



## Cabinet

Notice of a Meeting, to be held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane,  
Ashford, Kent TN23 1PL on Thursday, 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 7.00 pm.

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The Members of the Cabinet are:-

Cllr Clarkson – Leader of the Council  
Cllr N Bell – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Responsibility for Legal and Democratic  
Cllr Mrs Bell – Portfolio Responsibility for Environmental Land Management  
Cllr Bennett – Portfolio Responsibility for Culture  
Cllr Bradford – Portfolio Responsibility for Health, Parking and Community Safety  
Cllr Clokie – Portfolio Responsibility for Planning  
Cllr Galpin – Portfolio Responsibility for Corporate Property  
Cllr Pickering – Portfolio Responsibility for Human Resources and Customer Services  
Cllr Shorter – Portfolio Responsibility for Finance and IT  
Cllr White – Portfolio Responsibility for Housing

**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

- |   | Page<br>Nos. |
|---|--------------|
| 1. <b>Apologies</b>   |              |
| 2. <b>Declarations of Interest:-</b> To declare any interests which fall under the following categories, as explained on the attached document: | i            |
| a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)  |              |
| b) Other Significant Interests (OSI)  |              |
| c) Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests   |              |
| See Agenda Item 2 for further details   |              |
| 3. <b>Minutes</b> – To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 9 <sup>th</sup> November 2017                              |              |
| 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

6. Housing Framework Annual Report

## Part III – Ordinary Decision Items - Key Decisions Annotated\*

7. \*Draft Budget 2018/19
8. \*Council Tax Base 2018/19
9. Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2017 - 2047
10. \*Chilmington Community Development Strategy
11. \*Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme
12. East Kent Growth Framework
13. \*Submission Version of Ashford Borough Local Plan 2030

In view of the importance and wide-ranging nature of the Local Plan, all Members are requested by the Corporate Director (Law & Governance) & Monitoring Officer to consider carefully, in advance of the Meeting, whether they have any Interests which may require declaration, and/or withdrawal from part of the Meeting. This applies to:-

- **Disclosable Pecuniary Interests** (if any land owned, rented or licensed by a Member, or his/her spouse/partner, is proposed for any development or use in the Plan) <sup>1</sup> ; and
- **Other Significant Interest** (if any proposal in the Plan would significantly affect the value of any land owned or rented by a Member, or a Member's family member or close associate, or any employer of any of those persons, or any other firm or body with which any of those persons has an appointment, directorship, partnership, management position or significant shareholding)<sup>2</sup>.
- Any Members in doubt as to whether the above may apply to them should seek advice from the Corporate Director (Law & Governance) & Monitoring Officer, Terry Mortimer (tel. Ashford (01233) 330210, or email [terry.mortimer@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:terry.mortimer@ashford.gov.uk)) or from other Solicitors in Legal and Democracy as early as possible, and in good time before the Meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Government Guidance on Disclosable Pecuniary Interests 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](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/240134/Openness_and_transparency_on_personal_interests.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Other Significant Interests are defined in the Kent Code of Conduct, which was adopted by the Full Council on 19 July 2012, with revisions adopted on 17 October 2013; a copy can be found in the Council's Constitution at <http://www.ashford.gov.uk/part-5---codes-and-protocols>

14. \*Short Stay Accommodation
15. Smoke Free Civic and Stour Centre Grounds

#### **Part IV – Information/Monitoring Items**

16. Trading and Enterprise Board – Minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> November 2017
17. Ashford Strategic Delivery Board – Notes of 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017
18. Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – Notes of 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2017
19. Schedule of Key Decisions
20. Items for Future Meetings

#### **Part V – Cabinet Member Reports**

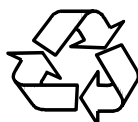
None for this Meeting

#### **Part VI – Ordinary Decision Items**

21. 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 Paragraph 3 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 Victoria Quarter Development (Jemmett Road) (Paragraph 3)

DS/AEH  
29<sup>th</sup> November 2017



**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](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 Corporate Director (Law and Governance) 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 **9<sup>th</sup> November 2017**.

### **Present:**

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);  
Cllr. Bell (Vice-Chairman);

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Bennett, Bradford, Clokie, Galpin, Pickering, Shorter, White.

### **Apologies:**

Cllrs. Hicks, Link.

### **Also Present:**

Cllrs. Buchanan, Burgess, Dehnel, Howard-Smith, Knowles, Miss Martin, Wedgbury.

Chief Executive, Director of Law and Governance, Director of Place and Space, Director of Finance and Economy, Head of Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications, Head of Corporate Property and Projects, Head of Environment and Land Management, Head of Housing, Head of HR and Customer Services, Accountancy Manager, Customer Service Manager, Environmental Contracts and Enforcement Manager, Facility Development Manager, Health, Parking and Community Safety Manager, Senior Policy, Performance and Scrutiny Officer, Commercial Development and Regeneration Officer, Corporate Scrutiny and Overview Officer, Environmental Health Officer, Open Space Planning Development Officer, Communications and Marketing Manager, Senior Member Services Officer.

## **212 Minutes**

### **Resolved:**

**That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 12<sup>th</sup> October 2017 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.**

## **213 Leader's Announcements**

The Leader advised that the pilot scheme for an experimental overnight parking and clamping trial for HGVs on the A20 had commenced and seemed to be working well at this early stage. The Truck Stop appeared to be coping with the extra demand and the mobile app advising of the number of available spaces was being well used. He had checked before the meeting and at that stage there had been 89 free spaces. The Leader said he looked forward to both the Ashford and Shepway Truck Stops increasing their capacities in the near future.

## **214 Ashford Borough Council's Performance – Quarter 2 - 2017/18**

The report updated Members and the public on the performance of the Council against its Corporate Plan for Quarter 2 - 2017/18. This included information on what the Cabinet had achieved through its decision-making, key performance data and consideration of the wider Borough picture which impacted upon the Council's work.

The Portfolio Holder re-iterated that the data belonged to the whole Council and he hoped all Members would look and take an interest in it. Information on the Council's performance would be available to the public via the Council's website imminently. He advised that the number of residents needing temporary Bed and Breakfast accommodation continued to increase which was unfortunate. Whilst this was a national issue, the Council was active in looking to respond and a report on the forthcoming Homelessness Reduction Act would be coming to the Cabinet in December.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Property drew attention to town centre vacancy rates which, at 7.9%, were at their lowest since rates were first recorded in 2008. These figures also did not yet reflect the new shops that had opened in recent weeks or were due to open before the end of this month. He said he would like to publically thank Jo Wynn-Carter, the Council's Town Centre Regeneration Manager, who had done a fantastic job in reducing those rates and would be missed when she left the Council next month.

### **Resolved:**

**That the Council's performance against the Corporate Plan in Quarter 2 of 2017/18 be noted.**

## **215 Financial Monitoring – Quarter 2 – 2017/18**

The report presented an assessment of the outturn based on the first half of the financial year, including the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Collection Fund. The General Fund was projecting an overspend against original budget with an overall movement from last quarter of £14,000. There were a number of variances affecting this position detailed within the report, however it should be noted that during the last quarter £100,000 of the service contingency was utilised and this had now been removed from the forecast. The Housing Revenue Account was projecting an underspend of £78,000, and there were again a number of variances affecting the position that were detailed in the report. He considered this was a good achievement in the current climate and applauded those involved. The report also asked Members to delegate authority to the Director of Place and Space, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to increase Planning Fees in line with statutory fee increases.

### **Resolved:**

**That (i) the outturn position for the General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and the Collection Fund be noted.**

- (ii) the update to the HRA Business Plan to include the purchase of off plan dwellings be noted (Paragraphs 20 – 22 of the report refer).

**Recommended:**

- That
- (i) the Council delegate authority to the Director of Place and Space, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to increase Planning fees in line with statutory fee increases (Paragraphs 10 – 12 of the report refer).
  - (ii) the Council approve the transfer of the Section 151 functions to the Director of Finance and Economy, which were previously held by the Head of Finance and IT (Paragraph 13 of the report refers).

## **216 Medium Term Financial Plan 2018-2023**

The report presented the Medium Term Financial Plan, a budget forecast including underlying assumptions, covering a five year period from 2018 to 2023. This was for the General Fund and a Business Plan for the Housing Revenue Account would be covered separately in a report to the December Cabinet. The Plan highlighted a budget gap from 2020/21 and the proposed measures to close that gap, including the Inflation Management Strategy.

Both the Leader and the Portfolio Holder drew attention to paragraphs 53 – 55 of the report on development of future income streams, which was all part of the Council's wider strategy to improve the quality of services, whilst at the same time limiting the burden on Council tax payers and the reliance on Government subsidies.

**Resolved:**

- That
- (i) the forecast be noted and underlying assumptions accepted.
  - (ii) the Inflation Management Strategy be endorsed.
  - (iii) it be noted that this is the third year of the four year settlement.
  - (iv) the one year change to the New Homes Bonus policy be noted.
  - (v) authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Economy in consultation with the Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance and IT to agree the Council's continued participation in the Kent Business Rates pool.

## **217 Mid Kent Joint Waste Partnership – Ashford's Progress**

The report examined the Council's progress in the Mid Kent Joint Waste Partnership and asked the Cabinet to agree to continue with the same collection methodology until re-procurement began in 2019/20 as well as making some slight adjustments to non-statutory services to cover costs and encourage digital service participation.

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report and emphasised the ongoing positive picture. She addressed concerns about a possible increase in fly-tipping and the measures the Council was taking to mitigate those concerns including jointly funding with other Kent Authorities, (for a two year trial), an Intelligence officer who would be dedicated to the detection of, and data sharing on, waste crime, to enable possible prosecutions. Additionally, they would be exploring the possibility of mobile camera fly-tipping enforcement. She endorsed the recommendations in the report and thanked the Borough's residents for their continued support.

**Resolved:**

- That**
- (i) the positive progress on the contract to date be noted.**
  - (ii) in the life of this contract, Ashford Borough Council would continue with the same collection methodology (subject to no legislative/regulatory changes that indicate to the contrary).**
  - (iii) in 2018/19 the Council engage with residents to achieve, as far as is practicable, a future quality household waste collection service, that residents demand and continue to understand and support.**
  - (iv) adjustments to non-statutory services be supported to cover costs from the next financial year and encourage digital service participation.**

## **218 Playing Pitch and Sports Facilities Strategy**

The report advised that both of these strategies had been produced by external consultants Max Associates, to assess current and future demand for indoor and outdoor sports facilities. They both supported the emerging Local Plan and would address the Borough's qualitative and quantitative needs. The report sought endorsement of the draft strategies and authority to adopt them following public consultation. Copies of both strategies could be found in the Members Room and on the Ashford Borough Council website.

**Resolved:**

- That**
- (i) the responses made against the draft Playing Pitch and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategies following consultation be noted.**
  - (ii) the Playing Pitch and Indoor Sports Facilities Strategies be approved and authorised for adoption.**
  - (iii) authority be delegated to the Director of Place and Space, in consultation with the necessary Portfolio Holders, to put in place all actions necessary to implement both Strategies.**

## **219 Open Space Strategy - Adoption**

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which advised that the Open Space Strategy had been produced to detail how the Council, in partnership with a range of organisations, planned to protect, enhance and provide open spaces to 2030 and

helped inform relevant sections of the emerging Local Plan. Following formal consultation on the draft Open Space Strategy, a number of comments had been received and these were contained at Appendix 1 to the report. These had resulted in a few updates to certain parts of the strategy. The report sought endorsement of the final strategy, a copy of which could be found in the Members Room and on the Ashford Borough Council website.

**Resolved:**

- That**
- (i) the representations made against the draft Open Space Strategy following consultation be noted.**
  - (ii) the final Open Space Strategy be approved and endorsed for adoption.**
  - (iii) authority be delegated to the Director of Place and Space, in consultation with the necessary Portfolio Holders, to agree final formatting and minor editing.**

## **220 Digital Transformation Strategy**

The Portfolio Holder introduced the Strategy which set out how the Council would go about developing greater on-line service delivery to provide customers with the widest choice of ways to access services and to improve efficiency of service provision. The report recommended that Cabinet approve and adopt the Strategy and associated action plans, and delegate the Member level monitoring of delivery of the Strategy to the IT and Digital Transformation Advisory Committee.

**Resolved:**

- That**
- (i) the Digital Transformation Strategy be approved and adopted.**
  - (ii) the Member level monitoring of the delivery of the Strategy and action plans be delegated to the IT and Digital Transformation Advisory Committee.**

## **221 Garage Commercialisation Strategy**

The report sought Cabinet approval to implement the Garage Commercialisation Strategy which would improve revenues from existing garages and provide improved parking and landscaping in and adjacent to the Council's estates. The Strategy would also identify sites suitable for development or alternative uses.

Members expressed their general support for the proposals and the principle of allowing more flexibility around garage sites. One Member asked about the reference to 'development potential' and whether that would allow for the development of Council or local needs housing? She also hoped that in view of the lack of parking in the urban areas, all opportunities to create extra parking areas for residents would be explored. The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Property responded that each site would be looked at on a case by case basis, but generally they had already been assessed as too small for housing potential when they were originally part of the Housing Revenue Account. The Leader agreed that any opportunities to improve parking

provision should be examined. The Deputy Leader advised that in Biddenden, redundant garages had been transformed in to local needs bungalows, so there was already a precedent for this type of development.

In response to a question the Chairman responded that there would certainly be consultation over sites with relevant Ward Members and that was reflected within the recommendations.

**Resolved:**

- That**
- (i) the development of the Garage Commercialisation Strategy be noted.**
  - (ii) the Head of Corporate Property and Projects be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Corporate Property and Finance and IT, and following consultation with relevant Ward Members, to approve alternative usage of garage sites to maximise the value of such sites to the Council.**
  - (iii) the Head of Corporate Property and Projects be authorised, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Corporate Property and Finance and IT and the Director of Finance and Economy, to approve any revised pricing strategy developed as part of the implementation of the Garage Commercialisation Strategy.**

## **222 Primary Authority Partnerships**

The report sought delegated authority for the Head of Health, Parking and Community Safety to enter into Primary Authority partnerships with suitable businesses. It explained that Primary Authority partnerships described an arrangement between businesses and regulators which improved the sharing of advice and guidance on regulatory matters relating to food hygiene, health and safety and licensing.

The Portfolio Holder endorsed the contents of the report and wanted to publically thank the Environmental Health Officer for the hard work she had undertaken to make some sense of this report and bring it to the Cabinet.

**Resolved:**

**That authority be delegated to the Head of Health, Parking and Community Safety to enter into Primary Authority partnerships under the provisions of Section 25 of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008, as amended by The Enterprise Act 2016 and the Co-ordination of Regulatory Enforcement Regulations 2017.**

## **223 The Armed Forces Covenant**

The Member Champion for the Military Covenant and Ceremonial Liaison introduced the report which advised that the Armed Forces Covenant was a promise from the Nation, ensuring that those who served or had served in the Armed Forces, and their families, were treated fairly. This commitment was made in recognition of the sacrifices they made on behalf of the Country. The Covenant was not designed to

give Armed Forces, Veterans and their families preferential treatment compared to other citizens, but it should ensure that they got a fair deal and were not disadvantaged because of their service. He gave some practical examples of where this principle had been put in place to achieve a favourable outcome. The report outlined an action plan for delivering the Council's commitments under the Armed Forces Covenant and strengthening support for the Armed Forces community. The Member Champion advised that he was looking forward to working with the newly appointed Head of Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications on the action plan and chairing a new Civilian Military Partnership Board, which would work to bring in representatives of all of the relevant agencies to support the Council's Officers and the Armed Forces community.

The Member Champion further explained that a lot of work had been undertaken recently to revamp the Remembrance Sunday event which would be taking place that coming weekend and on an event at the Ashford Tank to mark the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Cambrai on the 17<sup>th</sup> November. He hoped that both of these projects would further demonstrate the Council's commitment to Ashford's Armed Forces community.

The Leader said he fully supported the report and said that it further demonstrated this Council's desire to be an exemplar Authority and a leader on a number of issues. They had been recognised as a national pioneer for their work on resettling Syrian refugees, they were one of the most improved Authorities in the UK on waste and recycling and earlier that day Ashford Borough Council had been shortlisted in the prestigious Local Government Chronicle Awards, in both the entrepreneurial Council of the Year and overall Council of the Year categories. This was all an indication of the direction in which the Council was heading.

#### **Resolved:**

- That (i) the action plan outlined at paragraphs 16 – 18 and Appendix 2 to the report be approved.**
- (ii) the appointment of the Head of Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications to the role of Lead Officer for the Armed Forces Covenant be noted.**
- (iii) the Cabinet's support for the Armed Forces Covenant be re-affirmed.**

## **224 'Planning For The Right Homes in The Right Places' – Response to DCLG Consultation**

The report set out the Council's proposed response to the current consultation document from the Department of Communities and Local Government entitled 'Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places'. The Portfolio Holder directed Members attention to the tabled paper which contained a revised version of the proposed response. He said this was an extremely important document and he hoped the DCLG would take on board the Council's comments.

The Leader advised that the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group had spent a considerable amount of time going through each of the questions and helping Officers

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to formulate the final response. A Member asked if the responses would have any bearing on the emerging Local Plan and if the Council had undertaken any lobbying of Government to have the numbers changed for the current period? The Leader said that Officers would be able to advise on the issue of lobbying, but he knew the Government faced a large housing shortfall and Ashford would have to play its role. The Deputy Leader said that rather than lobbying, at this stage the focus should be on completing the Local Plan process and getting that in place as soon as possible, in order to protect the Borough and its residents.

**Resolved:**

**That the proposed responses to the consultation questions set out in the tabled Appendix to the report be endorsed.**

## **225 Economic Regeneration and Investment Board – 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017**

**Resolved:**

**That the notes of the meeting of the Economic Regeneration and Investment Board held on the 27<sup>th</sup> September 2017 be received and noted.**

## **226 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group – 13<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

**Resolved:**

**That the notes of the meetings of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 13<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017 be received and noted.**

## **227 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.**

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DS

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Queries concerning these Minutes? Please contact Danny Sheppard:  
Telephone: 01233 330349 Email: [danny.sheppard@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:danny.sheppard@ashford.gov.uk)  
Agendas, Reports and Minutes are available on: [www.ashford.gov.uk/committees](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/committees)



Report of Overview and Scrutiny Committee to Cabinet

**O&S Recommendations to Cabinet - Housing Framework Annual Report**

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**The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends to the Cabinet:-**

- I. The report be noted and formally published on the ABC website.
  - II. That the Committee's request for officer research into the following areas be noted and (resource permitting) taken forward:
    - a. The viability of schemes to encourage capital investment into social housing provision by landlords.
    - b. The viability of modular homes as a means to accelerate the delivery of less costly social housing
    - c. The viability of self-build as an additional means housing delivery option.
    - d. The role and promotion of credit unions operating in the Borough.
- 

**Date of O&S meeting:** 24 October 2017

**Chair of O&S Committee:** Cllr Brendan Chilton

**Date of Cabinet Meeting:** 7 December 2017

**Key Decision:** NO

**Significantly Affected Wards:** All – none specifically

**Relevant Portfolios:** Housing  
Finance and IT

**Management Team Comment:** See paragraph 6

**Background Papers:** **Housing Framework Annual Report** – report to Overview and Scrutiny Committee (and minutes), 24<sup>th</sup> October 2017

**Contact:** overviewandscrutiny@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330394

## **Report Title: O&S Recommendations to Cabinet – Housing Framework Annual Report**

### **Introduction and Background**

1. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee receives an annual update on the Housing Framework as a standing agenda item. This year's annual report provided a summary of actions undertaken through the Framework since its adoption in July 2013, as well as briefing Members on the future structure of the Housing Strategy.

### **Consideration of Housing Framework Annual Report**

2. Members were pleased to note the achievements made to date under the Framework and recognised the challenges facing the Council's Housing service going forward. Concerns were expressed by Members over the full roll out of Universal Credit in March 2018 and the potential for an increase in homelessness in the Borough (and consequential pressures on the General Fund) as a result of landlords refusing to let properties to tenants in receipt of Universal Credit. Parallels were drawn with the introduction of the Under-Occupancy Charge, introduced in 2013.
3. The Head of Housing noted the range of support options the Council provided to vulnerable claimants, including mutual exchanges, discretionary housing payments and a Deposit Guarantee Scheme, wherein the Council paid the deposit total to the Landlord and the tenant would then make monthly contributions to pay the amount back. Members felt the role of Credit Unions as a support mechanism to enable access to affordable housing needed exploration and research.
4. Questions were also raised around the provision of additional social housing stock in the Borough. Members noted with interest that the Council were looking at a range of alternative housing options to meet the demand for housing stock within the Borough, and felt that research into alternatives such as self-build and modular homes warranted attention.
5. A Member felt that there were three main constraints to the delivery of new housing stock, being land, management and capital. The Council could offer land and management, and could encourage capital investment to boost the supply of housing through a scheme of social impact bonds, municipal bonds or similar. Members agreed that this was a good idea, and deserving of further research.

### **Management Team Comment**

6. Management Team have considered the report, and wish to make its own comments on recommendation II -

- (a) Officers are seeking advice from Arlingclose in this area, however it should be noted that potential benefits would need to be balanced against the level of regulation associated with any such schemes and the required resource commitment.
- (b) An officer working group has been assembled to look into housing delivery options in the Borough, and will take this request into consideration.
- (c) An officer working group has been assembled to look into housing delivery options in the Borough, and will take this request into consideration.

## **Conclusion**

- 7. The O&S Committee recommends the following to Cabinet:
  - I. The report be noted and formally published on the ABC website.**
  - II. That the Committee's request for officer research into the following areas be noted and (resource permitting) taken forward:**
    - a. The viability of schemes to encourage capital investment into social housing provision by landlords.**
    - b. The viability of modular homes as a means to accelerate the delivery of less costly social housing.**
    - c. The viability of self-build as an additional housing delivery option.**
    - d. The role and promotion of credit unions operating in the Borough.**

## **Contact and Email**

- 8. Will Train, Corporate Scrutiny and Overview Officer  
[will.train@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:will.train@ashford.gov.uk) 01233 330394

**Agenda Item No:** 7  
**Report To:** Cabinet  
**Date of Meeting:** 7 December 2017  
**Report Title:** Draft Budget 2018/19  
**Report Author & Job Title:** Maria Seddon – Accountancy Manager  
Jo Stocks – Senior Accountant  
**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Neil Shorter  
**Portfolio Holder for:** Finance & ICT



**Summary:** This paper presents the draft budget for 2018/19 for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account.

The MTFP was presented at the November Cabinet meeting at which time Cabinet was asked to note that 2018/19 is the third year of the four year funding settlement, which was accepted at the October 2016 Cabinet meeting.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer presented his Autumn Budget on 22 November and the report asks Members to approve an increase to the long-term empty homes premium for Council Tax.

The draft budget outlined in this report will form the basis of budget scrutiny and budget consultation processes. Overall there is a balanced budget for 2018/19, however there are a number of risks with this projection that are explored in the body of the report.

The report also includes the draft Housing Revenue Account budget which incorporates the Housing review proposals and the 30 year business plan assumptions, both reports are elsewhere on the agenda.

**Key Decision:** YES

**Significantly Affected Wards:**

**Recommendations:** **The Cabinet is recommended to:-**

- I. Note the budget context (Section 1 Context)
- II. Approve the draft budget for 2018/19
- III. Approve the draft Housing Revenue Account budget for 2018/19 (
- IV. Section 3 Housing Revenue **Account**).

- V. Agree that this report will be used as the basis for budget consultation with the public, the business community, parish councils and staff.
- VI. Agree the draft budget as set out in the report should now be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Budget Task Group for formal scrutiny.
- VII. Approve an increase to the long-term empty homes premium for Council Tax from 50% to 100%

**Policy Overview:** The council's revenue budget is intended to support the priorities set out within the Business Plan and flows through from the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).

The Business Plan is geared to ensuring that priorities are delivered and that the council's service activities are managed within the constraints of the forecast cuts in government funding.

**Financial Implications:** The council has a requirement to produce a MTFP and a balanced budget. This report contains the four year settlement levels of government funding.

The HRA budget has been prepared on the basis of the 30 year business plan and the HRA review, reports that are also on this agenda. The plans for maintaining investment in housing stock are affordable within the current resource forecasts.

**Equalities Impact Assessment** No not at this stage, however an assessment will be included in the February report.

**Other Material Implications:** Consultation will be undertaken with the Joint Consultative Committee and business community, with findings reported back in February.

**Exempt from Publication:** **NO**

**Background Papers:** **None**

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## **Report Title: Draft Budget 2018/19**

### **Introduction and Background**

1. This report sets the scene for the Cabinet to consider its draft budget for 2018/19. The report explains the important background and contextual information to the medium term financial plan (MTFP) and next year's budget.
2. The Council agreed the corporate plan covering the period 2015-20 outlining the four proposed priorities for the Council during 2015/16. The underpinning Medium Term Financial Plan has also been approved (Cabinet November 2017) and is in line with the Council's business plan. This draft budget has been built based on the MTFP and reflects the corporate plan priorities.
3. The corporate plan sets the broad context for financial planning over the short and medium term.
4. As detailed in the MTFP report the Council agreed to accept the four year settlement and this year is the third year of that settlement.
5. The detailed budget for 2018/19 has now been drafted which is broadly in line with the targets established within the MTFP. The budget is based upon a 2.28% (£3.50 for a Band D) increase in Council Tax which will see the Council maintaining its position as the lowest in Kent.
6. The report includes the draft budget for the Housing Revenue Account (

7. Section 3 Housing Revenue **Account**) that is in line with the HRA business plan that was reported to members in November.
8. The forecast for the Council's capital reserves (Section 4 - Capital Resources) is included and shows that these resources remain under pressure and as a consequence borrowing will need to be used to fund the majority of capital investments which carries a higher revenue budget cost.
9. This report seeks Cabinets approval to the draft budget that will then form the basis of the budget scrutiny and consultation processes with the final budget due to be reported to the February Cabinet for approval and recommendation to Full Council.

### **Structure of the report**

10. For ease of consideration this report is split into sections;
  - i. Context
  - ii. Draft budget
  - iii. Housing Revenue Account
  - iv. Capital resource forecast and capital programme implications
  - v. Next steps

## Section 1 Context

11. In October 2015 the council agreed the Corporate Plan that contained the key themes as areas of important focus over the period 2015 - 2020. These are:
  - a. Enterprising Ashford
  - b. Living Ashford
  - c. Active and Creative Ashford
  - d. Attractive Ashford
12. Since then the Council has developed a Programme Management Plan with a number of priority projects many of which are underway, nearing completion or complete such as Ashford International College, commercial quarter and the Elwick Place development, including a multiscreen cinema, hotel and restaurants.
13. This budget and medium term financial plan has been set to enable key priorities to be the focus over the next five years.

### *The Autumn Budget Statement*

The Chancellor presented his Autumn Budget to parliament on 22 November at this time the announcement does not materially affect the Draft Budget the following should be noted:

14. Business rate increases will switch from RPI (retail price index) to CPI (consumer price index) in 2018, two years earlier than expected. The Council should be compensated for this change with a Section 31 grant from Government for this period. It is good news for businesses as increases will be lower than expected next year.
15. Long term empty property premium, currently 50% will be increased to 100% next year. The Council has around 60 long term empty properties with the borough and although this will not have a significant increase on Council income it will encourage home owners to bring these properties back into use. Members are asked to approve the increase in premium.
16. There is a drive to increase the level of affordable homes in area with high demand. This has led Government to consider the Housing Revenue Account Debt Cap and opportunities for this to be increased to build more homes.

### *The Economy*

17. The economic outlook is complicated by the BREXIT negotiations and there is a weakening outlook due to the uncertainty. The pound remains weak, with inflation expected to rise and action taken this month by the Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) raising base rate by 0.25%. This action may strengthen the pound going forward and weaken inflation.
18. With a weakening economy we may see the UK enter a period of recession however this shouldn't be felt as hard as the 2007 global crash as it should be isolated to the UK.

### *The Medium Term Financial Plan*

19. The Medium Term Financial Plan was reported to Members in November. Although there is an affordable plan it should be noted that there the plan relies on investment and projects coming forward in later years. There is a small funding gap between 2019/20 and 2022/23 so the Council need to monitor expenditure closely to ensure the overall pressure does do not increase.



20. It should also be noted that the plan assumes contributions to projects from New Homes Bonus funding of £5m over the 5 year period. This excludes the corporate projects funded by New Homes Bonus already built into the Draft Budget.

#### *Building the Draft Budget 2018/19*

21. The Service's draft budgets have been prepared alongside the relevant Service Plans and in consultation with the Portfolio Holders.
22. There are a number of corporate projects yet to be approved and are not reflected in the draft revenue budget. Approved projects that fall under capital will be included in the capital budget which will be presented to members for scrutiny.
23. There is corporate project funding available in revenue reserves and includes an unallocated amount of £1.6m at the time of writing this report, with upcoming projects requiring around £500k.

**Table 1: MTFP 2018-2023 (excluding HRA)**

	2018/19 £'000's	2019/20 £'000's	2020/21 £'000's	2021/22 £'000's	2022/23 £'000's
Revenue Support Grant	(264)	140	211	283	358
S31 Grant NNDR reliefs	(1,060)	(59)	(68)	(69)	(70)
Retained Business Rates	(3,317)	(3,985)	(3,702)	(4,144)	(4,746)
New Homes Bonus (50% allocated to support base budget)	(2,694)	(3,074)	(3,310)	(3,291)	(3,366)
Government Funding	(7,335)	(6,978)	(6,869)	(7,221)	(7,824)
Council Tax	(7,195)	(7,522)	(7,855)	(8,210)	(8,588)
Total Income Receipts (Including Specific Grants)	(49,106)	(48,254)	(48,098)	(47,945)	(47,773)
Base Budget Gross Expenditure	64,680	64,971	65,465	66,149	66,811
Budget Increases	(1,110)	(1,979)	(2,510)	(2,723)	(2,840)
<b>BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>(66)</b>	<b>238</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>(214)</b>

24. Managing the plan will need to be handled carefully. The Corporate Plan is focused on the delivery of business and housing growth as well as income generation by commercial activities; these items are important planks to the delivery of the financial strategy. Therefore whilst cost management is going to be an important focus, this must not be at the cost of delivery of these priorities.

#### *Local Government Funding*

25. The Cabinet made the decision to accept the Governments four year settlement and these funding levels have been built into the MTFP and the draft budget build. Including negative RSG from 2019/20 with a net payment of £140,000 rising to £358,000 by 2022/23.

#### *Local Retention of Business Rates*

26. Under the current scheme government retain 50% of business rates with 40% being retained by the district council and the remaining 10% being allocated to the county council and fire authorities. Local authorities then either pay tariffs (ABC's is circa £16m out of £20m retained) or top-ups in a system to equalise resources between authorities. Finally a levy is paid on growth over a baseline

figure (ABC's levy rate is 50%) and a government safety net is offered to authorities who's income falls by 7.5% below the baseline.

27. The Council is part of the Kent Business Rates Pool, along with 12 other Authorities including Kent County Council and Kent Fire Authority, which helps to reduce the levy paid on business rates growth but also reduces reliance on Government should business rates drop, the pool members would help to fund the safety net payment that would have been made.
28. As previously reported to Cabinet the Council is looking to be part of a pilot bid for 100% rates retention and Members will be updated more fully as government make announcements on the pilot bids.

#### *New Homes Bonus*

29. New Homes Bonus is measured on the number of properties that have been completed for a year October to September using data submitted on the council tax base return to government, this amount is then paid to the Council for a period of four years.
30. The amount was originally paid for six years however is has been reduced to four (2017/18 was the transitional year with one year dropping out so a five year receipt) a reduction of £1,132,726 from 2016/17 of £3,788,826 to 2018/19 forecast of £2,656,100.
31. Currently this reduction has been managed however should there be further cuts to New Homes Bonus or there is a major reduction in future house building there could be a serious impact on the MTFP and future corporate projects. The draft budget 2018/19 currently has £1.6m supporting the base budget with a further £522k supporting corporate projects which also form part of the base budget. If total New Homes Bonus falls below £2.1m there will not be the resources available to fund the base budget.
32. This Council Tax Base return has been completed showing 641 new properties and 20 conversions of long term empty properties, giving a total of 661 for new homes bonus, this equates to circa £717,000 potential payment from next April. This is less than the number estimated in the MTFP which was 712 properties, circa £755,000.

#### *Council Tax and Local Referendums on Council Tax*

33. The draft budget includes a Council Tax increase of £3.50 which equates to a rise of 2.28% resulting in a Band D equivalent charge of £157.50; this is a reduction to last year's increase which was £4.

34. The current administration has a commitment to remain the lowest council tax in Kent. For 2017/18 the Kent districts council taxes were:

District	Increase on previous year		Band D charge
Ashford	£4.00	2.67%	£154.00
Canterbury	£4.95	2.55%	£199.26
Dartford	£4.95	3.04%	£167.85
Dover	£4.95	2.87%	£177.39
Gravesham	£4.95	2.65%	£191.61
Maidstone	£4.95	2.06%	£245.61
Sevenoaks	£4.95	2.50%	£202.77
Shepway	£4.45	1.91%	£237.01
Swale	£4.95	3.10%	£164.88
Thanet	£4.95	2.30%	£219.87
Tonbridge & Malling	£5.00	2.60%	£197.51
Tunbridge Wells	£4.98	3.04%	£168.59

35. This means that should the other Kent districts decide to freeze council tax Ashford will remain the lowest in Kent by £7.38.
36. The Localism Act replaced the Secretary of State's powers to cap council tax increases with a requirement for councils, who are minded to agree 'excessive increases' in council tax, to hold a local referendum, with the result determined by a simple majority.
37. The level of increase that triggers a referendum is set by the Secretary of State and for 2018/19 that level is expected to remain at the higher of 2% or £5. The form of the question to be put in any local referendum is also determined by the Secretary of State. Should a referendum be necessary councils must have a shadow budget in place in the event that a referendum does not support the proposed council tax increase.
38. Whilst there is a long held ambition for the Council to grow its income streams from commercial activities it needs to be recognised that this strategy needs to mature before this will be achieved. Therefore with the risks to the council's funding and ambitions to improve services the increase is considered necessary, however planning to achieve a lower increase next year reducing in future years will begin as this budget cycle draws to a close.

## Section 2 - Draft Budget 2018/19

39. The draft budget has been built based on the four year settlement that was accepted at the October 2016 Cabinet as part of the MTFP report. This has given a little more certainty this year.
40. The draft budget presented below includes a 2.28% increase in council tax, with the borough Council's element of the charge now being £157.50 (2017/18 was £154) for a band D property.
41. Services were given targets from the MTFP against which they had to build their budgets. Budgets have then been built in detail and services have largely been able to manage within the expenditure limits set. Some pressures have come out during the process but these have mainly been managed within the services.
42. The draft budget is summarised below.

**Table 2: Draft General Fund Budget 2018/19**

Actuals 2016/17 £	Budget 2017/18 £	Projected Outturn 2017/18 £	Detail	Budget 2018/19 £
<b>12,760,333</b>	<b>13,692,770</b>	<b>13,771,522</b>	<b>Service Expenditure</b>	<b>13,087,580</b>
3,001,329	1,319,040	1,319,040	Contribution to/(from) Balances	1,437,972
(1,381,270)	(615,360)	(615,360)	Government Grant	(264,160)
(3,027,776)	(3,422,120)	(3,422,120)	Retained Business Rates	(3,351,000)
(669,587)	(500,000)	(500,000)	Business Rates S31 Grants	(1,059,600)
(3,788,826)	(3,394,890)	(3,394,890)	New Homes Bonus	(2,656,102)
(6,854,473)	(7,079,440)	(7,079,440)	Council Tax	(7,194,690)
<b>39,730</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78,752</b>		<b>0</b>

43. The details of service expenditure are attached at **Appendix A**. Subject to Cabinet's approval this budget will then be scrutinised and form the basis of the budget consultation process that will be completed in time for a final draft budget to be presented to Cabinet and then Council in February.
44. The Council's Medium Term Financial Plan is predicated on the aim to become entrepreneurial and enterprising to raise revenues, however the need for continued economy and efficiency is ever present to ensure value for money for services. Accordingly, included within the budget is a 1% efficiency target with an aim to reduce costs by 1% per annum for a period of 5 years. This will continue to be achieved through a combination of service reviews and thematic reviews on council expenditure, to challenge the way services are delivered and procured and achieve savings.

### Risks

45. There are a number of risks to the budget at this time including:
- Homelessness – cases could increase due to changes in the Homelessness Reduction Act
  - Planning reserves – balances are reducing due to planning appeals, these appeals will be reduced once the Local Plan is adopted which is currently underway
  - Accounting Standard changes to IFRS 9 (International Financial Reporting Standard) – Reduction in investment income resulting from changes in the standard could affect the Authorities strong Medium Term Financial Plan

- d.* Inflation – the projections within the plan are based on Arlingclose forecasts, these could move positively or negatively over the next year this risk will be monitored closely and reported through the Financial Monitoring process
  - e.* Legislative Charges – there are currently a consultations in process, looking at the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), this is the amount the Council sets aside to repay borrowing. Currently the Council sets aside MRP over 50 years for land and building but the consultation is proposing to change the maximum period to 40 years. This will impact on the bottom line of the Council.
  - f.* Borrowing limit – the government are look at how they lend to local authorities and whether this should be capped for the General Fund as it is the Housing Revenue Account.
46. These risks will be monitored and reported through to Cabinet in the final budget if changes are required.

## Section 3 Housing Revenue Account

### *HRA Business Plan*

47. The HRA business plan will be presented to this Cabinet for approval elsewhere on this agenda. The HRA Business Plan originates from this budget.
48. It is proposed that the HRA business plan should be scrutinised alongside the general fund draft budget as part of the budget scrutiny process.

### *Draft HRA Budget 2018/19*

49. The HRA Budget has been built to enable the council to maintain Decent Homes Standards, service the debt as a result of the HRA subsidy reform, and take account of the continuing 1% rent reduction running from 2016/17 to 2019/20.

**Table 3 – Draft Housing Revenue Account Budget 2018/19**

<b>REVENUE BUDGET</b>				
<b>Housing Revenue Account</b>				
<b>Actual 2016/17 £</b>	<b>Budget 2017/18 £</b>	<b>Projected Outturn 2017/18 £</b>	<b>DETAIL</b>	<b>Budget 2018/19 £</b>
4,142,152	5,149,750	5,127,730	Supervision & Management	5,264,580
(24,372,599)	(25,511,220)	(24,952,720)	Income	(24,978,930)
17,994,718	21,923,480	21,923,480	Other	17,449,220
3,350,305	3,328,470	3,352,704	Repairs & Maintenance	3,418,400
<b>1,114,576</b>	<b>4,890,480</b>	<b>5,451,194</b>	<b>SERVICE EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>1,153,270</b>

50. These figures are in line with the position forecast within the HRA business plan, with a deficit anticipated. There are a number of HRA projects currently underway and this in year deficit is financed from reserves for the purpose of financing capital projects.
51. Members are asked to approve the draft HRA budget for 2018/19 for scrutiny purposes.

## Section 4 - Capital Resources

52. The Council prepares a capital programme annually based on the Corporate Priorities and approves capital projects throughout the year. Financing of these projects are included in the Project Initiation Documents, however final financing will be approved at the end of the year.
53. Due to the nature of some reserves it is best to utilise these first and retain flexibility for the Council, for example, capital receipts can only be used on capital purposes therefore it is better to use these reserves first and keep revenue reserves, which can be used for any purpose.
54. The Housing Revenue Account has two kinds of capital receipts, general capital receipts that can be used for any capital purpose, and one-for-one receipts that can only be used for the provision of new affordable housing. To ensure the Council has enough flexibility in its capital financing and complies with the one-for-one commitment to government, these latter receipts will always be used first before capital receipts and revenue reserves.

### *Capital Resources Forecast*

55. Capital investment is currently made from the following funding streams:
  - a. Internal resources such as capital receipts and revenue reserves.
  - b. Prudential (external) borrowing. The Medium Term Financial Plan provides specific support to borrow for General Fund corporate projects that have been highlighted in the corporate plan. There is also specific borrowing for capital works on Council assets support by the planned maintenance schedule for capital works.
  - c. Third party grants and contributions from government, other authorities and other grant bodies.
  - d. Section 106 developer contributions – as at 31 March 2017 contributions amounting to £6.8m (capital & revenue) were held in reserves.
56. The table below shows the forecast based on current assumptions including that supported by revenue resources to support spending of a capital nature.

