



Cabinet

Notice of a Meeting, to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane,
Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL on Thursday, 11th February 2016 at 7.00 pm.

The Members of the Cabinet are:-

Cllr Clarkson – Leader of the Council

Cllr N Bell – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Responsibility for Government Policy Interface & Democracy

Cllr Mrs Bell – Portfolio Responsibility for Public Interaction and Borough Presentation

Cllr Bennett – Portfolio Responsibility for Planning, Development and Enforcement

Cllr Mrs Blanford – Portfolio Responsibility for Culture, Leisure and Environment

Cllr Clokie – Portfolio Responsibility for Housing and Home Ownership

Cllr Galpin – Portfolio Responsibility for Town Centres Focus and Business Dynamics

Cllr Heyes – Portfolio Responsibility for Highways, Wellbeing and Safety

Cllr Miss Martin – Portfolio Responsibility for Information and Communications

Cllr Shorter – Portfolio Responsibility for Finance, Budget and Resource Management

NB: Under the Council's Public Participation Scheme, members of the public can submit a petition to the Cabinet if the issue is within its terms of reference or ask a question or speak concerning any item contained on this Agenda (Procedure Rule 9 refers)

Agenda

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Nos. |
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| 1. Apologies | |
| 2. Declarations of Interest:- To declare any interests which fall under the following categories, as explained on the attached document: | 1 |
| a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) | |
| b) Other Significant Interests (OSI) | |
| c) Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests | |
| See Agenda Item 2 for further details | |
| 3. Minutes – To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 14 th January 2016 | |
| 4. To receive any Petitions | |
| 5. Leader's Announcements | |

Part I – Matters Referred to the Cabinet

None for this Meeting

Part II – Consideration of Reports from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

None for this Meeting

Part III – Ordinary Decision Items - Key Decisions Annotated*

6. O & S Budget Scrutiny Report
7. *Budget 2016/17
8. *Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report
9. Corporate Performance Report
10. Climate Change & Sustainable Environment – Annual Progress Review
11. Domestic Abuse Annual Report
12. *Gambling Act Policy Revision
13. *Recycling Performance 2015/16 and Waste Composition Analysis
14. *Appointment of Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer

Part IV – Information/Monitoring Items

15. Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – Notes of the Meeting held on 13th January 2016
16. Ashford Strategic Delivery Board – Notes of the Meeting held on the 22nd January 2016
17. Schedule of Key Decisions
18. Items for Future Meetings

Part V – Cabinet Member Reports

None for this Meeting

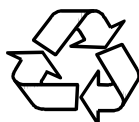
Part VI – Ordinary Decision Items

19. That pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of this item as it is likely that in view of the nature of the business to be transacted or the nature of the proceedings that if members of the public were present there would be disclosure of exempt information hereinafter specified by reference to the appropriate paragraphs of Schedule 12A of the Act, where in the circumstances the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information

E1 Flexible Retirement – Post Holder 3002 (Paragraphs 1 and 2)

KRF/AEH
3rd February 2016

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Declarations of Interest (see also “Advice to Members” below)

- (a) **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)** under the Localism Act 2011, relating to items on this agenda. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared, and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated.

A Member who declares a DPI in relation to any item will need to leave the meeting for that item (unless a relevant Dispensation has been granted).

- (b) **Other Significant Interests (OSI)** under the Kent Code of Conduct as adopted by the Council on 19 July 2012, relating to items on this agenda. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared, and the agenda item(s) to which it relates must be stated.

A Member who declares an OSI in relation to any item will need to leave the meeting before the debate and vote on that item (unless a relevant Dispensation has been granted). However, prior to leaving, the Member may address the Committee in the same way that a member of the public may do so.

- (c) **Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests** not required to be disclosed under (a) and (b), i.e. announcements made for transparency reasons alone, such as:

- Membership of outside bodies that have made representations on agenda items, or
- Where a Member knows a person involved, but does not have a close association with that person, or
- Where an item would affect the well-being of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc. but not his/her financial position.

[Note: an effect on the financial position of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc; OR an application made by a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc, would both probably constitute either an OSI or in some cases a DPI].

Advice to Members on Declarations of Interest:

- (a) Government Guidance on DPI is available in DCLG’s Guide for Councillors, at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/240134/Openness_and_transparency_on_personal_interests.pdf
- (b) The Kent Code of Conduct was adopted by the Full Council on 19 July 2012, with revisions adopted on 17.10.13, and a copy can be found in the Constitution at <http://www.ashford.gov.uk/part-5---codes-and-protocols>
- (c) If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or OSI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Head of Legal and Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer or from other Solicitors in Legal and Democratic Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **14th January 2016**

Present:

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);

Cllrs. Bennett, Mrs Blanford, Clokie, Galpin, Heyes, Miss Martin

Apologies:

Cllrs. Bell, Mrs Bell, Michael, Shorter

Also Present:

Cllrs. Bradford, Burgess, Link, Ovenden, Wedgbury

Corporate Director - Operations, Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Legal and Democratic Services, Head of Finance, Head of Planning and Development, Head of Health, Parking and Community Safety, Head of Environmental and Customer Services, Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager, Principal Policy Planner, Senior Economic Development Officer, Senior Communications Officer, Member Services and Scrutiny Manager.

273 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 3rd December 2015 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

274 Revenues and Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule

The report proposed the formal write-off of 389 debts totalling £278,557.91. The proposals were in line with the Council's Revenues and Benefits Service Write-Off policy and the existing bad debt provisions already more than covered the sums involved.

The report also recommended an additional delegation for the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget and Resource Management to approve the Council's Business Rate estimate for submission to Government on an annual basis.

A Member referred to a substantial proposed write-off listed within the Exempt Appendix to the report and sought an explanation as to how that debt had risen to such a level. The Head of Finance gave details of the nature of the debt and the Chairman suggested that the Member pursue this issue outside of the meeting with the officer concerned.

Resolved:

- That (i) accounts totalling £81,719.17 that had been written off under delegated powers (Financial Regulations 11.1) be noted.**
- (ii) the write-offs listed in the Exempt Appendices to the report totalling £196,838.74 be approved.**

Recommended:

That approval of the Council's Business Rates estimate for submission to Government on an annual basis be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget and Resource Management.

275 Managing Freight Vehicles Through Kent – Responding to the Highways England Consultation on a Proposal to Create a Permanent Lorry Area Adjacent to the M20 at Stanford

The report advised that in response to growing concerns about the impact of Operation Stack, Highways England were currently consulting on proposals to establish a permanent lorry park close to Junction 11 on the M20 motorway. The report set out the Council's formal response to that consultation.

The Portfolio Holder said that all were well aware of the impact of Operation Stack had on the Borough and said that he welcomed plans which would help to avoid further disruption.

A Member advised that for many years in his role as Borough Councillor he had been involved with initiatives to try and identify and secure appropriate parking facilities for lorries and he said that this was the first major initiative to put such a facility in place. He also indicated that he had some comments on the consultation exercise and the Chairman asked that they be forwarded to him to ensure that they were represented in the Council's overall response.

The Chairman also explained that he had met with the Leaders of both Dover and Shepway District Councils who were united in their support for Option 1 as the proposed site was nearer the motorway and would enable facilities available at Truck Stop 24 to be accessed via a bridge.

Resolved:

- That (i) the proposal to provide a permanent lorry parking area adjacent to the M20 to tackle the problems caused by Operation Stack and to help to meet the need for overnight lorry parking be welcomed.
- (ii) detailed evaluation of the site location options is a matter primarily for Shepway District Council but the Cabinet considers that in operational terms Option 1, with its direct access to the M20, is likely to be the better option.
- (iii) support be given for the use of the site for alternative 3 which would enable it to operate as an emergency lorry holding area (with free provision for Operation Stack and Dover TAP/Eurotunnel excess traffic) but with additional chargeable basic overnight parking all year round.

276 Joint Transportation Board – 8th December 2015

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held on the 8th December 2015 be received and noted.

277 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – 9th December 2015

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 9th December 2015 be approved and adopted.

278 Town Centre Regeneration Board – 16th December 2015

Resolved:

That the notes of the meeting of the Town Centre Regeneration Board held on the 16th December 2015 be received and noted.

279 Schedule of Key Decisions to be Taken

Resolved:

That the latest Schedule of Key Decisions as set out within the report be received and noted.

CA
140116

(KRF/AEH)

MINS:CAXX1602

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Agenda Item No: 6
Report To: Cabinet
Date: 11th February 2016
Report Title: Report of Budget Scrutiny Task Group
Report Author: Member Services and Scrutiny Manager



Summary:	The Overview and Scrutiny Budget Scrutiny Task Group has scrutinised the Council's draft 2016/17 budget and regards it as legal and achievable.
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Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards:

Recommendations: 1. **The O&S Committee recommends that the Cabinet:**

- **Be advised that the O&S Committee regards the Council's draft 2016/17 budget as legal and achievable**
- **Endorses the Risk Matrices and the risks identified within them, particularly noting those that fall in the shaded part of the matrix**
- **Note that the O&S Committee would consider it inappropriate for any amendments to be made to the budget following scrutiny as it would potentially make the budget insecure (subject to any unexpected announcements on Central Government funding).**
- **Note that the O&S Committee intend to scrutinise the MTFP document at its April meeting and test the assumptions made as a starting point for scrutiny of the following year's budget.**

Policy Overview: Under the Council's Constitution the O&S Committee has a duty to scrutinise the Council's draft Revenue and Capital Budgets.

Financial Implications: As noted in the report

Risk Assessment N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment N/A

Other Material As noted in the report.

Implications:

**Exemption
Clauses:** N/A

**Background
Papers:** All individual services draft 2016/17 budgets

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Summary

Achieving a balanced budget is a fundamental requirement for the Council. The Council's provisional draft budget for 2016/17 was presented to the Cabinet on 3rd December 2015. This budget was built against a backdrop of continued economic austerity measures, which are likely to deepen further, and an increasing cost base due to inflationary pressures.

The provisional draft budget presented to the Cabinet was then submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Budget Scrutiny Task Group for formal scrutiny.

When the draft budget was being prepared the Government's Autumn Budget statement had yet to be announced and so the draft budget was prepared using the Government's provisional figures which were published, for consultation, in the summer. Details of the settlement grant figures had also not been announced.

The Council's draft budget allowed for a 1.99% increase in Council tax.

This draft budget was scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny Budget Scrutiny Task Group over a series of meetings. The Task Group met on six occasions and at each meeting Members asked the relevant Officers to give the Group an overview of their service, the risks and uncertainties facing them, what savings they had achieved, and their proposed service developments.

The table attached to this report highlights the areas that the Task Group considered could be a risk to the 2016/17 budget and places them in a Risk Matrix which shows the potential likelihood of the event occurring and the material impact it would have on the Council if it were to occur. The Risk Matrix is separated into Financial risk and Operational (i.e. service quality) risk. Risks of high probability or materiality (in the shaded area of the matrix) could impact on the 2016/17 Budget and would require careful monitoring during the year.

The Minutes of each Service Budget Scrutiny meeting are available to Members and should be read in conjunction with this report for more information.

The 2016/17 budget is for the first year of the Council's 5 year Medium Term Financial Plan agreed in October 2015 when the Cabinet adopted the 'The Next Five Years' Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and the MTFP 2016-21 paper.

By the end of the Budget Scrutiny process the Task Group had not raised any issues that caused it to be concerned that the Budget for 2016/17 would not be achievable and were encouraged to know that financial position of the Council was being regularly monitored. However, it was acknowledged that the financial position in subsequent years was going to be increasingly challenging.

Keith Fearon – Member Services and Scrutiny Manager

Report of the Chairman of the Budget Scrutiny Task Group

Firstly I would like to thank Cllr's Burgess, Chilton, Link and Michael for their support and expertise in the scrutiny of the draft Budget for 2016-2017. In addition, I would like to thank Officers and staff for their support in guiding Members through the Budget Scrutiny process. Special thanks must go to Maria Seddon, Principal Accountant, for her hard work not only in the preparation of the numerous accounting spreadsheets but also her guidance through them for the members of the Task Group (TG). The extra explanations and details provided by Cllr Shorter, Keith Fearon and the Members Services Team were also invaluable when it came to ensuring the TG was able to complete their scrutiny of the Budget in a timely manner.

All Heads of Department and their Budget Managers presented their draft Budgets to the TG in order that its Members could scrutinise all draft Budget plans in detail which were then analysed/ identified/ classified for any potential risks both financially and operationally to the Budget and or the Authority. The final report and associated risk matrix are presented to all Members for their consideration and approval.

This year's draft Budget has been formed under some difficult fiscal circumstances with Central Government austerity seeing real term cuts in government grants to this authority due to the failure to eradicate the national Budget deficit. Calculations for this draft Budget have been based on an assumption that the full Council will consider and subsequently accept that a 1.99% increase in Council Tax will need to be made for this upcoming 2016-2017 Financial Year. Along with this potential changes in associated costs/ savings that are to be had given the personnel changes that have been notified and accepted amongst senior members of the Corporate Management Team have also been taken into account. Members of the TG noted their contributions to the excellent financial position that this Authority finds itself in and wishes to thank them for their efforts and hope that their future endeavours are personally fruitful whatever they may be.

The TG would furthermore like to thank all Cabinet Members who attended the respective meetings of this Group to report on their Budgets and offer poignant advice in regards to their portfolio. Thanks also to those Members that attended some meetings in order to gain a better insight into the workings of the Authority.

It is my personal opinion that the work of this TG does/ can give all Members a very good and well-rounded view of just how well and efficiently this Authority operates and that it does have some of (if not) the best Officers and staff of any Authority in not only the South East but further afield. The opportunity to Chair and work with the other Members of this Group along with Officers and staff has been an honour and a privilege.

Thank you

Larry Krause
Chair, Budget Scrutiny Task Group

Financial Risks to the Council				
Materiality	High >£500,000		5.1	4.3
	Medium £100,000– £500,000	3.1	2.2, 10.2	4.1
	Low <£100,000	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.4, 3.4, 4.2, 4.4, 5.3, 6.1, 6.3, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 7.4, 7.5, 8.7, 8.8, 8.9, 8.10, 8.13, 8.14, 9.2, 10.1, 10.3, 10.5, 10.6, 11.1	3.2	1.2, 5.2, 8.12, 11.2
		Low	Medium	High
	Probability			

Operational Risks to the Council				
Materiality	High	4.3		
	Medium	4.4, 7.2,	2.3, 8.9, 8.10, 8.11, 9.1, 10.1, 10.4, 10.7	8.11.1, 11.2
	Low	1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 2.1, 2.4, 3.3, 3.4, 4.2, 5.3, 6.3, 6.5, 7.3, 7.6, 8.13, 8.14, 9.3, 10.5, 11.1,	6.2,	1.3, 2.1, 3.2, 4.1, 6.4, 10.3
		Low	Medium	High
	Probability			

Risks and Uncertainties 2016-17

14 th December 2015 Corporate Property and Projects		Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
1.1	The service needs to be adaptable to accommodate work streams derived from the Corporate Plan and to raise additional incomes for the Council and maintain the Council's corporate assets. A key risk is the ability of the service as a relatively small team to maintain service continuity given its current workload.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational Low Materiality Low Probability
1.2	Let space within the property portfolio has been assessed on the basis of current terms prevailing for the financial year 2016/17. Should this not be the case there is a risk of the income generated being lower than predicted. However, a cautious view has been taken for 2016/17.	Financial Low Materiality High Probability Operational Low Materiality Low Probability
1.3	If the Facilities Management arrangements for Park Mall and International House are brought in house further pressure will be put on the staff resource within the team.	Operational Low Materiality Low Probability Financial Low Materiality Low Probability

15 th December 2015 Cultural Services		Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
2.1	Project list for 2016/17 – Risks associated with the likelihood of securing funding from the New Homes Bonus and other external sources and also ensuring that expertise and capacity is available within other services to support the projects.	Operational Low Materiality High Probability
2.2	Increased construction market costs and tenders could threaten the delivery of some new build projects.	Financial Medium Materiality Medium Probability
2.3	Delivery of Stour Centre Regeneration and JVC – Risks include a renewed partnership, lease and contractual arrangements for leisure management.	Operational Medium Materiality Medium Probability
2.4	Not achieving the utilities budget at the Stour Centre. Risk considered less likely given CHP working properly and the reduction in fuel prices generally.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational Low Materiality Low Probability

15 th December 2015 Planning and Development		Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
3.1	The fluctuation in fee income remained a risk, and whilst it had been higher than anticipated the additional workload has created pressure on existing staff resources.	Financial Medium Materiality Low Probability
3.2	Speculative housing applications in advance of the new local plan remained a risk in terms of large scale appeals and associated costs. Several applications had been submitted adding to the pressure on resources and diverts it from delivering Corporate priorities and maintaining a good quality day to day service.	Financial Low Materiality Medium Probability Operational Low Materiality High Probability
3.3	The delivery of the Big 8 projects is a major risk has led to additional pressure on staff resources and will inevitably impact on day to day service delivery. The risk of slower delivery includes dangers of market downturn and loss of investor confidence. Additionally the Administration's stated aim of making the Enforcement Team more robust will also create further pressure on resources. The Task Group considered that there was an urgent need to address staffing resources to continue to support the Big 8 and additional enforcement work. Without this the robustness of the draft budget would be questioned. Note: The Task Group considered that progress on the Big 8 should be closely monitored by the Ashford Strategic Development Board and the Cabinet.	Operational Low Materiality Low Probability
3.4	Applications had increased by 17% since 2013. This has been partly offset by the limited use of consultants and service efficiencies. Caseloads remained high and service resilience was becoming stretched.	Operational Low Materiality Low Probability Financial Low Materiality Low Probability

17 th December 2015 Community & Housing – General Fund Housing		Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
4.1	Rising house prices has resulted in previously rented properties continuing to be sold which made the acquisition of Private Sector Letting properties more difficult and placing pressure on the service with the risk of a reduction in contribution levels. Additionally, announcements were made as part of the spending review that there will be a change to	Financial Medium Materiality High Probability Operational Low Materiality High Probability

	the way the management of temporary accommodation is funded from 2017/18	
4.2	Bed and breakfast costs - the service is proactively pursuing options for another strategic purchase to reduce the Council's financial exposure to B&B costs.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational Low Materiality Low Probability
4.3	Affordable Housing Delivery – Considerable change was anticipated arising from Governments intention to move from affordable rented properties to affordable outright purchase. Further details were awaited. Also Housing Associations were reviewing their Business Plans in view of social rent reduction and Right to Buy proposals and requirements for delivery from developers was anticipated to change.	Financial High Materiality High Probability Operational High Materiality Low Probability
4.4	Welfare Reform – Although Universal Credit is due to be in place nationally from April 2017, welfare reform will continue to cause continued uncertainty for the housing sector and tenants both in the social sector and private sector.	Operational Medium Materiality Low Probability Financial Low Materiality Low Probability

17th December 2015 Community and Housing - HRA		Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
5.1	New Build and Sheltered Housing remodelling costs – The issues of cost inflation and increases in materials and labour costs remain a sector wide issue.	Financial High Materiality Medium Probability
5.2	Social Housing Rents – the announcement in the July 2015 Budget to reduce housing rents by 1% each year for the next 4 years materially affects the financing opportunities for the Council and other providers.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability
5.3	Welfare Reform – This remains an issue of concern with the introduction of Universal Credit but fortunately collection of rents remain high and arrears low, thus reducing the pressure on the HRA.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational Low Materiality Low Probability

22nd December 2015 Legal, Democratic and Emergency Planning		Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
6.1	Legal Income for 2016/17 remains a risk for the same reasons as in previous years, in particular	Financial Low Materiality

	<p>the volume of large scale planning applications submitted is outside the council's direct control (although activity and interest is strong and there is a good reason to be optimistic) whilst the level of cost recovery can be affected (and has been in the past been affected) if there is negotiation of reduced recharge rates or caps in specific cases.</p>	<p>Low Probability</p>
6.2	<p>The level of major project work requiring significant legal support continues to be high and this is anticipated to continue in line with last year's predictions. The consequent increase in Strategic Development legal resource was funded by the use of reserves. An increasing focus on income generating and social housing property acquisition work has led to increased pressure on the Property and Projects Team which has to be managed. This pressure is likely to be maintained as the Council's strategy is delivered.</p> <p>The Administration also has a stated aim to make the Enforcement Team more robust and this could lead to pressures in the legal service.</p>	<p>Operational Low Materiality Medium Probability</p>
6.3	<p>The national roll out of Individual Electoral Registration (IER) from summer 2014 has presented enormous ongoing challenges for the Electoral Services team. Some additional government funding has been made available for transitional work and the team has been re-structured to meet the challenges ahead. There is an ongoing process of review of pressures and resources to meet the challenges ahead. There is also an ongoing process of review of pressures and resources as the first full IER canvass concludes at the end of 2015.</p>	<p>Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational Low Materiality Low Probability</p>
6.4	<p>From January 2016 the Boundary Commission review work on borough ward boundaries (following on from the Community Governance Review) will need sensitive handling and resources across corporate and democratic services.</p>	<p>Operational Low Materiality High Probability</p>
6.5	<p>Large number of FOI/EIR requests, more requests for internal reviews and some referrals to the Information Commissioner continue to be a challenge for all service areas. This risk remains the same as last year with no sign of a reducing volume of requests/appeals.</p>	<p>Operational Low Materiality Low Probability</p>

22nd December 2015 Financial Services (including Capital)		Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
7.1	The draft budget has been built based on assumptions of the level of reductions in our budget emanating from the Comprehensive Spending Review 2015. The announcements within this and the detail that will follow with the subsequent Local Government Settlement has the potential to influence not only the deliverability of this budget but also the workload for the team.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability
7.2	Welfare reform has been a significant risk to the service with the team working to adapt to the changes brought in and to support residents managing this change whilst seeking to maintain the services performance in both revenues and benefits aspects of the service. Details are awaited in terms of how the proposals announced in the July budget are to be implemented.	Operational Medium Materiality Low Probability Financial Low Materiality Low Probability
7.3	The council is required to have a Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme and adopted a version of the Kent scheme in 2013-14. In view of the changes to welfare reform and the increasing pressure on budgets a county wide review of the scheme has been commissioned. It is important that the scheme that is developed is able to meet the council's needs, be efficient to operate and to be affordable to residents.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational Low Materiality Low Probability
7.4	There is a risk that the level of court costs charged is challenged by the court and they do not support our calculation and seek to reduce those charges, affecting the level of income.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability
7.5	The service receives administration grants from the government to fund the administration of the benefits service. There is a risk that the cuts to the grant do not match the transfer of caseload to Universal Credit leaving unfunded work within the department.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability
7.6	The council's finance system is likely to become 'de-supported' due to the release of a new version therefore to remain supported the council will need to upgrade.	Operational Low Materiality Low Probability

7.7	During the year the council's actuary will undertake the triennial review of the pension fund that will set the contribution level for the coming years. This will have a potential impact on the contribution levels for 2017/18 for both the benefits accrued in the year and the recovery of any pension deficit. This will heavily be influence by the levels of investment returns and bond yields which are used to forecast the value of assets and future liabilities.	Not relevant for the 2016/17 Financial Year
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22 nd December 2015 Human Resources, Communications and Technology		Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
8.7	2016/17 Pay Negotiations	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability
8.8	During the summer of 2015 the Government consulted on introducing a cap on public sector termination payments. Since then it has been announced that it is intended to implement this cap (together with some changes to tax allowances on severance packages) during 2016/17. HR are currently determining the possible impact of this on ABC and will be developing proposals on how ABC could handle these changes once full details are available.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability
8.9	In addition HR are modelling the likely effect of the new National Living Wage on pay scales as there is a need to ensure that the council remains competitive and attractive as an employer. Further work will come forward during 2016/17	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational Medium Materiality Medium Probability
8.10	Continuing uncertainty and difficulty in achieving compliance with PCN Code of Connection	Operational Medium Materiality Medium Probability Financial Low Materiality Low Probability
8.11	Loss of expertise from IT function - The departure of the IT Business Analyst and GIS Analyst/programmer as part of the MTFP proposals will result in a significant loss of expertise, and an associated loss of resilience within the Geographical Information Systems function, dilution of the knowledge and expertise involved in supporting core financial systems, although this risk is being actively managed within the service and a loss of business analysis capacity which underpins the requirements	Operational Medium Materiality Medium Probability

8.11.1	<p>phase of any systems development project.</p> <p>The Head of ICT is leaving at the end of March 2016 and this will result in a loss of technical knowledge and expertise as well as capacity to contribute in a strategic way through countywide networks</p>	<p>Operational Medium Materiality High Probability</p>
8.12	<p>There is a risk that staff will not retire on or before 1st April and this could add a pressure to the budget. A review of service requirements will need to be reviewed should this happen.</p>	<p>Financial Low Materiality High Probability</p>
8.13	<p>Greater collaboration with partner councils may require significant IT resource for scoping work at short notice- Work commissioned by Joint Kent Chiefs may result in proposals to change supplier, hosting or collaboration arrangements at short notice.</p>	<p>Operational Low Materiality Low Probability</p> <p>Financial Low Materiality Low Probability</p>
8.14	<p>Requirement to achieve and maintain revised standards for PCI-DSS compliance. Revised compliance regulations means significantly increased workload around IT and payment security. Possibility of significant fines and cessation of payment taking services if found in breach.</p>	<p>Operational Low Materiality Low Probability</p> <p>Financial Low Materiality Low Probability</p>

22 nd December 2015		Risk – High/Low
Corporate Management and Policy and Performance		Financial/Operational
9.1	<p>Corporate Management – Partnership working is essential in terms of delivering the Big 8 projects and the Corporate Plan. The work of the Ashford Strategic Delivery Board is constantly monitored to ensure that projects are progressed.</p>	<p>Operational Medium Materiality Medium Probability</p>
9.2	<p>Policy and Performance- Investment in the borough and income generation are aimed at tackling reduced funding from Central Government. If this does not materialise the budget may be at risk.</p>	<p>Financial Low Materiality Low Probability</p>
9.3	<p>Policy and Performance – need to recruit to vacant post within the section. Without this there may be a risk of not delivering the Council's Corporate Objectives.</p>	<p>Operational Low Materiality Low Probability</p>

5th January 2016 Health, Parking and Community Safety		Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
10.1	Achieving income targets for the Monitoring Centre at risk as ageing equipment limits new business development opportunities	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational Medium Materiality Medium Probability
10.2	Potential loss of an income stream following the withdrawal of the Supporting People Fund which is used by the Housing Revenue Account to fund lifeline services.	Financial Medium Materiality Medium Probability
10.3	Development of the Commercial Quarter would remove approximately half of the available car parking spaces in Dover Place and therefore will affect income.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational High Probability Low Materiality
10.4	Demand for more parking enforcement associated with the expansion of on-street parking schemes and lorry parking is a risk	Operational Medium Materiality Medium Probability
10.5	A recent audit of ABC street lighting assets has identified a potential risk of up to £75,000 for repair or replacement. Proposed to be funded by the Corporate Repair and Renewal Programme	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational Low Materiality Low Probability
10.6	Risk associated with potential for the Government to make changes in respect of statutory fees and charges. Statutory fees have remained fixed for many years despite increasing operational costs	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability
10.7	Workload is increasing as a consequence of the Borough's growth and there is an increasing demand for highway, transport and parking schemes. This presents both an opportunity and a pressure.	Operational Medium Materiality Medium Probability

5th January 2016 Environmental and Customer Services		Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
11.1	In terms of the Grounds Maintenance Service, the acquisition of a depot and large plant and machinery are a risk.	Financial Low Materiality Low Probability Operational Low Materiality Low Probability

11.2	Memorial Headstone reviews are recommended to take place every five years and the service is considering a series of policy guidelines, prior to inspection work being commissioned. A report will be submitted to Cabinet in March 2016.	Financial Low Materiality High Probability Operational Medium Materiality? High Probability
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12th January 2016	General Fund Wrap Up and Capital, Repairs and Renewals	Risk – High/Low Financial/Operational
	Risks identified under individual service risks	

Agenda Item No: 7
Report To: CABINET
Date: 11th FEBRUARY 2016
Report Title: Budget 2016/17
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Shorter Portfolio Holder for Finance & Budget, Resource Management and Procurement
Report Author: Accountancy



Summary: This report is the culmination of a number of financial planning reports that have been received by Cabinet over the last year. In October Cabinet received a report outlining the Council's Corporate Plan 2015-2020 including the Medium Term Financial Plan; this informed the draft budget that was presented to Cabinet in December and a consultation exercise and scrutiny process followed. This budget has been updated for the provisional funding announcements and this report presents the final draft budget 2016/17 for consideration by Cabinet. Cabinet's recommendations will then be presented to the full Council. The consultation process is still open and responses will either be presented to this meeting or to the full Council meeting on the 23 February.

The budget supports the first year of the Council's updated Corporate Plan and reflects the changes to services that were agreed in October 2015, following public consultation. The report covers the Housing Revenue Account which includes a 1% reduction in rents, the first of a four year reduction programme. Capital programme and the council's Treasury Management Strategy.

The reductions in local government funding and the changes to the way in which that funding is received has changed the risk environment against which the budget is built and the report includes specific advice on robustness and budgetary risk. With this in mind this report recommends a change in the reserves policy to ensure future income risks adequately covered.

For some time this Borough's council tax has been the lowest of Kent districts and well below the national average. This budget proposes a 1.99% rise in the Boroughs annual council tax with a Band D (the standard council tax band) charge moving to £148.34 for the year. It is expected this will remain the lowest of any Kent district. This excludes changes to Parish Councils' precepts, which vary from parish to parish.

Key Decision: YES

Affected Wards: All

Recommendations: The Cabinet is asked to:-

Part 1

- i) Note the budget context and MTFP position (**Table 3**) and the Provisional Settlement Consultation response in **Appendix A**
- ii) Note the final business rate yield forecast (NNDR1) in **Appendix B**
- iii) Note the proposed New Homes Bonus Consultation response in **Appendix C** and delegate authority to Cllrs Shorter and Bennett to approve the final New Homes Bonus consultation response
- iv) Note that the Council Tax Support Scheme adopted is as reported to Cabinet in December **paragraphs 37-41**

Part 2

- v) Recommend the Revenue Budget 2016/17 including the net budget requirement of **£14,205,480 (excluding parish precepts)**
- vi) Recommend the level of Discretionary Fees to be levied from 1st April 2016 (as set out in **Appendix G**).
- vii) Delegate to the Chief Finance Officer the powers to establish local discounts in Business Rates in accordance with those announced by the chancellor in the autumn statement
- viii) Agree to no change in allocations of discretionary rate relief until the end of the 2019-20 financial year
- ix) Note the reserves summary (from **paragraph 68 - Table 7**), **detail in Appendix F**
- x) Recommend the approval of changing retained reserves from a minimum of 7.5% of the net budget requirement to a minimum of 15%, details in **paragraphs 71-74**.
- xi) Note the Communities Impact Assessment in **Appendix H**
- xii) Recommend the Band D council tax at £148.34.

Part 3

- xiii) Resolve that the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2016/17 be approved
- xiv) Resolve the estimated average rent decrease of 1%, in accordance with government guidelines, and that rent setting for the future continues to follow movements in the 'limit rent' set by government

Part 4

- xv) Recommend to Council that the Capital Budget for 2016/17 in **Appendix J** is approved.

Part 5

- xvi) Recommend the Prudential Indicators, Treasury Management Strategy, MRP Policy and Annual Strategy as set out in the **Appendix K and Appendix L**.

Part 6

- xvii) Recommend the updated Financial Procedure Rules (as above) are approved
- xviii) Note the new tendering/quotation procedure Cashflow and approve the financial limits in **Appendix M**
- xix) Approve the Risk Based Verification policy as outlined in **Appendix N**

Part 7

- xx) Note the advice from the Chief Financial Officer concerning the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves.

Policy Overview:

Financial Implications:

The key implications of this budget are:

- Council Tax 1.99% rise at £148.34 at a Band D
- Staff cost of living increase 2%
- Council Tax Support Scheme limiting contributions to 10% whilst protecting the disabled and the elderly.
- Rents to reduce by 1%
- Revised fees and charges

Risk Assessment

The draft budget was scrutinised for risks by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and found to be '*deliverable*'. Its detailed risk conclusions will be adopted by the Management Team. Members' attention is also drawn to the advice at Part Seven concerning the robustness of the budget, the adequacy of the council's reserves and the risk assessment of the savings proposals.

The council's Chief Financial Officer (Deputy Chief Executive) is under a statutory duty to advise on these issues and advises that, after taking various matters into account, the budget is robust and that reserves levels are adequate.

Communities Impact Assessment

A Communities impact assessment (CIA) screening tool has been completed to identify whether the budget policy treats any group differently (**Appendix H**). The CIA assumes that individual policies and initiatives will have separate impact

assessments completed by the services concerned. The screening tool has highlighted some areas where further work is needed however overall the budget does not discriminate against any group in society.

Other Material Implications:

The budget's plans are in-line with the Corporate Plan.. In the light of the risks and opportunities associated with the government's financial reforms, the Medium Term Financial Plan Task Group should monitor these and establish recommendations for handling future budget gaps.

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Report Title: Budget 2016/17

Purpose of the Report

1. This report presents the final draft 2016/17 budget for approval and recommendation to the full Council. A preliminary draft budget was approved by the Cabinet in December.
2. The draft budget supports the corporate plan's key themes reported to Council in October and covers: the general fund revenue budget; discretionary fees; the housing revenue account; the capital programme; the prudential indicators; the treasury management and annual investment strategies; key decision thresholds and risks.
3. It follows on from the new corporate plan 2015-2021 and also scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Budget Task Group. Public consultation through the channels of the council's website commenced in January.
4. Full details of the draft revenue budget, HRA budget and capital programme will be contained in the 'Budget Book 2016/17' that will be published before the Full Council meeting.
5. This report is presented in seven parts:-
 - Part One - Policy Context and Government Grant
 - Part Two - General Fund Revenue Budget
 - Part Three - Housing Revenue Account
 - Part Four - Capital Programme
 - Part Five - Prudential Indicators, Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy
 - Part Six - Key Decision Thresholds and Financial Regulations
 - Part Seven - Robustness of Estimates and Adequacy of Reserves

Decision Required

6. The Cabinet is being asked to agree its final budget recommendations for consideration by the Full Council on 23 February 2016.

Consultation

7. Consultation with the public and the business community is taking place and the results will either be reported to this meeting or the Full Council meeting on 23 February 2016 depending on when comments are received. To facilitate this, a summary of the Budget proposals was posted on the council's website for general access.
8. Consultation took place with the Joint Consultative Committee on 28 January 2016 and made no comments on the draft budget.

Portfolio Holder Comment

9. To be given at the meeting.

PART ONE – CONTEXT and GOVERNMENT GRANT

The Five-Year Corporate Plan 2015-20

10. The council adopted the principles laid out in the Corporate Plan in October. The Plan identified the key themes for the council to focus upon over the next five years, which are:
 - a) Enterprising Ashford
 - b) Living Ashford
 - c) Active and Creative Ashford
 - d) Attractive Ashford

11. The council has a Medium Term Financial Plan which is a rolling five yearly budget that seeks to put the Corporate Plan into financial terms. This is reviewed regularly with any changes in priorities of new projects being incorporated. The most recent review of this reported to members was included in the report to the October Cabinet “the next five years.” This report discussed the emerging budget gap and introduced 4 main measures to address this:
 - i. Closing the budget gap 2019/20 strategy
 - ii. an investment and borrowing policy
 - iii. proposed allocations of New Homes Bonus
 - iv. Inflation management Strategy

12. The budget included in this report has been built in accordance with the strategy adopted.

Provisional Settlement

13. Overall it is a positive picture for next year when taking into account the settlement figures and the provisional estimate for business rates income there is a variance of £37,000 less funding than assumed in the draft budget.

14. The main issue is the consultation on the future of New Homes Bonus that will have some significant impacts for the Council. Formula grant will go completely over the period and government will increase the tariff on business rate retention to cut our funding further.

15. The settlement assumes no changes in business rates; therefore more detail is expected over the full retention of business rates over the next few months however there is an expectation that the 4 year period of the settlement a change to full local retention will happen.

16. The Government has announced a provisional 4 year settlement for Local Government, the minister has announced that for authorities that sign up to it, a four year settlement can be agreed. This will require authorities to sign up to an efficiency plan, the format of which is yet to be agreed, but will mean that authorities can have certainty over their settlements. This offer has been caveated by a need to retain the ability to adjust the tariff levels for business rates for inflation. Given that the council will lose formula grant in its entirety and will rely on Business Rates, which is heavily influenced by the level of tariff, and NHB for its funding. Financially there may be little to gain for the council

from this offer, however the underlying policy is very much in line with this Council's financial strategy of the last few years, seeking to become independent of government funding and in its financial planning has sought to identify efficiencies to make the savings needed to achieve that aim.

17. The Government was consulting on the settlement which closed on 15th January; the response is in **Appendix A**.

Formula Grant

18. The Secretary of State has outlined a provisional 4 year settlement and the table below demonstrates the annual difference of the grant from the draft budget, overall the Council will received £121,000 less than budgeted next year and £127,000 less over the 4 year period:

Table 1 – Formula Grant Comparison

	2016/17 £'000's	2017/18 £'000's	2018/19 £'000's	2019/20 £'000's
Base Budget General Government Grant	(2,107)	(1,391)	(834)	0
(Increase)/Decrease in Government Grant	716	557	834	0
MTFP/draft budget	(1,391)	(834)	0	0
Settlement	1,270	615	213	0
Difference	(121)	(219)	213	0

19. The Formula Grant will be cut to £0 in 2019/20 and the MTFP had assumed this a year earlier.
20. The data on the settlement assumes that the NNDR baseline continues at the current level, indeed in the final year government increases the tariff to cut our funding further. Therefore it is clear that treasury view that this level of funding is appropriate for the current services that are provided and if full retention of business rates is going to increase district councils funding significantly then there will be additional burdens transferred as well.

Business Rates

21. This area is more complicated as it needs to take into account a number of factors (tariff, yield and Small Business Rate Relief) affecting the budget, one of which is set by the settlement, the tariff.

Table 2 Business Rates Comparison

	2016/17 £'000's	2017/18 £'000's	2018/19 £'000's	2019/20 £'000's
MTFP/Draft Budget	(19,304)	(19,676)	(20,748)	(21,120)
Draft NNDR1	(19,270)			
Difference	(34)	NA	NA	NA
Tariff	15,779	15,810	15,842	15,873
Settlement	15,624	15,931	16,401	16,925
Difference	155	(121)	(559)	(1,052)
Base Budget S31 NNDR grants for reliefs	(575)	(596)	(617)	(638)
Draft NNDR1	(538)			
Difference	(37)	NA	NA	NA

Tariff

22. The level of Tariff is a fixed amount that we pay to government; this is heavily influenced by our inflation assumptions. Government are expecting the pace of inflation to increase at a much faster rate than the MTFP, it is expected that to some extent the impact of this will be offset by assumptions on income. **However** to ensure that the level of cut to shire districts is uniform across the country government have increased the level of tariff to authorities which have no formula grant left to cut. This applies to Ashford BC with an increase of £237,000 in the final year of the settlement; this was not forecast in the MTFP presented in October to Cabinet but has been updated in this report.
23. For 2016/17 we have budgeted for a Tariff of £15,779,000 which is £155,000 higher than the Settlement figure generating a saving to the draft budget offsetting the loss of formula grant detailed above.

Yield

24. The draft NNDR1 has been completed and shows that the Council's share is likely to be £19,270,040 (this includes £54,000 income for solar farms) this is £34,000 less than the level assumed in the draft budget. The total rateable value of non domestic properties in the borough has remained fairly constant at £115m. In view of the level of appeals against the rateable value that have been processed by the Valuation Office this is a positive position. The growth in rates yield has primarily been driven by the increase in the multiplier applied to this figure.
25. An appeal from the NHS Trust has been received seeking mandatory charitable rate relief on all its properties; first indications are that it is unlikely to be successful; the council has received advice to reject this application as the legal grounds not appear to be certain. The Trust currently pays around £750,000 per annum in business rates and nationally this would represent a cost of £1.5bn. We have allowed for an increase in the level of mandatory relief within the

forecast for business rates but not at the full value as we feel there is a strong probability that this application will be rejected.

Small Business Rate Relief

26. Government has for some time doubled the level of Small Business Rate relief offered, because this is outside the business rate retention scheme a compensatory grant is paid to the council in the form of a S31 Grant. The budget assumes that S31 grants for Small Business Rate Relief will continue and the draft budget has been prepared with an estimate of £575,000 being paid to compensate for this loss. The draft NNDR1 estimate for 2016/17 suggests that this will be £37,000 lower than the draft budget.

Summary

27. Overall the picture for business rates for 2016/17 is reasonably positive with the 3 elements having a total variance of £84,000 more funding than assumed in the draft budget. This offsets the negative variance for formula grant leaving a total difference of £37,000 less funding than was assumed in the draft budget, this has been updated in this report which presents the final draft budget.

New Homes Bonus

28. The provisional settlement for New Homes Bonus is £3,782,000, the statement reads:

“The New Homes Bonus provides valuable funding, and, as importantly, encourages house building.

So I can announce today that I will extend the Bonus indefinitely, but with some changes, on which I am consulting.”

29. The Budget assumed a New Homes Bonus receipt of £3,471,000 and following initial announcements from Government there was an expectation that there could be a 2 year top slice of £1,437,000 in the current year. This has not transpired, however a consultation document has been issued outlining the government's proposed method to top-slice the grant reducing it from 6 to 4 years with the possibility of a further reduction. The government is offering 2 approaches to do this, a straight cut to 4 years or an interim step to allow more time for adjustment.
30. The consultation document also looks at ways in sharpening the incentive through:
- stopping payments for years when local plans are not in place,
 - reducing the bonus paid by houses built on appeal,
 - setting a baseline which councils must achieve before they become eligible for bonus payments.
31. There does not seem to be any suggestion on whether the 80:20 split between upper and lower tier authorities should be changed but the savings achieved in the proposed changes will be re-allocated to areas of priority spend for local government such as Adult Social Care.
32. The Consultation closes on 10th March 2016 and the draft response is presented in **Appendix C** of this report for approval. It is recommended to the

Cabinet to delegate approval of the final response to Cllr Shorter (Portfolio Holder for Finance & Budget, Resource) and Cllr Bennett (Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development).

Council Tax

33. In his statement the Minister made it clear that there would be no freeze funding offered to Councils who freeze council tax. He has also confirmed that the 2% cap will remain but there will be scope for low taxing authorities to increase their council tax by up to £5.

“So while this settlement maintains the core referendum threshold at 2%, the threshold for the lowest cost district councils will be £5 a year, so they aren’t punished for being economical while those who have spent more in the past are allowed to spend more now.”

34. The draft budget assumed a 1.99% increase in Council Tax being in the band D payment to £148.34 (£145.45 in 2015/16), this Council does not qualify for the £5 increase as Ashford Borough Council ranks 54 from 201 districts, the lower quartile being a maximum of £144.59, based on the 2015/16 stats.
35. As part of the Council’s response to the provisional settlement consultation, the Council has, along with many other authorities, asked the Government to consider changing the cap, allowing authorities to increase Council Tax by £5 or 2% per annum.
36. At an increase of 1.99% Ashford will remain the lowest council tax in Kent, with Tonbridge Wells being the next lowest with a council tax of £158.63 at 2015/16 levels as it is unlikely Kent authorities will lower Council Tax following the Governments announcements.

Council Tax Support

37. As part of the welfare reform agenda Government abolished council tax benefit in 2013 and replaced this with the requirement for councils (the billing authorities) to introduce locally agreed schemes offering council tax discounts to residents. At that time the Government transferred 90% funding to local authorities.
38. This year it is proposed that the current scheme, slightly modified to keep in line with the Housing Benefit Scheme, will be retained by all Kent districts and public consultation for the Ashford scheme was in open until 11th January 2016, no responses were received.
39. The current proposed scheme includes the following:
- a. Full protection to pensioner claimants
 - b. 95% protection to eligible disabled claimants
 - c. a 10% contribution to council tax from working-age claimants (those that had previously received full council tax benefit).

40. A fundamental review of the scheme is needed as a result of the impact of welfare reform changes. Whilst a one year extension has been agreed, there is a commitment across Kent districts that a review of all local schemes will take place over the next six months, in readiness for an entirely new scheme from April 2017.
41. Our local council tax scheme has the agreement of the major precepting authorities who will also work in partnership with the council on measures to increase council tax yield.

Medium Term Financial Plan

Business plan and grant assumptions

42. The Medium Term Financial Plan was updated and reported to members in the October report. The forecast has been updated to reflect the details of the settlement, Business Rates forecast and other movements in the draft budget. The update has reduced the surplus for 2016/17 from £175,000 to £81,000 and the details of this movement can be found in the next section of this report, in table 5.
43. Overall the forecast shows an a fairly balanced position over the following 3 years, however in 2019/20 there is an increasing budget gap as grants reduce and costs increase at assumed levels of inflation. Plans for these future pressures will need to be developed and could include savings though efficiencies, Business Rate growth, and income targets set from the borrowing and acquisitions policy.

Table 3 – Medium Term Financial Plan 2016-2021

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's	£'000's
<i>Revenue Support Grant</i>	(1,270)	(615)	(213)	0	0
<i>S31 Grant NNDR reliefs</i>	(538)	(549)	(560)	(571)	(582)
<i>Retained Business Rates</i>	(3,410)	(3,478)	(5,248)	(5,316)	(5,422)
<i>New Homes Bonus (50% allocated to support base budget)</i>	(3,782)	(2,947)	(2,380)	(2,760)	(2,439)
Total Government Funding	(9,000)	(7,589)	(8,400)	(8,647)	(8,443)
Council Tax	(6,490)	(6,708)	(6,969)	(7,212)	(7,482)
Total Income Receipts (Including Specific Grants)	(48,037)	(48,080)	(48,137)	(48,283)	(48,430)
Base Budget Gross Expenditure	63,135	63,135	63,916	64,450	65,558
Contribution to/from NHB reserve	311	(992)	(1,428)	(719)	(604)
Budget Increases		822	534	1,108	1,529
Budget Reduction Strategy		(41)	0	0	0
BUDGET GAP	(81)	547	(484)	697	2,128

44. The plan does place reliance on the Council's ability to generate new income streams through its borrowing and acquisitions policy and this does represent a risk to the forecast should suitable investments not be found or that they deliver lower returns. It is important that the risks within the total programme are monitored due to the impact they could have on the budget going forward.
45. Work will commence in the new financial year reviewing the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Recommendations (Part One)

46. The Cabinet is asked to:
 - i) Note the budget context and MTFP position (**Table 3**) and the Provisional Settlement Consultation response in Appendix A
 - ii) Note the final business rate yield forecast (NNDR1) in **Appendix B**
 - iii) Note the proposed New Homes Bonus Consultation response in **Appendix C** and Delegate authority to Cllr Shorter and Bennett to approve the final New Homes Bonus consultation response
 - iv) Note that the Council Tax Support Scheme adopted is as reported to Cabinet in December **paragraphs 37-41**

PART TWO – GENERAL FUND BUDGET

47. A summary of the general fund budget, including a forecast of outturn for 2015/16 as at 30 September 2015, is shown at Table 4 below.
48. Necessary changes to the preliminary draft budget have been made and raised with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Budget Task Group. The principal changes are highlighted in paragraph 53.
49. All approved succession planning staff changes have been included in the budget for 2016/17 and has been scrutinised on that basis.
50. The Overview and Scrutiny Budget Task Group scrutinised the budget during December and January and did not raise any issues of concern over the draft budget for 2016/17 however they acknowledge that the financial position in subsequent year is going to be increasingly challenging. They supported the increase in Council Tax of 1.99% based on the MTFP pressures going forward and its cumulative impact.

Table 4 - General Fund Summary

Actual 2014/15 £	Budget 2015/16 £	Projected Outturn 2015/16 £	Detail	Budget 2016/17 £
12,662,382	13,468,570	13,530,610	SERVICE EXPENDITURE	14,205,480
2,357,724	265,120	248,120	Contribution to/(from) Balances	1,244,480
(2,947,755)	(2,106,830)	(2,106,830)	Government Grant	(1,269,920)
(2,183,239)	(2,628,370)	(2,628,370)	Retained Business Rates	(3,410,410)
(953,730)	(554,000)	(554,000)	Business Rates S31 Grants	(538,000)
(2,875,218)	(2,324,000)	(2,339,000)	New Homes Bonus	(3,782,820)
62,110	41,500	41,500	Parish CTS Payment	41,500
(6,105,813)	(6,161,990)	(6,161,990)	Council Tax	(6,490,310)
16,461	0	30,040	Budget Gap	0

Table 5 - Analysis of Contributions to From Balances

Contribution	Amount
Use of Reserves Focus 2013-15	(354,910)
Budgeted Surplus to reserves (based on 1.99% Council Tax increase)	81,740
New Homes Bonus Funding	1,355,290
Contribution to Repairs and Renewals	62,360
Service contingency	100,000
Total	1,244,480

51. The key points from the summary are:

- a) Council tax increase under 2% adding £2.89 on the annual cost of the band D council tax at £148.34
- b) Bring back the Grounds Maintenance contract back in house to improve the quality in the Borough.
- c) Park Mall and Wilkinson first full year trading in 2016/17.

52. A summary of service expenditure is provided at **Appendix D** and **Appendix E**. The detailed budget pages available in the draft budget book 2016/17 support this.

Principal changes to December's preliminary draft budget

53. Following government announcements and in consultation with the Leader and Cabinet there are some changes to the draft budget to report. In summary these are:

- a) The provisional settlement and the completion of the NNDR1 form have resulted in the following changes:
 - Decreased revenue support grant income by £120,595
 - Increased retained business rates by £121,313
 - Reduced the business rates S31 grant (rate relief grant) by £37,050
 - New Homes Bonus grant increased by £311,767 (amount added to reserves, detail below)
- b) The increase in New Homes Bonus has been transferred to reserve. This has possibly two purposes, one to fund corporate or income generating projects and/or fund future losses in New Homes Bonus allocations.
- c) Senior Planning officer approved to ensure corporate projects are delivered in projected timescales.

54. These movements are detailed in the table below:

Table 6 – movement from draft budget

	£'000
Draft budget position reported to the October Cabinet	(164)
Senior Planning Post	46
Revenue Support Grant	121
Retained Business Rates	(121)
Business Rates S31 Grants	37
New Homes Bonus	(311)
Contribution to Reserves (New Homes Bonus)	311
Budgeted surplus to reserve	81
Final draft budget position	0

Council Tax

55. The Final Draft Budget in Table 4 includes a Council Tax increase of 1.99% would result in an annual Council Tax amount of £2.89 per household based on a band D property.
56. Ashford Borough Council would remain the lowest Council Tax in Kent under both options by over £10 per annum.
57. This increase allows the council to have a balanced budget with a contingency for operational service risks in this year, and is in accordance with the council's adopted inflation management strategy and in line with the council's Medium Term Financial Plan assumptions.

Business Rate Relief

58. In the draft settlement the Chancellor announced a continuation of small business rate relief. The Government has said it will also continue fully compensating councils for the cost of these initiatives.
59. Due to the nature of the business rates system there are two ways that these reliefs can be granted, either through the introduction of legislation or to allow authorities to do this locally under powers included in the localism act. Last year the Council delegated authority to the Chief Finance Officer to establish these discounts using the powers within the localism act. It is therefore recommended to continue that delegation.
60. Following a comprehensive review, Cabinet agreed a new policy on discretionary rate relief in March 2013, with all current recipients then asked to reapply for relief (allocated from April 2014). These allocations were initially agreed for a period of two years to ensure that they struck the right balance of support for voluntary and community sector organisations and securing best value within the council's overarching financial plans.
61. Reflecting the current administration's election commitment to maintain levels of support for the voluntary and community sector until the next election, Cabinet is asked to agree to no change in allocations of discretionary rate relief until the end of the 2019-20 financial year.

Council Companies

62. During 2014/15 the Council opened two companies to not only increase the services the Council can supply in Housing and Building Control but also to work towards the self-sufficiency agenda adopted by this Council.
63. The Council achieves an income from these companies which includes loan interest and dividends. With the expansion of these companies in future years income is expected to grow and feeds into the MTP.

Discretionary Fees

64. The inflation management strategy determined that discretionary fees for several services should be increased above the level of inflation. For 2016/17 this results in average increases of 0.7%. Some charges will vary from this recommended level due to operational reasons, see **Appendix G** for details

65. The Garages were transferred from the Housing Revenue Account to the General Fund during 2015/16. The rent has been increase by CPI plus 1.5%. CPI was -0.1% in September therefore the increase will be 1.4% (to the nearest penny).
66. The Building Control Fee Earning Account aims to break even in accordance with the building control regulations.
67. The budget has been built with this level of fees and charges.

Reserves

68. A schedule of reserves is attached at **Appendix F**, which shows a total of revenue reserves estimated at 31st March 2016 of £7.0m, excluding Developer Contributions. During 2015/16 the Council released over £3.5m of reserves to support the borrowing and acquisition strategy (a key plank of the Medium Term Financial Plan) with the purchase of key properties within the Town Centre for regeneration and income generating assets. There will be further investment in the borough in 2016/17 which will reduce reserves to a lower level and closer to the minimum requirement set by the council.
69. Whilst these levels are planned for and within the tolerances agreed, consideration will need to be given to the replenishment of these reserves in the medium term. The risk contingency for Business Rates and unallocated new homes bonus are sources for increasing the reserves to fund future expenditure and have offset the planned reductions.

Table 7 - Summary of Reserves

	As at 31/03/2015 £000	Estimated as at 31/03/2016 £000	Estimated as at 31/03/2017 £000
General fund balance	1,359	1,941	2,057
Fund future expenditure	5,931	4,685	3,309
Provide for the maintenance or purchase of assets	3,950	182	134
Required by statute reserves	223	233	173
Total revenue reserves	11,463	7,041	5,673

70. CIPFA (the principal accounting body that provides statutory advice and guidance on accounting and financial management to local government chief finance officers) issues guidance (last updated in 2014) covering the relevant legal background and importantly emphasises that Authorities should make their own judgements on such matters taking into account all the relevant local circumstances. Such circumstances vary. The advice goes on to say that a well-managed authority, for example, with a prudent approach to budgeting, should be able to operate with a level of general reserves appropriate for the risks (both internal and external) to which it is exposed. CIPFA does not consider it necessary or appropriate to quantify a minimum level of reserves; this is for Chief Finance Officers and councils to consider. The government retains a power to impose a minimum, but is only intended to be used in circumstances where it is apparent to government that a council is not acting prudently and not following advice.
71. The Council currently has a policy that the general fund balance should be no less than 7.5% of net budget requirement, for 2016/17 this would be £1,065,000. During this period the Government are consulting on the four year provisional settlement delivered as part of the Comprehensive Spending Review. This reform transfers risk of Business Rates to the Council which will cause some volatility of funding.
72. The Council's agenda for it to be self-sufficient over the life of the MTFP. This reserves strategy supports the direction of the Corporate Plan with the economic expansion of housing and business in the district helps to underpin the risks that have been transferred to the Council.
73. A number of earmarked reserves have been set up over the years to deal with the Council's funding and income risks. However to simplify this process it is proposed to manage these risks through the general reserve by increasing the 7.5% of net budget requirement to 15%.
74. As part of the closing process the level of reserves will be reviewed and where necessary earmarked reserves will be transferred to the General Reserve to ensure that the 15% target is achieved. In addition to this all property based reserves (with the exception of reserves required as conditions of leases) will be merged into the repairs and renewals reserve to encourage a more holistic view on asset management.

Budget Scrutiny and Risk

75. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has examined the detailed budget proposals and the committee's findings are reported separately elsewhere on this agenda. The committee concluded that it had confidence the budget is deliverable and supports the recommendations to Cabinet and Council to approve the proposed budget. The task group also feels the 1.99% increase in Council Tax should go ahead following the Governments draft settlement which includes future financing of Local Authorities should come from increases in Council Tax.
76. A commentary of the risks associated with the budget is included as part of the statutory advice needed on 'budget robustness and the adequacy of reserves' within Part Seven of this report and at **Appendix H** Community Impact Assessment.

77. A community impact assessment (CIA) screening tool has been completed to identify whether the budget policy treats any group differently. The CIA assumes that individual policies and initiatives will have separate impact assessments completed by the services concerned. The screening tool has highlighted some areas where further work is needed however overall the budget does not discriminate against any group in society.

Recommendations (Part Two)

78. The Cabinet is asked to:

- v) Recommend the Revenue Budget 2016/17 including the net budget requirement of **£14,205,480 (excluding parish precepts)**
- vi) Recommend the level of Discretionary Fees to be levied from 1st April 2016 (as set out in **Appendix G**).
- vii) Delegate to the Chief Finance Officer the powers to establish local discounts in Business Rates in accordance with those announced by the chancellor in the autumn statement
- viii) Agree to no change in allocations of discretionary rate relief until the end of the 2019-20 financial year
- ix) Note the reserves summary (from **paragraph 68 - Table 7**), detail in **Appendix F**
- x) Recommend the approval of changing retained reserves from a minimum of 7.5% of the net budget requirement to a minimum of 15%, details in **paragraphs 71-74**.
- xi) Note the Communities Impact Assessment in **Appendix H**
- xii) Recommend the Band D council tax at **£148.34**.

PART THREE – HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT

Housing Revenue Account Budget

79. The 2016/17 position is broadly in line with the position reported to Members in the 30 year HRA business plan (November 2015 Cabinet), one of the key point to note here is, in the short-term money is being kept in reserves to fund agreed capital projects, rather than repaying the debt.
80. **Table 8** shows a net deficit in the HRA for 2016/17, this reflects the drawdown from HRA reserves approved for the remodelling/rebuilding of Farrow Court and other new build properties.
81. This deficit will be funded from HRA reserves, which were increased in 2014/15 by £1,130,210. The HRA business plan shows that the current plan remains affordable over the life of the plan. The information in **Table 8** is shown in more detail, analysed to subjective level, at **Appendix I**.

Table 8 - Housing Revenue Account (HRA)

ACTUAL 2014/15 £	BUDGET 2015/16 £	PROJECTED OUTTURN 2015/16 £	DETAIL	DRAFT BUDGET 2016/17 £
(24,368,578)	(24,794,010)	(24,756,070)	HRA income	(24,272,210)
4,371,045	4,584,800	4,602,500	HRA administration costs	4,684,310
(101,068)	880,920	961,020	HRA new build	844,910
3,642,765	3,622,340	3,622,340	HRA repairs & maintenance	3,449,760
15,325,626	16,075,770	15,867,180	HRA other expenditure	18,462,620
(1,130,210)	369,820	296,970	(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT IN YEAR	3,169,390
(4,594,850)	(5,725,060)	(5,725,060)	Balance b/fwd as at 1 April	(5,428,090)
(5,725,060)	(5,355,240)	(5,428,090)	Balance c/fwd as at 31 March	(2,258,700)

Rent decrease

82. As previously reported Government has made some changes to the rent setting formula for social housing, moving from an increase of Consumer Price Index + 1% to a rent decrease of 1% per annum for 4 year starting in 2016/17, however the Government have not indicated what the formula will be after this period.
83. This will drop the average weekly rent, for social housing to £92.14 (£93.07 in 2015/16). For tenants receiving housing benefit the decrease will not have any cash impact, although some council tenants may be affected by other aspects of the government's welfare reforms.
84. The 1% decrease in rent also applies to those tenants in affordable housing which will be applied. It should be noted that affordable rents are re-based to 80% of market rent each time a new tenancy agreement is made (i.e. upon vacancy) and will be decreased by the 1% each year thereafter.
85. The rent decrease will result in HRA revenue income by approximately £233,000 from 2015/16 levels. This four year 1% cumulative decrease has

been modelled in the 30 year Business Plan, the impact of the reduction in income has been analysed and capital works and planned maintenance programmes have been reduced. Following these adjustments the HRA is affordable for the next 30 years. Work will continue on Sheltered housing and new affordable homes however the initial number of homes will be reduced.

86. A consequence of the recovery plan is that the HRA capital programme is being reduced that will affect the ability to use 1-4-1 retained capital receipts to finance the new build programme. If the Council retains these funds and does not spend them within the time allowed a penalty interest rate will be applied to the repayment. Therefore the policy to continue to retain these receipts needs to be considered over the next 12 months; in addition to this a representation to government is needed to ensure that they are aware of the unintentional impact of the policy change on the affordable housing programme.