**Table 4 – Capital resource forecast (General Fund)**

<b>Resources available</b>	<b>2017/18 £'000</b>	<b>2018/19 £'000</b>	<b>2019/20 £'000</b>	<b>2020/21 £'000</b>
<b>Resources brought forward:</b>				
Capital receipts	11	0	0	0
Repairs and renewals reserve	660	570	480	390
Borrowing limit unapplied	500	400	300	300
	1,171	970	780	690
<b>Potential resources</b>				
Estimate of capital receipts	250	250	250	250
Estimate of reserve contributions to the repairs & renewal reserve	260	260	260	260
Approved borrowing limit supported by the revenue budget	500	500	500	500
	1,010	1,010	1,010	1,010
<b>Current planned outlay financed by:</b>				
Use of capital receipts	261	250	250	250
Use of the repairs & renewal reserve	350	350	350	350
Use of prudential borrowing (principally for the asset maintenance programme)	600	600	500	500
	1,211	1,200	1,100	1,100
<b>Uncommitted resources carried forward</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>780</b>	<b>690</b>	<b>600</b>

**Capital Investment**

57. Elwick Place commenced in May 2017 with and expected completion date of December 2018. The build is currently on target at £42 million and is progressing to plan. The scheme is now generating interest with potential occupier of the eateries making enquiries.
58. Future expansion of A Better Choice Property Company will be supported by further loans. This will underpin the strategic aims of the company to grow and establish itself within the private letting sector.
59. In line with the Council's aims of supporting disadvantaged people within the borough the Mandatory Disabled Facilities grant has been increased in 2018/19 by £200,000 for one year. This will allow the team delivering these essential facilities to clear the backlog of applicants and ensure works are carried out in a timely manner.



## **Section 5 - Next Steps**

60. Once approved by Cabinet it is proposed to submit the draft budget for formal scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and its Budget Scrutiny Task Group. This will include an examination of the base budget, assumptions on inflation, growth items and budget reduction proposals. The scrutiny process will continue throughout December and January with conclusions reported to the Cabinet in February.
61. The final budget report will be presented to Cabinet and then onto Council in February which will include any additional proposals for the budget and recommend to Cabinet the measures necessary to bridge any remaining budget gap.

### **Implications and Risk Assessment**

62. Risk assessments are being completed by Services and will form part of the Scrutiny process and reported back to Council with any recommendations from the Budget Scrutiny Task Group.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment**

63. The assessment will be completed alongside the final budget reported to Cabinet and Council in February.

### **Consultation Planned or Undertaken**

64. This report will form the basis of consultation with the business community, the public and parish councils. A summary document will be produced and sent to key stakeholders and posted on the website for comment.
65. The results from this consultation will help inform the final budget and will be reported back to the February Cabinet.

### **Conclusion**

66. Members are asked to consider the contextual information against which the MTFP and draft budget have been developed.
67. To approve the draft budget for 2018/19 for the purpose of public consultation, consultation with the parish councils, and for the basis of budget scrutiny by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

### **Portfolio Holder's Views**

68. To be given at the meeting

### **Contact and Email**

69. Maria Seddon – 01233 330547

DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET				
DIRECTORATE SUMMARY				
Actuals 2016/17 £	Budget 2017/18 £	Projected Outturn 2017/18 £	Directorate	Budget 2018/19 £
817,720	838,340	987,330	Chief Executive	965,760
3,556,382	3,070,680	3,238,165	Director of Finance & Economy	2,945,230
1,381,241	1,967,940	1,877,491	Director of Law & Governance	2,088,570
9,392,290	9,598,720	9,641,446	Director of Place & Space	10,219,590
<b>15,147,633</b>	<b>15,475,680</b>	<b>15,744,432</b>	<b>Service Expenditure</b>	<b>16,219,150</b>
614,029	(463,870)	(653,870)	Non service specific	(1,693,600)
<b>15,761,662</b>	<b>15,011,810</b>	<b>15,090,562</b>	<b>ABC Budget Requirement</b>	<b>14,525,550</b>
(15,721,932)	(15,011,810)	(15,011,810)	Financing	(14,525,550)
<b>39,730</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78,752</b>		<b>0</b>

DRAFT REVENUE BUDGET				
SERVICE SUMMARY				
Actuals 2016/17 £	Budget 2017/18 £	Projected Outturn 2017/18 £	Service	Budget 2018/19 £
817,720	838,340	987,330	Corporate Policy, Economic Development & Communications	965,760
1,281,899	1,361,440	1,254,852	Legal & Democratic Services	1,414,090
1,667,822	1,646,090	1,681,136	Planning	1,787,440
4,189,463	3,815,280	3,732,215	Finance & IT	3,668,940
(5,849)	90,010	115,610	HR & Customer Services	105,010
636,937	654,790	779,644	Housing Services	689,780
105,190	516,490	507,029	Health, Parking & Community Safety	569,470
4,464,702	4,939,690	4,929,960	Environmental & Land Management	5,186,090
(1,270,018)	(1,399,390)	(1,273,694)	Corporate Property & Projects	(1,413,490)
3,259,766	3,012,940	3,030,350	Culture	3,246,060
<b>15,147,633</b>	<b>15,475,680</b>	<b>15,744,432</b>	<b>Service Expenditure</b>	<b>16,219,150</b>
(2,632,128)	(2,032,910)	(2,222,910)	Capital Charges & Net Interest	(3,387,820)
244,828	250,000	250,000	Levies	256,250
3,001,329	1,319,040	1,319,040	Contribution to Balances	1,437,970
<b>15,761,662</b>	<b>15,011,810</b>	<b>15,090,562</b>	<b>ABC Budget Requirement</b>	<b>14,525,550</b>
			<b>Income</b>	
(1,381,270)	(615,360)	(615,360)	Government Grant	(264,160)
(3,027,776)	(3,422,120)	(3,422,120)	Retained Business Rates	(3,351,000)
(669,587)	(500,000)	(500,000)	Business Rates S31 Grants	(1,059,600)
(3,788,826)	(3,394,890)	(3,394,890)	New Homes Bonus	(2,656,100)
(6,854,473)	(7,079,440)	(7,079,440)	Council Tax	(7,194,690)
<b>39,730</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>78,752</b>		<b>0</b>

General Fund Draft Budget 2018/19				
Actuals 2016/17 £	Budget 2017/18 £	Projected Outturn 2017/18 £	Department	Budget 2018/19 £
			<b>Corporate Policy, Economic Development &amp; Communications</b>	
60,431	0	69,910	Chilmington	71,400
168,032	210,400	268,720	Policy and Performance	245,100
270,538	291,840	292,600	Economic Development	318,740
318,720	336,100	356,100	Communications & Marketing	330,520
<b>817,720</b>	<b>838,340</b>	<b>987,330</b>		<b>965,760</b>
			<b>Legal &amp; Democratic Services</b>	
864,812	876,850	867,320	Democratic Representation	852,470
371,145	435,320	417,030	Electoral Services	503,210
(7,001)	0	(78,768)	Legal	0
52,944	49,270	49,270	Mayor	58,410
<b>1,281,899</b>	<b>1,361,440</b>	<b>1,254,852</b>		<b>1,414,090</b>
			<b>Planning</b>	
142,150	110,240	114,300	Building Control	117,810
972,870	898,330	926,982	Development Control	1,066,350
(5,528)	(5,750)	(5,150)	Land Charges	(41,150)
(0)	(10)	(5,396)	Planning Administration	31,920
558,329	643,280	650,400	Strategic Planning	612,510
<b>1,667,822</b>	<b>1,646,090</b>	<b>1,681,136</b>		<b>1,787,440</b>
			<b>Finance &amp; IT</b>	
52,805	65,800	(1,370)	Accountancy	35,840
0	50	50	Audit Partnership	(60)
738,794	766,220	783,750	Benefits Administration	912,910
275,037	457,150	460,610	Council Tax Collection	417,870
(1,145)	(1,030)	500	Debtors/Debt Recovery	120
47,809	(19,610)	(10,950)	Exchequer	10,840
(467,817)	(256,000)	(256,000)	Housing Benefits Payments	(256,040)
(109,197)	(65,230)	(69,100)	NNDR Collection	(64,220)
2,351,186	1,695,970	1,467,820	Non-Distributed Costs	1,653,810
(6,002)	7,070	22,210	ICT	7,760
(0)	40	160	Telephony	(30)
1,307,993	1,164,850	1,334,535	Allocable Corporate Costs	950,140
<b>4,189,463</b>	<b>3,815,280</b>	<b>3,732,215</b>		<b>3,668,940</b>
			<b>HR &amp; Customer Services</b>	
(847)	90,000	151,270	Human Resources	105,000
(5,002)	10	(35,660)	Visitor & Call Centre	10
<b>(5,849)</b>	<b>90,010</b>	<b>115,610</b>		<b>105,010</b>

General Fund Draft Budget 2018/19				
Actuals 2016/17 £	Budget 2017/18 £	Projected Outturn 2017/18 £	Department	Budget 2018/19 £
			<b>Housing Services</b>	
178,342	141,260	128,720	Private Sector Housing	117,410
58,522	53,220	55,310	Housing Strategy and Enabling	36,880
606,812	528,390	664,991	Housing Options	535,270
(993)	(66,020)	(53,250)	Facilities Management	9,060
(211,159)	750	1,200	Refugee Project	0
5,412	(2,810)	(17,327)	Gypsy Site - Chilmington	(8,840)
<b>636,937</b>	<b>654,790</b>	<b>779,644</b>		<b>689,780</b>
			<b>Health, Parking &amp; Community Safety</b>	
493,402	496,720	517,834	Community Safety,AMC,Licencing	574,040
622,263	659,710	677,664	Environmental Health	618,160
(1,010,475)	(639,940)	(688,469)	Parking & Engineering	(622,730)
<b>105,190</b>	<b>516,490</b>	<b>507,029</b>		<b>569,470</b>
			<b>Environmental &amp; Land Management</b>	
701,703	568,800	572,070	Street Scene	502,690
2,628,747	3,010,760	3,070,760	Refuse,Recycling,Street Clean	3,292,380
1,134,252	1,360,130	1,287,130	Grounds Maintenance	1,391,020
<b>4,464,702</b>	<b>4,939,690</b>	<b>4,929,960</b>		<b>5,186,090</b>
			<b>Corporate Property &amp; Projects</b>	
17,298	37,920	27,390	Project Delivery Team	6,960
111,245	144,430	164,660	Town Centre Development	157,410
(1,398,560)	(1,581,740)	(1,465,744)	Corporate Property	(1,577,860)
<b>(1,270,018)</b>	<b>(1,399,390)</b>	<b>(1,273,694)</b>		<b>(1,413,490)</b>
			<b>Culture</b>	
392,064	241,250	242,494	Cultural Services Management	279,780
1,562,308	1,539,240	1,568,540	Leisure Centres	1,591,700
199,050	267,380	248,936	Open Spaces and Conservation	260,080
363,466	359,760	359,760	Single Grants Gateway	359,760
137,895	144,180	144,830	Tourism & Heritage	236,440
604,983	461,130	465,790	Cultural Projects	518,300
<b>3,259,766</b>	<b>3,012,940</b>	<b>3,030,350</b>		<b>3,246,060</b>
<b>15,147,633</b>	<b>15,475,680</b>	<b>15,744,432</b>	<b>NET EXPENDITURE ON SERVICES</b>	<b>16,219,150</b>
			<b>Other Items</b>	
(2,632,128)	(2,032,910)	(2,222,910)	Capital Charges & Net Interest	(3,387,820)
244,828	250,000	250,000	Levies & Precepts	256,250
3,001,329	1,319,040	1,319,040	Contributions to/from Reserves	1,437,970
<b>15,761,662</b>	<b>15,011,810</b>	<b>15,090,562</b>		<b>14,525,550</b>

**Agenda Item No:** 8

**Report To:** Cabinet

**Date of Meeting:** 7 December 2017

**Report Title:** Council Tax Base 2018/19

**Report Author & Job Title:** Jo Stocks - Senior Accountant

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr Shorter Portfolio Holder for Finance & Budget, Resource  
**Portfolio Holder for:** Management and Procurement



**Summary:** This Council is required to approve the tax base used to calculate the level of Council Tax for 2018/19. It is calculated with regard to the number of domestic properties (including a forecast of new properties), which are then converted to Band D equivalents.

The tax base has been calculated at 45,680 band D properties, an increase of 1,008 (or 2.26%) on the current year.

**Key Decision:** YES

**Significantly Affected Wards:** All

**Recommendations:** **The Cabinet is recommended to:-**

- I. Agree the 2018/19 'Net' tax base of 45,680 Band D equivalent properties
- II. Agree the distribution across parished areas of the proposed grant to parish councils to help compensate for the negative impact caused by the council tax support scheme on parish council's' tax bases (see appendix D totalling £40,900).
- III. Note the possibility of further Cabinet and Council decisions being required, before the end of January, should any material change in the tax base be required as a consequence of any further relevant funding announcements from government.

**Policy Overview:** The Council Tax base is required to be set in accordance

with the Local Authorities (Calculations of Tax Base)  
Regulations 2012

**Financial  
Implications:**

The tax base recommended will be used to calculate the level of Council Tax requirement that will be recommended to the Council on 8 February 2018.

**Legal Implications**

**Equalities Impact  
Assessment**

As part of the final budget reported to Cabinet in February

**Other Material  
Implications:**

None

**Exempt from  
Publication:**

**NO**

**Contact:**

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## Report Title: Council Tax Base 2018/19

### Introduction and Background

1. The Council Tax Base for 2018/19 and its distribution across parished and un-parished areas needs to be agreed.
2. By 31 January 2018 the Council as the 'billing authority' is required to notify its major precepting bodies (Kent County Council, Kent Police Authority and Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority) and the parishes of the relevant council tax base for the 2018/19 financial year.

### Council Tax Support

3. A Council Tax support scheme was introduced in April 2013 to address the abolition of Council Tax Benefit, and the associated 10% funding reduction by Government (Cabinet 2012).
4. The Kent scheme was updated in April 2017 (Cabinet December 2016), at the request of the major preceptors.
5. The scheme is designed to incentivise work and asks those people of working age, who currently claim council tax support, to contribute something towards their council tax. The scheme was amended to include the following, for working age claimants:
  - a. Set the contribution level at 17.5%
  - b. The capital threshold is set to £10,000
  - c. A Band D cap has been introduced
  - d. A flat rate £10 per week deduction in respect of a non-dependant (unless the non-dependant is disregarded)
  - e. A minimum income floor has been introduced in respect of self-employed claimants
  - f. Second Adult rebate has been abolished
6. There are no planned changes to the scheme for 2018/19.

### Protection for Parish Councils

7. The introduction of Council Tax Support effectively reduced the tax base for many if not all of the parish councils. If no action were taken this would have



resulted in taxpayers suffering increases in their tax towards parish precepts, even in circumstances where the cash amount of precept was unchanged. Following government guidelines the council introduced a grant (a total of £82,000) that paid parish councils the equivalent of the revenue they lost due to the changes in the tax base.

8. In 2014/15 a working group of parish and borough councillors met to discuss funding of this grant and recommended that the total funding for the grant be reduced in line with government cuts to formula grant. Accordingly the grant available for parish councils is proposed to be a total of £40,900 in 2018/19 be allocated based on the level of their precept and the Council Tax Support discounts for their parish. The proposed allocation is detailed in **Appendix D**.

### **The Tax Base (adjusted for various allowances)**

9. The council has already submitted a tax base return to central government, which will be used in the calculation of Revenue Support Grant. This figure is 49,814 (2017/18 49,187), but is based on the number of properties on the valuation list as at 1 October 2017 and excludes provisions for new properties, Council Tax Support discounts, and allowances for non-collection.
10. The tax base calculation made in this report allows for new properties anticipated to be coming on to the Valuation List. It is forecast that 2,329 properties will be completed during the 18 months from October 2016 to March 2017.
11. In calculating the tax base the authority must also have regard to discounts, exemptions, non-collection and appeals. For the purposes of this calculation 1% has been estimated for losses on collections and appeals, this is consistent with the collection levels that are being achieved.
12. In the Autumn Budget 2017 the Chancellor announced that long term empty properties could be charged a 100% premium (currently 50%) on their council tax. The tax base has not been adjusted to include this additional charge. Officers have calculated the impact to the tax base would see an increase of around 59 properties, assuming this increase does not act as a deterrent to lower the numbers of long-term empty properties. Officers are seeking members' views on this potential change and will put forward a proposal in the budget report.
13. For 2018/19 the tax base has been calculated at 45,680 (2017/18 was 44,671) as detailed at **Appendices A, B & C**.

### **Implications and Risk Assessment**

14. The Council Tax base is an important element of the budget setting process, estimating the number of properties upon which council tax will be levied.

## **Next Steps in Process**

15. Once agreed by the Council the tax base will be notified to the County Council, Kent Police, Kent and Medway Fire Authority and the Parish Councils.

## **Conclusion**

16. The 2018/19 tax base is in line with the assumptions in the Financial Strategy and the calculation results in a tax base of 45,680 band D equivalent properties. This will be used in the detailed budget and council tax setting calculations.

## **Portfolio Holder's Views**

17. To be given at meeting.

## **Contact and Email**

18. Jo Stocks
19. Jo.stocks@ashford .gov.uk

**TAX BASE 2018/19  
BAND D EQUIVALENTS**

<b>BAND</b>		<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
PARISH										
Aldington and Bonnington	0	19	21	112	84	83	142	149	3	613
Appledore	0	6	10	48	79	51	69	77	2	342
Bethersden	0	22	45	55	95	145	113	226	12	713
Biddenden	1	75	26	187	116	170	212	314	19	1,120
Bilsington	0	6	3	10	18	24	37	46	0	144
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	0	8	63	96	227	260	275	116	8	1,053
Brabourne	0	4	17	46	127	170	137	88	7	596
Brook	0	2	1	6	23	60	37	34	0	163
Challock	0	9	7	40	97	83	141	105	9	491
Charing	0	63	90	177	185	218	265	290	8	1,296
Chilham	0	8	36	105	157	182	120	133	20	761
Crundale (PM)	0	1	2	6	13	15	20	35	1	93
Egerton	0	7	22	36	87	95	130	129	4	510
Godmersham	0	1	5	14	29	56	28	34	4	171
Great Chart with Singleton	0	89	366	644	720	344	186	97	4	2,450
Hastingleigh	0	3	2	4	25	10	33	33	4	114
High Halden	0	51	58	150	58	95	141	182	6	741
Hothfield	2	7	61	74	34	27	22	42	4	273
Kenardington	0	3	1	23	9	21	17	33	3	110
Kingsnorth	0	8	269	762	1,028	1,111	1,092	113	2	4,385
Little Chart	0	3	1	13	21	17	20	51	5	131
Mersham and Sevington	0	6	29	107	145	190	230	125	5	837
Molash	0	2	3	9	18	18	18	37	4	109
Newenden	0	1	1	11	18	13	23	32	2	101
Orlestone	0	3	21	183	130	56	156	40	2	591
Pluckley	0	8	12	72	76	62	93	165	3	491
Rolvenden	0	7	14	141	112	117	105	166	31	693
Ruckinge	0	11	5	25	30	92	104	69	2	338
Shadoxhurst	0	17	17	63	71	158	166	51	0	543
Swarden	0	11	21	67	86	80	116	257	22	660
Smeeth	0	6	9	67	60	98	61	60	5	366
Stanhope	0	121	519	114	0	3	0	0	2	759
Stone	0	4	3	30	26	26	38	74	3	204

Tenterden (TC)	0	23	116	570	769	742	754	609	47	3,630
Warehorne	0	4	6	23	28	39	28	44	2	174
Westwell	0	10	11	27	60	84	54	75	8	329
Wittersham	0	8	16	89	51	121	88	139	19	531
Woodchurch	1	89	15	112	149	112	163	206	8	855
Wye with Hinxhill	0	31	73	158	218	175	223	143	18	1,039
Unparished Area	1	1,451	4,898	4,989	2,769	1,656	1,501	270	8	17,543
	<b>5</b>	<b>2,208</b>	<b>6,895</b>	<b>9,465</b>	<b>8,048</b>	<b>7,079</b>	<b>7,158</b>	<b>4,889</b>	<b>316</b>	<b>46,063</b>
Contributions in Lieu	0	0	0	0	79	0	0	0	0	79
Less 1% Provision	0	(22)	(69)	(95)	(80)	(71)	(73)	(49)	(3)	(462)
	<b>5</b>	<b>2,186</b>	<b>6,826</b>	<b>9,370</b>	<b>8,047</b>	<b>7,008</b>	<b>7,085</b>	<b>4,840</b>	<b>313</b>	<b>45,680</b>

## ANALYSIS OF PROPERTIES FOR WHOLE AUTHORITY 2018/19

		A No.	B No.	C No.	D No.	E No.	F No.	G No.	H No.	TOTAL No.
Total Chargeable Dwellings	9	3,935	12,591	12,555	8,815	6,401	5,286	3,098	170	52,860
Of which:										
Full Charge	6	1,790	7,500	8,489	6,454	4,983	4,394	2,620	142	36,378
Class C	0	23	70	52	31	11	6	4	0	197
Discount	2	1,992	4,780	3,765	2,128	1,278	787	390	18	15,140
Discount (Disregard Disc)	1	5	8	3	14	6	14	18	1	70
Discount on 2nd Homes	0	80	111	92	90	61	49	47	8	538
Full Charge on LT Empties	0	33	109	138	80	55	24	13	1	452
Premium on LT Empties	0	12	14	17	18	8	12	6	0	86
<b>Total number of Properties</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>3,935</b>	<b>12,591</b>	<b>12,555</b>	<b>8,815</b>	<b>6,401</b>	<b>5,286</b>	<b>3,098</b>	<b>170</b>	<b>52,860</b>
Total Equivalent Number - CTB1	4	2,248	8,763	10,235	8,200	7,379	7,297	4,940	322	49,387
Adjust for Council Tax Support	0	(661)	(1,954)	(1,324)	(568)	(263)	(123)	(39)	0	(4,933)
New Properties	0	671	131	602	477	0	0	0	0	1,881
Exemptions Factor	0	(52)	(47)	(46)	(61)	(34)	(16)	(11)	(5)	(272)
<b>Adjusted Band D equivalents</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2,206</b>	<b>6,892</b>	<b>9,466</b>	<b>8,048</b>	<b>7,082</b>	<b>7,158</b>	<b>4,890</b>	<b>317</b>	<b>46,062</b>
Contributions in Lieu	0	0	0	0	79	0	0	0	0	79
Losses In Collection	(0)	(22)	(69)	(95)	(80)	(71)	(72)	(49)	(3)	(461)
<b>Tax base</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2,184</b>	<b>6,823</b>	<b>9,372</b>	<b>8,046</b>	<b>7,011</b>	<b>7,086</b>	<b>4,841</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>45,680</b>

**TAX BASE 2018/19**  
**LOCAL TAX BASE (WHOLE/PART AREAS)**

<b>LOCAL TAX BASE</b>	<b>WHOLE AREA</b>	<b>BAND D EQUIVALENT</b>	<b>NEW OCCUPATIONS</b>	<b>0.75% PROVISION</b>	<b>Less discounts Council Tax Support</b>	<b>LOCAL TAX BASE</b>
<b>2017/18</b>		48,719	658.00	(337)	(4,368)	<b>2018/19</b> 44,672
	<b>PARISH</b>					
594	Aldington & Bonnington	652	17	(6)	(56)	607
339	Appledore	384	3	(3)	(46)	338
702	Bethersden	774	7	(7)	(68)	706
1,096	Biddenden	1,186	22	(11)	(88)	1,109
146	Bilsington	155	1	(1)	(11)	144
1,067	Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	1,117	2	(11)	(66)	1,042
597	Brabourne	618	2	(6)	(24)	590
155	Brook	157	8	(2)	(2)	161
453	Challock	460	43	(5)	(12)	486
1,306	Charing	1,421	24	(13)	(149)	1,283
746	Chilham	818	18	(8)	(75)	753
93	Crundale (PM)	94	0	(1)	(1)	92
501	Egerton	523	14	(5)	(27)	505
173	Godmersham	176	0	(2)	(5)	169
2,415	Great Chart with Singleton	2,629	47	(24)	(227)	2,425
114	Hastingleigh	120	0	(1)	(7)	112
716	High Halden	790	15	(7)	(64)	734
264	Hothfield	327	21	(3)	(75)	270
107	Kenardington	117	4	(1)	(12)	108
4,435	Kingsnorth	4,625	4	(44)	(244)	4,341
129	Little Chart	132	2	(1)	(3)	130
740	Mersham and Sevington	859	19	(8)	(41)	829
108	Molash	119	0	(1)	(10)	108
102	Newenden	108	0	(1)	(6)	101
597	Orlestone	649	0	(6)	(58)	585
476	Pluckley	513	21	(5)	(43)	486

681	Rolvenden	731	30	(7)	(68)	686
335	Ruckinge	350	5	(3)	(17)	335
543	Shadoxhurst	559	23	(5)	(38)	539
641	Smarden	669	34	(7)	(43)	653
360	Smeeth	398	4	(4)	(36)	362
777	Stanhope	1,043	0	(8)	(284)	751
202	Stone	224	0	(2)	(20)	202
3,534	Tenterden (TC)	3,767	177	(36)	(315)	3,593
175	Warehorne	179	1	(2)	(6)	172
325	Westwell	344	1	(3)	(16)	326
529	Wittersham	584	3	(5)	(56)	526
835	Woodchurch	904	17	(9)	(66)	846
1,025	Wye with Hinxhill	1,125	26	(10)	(113)	1,028
16,539	Unparished Area	18,789	1,268	(175)	(2,435)	17,447
<b>44,672</b>		<b>49,189</b>	<b>1,883</b>	<b>(459)</b>	<b>(4,933)</b>	<b>45,680</b>

## Proposed allocation of CTS grant

Parish	Discounts for Council Tax Support (Band D Equivalents)	Proposed Council Tax Support Grant 2017/18 £
Aldington & Bonnington	(56)	920
Appledore	(46)	750
Bethersden	(68)	1,110
Biddenden	(88)	1,440
Bilsington	(11)	180
Boughton Aluph and Eastwell	(66)	1,090
Brabourne	(24)	390
Brook	(2)	30
Challock	(12)	200
Charing	(149)	2,440
Chilham	(75)	1,230
Crundale (PM)	(1)	10
Egerton	(27)	430
Godmersham	(5)	80
Great Chart with Singleton	(227)	3,720
Hastingleigh	(7)	110
High Halden	(64)	1,050
Hothfield	(75)	1,230
Kenardington	(12)	190
Kingsnorth	(244)	3,990
Little Chart	(3)	50
Mersham and Sevington	(41)	670
Molash	(10)	160
Newenden	(6)	110
Orlestone	(58)	950
Pluckley	(43)	710
Rolvenden	(68)	1,110
Ruckinge	(17)	280
Shadoxhurst	(38)	620
Smarden	(43)	700
Smeeth	(36)	580
Stanhope	(284)	4,650
Stone	(20)	330
Tenterden (TC)	(315)	5,170
Warehorne	(6)	100
Westwell	(16)	260
Wittersham	(56)	920
Woodchurch	(66)	1,080
Wye with Hinxhill	(113)	1,860
	<b>2,498</b>	<b>40,900</b>



**Agenda Item No:** 9

**Report To:** Cabinet

**Date of Meeting:** 7 December 2017

**Report Title:** Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2017-2047

**Report Author & Job Title:** Sharon Williams, Head of Housing  
Jo Stocks, Senior Accountant

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. White, Portfolio Holder for Housing  
**Portfolio Holder for:** Cllr. Shorter, Portfolio Holder for Finance & IT



**Summary:**

This report provides an annual update to Members on the financial projections associated with the HRA Business Plan.

Work has been undertaken to review the cost base of the HRA and model for the life of the business plan. The Plan has been updated to allow for the latest planned maintenance schedule and the approved capital schemes.

In addition the Business Plan has been amended to reflect the recent government announcement that with effect from 2020 the four year rent reduction on social housing will end and rents will increase by CPI + 1%

Overall the plan remains affordable and there are no significant revisions from the version prepared in 2016 (Cabinet November 2016).

A bid has been made to DCLG for an increase in the HRA debt cap and an announcement is anticipated in the near future. Should this be successful this will enable the Council to deliver an additional 108 homes.

**Key Decision:** No

**Significantly Affected Wards:** None

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

- I. Review and agree the updated HRA Business Plan and financial projections.**
- II. Note that Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) are required to review the HRA Business Plan financial projections as part of the budget scrutiny process.**

**Policy Overview:** The Council is required to have a 30 year business plan for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). With effect from November 2013 members agreed that Cabinet would receive an annual update of the business plan position.

**Financial Implications:**

This paper provides an update to the financial position of the HRA over the next 30 years. The financial model forecasts that the HRA business plan continues to be a robust and viable business and is able to deliver its key priorities.

The financial model is a tool for testing existing priorities, the impact of changes in Government policies and changes in key business sensitivities such as inflation to ensure that Ashford's plans remain affordable. It also ensures that the HRA does not exceed its debt cap with its expenditure plans in line with Government rules.

**Legal Implications**

**Equalities Impact Assessment**

As part of the final budget reported to Cabinet in February 2018.

**Other Material Implications:**

None

**Exempt from Publication:**

**No**

**Contact:**

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## **Report Title: Housing Revenue Account Business Plan 2017-2047**

1. In November 2013 it was agreed that Cabinet would receive an annual update of the HRA Business Plan financial projections. This report updates the position for the period 2017-47.

### **Introduction and Background**

2. The Council is required to have a 30 year Business Plan for the HRA. To support this a 30 year financial model, sourced from the Chartered Institute of Housing, is maintained, which forecasts the financial position, capital requirements and cash flow for the HRA and allows the long term viability of the service to be modelled and tested.
3. As part of the national reform of the HRA subsidy system, in March 2012, the Council completed the buyout of the HRA from the housing subsidy system for £113.7m. This allowed the Council to take on a proportion of the national housing debt in return for the abolition of the Housing Subsidy System and keep all future income receipts. Total HRA debt is currently £120m, an average of approximately £24,500 per property.
4. As part of the HRA reform Government imposed a debt cap for each Local Authority, Ashford's debt cap is £126m, it is not permitted to be in excess of this amount at the end of a financial year.
5. The HRA buyout enabled the council to focus on its key priorities for council housing, which were updated and agreed by Cabinet at the December 2016 meeting:
  - a. Continue to build/acquire new homes for a range of tenures and needs, including shared ownership and homes for rent; utilising all available internal and external funding streams, as appropriate
  - b. Plan to rebuild/remodel the council sheltered accommodation across the borough to provide high standard accommodation for older and vulnerable persons, including ex-forces applicants, from the borough
  - c. Decent Homes Standard to be maintained over the 30 year Business Plan cycle
  - d. Provide an adequate programme of disabled adaptations to meet the needs of disabled tenants within a reasonable timeframe
  - e. Identify opportunities to remodel existing stock to cater for the needs of homeless people.
6. The HRA is a ring fenced, self-financed operation funded by council tenants, through rent, not Council Tax. It manages, maintains and repairs just over 4,600 properties. It also monitors and funds the Private Finance Initiative (PFI) for the regeneration of Stanhope in South Ashford.
7. Due to the impact of the four year 1% rent reduction, implemented by Government in 2016/17 (2017/18 being the second year), a service review of Housing was implemented, which has mitigated the effects of the rent loss over the four year period. This review was approved by Cabinet at the December 2016 meeting.

# Significant changes

## Modelling Assumptions

### *Projects*

8. A number of projects have been incorporated into the plan, some of which have already received Cabinet approval, and others that are in the early planning stages, and will be reported to Cabinet in due course, these include:
  - Farrow Court
  - Danemore
  - Affordable Housing Programme 2015-2019
  - Affordable Housing Development 2018-2022
  - Court Wurtin

### *Inflation Forecast and Impact*

9. Movements in inflation are a key sensitivity in any financial modelling and the HRA financial model applies a number of inflation assumptions to costs and income items in the budget. Historically rent levels have increased by the Government formula of CPI+1%. However, between 2016/17 to 2019/20 social housing rents are to be reduced by 1% per annum.
10. Government have proposed that after the current period of rent reduction has come to an end social housing rents will revert to increases of CPI +1%. This assumption has been included in the model. However, if this were to change then the model would need to be revisited to mitigate the effects of a loss in income. Inflation assumptions have been updated in the model to reflect those used in the Medium Term Financial Plan (elsewhere on the agenda), these assumptions were provided by Arlingclose, the council's treasury advisors.

### *Interest Rates and amount set aside to repay debt or invest in future capital projects*

11. Interest rates are a potential risk to the model if debt is not paid off in line with the Treasury portfolio timetable. It has been assumed that rates will remain at 0.5% for the remainder of 2017/18, increasing to 0.75% partway through 2018/19, slowly increasing up to 3% by 2041/42.
12. The HRA debt repayment profile, which is part of the treasury portfolio, remains unchanged with the maturing fixed debt due at various times over the life of the plan. Members will be able to review this profile of debt repayment if and when new capital plans come forward for review.
13. If the debt repayment were to be extended, without investing in new projects there would be a significant risk that the HRA would hold significant cash balances, as well as continuing to have outstanding loans. This would create a cost of carry, whereby investment returns are lower than the corresponding cost of holding debt; this could become an issue if investment returns remain low for a significant period.
14. Provided that interest rates remain within forecast levels it is expected that any potential issues arising from interest rates will be manageable, however

it may mean that some projects will need to be delayed in order to absorb the additional cost.

### *Rent Conversions*

15. It was agreed by Members (Cabinet April 2014) that for three years from April 2015 void 2 bed flats and 2/3 bedroom houses (approximately 80 properties per annum) would be converted from social rents to affordable rents. In order to achieve this average the model assumes that 100 void conversions will be completed in 2017/18 and 20 in 2018/19, with none after that point.
16. It should be noted that conversions from social rents to affordable rents can only be applied where the council is in receipt of grant funding, from the Homes & Communities Agency for new affordable housing. The council is currently maximising the use of one-for-one monies, but will continue to review the need for HCA funding and void conversions as required by the model, and the resources available.

### *Welfare Reform*

17. A continuing risk for the Business Plan is the impact of Welfare Reform. Despite Ashford's statistics continuing to show high rent collection levels those Local Authorities that have implemented Universal Credit are seeing arrears levels increase significantly. In developing the Business Plan the annual provision for bad debts has been revised, from year 3, to a higher level of 1% for general housing, with sheltered housing kept at the lower level of 0.25%. Sheltered housing is at a lower risk of arrears because the age demographic of these properties implies the residents are in receipt of pensions and other associated benefits.
18. In 2016/17 the annual rent charge was changed from 50 weeks to 52 weeks, in line with Local Housing Allowance rates. This change was implemented to assist tenants in budgeting their rents effectively throughout the year, in a move to assist in reducing arrears.
19. In 2017/18 RentSense was introduced, this new system monitors rents and arrears and allows officers to better support tenants as Universal Credit becomes more widely implemented. The system gathers and analyses trend information and is able to predict when tenants may need further support from officers to keep up with their rent payments.
20. It is anticipated that the work officers are doing with tenants will minimise the impact of welfare changes, however it is important to acknowledge potential issues as a result of the roll out of the reform agenda and continue to implement a range of tools to mitigate the effects for both tenants and the council.

### *General Fund Recharges*

21. The HRA is subject to a statutory ring fence which limits the costs that can be recharged into the Housing Revenue account.
22. The 2017/18 budget is forecasting a charge of approximately £2,375,200 of General Fund costs in accordance with CIPFA guidance which is included in the financial forecast. As part of the financial planning for both the HRA and General Fund the level and appropriateness of the recharges is examined and tested on a regular basis.

### *Other assumptions included in the model*

23. Kent County Council was expected to reduce Supporting People income, from 2017/18. However, we have received an additional £165,000 in the current year. In respect of future years, Kent County Council have confirmed that this funding will not be available and the model has been adjusted to reflect this change.
24. The Planned Maintenance programme reflects the likely spend per annum and includes a 10% contingency sum to address unforeseen major works.
25. Disabled adaptations were increased in 2016/17 to £605,000 to meet the higher demand. This increased level of investment has allowed officers to address the backlog, and the disabled adaptations budget can now be reduced to £400,000 from 2018/19, with the aim that we can deliver required adaptations within six months.
26. The purchase of 11 street properties, using 'one for one' money has been included for 2017/18, with a further 10 per annum for the next four years. It should be noted that these numbers could change, depending on the resources available. Delegated authority to the Head of Housing and Director of Finance & Economy in consultation with Portfolio holders was agreed in the Financial Monitoring Report presented to Cabinet in November 2017.
27. The model continues to maintain a minimum reserve balance of £1m, to meet approved priorities, and focus any surplus resources to either invest in new income streams or to repay the housing debt and reduce the Housing Capital Financing Requirement (HRA CFR), which is a measure of the HRA's indebtedness.
28. Right to Buys have decreased during 2017/18, with only 7 having taken place this year to date (31 at this time last year). It is thought that uncertainty around interest rates is discouraging potential sales. With lower sales the money retained in respect of one-for-ones will be lower, however the reduction in sales means there will be less pressure to replace stock in future years.
29. The Business Plan assumes Right to Buys will reach 15 in 2017/18, increasing to 20 going forward. Officers will continue to monitor the position and use the resources available to maximise the capital programme, while ensuring it is still affordable.
30. Since setting the 18/19 Budget £987,000 of section 106 money has been allocated to the HRA for affordable housing. These funds will be used to fund approved affordable housing projects; allowing for further capital projects in the HRA to be explored.

### **Capital Receipts**

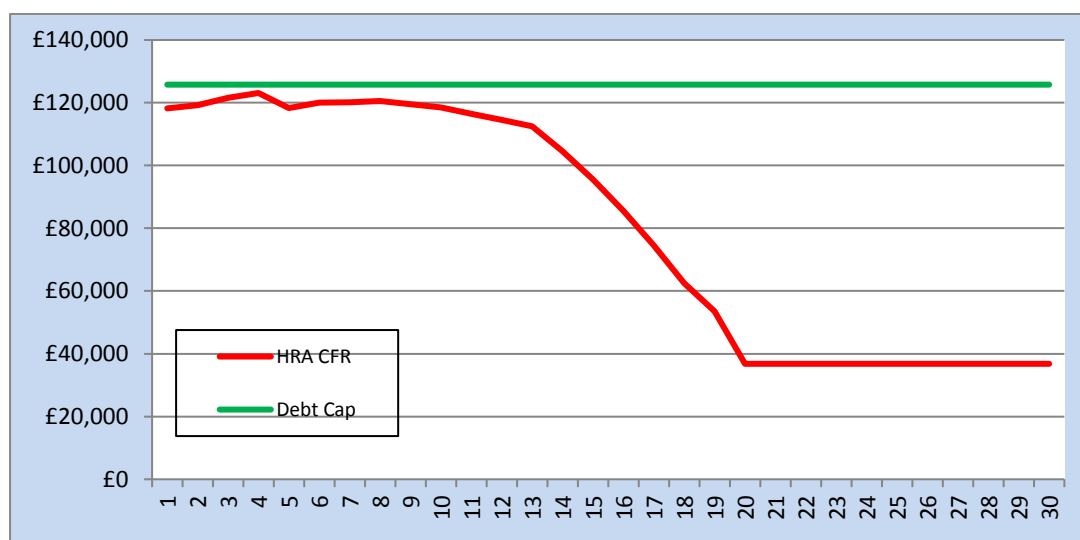
31. Capital receipts received for the sale of council properties, under the Right to Buy (RTB) scheme, have been built into the financial model. Going forward it is anticipated that any such receipts will be used to support existing capital programmes where funding is reduced due to the loss of income growth.
32. With the announcement to extend Right to Buy to Housing Associations the future treatment and pooling of capital receipts for both HRA's and Housing Associations is keenly awaited and will be reported in due course. The details are not expected to be announced by Government in this financial

year, therefore the impact of this will not be felt until at least 2019/20. No assumptions have been made in the model to reflect the potential impact of this, however officers will keep this under review as information becomes available.

33. It should be noted that capital receipts from Right to Buys are also applied to General Fund capital programme items, such as Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) and community projects.
34. In May 2012 the authority was invited to sign an agreement to re-invest Right to Buy receipts in affordable housing, known as 'One for One Replacement', as a result the Council started to retain receipts from 1 October 2012. These receipts need to be used within three years for the provision of additional affordable housing by means of purchase and development of dwellings. If these receipts are not used they need to be returned to the Secretary of State with an interest charge of 4% above base at the time of the funds being held (compound interest chargeable with 3 month rests).
35. In order to ensure 'One for One' money is utilised and not handed back to Government, with interest, the Affordable Homes Programme has incorporated the spend of these monies. This includes the purchase of existing street properties, Danemore and other affordable housing developments. One-for-One funding can account for up to 30% of the build cost per affordable unit, with the remainder funded by the HRA, revenue or borrowing. Use of 'One-for-One' money is more favourable than using HCA funding, as HCA funding contributes less than 30%.