Recommendations (Part Three)

87. The Cabinet is asked to:

- xiii) Resolve that the Housing Revenue Account budget for 2016/17 be approved
- xiv) Resolve the estimated average rent decrease of 1%, in accordance with government guidelines, and that rent setting for the future continues to follow movements in the 'limit rent' set by government

PART FOUR – CAPITAL PROGRAMME

Capital Resources and New Allocations to Projects

88. This section gives consideration to the level of capital resources that are potentially available to support priorities including the business plan and other requirements.
89. Capital investment currently may be funded from:
- a) Internal resources such as capital receipts and revenue reserves.
 - b) New Homes Bonus
 - c) Prudential (external) borrowing.
 - The 2016/17 budget provides specific support to borrow £500,000 for general fund property works, with a further £2m for strategic acquisitions that must be supported by a business plan.
 - Decision on additional borrowing will be subject to an affordability test and the HRA debt cap (explained below).
 - d) Third party grants and contributions from government, other local authorities or private organisations.
 - e) Section 106 developer contributions – currently we hold contributions amounting to £4m (capital & revenue), £3m of section 106 (some still to be received) will be used to support projects in the current capital programme and expected to be spent over the next few years on community assets such as community buildings, open space and play areas throughout the borough.
 - f) In the future from the Community Infrastructure Levy

Debt Cap (Housing Revenue Account)

90. Following the HRA reform there is room within the HRA Business Plan to invest in projects including new housing and sheltered redevelopments. However the reform introduced a HRA debt cap limiting the amount councils can borrow to fund major works. When considering the Housing programme regard will need to be given to the impact the projects will have on the debt cap and more generally on the viability of the HRA.
91. Due to the limitations on HRA borrowing for projects, future funding sources will be:
- External contributions from the HCA (Homes & Community Agency)
 - Capital receipts, including retained 'Right to Buy' capital receipts for 'one for one replacement'
 - Surpluses within the revenue budget could be used rather than repayment of borrowing.
 - Borrowing, the HRA has a debt cap, the transfer of the garage stock to the General Fund in 2015/16 created headroom to borrow of circa £3m.

Borrowing and Acquisition Policy

92. At the October 2015 Cabinet meeting, in the report titled Informing the Next Five Years the Borrowing and Investment Strategy was presented which

amalgamated a number of capital and investment projects into one Policy including:

1. Delivery of strategic priorities
2. For property and commercial investment
3. Development of cultural and community facilities
4. For investment in the Housing Revenue Account (must operate within the statutory debt cap)

93. The main elements of the strategy included:

- To achieve self-sufficiency from government grant
- Set sensible principles for making investments and undertaking borrowing
- Future General Fund borrowing to be around £40m, HRA borrowing will be within the debt cap
- To allocate a proportion of the Council's reserves to form a 'cash backed' element to investments
- A minimum of 10% of any return on an investment will be allocated to an investment reserve (debt/cash backed) to support future investments

94. To ensure all risks are monitored and managed the following measures will be required before an investment can take place:

- A project list will be maintained and prioritised to enable decisions to be taken in the round.
- Each project will have a full business case (including NPV and Internal Rate of Return Calculations) which will demonstrate it delivers acceptable worth for the Council.
- All investments will be appraised using the 25 year PWLB interest rate (or rate applicable to the life of the asset if it is lower)
- Loan to the value of the project will not exceed 90%
- All capital expenditure will require approval from Cabinet and the Full Council.
- Capital receipts from the sale of any asset will firstly repay any debt secured upon it and secondly be recycled for further investment

95. The acceptable worth to the Council will be established by Cabinet and should take into account:

- Recovering the borrowing within a reasonable time frame
- Replacing income lost from grants, so that we work towards self-sufficiency
- Reputational enhancement for the Borough and the Council

Capital Expenditure 2016/17

Corporate Delivery Plan

96. Underpinning the Corporate Plan is the Corporate Delivery Plan which includes the Council's priorities which will be the Council's focus over the next few years. These projects are not currently in the approved capital plan but as they are

developed they will come forward to Cabinet and Council for approval and will then form part of the plan.

Property Portfolio

97. Included in the capital programme is an amount set aside annually for the maintenance of property assets and the purchase of replacement IT equipment, this is to enable the required works to lengthen the lives of the assets saving future replacement costs.
98. There has been £2,000,000 set aside for strategic acquisitions, this allocation was approved in January 2014 and now forms part of the Borrowing and Acquisition Strategy. All projects will be supported with a business plan ensuring all investments are viable.

Commercial Quarter

99. The Council are working closely with development companies Quinn Estates and George Wilson Limited to develop the new offices within the future Commercial Quarter. Work is expected to start this year with an estimated completion date of Summer 2017.
100. The Council is also looking to redevelop the Old Corn Mill site so as to provide flexible office accommodation in the heart of the Commercial Quarter. This is to be expected to be delivered Autumn/Winter 2016.

Property Company – A Better Choice for Property

101. The Council's property company, A Better Choice for Property, requires financing to purchase its assets. The Council set aside an allocation of £10m that can be accessed by the company, based on a draw down over 5 years. 2016/17 will be the third year of the agreement.
102. The company as at January 2016 has drawdown £1,590,000 and a further £4.4m is still available for draw down which is approved to be released by the Trade and Enterprise Board in November 2015. This leaves a remaining amount of £4m which can be accessed if appropriate investments can be made subject to a business plan.
103. The Council will finance this £10m from accessing loans from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) or temporary borrowing and charging the company a competitive market rate above the PWLB or market rate which will attract a net revenue interest receipt for the Council.
104. This financing investment was approved under the Borrowing and Acquisition Policy.

In-House Grounds Maintenance Service

105. The decision to bring in-house the grounds maintenance service currently has two approved projects underway:
 - a) Acquisition of a depot at a suitable location within the borough. Several sites have currently been identified and work continues to explore the most suitable option. The depot is expected to be acquired in the region of £1,000,000.

- b) At the same time work has started to acquire the various items of plant and machinery for the service. This is expected to be in the region of £500,000. External advice is being sought to determine if the acquisitions should be funded by leasing or borrowing, to ensure the project delivers value for money.

Housing Revenue Account

106. Housing HRA projects during 2016/17 includes:

- a) Continuing the refurbishment of Farrow Court Sheltered Housing, the construction got underway early in 2014 and is expected to be complete in 2016.
- b) Repairs and maintenance to the existing housing stock to ensure Decent Homes standards are maintained
- c) Work on the future of the Affordable Housing Programme is underway and a report to Cabinet is expected during 2016/17.
- d) Reinstatement of the Oaktree road properties funded from the insurance settlement, with a total cost estimate of circa £800,000.

107. The capital programme is in **Appendix J**.

Recommendations (Part four)

108. The Cabinet is asked to:

- xv) Recommend to Council that the Capital Budget for 2016/17 in **Appendix J** is approved.

PART FIVE – PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS, TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY STATEMENT AND ANNUAL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Prudential Indicators

109. It is a requirement for the council to set prudential indicators on an annual basis. These are a framework designed to govern decision-making over the financing of capital expenditure. They are set to a level that will allow the council to meet its Medium Term Financial Plan, accommodate the debt for HRA reform and make provision for the Council's Capital Programme. This informs the recommended "Affordable Borrowing Limit" as shown under the heading 'Authorised Limit for External Debt'. The council must have regard to the prudential code when setting the Affordable Borrowing Limit. This essentially ensures that our total capital investment remains within sustainable limits as defined by the Council, and in particular, that the impact upon its future council tax and council rent levels is 'acceptable'.
110. The prudential indicators recommended for 2016/17 are detailed in **Appendix K**.

Treasury Management Strategy Statement & Annual Investment Strategy

111. The Council adopted the CIPFA Code of Treasury Management on 20th March 2002. Any subsequent amendments will also be followed.
112. The code provides a framework to ensure that the Council gives appropriate consideration to its Borrowing and investment activities and sets appropriate controls commensurate with the Council's risk appetite.
113. As part of a proactive approach to treasury management officers consider both investment opportunities and also the opportunities for debt restructuring to benefit from discounts offered on existing debt and lower interest rates. As at 22nd January 2016 the Council had £119.6m of borrowing relating to HRA reform and Investments of £32m.
114. In 2016/17 the Council's general fund Net Interest on Borrowing and Investments is forecast to be a net expense of circa £27,000. This reflects increased costs in borrowing necessary to achieve the Council's capital expenditure plans and the continued low interest environment. However, Officers will evaluate all investment and borrowing decisions as they arise with a view to lowering net borrowing charge and increasing investment returns. The use of internal balances will also be considered as a means of financing, although the benefits between internal and external borrowing will be monitored.
115. The proposed Treasury Management Strategy Statement for 2016/17 is attached at **Appendix L** (it is a requirement to review this annually).

HRA Debt Pools

116. The regulations allow councils to determine the number of debt pools (one, two or three) it wishes to operate. A 'two-pool' approach has been adopted; loans are split between the HRA & GF and new loans are added to each pool as

required. Interest expenditure on external borrowing attributed to the HRA is charged directly to the HRA. Interest expenditure on external borrowing attributed to the General Fund will be charged to the General Fund.

117. Where the HRA or GF has surplus cash balances which allow either account to have external borrowing below its level of CFR (internal borrowing), the rate charged on this internal borrowing will be based on the average rate of interest earned on cash balances for the financial year.

Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement

118. Each year the council must agree a statement on its policy for making a minimum revenue provision (MRP) (set aside for debt repayment).

119. There are four options available to the council as set out below:

- Option 1: Regulatory Method (4% borrowing requirement)
- Option 2: Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) Method (4% of non-housing borrowing requirement)
- Option 3: Asset Life Method (divide debt by asset life)
- Option 4: Depreciation Method (dependent on depreciation policy)

Proposed MRP Policy

120. Options 3 and 4 apply to new capital expenditure, and Option 3 is the most practical to adopt.
121. MRP for Loans to wholly owned Council companies will be calculated on an annuity basis using the interest rates agreed for the loan for 50 years or an appropriate term based on the life of the asset being funded.
122. MRP in respect of PFI (Private Financing Initiative) and leases brought on to the balance sheet will match the annual principal repayment for the associated deferred liability. This is a mandatory requirement, although in this instance does not affect the council's net expenditure.

Recommendations (Part Five)

123. The Cabinet is asked to:

- xvi) Recommend the Prudential Indicators, Treasury Management Strategy, MRP Policy and Annual Strategy as set out in the **Appendix K** and **Appendix L**.

PART SIX –FINANCIAL PROCEDURE RULES & CHANGES TO VIREMENT LIMITS

Financial Procedure Rules

124. The financial procedure rules have been updated following changes in the management structure driven from the approved succession planning report.
125. The EU commission has provided the revised threshold values for requiring a full EU procurement. These have updated and are included within **Appendix M** for adoption.

Key Decision Thresholds

126. Key Decision Thresholds (KDTs) are required for the purposes of determining whether decisions to be taken by the Cabinet (or officers acting under any delegations) should appear in the Forward Plan of Decision items. Key Decisions, which the Cabinet may resolve, may then be the subject of formal scrutiny.
127. The constitution requires that KDTs are decided annually level of these thresholds needs to be considered against the level of the General Reserve, this is forecast to increase to £2m in 2016/17. Given that there are no material changes to the budget or this reserve level over the current years the current level of KDT are considered to be appropriate.
128. Therefore it is recommended KDT's are as follows:
- £100,001 or greater for all revenue services
 - £100,000 (or greater) or 10% of net project costs, whichever is lower, for capital schemes.
 - £100,000 for decisions relating to redundancy and other termination payments (excluding pension costs).

Virement

129. The review of the procedure rules has highlighted that the limits for virements are out of step with the levels for use of reserve and the KDT's. Virement is the term used to describe the transfer of budget between budget headings. When setting these limits it is important to ensure that they allow effective budget management and yet also ensure that there is adequate control and oversight.
130. Therefore it is recommended that the virement regulations are as follows:
- a) Head of Service - < £50,000
 - b) Management Team with Portfolio Holder Consultation – between £50,000 and £100,000
 - c) Cabinet - > £100,000

131. The virement amounts have been updated to ensure Service Managers have the required flexibility in their budgets to respond to changing needs while

ensuring material changes are still reviewed by Management Team and/or Cabinet and matching the delegations on use of reserves and the KDT's.

Use of Reserves

132. Management Team has the flexibility to deploy up to £100,000 of reserves in either exceptional or urgent cases where this might be justified or where an amount may be needed to deal with some other service issue including investment to achieve greater efficiency. In all cases where the flexibility is applied the Chief Executive must liaise with the Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Budget, Resource Management and Procurement and the Deputy Chief Executive (as Chief Financial Officer) and be required to report any application of reserves to the Cabinet as part of the budget monitoring cycle.
133. There is a stated presumption that the use of this flexibility is for exceptional circumstances and not routinely applied, and in all cases the use of the delegation must be consistent with Business Plan priorities.
134. It is a requirement to review this delegation each year as part of the budget cycle. In 2015-16 this delegation was used three times to a total of £206,000 for changes to the Civic Centre and works to secure the Conningbrook development.
135. This delegation is considered to be working effectively and no changes are proposed other than to restate that this is considered to be for exceptional circumstances.
136. Additional flexibility was included in 2011 to the arrangement to resolve issues of urgent need or to address immediate community concerns regarded of sufficient priority, where other budgets are not available to address such a need. In cases where a request is made by a Portfolio Holder to the relevant Head of Service, or where a Head of Service after consulting the relevant Portfolio Holder identifies a relevant need then a Head of Service has delegated authority to spend up to £5,000 subject to an overall cap of £100,000. This policy is unchanged.
137. In 2015-16 this delegation was used twice to provide support to the Job club based on a recommendation from the welfare reform task group and to support Kent Savers. This delegation is considered to be working effectively and no changes are proposed.

Risk Based Verification

138. The risk based verification procedure for Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit/Support was introduced from 1 April 2012. DWP guidance at the time specified that any such policy must be approved by members annually.
139. A new policy for 2016/17 needs to be adopted, and the following changes have been made:
 - a) Reporting processing times updated in Section 4 to ensure working practices are achieving the optimum output from resources available and clearly identifying any issues with staff or working practices so these can be rectified

- b) Section 5 has been updated to reflect current audit requirements and guidance

140. The full policy can be found in **Appendix N**

Recommendations (Part Six)

141. The Cabinet is asked to:

- xvii) Recommend the updated Financial Procedure Rules (as above) are approved
- xviii) Note the new tendering/quotation procedure Cashflow and approve the financial limits in **Appendix M**
- xix) Approve the Risk Based Verification policy as outlined in **Appendix N**

PART SEVEN – ROBUSTNESS OF THE ESTIMATES AND ADEQUACY OF RESERVES

Background

142. The council has a legal duty to set a balanced budget and must take all reasonable factors into account when doing so. Under the Local Government Act 2003 the Chief Financial Officer (the Deputy Chief Executive) has a duty to advise the council about the robustness of the budget and the adequacy of the council's reserves. This section contains that advice.
143. The past year and the foreseeable future for local government continue to be dominated by public spending reduction plans. In December the Government released and has consulted on a provisional four year financial settlement for local authorities (see the Council's response in **Appendix A**).
144. In the preceding Comprehensive Spending Review the Government announced reducing grant funding linked to its intention to allow authorities to retain 100% of Business Rates and having a greater share of responsibilities. This principle is generally welcomed as it would enable the Council to become less reliant on Government funding. However greater financial independence and possible extra financial gain also attracts more risk as councils would carry much of the downside risks associated with business rates.. To help mitigate this risk the Council currently holds a number of earmarked reserves as discussed in Section Two and set out in Appendix G. Recognising the potential for more risk exposure in the future it is proposed to amalgamate these reserves in the General Fund reserve.
145. This would result in a higher level of General Fund reserves to manage the greater level of risk the council faces. Accordingly, it is proposed to increase the un-earmarked reserves held as a minimum percentage of Net Expenditure from 7.5% to 15% (**recommendation x**)
146. For prudence and as a financial planning target our Medium Term Financial Plan reflects falling government formula grants to a 'de minimis' level with a target for the council to become un-reliant on revenue support grant by 2018-2019. This plan then relies on the council growing its income base from other sources including: a growing retention of business rates under the government's local retention scheme, new revenue from targeted housing and property investments. The plan also assumes continued support from new homes bonus at approximately 50% of the total potential bonuses, however in the recent Government announcement it is their intention that the Bonus payment will be reduced from 6 to 4 years. The Council's proposed response to the consultation is attached at **Appendix C**.
147. Given the lengthy and comprehensive business, financial planning and scrutiny processes leading up to this point including members' roles in business plan project delivery; reviews last year of the corporate plan including financial planning involving the cabinet, and the full part played recently by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Task Group, there is no doubt that members and officers have had a full opportunity to understand the context and the issues facing the council.

148. This evidence is clear demonstration the council and its management team give serious regard to financial planning, to the management of resources, and to assessments of financial and operational risk.

Robustness

149. Robustness involves three considerations:

- a) consideration of the **context** in which the budget is set and how that context is understood, may develop and therefore influence budgetary issues,
- b) consideration of the various **components** of the budget, and
- c) **weighing-up** all factors and taking a balanced view.

Context

150. As previously highlighted and reported comprehensive advice was provided to members concerning our financial forecasts and their underlying assumptions. Final assumptions are the results of reviews with the cabinet last summer and autumn, including a review by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's budget task group.
151. As with any budget there are uncertainties as no budget can capture all future risks, however there is a corporate contingency within the budget for general unforeseen pressures.
152. This budget is set at a time when the economy is recovering more strongly albeit slowly, though not immune to factors that may act as a drag on this recovery. Inflation and interest rate remain low with the former being negative for a short period. Pressures on personal incomes continue, though more recently the easing of fuel prices is providing a boost. However, some service pressures remain for local authorities associated with the welfare reforms and pressures on housing which are likely to continue for the foreseeable future.
153. Ashford's local position is relatively stronger with positive signs of commercial expansion over the coming years and new housing supply remaining buoyant.
154. We are now reaching the end of the third year of the business rates retention scheme with encouraging results for business rate yield and a growth above target of the locally retained element. The business rates pool for much of Kent provides significant opportunities to increase the retained element.
155. With good opportunities and risks still to manage this draft budget (and the associated Medium Term Financial Plan) takes a considered view of both. It builds in prudent allowances as contingencies, and contributions for reserves given the cuts in future funding – the council needs a cushion to help manage the transition. The policy of not budgeting to use new homes bonus rewards for new projects until bonuses are achieved is to be maintained.
156. The MTFP aims to replace the revenue support grant element of formula grant with other sustainable sources of income by 2018/19. .

157. Consequently 2016/17 will continue to see proposals and affects arising from the expanded use of the council's prudential borrowing to support asset purchases and other investments, including further lending to the council's property company. Appropriate business planning and governance arrangements are in place to ensure that opportunities and associated risks are evaluated as part of the decision-making processes. It is important these processes are maintained.

Key components of the budget

158. Detailed advice is set out in **Appendix O**, which considers the budget across a number of key components. Additionally, members have received the advice and recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which has commented comprehensively on areas of risk within and agreed a risk matrix for on-going review. After considerable work its Task Group agreed to recommend that the draft budget is deliverable and submitted its matrix on the risks within the budget. The Chairman of the Task Group has highlighted inflation and the level of New Homes Bonus within the budget as areas of risk to be managed.

159. The Task Group's work highlighted areas of the budget that present some higher risks to delivery, which will be taken into account by services and our corporate risk management arrangements. Higher risks continue to be associated with the government's funding policies for local authorities and the risks inherent in the council exploring investment opportunities aimed at securing revenue streams to substitute for longer term grant reductions. Here the Cabinet and the Council's governance arrangements are designed to ensure that risks are evaluated, monitored and mitigated.

160. Inevitably there will be times when unplanned and unforeseeable pressures arise. Where this happens the Management Team will first consider the scope to absorb such pressures, but where this is not possible, then, and using the flexibility within financial procedure rules, the Management Team has the ability to deal with urgent pressures. The budget contains a service contingency provision for such risks.

Weighing-up

161. This budget is developed against a backcloth of substantial externally influenced change and an economic climate that is recovering, with good potential locally, but nevertheless not without continuing pressures and uncertainty. As Error! Reference source not found.N and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review highlight, risks should be manageable through processes in place supported by the totality of the council's contingencies and reserves.
162. Supported by our strong governance of financial management and the council's commitment to deliver sustainable longer-term positions, members can be confident this budget is robust.

Adequacy of Reserves

163. Section Two covers the reserves position with a detailed forecast included in **Appendix F**.
164. The proposed policy position is that reserves need to be maintained at adequate levels, with the **un-earmarked general fund reserve** maintained at a new minimum of 15% of net general fund revenue spending.
165. For 2016/17 this amounts to a minimum unallocated reserve requirement of circa £2.1m. Un-earmarked reserves, after planned drawings will stand at £1.9m, therefore it is proposed in Part 2 of this report to amalgamate some of the earmarked reserves into the General Reserves to achieve the 15% level.
166. Earmarked reserves (excluding section 106 developer contributions), again after planned drawings stand at £5.0m. By the end of 2016/17 total revenue reserves are expected to amount to circa £5.5m.
167. Overall the advice is the council has adequate levels of reserves to support its budget and other requirements for the coming year and future liabilities, including the planned cushion for the next two years against grant reductions forecast while alternative revenues develop in scale.
168. As ever reserve levels need close management to ensure they remain adequate and that longer term MTFP plans for resilience are sustainable.
169. Our budget monitoring will continue to highlight to Cabinet movements in the use of reserves including reporting any actions of the management team taken to address new pressures or priority needs.
170. On the capital side capital receipts (cash from asset disposals) remain fairly limited with reduced scope for new general fund commitments that are unsupported by income returns to offset the borrowing costs. Usable capital reserves for the General Fund (excluding Section 106 developer contributions held) were minimal, at £2,000 as at 31/03/2015 and after the proposed programme will stand around the same.
171. Officers will continue to focus on optimising the value of our assets, though some priority will be given to achieving greater revenue returns where achievable as an alternative to outright sales. The council is also intending to make more use of its prudential borrowing power, as this can and will be used

to fund investments that yield suitable returns that cover financing costs. Further, New Homes Bonus has provided an alternative source for capital investments and this may continue, although the scope is likely to reduce assuming NHB funds are cut.

172. As Error! Reference source not found. N and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review highlight, risks should be manageable through this proposed budget and the decision-making processes in place. The Council's reserves although reducing due to the investments made remain reasonably healthy and provide the means to cushion unexpected shocks.
173. Supported by our strong processes of financial management and the council's commitment to deliver sustainable longer-term positions, members can be confident this budget is robust.

Recommendations (Part Seven):

174. The Cabinet is asked to:

- xx) Note the advice from the Chief Financial Officer concerning the robustness of the estimates and the adequacy of reserves.

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Appendix A

Provisional Settlement Consultation Response to Government

This is the response from Ashford Borough Council to the consultation paper “the provisional local government and finance settlement 2016-17.”

General Points

The consultation paper was released with a number of other documents that need to be considered in the round rather than just looking at the settlement.

This Council understands that the amount of resources available to the department to allocate is finite and therefore the response looks at some of the wider implications of the settlement and the equity of the allocation of funding. The minister’s statement acknowledged the success of the sector in responding to the level of reduction in funding in the previous parliament and the settlement has revealed the extent of reductions for this parliament, it is important to ensure that local government is able to continue to innovate and respond to local issues. This Council has a long held objective to be self-sufficient and therefore welcomes many of the announcements in the settlement.

This Council also understands that government are seeking to prioritise resources for social care which further reduces the funding available for other service areas. However district councils do provide a wide range of services to its residents and have a valuable role to play in the delivery of the government’s housing target and so it is important they are adequately resourced. There is a strong link between the supply of adequate housing and the social care budget; there is a real need to ensure that there is appropriate housing to meet needs of people who need care.

With this in mind we would like to comment upon the referendum criteria that have been announced relating to Council Tax. We welcome a softening of the blanket cap of 2% allowing low taxing authorities to increase their council tax by £5 but this authority, with a band D tax of £145.45, is only marginally outside the lowest quartile (by £0.86) and therefore would only be able to raise its council tax by £2.89. We would like to suggest that the application of the criteria be reviewed with District Councils be allowed to increase council tax by £5 or 2%, whichever is the greater.

The Council does welcome the move to a longer term settlement but notes that there will be a requirement for an efficiency statement. Considering the short timescales involved and the need to ensure that such statements are agreed by members we would encourage government to ensure that these are appropriate. Councils all publish medium term financial plans that members agree and all councils have a responsibility to produce balanced budgets. Given that these will all be constrained by the settlement and the need to manage the reductions in funding to achieve, ensure that Councils have to continue to seek out efficiencies and review service provision. We understand that the Minister has outlined similar expectations to the LGA and we would support this direction of travel.

The Council broadly welcomes the move towards a longer term settlement but would like clarification from government on the following areas:

1. How will the business rate revaluation be managed within the four year settlement?
2. What capacity does government have within its resources to manage potential economic shocks over this period and how will these be managed within the 4 year settlement

Question 1 - Do you agree with the methodology for allocating central funding in 2016-17, as set out in paragraphs 2.6 to 2.8?

Broadly speaking this methodology is supported as there needs to be a pragmatic solution for reducing funding. We are concerned however that once an authority's grant has been cut the level of cut that would have been applied is made to the tariff that is paid on business rates. We feel that there needs to be an understanding of how this is to be applied and what the impact this would have on the areas of need that this funding was to be earmarked for.

Question 2: Do you agree with the proposed methodology for calculation of the council tax requirement for 2016-17, as set out in paragraphs 2.10 and 2.11?

The Council would like to draw your attention to the remarks made earlier about the level of Council Tax referendums.

Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed methodology in paragraph 2.12 for splitting the council tax requirement between sets of services?

Given the potential complexity of this issue the Council feels that the methodology being used is pragmatic and appropriate.

Question 4: Do you wish to propose any transitional measures to be used?

The Council would not seek any transitional arrangements, it is accepted that the overall resource envelop for local government is finite and needs to be apportioned. The proposed method seems to be appropriate

Question 5: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to fund the New Homes Bonus in 2016-17 with £1.275 billion of funding held back from the settlement, on the basis of the methodology described in paragraph 2.15?

This Council will be responding to the consultation document on New Homes Bonus, however we do not support the use of this funding to be allocated to adult social care and other measures that reduce, not sharpen, the incentive for authorities to build homes.

District Councils need to be adequately incentivised to deliver housing, without an adequate housing supply pressure will inevitably be created for the cost of home ownership and within the social care budget.

Given that it is widely reported that the spending pressures in the NHS are being caused by the funding crisis in adult social care we suggest that a proportion of the additional £8bn of funding that has been earmarked for the Health Service be diverted to Adult Social Care reducing the demand for NHS services.

Question 6: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to hold back £50 million to fund the business rates safety net in 2016-17, on the basis of the methodology described in paragraph 2.19?

Yes – Councils are starting to come to terms with the volatility in business rates funding and we are seeing more authorities having to manage significant changes in their business rates income. As part of the governments review of business rates we would urge a simplification of the appeals process to ensure that there are less speculative appeals.

Question 7: Do you agree with the Government's proposed approach in paragraph 2.24 to paying £20 million additional funding to the most rural areas in 2016-17, distributed to the upper quartile of local authorities based on the super-sparsity indicator?

This Council is a member of the Rural Services Network and would therefore like to take the opportunity to voice our support for the response from SPARSE on this aspect of the consultation paper.

Question 8: Do you agree with the Government's proposal that local welfare provision funding of £129.6 million and other funding elements should be identified within core spending power in 2016-17, as described in paragraph 2.28?

This Council is concerned about the impact the proposed welfare reforms will have on the most vulnerable people in society and has been working with DWP and County Council colleagues to manage the impact of the changes. There has been considerable demand for Discretionary Housing Payments to support people in this transition and with further changes to benefits due to come online, a continuation of this funding is welcomed.

With the threats to the economy that were outlined by the chancellor this council feels that it is important that this funding is maintained as the initiatives that are supported by this funding will be where people affected by a downturn go to for support.

Question 9: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to include all of the grant funding for the Care Act 2014 (apart from that funded through the Better Care Fund) in the settlement, using the methodology set out in paragraph 3.2?

While we welcome the continuation of Care Act funding, rolling this new burdens funding into RSG means that it is subject to the same redistribution as general RSG and the same reduction.

This Council would like to seek clarification from government that District Councils will continue to receive allocations for Disabled Facilities Grants through the Better Care Fund Allocation and that there will be a requirement on upper tier authorities to passport this funding through. This is another area where targeted investment can help to alleviate some of the pressures within health and social care budgets.

Question 10: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to include all 2015-16 Council Tax Freeze Grant in the 2016-17 settlement, using the methodology set out in paragraph 3.3?

When Councils took the decision to freeze council tax there was an understanding that government would continue this funding. The funding model is opaque and when an authority's formula grant is to be reduced to £0 and the tariff increased, reducing its business rates baseline, it is not possible to see how government funding for freeze grant or council tax support has been maintained. We would encourage government to demonstrate in a transparent way how this funding has been continued in the settlement.

Question 11: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to include all 2015-16 Efficiency Support Grant funding in the settlement and with the methodology set out in paragraph 3.5?

In general this council supports the merging of separate grants into core funding but would encourage government to make the allocation formulas more transparent to allow authorities to gain confidence that they are still getting the funding that they were promised.

Question 12: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to include funding for lead local flood authorities in the 2016-17 settlement, as described in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7?

Given the level of flooding that has occurred in recent years this Council feels that this would be a sensible time to review the allocation and targeting of resources for flooding and perhaps consider whether the current allocation method is appropriate.

Question 13: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to pay a separate section 31 grant to lead local flood authorities to ensure funding for these activities increases in real terms in each year of the Parliament?

As an area that has several flood risks and that has experienced significant development, we welcome the additional resources, we would however like to emphasise that many flood mitigation measures can be built into new developments through the use of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems that can help reduce flooding risk and we would encourage government to look at this Councils use of a SUDS supplementary planning guidance.

Question 14: Do you have any views on whether the grant for lead local flood authorities described in paragraph 3.8 should be ring-fenced for the Spending Review period?

Government has completed this settlement on the basis that authorities or each tier should be treated the same, any ring-fencing should not change that presumption.

Question 15: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to adjust councils' tariffs / top ups where required to ensure that councils delivering the same set of services receive the same percentage change in settlement core funding for those sets of services?

No, the Council is concerned about the Government's intention to increase the level of business rates tariff when the authorities formula grant is cut to zero and effectively goes negative. When the Local Retention of Business Rates scheme was established the levels of Tariff were set based on a needs analysis, these levels were to have remained for 10 years before the scheme was reset.

The council has completed its financial planning on that basis. The increase in the tariff is a breach of trust with government seeking to transfer local council tax income centrally.

Question 16: Do you have an alternative suggestion for how to secure the required overall level of spending reductions to settlement core funding over the Parliament?

The Council understands that the department needs to operate within the Departmental Expenditure Limit that has been agreed with the Treasury, however it is clear that the level of funding reductions in Local Government is seeing pressures in other departments developing with reductions in adult social care impacting upon the NHS and we are also seeing reductions in Benefit levels impacting upon the demand for local government services. It is suggested that reductions in expenditure on sports and leisure will ultimately also see an impact upon NHS spending in the longer term. Therefore we would support the government on looking across departmental boundaries in seeking solutions to these pressures, for example what would the ratio of saving in NHS spending be if patients could be transferred to adult social care more effectively.

Government is asked to consider the role that Local Government has in managing demand for central government services (e.g. Health, DWP, etc) and we would suggest that government consider how to incentivise authorities to work with government to manage this demand and reduce the cost of those services.

Removal of the referendum limit so local authorities can set council tax at a level that reflects the level of services expected by residents.

Government has stated that there is no cost effective way for means testing pensioner benefits, however local government has in place the apparatus to do this through the Council Tax Support scheme that is a means tested benefit. If Government were minded to transfer the administration of some of these benefits to local government significant savings could be delivered.

Removal of restrictions to the Local Council Tax Support schemes e.g. protection for pensioners.

This response would also like to sound a note of caution to central government, Local Government has been successful in delivering savings and will play its part in delivering them in the new parliament, but local government also has a role in delivering central government's policy agenda, in particular house building. This Council is committed to growth and will shortly be publishing a draft local plan, and has delivered the third largest single development in the country, but this is resource intensive and to continue to deliver these services need to be adequately resourced. The Council would urge government to allow authorities to fully recover the cost of planning applications from developers, the cost of development has been subsidised by local taxpayers for too long and this needs to be addressed.

In addition to planning fees government set a number of other fees and charges and this council would welcome the discretion to set these charges at a local level.

Finally we would urge government to continue the process of transferring offices from London as we feel that this would have the twin benefit of spreading the

economic benefit and stimulating the housing market in areas to which departments relocate to. Naturally with the transport links to the capital Ashford would be an excellent location and we would welcome any moves to the town.

Question 17: Do you have any comments on the impact of the 2016-17 settlement on persons who share a protected characteristic, and on the draft equality statement published alongside this consultation?

The Council supports the statement that has been published.

This concludes the Response from Ashford Borough Council, we are happy to discuss our responses with you in more detail.

Appendix B

Final NNDR1 Return

NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATES RETURN - NNDR1

2016-17

Please e-mail to: ndr.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk by no later than **31 January 2016**.
In addition, a certified copy of the form should be returned by no later than **31 January 2016** to the same email address

All figures must be entered in whole £

If you are content with your answers please return this form to DCLG as soon as possible

Select your local authority's name from this list:

Adur
Allerdale
Amber Valley
Arun
Ashfield
Ashford

Authority Name
E-code
Local authority contact name
Local authority contact number
Local authority e-mail address

Ashford
E2231
BENITA HARVEY
01233 330439
b.harvey@ashford.gov.uk

Ver 1

PART 1A: NON-DOMESTIC RATING INCOME

COLLECTIBLE RATES

1. Net amount receivable from rate payers after taking account of transitional adjustments, empty property rate, mandatory and discretionary reliefs and accounting adjustments **£ 48,274,952**

TRANSITIONAL PROTECTION PAYMENTS

2. Sums due to the authority **0**

3. Sums due from the authority **0**

COST OF COLLECTION (See Note A)

4. Cost of collection formula **180,852**

5. Legal costs **0**

6. Allowance for cost of collection **180,852**

SPECIAL AUTHORITY DEDUCTIONS

7. City of London Offset: Not applicable for your authority **0**

DISREGARDED AMOUNTS

8. Amounts retained in respect of Designated Areas. Not applicable for your authority **0**

9. Amounts retained in respect of Renewable Energy Schemes (See Note B) **54,000**

of which:

10. sums retained by billing authority **54,000**

11. sums retained by major precepting authority **0**

NON-DOMESTIC RATING INCOME

12. Line 1 plus line 2, minus lines 3 and 6 - 9 **48,040,100**

Local Authority : Ashford

Ver 1

PART 1B: PAYMENTS

This page is for information only; please do not amend any of the figures

The payments to be made, during the course of 2016-17 to:

- the Secretary of State in accordance with Regulation 4 of the Non-Domestic Rating (Rates Retention) Regulations 2013;
- major precepting authorities in accordance with Regulations 5, 6 and 7; and to be
- transferred by the billing authority from its Collection Fund to its General Fund,

are set out below

	Column 1 Central Government	Column 2 Ashford	Column 3 Kent County Council	Column 4 Kent Fire Authority	Column 5 Total
Retained NNDR shares					
13. % of non-domestic rating income to be allocated to each authority	£ 50%	£ 40%	£ 9%	£ 1%	£ 100%
Non-Domestic Rating Income for 2016-17					
14. Non-domestic rating income from rates retention scheme	24,020,050	19,216,040	4,323,609	480,401	48,040,100
15. (less) qualifying relief in Enterprise Zones	0	0	0	0	0
16. Not used this year					
17. TOTAL:	24,020,050	19,216,040	4,323,609	480,401	48,040,100
Other Income for 2016-17					
18. add: cost of collection allowance		180,852			180,852
19. add: amounts retained in respect of Designated Areas		0			0
20. add: amounts retained in respect of renewable energy schemes		54,000	0		54,000
21. add: qualifying relief in Enterprise Zones		0	0	0	0
22. add: City of London Offset		0			0
23. Not used this year					
Estimated Surplus/Deficit on Collection Fund					
24. Estimated Surplus/Deficit at end of 2015-16	383,967	307,173	69,114	7,679	767,933
TOTAL FOR THE YEAR					
25. Total amount due to authorities	£ 24,404,017	£ 19,758,065	£ 4,392,723	£ 488,080	£ 49,042,885

PART 1C: SECTION 31 GRANT (See Note C)**This page is for information only; please do not amend any of the figures***Estimated sums due from Government via Section 31 grant, to compensate authorities for the cost of changes to the business rates system announced in the 2013, 2014 & 2015 Autumn Statements*

	Column 2 Ashford	Column 3 Kent County Council	Column 4 Kent Fire Authority	Column 5 Total
2015-16 Multiplier Cap				
26. Cost of 2% cap on 2015-16 small business rates multiplier	£ 278,699	£ 62,532	£ 6,948	£ 348,179
Small Business Rate Relief				
27. Cost of temporary doubling SBRR for 2016-17	537,718	120,987	13,443	672,148
28. Cost to authorities of maintaining relief on "first" property	1,478	332	37	1,847
"New Empty" Property Relief				
29. Cost to authorities of giving relief to newly-built empty property	3,433	773	86	4,292
"Long Term Empty" Property Relief				
30. Relief on occupation of "long-term empty" property	3,151	709	79	3,939
In lieu of Transitional Relief				
31. Payments in lieu of Transitional Relief	2,841	639	71	3,551
TOTAL FOR THE YEAR				
32. Amount of Section 31 grant due to authorities to compensate for reliefs	£ 827,320	£ 185,972	£ 20,664	£ 1,033,956

NB To determine the amount of S31 grant due to it, the authority will have to add / deduct from the amount shown in line 32, a sum to reflect the adjustment to tariffs / top-ups in respect of the multiplier cap (See notes for Line 32)

Appendix C

Proposed New Homes Bonus Consultation Response

Draft consultation response New Homes Bonus

The deadline for written responses is 10 March 2016. Responses can be:

Completed online: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/X8RHS5>

Emailed to: newhomesbonus@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Ashford Borough Council understands and supports the Government's commitment to dealing with the housing crisis. This Council, as a former government growth area has seen significant housing growth and is committed to continued larger scale growth including in the past 15 months granting outline planning permission for the 3rd largest development site in the county (Chilmington Green with over 5,700 properties approved). Currently there are over 1,000 properties under construction, and next year the council will consult on and approve its new local plan. New Homes Bonus has therefore been a welcome government initiative that has provided an essential resource, replacing the former, but volatile planning delivery grant, to allow the council to resource the long lead in and effort needed to secure housing growth for future needs, as well as helping to mitigate the strain of growth by providing a resource to invest in local community infrastructure and community development initiatives. Of course the Council understands the need to review the effectiveness and affordability of the scheme as it is vital that incentives to ensure it remain effective. However as suggested, the planning process for major sites does take several years until developments start on site. Consequently this council and others have needed to support the costs of this upfront effort and will continue to bear significant cost implications for years to come as the full effect of New Homes Bonus is yet to be felt in terms of housing numbers. Cutting New Homes Bonus severely will penalise councils, such as Ashford, that have a good track record and are focused on maintaining strong growth in the years to come.

The Council does feel that there is a strong link between the delivery of new housing and the pressure on social care and NHS budgets. By ensuring that people have homes appropriate for their own stage of life will help to support them to maintain independence, health and ultimately reduce demand for other service areas. It is therefore important that communities are adequately incentivised to grow to help to manage the demand on these other service areas.

The Council does not support the top slice for adult social care as we would encourage government to consider the impact that adult social care services are having on NHS budgets. Government has committed to treating the symptom with greater funding for the NHS, but is possibly overlooking a contributory cause the lack of housing supply. This council advocates a greater redistribution of NHS funding to support innovative initiatives aimed at reducing pressures on adult social care budgets instead. We also welcome the Government's Committee for Intergenerational Fairness, looking at the triple lock and winter fuel benefits. We would suggest that these may be areas too that could free up some resources for adult social care.

Question 1 *What are your views on moving from 6 years of payments under the Bonus to 4 years, with an interim period for 5 year payments?*

Originally New Homes Bonus was a scheme to act as a real incentive for Councils and Communities to grow, providing a resource to help manage the strains caused by growth with “Communities able to use their reward for going for growth on whatever they wish locally.”¹

This incentive has been diluted a number of times, being used to manage the risks that have been transferred to authorities and have been included within the governments calculation of spending power to provide services to communities. This has seen the New Homes Bonus being transformed from a ‘bonus for growth’ to baseline funding.

For Ashford Borough Council the New Homes Bonus has been an important funding source supporting:

- our planning service to facilitate future levels of growth and to ensure that there is future developments in the pipeline,
- a town centre action team to help re-invigorate our town centre (which was a Porta Pilot).
- Economic development to ensure that there are new jobs to go with the additional housing and to help drive continuing growth,
- Community infrastructure and groups to help the new communities integrate and settle

A reduction of over 1/3rd as outlined in the consultation will seriously impair the council's ability to support new development and for a town that will nearly double in size over the life of its local plan this will cause real difficulties and make it harder to bring the communities with us through this period of sustained growth.

If the Government is minded to reduce the incentive from 6 years to 4 years it is important there is a transition period where councils can adapt their expenditure and plans accordingly and therefore a phased reduction is preferred.

Question 2 *Should the number of years of payments under the Bonus be reduced further to 3 or 2 years?*

No – In the consultation paper Government itself acknowledges the crucial role that authorities play in supporting housing and economic growth. If New Homes Bonus is to be an incentive to authorities it needs to offer a real and tangible incentive to Councils to grow and to provide some resources to authorities to help them manage that growth. A cut of this scale further penalises those most focused on growth and may act as a serious disincentive to communities and therefore could not be supported.

Question 3 *Should the Government continue to use this approach? If not, what alternatives would work better?*

This Council recognises that there is the potential to skew allocations for areas delivering larger higher banded properties but the effect of this needs to be offset by the need to make the calculation of the bonus simple and transparent. This council supports the current method of calculation and does not propose any amendments.

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/more-local-homes-means-more-rewards>

Question 4 *Do you agree that local authorities should lose their Bonus allocation in the years during which their Local Plan has not been submitted? If not, what alternative arrangement should be in place?*

This Council has had adopted local plan coverage for several decades and is in advanced stages of agreeing its new local plan. This sanction should be applied only to those authorities that have patently failed to address local plan making with any degree of urgency but should not unfairly penalise those moving from the LDF regime to the new local plan.

Question 5 *Is there merit in a mechanism for abatement which reflects the date of the adopted plan?*

No – this would be likely to be a blunt tool that is not capable of taking account of local circumstances and thereby penalise authorities unreasonably. There are many reasons for reviewing local plans and the timing of the process can be affected by timetables outside the local authority's control. Some plans are less sensitive to the passage of time than others; some have longer planning 'horizons' than others. A one-size fits all solution would lead to unfairness and lengthy debate over the real position locally, mitigating circumstances and potential legal challenges.

Question 6 *Do you agree to this mechanism for reflecting homes only allowed on appeal in Bonus payments?*

As a matter of democratic principle the council does not support the proposal to penalise councils for housing growth permitted on appeal. If the government is minded to reject this view and introduce a penalty and reduce the bonus for properties built on appeal then the process of collecting the data and making the reduction must be simple and transparent. The approach outlined in the paper will use existing data sets and therefore not create an additional workload for authorities.

Question 7 *Do you agree that New Homes Bonus payments should be reduced by 50%, or 100%, where homes are allowed on appeal? If not, what other adjustment would you propose, and why?*

No, as a matter of important democratic principle. The planning process is one that seeks to strike a balance between the need for homes and development on the one hand and the impacts it will give rise to. Inevitably there will be times when this balance is a fine one and it is key to local democracy and localism that Councils can refuse development if they believe there are important planning reasons to do so. This should be viewed as a sign of a healthy and mature society and members should be allowed to represent local opinions. The penalty that is included in this paper will limit their freedom to do this.

Penalising Councils if housing is allowed at appeal by reducing New Homes Bonus is a heavy handed approach. By exerting this pressure local decisions may become increasingly based on financial concerns rather than sound decision making.

If the Government wants to send a message to authorities that it feels are frustrating growth by refusing too many housing proposals then the fair, and more sophisticated, way to proceed is to test how often this is happening and penalise authorities where there is a recurrent trend, there will always be some instances where a developer appeals the decision and it is overturned.

Question 8 *Do you agree that reductions should be based on the national average Band D council tax? If this were to change (see question 3) should the new model also be adopted for this purpose?*

Again the council does not support a penalty for growth permitted on appeal. However, if the government rejects this view then the proposal amounts to the simplest way of calculating the reduction; to gather more data on this would be onerous.

Question 9 *Do you agree that setting a national baseline offers the best incentive effect for the Bonus?*

No – given that the incentive itself is to be reduced from 6 to 4 years and that councils will need to continue to invest in their planning departments to develop and maintain local plans this proposal will only further reduce the incentive and when taken together the decision will be less material.

When the bonus was first introduced there was a material incentive for councils to grant planning permission, the proposals will reduce that incentive. What material incentive will remain to encourage members to support a development against a public campaign against growth?

Question 10 *Do you agree that the right level for the baseline is 0.25%?*

Given that the Council does not agree with the concept of baselines the Council would support a baseline of 0.00%.

Question 11 *Do you agree that adjustments to the baseline should be used to reflect significant and unexpected housing growth? If not, what other mechanism could be used to ensure that the costs of the Bonus stay within the funding envelope and ensure that we have the necessary resources for adult social care?*

No – surely this is what the bonus is seeking to achieve, significant housing growth, it would seem bizarre that government's incentive for housing growth actually does not reward areas that have achieved housing growth. Where is the incentive for councils to grow if significant or unexpected growth occurs? If a control is in place to ensure that properties built on appeal are capped then what unexpected growth is their likely to be that should be capped?

This Council does not agree with the use of New Homes Bonus funding to support adult social care, we feel that there is a link between the need to provide adequate housing for all people and pressures within the care budget. For example having suitable accommodation for disabled and elderly residents will help to keep people in their homes rather than in social care.

Additional funding for adult social care should be found from the additional resources allocated to the NHS budget to address, in part, the pressures caused by the shortfall in social care services.

Question 12 *Do you agree that the same adjustments as elsewhere should apply in areas covered by National Parks, the Broads Authority and development corporations?*

Yes – the adjustment should be applied consistently to all areas.

Question 13 *Do you agree that county councils should not be exempted from adjustments to the Bonus payments?*

Yes – the Government's settlement proposals have sought to treat authorities similarly ensuring that reductions are consistent across authority types. Therefore changing the treatment of counties would not be a fair approach and we would support the proposal to treat counties in the same way.

Question 14 *What are your views on whether there is merit in considering protection for those who may face an adverse impact from these proposals?*

None

Appendix D

REVENUE BUDGET				
SUMMARY				
Actuals 2014/15 £	Budget 2015/16 £	Projected Outturn 2015/16 £	Detail	Estimate 2016/17 £
1,295,520	1,180,610	1,226,610	Corporate, Strategy & Personnel	1,270,720
1,233,907	1,402,300	1,395,230	Legal & Democratic	1,477,660
1,748,960	1,821,590	1,821,180	Planning & Development	1,995,050
2,101,070	2,167,130	2,167,080	Financial Services	2,554,620
160,623	359,740	395,110	Human Resources and Technology	291,010
775,617	888,690	903,250	Housing Services	915,710
451,022	891,010	838,450	Health, Parking & Community Safety	882,700
4,450,502	4,627,570	4,562,760	Environment and Customer Services	4,821,510
(936,132)	(1,060,370)	(1,049,960)	Corporate Property & Projects	(1,512,060)
2,788,256	3,015,240	3,095,840	Culture & the Environment	2,713,130
14,069,346	15,293,510	15,355,550	Service Expenditure	15,410,050
(1,694,370)	(2,106,200)	(2,106,200)	Capital Charges & Net Interest	(1,475,830)
50,180	40,260	40,260	Concurrent Functions Grant	30,260
237,227	241,000	241,000	Levies	241,000
2,357,724	265,120	248,120	Contribution to Balances	1,244,480
15,020,107	13,733,690	13,778,730	ABC Budget Requirement	15,449,960
			Income	
(2,947,755)	(2,106,830)	(2,106,830)	Government Grant	(1,269,920)
(2,183,239)	(2,628,370)	(2,628,370)	Retained Business Rates	(3,410,410)
(953,730)	(554,000)	(554,000)	Business Rates S31 Grants	(538,000)
(2,875,218)	(2,324,000)	(2,339,000)	New Homes Bonus	(3,782,820)
62,110	41,500	41,500	Parish CTS Payment	41,500
(6,105,813)	(6,161,990)	(6,161,990)	Council Tax	(6,490,310)
16,462	0	30,040	Budget Gap	0

Appendix E

Service Budgets

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY 2016/17 BUDGET				
Actuals 2014/15 £	Budget 2015/16 £	Projected Outturn 2015/16 £	Detail	Estimate 2016/17 £
828,188	677,570	724,860	Corporate, Strategy & Personnel	
339,479	327,880	322,180	Corporate Allocable Costs	834,449
127,853	175,160	179,570	Corporate Management	274,970
			Policy and Performance	161,300
1,295,520	1,180,610	1,226,610		1,270,720
			Legal & Democratic	
810,970	857,290	841,870	Democratic Representation	903,220
277,479	395,580	395,580	Electoral Services	422,920
99,353	91,600	91,600	Emergency Planning	97,340
(9,237)	0	8,350	Legal	4,850
55,342	57,830	57,830	Mayor	49,330
1,233,907	1,402,300	1,395,230		1,477,660
			Planning & Development	
116,381	120,730	127,360	Building Control	144,580
777,919	866,170	935,210	Development Control	906,920
458,621	349,370	349,760	Economic Development	404,000
1,074	(21,360)	(20,600)	Land Charges	(8,620)
(1,474)	0	(8,070)	Planning Administration	0
396,440	506,680	437,520	Strategic Planning	548,170
1,748,960	1,821,590	1,821,180		1,995,050
			Financial Services	
28,058	500	500	Accountancy	2,050
(245)	70	70	Audit Partnership	40
756,816	615,000	589,730	Benefits Administration	823,710
194,671	323,470	348,690	Council Tax Collection	442,070
(281)	(1,010)	(1,010)	Debtors/Debt Recovery	(1,130)
13,090	(20)	(20)	Exchequer	10
(248,196)	(245,290)	(245,290)	Housing Benefits Payments	(256,000)
(113,900)	(2,590)	(2,590)	Miscellaneous Expenditure	71,240
(56,751)	(88,580)	(88,580)	NNDR Collection	(82,120)
1,527,808	1,565,580	1,565,580	Non-Distributed Costs	1,554,750
2,101,070	2,167,130	2,167,080		2,554,620
			Human Resources and Technology	
229,243	204,030	202,480	Communications & Marketing	279,260
(108)	470	(11,430)	Telephony	(10)
(87,465)	2,440	65,900	ICT	(81,360)
18,953	152,800	138,160	Personnel & Development	93,120
160,623	359,740	395,110		291,010

GENERAL FUND SUMMARY 2016/17 BUDGET				
Actuals	Budget	Projected	Detail	Estimate
2014/15 £	2015/16 £	Outturn 2015/16 £		2016/17 £
			Housing Services	
1,367	17,870	63,730	Private Sector Housing	51,620
135,475	141,280	141,280	Housing Strategy and Enabling	145,770
640,056	713,080	690,520	Housing Options	721,460
(1,281)	16,460	7,720	Gypsy Site - Chilmington	(3,140)
775,617	888,690	903,250		915,710
			Health, Parking & Community Safety	
455,895	505,190	535,130	Community Safety,AMC,Licencing	569,320
676,368	692,680	689,180	Environmental Health	669,590
(681,241)	(306,860)	(385,860)	Parking & Engineering	(356,210)
451,022	891,010	838,450		882,700
			Environment and Customer Services	
(2,558)	(10)	10,390	Visitor & Call Centre	(20)
486,063	598,320	606,430	Street Scene	597,670
2,871,340	2,997,850	2,914,530	Refuse,Recycling,Street Clean	3,006,470
1,095,658	1,031,410	1,031,410	Parks And Open Spaces	1,217,390
4,450,502	4,627,570	4,562,760		4,821,510
			Corporate Property & Projects	
25,756	35,990	33,900	Project Office	41,560
(961,888)	(1,096,360)	(1,083,860)	Corporate Property & Projects	(1,553,620)
(936,132)	(1,060,370)	(1,049,960)		(1,512,060)
			Culture & the Environment	
334,163	237,820	237,820	Cultural Services Management	219,070
1,488,095	1,700,590	1,779,190	Leisure Centres	1,343,460
163,066	159,560	159,560	Conservation	161,590
288,371	410,370	410,370	Single Grants Gateway	418,860
171,856	129,490	131,490	Tourism	146,340
342,706	377,410	377,410	Cultural Projects	423,810
2,788,256	3,015,240	3,095,840		2,713,130
14,069,346	15,293,510	15,355,550	NET EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES	15,410,050
			Other Items	
(1,694,370)	(2,106,200)	(2,106,200)	Capital Charges & Net Interest	(1,475,830)
50,180	40,260	40,260	Concurrent Functions	30,260
237,227	241,000	241,000	Levies & Precepts	241,000
2,357,723	265,120	248,120	Contributions to/from Reserves	1,244,480
15,020,106	13,733,690	13,778,730		15,449,960

Appendix F

Forecast of Reserves Balances (before re-ordering)

	2015/16			2016/17			Balance at 31st March 2017 £'000
	Balance at 31st March 2015 £'000	Transfers In £'000	Transfers Out £'000	Balance at 31st March 2016 £'000	Transfers In £'000	Transfers Out £'000	
General Fund Balance	(1,359)	(698)	116	(1,941)	(566)	450	(2,057)
	(1,359)	(698)	116	(1,941)	(566)	450	(2,057)
<i>Earmarked Reserves</i>							
Business Rate Income Res	(1,247)		97	(1,150)		1,000	(150)
Elections	(209)	(60)	140	(129)	(60)		(189)
Focus 2013-15	(786)		293	(493)		293	(200)
Footway Maintenance	(6)		6	0			0
Green Transport Initiatives	(45)	(5)		(50)	(5)		(55)
Hopewell Twinning Reserve	(5)			(5)			(5)
Interest Rate Reserve	(117)			(117)		100	(17)
Insurance Reserve	(215)		50	(165)			(165)
Land Searches Reserve	(113)			(113)			(113)
Members' IT	(29)	(5)		(34)	(5)		(39)
Netball Centre Reserve	(43)	(5)	40	(8)	(5)		(13)
New Homes Bonus	(1,077)	(3,150)	3,820	(407)	(3,471)	2,839	(1,039)
New Initiatives Reserve	(3,505)		3,505	0			0
Devolution Reserve	0			0	(65)		(65)
Planning Delivery Grant	(500)			(500)		100	(400)

Forecast of Reserves Balances - continued

	2015/16			2016/17			Balance at 31st March 2017 £'000
	Balance at 31st March 2015 £'000	Transfers In £'000	Transfers Out £'000	Balance at 31st March 2016 £'000	Transfers In £'000	Transfers Out £'000	
Chilmington reserve	(250)	(100)		(350)		40	(310)
Repairs & Renewals	(369)		235	(134)	(80)	140	(74)
Section 106 Monitoring Fee	(84)	(10)	20	(74)	(10)	20	(64)
Service Pressure Reserve	(143)		30	(113)		30	(83)
Singleton Environment Centre	(6)			(6)			(6)
St Mary's Church Ruin	(5)			(5)			(5)
Stour Centre	(1,218)	(70)	190	(1,098)	(70)	640	(528)
Transport Initiatives	(110)	(10)		(120)		60	(60)
Waterside Reserve	(22)	(7)		(29)	(7)		(36)
<i>Developer Contributions</i>							
S106 Unapplied Grants	(3,924)	(75)		(3,999)		875	(3,124)
Commuted Sums Unapplied Grants	(823)	(50)	155	(718)	(50)	155	(613)
Spg6 Unapplied Grants	(753)	(30)		(783)	(30)		(813)
Total Earmarked Reserves	(15,604)	(3,577)	8,581	(10,600)	(3,858)	6,292	(8,166)

Appendix G

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LICENSING FEES

Item	Statutory or Discretionary	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %	
Licensing Act								
Premises - new application	Statutory	Fee band - A	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%	
		Fee band - B	NB	190.00	190.00	190.00	0.00%	
		Fee band - C	NB	315.00	315.00	315.00	0.00%	
		Fee band - D - if exclusively or primarily for supply, sale or consumption of alcohol <u>double</u> the fee	NB	450.00	450.00	450.00	0.00%	
		Fee band - E - if exclusively or primarily for supply, sale or consumption of alcohol <u>triple</u> the fee	NB	635.00	635.00	635.00	0.00%	
		Premises allowing 5000+ people attract additional		See regulation for detail				
		Premises where only licensable activity is regulated entertainment & premises is education, church hall, village hall or similar		No fee payable				
Premises - annual fee	Statutory	Fee band - A	NB	70.00	70.00	70.00	0.00%	
		Fee band - B	NB	180.00	180.00	180.00	0.00%	
		Fee band - C	NB	295.00	295.00	295.00	0.00%	
		Fee band - D - if exclusively or primarily for supply, sale or consumption of alcohol <u>double</u> the fee	NB	320.00	320.00	320.00	0.00%	
		Fee band - E - if exclusively or primarily for supply, sale or consumption of alcohol <u>triple</u> the fee	NB	350.00	350.00	350.00	0.00%	
		Premises allowing 5000+ people attract additional fees		See regulation for detail				
Personal	Statutory		NB	37.00	37.00	37.00	0.00%	
Temporary Event Notice	Statutory		NB	21.00	21.00	21.00	0.00%	
Change of address notification	Statutory		NB	10.50	10.50	10.50	0.00%	
Replacement licence etc (due to	Statutory		NB	10.50	10.50	10.50	0.00%	
Designated premises supervisor	Statutory		NB	23.00	23.00	23.00	0.00%	
Premises licence transfer	Statutory		NB	23.00	23.00	23.00	0.00%	
Club registration change	Statutory		NB	10.50	10.50	10.50	0.00%	
Club name or rules notification	Statutory		NB	10.50	10.50	10.50	0.00%	
Interim Authority Notice	Statutory		NB	23.00	23.00	23.00	0.00%	
Provisional Statement	Statutory		NB	315.00	315.00	315.00	0.00%	
Freeholder notification of licensing	Statutory		NB	21.00	21.00	21.00	0.00%	
Minor Variation	Statutory		NB	89.00	89.00	89.00	0.00%	

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LICENSING FEES

Animal Welfare and Public Health Licences							
Dog Breeding Establishments	Discretionary	New Licence	NB	541.00	555.00	557.00	0.36%
	Discretionary	Renewal	NB	134.00	137.00	138.00	0.73%
	Discretionary	Variation	NB	134.00	137.00	138.00	0.73%
	Discretionary	Concurrent 2nd application	NB	67.00	69.00	69.00	0.00%
Animal Boarding Establishments	Discretionary	New Licence	NB	541.00	555.00	557.00	0.36%
	Discretionary	Renewal	NB	134.00	137.00	138.00	0.73%
	Discretionary	Variation	NB	134.00	137.00	138.00	0.73%
	Discretionary	Concurrent 2nd application	NB	67.00	69.00	69.00	0.00%
Home Boarding	Discretionary	New Licence	NB	84.00	86.00	87.00	1.16%
	Discretionary	Renewal	NB	65.00	67.00	67.00	0.00%
Pet Shops	Discretionary	New Licence	NB	541.00	555.00	557.00	0.36%
	Discretionary	Renewal	NB	134.00	137.00	138.00	0.73%
	Discretionary	Variation	NB	134.00	137.00	138.00	0.73%
	Discretionary	Concurrent 2nd application	NB	67.00	69.00	69.00	0.00%
Riding Establishments	Discretionary	New Licence	NB	541.00	555.00	557.00	0.36%
	Discretionary	Renewal	NB	391.00	401.00	403.00	0.50%
	Discretionary	Variation	NB	73.00	75.00	76.00	1.33%
	Discretionary	Concurrent 2nd application	NB	34.00	35.00	35.00	0.00%
Dangerous Wild Animals	Discretionary	New Licence (2 year licence)	NB	894.00	916.00	922.00	0.66%
	Discretionary	Renewal (2 year licence)	NB	612.00	627.00	631.00	0.64%
	Discretionary	Variation	NB	315.00	323.00	325.00	0.62%
	Discretionary	Concurrent 2nd application	NB	79.00	81.00	82.00	1.23%
Zoos	Discretionary	Consideration	NB	1,113.00	1,141.00	1,149.00	0.70%
	Discretionary	Licence (4 year licence)	NB	1,835.00	1,881.00	1,894.00	0.69%
	Discretionary	Renewal (6 year licence)	NB	2,753.00	2,822.00	2,842.00	0.71%
	Discretionary	Dispensation - 14(1)(a)	NB	448.00	459.00	462.00	0.65%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LICENSING FEES

Public Health Licences

Acupuncture	Discretionary	Initial registration practitioner/premises	NB	166.00	170.00	171.00	0.59%
	Discretionary	Additional practitioner/premises	NB	101.00	104.00	105.00	0.96%
	Discretionary	Minor variation	NB	28.00	29.00	29.00	0.00%
Tattooing (including semi-permanent skin-colouring)	Discretionary	Initial registration practitioner/premises	NB	321.00	329.00	331.00	0.61%
	Discretionary	Additional practitioner/premises	NB	101.00	104.00	105.00	0.96%
	Discretionary	Minor variation	NB	28.00	29.00	29.00	0.00%
Electrolysis	Discretionary	Initial registration practitioner/premises	NB	166.00	170.00	171.00	0.59%
	Discretionary	Additional practitioner/premises	NB	101.00	104.00	105.00	0.96%
	Discretionary	Minor variation	NB	28.00	29.00	29.00	0.00%
Cosmetic Piercing (excluding ear piercing)	Discretionary	Initial registration practitioner/premises	NB	321.00	329.00	331.00	0.61%
	Discretionary	Additional practitioner/premises	NB	101.00	104.00	105.00	0.96%
	Discretionary	Minor variation	NB	28.00	29.00	29.00	0.00%
Ear Piercing	Discretionary	Initial registration practitioner/premises	NB	166.00	170.00	171.00	0.59%
	Discretionary	Additional practitioner/premises	NB	101.00	104.00	29.00	-72.12%
	Discretionary	Minor variation	NB	28.00	29.00	29.00	0.00%
Hairdressing	Statutory	Registration			No fee payable		
Sex Establishments Licence							
Sex Shops, Sex Cinemas and Sexual Entertainment Venue Licences	Discretionary	Grant	NB	3,172.00	3,204.00	3,204.00	0.00%
	Discretionary	Renewal	NB	579.00	350.00	350.00	0.00%
	Discretionary	Transfer	NB	579.00	350.00	350.00	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LICENSING FEES

Street Trading and Consents

Publicity Displays	Statutory			No fee payable			
Street Collection Permit	Statutory			No fee payable			
Street Trading Licence	Discretionary	Yearly	NB	71.00	71.00	72.00	1.41%
Casual Street Trading Licence/Consent For One Off Event	Discretionary	Grant	NB	11.50	11.50	12.00	4.35%
Casual Street Trading Licence for Market	Discretionary	Monthly	NB	25.00	25.00	26.00	4.00%
Street Trading Consent	Discretionary	Yearly	NB	71.00	71.00	72.00	1.41%
New Site Street Trading Consent - static	Discretionary	Grant -if planning permission already granted	NB	155.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
New Site Street Trading Consent - static	Discretionary	Grant - if no planning permission at time of application	NB	310.00	200.00	200.00	0.00%
New Site Street Trading Consent - short term static	Discretionary	Grant - 1 site £100 (£25 extra for each additional site, i.e. £125 for 2 sites, £150 for 3 sites)	NB	£160 per site plus £55 per additional site	£100 per site plus £25 per additional site	£100 per site plus £25 per additional site	-37.50%
Hawker Street Trading Consent	Discretionary	Yearly	NB	71.00	71.00	72.00	1.41%
Town Centre Commercial Booking	Discretionary	Daily (Monday - Friday, Sunday).For 4 consecutive days deduct £100 from total cost 5 consecutive days deduct £150, and for 6 consecutive days deduct £200)	NB	150.00	150.00	150.00	0.00%
Town Centre Commercial Booking	Discretionary	Small, local businesses, weekdays and Sundays	NB			50.00	
Town Centre Commercial Booking	Discretionary	Small, local businesses, Saturdays	NB			75.00	
Town Centre Commercial Booking	Discretionary	1 day (Saturday)	NB	200.00	200.00	200.00	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LICENSING FEES

Street Trading Consent Rents

Furners Wood Lay-by - cherry stall	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	150.00	150.00	150.00	0.00%
Furners Wood Lay-by - hot food	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	225.00	225.00	225.00	0.00%
Great Chart - A28 Tenterden bound - Food	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	225.00	225.00	225.00	0.00%
Great Chart - A28 Tenterden bound - Non Food	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	150.00	150.00	150.00	0.00%
Great Chart - A28 Ashford bound - Food	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	225.00	225.00	225.00	0.00%
Great Chart - A28 Ashford bound Non Food	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	150.00	150.00	150.00	0.00%
Hothfield - A20 Maidstone bound - Non Food	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	150.00	150.00	150.00	0.00%
Hothfield - A20 Maidstone bound - Food	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	225.00	225.00	225.00	0.00%
Hothfield - A20 Ashford bound - Non Food	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	150.00	150.00	150.00	0.00%
Hothfield - A20 Ashford bound - Food	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	225.00	225.00	225.00	0.00%
Henwood	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	206.50	206.50	206.50	0.00%
Recreation Ground Road car park	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	380.00	380.00	380.00	0.00%
Potters Corner, Hothfield	Discretionary	Monthly rents	NB	225.00	225.00	225.00	0.00%
Hall Avenue, Sevington	Discretionary	Max 28 days use per year	NB	240.00	240.00	240.00	0.00%
Chilham Mill	Discretionary		NB	225.00	225.00	225.00	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LICENSING FEES

Council Land							
Charity	Discretionary			No fee payable			
Commercial (e.g. circuses and funfairs)	Discretionary	per operating day	NB	260.00	267.00	270.00	1.12%
	Discretionary	per non-operating day	NB	185.00	190.00	190.00	0.00%
Food Hygiene							
Level 2 course	Discretionary		EX	70.00	48.00	48.00	0.00%
Re-sit (at time of next course)	Discretionary		EX	18.00	18.00	18.00	0.00%
Re-sit (oral)	Discretionary		EX	42.00	42.00	42.00	0.00%
Food Safety Charges							
Food Surrender Certificate	Discretionary		NB	93.00	95.00	96.00	1.05%
Inspection (Voluntary Surrender) or plus tipping charge at cost	Discretionary	Per hour	NB	91.00	93.00	94.00	1.08%
	Charged by tip			NA	NA	NA	NA
Export Certificate for food manufacture	Discretionary		NB	154.00	158.00	159.00	0.63%
Miscellaneous							
Scrap Metal Site Licence	Discretionary		NB	300	303.00	305.00	0.66%
Scrap Metal Collectors Licence	Discretionary		NB	200	202.00	205.00	1.49%
Scrap Metal Site Licence - Renewal	Discretionary		NB	200	202.00	205.00	1.49%
Scrap Metal Collectors Licence - Renewal	Discretionary		NB	100	101.00	102.00	0.99%
Scrap Metal Variations	Discretionary		NB	75	76.00	77.00	1.32%
Scrap Metal Replacement Licence	Discretionary		NB		11.00	11.00	NA

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LICENSING FEES

Gambling Act

New small casino	Statutory	New application	NB	6,442.00	6,506.00	6,570.00	0.98%
		Annual fee	NB	3,664.00	3,701.00	3,730.00	0.78%
		Variation	NB	2,645.00	2,671.00	2,690.00	0.71%
		Transfer	NB	1,538.00	1,553.00	1,564.00	0.71%
		Re-instatement	NB	1,292.00	1,305.00	1,314.00	0.69%
		Provisional statement	NB	6,442.00	6,506.00	6,570.00	0.98%
		Provisional statement holders	NB	2,296.00	2,319.00	2,335.00	0.69%
		Copy licence	NB	26.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Notification of change	NB	51.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
New large casino	Statutory Maximum	New application	NB	7,729.00	7,806.00	7,860.00	0.69%
		Annual fee	NB	7,395.00	7,469.00	7,520.00	0.68%
		Variation	NB	3,495.00	3,530.00	3,555.00	0.71%
		Transfer	NB	1,804.00	1,822.00	1,835.00	0.71%
		Re-instatement	NB	2,035.00	2,055.00	2,070.00	0.73%
		Provisional statement	NB	7,729.00	7,806.00	7,860.00	0.69%
		Provisional statement holders	NB	3,793.00	3,831.00	3,860.00	0.76%
		Copy licence	NB	26.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Notification of change	NB	51.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
Regional casino	Statutory Maximum	New application	NB	12,177.00	12,299.00	12,380.00	0.66%
		Annual fee	NB	11,419.00	11,533.00	11,610.00	0.67%
		Variation	NB	5,709.00	5,766.00	5,800.00	0.59%
		Transfer	NB	4,156.00	4,198.00	4,230.00	0.76%
		Re-instatement	NB	4,156.00	4,198.00	4,230.00	0.76%
		Provisional statement	NB	12,177.00	12,299.00	12,380.00	0.66%
		Provisional statement holders	NB	5,930.00	5,989.00	6,030.00	0.68%
		Copy licence	NB	26.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Notification of change	NB	51.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
Bingo club	Statutory Maximum	New application	NB	2,214.00	2,236.00	2,250.00	0.63%
		Annual fee	NB	690.00	697.00	700.00	0.43%
		Variation	NB	1,512.00	1,527.00	1,540.00	0.85%
		Transfer	NB	841.00	849.00	855.00	0.71%
		Re-instatement	NB	841.00	849.00	855.00	0.71%
		Provisional statement	NB	2,214.00	2,236.00	2,250.00	0.63%
		Provisional statement holders	NB	912.00	921.00	930.00	0.98%
		Copy licence	NB	26.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Notification of change	NB	51.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LICENSING FEES

Gambling Act							
Betting Premises (excluding tracks)	Statutory	New application	NB	2,250.00	2,273.00	2,290.00	0.75%
		Annual fee	NB	445.00	449.00	455.00	1.34%
		Variation	NB	1,276.00	1,289.00	1,300.00	0.85%
		Transfer	NB	841.00	849.00	855.00	0.71%
		Re-instatement	NB	841.00	849.00	855.00	0.71%
		Provisional statement	NB	2,214.00	2,236.00	2,250.00	0.63%
		Provisional statement holders	NB	912.00	921.00	930.00	0.98%
		Copy licence	NB	26.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Notification of change	NB	51.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
Tracks	Statutory Maximum	New application	NB	1,732.00	1,749.00	1,760.00	0.63%
		Annual fee	NB	687.00	694.00	700.00	0.86%
		Variation	NB	1,158.00	1,170.00	1,180.00	0.85%
		Transfer	NB	841.00	849.00	855.00	0.71%
		Re-instatement	NB	841.00	849.00	855.00	0.71%
		Provisional statement	NB	1,732.00	1,749.00	1,760.00	0.63%
		Provisional statement holders	NB	912.00	921.00	930.00	0.98%
		Copy licence	NB	26.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Notification of change	NB	51.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
Family Entertainment Centres	Statutory Maximum	New application	NB	1,732.00	1,749.00	1,760.00	0.63%
		Annual fee	NB	595.00	601.00	605.00	0.67%
		Variation	NB	779.00	787.00	795.00	1.02%
		Transfer	NB	841.00	849.00	855.00	0.71%
		Re-instatement	NB	841.00	849.00	855.00	0.71%
		Provisional statement	NB	1,732.00	1,749.00	1,760.00	0.63%
		Provisional statement holders	NB	753.00	761.00	770.00	1.18%
		Copy licence	NB	26.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Notification of change	NB	51.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
Adult Gaming Centre	Statutory Maximum	New application	NB	1,732.00	1,749.00	1,760.00	0.63%
		Annual fee	NB	690.00	697.00	705.00	1.15%
		Variation	NB	780.00	788.00	795.00	0.89%
		Transfer	NB	841.00	849.00	855.00	0.71%
		Re-instatement	NB	841.00	849.00	855.00	0.71%
		Provisional statement	NB	1,732.00	1,749.00	1,760.00	0.63%
		Provisional statement holders	NB	912.00	921.00	930.00	0.98%
		Copy licence	NB	26.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Notification of change	NB	26.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
Temporary Use Notices	Statutory Maximum	New application	NB	200.00	202.00	204.00	0.99%
		Copy licence	NB	26.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LICENSING FEES

Gambling Act							
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine	Statutory	Grant	NB	150.00	150.00	150.00	0.00%
		Existing operator grant	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Variation	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Transfer	NB	25.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Annual Fee	NB	50.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
		Change of name	NB	25.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Copy of permit	NB	15.00	15.00	15.00	0.00%
Lottery Registration	Statutory	New Application	NB	40.00	40.00	40.00	0.00%
	Maximum	Renewal	NB	20.00	20.00	20.00	0.00%
Licensed Premises Automatic Notification Process	Statutory Maximum	Notification	NB	50.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
Club Gaming Permits	Statutory Maximum	Grant	NB	200.00	200.00	200.00	0.00%
		Grant (Club Premises Certificate holder)	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Existing operator grant	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Variation	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Renewal	NB	200.00	200.00	200.00	0.00%
		Renewal (Club Premises Certificate holder)	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Annual Fee	NB	50.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
Club Machine Permits	Statutory Maximum	Grant	NB	200.00	200.00	200.00	0.00%
		Grant (Club Premises Certificate holder)	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Existing operator grant	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Variation	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Renewal	NB	200.00	200.00	200.00	0.00%
		Renewal (Club Premises Certificate holder)	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Annual Fee	NB	50.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permit	Statutory Maximum	Grant	NB	300.00	300.00	300.00	0.00%
		Renewal	NB	300.00	300.00	300.00	0.00%
		Existing operator grant	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Change of name	NB	25.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Copy of permit	NB	15.00	15.00	15.00	0.00%
Prize Gaming Permits	Statutory Maximum	Grant	NB	300.00	300.00	300.00	0.00%
		Renewal	NB	300.00	300.00	300.00	0.00%
		Existing operator grant	NB	100.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
		Change of name	NB	25.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
		Copy of permit	NB	15.00	15.00	15.00	0.00%
		Annual Fee	NB	20.00	20.00	20.00	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LICENSING FEES

Hackney Carriage/Private Hire							
Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Drivers Licence	Discretionary	For 1 year	NB	49.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
		For 3 years	NB	75.00	100.00	100.00	0.00%
Vehicle Licence	Discretionary	New	NB	300.00	303.00	305.00	0.66%
		Renewal	NB	280.00	283.00	285.00	0.71%
Additional Hackney Carriage & Private Hire Drivers licence	Discretionary		NB	20.00	20.00	20.00	0.00%
Private Hire Operators	Discretionary	1-3 Vehicles	NB	75.00	76.00	125.00	64.47%
		4-10 Vehicles	NB	250.00	253.00	420.00	66.01%
		11-20 Vehicles	NB	500.00	505.00	840.00	66.34%
Drivers Badge (replacement)	Discretionary		NB	10.50	11.00	11.00	0.00%
Fee for Returned (Bounced) Cheques	Discretionary		NB	16.00	16.00	16.00	0.00%
Transfer of vehicle licence (including plate)	Discretionary		NB	25.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
Replcement Plate (internal/external)	Discretionary		NB	25.00	25.00	25.00	0.00%
Additional Vehicle under an Operators Licence	Discretionary	Category 1-3 to 4-10	NB	175.00	177.00	290.00	63.84%
	Discretionary	Category 4-10 to 11-20	NB	250.00	253.00	420.00	66.01%
Replacement Licence	Discretionary		NB	10.50	11.00	11.00	0.00%
Hackney carriage knowledge test	Discretionary				50.00	50.00	0.00%
CRB	Set by Home Office		NB	44.00	44.00	44.00	0.00%

VAT Indicator:

NB = Non Business no VAT

EX = Exempt from VAT

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Parking Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Season Tickets (Ashford)						
	Edinburgh Road Reserved 12 months	VT	1,520.00	1,520.00	1,520.00	0.00%
	Flour Mills Car Park 1 month	VT	68.00	68.00	68.00	0.00%
	Flour Mills Car Park 3 months	VT	191.00	191.00	191.00	0.00%
	Flour Mills Car Park 6 months	VT	360.00	360.00	360.00	0.00%
	Flour Mills Car Park 12 months	VT	675.00	675.00	675.00	0.00%
	Town Centre 1 month	VT	76.00	76.00	76.00	0.00%
	Town Centre 3 Months	VT	215.00	215.00	215.00	0.00%
	Town Centre 6 Months	VT	405.00	405.00	405.00	0.00%
	Town Centre 12 Months	VT	760.00	760.00	760.00	0.00%
	Henwood Parking Area 1 month	VT	54.00	54.00	54.00	0.00%
	Henwood Parking Area 3 months	VT	153.00	153.00	153.00	0.00%
	Henwood Parking Area 6 months	VT	288.00	288.00	288.00	0.00%
	Henwood Parking Area 12 months	VT	540.00	540.00	540.00	0.00%
Season Tickets (Tenterden)						
	Bridewell Lane Car Park 1 month	VT	76.00	76.00	76.00	0.00%
	Bridewell Lane Car Park 3 months	VT	215.00	215.00	215.00	0.00%
	Bridewell Lane Car Park 6 months	VT	405.00	405.00	405.00	0.00%
	Bridewell Lane Car Park 12 months	VT	760.00	760.00	760.00	0.00%
	Bridewell Lane Reserved 12 months	VT	1,520.00	1,520.00	1,520.00	0.00%
	<i>*Season Tickets issued for Bridewell Lane car park are also valid in the rear car park at Tenterden Leisure Centre</i>					
	Admin Charge for loss of season ticket	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
	Admin Charge for refund of Season ticket	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Parking Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Residents Permits						
	Zone A Annual	EX	100.00	120.00	120.00	0.00%
	Zone B Annual	EX	40.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
	Zone B Annual - Off Street Residents Parking Permit	VT	135.00	135.00	135.00	0.00%
	Zone D Annual	EX	25.00	30.00	30.00	0.00%
	Zone E Annual	EX	25.00	30.00	30.00	0.00%
	Zone F Annual	EX	25.00	30.00	30.00	0.00%
	Zone G Annual	EX	25.00	30.00	30.00	0.00%
	Admin Charge for loss of permit	EX	5.00	5.00	5.00	0.00%
Other Permits						
	Visitor's permits each	EX	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Staff (decrementing) card per day	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Staff permit per month	VT	18.00	18.00	18.00	0.00%
	Admin Charge for loss of staff card/permit	VT	5.00	5.00	5.00	0.00%
	HPA parking permit annual	VT	760.00	760.00	760.00	0.00%
	DSA parking permit annual	VT	760.00	760.00	760.00	0.00%
Misc Charges						
	Waivers	VT	30.00	30.00	30.00	0.00%
	Additional Charge for occupying on street pay and display bay, per bay per day	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
	Additional Charge for occupying on street pay and display	VT	30.00	30.00	30.00	0.00%
	Bay Suspensions per month	VT	50.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
	Replacement of lost cones per cone	VT	20.00	20.00	20.00	0.00%
	Locked Car park-vehicle release fee	VT	55.00	55.00	55.00	0.00%
	Install white access highlight markings (dog-bones)	VT	0.00	121.00	121.00	0.00%
	Refresh white access highlight markings (dog-bones)	VT	0.00	158.00	158.00	0.00%
	Printing Charges Up to 5 pages per page	VT	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.00%
	Printing Charges more than 5 pages per page	VT	0.10	0.10	0.10	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Parking Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Car Park Charges (Ashford)						
	Civic Centre and Stour Centre car park minimum charge up to 2 hours	VT	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.00%
	Civic Centre and Stour Centre car park per hour over 2 hours. Linear Charge in 5p increments	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Civic Centre and Stour Centre car park charge over 4 hours Mon-Fri	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
	Civic Centre and Stour Centre car park charge over 4 hours Sat and Sun	VT	4.50	4.50	4.50	0.00%
	Civic Centre and Stour Centre car park per hour Coach Charge (Linear Charge in 5p increments)	VT	1.50	1.50	1.50	0.00%
	Civic Centre and Stour Centre car park Coach charge over 4	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
	Dover Place Car Park per hour	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Dover Place Car Park charge over 4 hours	VT	4.50	4.50	4.50	0.00%
	Edinburgh Road Car Park per hour	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Edinburgh Road Car Park charge over 4 hours	VT	4.50	4.50	4.50	0.00%
	Flour Mills Car Park per hour	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Flour Mills Car Park charge over 4 hours	VT	4.00	4.00	4.00	0.00%
	Henwood Car Park per hour	VT	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.00%
	Henwood Car Park charge over 4 hours	VT	3.20	3.20	3.20	0.00%
	Station Road Ashford Car park per hour	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Station Road Ashford Car park charge over 4 hours	VT	4.50	4.50	4.50	0.00%
	Vicarage Lane Car Park per hour	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Vicarage Lane Car Park charge over 4 hours	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Parking Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Car Park Charges (Tenterden)						
	Bridewell Lane Car Park per hour	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Bridewell Lane Car Park charge over 4 hours	VT	4.50	4.50	4.50	0.00%
	Recreation Ground Road Car Park per hour	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Recreation Ground Road Car Park charge over 4 hours	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
	Station Road Car Park Tenterden per hour	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Station Road Car Park Tenterden charge over 4 hours	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
	Station Road Car Park Tenterden per hour Coach charge	VT	1.50	1.50	1.50	0.00%
	Station Road Car Park Tenterden charge over 4 hours	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
	Tenterden Leisure Centre Car Park per hour	VT	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Tenterden Leisure Centre Car Park charge over 4 hours	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
	Tenterden Leisure Centre Car Park Coach charge per hour	VT	1.50	1.50	1.50	0.00%
	Tenterden Leisure Centre Car Park Coach charge over 4 hours	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
On Street Parking Charges						
	Charge per hour before 6pm	EX	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Charge after 6pm for parking up to 1 hour	EX	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00%
	Charge after 6pm for parking over one hour	EX	2.70	2.70	2.70	0.00%
Penalty Charge Notices						
	Lower level	EX	50.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
	Higher level	EX	70.00	70.00	70.00	0.00%

Where an actual recharge (based on hours worked) exceeds minimum figures above, the actual charge is to be levied unless commercial in which case an uplift of a minimum of 50% should be considered with Team Leader or Head of Service.

VAT Indicator:

EX = Exempt from VAT

VT = Inclusive of VAT

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Charge for the Supply of Information and Photocopies of Documents

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
General Photocopying	Per sheet of photocopy (for the first 10 sheets)	VT	0.36	0.37	0.37	0.00%
	Further Copies	VT	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.00%
Fax	First Page	VT	1.36	1.39	1.40	0.72%
	Each page thereafter	VT	0.72	0.74	0.75	1.35%
Notices and Extracts	Authenticated Building Control Regulation Approval or Completion Certificate	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
	Architects Plans (A3 & A4)	VT	0.36	0.37	0.37	0.00%
	Architects Plans (A2+)	VT	6.06	6.21	6.25	0.64%
Fact sheets	Major Development Proposals in Ashford (per page)	VT	1.66	1.70	1.71	0.59%
	All other fact sheets (per page)	VT	0.36	0.37	0.37	0.00%
Requests for Planning Information*		VT	52.50	53.50	53.90	0.75%
Requests for Building Control Information*		VT	52.50	53.50	53.90	0.75%
Inspection of approved Building Regulation Plans*		VT	52.50	53.50	53.90	0.75%
Gas and Pipeline Extracts*		VT	6.53	6.69	6.74	0.75%
Hard Copy Provision of Weekly List		VT	169.79	174.03	175.25	0.70%
Postage and Packing		VT	0.36	0.93	0.94	1.08%

*Fee for addition work on information that is freely available on website

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Sale of Documents and Room Hire

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Minutes	Council and Committees - per annum	VT	179.85	184.35	185.64	0.70%
	(excluding the Planning Committee) - per cycle	VT	36.37	37.28	37.54	0.70%
	Cabinet only - per annum	VT	119.21	122.19	123.05	0.70%
	- per cycle	VT	24.40	25.01	25.19	0.72%
	Planning Committee only - per annum	VT	119.21	122.19	123.05	0.70%
	- per cycle	VT	24.40	25.01	25.19	0.72%
	A single committee and its Sub- Committee - per annum	VT	60.46	61.97	62.40	0.69%
	(excluding the Planning Committee) - per cycle	VT	12.55	12.86	12.95	0.70%
Agendas and Reports	Council and Committees - per annum	VT	321.96	330.01	332.32	0.70%
	(excluding the Planning Committee) - per cycle	VT	64.94	66.56	67.03	0.71%
	Cabinet only - per annum	VT	602.15	617.20	621.52	0.70%
	- per cycle	VT	25.80	26.45	26.64	0.72%
	Planning Committee only - per annum	VT	602.15	617.20	621.52	0.70%
	- per cycle	VT	25.80	26.45	26.64	0.72%
	A single committee and its Sub- Committee - per annum	VT	64.94	66.56	67.03	0.71%
	(excluding the Planning Committee) - per cycle	VT	13.52	13.86	13.96	0.72%
	<i>NB Head of Legal and Democratic Services may determine a higher charge where the Agenda and Reports are in excess of 200 pages</i>					
Other Publications	Annual Budget Book / Statement of Accounts - requested by individuals	VT	8.43	8.64	8.70	0.69%
	- requested by commercial bodies	VT	41.43	42.47	42.77	0.71%
	Council Year Book	VT	3.38	3.46	3.48	0.58%
	Copy of Lease, Order etc	VT	7.42	7.61	7.66	0.66%
	Copy of Byelaws - Statutory Fee	VT	0.25	0.26	0.26	0.00%
Room Hire	Council Chamber - Up to 4 hours	VT	159.70	163.69	163.69	0.00%
	- Full Day	VT	280.33	287.34	287.34	0.00%
	- Evening after 5pm	VT	257.05	263.48	263.48	0.00%
	Committee Rooms - Up to 4 hours	VT	83.70	85.79	85.79	0.00%
	- Full Day	VT	150.33	154.09	154.09	0.00%
	- Evening after 5pm	VT	144.68	148.30	148.30	0.00%

VAT Indicator:

VT = Inclusive of VAT

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Cemetery Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Cemetery Charges - Bybrook and Willesborough Cemeteries						
Composite Burial Fee For New Graves (Includes Digging Fee, Purchase of Right of Burial for 30 years and wooden cross)	(1) Single Grave Depth	EX	1,087.00	1,114.00	1,122.00	0.72%
	(2) Double Grave Depth	EX	1,198.00	1,228.00	1,237.00	0.73%
	(3) Triple Grave Depth	EX	1,401.00	1,436.00	1,446.00	0.70%
	(4) Child under 12 months		FREE			
	(5) Child aged 1 year to 16 years (please note the digging fee is waived for the digging of children's graves but if the family wish to erect a memorial at a future date a purchase fee and permit fee will be required) <i>(NB If grave required to be reopened to enable further family burial(s) the fees in (2) and (3) apply</i>		FREE			
	(6) Cremated Remains - Garden of Remembrance Willesborough	EX	390.00	400.00	403.00	0.75%
	(7) Single grave depth - includes boarding out with timber		N/A	1,339.00	1,339.00	0.00%
Reopening of Existing Graves/Opening of Pre-Purchased Graves	(1) Single Grave Depth	EX	517.00	530.00	530.00	0.00%
	(2) Double Grave Depth	EX	629.00	645.00	650.00	0.78%
	(3) Triple Grave Depth	EX	N/A	930.00	930.00	0.00%
	(4) Cremated Remains	EX	107.00	110.00	111.00	0.91%
Additional fee for Saturday interments	(consideration may be given in special circumstances)		By negotiation			
<i>Non standard grave sizes may require the adjacent grave to be purchased if this grave is put out of use due to the over size coffin</i>						
<i>NB: A Surcharge of 100% on the above scale of charges is made for persons who live outside the Ashford borough (this is common practice with other authorities</i>						

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Cemetery Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Cemetery Charges - Tenterden Cemetery						
Composite Burial Fee For New Graves (Includes Digging Fee, Purchase of Right of Burial for 30 years and wooden cross)	(1) Single Grave Depth	EX	1,090.00	1,117.00	1,125.00	0.72%
	(2) Single Grave Depth (plus purchase of right of burial in adjoining grave) (i.e. single depth charge plus purchase charge)	EX	1,557.00	1,596.00	1,607.00	0.69%
	(3) Child under 12 months	EX	FREE			
	(4) Child aged 1 year to and including 16 years (please note the digging fee is waived for the digging of children's graves but if the family wish to erect a memorial at a future date a purchase fee and permit fee will be required)	EX	FREE			
	(5) Cremated Remains - Garden of Remembrance - Large Plot	EX	458.00	469.00	472.00	0.64%
	(6) Cremated Remains - Garden of Remembrance - Small Plot	EX	308.00	318.00	326.00	2.52%
Reopening of Existing Graves/Opening of Pre-Purchased Graves	(1) Single Grave Depth	EX	587.00	602.00	606.00	0.66%
	(2) Double Grave Depth	EX	694.00	711.00	716.00	0.70%
	(3) Cremated Remains	EX	177.00	181.00	182.00	0.55%
Additional fee for Saturday interments	(consideration may be given in special circumstances)		By negotiation			
<i>Non standard grave sizes may require the adjacent grave to be purchased if this grave is put out of use due to the over size coffin</i>						
<i>NB: A Surcharge of 100% on the above scale of charges is made for persons who live outside the Ashford borough (this is common practice with other authorities)</i>						

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Cemetery Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Cemetery Charges - All Cemeteries						
Purchase of Right of Burial for 30 years (Applies to pre-purchase of graves and where burial rights were not purchased)	(1) One grave space	EX	494.00	510.00	510.00	0.00%
	(2) One cremation plot - (holds 4 sets of ashes)	EX	276.00	283.00	285.00	0.71%
	(3) One child grave aged 1 year to 16 years	EX	N/A	170.00	170.00	0.00%
Right to erect a memorial	(1) Right to erect a headstone or tablet (including inscription to one person) - Adult - Child under 12 months - Child aged 1 to 16 years	EX	162.00	166.00	167.00	0.60%
		EX	FREE			
		EX	HALF ADULT FEE			
	(2) Right to erect a kerbstone (including inscription to one person) - Adult - Child to 16 years	EX	233.00	239.00	241.00	0.84%
		EX	HALF ADULT FEE			
	(3) Additional inscription (per person after first)	EX	54.00	55.00	55.00	0.00%
	(4) Right to place a vase (including inscription to one person)	EX	N/A	80.00	80.00	0.00%
	Purchase of wooden cross including plaque	(Ashford Borough Cemeteries only)	EX	39.00	40.00	40.00
EX						
Family managed burials	Additional administrative cost of this option	EX	161.00	165.00	166.00	0.61%
Family history search	Per Name	EX	25.00	26.00	26.00	0.00%
	Over 4 Names	EX	77.00	79.00	80.00	1.27%
<i>NB: A Surcharge of 100% on the above scale of charges is made for persons who live outside the Ashford borough (this is common practice with other authorities)</i>						
Maintenance of graves	(1) Maintenance and Planting twice yearly with plants supplied by the Council	NB	152.00	156.00	157.00	0.64%
	(2) Cleaning of kerbstone (per annum)	NB	90.00	92.00	93.00	1.09%
	(3) Cleaning of headstone or memorial (per annum)	NB	151.00	155.00	156.00	0.65%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Cemetery Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Woodland Burials						
Bybrook Cemetery	Woodland Burial Fee excluding coffin, but including tree					
	- one grave	EX	700.00	718.00	723.00	0.70%
	- two adjacent graves	EX	1,307.00	1,340.00	1,349.00	0.67%
	Interment of cremated remains (in grave space) including casket and tree*	EX	602.00	617.00	621.00	0.65%
	Selection of grave space <i>(* These fees may be prepaid)</i>	EX	85.00	87.00	88.00	1.15%
Tenterden Cemetery	Woodland Burial Fee excluding coffin, but including tree					
	- one grave	EX	763.00	782.00	787.00	0.64%
	- two adjacent graves	EX	1,372.00	1,406.00	1,416.00	0.71%
	Interment of cremated remains (in grave space) including casket and tree*	EX	670.00	687.00	692.00	0.73%
	Selection of grave space <i>(* These fees may be prepaid)</i>	EX	85.00	87.00	88.00	1.15%
All Cemeteries	Further interment of cremated remains including casket					
	- Ashford	EX	125.00	128.00	129.00	0.78%
	- Tenterden	EX	190.00	195.00	196.00	0.51%
	Interment of a child to 16 years (NOT including coffin or tree)	EX	Free			
	Grave reservation	EX	169.00	173.00	174.00	0.58%
	Selection of grave space	EX	85.00	87.00	88.00	1.15%

NB: A Surcharge of 100% on the above scale of charges is made for persons who live outside the Ashford borough (this is common practice with other authorities)

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Cemetery Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Other Related Charges						
Memorial Bench with Dedication Inscription (Subject to space being		EX	617.00	AT COST	AT COST	N/A
Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burial	per request	EX		50.00	50.00	0.00%
Late arrival at cemetery of more than 30 mins		NB		100.00	100.00	0.00%
Extend exclusive right of burial for a period of 5 years	No more than 30 years can be held at one time	EX		85.00	85.00	0.00%
To inter 2 or more sets of ashes at the same time	additional fee to cover admin costs	EX		25.00	25.00	0.00%
Exhumation of coffin if reburying in the same plot		VT		AT COST	AT COST	N/A
Exhumation of coffin if reburying in a different plot		EX		AT COST	AT COST	N/A

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17**SPORTING CHARGES**

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
SPORTING HIRE CHARGES						
Football Grass Pitch at Spearpoint/Pitchside Adult	Per season	VT	466.00	478.00	481.00	0.63%
Football Grass Pitch at Spearpoint/Pitchside Junior	Per season	VT	250.00	256.00	258.00	0.78%

All price changes effective 1st September 2016 subject to approval.

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DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Monitoring Centre

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Telecare/Lifeline						
Telecare Lifeline Installation (Within Kent)	One Off Payment per client	VT	30.44	30.00	30.00	0.00%
Telecare Lifeline Installation (Outside Kent)	One Off Payment per client	VT			60.00	
Telecare Lifeline Monitoring and Equipment Hire	Annual Fee per client	VT	145.83	154.99	154.99	0.00%
Telecare Lifeline Monitoring and Equipment Hire including TES	Annual Fee per client	VT	156.67	159.99	167.49	4.69%
Telecare Monitoring Fee only (no longer available to clients) - for purchased equipment - Prior to 1/04/11	Annual	VT	22.46	24.99	26.99	8.00%
TES Card monitoring for existing customers _Prior to 01/04/2014	One Off Payment per client	VT		10.56	12.50	18.37%
Supply of Second Pendant sensor	One off payment per client	VT	66.67	49.99	49.99	0.00%
Supply of Key safe - new style	One Off Payment per client	VT	70.83	72.60	73.50	1.24%
Supply of Key release Door Chain new style	One Off Payment per client	VT	27.50	28.19	58.99	109.26%
Telecare/Lifeline Equipment	Replacement of Equipment due to Damage/Non Return	VT	191.67	191.67	191.46	-0.11%
Additional sensor installation	One Off Payment per client per visit for install of items	VT	30.44	30.00	30.00	0.00%
Additional sensor Installation (Outside Kent)	One Off Payment per client	VT			60.00	
Purchase of Safe Socket	One off payment per safe socket required	VT	20.83	21.35	21.49	0.66%
Purchase of BT Cable for Lifeline	One off payment per BT cable required	VT	11.00	11.28	11.49	1.86%
Purchase of Fall Detector	One off payment per fall detector	VT	145.00	99.99	99.99	0.00%
Purchase of Carbon Monoxide Detector	One off payment per Carbon Monoxide Detector	VT	140.00	114.99	114.99	0.00%
Purchase of Flood Detector	One off payment per Flood Detector	VT	116.49	99.99	99.99	0.00%
Purchase of Pendant Easy Press	One off payment per Pendant Easy Press	VT	15.00	15.38	15.49	0.72%
Purchase of Smoke Alarm Detector	One off payment per Smoke Alarm Detector	VT	118.16	99.99	99.99	0.00%
Purchase of Power Cable	One off payment per Power Cable	VT	30.00	30.75	30.99	0.78%
Legionnaire Security Ltd: security checks for Liverpool, London & St Christopher Sites	Monthly Fee per site	VT	28.31	30.11	30.11	0.00%
Guardian Staff Safety	Monthly Fee	VT	68.33	70.04	70.04	0.00%

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DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LEGAL & ELECTORAL SERVICES

Legal Fees

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
S9 Agreements	(including caution/note on Register)	NB	291.00	298.00	300.00	0.67%
S9 Transfers	Plus Land Registry Fees	NB	291.00	298.00	300.00	0.67%
S106 agreements		NB	847.00	868.00	874.00	0.69%
Grazing Licences		NB	106.00	109.00	110.00	0.92%
Licences to Assign		NB	200.00	200.00	201.00	0.50%
Sales or Easements	Up to £2,500 in value	NB	285.00	285.00	287.00	0.70%
Sales or Easements	over £2,500 in value - Basic Fee of £300.00 plus 1% of sale price	NB	320.00	320.00	322.00	0.63%
Ellingham Leases		NB	310.00	310.00	312.00	0.65%
Ellingham lease renewals		NB	210.00	210.00	211.00	0.48%
Surrenders		NB	190.00	190.00	191.00	0.53%
Landlord consent etc		NB	100.00	100.00	101.00	1.00%
Transfer of Equity (mortgage)		NB	206.00	211.00	212.00	0.47%
Redemptions		NB	106.00	109.00	110.00	0.92%
Mortgagees Enquiries		NB	90.00	92.00	93.00	1.09%
Deed of Postponement		NB	90.00	90.00	91.00	1.11%
Release of expired Statutory Charge		NB	95.00	97.00	98.00	1.03%
Waiver (Improvement Grant)		NB	95.00	97.00	98.00	1.03%
Notice of Charge		NB	60.00	60.00	60.00	0.00%
Counterpart Lease		NB	60.00	60.00	60.00	0.00%
Engross Transfer/conveyance		NB	50.00	50.00	50.00	0.00%
Notice to Assign		NB	60.00	60.00	60.00	0.00%
Wayleaves		NB	175.00	175.00	176.00	0.57%

The above represent a minimum level of charge, not a fixed level of charge.

Where the value of the time worked on a matter exceeds the proposed charge stated above, the value of the time will be charged unless it is deemed by the Head of Legal Services to not be commercial or reasonable to charge the full cost.

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

LEGAL & ELECTORAL SERVICES

Electoral Services

Confirmation of Registration letters	Letters required due to the credit reference agencies not updating their information	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
Postal votes pack	Postal votes pack (Charge to Parish Councils for by-elections)	VT	1.30	1.30	1.30	0.00%
Poll Cards	Poll card (Charge to Parish Councils for by-elections)	VT	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.00%
Statutory Charges (restricted availability for full register and overseas lists)						
Sales of full and edited register	Data £20 plus £1.50 per 1,000 entries or part of 1,000	NB	21.50	21.50	21.50	0.00%
Sales of full and edited register	Printed £10 plus £5 per 1,000 or part of 1,000	NB	15.00	15.00	15.00	0.00%
Overseas electors List	Data £20 plus £1.50 per 100 entries or part of 100	NB	21.50	21.50	21.50	0.00%
Overseas electors List	Printed £10 plus £1.50 per 100 or part of 100	NB	11.50	11.50	11.50	0.00%

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DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Property Services

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Licences - valuation	If external valuers are appointed, the charge will be the amount invoiced by the valuer.	EX	at cost recovery	at cost recovery	at cost recovery	N/A
Licences - inspection/administration	The cost of the site inspection has not previously been charged for. The fee may be £75 or £100 depending upon whether a new boundary fence needs to be erected.	VT	180.00	185.00	186.00	0.54%
Land sales - valuation	If external valuers are appointed, the charge will be the amount invoiced by the valuer.	EX	at cost recovery	at cost recovery	at cost recovery	n/a
Land sales - inspection/administration	Cost of the site inspection	VT	180.00	185.00	186.00	0.54%
Easements - valuation	If external valuers are appointed, the charge will be the amount invoiced by the valuer.	EX	at cost recovery	at cost recovery	at cost recovery	N/A
Easements - administration		VT	120.00	125.00	126.00	0.80%
Release of covenant - valuation	If external valuers are appointed, the charge will be the amount invoiced by the valuer.	EX	at cost recovery	at cost recovery	at cost recovery	N/A
Release of covenant - administration		VT	120.00	125.00	126.00	0.80%
Boundary disputes	Charge only applies if unlawful encroachment on Council land is found to have occurred. Final cost will depend upon complexity of dispute.	EX	180.00	185.00	186.00	0.54%
Wayleaves - inspection/administration	The cost of the site inspection has not previously been charged for.	VT	120.00	125.00	126.00	0.80%
Standard garage	charge per week	EX	7.18	7.37	7.47	1.36%
Premium garage	charge per week	EX	8.13	8.35	8.47	1.44%

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DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Other Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Land Charges						
Standard Search Fee	Domestic Properties	NB				Cost Recovery
	Non-Domestic Properties	NB				
Extra Questions		NB				
	All Land Charges Fees are to be set at on full cost recovery Basis - these need to be reviewed periodically throughout the year to ensure that this is achieved.					Cost Recovery
Street Administration						
Street Naming and numbering	1 Unit	NB	47.00	48.00	49.00	2.08%
	2-10 units	NB	40.00	41.00	42.00	2.44%
	Over 10 units	NB	36.00	37.00	38.00	2.70%
New Street Name		NB	112.00	115.00	120.00	4.35%
Rename Existing Street		NB	250.00	256.00	256.00	0.00%
Address Change	per property	NB	47.00	48.00	49.00	2.08%
Building Control						
Discretionary Works	Including Party Wall surveying, Fire Risk assessments, Access audits, SBEM, SAP ratings and other surveying activities	VT				Cost Recovery
Exempt Letters		VT	38.00	39.00	40.00	2.56%
Waste Collection						
Bulky Collection	Base Charge	NB	23.00	24.00	24.00	0.00%
Garden Waste Bins	Wheelie Bin for Garden Waste - Previously agreed by	NB	32.50	35.00	35.00	0.00%
Garden Waste Bins (DD charge)	Wheelie Bin for Garden Waste	NB	N/A	32.50	32.50	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Other Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Dog Warden Fees						
Stray Dogs	Statutory fee for dog not being on lead	NB	25.00	26.00	26.00	0.00%
Dog Control Costs	Collection/delivery of dog	NB	40.00	40.00	40.00	0.00%
Kennelling costs	Pe 24 hour period, day one due on admission	NB	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
Administration charge	Office Hours	NB	15.00	15.00	15.00	0.00%
	Outside Office Hours	NB	30.00	30.00	30.00	0.00%
Vetinary Treatment	As required	NB	Cost Recovery			
Pest Control						
Wasp nest	Customer on Benefits	VT	20.50	21.00	58.50	178.57%
	Customer not on Benefits	VT	45.50	46.00	58.50	27.17%
Additional Wasp nest	Customer on Benefits	VT	3.50	4.00	10.00	150.00%
	Customer not on Benefits	VT	8.00	8.00	10.00	25.00%
Rats & Mice		VT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%
Ants		VT	23.50	23.50	30.00	27.66%
Bedbugs & Cockroaches	Up to six rooms	VT	0.00	0.00	280.00	0.00%
	Additional four rooms	VT	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%
Fleas	Customer on Benefits - up to six rooms	VT	27.50	27.50	70.00	154.55%
	Customer not on Benefits - up to six rooms	VT	55.00	55.00	70.00	27.27%
	Additional four rooms	VT	10.00	10.00	10.00	0.00%
Other Household Pests (Flies, Lice, Silverfish)	Customer on Benefits	VT	27.50	27.50	70.00	154.55%
	Customer not on Benefits	VT	55.00	55.00	70.00	27.27%
Chilmington Road Travellers Site						
Rent	Charge per week	NB	45.00	46.00	46.00	0.00%
Service Charge	Charge per week	NB	40.46	40.46	40.46	0.00%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Other Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Mobile Homes						
Annual monitoring fee		NB	NA	30.00	30.00	0.00%
Check & Depositing Site Rules		NB	NA	60.00	60.40	0.67%
Site Licence Application Fees	Band 1 - 1-10 pitches	NB	NA	385.50	388.20	0.70%
	Band 2 - 11-50 pitches	NB	NA	450.49	453.60	0.69%
	Band 3 - 51-99 pitches	NB	NA	627.00	631.40	0.70%
	Band 4 - 100-199 pitches	NB	NA	756.99	762.30	0.70%
	Band 5 - 200+ pitches	NB	NA	936.99	943.50	0.69%
Application to transfer a site licence	Band 1 - 1-10 pitches	NB	NA	77.10	77.60	0.65%
	Band 2 - 11-50 pitches	NB	NA	90.10	90.70	0.67%
	Band 3 - 51-99 pitches	NB	NA	125.40	126.30	0.72%
	Band 4 - 100-199 pitches	NB	NA	151.40	152.50	0.73%
	Band 5 - 200+ pitches	NB	NA	187.40	188.70	0.69%
Application to amend a site licence	Band 1 - 1-10 pitches	NB	NA	128.50	129.40	0.70%
	Band 2 - 11-50 pitches	NB	NA	150.16	151.20	0.69%
	Band 3 - 51-99 pitches	NB	NA	209.00	210.50	0.72%
	Band 4 - 100-199 pitches	NB	NA	252.33	254.10	0.70%
	Band 5 - 200+ pitches	NB	NA	312.33	314.50	0.70%
Allotment Rents						
Plot rent		EX	4.40	5.00	6.00	20.00%
Key Deposit		EX			25.00	N/A
Concessionary rate rent	50% for 1st 5 perch, full price after	EX			3.00	N/A
Council Tax Collection						
Court costs	Summons costs	NB	60.00	60.00	60.00	0.00%
	Liability orders	NB	65.00	65.00	65.00	0.00%
Business Rates						
Court costs	Summons costs	NB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%
	Liability orders	NB	180.00	180.00	180.00	0.00%
Homelessness						
Copy of File		VT	13.40	13.70	13.80	0.73%

DISCRETIONARY & STATUTORY FEES 2016/17

Other Charges

Item	Description/Comments	VAT Indicator	Charge 2014/15 £	Charge 2015/16 £	Proposed Charge 2016/17 £	Increase / Decrease on 2015/16 %
Private Sector Housing						
Charge for service of enforcement notices Housing Act 2004	Incorporating improvement notices, prohibition orders, emergency remedial action, emergency prohibition orders, demolition orders	NB	300.00 per notice	300.00 per notice	300.00 per notice	0.00%
Charge to carry out inspections in respect of a UK entry application		NB	80.00	82.00	83.00	1.22%
Making a prohibition notice (Housing Act 2004 sec 20 or 21)	Discretion regarding matters relating to over-crowding, but other issues which require a notice to be charged at £300	NB			300.00	N/A
Charge for making an emergency prohibition order - Housing Act 2004		NB			200.00	N/A
Charge for undertaking emergency remedial action (Housing Act 2004)	Charge between £100 - £500, depending on the extent of emergency works carried out	VT			100.00 - 500.00	N/A
Penalty Charge notices - the smoke and carbon monoxide alarm regulations 2015	First Offence £1500, an early payment will attract a discount of 25% making it £1,125	NB			1500.00	N/A
	For subsequent offences the penalty will be £3,500 to deter continued non-compliance. No early payment discount would apply	NB			3500.00	N/A
House in Multiple Occupation Licence Fee	Five Year Licence - 1st property	NB	370.00	380.00	383.00	0.79%
	Five Year Licence - subsequent properties	NB	340.00	350.00	352.00	0.57%
ABC Lettings						
Management charge	Agreed with landlord	VT	10% -12.5%	10% -12.5%	10% -12.5%	0.00%
Landlords one-off set up fee		VT	250.00	250.00	250.00	0.00%
Repairs Service		VT		Cost +10%	Cost +10%	0.00%
Sewerage Services						
Unmeasured Water - Supplies to premises without rateable value		EX	337.71	337.71	337.71	N/A
Tourist Information Service						
Ticket Sales - Charitable Organisations	Per ticket VAT charged on commission	VT	10%	10%	10%	0.00%
Ticket Sales - Commercial	Per ticket VAT charged on commission	VT	10%	10%	10%	0.00%
Ticket Sales - Revelations St. Mary's	Per Ticket 10% charge of face value to customers	VT	10%	10%	10%	0.00%
West End Theatre Tokens	Per ticket VAT charged on commission	VT	5%	5%	5%	0.00%
Accommodation Booking Fees	Set fee paid by customer	VT	3.50	5.00	5.00	0.00%
Ticket Sales - Leas Cliff Hall	Per ticket (no commission paid by organisations)	VT	1.25	1.25	1.25	0.00%
Credit Card Payments	Charge per booking on Agency Sales	VT	1.50	1.50	1.50	0.00%

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Appendix H

Ashford Borough Council Community Impact Assessments Stage 1 - Screening tool

General information		
1.	Name/s of policy, procedure, or practice:	The Budget
2.	Service:	Financial Services
3.	Policy Owner:	Head of Finance
4.	Lead officer:	Head of Finance
5.	Date of screening:	19/01/2016
6.	Is this a proposed or existing policy, procedure or practice?	Approved annually
6b.	Does this policy link with others	Linked to the Five Year Corporate plan and individual Service Plans
Aims of policy and monitoring arrangements		
7.	What are the overall aim/s or purpose of the policy, procedure or practice?	<p>The budget translates the Corporate Plan into resource allocations across services and projects to meet the council's priorities and statutory responsibilities.</p> <p>The council has a requirement to set a balanced budget and also sets the level of council tax, which are important purposes of the report.</p>
8.	Who is intended to benefit from the policy, procedure or practice?	The budget seeks to ensure that services have the resources necessary to implement the council's Corporate Plan – allocating resources according to the priorities outlined in the Plan
9.	Are any other Services involved in the delivery of the policy, procedure or practice within Housing Services and the council?	All services are involved in the delivery of this policy. Each service will need to complete a separate impact assessment to assess the delivery of services and implications for the community.
10.	Are any partner agencies involved in the delivery of the policy, procedure or practice?	<p>The budget sets levels of funding offered to external bodies such as parish councils, the voluntary sector, etc.</p> <p>Parish Councils have been consulted on the method of calculation of the grant for Council Tax Support and Concurrent grant</p> <p>The Council Tax Support Scheme has completed a detailed process of consultation</p>

		and its own Equalities Impact Assessment.
11.	Do you monitor the policy, procedure or practice in relation to any of the following?	<input type="checkbox"/> Complaints <input type="checkbox"/> Eligibility criteria <input type="checkbox"/> PIs <input type="checkbox"/> Service uptake <input type="checkbox"/> User satisfaction <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Financial performance is monitored monthly and reported to members and team at quarterly intervals
12.	If you answered yes to any of the above, do you collect this data broken down by any of the following?	<input type="checkbox"/> Age <input type="checkbox"/> Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Gender Identity <input type="checkbox"/> Faith <input type="checkbox"/> Race <input type="checkbox"/> Sexual orientation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other Language, Income & Employment Income and Expenditure against budget headings.
13.	Has any related consultation with service users taken place on the policy, procedure or practice within the last two years?	Yes – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corporate Planning process included extensive consultation with the public, Members, staff and key interest groups, including public questionnaires. • All services are consulted in the budget build process. • Members have extensive input into the budget and MTFP. • There is statutory business rate payer's consultation. • Parish Council working group to discuss impacts on parish council funding.

Making a judgement

		Yes	No	Issue / evidence
14.	Does the evidence considered above indicate that the policy, procedure or practice affects any groups differently, or that needs may be unmet?	Possibly		<p>The budget seeks to allocate the limited resources of the council to meet its priorities. This has to balance the needs of the service users with the ability of the council to generate funding.</p> <p>Government control the level of council tax increases and the level of grant funding.</p> <p>Against the context of funding cuts and increased demand for services, therefore it is likely that some needs will be un-met.</p> <p>Changes to concurrent grant could affect households in parished areas, however un-parished areas may be effected more greatly by general service reductions which may, in other areas be provided by parish councils with funding raised through their precepts.</p> <p>Council Tax Support Schemes will impact differently upon residents, this has been assessed in detail.</p>
15.	<p>Age</p> <p>Older people (50+)</p> <p>Single younger people (16-25)</p> <p>Households with children</p>	<p>Possibly – Disabled Facilities Grants</p> <p>Possibly</p> <p>Possibly</p>		<p>The resource allocation for DFG's is often below demand for the service resulting in delays in these grants.</p> <p>The provision of some services is not even across the borough (rural areas).</p>

16.	Disability	Mobility/ Sensory/ Learning/ Mental health			<p>Council tax is charged on a household basis and therefore there is no discrimination on grounds of disability for council tax billing</p> <p>The Council Tax Support Scheme will impact upon this group however additional protection has been built into the scheme for disabled people</p>
17.	Gender	Women Men Transgender			<p>Council tax is charged on a household basis and therefore there is no discrimination on grounds of gender for council tax billing</p>
18.	Race	White Mixed Asian or Asian British Black or Black British Chinese or other ethnic group Other not listed			<p>Council tax is charged on a household basis and therefore there is no discrimination on grounds of race for council tax billing.</p> <p>As part of the introduction of the screening tool all services were tasked with reviewing their service delivery to see whether there was any discrimination in service delivery. The budget is not seeking to end any services or make changes to frontline service delivery.</p>
19.	Religion & Belief	Faith Groups			<p>Council tax is charged on a household basis and therefore there is no discrimination on grounds of religion for council tax billing</p> <p>As above services have already reviewed their service delivery as part of the stage 1 CIA screening process.</p>
20.	Sexual orientation	Lesbians Gay men Bisexuals			<p>Council tax is charged on a household basis and therefore there is no discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation for council tax billing</p>

Conclusions		
21.	If the policy, procedure or practice affects any group differently, can this be legally justified?	<p>Currently the budget does not discriminate, however the Council Tax Support Scheme will impact upon groups differently, a full assessment has been completed.</p> <p>Parish councils do not specifically represent a single group in population but the wider community. The concurrent grant is primarily used for the maintenance of parish assets (grass cutting, play areas, etc) and therefore a reduction in this grant is not going to impact upon them.</p>
22.	Does the policy, procedure or practice miss any opportunities to promote equality or good inter-group relations?	The budgets role is to set council tax, provide a framework to measure performance and to allocate resources to match the priorities established within the business plan.
23.	Is there a need to gather more information than is currently available to assess the impact of the policy, procedure or practice?	It is recommended that each Service Manager be tasked with completing this process before changes to services are introduced.
24.	Is it possible to easily modify this policy, procedure or practice to address any issues highlighted above? Please give details of how and when this could be implemented.	No – the Financial situation gives the council a reducing resource base and increasing demands for services. Therefore it is becoming increasingly difficult to balance these conflicts and not impact upon unfairly on minority groups within the borough.
Conclusions		
25.	Based on your answers to the questions above, what is the relative priority of this policy,	Medium – Individual Services will look at discrimination for service provision, if a regular theme of those reviews suggests that financial resources are the key factor baring minorities from accessing our services then perhaps we need to elevate this higher.

	procedure or practice for full assessment?	
26.	If you identified this policy, procedure or practice as a medium or high priority, why was this?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> It is a major policy, procedure or practice, in terms of its scale or significance for ABC's activities <input type="checkbox"/> High relevance to equality, equal opportunities or good inter-group relations / likely to have a significant impact on people from diverse groups <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Possible/actual negative impact identified. <input type="checkbox"/> Insufficient information/evidence to make a judgement. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
27.	Please indicate the date a full assessment is proposed to commence:	TBC

Appendix I

Budget Housing Revenue Account 2016/17

SUBJECTIVE ANALYSIS - 2016/17 ESTIMATE						
Housing Revenue Account						
	Hra - Admin	Hra - Income	Hra - New Builds	Hra - Other	Hra - Repairs	Total
EXPENDITURE						
Employees	2,381,820	-	175,360	-	-	2,557,180
Premises	743,180	-	105,000	-	3,416,760	4,264,940
Supplies and Services	544,770	-	210,000	358,000	33,000	1,145,770
Transport	124,750	-	9,280	-	-	134,030
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	3,794,520	-	499,640	358,000	3,449,760	8,101,920
INCOME						
Grants	-	-	-	(2,999,850)	-	(2,999,850)
Fees & Charges	(55,120)	(24,272,210)	-	(12,780)	-	(24,340,110)
TOTAL INCOME	(55,120)	(24,272,210)	-	(3,012,630)	-	(27,339,960)
NET CONTROLLABLE EXPENDITURE	3,739,400	(24,272,210)	499,640	(2,654,630)	3,449,760	(19,238,040)
NON CONTROLLABLE ITEMS						
Support Services	1,130,010	-	44,620	893,090	-	2,067,720
Capital Charges	(80,000)	-	300,650	20,224,160	-	20,444,810
Recharges	(105,100)	-	-	-	-	(105,100)
Transfers to/from Reserves	-	-	-	-	-	-
TOTAL NON-CONTROLLABLE ITEMS	944,910	-	345,270	21,117,250	-	22,407,430
NET EXPENDITURE	4,684,310	(24,272,210)	844,910	18,462,620	3,449,760	3,169,390

Appendix J

Capital Programme

Capital Programme 2016/17 - 2018/19						
	Current budget £	Previous Exp £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £
Community & Housing						
Planned Maintenance funded from capital	2,000,000	127,906	811,060	534,770	500,000	500,000
Acquisition of Property	6,000,000		4,383,720	1,616,280	0	0
Property Company Acquisitions	10,000,000	1,121,000	2,000,000	2,500,000	2,500,000	1,879,000
International House Works	650,000	193,130	2,550	230,000	224,320	0
Parking Machine Replacement	270,000	0	0	180,000	90,000	0
Mandatory Disabled Facility Grants						
Expenditure	1,641,884	0	410,471	410,471	410,471	410,471
External Funding	(1,281,884)	0	(320,471)	(320,471)	(320,471)	(320,471)
	360,000	0	90,000	90,000	90,000	90,000
Total - Community & Housing	20,561,884	1,442,036	7,607,801	5,471,521	3,724,791	2,789,471
Culture & the Environment						
Julie Rose Stadium Environmental Improvements	100,000	0	0	100,000	0	0
Single Grants Gateway Fund	300,000	0	75,000	75,000	75,000	75,000
Market Gates and Associated Works	20,000	0	4,000	8,000	8,000	0
Park Farm S & E (MUGA)						
Expenditure	250,000	0	100,000	150,000	0	0
External Funding	(250,000)	0	(100,000)	(150,000)	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Park Farm S & E (Bridge Field Play & Amenities)						
Expenditure	650,000	0	20,000	630,000	0	0
External Funding	(650,000)	0	(20,000)	(630,000)	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Repton Park Community Centre						
Expenditure	1,892,000	27,947	100,000	882,053	882,000	0
External Funding	(1,892,000)	(27,947)	(100,000)	(882,053)	(882,000)	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Brisley Farm - Community Leisure						
Expenditure	133,000	21,640	30,000	10,000	71,360	0
External Funding	(133,000)	(21,640)	(30,000)	(10,000)	(71,360)	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0
Stour Centre CHP, Roofing & PV Panels	2,060,000	1,322,300	36,000	701,700	0	0
Grounds Maintenance Depot	1,051,750	0	0	1,051,750	0	0
Grounds Maintenance Machinery	460,515	0	0	460,515	0	0
Spearpoint Pavilion						
Expenditure	918,888	0	20,000	898,888	0	0
External Funding	(788,888)	0	(20,000)	(768,888)	0	0
	130,000	0	0	130,000	0	0
Total Culture & the Environment	7,836,153	1,371,887	385,000	4,967,906	1,036,360	75,000
General Fund Total	28,398,037	2,813,923	7,992,801	10,439,427	4,761,151	2,864,471
HRA Capital Works						
Programmed Works	0	0	5,699,000	4,465,000	4,962,300	5,267,000
Oak Tree Road (Rebuild)	800,000	0	0	800,000	0	0
Farrow Court Redevelopment (inc Sheltered Housing)						
Expenditure	15,400,000	5,294,531	4,795,380	5,310,089	0	0
External Funding	(4,060,000)	(307,985)	(3,752,015)	0	0	0
	11,340,000	4,986,546	1,043,365	5,310,089	0	0
Total HRA	16,200,000	5,294,531	10,494,380	10,575,089	4,962,300	5,267,000
Total Capital Spend	44,598,037	8,108,454	18,487,181	21,014,516	9,723,451	8,131,471

Capital Programme 2016/17 - 2018/19						
	Current budget £	Previous Exp £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £
CAPITAL SUMMARY						
Community & Housing	20,561,884	1,442,036	7,607,801	5,471,521	3,724,791	2,789,471
Culture & the Environment	7,836,153	1,371,887	385,000	4,967,906	1,036,360	75,000
GENERAL FUND	28,398,037	2,813,923	7,992,801	10,439,427	4,761,151	2,864,471
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT	16,200,000	5,294,531	10,494,380	10,575,089	4,962,300	5,267,000
TOTAL CAPITAL PROGRAMME	44,598,037	8,108,454	18,487,181	21,014,516	9,723,451	8,131,471

Funding Statement 2016/17 - 2018/19						
	Current budget £	Previous Exp £	2015/16 £	2016/17 £	2017/18 £	2018/19 £
Funding Source						
Capital Receipts - GF	660,000	0	165,000	165,000	165,000	165,000
Borrowing GF	22,222,265	2,764,336	4,634,725	7,095,015	3,224,320	2,379,000
External grants & contributions HRA	4,060,000	307,985	3,752,015	0	0	0
External grants & contributions GF	4,995,772	49,587	590,471	2,761,412	1,273,831	320,471
Major Repairs Reserve HRA	0	0	5,699,000	4,465,000	4,962,300	5,267,000
New Initiative Reserve	0	0	2,598,605	0	0	0
Repairs & Renewals Reserve	270,000	0	0	180,000	90,000	0
Other Reserve HRA	12,140,000	4,986,546	1,043,365	6,110,089	0	0
Other Reserve GF	250,000	0	4,000	238,000	8,000	0
	44,598,037	8,108,454	18,487,181	21,014,516	9,723,451	8,131,471
External Grants						
Homes & Communities Agency (HCA)	4,060,000	307,985	3,752,015	0	0	0
Section 106	3,085,625	49,587	250,000	1,671,598	953,360	0
Disabled Facility Grants	1,281,884	0	320,471	320,471	320,471	320,471
Football Foundation	469,678	0	11,415	458,263	0	0
Sports Foundation	150,000	0	0	150,000	0	0
Other contributors	8,585	0	8,585	161,080	0	0
	9,055,772	357,572	4,342,486	2,761,412	1,273,831	320,471

Appendix K

PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS & MRP Policy 2016/17 TO 2019/20

Prudential Indicators 2016/17 to 2018/19

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to have regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities* (the Prudential Code) when determining how much money it can afford to borrow. The objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure, within a clear framework, that the capital investment plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable, and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice. To demonstrate that the Authority has fulfilled these objectives, the Prudential Code sets out the following indicators that must be set and monitored each year.