## Modelling HRA Debt and Capital Resources

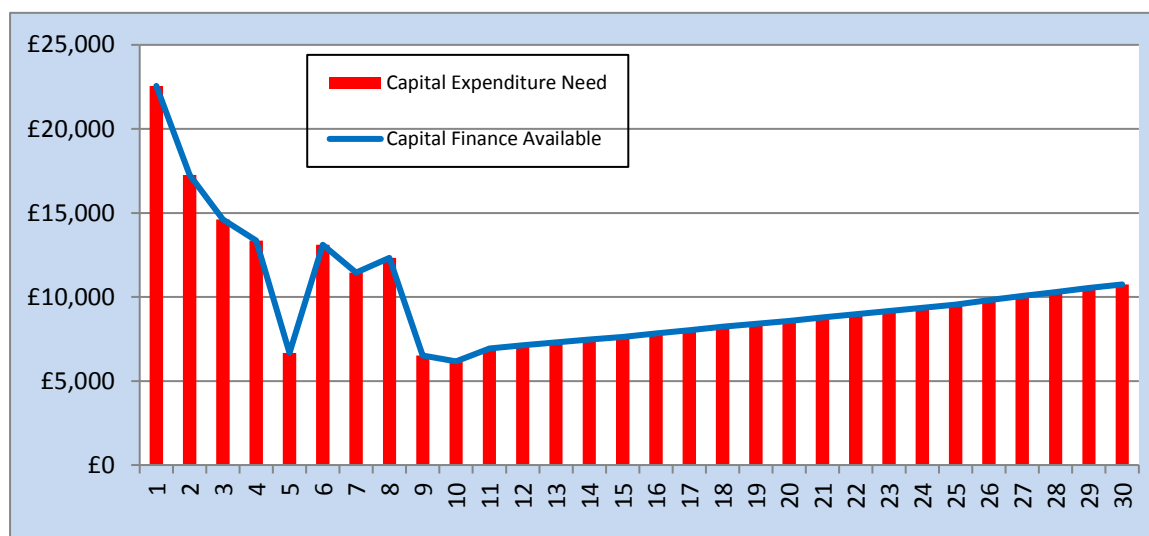
**Graph 1: Amount of HRA Debt held (values shown in £000's, year 1 – 2017/18)**



36. Graph 1 shows the HRA CFR (Capital Financing Requirement) outstanding for the life of the HRA Business Plan. In this graph the HRA CFR is defined as the amount of housing debt held by an authority.
37. The outstanding debt remains high due to the £50m of projects that have been included in the plan, such as the sheltered refurbishments and the affordable homes programmes.
38. The profile of the debt, as currently reported, could change in future,

depending on future proposals not included in the model or any changes in priorities, as agreed by Members. This is a flexible approach, which will be monitored by officers as new projects are considered and approved.

**Graph 2: Capital Expenditure and Resources (values shown in £000's, year 1 – 2017/18)**



39. The Business Plan model also tracks the levels of planned capital expenditure and the availability of resources, and highlights any years where there are insufficient resources available to meet the financial demands.
40. It should be noted that the updated plan has no years where the capital programme exceeds the available resources (see Graph 2 above). If spend did exceed the availability of funds then planned building projects would be delayed or postponed until the capital programme matched the funding available, also other large savings in planned maintenance or staff would have to be considered during this process.

### Wider Policy context

41. The Housing and Planning Act sets out the framework to deliver the sale of higher value local authority housing. It is expected that each HRA authority will be required to make an annual payment to government in respect of vacant higher value properties. However, at the time of writing there is no information available in respect of this, as such no assumptions have been made, or included in the model.
42. In anticipation of these changes an intensive housing management charge was introduced, which is eligible for Housing Benefit. This provides the scope to increase the charge as Supporting People funding comes to an ends. This allows the scheme manager services to continue to be funded, reducing the pressure on the HRA.

#### *EU Referendum*

43. The decision, on 23 June 2016, to leave the European Union, is expected to continue to have an impact on growth forecasts and interest rates, the assumptions in the Business Plan are broadly in line with the advice from our treasury advisors, however the full potential impact of Brexit will remain unknown for some time.



## *Bespoke Deals with the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG)*

44. The current HRA Business Plan is based on the financial constraints placed upon the HRA by Government. However, it should be noted that Government have indicated a willingness to work with councils to create bespoke offers.
45. Ashford are in the process of presenting a bespoke offer to DCLG which involves an increase to the debt cap. Should this offer be accepted then the projects included in the current model can be accelerated to be delivered within 5 years instead of 8 years , with 108 additional units provided at a number of sites, as well as the continued modernisation of our older persons schemes.
46. In the Autumn 2017 budget it was announced that Local Authorities will be invited to bid for an increase in their debt caps (from a £1 billion pot), between 2019/20 to 2021/22. It is anticipated that once more information becomes available officers and members will look to maximise Ashford's opportunities to build more affordable housing.

## **Implications and Risk Assessment**

47. The business plan financial projections continue to be viable and include the current spending commitments (as set above), it has the resources to repay its debt by 2037/38 (year 20), alternatively the debt could be re-financed and invested into new projects.
48. If any new initiatives are developed and approved by Members they will be incorporated into the business plan financial projections and the impact on the viability of the business plan will be costed and measured and reported back to Members when those initiatives are reviewed.
49. Likewise, as new proposals and changes are put forward by Government these will be incorporated into the business plan financial projections and mitigating action taken, as appropriate, with guidance from Members.

## **Next Steps in Process**

50. Members are asked to agree the latest updated HRA business plan financial projections which set out the long term financial plans for the Council's housing stock which has been set in conjunction with the detailed HRA budget for 2018/19 (also on this agenda).
51. Members are asked to note that Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) are required to review the HRA business plan financial projections as part of the budget scrutiny process.
52. Work will continue to review and further update the Business Plan financial projections in the light of forthcoming Government announcements.

## **Portfolio Holder's Views**

53. This is a crucial time for housing delivery both in the Borough and nationally. I am confident that we have maximised resources in the HRA to meet the priorities set out and to continue to deliver an affordable housing programme. We have ambitious plans to increase our development opportunities and have made a bid to the DCLG to increase the Council's debt cap level to enable us to deliver more homes for local people.

## Contact and Email

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## Appendix A – HRA Business Plan (extract) – Top level budget summary to 2026/27

Year	2017.18	2018.19	2019.20	2020.21	2021.22	2022.23	2023.24	2024.25	2025.26	2026.27
£'000	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
<b>INCOME:</b>										
Rental Income	23,780	24,127	24,160	24,997	25,738	26,537	27,441	28,377	29,232	29,998
Void Losses	-71	-77	-80	-84	-86	-90	-94	-99	-103	-106
Service Charges	836	857	877	894	912	930	949	968	987	1,007
Non-Dwelling Income	66	66	67	69	70	72	73	75	76	78
Grants & Other Income	3,205	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,000	3,060	3,121	3,183	3,247
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>27,816</b>	<b>27,973</b>	<b>28,024</b>	<b>28,876</b>	<b>29,634</b>	<b>30,449</b>	<b>31,429</b>	<b>32,441</b>	<b>33,376</b>	<b>34,224</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE:</b>										
General Management	-4,393	-4,516	-4,683	-4,844	-5,010	-5,182	-5,362	-5,549	-5,744	-5,945
Special Management	-736	-755	-772	-787	-803	-819	-835	-852	-869	-886
Other Management	-5,228	-5,358	-5,479	-5,588	-5,700	-5,814	-5,931	-6,049	-6,170	-6,294
Rent Rebates	-51	-51	-51	-52	-54	-55	-57	-59	-61	-62
Bad Debt Provision	-59	-60	-209	-215	-225	-231	-237	-244	-250	-257
Responsive & Cyclical Repairs	-3,474	-3,331	-3,409	-3,480	-3,549	-3,695	-3,826	-3,932	-4,037	-4,120
<b>Total Revenue Expenditure</b>	<b>-13,941</b>	<b>-14,071</b>	<b>-14,603</b>	<b>-14,966</b>	<b>-15,340</b>	<b>-15,796</b>	<b>-16,248</b>	<b>-16,685</b>	<b>-17,131</b>	<b>-17,564</b>
Interest Paid	-3,703	-3,740	-3,887	-4,044	-4,213	-4,113	-4,205	-4,249	-4,268	-4,239
Finance Administration	-60	-62	-63	-64	-65	-67	-68	-69	-71	-72
Interest Received	10	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	7	19
Depreciation	-4,898	-4,901	-4,912	-4,926	-4,916	-4,933	-4,947	-4,963	-4,953	-4,942
<b>Net Operating Income</b>	<b>5,223</b>	<b>5,202</b>	<b>4,562</b>	<b>4,879</b>	<b>5,102</b>	<b>5,542</b>	<b>5,963</b>	<b>6,475</b>	<b>6,961</b>	<b>7,425</b>
<b>APPROPRIATIONS:</b>										
FRS 17 /Other HRA Reserve Adj	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Provision (HRACFR)	-3,342	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Revenue Contribution to Capital	-6,512	-6,309	-4,510	-4,921	-5,098	-5,550	-5,972	-6,474	-2,075	-1,742
<b>Total Appropriations</b>	<b>-9,853</b>	<b>-6,309</b>	<b>-4,510</b>	<b>-4,921</b>	<b>-5,098</b>	<b>-5,550</b>	<b>-5,972</b>	<b>-6,474</b>	<b>-2,075</b>	<b>-1,742</b>
<b>ANNUAL CASHFLOW</b>	<b>-4,630</b>	<b>-1,107</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>-43</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>-8</b>	<b>-10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>4,886</b>	<b>5,683</b>
Opening Balance	6,753	2,123	1,017	1,068	1,026	1,029	1,022	1,012	1,013	5,899
<b>Closing Balance</b>	<b>2,123</b>	<b>1,017</b>	<b>1,068</b>	<b>1,026</b>	<b>1,029</b>	<b>1,022</b>	<b>1,012</b>	<b>1,013</b>	<b>5,899</b>	<b>11,582</b>

Appendix B – HRA Business Plan (extract) – Top level summary of New Build, Sheltered Housing schemes and other items

<b>Programme Name</b>	<b>HRA Revenue Contribution to Capital Projects</b>	<b>2017.18</b>	<b>2018.19</b>	<b>2019.2</b>	<b>2020.21</b>	<b>2021.22</b>	<b>2022.23</b>	<b>2023.24</b>	<b>2024.25</b>
Farrow Court	1,509,391	1,509,391	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AHP Phase 5 (HCA)	2,130,819	2,130,819	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AHP Phase 5 (1-4-1)	3,702,475	3,702,475	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Danemore	4,538,050	2,919,025	2,319,025	(700,000)	0	0	0	0	0
Court Wurtin	472,500	210,000	0	0	262,500	0	0	0	0
Affordable Homes Delivery 2018-22	36,297,396	1,445,714	6,246,400	6,669,200	4,586,686	(375,000)	5,461,000	6,035,136	6,228,260
	<b>48,650,631</b>	<b>11,917,424</b>	<b>8,565,425</b>	<b>5,969,200</b>	<b>4,849,186</b>	<b>(375,000)</b>	<b>5,461,000</b>	<b>6,035,136</b>	<b>6,228,260</b>

**Agenda Item No:** 10  
**Report To:** Cabinet  
**Date of Meeting:** 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2017



**Report Title:** Adoption of An Early Community Development Strategy for Chilmington Green (Jan 2018 to Dec 2020)  
**Report Author & Job Title:** Christina Fuller, Head of Culture and SallyAnne Logan, CMO Project Manager  
**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Shorter, CMO Project Lead & Cllr Bennett, Portfolio  
**Portfolio Holder for:** Holder for Culture

**Summary:** Chilmington Green is one of the Council's corporate priority projects and aligns with three of the corporate plan priorities. Quality is at the heart of Chilmington Green and in order to achieve this, a Community Development Strategy is required. Substantial community consultation has taken place, with the Strategy amended to reflect this.

This Strategy adopts an early approach which aims to 'educate, engage and empower' existing residents and the growing population and sets a framework for community development activity for a wide range of delivery partners.

There is £250k within the Chilmington S106 for community development work. It is proposed that this sum be provided to the Community Management Organisation (CMO) to lead and delivery community development action.

**Key Decision:** YES

**Significantly Affected Wards:** Singleton South, Great Chart With Singleton, Washford and Weald South

**Recommendations:** The Cabinet is recommended to:-

- I. Note the consultation, its outcomes and endorse the approach, recommending that Council adopt the Early Community Development Strategy for Chilmington Green; and
- II. Agree for the Director of Place and Space, in consultation with relevant Directors, to put in place a legal contract with the Chilmington Green Community Management Organisation to lead and coordinate delivery of community development action, using as appropriate the relevant S106 contribution.

**Policy Overview:** Chilmington Green is one of the Council's corporate priority

projects and aligns with three of the corporate plan priorities.

**Financial Implications:**

A sum of £250k plus indexation is to be granted to the Council through the S106 agreement and the first payment is due in December 2017. The contributions will be passed onto the CMO (once created) as agreed within the legal agreement to best support community development action over the next five years and indeed beyond. The S106 Working Group will consider the proposals for use of this sum as appropriate and against an annual action plan. Ward members have signed off this approach.

**Legal Implications**

The Strategy has been constructed with full knowledge of the detail and commitments for the council, KCC and Developers within the S106. The contract between the council and the CMO will reflect the delivery needs of the Early Community Development Strategy and subsequent reviews and action plans alongside the requirements of the S106.

**Equalities Impact Assessment**

See Attached

**Other Material Implications:**

None

**Exempt from Publication:**

**NO**

**Background Papers:**

-

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**Report Title: Adoption of An Early Community Development Strategy for Chilmington Green (Jan 2018 to Dec 2020)**

**Introduction**

1. Chilmington Green is one of the Council's corporate priority projects and aligns with three of the corporate plan priorities. Members have made a commitment to create an exceptional development which is of the highest quality. Simply creating a place that looks great, has quality homes and a range of facilities is not enough. The success of Chilmington will be judged by the strength of its community and the pride people have being part of that community. In order to achieve this, a community development strategy is required to foster engagement as new residents move in as well as the involvement of the existing community.
2. The community development strategy aspires to ensure that the built infrastructure and public realm is complemented and supported by a community which is educated, engaged and empowered.
3. The draft Strategy (attached as Appendix A) sets out a framework for community development action at Chilmington, based on the early site development. It provides a framework for community development action that local delivery partners can utilise and sets a benchmark for quality.
4. Led by the Council, the draft Strategy has been developed in partnership with the CMO Partnership Working Group and involved the three parish councils, the CG Community Stakeholder Group, Kent County Council and other local delivery partners to shape the principles, approach and framework to respond to the unique requirements of the development. Local residents have also contributed.
5. This Strategy covers the early development and community activity that should be delivered. Whilst there are no *new* residents at present, there are residents who reside in the Hamlet (centre of the development site), at Brisley Farm and around the periphery who have a growing interest in the site, want to know what is happening and want to get involved. The first new residents will potentially take up occupation in early 2019 so it will be important for a community development worker to be in place to help drive forward action and respond to early residents' needs.
6. By the end of the Strategy period (Dec 2020) the infrastructure for phase 1 will be complete, the CMO premises will be in place and will include a community space and the first primary school will be open. Both the CMO and The Stour Community Trust (operator of the first primary school) will play a key role in developing the community and will set an early tone for engagement, with clear, regular and consistent communication.
7. Appendix D of the Strategy is the Delivery Approach which has six themes;
  - a. The Planning and Delivery Process

- b. The CMO and Its Base
  - c. First Primary School and Community Hub
  - d. Early Active Travel
  - e. Open Space, Play and Landscaping
  - f. Public Art, Heritage and Archaeology
8. These themes set down the headlines for an annual action plan that will need to be agreed and implemented. Measuring success and evaluating individual projects will be pivotal and will inform future working. The CMO will lead this as part of a Service Level Agreement related to the spending of the allocated Section 106 for community development.
  9. Much of the early delivery will be focused on the first primary school, the CMO set up and first premises, public art, the residents Welcome Pack and the community archaeology project. Overlaying that we will be setting up channels for residents to get involved and have their say, and setting up approaches for communication. Directly linked to the Strategy is the branding of the development and any marketing/communications work that results.

## **Framework of the Strategy**

10. The Strategy has reflected on other research from large-scale development sites, as well as in-house experience and well-known community development approaches. More importantly the Strategy responds to and encompasses the unique circumstances and aspirations of Chilmington Green.
11. The Strategy provides a community development framework around '3E's' - 'educate, engage and empower'. Evolved from theoretical community development approaches, this includes the various ways in which the community can be involved, that is
  - The 'Educate' element is about informing people - predominantly from key delivery organisations to the community e.g. a community newsletter, media release or information leaflet.
  - The 'Engage' element is about a level of involvement by the community, whether that be responding to a consultation or encouraging active participation in the running of a community group, for example.
  - The 'Empower' aspect is where local people take more control. Lead organisations take a step back and increasingly hand decision making to local people. They are 'empowered' to lead and direct what happens in their community. At Chilmington, this could mean the running of a new community group or the leadership role anticipated for the CMO.
12. The three elements do not have to be delivered sequentially. Any one project or action could use one of the three elements and never move on to another.
13. Once the CMO is created (anticipated May 2018), it is proposed that the Council will look to put in place a Service Level Agreement that devolves responsibility for the delivery of the Strategy, future reviews and annual action plans to the CMO. Funding to support this will be provided through the £250k



sum to be received by the Council from the developers. In the meantime, Culture and the CMO Team will continue to drive forward delivery and coordinate early action where required.

## **Implications and Risk Assessment**

14. There are limited risks for the Council associated with this project. It is a positive approach to early delivery and drives forward the Councils' agenda for quality and community engagement and stewardship on site.
15. If housing delivery on site is delayed, there are implications for the creation of the CMO and therefore knock on impacts for the delivery of the Strategy. Culture and the CMO Team would need to continue to coordinate delivery and take a leadership and coordination role with partners and may need to pull down some of the Section 106 sum. Delivery of the annual action plan will also be supported and monitored via the partner working groups being set up to deliver the development.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

16. Members are referred to the attached Assessment.

## **Consultation Planned or Undertaken**

17. Since January 2017, there has been considerable community consultation. Over 175 people were involved at some level. Workshops with key delivery partners, the Community Stakeholder Group and public consultation took place. Following this, a report and revised strategy was pulled together which was presented back to key delivery partners, parish councillors and partners.
18. A delivery partners workshop in January helped to cement the approach to the strategy. Regular communication with and presentations to the Community Stakeholder Group took place including a workshop in July which brought forward some great outcomes and considerations which have now been included. One key piece of feedback suggested that existing community groups are under immense pressure, with some struggling with funding, membership and volunteers. The request was that no new community groups should be created until the existing ones had been supported. This is a common sense approach and forms the basis of need for an audit of existing groups.
19. A public exhibition was held in July which was complemented by an online survey and a postcard for feedback, all of which were promoted through a range of media. Please refer to the summary of the consultation which is included in the Strategy.
20. Ward members have been involved in the consultation process throughout with Portfolio Holders also involved and regularly briefed on progress and approach.
21. Following the community consultation, a report and the draft strategy were presented to Kingsnorth, Great Chart with Singleton and Shadoxhurst Parish

Council. All three have endorsed the Strategy and are keen to work together in delivery. The Community Stakeholder Group also supports the Strategy.

22. Kent County Council has a broad range of responsibilities under the S106 such as the first primary school and community archaeology project and are keen to work in close partnership with the Council to ensure efficient, joined up delivery.
23. The annual action plan which will be developed following adoption will be shared with the early delivery partners for input and implementation.

## **Other Options Considered**

24. There is an argument that might suggest a community development strategy is not needed before the first residents take up occupation. However, without an agreed approach to this, the output would be random, disparate and uncoordinated across the number of key stakeholders who are active or involved in the site. The reason for developing a community development strategy early is therefore beneficial for many.
25. The Council could deliver the community development work itself utilising the sum provided by the S106. However, this does not sit well with the approach to Chilmington which sees the CMO as a central pin to developing and supporting the community.
26. Alternatively, another voluntary sector provider could have been utilised, but this again does not sit well with the Chilmington approach and will confuse residents. It would also see a duplication of some work given the CMO's role.

## **Next Steps in Process**

27. An annual action plan will be drafted if the Council is minded to adopt the Strategy. This will be shared and agreed with key early delivery partners for the Director of Place and Space to sign off in consultation with the Council's S106 Working Group. It will form a key part of the Service Level Agreement with the CMO, which will be drafted and agreed in early summer 2018.
28. Following adoption by the Council, a leaflet will be produced which will be for use with the community. It is likely to form part of the Welcome Pack for new residents and will enable residents to clearly understand how, when and where they can expect to be involved.
29. A second action plan will be developed towards the end of the first year which will reflect on progress and outcomes and respond to the focus for the coming 12-24 months. It is felt that the pace of development is still too unknown at this stage to be able to develop a full three to five year action plan.

## **Conclusion**

30. It is proposed that Ashford Borough Council adopt the Strategy given its responsibilities to local residents and the Councils' commitment to ensuring a

high quality development, following garden city principles, which sees community engagement and stewardship at its heart.

31. The Councils' commitment to supporting the development of the CMO as part of the quality agenda makes it well placed to drive forward this early Strategy and take a leadership role to ensure local engagement, involvement and empowerment is a central part of delivery from the outset.
32. Members are recommended to adopt the Strategy and commit the S106 sum of £250k to community development action with the CMO as the primary leader and coordinator of this important and complex work.

### **Portfolio Holder's Views**

33. 'Given the aspirations at Chilmington for a high quality development and the multiplicity of partners involved in some way on developing the site, it is vital for local residents and delivery partners to be provided with a framework for action which defines how, when and where residents can expect to be educated, engaged and empowered in the community. This Strategy aims to do this and I fully support the approach presented here'.

Cllr Neil Shorter, Portfolio Holder for Finance and IT (CMO Project Lead)

34. 'We need to involve and communicate with existing residents from the earliest point of activity on site and there needs to be an agreed approach in place for the first residents when they take up occupation. This will drive the quality agenda, a consistent approach across the partners and ensure residents feel part of something that is unique and special. I very much hope the Council will adopt this early Strategy and support its delivery.'

Cllr Mike Bennett, Portfolio Holder for Culture

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**Building A Community at Chilmington**  
**The First Three Years**  
**(January 2018 – December 2020)**

**An Early**  
**Community Development Strategy**



FINAL VERSION

PRESENTED TO ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL'S CABINET

AUTUMN 2017

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Supported and endorsed by;

Shadoxhurst Parish Council....the woodland gateway to the countryside

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## THIS STRATEGY

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This strategy aims to provide a joined up approach which delivery partners can adopt to ensure clear communication and participation with residents and others so they will understand how they can expect to receive information and feedback, how they can get involved and how their views and ideas will be used to shape the Chilmington Delivery Programme.

It aims to provide residents with the routes to empowerment, where they can play a role in decision making in these early three years.

As part of the development of this Strategy, potential delivery partners suggested ideas and approaches to community development, and provided valuable insight into the early challenges and opportunities. A programme of community public consultation has also taken place which has helped to refine the strategy further.

More work to hone the delivery of suggested actions is needed but this strategy and the proposed delivery approach do provide a sound and informed framework for future discussion and more importantly, stress the need for early community development action.

### ***This Strategy:***

- ***Provides the development context in which the strategy aims to sit***
- ***Describes what community development can achieve given the ambition of the development***
- ***Explains the challenges and opportunities that the early years development creates***
- ***Provides a framework in which to consider a delivery approach to community development action***
- ***Suggests key tasks that will need to be coordinated and delivered through multiagency support.***

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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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The Chilmington development is ambitious: 5,750 homes over a 20 year build-out period with high quality homes and community infrastructure. In order to be successful, the community must be strong, sustainable, healthy, vibrant and, most importantly, active.

The development will see the creation of a Community Management Organisation (CMO) who will own and manage all community assets usually endowed to the borough council and who will lead community development action. There are a number of areas of key learning to be applied at Chilmington which have influenced the proposed approach to community action. In summary these are: early action by an accountable champion; flexibility to the approaches applied; ensure a broad approach to integration and promotion beyond the boundaries of the development.

Mindful of this learning, there are key challenges that have been identified including maximising existing resources effectively; being flexible in delivery; and ensuring actions involve a wide cohort of residents as well as responding to the existing, growing and changing population. These are described more fully below.

This Strategy seeks to lay down some early principles and a framework for community development **action** and is aimed at key stakeholders and partners involved in delivery. This will support the evolution of a sustainable community through positive and

collaborative approaches which will see local stakeholders working in partnership to provide maximum benefit to the Chilmington community.

The Strategy has been through a period of consultation with local residents and key stakeholders who have signed up to this approach. The outcomes of this consultation have been built into this Strategy and include a need to focus more on community integration, supporting existing community groups first and foremost and communication about the principles and early construction of the development. Whilst this second point is not strictly a community development function, it is clear that there is a need to '*educate*' local residents and that until a better understanding is achieved, it will be difficult for them to '*engage*'.

This Strategy covers the first three years of development. For the first nine-12 months of delivery, there will be no residents within the development boundaries. There are, however, residents surrounding the development site who will be integral to early engagement and success. Action will also build on successful work with the Chilmington Community Stakeholder Group and the quickly evolving CMO Board (Partnership Working Group in the first instance).

A true picture of the likely demography of the first residents is still to emerge, but we know that the District Centre is one of the first

areas to be developed and that will have a number of buildings with flats (likely to be occupied by young professionals/young families) and an extra care unit for older people. This, together with the likelihood of three and four bed housing at Brisley Farm and The Hamlet, suggests that in the early days there is likely to be a clutch of families as the first residents. This is further evidenced by the commitment for a primary school set to open in September 2019.

A community development framework is proposed which applies the '3Es of Participation: **Educate, Engage** and **Empower**. Each one of these modes of action has a role to play and involvement can move from one to the other and back again throughout a single project. Equality will be a thread through all work ensuring transparency and inclusivity. A delivery framework is included which will continually evolve and adapt during the next three years. Action plans for individual projects will sit beneath this. It is hoped that partners and stakeholders will shape the action plans to meet local need using the '3Es as the principle and framework for action.

A management group will drive forward this Strategy and actions associated with the Delivery Approach. The management group will include representation from the developers, local authorities, voluntary and community sector, parish councils and social housing provider/s. The resources to deliver this Strategy are secured within existing Borough Council resources (for the short term) and then, as funding comes on line through the S106, through dedicated community development worker/s who are likely to be employed by the CMO. It is also

expected that leaders of projects will build in capacity within their own teams and secure funding to support community action, aligning and pooling resources accordingly, where relevant.

The next three years will see a period of delivery of a range of complex matters and projects; from the A28 improvement works and the first reserved matters applications to the first school and CMO base. This broad range of community projects requiring community development action will need to adopt timely, efficient and effective ways of capturing the views of local people and that will include opportunities for a diverse and broad range of people to have their say.



# PART ONE: SETTING THE SCENE

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## The Development

The Chilmington development will see the provision of 5,750 homes over a period of 20+ years as an urban extension to the west of Ashford town. A population of circa 15,000 is expected by the end of the build out. The ambition has always been to provide a high quality, sustainable community which utilises many of the garden city principles created by Ebenezer Howard, early in the 20th century. This was confirmed in the Area Action Plan for Chilmington (adopted July 2013).

The existing community includes the Chilmington Hamlet (circa 30 properties) and residents of Singleton and Brisley Farm together with those living in the villages of Shadoxhurst, Stubbs Cross, Kingsnorth and Great Chart.

The developers (led by Hodson developments and including Jarvis Homes, Pentland and BDW) have created a vision for the Chilmington development which can be found at Appendix A. The Design Code (2013) and The Quality Charter (2016) were adopted to further embed the quality agenda and intention that Chilmington Green will be a community that it feels good to be a part of: a community of choice for new and existing residents.

Planning permission was granted and the S106 signed in early 2017.

## Delivery Programme

Development in the first phase (and beginning work in the first three years) is across four locations with four developers expected on site including the District Centre, Chilmington Green Hamlet, Access A on the A28 and Brisley Farm extension.

The early residents are likely to occupy the following types of dwellings and are typically therefore going to attract families, young professionals and older people:

- Flats at the district centre
- Extra care unit at the district centre for older people
- 3-4 bedroom homes at Brisley Farm
- 3-5 bedrooms homes at The Hamlet

In the first three years a range of community infrastructure will be planned and built (refer Appendix B for a description of these community assets). These include:

- First CMO premises including community development workers
- Landscaping and open space
- Public art
- Primary school
- Transport links

## Key Delivery Partners

There are key delivery partners who have obligations through the S106 or who are committed to supporting the delivery of these obligations. All of the organisations will need to embrace the community development function as part of successfully delivering community infrastructure over the coming three years. These partners include:

- Ashford Borough Council
- CMO (The Partnership Working Group will take on this role prior to the CMO being set up)
- Developers
- Health Authority
- Kent County Council
- Parish Councils
- Social Housing providers
- Voluntary and Community Sector

## The Ambition

The Area Action Plan (AAP) for Chilmington focuses on the spatial elements and the need for high quality design and infrastructure to provide the building blocks towards a sustainable community.

It considers what will make the community at Chilmington distinct from others in the borough and wider afield and therefore what will make Chilmington a place that people aspire to live and work. It reflects the need to be ambitious and deliver high quality infrastructure and public realm together with a vibrant and active community.

*Chilmington needs to be a place where residents are integrated with existing communities and new community groups emerge and people come together. This enables collective action and generates solutions to common problems which improve the wellbeing of those living locally.*

*It is well understood that living in a community which is positive, inclusive and supportive has a long term impact on people's lives. It is as much about the built environment and connectivity between spaces as it is about the people who live there and how they interact with their neighbours.*



## The Community Development Function

The community will evolve over time and it will need to be encouraged and motivated to live, play and work together, for the good of everyone's wellbeing. The community development function can support this growth and evolution as well as providing a channel and voice for the community.

The ambition is that residents will know their neighbours, seek support from each other, be active in their community and feel empowered to make decisions about community matters, whether that is the development of a new facility or their role as a member of a local club or community interest group.

Such participation can also help individuals develop skills, build self-confidence, build social networks and thereby reduce health inequalities, social isolation, crime, etc. Individuals will need to be helped to see the value of their input and where their passion can be best applied to achieve an outcome which is of value to them and others.

*The function of community development needs to be an inherent part of the delivery programme - not seen as an 'add on' or distraction. It must be a thread in all that relates to Chilmington and be applied creatively and appropriately to ensure inclusivity for all those who want to participate.*

### Learning from Others

There is significant research and theory based work which demonstrates the value of community development in creating safe, healthy, cohesive, sustainable and engaged communities.

There are good case studies (see Appendix C) that either have or are demonstrating how to create a sustainable community i.e. Letchworth, Graylingwell and Camborne. These also helped direct the design of a Community Management Organisation (CMO) for Chilmington.

Starting small and growing has been a key learning point from research and advice from stakeholders but there are other challenges to consider when deciding, planning and delivering the community development function.

### Key Challenges and Opportunities

Integration with those already living locally and those who have or are thinking of moving into the area is key. The community consultation emphasised the need to utilise and support existing community groups rather than create new from the outset,. The consultation also highlighted a need to 'piggy back' on existing events and to research and build relationships with existing groups/events to help the delivery of activities and aid information sharing.

Thought should also be given to creating a wider cohesive community i.e. including engagement and participation with adjacent neighbourhoods to the development such as Singleton and Brisley Farm. Included in this is how the residents living in the four early communities on site can be brought together to form one larger community and feel 'a part of the whole.' There is a risk that some residents, particularly at the Brisley Farm extension, will feel isolated given the physical challenges to accessing community facilities in the early years.

There is a need to be mindful of the ebb and flow of changes to both existing residents, newcomers, visitors and those working at Chilmington as the development progresses.

We need to focus on the early years where we can be clear on the immediate community infrastructure that will support the community development function and add real value to decision making.

From a broader perspective, it will be important in the early days (when the first community facilities are under development) that residents understand the wider offer within the neighbouring villages, town and borough. Such promotion could include communicating work opportunities, leisure facilities, community groups and shopping opportunities in both Chilmington and the wider borough for the benefit of all.

There are a range of projects and initiatives that are associated with the community development function. Such community development actions need to be appropriate, relevant and offered at the right time.

Innovative ways to communicate and engage residents on community matters will need to be developed that keep pace with current trends e.g. You Tube clips. The use of technology to communicate (as one of many mediums) is important. Information must be current and easily accessible. Broadband access needs to be enhanced for existing residents to enable them to keep pace and fully participate.

***These challenges and opportunities require managing and coordinating. A clear delivery plan, jointly adopted, will help match available resources as well as coordinate community development action by other partners and stakeholders. The delivery partners' support and skills will be crucial as the CMO develops its ability to deliver.***

## PART TWO: A DELIVERY APPROACH

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### Community Development Action

What early community development action must do is set a tone of engagement and a quality of delivery that encourages a culture of participation.

**Three key outcomes are possible if community development action is applied successfully. These are:**

- **An Educated community, knowing what is happening in the area and aware of the impact on them**
- **A community that is Engaged in the design of places and activity**
- **A community that is Empowered to make decisions and lead.**

#### **The 3Es Framework**

These outcomes have been translated into the 3Es to provide a framework that can be used when considering what community development actions are needed, at what stage and for which project, build development and initiative.

It is important to understand that this approach is not linear, thus it is best shown as a wheel. A project or initiative may need all three elements or just one; equally, action can jump from one to the other several times across the lifetime of a project.

- **Educate**

This passive stage of engagement is about imparting information and knowledge through newsletters, web pages, social media, formal letter, etc. There is no expectation of a response or any further involvement from the individuals or groups of individuals.

Community members often need to pass through this stage to become involved and empowered to enable them to develop the knowledge and skills to participate on a meaningful level. Within this stage, there are two elements which are distinct: *Informing* (driven by the need to inform the community of a particular action which may affect them) and *Communicating* (where community members already have some knowledge of an activity or subject and will involve imparting information through a website, newsletter, face book page, or flyer to which they can choose to respond or not).

At this point it is important to highlight the role of volunteers. They are a key part of *Engage* and *Empower* and their interest is often sparked at the *Educate* stage.

Volunteers bring a wealth of skills and knowledge to a community and are central to a successful, active and vibrant community. The creation of a pool of volunteers is a key outcome for a community development strategy.

This stage is particularly important in Year 1.

- **Engage**

This is an active response but within firm boundaries and usually driven by a particular task in mind; e.g. consultation on the design of a play space. *Engagement* is tightly bound to that project and is likely to have a short start and end point. There are two elements to this stage: *consulting* (the coming together of individuals to be informed of a particular approach or provision of a facility for which their views are sought. It is a two way process of briefing, listening, responding and adapting next steps based on feedback) and *participation* (participation goes one step further; community members are made aware of the boundaries of their input and are engaged in creating and bringing together collaborative solutions from which the authorities must make appropriate decisions).

- **Empower**

This is the opportunity for members of the community to lead collective action, make decisions and drive forward initiatives, including the management of facilities that allow them directly to meet the needs of local people. This is an empowered resident base who have ownership of their community and who have control of their assets. There are two stages to *empowerment*; collaborating and partnering (decision making between the community members and those with authority is shared) and enabling leadership and control (community members take control of decision making, delivery and action).

Equality will wrap around all aspects of community development action.



### ***Mediums for Educating and Engaging:***

- A website where people can promote local activities, request help from the community, and offer to contribute their time or expertise to help someone else.
- Social media supports widespread engagement and is a key tool for communication and consultation.
- Workshops and focus groups: local interest groups are likely to emerge based on the needs of the first residents
- Feedback through the web/social media avenues
- Exhibitions at key community venues
- Public forums
- Door knocking
- Community events which draw attendance and seek opinion at the same time (cake and chat, fish and chat, community BBQ etc)
- Presentations/sessions with schools/community groups
- Consultation questionnaires, including online tools
- Use of 'You Tube' or other emerging tools to communicate and consult
- Training for volunteers
- Engagement projects.

### ***Mediums for Empowering:***

- Commissioning groups
- Grant giving to small groups
- Volunteer training and recruitment
- Community organising
- 'Meanwhile Spaces':- vacant spaces in properties offered for community projects and cooperative workspaces
- Time credits
- Volunteering awards
- Creation of new groups such as resident forums, societies and clubs.



## Applying the 3Es Framework

Real opportunities, where residents and stakeholders can be *educated, engaged* and *empowered* will flow from the early years' delivery programme and hence it can be effectively used to structure a programme of community development action.

Our Delivery Approach (at Appendix D) adopts the principles of *educating, engaging and empowering*. It is intended to be a working document allowing flexibility within an ever changing environment. It will be used to shape delivery and investment by both the CMO and stakeholders, based on the 'community development challenges' and 'what needs to be done' over the next three years. This will direct an annual action plan requiring a fully coordinated approach and partner support, together with resident involvement.

There will be other reviews and individual development management plans for specific infrastructure and areas including the CMO's own Marketing and Communications Strategy which will sit alongside and link in with this delivery approach.

As mentioned in Part One, the community infrastructure (people and assets) in the first three years from early 2017 to the end of 2019 will include the A28 highway improvements and construction of the access points to the site, provision of the first premises for the CMO as well as the first open spaces (formal and informal), construction of the first primary school and of course, the first houses! A more detailed description of the early infrastructure planned is provided in Appendix C.

Within the early years' timeframe it is expected that the existing community (i.e. those living in the Chilmington Hamlet - approximately 70 people/30 dwellings - together with a few scattered dwellings elsewhere) will be joined by a further circa 200 dwellings (circa 480 people) within the Chilmington development area, by the end of 2019. The first new residents are expected early 2019.

***Individuals and groups of people who are residents from within the development or the surrounding community will be the focus of community development action.***



## Who will deliver?

The Developer Consortium, Ashford Borough Council, Kent County Council and its partners (who will be part of the CMO Board) are clear that the CMO will be the champion for the community development function.

It will be an accountable champion starting community development pre-first occupation but is also there for the longer term to provide consistency and to ensure delivery and that the voice of the community is heard.

In the early years this will help ensure existing residents are engaged and involved and are being supported through significant building works and changes to their environment.

There are a number of other delivery partners who play a central role in developing Chilmington and who will need to agree to adopt this strategy and support the delivery approach. Each has a particular role to play and their input will ebb and flow, as the development builds out.

## Role of the CMO

Where the role of the CMO will be vitally important is in bringing together the collective (or opposing) views of interest groups to shape developments at key sites such as the Discovery Park and the community hub and with key projects which span the development; public art, heritage, archaeology, etc. The CMO must find a way to support the creation of these groups, engage with them and empower them to take real ownership of their community. By the end of the three year period, some are likely to play a key role in delivering community development functions e.g. a management committee of a constituted community group consults residents on the focus to its work or an allotment society is formed in preparation to operate the first site due later in Phase 1.

The CMO must find ways for these forums to feed into the CMO Board and other key forums with the Community Development Worker (CDW) providing vital support and a route through. The trustees will also play a key role in creating these avenues. The Board will be encouraged to think about how it is accessible to residents, is listening and acting on ideas and concerns and is empowering local people to make decisions.

The CMO must also build relationships with existing community groups to build their capacity and support the integration of new residents with those who are already there.

Over the three-year period of this strategy, community development workers (CDWs) will be employed to support the community development function. They will play a central role in supporting the delivery of the action plans which emerge under the Delivery Approach and providing support to the lead organisation. A community development leader is likely to be employed by the CMO prior to first occupation. The CDWs will also be responsible for supporting emerging community groups and forums. They will also be central to communications with existing and new residents and building long term relationships with existing and new groups. A key role will be to help in the creation of the 'door stop' community, where neighbours know and support each other and where residents feel safe and involved in their immediate community. They will be 'out and about' working with the community from the outset, facilitating and enabling residents to drive forward their own initiatives. Their impact on the development will be significant, with CDW's playing a vital role in coordinating action, providing a holistic view and supporting a reduction in duplication through the coming together of common or similar agendas.

A detailed account of *what* the community development workers will be focused on can be found at Appendix E.

# PART THREE: RESOURCES & MEASURING SUCCESS

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## Mobilising Early Resources

This Strategy seeks to cover all bases at this early stage and provide a platform for coordinated community action which will, through its very nature, help to align and make best use of available resources. Once adopted by the borough council, the Partnership Working Group will 'own' the Strategy and its delivery working closely with the CMO Team at the Council.

Early on, six months from commencement of work on site, some specific funding for community development will flow from the developers which will provide for dedicated expertise and resource. However, it is important that partners leading major projects, such as the first school and first play-space build in time, capacity and funding for community action. A community development leader will be employed in the autumn of 2018. In the meantime, the Ashford Borough Council CMO Team will lead on delivery. As part of the community development work, it is recommended that a small grant pot (eg. max bids up to £300) be created which will be administered by the community development workers and will be available to groups of residents or partners to help enable community action. The decision making for grants could be supported by a group of interested residents who

recommend to the CDWs projects to support. This fund will be set up in 2018/19.

### *Community Development Funding from the S106;*

- £250k total sum for community development paid as follows;
- £50k within six months of commencement and a further £50k on each of the first, second, third and fourth anniversaries of the date of the first payment.

The use of the funding is defined in the S106 as follows:

*...use of monies received for the purposes of a community development programme (s) for the residents and future residents of the Development, which may include the cost of dedicated staff and consultants and setting up and running a community website.*

This funding will be received by the Borough Council and is likely to be passed to the CMO once it is operational.

The S106 community development funding will be vital to setting early action in progress and for the community development workers to coordinate work across all the work streams. They will particularly work alongside the community archaeologist who will be supporting the delivery of heritage work across the site. They will also be able to work with community groups and partners to access external funding to underpin and bolster existing resources.

## Monitoring Delivery

Those leading community development must have a real understanding of what will be deemed a success for residents and what will help them to be engaged and empowered in their community development action. Regular assessment of processes and approaches used is vital so that improvements can be made to ensure the best possible impact and outcomes for the residents and stakeholders. Setting SMART objectives at the start together with 'A Delivery Approach' shows what action will be measured. The subsequent annual action plan will detail the measures and targets to be achieved that will enable us to:

- Know what has changed and what works about an intervention or funding programme
- Know the extent and intensity of the change
- Benchmark and make comparisons
- Learn and make improvements
- Test assumptions
- Provide evidence of value for money
- Detect any unintended impacts.

## Measurement tools

There are a range of measurement tools available which can be used directly or adapted. There are some tools such as Outcome Stars ([outcomestars.org.uk](http://outcomestars.org.uk)) which are primarily used for measuring the progress and change for individuals and others which measure the impact of the activity in a community. Such tools include Social Return on Investment and Social Cost Benefit Analysis. See Appendix F for more examples.

There is no one tool which works for every programme so this strategy does not set down the specific measurement tools to be used, but adopts the principle that measuring impact will be a vital component for delivery and measurement of success.

## Early outputs

A brand for the development site which allows local people to synergise with the values and principles of living at Chilmington

A web site for Chilmington which provides information and captures;

- Easy access to current Planning applications and Masterplans
- Information on the CMO for potential purchasers and residents
- Development sales information for potential purchasers
- A 'what's on' area which captures community activity, events and current community consultations
- Local community facilities and services (on and off site) and how to access them
- Information on the Quality Monitoring Team and its role
- The CMO 'going live' and based in the first premises onsite
- Employment of community development professional/s to drive forward the delivery of this Strategy
- Community involvement in early capital projects is appropriate and timely with outcomes incorporated into the relevant project brief.

## Review and Progress Reporting

An annual action plan will be developed which will be coordinated by the CMO on behalf of all the delivery partners and progress recorded.

Individual tasks will be delivered through a mix of delivery partners' action and potentially some joined up multi-agency task groups.

A Management Group will be created and coordinated by the Ashford Borough Council (ABC) CMO team initially and then by the CMO Development Manager, reporting to the CMO Board. The Management Group could include representation from;

- Ashford Borough Council
- Developer team
- Kent County Council
- Parish Councils
- Social housing provider (once identified)
- The Community Stakeholder Group
- Voluntary and community sector (eg. Environment, Conservation and Heritage Task Group, Ashford Volunteer Centre)

*It is well understood that delivery will evolve and change over time and as the development gathers pace.*

*Membership of the Management Group will therefore also change to accommodate live projects and priorities for delivery.*

This Strategy is expected to flex and adapt and it is therefore expected that a review of progress against the Delivery Approach by the Management Group will be required on an annual basis. A light touch review of the Strategy will also take place annually as a sensor check. This will be reported through to the CMO Board (or PWG in the first instance).

Key stakeholders (whether on the Management Group or not) will be engaged in this review process with progress, achievements and challenges captured at each stage. Learning will be applied to the following year. Alongside this strategy, a Chilmington Joint Working Protocol between Ashford Borough Council and Kent County Council has been agreed that looks to strengthen further the strong relationship between the two authorities and to build on the success we have already achieved in the negotiations for the CMO through the S106. The Protocol makes reference to this strategy and encourages officers to work to its Delivery Approach in a flexible and collaborative manner to ensure maximum local benefit.

A peer review group could be created to assess the lessons learnt against other developments nationally and/or other local projects to ensure the widest possible application of learning.

Towards the end of the three year period a full review will take place, with a new community development strategy expected to emerge, befitting to the place and approach needed at that time.

## APPENDIX A - THE CHILMINGTON VISION

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**Source;** <http://chilmington-green.co.uk/index.php/vision/>

- Chilmington Green will look good and be a great place to live. It will set the benchmark for high quality design. It will become a place of special and varied character, with sustainability integrated into all aspects of design.
- Chilmington Green will respect and integrate heritage buildings, landscape features and wildlife habitats as part of a well planned layout.
- Chilmington Green will offer a lively and fun place to be, with an attractive High Street that meets local peoples' daily needs.
- Chilmington Green will in a joined up way, be for people of all ages and will provide the range of community, school, health and other services.
- Chilmington Green will offer a range of local jobs but also cater for those working in the town centre and elsewhere with regular, high quality bus connections.
- Chilmington Green will have its own, strong identity in a landscape setting, closely linked to the urban area to be able to offer new opportunities to other residents of Ashford, in particular those nearby in Brisley Farm, Singleton, Shadoxhurst and Stanhope.
- Chilmington Green will foster pride and a local community that develops a strong sense of local 'ownership' and the capacity to help manage Chilmington Green on a day to day basis.
- Chilmington Green will be flexible in design and resilient to change, and able to respond positively to advances in technology and changing working and daily lifestyles.

# APPENDIX B - CASE STUDIES

## LARGE SCALE DEVELOPMENTS - COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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### Chichester Community Development Trust, (the Graylingwell and De Roussillon developments)

<http://chichestercdt.org.uk/>

Both developments include approximately 1,300 new dwellings on an old hospital site on the edge of Chichester town. The community trust is a membership organisation with membership paid by residents. The site has been developed out by Linden Homes and Affinity Sutton, who is the social housing provider.

The Trust has been endowed with a range of community assets from historical churches which are converted for community use to spaces for start up businesses. The Trust runs programmes which engage the local community. There is a focus on creating a sustainable community through volunteering, supporting young people and skills development. The community development programme is run in partnership with Affinity Sutton and is very successful in listening and acting on the voice of the local people. It has an active membership and its board is made up of developers, council reps, social housing reps and local residents.

The Trust is funded by its members, the council and many other funders including Heritage Lottery Fund and Awards for All.

#### *Key Learning Points:*

- Start small and stay local
- Residents are at the heart of the Trust and the community
- Offer a range of activities to interest different people
- Partnership with the social housing provider provides a route in to those residents who may be less engaged/more difficult to reach. It also provides for early capacity.



## North West Bicester (part of the Bicester Extension programme), Cherwell District Council

<http://nwbicester.co.uk/>

North West Bicester is one of the UK's Eco towns. The Bicester extension is a phased development with separate large scale developments delivered over a significant period of time. Rather than set up their management organisation (Local Management Organisation or LMO) from the start, the Council and social housing provider (A2Dominion) are taking a different approach which sees existing local people and stakeholders participate in workshops and early consultations relating to the evolution of the development. As new residents take up occupation they are encouraged to be part of working groups which will eventually merge and form the LMO. This will not happen until there is a quantum of residents. A2Dominion will run the LMO in the first instance, eventually stepping back to create an independent organisation when the community is ready.

There are community builders (community development workers) for each 1,000 dwellings who engage with new residents and encourage them to become involved with community activities. This model sees those community builders move on after a period of time to support newer, emerging neighbourhoods.

The LMO will be endowed with a number of small assets (community hall, play spaces) and will be gifted an endowment to manage these facilities into the long term. There is no service charge on residents and the LMO will not manage any landscaping. This function will be retained by Cherwell DC.

### *Key Learning Points:*

- Everything takes time
- Seek early stakeholder engagement (there are concerns that the LMO could take over the role of the Town Council. Time must be taken to reassure and comfort stakeholders of the remit and purpose of the LMO)
- One-to-one interviews with residents and stakeholders have worked very well and been crucial to understanding local fears and concerns that would not have been aired in a workshop/consultation setting
- Community builders are a valuable asset, building early relationships with the first residents and access to facilities, services and knowledge
- Find new ways of communicating with residents. Each household receives an i-pad to manage its energy usage – this provides opportunities for wider communication too.
- A community wellbeing strategy aims to embed art and cultural wellbeing from the outset, ensuring artists are engaged in the design and form of community buildings and activities.

## The Green Estate Trust & Manor and Castle Trust, Sheffield

<http://greenestate.org.uk> and <http://www.manorandcastle.org.uk/>

The Manor Estate was labelled, 'the worst estate in Britain' in the mid 90's. In 1996, the Manor and Castle Trust was set up to respond to the deprivation and disadvantage. The Green Estate Trust and Manor and Castle Trust deliver exceptional work to support the regeneration of the community and provide work based opportunities from within the immediate locality to enable local people to find and sustain work. Building long term stewardship is key to their success.

Whilst the synergies to Chilmington are few when comparing existing housing, levels of deprivation and the provision of existing poor quality housing, the enterprising approach taken to provide long term sustainable solutions are exemplary and ones which the Chilmington approach can adopt.

The Manor and Castle Trust has set about rebuilding housing using SRB3 funding and regenerating poor value open space to provide for a healthy environment for its residents, which has had significant impacts on their health and wellbeing. Combine this with the wide range of community development programmes including, getting local residents active, building skills for employability, educating on healthy lifestyles and providing safe spaces for children and young people to meet, provides a recipe for success.

The business model at Manor and Castle combines public sector and other funding with the letting of commercial office space (which is in itself a hub for supporting new local business) and income generation through use of its community venues. This sustainable approach provides sufficient funding to underpin the community development activities.

The Green Estate Trust emerged from an 18 month project to regenerate, manage and maintain the green spaces in and around Manor and Castle. The Trust was created in 1999 and is independent from the Manor and Castle Trust. They work very closely together to ensure a coordinated approach to supporting the community.

The Green Estate Trust operate on a social enterprise model and are committed to managing green spaces in Sheffield in a way that maximises social, environmental and economic benefits for the neighbourhood.

Instead of receiving core funding to support ongoing green space management the Trust had to develop core commercial activities that could support a reasonably sized 'green' organisation still capable of addressing the areas environmental issues.

This approach has resulted in the mix of commercial sales and services and social / environmental activities that are now delivered and can be read about on their website.

Despite the improvements to the physical fabric of the area and the investment in community development, many of the issues are deeply rooted and the remediation strategies that are now in place will take many years to bear fruit.

The Trust website cites:

‘Against the odds most of our original ambitions have been achieved which on a good day makes us feel really positive. We have provided some of the leadership and vision and have taken lots of risks but the reality is that these achievements are the sum of many different people and organisations working mostly together.

The value of having the right people around you, some ambitious joined up thinking, a lot of persistence and not a little luck have all been essential ingredients in getting to where we are now – a better looking, much more resilient place to live, work and enjoy life from.’

## **Cambourne, Cambridgeshire**

<http://www.cambourneparishcouncil.gov.uk/>

A very different approach to most other sites researched, the community development function here is delivered at a very local organisational level i.e. by individual sports, youth and other clubs, supported by the Parish Council.

The Parish Clerk is an inspiration, providing enormous support and advice to those operating and living in the Parish. The Parish Council delivers its role as the closest tier of local government to local people well, going beyond its statutory duties to ensure new community provision are of high quality design, consulted on and provide for the needs of its parishioners.

The Parish Council owns most of the community assets and leases/hires them to local organisations at low/nil rents. The Parish Council also has a community grant fund which provides funding for local activities.

## APPENDIX C - EARLY YEARS INFRASTRUCTURE

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In the context of Chilmington, the early avenues for community engagement can be linked to distinct themes which are held together as key deliverables through the S106 planning agreement in the early years. These can be defined as follows.

### *Engagement in the Planning*

This will include but is not limited to:

- A28 construction works (led by KCC) – community involvement likely via workshops and exhibitions
- Individual Reserved Matters applications (led by Planning) – community involvement through the usual channels
- Construction management issues (led by Planning with support from KCC Highways) – via clearance of conditions and onsite by Developer named contact for complaints
- Improvements to the channels in which the community can be kept in touch with planning submissions and latest developments, including an interactive map of live applications, briefing sessions for Parish Councils on how to deal with applications, a mailing list of residents/stakeholders who wish to be kept informed and regular updates to the community stakeholder group.

### *Community development and engagement on priority projects*

This includes but is not limited to:

- Open space management (including the first advanced planting areas, ecological mitigation land, public open space, play spaces maintenance (led by the CMO Team/CMO Board) – advice will be required through working with key partners and experts to decide the best way to manage these key spaces. Local people will have the opportunity to become involved in this debate through consultation at events and workshops where timely and relevant to do so.
- Creation of a public art strategy (led by the Council) – community engagement through exhibitions, workshops and events.
- Development of a Discovery Park Masterplan (led by the Council) – community engagement through exhibitions, workshops and events including the delivery of a sports hub and pitches.
- Early community development worker posts, their role and remit (led by the Ashford BC Cultural Services, the CMO Team and PWG/CMO Board).
- Heritage and archaeology; building an understanding of the history of the site in terms of its agricultural uses, links to World War 2 and the RAF, Iron Age burial site and Roman Road. Bringing together the historic links and embedding them into the design of the public realm will help to create a sense of place and ownership for the new community.

This understanding can be proportionally threaded through community development work, public art and physical structures.

- The opening of the first primary school – the first permanent community building to be provided - the primary school will play an important part in early community engagement. It will also help to create a vibrant and active community through the natural focus and energy of local families with children attending a new school. The community development function should embrace this opportunity, with key partners working together to inform, engage and consult residents not only about community activities which could be delivered from the school but wider community projects too.

## The Community Assets

The early physical community assets expected to come forward in the three year lifespan of this Strategy include:

- First CMO operating premises – likely to be located near the ‘gateway’ to the site, on the spine road and adjacent to the first marketing suite - this temporary building will be instrumental in connecting new and existing residents to the emerging community and its assets. The premises will be approximately 200 sq m and include a room for community use and at least one meeting room. It is hoped an outside space can be created which can evolve into a small community garden and area for community BBQs, etc. The building will include the offices of the CMO and be the place where residents can meet trustees and staff to discuss any concerns, get involved in the community and comment on the latest plans.
- Public art – the first installation is expected in the first phase. The detail to this piece is currently unclear but could be a sculpture, temporary structure or other project which embraces the principles of the emerging public art strategy.
- First open spaces (informal and formal) – open space will be provided from the outset and managed by the developers in the first instance. The CMO will take on open space once it is established. Early spaces include:
- Chilmington Gardens – a small urban park at the district centre, adjacent to the Market Square and community hub, with mature trees and a watercourse - this space will provide for a recreation and relaxation area for residents and visitors.
- Northern Gateway (Access A) – the main access road to the site will be designed to provide a high quality frontage to the site, which will include open space, pedestrian and cycle routes into the district centre and connections to other adjacent communities and wider cycle routes. There will be space for recreation.
- First primary school – proposed opening onsite in 2019, the primary school will provide a central meeting place for new residents with children. The design of the building/s will follow similar lines to that of other recent new schools in the borough and include some spaces which can be used by the community outside of core school times e.g. school hall. Located at the heart of the district centre, adjacent to the community hub and first allotment, the school will be the first permanent community building.

# APPENDIX D: A DELIVERY APPROACH FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE EARLY YEARS

## Introduction

This delivery approach responds to the *Building a Community at Chilmington Green and, the First Three Years (2018-2020)*. Agreed by the Partnership Working Group (PWG) (the advisory board to the developers) in March 2017, and here on called the Community Development Strategy, it states the Chilmington Community Management Organisation's (CMO) and its partners' community development ambition that is to:

- Ensure the provision of early facilities meets community need and are valued because residents and the wider immediate community and wider borough community are aware, consulted, informed and part of decision making;
- Promote and build long term relationships with existing community groups and encourage new community groups to emerge. Help people come together to take collective action and generate solutions to common problems;
- Enable residents (on a day-to-day basis) to know their neighbours, seek support from their neighbours, be active in the community and be empowered to make decisions about community matters whether that be the development of a new facility or their role as a member of a local club or interest group.

Our delivery approach adopts the principles of *Educating, Engaging and Empowering*. It is intended to be a working document allowing flexibility within an ever changing environment. It will be used to shape delivery and investment by both the CMO and stakeholders, based on the 'community development challenges' and 'what needs to be done' over the next three years. This will direct an annual action plan requiring a fully coordinated approach and partner support, together with resident involvement.

There will be other reviews and individual development management plans for specific infrastructure and areas including the CMO's own Marketing and Communications Strategy which will sit alongside and link in with this delivery approach.

## Priority Areas (places and projects)

The Community Development Strategy summarises the delivery and timetable for community infrastructure at Chilmington comprising buildings, open space and parks, schools, public art, as well as establishment of the CMO in the Early Years.

The priority areas that will assist community development include:

1. The Planning and Delivery Process
2. The CMO and its Base
3. First Primary School and Community Hub
4. Early Active Travel
5. Open Space (including Parks, Allotments, Conservation Areas), Play and Landscaping
6. Public Art, Heritage and Archaeology.

Each area of the above are considered separately in our approach but clearly some ideas and actions join up. The community development action suggested under 'what needs to be done' aims to add value to the successful delivery of these priority areas and in turn help meet the ambitions of the CMO to create an *Educated, Engaged and Empowered* community that is healthy and vibrant.

## Delivery and Evaluation

Local stakeholders are key to delivery and, together with the CMO, will be key to build activity and provision which is responsive to need and utilises the skills and expertise available from across the borough. Local residents will be at the heart of the work, with avenues created, bespoke to each project, which capture their ideas and promote their active involvement.

The CMO will be employing a community development worker in 2018 who will help with delivery. The CMO will also be responsible for supporting and evaluating the programme to ensure it is meeting local need. This will include collecting resident feedback and highlighting successes and challenges.

# 1. THE PLANNING AND DELIVERY PROCESS

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*The Borough and County Council's Planning functions already have statutory processes concerning the community on planning applications. A Council Communications Strategy will look at the key milestones and how best to communicate these to residents.*

*This section looks at how the CMO can add value and delivers new channels for engagement as well as informing people about the delivery programme and how it affects them.*

## Community Development Challenges

- Local residents and stakeholders could miss the opportunities to formally respond and understand what is going on.
- A wider pool of local people may not be aware of planning developments and the delivery programme for community assets.
- Residents may not be aware of the different channels in place to deal with concerns as work progresses (e.g. construction and highway improvements).

## What needs to be done

- a) Distribute a flyer which educates and provides information to residents on 'how to get involved and stay informed' – part of the Welcome Pack.
- b) Create a regular update newsletter/ communication flow, clearly dated, on i) the overall development; ii) what's happening on the ground NOW; iii) and the different roles of the partners.
- c) Create and promote the existence of a Chilmington mailing list to alert residents of planning applications.
- d) Explore options for digital communications and test ideas/pilot with existing residents.
- e) Develop bespoke web messages on stakeholder websites (the Developers, Ashford BC, Kent CC, Parish Councils and in time, the CMO) providing key information e.g. current and approved planning applications, live construction traffic news on KCC's website and a dedicated phone line provided by the Developers for concerns on construction impacts.
- f) Consider social media campaigns and community events to promote key stages in the delivery programme for community assets.
- g) Advocate the importance of broadband enhancement for the Hamlet and other surrounding properties
- h) Regularly review communication channels and their effectiveness.



## 2. THE CMO & ITS BASE

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*The CMO is producing a Marketing and Communications Strategy which sets out early actions in creating an identity of openness, transparency and inclusivity. A flexible base with community space will provide the CMO's office and space to support early resident communication, engagement and activity.*

### Community Development Challenges

- Unknown and invisible CMO with a limited track record.
- Fragmented early builds (across four locations) and the surrounding the sites, which need to be seen as one community.
- Respond to the local demographic to shape activities, information and marketing literature and use feedback to understand what is working (and what is not)

### What Needs To Be Done

- a) Build relationships with existing community groups, event organisers and forums in the locality, promoting their offer and (where appropriate) securing their future ahead of duplicating new groups at Chilmington
- b) Agree the content of a Welcome Pack (including gift) for new residents, test with existing residents, distribute and include a summary leaflet of the Community Development Strategy and wider borough facilities.
- c) Meet and greet new residents (within four weeks of moving in). Consider innovative welcome 'gifts' such as a sustainable garden pack or vegetable starter pack with growbag.
- d) Create an engagement programme at the CMO base which includes 'drop-in's' or surgeries with various stakeholders and the CMO trustees; have internet access points, display design drawings and consider models to support key consultations
- e) Work with local service providers and residents to identify appropriate early services that bridge the gap before the Community Hub, Health Facility and School e.g. breakfast/afterschool clubs.
- f) Create a Community Chest Grant fund (managed by the Community Development Worker) focused on supporting existing and new groups/community activities which meets the needs of the residents and generates participation and stewardship, and looks to build local capacity such as volunteering.
- g) Deliver specific programmes of activity that support the needs of the disadvantaged, vulnerable and unemployed.
- h) Explore the creation of a volunteer strategy and the need to identify local community champions.

### 3. FIRST PRIMARY SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY HUB

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*The first primary school serving Chilmington aims to open in 2019. The Community Hub will provide for a large number of services in the community including health and social care, library facilities, community social and indoor sports and outdoor spaces but not until the occupation of 1,800 homes. Please also refer to The CMO and Its Base at No.2 of the Delivery Approach.*

#### Community Development Challenges

- Information, advice and space for services in the early years will be limited.
- Residents may go elsewhere for services e.g. GP.
- Valuable and meaningful involvement in aspects of design needs to respect statutory processes and budget constraints.

#### What Needs To Be Done

- a) Ensure the Welcome Pack provides information about the school and hub and what (at least in the short-medium term) is provided off site.
- b) Continue to work with KCC Education (and/or its promoter) to identify opportunities for community and stakeholder involvement as the primary school develops.
- c) Work with Health providers to identify services required by the community which can be provided on site.
- d) Maintain strong communication channels with residents that promote involvement in the shape and design of early services and facilities encouraging early stewardship so that when services are provided on site, there is already a desire to 'stay local'.
- e) Utilise the school community as a vehicle to promote and distribute information eg school gate campaigns.

## 4. EARLY ACTIVE TRAVEL

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*Through the Planning process, routes are designed that provide for connectivity and easy travel across the site and into the wider borough. Some of these will incorporate running routes, cycle ways and green links that support health and active travel.*

### Community Development Challenges

- Limited offer and choice in the early years for the first residents i.e. bus routes, some pedestrian routes and minimal cycle ways.
- Changing the culture where sustainable travel is the preferred choice of residents, visitors and workers.
- Providers do not work in isolation and are not aware of the communication objectives.

### What Needs To Be Done

- a) Creatively promote (e.g. through pop ups, stunts, activities, etc) the opportunities for people to respond to active travel proposals.
- b) Work with providers to distribute a flyer on the options for travel, the routes available and promote the active travel benefits, including the residents' bus vouchers.
- c) Deliver a green transport engagement project that helps introduce the Active Travel brand, and test, consult and generate further ideas.

## 5. OPEN SPACE (INCLUDING PARKS, ALLOTMENTS, CONSERVATION AREAS), PLAY & LANDSCAPING

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*There is a mix of open spaces, parks, play areas, ecology sites and the first allotment site to be designed and in part delivered in the early years. This requires input from the community and key stakeholders. ABC has a commitment to produce a masterplan for the Discovery Park which will be a strategic park for the borough.*

### Community Development Challenges

- Low number of residents when designs and masterplans are needing to be consulted on.
- Valuable and meaningful involvement in aspects such as highway verge landscape design will need to respect statutory requirements.
- Unrealistic expectations by residents on timings and delivery of assets.
- Conflicting uses and needs eg. strategic nature of the Discovery Park against local resident need.
- Different amenity spaces and play areas need strong identities to help place making.
- A number of different stakeholders will be creating, managing and maintaining assets - joined up communication is key.
- Timely involvement of volunteers.

### What Needs To Be Done

- a) Agree with stakeholders the process for community consultation on key sites to ensure involvement is timely and meaningful.
- b) Provide clear information through various stakeholders to educate residents about the phasing, delivery programme and nature of the different assets.
- c) Explore with residents and stakeholders the 'Chilmington Story' (see Heritage) and incorporate in designs.
- d) Ensure the Discovery Park masterplan includes local engagement and once adopted, discussion and creativity continue.
- e) Set up a themed stakeholder working group to advise the CMO for longer term community involvement in the management of open space such as the timely creation of an allotment association.

## 6. PUBLIC ART, HERITAGE & ARCHAEOLOGY

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*Chilmington will be a creative place which will be reflected in its public realm and project delivery supported by a Public Art Strategy. Public art will work to focus on contemporary new design as well as to reflect its past. Heritage will major on its natural links to the Iron Age, Romans, World War 2 and the agricultural heritage.*

### Community Development Challenges

- Limited time and residents to provide opportunities for community engagement, involvement and influence in the Public Art Strategy before adoption.
- Ensuring the Public Art Strategy is seen as an important element of encouraging resident and borough-wide engagement in Chilmington.
- Capturing the history of the site and use it in the best way possible within the design of the public realm, open spaces and other community assets.

### What Needs To Be Done

- a) Engage with existing residents and stakeholders on the Public Art Strategy.
- b) Ensure new residents are aware of and can contribute to public art design and installation.
- c) 'Tell the Chilmington Story' (past, present and future) and promote it borough-wide.
- d) Maximise the different historic aspects in community participation and educational programmes, working closely with the community archaeologist.
- e) Embed 'the story' in design work streams, ensuring a cohesive approach to interpretation on site.

## APPENDIX E - THE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT LEADER/WORKER FUNCTION

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The CDW's core function will fundamentally be to help to create a sense of place and belonging for local residents. They will be 'out and about' working with the community from the outset, facilitating and enabling residents to drive forward their own initiatives. This could be achieved through;

- Being accessible to potential buyers
- A home visit within four weeks of moving in, informing new residents of the CMO, its work, ethos, structure and remit to support local residents. This home visit could be further supported by a joint visit with the Quality Monitoring Team, providing residents with an opportunity to share any thoughts about their house purchase and how and who to raise concerns to.
- Administer a small grants pot (up to £300) to generate local activity and support their operation
- Coordinate and potentially lead wider community consultation (on behalf of the Developers) on community assets to be adopted by the CMO prior to reserved matters applications being made to the Council.
- Hold community events which bring together residents which can be used as an opportunity to build social cohesion and allow space to consult residents on what matters to them.
- Coordinate regular communication providing updates on Planning matters, activities, opportunities to get involved and the work of the CMO through newsletters, media, social media and web updates.
- Coordinate local interest groups, bringing together agendas where relevant and ensuring they are connected to each other, the wider community and stakeholders as and when appropriate.
- Signpost to and help to secure funding for the functions and activities of local interest groups.
- Be the first point of call for residents and local interest groups, providing two way communication channels for residents to the CMO Board and other stakeholders.
- Provide or signpost to relevant training sessions for volunteers.
- Help new groups to form to meet local need eg. an allotment society, sports clubs and parent and toddler groups.

# APPENDIX F – STRATEGY CONSULTATION PROCESS AND OUTCOMES

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The community development strategy has been through a rigorous process of consultation with residents, key stakeholders and delivery partners. This process took place from December 2016 to September 2017 and included;

- A stakeholder and delivery partners workshop to agree the principles to the strategic approach
- A workshop with the Community Stakeholder Group and key partners
- A programme of public consultation activity which was promoted through local schools, leaflets drops and other avenues and invited residents to attend an exhibition at The Environment Centre and/or respond via an online survey, postcard responses and email
- Presentations to the Community Stakeholders Group, Parish Councils and Partnership Working Group which sought endorsement to the amended strategy ahead of adoption by the borough council.

## *Key Outcomes*

The consultation was broadly a success with a reasonable response from the wider public. The stakeholder workshop was a great success, delving into the challenges and opportunities for community development in the early years.

A surprising outcome was the **lack of understanding of the broader development principles and aspirations**. This has led to a reassessment of the first year priorities for the CDS Action Plan, which must focus more on ‘educating’ residents about the development before they can be expected to engage meaningfully in shaping community development action. Of course some of the ‘educating’ can be achieved through community development action eg through the creation of a public art strategy or early work of the community archaeologist.

**Communication** is key to success and **technology and access to it** plays a huge part in ensuring equality of access to information and activities. The first action plan must therefore seek to address how to make this possible when existing residents have currently no access to high speed broadband.

**Community integration** was a further key theme where a number of ideas were brought forward, most notably the need to support existing groups before duplicating with new at Chilmington, creation of community champions and to ‘piggy back’ on existing groups and events.

These ideas and more have been built into this Strategy and its Delivery Approach and will provide focus for the first annual action plan (and beyond).

Overall, local people, partners and stakeholders agreed with the approach to the community development strategy and welcomed the opportunity to get involved.

## APPENDIX G - FURTHER RESEARCH

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**What is Community Engagement: HCA Tool Kit;** [http://www.equality-ne.co.uk/downloads/856\\_toolkit-community-engagement.pdf](http://www.equality-ne.co.uk/downloads/856_toolkit-community-engagement.pdf)

**S Davidson, Spinning the Wheel of Empowerment: 1998**  
<http://www.sarkissian.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2009/06/Davidson-Spinning-wheel-article1998.pdf>

**Neighbourliness and Empowerment = Wellbeing: Is there a formula for happy communities?: Mandeep Hothi with Nicola Bacon, Marcia Brophy and Geoff Mulgan**  
[http://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/N\\_E\\_W\\_web.pdf](http://youngfoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/N_E_W_web.pdf)

**An Action Plan for Community Empowerment: Building on Success: Local Government Association: October 2007**  
<http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20120919132719/http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/communities/pdf/actionplan>

**Pathways through participation: What creates and sustains active citizenship?: September 2011: Ellie Brodie: NCVO, Institute of Volunteering Research: Involve; Big Lottery.** <http://pathwaysthroughparticipation.org.uk/resources/summaryreport/>

**The International Association of Public Participation: IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation: 2007:**  
<http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.iap2.org/resource/resmgr/imported/spectrum.pdf>

### [Measuring Impact Tools and Approaches](#)

**The BIG Lottery Fund 'An Introduction to Impact Measurement' document;**

<https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/about-big/publications?containing=measuring%20impact>

### **HACTS Social Value Bank Tool**

<http://www.hact.org.uk/social-value-bank>

**Nesta's and the Social Innovation Partnership – Guidance for Developing a Theory of Change for your Programme**

[https://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/theory\\_of\\_change\\_guidance\\_for\\_applicants\\_.pdf](https://www.nesta.org.uk/sites/default/files/theory_of_change_guidance_for_applicants_.pdf)

### **Valuation Techniques for Social Cost Benefit Analysis**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/valuation-techniques-for-social-cost-benefit-analysis>



# Equality Impact Assessment

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1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a document that summarises how the council has had due regard to the public sector equality duty (Equality Act 2010) in its decision-making. Although there is no legal duty to produce an EIA, the Council must have **due regard** to the equality duty and an EIA is recognised as the best method of fulfilling that duty. It can assist the Council in making a judgment as to whether a policy or other decision will have unintended negative consequences for certain people and help maximise the positive impacts of policy change. An EIA can lead to one of four consequences:

- (a) No major change – the policy or other decision is robust with no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. Opportunities to promote equality have been taken;
- (b) Adjust the policy or decision to remove barriers or better promote equality as identified in the EIA;
- (c) Continue the policy – if the EIA identifies potential for adverse impact, set out compelling justification for continuing;
- (d) Stop and remove the policy where actual or potential unlawful discrimination is identified.

## Public sector equality duty

2. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the council, when exercising public functions, to have due regard to the need to:
- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
  - (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
  - (c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (ie tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups).

3. These are known as the three aims of the general equality duty.

## Protected characteristics

4. The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine protected characteristics for the purpose of the equality duty:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership\*
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

\*For marriage and civil partnership, only the first aim of the duty applies in relation to employment.

## Due regard

5. Having 'due regard' is about using good equality information and analysis at the right time as part of decision-making procedures.
6. To 'have due regard' means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities the council must consciously consider the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This can involve:
- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
  - taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics when these are different from the needs of other people.
  - encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where it is disproportionately low.
7. How much regard is 'due' will depend on the circumstances. The greater the

potential impact, the higher the regard required by the duty. Examples of functions and decisions likely to engage the duty include: policy decisions, budget decisions, public appointments, service provision, statutory discretion, decisions on individuals, employing staff and procurement of goods and services.

8. In terms of timing:

- Having 'due regard' should be considered at the inception of any decision or proposed policy or service development or change.
- Due regard should be considered throughout development of a decision. Notes shall be taken and kept on file as to how due regard has been had to the equality duty in research, meetings, project teams, consultations etc.
- The completion of the EIA is a way of effectively summarising this and it should inform final decision-making.

**Case law principles**

9. A number of principles have been established by the courts in relation to the equality duty and due regard:

- Decision-makers in public authorities must be aware of their duty to have 'due regard' to the equality duty and so EIA's must be attached to any relevant committee reports.
- Due regard is fulfilled before and at the time a particular policy is under consideration as well as at the time a decision is taken. Due regard involves a conscious approach and state of mind.
- A public authority cannot satisfy the duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken.
- The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.
- The duty is a non-delegable one. The duty will always remain the responsibility of the public authority.
- The duty is a continuing one so that it needs to be considered not only when a

policy, for example, is being developed and agreed but also when it is implemented.

- It is good practice for those exercising public functions to keep an accurate record showing that they have actually considered the general duty and pondered relevant questions. Proper record keeping encourages transparency and will discipline those carrying out the relevant function to undertake the duty conscientiously.
- A public authority will need to consider whether it has sufficient information to assess the effects of the policy, or the way a function is being carried out, on the aims set out in the general equality duty.
- A public authority cannot avoid complying with the duty by claiming that it does not have enough resources to do so.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has produced helpful guidance on "Meeting the Equality Duty in Policy and Decision-Making" (October 2014). It is available on the following link and report authors should read and follow this when developing or reporting on proposals for policy or service development or change and other decisions likely to engage the equality duty. [Equality Duty in decision-making](#)

<b>Lead officer:</b>	Christina Fuller
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Decision:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy, project, service, contract</li> <li>• Review, change, new, stop</li> </ul>	Chilmington Green Early Community Development Strategy (Jan 2018-Dec 2020)
<b>Date of decision:</b> The date when the final decision is made. The EIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	7 <sup>th</sup> December, 2017 (Cabinet)
<b>Summary of the proposed decision:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims and objectives</li> <li>• Key actions</li> <li>• Expected outcomes</li> <li>• Who will be affected and how?</li> <li>• How many people will be affected?</li> </ul>	The principles of the Community Development Strategy are based on engagement and involvement from ALL of the community. Methods of community, marketing and engagement will reflect the local demographic and encourage active participation through a range of means to accommodate a diverse range of needs.
<b>Information and research:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline the information and research that has informed the decision.</li> <li>• Include sources and key findings.</li> </ul>	Community development theories and approaches have been applied to the proposals which revolve around inclusive engagement and involvement by local people.
<b>Consultation:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What specific consultation has occurred on this decision?</li> <li>• What were the results of the consultation?</li> <li>• Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics?</li> <li>• What conclusions can be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics?</li> </ul>	<p>A robust consultation process for the development of the Strategy was adopted that involved over 175 people. The consultation was accessible through public exhibitions, postcard responses and online survey.</p> <p>The evolving action plan will consider how best to involve residents and use a diverse range of methods and opportunities to encourage and enable them to get involved.</p> <p>The consultation has not flagged any potential impact on those with protected characteristics.</p>

**Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics.**

When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.

<b>Protected characteristic</b>	<b>Relevance to Decision</b> High/Medium/Low/None	<b>Impact of Decision</b> <b>Positive</b> (Major/Minor) <b>Negative</b> (Major/Minor) <b>Neutral</b>
<u>AGE</u> Elderly	The Strategy is only applicable to residents of Chilmington and surrounding area.  High	Positive (major)
Middle age	High	Positive (major)
Young adult	High	Positive (major)
Children	High	Positive (major)
<u>DISABILITY</u> Physical	High	Positive (major)
Mental	High	Positive (major)
Sensory	High	Positive (major)
<u>GENDER RE-ASSIGNMENT</u>	High	Positive (major)
<u>MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP</u>	High	Positive (major)
<u>PREGNANCY/MATERNITY</u>	High	Positive (major)
<u>RACE</u>	High	Positive (major)
<u>RELIGION OR BELIEF</u>	High	Positive (major)
<u>SEX</u> Men	High	Positive (major)
Women	High	Positive (major)
<u>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</u>	High	Positive (major)

<b>Mitigating negative impact:</b>	None
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Where any negative impact has been identified, outline the measures taken to mitigate against it.	
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<p><b>Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty?</b></p> <p>Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's <a href="#">Essential Guide</a>, alongside fuller <a href="#">PSED Technical Guidance</a>.</p>	
Aim	Yes / No / N/A
1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	No
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes

<p><b>Conclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish.</li> <li>There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see guidance above).</li> <li>Advise on whether the proposal meets the aims of the equality duty or whether adjustments have been made or need to be made or whether any residual impacts are justified.</li> <li>How will monitoring of the policy, procedure or decision and its implementation be undertaken and reported?</li> </ul>	<p>Consideration has been given to Equality Duty through consultation and generation of the strategy. The purpose of the strategy is to promote engagement and involvement by all the community at Chilmington Green and surrounding community.</p> <p>No adjustments have been made to accommodate the Equality Duty to date.</p> <p>Monitoring of the Strategy, and its delivery as well as the Equality Duty will be carried out through ongoing monitoring of the Strategy. This will be led by Culture and carried out by the Community Management Organisation through a contract with the council.</p>
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	<i>The council's revised policy register will assist services to meet this</i>
<b>EIA completion date:</b>	7/11/2017

**Agenda Item No:** 11  
**Report To:** CABINET  
**Date of Meeting:** 7 DECEMBER 2017



**Report Title:** **Proposed Local Business Rates Scheme following consultation with Ratepayers and other interested parties**

**Report Author & Job Title:** Peter Budden  
Operations & Support Manager

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Shorter  
**Portfolio Holder for:** Finance & IT

<b>Summary</b>	In the spring budget of March 2017 the Chancellor of the Exchequer introduced a discretionary rate relief scheme for businesses suffering from the impact of April 2017 revaluation of business rates. The government would provide a total £300m fund that would be distributed to ratepayers over a four year period. Approximately 60% of the fund would be distributed in year one (2017/18) with the subsequent years distributing 28%, 10% & 2% of the fund respectively. It was decided that the criteria of the scheme should be consulted on with ratepayers and interested parties. This report analyses the consultation and proposes a Discretionary Rate Relief scheme.
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**Key Decision:** No

**Significantly Affected Wards:** None

**Recommendations:** **The Cabinet is recommended to:-**  
**I. Adopt the amended scheme as outlined in the report.**

**Policy Overview:** Government announced funding for a discretionary rate relief scheme in the March Budget to mitigate the impact on local businesses of the revaluation of business properties.

After some delays in receiving guidance from government and software updates members approved a proposed scheme for consultation in the autumn.

**Financial Implications:** None – the scheme will be fully funded by the Government

**Legal Implications** None - The scheme will be operated within the existing regulations for the administration of business rates.

**Equalities Impact Assessment** Not applicable - The scheme seeks to provide support to local businesses and not individuals.

**Other Material  
Implications:**

None

**Exempt from  
Publication:**

**Contact:**

**Peter Budden  
Operations & Support Manager**



## **Report Title: Proposed Local Business Rates Scheme following consultation with Ratepayers and other interested parties**

### **Introduction and Background**

1. A local business rates relief scheme was one of three measures to assist businesses suffering the impact of the revaluation of business rates, introduced by the government in the spring budget. For this scheme Ashford Borough Council was granted £600,000 in total, spread over four years as follows: 2017/18 £350,000, 2018/19 £170,000 2019/20 £70,000 & 2020/21 £10,000. The other two measures a cap on the increase in the rates bill for small businesses and a discount of up to £1,000 for all public houses with a rateable value up to £100,000, have now been implemented as the Government guidelines.
2. The proposed main criteria for the local business rates relief Scheme that went out to consultation was as follows:
  - Relief will not be granted where mandatory relief is already granted – this is for charitable organisations.
  - Relief will only be awarded where the revaluation has seen a business receive an increase of more than 12.5%
  - Relief will only be awarded to premises that are occupied – there will be no award for unoccupied premises
  - Relief will only be awarded where the rateable value of the premises is less than £200,000
  - Furthermore, relief will only be granted for premises that were occupied on 31st March 2017 and 1st April 2017
  - Relief will not be granted to new businesses taking up ownership of a premises on or after 1st April 2017
  - Relief will be awarded to local businesses – ie those with only one or more premises in the borough council area – not national or multi-national businesses with branches elsewhere
  - A local business with more than one premises in the borough may receive discretionary rate relief for more than one premises providing that all other criteria are met
  - Businesses will need to complete a short form to apply for the discretionary rate relief
3. It was also proposed that:
  - In year one of the scheme, given that 12.5% is deemed an acceptable increase, the council will use the discretionary rate relief to bridge the gap between that and the actual increase
  - In year two of the scheme, given that the council's funding pot is halved, the council will award half of the rate relief it would have awarded in year one.