Estimates of Capital Expenditure: The Authority's planned capital expenditure and financing may be summarised as follows. Further detail is provided in the capital programme, see **Appendix J**.

Capital Expenditure and Financing	2015/16 Revised £,000	2016/17 Estimate £,000	2017/18 Estimate £,000	2018/19 Estimate £,000
General Fund	6,196	7,986	2,158	614
HRA	10,494	9,775	4,962	5,267
Total Expenditure	16,690	17,762	7,121	5,881
Capital Receipts	165	165	165	165
Reserves	6,949	10,240	5,060	5,267
Borrowing	5,233	4,595	622	129
External Grants	4,342	2,761	1,274	320
Total Financing	16,690	17,762	7,121	5,881

Estimates of Capital Financing Requirement: The Capital Financing Requirement (CFR) measures the Authority's underlying need to borrow for a capital purpose.

Capital Financing Requirement	31.03.16 Revised £,000	31.03.17 Estimate £,000	31.03.18 Estimate £,000	31.03.19 Estimate £,000
General Fund	15,464	22,524	25,748	28,128
HRA	146,067	146,067	146,067	146,067
Total CFR	161,531	168,591	171,815	174,195

The CFR is forecast to rise by £12.66m over the next three years as capital expenditure financed by debt outweighs resources put aside for debt repayment.

Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement: In order to ensure that over the medium term debt will only be for a capital purpose, the Authority should ensure that debt does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of capital financing requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional capital financing requirement for the current and next two financial years. This is a key indicator of prudence.

Debt	31.03.16 Revised £,000	31.03.17 Estimate £,000	31.03.18 Estimate £,000	31.03.19 Estimate £,000
Borrowing	0	15,200	18,424	20,804
HRA	119,664	117,664	114,664	113,664
PFI liabilities	27,159	26,719	26,217	25,649
Total Debt	146,823	159,583	159,305	160,117

Total debt is expected to remain below the CFR during the forecast period.

Operational Boundary for External Debt: The operational boundary is based on the Authority's estimate of most likely (i.e. prudent but not worst case) scenario for external debt. It links directly to the Authority's estimates of capital expenditure, the capital financing requirement and cash flow requirements, and is a key management tool for in-year monitoring. Other long-term liabilities comprise finance lease, Private Finance Initiative and other liabilities that are not borrowing but form part of the Authority's debt.

Operational Boundary	2015/16 Revised £,000	2016/17 Estimate £,000	2017/18 Estimate £,000	2018/19 Estimate £,000
Borrowing	123,000	136,000	137,000	138,000
Other long-term liabilities	28,000	27,000	27,000	26,000
Total Debt	151,000	163,000	164,000	164,000

Authorised Limit for External Debt: The authorised limit is the affordable borrowing limit determined in compliance with the Local Government Act. It is the maximum amount of debt that the Authority can legally owe. The authorised limit provides headroom over and above the operational boundary for unusual cash movements.

Authorised Limit	2015/16 Revised £,000	2016/17 Estimate £,000	2017/18 Estimate £,000	2018/19 Estimate £,000
Borrowing	344,000	344,000	344,000	344,000
Other long-term liabilities	25,000	25,000	25,000	25,000
Total Debt	369,000	369,000	369,000	369,000

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream: This is an indicator of affordability and highlights the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs, net of investment income.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream	2015/16 Revised %	2016/17 Estimate %	2017/18 Estimate %	2018/19 Estimate %
General Fund	0.71%	0.71%	0.71%	0.71%
HRA	15.81%	15.81%	15.81%	15.81%

Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions: This is an indicator of affordability that shows the impact of capital investment decisions on Council Tax and housing rent levels. The incremental impact is the difference between the total revenue budget requirement of the current approved capital programme and the revenue budget requirement arising from the capital programme proposed earlier in this report.

Incremental Impact of Capital Investment Decisions	2016/17 Estimate £	2017/18 Estimate £	2018/19 Estimate £
General Fund - increase in annual band D Council Tax	2.40	0.00	3.70
HRA - increase in average weekly rents	0.00	0.00	0.00

Adoption of the CIPFA Treasury Management Code: The Authority adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2011 Edition* in March 2002.

Annual Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2016/17

Where the Authority finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), although there has been no statutory minimum since 2008. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Authority to have regard to the Department for Communities and Local Government's Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision most recently issued in 2012.

The broad aim of the CLG Guidance is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits, or, in the case of borrowing supported by Government Revenue Support Grant, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of that grant.

The CLG Guidance requires the Authority to approve an Annual MRP Statement each year, and recommends a number of options for calculating a prudent amount of MRP. The following statement incorporates options recommended in the Guidance as well as locally determined prudent methods.

For unsupported capital expenditure incurred after 31st March 2008, MRP will be determined by charging the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant assets in equal instalments, starting in the year after the asset becomes operational. MRP on purchases of freehold land will be charged over 50 years. MRP on expenditure not related to fixed assets but which has been capitalised by regulation or direction will be charged over 20 years (CLG Option 3).

For assets acquired by finance leases or the Private Finance Initiative, MRP will be determined as being equal to the element of the rent or charge that goes to write down the balance sheet liability (CLG Option 4).

MRP for Loans to wholly owned Council companies will be calculated on an annuity basis using the interest rates agreed for the loan for 50 years or an appropriate term based on the life of the asset being funded (Council approved policy).

No MRP will be charged in respect of assets held within the Housing Revenue Account.

MRP in respect of the £114m payment made in 2012 to exit the Housing Revenue Account subsidy system will be determined as being equal to the principal amount repaid on the loans borrowed to finance that payment.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2016/17 will not be subject to a MRP charge until 2017/18.

Based on the Authority's latest estimate of its Capital Financing Requirement on 31st March 2016, the budget for MRP has been set as follows:

	31.03.2016 Estimated CFR £,000	2016/17 Estimated MRP £,000
Capital expenditure before 01.04.2008	0	0
Supported capital expenditure after 31.03.2008	0	0
Unsupported capital expenditure after 31.03.2008	12,344	388
Finance leases and Private Finance Initiative	0	0
Transferred debt	0	0
Loans to wholly owned companies	3,120	62
Total General Fund	15,464	450
Assets in the Housing Revenue Account	32,067	0
HRA subsidy reform payment	114,000	0
Total Housing Revenue Account	146,067	0
Total	161,531	450

Appendix L

Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2016/17

Introduction

In March 2012 the Authority adopted the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's *Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice 2011 Edition* (the CIPFA Code) which requires the Authority to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year.

In addition, the Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) issued revised *Guidance on Local Authority Investments* in March 2010 that requires the Authority to approve an investment strategy before the start of each financial year. This report fulfils the Authority's legal obligation under the *Local Government Act 2003* to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the CLG Guidance.

The Authority has borrowed and invested substantial sums of money and is therefore exposed to financial risks including the loss of invested funds and the revenue effect of changing interest rates. The successful identification, monitoring and control of risk are therefore central to the Authority's treasury management strategy.

External Context

External context covers the following areas and is detailed at Appendix A with supporting tables.

- Economic Background
- Credit Outlook
- Interest Rate Forecast

Local Context

The Authority currently (as at 4th January 2016) has £119m of borrowing and £43m of investments. This is set out in further detail at **Appendix B**. Forecast changes in these sums are shown in the balance sheet analysis in table 1 below.

Table 1: Balance Sheet Summary and Forecast

	31.3.15 Actual £,000	31.3.16 Estimate £,000	31.3.17 Forecast £,000	31.3.18 Forecast £,000	31.3.19 Forecast £,000
General Fund CFR	8,140	15,464	22,524	25,748	28,128
HRA CFR	149,067	146,067	146,067	146,067	146,067
Total CFR	157,207	161,531	168,591	171,815	174,195
Less: Other debt liabilities *	(27,159)	(26,719)	(26,217)	(25,649)	(25,649)
Borrowing CFR	130,048	134,812	142,374	146,166	148,546
Less: External borrowing	0	0	(15,200)	(18,424)	(20,804)
Less: HRA External borrowing**	(119,664)	(119,664)	(117,664)	(114,664)	(113,664)
Internal borrowing	10,384	15,148	9,510	13,078	14,078
Usable reserves	(26,801)	(20,812)	(15,304)	(13,370)	(13,782)
Working capital	(7,413)	(7,413)	(7,413)	(7,413)	(7,413)
Available for Long Term Investment	23,830	13,077	13,207	7,705	7,117

* finance leases, PFI liabilities and transferred debt that form part of the Authority's total debt

** £119.6m of this value per annum relates to the HRA stock acquisition.

The underlying need to borrow for capital purposes is measured by the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR), while usable reserves and working capital are the underlying resources available for investment. The Authority will consider the best financing options available at the time of investments/acquisitions; currently the use of internal reserves provides an attractive option subject to the Authority holding a minimum investment balance of £5m.

The Council has an increasing CFR due to the capital programme, which includes loans to A Better Choice for Property Ltd, appropriation of Garages to general fund, property acquisitions, Wilkinsons/Park Mall acquisition, grounds maintenance depot/equipment and the planned maintenance programme. To cover of this capital investment, external borrowing of circa £20.8m is assumed over the forecasted period and is reflected in the table above, however as aforementioned decisions will be based at the time of investment/acquisition to best benefit the Authority.

Usable reserves are also forecast to fall over the forecasted period, this is due to reserves belong used to part fund the general fund acquisitions. Additionally the HRA is also significantly reducing its reserves to support its capital programme over the next few years.

CIPFA's *Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities* recommends that the Authority's total debt should be lower than its highest forecast CFR over the next

three years. Table 1 shows that the Authority expects to comply with this recommendation during 2016/17.

Borrowing Strategy

The Authority currently holds £119.6m of loans. The balance sheet forecast in table 1 shows that the Authority expects to borrow up to £15.2m in 2016/17. The Authority may also borrow additional sums to pre-fund future years' requirements, providing this does not exceed the authorised limit for borrowing of £369m.

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

Strategy: Given the significant cuts to public expenditure and in particular to local government funding, the Authority's borrowing strategy continues to address the key issue of affordability without compromising the longer-term stability of the debt portfolio. With short-term interest rates currently much lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead, again decisions will be based accordingly at the time of investment/acquisition.

By using internal resources, the Authority is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of internal borrowing will be monitored regularly against the potential for incurring additional costs by deferring borrowing into future years when long-term borrowing rates are forecast to rise. Arlingclose will assist the Authority with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. Its output may determine whether the Authority borrows additional sums at long-term fixed rates in 2015/16 with a view to keeping future interest costs low, even if this causes additional cost in the short-term.

Alternatively, the Authority may arrange forward starting loans during 2016/17, where the interest rate is fixed in advance, but the cash is received in later years. This would enable certainty of cost to be achieved without suffering a cost of carry in the intervening period.

In addition, the Authority may borrow short-term loans (normally for up to one month) to cover unexpected cash flow shortages.

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

- Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and any successor body
- any institution approved for investments (see below)
- any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK
- UK public and private sector pension funds (except Kent County Council Pension Fund)

- capital market bond investors
- UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc and other special purpose companies created to enable local authority bond issues

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

- operating and finance leases
- hire purchase
- Private Finance Initiative
- sale and leaseback

The Authority has previously raised all of its long-term borrowing from the PWLB but it continues to investigate other sources of finance, such as local authority loans and bank loans, that may be available at more favourable rates.

LGA Bond Agency: UK Municipal Bonds Agency plc was established in 2014 by the Local Government Association as an alternative to the PWLB. It plans to issue bonds on the capital markets and lend the proceeds to local authorities. This will be a more complicated source of finance than the PWLB for two reasons: borrowing authorities may be required to provide bond investors with a joint and several guarantee over the very small risk that other local authority borrowers default on their loans; and there will be a lead time of several months between committing to borrow and knowing the interest rate payable. Any decision to borrow from the Agency will therefore be the subject of a separate report to Cabinet.

Short-term and Variable Rate loans: These loans leave the Authority exposed to the risk of short-term interest rate rises and are therefore subject to the limit on the net exposure to variable interest rates in the treasury management indicators below.

Debt Rescheduling: The PWLB allows authorities to repay loans before maturity and either pay a premium or receive a discount according to a set formula based on current interest rates. Other lenders may also be prepared to negotiate premature redemption terms. The Authority may take advantage of this and replace some loans with new loans, or repay loans without replacement, where this is expected to lead to an overall cost saving or a reduction in risk.

Investment Strategy

The Authority holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 9 months, the Authority's investment balance has ranged between £21.2 and £46.2 million, and similar levels are expected to reduce in the coming year as reserves are used to support General Fund and HRA capital programmes. Further reductions could be incurred if internal borrowing is used to support capital acquisitions rather than external borrowing.

Objectives: Both the CIPFA Code and the CLG Guidance require the Authority to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Authority's objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.

Strategy: Given the inherent risk and continued low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Authority aims to continue diversification into more secure and higher yielding asset classes during 2016/17. Diversification will be through the introduction of new money market funds and further use of equities which were introduced to the portfolio in 2015/16. The council will work closely with its treasury management advisors 'Arlingclose' to explore new investment opportunities which will complement the portfolio. This approach will represent a continuation of the strategy adopted in 2015/16.

Approved Counterparties: The Authority may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in table 2 below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and the time limits shown.

Table 2: Approved Investment Counterparties and Limits

Credit Rating	Banks Unsecured	Banks Secured	Government	Corporates	Registered Providers
UK Govt	n/a	n/a	£ Unlimited 50 years	n/a	n/a
AAA	£3m 5 years	£5m 20 years	£5 m 50 years	£3m 20 years	£3m 20 years
AA+	£3m 5 years	£5m 10 years	£5m 25 years	£3m 10 years	£3m 10 years
AA	£3m 4 years	£5m 5 years	£5m 15 years	£3m 5 years	£3m 10 years
AA-	£3m 3 years	£5m 4 years	£5m 10 years	£3m 4 years	£3m 10 years
A+	£3m 2 years	5m 3 years	£3m 5 years	£3m 3 years	£3m 5 years
A	£3m 13 months	£5 m 2 years	£3m 5 years	£1m 2 years	£1m 5 years
A-	£3m 6 months	£5m 13 months	£3m 5 years	£1m 13 months	£1m 5 years
BBB+	£1m 100 days	£5 m 6 months	£1m 2 years	£.5m 6 months	£1m 2 years
BBB or BBB-	£1m next day only	£3 m 100 days	n/a	n/a	n/a
None	£1m 6 months	n/a	£3m 25 years	£50,000 5 years	£1 m 5 years
Pooled funds	£6m per fund				

Where investments are subject to capital appreciation/depreciation, the initial value of the investment is considered in relation to the table above.

This table must be read in conjunction with the notes below

Credit Rating: Investment decisions are made by reference to the lowest published long-term credit rating from Fitch, Moody's or Standard & Poor's. Where available, the credit rating relevant to the specific investment or class of investment is used, otherwise the counterparty credit rating is used.

Banks Unsecured: Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. Unsecured investment with banks rated BBB or BBB- are restricted to overnight deposits at the Authority's current account bank.

Banks Secured: Covered bonds, reverse repurchase agreements and other collateralised arrangements with banks and building societies. These investments are secured on the bank's assets, which limits the potential losses in the unlikely event of insolvency, and means that they are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used to determine cash and time limits. The combined secured and unsecured investments in any one bank will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments.

Government: Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is an insignificant risk of insolvency. Investments with the UK Central Government may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years.

Corporates: Loans, bonds and commercial paper issued by companies other than banks and registered providers. These investments are not subject to bail-in, but are exposed to the risk of the company going insolvent. Loans to unrated companies will only be made as part of a diversified pool in order to spread the risk widely.

Registered Providers: Loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of Registered Providers of Social Housing, formerly known as Housing Associations. These bodies are tightly regulated by the Homes and Communities Agency and, as providers of public services, they retain a high likelihood of receiving government support if needed.

Pooled Funds: Shares in diversified investment vehicles consisting of the any of the above investment types, plus equity shares and property. These funds have the advantage of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a fee. Short-term Money Market Funds that offer same-day liquidity and aim for a constant net asset value and will be used as an alternative to instant access bank accounts, while pooled funds whose value changes with market prices and/or have a notice period will be used for longer investment periods.

Bond, equity and property funds offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Authority to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Authority's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.

Risk Assessment and Credit Ratings: Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Authority's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:

- no new investments will be made,

- any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be, and
- full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.

Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as “rating watch negative” or “credit watch negative”) so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long-term direction of travel rather than an imminent change of rating.

Other Information on the Security of Investments: The Authority understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will therefore be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support and reports in the quality financial press. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may meet the credit rating criteria.

When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2011, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Authority will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Authority’s cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government, via the Debt Management Office or invested in government treasury bills for example, or with other local authorities. This will cause a reduction in the level of investment income earned, but will protect the principal sum invested.

Specified Investments: The CLG Guidance defines specified investments as those:

- denominated in pound sterling,
- due to be repaid within 12 months of arrangement,
- not defined as capital expenditure by legislation, and
- invested with one of:
 - the UK Government,
 - a UK local authority, parish council or community council, or
 - a body or investment scheme of “high credit quality”.

The Authority defines “high credit quality” organisations and securities as those having a credit rating of A- or higher that are domiciled in the UK or a foreign country with a sovereign rating of AA+ or higher. For money market funds and other pooled funds “high credit quality” is defined as those having a credit rating of A- or higher.

Non-specified Investments: Any investment not meeting the definition of a specified investment is classed as non-specified. The Authority does not intend to make any investments denominated in foreign currencies, nor any that are defined as capital expenditure by legislation, such as company shares with the exception of Council owned companies. Non-specified investments will therefore be limited to long-term investments, i.e. those that are due to mature 12 months or longer from the date of arrangement, and investments with bodies and schemes not meeting the definition on high credit quality. Limits on non-specified investments are shown in table 3 below.

Table 3: Non-Specified Investment Limits

	Cash limit
Total long-term investments	£15m
CCLA property Fund *	£6m
Equities*	£6m
Council owned companies	£10m
Total investments without credit ratings or rated below A-	£5m
Total investments (except pooled funds) with institutions domiciled in foreign countries rated below AA+	£0m

* Where investments are subject to capital appreciation/depreciation, the initial value of the investment is considered in relation to the table above.

Investment Limits: The Authority’s revenue reserves available to cover investment losses were £16.9 million on 31st March 2015. In order that no more than 36% of available reserves will be put at risk in the case of a single default, the maximum that will be lent to any one organisation (other than the UK Government) will be £6m. A group of banks under the same ownership will be treated as a single organisation for limit purposes. Limits will also be placed on fund managers, investments in brokers’ nominee accounts, foreign countries and industry sectors as below. Investments in pooled funds and multilateral development banks do not count against the limit for any single foreign country, since the risk is diversified over many countries.

Table 4: Investment Limits

	Cash limit
Any single organisation, except the UK Central Government	£5m each
UK Central Government	unlimited
Any group of organisations under the same ownership	£5m per group
Any group of pooled funds under the same management *	£6m per manager
Foreign countries	5m per country
Registered Providers	£10m in total
Unsecured investments with Building Societies	£5m in total
Loans to unrated corporates	£5m in total
Money Market Funds	£15m in total

* Where investments are subject to capital appreciation/depreciation, the initial value of the investment is considered in relation to the table above.

Liquidity Management: The Authority uses cash flow forecasting to determine the maximum period for which funds may prudently be committed. The forecast is compiled on a pessimistic basis, with receipts under-estimated and payments over-estimated to minimise the risk of the Authority being forced to borrow on unfavourable terms to meet its financial commitments. Limits on long-term investments are set by reference to the Authority's medium term financial plan and cash flow forecast.

Treasury Management Indicators

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

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

	Target
Portfolio average credit score	6.0

Interest Rate Exposures: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to interest rate risk. The upper limits on fixed and variable rate interest rate exposures, expressed as the proportion of net principal borrowed will be:

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Upper limit on fixed interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%
Upper limit on variable interest rate exposure	100%	100%	100%

Fixed rate investments and borrowings are those where the rate of interest is fixed for at least 12 months, measured from the start of the financial year or the transaction date if later. All other instruments are classed as variable rate.

Maturity Structure of Borrowing: This indicator is set to control the Authority's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing will be:

	Upper	Lower
Under 12 months	100%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	100%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	100%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	100%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%

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

Principal Sums Invested for Periods Longer than 364 days: The purpose of this indicator is to control the Authority's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the total principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19
Limit on principal invested beyond year end	£15m	£15m	£15m

Other Items

There are a number of additional items that the Authority is obliged by CIPFA or CLG to include in its Treasury Management Strategy.

Policy on Use of Financial Derivatives: Local authorities have previously made use of financial derivatives embedded into loans and investments both to reduce interest rate risk (e.g. interest rate collars and forward deals) and to reduce costs or increase income at the expense of greater risk (e.g. LOBO loans and callable deposits). The general power of competence in Section 1 of the *Localism Act 2011* removes much of the uncertainty over local authorities' use of standalone financial derivatives (i.e. those that are not embedded into a loan or investment).

The Authority will only use standalone financial derivatives (such as swaps, forwards, futures and options) where they can be clearly demonstrated to reduce the overall level of the financial risks that the Authority is exposed to. Additional risks presented, such as credit exposure to derivative counterparties, will be taken into account when determining the overall level of risk. Embedded derivatives, including those present in pooled funds, will not be subject to this policy, although the risks they present will be managed in line with the overall treasury risk management strategy.

Financial derivative transactions may be arranged with any organisation that meets the approved investment criteria. The current value of any amount due from a derivative counterparty will count against the counterparty credit limit and the relevant foreign country limit.

Policy on Apportioning Interest to the HRA: On 1st April 2012, the Authority notionally split each of its existing long-term loans into General Fund and HRA pools.

In the future, new long-term loans borrowed will be assigned in their entirety to one pool or the other. Interest payable and other costs/income arising from long-term loans (e.g. premiums and discounts on early redemption) will be charged/ credited to the respective revenue account. Differences between the value of the HRA loans pool and the HRA's underlying need to borrow (adjusted for HRA balance sheet resources available for investment) will result in a notional cash balance which may be positive or negative. This balance will be measured annually and interest transferred between the General Fund and HRA at the Authority's average interest rate on investments, adjusted for credit risk.

Investment Training: The needs of the Authority's treasury management staff for training in investment management are assessed as part of the staff appraisal process, and additionally when the responsibilities of individual members of staff change.

Officers attend training courses, seminars and conferences provided by Arlingclose and CIPFA. Relevant Officers are also encouraged to study professional qualifications from CIPFA, the Association of Corporate Treasurers and other appropriate organisations.

Investment Advisers: The Authority has appointed Arlingclose Limited as treasury management advisers and receives specific advice on investment, debt and capital finance issues. The quality of this service is controlled by the need to justify the ongoing appointment of Arlingclose through the completion of a 'Use of Consultant' pro-forma as stipulated in contract procedure rules. The Authority's Treasury Management Function is also periodically reviewed by Internal and External audit

Investment of Money Borrowed in Advance of Need: The Authority may, from time to time, borrow in advance of need, where this is expected to provide the best long term value for money. Since amounts borrowed will be invested until spent, the Authority is aware that it will be exposed to the risk of loss of the borrowed sums, and the risk that investment and borrowing interest rates may change in the

intervening period. These risks will be managed as part of the Authority's overall management of its treasury risks.

The total amount borrowed will not exceed the authorised borrowing limit. The maximum period between borrowing and expenditure is expected to be 2 years, although the Authority is not required to link particular loans with particular items of expenditure.

Financial Implications

The budget for investment income in 2016/17 is £543,000, based on an average investment portfolio of £29m million at an interest rate of 1.87%. The budget for debt interest paid in 2016/17 is £517,250, based on an average debt portfolio of £15.2m at an average interest rate of 3.4%.

In relation to the HRA, the Interest on investment income for 2016/17 is forecast at circa 13k, based on an average investment portfolio of £2.5m at an interest rate of circa 0.5%. The budget for debt interest paid in 2016/17 is £3.6 million, based on an average debt portfolio of £119.6 million at an average interest rate of 3%. HRA balances are invested with general fund balances and an apportionment of interest is made at the end of the year through the item 8 calculation, this was covered previously in this report under 'Policy on Apportioning Interest to the HRA'.

If actual levels of investments and borrowing, and actual interest rates differ from those forecast, performance against budget will be correspondingly different.

Other Options Considered

The CLG Guidance and the CIPFA Code do not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Chief Finance Officer has consulted the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Budget, Resource Planning and Procurement, believes that the above strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. Some alternative strategies, with their financial and risk management implications, are listed below.

Alternative	Impact on income and expenditure	Impact on risk management
Invest in a narrower range of counterparties and/or for shorter times	Interest income will be lower	Lower chance of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be greater
Invest in a wider range of counterparties and/or for longer times	Interest income will be higher	Increased risk of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be smaller
Borrow additional sums at long-term fixed interest rates	Debt interest costs will rise; this is unlikely to be offset by higher investment income	Higher investment balance leading to a higher impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be more certain
Borrow short-term or variable loans instead of long-term fixed rates	Debt interest costs will initially be lower	Increases in debt interest costs will be broadly offset by rising investment income in the medium term, but long term costs may be less certain
Reduce level of borrowing	Saving on debt interest is likely to exceed lost investment income	Reduced investment balance leading to a lower impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be less certain

Appendix A – Arlingclose Economic & Interest Rate Forecast November 2015 (minor amendments January 16 by ABC)

Economic background: Domestic demand has grown robustly, supported by sustained real income growth and a gradual decline in private sector savings. Low oil and commodity prices were a notable feature of 2015, and contributed to annual CPI inflation falling to 0.1% in October. Wages are growing at 3% a year, and the unemployment rate has dropped to 5.4%. Mortgage approvals have risen to over 70,000 a month and annual house price growth is around 3.5%. These factors have boosted consumer confidence, helping to underpin retail spending and hence GDP growth, which was an encouraging 2.3% a year in the third quarter of 2015. Although speeches by the Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) members sent signals that some were willing to countenance higher interest rates, the MPC held policy rates at 0.5% for the 81st consecutive month at its meeting in November 2015. Quantitative easing (QE) has been maintained at £375bn since July 2012.

The outcome of the UK general election, which was largely fought over the parties' approach to dealing with the deficit in the public finances, saw some big shifts in the political landscape and put the key issue of the UK's relationship with the EU at the heart of future politics. Uncertainty over the outcome of the forthcoming referendum could put downward pressure on UK GDP growth and interest rates.

China's growth has slowed and its economy is performing below expectations, reducing global demand for commodities and contributing to emerging market weakness. US domestic growth has accelerated but the globally sensitive sectors of the US economy have slowed. Strong US labour market data and other economic indicators however suggest recent global turbulence has not knocked the American recovery off course. The Federal Reserve did not raise policy rates at its meetings in October and November, but the statements accompanying the policy decisions point have made a rate hike in December 2015 a real possibility. In contrast, the European Central Bank finally embarked on QE in 2015 to counter the perils of deflation.

Credit outlook: The varying fortunes of different parts of the global economy are reflected in market indicators of credit risk. UK Banks operating in the Far East and parts of mainland Europe have seen their perceived risk increase, while those with a more domestic focus continue to show improvement. The sale of most of the government's stake in Lloyds and the first sale of its shares in RBS have generally been seen as credit positive.

Bail-in legislation, which ensures that large investors including local authorities will rescue failing banks instead of taxpayers in the future, has now been fully implemented in the UK, USA and Germany. The rest of the European Union will follow suit in January 2016, while Australia, Canada and Switzerland are well advanced with their own plans. Meanwhile, changes to the UK Financial Services Compensation Scheme and similar European schemes in July 2015 mean that most private sector investors are now partially or fully exempt from contributing to a bail-in. The credit risk associated with making unsecured bank deposits has therefore

increased relative to the risk of other investment options available to the Authority; returns from cash deposits however remain stubbornly low.

Interest rate forecast: The Authority's treasury advisor Arlingclose projects the first 0.25% increase in UK Bank Rate in the third quarter of 2016, rising by 0.5% a year thereafter, finally settling between 2% and 3% in several years' time. Persistently low inflation, subdued global growth and potential concerns over the UK's position in Europe mean that the risks to this forecast are weighted towards the downside.

A shallow upward path for medium term gilt yields is forecast, as continuing concerns about the Eurozone, emerging markets and other geo-political events weigh on risk appetite, while inflation expectations remain subdued. Arlingclose projects the 10 year gilt yield to rise from its current 2.0% level by around 0.3% a year. The uncertainties surrounding the timing of UK and US interest rate rises are likely to prompt short-term volatility in gilt yields.

A more detailed economic and interest rate forecast provided by Arlingclose is tabled below:-

For the purpose of setting the budget, it has been assumed that new investments will be made at an average rate of 1.89%, and that new long-term loans will be borrowed at an average rate of 3.40%.

	Dec-15	Mar-16	Jun-16	Sep-16	Dec-16	Mar-17	Jun-17	Sep-17	Dec-17	Mar-18	Jun-18	Sep-18	Dec-18
Official Bank Rate													
Upside risk		0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Arlingclose Central Case	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.75	0.75	1.00	1.00	1.25	1.25	1.50	1.50	1.75	1.75
Downside risk				-0.25	-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.75	-0.75	-1.00	-1.00	-1.25	-1.25
3-month LIBID rate													
Upside risk	0.20	0.30	0.30	0.30	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40
Arlingclose Central Case	0.55	0.60	0.70	0.80	0.95	1.05	1.15	1.30	1.40	1.55	1.65	1.80	1.85
Downside risk		-0.20	-0.30	-0.45	-0.55	-0.65	-0.80	-0.90	-1.05	-1.10	-1.20	-1.20	-1.20
1-yr LIBID rate													
Upside risk	0.25	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.40	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45
Arlingclose Central Case	1.10	1.20	1.35	1.45	1.55	1.70	1.80	1.95	2.00	2.10	2.15	2.15	2.15
Downside risk	-0.15	-0.25	-0.35	-0.50	-0.60	-0.70	-0.85	-0.95	-1.10	-1.15	-1.25	-1.25	-1.25
5-yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.40	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Arlingclose Central Case	1.50	1.55	1.60	1.70	1.80	1.90	2.00	2.10	2.20	2.25	2.30	2.35	2.35
Downside risk	-0.35	-0.45	-0.55	-0.60	-0.70	-0.80	-0.90	-1.00	-1.10	-1.15	-1.20	-1.25	-1.25
10-yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.40	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Arlingclose Central Case	2.00	2.05	2.10	2.20	2.30	2.40	2.50	2.60	2.65	2.70	2.75	2.80	2.80
Downside risk	-0.35	-0.45	-0.55	-0.60	-0.70	-0.80	-0.90	-1.00	-1.10	-1.15	-1.20	-1.25	-1.25
20-yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.40	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Arlingclose Central Case	2.45	2.50	2.55	2.55	2.60	2.65	2.70	2.75	2.80	2.85	2.90	2.95	2.95
Downside risk	-0.30	-0.40	-0.50	-0.55	-0.65	-0.75	-0.85	-0.95	-1.05	-1.10	-1.15	-1.20	-1.20
50-yr gilt yield													
Upside risk	0.40	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60	0.60
Arlingclose Central Case	2.45	2.50	2.55	2.60	2.65	2.70	2.75	2.80	2.85	2.90	2.95	3.00	3.00
Downside risk	-0.25	-0.35	-0.45	-0.50	-0.60	-0.70	-0.80	-0.90	-1.00	-1.05	-1.10	-1.15	-1.15

Appendix B – Existing Investment & Debt Portfolio Position

Treasury Management Portfolio as at 4th January 2016

Counter Party	Deal Date	Rate %	Amount £	Comment
Temporary Investments				
Lloyds Banking Group	04/01/2016	0.80	3,000,000	175 day notice account
Total Temporary Investments			3,000,000	
Long Term Investments				
Blaenau Gwent	21/10/2014	2.00	3,000,000	Matures 21/10/2019
Newport City Council	10/11/2014	1.50	2,500,000	Matures 10/07/2017
Total Long Term Investments			5,500,000	
Investment Accounts				
Santander	Various	0.50	3,000,125	Deposit Account
Handelsbanken	Various	0.50	3,000,000	Deposit Account
National Westminster Bank plc	Various	0.25	1,689,174	Deposit Account
Goldman Sachs	Various		51,202	AAA rated deposit facility *
ICD Portal - Invesco	Various	0.46	5,000,000	AAA rated deposit facility *
ICD Portal - BNP Paribas	Various	0.52	5,000,000	AAA rated deposit facility *
ICD Portal - Black Rock	Various	0.44	5,000,000	AAA rated deposit facility *
Total Investment Accounts			22,740,501	
Local Authority Property Fund	Estimate	4.90	6,000,000	Rate is Net of Management Fees (Variable Rate of Return)
Total pooled funds Accounts			6,000,000	
City Financial Multi Asset Diversified Fund	27/08/2015	4.82	1,000,000	Long term investment **
UBS Multi Asset Income Fund	26/08/2015	5.05	1,000,000	Long term investment **
M&G Global Dividend Fund	27/08/2015	5.25	1,000,000	Long term investment **
Schroder Income Maximiser	03/11/2015	3.5 Est.	1,000,000	Long term investment **
Total Equity funds **			4,000,000	
Total Investment Portfolio			41,240,501	
Long Term Borrowing				
Public Works Loan Board***	various	various	119,664,150	Maturity Date - various
Total Long Term Borrowing			119,664,150	
Grand Total Borrowing			119,664,150	

* Money Market Fund (MMF) are AAA rated deposit facilities which have variable rates of interest but have constant net asset values. Interest rates shown are as at 5/1/2016

** Equity funds have variable rates of interest and also have fluctuating capital values

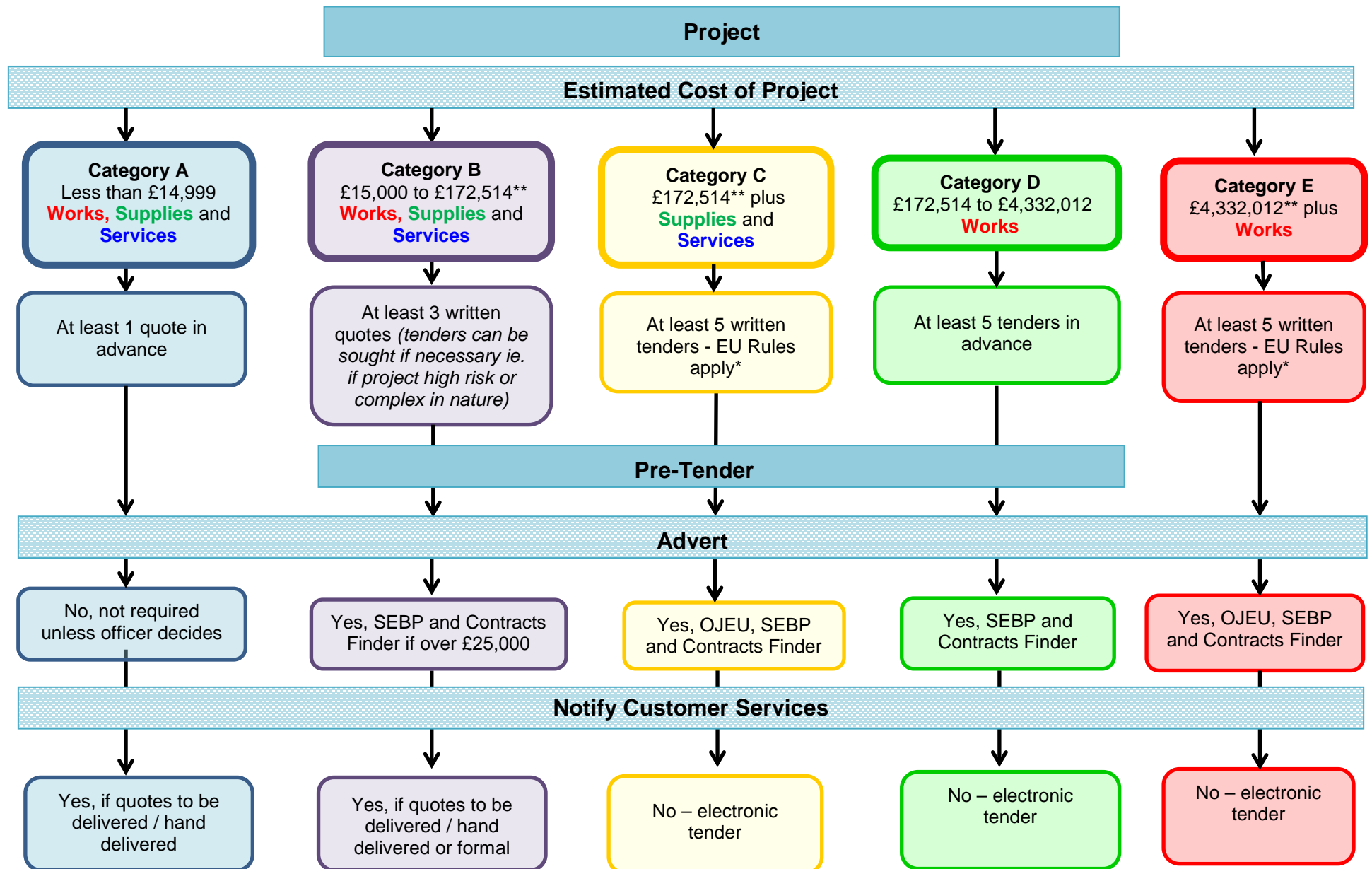
*** HRA borrowing

Note: the loans made to ABCFP Ltd are not shown in the investment portfolio above, for clarity though the total draw down value of loans to the company as at 4th January 2015 was 1.59m.

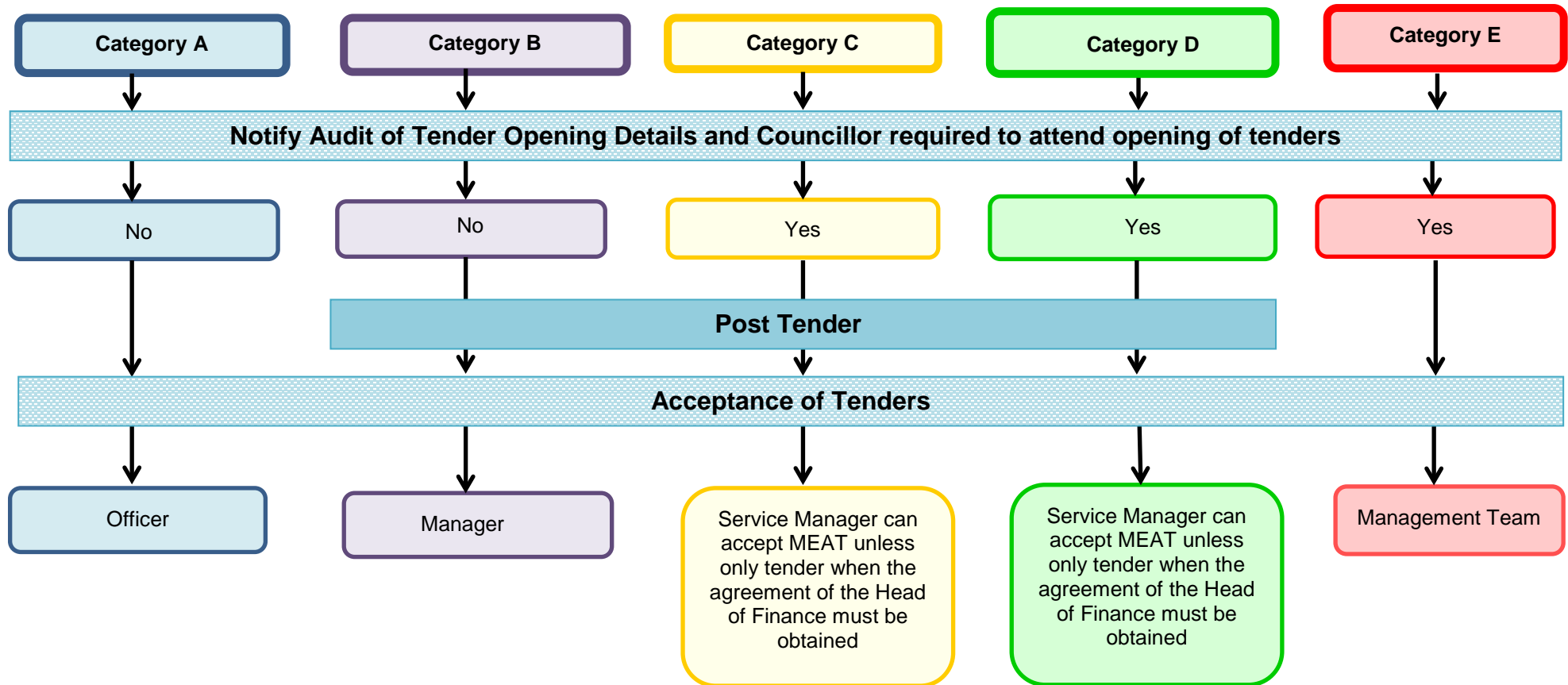
Debt Portfolio

Loan Amount £'000	Start Date	Interest Type	Interest Rate %	Repayment Type	Redemption Date
7,000	28/03/2012	Variable	0.6200	Maturity	27/03/2022
2,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	1.2400	Maturity	27/03/2017
3,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	1.5000	Maturity	27/03/2018
1,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	1.7600	Maturity	27/03/2019
5,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	1.9900	Maturity	27/03/2020
2,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	2.2100	Maturity	27/03/2021
2,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	2.4000	Maturity	27/03/2022
2,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	2.5600	Maturity	27/03/2023
3,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	2.7000	Maturity	27/03/2024
3,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	2.8200	Maturity	27/03/2025
1,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	2.9200	Maturity	27/03/2026
1,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.0100	Maturity	27/03/2027
2,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.0800	Maturity	27/03/2028
2,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.1500	Maturity	27/03/2029
2,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.2100	Maturity	27/03/2030
8,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.2600	Maturity	27/03/2031
9,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.3000	Maturity	27/03/2032
10,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.3400	Maturity	27/03/2033
11,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.3700	Maturity	27/03/2034
12,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.4000	Maturity	27/03/2035
9,000	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.4200	Maturity	27/03/2036
16,713	28/03/2012	Fixed	3.4400	Maturity	27/03/2037
5,951	29/03/2011	Fixed	5.2600	Maturity	26/03/2061
119,664					

Appendix M - Flow Chart to clarify tendering/quotation procedure



Appendix A: Flow Chart to clarify tendering/quotation procedure (contd.)



NOTES:

- (1) SEBP - South East Business Portal – a web portal to advertise opportunities
- (2) Contracts Finder – information about local and central government contracts
- (3) OJEU - Official Journal of the European Union – European Gazette of record
- (4) *EU Rules – Tenders will be invited in accordance with
- (5) **EU Thresholds: are revised every two years and the current thresholds are effective from 1 January 2014 (£172,514 for Supplies (Goods) and Services and £4,332,012 for Works)
- (6) Financial reference sought of successful bid only if Head of Service feels it is necessary
- (7) MEAT (Most Economically Advantageous Tender)
- (8) A Tender (rather than a quote) within threshold £15,000 to £172,514** can be sought if appropriate

Section	Item	Value £
5.5	Payments requiring two authorised signatures	>£20,000
6	The limits for tendering in the EU: Supplies (Goods) and Services	£164,176
	Works	£4,104,394
7.19	Virement: approvals	
	Heads of Service	< £50,000
	Management Team with Portfolio holder consultation	Between £50,000 and £100,000
	Cabinet	>£100,000
19.2	Petty Cash limit on individual items	£30
27.8	Approval for disposal of stores, furniture and equipment	
	Head of Service	< £5,000
	Management Team	> £5,000
31.1	Approval for Write offs:	
	Deputy Chief Executive	Up to £1,000 per individual debtor
	Members	> £1,000

Budget Thresholds

Key Decision Thresholds are:

- a. £100,001 (or greater) for all Revenue Services.
- b. £100,000 (or greater) or 10% of net project costs, whichever is lower, for Capital Schemes.
- c. £100,000 for decisions relating to redundancy and other termination payments (excluding pension costs).

Flexibility to Deploy Reserves:

Management Team has the flexibility to deploy up to £100,000 of reserves in either exceptional and urgent cases where this might be justified or where an amount may be needed to deal with some other service issue including investment to achieve greater efficiency. In all cases where the flexibility is

applied the Chief Executive must liaise with the Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Finance & Budget, Resource Management and Procurement and the Deputy Chief Executive (as Chief Financial Officer) and be required to report any application of reserves to the Cabinet as part of the budget monitoring cycle.

There is a stated presumption that the use of this flexibility is for exceptional circumstances and not routinely applied, and in all cases the use of the delegation must be consistent with Business Plan priorities.

Appendix N

Housing and Council Tax Benefit E- Claim Risk Based Verification Policy



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

1. Introduction

The Verification Framework Policy was initially introduced by the Department of Work and Pensions as guidance in line with the Social Security Administration Act 1992 for administering Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims. Since the abolition of that Policy in 2006 by the Department of Work and Pensions, Ashford Borough Council has prepared the following robust procedure for E- Claim Verification of claims for Housing Benefit.

The emphasis of this procedure is to operate a strict regime of preventing fraud and error entering the system whilst continuing with live caseload intervention and will take effect from 1st April 2016. Risk Based Verification will also be used for E- Claim Verification of claims for Council Tax Support.

2. Background

Ashford Borough Council must adhere to Housing Benefit legislation and Council Tax Support legislation. The regulations within the legislation do not specify what information and evidence they should obtain from a benefit customer. However, it does require an authority to have information which allows an accurate assessment of a claimant's entitlement, both when a claim is first made and when the claim is reviewed.

Housing Benefit Regulation 86 states

“a person who makes a claim, or a person to whom housing benefit has been awarded, shall furnish such certificates, documents, information and evidence in connection with the claim or the award, or any question arising out of the claim or the award, as may reasonably be required by the relevant authority in order to determine that person's entitlement to, or continuing entitlement to housing benefit and shall do so within one month of being required to do so or such longer period as the relevant authority may consider reasonable.”

Furthermore; Section 1 of the Social Security (Administration) Act 1992 dictates a National Insurance number must either be stated or enough information provided to trace or allocate one. This legislation applies to both customers and their partners.

(1A) No person whose entitlement to any benefit depends on his making a claim shall be entitled to the benefit unless subsection (1B) below is satisfied in relation both to the person making the claim and to any other person in respect of whom he is claiming benefit.

(1B) this subsection is satisfied in relation to a person if–

a. The claim is accompanied by–

- i. a statement of the person's national insurance number and information or evidence establishing that that number has been allocated to the person; or*
- ii. information or evidence enabling the national insurance number that has been allocated to the person to be ascertained; or*

b. the person makes an application for a national insurance number to be allocated to him which is accompanied by information or evidence enabling such a number to be so allocated.

Given those requirements are at the core of the process of administering claims these shall be adhered to at all times and be considered process within the Quality Assurance checks completed on benefit claims assessed.

3. Risk Based Verification

Ashford Borough Council implemented an IT solution for Risk Based Verification in line with recommendations provided by the DWP in order to improve performance and improve the detection of fraud. Risk Based Verification is a method of applying different levels of checks to benefit claims according to the risk associated with those claims. This in effect means being able to target activity toward checking those cases deemed to be at highest risk of involving fraud and/or error. The baseline of fraud in Ashford Borough Council based on benefit data extracts is 5%. The purpose of Risk Based Verification is to increase the levels of fraud and error detected by focusing resource appropriately.

The process of Risk Based Verification is for the process of assessing a New Housing and/or Council Tax Support E-Claim only. Paper applications or any change of circumstances will follow separate standards.

For the purposes of applying verification on a risk basis, each claim is ranked into one of three categories; these categories are Low, Medium and High Risk.

The RBV software will integrate with Callcredit data to optimise the risk scores by checking claimant, partner and non-dependant details against Credit Reference Agency (CRA) data. This will enable CRA checks to be carried out "in process" and in real-time, which is likely to extend the percentage of Low risk claims as detection rates in the High risk cases increase. All cases where the CRA check identifies a discrepancy within Callcredit's data will come back as High risk. The CRA information from Callcredit will also be supplied to Ashford Borough Council.

The table at Appendix 1 shows the requirement to be upheld dependent on the risk grouping. A national Insurance number and identity confirmation must be made in all cases irrelevant of the risk grouping; this is to comply with aforementioned legislation.

Low Risk 65-55%

The only checks to be made on cases classed as low risk are proof of identity, production of a National Insurance Number and if they are a student formal confirmation.

Medium Risk 25-20%

Cases in this category must have the same checks as low risk plus for every type of income or capital declared documentation proof is required. The documentation can be photocopies or scanned copies in this instance.

High Risk 20-15%

All high risk categorised cases must have the same checks as low risk and documentation provided for each declared type of income or capital; however the documents must be original. High Risk claims will be either: visited, telephoned or sent a postal review, carried out to verify the circumstances declared on the application. Additional further checks may also be carried out.

4. Recording and Monitoring

In line with Department of Work and Pensions guidance around 65-55% of cases could be Low Risk, 25-20% Medium and 20-15% High.

All risk scores are recorded by the software used to process benefits and they must be recorded on the assessment officer's notebook in I World. Ashford Borough Council also has a minimum of 2% blind sampling which means cases from lower categories are upgraded to test the software assumptions and this information can be fed back into the propensity models supporting the parameters of the Risk Based Verification Portal. Cases cannot be downgraded at any time by an assessment officer; they can be increased though with approval from a Team Leader. All cases which are upgraded are recorded along with the reasons for this so that this information can be fed through to the parameters if errors are found.

Ashford Borough Council will monitor these splits on a monthly basis by using IT tools available. The reports will show the level of splits by percentage and the level of fraud across the authority in comparison to its baseline of 5%. This detection level will also be split across the areas of Low, Medium and High Risk. Information will be derived from cell 222 within the SHBE extract file in order to be able to produce statistical data.

Ashford Borough Council also undertakes to review a sample of cases. This will help monitor the effect of Fraud and Error detection rates compared to the baseline rate. It is expected that the levels of Fraud and Error will be a small amount in Low Risk and increased for Medium and increased further still in High Risk.

Monthly monitoring of RBV risk scores distribution and the processing information will provide accurate reporting on the time-scales for processing new claims, incomplete new claims and completing new claims upon receipt of the required further documentary evidence.

5. Audit

This Policy has been produced in line with Department of Work and Pensions guidance on the use of Risk Based Verification circular S11/2011.

DWP advised in January 2012 that "Auditors will carry out their audit against the terms of the risk-based verification procedure. They will not audit or in any way assess the accuracy of the guidance; that is the job of the local authority itself, in particular the Section 151 Officer and Revenues and Benefits Manager who sign off the procedure. If individual cases have been actioned correctly against the requirements of the guidance auditors will make no comment."

Ashford Borough Council will comply with the terms of the guidance which means that the high/medium/low risk cases are noted as such and verified as such. DWP guidance states auditors will check during the annual certification that the subsidy claim adheres to the Ashford Borough Council's RBV Policy; which states the necessary level of verification needed to support the correct processing of each type of HB/CTS claim. The risk category will be recorded on each E-claim application form.

Fraud Manager

Revenue and Benefits Manager

Audit Manager

Section 151 Officer

Dated

Appendix 1

Type of Evidence	Sub-category of evidence	Low Risk	Medium Risk	High Risk
Identity and S19	Identity	Originals or Photocopies/ Scanned copies	Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
	S19	Originals or Photocopies/ Scanned copies	Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
Residency/Rent	Private Tenants		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
	Social Landlords		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
	Public Sector			
	Registered		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
Household Composition	Partner ID/S19/Income/Capital	Originals or Photocopies/ Scanned copies	Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
	Dependants under 18		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
	Non-dependants - remunerative work		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
	Non-dependants – pass-ported benefit			
	Non-dependant - student		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
	Non-dependant - not in remunerative work/other		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
Income	State Benefits			
	Earnings/SMP/SSP		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
	Self-employed earnings		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
Child Care Costs			Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
Student Status	Income also required	Originals or Photocopies/ Scanned copies	Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
Capital	Below lower capital limit		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies accepted if over £5500 for Working Age or over £9500 for Elderly - not required if under these amounts	Originals if over £5500 for Working Age or over £9500 for Elderly - not required if under these amounts
	Above lower capital limit		Originals or Photocopies/Scanned Copies	Originals required
	Property		Originals or Photocopies accepted	Originals required

Appendix O

Draft for 2016/17 Budget Report

Budget Robustness

A Commentary on Risks Associated with Components of the Budget

Please note this advice takes a broad view of the council's budget. It is separate from, but complementary to the detailed view undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Task Group and is prepared by the council's statutory Chief Financial Officer in fulfilment of his statutory duty to advise the council on the robustness of the estimates – see also part seven of the main report.

Budget Component	Financial standing and management
1. Inflation	<p>The review of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) undertaken during 2015 has considered advice from various sources about future cost price inflation, assumptions for pay settlements, and the prospects for interest rates. December's preliminary draft budget to Cabinet included the results of this work. These assumptions were considered by the Overview & Scrutiny task group. The net impact of inflation on the council's budget is circa £600,000 pa. This primarily driven by inflation being applied to the £60m general fund expenditure, but inflationary increases in the £45m fees and charges income being restricted by government policy.</p> <p>Government grants and other sources of income are not expected to compensate fully for the overall effects of inflationary pressures.</p> <p>Pay inflation and salary increments in the budget assumes a 2.7% full year increase. 2% salary increase (payable from April) and 0.7% for increments.</p> <p>National insurance employer rates will change from April, resulting in 1.7% inflation to salaries.</p> <p>For inflation on service contracts the budget assumes retail prices index forecasts as used by the Government's Office of Budget Responsibility (0.9%).</p> <p>For other cost inflation (excluding utilities), the budget assumes the consumer prices index forecast (0.2%). For utilities inflation the budget assumes higher cost increases, given trends and expectations (3.2%).</p>
2. Demand-led service pressures	<p>For several services the council is less able to control demand during times of economic pressure on households. In this category are services such as: homelessness, the payment of housing benefit and council tax support payments, and servicing general customer enquiries.</p> <p>During 2015 benefit caseload has declined slightly, having risen to its highest ever level in 2013/14. This reduction has reduced service pressures. The Council's local Council Tax Support Scheme has been reviewed and the scheme agreed (with minimal</p>

Budget Component	Financial standing and management
	<p>changes) for 2016/17 is considered affordable with low risk to the budget. The council continues to receive financial support to administer the scheme from the major precepting authorities; this is likely to continue for a further two years, subject to a review should a new government decide to cut support from the current level. Without the preceptors support our ability to manage the demand on the service and maintain high council tax collection rates would be stretched.</p> <p>The housing market poses a number of risks to this authority, with rising house prices rents are escalating and this will create a pressure on welfare and housing services.</p> <p>Management Team receives budget monitoring information, and has some flexibility to manage demand through transferring resources from other services, and the prudent use of reserves (subject to limits). A restraint on spending will continue to ensure that resources are directed at priorities and there remains enough leeway to tackle unexpected pressures. There is a recognition that priority project workload will demand more resource if it is all to be managed according to the council's corporate plans, and some project work is of course influenced by government (for example, the welfare reform responses). The council has adequate reserves, including new homes bonus receipts to help with such pressures.</p>
3. New service developments	<p>During 2016/17 the grounds maintenance service will be moving back to an in-house service. The budget has been built with this in mind and includes a contingency within the estimates as this is a relatively unknown area for officers. It is believed that the Budget is sufficient however due to the significant change to the service, the operations and finance will be closely monitored in 2016/17 into 2017/18.</p>
4. Assumptions about increases in service income.	<p>The budget proposes that service income are is increased by an average of 0.7%, for legislative reasons or demand some charges will be lower of higher than this.</p> <p>This increase does not apply to car parking fees, where fees will remain unaltered at this time, or to fees that are not in the council's gift to determine (planning application fees for example). The proposed service charges are presented in detail as part of the budget report. Any amendments to the proposals may involve a slight risk to the budget.</p>
5. Housing Revenue Account	<p>The Housing Revenue, following Government announcements, has reduced rents by 1% this year and will continue to do so for a further three years. As the HRA is a ring-fenced fund this pressure needs to be managed within the fund.</p> <p>The Council keeps a HRA business plan that enables the management of the HRA financial plans. The 1% reduction in rent has been included within the business plan and changes have been made to future expenditure to ensure the HRA is affordable, this</p>

Budget Component	Financial standing and management
	<p>was approved by members in November 2015.</p> <p>The plan includes some staff redundancies as well as cutting back on future developments such as the affordable housing programme.</p> <p>Regular updating of the HRA business plan and financial monitoring will occur during 2016/17.</p>
<p>6. Estimates of the level and timing of capital receipts.</p>	<p>Capital receipts are now low in the General Fund, the budgets and financing of the capital plan reflects this.</p> <p>The Housing Revenue Account capital receipts have increased over the last couple of years due to the invigorated 'Right to Buy' policy.</p> <p>The majority of RTB receipts need to be held to fund affordable housing (funds 30% of the total cost) within the Borough, and this Council took the opportunity to retain these receipts for this purpose, these receipts are called 1-4-1 capital receipts.</p> <p>Following the recent government announcements (reduction in rents of 1%) the estimated retained reserves within the HRA, to match-fund the affordable housing works have been significantly reduced.</p> <p>The receipts and capital plans are being closely monitored and ensure these receipts are used to avoid repayment which would attract interest of 4% above base. (See Part 3 HRA)</p>
<p>7. Major Capital Projects</p>	<p>The Council agreed the Corporate Plan at the October Cabinet meeting and work is in progress to prepare proposals for the detailed Corporate Delivery Plan.</p> <p>This plan will carefully consider the delivery of the project and the funding overall and will be monitored by the Strategic Delivery Board.</p>
<p>8. Business Rates</p>	<p>Advice on the risk to the council's business rates yield has been included in the report.</p> <p>The level of income from business rates is affected by the overall performance of the economy, with the UK seemingly well placed to manage the global uncertainty. Business rates are monitored regularly and any downturn will be flagged in the monitoring.</p> <p>The nature of the system for accounting for business rates means that the general fund is guaranteed to get the level of income forecast in the budget, however in the event of a decrease or increase in income it will not be distributed to the general fund and preceptors until the following year. Therefore the budget is insulated from business rates risk for the current year.</p>
<p>9. Welfare Reform</p>	<p>The government's welfare reform agenda has been reported to cabinet and the council has established a welfare reform task group to monitor and manage the risks of this agenda. The reforms have very few direct impacts on the council however they have the</p>

Budget Component	Financial standing and management
	<p>potential of affecting the level of demand for council services and have an impact on the council's ability to collect taxes and rents due.</p> <p>The Chancellor of the exchequer announced in the autumn budget statement the suspension of changes to tax credits that have delayed the impact of some of the changes however we will see the level of benefits frozen and the removal of some allowances which will reduce the amount of money some people receive.</p>



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Agenda Item No: 8
Report To: Cabinet
Date: 11 February 2015
Report Title: Budget Monitoring Report – 3rd Quarter 2015/16
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Shorter Portfolio Holder for Finance & Budget, Resource Management and Procurement
Report Author: Maria Seddon - Principal Accountant

Summary: This report presents an assessment of an outturn position for this financial year based on the third quarter actuals for the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Collection Fund.

This quarter the General Fund is projected to be £52,000 under the original budget, a £82,000 movement from last quarter where a slight overspend of £30,000 was projected. This variance is driven from two major variances, a saving in borrowing costs and a transfer to reserves for future maintenance of assets, including recent acquisitions where borrowing costs have been saved.

The Housing Revenue Account is projecting an overall deficit of £192,000, this compares to a budgeted deficit of £370,000. The movement from last quarter is a favourable £139,000 and detailed below in Table 4.

There is also an update on New Homes Bonus projects, including progress and remaining budgets and the mid-year treasury management review.

Key Decision: YES

Affected Wards: All

Recommendations: **The Cabinet be asked to:-**

- I. note the Budget Monitoring position as at 30 December 2015**
- II. approve the proposed transfer to reserve see paragraphs 9-10**
- III. approve an increase in the grounds maintenance capital budget for the purchase of the depot from £1.0m to £1.5m see paragraphs 14-16**

- IV. **approve an allocation of £75,000 from General Fund Reserves to fund Art's at St. Marys for a further 3 years, see paragraphs 17-18**
- V. **Note the New Homes Bonus schedule in Appendix A**

Policy Overview: The budget is a key element supporting the delivery of the Council's wider Policy Objectives

Financial Implications: At this stage in the year the General Fund is reporting a potential net underspend of £52,000, this variance includes a substantial transfer to reserves for the long term maintenance of assets. The outturn will continue to be monitored and reviewed as pressures arise to keep the outturn within budget.

The Housing Revenue Account is reporting a deficit of £192,000 compared to a budgeted deficit of £370,000, a total favourable variance of £178,000. Last quarter a deficit of £331,000 was reported so there has been a favourable movement in outturn of £139,000 this quarter, see Housing Revenue Account section for details.

The Council's reserve balances remain healthy.

Risk Assessment YES

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Report Title: Budget Monitoring Report 3rd Quarter 2015/16

Purpose of the Report

1. This report is to inform Members of the projected outturn for the financial year based on nine months information (April to December) for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, and the Collection Fund.
2. Provide Members with updates of the approved New Homes Bonus projects and the Council's treasury management Investment and Borrowing portfolio.

Issue to be Decided

3. The Cabinet is asked to note the budget monitoring position for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account, the Collection Fund and New Homes Bonus schedule.
4. Approve the transfer to the Repairs & Renewals reserve for future maintenance of Council assets, including recently acquired assets such as International House and Park Mall.

Budget monitoring assessment to end of December 2015

5. Overall the General Fund is showing a potential for a year end underspend of £52,000. Reasons for this movement are detailed below.

Key Variations

Health, Parking & Community Safety

6. Monitoring Centre camera maintenance is expected to exceed the budget by £10,000 this year; this was reported to Management Team earlier in the year. There is also a shortfall in the income target by around £12,000; however the target is expected to be achieved in future years.
7. A report detailing future investment in the Monitoring Centre will come before Cabinet in the spring; the report will include investment in software to increase future income targets and replacement hardware to reduce future maintenance.
8. There are a number of other smaller movements within the services making up the full £46,000. It is important to note that the service still has a favourable variance of £40,000 overall, largely as a result of additional parking income, reported in previous budget reports.

Repayment of Borrowing & Net Interest and Transfer to Reserves

9. The 2015/16 budget was built with the assumption that borrowing would be taken out at the start of the year to fund recent capital purchases. Following advice from the Council's Treasury Management Advisors, the Council has taken the decision not to borrow during this financial year, and use internal sources of finance.
10. This decision has saved the Council around £640,000 this year and it is proposed to transfer £500,000 from this sum to the Repairs and Renewals reserve. This transfer will help fund future liabilities in relation to the Council's property portfolio, including the recent acquisitions. The reserve itself is reaching a very low level, replenishing the reserve over the medium term is therefore advised.

Table 1 – General Fund Budget Outturn Forecast as at 30 December 2015

Service	Current Budget (net)	Forecast Outturn (net) to 31/03/16	Variance (B-A)	Movement from previous quarter
	A	B		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Corporate, Strategy & Personnel	1,795	1,792	(3)	(2)
Culture & the Environment	3,669	3,760	91	10
Finance	2,171	2,167	(4)	0
Communications & Technology	293	358	65	9
Legal & Democratic	1,300	1,296	(4)	(7)
Planning & Development	1,814	1,818	4	(3)
Corporate Property & Projects	(1,096)	(1,078)	18	6
<i>Community and Housing</i>				
Housing Services	880	903	23	(1)
Environmental & Customer Services	3,579	3,516	(63)	(1)
Health, Parking & Community Safety	919	879	(40)	46
Net Service Expenditure	15,324	15,411	87	57
Capital Charges and net interest	(2,106)	(2,746)	(640)	(640)
Levies, Grants and Precepts	281	281	0	0
Contribution to reserves	233	733	500	500
Budget Requirement	13,732	13,680	(52)	(82)
Financing:				
Revenue Support Grant	(2,107)	(2,107)	0	0
NNDR. Pool	(2,628)	(2,628)	0	0
NNDR S31 Grant	(554)	(554)	0	0
Collection Fund	(6,162)	(6,162)	0	0
CTS Payment For Parish Council	42	42	0	0
New Homes Bonus	(2,324)	(2,324)	0	0
	(2)	(54)	(52)	(82)

Vacancy Management

11. The budget contains a number of savings targets to be delivered by managing vacancies totalling £108,130. During the first nine months savings of £92,180 have been achieved with the remaining target expected to be achieved by the end of the year.

Reserve Balance

12. The table below summarises the estimated reserves forecast to be held within the General Fund as at 31 March 2016. There are no changes to report to members.

Table 3 – Reserve Summary

	£'000	£'000
General Reserve	1,697	
Earmarked Reserves*	10,104	
Opening Balance 31/03/15		11,801
Known/likely transfers to reserves		
<i>Items previously reported</i>		
Items approved as part of the Budget	742	
Items approved previously	80	
Transfer to Repairs & Renewals (if approved)	500	
		1,322
Known/likely draw downs		
<i>Items previously reported</i>		
Items approved as part of the Budget	(1,103)	
Items approved Previously	(819)	
Conningbrook Lakes – delivering planning conditions	(100)	
		(2,022)
Estimated Closing Balance		11,101

* Excludes developer contributions

Reserve movements

13. The table above includes the Management Team approval of £100,000 to the Conningbrook Lakes Housing Development which enables work to commence on the development once the planning condition 71 has been met.

Grounds Maintenance Depot

14. The Council is in the process of developing its own in house grounds maintenance service, as part of that process Council approved a budget of £1.5m for the purchase of a depot, estimated at £1.0, and equipment, estimated at £0.5m. Since Council has approved this a search has been undertaken to identify suitable sites for the facility that offer a balance between the operational practicalities of the site, cost and planning considerations.
15. The search has generated a limited number of options and the preferred site acquisition and fit out are now forecast to cost up to £1.5m. The costs are being driven by increases in land value and increases in the cost of concrete and other materials. This figure is subject to negotiation; however there is an adequate contingency within the service budget to fund the additional borrowing costs that would be caused by this additional cost.
16. The proposal has been discussed with the Leader and Portfolio Holder and they have agreed that the site is the best option; it is a town centre site with good access

and is deliverable within the project timetable. Therefore it is recommended that the capital budget for the acquisition of the depot is increased to £1.5m.

Revelation St Mary's & St Marys Arts Trust

17. St Mary's Arts Trust has recently been offered funding from Arts Council England (£80,000 over two years) and KCC Arts (£6,000 for one year) towards supporting the ambitions over the next few years.
18. This funding is dependent on the Council also supporting the trust with a financial commitment. It is therefore proposed to offer the trust a three year funding agreement totalling £75,000; this is to be funded from the 2016/17 General Fund Reserves.

New Homes Bonus

19. A schedule of New Homes Bonus allocations for 2015/16 is included at Appendix A. This includes the expected outturn position for this year and indicative figure for likely carry forward requests.

Housing Revenue Account

Table 4 – Housing Revenue Account Budget Outturn Forecast as at 30 December 2015

Budget Page	Current Budget A £'000	Forecast Outturn to 31/03/16 B £'000	Variance (B-A) £'000	Movement from previous quarter £'000
Income	(23,901)	(23,858)	43	(0)
Supervision and Management	4,585	4,596	12	(7)
Repairs and Maintenance	3,622	3,411	(211)	(211)
New Build	(12)	97	109	0
Other	16,076	15,867	(209)	0
Net Revenue Expenditure	370	114	(256)	(217)
Capital Works - Decent Homes	5,589	5,515	(74)	0
<i>Capital Works financed by:</i>				0
Major Repairs Allowance (from Self Financing Determination)	(5,192)	(5,192)	0	0
Contribution to/(from) Major Repairs Reserve	(397)	(245)	152	78
Net Capital Expenditure	0	0	0	0
Total Net Expenditure	370	192	(178)	(139)

Variances

20. Repairs and maintenance underspend of £211,000; this is mainly due to gas maintenance which has reduced significantly following the large boiler replacement programme in 2014/15 which has reduce the need for maintenance.
21. There has been a reduction from Major Repairs Reserve based on the amount available at year end. This will be further reduced if the capital plan comes below estimates.

Treasury Management

22. The semi-annual treasury management report is shown at Annex A, this shows the treasury management position as at 4 January 2016 and commentary on the performance of the Council's investment portfolio to that date, and the forecasted outturn

Portfolio Holder's Views

23. To be given at the meeting

Contact: Maria Seddon

Email: Maria.seddon@ashford.gov.uk

Appendix A

New Homes Allocations 2015/2016

Project Theme	Outline	Budget 2015/16	Project Outturn 2015/16	Variance	Forecast Carry Forward	Forecast to reserves
Support for town centre	Town Manager & Economic Development	110,000	110,000	0	0	0
Town Centre Action Team	T-CAT: High profile Team to look after Ashford town centre and town entrances, notional allocation, within the base budget, with no defined end date	120,000	120,000	0	0	0
Direct Ward Benefit	Cabinet agreement to increase Ward Member Grants to £4,000 per Member	22,000	22,000	0	0	0
Community Support (for Single Grants Gateway)	Continued commitment to underpin voluntary sector: increase SGG to £100k	100,000	100,000	0	0	0
Major Community Projects Fund	New fund specifically targeted on infrastructure projects for Ashford's local communities: Allocated for St Mary's Willesborough	100,000	100,000	0	0	0
Create Festival	Guarantee of fixed period of future funding will underpin festival and allow time for income generation (e.g. commercial) to achieve sustainability. £20k p.a. x 3 years. SLA required	20,000	20,000	0	0	0
St Mary's Arts Trust	Commitment to invest in Trust for a further three year period: £25k in year 1, £20k in year 2, £15k in year 3	15,000	15,000	0	0	0
Tourism & Business in Rural Areas	Support for rural business and aim to increase tourism in the rural areas	20,000	14,000	6,000	6,000	0
Marketing	To promote growth and encourage inward investment	6,750	6,750	0	0	0
Hothfield Regeneration (Café)	Initial allocation of £50k. However work on Hothfield Café is likely to exceed this allocation, so another £100k is proposed to forward fund and recover	332,535	13,200	319,335	0	319,335
Parking	Up to £40k p.a. This amount is proposed to be a provisional 5 year allocation which should be reviewed annually	40,000	0	40,000	0	40,000
Tourism and Gateway (Relocation)	Subject to a future presentation from the Portfolio Holder	85,000	58,800	26,200	0	26,200
Tourism Symposium	To support Tourism Symposium as being based in Ashford in 2015/16	15,000	15,000	0	0	0
Space Science Destination	Initial feasibility work	52,660	13,860	38,800	33,000	5,800
Environmental Enhancements (Town/Gateways)	Subject to developments of Grounds Maintenance/Open Space new contract/service	300,000	290,000	10,000	10,000	0
Support to deliver Major Projects	To incorporate specialist planning advice	62,500	62,500	0	0	0

Project Theme	Outline	Budget 2015/16	Project Outturn 2015/16	Variance	Forecast Carry Forward	Forecast to reserves
Support to deliver Major Projects	To incorporate specialist planning advice	62,500	0	62,500	62,500	0
Tourism Projects	Tourism and Gateway (Relocation) Tourism Symposium Rural Areas - Trails	10,000	10,000	0	0	0
Town Centre Projects	Various projects to improve the image and prosperity of the Town Centre.	250,000	75,000	175,000	175,000	0
Park Mall	To promote and improve the centre, and for preliminary work on a development brief.	250,000	80,000	170,000	170,000	0
Town Centre Regeneration Board	Town Centre Regeneration Board	100,000	0	100,000	100,000	0
Marketing	Increase contract with Edwards Harvey for an additional 6 Months	13,500	13,500	0	0	0
Support Corporate Plan Priorities	Professional fee budget to support corporate priorities such as the Commercial QTR and Elwick Place	100,000	0	100,000	100,000	0
Spear Point Pavillion	To support the demolition and construction of a community sports pavilion	102,887	0	102,887	102,887	0
New Homes Bonus Projects Agreed 2015/16		2,290,332	1,139,610	1,150,722	759,387	391,335

Semi Annual Review of Treasury Management 2015/16

Introduction

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy for 2015/16 was approved by full Council on 19 February 2015 as part of the "Budget 2015/16" report as recommended by the Cabinet meeting of 11 February 2015.

This review is undertaken as set out within CIPFA's Treasury Management code of practice which stipulates that a semi-annual review of treasury management activity should be completed.

Treasury Management is defined by CIPFA as "the management of the organisation's cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks",

This review covers the period 1st April 2015 to 4th January 2016 in which the Council has invested £143m and had repaid £124m; the need to borrow for previous acquisitions has so far been avoided although current borrowing rates make this a favourable option which will be considered in 2016.

Investment Activity

The net income budget from investment activity is £455,000 for 2015/16. This target is set against a continuing low interest environment and therefore requires a blend of investments for it to be achieved.

To balance the portfolio and ensure sufficient returns are made, the portfolio can be broadly viewed as short and long term investments, short term investments/deposits enable the Council to actively manage its cash flow requirements, and long term investments provide the opportunity to generate higher yields which are required to achieve the budget expectations.

As at the 4th January 2016, the Council had £41m of investments placed across 15 counterparties, £15.5m in long term in investments and £25.5m being short term.

Treasury management is performed on a daily basis and at 4 January 2016 the Council had invested around £134m, of which £124m has been repaid. Around 75% of the investment activity has been made through the Council's investment portal ICD, from which the Council accesses 3 money market funds. Money market funds are highly liquid instruments, offer good yields commensurate with overnight deposit rates, and reduce the Council's exposure to bail in risk (the risk of losing capital to refinance a bank if it fails).

Appendix B shows the level of treasury management activity for each counterparty as at 4 January 2016.

A complete list of current investments including indicative yields can be seen at Appendix A. It should be noted that the equity funds are new financial instruments for the Council and that the rates shown are based on one interest period only.

Investment Performance

Overall the portfolio has performed well in the first 3 quarters of 2015/16 and this good performance is expected to continue for the remainder of the financial year. There is no anticipated change in the base rate (currently 0.50%) until possibly the second quarter of 2016 at the earliest.

The good performance is largely due to the continued success of the CCLA Property Fund which is returning yields of circa 5.0% generating net interest of circa £340,000; additionally the switch from MMF dividend re-investment funds to equity funds mid year is anticipated to return £100,000 of additional interest.

Further interest has also been received in relation to loans made to the Council's subsidiary, A Better Choice for Property Ltd. which was not factored in when the budget was set. In relation to the loans made to ABCFP, the loans are beneficial to the Council as the funds would likely have been placed in MMF's earning around 0.50%, however, due to the requirement for the loans to be at market rates, the Council is receiving average returns of around 3.5% (an annual difference of £30,000 on £1m). The loan book with ABCFP Ltd. is currently around £1.59m, although the company could request further drawdowns of £4m which have been approved.

The table below shows the original budget and anticipated annual interest forecast for each investment category:-

Investment	2015/16 Budget £	2015/16 Interest Forecast £	Variance £
Temporary Investments	15,000	20,250	5,250
Long Term Investments	97,500	97,500	0
Corporate Bonds	0	4,400	4,400
Deposit Accounts	21,250	29,000	7,750
Money Market Funds	21,250	30,000	8,750
Equity Funds	0	100,000	100,000
CCLA Property Fund	300,000	340,000	40,000
ABC for Property Ltd.	0	40,000	40,000
Total Return on Portfolio	455,000	661,150	206,150

Borrowing Strategy

At 4th January 2016 the Council held £119.4m of loans which relate to the HRA. This figure has not changed this financial year and the first settlement date is not due until March 2017.

In relation to borrowing the Council has an interest payable budget of £437,000 for long term borrowing, and £20,000 for short term borrowing. These interest payable budgets have been made as it is the intention of the Council to borrow for the capital expenditure incurred on new acquisitions including International House, Stanhope Shops and Christchurch House.

However, with borrowing and investment rates as they are, it has not been in the Council's interest to take on borrowing at this stage and therefore these acquisitions have been funded from internal resources. However, rates are now getting to a level where the cost of carry (paying more now but gaining in the future) is more advantageous so meetings will be held shortly with the Council's treasury advisors, Arlingclose, to confirm the figures and provide a breakeven analysis.

Treasury Management Portfolio as at 4th January 2016

Counter Party	Deal Date	Rate %	Amount £	Comment
Temporary Investments				
Lloyds Banking Group	04/01/2016	0.80	3,000,000	175 day notice account
Total Temporary Investments			3,000,000	
Long Term Investments				
Blaenau Gwent	21/10/2014	2.00	3,000,000	Matures 21/10/2019
Newport City Council	10/11/2014	1.50	2,500,000	Matures 10/07/2017
Total Long Term Investments			5,500,000	
Investment Accounts				
Santander	Various	0.50	3,000,125	Deposit Account
Handelsbanken	Various	0.50	3,000,000	Deposit Account
National Westminster Bank plc	Various	0.25	1,689,174	Deposit Account
Goldman Sachs	Various		51,202	AAA rated deposit facility *
ICD Portal - Invesco	Various	0.46	5,000,000	AAA rated deposit facility *
ICD Portal - BNP Paribas	Various	0.52	5,000,000	AAA rated deposit facility *
ICD Portal - Black Rock	Various	0.44	5,000,000	AAA rated deposit facility *
Total Investment Accounts			22,740,501	
Local Authority Property Fund	Estimate	4.90	6,000,000	Rate is Net of Management Fees (Variable Rate of Return)
Total pooled funds Accounts			6,000,000	
City Financial Multi Asset Diversified Fund	27/08/2015	4.82	1,000,000	Long term investment **
UBS Multi Asset Income Fund	26/08/2015	5.05	1,000,000	Long term investment **
M&G Global Dividend Fund	27/08/2015	5.25	1,000,000	Long term investment **
Schroder Income Maximiser	03/11/2015	3.5 Est.	1,000,000	Long term investment **
Total Equity funds **			4,000,000	
Total Investment Portfolio			41,240,501	
Long Term Borrowing				
Public Works Loan Board***	various	various	119,664,150	Maturity Date - various
Total Long Term Borrowing			119,664,150	
Grand Total Borrowing			119,664,150	

* Money Market Fund (MMF) are AAA rated deposit facilities which have variable rates of interest but have constant net asset values. Interest rates shown are as at 5/1/2016

** Equity funds have variable rates of interest and also have fluctuating capital values

*** HRA borrowing

Note: the loans made to ABCFP Ltd are not shown in the investment portfolio above, for clarity though the total draw down value of loans to the company as at 4th January 2015 was 1.59m.

Short Term Investments

Balance as at 01/04/2015	4,000,000
Investments Raised	3,000,000
Investments Repaid	-4,000,000

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>3,000,000</u>
--------------------------	------------------

Long Term Investments

Balance as at 01/04/2015	5,500,000
Investments Raised	0
Investments Repaid	0

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>5,500,000</u>
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Fixed Bonds

Balance as at 01/04/2015	1,003,396
Investments Raised	1,008,204
Investments Repaid	-2,011,600

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>0</u>
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Santander

Balance as at 01/04/2015	125
Investments Raised	13,250,000
Investments Repaid	-10,250,000

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>3,000,125</u>
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National Westminster Bank Investment A/C

Balance as at 01/04/2015	734,287
Investments Raised	19,487,277
Investments Repaid	-18,532,390

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>1,689,174</u>
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Handlesbanken Deposit Account

Balance as at 01/04/2015	0
Investments Raised	3,000,000
Investments Repaid	0

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>3,000,000</u>
--------------------------	------------------

Goldman Sachs

Balance as at 01/04/2015	51,202
Investments Raised	0

Investec Money Market Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	1,007,847
Investments Raised	0
Investments Repaid	-1,007,847

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>0</u>
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Invesco Money Market Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	0
Investments Raised	21,070,000
Investments Repaid	-16,070,000

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>5,000,000</u>
--------------------------	------------------

BNP Paribas Money Market Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	0
Investments Raised	32,750,000
Investments Repaid	-27,750,000

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>5,000,000</u>
--------------------------	------------------

Black Rock Money Market Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	0
Investments Raised	45,900,000
Investments Repaid	-40,900,000

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>5,000,000</u>
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City Financial Multi Asset Diversified Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	0
Investments Raised	1,000,000
Investments Repaid	0

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>1,000,000</u>
--------------------------	------------------

UBS Multi Asset Income Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	0
Investments Raised	1,000,000
Investments Repaid	0

Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>1,000,000</u>
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M&G Global Dividend Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	0
Investments Raised	1,000,000

Investments Repaid	0
Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>51,202</u>

Payden Money Market Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	1,005,198
Investments Raised	0
Investments Repaid	-1,005,198
Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>0</u>

Ignis Liquidity Money Market Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	1,012,577
Investments Raised	0
Investments Repaid	-1,012,577
Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>0</u>

Federated Prime Rate Money Market Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	1,002,949
Investments Raised	0
Investments Repaid	-1,002,949
Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>0</u>

Investments Repaid	0
Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>1,000,000</u>

Schroder Income Maximiser

Balance as at 01/04/2015	0
Investments Raised	1,000,000
Investments Repaid	0
Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>1,000,000</u>

CCLA Property Fund

Balance as at 01/04/2015	6,000,000
Investments Raised	0
Investments Repaid	0
Balance as at 04/01/2016	<u>6,000,000</u>

Summary	
Balance as at 01/04/2015	21,317,581
Investments Raised	143,465,481
Investments Repaid	-123,542,560
Balance as at 04/01/2016	41,240,501

* As at the 1st April 2015 the fair value of the CCLA property fund was £6,754,102.

++ These investments are considered long term.



Investment Benchmarking

31 December 2015

Ashford

47 English Non-Met Districts Average

124 Local Authorities Average

Internal Investments	£22.9m	£36.1m	£72.1m
External Funds	£11.1m	£7.9m	£8.0m
TOTAL INVESTMENTS	£34.0m	£43.7m	£80.1m

Security

Average Credit Score	4.12	4.22	4.17
Average Credit Rating	AA-	AA-	AA-
Average Credit Score (time-weighted)	2.31	3.73	3.69
Average Credit Rating (time weighted)	AA+	AA-	AA-
Number of Counterparties / Funds	16	23	23
Proportion Exposed to Bail-in	76%	71%	67%

Liquidity

Proportion Available within 7 days	51%	40%	42%
Proportion Available within 100 days	51%	71%	74%
Average Days to Maturity	244	129	51

Market Risks

Average Days to Next Rate Reset	261	128	65
External Fund Volatility	1.9%	2.1%	2.6%

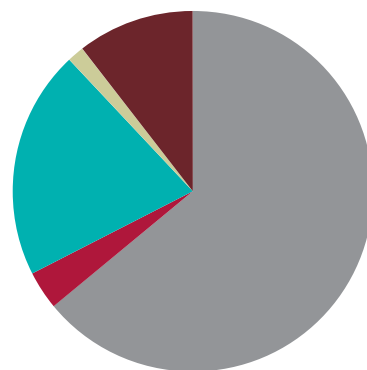
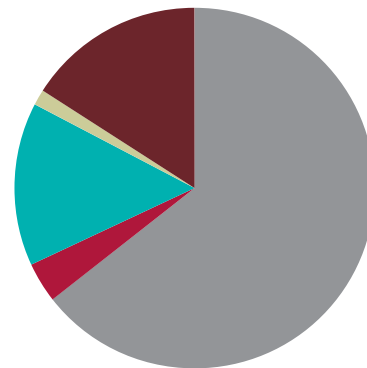
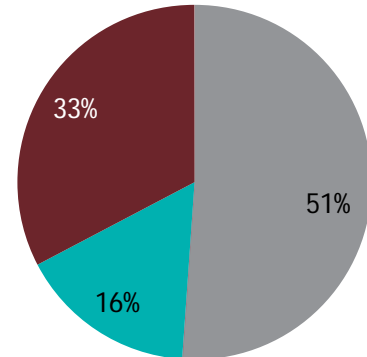
Yield

Internal Investment Return	0.84%	0.67%	0.65%
External Funds - Income Return	3.45%	3.01%	3.04%
External Funds - Capital Gains/Losses	3.54%	-0.56%	0.30%
External Funds - Total Return	6.99%	2.45%	3.33%
Total Investments - Income Return	1.69%	0.96%	0.88%
Total Investments - Total Return	2.85%	0.85%	0.91%

Notes

- Unless otherwise stated, all measures investments only, i.e. excluding extern
- Averages within a portfolio are weigh across authorities are not weighted.
- Credit scores are calculated as AAA =
- Volatility is the standard deviation of

Ashford



Agenda Item No: 9
Report To **Cabinet**
Date: **11 February 2016**



Report Title: **Ashford Borough Council's Performance – Quarter 3 2015/16**
Report Author: Policy and Performance Officer, Nicholas Clayton
Portfolio Holder: Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget & Resource Management, Neil Shorter

Summary:

This report seeks to update members and the public on the performance of the council during the quarter. This includes information on what the Cabinet has achieved through its decision-making, key performance data on our frontline services, and consideration of the wider borough picture which impacts upon the council's work.

The report also includes a 'Technical Annex' of all numerical information included within the report which provides comparison and trend data against performance over the previous four quarters.

Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards: ALL

Recommendations: **The Cabinet is asked to note performance for Quarter 3 2015/16.**

Policy Overview: Previously, the council's strategic direction, which informs the report's content, was held within "Focus 2013-15", the council's corporate plan.

In December the council agreed a new Corporate Plan - "The Five Year Corporate Plan – for Aspiration, Action and Achievement". This will therefore be the last quarterly performance report compiled against the previous corporate priorities, and all future reports will consider performance against this new corporate plan and refreshed priority areas.

Financial Implications: None specifically arising from this report.

Risk Assessment Not specifically applicable, but the report notes key frontline

service information which is an important indicator of pressures (external and internal) on the council's resources.

Impact Assessment N/A

Other Material Implications: N/A

Background Papers: None

Portfolio Holder's Comments

Overall, the last three months has seen some additional progress on a number of the council's key priorities – including a continued improvement in the borough's recycling rate and approval of significant development along Elwick Road.

Service performance remains steady, and following action in the previous quarter to review and amended our approach to dealing with face to face enquiries, this change continues to lead to improvements in the service offered at our Gateways. The speed at which Officers deal with other transactions – from planning applications to benefit claims – remain on target, whilst there has been continued falls in unemployment figures.

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Ashford Borough Council

Our Performance

October to December 2015

Introduction from the Portfolio Holder

Neil Shorter, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Budget & Resource Management

Overall, the last three months has seen some additional progress on a number of the council's key priorities – including a continued improvement in the borough's recycling rate and approval of significant development along Elwick Road.

Service performance remains steady, and following action in the previous quarter to review and amended our approach to dealing with face to face enquiries, this change continues to lead to improvements in the service offered at our Gateways. The speed at which officers deal with other transactions – from planning applications to benefit claims – remain on target, whilst there has been continued falls in unemployment figures.



Helping to create jobs and economic growth

An average of 282,000 people visited the town centre per month during the quarter, as calculated by the footfall counter installed on the high street last year. This is a decrease of around 30,000 compared to the previous quarter. A spike in September brought up the average for the previous three months, whilst this quarter's result is consistent with the numbers seen at the same time last year.

Source: Compiled by the Economic Development Team

An average of just under 105,000 people per month used the council's car parks in the three months to November. This is a slight increase on the previous quarter and an increase of around 5,000 compared to the same time last year.

Source: Compiled by the Parking Services Team

In December the Planning Committee approved an application to develop land along Elwick Road from the leading UK developer Stanhope. Representing in excess of £75 million of private investment into Ashford, the plans include –

- A multi-screen Cinema
- A hotel to support the borough's growing tourist economy
- Restaurant space
- Homes, including private apartments and rental properties
- Attractive public space and landscaping

Source: Planning Committee 16/12/2015, Application number [15/01195/AS](#)

The council received 230 applications from householders to develop their homes over the quarter – around 10 more than the previous quarter. The latest response rates showed that the council decided 95% within eight weeks while approving 97%.

Source: Compiled by the Planning and Development Service

The council received around 90 applications from small business and others to develop their properties over the quarter – around 10 more than the previous quarter. The latest response rates showed that the council decided 88% within eight weeks while approving around 85%. This represents stable performance compared to previous months.

Source: Compiled by the Planning and Development Service

The number of residents claiming Job-Seekers Allowance continued to fall slightly, and now stands at just above 775¹. This is around 20% less than at the same time last year and constitutes around 1% of Ashford's working age population. Ashford is below the Kent average, currently at 1.4%. The number of young people (18-24) claiming JSA long-term (over 12 months) remains steady at 30.

Just over 100 claimants a month either returned to work or increasing their employment hours, whilst the circumstances of around 5 per month meant a switch to another type of benefit.

Source: NOMIS

In October Ashford returned to the UK's large-scale property trade show MPIPIM UK. Ashford's stand, hosted by the council in partnership with local business providers, provided an excellent platform to promote the borough to a wider audience.

¹ As part of the Government's reorganisation of the welfare system, Universal Credit (UC) continues to be rolled out across the country, replacing a number of means tested benefits, including Jobseekers Allowance (JSA). UC rollout in Ashford began in April, meaning that JSA figures no longer include those now on UC. As not all UC claimants will be in work, it is probable that JSA claimant numbers now underestimate unemployment. The Office for National Statistics is working with the Department for Work and Pensions to produce an agreed method for separating out unemployed and inactive UC claimants to give a more accurate estimate of local unemployment – due to be updated for local data in early 2017.

Creating quality homes & places to live

The average selling price of homes in Ashford (to October) was just over £230,000 - around 7% more than at the same time last year.

Source: Home.co.uk

The building of 80 new homes was started during Quarter 2, a decrease of 40 on the previous three months – with the vast majority of these coming from private enterprises. The number of homes completed increased by around 50 to 130. (*Quarter 3 figures yet to be released by DCLG*)

Source: Department for Communities and Local Government)

100% of council-owned properties had a current gas safety certificate at the end of the quarter, a number comparable with both last quarter's and last year's performance.

Source: Compiled by the Community and Housing Service

In October the Cabinet endorsed a new Quality Monitoring approach, which seeks to drive up the standards of new homes built, the places they are part of and the environment around them.

Source: Cabinet 08/10/15 minute 162

The average number of families requiring temporary Bed and Breakfast accommodation during the last three months (to October) rose slightly to around 18 a month. During quarter 2 the number of homeless applications also rose slightly to around 55 per quarter - with just over half of these being accepted. (*Quarter 3 figures yet to be available*)

Source: Compiled by the Community and Housing Service

In December DEFRA's latest recycling league tables confirmed that Ashford is now in the top 10% recycling councils in the country. During 2014/15 the borough was the best in Kent at producing the least waste per household, and also remained the second most improved recycler across the country.

In October the Cabinet received the most recent review of homelessness, alongside a draft homelessness strategy, ahead of a 12 week consultation exercise.

Source: Cabinet 08/10/15 minute 166

In November the Cabinet granted additional funding towards the replacement of Kennington's Spearpoint Pavilion. The additional money will enable the council to invest in a new high quality sports facility providing modern facilities including a new kitchen and eight male and female changing rooms.

Source: Cabinet 12/11/15 minute 201

Working with colleagues from Kent County Council's occupational health, the council completed around 75 disabled adaptations - from grab rails to flush floor showers - to private and public sector homes during the last three months. This is slightly higher than during the previous quarter, and higher than the same time last year.

Source: Compiled by Community and Housing Services



Giving residents value for money services

The council's Customer Service Agents at the Gateway +, Civic Centre and elsewhere dealt with an average of just over 6,000 visitors per month – around 1,000 less than in the previous quarter. A fully appointment-only service now runs five days a week, a change which is working really well – with the need for face to face appointments reducing and the numbers using our 'fast track' service increasing. This has meant that overall wait times have also improved, with around 95% of face-to-face queries seen within our target of 15 minutes, whilst the average wait time for those using fast track was just over 5 minutes, a slight improvement from last quarter.

The proportion of customers using 'self-service' provision is increasing slightly to average 21% each month, and it remains above our target of 10% - meaning that customers didn't need to speak to a member of staff and freeing up officers to deal with more complex queries.

Source: Compiled by the Customer Services Team

By the end of December the council had collected around 85% of council tax and business rates, around the same as at this point last year. Around 67% of residents chose to use direct debit for paying council tax, a figure which remains broadly constant compared to last year.

Source: Compiled by the Revenues and Benefits Team

The benefits caseload has fallen to around 9,650 throughout the quarter. This in turn has meant that the average time taken to process new claims and changes in circumstances remains around 6 days - under the target of 8 days.

Source: Compiled by the Revenues and Benefits Team

In December the Audit Committee received the external auditor's annual audit letter, which confirmed that during the previous year

the council had proper arrangements to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use of resources.

Source: Audit Committee 01/12/15 minutes 221 and 222

The percentage of sundry debtor income received on time – small payments from residents who don't usually interact with the council (parking fines, pest control services etc) - averaged around 80%, slightly less than the previous quarter. If not paid within the prescribed 14 days, all statutory methods of enforcement of debts are available for the council to use.

Source: Compiled by the Revenues and Benefits Team

96.8% of food premises comply with environmental health standards. While the percentage has remained steady over the last year, the council has maintained its effort in this area with a continued focus and resources.

Any food premises found to be non-compliant either receive a formal letter or a revisit, and officers always seek to work with the premises in the first instance. If non-compliance is severe, or does not improve after these initial interventions, officers would then serve a notice. Indeed, in November and December officers served enforcement notices on two businesses meaning that they require urgent improvement to meet health standards.

Source: Compiled by the Environmental Health Team

In December the Cabinet agreed a new Corporate Plan - "*The Five Year Corporate Plan – for Aspiration, Action and Achievement*". This sets out what the councils aims to achieve in the following priority areas –

- *Enterprising Ashford* – economic growth & investment
- *Living Ashford* – quality housing and homes for all
- *Active & Creative Ashford* – healthy choices through physical, cultural & leisure engagement
- *Attractive Ashford* – countryside & townscape, tourism & heritage

Source: Cabinet 03/12/15 minute 238

Technical Annex

Indicator	Quarter 3 2015/16	Quarter 2 2015/16	Quarter 1 2015/16	Quarter 4 2014/15	Quarter 3 2014/15
Helping to create jobs and economic growth					
Average Town Centre footfall per month	282,000	316,600	310,000	300,000	282,484
Average car park users per month	104,000	101,950	99,650	98,600	101,000
Householder planning applications - number	230	218	234	215	253
Householder planning applications - % decided within 8 weeks	95	92	88	84	82
Householder planning applications - % approved	97	93	93	98	90
Small business planning applications - number	90	82	97	83	90
Small business planning applications – % decided within 8 weeks	88	80	80	57	70
Small business planning applications – % approved	87	84	84	79	85
JSA claimants	775	790	850	1,070	980
Long-term (over 12 months) JSA claimants 18-24	30	30	30	30	35
Creating quality homes and places to live					
Average house selling price	230,919	226,827	215,340	217,500	229,000
Number of homes started	---	80	120	100	80
Number of homes completed	---	150	80	80	80
% of properties with a current gas safety certificate	100	100	100	100	100
Average number of families in B&B accommodation per month	18	15	10	14	5
Number of homeless applications received	---	56	38	65	45
Number of homeless applications approved	---	42	23	40	45
Value for money services					
Average number of face-to-face contacts per month	6,130	7,110	7,060	11,099	8,253
% of customers seen within 15 minutes	95	99	94	93	94
% of customers using 'self service'	21	20	16.7	19.2	17.8
% Council Tax collected	86.7	58.5	30.5	98.5	86.8
% Business rates collected	84.1	60.2	33.2	98.5	86
% take up of direct debit for paying council tax	66.6	67.1	67.1	66.7	66.6
Benefits Caseload	9,650	9,700	9,800	9,900	9,860
Number of days to process new benefit claims / CoC	6.5	5.75	5.5	4.8	5.6
% sundry debtor income	81	84	89	92	94.6
Number of disabled adaptations completed	75	65	50	65	68
% of compliant food premises	97	97	97	98	98

Agenda Item No: 10
Report To: Cabinet
Date: 11/02/2016



Report Title: **Climate Change and Sustainable Environment – Annual Progress Review**

Portfolio Holder: Portfolio Holder for Culture and the Environment, Jessamy Blanford

Report Author: Policy and Performance Officer, Nicholas Clayton

Summary:

This report, the third such annual review, summarises actions and initiatives undertaken throughout the authority during the last year in the complementary areas of a sustainable environment, carbon and energy reduction and responding to the threat of climate change. These had been brought together previously within the council's Position Statement.

Many new initiatives were set in train over the previous year (the details of which were included in the February 2015 annual progress report). As such, much of the emphasis over this year has been to consolidate these, whilst adding a smaller number of additional projects.

Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards: ALL

Recommendations: **The Cabinet be asked to:-**

- Note progress over the last year across the authority in achieving the aims and objectives of the *Position Statement on Climate Change and a Sustainable Environment*.**

Policy Overview: The Position Statement was originally adopted in August 2011 and updated in February 2013. When it was adopted by Cabinet it was agreed that an Annual Report should be produced to capture progress against its aims – this report fulfils that obligation.

Financial Implications: The measures outlined within this report, when taken together, have a positive impact on both the environmental impact of the council's services and our residents' carbon footprint, and aim to secure long-term financial savings.

Risk Assessment N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment N/A

Background Papers:

Portfolio Holders Comments

Ashford Borough Council takes its role in ensuring a sustainable future for the borough very seriously. This summary provides a comprehensive overview of the varied array of individual projects, initiatives and efficiency measures which provide an overall positive impact on the efficiency and sustainability of the council's operations and the borough overall.

I am pleased to see that good progress continues to be made, and I am encouraged at the ever-increasing uptake of electric vehicles across the borough and improved understanding of the council's own energy use – initiatives which were set in motion last year and which are now bearing fruit. The council will continue to focus on its new recycling service, leading to an improvement in the overall recycling rate.

Many of the projects are still ongoing, and I look forward to providing colleagues with further updates as these - and other initiatives - developed during the year.

Contacts: Nicholas.clayton@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233 330208)

Report Title: Climate Change and Sustainable Environment – Annual Progress Review

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide the Cabinet with the details of work undertaken during the last year by departments across the authority which, taken together, further the aims and objectives of the council's *Position Statement on Climate Change and a Sustainable Environment (the Statement)*.
2. This annual update provides a concise summary of actions and initiatives undertaken during the last year, rather than a wholesale restating of the Statement itself.

Background

3. The Statement was originally adopted in August 2011 and updated in February 2013. When it was adopted by Cabinet it was agreed that an Annual Report should be produced to capture progress against its aims – this report fulfils that obligation.
4. The Statement did not create new policy as such, rather it provided a framework capturing the varied and complementary work undertaken throughout the authority which – taken together - have a positive impact. As such it states the council's commitment to carbon and energy reduction, including the promotion of sustainable policies and practices affecting the borough, our residents and businesses more generally. Through the Statement members and the wider community have a single reference point for the council's work on a sustainable environment, carbon and energy reduction and responding to the threat of climate change.
5. The Cabinet has previously received an annual update on the progress seen during 2014 (in February 2015). As such, this report builds upon (and updates) the actions set in train during the previous year.

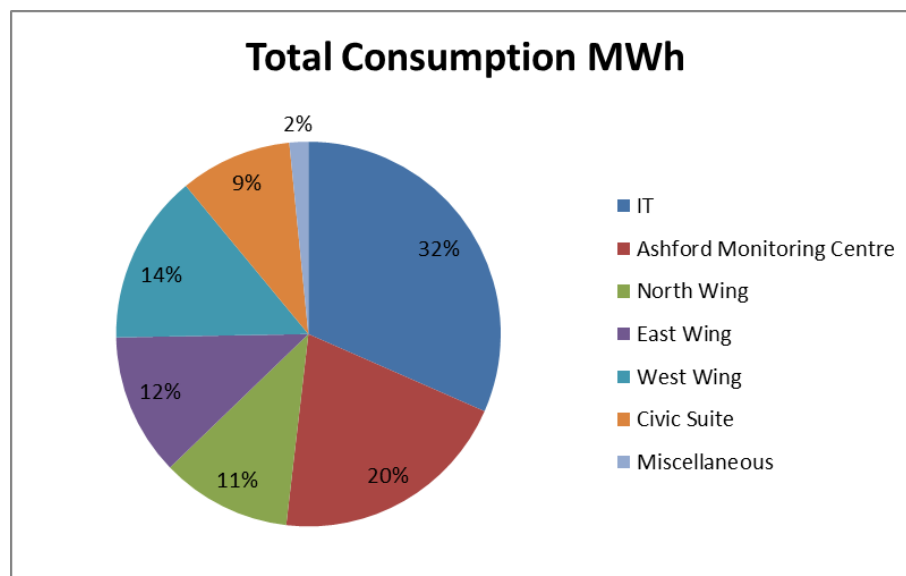
Progress in the last year

6. The Statement sets out a number of overarching themes, bringing together the many elements of this agenda and our plans for each. Progress against each of these themes during the last year is set out below.

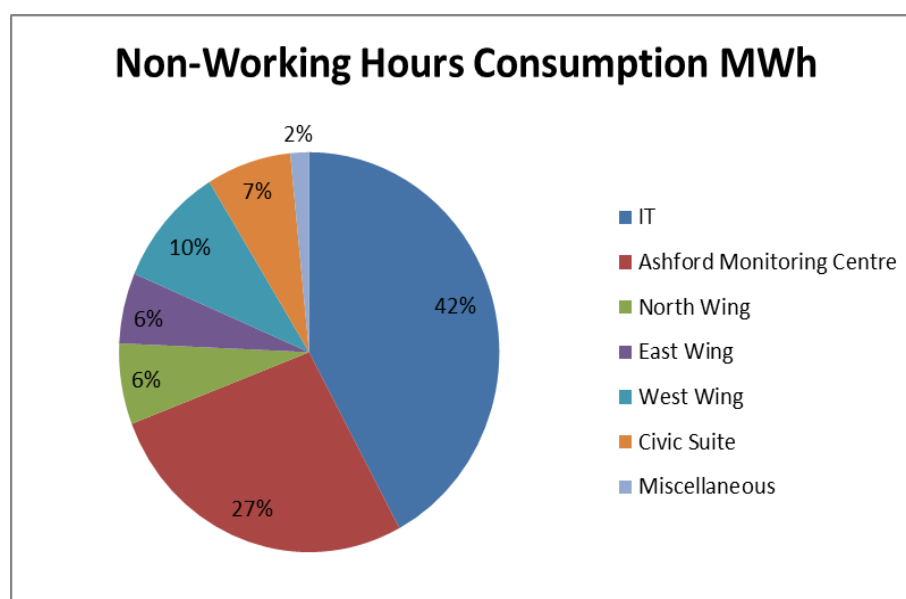
A. Our Estate and Operations

Reducing our own energy use

7. As part of the council's ongoing commitment to reduce its impact upon the environment and to provide best value services, the council aims to ensure that its own operations remain as efficient and effective as possible.
8. Building on the large number of initiatives set in train during 2014, energy efficiency measures began to bear fruit during the last year.
9. Submetering systems, installed during early 2014, now provide improved and disaggregated information on energy consumption across the Civic Centre. Officers continue to monitor consumption and target actions to address high and unexpected usage. As can be seen, IT and the Ashford Monitoring Centre are the main energy consumers within the Civic Centre estate, accounting for over half of total consumption:



10. Both areas also account for the majority of non-working hours consumption:



11. Accordingly, efforts are being concentrated on both areas to reduce consumption. By the end of January 2016 officers will have completed the installation of energy efficient lighting in the Monitoring Centre, which will reduce their monthly electricity consumption from around 6,000KWh to around 5,000KWh (approximately a 16% reduction saving £75 per month).
12. By using in-house electricians and large scale reuse of salvaged light fittings and sensors, the council has been able to make these changes very little outlay.
13. During the summer a thorough, investigative survey was undertaken on the Stour Centre. This audit sought to establish the current electrical consumption of equipment, and to identify any opportunities to reduce electricity usage and maximise the efficiency of gas energy.
14. A report was considered by the council's Management Team in October 2015, which endorsed recommendations for a series of energy efficiency measures to improve utilities usage at the leisure centre.
15. Overall, these additional measures (building on the new initiatives set in motion during 2014), have ensured that energy consumption across the Civic and Stour Centres continues to fall, while electricity consumption for the Civic Centre fell by 7.5% over 2015 compared with the previous year.

Solar PV and CHP

16. 180 solar panels were installed on the Civic Centre roof in March 2012, alongside others on Trumpet House. On both sites, the panels continue to perform above initial estimates – with the Civic Centre panels providing almost 20% more electricity than was forecast, performance which is in line with generation in the previous two years.

B. Our Services and Procurement

Ashford's recycling rates

17. During the first full year of Ashford's new recycling service quadrupled its average recycling, reuse and composting rate, hitting around 55% by the end of 2014.
18. During 2015 Ashford built on this success, and now sits within the top 10% of recycling councils in the country. The borough posted a recycling rate of 55.3% in 2014/15, an improvement of 13.4% on the year before. This was the second largest improvement nationally, whilst being the very best in the county at producing the least waste per household.

Largest increases in Recycling (2014/15)					
Authority	Region	Authority Type	Percentage Household waste sent for Recycling, Reuse, or Composting 2014/15 (EX NI 192)	Percentage Household waste sent for Recycling, Reuse, or Composting 2013/14 (EX NI 192)	Improvement (Percentage points)
South Bucks District Council	South east	Collection	50.7%	33.4%	17.3%
Ashford Borough Council	South east	Collection	55.3%	41.9%	13.4%
East Cambridgeshire District Council	Eastern	Collection	56.6%	45.5%	11.2%
Gravesham Borough Council	South east	Collection	34.2%	24.5%	9.7%
North Warwickshire Borough Council	W Midlands	Collection	48.7%	39.8%	8.9%
Middlesbrough Borough Council	North East	Unitary	36.3%	27.7%	8.6%
Lambeth LB	London	Collection	28.3%	21.1%	7.2%
Halton Borough Council	North West	Unitary	46.8%	39.8%	7.0%
Dudley MBC	W Midlands	Unitary	42.2%	35.7%	6.5%
Waverley Borough Council	South east	Collection	51.7%	45.2%	6.5%

19. While the new recycling contract is a key component in contributing to the continued reduction in the borough's carbon footprint, the council is aware that – following two straight years of impressive increases in recycling rates – the important next step is to consolidate this improved performance. As such, a Kent-wide "Recycle Now" awareness campaign was launched by the Kent Resource Partnership in December, which seeks to build upon these improved recycling figures with a targeted campaign focussing on metal and plastic items.



20. The campaign is designed to engage with, and inform, residents of the benefits of recycling these materials via existing local recycling services. By example, plastic bottles already account for 40% of all household plastic packaging waste – however not all residents are currently aware of the plastic

bottles, pots, tubs, and trays from around the home that can also be recycled. Residents will receive leaflets on plastic and metal recycling during early 2016.

Continually improving our own housing

21. The council constantly seeks to ensure that the housing our tenants enjoy is as efficient as possible – this keeps them up to date and reduces energy bills. To this end, over the last year the council was active in upgrading and improving our own housing, including –
 - a. Installing around 170 ‘A’ rated gas boilers and 9 ‘A’ rated oil boilers with Part L compliant controls such as thermostatic radiator valves and room thermostats.
 - b. As part of our affordable warmth programme (which focuses more towards off-gas properties) the council plans to gradually install electric storage heaters that are better designed to be more efficient with greater control coupled together with PV and a hot water optimiser. Due to recent cuts in feed in tariffs, officers were only able to install 2 of these systems. Nonetheless, the new storage heaters alone represent better savings and control over and above the original storage heaters installed. More widely, 56 homes received new high efficiency storage heaters.
 - c. The council’s insulation programme continues to improve the thermal insulation levels by increasing loft insulation depth and rectifying failed cavity wall insulation. This programme is primarily focusing on off-gas areas, but addresses those properties on gas when required. By the end of the year the council was on target to address 65 properties with cavity wall insulation, 63 properties with loft insulation and 13 hard to treat homes will have received external wall insulation.
 - d. One sheltered scheme received a new high efficiency gas boiler and three schemes received commercial sized PV arrays.

Our procurement procedures

22. Procurement is important to the Council’s environmental strategies and the well-being of the borough as a whole. “Green” or environmentally friendly products are not necessarily more expensive – while initially cheaper products may cost more in the long term when whole-life costs are taken into account.
23. In September the Cabinet approved new procurement guidance, in light of wider legislative developments and a comprehensive review audit during 2013 which made a number of recommendations. This refreshed guidance now includes additional sustainability measures, namely:
 - a. Measures to encourage smaller companies and local supplier to participate in the Council’s procurement processes – and in doing so reduce the carbon footprint of contractual arrangements. The rules have been redrawn with a focus on providing contracts to local firms.

- b. The Social Value Act now encourages councils to consider the environmental impact of purchasing decisions. Possible examples include purchase of 'low emission' vehicles and the use of low energy equipment. Councils have a certain amount of freedom to specify environmentally-friendly requirements, for example that harmful materials are not used.

C. Our Workforce

24. Officers try to minimise the use of vehicles when carrying out day-to-day council operations. More energy efficient biodiesel vehicles were commissioned for the new recycling contract, and officers have further reduced the miles they travel by car. The last full financial year saw a continued reduction of 10% overall in the miles travelled by the council's lease car fleet compared to the previous 12 months - with a reduction in the use of petrol cars by around 35%.
25. Over the last two years, 11 members of staff have taken advantage of the council's participation in the government-backed cycle to work scheme, making the switch from coming to work by car or other carbon-emitting transport to commuting by bike.

D. Our Future Plans for Ashford

Striving for quality place-making

26. The council seeks to ensure that any new development meets the quality standards – including environmental - both we and our residents expect. To this end the council's adopted Core Strategy sets challenging energy efficiency standards for new homes and employment buildings (policy CS10).
27. This adopted policy CS10 (sustainable design and construction), sets out guidance on how to meet required environmental performance standards for all new major developments within the borough. These are based upon the Code for Sustainable Homes (CSH), a national accredited standard for key elements of design and construction which affect the sustainability of a new home. The CSH scheme covers nine environmental categories and uses a sustainability rating system indicated by 'stars', to communicate the overall sustainability performance of a dwelling. A home can achieve a sustainability rating from one (*) to six (*****) stars depending on the extent to which it has achieved the Code standards.
28. In October Cabinet endorsed a new Quality Monitoring approach for new housing development – further embracing the importance of good design and lasting place-making.
29. Over the last few years, the council has increased its design skills and shown a real determination to deliver better quality development and create better

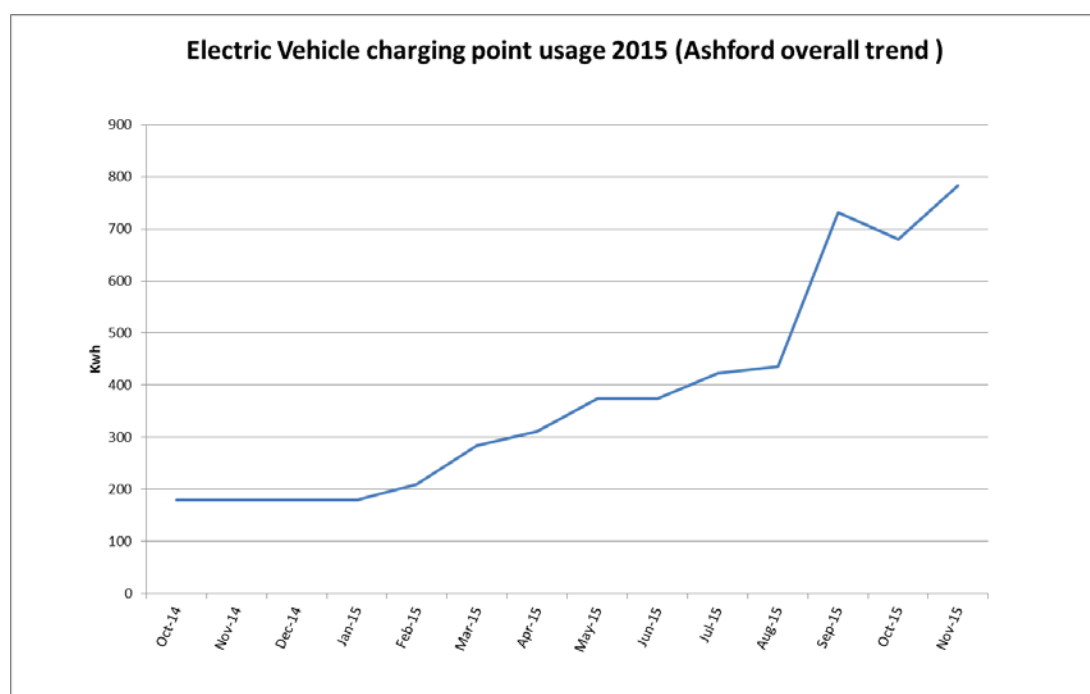
places. Efforts made locally to do this go well beyond the typical response of local government and include:

- a. Design Workshops for major developments for the last 15 years
 - b. Setting up the independent Ashford Design Panel
 - c. National recognition with a Government 'Charter mark'
 - d. Working with rural communities on Village Design Statements and design workshops
 - e. Comprehensive development briefs for key sites
 - f. National Design Coding pilot at Repton Park
 - g. Study visits to exemplar schemes
 - h. National and regional awards for masterplanning
 - i. Pioneering comprehensive space and parking design standards
 - j. Biennial 'Ashford Building and Construction Design Quality Awards'
30. The council's adopted Core Strategy emphasises the importance of delivering high quality development (policy CS9 and pages 50-55) as does the Chilmington Area Action Plan (CG1, CG22 for example) and the Tenterden and Rural Sites DPD (paras 4.10 – 4.13). At Chilmington Green a new initiative – A Quality Agreement – has been signed by the Council and the developer team, giving even greater emphasis to achieving lasting design quality.
31. However, as expectations about design standards and the quality of environment people expect rise, so does the importance of spotting problems early before they need expensive rectification or are repeated elsewhere.
32. The Quality Monitoring approach will provide a more rigorous regime for checking quality, working with house-builders and their site managers to spot problems early so they can be corrected. This goes beyond the scope of the building control inspection of the building works themselves and encompasses checking the planning conditions – for example, on the materials used and the detailed design drawings (e.g. of window design). But it also includes the environment around the home – for example, the adequacy of tree pit construction and planting; the construction of recreational footways and cycleways.
33. The Quality Monitoring regime proposed will initially be trialled on three development projects deliberately chosen to cover the range of sizes of schemes which come before the council:
- Aldington, Calleywell Lane – 41 homes
Tenterden, TENT 1 site – 250 homes
Chilmington Green – up to 5,750 homes
34. For each site a bespoke monitoring system and short business plan will be set up.
35. The council is also helping to set up a Community Management Organisation for the Chilmington Green development, to ensure that this quality is maintained as the new community develops.

36. Similarly, any new social housing is finished to a good sustainability level. It should also be noted that the new 100-space dementia friendly accommodation constructed at Farrow Court was built to our lifetime living standards.

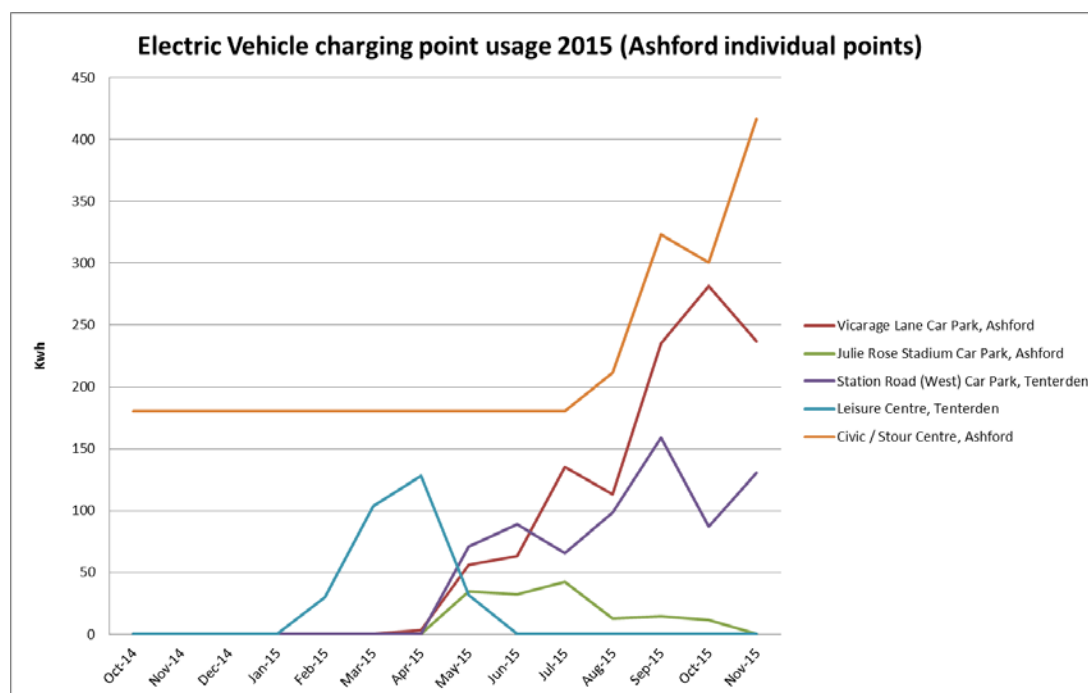
Electric vehicle charging

37. At the beginning of 2014 the council (in partnership with KCC) agreed to install a total of five double electric vehicle charging points within the borough¹, as part of a 43-strong network across Kent. This is part of a wider government-backed initiative to provide the infrastructure to support electric vehicles. Although there are currently only a small number of owners of electric vehicles, statistics and surveys suggest that this will increase over the coming years with a lot of interest from companies to produce the vehicles at a reasonable price – provided the necessary infrastructure is in place to run (and re-charge) the vehicles.
38. All of Ashford’s charging points are operational, except for the one at Tenterden Leisure Centre which – while initially working - has encountered issues since June. KCC and the operators are liaising to resolve the problem.
39. Since installation last year, Ashford’s charging point locations have resulted in 952 charging sessions by 47 unique drivers. A total of 5,352 kilowatts have been drawn to charge the vehicles – round a third of the total for all of Kent. The Civic / Stour Centre location has been the second most used in the county.
40. Initial usage data suggests an increasing trend for electric vehicles:



¹ Ashford Civic Centre, Ashford Vicarage Lane, Julie Rose Stadium, Tenterden Leisure Centre, Tenterden Station Road

41. A breakdown of usage for each charging point is also available:



42. Initial analysis suggests the following:

- Time of plugging in* – There are peaks between 7am-9am, 1pm-3pm and after 5pm
- Day of plugging in* – The majority of charging events occur Monday – Friday
- Plug in duration* – The median was 2 hours 28 minutes. Some charging does occur overnight (3%)
- Energy* – the median charging amount per session is 5.62 kWh.

43. The council will continue to monitor the take-up of electric vehicles to inform future discussions with partners and others on sustainable transport and infrastructure.

E. Our Leadership in the Community

The Five Year Corporate Plan – for Aspiration, Action and Achievement

44. In December Cabinet endorsed a new corporate plan. This refocuses the council's priorities to 2020 and sets the overall approach – including on sustainability – for the near future.
45. Building on the Quality Monitoring regime noted above, Priority 4 (Attractive Ashford) includes an aspiration to “*achieve an environment that creates higher standards of public space...to safeguard and conserve our local heritage and areas of outstanding landscape quality to ensure the very best attractive environment*”.

46. This priority lays out a number of areas of achievement for the future, including to:
 - a. Create a Landscape Action Team and implement higher maintenance standards
 - b. Bring forward a new green corridor action plan to improve presentation, signage, planting and better water quality
 - c. Develop a cycle town strategy and connections between green spaces via cycle and footpath links

Green Travel

47. In 2014 the council, with grant funding from KCC's Health Inequalities fund, extended the 'Walk to School' program in Ashford. The delivery partner (the KM Charity group) targeted primary schools considered to have specified health inequalities when compared with other local schools. The programme encourages primary aged children either to walk, cycle or travel to school in some other active way, to improve road awareness, encourage physical fitness and improve local air quality (through a reduction in often short car journeys).
48. The Ashford walk to school program has continued to be a very successful program. Three schools have walking buses and 13 schools participate in the programme overall. One school is set to receive an award at a presentation in Dartford in February 2016.

Conningbrook Lakes

49. In May Ashford's newest country park officially opened. Conningbrook Lakes, set on a picturesque stretch of the River Stour next to the Julie Rose Stadium, will provide a real boost – not only to the borough's leisure and recreation amenities – but also to local countryside conservation and the sustainable environment of the borough.
50. Conningbrook Lakes now provides a gateway for families, walkers and cyclists to explore the Stour Valley, and a site for water sports organised and supervised by local clubs and associations.
51. The park will be managed by a partnership involving the council, Ashford Leisure Trust, Kent Wildlife Trust and Mid Kent Fisheries. A Conservation Community Warden works with the Wildlife Trust to run tasks and events to highlight and improve the wildlife across the country park.