4. The full proposed draft policy is attached at **Appendix A**.
5. Consultation with local businesses & other interested parties commenced on 25 September and ended 6 November 2017. A survey was made available on our website and the Communication Team advertised the consultation and contacted a number of interested parties they were aware of. A copy of the questionnaire and the responses are attached at **Appendix B**.
6. Unfortunately only 9 responses to the survey were received however the majority of the respondents agreed with the suggestions to award the relief to local businesses, that recipients of the relief should apply for the relief and that the second years relief should be half the first years relief as is the Governments grant.
7. The majority of the recipients did not agree that 12.5% was a reasonable increase in the business rates charge.
8. This has subsequently been reviewed by examining the businesses that will qualify for the relief and then allocating the funding across those accounts. The scheme targets the support to local businesses and the definition of a local business has limited this to a fairly small number of accounts. This has identified that the funding available will support relief being granted to businesses that have suffered an increase of 2%. Accordingly a 2% increase has therefore been included in the Current Proposal below.

## **Current Proposal**

9. Taking account of as many of the comments as possible in the responses to the consultation exercise the following main criteria for the Local Business Rates Scheme is as follows:
  - Relief will not be granted where mandatory relief is already granted – this is for charitable organisations.
  - Relief will only be awarded where the revaluation has seen a business receive an increase of more than 2%
  - Relief will only be awarded to premises that are occupied – there will be no award for unoccupied premises
  - Relief will only be awarded where the rateable value of the premises is less than £200,000
  - Furthermore, relief will only be granted for premises that were occupied on 31st March 2017 and 1st April 2017
  - Relief will not be granted to new businesses taking up ownership of a premises on or after 1st April 2017
  - Relief will be awarded to local businesses – i.e. those with only one or more premises in the borough council area – not national or multi-national businesses with branches elsewhere.
  - A local business with more than one premises in the borough may receive discretionary rate relief for more than one premises providing that all other criteria are met
  - Businesses will need to complete a short form to apply for the discretionary rate relief.

- 10.** It is also proposed that:
- In year one of the scheme, given that 2% is an acceptable increase, the council will use the discretionary rate relief to bridge the gap between that and the actual increase
  - In year two of the scheme, given that the council's funding pot is halved, the council will award half of the rate relief it would have awarded in year one.

## **Implications and Risk Assessment**

11. None – the scheme is fully funded by the Government.

## **Consultation Undertaken**

12. A full public consultation has been undertaken and is referred to above. .

## **Next Steps in Process**

13. Members are asked to agree the Current Proposal in points 9. & 10. above.
14. The relief for 2017/18 will be granted as soon as possible to those businesses that have already applied. All other businesses that appear to qualify for the relief will be contacted and advised the relief is available on application and details supplied.
15. Year 2 relief at the rate of half Year 1 relief will be granted in March 2018 and appear on the 2018/19 Business Rates bills.
16. Year 3 and 4 relief will be granted only on a discretionary case by case basis as total relief is limited in Years 3 & 4.

## **Conclusion**

17. In response to the consultation exercise and the detailed financial modelling, the scheme can be amended to provide additional support for local businesses lowering the threshold for support from a 12.5% increase to a 2% increase.
18. The scheme is broadly supported by the community and should be adopted.

## **Portfolio Holder's Views**

19. Comments will be given at the meeting.

## **Contact and Email**

Peter Budden, Revenues & Benefits Operations Manager, 01233 330698  
[peter.budden@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:peter.budden@ashford.gov.uk)

## Appendix A

### Ashford Borough Council Discretionary Business Rate Relief Scheme - the council's policy for granting discretionary relief.

1. The council has decided that relief under the scheme will be awarded using the following criteria:
  - a. The scheme is designed to assist ratepayers who have suffered significant increases in rate liability due to the revaluation and the subsequent increase to their Rateable Value;
  - b. Relief will not be awarded where mandatory relief is granted;
  - c. In assessing any potential entitlement to an award under this scheme, the Council will compare the following:
    - i. The rate liability of the ratepayer at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 after any reliefs and reductions; and
    - ii. The rate liability of the ratepayer at 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 taking into account any transitional relief or discretionary relief within this policy;
  - d. Relief will be awarded where the calculation in c. above would result in an increase of more than 2%;
  - e. Relief will only be given to premises which are liable for occupied rates. No relief within this scheme will be granted for unoccupied premises;
  - f. Relief will only be granted to ratepayers who were in occupation at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017 and in occupation on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 and for each day subsequently
  - g. Ratepayers taking up occupation after the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 will **not** be eligible for relief on the bases that new ratepayers would not have suffered from increases due to a revaluation;
  - h. Relief will be targeted to local businesses and not those businesses that are national or multi-national in nature. Local businesses are, for the purposes of this scheme, those which have premises wholly in the Council's area;
  - i. Relief may be awarded for more than one premises as long as **all** other criteria are met;
  - j. Relief will **not** be awarded where:
    - i. Mandatory relief is awarded; or
    - ii. Where the ratepayer has applied for a reduction under S44a of the Local Government Finance Act 1988; and
    - iii. The hereditament has an increase in Rateable Value after the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 which increases the rate charge above the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 value.

### Applications for relief under this scheme

2. The council is keen to identify ratepayers who may qualify for the relief and as such will look to encourage certain ratepayers to apply. The council will look to simplify the application process wherever possible, but it will expect any ratepayers to provide such information as is required by the Council to support their application

### Amount of relief

3. The amount of relief is tapered and will be calculated as follows:

#### **2017/18**

Award = a comparison of the rate liability increase calculated in 1ci and 1cii, with a 2% increase calculated on 1ci. The difference will be the amount of the award.

**2018/19**

Award = 2017/18 award x 50% (for clarity this will be half of the relief awarded in 2017/18)

**2019/20 & 2020/21**

For the final two years of the scheme, the Council will determine any award on an individual case by case basis and will take into account:

- The amount of the increase in rate liability due to the revaluation;
- The amount of rates in relation to other business expenses and income of the business;
- The amount of reserves held by the business; and
- The ability of the business to pay the increase.

# Summary of Responses

[List Responses](#)[Cross Tabulate](#)[Export](#)

## 1

Do you agree that the council is right to award rate relief to local businesses only with premises within the borough?

We are defining a local businesses as those with only one or more premises in the borough council area – not national or multi-national businesses with branches elsewhere.

I agree strongly	<input type="text"/>	89% (8)
I agree slightly	<input type="text"/>	11% (1)
I have no view	<input type="text"/>	0% (0)
I disagree slightly	<input type="text"/>	0% (0)
I disagree strongly	<input type="text"/>	0% (0)

## 2

Do you agree that 12.5% is an acceptable increase and that the council will only offer discretionary relief to businesses who have seen an increase above that amount?

I agree strongly	<input type="text"/>	11% (1)
I agree slightly	<input type="text"/>	11% (1)
I have no view	<input type="text"/>	0% (0)
I disagree slightly	<input type="text"/>	44% (4)
I disagree strongly	<input type="text"/>	33% (3)

## 3

Do you agree that businesses should complete a small application process to apply for the discretionary relief?

I agree strongly	<input type="text"/>	56% (5)
I agree slightly	<input type="text"/>	22% (2)
I have no view	<input type="text"/>	0% (0)

I disagree slightly	<input type="text"/>	22% (2)
I disagree strongly	<input type="text"/>	0% (0)

#### 4

Do you agree that given the council has only half the funding available in year two of the scheme that it will award half the amount it would have offered in year one to successful businesses applying for the discretionary relief?

I agree strongly	<input type="text"/>	44% (4)
I agree slightly	<input type="text"/>	11% (1)
I have no view	<input type="text"/>	11% (1)
I disagree slightly	<input type="text"/>	11% (1)
I disagree strongly	<input type="text"/>	22% (2)

#### 5

In your opinion, should any businesses be excluded from receiving discretionary rate relief or should it be available to all businesses that meet the criteria? if answering yes, please indicate the type of business that you feel should be excluded. (Please note that you do not have to provide a response to this question).

This question has been answered 7 times.

#### 6

Please use the free-text box provided to detail any further comments you may wish to make in response to the council's proposed discretionary rate relief scheme. You may wish to make us aware of the business you represent. We can use this information to contact you should you have any specific concerns that you wish us to discuss further with you.

This question has been answered 5 times.

#### 7

Are you a business owner in Ashford?

Yes

67% (6)

No

33% (3)



**Question:1 Do you agree that the council is right to award rate relief to local businesses only with...**

I agree strongly

I agree strongly

I agree strongly

I agree strongly

I agree strongly

I agree strongly

I agree slightly

I agree strongly

I agree strongly

**Question:2 Do you agree that 12.5% is an acceptable increase and that the council will only offer...**

- I disagree strongly
- I disagree slightly
- I disagree slightly
- I agree slightly
- I disagree slightly
- I disagree strongly
- I disagree strongly
- I disagree slightly
- I agree strongly

**Question:3 Do you agree that businesses should complete a small application process to apply for the...**

I disagree slightly

I agree strongly

I agree slightly

I agree strongly

I disagree slightly

I agree slightly

I agree strongly

I agree strongly

I agree strongly

**Question:4 Do you agree that given the council has only half the funding available in year two of the...**

I disagree strongly

I agree strongly

I agree slightly

I agree strongly

I disagree strongly

I agree strongly

I have no view

I disagree slightly

I agree strongly

**Question:5 In your opinion, should any businesses be excluded from receiving discretionary**

Yes - No chains.

All businesses

no opinion

National Companies-

Available to all who meet the criteria.

It should be based on profit. As a Parish Council we do not make a profit.

No business should be excluded who meets the criteria

**Question:6 Please use the free-text box provided to detail any further comments you may wish to make**

As a business we do not get any benefit from paying rates. We are a rural business with no lighting, no public  
12.5% is very high when inflation has been about 2%

Even a 12% increase is substantial, especially for small businesses.

The issue for Wye with Hinxhill Parish Council is that, according to the rules of the Valuation Office, we have three  
This return is on behalf of the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, Ashford Economic Development Group. Who

<b>Question:7 Are you a business owner in Ashford?</b>	<b>Response Id</b>
No	564784
Yes	565156
Yes	565390
Yes	571963
Yes	573068
No	573807
Yes	574556
No	579318
Yes	572941

**Response Date**

25 Sep 2017 17:32:42

26 Sep 2017 17:55:48

27 Sep 2017 13:45:24

19 Oct 2017 22:25:13

24 Oct 2017 13:55:25

26 Oct 2017 14:50:38

30 Oct 2017 11:24:53

15 Nov 2017 13:43:32

24 Oct 2017 08:48:15



**Agenda Item No:** 12  
**Report To:** CABINET  
**Date of Meeting:** 7<sup>th</sup> December 2017  
**Report Title:** East Kent Growth Framework 2017 - 2027  
**Report Author & Job Title:** Andrew Osborne  
Economic Development Manager  
**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Gerry Clarkson  
**Portfolio Holder for:** Leader of the Council



**Summary:**

This report summarises the East Kent Growth Framework (EKGF) 2017-2027, prepared for the East Kent Growth Board by Litchfields alongside an officer working-group from the 6 Local Authorities. The EKGF updates the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan, and sets out an overarching strategic approach for identifying investment priorities to achieve long-term economic growth across East Kent between 2017 and 2027.

This report describes the four key objectives of the EKGF, the 4 critical nationally significant investment priorities and the projects identified within the Borough of Ashford that will address these objectives to have the greatest long-term impact on the growth of the area. The EKGF will be used to feed into the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership (KMEP) and South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Strategic Economic Plans and support future potential funding bids to SELEP, Government programmes and other regional and national funding sources.

**Key Decision:** No

**Significantly Affected Wards:** All wards

**Recommendations:** **The Cabinet is recommended to:-**

- I. Note the contents of the East Kent Growth Framework and associated documents.**
- II. Endorse the East Kent Growth Framework as the strategic document setting out the key investment priorities for the growth of East Kent.**

**Policy Overview:** The EKGF incorporates many of the economic development priorities of Ashford Borough in a sub-regional context, and therefore will help deliver a number of the objectives and projects detailed in the Corporate Plan 2015-2020. The Framework also complements the emerging Local Plan for

Ashford Borough, supporting the key critical infrastructure, housing and commercial developments required to deliver this plan.

**Financial Implications:** None

**Legal Implications** -

**Equalities Impact Assessment** Not Required

**Other Material Implications:** None

**Exempt from Publication:** No

**Background Papers:** **Appendix A - East Kent Growth Framework Final Draft Report (East Kent Growth Board)**  
**Appendix B – East Kent Growth Framework Evidence Report (Lichfields)**  
**Appendix C – DRAFT East Kent – The Gateway to UK plc.**

**Contact:** **Andrew Osborne, Economic Development Manager**  
Andrew.osborne@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: 01233 330310

## Report Title: East Kent Growth Framework 2017-2027

### Introduction and Background

1. Following East Kent's success in attracting South East Local Enterprise Partnership, Local Growth Funds, through the development of the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan, and with the proposed revision of the South East Strategic Economic Plan, the East Kent Growth Board commissioned the production of a new East Kent Growth Framework. This East Kent Growth Framework (EKGF) has been prepared to set out an overarching strategy and clear investment priorities for achieving long-term sustainable economic growth across East Kent between 2017 and 2027. The Framework incorporates the five East Kent districts of Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Shepway and Thanet.
2. This new framework builds on a strong track record of the East Kent local authorities working together to plan for and execute investment across their boundaries while developing complementary initiatives to deliver growth. This Framework represents a strong commitment that this will continue, leading the way in building a stronger and more productive economy as envisaged by the Government's emerging Industrial Strategy, and making a significant contribution to achieving the growth ambitions of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.
3. The new Framework document appended to this report as Appendix A, is supported by a background evidence report (Appendix B), which provides an economic assessment of East Kent and each of the 5 district/borough areas. To support the communication of the priorities established within these documents, the East Kent Growth Board are also developing a document "East Kent – Gateway to UK Plc" (which is in its draft form in Appendix C to this report). This document will help portrait the key priorities of the Framework to the SELEP, central government and other partner organisations to ensure critical investment is secured for these priorities.
4. The five districts are a significant economic sub-region accommodating about 279,000 jobs, equivalent to about a third of the Kent total. The economy has expanded rapidly since the late 1990s, growing by over 20%, which matched the rest of Kent. The significant growth in employment within the area has taken place within the Borough of Ashford, with 47% growth in employment over the last 19 years.
5. As a region East Kent is experiencing fast population growth, outpacing the rest of Kent and the wider South East. Ashford is a key driver in particular due to strong housing growth over a sustained period of time. The borough is attracting a growing cluster of young professionals and families and has opportunities to encourage greater working-age population growth through planned developments and regeneration.
6. The East Kent economy supports a diverse business base across a wide range of activities, and has performed strongly in terms of growth of higher-

value sectors such as professional services, finance and information communications and technology. There is real diversity of sector strengths, which gives East Kent both a range of complementary activities but also added resilience when it is considered as a single economic sub-region. The Framework therefore advocates an approach that supports the development of complementary sector specialisms across different parts of East Kent. For Ashford, the key sectors are advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and ICT. Despite the significant growth over the past few decades, East Kent still has significant challenges compared to other areas of the South East, and more importantly has significant opportunity for increased productivity and growth over the next 10 years.

7. The East Kent Growth Framework is intended to set out an overall direction of travel within the region to maximise economic opportunities and to help address the challenges and issues it faces. It identifies 4 key objectives, and from these a range of 75 individual projects – 38 strategic and 37 locally significant - which relate to these framework objectives and will enable the areas ambitions for growth to be realised. Together these could deliver over 47,000 new direct and indirect jobs (equivalent to 16% of the total number of jobs in East Kent in 2016) and more than 86,000 new homes to East Kent.

### **East Kent Growth Framework 2017-2017**

8. The Framework recognises East Kent's critical role as the Gateway to UK plc, with approximately 40% of UK trade with the EU passing through this area each year. The Framework sets out the critical investments needed to ensure not only the growth of East Kent, but also the continued productivity of UK businesses exporting to or importing from the EU.
9. The Framework is intended to complement existing strategies and to help inform new ones as they emerge. It reflects the existing aspirations of Ashford Borough Council, for example through the council's Corporate Plan 2015-2020, and the draft Local Plan and supporting draft Infrastructure Plan. The Framework elevates the strategic housing and commercial developments and infrastructure requirements from the individual Local Plans through a bottom up approach.
10. The Framework brings together the critical priorities from the 5 East Kent local authority areas, to help to co-ordinate bids to available funds such as the Local Growth Fund, Housing Infrastructure Funds, and provides a platform within which to consider the allocation of potential future 100% business rates retention to stimulate further development of housing and commercial space.
11. The EKGF draws on the government's emerging Industrial Strategy and contextualises it specifically in respect of East Kent's economic strengths and opportunities.
12. The Framework has four key Objectives:

**Objective 1: Unlocking growth through infrastructure** - identified sites for development need effective transport and digital infrastructure and targeted upgrading of our road and rail networks (particularly High Speed 1) will enhance domestic and international connectivity.

**Objective 2: Delivery of business space** - high quality flexible modern commercial space is needed in the right locations to support our existing businesses while attracting new investors.

**Objective 3: Supporting skills and productivity within business** - creating an environment for innovation in productivity and the creation of talent will strengthen the area further.

**Objective 4: Place making and shaping** - East Kent will be a location of first choice that retains and attracts young people, families and entrepreneurs, while at the same time maximising the potential of the natural assets we hold, enhancing our town centres and ensuring a high quality built environment.

### **Priorities for Investment**

13. The Framework identifies four nationally significant investment priorities to ensure the economic prosperity of UK plc, alongside the growth of East Kent:
  1. **Strategic network improvements to A2/M2** - these are required to support the new Lower Thames Crossing, the growth of Canterbury and the ports of Dover and Ramsgate;
  2. **M20/A20 improvements** – supporting the growth of Ashford, Dover and Shepway, including junction 10A, a solution to Operation Stack, HGV overnight parking and access to Dover;
  3. **Improvements to rail capacity, speeds, frequency and associated infrastructure** - including Ashford SPURS, Westenhanger Station enhancement, and Thanet Parkway; and
  4. **A28 corridor artery** – stretching across East Kent from Margate to Ashford via the City of Canterbury, which requires eight separate but connected transport infrastructure projects to improve road links, address bottlenecks and ease problems of congestion.
14. As part of the development of the Framework, a comprehensive review of potential investment projects across East Kent has been undertaken having regard to the existing evidence available and working in close partnership with each of the East Kent local authorities. There are 75 individual projects – 38 strategic and 37 locally significant - which relate to the four framework objectives and will enable growth to be realised. This list includes projects previously identified in the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan which are either underway and may require further support to be fully delivered or have not yet come forward.
15. The projects have been identified based on a local recognition of their importance, rather than a strict, criteria-based scoring process. This recognises the balanced approach to growth defined by the Framework objectives. Identifying priority locations for investment purely based on housing numbers or employment outputs would underplay the importance of smaller-scale projects and other initiatives that will have a longer-term impact on perceptions of the area and its attractiveness to investors.

16. In order to help frame future priorities, a tiered approach has been adopted which differentiates between projects that deliver the four nationally significant priorities identified above, those which are 'strategically significant' (i.e. those important to growth in East Kent overall) and 'locally significant' (i.e. those important to growth in an individual local authority). Nationally significant and Strategically significant projects would generally be afforded greater priority over locally significant projects in gaining the support of the East Kent Growth Board.
17. There are 15 projects that will provide direct positive benefits to the Borough of Ashford, 12 Ashford projects and 3 East Kent projects. These are listed in the table below (and can also be found in the table on pages 29-32 in the East Kent Growth Framework in Appendix A, with more detail on each of these projects on pages 35-39 and 56-57 of the same document):

	Project Name	Location	Scheme Type	Significance	Alignment with Framework Objective(s)			
					1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
1	Ashford Town Centre Transformation Project:	Ashford	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓			✓
2	<i>Ashford Commercial Quarter</i>	Ashford	Mixed	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
3	<i>Ashford College Campus</i>	Ashford	Mixed	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	<i>Elwick Place</i>	Ashford	Mixed	Local			✓	✓
5	<i>Southern Expansion Quarter / Victoria Way</i>	Ashford	Mixed	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Jasmin Vardimon	Ashford	Commercial	Local		✓	✓	✓
7	Ashford Designer Outlet Expansion	Ashford	Commercial	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
8	Chilmington Green	Ashford	Mixed	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	M20 Junction 10a	Ashford	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
10	Ashford International Station	Ashford	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
11	Newtown Works	Ashford	Mixed	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	Conningbrook housing and water park	Ashford	Mixed	Strategic	✓			✓
...	...	...	...	...				
68	East Kent Increased rail capacity and journey times	East Kent	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	✓
69	Business funding support – Kent & Medway Business Fund	East Kent	Infrastructure	Strategic			✓	
70	Upgrading broadband	East Kent	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	✓

Place	Total projects	Strategically-significant	Locally-significant	Alignment with strategic objective(s)			
				1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
Ashford	12	8	4	8	7	10	10
Canterbury	17	7	10	12	7	19	4
Dover	11	5	6	6	5	11	7
Shepway	13	7	6	10	9	6	6
Thanet	14	6	8	6	5	9	7
East Kent wide	3	3	0	2		3	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>39</b>

18. The tables above show that 8 of the 12 Ashford projects have been classified as strategic, providing benefit beyond just the boundaries of Ashford Borough, with all 3 East Kent projects also being classified as Strategic. The projects above incorporate the Big 8 projects for Ashford, but also introduce emerging priorities such as Newtown Works and Conningbrook housing and water park.
19. Within the wider list of all East Kent projects, it should also be noted that recent changes with the withdrawal of the Government's plans to take forward the M20 Lorry Area at Stanford West, which was planned to mitigate

Operation Stack, this demonstrates that the project list will need to be regularly updated to reflect the delivery of some projects, and the emergence of new projects within the area. The Framework therefore provides a strategic focus to the priority themes and areas for investment, and the priority projects at the time of publishing this document, but that this project list will change over time.

## **Implications and Risk Assessment**

20. The EKGf provides a basis for collaborative growth over the next decade. Ashford will need to work positively internally and with partners to achieve successful outcomes or risk missing the opportunity for public sector investment to enable transformational growth.
21. A key challenge for the development of the East Kent Growth Framework will be to strike a balance between supporting successful locations to continue to grow and supporting poorer performing areas to 'catch up' and bridge the growing gap.
22. It is also important to recognise that the strengths and weaknesses of one location can represent opportunities and threats to others areas, and so it will be important for Ashford to remain cognisant of neighbouring activity. The continued partnership working provided by this East Kent Growth Board and this Framework will assist with this process.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

23. Not applicable

## **Consultation Planned or Undertaken**

24. Not applicable

## **Other Options Considered**

25. The EKGf is the result of collaborative work between Ashford Borough Council and its partners. An Evidence Report produced by consultants Lichfields provided a basis for examining the potential investment priorities across the region by determining how the different locations in East Kent play to their strengths and opportunities in a way that supports the development of the whole area.
26. A number of workshops with the East Kent Growth Board and officers from the 6 Local Authorities and partner organisations have been undertaken to consider the options for the direction of this Framework and to help shape these final documents.

## Reasons for Supporting Option Recommended

27. The EKRF reflects and complements Ashford's priorities for growth and provides a framework for developing them in a sub-regional context. It has been developed by officers of the authority in partnership with those of the neighbouring authorities and recognises those projects that are key to Ashford's future successful growth.
28. The potential impact on the East Kent economy if all 75 projects are delivered is significant. Based on information (where known), in combined terms the projects represent the potential to generate or unlock:
  - About 47,000 direct and indirect jobs, equivalent to 16% of the total number of jobs in East Kent in 2016
  - Capacity for over 85,000 dwellings
29. To bring these projects to fruition and to achieve the growth ambitions for East Kent, there is a need to work in partnership to ensure the promotion of projects in a competitive funding environment. This includes working with the private sector, to bring forward housing and employment sites, infrastructure and other initiatives, Further and Higher Education providers to deliver skills infrastructure and training, and agencies including Locate in Kent that promotes our area and support inward investment. National Government also has a key role to play, particularly in providing public sector investment to ensure that our infrastructure works effectively, not only for the benefit of East Kent to realise our growth ambitions, but also to support the wider UK economy due to the crucial role East Kent plays as an international gateway for UK plc.

## Next Steps in Process

30. The East Kent Regeneration Board will meet to consider the final documents on the 13<sup>th</sup> December 2017, with the 5 Local Authorities of East Kent seeking endorsement of these documents through their own Council processes. Once endorsement has been achieved, these documents will be used to work with East Kent MPs to promote the investment requirements of East Kent to the SE LEP and central government departments, and will be used to support future bids for funding.

## Conclusion

31. The East Kent Growth Framework sets out an overarching strategic approach for identifying investment priorities to achieve long-term economic growth across East Kent between 2017 and 2027. It builds on the successes of attracting public sector investment into East Kent through the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan.
32. The Framework sets out the four key objectives of: 1) Unlocking growth through infrastructure; 2) Delivery of business space; 3) Supporting skills and productivity; and 4) Place making and shaping. With "Unlocking growth through infrastructure" prioritised, the Framework identifies four critical nationally significant investment priorities that elevate East Kent's role as the Gateway to UK plc, these are; 1) Strategic network improvements to A2/M2; 2) M20 / A20 improvements; 3) Improvements to rail capacity, speeds,



frequency and associated infrastructure; 4) A28 corridor artery. These support the required infrastructure for Ashford's growth and present a strong combined case for investment.

33. The Framework provides support for the Ashford Big 8 projects, as well as the emerging corporate priorities for investment to support the prosperity of the Borough. It also sets the Framework to promote future funding bids and development proposals to help Ashford achieve significant growth with the support of other East Kent districts and Kent County Council.

## **Portfolio Holder's Views**

### **34. Cllr Gerry Clarkson – Leader of Ashford Borough Council:**

“Clearly this is a very important piece of strategic work that integrates all the projects and categorises their importance, enabling East Kent authorities to work collaboratively in supporting future funding bids. It is clear that Ashford figures as an important contributor to the ongoing prosperity of East Kent, and as the facts show, Ashford is at the forefront of significant local and hugely important strategic projects.”

## **Contact and Email**

35. Andrew Osborne – Economic Development Manager  
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# **East Kent Growth Framework Final Draft Report**

East Kent Regeneration Board

September 2017

## Executive Summary

East Kent is a significant economic sub-region. The area combines a distinctive and unique blend of international connectivity, proximity to London and mainland Europe, world-class education institutions, incredible coastal assets and a rapidly-expanding base of high growth sectors which provide a strong platform for future growth. It accounts for a third of all jobs in Kent, and since the late 1990s has been one of the fastest growing areas in South East England. Recent house building growth coupled with the lifestyle attractions of vibrant historic towns, outstanding countryside, heritage assets and coastal areas mean that increasing numbers of people are choosing to invest in and call East Kent home. East Kent is of national significance because it has leading infrastructure such as the High Speed 1 rail network, Channel Tunnel, Port of Dover and Port of Ramsgate. We are the gateway location that links the UK with continental Europe.

Considerable progress has been made over the last few years to deliver against the various strategic priorities and locations identified in the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan, with a combination of private and public sector investment helping to bring forward a range of significant development projects.

Looking over the next 20 years, East Kent is expected to generate 36,500 new jobs according to the latest forecasts and increase economic output by over 50% from current levels. The working-age population of East Kent has been expanding more rapidly than other parts of Kent and the South East over recent years. There is even greater potential for increased economic output given the major opportunities to support new housing and employment growth that have been identified across a range of strategic well connected sites. These sites will give the space for new communities and businesses to grow, and create innovation and productivity enhancements across the economy. Realising this potential represents an economic dividend not just for East Kent but the wider national economy. This potential can be realised with targeted investment in resources to help address current and future challenges along the way.

In this context, the East Kent Growth Framework (EKGF) sets out an overarching strategic approach for identifying investment priorities to achieve long-term economic growth across East Kent between 2017 and 2027. The Framework incorporates the five East Kent districts of Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Shepway and Thanet. It represents a commitment to collective working that has yielded past success and recognition that a collaborative approach will maximise the potential impact of East Kent in a way that is greater than the sum of its parts. This will include working with neighbouring areas, the private sector and public agencies to support strategic investment outside the immediate boundaries of East Kent. There are inherent inter-dependencies within and beyond East Kent in terms of how people move about, corridors of infrastructure, and importantly where businesses access their workforce and supply chains. Our framework reflects and draws on these critical functional economic relationships.

We have defined four key objectives as the 'building blocks' for driving continued and sustained growth and focusing future investment across East Kent on this basis. They are not intended to operate in isolation but are complementary and self-reinforcing:

- 1 **Unlocking growth through infrastructure** – identified sites for development need supporting transport and digital infrastructure particularly targeted upgrading and making better use of our road and rail networks (particularly High Speed 1) to enhance domestic and international connectivity while enabling local accessibility.
- 2 **Delivery of business space** – we want to deliver the next-generation of modern commercial space for our business start-ups, encouraging existing businesses to scale-up, and to help attract new mobile investment into the area while driving forward the development of our brownfield sites.
- 3 **Supporting skills and productivity within business** – creating an environment for innovation in productivity improvements, supporting businesses to grow and move up the value chain, encouraging faster broadband, ensuring that businesses have the skills to grow and that our skills

base continues to improve is linked to the success of our higher education and further education sectors creating talent.

- 4 **Place making and shaping** – East Kent is a fabulous place to live, work, holiday and invest. We want to improve the perception of people’s idea of East Kent and make it a location of first choice that retains and attracts young people, families and entrepreneurs, while at the same time maximising the potential of the natural assets we hold, enhancing our town centres and ensuring a high quality built environment.

Of these four key objectives, **unlocking growth through infrastructure** is considered to be the most important and focuses on securing delivery of critical infrastructure projects, working with industry bodies and other agencies where necessary. The importance of infrastructure investment is well recognised and the ICE Autumn statement<sup>1</sup> identifies that for every £1 spent on infrastructure construction economic activity nationally is raised by £2.84<sup>2</sup>; this investment provides a strong economic stimulus with a multiplier effect that can help support local growth.

We have identified a total of 75 individual projects in East Kent that will address these objectives and have the greatest long term impact on the area and its attractiveness to investors. Half (38) of these projects are therefore regarded as ‘strategically significant’ which means their delivery will have positive impacts across the whole of East Kent and beyond (see Table ES1.1); they are afforded greatest priority for future investment. These include a number of major infrastructure and development projects. The current status and funding position of these projects varies and will evolve over time.

In combined terms, based on available information, the potential impact of delivering all of the **strategically significant projects** identified across East Kent represents:

- **Over 36,000 direct jobs** once operational; and
- **Capacity for over 73,000 dwellings** either directly or via associated development.

Table ES1.1 Strategically-significant projects in East Kent (shown alphabetically by local authority area)

	Project	Area		1. Unlocking growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
1	Ashford Town Centre Transformation Project:	Ashford	Strategic	✓			✓
2	<i>Ashford Commercial Quarter</i>	Ashford	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
3	<i>Ashford College Campus</i>	Ashford	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	<i>Elwick Place</i>	Ashford	Local			✓	✓
5	<i>Southern Expansion Quarter / Victoria Way</i>	Ashford	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Jasmin Vardimon	Ashford	Local		✓	✓	✓
7	Ashford Designer Outlet Expansion	Ashford	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
8	Chilmington Green	Ashford	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	M20 Junction 10A	Ashford	Strategic	✓		✓	
10	Ashford International Station	Ashford	Strategic	✓		✓	

<sup>1</sup> ICE Autumn Statement November 2016

<sup>2</sup> Civil Engineering Contractors Association [http://www.ceca.co.uk/media/103459/ceca\\_cebr\\_report\\_-\\_securing\\_our\\_economy\\_the\\_case\\_for\\_infrastructure\\_-\\_may\\_2013.pdf](http://www.ceca.co.uk/media/103459/ceca_cebr_report_-_securing_our_economy_the_case_for_infrastructure_-_may_2013.pdf)

	Project	Area		1. Unlocking growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
11	Newtown Works	Ashford	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	Conningbrook housing and water park	Ashford	Strategic	✓			✓
13	Canterbury Knowledge City:	Canterbury	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	<i>Kent Medical School &amp; Research Complex</i>	Canterbury	Strategic		✓	✓	
15	<i>Canterbury Innovation Centre II</i>	Canterbury	Local		✓	✓	
16	<i>"Makers Space" and "Hot House"</i>	Canterbury	Local		✓	✓	
17	<i>Canterbury Christ Church University EDGE Project</i>	Canterbury	Strategic		✓	✓	
18	<i>Herne Bay Business Centre</i>	Canterbury	Local		✓	✓	
19	A28 Corridor:	Canterbury	Strategic	✓		✓	
20	<i>Milton Manor Roundabout</i>	Canterbury	Local	✓		✓	
21	<i>A2 slip at Bridge</i>	Canterbury	Local	✓		✓	
22	<i>A2 offslip and park &amp; ride relocation</i>	Canterbury	Local	✓		✓	
23	<i>Wincheap Traffic Management Scheme</i>	Canterbury	Local	✓		✓	✓
24	<i>Sturry Link Road</i>	Canterbury	Strategic	✓		✓	
25	<i>Sturry Rd Integrated Transport Package</i>	Canterbury	Local	✓		✓	
26	<i>Canterbury Eastern Bypass</i>	Canterbury	Strategic	✓		✓	
27	Canterbury Western Link Road	Canterbury	Strategic	✓		✓	
28	Herne Bay Marina	Canterbury	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
29	Whitstable Park & Ride	Canterbury	Local	✓			✓
30	Whitfield:	Dover	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
31	<i>Sewerage and Water Infrastructure</i>	Dover	Local	✓		✓	
32	<i>Bus Rapid Transit Scheme</i>	Dover	Local	✓		✓	
33	White Cliffs Business Park (Phase 3)	Dover	Local		✓	✓	✓
34	Dover Town Centre public realm and place making Improvements	Dover	Local			✓	✓
35	Dover Waterfront	Dover	Local			✓	✓
36	Former Connaught Barracks	Dover	Local		✓	✓	✓
37	Discovery Park, Sandwich	Dover	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
38	A2 Duke of York Roundabout Improvements	Dover	Strategic	✓		✓	
39	A2 Improvements – dualling between Lydden & Dover Town	Dover	Strategic	✓		✓	
40	Dualling of the remainder of the A256 and improved connections to the A258	Dover	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
41	Betteshanger Sustainable Park	Dover	Local		✓	✓	✓
42	Open Golf at Sandwich	Dover	Strategic	✓			✓
43	Folkestone Seafront & Town Centre:	Shepway	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
44	<i>Folkestone Harbour and Seafront</i>	Shepway	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
45	<i>Folkestone Creative Quarter</i>	Shepway	Local		✓	✓	✓
46	<i>Folkestone Townscape Heritage Initiative</i>	Shepway	Local			✓	✓

	Project	Area		1. Unlocking growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
47	<i>Former Gasworks, Ship Street</i>	Shepway	Local	✓			✓
48	<i>Shearway Business Park - Bigginwood/Caesars Way</i>	Shepway	Local	✓	✓		
49	<i>Park Farm Industrial Estate - Former Silver Spring site</i>	Shepway	Local	✓	✓		
50	East Kent College Folkestone Campus Extension	Shepway	Local		✓	✓	
51	Princes Parade, Hythe	Shepway	Local		✓		✓
52	Romney Marsh Regeneration:	Shepway	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	
53	<i>Mountfield Road Industrial Estate/South New Romney</i>	Shepway	Local	✓	✓	✓	
54	<i>London Ashford Airport</i>	Shepway	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	
55	Operation Stack Lorry Area	Shepway	Strategic	✓		✓	
56	Otterpool Park/ M20 Junction 11	Shepway	Strategic	✓	✓		✓
57	<i>Westenhanger Rail Station upgrade</i>	Shepway	Strategic	✓		✓	
58	Port of Ramsgate	Thanet	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
59	Thanet Parkway Station	Thanet	Strategic	✓		✓	✓
60	Inner Circuit Improvement Strategy	Thanet	Strategic	✓		✓	✓
61	<i>Westwood relief strategy</i>	Thanet	Local	✓		✓	✓
62	Margate Junction improvements	Thanet	Local	✓		✓	✓
63	Advanced Manufacturing Park (Manston Business Park)	Thanet	Strategic		✓	✓	
64	Creative Industries Workspace	Thanet	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
65	Feasibility Modelling for Ramsgate, Margate and Viking Bay	Thanet	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
66	<i>Ramsgate Heritage Action Zone</i>	Thanet	Local				✓
67	<i>Theatre Royal</i>	Thanet	Local				✓
68	<i>Dreamland and Sunshine Cafe Redevelopment</i>	Thanet	Local				✓
69	<i>Viking Bay</i>	Thanet	Local				✓
70	EuroKent Business Park	Thanet	Strategic		✓		
71	Agri-Tech Hub	Thanet	Local			✓	
72	East Kent College Broadstairs Campus refurbishment	Thanet	Local			✓	
73	East Kent Increased rail capacity and journey times	East Kent	Strategic	✓		✓	✓
74	Business funding support – Kent & Medway Business Fund	East Kent	Strategic			✓	
75	Upgrading broadband	East Kent	Strategic	✓		✓	✓

Source: Local authorities / Lichfields analysis

Note: projects in *italics* represent subsidiary projects which are linked to or required in order to deliver the headline project; the numbering of projects does not infer any prioritisation of projects

Amongst the strategically significant projects, there are three key strategic priorities which partners recognise as being crucially important for the future of East Kent and therefore prioritise these above all others:

- (1) Strategic network improvements to A2/M2 required to support the new Lower Thames Crossing, the growth of Canterbury and the Port of Dover;**
- (2) M20/A20 improvements including junction 10A, the proposed lorry holding area, HGV overnight parking and access to Dover; and**
- (3) Improvements to rail capacity, speeds, frequency and associated infrastructure including Ashford SPURS, Westenhanger Station enhancement, and Thanet Parkway.**

The specific projects which will therefore be accorded greater priority as future funding opportunities arise are:

- Brenley Corner improvements in Swale District;
- A2 slip at Bridge (21);
- A2 offslip and park & ride relocation, Canterbury (22);
- Canterbury Eastern bypass (26)
- A2 Improvements – dualling between Lydden & Dover Town (38)
- A2 Duke of York Roundabout Improvements(37)
- Dualling of the remainder of the A256 and improved connections to the A258(39)
- Operation Stack lorry holding area and HGV overnight parking(51)
- Ashford International Station(10)
- M20 Jct 10A (9)
- Westenhanger Rail Station upgrade(53)
- Thanet Parkway Station(55)
- East Kent Increased rail capacity and journey times(68)

The remaining 37 iprojects are defined as ‘locally significant’ and will deliver important benefits for individual locations; many of these will support delivery of the strategically-significant projects and also contribute to the Framework objectives.

These local schemes offer the further potential **to create over 11,000 jobs and potential to unlock over 12,000 dwellings.**

Therefore their collective contribution to East Kent’s growth potential should not be underestimated. A full list of these projects is contained in Appendix 2.

The combined economic potential of the 75 projects identified is summarised below.

Table ES1.2 Estimated Economic Outputs from Projects

Type	Employment *	Dwellings
Strategically-significant	36,300	73,800
Locally-significant	11,100	12,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,400</b>	<b>86,300</b>

Source: East Kent local authorities      Note: totals rounded      \* direct and indirect jobs excluding construction

The local authorities recognise that to bring these projects to fruition and to achieve our growth ambitions for East Kent, there is a need to work in partnership. This includes working with the private sector and partners such as the Homes and Communities Agency, Highways England and the South East LEP, to bring forward housing and employment sites, infrastructure and other initiatives, further and higher education providers to deliver skills infrastructure and training, and agencies, including Locate in Kent which

promotes our area and supports inward investment. National Government also has a key role to play, particularly in providing public sector investment to ensure that our infrastructure works effectively, not only for the benefit of East Kent to realise our growth ambitions, but also to support the wider UK economy in view of the crucial role East Kent plays as an international gateway for UK plc.



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## 1.0 Introduction

**The East Kent Growth Framework (EKGF) has been prepared by the East Kent Regeneration Board<sup>3</sup> to set out an overarching strategy and clear investment priorities for achieving long-term sustainable economic growth across East Kent between 2017 and 2027. The Framework incorporates the five East Kent districts of Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Shepway and Thanet.**

1.1 The EKGF has been developed on behalf of the Board by Officers with technical support from Lichfields, and comprised three stages:

- 1 Evidence review and data gathering;
- 2 Synthesis and identification of strategic objectives; and
- 3 Identifying investment priorities.

1.2 The process has been informed by consultation and engagement with a range of stakeholders (see Appendix 1), including a series of officer workshops and presentations of emerging findings to members of the East Kent Regeneration Board (EKRB).

### Purpose

1.3 East Kent is an important economic sub-region which has been one of the fastest growing areas in the South East in recent years and has significant identified future growth potential. Against this backdrop, there is a strong track record of the East Kent local authorities working together to plan for and execute investment across their boundaries while developing complementary initiatives to deliver growth. There is a strong commitment that this will continue and their activities will serve to stimulate private sector investment demand through increasing confidence in the market.