F. Our Decision-Making

52. The council recognises that we must work with other local authorities and public-sector partners to make the most of the opportunities presented by the sustainable agenda. To this end we signed up to Climate Local Kent in September 2012, a Local Government Association initiative to capture the

collective effort local government has provided on the issue. Annual reporting against this agreement is compiled by KCC².

53. In addition, Ashford Borough Council adopted the Kent Environment Strategy in 2010. This document, developed by Kent County Council, looks at the challenges that Kent faces in terms of the environment, health and the economy over the coming decades and aims to support economic growth whilst protecting and enhancing our natural and historic environment.
54. The Kent Environment Strategy was revised and updated following Kent-wide public consultation. The updated Strategy will be considered for formal adoption by Council Members later in 2016.
55. Although Ashford has historically been well-prepared in terms of planning for floods, the council is keen to ensure that its plans remain relevant and responsive to changing weather patterns – namely the potential for more heavy rainfall and persistent flooding.
56. A key element of this crucial work of ensuring the awareness of longer-term flood preparedness will be taken forward by a new Member working sub-group specifically for Flood Defence planning.
57. This working sub-group will engage with relevant external bodies, such as water companies, the Environment Agency, Kent County Council and Drainage Boards to determine collective solutions.

Conclusion and Aims for the Next 12 months

58. Good progress continues to be made towards the general ambitions set out in the Statement. The range of initiatives included within this report show the importance of a package of measures to tackle what is a complex and multifaceted area. It is clear, however, that energy efficiency measures undertaken over the last year – although small individual changes - have delivered significant aggregate reductions in the energy used by the council to provide its services.
59. Many of the initiatives already set in motion have begun to influence the overall sustainable impact of the borough. The uptake of electric vehicle charging has only increased since the installation of a network infrastructure across Ashford, while the new recycling service continues to provide improvements in the amount of material recycled rather than sent to landfill.
60. The commitments set out in both the council's new corporate plan and the enhanced Quality Monitoring regime demonstrate a commitment to high-quality environmental and sustainability standards across the wide range of council involvement in the borough. Building on these general ambitions, over the next year the council will seek to –

² <https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/environment-and-planning/environment-and-climate-change/Climate%20Local%20Kent%20monitoring%202013.pdf>

- a. Further refine the efficiency of our own operations, namely more routine monitoring of gas usage.
- b. Consider the longer-term use and impact of electric vehicle charging in light of the developing trends
- c. Set up a working sub-group to consider Flood Defence planning
- d. Explore further the areas of achievement set out in the *Attractive Ashford* priority of the council's new corporate plan.
- e. Consider the revised Kent Environment Strategy for formal adoption
- f. Continue to supported the Ashford walk to school program to ensure the program continues to grow and develop across the borough.
- g. Combine the above with taking advantage of other opportunities as they arise.

Risk Assessment

61. N/A as this is a summary of individual projects which will all have been subject to their own appropriate risk assessments.

Equalities Impact Assessment

62. N/A as this is a summary of individual projects which will all have been subject to their own appropriate equalities assessments.

Portfolio Holder's Views

63. Ashford Borough Council takes its role in ensuring a sustainable future for the borough very seriously. This summary provides a comprehensive overview of the varied array of individual projects, initiatives and efficiency measures which provide an overall positive impact on the efficiency and sustainability of the council's operations and the borough overall.
64. I am pleased to see that good progress continues to be made, and I am encouraged at the ever-increasing uptake of electric vehicles across the borough and improved understanding of the council's own energy use – initiatives which were set in motion last year and which are now bearing fruit. The council will continue to focus on its new recycling service, leading to an improvement in the overall recycling rate.
65. Many of the projects are still ongoing, and I look forward to providing colleagues with further updates as these - and other initiatives - developed during the year.

Contact: Nicholas Clayton, Policy and Performance Officer

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Agenda Item No: 11
Report To: CABINET
Date: 11th February 2016
Report Title: Domestic Abuse Annual Report
Report Author: James Hann and Elizabeth Mannington
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Heyes – Portfolio Responsibility for Highways, Wellbeing and Safety



Summary: This paper sets out for comment the progress the council and its partners have made on projects relating to domestic abuse over the past 12 months. It specifically addresses:

- The current position on the Kent and Medway Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service,
- The work of the council's Domestic Abuse Coordinator, and
- The programme of work going forward.

Key Decision: No

Affected Wards: All

Recommendations: The Cabinet be asked to:-

- i. **Endorse the work of partners in tackling domestic abuse.**
- ii. **To note the work of the Independent Domestic Violence Advisors and the council's Domestic Abuse Coordinator.**
- iii. **To note the achievements of the Ashford Domestic Abuse Forum on obtaining charitable status.**

Policy Overview: Our work on domestic abuse is as a crucial part of the council's aspirations to build a civilised society that ensures support and protection is provided to those who are among the most vulnerable.

Financial Implications: The council allocated up to £50,000 per year for three years to support the work on tackling domestic abuse which includes funding for the post of Domestic Abuse Coordinator.

Risk Assessment Addressed within the body of the report.

**Other Material
Implications:**

Addressed within the body of the report.

**Background
Papers:**

None

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Report Title: Domestic Abuse Annual Report

Purpose of the Report

1. This paper sets out for comment the progress the council and its partners are making on projects focusing on domestic abuse over the past 12 months since the agreement by the council to allocate up to £50,000 per year for three years to support the work on tackling domestic abuse.
2. Specifically it sets out progress on:
 - Funding of the Kent and Medway Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service.
 - Evaluating the work of the Domestic Abuse Coordinator.
 - The programme of work going forward.

Issue to be Decided

3. The Cabinet be asked to:-
 - i. Endorse the work of partners in tackling domestic abuse.
 - ii. Note the work of the Independent Domestic Violence Advisors and the Domestic Abuse Coordinator.
 - iii. Note the achievements of the Ashford Domestic Abuse Forum on obtaining charitable status.

Background

4. This report highlights key achievements from the last year as well as our actions for tackling domestic abuse in the future. Data has been provided by a range of partners.
5. There have been a huge number of successes across the county and the borough over the last 12 months. There are still many challenges ahead with an increased number of reports to police, increased referrals to MARAC¹ and an increase in attendance at the One Stop Shop².
6. The last year has seen agencies providing services with an increasing workload and more often than not a reduction in resources. Professionals have to work in partnership more than ever.

¹ A Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (**MARAC**) is a local, multi agency victim-focussed meeting where information is shared on the highest risk cases of domestic violence and abuse between different statutory and voluntary sector agencies.

² The One Stop Shop is a confidential service for people experiencing domestic violence

7. The purpose of the report is to demonstrate what has been achieved over the last 12 months and what we want to achieve in the future. This relies on the continued work of partners within the Borough, something Ashford can pride itself on. What has been achieved so far and what we hope to achieve would not be possible without those dedicated to dealing with domestic abuse, the hard work they commit to under increased pressure, and the huge effort which is made to ensure those suffering domestic abuse are afforded protection and safety as well as working towards preventing domestic abuse.

Services in Ashford

8. Ashford Borough Council has committed to providing £50,000 of funding towards the Kent Domestic Abuse Consortium (KDAC) for the provision of an Independent Domestic Violence Advisor for Ashford, as well as to fund a Domestic Abuse Coordinator post within the council. This post provides assistance to the Ashford Domestic Forum (ADAF), coordinates support groups available to victims and ensures statutory partners and related organisations are coordinating their work in tackling domestic abuse.
9. The co-commissioned Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service in Ashford is delivered through Rising Sun. The Ashford IDVA has continued to provide a service to high risk victims throughout 2015.
10. The role of the MARAC IDVA is to address the safety of those identified as experiencing high risk domestic abuse. Acting as a primary contact IDVA's work proactively with their clients from point of crisis to assess the level of risk, discuss a range of options and develop safety plans. IDVA's act as an advocate on the victim's behalf, exploring options and support. The service aims to encourage and enable the victim's voice to be heard by service providers and agencies, ensuring the advice and support offered safeguards the victim and their family.
11. The IDVA treats every case individually. For victims to feel safe listening to their needs and experiences is vital and be able provide a response tailored to them, this is crucial to help those looking to live a life free from abuse.
12. To give an idea of the scale of work that they undertake each quarter there are around 30 to 40 service referrals to the IDVA. Of all MARAC cases 82% have been supported within Ashford. Those not supported would have either declined the service or received alternative assistance. The Ashford IDVA engaged with 88% of clients referred to them, and those reporting a reduction of risk were 94%.
13. In January 2015 an independent evaluation of the Kent and Medway IDVA service was published. This included a cost benefit analysis that calculated the service is generating net savings of £19,860,792. Every £1 invested in the Kent & Medway IDVA service generates savings of £25.18 i.e. it saves money investing in domestic abuse.
14. Through Rising Sun other provisions have been available to Ashford residents. They offer a counselling service which is managed by a highly qualified and experienced psychotherapist who assesses all women who require the counselling service and matches them to a volunteer counsellor.

Women are offered 12 sessions initially, which is free to all women who have experienced domestic abuse.

15. Rising Sun have also offered one to one and group work to children affected by domestic abuse. On behalf of Kent County Council Rising Sun delivered the "All About Me" programme to children aged 5 to 11. They are one of the county's leaders in working with children who have experienced domestic abuse and lead the delivery of children and youth projects across Kent for KDAC.
16. Kent Police have recorded over 20,000 incidents of domestic abuse every year since 2006. Between January 2015 and December 2015, Ashford had 799 notifiable offences. 457 of those were identified as medium risk and 196 identified as high risk. 71 young people aged between 12-18 years were the primary victim of domestic abuse. There were 455 repeat victims, which equates to 25.6%.
17. Domestic abuse continues to be one of the police's priorities. They are committed to protecting those at risk of domestic abuse and prevent further harm. 2015 saw the implementation of specialist Domestic Abuse Single Points of Contact (SPOC) across the county. Ashford now has a full time officer who deals with medium risk cases in the Borough, as well as offering support to partners. Ashford also has a number of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) who have supported the work of partners and continue to use their skills and knowledge to help victims of domestic abuse and hold perpetrators to account.
18. Ashford has one of the busiest One Stop Shops (OSS) in the County. Kent are afforded the ability to have a network of One Stop Shops throughout the county with a Kent and Medway Domestic Violence Coordinator who facilitates a formal network with shared practice and agreed protocols, unlike any other area in the country.
19. This network is overseen by the county wide operational group and each borough has a local sub group. Domestic abuse is a key priority for the Ashford Community Safety Partnership. This priority's lead is the Ashford Domestic Abuse Forum (ADAF), a local charity that oversees the coordination of the Ashford One Stop Shop, as well as other key projects.
20. Ashford's OSS has a high level of staff attendance and good reputation for partnership working. Throughout 2015 we have seen this continue, with fewer pressures on our partners as a consequence of the management support being provided by the Domestic Abuse Coordinator post.
21. The OSS also continues to be an area for professionals to work together in a coordinated response, facilitate training of their roles, as well as the services available at the OSS. Often agencies will come to observe the running of the OSS.
22. This year has seen the council's Housing Options Team strengthen commitment to attend weekly one hour slots; to ensure anyone attending with urgent housing need can be dealt with quickly and efficiently. This is proving

highly successful for clients at the OSS with positive feedback from both victims and professionals.

23. Ashford One Stop Shop has developed an excellent reputation across the county and has strong partner links. At a time when resources are reduced and there are added pressures and caseloads, it is important victims of domestic abuse, regardless of their risk level, can access face to face support and advice. The table below illustrates the rise in visitors to the Ashford OSS year-on-year. The data relates to the period July to June each year.

No of visitors 2010/11	No of visitors 2011/12	No of visitors 2012/13	No of visitors 2013/14	No of visitors 2014/15
75	169	239	316	317

Busiest month	No of Visitors	Quietest Month	No of Visitors
June 2015	45	April 2015	14

24. Ashford has a high number of visitors from within the borough. Often, victims prefer to access services outside of their local authority area for fear of being seen by the perpetrator, or due to concerns with disclosing information to local services. This year saw an increase of those within the borough accessing the service up 21% on the previous year.
25. There is also a positive amount of returning visitors, with 19% of visitors attending an OSS on two or more occasions.

Visitors from within LA area	Visitors who attended 2+ times
93% (previous year 72%)	19% (Previous year 22%)

26. During the year, 15 male victims attended the OSS which accounts for 5% of the total attendance.
27. Of the attendees 84% were White British with 14% from other ethnicities (6% were White European) and a further 2% ethnicity was unknown. Support was not only provided by those who actually attended the OSS but indirectly 480 children were supported. While it is difficult to evaluate the outcomes for individual people, 100% report that the visitor and support given was helpful (response rate 74%).
28. The recording of outcomes has been a challenge, as dealing with service users at the point of crisis and requesting them to provide feedback on the service is always sensitive and can sometime be extremely difficult. The data capture for outcomes is something which partners must work towards in the coming year. The success of the OSS is, however best reflected by some of the visitor's stories and feedback, an example of which is provided at Appendix A.
29. As more people access the OSS, we need to continue to meet this demand and provide services to keep victims and their family safe. We have an increased number of professionals who are attending OSS. We now have Housing Options, a caseworker from Porchlight and the Coordinator as regular support. Kent Fire and Rescue Service have dedicated a volunteer

who will be able to offer support in the coming year. Agency referrals are the main signpost to the OSS, with 211 of the total visitors reporting they heard about the service through an agency. This is a reflection of the partnership working within Ashford, and we hope to continue to build on this awareness with local services.

30. Due to the growth of the OSS, and high number of visitors, the council and the Forum will be working towards opening a rural drop-in service in 2016 for Tenterden and surrounding areas. A venue has already been identified and it is hoped delivery of a domestic abuse multi agency drop-in will begin shortly. This will alleviate any travel pressures for those victims who may be based in the more rural parts of the Borough, or who are unable to access the main OSS on Tuesdays.

Group work

31. Ashford has a consistent approach for delivering support groups. The main service being the Freedom Programme, a 12 week information course to help victims of domestic abuse recognise the impact of domestic abuse on their and their children's lives, understand the behaviour they were exposed to and also to understand warning signs in possible future relationships.
32. This has been provided in Ashford for a number of years. It is delivered by a range of partners; however, Ashford is noted for the strong commitment the Early Help and Preventative Services (EHPS) provide. The majority of facilitators for this group are provided by EHPS, as well as other partners such as the Kent Community Health (NHS) Foundation Trust, KCC (especially the education service) and the council. The rooms and crèche are also provided free of charge via the Beaver Community Trust, a commissioned service within Ashford for KCC.
33. 2015 saw the development of second and complimentary programme for victims of domestic abuse. Feedback from participants was that although they were able to access the Freedom Programme twice, they still felt it would be beneficial to have another group which follows on from this.
34. The forum was successful in a bid to the Ashford Soroptimists who provided funding to train eight facilitators for Ashford. A commitment was also received from the Children's Centres to use their facilities and crèche as well as some costs for running the group, as the costs are higher due to the more intensive nature of the course.
35. The Recovery Toolkit is a psycho-educational resource which includes a cognitive behavioural therapy module. It can be offered to women and also men and provides a follow on to the Freedom Programme. This programme was offered for the first time in early January and early reports are extremely positive. Over 90% of those who signed up to the programme attended, and this is an usually high attendance rate. It is hoped to continue offering this each term to run alongside the Freedom Programme, it should alleviate pressure on waiting lists as well as providing additional support to those who have previously engaged with our services and need further help.

36. An ambition for the Forum is that eventually a group could be run for male victims, as Kent Police and OSS data shows an increasing number of male victims are coming forward. A target for the next year is to identify a male professional who would be able to facilitate this and begin working towards setting up a male victims group, something which is currently not offered anywhere within Kent.
37. Further work for the coming year will involve the council and partners developing a preventative programme for young people. There are a number of programmes available for young people and the Forum and Early Help and Preventative services are looking at the most appropriate programme to use and roll this out in the coming year across Ashford. This will ensure young people have access to a service which helps them understand healthy relationships. This cuts across many priorities not just for domestic abuse, but would lend itself to work being done in the area of child sexual exploitation as well as the Supporting Families and the Prevent duty agendas.

Training and Awareness

38. A key action for the Forum was to develop an iBook for young people. This has been achieved by working with professionals at Homewood School, and is due to be released later this year. It will enable young people to access information and support, and is available to any young person with an Apple device. A link will be made available via the Forum once the final version has been agreed and finalised.
39. Implementation of new legislation such as the stalking legislation 2012 and the coercive control legislation³ which was introduced in December 2015, means that training and awareness needs to continually be developed and offered to partners to ensure front line professionals are able to cope with changes to provide the best service possible for victims.
40. In addition to this training, work with the Hospital Trust, Specialist Children's Services, Early Help and Preventative Services and local businesses are all important links which will be offered specialist training in the coming year. The Domestic Abuse Coordinator will be able to provide free training to ensure the best possible response to victims of domestic abuse and further strengthen partnership links.

Other developments

41. In 2015 the Ashford Domestic Abuse Forum was successful in receiving charitable status. This will enable them to apply for more varied funding streams, to continue with the work its partner agencies deliver as well as providing a flight fund for local victims who are destitute and must leave in an emergency.
42. As previously mentioned preventative work is a key for the Forum. Working with partner agencies to develop programme content and services that are

³ The new offence in the Serious Crime Act closes the gap in the current legal framework in order to capture repeated or continuous coercive or controlling behaviour.

appropriate for young people, helping them further understand healthy relationships and develop their understanding of domestic abuse is vital. This will cut across areas of child sexual exploitation, which is also a priority for the Community Safety Partnership.

43. Another priority moving forward is to ensure there is adequate provision of perpetrator programmes. There is currently a national pilot to assess the importance of working directly with high risk perpetrators. Ashford, like some other areas across the county, does not currently offer any perpetrator programmes. This is due to funding as we know there is a gap in services allocated to perpetrators. We would like to see funding provided to ensure robust and consistent work is carried out with perpetrators of domestic abuse, in the hope this will be another step in breaking the cycle of abuse.
44. Work between the Forum and Housing Options has already begun. In October 2015 the Housing Options Team worked with partners to put together a bid to the Home Office. Although this bid was unsuccessful, the council are aware provision of accommodation for victims of domestic abuse is costly and with decreasing funds to provision of women's refuges, continues to be a challenge to find appropriate placements. It is the vision of the council and the Forum that this work will continue in the future to ensure those most vulnerable due to domestic abuse can be provided with suitable and cost effective accommodation.
45. Housing Options have undertaken a homelessness review and refreshed their homelessness strategy which is currently out to consultation. Along with the aforementioned attendance at OSS, there is also now a strengthened commitment at MARAC, and regular attendance at the Forum meeting, ensuring new updates and projects are shared. Joint work continues well in this way and the Forum and Housing Options will continue this work together in the coming year.
46. A review of the council's administration of the Sanctuary Scheme is currently underway. An initiative which allows those at risk of homelessness or further violence due to domestic abuse the option to remain in their home with enhanced security. This review is being conducted with the Forum and other partners' feedback and Housing Options will continue to work with partners to ensure a streamlined and cost effective service.

Commission across Kent

47. Kent has recently undertaken a review of the commissioning of IDVA services. The decision as to what services need to be commissioned is still being determined, and this could be of real significance (and potential risk) for Ashford. The hope is to provide a more streamlined service and secure front line delivery. Ensuring less duplication of work and more appropriate services available for victims. However, at the time of writing the service is due to be rolled out in July 2016, with no clear picture of the service provision or even who this service provider will be.
48. Officers will continue to work with this service to ensure a seamless transition and continue the coordinated approach and joined up partnership working which has continued in Ashford for many years.

Equalities Impact Assessment

49. This report reflects on progress over the last year. It is not necessary to undertake an EIA at this point in time. The services are open to all.

Other Options Considered

50. Clearly there is more that could be done on this important agenda. Cuts to services have hit domestic abuse services hard and in some situations the quality of support given has suffered. There is a need to consider the wider impact this has on our society. Domestic abuse comes at a huge cost to the public purse, and this will not change until there is a change in society's attitudes towards this crime. Prevention and rehabilitation is of fundamental importance as is ensuring that the services we provide are consistently provided.
51. Joint working is the key to a successful response to domestic abuse. It is the vision of the council that we continue to work towards securing funding for services which can save lives, as well as aid recovery, awareness raising and prevention. Working for and with our partners is crucial in terms of providing support to each other, sharing knowledge and best practice, coordinating awareness raising, undertaking training, and preventative measures.
52. Funding is of course a major barrier. This reports sets out our agenda for the next year and we hope in future to present further options for the council to build on this work.

Consultation

53. In preparing this report the views of our major stakeholders were sought. The following paragraphs indicate what they feel about the support provided by the council as well as updating on their particular focus.
54. Chair of the Ashford Domestic Abuse Service: "With the constant pressure to raise money relieved by this funding, it has enabled us to make time to forge the links that are so important to the smooth running and continued improvement of our offer. We have been very grateful for the commitment of ABC's Housing Department to regularly attend the One Stop Shop to advise those who have to leave their home. In addition, they put in considerable work in writing bids for additional funding from central Government, both of which had to be completed in a very short time. Unfortunately, they were unsuccessful, but will provide very useful information for the bids we intend to write to charities. In this connection ADAF achieved Charitable Status in the autumn of 2015 shortly before our 5th birthday was celebrated in the ABC Council Chamber with a multi-agency list of invitees. Our charitable status will enable us to widen the scope of our work and help with our aims of attracting more of the hard-to-reach clients some of whom are in outlying areas of the Borough with no access to transport. We are grateful to the Police and also the Community Safety Partnership who have been so supportive of our work. In this connection the Police have been very proactive in organising their own fundraising events to help us, and we also received £6,200 from the Police and Crime Commissioner to help with the funding of much needed crèche

facilities at the Ashford Refuge. We believe that we are playing a valuable part in helping victims, particularly those who also come from Troubled Families, helping them to rebuild their lives and get back into the work place, and in turn this also helps their children. Our focus in the coming year will be how we can do more to break the cycle of abuse. Work has already started with schools, and we want to develop this and also look at what can be done to change the behaviour of perpetrators”.

55. Chief Inspector, Ashford District Commander and East Division Health and Wellbeing Lead: “Kent Police are committed to protecting and safeguarding vulnerable people, who are in or have been in relationships. This is best served by working together with our partners through the community safety partnership and Ashford Borough Council. At Ashford, we have invested in a dedicated Domestic Abuse SPOC, whose role is to review the level of support, that we have provided victims of domestic abuse and sought opportunities for enhanced safeguarding and protection of our most vulnerable people”.
56. Service Director, Rising Sun Domestic Violence and Abuse Service, “I wish to thank Ashford Borough Council for their commitment and hard work throughout the year and their continued support and commitment to our shared vision of ending domestic abuse. In pursuit of that goal Ashford Borough Council and the Ashford Domestic Abuse Forum continue to raise awareness, improve practice and deliver effective responses to protect and adults, children and young people with experience of domestic abuse. This year the services provided by Ashford Borough Council has continued to grow and demand has continued to increase which is positive in that families are seeking help to improve their lives but negative in that Domestic Abuse is still an issue in today’s society. Like all of the Public and Third Sector, who are struggling to cope in the current economic climate where funding shrinks rapidly whilst demand for services grows. How are we managing? Simple, Ashford has a dedicated and hardworking team who are committed to delivering our high quality service to adults, children and young people and have those who need support as their priority.”

Implications Assessment

57. Local authorities play a vital and central role in tackling domestic violence. As well as providing services and raising awareness, the council’s role at the heart of local communities means that they are well placed to facilitate local partnerships – bringing all the agencies together to tackle this issue. As well as the direct and devastating damage to the victim or their families, there are significant costs to the local authority in terms of providing social service support, emergency housing costs, lost of economic output and costs to the police and health services.
58. Councils have a key role, alongside other agencies, in tackling domestic abuse by safeguarding survivors, offering services to reduce the impact of the abuse and holding perpetrators to account. It's easiest to understand this role by dividing it into three areas: councils input into local partnerships; their corporate response, and direct service provision. All this is complimentary to the work undertaken by the voluntary sector, criminal justice professionals and other public service providers.

59. At present the level of direct funding to the council is £50,000 per year for three years. Funding is currently provided by the Health, Parking & Community Safety service core budget.

Handling

60. The report reflects on the last year domestic abuse activity. The work will continue as agreed by Cabinet through to end March 2018 representing three full years of funding.

Conclusion

61. This local picture of domestic abuse is reflected nationally. Reporting of domestic abuse continues to rise for police forces, and service providers report increasing referrals. Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC) found reporting of domestic abuse increase by almost a third on the reporting year to April 2015. Although violent crime is said to be reducing, new research⁴ has found that victims of domestic abuse are not accurately portrayed in these statistics, and when looking at victims of domestic abuse and violence against women, the figures have continued to rise since 2009, when the financial crisis began and cuts to services started.
62. Further outreach work is also needed across the borough; one area which would be a focus for this work would be the rural areas, although KDAC and group provision is available to anyone in the Borough. As most of these victims are extremely isolated, travel for them to get to the main town is difficult and costly. Should a medium risk outreach worker be in post, more could be done to support those in need within community.
63. With the appointment of a full time Domestic Abuse Coordinator the council has been able to offer training sessions to partner agencies and local services to ensure continued development of those engaging with victims of domestic abuse. This is helping to ensure best practice, encourage joint working and the promotion of local services. In the current financial climate most organisations are working with reduced funds, and have less to spend on outside training. The scope of domestic abuse is constantly changing and it is important professionals stay up to date with new legislation and policy.
64. A number of events were coordinated, held and delivered through the council, we hope this will continue as the training provided is essential for partnership working and ensuring best practice within services. Training was delivered on risk assessment, domestic abuse awareness and the range of services being provided in Ashford. Domestic abuse training has been provided for those working with those who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender. Other sessions have focused on mental health and young people, awareness of domestic abuse in the gypsy and traveller community, county wide delivery of

⁴ S.Walby, J. Towers, B. Francies, IS VIOLENT CRIME INCREASING OR DECREASING? A NEW METHODOLOGY TO MEASURE REPEAT ATTACKS MAKING VISIBLE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF GENDER AND DOMESTIC RELATIONS. *British Journal of Criminology* December 2015. Available online: <http://bjc.oxfordjournals.org/content/early/2015/12/31/bjc.azv131.full.pdf+html>

Freedom Programme facilitator training as well as a 5th anniversary event for the OSS which recognised of the work the Forum have completed.

65. The council and the Forum will continue to work in partnership to meet the targets set over the next 12 months. The Forum has received charitable status, meaning additional funding streams will be available. Work towards securing funding is a priority as well as holding fundraising events to raise awareness.
66. The work being done across the borough to support the domestic abuse agenda has been extremely valuable. Services are dealing with more victims than ever before, feedback from other agencies and organisations has been positive and many women and their children have been supported. The council continues to have a very serious interest and part to play in helping families in crisis. In continuing to fund this area of work we are able to help ensure that services are coordinated and that Ashford has the necessary dedicated professions to keep helping those at real risk.

Portfolio Holder's Views

67. The portfolio holder will be making his comments at the Cabinet meeting.

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Appendix A

Laura*, 29 from Ashford was a visitor to the OSS. She spent five years in an abusive relationship until she accessed the OSS. She says “He was never physically violent but he was so controlling and jealous I felt suffocated. I wasn’t allowed to see my friends so I felt very isolated and his constant control over who I saw and where I went almost ruined my relationship with my family. I was exhausted from having to act normal around him so he wouldn’t get suspicious. He controlled all of our money to the point I wasn’t allowed to have any cash on me. Once he went through my pockets and found a pound coin and demanded to know why. One day I just had enough. I snapped and decided I had to leave.”

After she visited her GP, the mum of two was given details of the One Stop Shop and came along one week.

“I was concerned that I would be the only one there, but I was there all day and by the end I was absolutely sure this was the right decision for me and my kids.” Laura was then referred to the Freedom Programme by the health visitor, who also took on her case and continued to support her and the children. “The programme taught me to recognise his bad behaviour and convinced me to trust myself and my instincts. It gave me the strength to leave.”

Since leaving her partner Laura went to live with her parents and is waiting to be rehoused, her health visitor supported her with her housing application and Laura and her family are looking forward to being in their own home.

“The support we have had has been brilliant. My son has been receiving play therapy to help him come to terms with the changes and because I feel safe and secure I have had the confidence to start volunteering at his school so I can start training as a teaching assistant. It’s a new start for us and I couldn’t have done it without all the different help I received at the One Stop Shop.”

*Names have been changed to ensure the safety of the client. This feedback was taken from Kent Community Health Team NHS magazine, which featured Ashford’s lead DA Health Visitor and the invaluable work she continues to do for victims in Ashford.

Agenda Item No: 12

Report To: **CABINET**

Date: **Thursday 11th February 2016**

Report Title: **Gambling Act 2005 – Policy Statement Revision**

Report Author: **Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager**

Portfolio Holder: **Cllr Heyes – Portfolio Responsibility for Highways, Wellbeing and Safety**

Report Author: **James Hann - Health, Parking & Community Safety Manager**



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Summary:	The purpose of this report is to present to the Cabinet the Gambling Policy Statement prepared in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005 (the Act) for subsequent submission for approval to full Council, with any changes the Cabinet deem necessary. The report also provides a summary of the policy consultation results and indicates how this consultation has been taken into account when preparing the final version of the policy. There are no significant implications associated with this latest revision of the policy.
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Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards: All

Recommendation: **The Cabinet are asked to recommend the revised Gambling Policy Statement 2016-2019 to the full Council, with any changes the Cabinet deem necessary.**

Policy Overview: The Gambling Act 2005 requires local authorities to publish and review a three year licensing policy in respect of various gambling activities. The revision of the Gambling Policy Statement is a legal requirement and it also contributes to the objectives of a wider group of related organisations.

Financial Implications: The costs associated with the revision to the Gambling Policy Statement are met through the licensing fees under the 2005 Act.

Risk Assessment YES

Communities Impact Assessment YES

**Other Material
Implications:**

The implementation of the Gambling Act has an impact on several service units within the council, particularly Health, Parking and Community Safety, Legal Services and Member Services. There are no significant implications associated with this latest revision of the policy.

**Exemption
Clauses:**

None

**Background
Papers:**

None

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Report Title: Gambling Act 2005 – Policy Revision

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to present to the Cabinet the Gambling Policy Statement prepared in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005 (the Act) for approval to the full Council, with any changes the Cabinet deem necessary. The report also provides a summary of the policy consultation results and indicates how this consultation has been taken into account when preparing the final version of the policy. There are no significant implications associated with this latest revision of the policy.

Issue to be Decided

2. The Cabinet are asked to recommend approval of the revised Gambling Policy Statement, as prepared in accordance with the Gambling Act 2005. The policy is in Appendix A.

Background

3. The Borough Council as the licensing authority must prepare and publish a new statement of licensing principles for gambling (the statement) every three years under the requirements of section 349 of the Act.
4. The statement forms the licensing authority's mandate for managing local gambling provision and sets out how the licensing authority views the risk environment and therefore its expectations in relation to operators with premises in the Borough.
5. The Borough currently has the following gambling related businesses: One bingo establishment, 12 betting shops and 5 adult gaming centres. The majority of these premises are based in the urban area of Ashford, with one betting shop located in Tenterden.
6. In addition 93 pubs and clubs across the borough are licensed to use gaming machines.

Changes to national gambling regulation and our Gambling Policy Statement

7. There have been some changes in national gambling regulation and policy which need to be reflected in our Statement. The Gambling Commission have introduced the requirements within their Licensing Conditions and Codes of Practice (LCCP) that operators, from 6th April 2016, must assess the risks their gambling premises may have in relation to the licensing objectives.
8. Licence conditions and codes apply to new and existing licences.

9. While operators will have this new risk assessment requirement from 6th April 2016 and all those licensed under the Act will have to adhere to the revised LCCP.
10. The Gambling Policy Statement before Cabinet contains the minimum of amendments and no changes to the intent or direction of the policy. The amendments include:
 - Removal of out of date elements
 - Change of dates
 - Legislative changes
 - Inclusion of additional information
11. The revised Gambling Policy Statement is provided at Appendix A.

Risk Assessment

12. Minimal legal risk which is mitigated by having an up to date policy which reflects national guidance. Financial risk equally low as changes do not result in additional costs to the council. The new risk assessment will need to be reviewed by licensing staff, but there are no significant difficulties associated with doing this. Finally minimal risks in terms of safeguarding (which are actually enhanced by this latest policy revision), reputation, and the environment.

Communities Impact Assessment

13. A Communities Impact Assessment has been completed. No negative impacts have been identified.

Other Options Considered

14. The requirement to implement and enforce the Act is a statutory duty. The Gambling Commission guidance to a large effect dictates the process.

Consultation

15. The current policy was developed in consultation with the Kent Police. The Kent and Medway Licensing Strategic Steering Group also guided the development of the current policy.
16. Cabinet approved a revised Gambling Policy Statement for the purpose of public consultation on the 12th November (minute CA/202/121115 refers). The consultation took place between 20th November and 31st December 2015.
17. The consultation process included the police, representatives of the gambling industry and those that represent people who may be adversely affected by gambling. A full list of the consultees is provided at Appendix B.

18. The draft policy was also made available on the council's website.
19. The policy revision does not make any major changes to the previous policy approved by the council so perhaps it is not surprising that there were only two responses. One was from Gosschalks solicitors on behalf of the Association of British Bookmakers (ABB), and one from Coral Racing Limited. The consultation responses are in Appendix C.
20. The two consultation responses were broadly supportive of the draft policy, but made a few useful comments. The main points raised by both consultees are summarised in Appendix D, along with suggested amendments to the policy. These amendments are now reflected in the Gambling Policy Statement in Appendix A.
21. The consultation responses did not indicate the need to develop a local profile.

Implications Assessment

22. Judicial review is a significant risk if the policy the council adopts strays beyond the key licensing objectives.

Handling

23. Legal and Democratic Services staff have been consulted following the consultation.
24. Once agreed the revised policy will need to be agreed by the full Council.

Conclusion

25. The Gambling Act 2005 created a new system of licensing and regulation for commercial gambling in this county. Amongst other changes, it gave to local authorities new and extended responsibilities for licensing premises for gambling. The objectives of the Act are to keep crime out of gambling, make sure gambling is fair and open and protect children and vulnerable people from harm. Our challenge as a council is to revise a policy that will continue to support the aspirations of the legislation.

Portfolio Holder's Views

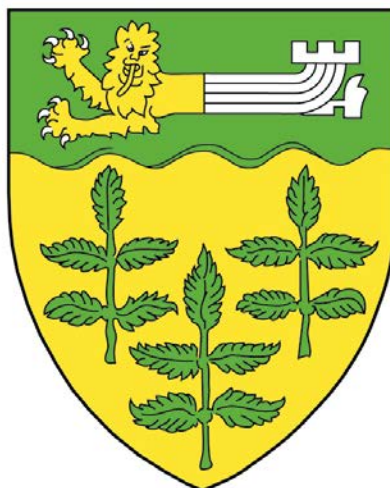
26. The Portfolio Holder will provide his comments at the Cabinet meeting

Contact: James Hann

Email: james.hann@ashford.gov.uk

- Appendix A: Proposed Gambling Policy Statement 2016 - 2019**
- Appendix B: List of consultees**
- Appendix C: Consultation responses**
- Appendix D: Summary of consultation responses**

Appendix A:



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

**Proposed Gambling Policy
Statement 2016 - 2019**

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1. The Licensing Objectives

In exercising most of its functions under the Gambling Act 2005 (the Act) this licensing authority shall aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as the authority think it:

- a) in accordance with any relevant code of practice;
- b) in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission;
- c) reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
- d) in accordance with this gambling policy statement.

The licensing objectives are:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime.
- Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way.
- Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

2. Introduction

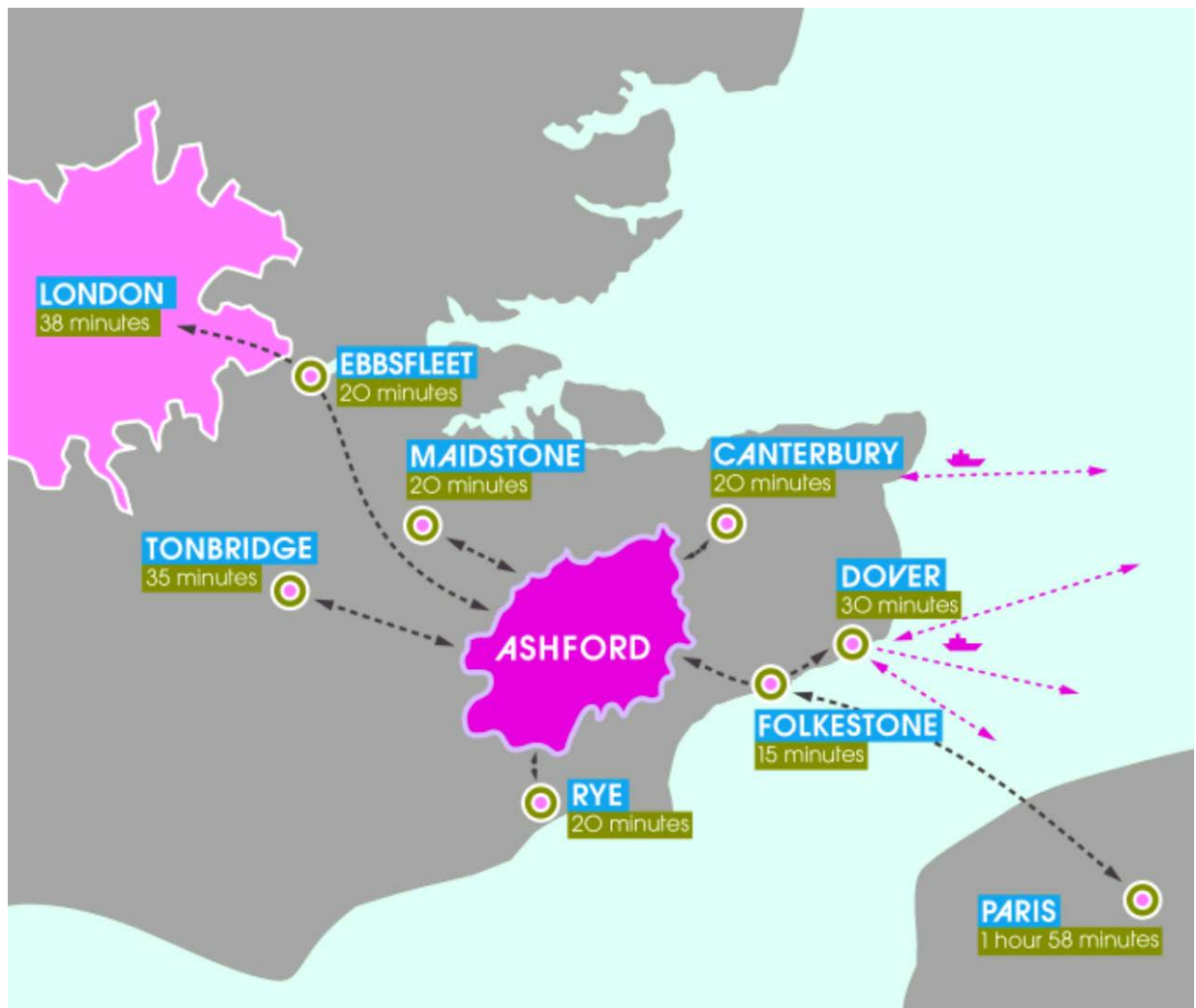
Ashford Borough Council is situated in the County of Kent, which contains 12 District Councils and 1 Unitary Authority in total. Each is represented on the Kent and Medway Regulatory Licensing Steering Group whose role includes the identification of issues on which a consistent countywide approach is considered essential and the formulation of recommended policy that establishes a minimum standard on these identified issues.

Ashford is the largest Borough in Kent, covering 224 square miles and containing 39 parishes and is part of Kent Police's Eastern Division. The estimated population of the Borough in 2015 is 122,000, having trebled in the last 40 years. The population is predicted to increase to 129,900 by 2021 and to 149,200 by 2031.

The borough has the largest rural area in Kent and has two towns: urban Ashford and the rural town of Tenterden.

Ashford's road and rail connections make it ideal for commuting to London, to other parts of Kent, and to continental Europe. The borough's location, connectivity and accessibility make it an ideal business location and the number of jobs is predicted to grow by at least 12,400 over a 20 year period to 2030.

The council currently licences 1 bingo establishment, 12 betting shops, 5 adult gaming centres and 93 pubs and clubs to use gaming machines.



Licensing authorities are required by the Act to publish a statement of the principles that they proposed to apply when exercising their functions. This statement must be published at least every three years. The statement can also be reviewed from “time to time” and the amended parts re-consulted upon. Ashford Borough Council consulted widely on the 2010 and 2013 policy statements before finalising and publishing.

The Act requires that the following parties be consulted by licensing authorities:

- The Chief Officer of Police;
- persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons carrying on gambling businesses in the authority’s area; and
- persons who appear to the authority to represent the interests of persons who are likely to be affected by the exercise of the authority’s functions under the Act.

In determining its policy the licensing authority must have regard to the Guidance and will give appropriate weight to the views of those it has consulted.

The full list of comments made and the consideration by the council are available by request to: Ashford Borough Council's Licensing Authority's email licensing@ashford.gov.uk.

It should be noted that this policy statement will not override the right of any person to make an application, make representations about an application, or apply for a review of a licence, as each will be considered on its own merits and according to the statutory requirements of the Gambling Act 2005.

3. Declaration

In producing this licensing policy statement, this licensing authority declares that it has had regard to the licensing objectives of the Act, the guidance issued by the Gambling Commission, and any responses from those consulted on the policy statement.

4. Casinos

This licensing authority has not passed a 'resolution not to issue casino premises licences' resolution under section 166 of the Act, but is aware that it has the power to do so. Should this licensing authority decide in the future to pass such a resolution, it will update this policy statement with details of that resolution.

5. Background

Gambling is defined in the Act as either gaming, betting or taking part in a lottery:

- 'Gaming' means playing a game for the chance to win a prize.
- 'Betting' means:
 - making or accepting a bet on the outcome of a race, competition or other event
 - the likelihood of anything occurring or not occurring
 - whether something is true or not.
- A 'Lottery' is where participants are involved in an arrangement where prizes are allocated wholly by a process of chance.

6. Functions

The responsibility for regulating gambling is shared between the Gambling Commission and local authorities. The Gambling Commission is responsible for issuing operating licences to organisations and individuals who provide facilities for gambling and personal licences to persons working in the gambling industry. The Commission will take the lead role on ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way through the administration and enforcement of operating and personal licence requirements. The Commission will also be responsible for remote gambling activities such as facilities provided via the Internet, television or radio.

Function	Who deals with it
Be responsible for the licensing of premises where gambling activities are to take place by issuing premises licences	Licensing Authority
Issue provisional statements	Licensing Authority
Regulate members' clubs and miners' welfare institutes who wish to undertake certain gaming activities via issuing club gaming permits and/or club machine permits	Licensing Authority
Issue club machine permits to commercial clubs	Licensing Authority
Grant permits for the use of certain lower stake gaming machines at unlicensed family entertainment centres	Licensing Authority
Receive notifications from alcohol licensed premises (under the Licensing Act 2003) of the use of two or fewer gaming machines	Licensing Authority
Grant licensed premises gaming machine permits for premises licensed to sell/supply alcohol for consumption on the licensed premises, under the Licensing Act 2003, where more than two machines are required	Licensing Authority
Register small society lotteries below prescribed thresholds	Licensing Authority
Issue prize gaming permits	Licensing Authority
Receive and endorse temporary use notices	Licensing Authority
Receive occasional use notices	Licensing Authority
Provide information to the Gambling Commission regarding details of licences issued (see section above on information exchange)	Licensing Authority
Maintain registers of the permits and licences that are issued under these functions	Licensing Authority
Issue and renewal of operating licences	Gambling Commission
Review operating licences	Gambling Commission
Issue personal licences	Gambling Commission
Issue codes of practice	Gambling Commission
Issue Guidance to local authorities	Gambling Commission
Licence remote gambling through operating licences	Gambling Commission
Issue licences in relation to the manufacture, supply, installation, adaptation, maintenance or repair of gaming machines	Gambling Commission
Deal with appeals against the Commission's decisions	Gambling Appeals Tribunal

7. Responsible Authorities

In exercising this licensing authority's powers under Section 157(h) of the Act to designate, in writing, a body which is competent to advise the authority about the protection of children from harm, the following principles have been applied:

- the need for the body to be responsible for an area covering the whole of the licensing authority's area
- the need for the body to be answerable to democratically elected persons, rather than any particular vested interest group etc

In accordance with the Gambling Commission's Guidance this authority designates the following for this purpose:

Kent Children's Social Services, Kent County Council Kroner House, Eurogate Business Park, Ashford, TN24 8XU

The contact details of all the Responsible Bodies under the Gambling Act 2005 are available in Appendix 2.

8. Interested parties

The licensing authority is required by regulations to state the principles it will apply in exercising its powers under the Act to determine whether a person is an interested party. The principles are:

"For the purposes of this Part a person is an interested party in relation to an application for or in respect of a premises licence if, in the opinion of the licensing authority which issues the licence or to which the applications is made, the person –

- a) lives sufficiently close to the premises to be likely to be affected by the authorised activities;
 - b) has business interests that might be affected by the authorised activities;
- or
- c) represents persons who satisfy paragraph (a) or (b)."

The category of representative bodies may for example include trade associations, trade unions, residents' associations and tenants' associations, provided that the body represents either persons living close to the premises or persons who have business interests that might be affected.

The Gambling Commission's Guidance recommends that the phrase "business interests" should be given the widest possible interpretation, so that this category could include partnerships, charities, faith groups and medical practices."

Interested parties can be persons who are democratically elected such as Councillors and Members of Parliament or a Parish Council as an elected body.

Councillors wishing to make representations may not also serve on the Licensing Sub-Committee dealing with an application as there would be a conflict of interest. Care should be taken when approaching councillors that they are not part of the sub-committee dealing with the application. If there are any doubts then please contact the licensing department (licensing@ashford.gov.uk).

9. Consideration of Applications

The licensing authority is bound by section 153 of the Act which states the principle in favour of permitting applications and that each application made will be decided on a case by case basis, on its own merits, and will set out a clear statement detailing the reasons for granting, refusing or reviewing all licenses under the Act. It will not apply a rigid rule to its decision making but will ensure that all decisions made are done so with full reference to the licensing authority's licensing objectives.

In reaching a view that the grant of a licence, or the giving of the temporary use notice, is in accordance with such guidance, code of practice or policy statement, a licensing authority is, in common with all such public authority decision makers, under a duty to act fairly and rationally. In cases where an authority is concerned whether a grant would be in accordance with, for example, the guidance in this document, this can be resolved by the imposition of appropriate licence conditions. In the unlikely event that a licensing authority perceives a conflict between a provision of a Commission code of practice or this Guidance and its own policy statement or view as to the application of the licensing objectives the structure of section 153 makes it plain that the Commission's codes and Guidance take precedence.

Where category C or above machines are on offer in premises to which children are admitted, the licensing authority will consider the following issues:

- whether all such machines are located in an area of the premises which is separated from the remainder of the premises by a physical barrier which is effective to prevent access other than through a designated entrance
- whether and how children are prohibited from admission to the area where these machines are located
- how access to the area where the machines are located is supervised
- whether the area where the machines are located is arranged in such a way that it can be observed by the staff or the licence holder
- whether there are notices prominently displayed at the entrance to and inside any such area stating that access to the area is prohibited to persons under 18.

The Act and the Gambling Commission's Guidance make clear that when considering applications for premises licences the licensing authority shall not have regard to the expected demand for the facilities which it is proposed to provide.

Guidance also states that moral or ethnic objections to gambling are not a valid reason to reject applications for premises licences. This is because such objections do not relate to the licensing objectives, however, the stated licensing objectives encompass our duties to protect the public and vulnerable members of our community, such as children, quite explicitly.

The Guidance to Local Authorities and the Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice (LCCP) commencing May 2015, set out additional matters that the council should take into account when considering licence applications for premises licences. Guidance section 19, LCCP condition 16 and code 9 prescribe restrictions on gambling activities on premises, previously known as primary gambling activity. The council will consider any application based on the provisions in these codes and guidance.

Where gambling facilities are provided at premises as a supplementary activity to the main purpose of the premises; e.g. motorway service areas and shopping malls, the council will expect the gambling area to be clearly defined to ensure that customers are fully aware that they are making a choice to enter into the gambling premises, and that the premises is adequately supervised at all times.

10. Licence Conditions and Codes of Practice

Considerations that an operator must make in order to protect children and young people from accessing gambling premises are set out in Section 7 of the Gambling Commission Guidance to Local Authorities.

The LCCP prescribes how operators must prevent children from using age restricted gaming or gambling activities, particularly where gaming machines are licensed. In particular operators must ensure that;

- all staff are trained,
- that all customers are supervised when on gambling premises
- must have procedures for identifying customers who are at risk of gambling related harm.

The council will expect all operators to have policies and procedures in place as required by the LCCP codes on social responsibility to cover all aspects of the code, in particular staff training records and self-exclusion records.

Further provisions with regard to self-exclusion and marketing are included in the social responsibility code. The council will take all conditions and codes into account when considering applications or performing enforcement activities.

11. Risk Assessments

Such risk assessments are required from new applicants, and from existing premises licensees seeking to vary a licence. The code requires all operators of casinos, adult gaming centres, bingo premises, family entertainment centres, betting shops and remote betting intermediaries to assess specific local risks to the licensing objectives, and to have policies, procedures and control measures in place to mitigate those risks.

Operators are required by the code to make the risk assessment available to licensing authorities when an application is submitted either for new premises licence or variation of a premises licence, or otherwise on request, and this will form part of the council's inspection regime and may be requested when officers are investigating complaints.

This council expects the following matters to be considered by operators when making their risk assessment:-

- Information held by the licensee regarding self-exclusions and incidences of underage gambling;
- Arrangement for localised exchange of information regarding self-exclusions and gaming trends;
- Urban setting;
- Range of facilities in proximity to the licensed premises,
- Matters relating to children and young persons;
- Recorded incidents of attempted underage gambling.

Matters relating to vulnerable adults, including:-

- Information held by the licensee regarding self-exclusions and incidences of underage gambling;
- Arrangement for localised exchange of information regarding self-exclusions and gaming trends;
- Proximity of premises which may be frequented by vulnerable people such as hospitals, residential care homes, medical facilities, doctor's surgeries, council housing offices, addiction clinics or help centres, places where alcohol or drug dependant people may congregate.

12. Exchange of Information

Licensing authorities are required to include in their policy statement the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising the functions under sections 29 and 30 of the Act with respect to the exchange of information between it and the Gambling Commission, and the functions under section 350 of the Act with the respect to the exchange of information between it and the other persons listed in schedule 6 to the Act.

The principle that this licensing authority applies is that it will act in accordance with the provisions of the Act in its exchange of information which includes the provision that the Data Protection Act 1998 will not be contravened. The licensing authority will also have regard to any Guidance issued by the Gambling Commission to local authorities on this matter when it is published, as well as any relevant regulations issued by the Secretary of State under the powers provided in the Act.

13. Enforcement

The Kent and Medway Licensing Steering Group has formulated an Enforcement Protocol which each licensing authority and responsible authority has agreed. The purpose of this protocol is to facilitate co-operation and co-ordination between enforcement agencies in pursuance of both the Act and the

Licensing Act 2003. It will underpin the mutual operational support required to tackle licensing issues. A copy is available on request.

As per the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities this licensing authority will endeavour to avoid duplication with other regulatory regimes so far as possible.

This licensing authority will also, as recommended by the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities, adopt a risk-based inspection programme, targeting high-risk premises with a lighter touch towards low-risk premises

The council will take account of the Gambling Commission's guidance document and any subsequent amendments on the 'Approach to Test Purchasing' when considering making test purchases at gambling premises.

Licensing authorities are required by regulation under the Act to state the principles to be applied by the authority in exercising the functions under Part 15 of the Act with respect to the inspection of premises; and the powers under section 346 of the Act to institute criminal proceedings in respect of the offences specified.

This licensing authority will be guided by the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities and it will endeavour to be:

- Proportionate: regulators should only intervene when necessary: remedies should be appropriate to the risk posed, and costs identified and minimised;
- Accountable: regulators must be able to justify decisions, and be subject to public scrutiny;
- Consistent: rules and standards must be joined up and implemented fairly;
- Transparent: regulators should be open, and keep regulations simple and user friendly; and
- Targeted: regulation should be focused on the problem, and minimise side effects.

The main enforcement and compliance role for this licensing authority in terms of the Act will be to ensure compliance with the premises licences and other permissions which it authorises.

The Gambling Commission will be the enforcement body for the operator and personal licences and will be responsible for compliance as regards unlicensed premises.

Appendix 1

The Gambling Commission's Guidance for licensing authorities states the following. The paragraphs below endeavour to meet this request:

"The statement of policy should set out what factors it may take into account when considering applications for premises licences, permits and other permissions and matters that it will consider relevant when determining whether to review a licence. This may be informed by the licensing authority's local area profile and will include considerations such as the proximity of gambling premises to schools and vulnerable adult centres, or to residential areas where there may be a high concentration of families with children." (6.33)

"Although the statement of policy should identify the factors to be considered, it should be clear that each application or review will be decided on its merits. Importantly, if an applicant for a premises licence can show how risks to the licensing objectives can be mitigated, the licensing authority will need to take that into account in its decision making." (6.34)

1. Permits

(i) Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centre gaming machine permits (Statement of Principles on Permits - Schedule 10 paragraph 7)

Where a premises does not hold a premises licence but wishes to provide gaming machines, it may apply to the licensing authority for this permit. The applicant must show that the premises will be wholly or mainly used for making gaming machines available for use (section 238).

Ashford Borough Council has considered and intends to require applicants to demonstrate:

- a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes of the gambling that is permissible in unlicensed family entertainment centres;
- that the applicant has no relevant convictions (those that are set out in schedule 7 of the Act); and
- that staff are trained to have a full understanding of the maximum stakes and prizes.

It should be noted that a licensing authority cannot attach conditions to this type of permit and that the "statement of principles" only applies to initial applications and not to renewals (paragraph 18(4)).

Statement of Principles

This licensing authority has adopted a statement of principles which is available in Appendix 3.

With regard to renewals of these permits, a licensing authority may refuse an application for renewal of a permit only on the grounds that an authorised local authority officer has been refused access to the premises without reasonable

excuse, or that renewal would not be reasonably consistent with pursuit of the licensing objectives.

(ii) (Alcohol) Licensed premises gaming machine permits – (Schedule 13 Para 4(1))

There is provision in the Act for premises licensed to sell alcohol for consumption on the premises, to automatically have 2 gaming machines, of categories C and/or D. The premises merely need to notify the licensing authority. The licensing authority can remove the automatic authorisation in respect of any particular premises if:

- provision of the machines is not reasonably consistent with the pursuit of the licensing objectives;
- gaming has taken place on the premises that breaches a condition of section 282 of the Act (i.e. that written notice has been provided to the licensing authority, that a fee has been provided and that any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission about the location and operation of the machine has been complied with);
- the premises are mainly used for gaming; or
- an offence under the Act has been committed on the premises.

If a premises wishes to have more than two machines, then it needs to apply for a permit and the licensing authority must consider that application based upon the licensing objectives, any guidance issued by the Gambling Commission issued under section 25 of the Act, and “*such matters as they think relevant.*” This licensing authority considers that “such matters” will be decided on a case by case basis but generally these will concern the need to protect children from harm and vulnerable persons from being harmed or being exploited by gambling. We will expect the applicant to satisfy the authority that there will be sufficient measures in place to ensure that persons under 18 years old will not have access to adult only gaming machines.

Measures which will satisfy this authority with regards to these concerns may include adult only machines being placed in site of bar areas and/or in the site of staff that can monitor their use. Guidance, notices from organisations such as Gamcare should also be considered.

It should be noted that the licensing authority can decide to grant the application with a smaller number of machines and/or a different category of machines than that applied for, but conditions (other than these) cannot be attached.

It should also be noted that the holder of a permit shall comply with any Code of Practice issued by the Gambling Commission about the location and operation of the machine.

(iii) Prize Gaming Permits – (Statement of Principles on Permits - Schedule 14 Para 8 (3))

Given that these premises will particularly appeal to children and young persons, in considering what to take into account in the application process and what information to request from the applicant this licensing authority will give weight to child protection issues. Applicants will be asked to set out the types of gaming that they are intending to offer and will be expected to demonstrate:

- That they understand the limits to stakes and prizes that are set out in regulations; and
- That the gaming is offered within the law.

This licensing authority has adopted a statement of principles which is available in Appendix 3. In making its decision on an application for this permit the licensing authority does not need to have regard to the licensing objectives but must have regard to any Gambling Commission guidance.

It should be noted that there are conditions in the Act that the permit holder must comply with, but that the licensing authority cannot attach conditions. The conditions in the Act are:

- the limits on participation fees, as set out in regulations, must be complied with;
- all chances to participate in the gaming must be allocated on the premises on which the gaming is taking place and on one day; the game must be played and completed on the day the chances are allocated; and the result of the game must be made public in the premises on the day that it is played;
- the prize for which the game is played must not exceed the amount set out in regulations (if a money prize), or the prescribed value (if non-monetary prize); and
- participation in the gaming must not entitle the player to take part in any other gambling.

(iv) Club Gaming and Club Machines Permits

Members clubs and miners' welfare institutes (but not commercial clubs) may apply for a club gaming permit or a club gaming machines permit. The club gaming permit will enable the premises to provide gaming machines (three machines of categories B3A, B4 C or D), equal chance gaming and games of chance as set-out in regulations. A club machine permit will enable the premises to provide gaming machines (three machines of categories B3A, B4 C or D).

The Gambling Commission Guidance for local authorities states: "Members clubs must have at least 25 members and be established and conducted "wholly or mainly" for purposes other than gaming, unless the gaming is restricted to bridge and whist. There is no requirement for a club to have an alcohol licence. A members' club must be permanent in nature, not established to make commercial profit, and controlled by its members equally. Examples

include working men's clubs, branches of Royal British Legion and clubs with political affiliations."

Before granting a permit the licensing authority will need to satisfy itself that the premises meet the requirements of a members' club and may grant the permit if the majority of members are over 18.

This licensing authority is aware that: "licensing authorities may only refuse an application on the grounds that:

- (a) the applicant does not fulfil the requirements for a members' or commercial club or miners' welfare institute and therefore is not entitled to receive the type of permit for which it has applied;
- (b) the applicant's premises are used wholly or mainly by children and/or young persons;
- (c) an offence under the Act or a breach of a permit has been committed by the applicant while providing gaming facilities;
- (d) a permit held by the applicant has been cancelled in the previous ten years; or
- (e) an objection has been lodged by the Commission or the police."

It should be noted that there is a 'fast-track' procedure available for premises that hold a club premises certificate under the Licensing Act 2003. As the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities states: "Under the fast-track procedure there is no opportunity for objections to be made by the Commission or the police, and the ground upon which an authority can refuse a permit are reduced" and "The grounds on which an application under this process may be refused are that:

- a) the club is established primarily for gaming, other than gaming prescribed by regulations under section 266 of the Act;
- b) in addition to the prescribed gaming, the applicant provides facilities for other gaming; or
- c) a club gaming permit or club machine permit issued to the applicant in the last ten years has been cancelled."

There are statutory conditions on club gaming permits that no child uses a category B3A, B4 or C machine on the premises and that the holder complies with any relevant provision of a code of practice about the location and operation of gaming machines.

2. Premises Licences

(i) Decision making - general

Premises licences will be subject to the permissions/restrictions set-out in the Act and regulations, as well as specific mandatory and default conditions which will be detailed in regulations issued by the Secretary of State. Licensing authorities are able to exclude default conditions and also attach others, where it is believed to be appropriate. The starting point for consideration of any application is that it will be

granted subject only to the mandatory and default conditions and any additional conditions must be evidence based.

This licensing authority is aware that in making decisions about premises licences it should aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as it thinks it:

- in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission;
- in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission ;
- reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
- in accordance with the authority's statement of licensing policy.

Any conditions attached to licences by the licensing authority will be proportionate and will be:

- relevant to the need to make the proposed building suitable as a gambling facility;
- directly related to the premises and the type of licence applied for;
- fairly and reasonably related to the scale and type of premises; and
- reasonable in all other respects.

Decisions upon individual conditions on a case by case basis, although there may be a number of measures that may be relevant, including the use of supervisors, appropriate signage for adult only areas, etc. This licensing authority will expect the applicant to offer their own suggestions as to the way in which the licensing objectives can be promoted.

There are also conditions which the licensing authority cannot attach to premises licences which are:

- any condition on the premises licence which makes it impossible to comply with an operating licence condition;
- conditions relating to gaming machine categories, numbers, or method of operation;
- conditions which provide that membership of a club or body be required (the Act specifically removes the membership requirement for casino and bingo clubs and this provision prevents it being reinstated; and
- conditions in relation to stakes, fees, winning or prizes.

(ii) Premises

A premises is defined in the Act as "any place". It is for the licensing authority to decide whether different parts of a building can be properly regarded as being separate premises it this will be considered on a case by case basis. The Gambling Commission does not however consider that areas of a building that are artificially or temporarily separate can be properly regarded as different premises.

This licensing authority takes particular note of the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities which states that in considering applications for multiple licences for a building or those for a specific part of the building to be licensed, "licensing authorities should be aware that:

- The third licensing objective seeks to protect children from being harmed by gambling. In practice that means not only preventing them from taking part in gambling, but also preventing them from being in close proximity to gambling. Therefore premises should be configured so that children are not invited to participate in, have accidental access to, or closely observe gambling where they are prohibited from participating.
- Entrances to and exits from parts of a building covered by one or more premises licences should be separate and identifiable so that the separation of different premises is not compromised and people do not 'drift' into a gambling area. In this context it should normally be possible to access the premises without going through another licensed premises or premises with a permit.
- Customers should be able to participate in the activity named on the premises licence.

(iii) Location

This licensing authority notes the Gambling Commission's Guidance for local authorities which states that: "Local authorities are experienced in making judgements in relation to the suitability of premises, particularly those for which they have responsibilities under the Licensing Act 2003, in which context they have wider powers to also take into account measures to prevent nuisance. In relation to preventing disorder, licensing authorities have the ability under section 169 of the Act to attach additional conditions to premises licences, and are entitled to include a requirement for door supervision, as provided for in section 178 of the Act. If a person employed on door supervision would be required to hold a licence issued by the Security Industry Authority (SIA), that requirement will have force as though it were a condition on the premises licence."

The Commission also states in its Guidance: "For example, a licensing policy statement might set out that the authority will consider very carefully whether applications for premises licence in respect of certain gambling premises located very close to a school, or a centre for gambling addicts should be granted in light of the third licensing objective. Any such policy must, however, come with the qualification that each case will be decided on its merits, and will depend to a large extent on the type of gambling that it is proposed will be offered on the premises. If an applicant for a premises licence can show how licensing objective concerns can be overcome, that will have to be taken into account.". This licensing authority will adhere to this advice.

(iv) Planning

Planning and licensing are different regulatory systems and will be dealt with separately. As the Gambling Commission's Guidance states: "When dealing with a premises licence application for finished buildings, the licensing authority

should not take into account whether those building have or comply with the necessary planning or building consents. Those matters should be dealt with under relevant planning control and building regulation powers, and not form part of the consideration for the premises licence. Section 210 of the Act prevents licensing authorities taking into account the likelihood of the proposal by the applicant obtaining planning or building consent when considering a premises licence application. Equally the grant of a gambling premises licence does not prejudice or prevent any action that may be appropriate under the law relating to planning or building.”

This authority will though listen to, and consider carefully, any concerns about conditions which are not able to be met by licensees due to planning restrictions should such a situation arise.

(v) Duplication

As stated in the section above on enforcement, and as per the Gambling Commission’s Guidance for local authorities this licensing authority will endeavour to avoid duplication with other regulatory regimes so far as possible.

(vi) Door Supervisors

The Gambling Commission advises in its Guidance for local authorities that licensing authorities may require persons operating premises in which gambling takes place to take measures such as the supervision of entrances; segregation of gambling from non-gambling areas frequented by children (assuming such non-gambling areas are compatible with requirements of the Act); and the supervision of gaming machines in non-adult gambling specific premises in order to pursue the licensing objectives. The authority will make a door supervisor requirement only if there is clear evidence from the history of trading at the premises that the premises cannot be adequately supervised from the counter and that door supervision is both necessary and proportionate.

Any person employed to fulfil a condition on a premises licence (under the Licensing Act 2003) that requires door supervision should hold a relevant licence issued by the Security Industry Authority (SIA).

It is to be noted that door supervisors at licensed casino or bingo premises may be exempt from the requirements of the Private Security Industry Act 2001. Where an authority imposes door supervision requirements on such licences, the personnel may not need licensing under the 2001 Act.

(vii) Licensing objectives

This licensing authority has considered the Gambling Commission’s Guidance to local authorities and some comments are provided with regard to the licensing objectives.

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime.

- Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way.
- Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

This licensing authority will pay particular attention to any Codes of Practice, which the Gambling Commission issues as regards this licensing objective.

(viii) Reviews

Interested parties or responsible authorities can make requests for a review of a premises licence; however, it is for the licensing authority to decide whether the review is to be carried-out. This will be on the basis of whether the request for the review is relevant to the following matters:

- it is in accordance with any relevant code of practice issued by the Gambling Commission;
- it is in accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission;
- it is reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives; and
- it is in accordance with the authority's statement of licensing policy.

Consideration will be given as to whether the request is frivolous, vexatious, or will certainly not cause this authority to wish alter/revoke/suspend the licence, or whether it is substantially the same as previous representations or requests for review.

The licensing authority can also initiate a review of a licence on the basis of any reason that it thinks is appropriate.

(ix) Provisional Statements

In terms of representations about premises licence applications, following the grant of a provisional statement, the Gambling Commission's Guidance states: "If a provisional statement has been granted, the licensing authority is constrained in the matters it can consider when an application for a premises licence is made subsequently in relation to the same premises. No further representations from relevant authorities or interested parties can be taken into account unless they concern matters which could not have been addressed at the provisional statement stage, or they reflect a change in the applicant's circumstances. In addition, the authority may refuse the premises licence (or grant it on terms different to those attached to the provisional statement) only by reference to matters:

- which could not have been raised by way of representations at the provisional licence stage; or
- which, in the authority's opinion, reflect a change in the operator's circumstances; or
- where the premises has not been constructed in accordance with the plan and information submitted with the provisional statement application. This must be a substantial change to the plan and licensing

authorities should discuss any concerns they have with the applicant before making a decision.

This authority has noted the Gambling Commission's Guidance that "A licensing authority must not have regard to whether or not a proposal by the applicant is likely to be permitted in accordance with planning or building law."

(x) Adult Gaming Centres (AGCs)

This licensing authority particularly notes the Gambling Commission's Guidance which states: "No-one under the age of 18 is permitted to enter an AGC."

"Licensing authorities will wish to have particular regard to the location of an entry to AGCs to minimise the opportunities for children to gain access. This may be of particular importance in areas where young people may be unsupervised and an AGC is in a complex, such as a shopping centre or airport."

The licensing authority will expect applicants to offer their own measures to meet the licensing objectives however appropriate measures/licence conditions may cover issues such as:

- Proof of age schemes
- CCTV
- Supervision of entrances/machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices/signage
- Specific opening hours
- Self-barring schemes
- Provision of information, leaflets and helpline numbers for organisations such as Gamcare.

This list is not mandatory nor exhaustive, but merely indicative of possible measures.

(xi) (Licensed) Family Entertainment Centres

Family entertainment centres are wholly or mainly used for having gaming machines available for use. This licensing authority will, as per the Gambling Commission's guidance refer to the Commission's website to see any conditions that apply to operator licences covering the way in which the area containing the category C machines should be delineated. This licensing authority will also make itself aware of any mandatory or default conditions on these premises licences, when they have been published.

The licensing authority will expect applicants to offer their own measures to meet the licensing objectives however appropriate measures/licence conditions may cover issues such as:

- CCTV
- Supervision of entrances/machine areas
- Physical separation of areas
- Location of entry
- Notices/signage
- Specific opening hours
- Self-barring schemes
- Provision of information, leaflets and helpline numbers for organisations such as Gamcare.
- Measures and training for staff on how to deal with suspected truant school children on the premises.

This list is not mandatory nor exhaustive, but merely indicative of possible measures.

(xii) Tracks

This licensing authority will have regard to the Gambling Commission's guidance.

(xiii) Casinos

This licensing authority will have regard to the Gambling Commission's guidance.

(xiv) Bingo

This licensing authority will have regard to the Gambling Commission's guidance.

(xv) Temporary Use Notices

There are a number of statutory limits as regards temporary use notices. It is noted that it falls to the licensing authority to decide what constitutes a 'set of premises' where temporary use notices are received relating to the same building / site.

(xvi) Occasional Use Notices

The licensing authority has very little discretion as regards these notices aside from ensuring that the statutory limit of 8 days in a calendar year is not exceeded. The licensing authority will though need to consider the definition of a 'track' and whether the applicant is permitted to avail him/herself of the notice.

(xvii) Travelling Fairs

It will fall to this licensing authority to decide whether, where category D machines and / or equal chance prize gaming without a permit is to be made available for use at travelling fairs, the statutory requirement that the facilities for gambling amount to no more than an ancillary amusement at the fair is met.

The licensing authority will also consider whether the applicant falls within the statutory definition of a travelling fair.

It has been noted that the 27-day statutory maximum for the land being used as a fair, is per calendar year, and that it applies to the piece of land on which the fairs are held, regardless of whether it is the same or different travelling fairs occupying the land. This licensing authority will work with its neighbouring authorities to ensure that land which crosses our boundaries is monitored so that the statutory limits are not exceeded.

Appendix 2: Responsible Authorities Contact details

Licensing Authority

Ashford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Tannery Lane
Ashford, Kent
TN23 1PL

Chief Officer of Police

Licensing / CSU
Canterbury Police Station
Old Dover Road
Canterbury
Kent
CT1 3JQ

The Fire Authority

South Kent Group Fire Safety Office
Folkestone Fire Station
Park Farm Road
Folkestone
Kent
CT19 5LT

The Local Planning Authority

Development Control
Ashford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Tannery Lane
Ashford, Kent
TN23 1PL

Enforcing Authority for Pollution and Harm to Human Health & the enforcing authority for Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974

Health, Parking and Community Safety,
Ashford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Tannery Lane
Ashford, Kent
TN23 1PL

HM Principal Inspector, Services
Group / Enforcement Liaison
Health & Safety Executive
Phoenix House,
23 - 25 Cantelupe Road,
East Grinstead,

West Sussex, RH19 3BE

Social Services

Integrated Family Services
Manager
Specialist Children's Services
Kent County Council,
Unit 5, Kroner House,
Eurogate Business Park,
Ashford
TN24 8XU

Gambling Commission

Gambling Commission
Victoria Square House
Victoria Square
Birmingham
B2 4BP

HM Revenue & Customs

HM Revenue and Customs
National Registration Unit
Portcullis House
21 India Street
Glasgow
G2 4PZ

Appendix 3: Statement of principles for unlicensed family entertainment centres, gaming machine permits and prize gaming permits



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Statement of Principles for Unlicensed Family Entertainment Centres, Gaming Machine Permits & Prize Gaming Permits

Gambling Act 2005

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The Gambling Act 2005

The Gambling Act 2005 (the Act) reforms the law on all commercial gambling in the United Kingdom other than the National Lottery and spread betting.

Ashford Borough Council is the relevant licensing authority for the licensing of premises for gambling such as bookmakers, casinos and bingo halls as well as issuing various other gambling permits.

The Act requires the council, as the licensing authority, to aim to permit the use of premises for gambling in so far as the authority thinks it:

- In accordance with a relevant code of practice
- In accordance with any relevant guidance issued by the Gambling Commission
- Reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives and
- In accordance with the licensing authority policy issued under the Act.

The licensing objectives are:

- Preventing gambling from being a source of crime or disorder, being associated with crime or disorder or being used to support crime
- Ensuring that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way
- Protecting children and other vulnerable persons from being harmed or exploited by gambling.

Purpose of this document

This document has been prepared to assist persons considering making an application for either an unlicensed family entertainment centre (UFEC) gaming machine permit or a prize gaming under the Gambling Act 2005.

Ashford Borough Council expects all applicants to work in partnership to promote the above objectives through clear and effective management of each gambling operation whether in respect of a permit or premises licence.

In respect of UFEC gaming machine permits it has been prepared in accordance with Paragraph 7 of Schedule 10 of the Act and in respect of prize gaming permits it has been prepared in accordance with paragraph 8 of Schedule 14 of the Act. The document should be read in conjunction with Ashford Borough Council Statement of Licensing Policy and Principles. – Gambling Act 2005.

The purpose of the document is to clarify measures that the council will expect applicants to demonstrate when applying for either of these permits so the council can determine the suitability of the applicant and the premises for a permit. Within this process the council will aim to grant the permit where the applicant is able to demonstrate that:

- They are a fit and proper person to hold the permit; and
- they have considered and are proposing suitable measures to promote the licensing objectives and they have a legal right to occupy the premises to which the permit is sought.

The measures suggested in this document should be read as guidance only and the council will be happy for applicants to suggest measures above and beyond those listed in the document and or to substitute measures as appropriate.

Unlicensed family entertainment centres

The term 'unlicensed family entertainment centre' is one defined in the Act and refers to a premises which provides category D gaming machines together with various other amusements such as computer games and "penny-pushers".

The premises is 'unlicensed' in that it does not require a premises licence but does require a permit to be able to provide its category D gaming machines. It should not be confused with a 'licensed family entertainment centre' that does require a premises licence because it contains both category C and D gaming machines.

Unlicensed family entertainment centres (UFECs) will be most commonly located at seaside resorts, in airports and at motorway service centres, and will cater for families, including unaccompanied children and young persons. The council will only grant a UFEC gaming machine permit where it is satisfied that the premises will be operated as a bona fide unlicensed family entertainment centre.

In line with the Act, while the council cannot attach conditions to this type of permit, the council can refuse applications if they are not satisfied that the issues raised in this "Statement of Principles" have been addressed through the application.

Applicants should address the "Statement of Principles" when making their initial applications and at renewal time. (Permits are granted for a period of ten years.)

Prize gaming permits

Section 288 defines gaming as prize gaming if the nature and size of the prize is not determined by the number of people playing or the amount paid for or raised by the gaming. The prizes will be determined by the operator before play commences. Prize gaming can often be seen at seaside resorts in amusement arcades where bingo is offered and the prizes are displayed.

A prize gaming permit is a permit issued by the council to authorise the provision of facilities for gaming with prizes on specified premises.

Applicants should be aware of the conditions in the Gambling Act 2005 by which prize gaming permits holders must comply. The conditions in the Act are:

- The limits on participation fees, as set out in regulations, must be complied with
- All chances to participate in the gaming must be allocated on the premises on which the gaming is taking place and on one day; the game must be played and completed on the day the chances are allocated; and the result of the game must be made public in the premises on the day that it is played
- The prize for which the game is played must not exceed the amount set out in regulations (if a money prize), or the prescribed value (if non-monetary prize) and participation in the gaming must not entitle the player to take part in any other gambling

In line with the Act, while the council cannot attach conditions to this type of permit, the council can refuse applications if they are not satisfied that the issues raised in this “Statement of Principles” have been addressed through the application.

Applicants only need to address the “Statement of Principles” when making their initial applications and not at renewal time. Permits are granted for a period of ten years.

Supporting documents

The council will require the following supporting documents to be served with all UFEC gaming machine permit and prize gaming permit applications:

- Proof of age (a certified copy or sight of an original birth certificate, driving licence, or passport – all applicants for these permits must be aged 18 or over)
- Proof that the applicant has the right to occupy the premises. Acceptable evidence would be a copy of any lease, a copy of the property’s deeds or a similar document
- An enhanced criminal record certificate. (this should be no greater than one month old.) This will be used to check that the applicant has no relevant convictions (those that are set out in Schedule 7 of the Act.)

In the case of applications for a UFEC gaming machine permit evidence that the machines to be provided are or were supplied by a legitimate gambling operator who holds a valid gaming machine technical operating licence issued by the Gambling Commission.

A plan of the premises to which the permit is sought showing the following items:

- The boundary of the building with any external or internal walls, entrances and exits to the building and any internal doorways where any category D gaming machines are positioned and the particular type of machines to be provided (e.g. Slot machines, penny falls, cranes)
- The location where any prize gaming will take place (including any seating and tables) and the area where any prizes will be displayed
- The positioning and types of any other amusement machines on the premises
- The location of any fixed or semi-fixed counters, booths or offices on the premises whereby staff monitor the customer floor area the location of any ATM/cash machines or change machines the location of any fixed or temporary structures such as columns or pillars
- The location and height of any stages in the premises; any steps, stairs, elevators, balconies or lifts in the premises
- The location of any public toilets in the building.

(The plan should be drawn to a scale with a key showing the items mentioned above)

Child protection issues

The council will expect the applicant to show that there are policies and procedures in place to protect children from harm. Harm in this context is not limited to harm from gambling but includes wider child protection considerations.

The council will assess these policies and procedures on their merits, and they should (depending on the particular permit being applied for) include appropriate measures/training for staff as regards the following:

- Maintain contact details for any local schools and or the education authority so that any truant children can be reported
- Employ policies to address the problems associated with truant children who may attempt to gain access to the premises and gamble when they should be at school.
- Employ policies to address any problems that may arise during seasonal periods where children may frequent the premises in greater numbers, such as half terms and summer holidays
- Maintain information at the premises of the term times of any local schools in the vicinity of the premises and also consider policies to ensure sufficient staffing levels during these times
- Display posters displaying the 'Child Line' phone number in discreet locations on the premises e.g. toilets
- Maintain an incident register of any problems that arise on the premises related to children such as children gambling excessively, truant children, children being unruly or young unaccompanied children entering the premises. (The register should be used to detect any trends which require attention by the management of the premises.)
- Ensure all young children are accompanied by a responsible adult
- Maintain policies to deal with any young children who enter the premises unaccompanied
- Enhanced criminal records checks for all staff who will be working closely with children

NB: Any supporting evidence of the above measures e.g. Training manuals or other similar documents/written statements should be attached to the application.

Protection of vulnerable persons.

The council will expect the applicant to show that there are policies and procedures in place to protect vulnerable persons.

The council will assess these policies and procedures on their merits; however they may (depending on the particular permit being applied for) include appropriate measures / training for staff as regards the following:

- Display Gamcare helpline stickers on all gaming machines
- Display Gamcare posters in prominent locations on the premises
- Training for staff members which focuses on building an employee's ability to maintain a sense of awareness of how much (e.g. how long) customers are gambling, as part of measures to detect persons who may be vulnerable
- Consider appropriate positioning of ATM and change machines (including the display of Gamcare stickers on any such machines)

NB: Any supporting evidence of the above measures e.g. Training manuals or other similar documents/written statements should be attached to the application.

Other miscellaneous issues

The applicant should also be mindful of the following possible control measures (depending on the particular permit being applied for) to minimise crime and disorder and the possibility of public nuisance as follows:

- Maintain an effective CCTV system to monitor the interior and exterior of the premises
- Keep the interior and exterior of the premises clean and tidy
- Ensure the external lighting is suitably positioned and operated so as not to cause nuisance to neighbouring and adjoining premises
- Consider the design and layout of the outside of the premises to deter the congregation of children and youths.
- Restrict normal opening hours to 8.45am to midnight daily.
- Not permit any person who is drunk and disorderly or under the influence of drugs, to enter or remain on the premises.
- Take such steps as are reasonably practicable to eliminate the escape of noise from the premises.
- Ensure, where possible the external doors to the premises remain closed, except when in use, by fitting them with a device for automatic closure or by similar means.
- Ensure that the premises are under the supervision of at least one responsible, adequately trained person at all times the premises are open

NB: Any supporting evidence of the above measures e.g. Training manuals or other similar documents/written statements should be attached to the application.

Applicants may obtain an Disclosure on application to Disclosure Scotland on 0870 609 6006 or online at www.disclosurescotland.co.uk

Authority's Details

Applications should be submitted to: **Ashford Borough Council, Licensing Authority, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL.**

Cheques should be made payable to: **Ashford Borough Council.**

Appendix B: List of consultees

- Gamcare
- Gamble Aware
- BACTA
- Association of British Bookmakers
- National Casino Forum
- Chair of Licensing, Health and Safety Committee
- Portfolio Holder for Highways, Wellbeing and Safety
- Chief Officer of Police
- South Kent Group Fire Safety Office
- Ashford Borough Council's Planning and Development Services
- Ashford Borough Council's Environmental Protection
- Ashford Borough Council's Health and Safety
- Health and Safety Executive
- Kent County Council's Specialist Children's Services
- Gambling Commission
- Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs
- Casino Gaming Limited
- Mecca Bingo
- SE Leisure
- Quality Amusements Limited
- Ivor Thomas Amusements
- Gamestec Leisure Limited
- Capital Coin Machine Limited
- Cineworld (UK) Limited
- Panbet
- Coral Racing Limited
- Ladbrokes Betting and Gaming Limited
- Done Brothers (Cash Betting) Limited
- Starbets Gamin
- Betfred
- William Hill Organisation Limited
- Shepherd Neame Limited
- Punch Taverns PLC
- Enterprise Inns PLC
- Admiral Taverns (Cygnet) Limited
- J.D. Weatherspoon
- LP Pubs and Bars Limited
- Stonegate Pub Company Limited
- The Luminar Group Limited
- Mr Withers Green
- AMF Bowling
- The Original Bowling Company
- WKM Leisure Limited
- Ashford Community Mental Health
- Signpost
- Ashford Mental Health Services
- Lenworth Clinic
- Kent County Council Education Services

- Public Health England
- Kent Community Health NHS Trust
- Southern Housing
- Housing 21
- Moat Housing

Appendix C: Consultation responses



Licensing
Ashford Borough Council
Civic Centre
Ashford
TN23 1PL

Please ask for: Richard Taylor
Direct Tel: 01482 590216
Email: rjt@gosschalks.co.uk
Our ref: RJT / SDS / 097505.00004
#GS504811
Your ref:
Date: 03 December 2015

Dear Sir/Madam,

Re: Gambling Act 2005 Policy Statement Consultation

We act for the Association of British Bookmakers (ABB) and have received instructions to respond on behalf of our client to the current consultation on the Council's review of its gambling policy statement.

The ABB represents over 80% of the high street betting market. Its members include large national operators such as William Hill, Ladbrokes, Coral and Paddy Power, as well as almost 100 smaller independent bookmakers.

This response will explain the ABB approach to partnership working with local authorities, it will detail its views on the implementation of the new LCCP requirements, from April 2016, relating to operators' local area risk assessments and their impact on the licensing regime and will then make specific comment with regard to any statement(s) of concern/that are welcomed in your draft policy.

The ABB is concerned to ensure that any changes are not implemented in such a way as to fundamentally change the premises licence regime through undermining the "aim to permit" principle contained within s153 Gambling Act 2005.

The current regime already adequately offers key protections for communities and already provides a clear process (including putting the public on notice) for representations/objections to premises licence applications. The recent planning law changes effective since April 2015 have also already increased the ability of local authorities to consider applications for new premises, as all new betting shops must now apply for planning permission.

It is important that any consideration of the draft policy and its implementation at a local level is put into context. There has recently been press coverage suggesting that there has been a proliferation of betting offices and a rise in problem gambling rates. This is factually incorrect.

Queens Gardens, Hull, HU1 3DZ T 01482 324252 F 0870 600 5984
E info@gosschalks.co.uk W www.gosschalks.co.uk DX 11902 – Hull

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Over recent years betting shop numbers have been relatively stable at around 9,000 nationally, but more recently a trend of overall downwards decline can be seen. The latest Gambling Commission industry statistics show that numbers as at 31 Mar 2015 were 8,958 - a decline of 179 from the previous year, when there were 9,137 recorded as at 31 March 2014.

As far as problem gambling is concerned, successive prevalence surveys and health surveys reveal that problem gambling rates in the UK are stable (0.6%) and possibly falling.

Working in partnership with local authorities

The ABB is fully committed to ensuring constructive working relationships exist between betting operators and licensing authorities, and that where problems may arise that they can be dealt with in partnership. The exchange of clear information between councils and betting operators is a key part of this and we welcome the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

There are a number of examples of the ABB working closely and successfully in partnership with local authorities.

LGA – ABB Betting Partnership Framework

In January 2015 the ABB signed a partnership agreement with the Local Government Association (LGA). This was developed over a period of months by a specially formed Betting Commission consisting of councillors and betting shop firms and established a framework designed to encourage more joint working between councils and the industry.

Launching the document Cllr Tony Page, LGA Licensing spokesman, said it demonstrated the *"...desire on both sides to increase joint-working in order to try and use existing powers to tackle local concerns, whatever they might be."*

The framework built on earlier examples of joint working between councils and the industry, for example the Ealing Southall Betwatch scheme and Medway Responsible Gambling Partnership.

In Ealing, the Southall Betwatch was set up to address concerns about crime and disorder linked to betting shops in the borough. As a result, crime within gambling premises reduced by 50 per cent alongside falls in public order and criminal damage offences.

In December last year, the Medway Responsible Gambling Partnership was launched by Medway Council and the ABB. The first of its kind in Britain, the voluntary agreement allows anyone who is concerned they are developing a problem with their gambling to exclude themselves from all betting shops in the area.

The initiative also saw the industry working together with representatives of Kent Police and with the Medway Community Safety Partnership to develop a Reporting of Crime Protocol that is helpful in informing both the industry, police and other interested parties about levels of crime and the best way to deal with any crime in a way that is proportionate and effective.

Lessons learnt from the initial self-exclusion trial in Medway have been incorporated into a second trial in Glasgow city centre, launched in July this year with the support of Glasgow City Council, which it is hoped will form the basis of a national scheme to be rolled out in time for the LCCP deadline for such a scheme by April 2016.

Jane Chitty, Medway Council's Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Growth & Regulation, said: *"The Council has implemented measures that work at a local level but I am pleased to note that the joint work we are doing here in Medway is going to help the development of a national scheme."*

Describing the project, Glasgow's City Treasurer and Chairman of a cross-party Sounding Board on gambling, Cllr Paul Rooney said:

"This project breaks new ground in terms of the industry sharing information, both between operators and, crucially, with their regulator."

Primary Authority Partnerships in place between the ABB and local authorities

All major operators, and the ABB on behalf of independent members, have also established Primary Authority Partnerships with local authorities.

These Partnerships help provide a consistent approach to regulation by local authorities, within the areas covered by the Partnership; such as age-verification or health and safety. We believe this level of consistency is beneficial both for local authorities and for operators.

For instance, Primary Authority Partnerships between Milton Keynes Council and Reading Council and their respective partners, Ladbrokes and Paddy Power, led to the first Primary Authority inspection plans for gambling coming into effect in January 2015.

By creating largely uniform plans, and requiring enforcing officers to inform the relevant Primary Authority before conducting a proactive test-purchase, and provide feedback afterwards, the plans have been able to bring consistency to proactive test-purchasing whilst allowing the Primary Authorities to help the businesses prevent underage gambling on their premises.

Local area risk assessments

With effect from 6th April 2016, under new Gambling Commission LCCP provisions, operators are required to complete local area risk assessments identifying any risks posed to the licensing objectives and how these would be mitigated.

Licensees must take into account relevant matters identified in the licensing authority's statement of licensing policy and local area profile in their risk assessment, and these must be reviewed where there are significant local changes or changes to the premises, or when applying for a variation to or a new premises licence.

The ABB is concerned that overly onerous requirements on operators to review their local risk assessments with unnecessary frequency could be damaging. As set out in the LCCP a review

should only be required in response to significant local or premises change. In the ABB's view this should be where evidence can be provided to demonstrate that the change could impact the premises' ability to uphold the three licensing objectives.

Although ABB members will be implementing risk assessment at a local premises level, we do not believe that it is for the licensing authority to prescribe the form of that risk assessment. We believe that to do so would be against better regulation principles. Instead operators should be allowed to gear their risk assessments to their own operational processes informed by Statements of Principles and the local area profile.

The ABB supports the requirement as set out in the LCCP, as this will help sustain a transparent and open dialogue between operators and councils. The ABB is also committed to working pro-actively with local authorities to help drive the development of best practice in this area.

Local Area Profiles – Need for an evidence based approach

It is important that any risks identified in the local area profile are supported by substantive evidence. Where risks are unsubstantiated there is a danger that the regulatory burden will be disproportionate. This may be the case where local authorities include perceived rather than evidenced risks in their local area profiles.

This would distort the "aim to permit" principle set out in the Gambling Act 2005 by moving the burden of proof onto operators. Under the Act, it is incumbent on licensing authorities to provide evidence as to any risks to the licensing objectives, and not on the operator to provide evidence as to how they may mitigate any potential risk.

A reversal of this would represent a significant increase in the resource required for operators to be compliant whilst failing to offer a clear route by which improvements in protections against gambling related harm can be made.

We would also request that where a local area profile is produced by the licensing authority that this be made clearly available within the body of the licensing policy statement, where it will be easily accessible by the operator and also available for consultation whenever the policy statement is reviewed.

Concerns around increases in the regulatory burden on operators

Any increase in the regulatory burden would severely impact on our members at a time when overall shop numbers are in decline, and operators are continuing to respond to and absorb significant recent regulatory change. This includes the increase to 25% of MGD, changes to staking over £50 on gaming machines, and planning use class changes which require all new betting shops in England to apply for planning permission.

Moving away from an evidence based approach would lead to substantial variation between licensing authorities and increase regulatory compliance costs for our members. This is of particular concern for smaller operators, who do not have the same resources to be able to put

into monitoring differences across all licensing authorities and whose businesses are less able to absorb increases in costs, putting them at risk of closure.

Such variation would in our opinion also weaken the overall standard of regulation at a local level by preventing the easy development of standard or best practice across different local authorities.

Employing additional licence conditions

The ABB believes that additional conditions should only be imposed in exceptional circumstances where there are clear reasons for doing so - in light of the fact that there are already mandatory and default conditions attached to any premises licence. The ABB is concerned that the imposition of additional licensing conditions could become commonplace if there are no clear requirements in the revised licensing policy statements as to the need for evidence.

This would further increase variation across licensing authorities and create uncertainty amongst operators as to licensing requirements, over complicating the licensing process both for operators and local authorities.

Specific Policy Comments

A new section of the policy is proposed in section 11. This relates to risk assessments following the implementation of the new social responsibility and ordinary code provisions. The first paragraph in section 11 correctly identifies that operators must assess local risks to the licensing objectives and to have policies, procedures and control measures to mitigate those risks.

Section 11 contains a list of matters that the Council expect operators to take into account. This list needs to be redrafted to delete irrelevant considerations.

As stated above, the requirement is to assess local risks to the licensing objectives. Issues such as anti-social behaviour in the area, street drinking, drug dealing activities, underage drinking and graffiti/tagging do not pose any risks to the licensing objectives in the context of a Gambling Act 2005 application. Similarly, "gaming trends that may mirror days for financial payments such as paydays or benefit payments" should be removed from this list. This automatically assumes that people in receipt of benefit may be vulnerable.

Section 2 of the policy, under the heading "(1) Decision Making – General" explains the Licensing Authority's approach to the imposition of conditions. The proposed gambling policy would be assisted by a statement that the starting point for consideration of any application is that it will be granted subject only to the mandatory and default conditions as these are usually sufficient to ensure operation that is reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives. The draft policy should make it clear that additional conditions will only be imposed where there is evidence of a risk to the licensing objectives that requires that the mandatory and default conditions be supplemented.

Conclusion

The industry fully supports the development of proportionate and evidenced based regulation, and is committed to minimising the harmful effects of gambling. The ABB is continuing to work closely with the Gambling Commission and the government to further evaluate and build on the measures put in place under the ABB Code for Responsible Gambling, which is mandatory for all our members.

ABB and its members are committed to working closely with both the Gambling Commission and local authorities to continually drive up standards in regulatory compliance in support of the three licensing objectives: to keep crime out of gambling, ensure that gambling is conducted in a fair and open way, and to protect the vulnerable.

Indeed, as set out, we already do this successfully in partnership with local authorities now. This includes through the ABB Code for Responsible Gambling, which is mandatory for all our members, and the Safe Bet Alliance (SBA), which sets voluntary standards across the industry to make shops safer for customers and staff. We would encourage local authorities to engage with us as we continue to develop both these codes of practice which are in direct support of the licensing objectives.

Yours faithfully,



GOSSCHALKS

Licensing,
Ashford Borough Council,
Civic Centre,
Ashford,
TN23 1PL

29th December 2015

Dear Sir,

Consultation on Ashford Borough Council's Statement of Principles – Gambling Act 2005

Coral Racing Limited is most grateful to be given the opportunity to respond to this consultation exercise. Coral was one of the first national bookmakers to be licensed under the Betting and Gaming Act of 1960, and so has been operating the length and breadth of the UK for over 50 years. Its premises comprise locations in the inner city, on the high street, in suburbs and in rural areas, and in areas of both high and low deprivation. It now operates 1850 betting offices across Great Britain, which comprise about 20% of all licensed betting offices. It is, therefore, a highly experienced operator.

Coral Racing Limited are broadly supportive of the document. It again notes that the Board when considering applications are still required to 'aim to permit gambling' where this is 'reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives'. Your Statement also correctly includes that the Council should not take into account any moral objections to gambling either.

Coral Racing Limited recognise the requirement to supply risk assessments with future applications and variations (requirement is from 6th April 2016) following the consultation completion and are pleased to see this information included.

Coral's experience is that through all it does, it achieves an exemplary degree of compliance already, and attracts negligible evidence of regulatory harm. Through the additional local risk assessment to be introduced, Coral believe that these should be a) to assess specific risks to the licensing objectives in the local area, and b) to assess whether control measures going beyond standard control measures are needed.

We politely note that on page 10 of your draft document, you list a wide range of locations which should be considered by operators during the completion of their risk assessments. Whilst each application will be judged on its merits as mentioned at several points within your statement, Coral knows of no evidence that the location of a licensed betting office within the proximity of schools as an example, causes harm to the licensing objectives. Coral's general experience, in common with other bookmakers, is that children are not interested in betting, and in any case the Think 21 policy operated by Coral is adequate to ensure that underage gambling does not occur in their premises. There are very many examples of betting offices sited immediately next to schools and colleges as well as the other various locations listed within your risk assessment listings and no evidence whatsoever that they cause problems. We do appreciate that the licensing board have flexibility in this regard when granting licences but caution against any inference of a link between such locations and problem gambling.



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a  company



1700+ shops



mobile



coral.co.uk



0800 242 232

For your information, we have recently been working with Westminster City Council in agreeing a suitable format of risk assessments and are looking to use this across our estate. Naturally, if these do not meet the level desired by the local Councils involved, we would adjust to suit.

If we can provide any further information, we would be pleased to do so.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'John Liddle', written in a cursive style.

John Liddle
Director of Development – Coral Retail

Appendix D: Summary of consultation responses

Consultee Name	Relevant Policy Reference	Consultee's Comments	Officer Comment	Proposed Amendment to Policy
Coral Racing Limited	Overall policy	Coral Racing are broadly supportive of the policy and recognise the requirement to supply risk assessments with future applications and variations (from 06/04/16).	Positive feedback	No amendment
Coral Racing Limited	Risk Assessments (Section 11, page 10 of the draft policy)	Additional local risk assessments should be a) to assess specific <u>risks</u> to the licensing objectives in the local area, and b) to assess whether control measures going beyond standard <u>control measures</u> are needed.	By adding the word specific before risks this will mitigate the point raised. The insertion of the word "specific" keeps it pertinent to the local risks as requested, so no reference to going beyond the standard control measures is needed.	Changed section on page 10 to add the word "specific" before "local risks to the licensing objectives."
Coral Racing Limited	Risk Assessments (Section 11, page 10 of the draft policy)	Whilst each application will be judged on its merits as mentioned at several points within your statement, Coral knows of no evidence that the location of a licensed betting office within the proximity of schools as an example causes harm to the licensing objectives. Coral's general	Each application will be judged on its merits and any specific risks to the licensing objectives will be identified in the risk assessment, along with the expected control measures. By amending the wording, the points	Change the wording on page 10 to state: Urban setting, Range of facilities in proximity to the licensed premises.

		<p>experience, in common with other bookmakers, is that children are not interested in betting, and in any case the Think 21 policy operated by Coral is adequate to ensure that under-age gambling does not occur in their premises. There are very many examples of betting offices sited immediately next to schools and colleges as well as the other various locations listed within your risk assessment listings and no evidence whatsoever that they cause problems.</p>	<p>raised by the consultee can be addressed.</p>	<p>Matters relating to children and young persons.</p>
<p>Gosschalks Solicitors representing the Association of British Bookmakers (ABB)</p>	<p>Overall policy</p>	<p>The Association of British Bookmakers is broadly supportive of the policy and fully supports the development of proportionate and evidenced based regulation, and is committed to minimising the harmful effects of gambling. The ABB recognises that operators must assess local risks to the licensing objectives and to have policies, procedures and control measures to mitigate those risks.</p>	<p>Positive feedback</p>	<p>No amendment</p>
<p>ABB</p>	<p>Risk Assessments (Section 11, page 10 of the draft)</p>	<p>Section 11 contains a list of matters that the council expect operators to take into account. This list needs to be redrafted to delete irrelevant</p>	<p>Matters relating to anti-social behaviour in an area should be dealt with using other legislation.</p>	<p>Remove: Known problems in the area such as problems</p>

	policy)	considerations. Issues such as anti-social behaviour in the area, street drinking, drug dealing activities, underage drinking and graffiti/tagging do not pose any risks to the licensing objectives in the context of a Gambling Act 2005 application. Similarly, “gaming trends that may mirror days for financial payments such as paydays or benefit payments” should be removed from this list. This automatically assumes that people in receipt of benefit may be vulnerable.	Remove wording linking with paydays or benefit payments.	<p>arising from street drinkers, youths participating in anti-social behaviour, drug dealing activities, etc.</p> <p>Gaming trends that may mirror days for financial payments such as pay days or benefit payments</p>
ABB	<p>Premises Licences</p> <p>(i) Decision making – general</p> <p>(Page 15 of the draft policy)</p>	Section 2 of the policy, under the heading “(I) Decision Making – General” explains the Licensing Authority’s approach to the imposition of conditions. The proposed gambling policy would be assisted by a statement that the starting point for consideration of any application is that it will be granted subject only to the mandatory and default conditions as these are usually sufficient to ensure operation that is reasonably consistent with the licensing objectives. The draft policy should make it clear that additional conditions will only be imposed	Agreed.	<p>Add:</p> <p>The starting point for consideration of any application is that it will be granted subject only to the mandatory and default conditions and any additional conditions must be evidence based.</p>

		where there is evidence of a risk to the licensing objectives that requires that the mandatory and default conditions be supplemented.		
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Agenda Item No: 13

Report To: Cabinet

Date: 11/02/2016

Report Title: Recycling Performance 2015/16 Update and 2015 Waste Composition Analysis

Report Author: Julie Rogers: Head of Environmental and Customer Services

Portfolio Holder: Councillor Clair Bell



Summary:

This report provides an update on Ashford's recycling performance for 2015/16 and the findings from a residual and recyclable waste composition analysis undertaken during November 2015. The challenges arising for Ashford are explored with a proposal to develop a forward strategy for Ashford to maintain recycling performance above 50%.

Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards: All wards in Ashford

Recommendations: **The Cabinet is recommended to:-**

1. Note the findings of this report and
2. Approve the development of a costed forward education and promotion strategy including forward recycling options and targets to be brought back to Cabinet in June.

Policy Overview: Ashford made a significant policy commitment to improve its recycling performance in 2012, to respond to the national recycling target of 50%, after being titled the worst in England with a performance of 12% in 2011/12. Key to delivery was the implementation of the Mid Kent Partnership (Maidstone, Swale, Ashford and Kent Council's) and the Biffa contract, which commenced in April 2013.

Financial Implications: None at this stage

Risk Assessment N/A

Equalities Impact Assessment N/A

Background Papers Mid Kent and Canterbury Waste Composition Analysis: A report by Waste Intelligence: December 2015

Portfolio Holders Comments Ashford Recycling Performance: monthly data analysis
Portfolio Holder will provide verbal comments at the meeting.

Contacts:

julie.rogers@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233 330 856)

Report Title: Recycling Performance 2015/16 Update and 2015 Waste Composition Analysis

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides an update on Ashford's recycling performance for 2015/16 including a modelled full year comparison with 2014/15.
2. The report will also inform Members of the findings from a residual and recyclable waste composition analysis undertaken during November 2015.
3. The issues and challenges arising from both analyses conclude that Ashford will need to develop a more targeted forward education and promotion strategy if it is to maintain recycling performance above the national 50% target.

Issue to be Decided

4. The Cabinet is recommended to:
 - a. Note the outcomes of this report and
 - b. Approve the development of a costed forward education and promotion strategy including forward recycling options and targets to be brought back to Cabinet in June.

Summary

5. Ashford's recycling performance remains high, projected to be 52% for 2015/16, and comfortably above the national target of 50%.
6. The recycling services offered by Ashford are generally very well used with participation in the dry recycling service (paper/card, cans, plastics, glass) at an exceptional 92%.
7. The rates of capture for targeted dry recyclables in Ashford are generally high or very high ranging between 70 and 90%. Similarly for waste electronic and equipment (so called WEEE), a new service for Ashford where the capture rate is 88%.
8. Green waste continues to be a success with a further rise in subscribers for 2015/16 and a commensurate rise in tonnage collected.
9. Between 2008 and 2015, the households in Ashford put 55% less waste in the residual waste bin. The same period saw the amounts of waste left in the residual bin that could have been recycled also fall by between 45-60% for targeted materials such as food, paper/card and glass. (Please refer to paragraph 37a for further information).
10. There was a rise in green waste put out for disposal with significant amounts left in the residual bin which suggests, despite the success of the green waste

service, there is more to do.

11. Contamination of the recycling put out for collection appears to be a growing challenge for Ashford and a contributing factor to a drop off in predicted recycling performance for 2015/16.
12. The total amount of waste generated by Ashford households is predicted to rise for 2015/16. There is also expected to be a significant fall in the amounts of dry recyclables and food waste collected. Taken together, these factors also contribute to the expected fall off in recycling performance.
13. Detailed analysis reveals that there are significant differences in dry recycling and food waste performance between flats and other households in Ashford. There are also differences between socio, demographic and economic (ACORN) groups.
14. The work undertaken suggests that some further detailed in-house analysis is required to fully understand the trends being seen and to be able to develop options for responding. These options will need to be targeted and costed to look at the potential impact on recycling performance (cost versus return) and form the basis of a forward strategy and any future recycling target.

Background

15. Ashford achieved a nationally recognised most improved recycling performance of 43% in 2013/14, even allowing for this performance reflecting only 9 months of the new contract partial services roll out. This improved further to 55% for 2014/15 reflecting a full year of the new contract but which still only saw food waste collections rolled out to flats during the third quarter. Given this rapid and impressive rise in performance from 2012/13 (12%), maintaining or improving on it was always going to present a major challenge.
16. Recycling performance is monitored monthly along with identifying areas of concern that may be addressed by in-year actions.
17. In support of routine performance monitoring Ashford, in partnership with Mid Kent and Canterbury City Council, commissioned a waste composition analysis to look at both residual and recycling waste (food, green and dry mixed recyclables) that residents were putting out for collection.
18. The aim of the waste analysis, undertaken by a specialist company (Waste Intelligence) was:
 - a. to provide up to date data some two and a half years into Ashford's new contract;
 - b. to enable a comparison to be made between 2015 and 2008 when the last Kent wide waste composition analysis was undertaken;
 - c. to examine any differences within household categories using the representative ACORN (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods) sampling methodology;
 - d. to identify how much of the recyclable material (mixed dry recycling, food and green) that is in the waste stream is being put out for collection through the systems offered by Ashford; and

- e. identify any areas where Borough wide or targeted improvement may support maintaining a recycling rate above 50%.

Recycling Performance and Waste Composition Analysis

Recycling Performance, Full Year Modelling and Analysis

19. Recycling performance for the year to date (Apr-Dec) is averaging 52% which is down on the same period last year at 55%. Initial high level analysis suggested that this was mainly attributable to a significant drop in recycling performance in July 2015 to 44%.
20. The performance in July 2015 can be attributed to a significant rise in the tonnage of recyclable material rejected as contaminated at either the KCC transfer station or materials reprocessing facility (MRF). This rejected material ends up sent to energy from waste or landfill. Against a generally rising problem with contamination in recycling collections in Mid Kent and beyond, a particular focus on the sample and full loads delivered into the KCC processing infrastructure was seen.
21. Ashford responded to this challenge by publicising the issue and also advising residents that a much tougher approach would be taken with bins more carefully examined at the time of collection. Any bins or bags raising concerns were highlighted to the responsible household or management company with a warning that repetition would see the bin or bags left uncollected with advice for the householder / management company in order to rectify.
22. The tougher approach appeared to have an immediate impact with the August 2015 recycling performance at 59%. However, further analysis and modelling has shown that July 2015 alone cannot be held responsible for the drop off in recycling performance.
23. Detailed recycling and residual tonnage analysis to enable forward modelling of a 2015/16 full year recycling performance suggests that Ashford's performance will remain at around 52%. 2015/16 is the 2nd full year of the new contract and the 1st where the full roll out of all services, including food, to flats has been in operation.
24. In order to at least maintain recycling performance at the 2014/15 level (55%), Ashford would need to see Jan- March 2016 exceed 60% in each month. Both historic data together with the further analysis and modelling suggest this is highly unlikely.

Findings

25. The analysis and modelling reveals both good and bad news suggesting that there are a number of concerns and challenges:
 - a. the tonnage of dry recycling (the mixed bin) materials put out for collection is predicted to be down by over 10%
 - b. the tonnage of food waste put out for collection is predicted to be down by nearly 6%

- c. the tonnage of green waste put out for collection is predicted to be up by over 7%; and
 - d. the tonnage of residual waste put out for collection is predicted to be up by nearly 10%
26. The reductions in food waste and dry recyclables on their own would not necessarily be an issue. It could be that households are producing and discarding less food waste, a good thing. Similarly, the reductions in dry recyclables could be due to the same reasons.
 27. However, when taken with the significant predicted rise in residual waste this suggests a shift whereby similar amounts of food and recyclables are being generated but are not being diverted into the associated separated collection offered.
 28. Members will be aware that while ever recycling performance is a weight based target then the shifts in tonnages outlined above are going to see that performance fall.
 29. The rise in tonnage predicted for green waste are a good measure of the continued success of the subscriber service offered. However, this rise alone is not sufficient to counter the effects of the reduced food and dry recycling waste.
 30. In order to further understand and respond to the challenges the recycling performance analysis suggests, a detailed evaluation of the waste composition analysis commissioned was undertaken

Waste Composition Analysis and Findings

Analysis: Overview

31. The waste composition analysis involved separately collecting both residual and recycling waste put out by a representative sample of households derived from using ACORN (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods) data. For Ashford, this saw 250 households and 250 flats (communal collections) chosen with the waste fully analysed via a hand sorting and weighing methodology.
32. Based upon the overall make up of Ashford, the ACORN (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods) sample for Ashford fell into 5 classification categories:
 - a. ACORN 1: Affluent Achievers
 - b. ACORN 2: Rising Prosperity
 - c. ACORN 3: Comfortable Communities
 - d. ACORN 4: Financially Stretched
 - e. ACORN 5: Urban Adversity
33. The selected households were not advised in advance in order that true and normal behaviour was analysed. This is standard and good practice when undertaking a waste composition analysis and the collection itself was undertaken in such a way that the householder does not see any change. No

individual household was identified via the analysis of what was collective tonnage from the sampled area.

34. More details of the sampling and overall waste composition analysis methodology is available via the background papers.

Findings

35. A series of key extracts from the full waste composition analysis (background paper) are included at Appendix 1 to the report. They comprise:
- a. comparative charts showing the composition of the residual waste in 2008 and 2015 (Appendix Figure 1);
 - b. comparative charts showing the composition of the recycling waste modelled for 2008 and 2015 actual (Appendix Figure 2);
 - c. changes in the weights of recyclable materials found in the residual waste bin 2008-2015 (Appendix Table 1)
 - d. the capture rates for targeted recycling materials: mixed dry recyclables, food waste and green waste including how Ashford households compares with the other mid Kent authorities and Canterbury City Council (Appendix Table 2)
 - e. some analysis of the waste generated by flats (Appendix Figure 3)
 - f. the capture rates for targeted recycling materials: mixed dry recyclables, food waste and green waste for flats (Appendix Table 3)
 - g. some comparative data for the different ACORN categories within Ashford (Appendix Figure 4).
36. Drawing on all of the waste composition data and analysis a number of the key findings are set in the following sections of the report.

General Trends and Performance

- a. There was a 26% reduction in the average weight of residual waste produced by all households between 2008 and 2015. Ashford is 55% lower which compares to 30% lower for a Maidstone household and 23% for a Swale household;
- b. There has been a welcome and significant reduction in the amount of food waste, a national challenge, that makes up overall residual waste;
- c. There has not been any substantial increase in hard or impossible to recycle materials such as some plastics, for example, plastic film or a significant increase in plastic packaging overall; and
- d. Ashford 'stand alone' households are putting out greatest weight in their mixed dry recycling bin but also the highest proportion and weight of unwanted materials i.e. contamination. When this contamination is accounted for the Ashford households put out the same average weight as the other Councils in the study.
- e. There was a lower performance overall when looking at the flats (communal collections) sampled.

37. Materials Analysis

- a. Ashford has the lowest weights of recyclable materials left in residual waste. Importantly, there have been some substantial reductions in key types of some of this waste which suggests that services are being well used (Appendix Table 1):
 - i. food: down 50%
 - ii. paper and card: down 46% (average)
 - iii. glass: down 60%
- b. Garden waste has increased both in the overall waste (up 4%) and remaining in the residual waste bin that could be recycled (up 24%: Appendix Figure 1 and Table 1);
- c. Decreases in other materials remaining in the residual waste bin that could have been recycled are also a positive contribution to increased recycling;
- d. In the important recycling services, Ashford has a set out rate (placed out for collection) for food collections averaging 63% over the sampling period and 92% for mixed dry recycling collections. Both of these were substantially higher than the other three authorities studied:
 - i. Set out rates for a mixed dry recycling service of over 85% are excellent and so Ashford can be very pleased at its achievement in getting households using this service.

38. Capture Rates

39. Recyclable material capture rates are a critical measure of both the success of any service offered and where potential challenges remain. Capture rates look at the amount of potential recyclable material that is in the waste stream, whether in the residual waste bin or recycling bin, and that which is actually put out for collection in the recycling bin. When looking at this part of the analysis (Appendix Table 2):
 - a. Ashford has the highest overall capture rates for materials targeted;
 - b. Ashford has high or very high rates for paper and card (average 77%), glass (90%), steel cans (Fe: 70%) and electronic and electrical equipment (WEEE: 88%) and good captures rates for plastics (59%);
 - c. the higher capture rate materials: glass, paper and card and WEEE are also the heaviest and so contribute more pro rata to recycling performance; and
 - d. whilst capture rates for aluminium cans and textiles are not as good, they do compare well with the other authorities.
 - e. For food waste, Ashford 'stand alone' households have the best capture rate (63%) when compared to the other authorities;
 - f. For flats, in addition to putting out less recyclable material for collection, particular other issues highlighted include:
 - i. Ashford flats do perform well overall when compared to the other authorities in the study. However:
 - ii. around 50% of the waste remaining in the residual bin could be diverted to recycling;
 - iii. capture rates for paper and card were still good and, interestingly, the capture rates for textiles were much higher than for 'stand alone' households; and
 - iv. over a third (39%) of the recyclable waste put out for collection was contaminated.

40. ACORN (A Classification of Residential Neighbourhoods) Analysis

41. Within both 'stand alone' households and flats there are some significant differences across the whole range of measures. Of particular interest are (Appendix Table 4):
 - a. Significantly lower weights of materials put out for recycling by ACORN 1 (Affluent Achiever) households even after allowing for higher contamination in other ACORN groups.
 - b. Higher amounts of food waste that could be recycled were placed out for collection by ACORN 5 (Urban Adversity) households and flats

Conclusions

42. The full year modelled recycling tonnages and projected performance of 52% suggest that there are a number of challenges:
 - a. rising tonnage of overall waste produced has had a real impact; and
 - b. lower amounts of key dry recyclable materials and food waste are being presented which may, in isolation, suggest a degree of apathy towards the services Ashford are offering.
43. Some excellent performance when looking at service participation rates and materials capture rates are not sufficient to counter the issues highlighted from the recycling performance analysis.
44. The most efficient food waste recyclers were the Ashford ACORN 5 (Urban Adversity) households. This is often seen across the UK as it is thought that ACORN 5 households are less bothered by the "yuck factor".
45. The flats in the Ashford sample areas could recycle more food and mixed recycling, but for some of the flats the weights were very low. However, this is not unusual and is a feature of these types of property nationally. This suggests that more careful selection of the flats that will participate in a food waste or mixed recycling scheme may be more beneficial than the full roll out of these schemes to all. However, more work is needed, a comprehensive study is currently being undertaken by London authorities with the Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP). The results of this alongside local studies and pilots currently underway will help inform the way forward.
46. Ashford appears to have a growing problem with contamination of recyclables put out for collection and this is having a direct impact on recycling performance.
47. There appears to be an opportunity to capture more green waste and textiles via the services offered by Ashford.
48. Whilst the waste composition analysis was a snapshot in time and a sample of properties, a more comprehensive extrapolation model to equate to the whole of Ashford gives similar results for key measures such as capture rates. This provides confidence in using the data as part of forward planning.
49. Taken together, the studies and modelling suggest that more work internally is needed to understand particular area or ACORN groups and the sources of contamination.

50. The studies and modelling, combined with further analysis, can form the sound, evidenced basis for the development of a targeted and costed education and promotion strategy. This will enable:
- a. a proper consideration of the practicalities and potential effectiveness of various approaches
 - b. an examination of any costs versus return in respect of maintaining or improving performance for 2016/17
 - c. members to determine what, if any, target they wish to adopt for recycling performance in Ashford going forward.

Portfolio Holder's Views

51. The Portfolio Holder will provide verbal comments at the meeting.

Contact: Julie Rogers, Head of Environmental and Customer Service on extension 856.