1.4 More widely, East Kent offers potential to lead the way in building a stronger and more productive economy, as envisaged by the Government's emerging Industrial Strategy<sup>4</sup>, and making a significant contribution to achieving the growth ambitions of the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.

1.5 Two of the local authority areas, Canterbury and Thanet, also sit within the Thames Estuary 2050 Commission.

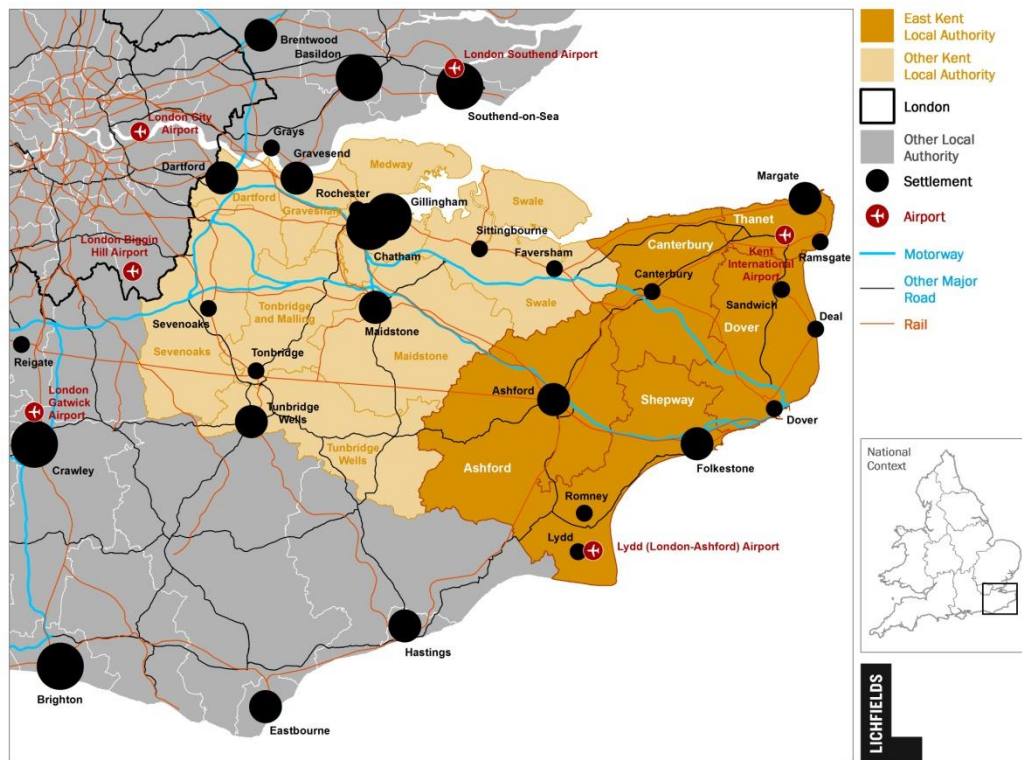
1.6 East Kent includes the five local authority areas of Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Shepway and Thanet as shown in Figure 1.1. Throughout this report, 'East Kent' is used to refer collectively to these five local authority districts, which together form the area covered by the East Kent Regeneration Board.

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<sup>3</sup> The EKRBB comprises the five East Kent local authorities and Kent County Council. Board representatives include the Leaders and Chief Executives from each of the five East Kent Districts, together with the Kent County Council's Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Corporate Director of Growth, Transport and Environment.

<sup>4</sup> *Building our Industrial Strategy Green Paper*, HM Government, January 2017  
[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/586626/building-our-industrial-strategy-green-paper.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/586626/building-our-industrial-strategy-green-paper.pdf)

Figure 1.1 Spatial Context of East Kent



Source: Lichfields

- 1.7 It is four years since the previous East Kent Growth Plan was produced and the Board considers now is the time for an updated strategy to help promote East Kent to investors and ensure that East Kent is best placed to plan for and seize opportunities as they arise. This requires understanding and articulating clearly what the East Kent offer is and how investment in East Kent will deliver growth which benefits the investor and the local and wider national economy.
- 1.8 The Framework is therefore intended to set out an overall direction of travel to maximise the economic opportunities and to help address the challenges and issues it faces. The Framework is intended to complement existing strategies and to help inform new ones as they emerge. It identifies a series of objectives, and from these a range of projects that will be the focus of future investment to fully realise the potential of East Kent. These projects will be reviewed and refreshed over time as they progress, and will support the EKRB in promoting a cohesive and consistent approach towards investment opportunities as future funding opportunities arise.

## Structure

- 1.9 This document is structured as follows:
- Section 2.0 sets the context by providing a summary **profile of East Kent** and its strengths, opportunities, weaknesses and threats. Section 3.0 outlines the **strategy for growth** and identifies **four strategic objectives**.
  - Section 4.0 identifies **future investment priorities** which will be the focus for future investment. This includes a review of progress against spatial priorities set out within the 2013 Plan for Growth and new projects that have emerged since.

- 1.10 The Framework is informed by a separate **Evidence Review report** which contains detailed evidence on the performance of the East Kent economy and trends over time. This draws upon many existing data sources and other published evidence available for East Kent.

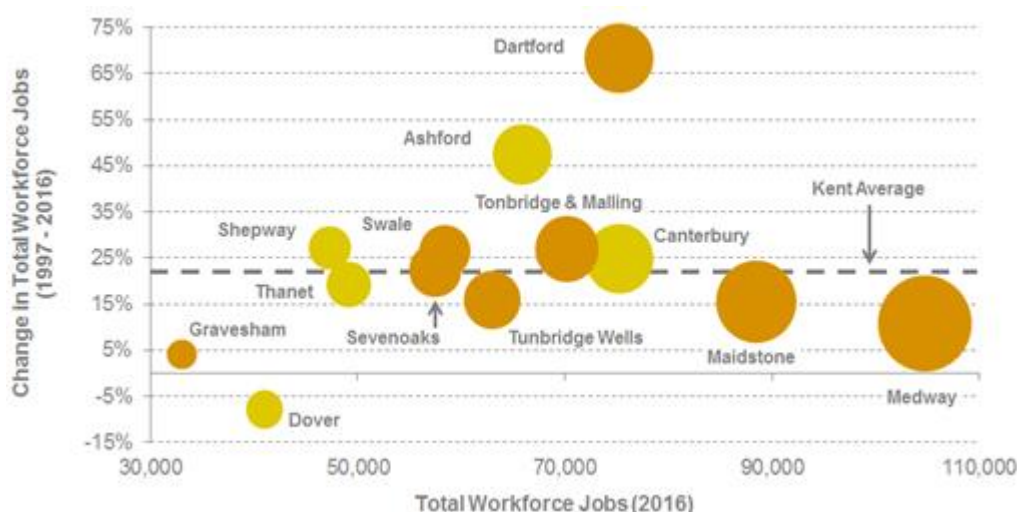
## 2.0 Setting the Context

This section provides an overview of the East Kent economy, highlighting key opportunities and challenges. It draws on the data and analysis contained in the Evidence Review report, set against the inter-connected themes of economy, people and place.

### Economy

- 2.1 East Kent is a significant economic sub-region accommodating about 279,000 jobs, equivalent to about a third of the Kent total. The economy has expanded rapidly since the late 1990s, growing by over 20%, similar to the rest of Kent. In particular, Canterbury is now the third largest workplace economy in Kent, and Ashford was the fastest growing district in Kent second only to Dartford<sup>5</sup> (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Employment Change by Kent Local Authority



Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

- 2.2 East Kent supports a diverse business base across a wide range of activities and has performed strongly in terms of growth of higher-value sectors, such as professional services, finance and information communications and technology. There is real diversity of sector strengths which gives East Kent both a range of complementary activities and added resilience when it is considered as a single economic sub-region.<sup>6</sup>
- 2.3 There are established and growing clusters of specialist and high value economic activity, including higher education (Canterbury), pharmaceuticals (Dover), creative, media and nuclear energy (Shepway), creative and agri-tech (Thanet) and advanced manufacturing (Ashford and Thanet).
- 2.4 Reflecting the rural and coastal offer of East Kent, the visitor economy is vital and directly and indirectly employed around 32,500 people in 2015. For example, between 2013 and 2015 the

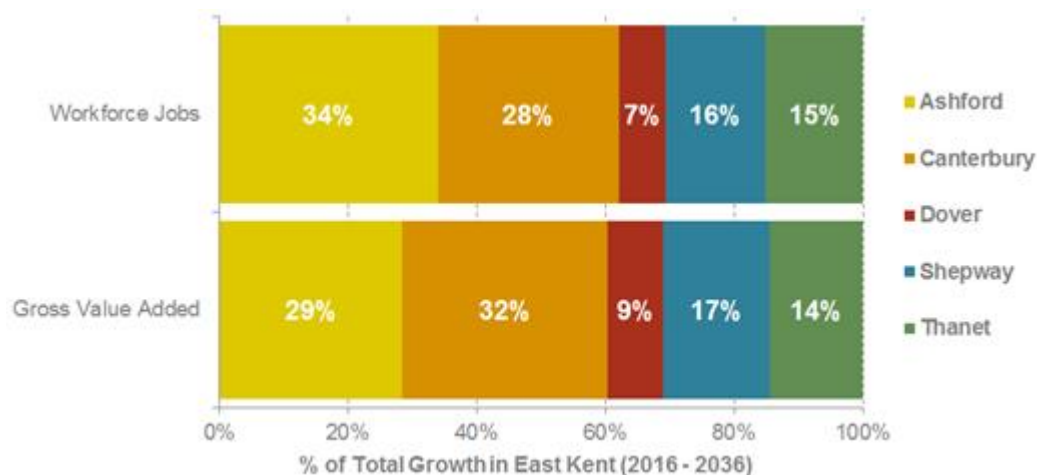
<sup>5</sup> Experian September 2016

<sup>6</sup> The business case for the East Kent coastal authority specifically recognises the benefits that the economic geography of the area would present to a new council. [https://www.shepway.gov.uk/media/4107/A-business-case-for-the-potential-creation-of-a-single-new-council-from-the-four-East-Kent-coastal-districts/pdf/A\\_business\\_case\\_for\\_the\\_potential\\_creation\\_of\\_a\\_single\\_new\\_council\\_from\\_the\\_four\\_East\\_Kent\\_'coastal'.pdf](https://www.shepway.gov.uk/media/4107/A-business-case-for-the-potential-creation-of-a-single-new-council-from-the-four-East-Kent-coastal-districts/pdf/A_business_case_for_the_potential_creation_of_a_single_new_council_from_the_four_East_Kent_'coastal'.pdf)

fastest increase in the total value of tourism (+19.4%) and increase in tourism related jobs (+23.3%) in the UK was in Thanet.

- 2.5 In total, over 70,000 jobs in East Kent – a quarter of the total economy – are now within growth sectors which are identified by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership as having high growth potential and where support for innovation should be targeted.<sup>7</sup>
- 2.6 East Kent has historically been characterised by low productivity levels, but the growth of higher value sectors means the area’s performance has improved consistently over the past two decades. However, consistent with the situation across the country, the rate of improvement has slowed since the recession when investment stalled, so there is now real potential to focus future investment to help bridge the productivity gap with other parts of the South East. The latest economic forecasts<sup>8</sup> indicate growth potential of some 36,500 jobs and 50% growth in economic output by 2036 (split down by local authority area in Figure 2.2) which represents a substantial economic dividend not only for East Kent but the wider economy.

Figure 2.2 East Kent Employment and GVA Forecasts



Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

- 2.7 Therefore the priority moving ahead is to continue to promote and build on East Kent’s unique selling points and encourage greater representation in ‘wealth generating’ knowledge-based sectors. This might mean building capacity around specific sector opportunities where East Kent can offer a competitive advantage, such as agri-tech in Thanet which maximises the strength of Thanet’s sunlight in its production along with the emerging land management, food security and environmental offer at Betteshanger in Dover district. This support will help drive innovation across the breadth and depth of the East Kent economy and in time will ensure all parts of East Kent can establish new sector strengths either directly or through supporting supply chains. This requires investment in supporting infrastructure and ensuring appropriate training and skills development, so that all communities across East Kent are able to benefit from the opportunities that economic growth creates.

## People

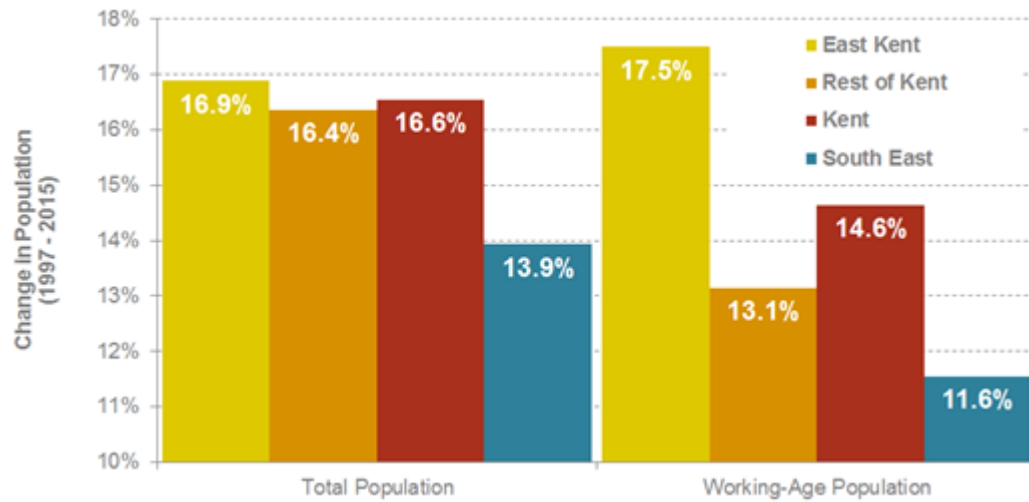
- 2.8 The population of East Kent has grown significantly over recent years, outpacing growth in the rest of Kent and the wider South East. In particular, the working-age population of East Kent has grown by 18% since 1997, compared to 13% in the rest of Kent and 12% in the wider South

<sup>7</sup> These are defined by the South East LEP as manufacturing, creative industries, energy (including renewables), food and drink, higher education, life sciences, tourism and transport and storage.

<sup>8</sup> Experian Regional Planning Service, September 2016

East (Figure 2.3). Currently Ashford, Canterbury and Thanet, and to a lesser extent Dover and Shepway, are projected to drive population growth and this will be vital for economic vitality moving forward.

Figure 2.3 Total and Working Age Population Growth, 1997-2015

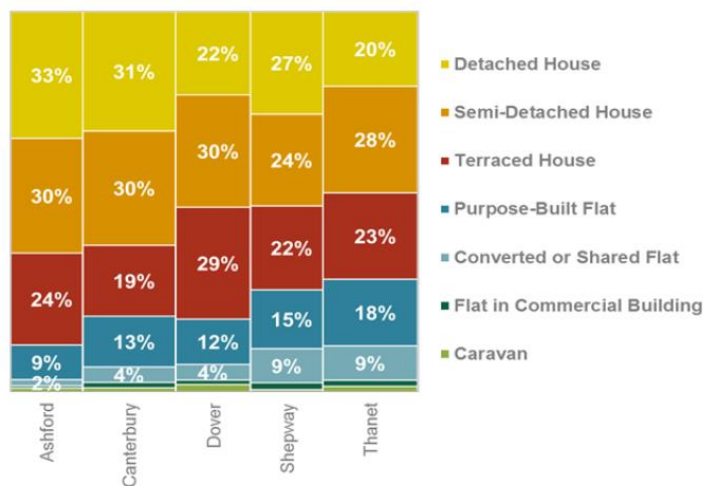


Source: ONS (Mid-Year Population Estimates) / Lichfields analysis

2.9

Part of this recent population change has been driven by migration flows, with East Kent functioning as a net importer in migration terms from other parts of the South East, notably London and other parts of Kent. The profile and nature of existing housing stock varies across East Kent and this plays a key role in influencing choices of those who might move to East Kent (Figure 2.4). As a centre of education, Canterbury, in particular, plays a major role in attracting young people to the area, many of whom stay after graduation, whilst recent housing delivery in Ashford has also attracted new people to East Kent. Thanet, Dover and Shepway are currently more self-contained in migration terms (i.e. people tend to move locally). Once within East Kent, many residents move elsewhere within the sub-region, in particular to the coastal areas where the stock of housing tends to be more affordable.

Figure 2.4 Housing Stock by Dwelling Type



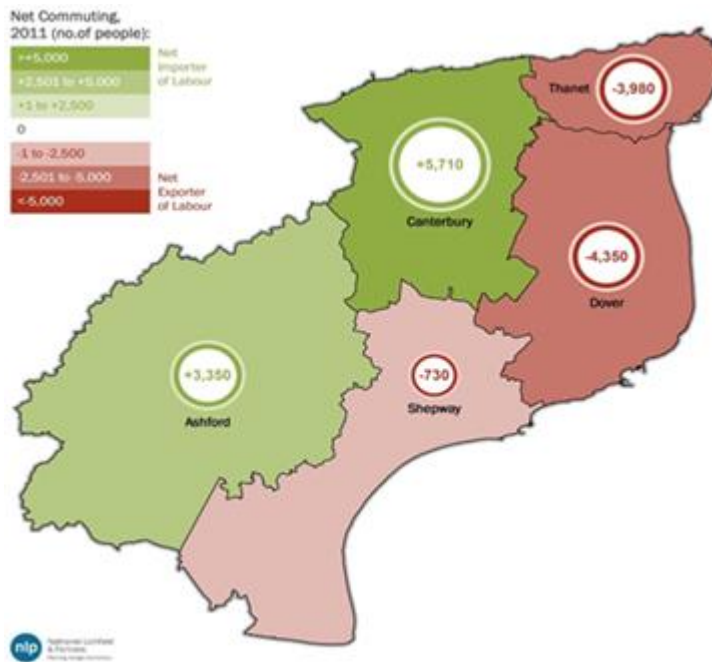
Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis



2.10 East Kent has a diverse socio-economic profile which includes some areas of retired populations around the coastal stretches and also growing clusters of young professionals and families in the sub-region’s key towns (such as Ashford, Dover, Folkestone and Margate). Some 60% of East Kent’s population is of working-age, in line with the rest of Kent and South East, which is a factor in supporting the future growth of the local economy and its entrepreneurial base. Planned development and regeneration will importantly serve to broaden this demographic diversity in the future. Looking ahead, the opportunity for East Kent could be to spread this diversification further and encourage greater working-age population growth across all parts of East Kent, whilst also retaining the valued character of the sub-region as a sought-after rural and coastal location.

2.11 In labour market terms, East Kent is characterised by its strong economic relationships with other parts of Kent and London and overall the sub-region is a net exporter of labour. Beyond HS1 links to employment opportunities in London, Ashford and Canterbury (as East Kent’s largest economies) act as the main internal employment centres drawing in significant flows of workers from Dover, Shepway and Thanet (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5 Net Commuting Balance by East Kent Local Authority



Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis

2.12 Over the last 10 years, East Kent has made real progress in terms of improving qualification levels, with reductions in the proportion of people with no qualifications across all authorities. There have also been considerable increases within higher qualification groups, partly linked to the strength of the higher and further education offer in East Kent. In particular, East Kent has a higher education presence of national scale and significance, with the University of Kent, Canterbury Christchurch University and the University for the Creative Arts accounting for over 32,000 students. The area’s Further Education assets include Ashford College (run by Hadlow College who also has a base at Betteshanger) and the merging Canterbury College with East Kent College which has campuses at Dover, Folkestone and Broadstairs; the latter recently received five ‘Outstanding’ gradings in an Ofsted inspection.

2.13 There is a need for strong connectivity and accessibility between East Kent’s key housing growth and employment centres in order to facilitate the flexible movement of labour, to help match



local residents with suitable employment opportunities and to generate business growth. This may also serve to alleviate housing market pressures and improve the choice and affordability of housing for different socio-economic groups.

## Place

- 2.14 One of the great strengths of East Kent, and what attracts people to the area, is the diversity of place and quality of life which combine to make the area a desirable place to live and work and also supports a vibrant visitor economy. There is a rich historic and cultural offer, including the historic centre of Canterbury, and a varied landscape which ranges from the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Beauty down to the area's unique and internationally renowned stretch of coastline. Coupled with this, East Kent is positioned as a gateway between Europe, London and the rest of the UK and has a unique blend of infrastructure and economic assets which provide a strong platform for growth.
- 2.15 High Speed 1 (HS1) has been the most high-profile investment of recent years resulting in considerably reduced journey times, a good choice of services to Central London and continental Europe and also improved rail connectivity within Kent (Figure 2.5). This has given direct international connectivity via Ashford International through the Channel Tunnel and also extended the reach of the wider London housing market to East Kent where shorter commuting times and availability and/or relative affordability of housing have combined to attract new residents into East Kent. For example, in 2016 Thanet saw a 31% increase in off peak travel to the district. There are further opportunities for passenger growth, particularly if HS1 services can be increased as is currently being proposed.
- 2.16 East Kent has incredible links to Europe for leisure and industry. Improved international services from Ashford International will expand its role as the commercial gateway to the UK by rail. Other key assets include the Port of Dover, which is Europe's busiest passenger port and currently handles 17% of total UK trade in goods at a value of £119 billion, and the Port of Ramsgate, which currently has capacity of 500,000 units per annum from cross channel RoRo traffic and could offer a complementary service to The Port of Dover and boost Kent's resilience to Operation Stack when operational. The planned expansion of London Ashford Airport with its new extended runway will also provide increase international links from East Kent in the future.
- 2.17 East Kent has the infrastructure to support business and skills growth and investment is necessary to ensure that business has access to the talent needed to grow. The Discovery Park Enterprise Zone is the most successful enterprise zone in the UK. There is access to world-class higher education facilities, particularly focused at Canterbury where the University of Kent, Canterbury Christ Church University and the University for the Creative Arts have campuses. Excellent further education is provided by East Kent College at Canterbury (through their proposed merger with Canterbury College), Folkestone and Dover and by Hadlow College at Ashford and Betteshanger. These are all contributing to upskilling the workforce of East Kent and ensuring that the resident population has the qualifications and skills necessary to drive future economic growth and enhance East Kent's competitive advantage.
- 2.18 Recent housing growth has supported population growth notably in Ashford and Canterbury. Furthermore, significant additional capacity has been identified on a range of sites across East Kent, including on council owned land (e.g. the Otterpool Park Garden Town in Shepway<sup>9</sup>) which will help sustain the future working-age population and act as a catalyst for the regeneration of key towns (with a particular focus on town centres) as attractive places to live and work.

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.shepway.gov.uk/media/3726/Otterpool-Park-Expression-of-Interest/pdf/Shepway\\_District\\_Council\\_EoI.pdf](https://www.shepway.gov.uk/media/3726/Otterpool-Park-Expression-of-Interest/pdf/Shepway_District_Council_EoI.pdf)

- 2.19 There has been growing demand from high-value industries such as the life sciences, creative and technology industries, as well as those in the finance and business services sector. High quality affordable office stock and accessibility to London and European markets are key locational drivers for business that differentiates East Kent from other places. This will continue to drive delivery of new commercial space, including for start-up and existing businesses. A number of strategic sites have been identified to attract investment to help modernise and grow East Kent’s current mix of industrial and office premises, which in some cases is coming under pressure from redevelopment or conversion to other uses.
- 2.20 Whilst East Kent is well served in terms of infrastructure, there remain pinch-points and areas of congestion that impact the efficiency of the network. One of the most wide-reaching is Operation Stack on the M20 which requires a long-term solution. There are a number of solutions, including a lorry parking area along this route or utilising the Port of Ramsgate more, with its dedicated route to avoid town centre traffic congestion, to build resilience into our cross Channel offering. Failure to bring forward early solutions to Operation Stack will imperil UK plc.
- 2.21 Future arrangements regarding customs controls following Brexit are still to be determined, but are highly relevant to the operation of routes through Kent and particularly around Dover, Ramsgate and the Channel Tunnel. The national significance of East Kent’s infrastructure and the significance of flows of people and goods that are supported by it, means that addressing identified pinch points within the sub-region will not only benefit East Kent but the competitiveness of the UK as a whole.
- 2.22 A number of locally significant infrastructure capacity issues have also been identified by the Growth and Infrastructure Framework<sup>10</sup> for Kent and Medway (currently being updated). The strengthening of existing key routes will be vital if the scale of planned new housing and commercial development in East Kent is to be achieved. There are also some nationally significant infrastructure points just outside of the immediate East Kent area, such as a new Lower Thames Crossing and the M2/A2 junction at Brenley Corner, the dualling of the A2 from Lydden to Dover and the A2/A256/A258 Junction at Duke of York’s, where future investment is critical to support continued growth in the sub-region.

## Synthesis

- 2.23 The analysis in the Evidence Review has been synthesised to arrive at an overall SWOT analysis for East Kent which is set out in Table 2.1. This is not exhaustive, but seeks to capture the key collective issues as far as they relate to East Kent in overall terms as has been described above.

Table 2.1 East Kent SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong working-age population and employment growth in recent years</li> <li>• Rising skill levels and improved productivity across all local authorities</li> <li>• Relatively high levels of labour self-containment in Dover, Shepway and Thanet</li> <li>• Success in attracting in-migrants, particularly to Ashford and Canterbury</li> <li>• Quality of life advantages and cultural offer</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uneven spatial distribution of growth</li> <li>• High value sectors currently clustered in a small number of locations</li> <li>• Widening productivity gap between East Kent and wider region since the recession reflecting drop in recent investment</li> <li>• Uneven qualification attainment levels and below regional average in all areas except Canterbury</li> </ul>

<sup>10</sup> <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/growth-and-infrastructure-framework-gif>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Stunning coastal location and beautiful countryside Competitive travel times to London and relative ease of commuting to the Capital</li> <li>• Major higher education and further education offer</li> <li>• Comparative affordability of housing and commercial space</li> <li>• Strong demand for commercial space</li> <li>• Presence of strategic infrastructure giving excellent access to London, continental Europe and the wider South East region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Housing affordability issues particularly in Canterbury and Ashford</li> <li>• Pockets of socio-economic deprivation, particularly in some coastal communities</li> <li>• Congestion issues on some parts of the strategic infrastructure network, including Operation Stack.</li> </ul>
<b>Opportunities</b>	<b>Threats</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representation across multiple growth sectors, and access to range of economic assets</li> <li>• Space to grow with significant unrealised development schemes and projects (to enable both housing and employment development)</li> <li>• Councils taking a proactive approach to making land available for development and also developing some sites out themselves</li> <li>• Proactive interventions by councils will increase private sector investment confidence, as well as reducing the perceived or actual risk of bringing forward some key development sites</li> <li>• Capacity to grow usage of High Speed 1 and to increase service provision</li> <li>• Forecast population, employment and economic output growth</li> <li>• Increasing demographic and socio-economic diversity, including more young people, families and share of working-age population</li> <li>• Potential to retain a greater share of high-skilled out-commuters and graduates from HE institutions to generate more business start-ups</li> <li>• Regenerating East Kent’s town centres to boost resident and business attractiveness</li> <li>• Strong partnership working between East Kent authorities and business provides opportunities for greater capacity and capability to coordinate investment and economic development policy and initiatives</li> <li>• Expansion of direct services from Ashford International Station to Holland and Germany</li> <li>• Brexit negotiations may result in employment opportunities associated with freight clearance and supply chain growth in East Kent.</li> <li>• Securing the Open Golf Championship at Sandwich on a regular basis will provide substantial economic benefits and international recognition for East Kent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher recent economic growth in Ashford and Canterbury (compared to other areas in East Kent) and lack of ‘spill over’ to other East Kent locations</li> <li>• Cross country infrastructure constraints impacting ability to deliver strategic housing and employment growth</li> <li>• Lack of infrastructure investment could limit economic growth potential of East Kent and wider UK economy</li> <li>• Under-performance of town centres and need to support long-term regeneration</li> <li>• Loss of employment space, lower land values and viability issues constraining new commercial development.</li> <li>• Lack of comprehensive improvements to the M2/A2 route from the proposed Lower Thames Crossing to the Port of Dover</li> <li>• Lack of long-term solution to address lorry parking issues associated with Operation Stack</li> <li>• Future customs arrangements following Brexit currently unknown but may adversely impact functioning of Port of Dover and Channel Tunnel</li> <li>• Impact of Brexit on the flow of people and trade across the Channel</li> <li>• Peak time overcrowding on some High Speed rail services</li> <li>• Impact of legal challenges in causing delays in developments coming forward</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The development of Full Fibre Broadband Networks through the incorporation of new planning policies for new developments.</li></ul>	
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Source: Lichfields analysis

### 3.0 Strategy for Growth

**This section defines the strategic objectives that underpin the future strategy for growth in East Kent.**

- 3.1 Drawing on the context set out in the previous sections, four overarching strategic objectives have been identified and validated through consultation with a series of economic stakeholders across East Kent. These are cross-cutting to provide the ‘building blocks’ to guide the future strategy for supporting growth across East Kent. They have been selected on the basis that investment within these four areas is considered to offer the greatest scope and potential to deliver economic growth over the next few years within the sub-region, whether this relates to job creation, development of new housing and commercial space or by enhancing productivity within East Kent’s workforce and business base.
- 3.2 Given the national significance of some of East Kent’s economic assets, the strategic objectives set out within the framework provide a way of channelling future investment to not only deliver economic growth across East Kent, but for the UK more broadly. They also reflect an aspiration amongst East Kent partners for a balance of ‘quality’ and ‘quantity’ outcomes associated with economic growth and development. They are not intended to operate in isolation but are complementary and self-reinforcing.
- 3.3 These objectives are summarised in Figure 4.1 and detailed further below.

Figure 3.1 Framework Objectives

Framework objective	Purpose
1.Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	Funding key pieces of infrastructure to unlock sites and development opportunities as well as alleviating pressure and addressing constraints within East Kent’s existing infrastructure networks. This covers a range of infrastructure provision including highways, rail, air, ports, broadband and utilities
2.Delivery of Business Space	Delivery of high quality enterprise, innovation and incubator space to support existing businesses to grow and to enable East Kent to compete for inward investment and attract high value, knowledge based activity and jobs
3.Supporting Skills and Productivity within Business	Upskilling existing residents and attracting high skilled workers to drive innovation and productivity within East Kent’s business base, and helping businesses to access the support and finance they need to grow
4.Place Making and Shaping	Creating attractive places to live and work through revitalising the existing built environment and creating new spaces. Within East Kent, town centres provide a key focus for place making activity, with significant scope to enhance the quality of urban spaces and public realm

Source: Lichfields

- 3.4 These objectives echo themes set out within the Government’s emerging Industrial Strategy at a national level, which identifies ten ‘pillars’ to driving future growth and investment. These include:
  - **Investing in science, research and innovation** – “we must become a more innovative economy and do more to commercialise our world leading science base to drive growth across the UK.”

- **Developing skills** – “we must help people and businesses to thrive by: ensuring that business has access to the talent it needs to grow; ensuring everyone has the basic skills needed in a modern economy; building a new system of technical education to benefit the half of young people who do not go to university; boosting STEM skills, digital skills and numeracy; and by raising skill levels in lagging areas.”
- **Upgrading infrastructure** – “we must upgrade our standards of performance on digital, energy, transport, water and flood defence infrastructure, and better align central government infrastructure investment with local growth priorities.”
- **Supporting businesses to start and grow** – “we must ensure that businesses across the UK can access the finance and management skills they need to grow; and we must create the right conditions for companies to invest for the long term.”
- **Cultivating world-leading sectors** – “we must build on our areas of competitive advantage, and help new sectors to flourish, in many cases challenging existing institutions and incumbents;” and
- **Driving growth across the whole country** – “we will create a framework to build on the particular strengths of different places and address factors that hold places back – whether it is investing in key infrastructure projects to encourage growth, increasing skill levels, or backing local innovation strengths.”

3.5 The Government notes that these pillars all reinforce one another; an economy with more innovative start-ups will require more highly skilled people, more venture capital, and better digital infrastructure. Inward investment can drive productivity growth by bringing new ideas and new ways of doing things to the UK. But to attract inward investment we need to be competitive on energy costs and infrastructure – as well as having a strong science base and highly skilled people.

3.6 This Growth Framework reflects these themes but contextualises them in terms of unlocking the economic potential of East Kent. However, by aligning with national policy objectives, the East Kent Regeneration Board can ensure that East Kent is in the strongest position to put its case forward to Government departments, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership and other stakeholders (e.g. infrastructure providers) and agencies relevant to future delivery of projects. For many of the Government’s pillars, such as research and innovation and infrastructure, East Kent already has great strengths. The Growth Framework will enable the sub-region to capitalise fully on them.

## 1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure

3.7 This objective is considered to be the most important of the four framework objectives and focuses on securing delivery of critical infrastructure projects, working with industry bodies and other agencies where necessary. Significant progress has been made to improve infrastructure in East Kent in recent years, but further investment is required, particularly given the importance of East Kent as the UK’s gateway to Europe.

3.8 There are a significant number of development sites with potential to deliver major housing and employment growth in East Kent but these need to be unlocked with supporting infrastructure. The delivery of new homes and jobs is key to maximising the future economic potential of East Kent and the larger schemes will require up-front infrastructure to be put in place in a coordinated and phased way. A good example of this is the delivery of the new junction 10A on the M20 to facilitate housing and employment growth in south Ashford, which is due to be completed in 2019. Whilst the list of schemes may change over time, the principle of ensuring a deliverable supply of development land aligned to statutory development plans is a key objective of this Framework.



- 3.9 The future economic architecture and productivity of East Kent depends on access to efficient transport and digital infrastructure, to support the functioning of the labour market and to give businesses the connectivity that they demand. As noted in section 2.0, there are both strategic opportunities for road investment (e.g. on the motorway and trunk road network) and also local, small-scale requirements (e.g. to alleviate bottlenecks on local routes).
- 3.10 Given the extent of international connectivity, upgrading infrastructure within and around East Kent will also bring national benefits, with the effect that the potential return on investing in East Kent's infrastructure will be higher than elsewhere in the UK due to the sub-region's strategic location between mainland Europe, London and the rest of the country. The case for investing in strategic infrastructure is further strengthened by the UK's upcoming exit from the European Union and the potential impacts that post-Brexit border controls<sup>11</sup> could have upon a number of locations in East Kent. However, Brexit may also offer opportunities for East Kent, such as growth in sectors associated with freight clearance and supply chain growth.
- 3.11 Maximising the opportunities for economic growth in East Kent requires thinking beyond the East Kent boundaries for transport infrastructure. For example, the Lower Thames Crossing is critical to facilitating future growth and improving productivity and resilience for businesses in the wider economy and will also impact on East Kent. At a national level, the Lower Thames Crossing provides a critical piece of infrastructure for enabling the effective transportation of goods from the UK to Europe and it is important that investment in Kent's strategic road infrastructure keeps pace to ensure that this route to market can sustain increasing volumes of traffic without adversely affecting the day-to-day operations of East Kent's business community. Therefore there is a need to adopt an integrated strategy to ensure maximum benefits are achieved, with upgrading of the M2/A2/A299, improving Brenley Corner junction in Swale and improvements to the A2/A256/A258 Duke of York's junction in Dover necessary as part of a coordinated package of measures to improve strategic connectivity. This would also benefit East Kent through supporting sites for housing and employment growth.<sup>12</sup>
- 3.12 There is also widespread recognition of the need to improve rail services in East Kent including, as noted above, making more intensive use of HS1 through the provision of additional services across East Kent, continual improvements to journey times and new station stops at Thanet Parkway (not only supporting business growth in Thanet, but also at Discovery Park Enterprise Zone) and Westenhangar; the latter is critical to supporting the Otterpool Park Garden Town which represents the largest future development project in East Kent. However, it is also important that Dover and Coastal East Kent are provided with HS1 Services on a level playing field with other locations and any new station stops do not prejudice the levels of service provided to Dover, Deal and Sandwich. Whilst East Kent's existing strategic infrastructure (such as HS1, M2, M20) is considered to be one of its key strengths, intra-Kent links are considered by stakeholders to represent a significant weakness to facilitating future growth, particularly east-west links and routes away from East Kent's main economic hubs.
- 3.13 Excellent quality digital infrastructure is central to enabling business productivity, innovation and international trade and provides East Kent with a unique selling point. Kent County Council is currently working with the Government's broadband agency, Broadband Delivery UK, on a second project to further extend the reach of superfast broadband which is aiming for 95% coverage by the end of 2017 and 95.7% coverage during 2018. However some rural communities in East Kent will still be under-served and therefore local projects will need to be progressed.

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<sup>11</sup> See Ready on Day One: Meeting the Brexit Borders Challenge, Charlie Elphicke, May 2017 for more details

<sup>12</sup> This approach has also been advocated by the South East LEP in their response to the Lower Thames Crossing consultation, [http://www.southeastlep.com/images/uploads/resources/SELEP\\_response\\_to\\_Lower\\_Thames\\_Crossing\\_Consultation\\_March\\_2016.pdf](http://www.southeastlep.com/images/uploads/resources/SELEP_response_to_Lower_Thames_Crossing_Consultation_March_2016.pdf)

## 2. Delivery of Business Space

- 3.14 Delivery of new business space is key to supporting the growth of existing businesses in East Kent and contributing to improved efficiency and productivity, as well as providing an attractor for mobile footloose investment into the area. There have been some real success stories in recent years, such as Eureka Park in Ashford and Discovery Park in Sandwich which has reinvented itself since the downsizing of Pfizer and benefitted from Enterprise Zone status. The East Kent Spatial Development Company works as an East Kent<sup>13</sup> local authority owned investment vehicle and has successfully brought forward new high quality business accommodation, for example at Canterbury Innovation Centre, Aylesham Business Park in Dover District and Clover House in Whitstable .
- 3.15 Kent is an increasingly favourable business location, with the impact of rising prices in London and other parts of the South East making the East Kent business ‘offer’ increasingly competitive (as well as its residential offer). However, it must be recognised that many potential employment developments face viability challenges that can delay delivery. This means that East Kent’s stock of industrial and commercial space is at risk of becoming dated and not growing to keep pace with future job growth needs. In addition, some sites are under pressure for redevelopment to other uses, and office floorspace has been lost across some of East Kent through Permitted Development Rights that allow conversion to residential units.
- 3.16 The East Kent local authorities are actively intervening both directly themselves and through the local authority-owned investment vehicle, the East Kent Spatial Development Company (EKSDC), to bring forward key development sites across East Kent for both housing and employment. This is serving to stimulate the private sector investment market by reducing the risk associated with the development of some sites, which require considerable remediation in some cases, and, in other instances, by providing the market evidence of the returns that can be achieved to the private investor.
- 3.17 This Framework Objective is therefore to support delivery of the next generation of high-quality business space in East Kent. This involves the full ‘ladder’ of premises, including incubator and innovation space, that can accommodate small and fast-growing businesses alongside larger office and industrial premises that can allow existing businesses in East Kent to be retained and to scale-up. This will ensure that East Kent can offer the choice, flexibility and affordability of premises to meet a range of business and sector needs (helping to enhance the appeal of East Kent’s centres for business, linked to objective 1 above) and also to be in a stronger position to positively respond to mobile inward investment opportunities when these arise. This includes leading innovation in sectors such as advanced manufacturing where East Kent can develop new strengths (linked to objective 4 below), as well as accommodating industrial activities which are increasingly being displaced out of Greater London.
- 3.18 There are a number of examples of high quality business space being delivered in East Kent in recent years and the East Kent Spatial Development Company has the potential to continue to provide an important vehicle to support future delivery of quality business accommodation over the time horizon of this Growth Framework.

## 3. Supporting Skills and Productivity within Business

- 3.19 Productivity levels and economic output vary considerably across East Kent, and the gap between the area and the rest of Kent and wider South East has recently started to widen again in the period since the recession, having narrowed previously. This means working with existing businesses and sectors in East Kent to help build efficiency and progression up the value chain,

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<sup>13</sup> Thanet DC, Canterbury CC, Shepway DC and Dover DC



but also to grow the higher value sectors that have potential as noted in section 2.0. The Framework therefore advocates an approach which supports the development of complementary sector specialisms across different parts of East Kent including:

- **Ashford:** Advanced manufacturing, life sciences, ICT
- **Canterbury:** Higher education, tourism, creative, healthcare and professional services
- **Dover:** Life sciences, transport .logistics and storage, tourism and heritage
- **Shepway:** Tourism, energy, creative and digital media
- **Thanet:** Advanced manufacturing, agri-tech, tourism, creative and heritage

3.20 A strategy to support higher growth and higher value added sectors needs to be supported by improvements in the skills profile of East Kent if local people are to access jobs within new and emerging sectors and the benefits of these are to accrue locally. This will need to include efforts to tackle low skills attainment amongst some younger residents on leaving school, as well as basic employability and business skills, which stakeholders note continue to represent a key gap. There is also a need to retain a greater share of East Kent’s university graduates and embedding these higher level skills within the sub-region’s business base. Similarly, there is a need to ensure that opportunities for businesses to start-up and grow are fostered, such as access to core business management skills and financing.

3.21 In this respect, there are opportunities to further enhance the links between the strong education sector with the sector specialisms in the districts ( for example, advanced manufacturing in Thanet and creative industries in Shepway and Thanet). Ways to achieve this will be explored further, including enhancing partnership working between the local authorities and education and training providers to identify the specific skills needs of employers in key sector potentially through regular ‘sector conversation’ workshops

3.22 Recent higher education capital investment, such as the Engineering, Design, Growth and Enterprise (‘EDGE’) Hub at Canterbury Christ Church University which was recently awarded funding through the Local Growth Fund, is a good example of a cross-sector facility linking education and business that will benefit all parts of East Kent as well as other areas.<sup>14</sup>

3.23 Other skills related investments and projects include major Skills Funding Agency investment in East Kent College’s Folkestone and Dover Campuses and the development of a brand new Elwick Road campus for Ashford College which is due to open in September 2017.

3.24 Both Canterbury Christ Church University and the University of Kent have major plans to expand their offer; for example, the University of Kent’s masterplan for a redeveloped and expanded campus includes a new business school, supercentre for Biotechnology and Molecular Medicine and new media and innovation space/biotechnology development. Some of these projects are included within the EKGF’s ‘future investment priorities’ (see Chapter 5.0) and have the potential to stimulate a significant pipeline of capital investment in East Kent over the coming years.

## 4. Place Making and Shaping

3.25 This objective is about supporting the essential ingredients that can bring about successful places – those which are attractive places to live , work and invest – and in doing so provide the platform for sustaining future economic growth. East Kent already offers significant lifestyle attractions, such as vibrant historic towns (with many listed buildings and conservation areas), outstanding countryside and coastal areas, all of which represent important economic assets. A number of East Kent’s larger town centres offer significant scope to facilitate growth and

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.canterbury.ac.uk/news-centre/press-releases/2017/engineering-hub-wins-6m-government-funding.aspx>

regeneration. There is an opportunity for planning and feasibility modelling of town centres and coastal areas to make inroads into creating a coherent sense of Place. This type of investment will significantly improve the quality of life for those who rely on these town centres for access to a choice of goods and services, as well as act as a catalyst to attract new residents who bring additional expenditure and the talented people able to generate new business activity and start-ups. In turn this process can help secure the investment needed to secure wider regeneration, as has already been happening particularly in Ashford, Folkestone and Margate.

- 3.26 A number of key stakeholders consulted in the development of this EKGf noted that whilst many parts of East Kent are well served and supported by the strategic and local infrastructure needed to facilitate growth and investment, the quality of built environment and supporting infrastructure – in particular some of the sub-region’s town centre and housing offers – can often let it down. Investing in ‘place making’ activities is therefore considered to be crucial in enabling East Kent’s settlements to become more attractive and appealing to business and people. In so doing this will maximise the growth potential afforded by recent investments such as HS1.
- 3.27 The focus of this objective is therefore to continue to promote projects and interventions that contribute to revitalising the existing built environment and create new urban spaces that will forge a stronger network of town centres across East Kent, whilst also enhancing the natural environment which is a hallmark of the area. This will not only enhance the individual identities and distinctiveness of these towns but also reinforce a network of complementary location ‘brands’ that will increase the profile of East Kent to investors, visitors and residents alike. The need to showcase a clearer economic profile and role for East Kent and its key settlements was identified through stakeholder consultation; this is relevant for all strategic objectives, including improving workforce productivity by better matching the skills of local people to the economic and employment opportunities of the future (see objective 4).
- 3.28 Practically, it will also support the functioning of the housing market through new housing development to attract new residents and may also support new business space to help the future economic vitality of East Kent overall.

## Towards an Integrated Strategy

- 3.29 The Framework objectives are designed as the ‘building blocks’ that collectively are designed to establish the strongest platform for future economic growth in East Kent. In turn, these objectives provide the basis for setting future investment priorities (see section 4.0). Set out below are elements of how this approach might be characterised:
- a **A strengthened East Kent brand** that more clearly articulates the strength and diversity of the East Kent offer (and potential) to the marketplace and those with a stake in delivery, but also to advocate East Kent’s growth potential to a wider audience.
  - b Maximising **economic potential and meeting regeneration needs**, so that there is a focus on both giving East Kent’s existing successful economic ‘hotspots’ the capacity and resources to grow, but also recognising where gaps might exist and scope for economic change is perhaps greatest.
  - c **Balancing short and long term opportunities**, particularly against the backdrop of potentially uncertain economic times. In a competitive market for funding and investment, it naturally follows that short term returns can be prioritised, but the Board recognises that taking a long-term view is also important.
  - d **Consistency of plans and strategies** – this Framework is intended to set an overall direction of travel and to guide how future investments might be prioritised. It does not, however, operate in isolation and relies upon other plans and programmes that

directly impact delivery. A coordinated approach is therefore strongly encouraged, including the future refresh of the South East LEP Strategic Economic Plan.

## 4.0 Future Investment Priorities

**This section identifies the investment priorities and projects required to deliver the strategic objectives defined by this Framework.**

4.1 A comprehensive review of potential investment projects across East Kent has been undertaken having regard to the existing evidence available and working in close partnership with each of the East Kent local authorities. This includes projects previously identified in the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan which are either underway and may require further support to be fully delivered or have not yet come forward.

4.2 The projects have been identified on the basis of a local recognition of their importance, rather than through a strict, criteria-based scoring process. This recognises the balanced approach to growth defined by the Framework objectives. Identifying priority locations for investment purely based on housing numbers or employment outputs would underplay the importance of smaller-scale projects and other initiatives that will have a longer term impact on perceptions of the area and its attractiveness to investors.

### Defining Significance

4.3 In total 75 individual projects or interventions have been identified across East Kent. The projects identified vary considerably in terms of type and scale, and include residential, commercial, mixed use and infrastructure projects.

4.4 In order to help frame future priorities, a tiered approach has been adopted which differentiates between projects which are ‘strategically significant’ (i.e. those important to growth in East Kent overall) and ‘locally significant’ (i.e. those important to growth in an individual local authority). Strategically significant projects would generally be afforded greater priority over locally significant projects. The broad criteria that have been applied for each of these categories are summarised in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Project Significance Criteria

Strategically significant (for East Kent)	Locally significant (for local authority)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects and initiatives that are integral to supporting growth of the East Kent economy as a whole</li> <li>• Impacts not only benefitting individual local authority areas but also the wider sub-region</li> <li>• Generally larger in scale, longer term projects, which unlock growth opportunities across a ‘larger than local’ area</li> <li>• Enhance ability of East Kent to compete for investment and development opportunities at a national and international level.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projects and initiatives that are important to achieve individual local authority’s growth objectives</li> <li>• Impacts generally not extending beyond the local area</li> <li>• Generally smaller scale projects to address local constraints and opportunities</li> <li>• Ability to enable local authority to remain competitive at an East Kent level.</li> </ul>

Source: Lichfields

4.5 The list of identified projects and their contribution to the Framework strategic objectives is set out in Table 4.2, with additional supporting information contained at Appendix 2. It is important to note that this is not intended to be a ‘fixed’ list, but rather one that can be continually reviewed and updated as new information becomes available and individual projects progress.

- 4.6 The current funding position of these projects varies and will evolve over time as new funding rounds are released. For example, a number of projects in East Kent were included as part of the recent £102 million Local Growth Fund Round 3 investments by Government through the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.<sup>15</sup> These grant awards are set out later in this section. For projects where funding needs are yet to be defined, more detailed business cases will be developed to assist with their delivery.

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<sup>15</sup> <http://www.southeastle.com/news/article/102m-cash-boost-for-south-east-local-enterprise-partnership-to-help-create>

Table 4.2 Alignment of Identified Projects with Framework Objectives (shown alphabetically by local authority area)

	Project Name	Location	Scheme Type	Significance	Alignment with Framework Objective(s)			
					1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
1	Ashford Town Centre Transformation Project:	Ashford	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓			✓
2	<i>Ashford Commercial Quarter</i>	Ashford	Mixed	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
3	<i>Ashford College Campus</i>	Ashford	Mixed	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
4	<i>Elwick Place</i>	Ashford	Mixed	Local			✓	✓
5	<i>Southern Expansion Quarter / Victoria Way</i>	Ashford	Mixed	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
6	Jasmin Vardimon	Ashford	Commercial	Local		✓	✓	✓
7	Ashford Designer Outlet Expansion	Ashford	Commercial	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
8	Chilmington Green	Ashford	Mixed	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
9	M20 Junction 10A	Ashford	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
10	Ashford International Station	Ashford	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
11	Newtown Works	Ashford	Mixed	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
12	Conningbrook housing and water park	Ashford	Mixed	Strategic	✓			✓
13	Canterbury Knowledge City:	Canterbury	Mixed	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
14	<i>Kent Medical School &amp; Research Complex</i>	Canterbury	Commercial	Strategic		✓	✓	
15	<i>Canterbury Innovation Centre II</i>	Canterbury	Commercial	Local		✓	✓	
16	<i>"Makers Space" and "Hot House"</i>	Canterbury	Commercial	Local		✓	✓	
17	<i>Canterbury Christ Church University EDGE Project</i>	Canterbury	Mixed	Strategic		✓	✓	
18	<i>Herne Bay Business Centre</i>	Canterbury	Commercial	Local		✓	✓	
19	A28 Corridor:	Canterbury	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
20	<i>Milton Manor Roundabout</i>	Canterbury	Infrastructure	Local	✓		✓	
21	<i>A2 slip at Bridge</i>	Canterbury	Infrastructure	Local	✓		✓	
22	<i>A2 offslip and park &amp; ride relocation</i>	Canterbury	Infrastructure	Local	✓		✓	
23	<i>Wincheap Traffic Management Scheme</i>	Canterbury	Infrastructure	Local	✓		✓	✓

	Project Name	Location	Scheme Type	Significance	Alignment with Framework Objective(s)			
					1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
24	<i>Sturry Link Road</i>	Canterbury	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
25	<i>Sturry Rd Integrated Transport Package</i>	Canterbury	Infrastructure	Local	✓		✓	
26	<i>Canterbury Eastern Bypass</i>	Canterbury	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
27	Canterbury Western Link Road	Canterbury	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
28	Herne Bay Marina	Canterbury	Mixed	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
29	Whitstable Park & Ride	Canterbury	Infrastructure	Local	✓			✓
30	Whitfield:	Dover	Mixed	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
31	<i>Sewerage and Water Infrastructure</i>	Dover	Infrastructure	Local	✓		✓	
32	<i>Bus Rapid Transit Scheme</i>	Dover	Infrastructure	Local	✓		✓	
33	White Cliffs Business Park (Phase 3)	Dover	Mixed	Local		✓	✓	✓
34	Dover Town Centre public realm and place making Improvements	Dover	Mixed	Local			✓	✓
35	Dover Waterfront	Dover	Mixed	Local			✓	✓
36	Former Connaught Barracks	Dover		Local		✓	✓	✓
37	Discovery Park, Sandwich	Dover	Mixed	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
38	A2 Duke of York Roundabout Improvements	Dover	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
39	A2 Improvements – dualling between Lydden & Dover Town	Dover	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
40	Dualling of the remainder of the A256 and improved connections to the A258	Dover	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
41	Betteshanger Sustainable Park	Dover	Commercial/Mixed	Local		✓	✓	✓
42	Open Golf Championship at Sandwich	Dover	Mixed	Strategic	✓			✓
43	Folkestone Seafront & Town Centre:	Shepway	Mixed	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
44	<i>Folkestone Harbour and Seafront</i>	Shepway	Mixed	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
45	<i>Folkestone Creative Quarter</i>	Shepway	Commercial	Local		✓	✓	✓
46	<i>Folkestone Townscape Heritage Initiative</i>	Shepway	Mixed	Local			✓	✓
47	<i>Former Gasworks, Ship Street</i>	Shepway	Mixed	Local	✓			✓
48	<i>Shearway Business Park - Bigginwood/Caesars Way</i>	Shepway	Mixed	Local	✓	✓		

	Project Name	Location	Scheme Type	Significance	Alignment with Framework Objective(s)			
					1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
49	<i>Park Farm Industrial Estate - Former Silver Spring site</i>	Shepway	Commercial	Local	✓	✓		
50	East Kent College Folkestone Campus extension	Shepway	Mixed	Local		✓	✓	
51	Princes Parade, Hythe	Shepway	Mixed	Local		✓		✓
52	Romney Marsh Regeneration:	Shepway	Mixed	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	
53	<i>Mountfield Road Industrial Estate/South New Romney</i>	Shepway	Mixed	Local	✓	✓	✓	
54	<i>London Ashford Airport</i>	Shepway	Mixed	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	
55	Operation Stack Lorry Area	Shepway	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
56	Otterpool Park /M20 Junction 11	Shepway	Mixed	Strategic	✓	✓		✓
57	<i>Westenhanger Rail Station upgrade</i>	Shepway	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	
58	Port of Ramsgate	Thanet	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
59	Thanet Parkway Station	Thanet	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	✓
60	Inner Circuit Improvement Strategy	Thanet	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	✓
61	<i>Westwood relief strategy</i>	Thanet	Infrastructure	Local	✓		✓	✓
62	Margate Junction improvements	Thanet	Infrastructure	Local	✓		✓	✓
63	Advanced Manufacturing Park (Manston Business Park)	Thanet	Commercial	Strategic		✓	✓	
64	Creative Industries Workspace	Thanet	Commercial	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
65	Feasibility Modelling for Ramsgate, Margate and Viking Bay	Thanet	Commercial	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
66	<i>Ramsgate Heritage Action Zone</i>	Thanet	Commercial	Local				✓
67	<i>Theatre Royal</i>	Thanet	Commercial	Local				✓
68	<i>Dreamland and Sunshine Cafe Redevelopment</i>	Thanet	Commercial	Local				✓
69	<i>Viking Bay</i>	Thanet	Commercial	Local				✓
70	EuroKent Business Park	Thanet	Mixed	Strategic		✓	✓	
71	Agri-Tech Hub	Thanet	Commercial	Local			✓	
72	East Kent College Broadstairs Campus extension	Thanet	Mixed	Local			✓	
73	East Kent Increased rail capacity and journey times	East Kent	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	✓



	Project Name	Location	Scheme Type	Significance	Alignment with Framework Objective(s)			
					1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
74	Business funding support – Kent & Medway Business Fund	East Kent	Infrastructure	Strategic			✓	
75	Upgrading broadband	East Kent	Infrastructure	Strategic	✓		✓	✓

Source: Local authorities / Lichfields analysis

Note: projects in *italics* represent subsidiary projects which are linked to or required in order to deliver the headline project; the numbering of projects does not infer any prioritisation of projects

## Spatial Priorities

4.7 Table 4.3 below provides a summary of the identified projects by area, significance and contribution to strategic objectives.

Table 4.3 Overview of Projects

Place	Total projects	Strategically significant	Locally-significant	Alignment with strategic objective(s)			
				1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
Ashford	12	8	4	8	7	10	10
Canterbury	17	7	10	12	7	16	4
Dover	13	7	6	7	6	12	9
Shepway	15	7	8	10	11	10	7
Thanet	15	6	9	6	5	10	11
East Kent wide	3	3	0	2	0	3	2
<b>Total</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>43</b>

Source: Lichfields analysis

4.8 A total of 36 projects have been identified as being strategically-significant for the future economic growth of East Kent. These are distributed across all parts of East Kent and underline that there are opportunities in each local authority to contribute to the overall potential of East Kent. These projects are summarised as follows:

- **Ashford** : Ashford Town Centre Transformation Project, Ashford Commercial Quarter, Ashford College Campus, Chilmington Green, M20 Junction 10A , Ashford International Station and Ashford Designer Outlet Expansion.
- **Canterbury**: Canterbury Knowledge City, Kent Medical School and Research Complex, Canterbury Christ Church University EDGE Project, A28 Corridor, including the Sturry Link Road and Canterbury Eastern Bypass and Canterbury Western Link Road.
- **Dover**: Whitfield, White Cliffs Business Park (Phase 3), Discovery Park at Sandwich, A2 improvements (including improvements to Brenley Corner in the neighbouring district of Swale), including Duke of York roundabout and dualling between Lydden and Dover Town and the dualling of the remainder of the A256 and improved connections to the A258.
- **Shepway**: Folkestone Town Centre and Seafront , including Folkestone Harbour and Seafront development, Romney Marsh regeneration, including the development of London Ashford Airport, Westenhanger Lorry area, Otterpool Park Garden Town around M20 Junction 11 and Westenhanger rail station upgrade.
- **Thanet**: Port of Ramsgate, Thanet Parkway Station and Inner Route improvements, Advanced Manufacturing Park at Manston Business Park, Creative Industries workspace and developing out EuroKent Business Park.
- **East Kent wide**: Upgrading broadband, rail capacity and journey time improvements and business support funding

4.9 In addition, 37 locally-significant projects have also been identified many of which have a supporting role as components of delivering the strategically-significant projects.

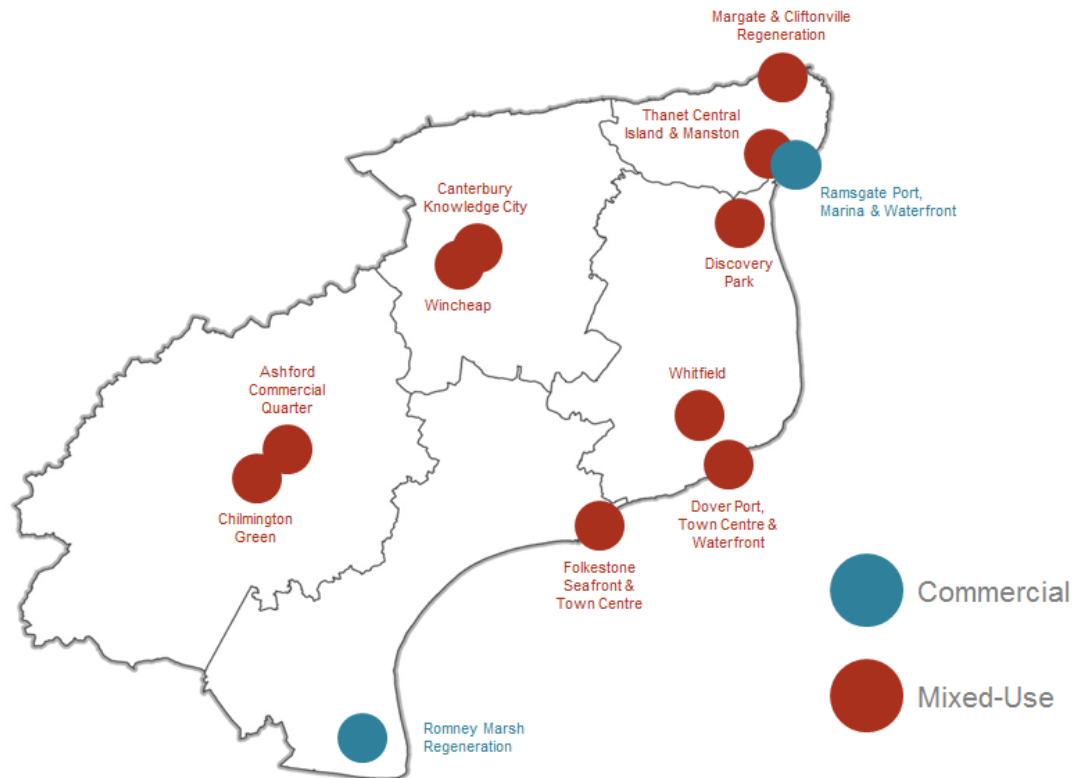
## Meeting the Strategic Objectives

- 4.10 As detailed in Table 4.3, the identified projects contribute to meeting a range of the Framework's strategic objectives with some particular examples summarised below:
- 1 **Unlocking growth through infrastructure:** Chilmington Green, M20 Junction 10A, Ashford International Station, , Ashford Town Centre Transformation Project, A28 corridor projects, Herne Bay Marina, Whitfield (Dover) and upgrades to the A2 and A256, M2/A2/A299 Brenley Corner along with the dualling of the A2 from Lydden to Dover, Otterpool Park garden town and related transport infrastructure upgrading (including Westenhanger railway station), Port of Ramsgate, Thanet Parkway Station and Inner Route circuit improvements, including Westwood Relief Road and Margate Junction improvements.
  - 2 **Delivery of business space:** Ashford Commercial Quarter, Ashford Designer Outlet Expansion, Chilmington Green, Canterbury Knowledge City, Whitfield, White Cliffs Business Park (Phase 3), Folkestone Harbour and other employment sites in the town, Mountfield Road Industrial Estate, Otterpool Park, Creative Industries Workspace and advanced manufacturing park at Manston.
  - 3 **Supporting productivity within business:** Ashford College Campus, Canterbury Knowledge City, Discovery Park, Mountfield Road industrial estate, Otterpool Park, Creative Industries Workspace and the Advanced Manufacturing Park at Manston.
  - 4 **Place-making and shaping:** a number of Ashford town centre and urban extension/housing projects, Canterbury Knowledge City, Herne Bay Marina, Dover Town Centre and Waterfront, Whitfield and Discovery Park, Folkestone Town Centre and Seafront, Otterpool Park garden town, Creative Industries Workspace (Thanet), Thanet Parkway, Inner circuit improvements including Westwood Relief Strategy and Margate Junction Improvements and Feasibility Modelling for Ramsgate, Margate and Viking Bay.

## Spatial Priorities

- 4.11 Considerable progress has been made over the last few years to deliver the various strategic priorities and locations identified in the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan. Whilst the extent of this progress inevitably varies across East Kent and between the individual projects, a combination of private and public sector investment has helped to bring forward a range of development projects that have started to deliver against the 2013 Growth Plan's target for new jobs and additional homes.
- 4.12 All of these opportunities provide the potential to further transform the growth and prosperity of East Kent over the coming years, although a number of projects, such as Chilmington Green (in Ashford), Otterpool Park (in Shepway) and Whitfield (in Dover) will take a number of years to fully deliver, and therefore represent longer term priorities for the EKGf over the next 10 years and beyond.
- 4.13 The location of the twelve spatial priorities and locations is shown in Figure 4.1 below.

Figure 4.1 Location of 2013 East Kent Growth Plan Spatial Priorities



Source: Lichfields

4.14 The progress of projects that continue to be a high priority and which are continuing to be delivered is summarised below and those that are new to this Growth Framework are also outlined.

## Ashford

4.15 Within the East Kent Growth Plan, “Open for Growth” 2013, there were two spatial priorities for the Borough of Ashford - Ashford Commercial Quarter and Chilmington Green, along with two strategic infrastructure projects, M20 Junction 10A, and the Ashford International Station Project. Within the Commercial Quarter spatial priority, now known as Ashford Town Centre Transformation Project, there are a number of key sites around the Ashford International Station that were incorporated within this spatial priority. Significant progress has been made on delivering these projects in the last 4 years, with many now on site delivering housing growth and commercial development to stimulate the East Kent economy

### (1) Ashford Town Centre Transformation Project

4.16 With 5 key developments being delivered within Ashford Town Centre over the next few years, which could create over 1,200 homes and 1,000 jobs, this project also delivers improvements to existing junctions, parking, and to the public realm and pedestrian movement between Ashford International Station and the town centre. These improvements will release capacity within the highways network as well as improving the environment within this core area of the town. Funding has been secured through Section 106 to deliver some of the work that is being taken forward in 2017/18, but further funding is required to deliver further improvements beyond this first phase. This project just fell outside the allocation of funding in LGF Round 3.

## (2) Ashford Commercial Quarter

- 4.17 The Ashford Commercial Quarter development provides the potential for up to 80,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office development alongside 2,500 m<sup>2</sup> of retail / leisure and 150 homes. This strategic site right next to Ashford International Station has the potential to be a key driver of employment growth in Ashford and East Kent over the next decade. Ashford Borough Council acquired key land holdings within this site from the Homes and Communities Agency in April 2014 to drive forward the development of new offices. First phase public realm works have been completed and a development partner was sought for the first office building of 7,500m<sup>2</sup>. Quinn Estates and George Wilson holdings are now developing the first phase building. Works started in January 2017 and are due to complete in Spring / Summer 2018. This new office building has the potential to house over 500 jobs as the first phase of this dynamic new quarter, and establish a thriving new town centre office market within Ashford

## (3) Ashford College Campus

- 4.18 The Hadlow Group took over the ownership of West Kent and Ashford College in August 2014 from the K College group, following a competitive process. Plans for the new 7,106 m<sup>2</sup> Ashford College Campus were then taken forward on the Elwick Road site alongside the redevelopment of the current Jemmett Road Ashford Campus. The new Elwick Road campus is to be delivered in two phases (Phase 1 and Phase 1a) at a total cost of £25.8 million. £5 million was secured from the Skills Funding Agency (SFA), £9.8 million was secured with the support of other East Kent Partners from the SE LEP Skills Capital Fund and further funding has been secured from Ashford Borough Council, the SE LEP Equipment Fund and the sale of the Jemmett Road site.

- 4.19 Phase 1 started construction in January 2016, and is due to open for students in September 2017, with Phase 1a due to start early 2018 and be open in early 2019. This provides a strategic investment in education and training in the Ashford area, with a further £14 million Phase 2 higher education facility planned to be delivered on the Elwick Road campus within the next 5 years.



## (4) Elwick Place

- 4.20 This 26,900 m<sup>2</sup> leisure led town centre development will deliver a new Cinema, 8 restaurants and bars, and a 60 bedroom hotel in Phase 1. The site is being delivered by Stanhope Plc in partnership with Ashford Borough Council who acquired the site at the end of 2015. Planning permission for phase 1 was granted in December 2015. Work has started on site in May 2017 and will be completed in 2018.





**(5) Southern Expansion Quarter / Victoria Way**

4.21 Two town centre sites on Victoria Road in Ashford will deliver 860 new homes and over 200 jobs within the town. Plans being brought forward for 660 homes on the former Powergen site by Quinn Estates, in partnership with Neighbour and GRE will start the development in 2017. A further scheme by U +I on a site opposite the International Station will see a new Aldi food store, Chapel Down Brewery, 200 homes and a 120 bed hotel on this prominent site. This site will also see development started in 2017. There is also the potential for further regeneration and development to bring forward additional homes, parking and jobs to transform this area of the town and its relationship to Victoria Park.

**(6) Jasmin Vardimon**

4.22 Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company moved to Ashford in 2012 and the company now wishes to expand the work already undertaken to deliver a JVC International Dance Academy alongside space and support for creative industry businesses. Ashford Borough Council, Kent County Council and the Arts Council are working with the company to develop their plans with early feasibility work underway.

**(7) Ashford Designer Outlet Expansion**

4.23 Ashford Designer Outlet was originally opened in 2000 attracting shoppers from across the region to purchase discounted premium brands. McArthur Glen received planning permission in September 2016 for an additional 100,000 sq. ft. of space, 38 new units, with the potential to create a further 500 jobs. Work is expected to start on site by the end of 2017, with the new parts of the centre completed in 2019.

**(8) Chilmington Green**

4.24 Chilmington Green is a new urban extension on the edge of Ashford town, based firmly on Garden city principles. The scheme includes up to 5,750 residential units; up to 10,000 m<sup>2</sup> of class B1 uses; 9,000 m<sup>2</sup> retail and leisure; a secondary school, 4 primary schools; and parks and open space. Planning permission has now been granted and infrastructure works are now underway.

4.25 As part of the delivery of this urban extension, improvements to the A28 are required at an estimated cost of £32 million. £10.2 million of funding was secured through the SE LEP Local Growth Fund to ensure this development could be progressed. Works to deliver this road infrastructure project are due to start in 2018/19.



### **(9) M20 Junction 10A**

- 4.26 This new junction will be located a short distance east of Junction 10 of the M20 and will act to provide additional highways capacity to unlock substantial new development in Ashford and the wider area. This scheme is being delivered by Highways England as part of their strategic programme, and is being funded through £19.7 million of SE LEP Local Growth Fund, developer contributions and Highways England funding. This new junction has the potential to unlock approximately 5,000 jobs and 7,000 homes.
- 4.27 This scheme is classified as a National Significant Infrastructure Project (NSIP) and consequently Highways England submitted a Development Consent Order (DCO) in the summer of 2016 to the Planning Inspectorate. The Inspectorate have been undertaking the process of considering this application during 2017 and will report their recommendations to the Secretary of State for a final decision. If approved, works are likely to start on site in 2018, with the new junction opening in 2019.
- 4.28 One of the sites that will be unlocked by the delivery of Junction 10A is the Stour Park development at Sevington, a 1.6 million sq. ft. industrial development. This development was approved by planning committee in 2016, with development due to be taken forward in conjunction with the delivery of the new junction.

### **(10) Ashford International Station (Ashford Spurs)**

- 4.29 Upgrading the signalling at Ashford International Station will mean that the next generation of Eurostar trains - and any future European rail operators - can continue to stop at the station. This £10.5 million project is now fully funded through the Local Growth Fund, from the project partners Ashford Borough Council, Kent County Council, Network Rail, Eurostar and HS1 and from the EU



through the Regions of Connected Knowledge project. Due to be delivered in spring 2018, it will maintain Ashford's place at the heart of Europe's transport network and safeguard direct high-speed international services which benefit the whole of the East Kent economy

### **(11) Newtown Works**

- 4.30 This former railway works site is centrally located close to Ashford Town Centre and is home to the longest listed railway buildings in the country. This mixed-use development site has the potential to deliver an additional 450 homes and substantial employment space within the site and its historic buildings. This site provides the opportunity to deliver a high quality development which celebrates the town's railway heritage, but due to the nature of the sites previous uses and the need to restore the listed buildings, further funding will be required to bring forward this unique opportunity.

### (12) Conningbrook housing and water park

- 4.31 A new country park and water sports venue alongside 300 new homes will create a new regional park for residents of Ashford and East Kent. The Clarion Housing Group is taking forward the 31 acre housing site at Conningbrook Lakes to build 300 quality homes. Funding from the residential developments will help fund facilities at the new country park operated by Ashford Borough Council, which opened in 2015. With the beautiful lakeside setting and network of country trails this project provides a unique piece of community infrastructure that will help deliver growth and improve the attractiveness of the area.

## Canterbury

### (13) Canterbury Knowledge City

- 4.32 This programme comprises a number of projects that seek to improve the supply of high quality business space and facilities that will promote business development, high level skills and support productivity. In each case funding assistance will be required to support delivery.
- 4.33 To date a number of successes in the district can be reported including £6.1 million from the Local Growth Fund for a new engineering, science and technology centre for Kent and Medway supporting high-value employment, growth and investment in engineering and technology businesses – the (17) Canterbury Christ Church University EDGE Project. Although based in Canterbury, this will have satellite facilities across Kent including East Kent.
- 4.34 Future development will focus on a number of key schemes which emphasise the aspiration for more first class facilities including:
- **(14) Kent Medical School & Research Complex** – to develop a much needed medical complex to deliver clinical capacity, training and research to support medical services across the county. This will support the delivery of healthcare services including hospitals, satellite clinics and the wider community. It will help equip East Kent with the necessary healthcare infrastructure it needs to continue to grow and expand economically. The project would complement the University of Kent's existing activities in health and bio-medical related research and Canterbury Christ Church University postgraduate medical programmes. With this strong healthcare presence, combined with specialist facilities, expert clinical staff and potential talent pool East Kent should have a greater role in strengthening and expanding Kent's life-sciences sector and BioGateway network. Linked to the complex will also be opportunities to develop a surrounding science/research environment that would attract complementary commercial activities;
  - **(15) Canterbury Innovation Centre II** – to build a second innovation centre which replicates the successful formula of the existing facility and will provide more serviced offices/workshops for innovative firms;
  - **(16) New “Makers Space” and “Hot House”** – to provide specialist facilities and equipment for new makers, creatives, programmers, scientists and engineers;
  - **(18) Herne Bay Business Centre** – to meet the continuing need for industrial/office space for small firms along the north Kent coastal corridor.
- 4.35 These projects will also be complemented by other activities that are being pursued by other partners. The University of Kent, for example, is currently consulting on its concept Master Plan which sets out a vision for its Canterbury campus over the next 50 years. This would create a 'garden' type campus that will provide developments such as new business innovation units, enabling synergy between university research and the creative industries. Its growth plans will



introduce new Bio-tech and Molecular Medicine 'super centres' to its Canterbury campus, which will help reinforce its status as a top 20 UK university and global research body.

### **(19) A28 Corridor**

- 4.36 This programme of eight separate but connected transport infrastructure projects aims to make vital improvements along the A28 road which links Thanet in North East Kent to southern Kent and East Sussex via the City of Canterbury. It comprises projects that are of both 'strategic' (East Kent) and local significance.
- 4.37 The A28 road is currently subject to regular congestion, bottlenecks and consequently serious delays are commonplace particularly north of Canterbury at the Sturry level crossing and along the city's ring road where local and other traffic from multiple locations converge. To help address this in a comprehensive way, the programme includes major improvements to the A2 (London to Dover road) which serves Canterbury at three points, including a junction with the A28 to relieve pressure on the A28 corridor. Improvements are vital if Canterbury is to adequately manage current and future transport demand. The package of enhancements is also essential in unlocking thousands of new homes, commercial space and other facilities/amenities at major, planned development sites north and south of Canterbury.
- 4.38 Considerable progress has been made with this programme since the last East Kent Growth Plan. Five of the eight projects have all or partial funding secured including almost £11million from Local Growth Fund Rounds 1 and 3. At the same time many tens of millions of pounds of investment are being secured/levered from the private sector towards local road infrastructure. Projects that have evolved significantly include:
- **(24) Sturry Link Road, Canterbury** – this new link road will connect the A28 Sturry Road to the A291 Sturry Hill and requires a crossing of both the railway and the river. £5.90 million of LGF money is leveraging £23.70 million of private sector match funding from a consortium of local developers to finance this vital bypass/crossing project. Pre-planning is now underway and with all necessary consents in place. Construction will start in spring 2019 with a 18 month construction period. The scheme will directly unlock 720 homes at Sturry/Broad Oak and will support the delivery of thousands of other homes and jobs north of Canterbury at Hersden and Herne Bay, as well as helping to address congestion problems along the A28 corridor north of Canterbury.
  - **(25) Sturry Rd Integrated Transport Package, Canterbury** – this project will extend an in-bound bus lane thereby complementing the Sturry Link Road. Plans are currently being amended with an adjusted route proposed. With consents in place, work could take place in 2017/18 with a 4 month construction period. At a cost of £0.55m (including £0.3 million LGF) the scheme will support new strategic sites and enable decongestion of the challenging area of the A28 corridor.
  - **(21) A2 junction at Bridge, Canterbury** – at a cost of £25million this new infrastructure will be funded by a private sector developer to support the delivery of the district's largest strategic site and urban extension - Mountfield Park. Outline planning consent has been secured with a first phase of homes to get underway shortly. The new junction will directly support the delivery of 4,000 homes together with a 70,000m<sup>2</sup> business park and other facilities in this new community.
  - **(22) A2 offslip and Park & Ride, Wincheap, Canterbury** –this comprises two projects in the A28 Corridor programme with £8.8 million secured (including £4.4million from Round 3 of the Local Growth Fund) to deliver a new A2 offslip on to the A28 and a relocation of the park & ride facility. Full designs are in place and once

developed this will support wider regeneration and new development projects that will deliver 1,685 jobs and 68,333m2 retail/office space, as well as leveraging other private sector funding for wider transport enhancements. The **(23)Traffic Management Scheme for Wincheap** will form part of these wider improvements, although the scheme design and funding package is yet to be formulated and agreed.

4.39 To help continue the A28 Corridor Programme, the East Kent Growth Framework will seek to ensure that the above projects are delivered while focusing on other longer term aspirational enhancements which could also help unlock and support growth. These projects comprise:

- **(20) Milton Manor Roundabout upgrade** – improvements to help manage the impacts of new local developments along the A28 corridor south west of Canterbury;
- **(27) Canterbury Western Link Road** – to improve future access from an expanded University of Kent campus to the A2 road west of Canterbury; and
- **(26) Canterbury Eastern Bypass** – to divert non local A28 and A257 traffic away from Canterbury City on to a new A2 road junction, south east of Canterbury. Although this scheme is identified in the emerging District Local Plan, due to the significant costs involved (£80 million +) the project is not currently deliverable through existing developer contributions. However, it will be a longer-term strategic East Kent priority in terms of its ability to potentially unlock significant housing and commercial growth in future development plans and to enable more efficient movement of traffic through north East Kent. Therefore a funding solution requiring a combination of future developer contributions and Government investment will need to be explored.

### **(28) Herne Bay Marina**

4.40 There is an aspiration for a Marina at the seaside town of Herne Bay. This will help address an unmet need for new marina capacity in north east Kent as well as providing new commercial space for the town. This place making and shaping initiative will also complement long-term ongoing work to regenerate and renew the town centre. Herne Bay is expected to experience significant growth over the next twenty years with thousands of new homes in the pipeline, complemented by new business parks and community facilities.

### **(29) Whitstable Park and Ride**

4.41 This £2 million project would help manage traffic volumes at this seaside town thereby accommodating and supporting its ongoing and future growth.

## **Dover**

### **(30) Whitfield**

4.42 Whitfield is a major urban extension at Dover, capable of providing up to 5,750 new homes (with 3,000 delivered by 2026) and a range of associated community facilities. The 2013 East Kent Growth Plan noted that whilst Whitfield will make a major contribution towards East Kent's future growth, the site is challenging to develop. Particular infrastructure priorities include a major new roundabout access onto the A2, which is currently scheduled for completion in 2017. In addition, a priority bus system known as a Bus Rapid Transit System (BRT) is also considered essential to provide sustainable connectivity to Dover town centre.

4.43 The Whitfield Urban Expansion (WUE) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) was adopted in April 2011 and outline planning permission for 1,250 homes has been granted under Phase 1

of the WUE. A reserved matters application for 94 dwellings (under sub phase 1a) has been approved and a number of houses are now under construction along with the A256 roundabout.

4.44 Work is also well under way on the Abbey homes development on the land east of the Sandwich Road. Planning permission was granted for 74 dwellings; 37 units are completed and 21 are under construction this monitoring year. An application for Phase 2 of the WUE comprising 1,190 dwellings in the areas of Parsonage Whitfield and Shepherd's Cross (areas identified in the Whitfield SPD) has been submitted. A further application for the erection of 133 dwellings off the south side of Singledge Lane has been received within the monitoring period and has recently been refused. A further application for 100 units has recently been submitted.

4.45 Whilst progress is now being made to deliver the Whitfield Urban Expansion, with the commencement of the general market component of Phase 1a, the timetable for the delivery of the urban expansion is some 3-4 years behind the Core Strategy Programme.

4.46 From a more commercial perspective, the White Cliffs Business Park (located within the wider Whitfield area) represents Dover's premier employment site and benefits from a large quantum of readily available developable land and excellent road access onto the A2. Phase II of the business park has outline permission and a masterplan, with several applications now in process. These include a new Lidl Supermarket, which has recently been approved and is under construction, along with a District wide Leisure Centre which has recently secured consent. The BRT is also provides a major foundation to the future uses at White Cliffs Business Park and a legal Agreement has recently been completed to facilitate the delivery of the infrastructure.

### **(34) Dover Town Centre public realm and place making improvements and (35) Dover Waterfront**

4.47 This spatial priority consisted of a number of elements including the expansion of Dover Port (including the development of Terminal 2 and associated infrastructure improvements) and mixed use developments at Dover Waterfront, Dover Mid-Town and St James. The Port of Dover's development of a revised proposal at Terminal 2, known as the Dover Western Docks Revival Project (DWDR), has commenced on site and represents a £0.25 billion investment. Aside from substantial construction opportunities, the DWDR will provide and retain 600 jobs in the first phase which will provide a new cargo terminal and logistics facility along with much better leisure and recreational facilities. It will also provide a new marina, pier and marina arm along with the foundations for a comprehensive regeneration opportunity on the marina arm and Dover Waterfront around Wellington Basin which becomes surplus to Port uses.

4.48 The St James development is set to transform the leisure and retail offer in Dover, with a six screen Cineworld cinema, 108-bed Travelodge hotel, 16,000 sq. ft. M&S Simply Food store, along with a mix of retail and restaurant/café units. Following a site wide demolition programme, archaeology, decontamination and remediation, construction proper has commenced. Piling works, which comprise a collective total of some 10.3 miles of bored piles, have been completed and the subsequent construction of mixed-use retail and leisure buildings is well advanced. The scheme is anticipated to generate around 720 jobs, with scheme completion expected in late 2017/early 2018.

4.49 The Dover Waterfront area consists of sites allocated in the District Council's Adopted Core Strategy including Waterloo Crescent, Wellington Dock and the new Marina Curve planned within the Port's approved DWDR. An internationally renowned team of consultants have recently been appointed by Dover District Council, the Port of Dover and a major land owner in the area to develop a planning and regeneration framework for the development and regeneration of the wider Dover Waterfront area. The framework will build, strengthen and link into many of the plans and initiatives already underway in the town, including the St James

retail and leisure development. The recently completed Dover Economic Development Needs Assessment estimates that the retail and leisure-led redevelopment of Dover Waterfront could generate approximately 1,930 jobs across the retail, hospitality and leisure sectors.