Email: Julie.rogers@ashford.gov.uk

FIGURE 1: Average Household Residual Waste Bin

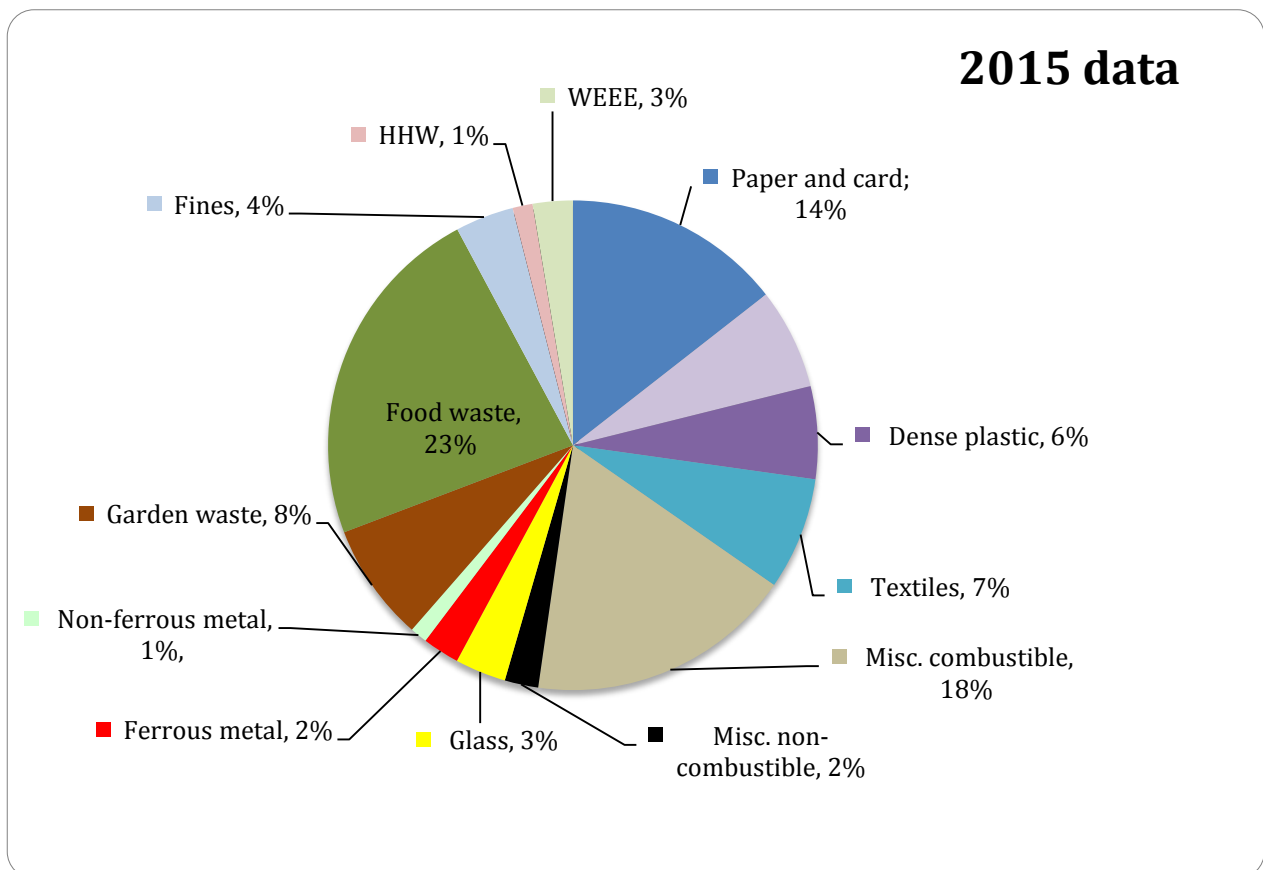
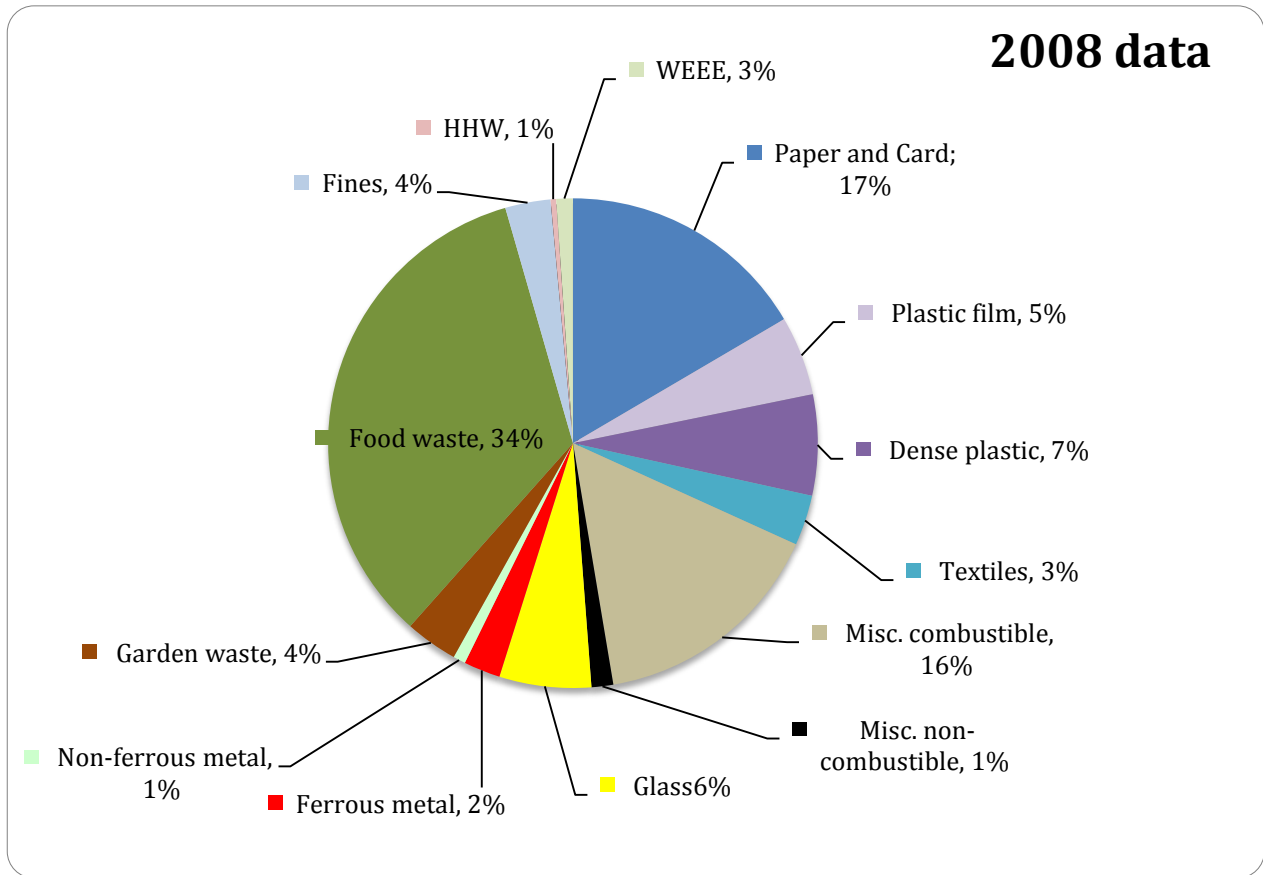


FIGURE 2: Recyclable Material in the Residual Waste Bin

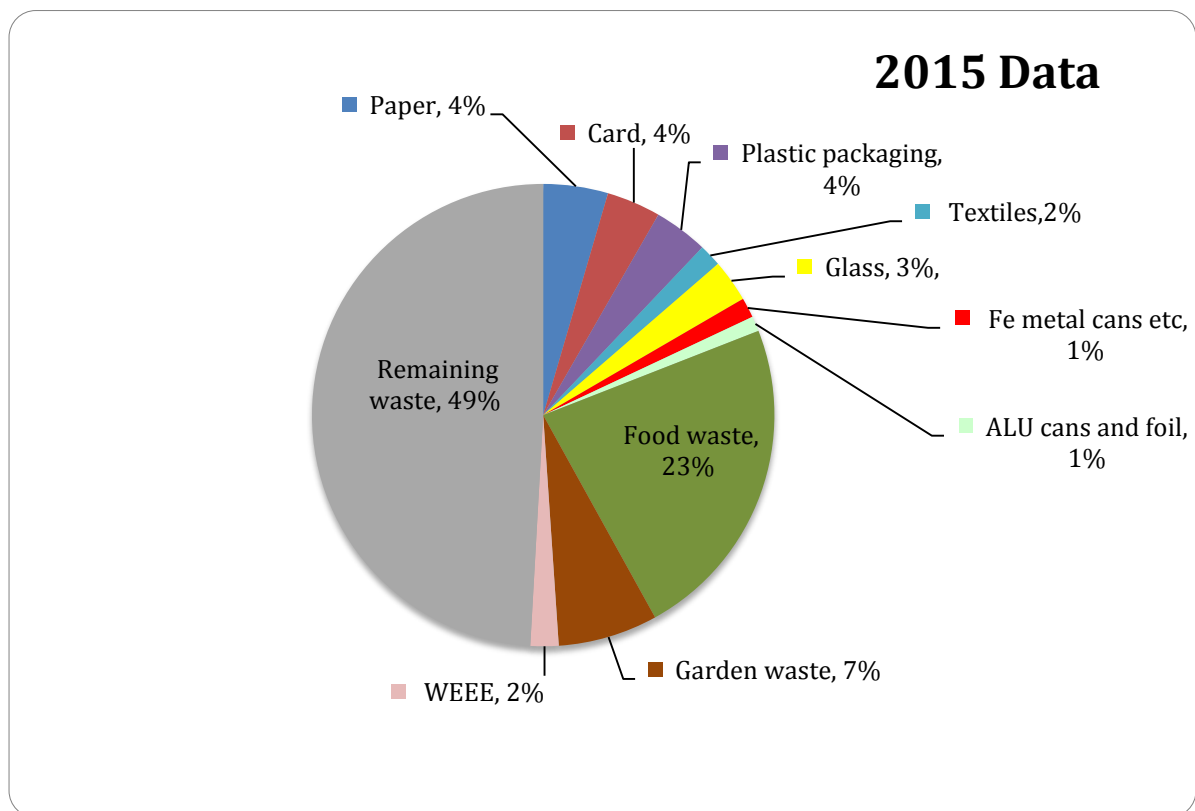
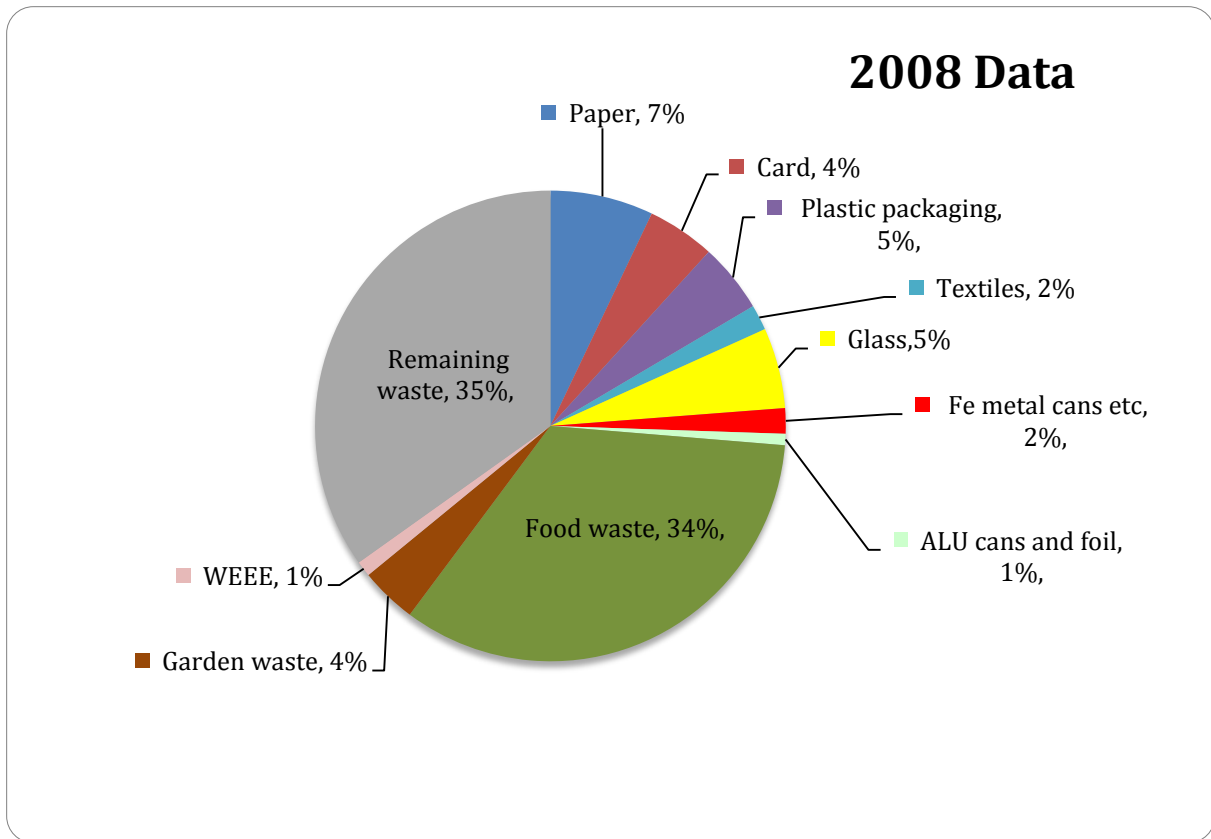


TABLE 1 : Ashford: Weights of recyclable material found in the household residual waste bin 2008 and 2015 compared

	2008	2015	% Change
Paper	0.73	0.34	53% -
Card	0.48	0.29	40% -
Plastic packaging	0.49	0.29	41% -
Textiles	0.18	0.12	34% -
Glass	0.57	0.23	60% -
Fe metal cans etc	0.18	0.11	41% -
ALU cans and foil	0.08	0.08	0%
Food waste	3.49	1.74	50% -
Garden waste	0.40	0.53	24% +
WEEE	0.11	0.15	26% +
Remaining waste	3.59	3.73	4% +
Total	10.3	7.60	26% -

TABLE 2: Capture Rates of Recyclable Materials: 'Stand Alone' Households

	Ashford	Canterbury	Maidstone	Swale
Paper	80%	80%	79%	64%
Card	75%	63%	62%	70%
Plastics	59%	44%	44%	59%
Textiles	20%	53%	6%	15%
Glass	90%	77%	60%	88%
FE Cans	70%	43%	34%	50%
Alu Cans	35%	24%	34%	48%
WEEE	88%	-	35%	-

FIGURE 3: Composition of Waste from Sampled Ashford Flats

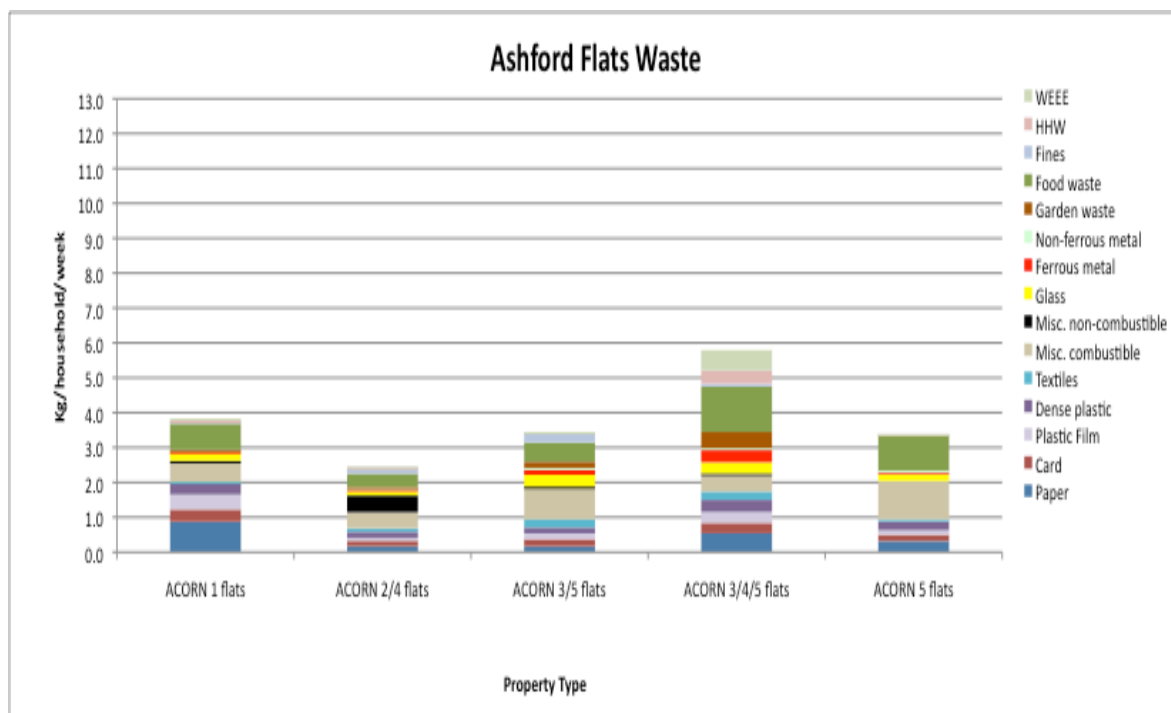
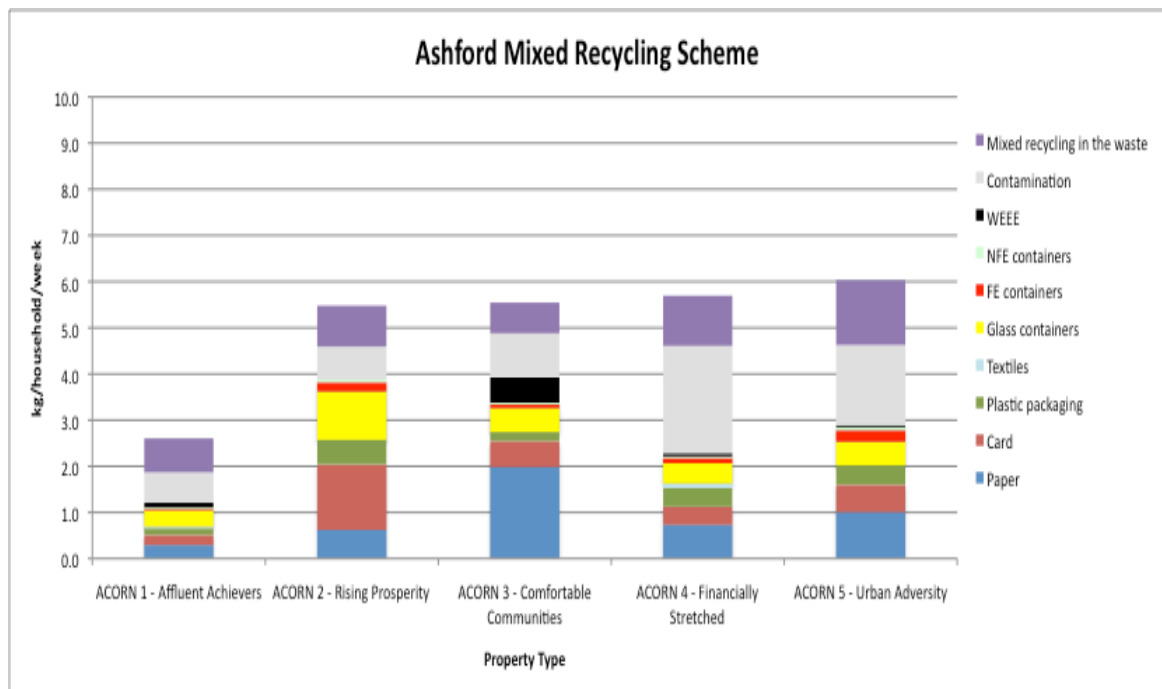


TABLE 3: Capture Rates of Recyclable Materials: Flats

	Ashford	Canterbury	Maidstone
Paper	60%	37%	65%
Card	57%	33%	38%
Plastics	32%	31%	19%
Textiles	56%	-	11%
Glass	43%	31%	49%
FE Cans	29%	24%	14%
Alu Cans	22%	14%	11%
Food	34%	-	35%
WEEE	15%	-	10%

FIGURE 4: Comparison of weights put out for recycling across ACORN categories



Agenda Item No: 14

Report To: Cabinet

Date: 11 February 2016

Report Title: Appointment of the Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer

Report Author: Michelle Pecci- Head of Personnel & Development

Portfolio Holder: Cllr Clarkson- Leader of the Council



Summary:

Further to the resignation of the Chief Executive this report makes recommendations on the appointment of key senior posts in light of the recent senior management structure approval, the recently adopted Corporate Plan and uncertainties around devolution.

It recommends that the Council makes an internal appointment to the post of Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service and also makes recommendations on the appointments to the Electoral Registrations Officer and Returning Officer roles as these roles are also carried out by the current Chief Executive.

The paper also seeks approval of the job description and remuneration package for the interim Chief Executive role.

Key Decision: No

Affected Wards:

Recommendations: Cabinet recommend the following to Council:-

- i) That the Council does not appoint a permanent Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service at this stage.
- ii) That the Council appoint an interim Chief Executive/ Head of Paid Service for a period of up to 2 years from within its existing officers, commencing immediately and subject to existing notice provisions
- iii) That the current post holder of Corporate Director (Operations) (post number 7001) be seconded into this role.
- iv) To approve the remuneration package and reviewed job description for the post of Interim Chief Executive.
- v) That the current post holder of the post of Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer (post number 1003) be appointed

- Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer for the Council for the period of up to 2 years commencing immediately, and continues with these responsibilities when he takes up his new Corporate Director (Law and Governance) and Monitoring Officer post in April 2016.
- vi) That the Head of Planning & Development be re-designated Corporate Director (Development) from April 2016.
 - vii) To Note the minor structural changes as a consequence of these revisions.
 - viii) That, from 1 April 2016, the Head of Finance be appointed s151 Officer, and the Deputy Chief Executive be appointed Deputy s151 Officer.
 - ix) That the Head of Legal & Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer amend and update the “Scheme of Delegations to Officers including Proper and Authorised Officers and Designated Posts” in the constitution as appropriate.

Policy Overview:

Financial Implications:

The Chief Executive post is fully budgeted and so there is no budget pressure associated with this post.

In addition making an internal appointment saves recruitment and selection costs.

Risk Assessment

YES

Equalities Impact Assessment

YES This report builds on the principles of the October 2015 Succession Planning Report.

Other Material Implications:

The post of PA to the Corporate Director (Operations) will become redundant as it is not intended to back-fill the post of Corporate Director.

Exemption Clauses:

Background Papers:

Contacts:

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Report Title: Appointment of the Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service, Returning Officer and Electoral Registration Officer.

Purpose of the Report

1. Further to the resignation of the Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service this report makes recommendations on how the post of Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service and Returning Officer posts could be appointed in light of the recent senior management structure approval, the recently adopted Corporate Plan and uncertainties around devolution.
2. The paper also seeks approval of the job description and remuneration package for the Interim Chief Executive Role.

Background

3. In October 2015, as part of the Corporate Plan suite of reports, Members approved the direction of travel for the long-term management structure of the council that acknowledged, and planned for, a series of senior management changes. The strategy built on the successful approach to succession planning that has been adopted across the council in recent years. In that report it was highlighted that there would be a transition period where the council would need to be flexible and responsive as subsequent senior officer turnover occurred. The structure was designed to support members in achieving the corporate plan objectives, building on the progress made in the past 5 years.
4. Since then John Bunnett, the Chief Executive, has announced his resignation, with a leaving date mid-February 2016. Due to the 'currency' of the management structure it does not seem necessary to undertake any major review of the management structure, rather make some minor adjustments as necessary once a decision has been made on how we fill the Chief Executive vacancy.
5. Since the General Election in May this year it has been clear that devolution has been one of the Governments goals, the Chancellor's speech on 25 November 2015 continued to reinforce this direction. At the same time countywide discussions on devolution has started to pick up more pace. Any devolution change has the potential to have a significant impact on the council's senior officer structure and, by implication; this could impact on the attractiveness to external candidates of moving into a Chief Executive role in a two tier district authority.
6. The last Chief Executive recruitment cost the council circa £40k including recruitment advertising and the engagement of recruitment consultants to manage the process for us, to conduct head-hunting and support the appointments committee in long listing, shortlisting and selection exercises.

7. These points suggest that it may be prudent to make a temporary internal appointment to the Chief Executive role for the time being until the impact of devolution becomes clearer.
8. Experience would show that an externally appointed Chief Executive would take up to 6 months before they join then would need time to 'get up to speed'. This could impact on our ability to maintain a steady course. An internal appointment would be available immediately and also has other benefits in that the corporate plan direction is established and the senior management team are already engaged with the progress that needs to be made and are already supporting members in delivering this vision and priorities

Proposal- Structure charts in Appendix 1 refer

9. It is proposed that the Corporate Director (Operations) be seconded into the Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service role for the period of up to two years, retaining responsibility for the services currently allocated in the structure plus Property and Projects.
10. This post holder has been identified because of her already largely externally facing role and her ability to make that step without compromising existing service delivery.
11. The current Head of Planning & Development (will be designated 'Corporate Director (Development)'); who in the previous structure was part of the transition for the next two or three years as he prepared his team for succession opportunities will continue to take responsibilities for the areas already allocated (Planning & Development related) as well as the Cultural Services unit as that has strong links to Economic Development and currently works closely with the Planning unit. These changes will take effect from 1 April 2016 on the retirement of the Head of Culture & the Environment.
12. The Corporate Director (Law and Governance) and Monitoring Officer will become the interim *Returning Officer* and *Electoral Registration Officer* as these roles have a very close link to members that has synergies with the Monitoring Officer role. It is *usual* for the Chief Executive to carry out these Returning Officer duties so it is proposed that these additional duties are allocated to the Corporate Director (Law and Governance) on an interim basis until a decision can be reached about the permanent Chief Executive position.
13. The Corporate Director (Operations) role will not be back-filled for the duration of the secondment but will remain on the establishment for the post holder to return to subject to future decisions on structure, recruitment and selection and devolution (as is usual in secondment arrangements). (Structure charts at Appendix 1 show how the structure will change).
14. There will be no change to the current Deputy Chief Executive's role as that post holder has now reduced his contractual hours and is specifically focused on managing the Chilmington CMO project as well as taking the Senior Officer lead on devolution, and retaining management responsibility for the Policy & Performance Team.

15. For the purposes of assuring members: in the previous paper considered by members in October 2015 it was highlighted that the role of the Policy & Performance team would be reviewed in light of members strong focus on enforcement and compliance. This review will still be undertaken and reporting lines may change at a later date, but for the time being the function will continue to report into the Deputy Chief Executive.
16. The October 2015 Succession Planning report that outlined a revised management structure also proposed that, in April 2016, the Deputy Chief Executive, (who is the s151 Officer) and the Head of Finance (the Deputy s151 Officer) should 'swap' their statutory responsibilities as part of the succession planning transition. Members were supportive of this, and Officers would see this report as an ideal opportunity to formalise approval of those changes from 1 April 2016. Recommendation (viii) has therefore been included to enable these changes to take effect.

Other material implications

17. The Corporate Director (Operations) currently has a PA that supports that role. In this arrangement it is not proposed for the foreseeable future to back-fill the effective vacancy left by the post holder being seconded into the Interim Chief Executive post. This PA post will therefore become redundant. This will be dealt with under delegated powers.

The Chief Executive Job Description

18. Attached at **Appendix 2** is a revised job description for the role of Interim Chief Executive described in this report. Members are asked to confirm approval that this should be the role description.

Remuneration package

19. The current salary package for the Chief Executive:

Salary	MG1.3 £110,376 MG1.2 £104,862 MG1.1 £ 99,357
Annual Leave	29 days including local condition statutory days, plus public holidays.
Lease car subsidy or cash alternative	£4,280
Annual mileage allowance (to pay for first 3,000 miles travelled within Kent per year)	£450

20. Research on Chief Executive salaries shows that our salary level is comparable with other authorities in the south-east and that we sit around the middle of the table at this salary level.
21. In addition, at the top of this grade are two discretionary points awarded in recognition of high performance, or as part of a retention package, at the discretion of the Leader and Group Leaders once the post holder has reached the top of the grade. The additional points are the equivalent of 5% and 10% of the top of the grade. These points are discretionary and not automatically applied. It is not proposed to include these two on this interim role because the post holder will not have progressed to the top of the grade by the time the interim appointment comes to an end. This provides scope for the RO/ERO role being funded from within the existing budget from the savings created..
22. Members are asked to agree the salary package as described in the table above.

Risk Assessment

23. Turnover in an organisation can be a healthy; it enables new ideas, a different perspective new skills and experience to come into an organisation. The risk of making an internal temporary appointment is that the council will miss out on these new skills. However, the council is at a critical point of its corporate plan delivery with many key priorities on the cusp of being delivered the risk to the council of an external appointment is that momentum will be lost by the inevitable time delay of an external appointment (around 6 months, plus 'settling-in' time).
24. Morale across the officer group is good, staff are committed to the council and largely this is due to the leadership shown by the existing senior management team, the commitment to succession planning and the impact officers feel their roles make on the borough. Change is unsettling, making an external appointment could impact on morale.
25. The proposal is not to back fill the Corporate Director (Operations) role, and to leave this post effectively vacant for the period of the secondment. This may present a risk in terms of senior management capacity and experience however it is felt that the priorities of the council are fairly well set through the corporate plan and the introduction of more rigid programme management processes will provide a stronger framework in which to manage these risks.

Handling

26. Formal consultation processes with materially affected staff commenced during week commencing 14 December 2015 and the proposals have been considered by the JCC on 28 January 2016.
27. Appointment to the Interim Chief Executive role with statutory responsibilities as Head of Paid Service is a Council decision as is the appointment of RO

and ERO. If Cabinet members are satisfied with these proposals a formal recommendation to members will be made to the February Council meeting.

28. This timing has the added benefit that, if approved by Council; there will be no need to appoint a temporary Chief Executive/Head of Paid Service pending a recruitment process.
29. Once Council has approved the recommendations arrangements can be put in place to formalise the secondment into to the Interim Chief Executive role and formal notice will be issued to the PA to the Corporate Director (Operations) subject to redeployment processes.

Conclusion

30. With considerable uncertainty around devolution, and the critical stage the Council has reached in achieving key corporate priorities, it seems to be a sensible way to proceed with the appointment of Interim Chief Executive/Head of Paid service.
31. An internal secondment appointment provides the Council with flexibility for the future, but also provides the stability and consistency that the organisation needs to maintain its direction of travel.

Portfolio Holder's Views

32. Cllr Gerry Clarkson- Leader of the Council

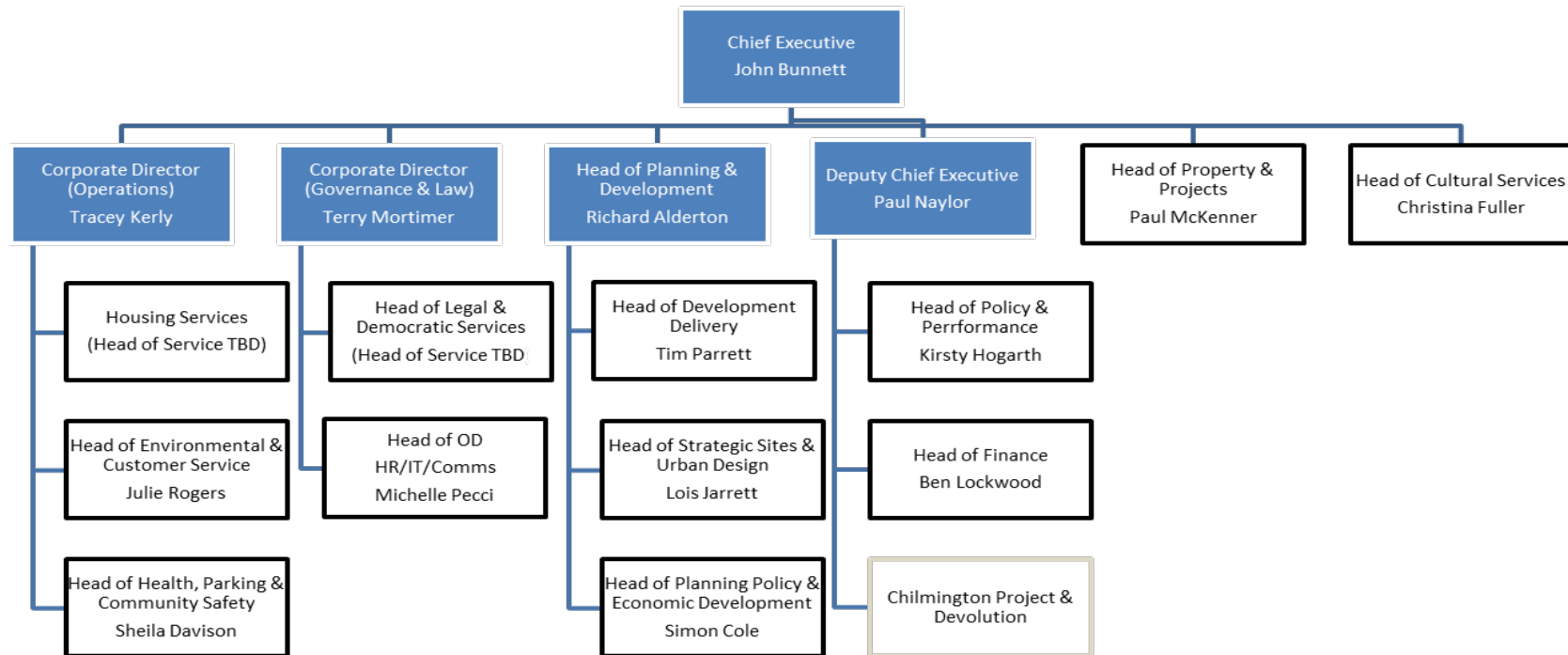
The Council is currently in a strong position with the recently agreed corporate plan providing direction and focus; and having made significant progress in realising major project delivery. The Council has a good reputation with residents, businesses and potential inward investors. Much of this is as a result of strong and consistent member and officer leadership.

The recommendation to temporarily appoint an internal candidate into the Chief Executive role helps to ensure we maintain a steady course to achieving our objectives whilst also recognising the external environment is changing, this will provide the organisation with the ability to respond appropriately as the future becomes clearer.

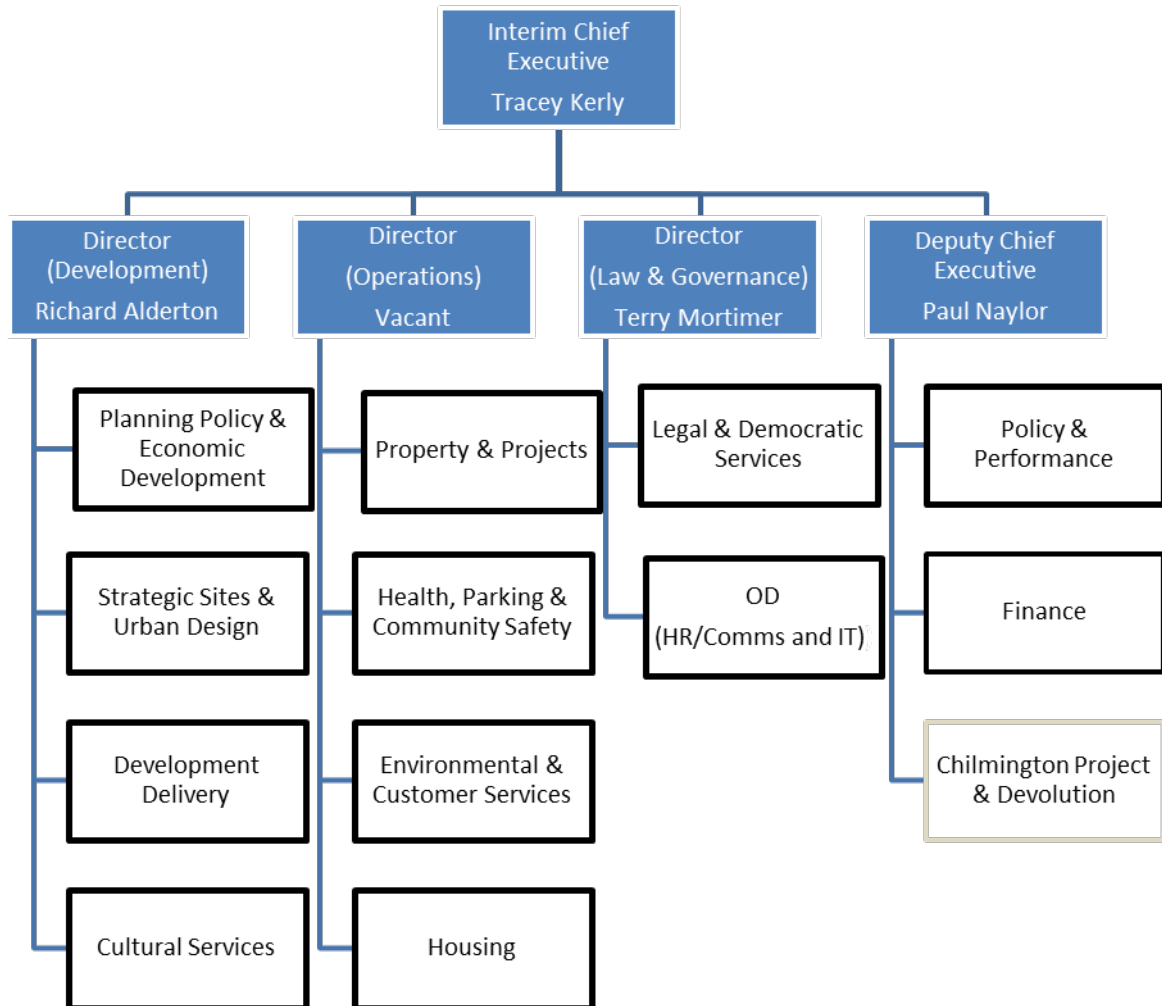
Contact: Michelle Pecci

Email: michelle.pecci@ashford.gov.uk Tel: 01233 330602

ORIGINAL STRUCTURE EFFECTIVE APRIL 2016



PROPOSED INTERIM STRUCTURE



ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

JOB DESCRIPTION

JOB TITLE:	INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE
GRADE:	MG1
POST NUMBER:	0001
RESPONSIBLE TO	The Council through the Leader
JOB SUMMARY:	To provide strong managerial leadership, motivating and inspiring the Council's staff in ensuring that all Members of the Council are fully supported in their various roles and that Council policy is effectively implemented in order to achieve the authority's strategic and corporate objectives as efficiently and economically as possible.
ROLE REQUIREMENTS:	
	MEMBER RELATIONS:
1.	To advise the Council on all matters of general policy and corporate policy, supporting the development of a clear vision, appropriate strategies and robust policies.
2.	To develop and maintain excellent relations with Members, ensuring that they receive the advice and information they need to enable them to discharge their roles in policy making, performance management, representation and scrutiny.
3.	To deliver effective accountability of staff to Members and the public.
	STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT:
1.	To give the Management Team strategic leadership and direction, promoting a corporate approach in both forward planning and day-to-day management. Set clear objectives and goals for members of the Management Team.
2.	To lead the Management Team in setting the strategic agenda for the Borough. To update the Council's Corporate Strategy regularly, and ensure that this is delivered by the service plans within the organisation.
3.	To ensure that the interests of the Council and of Borough residents are fully protected in the operation of the county and

	regional agreements.
4.	To provide leadership on organisational, cultural and transformational change whilst maintaining quality, performance and a customer focused approach.
	SERVICE DELIVERY:
1.	To ensure that value for money, good quality services are provided in the most effective, economic and efficient way.
2.	Maintain and develop relationships with stakeholders and ensure that all stakeholders continue to be consulted.
3.	To exploit the Council's community leadership role by building on and developing partnership working in support of the Council's aims and objectives, ensuring that effective governance arrangements are in place for all key partnerships.
4.	To monitor and manage service and corporate performance to secure continuous improvements.
5.	To engender within the organisation a culture of valuing and celebrating the diversity of the Borough's communities, ensuring that equal opportunities policies and practices are in place to eliminate unfair discrimination whether as an employer or a provider of services.
	RESOURCE MANAGEMENT:
1.	To ensure that the Council is organised effectively and is able to respond to changing needs, that operational accountabilities are clearly defined and appropriately managed and that all services and staff have clear objectives that relate directly to the delivery of the Corporate Plan.
2.	To motivate and lead all staff to deliver good quality and value services in an innovative and flexible way. To ensure effort, skills and time are used productively to achieve high standards in relation to the quantity and quality of performance. To tackle areas of weakness within the organisation and manage poor performance in line with Council procedures.
3.	To support effective medium term financial planning and continued strong financial management and ensure that the Council's financial systems and affairs are properly managed to a high standard and its statutory obligations are met.
4.	To ensure that appropriate project management arrangements and resources are in place to support the delivery of major projects and that progress is reported

	regularly to Management Team and Members.
	COMMUNICATIONS:
1.	To develop, maintain and promote effective communication and liaison throughout the Council and between the Council, the public and other organisations.
2.	To act as an Ambassador promoting the interests of the Council and of the Borough.
	OTHER RESPONSIBILITIES:
1.	The post holder is the Head of Paid Service.
2.	To play a full part in the Council's Emergency Planning arrangements as required under the Civil Contingencies Act and attend training as necessary.
3.	To perform such other duties in connection with the work of the Council as may be required.
4.	To represent the Council as required on the board of local agencies.
	EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES:
1.	To promote equality of opportunity in employment and service provision, and eliminate unlawful discrimination.
2.	To recognise that people have different abilities to contribute to the Council's goals and performance and to take necessary action to give everyone a chance to contribute and compete on equal terms.
	EMERGENCY PLANNING:
1.	To participate as required in the Council's Emergency Planning operations including undertaking training and exercising as directed.
2.	To participate in the response to an emergency which may involve duties outside your normal job description and at times outside your contracted hours.
3.	To participate in the recovery stage following the emergency.
	BUSINESS CONTINUITY:
1.	In the event that an incident has occurred which disrupts the Council's ability to deliver its critical functions, to undertake duties within your competencies in other departments and/or at other locations.

	DATA PROTECTION:
1.	To ensure that data quality and integrity is maintained and that data is processed in accordance with Council policy, the Data Protection Act, the Freedom of Information Act, and other legislation.
	HEALTH & SAFETY:
1.	All employees have responsibilities under The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. These responsibilities are laid out in the Council's Health and Safety Policy, available on the Intranet or from Personnel.
	ADDITIONAL DUTIES:
1.	To undertake any additional duties of a similar level of responsibility as may be required from time to time.
OTHER CONDITIONS:	
December 2015 MP	

KEY COMPETENCY AREAS

Ashford Borough Council uses a Competency Framework which describes the behaviours all staff are expected to display when performing their role. These behaviours are an important cornerstone of our recruitment and selection processes as well as our performance management processes.

LEADING BY EXAMPLE

- Communicate simply and clearly when writing and speaking
- Accept responsibility for own area of work and learn from mistakes
- Be consistent when making decisions and dealing with others
- Welcome ideas and feedback and encourage openness
- Remain calm and composed at times of pressure
- Be positive and enthusiastic with a 'can-do' approach and be proactive, with a willingness to get involved

WORKING WITH OTHERS

- Treat others with respect and dignity at all times, ensuring that there is no discrimination regardless of background
- Take time in conversations and meetings to listen to other people and consider their opinions
- Provide help willingly, and share own knowledge, time and skills to assist others
- Understand the feelings of others and show tact and empathy
- Be approachable and pleasant to interact with
- Positively engage with others and keep any criticism constructive

MANAGING OURSELVES

- Inspire trust by demonstrating honesty and integrity
- Manage workloads effectively to prioritise demands and meet deadlines. Use clear and realistic goals broken down into smaller objectives
- Be self motivated and work hard. Use own initiative and require minimal supervision
- Challenge yourself to learn and encourage others to make changes to enhance performance and standards
- Demonstrate self awareness by understanding the impact of our own behaviour on others
- Complete work to the highest standard possible whilst balancing the need to deliver with good attention to detail.

ACHIEVING OUR GOALS

- Look at options before making a decision and promote acceptance of an appropriate level of risk
- Be flexible and propose, accept and implement change where necessary
- Be brave and use creativity and innovation to solve problems by doing things differently
- Understand the direction of the council and where possible seek to replicate and develop good practice from all other sectors and apply their approach to the day to day role
- Display loyalty and commitment to own role, team priorities and the council as an employer. Be fully focused on delivery
- Be knowledgeable of own service area and have an awareness of the role of other council departments.

Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group

Notes of a Meeting of the Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group held on the **13th January 2016**.

Present:

Councillor Clarkson (Chairman);
Councillor Bennett (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Mrs Blanford, Bradford, Britcher, Clokie, Galpin, Heyes, Michael, Wedgbury.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2(iii) Councillor Bradford attended as Substitute Member for Councillor Shorter.

Apologies:

Cllr. Shorter.

Also Present:

Cllrs. Burgess, Hicks.

Simon Cole – Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development; Ian Grundy – Principal Policy Planner; Daniel Carter – Principal Policy Planner; Danielle Dunn - Policy Planner; Jennifer Shaw - Housing Strategy Manager; Dave Jeffrey - Housing Enabling Officer; Jeremy Baker – Principal Solicitor (Strategic Development); Rosie Reid – Member Services & Scrutiny Support Officer.

1 Notes of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group Meeting held on 9th December 2015

- 1.1 The Task Group Members agreed that the Notes of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group Meeting held on 9th December 2015 were an accurate record.

2 Planning for Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Local Plan

- 2.1 The Policy Planner introduced this item. She explained that in August 2015 the Government had amended the definition of a gypsy and traveller so that in future those who ceased to travel permanently would be excluded from this category and be considered part of the 'settled' population. Ashford's Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Assessment (GTAA) was carried out in 2013 using the old definition and had estimated a pitch requirement of 57 pitches for the 15-year period 2013 – 2028. However, reassessment of pitch requirement using the data from the GTAA in conjunction with the new definition had resulted in a new pitch requirement of 48 pitches for the same period. 27 pitches had already received full planning permission, resulting in a shortfall of pitches to be provided by 2028 of 21. Since the Local Plan covered the period up until 2030, on a pro rata basis there would be a net need for 27 new pitches. The Policy Planner outlined the three options discussed in the report and concluded by saying that the paper suggested a

draft policy which used a combination of approaches by allocating a small number of sites and leaving the remainder to come forward as windfalls. By having a site allocation and criteria-based policy, the Council would be able to resist applications for gypsy and traveller sites in unsuitable locations, with more likelihood of support by the Planning Inspectorate at Appeal.

2.2 The Chairman opened up this item for discussion, and the following points were raised:

- Members felt the proposed policy covered all the important points. They considered that a combined policy was the best approach as the Council would be vulnerable if it did not identify sites in the Local Plan and relied on windfall sites alone. It was suggested that sites should not only be sought in rural areas as there may be some suitable urban sites as well.
- There was a shortage of adequate sites available in the Borough. A Member suggested that current sites could be adopted and extended to mitigate having to establish new sites. He considered that sites needed to be controlled in terms of appearance and efficient functionality. The Policy Planner explained that work was being undertaken to explore a policy to retain existing gypsy sites so that there was not a need to allocate more sites. She confirmed that, at present, a pitch could be passed on to any new gypsy or traveller as long as it was not tied to any specific family.
- The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development said that the Call for Sites had resulted in a poor response in respect of potentially suitable sites. There were some sites available, and these would be discussed at the next Task Group meeting in February, but it was unlikely there were enough suitable sites to cover all of the 27 pitches required. He recommended a balanced approach, allocating any suitable, deliverable sites, plus windfall options to meet requirement. He considered that any applications which met the criteria in the policy should be regarded as acceptable.
- The Task Group agreed a maximum of 5 pitches per site.
- In response to a question, the Policy Planner advised that Ashford had a static gypsy and traveller community. Across Kent, the Council was approximately in the mid-range of authorities regarding the number of sites required.
- It was noted that the new policy would apply to future sites and applications, but not established sites.
- The Chairman thanked officers for the work done to move this issue forward.

Resolved:

That Cabinet be asked to:

- i) agree that the level of need for gypsies and travellers is an additional 27 pitches in the period 2016 – 2030;**
- ii) endorse the general wording of the draft policy appended to the report subject to such adjustments as may be appropriate and to the addition of a clause limiting the maximum number of pitches on any site to 5.**

3 Local Plan to 2030 – Town Centre contribution towards overall housing target

- 3.1 The Principal Policy Planner introduced this item. He gave a presentation which covered the need to agree a broad approach towards key town centre sites in the Local Plan 2030, and establishing a housing figure for the town centre to contribute towards the overall housing target in the Local Plan 2030. The presentation concluded that it was preferable to adopt one policy that covered the whole town centre core area and move away from specific ‘quarters’ policies, except for the Commercial Quarter. The presentation suggested sites which could be relied upon to deliver housing towards the target, as well as sites which would be referred to but could not be relied on to deliver targets.
- 3.2 The Portfolio Holder for Town Centre Focus & Business Dynamics said he considered that the suggestions presented a pragmatic approach, with a good balance of sites.
- 3.3 Members noted the need to find the balance between flexibility and prescription. They considered that the Vicarage Lane car park was an important site as it was versatile and central and had an impact on the surrounding area. It was important to improve links between that site and the High Street. One Member considered that the site could be a key area for a bus interchange as there was no major bus station in Ashford. Members also discussed the options for introducing high quality residences into the Lower High Street, as well as possible future options for the Bingo Hall.

Resolved:

That Cabinet be asked to:

- i) agree that approximately 1500 units in the town centre core area is considered to be robust and deliverable for the purposes of meeting a proportion of the overall Local Plan to 2030 housing target;**
- ii) agree a strategic policy approach that provides the right balance between encouragement and flexibility, so as not to undermine development potential, yet provides enough of a steer to ensure that the Council’s aims and objectives can be delivered.**

4 Response to DCLG consultation on proposed changes to national planning policy

4.1 The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development introduced this item. He explained that the most significant issues in the document were:

- amending the definition of affordable housing to include starter homes. The Housing and Planning Bill defined starter homes as new dwellings for first time buyers under 40 years of age, sold at a discount of at least 20% of market value and at less than the price cap of £250,000 (outside of London). It was likely that a proportion of new development would be delivered as starter homes.
- the Government was proposing to be more specific in policy support for housing development by introducing a presumption in favour of housing proposals on brownfield sites. There was also potential to introduce a presumption in favour of housing schemes on small sites, of less than 10 dwellings, whether brownfield or greenfield, where immediately adjacent to settlement boundaries, if sustainable.
- The Government was proposing greater support for the delivery of starter homes through a change in planning policy. In rural areas this could impact on local needs policy as starter homes could be delivered through existing rural exception sites. The new proposals would present a significant departure from existing policy and could undermine the Council's ability to control urban creep.

4.2 The Chairman opened up this item for discussion and the following points were raised:

- The Head of Planning Policy and Economic Development said that the exact details of the new proposals would not be clear when the Council's draft Local Plan was published. It would be necessary to make some assumptions and inject details into the Plan as facts became known. He asked all Members to study the consultation documents and provide feedback. He would need to finalise the Council's response on 10th February.
- The Housing Strategy Manager advised that starter homes could be sold after 5 years at market rates, after which time they would no longer qualify as starter homes.
- One Member considered that by supporting housing development on brownfield land and small sites, the Government was in danger of creating a domino pattern of windfall sites. This would have an adverse impact on the Council's Local Plan. The Member considered that this point required a strong response from the Council.
- Members expressed concerns about developers 'landbanking' and they considered this could be one of the unintended consequences of the new proposals. Members considered that the proposals could take

control away from the local planning authority and put it into the hands of developers, and they felt it was important for the Government to acknowledge the dangers of landbanking.

6 Dates of Next Meetings

6.1 The dates of the meetings to the end of the current Municipal Year would be: -

All at 2pm

Wednesday 10 February 2016

Thursday 25 February 2016

Wednesday 9 March 2016

Wednesday 13 April 2016

Councillor Clarkson (Chairman)
Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group

Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Rosie Reid:
Telephone: 01233 330565 Email: rosie.reid@ashford.gov.uk
Agendas, Reports and Minutes are available on: www.ashford.gov.uk/committees

**Notes of a meeting of the
Ashford Strategic Delivery Board
Friday 22nd January 2016 at 10.00am**

Present:

Board Members

Cllr Gerry Clarkson (Chairman) - Leader ABC
Rt Hon Damian Green MP
Cllr Graham Galpin – Portfolio Holder for Town Centres Focus & Business Dynamics, ABC
Cllr Mike Bennett – Portfolio Holder for Planning, Development & Enforcement, ABC
Cllr Mark Dance - Cabinet Member for Economic Development, KCC
Cllr Matthew Balfour – Cabinet Member for Environment and Transport. KCC
Mark Lumsdon-Taylor – Hadlow Group
Paul Harwood – Highways Agency

Non Board Members

John Bunnett, ABC
Tracey Kerly, ABC
Richard Alderton, ABC
Paul McKenner, ABC
Lois Jarrett, ABC
Simon Cole, ABC
Christina Fuller, ABC
Andrew Osborne, ABC
Kirsty Hogarth, ABC
Stephen Gasche, KCC
David Smith, KCC
Rosie Reid, ABC

Apologies

Jon Linstrum, Arts Council
Chris Moore, HCA

Item	Notes	Action
1.	Welcome The Chair welcomed all attendees and explained that this would be John Bunnett (JB)'s last Board meeting as he was leaving the Council to take on a new role in the private sector. The Chair thanked JB for his hard work and said he would be sorely missed. The Cabinet had decided that now was not the time to recruit a new Chief Executive and had agreed to appoint Tracey Kerly (TK) as Interim Chief	

	Executive from 19 th February for 2 years. The Chair welcomed TK and said that she had established an excellent reputation in Kent and nationally by running one of the most successful and innovative Housing services in the country.	
2.	<p>Junction 10a – M20</p> <p>Paul Harwood gave a presentation which covered the outline of the proposed Junction 10a scheme. He explained that the new scheme was needed to relieve the congestion that would exist once all the building had been undertaken for which planning consent had already been given. The presentation covered features of the proposed design, scheme objectives, consultation process, Development Consent Order stages and timeframe.</p> <p>The Chairman emphasised the need to address the issue of forward funding as this could pose a problem, and it was agreed that Damian Green would write to ministers in DCLG & DfT to draw their attention to this issue. The Board noted that consultation had taken place on possible reform of S106 and CIL Regulations. KCC and ABC had submitted suggestions with supporting evidence, and had cited Junction 10a as an example of the restrictions in existence in the Regulations. Feedback from the DCLG consultation was unlikely to be made available until early summer. Richard Alderton said that Highways England would need to demonstrate the deliverability of the scheme as part of the DCO submission, the timing of which would be relevant to the progress of the new Draft Local Plan.</p>	Damian Green
3.	<p>Ashford Station/Spurs</p> <p>Stephen Gasche (SG) and Andrew Osborne (AO) gave a joint presentation. AO explained that the project had changed in scope with a new option now preferred for the spurs, which would be cheaper and easier to deliver. Indicative cost would be available in March, and that a delivery team within Network Rail was now in place to take implement this project. Any potential gap in funding identified would require further bids to the South East LEP for funding. The Board stressed the importance of taking this project forward quickly to re-signal Ashford International Station. The following actions were agreed for local partners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby project partners for the earliest implementation of the new signalling to secure International Services at Ashford International.; • Lobby the SE LEP regarding the potential 	Damian Green / Gerry Clarkson / Paul Carter

	<p>requirement for further funding;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lobby Eurostar for improved services from Ashford International. 	
4.	<p>Project Updates</p> <p>a) <u>Ashford College</u></p> <p>Mark Lumsdon-Taylor introduced this topic. He said that the sale of the Jemmett Road site and Heads of Terms had been agreed with the developer. It was hoped to conclude the deal mid-February. Major demolitions had been completed and a contractor had been appointed for Phase 1. It was anticipated that Phase 1 and Phase 1a would be completed by April 2017.</p> <p>The Board noted a disconnection between what the Council was trying to achieve in terms of enabling development, and what KCC Property Services were doing to increase their capital receipts. It was felt that further conversations were needed outside of the meeting to ensure that partners were not holding each other to ransom and that the Council would not miss out on delivering projects to regenerate the town and galvanise business rates.</p> <p>b) <u>Elwick Place</u></p> <p>Paul McKenner (PMcK) advised that the Council had acquired land at Elwick Road and had submitted a planning application for the commercial element. The application was approved by Planning Committee in December 2015 with the Section 106 duly signed. The agreement with the hotel operator was finalised and signed, and agreements with most of the eateries were nearing conclusion. It was hoped that agreement with the cinema operator was also nearing completion.</p> <p>c) <u>Commercial Quarter</u></p> <p>Paul McKenner reported that solid interest had been shown by investors at the MIPIM conference last year, and the first building on the Commercial Quarter would shortly be underway. The Heads of Terms were due to be signed in mid-February. A planning application would be submitted including some car parking on site, with a larger number of spaces provided nearby. The Council would continue to promote the rest of the Commercial Quarter space. At the moment the Council was in discussions to transform one of the corn store buildings into a digital hub.</p>	

<p>d)</p> <p>e)</p> <p>f)</p>	<p><u>Designer Outlet Expansion</u></p> <p>Lois Jarrett advised that the developers had submitted a planning application which had gone to Planning Committee in September 2015, it had been agreed, subject to completion of a S106 agreement. Negotiations were going well, despite the fact that there were some complicated clauses, and it was hoped that the agreement would be signed end January/early February. The Council was working with Javelin to analyse Ashford's shopping offer, and Javelin had indicated that they believed Ashford could rise up the shopping rankings in the next 5 – 10 years. Although there was no specific commencement date yet for building work, occupation on site was due in 2017 as predicted.</p> <p><u>Jasmin Vardimon</u></p> <p>Christina Fuller (CF) introduced this item. She had been working with Jasmin Vardimon to see how their offer in Ashford could be strengthened. Negotiations were currently underway to refurbish an existing building in the town, which would be vital to the delivery of the business plan. CF met with the Arts Council earlier in the week, and was now awaiting the announcement of the funding round in June. She would bring a further presentation to the Board at the next meeting in April.</p> <p><u>Chilmington Green</u></p> <p>Lois Jarrett advised that S106 negotiations were nearing a conclusion and Heads of Terms had been agreed with the exception of some minor issues. It was hoped that development would commence during September 2016. John Bunnett congratulated KCC Highways officers for the excellent work they had done on the proposed A28 improvements.</p> <p><u>Other Sites</u></p> <p>The Chair advised that the Highways England freight management proposals were currently open to consultation, and that as far as the Council was concerned, the most favourable proposal was option 1. He said that the Council was currently undertaking its enforcement role, but still required fundamental guidance and powers from the Government, including a physical means to prevent illegal parking. Damian Green and Matthew Balfour to discuss further.</p>	<p>Damian Green/ Matthew</p>
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		Balfour
5.	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>The Chair thanked all for attending and said he considered the Board was working well. He suggested that Hugh Edwards, Project Director of Network Rail, should be invited to attend a future Board meeting.</p> <p>Mark Lumsdon-Taylor reported that an event was being set up on the Big 8 by Finn Kelcey. This had become an annual event, chaired by Damian Green. Richard Alderton would be attending to update on the Big 8 projects.</p>	

Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Rosie Reid: Telephone: 01233 330565 Email: rosie.reid@ashford.gov.uk. Agendas, Reports and Minutes are available on: www.ashford.gov.uk/committees

Agenda Item No: 17
Report To: CABINET
Date: 11TH FEBRUARY 2016
Report Title: SCHEDULE OF KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN
Report Author: Head of Legal and Democratic Services



Summary:	To set out the latest Schedule of Key Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet of Ashford Borough Council.
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Key Decision: NO

Affected Wards: Where appropriate, individual Wards are indicated.

Recommendations : **That the Cabinet receive and note the latest Schedule of Key Decisions.**

Policy Overview: Under The Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, there is no longer a legal requirement to publish a Forward Plan of Key Decisions, however there is still a requirement to publish details of Key Decisions 28 clear days before the meeting they are to be considered at. The Council maintains a live, up to date rolling list of decision items on the Council's website, and that list will be presented to the Cabinet each month, in its current state, for Members' information.

Financial Implications: Nil

Other Material Implications: Nil

Exemption Clauses: Nil

Background Papers: None

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**CABINET
SCHEDULE OF KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN**

The following Key Decisions will be taken by Ashford Borough Council's Cabinet on the dates stated.

Ashford Borough Council's Cabinet is made up of: - Councillors Gerry Clarkson; Neil Bell; Clair Bell; Mike Bennett; Jessamy Blanford; Paul Clokie; Graham Galpin; Bernard Heyes; Jane Martin; Neil Shorter.

Copies of the reports and any other relevant documents that are submitted to the Cabinet in connection with a proposed decision will be available for inspection, or on screen, five clear days before the decision date at the Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford and at Tenterden Gateway, 2 Manor Row, Tenterden, during opening hours, or at www.ashford.gov.uk/councillors_and_committees.aspx

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
11th February 2016					
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report</i>	Cllr Shorter	Maria Seddon	Open	12/2/15
Revenue Budget 2016/17	<i>To present the draft revenue budget for 2016/17 to the Cabinet for recommendation to Council.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Paul Naylor/Ben Lockwood	Open	12/2/15
Corporate Performance Report	<i>The report seeks to give members and the Borough's residents an overview of how the Council is performing. It seeks to do this in a transparent and easily-accessible manner, giving a key performance 'snapshot'.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Nicholas Clayton	Open	12/2/15

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
Climate Change and Sustainable Environment – Annual Progress Report	<i>This report summarises actions and initiatives undertaken throughout the authority during the last year in the complementary areas of a sustainable environment, carbon and energy reduction and responding to the threat of climate change. These had been brought together previously within the Council's Position Statement.</i>	Cllr Mrs Blanford	Paul Naylor	Open	12/2/15
Gambling Policy Revision	<i>Report back following consultation</i>	Cllr Heyes	James Hann	Open	18/11/15
Domestic Abuse Annual Report	<i>Sets out for comment the progress the Council and its partners are making on projects focusing on domestic abuse over the past 12 months since the agreement by the Council to allocate up to £50,000 per year for three years to support the work on tackling domestic abuse.</i>	Cllr Heyes	James Hann/Elizabeth Mannington	Open	4/12/15
Chief Executive Appointment	<i>Further to the resignation of the Chief Executive the report makes recommendations on minor changes to the organisation structure, and on the appointment of key senior posts in light of the recent senior management structure approval, the recently adopted Corporate Plan and uncertainties around devolution.</i>	Cllr Clarkson	Michelle Pecci	Open (Exempt Appendix)	7/12/15

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
Flexible Retirement	<i>This report seeks member approval to the Flexible Retirement of post number 3002</i>	Cllr Clarkson	Keith Fearon	Exempt	7/12/15
Waste Composition Analysis	<i>To provide an update on Ashford's recycling performance for 2015/16 with a modelled full year performance to assist with forward planning for 2016/17 and also to inform Members of the findings and challenges arising from the residual and recyclable waste composition analysis undertaken during November 2015.</i>	Cllr Mrs Bell	Julie Rogers	Open	17/12/15
10th March 2016					
T-CAT Update	<i>To propose a review of T-CAT which will determine: - the current functions of the Team; categories of functions carried out by T-CAT and their worth; who tasks T-CAT and how that tasking is done; what else needs to be done (now and during the next five years) and who should do it; what resources need to be available to do this work, and where they should come from.</i>	Cllr Mrs Blanford/ Galpin	Kirsty Hogarth	Open	9/5/14
Victoria Park & Watercress Fields Masterplanning and Heritage Lottery Fund Bid	<i>To update on an exciting opportunity to maximise the value of Victoria Park (Corporate Plan Priority 4) through timely and beneficial improvements.</i>	Cllr Mrs Blanford	Mark Carty	Open	26/1/16

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
Cemetery Memorial Safety Policy	<i>To propose a policy and set of operational guidelines for adoption to manage the forward process relating to the safe management of memorials in Ashford.</i>	Cllr Mrs Blanford	Julie Rogers	Open	17/12/15
Chilmington Gypsy Site	<i>To set out the position in relation to negotiations with Kent County Council over the future management and ownership of Chilmington Gypsy Site. It will recommend the disposal of Chilmington Gypsy site to KCC for nominal value with some suggested covenants on the land regarding future use and disposal.</i>	Cllr Clokie	Sharon Williams	Open	17/12/15
CCTV Strategy	<i>To present a Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Strategy for adoption.</i>	Cllr Heyes	James Hann	Open	6/1/16
Anti-Social Behaviour and Enforcement	<i>To revise delegations for legislation under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 and propose a bespoke support service for enforcement activity.</i>	Cllr Heyes	James Hann	Open	7/12/15
Procurement of Leisure Facilities	<i>To consider arrangements for future procurement and management of Ashford's leisure facilities.</i>	Cllr Mrs Blanford	Mark Carty	Open	26/1/16
14th April 2016					
Rural Speed Limits		Cllr Heyes	Sheila Davison	Open	23/7/15

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
Ashford International Model Railway Education Centre – (AIMREC): Proposed new Major Visitor Attraction		Cllr Mrs Blanford/Mrs Bell	Ben Moyle	Open	17/3/15
Annual Pay Policy Statement	<i>A review of the annual Pay Policy Statement and Ashford Living Wage Allowance.</i>	Cllr Miss Martin	Ian Smith	Open	13/3/15
Safeguarding Policy		Cllr Shorter	Nick Clayton	Open	6/1/16
Publication Draft Local Plan to 2030		Cllr Bennett	Simon Cole	Open	15/1/16
Affordable Homes Programme Phase 5		Cllr Clokie	Giles Holloway	Open	15/1/16
Chilmington Design Code – Adoption as a Supplementary Planning Document		Cllr Bennett	Mark Chaplin	Open	31/7/15
The Draft Planning & Development Local Enforcement Plan		Cllr Bennett	Richard Alderton	Open	26/1/16

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
12th May 2016					
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report</i>	Cllr Shorter	Maria Seddon	Open	13/3/15
9th June 2016					
Section 106 Agreements – Annual Progress Report	<i>Focus on s106 contributions received in the last year, contributions secured in new agreements and projects that have been supported by s106 funding</i>	Cllr Bennett	Lois Jarrett	Open	12/6/15
Final Outturn 2015/16	<i>Final budget outturn for previous financial year</i>	Cllr Shorter	Ben Lockwood	Open	12/6/15
Annual Report	<i>The Annual Report will build upon the contents of quarterly performance monitoring, but will also include the following information – An Introduction from the Leader and Chief Executive; Facts and figures about Ashford; Timeline of key achievements in the Borough over the calendar year; Borough achievements; and a Financial Summary.</i>	Cllr Miss Martin	Nicholas Clayton	Open	10/7/15
14th July 2016					
Revenues & Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule	<i>Proposed formal write-off of debts</i>	Cllr Shorter	Peter Purcell	Open (Exempt Appendix)	10/7/15

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
11th August 2016					
Corporate Performance Report	<i>To give Members and residents an overview of how the council is performing with a key performance 'snapshot'.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Nicholas Clayton	Open	28/7/15
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report</i>	Cllr Shorter	Maria Seddon	Open	28/7/15
8th September 2016					
13th October 2016					
10th November 2016					
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Maria Seddon	Open	13/11/15
Corporate Performance Report	<i>To give Members and residents an overview of how the council is performing with a key performance 'snapshot'</i>	Cllr Shorter	Nicholas Clayton	Open	13/11/15

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
8th December 2016					
Draft Budget 2017/18	<i>To present the preliminary draft service budget and outline MTFP for the purposes of subsequent formal scrutiny by the O&S Task Group and public consultation.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Paul Naylor/Ben Lockwood	Open	4/12/15
Council Tax Base	<i>To present for approval the estimated 2017/18 Council tax base calculation for the Borough and each parished area, on which the major preceptors and local Parish Councils will base their requirements.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Ben Lockwood	Open	4/12/15
12th January 2017					
Revenues & Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule	<i>Proposed formal write-off of debts</i>	Cllr Shorter	Peter Purcell	Open (Exempt Appendix)	16/1/15

***If you wish to contact a Report Author by email, unless stated otherwise, the addresses are;
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2/2/16