### **(36) Former Connaught Barracks**

4-50 The former Connaught Barracks site was declared surplus to military requirements in 2007 and is now owned by the Homes and Communities Agency. The overall site comprises Connaught Barracks (12.5 hectares), a scheduled monument called Fort Burgoyne (approximately 10 hectares, playing fields (around 9 hectares and a former training area (around 24 hectares) designated as a Local Wildlife Site.

4-51 Fort Burgoyne and surrounding land has been transferred to the Land Restoration Trust and a major programme of demolition has been undertaken on the remainder of the part of the site comprising the former barracks site.

4-52 The site is defined as a strategic site in DDC's Adopted Core Strategy and an initial planning consent for a small part of the barracks site, known as the Officers' Mess site has been granted for residential use. As yet, this has not been released to the market an proposals for future uses at Fort Burgoyne and the remainder of the barracks site are awaited.

### **(37) Discovery Park**

4-53 Formerly 100% occupied by Pfizer as a global research and development facility, Discovery Park is a 99.4 hectare site at Sandwich, including high-quality R&D premises. The site provided 2,400 jobs – many of them very highly skilled – before Pfizer announced its intention to withdraw from Sandwich as part of a global restructuring in February 2011. Given its importance as a nationally-significant centre for R&D, the opportunity that it presents to establish a more diversified scientific research facility, building on the skills still present in the area, as well as the quality of the building stock, Discovery Park was awarded Enterprise Zone status. This brings financial incentives to occupiers and a simplified planning process and has secured additional flood defence investment.

4-54 The Enterprise Zone at Discovery Park has been successful at accommodating and diversifying new business growth in the District over recent years, with the site now home to around 150 companies and 2,500 employees. These range from established organisations to start-ups in such fields as life sciences, pharmaceuticals, and biotechnology.

4-55 According to the site's operator, 2016 saw over forty new arrivals and expansions at Discovery Park<sup>16</sup>. Amongst the latest companies to open offices at the South East's leading science, technology and enterprise hub are SCI Innovative Building Control Systems, Gemini Fundraising and MP Associates. They join Start Up Zone newcomers - Ideal4U Marketing and business growth platform F6S - in taking space within Innovation House, Discovery Park's main hub for entrepreneurs, general and science support companies.

4-56 Further investment and job creation is expected at Discovery Park in 2017, including the completion of 70,000 sq. ft. of manufacturing space, with OFP Timber Frames Homes Ltd on course to open its new 22,000 sq. ft. production facility in the first quarter of 2017. With the total number of jobs now past the 2,500 milestone, Discovery Park remains on course to reach a target of 3,000 by the end of this year. Construction of the new £160 million bio-mass facility has also commenced on site and will eventually provide all the power and heating for Discovery Park gets underway.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.discovery-park.co.uk/news/article/new-arrivals-and-growing-stories-for-businesses-at-discovery-park>

4.57 The recently completed Dover Economic Development Needs Assessment<sup>17</sup> study identifies significant scope for re-development of the site to accommodate a greater critical mass of activity in future, with planning permission in place for a number of development projects (including those listed above). It is estimated that the redevelopment of part of Discovery Park could generate an additional 1,890 jobs by 2037 across a range of sectors including R&D, manufacturing, utilities, wholesale, hospitality, professional services and education.

#### **(41) Betteshanger Sustainable Park**

4.58 The Council has been working alongside the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to bring forward proposals for the former Betteshanger Colliery and Fowlmead site. The development of Betteshanger Sustainable Parks represents a UK first for investment in green and sustainable business, energy, education and heritage.

4.59 Located on the 121 hectare site of the former East Kent coalfield, the project is led by Hadlow College and will combine a green technologies sustainable business park; world class research & development, and a national visitor destination and learning centre for sustainable energy and mining heritage.

4.60 The development will also build on and foster relationships with the Discovery Park to provide business incubation space. The £40 million first phase has already received public funding of £5 million from the HCA and £2.5 million from the Coastal Communities Fund. A further £11 million in private investment has been agreed in principle with agreed pre-lets. The scheme is set to bring over 1,000 jobs to East Kent and a multi-million pound boost for economic and social regeneration. A planning application has been approved for a new visitor centre and construction is currently underway and expected to be finished spring 2018. In tandem with this, planning consent has recently been granted for the first development, a preventative health incubation hub, on the business park with master planning continuing for the remainder of the site.

#### **(42) Open Golf Championship**

4.61 The District Council has been working with KCC, SELEP and partners across East Kent along with the Royal and Ancient Golf Club and Royal St George's Golf Club at Sandwich to bring the Open Golf Championship back to the area in 2020. The Open brings significant economic benefits and international recognition. However, major improvements are required to infrastructure, particularly at Sandwich Station, to enable the successful transport plan to be put in place in circumstances where the expectation is on a significantly increased attendance.

### **Shepway**

#### **(43) Folkestone Seafront and Town Centre**

4.62 Folkestone is continuing to gain an international reputation for culture and creativity (the Creative Quarter and Folkestone Triennial), heritage (Townscape Heritage initiatives, Folkestone Airshow) and the coast (coastal parks, sea sports, fisheries and eateries). The attractiveness of the area as a place to both visit and live, combined with good accessibility via HS1, is making the town increasingly attractive to businesses in the IT, Creative and Digital Media sector.

4.63 The new seafront development will bring new high quality accommodation into the town which will increase footfall and the creative culture is building on the local entrepreneurial spirit. The town centre will become not only a place to shop, but also an area for recreation with museums,

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<sup>17</sup> Dover Economic Development Needs Assessment, March 2017 (Lichfields)



high quality parks and public art. Attracting new employment into high quality modern office accommodation and continuation of investment in existing hotels to support tourism by extending the local offer to boutique and four star hotels is marking the renaissance of the town

**(44) Folkestone Harbour and Seafront**

4.64 The delivery of the Folkestone Seafront development, which received outline planning consent in 2015, is now actively underway by Folkestone Harbour Company. The scheme will include public realm improvements, commercial/leisure activities and residential development.

4.65 A £5 million Local Enterprise Growth Fund contribution secured in 2016 for the project has been used to support the exceptional costs of essential infrastructure on the site, including sea defence work, ground investigation, provision of essential services and public realm



enhancements in readiness for commencement of the site development in 2018. Changes to highways around the site have been made, including implementing the two way operation of Tram Road and Tontine Street (for bus operations) in 2016. Reinforcement of flood defences and beach nourishment is underway, as well as earthworks and connections north-south and

east-west into the scheme.

4.66 The first phase of building works is scheduled to commence in 2018. Excluding construction jobs, some 315 direct FTE jobs are being created and the development will create up to 1000 homes of which 8% will be affordable units.

4.67 Following a £3.5 million renovation, the Folkestone Harbour Arm was opened in 2015 as a public promenade with independent bars, restaurants and cafes, and has rapidly become one of Folkestone’s major visitor attractions with over 80,000 people visiting in just twelve weekends in 2015 and hundreds of thousands of visitors in 2016. The Harbour Arm is an important step towards realising the rejuvenation of the wider harbour and seafront area and is being followed by the restoration of the station and viaduct to open in 2017. The overall seafront scheme is not expected to be finally completed until 2030.

4.68 In close association with the seafront development, and as a further sign of commitment to Folkestone town centre, the Roger De Haan Charitable Trust is funding the construction of a £12 million multi-storey urban sports centre, offering the opportunity to engage in a unique range of sports, including skateboarding, boxing, climbing and bouldering. The centre, thought to be the first of its kind in the world, is expected to open in 2017.

#### **(45) Folkestone Creative Quarter**

4.69 The Folkestone Creative Quarter continues to build its profile through the acquisition, conversion and successful letting of a range of accommodation from artists' studios to small business spaces which have created a hub for digital businesses.

Occupancy rates are now high and the businesses operate from a mix of hired deskpace to modular offices. The success of this activity has begun to change the perception of a



rundown area of the town through attracting artists and media/digital industries and creating employment that is expected to total some 300 jobs. There are signs of more market-led interest in this area which suggests the area is gaining a more positive identity for creative industries, but it remains essential that there is no dilution of the standard set by the Creative Foundation and others in sharing the vision for this part of the town.

4.70 A major festival of the arts, the Folkestone Triennial, commences in September 2017 to bring well known artists and their exhibits to the town over a nine-week period.

#### **(46) Folkestone Townscape Heritage Initiative**

4.71 This scheme covered parts of the Old Town and The Bayle to restore the original facade of properties and improve the landscape surrounding. It has resulted in bringing back into use 6 buildings in the Old High Street. The focus of HLF funding has been the designated conservation area and has involved a series of dissemination events about the history of this area for students and heritage skills workshops for students and wider public.

#### **(47) Former Gasworks, Ship Street**

4.72 This 1.56ha site is a former gasworks in central Folkestone which has the potential for developing up to 85 housing units. In 2009 the site was remediated with large scale removal of contamination and structures, but further remediation is required for it to become usable for mixed/residential development.

4.73 The site is the single largest derelict site within Folkestone Town Centre that is not the subject of redevelopment and it falls in one of the most deprived wards in the country. The Council's planning policies have promoted the redevelopment of the site for housing in local plans for several decades. The site already has support from Heritage Lottery Fund through their Great Place Scheme, following a successful bid by the Creative Foundation. This scheme is designed to pilot new approaches that enable cultural and community groups to work more closely together and to place heritage at the heart of communities.

#### **(48) Shearway Business Park – Biggins Wood/Caesars Way**

4.74 Shepway District Council acquired in December 2016 the Biggins Wood site - a former brickworks and receptor site for waste - which has planning permission for 77 homes and 5,802 sq. m of commercial office, industrial and storage space (B1 & B8). The council is

currently assessing the options for taking the site forward, with the ambition to commence construction late 2018/early 2019.

- 4.75 There is a further 2.9 acre site alongside the Biggins Wood site on Caesars Way which is allocated in the Local Plan for business, general industrial and Warehouse (use classes B1,B2 & B8). This site links the Biggins Wood site to the rest of Shearway Business Park, but connectivity is limited because there is no direct access to the business park infrastructure.

#### **(49) Park Farm Industrial Estate - Former Silver Spring site**

- 4.76 This 3.8 hectare site in the heart of the Park Farm Industrial Estate in Folkestone is the former site of the Former Silver Spring bottling plant which closed in 2013. The former buildings have now been demolished and the site cleared.
- 4.77 This site offers the potential, alongside other sites, to address the shortage of good quality office space in Folkestone which has been identified as an issue in the recent Shepway Employment Land Review. However, there is recognition that this site could reflect the changing nature of the industrial estate which now has a large component of retail DIY and a large retail convenience store. Following close working with the owners of the site, the emerging Places and Policies Local Plan Preferred Options proposes mixed use development, including business (B1), leisure (D), selective retail (A1) and hotel (C1) uses for the site. Proposals are expected to come forward for this site via a planning application in the near future, with some infrastructure requirements alongside already identified in the emerging policy formation work undertaken.

#### **(50) East Kent College Folkestone Campus Extension**

- 4.78 New construction is proposed for the front of East Kent College's Folkestone campus to accommodate curriculum development for the Professional Services, Hospitality and Catering (including commercial restaurant) and Hair and Beauty (including commercial salon) and Early Years (provision of a nursery) sectors, a new reception, refectory and learning resource centre. The project would also create a new frontage to the campus and improved opportunities for students to train in commercially-orientated learning environments. The project would include a land disposal, encompassing a portion of land to the rear of the site and it is estimated will cost around £7.7 million.

#### **(51) Princes Parade, Hythe**

- 4.79 The Princes Parade site, located along Hythe Seafront and covering an area of 10ha, is a former waste disposal site that has lain dormant since the early 1970s. The site provides an opportunity to breathe new life into the area and deliver a number of key public benefits including :-
- A new leisure centre consisting of a 25m swimming pool, teaching pool, studio space and gym to replace the existing Hythe Swimming Pool which is obsolete.
  - New public open space to replace the existing underused space on the site and provide enhanced recreational opportunities at the seafront, including an 11m wide promenade and a substantial new public park to the western end of the site.
  - Up to 150 new homes, including 45 affordable units, to address social housing need within the District.
  - Small scale commercial uses including potentially shops/café/restaurant and a boutique hotel to expand the range of local services at the seafront and bring activity to the site.
  - The creation of a high quality tourist destination that will greatly boost Shepway and East Kent's tourism offer.



4.80 Shepway District Council, as the owner of the site, has recently submitted a planning application for the scheme and is in the process of preparing a business plan that will set out in detail how the scheme will be implemented. The Princes Parade development, being comprehensive in nature, provides an opportunity to deliver a range of regeneration and economic development objectives through the delivery of a scheme where the whole is greater than the sum of the parts.

### **(52) Romney Marsh Regeneration**

4.81 Romney Marsh is faced with a significant economic challenge in light of the decommissioning of the Dungeness A nuclear power station which is due to enter the “Care and Maintenance” stage in 2025. EDF’s B station is also expected to cease generation in 2028, and while its decommissioning is actually likely to increase demand for employees for a while, cessation of energy production will eventually limit job opportunities for local people.

4.82 In response to this, partners, including Shepway District Council, Ashford Borough Council, Kent County Council, Magnox and the Nuclear Decommissioning Authority, are working through the Romney Marsh Partnership. This aims to deliver a mix of social, training and employment creation initiatives to help diversify the economy, which are identified in the Romney Marsh Delivery Plan.

4.83 There is strong evidence of local support for the nuclear industry in the Romney Marsh area which alongside close proximity to areas of high electricity demand and the presence of good infrastructure, provide strong arguments for the development of a Dungeness C nuclear power station. While at present the site is not on the Government’s list of preferred locations for new nuclear development, there is growing interest in the possibility of Small Modular Reactors (SMRs) which might be more easily accommodated at Dungeness. Other options, including the siting of a Geological Disposal Facility will also be explored.

### **(53) Mountfield Road Industrial Estate**

4.84 Shepway District Council is finalising a Places and Policies Local Plan to identify further sites for development which will lead to the safeguarding of the Mountfield Road Industrial Estate for employment use. There is also potential for an adjacent site to be brought forward for development in the medium-term to long-term for housing which could deliver improved access to the estate as well as new community facilities.

4.85 Mountfield Road currently provides a business location for over 70 companies and organisations, with space for new ventures very rarely available. This is identified as a key employment site for further development in the Romney Marsh Delivery Plan. Initial capacity studies of the further 6.1ha available for development indicate it could provide up to 20,000 sq. m gross new business space, which could accommodate up to 700 jobs and approximately 40 businesses. There is also demand from existing occupiers of earlier phases for more grow-on space for expansion. The further development of Mountfield Road will make a significant contribution to facilitating the growth of business, job and skills opportunities on Romney Marsh.

- 4.86 Shepway District Council is funding, with a contribution from the Magnox Socio-economic Fund, the costs of taking forward development plans for the estate during 2017/18. This will include site master planning; a utilities & infrastructure report; and costings for the service road, development of plots and a business hub & skills centre.

**(54) London Ashford Airport, Lydd**

- 4.87 Following a Public Inquiry planning permissions have been secured for the extension of the runway and construction of a new terminal building at London Ashford Airport. The development will enable aircraft up to the size of Boeing 737s and Airbus 320s, capable of reaching most of Europe and North Africa, to be accommodated.



- 4.88 Total investment is expected to be £55 million with up to 200 jobs created and passenger numbers rising from an initial 30,000 pa to an eventual 500,000 pa.
- 4.89 The Airport is also now the permanent base for the UK Coastguard’s Search and Rescue Helicopter Service in the south-east, which has involved £7 million of investment in the building of a new hangar for the service.

**(55) Operation Stack Lorry Area**

- 4.90 Over recent decades, the numbers of lorries crossing the English Channel has increased seven fold. Nearly 90% of all UK roll-on, roll-off, international freight goes through the Strait of Dover which puts 11,000 lorries per day on Kent’s roads. When lorries are unable to use the Port of Dover and/ or Eurotunnel there are extensive queues of HGVs that have to be held on the M20 using the Operation Stack procedure. This causes considerable disruption to the national and local Kent economy, as well as considerable difficulties for local residents to go about their daily business. The problem was particularly acute in 2015 when Operation Stack was in place for 32 days.
- 4.91 Following a previous consultation on two possible sites in July 2016, the Secretary of State for Transport announced that a lorry area would be provided at Stanford West, located to the north and south of the M20 just west of junction 11 and close to the Stop24 Service Area. The plans for the proposed lorry area were the subject of a consultation in the summer of 2016. Space is proposed for around 3,600 HGV’s, including 500 overnight parking spaces. The two parts of the site would be connected by a new bridge over the M20 with access directly to and from the M20. The proposals for the lorry area are currently the subject of a judicial challenge brought by a local land owner and supported by other parties. The judicial review is scheduled to be considered by the courts later in 2017 with legal submissions relating primarily to Environmental Assessment and consultation procedures carried out by Highways England. The programme for taking the project forward will depend on the outcome of the judicial review and the current Government’s position.
- 4.92 The development of this lorry area may offer future employment growth opportunities for East Kent, associated with the development of freight clearance facilities and the resulting supply chains in view of Brexit.

**(56) Otterpool Park/M20 Junction 11**

- 4.93 In June 2016 Shepway District Council submitted an Expression of Interest for a new garden settlement of up to 12,000 new homes at Otterpool Park in response to the Department of Communities and Local Government's prospectus for "Locally Led Garden Villages, Towns and Cities". The expression of Interest led by Shepway District Council was supported by Kent County Council, Cozumel Estates (owners of Folkestone Racecourse) and Damian Collins M.P as well as a wide range of other key organisations and local businesses. The submission document stressed the unique opportunity presented by Otterpool Park to provide much needed new homes, employment and other facilities in a unique strategic location with a significant part of the area of search being in public ownership.
- 4.94 Gavin Barwell M.P, Minister for Housing and Planning, announced on the 11th November 2016, that Shepway's Expression of Interest had been successful. In making the announcement the Minister commented that the Government are getting behind plans for a new "Garden Town which offers a unique opportunity to boost the local economy, jobs and provide new homes in Shepway, Kent". The Minister confirmed that "Otterpool Park Garden Town will be supported with £750,000 of additional government capacity funding that will help kick-start work and enable the local council to take forward their proposal". SDC has subsequently been awarded a further £345,000 to support ongoing work to bring the site forward.
- 4.95 The Council is progressing two distinct works streams with regard to planning and delivering Otterpool Park. The first work stream involves the Council under its responsibility as the local planning authority, reviewing the Core Strategy Local Plan 2013 Its spatial growth study identifies this area for strategic growth, which will form the basis of an allocation for a new settlement. The second work stream involves other officers representing the council's land owning interests working closely with landowner partners Cozumel Estates in master planning the new settlement at Otterpool.
- 4.96 The intention is for a framework masterplan to be produced in the autumn 2017 with a planning application submitted during 2018. The planning application would be progressed in tandem with the planning policy work with a view to planning permission being secured in 2019 and the first development commencing on site in 2020.

### **(57) Westenhanger Rail Station Upgrade**

- 4.97 A key component of the Transport and Movement Strategy for the Otterpool Park Garden Town will focus on the significant demand for rail access and the opportunity that Westenhanger Station can provide. By taking advantage of the connectivity to HS1 rail services offered by Westenhanger Station, Otterpool Park is ideally located to provide excellent access to the rail network and sustainable travel patterns, but requires substantial enhancement. One of the guiding principles for the new community is "promoting walking, cycling and sustainable transport".
- 4.98 An overarching key objective is to improve the East Kent HS1 service, and in particular for Shepway District to/from London St Pancras with the flexibility of introducing hourly connections to serve Otterpool Park Garden Town at Westenhanger Station. Accordingly, there will be a need for a study to define and appraise the benefits and disbenefits of providing a High Speed connection at Westenhanger, including the impacts on both Folkestone stations and at Sandwich and Dover.
- 4.99 The Shepway DC study team has engaged with relevant practitioners from Network Rail alongside other stakeholder partners (e.g. Kent County Council and Southeastern) in order to define the scale of enhancements required at Westenhanger Station. These will be captured and reflected within the Otterpool Site master plan and associated technical submissions. The next

step is to progress work on a Strategic Outline Business Case to develop the funding position for delivery of the Westenhanger Rail Station upgrade project.

- 4.100 The study team is separately aware that Network Rail (NR) is in the process of developing a Kent Route Study (KRS) for Network Rail’s Control Period 6 (CP6: 2019-2024) which will be subject to consultation in 2017. The final KRS will set out the Initial Industry Advice (IIA) which will set out the Statement of Funds Available (SOFA) to establish the High Level Output Specification (HLOS) from which the funding package for CP6 is finalised. Shepway District Council (SDC) is to make representations to both the KRS study and to the new South Eastern Rail Franchise consultations in due course.

## Thanet

### (58) Port of Ramsgate, Marina and Waterfront

- 4.101 The Port of Ramsgate is a vibrant Port with over £2 million investment in the refurbishment of Ro-Ro berths two and three, perimeter security improvements and maintenance dredging. The



Port currently has capacity for 500,000 units per annum which could be doubled and provides significant value to transport and logistics in East Kent. The project is currently at detailed design stage with the Council leading on delivery of the first phase. The first phase is the construction of a new double-deck ro-ro (roll on roll off) berth which will provide additional capacity for modern double deck loading and unloading which will increase resilience at the Port. This

initial phase will also include capital dredging of the 1 nautical mile long approach channel to the port entrance. This will widen the channel to provide the necessary clearance for larger vessels (up to 200m in length) to be accommodated at the port.

- 4.102 The second phase of the project involves seaward port expansion via land reclamation. The scheme will deliver at least 10 hectares of additional port side space and a long (250m) alongside quay facility allowing up to 2 freight vessels access at any one time.
- 4.103 The Royal Harbour in Ramsgate is edged by heritage assets, including a series of arches under the main road facing the harbour which are rented out and create a vibrant mixed use space with chandlers, bars, cafes and shops.

### (59) Thanet Parkway Station

- 4.104 The proposed Thanet Parkway passenger railway station is located on the Ashford International to Ramsgate line, south of the Manston Airport site and just to the west of the village of Cliffsend. It will be located between the existing Ramsgate and Minster stations on the Kent Main Line. The station will be served by the high speed domestic services which run from Margate to St Pancras via Ashford International and mainline services from Ramsgate to Charing Cross.
- 4.105 With connections to HS1, in combination with the Journey Time Improvement (JTI) project, the new station will reduce travel times from Thanet to central London to about one hour. This will

help improve investors' perception that East Kent is easily accessible and an attractive place to invest in and do business. Reduced journey times to London will support the Council's (and partners) requirement to increase inward investment in the area. The



public sector owns employment land that was purchased to enable development and the Parkway will assist its success in providing employment opportunities.

4.106 The total capital cost of the scheme including the station is estimated to be approximately £21.2 million at current prices. Funding has been secured from the Local Growth Fund and an application is in to the New Stations Fund Two for £8.8 million. Commencement is due on site in May 2019 with completion in 2020.

4.107 Improving connectivity is a vital step in unlocking growth potential and attracting the necessary investment and job opportunities for local people. In particular, the Parkway supports Thanet's Local Plan delivery targets of creating 17,140 house and 5,000 job in the district by 2031. The station will support potential new development at the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone, Manston Park and EuroKent Business Park (which are all within three miles of the proposed station location) and Westwood Cross Retail and Shopping Centre. It will also provide significantly improved access to the former Manston Airport site and additional car park capacity for park & ride to supplement existing provision at Ramsgate station.

### **(60) Inner Circuit Improvement Strategy**

4.108 The inner route improvement strategy encompasses an integrated package of new and upgraded highways to provide additional highway capacity and network resilience within Thanet. This will provide a highway network that is fit for purpose to accommodate traffic generated by proposed future housing and employment growth within the district.

4.109 Thanet's principal road network is currently subject to significant traffic delay and congestion within times of peak demand. The Inner Route Improvement Strategy provides access to alternative routes when travelling between towns and settlements, freeing up existing road capacity and making better use of existing infrastructure provision. It also provides enhanced opportunities for improved public transport access, including existing rural settlements. The routes will provide direct access to the A28, A256 & A299 corridors. They will also provide improved access to Westwood, the district's commercial and retail hub, without traversing built up areas or causing congestion on the network.

4.110 The route strategy is therefore essential to support future growth and investment in the district. Directly the different sections of road will deliver 6,650 dwellings. However, the improved network is required to support the delivery of the total 17,140 dwellings identified in the Local Plan, ensuring that the district is able to facilitate this growth in a positive way.

### **(61) Westwood Relief Strategy**

4.111 The Westwood Relief Strategy, which is part of the Inner Circuit Improvement Strategy, will combine the creation of a circular route around the core area of Westwood, with improvements to the central roundabout, promoting increased pedestrian, cycle and public transport permeability. This will facilitate improved accessibility at peak times to reduce congestion and



will also unlock the ability to redesign Westwood as a more integrated town centre with an improved relationship between existing retail land uses.

- 4.112 The proposed scheme will upgrade, realign and reconstruct an existing private access road which connects the major road networks of the A254 & A256. This will subsequently enable it to be used as a strategic distributor route, in turn realising a comprehensive relief route for the Westwood roundabout. The new link road will form part of the principal road network and therefore become a publically maintainable highway.
- 4.113 This scheme will offer enhanced public transport opportunities, with direct bus access to retail frontages and enhanced footway/cycleway facilities which will encourage a shift to more sustainable modes of transport.
- 4.114 The Westwood Relief Strategy is currently partially implemented following a successful 'Pinch Point' funding bid and development negotiations. The proposed scheme represents the final and most critical element of the new alternative orbital route, which in turn enables the full benefits of previous investment to be realised. It will complete the opportunity for road users to travel around the Westwood area and not be directed to converge with other major routes into the middle at Westwood Roundabout. It will provide a much more flexible and resilient highway network for all road users.

### **(63) Advanced Manufacturing Park (Manston Business Park)**

- 4.115 Through the council's Economic Growth Strategy the delivery of an Advanced Manufacturing Park (AMP) has been identified as a transformational initiative that will provide the space and impetus for funding to drive growth within the sector.
- 4.116 Thanet has the availability of employment land that can fulfil such a cluster. Advanced Manufacturing businesses already exist in the district; some of these are multinationals including Cummins and Fujifilm who play a key role in this sector by investing in people and sharing best practice.
- 4.117 Thanet is fortunate to be closely located to Discovery Park which includes a large number of R&D companies who potentially require further space, and/or requirements for manufacturing linked to businesses on the site. Discovery Park has shown support for such a development in Manston.
- 4.118 A dedicated park will provide space to bring together the businesses that already exist in the district, whilst providing opportunities for move on space. It is well documented that clustering businesses together provides a number of opportunities including growth in that sector. A dedicated park would support the churn of start-up businesses by providing space for growing businesses to move in to, thus releasing sort after smaller start-up units. The Park will also create spin-off businesses, as seen at Discovery Park.

### **(64) Creative Industries Workspace**

- 4.119 The council commissioned a report into the creative sector to better understand the growth opportunities of the businesses already in the district and to identify how they have grown over time. Over the four year period to 2016 the creative industries grew by a significant 84% in Thanet.
- 4.120 There are a number of workspaces available across the district. However, the sustainability of these is not guaranteed and the council does not own or have any direct influence on this. A programme of activity is required to support the development of studios, makers spaces and workshops to support this growing sector. A previous grants programme supported the growth of a number of businesses in the district taking them from start-ups to successful businesses.

This form of support enables start-up organisations to take the risk required to ensure their growth alongside a programme of business support.

### (65) Feasibility modelling for Ramsgate, Margate and Viking Bay

- 4.121 Ramsgate has previously received regeneration funding for public realm and mixed use development with a focus on improving the residential areas of the town centre. The town is coming towards an exciting time and a masterplan is a priority to draw together all of the opportunities facing the town.
- 4.122 Funding applications are into various bodies for a number of projects including for public realm, business support, engaging with young people, the creative environment and supporting the growth of the Port of Ramsgate. Joining these up to help inform planning and investment decisions will enable the town to take advantage of the opportunities available.
- 4.123 The aspiration is to develop a plan that includes business cases for some key sites and assets that are around Ramsgate town which could truly make a significant difference to the economy and will encourage stalled private sector investments to continue. The plan will also be important to create a balanced mixed economy supporting its businesses, visitors and residents. Funding will help develop the plan and business cases in order to direct other external funding to enable delivery that will be truly place shaping, and which has been identified in Ramsgate Coastal Community Team's Economic Plan.
- 4.124 Developing a masterplan for Margate is a priority because it brings together 15 years of focus on delivering regeneration in the town at a time when values are improving and economic growth in the town is evident. Nationally town centres are still feeling the pressure from changes in the way that we shop and the fact that brands have left many small town centres. Margate still feels this pressure in the larger units across the town, but the smaller units are being filled by independents and are very much in demand.
- 4.125 The Margate Housing Intervention Programme was established in 2012. It set out to transform the housing market in two of Britain's most deprived wards; Cliftonville West and Margate Central. 'Live Margate' is a 10-15 year innovative programme that has seen Thanet District Council (TDC), Kent County Council (KCC) and the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) work together to deliver housing improvements, on a street by street basis, with the aim of enabling a step change in the housing market, improving the transient nature of the areas and creating a more sustainable community. The programme estimated that over its lifetime 300 homes would need to be acquired, improved and occupied with a new form of tenure if the aims of the programme are to be achieved.
- 4.126 £666,000 from the Local Growth Fund has been awarded to deliver projects in two streets in the Cliftonville West area alongside the great delivery that has taken place since 2012 which is making a real difference to the area and its housing. Margate has been quoted as having seen an average house price increase of 12.5% between 2015 and 2016.



4.127 The Old Town in Margate and the public realm improvements to the Revetments steps have been a catalyst for significant economic growth in the creative sector demonstrated by an 84% growth in Creative businesses.

**(66) Ramsgate Heritage Action Zone**

4.128 Ramsgate has been awarded Heritage Action Zone status by Historic England which brings a concerted effort by Historic England, the council and the Ramsgate Coastal Community Team to improve the historic environment and bring forward projects that support the town’s economic growth whilst sustaining the built environment.



4.129 Match funding has come from the public sector in order to support this, including the requirement of a Heritage Action Zone Programme Manager to lead project engagement and delivery.

4.130 The council, with the HCA which has ownership of a large unit in Margate the town centre, own a number of leisure buildings in the town including the Winter Gardens, Dreamland and the Theatre Royal. Other valued assets are in private ownership, including the Lido. The Turner Contemporary has seen huge numbers of visitors and has plans for growth and the wider creative sector is starting to take hold and grow in the town. It is at this point that a masterplan is required to help draw to together the successes and ensure the town is prepared and has the right assets (with the right zoning) to take forward the next phase of growth to ‘ride the crest of the wave’.

4.131 Decisions need to be informed, whether they are planning decisions or investment decisions, to ensure that the town is fit for purpose for its businesses, residents and visitors. Funding is required for initial master planning with some match funding from the council and for initial business case development to help bring forward sites that are in public sector ownership to enable the council to deliver its place leadership and shaping role. This is also identified as a priority in the Margate Coastal Community Team's Economic Plan

**(68) Dreamland and Sunshine Cafe Redevelopment**

4.132 Following the successful investment in the Dreamland amusement park site, Thanet District Council has accessed funding and invested in developing out the Dreamland cinema complex on Margate sea front. Phase 1 includes the redevelopment and refurbishment of the Sunshine Café including restoring its heritage assets. The aim has been to prepare it for the market place to bring in an external private operator. Phase 2 is the further development of the Cinema Complex which could produce a further 200 jobs and multi-functional entertainment space with provision for some office units.





### **(69) Viking Bay**

- 4.133 The jewel in the crown in terms of Thanet's beaches, which attract residents and visitors alike, is Viking Bay which has a place shaping role in terms of the wider Broadstairs town. The Broadstairs Coastal Community Team has identified improving Viking Bay through the development of a masterplan as a priority in their Economic Plan.
- 4.134 The council is in ownership of a significant land parcel at the back of the bay which currently includes beach huts, vacant toilets and lift short and concessions. This creates a poor image of the public realm due to its poor state of repair and does not fit with the image of the rest of the town.
- 4.135 The vision is for a comprehensive redevelopment of the back of the bay which will take into account leisure and tourism uses and makes better use of the space, working with the private sector. Funding is required for the initial masterplan and to take the site to the market to take forward the development.

### **(70) EuroKent Business Park**

- 4.136 A joint venture between Thanet District Council and Kent County Council, East Kent Opportunities is bringing forward the commercial development at EuroKent with a view to providing office accommodation on site adjacent to the residential development. This supports the existing EuroKent Business Park, a Thanet District Council and SEEDA development, where the office and industrial space is currently full. This model is one that could be replicated in East Kent to support the provision of commercial units.

### **(71) Agri-Tech Hub**

- 4.137 Thanet is home to the UK's leading agri-tech business Thanet Earth. Here technology meets 20% extra daylight to produce tones of cucumbers, peppers and tomatoes in six enormous greenhouses in the middle of the district. The council is working with Thanet Earth and Canterbury Christ Church University to identify opportunities for developing an Agri-tech hub and centre of excellence in the district to support research and business development.



### **(72) East Kent College Broadstairs Campus extension**

- 4.138 There are plans to refurbish the Inspire Building at East Kent College's Broadstairs campus to create modern Hospitality and Catering sector training provision in order to ensure that the skills training provided by the college is relevant for the growing modern tourist sector across East Kent. The estimated of this project is £2.1 million.

### **(73) East Kent Increased Rail Capacity and Journey Time Improvements**

- 4.139 Phase 1 of the project (Ashford – Canterbury West) to improve rail capacity and journey times in East Kent is nearing completion. Extensive works have been undertaken to the track to increase the speed limit on this section and there remains a final piece of work to deliver. The expected journey time saving from this phase will be two minutes, which is planned for delivery in the May 2018 timetable.
- 4.140 Phase 2 of the project (Canterbury West – Ramsgate) is at an earlier stage of development with Network Rail, working in partnership with Kent County Council to deliver the project, undertaking option selection for this section of the route. Works are expected to be undertaken

during 2018 and 2019, with a further one minute journey time saving expected to be gained in the May 2020 timetable.

- 4.141 Taken together with the two minutes savings already delivered in the January 2015 timetable with the removal of joining and dividing of High Speed trains at Ashford, the saving from the journey time improvement (JTI) project is expected to total five minutes. This will support the planned opening of the new Thanet Parkway station in 2020, with the additional journey time incurred at Ramsgate offset by the JTI project. The best journey times will be from the new station, with an anticipated running time of about 62 minutes to London Stratford and about 69 minutes to London St Pancras.
- 4.142 East Kent needs to see an increase in the capacity and frequency of services from the area, both on the high speed line and on the mainline services especially in peak periods. The new South Eastern Franchise and new South East Route: Kent Area Route Study will need to deliver additional rolling stock to facilitate this requirement for increased rail capacity, especially with the high projected demand through the growth of the area over the next 10 years
- 4.143 The March 2017 “South East Route: Kent Area Route Study, Draft for Consultation” sets out the key requirements to upgrade the Marshlink line between Ashford International and Hastings to enable High Speed services from Hastings to St Pancras via Ashford International. Electrification and journey time improvements, as well as development of a new connection at Ashford International onto HS1 and additional rolling stock, are required to deliver these new improvements to better connect East Kent to Sussex and London.

#### **(74) Kent & Medway Business Fund/Expansion East Kent**

- 4.144 The Expansion East Kent Programme was launched in December 2012 following an allocation of £35 million from the central Government Regional Growth Fund to offer financial assistance (loans, grants or equity) to local businesses in East Kent. As at 31 December 2016 Kent County Council, as the accountable body for the funds, have committed 160 investments totalling £36.2 million to 153 companies within the local authority areas of Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Shepway and Thanet.
- 4.145 There were two funding schemes open to business in the area - the Expansion East Kent programme and the Small Business Boost programme, both of which are now closed. The programmes have created 1,459 job opportunities and safeguarded 967 jobs that without the funding awarded to the companies would have ceased.
- 4.146 The companies receiving the loans have now made repayments of over £5 million which will be recycled to other businesses in the East Kent area via the new ‘Kent and Medway Business Fund’.

#### **(75) Delivering Better Broadband**

- 4.147 Kent County Council is working with the Government’s broadband agency, Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) to improve access to superfast broadband services. To date this work has already brought superfast broadband to over 125,000 homes and businesses, which would otherwise have been left with no or slow broadband speeds. This means that over 92% of properties across Kent and Medway can now access a superfast broadband service of at least 24mbps. In all districts except Ashford across East Kent, a higher percentage of properties have access to superfast broadband than the Kent average. According to the Think Broadband website, Thanet has the highest percentage at 97.6%, followed by Canterbury (94.7%), Shepway (92.9%), Dover (91.2%) and Ashford (86%).

4.148 The County Council is now working with BDUK on further projects to extend the reach of superfast broadband. This is part of the Government’s national broadband programme to ensure that at least 95% of properties across the UK can access superfast broadband by the end of the 2017. In Kent, the aim is to achieve 95% coverage by the end of 2017 and 95.7% coverage by September 2018.

4.149 The Government has also developed a ‘better broadband’ scheme for homes and businesses that are not able to get a broadband service of at least 2mbps. This national scheme offers a subsidy towards the equipment and installation costs of a satellite or fixed wireless broadband connection and Kent County Council is administering the scheme.

4.150 East Kent should drive for 1G broadband working with broad band providers to support East Kent to have another unique selling point.

### Scale of Opportunity

4.151 The potential impact on the East Kent economy if all of the listed projects are delivered is significant. Based on information (where known), in combined terms the projects represent the potential to generate or unlock:

- About 47,000 direct and indirect jobs, equivalent to 16% of the total number of jobs in East Kent in 2016.
- Capacity for over 86,000 dwellings.

4.152 The economic potential of the strategic and local projects is set out in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4 Estimated Economic Outputs from Projects

Type	Employment *	Dwellings
Strategically-significant	36,300	73,800
Locally-significant	11,100	12,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>47,400</b>	<b>86,300</b>

Source: East Kent local authorities Note: totals rounded \* direct and indirect jobs excluding construction

This demonstrates the extent of the opportunity. Members of EKRB are pleased to present and to have further discussions on the necessary investments required to enable the significance of growth to be realised.

## Appendix 1: Stakeholder Consultees

The following individuals have contributed to the development of the Framework through attendance at officer group meetings, workshops or through individual discussions.

Louise Askew, Thanet District Council

Carole Barron, University of Kent

Ian Brown, Canterbury City Council

Rebecca Burden, Dover District Council

Nick Churchill, Canterbury City Council

Andrew Coleman, Local Partnerships

Simon Coles, Ashford Borough Council

Richard Hall, Canterbury City Council

Dave Hughes, Kent County Council

Liz Harrison, Kent County Council

Katharine Harvey, Shepway District Council

Susan Priest, Shepway District Council

Tim Ingleton, Dover District Council

Helen James, Canterbury Christ Church University

Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce – Ashford Economic Development Group

Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce – Canterbury Economic Development Group

Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce – East Kent Economic Development Group

Graham Razey, East Kent College/Canterbury College

Paul Sayers, East Kent College/Canterbury College

Mark Lumsden-Taylor, Hadlow College

Geoff Miles, Kent and Medway Economic Partnership

Sarah Nurden, KMEP

Andrew Osborne, Ashford Borough Council

Susan Priest, Shepway District Council

Jim Scopes, Local Partnerships

Debbie Spalding, East Kent Spatial Development Company

Adrian Verrall, Thanet District Council

Jacqui Ward, Kent County Council

Paul Wookey, Locate in Kent

## Appendix 2: Project Schedule

Local Authority	Project Name	Scheme Type	Employment Outputs (if known)*	Housing Outputs (if known)	Significance	Alignment with Framework Objective(s)			
						1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Skills and Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
Ashford	1 Ashford Town Centre Transformation Project	Infrastructure	Unlocking 1,000	Unlocking 1129	Strategic	✓			✓
	2 Ashford Commercial Quarter	Mixed	2,800	150	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
	3 Ashford College Campus	Mixed	150	240	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
	4 Elwick Place	Mixed	600	150	Local			✓	✓
	5 Southern Expansion Quarter / Victoria Way	Mixed	c500	c1,100	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
	6 Jasmin Vardimon	Commercial	Unknown	0	Local		✓	✓	✓
	7 Ashford Designer Outlet Expansion	Commercial	Up to700	0	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
	8 Chilmington Green	Mixed	1,000	5,750	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
	9 M20 Junction 10A	Infrastructure	Unlocking 5,000	Unlocking 7,000	Strategic	✓		✓	
	10 Ashford International Station	Infrastructure	1,000	350	Strategic	✓		✓	
	11 Newtown Works	Mixed	500	c450	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
	12 Conningbrook housing and water park	Mixed	100	c550	Strategic	✓			✓

Local Authority	Project Name	Scheme Type	Employment Outputs (if known)*	Housing Outputs (if known)	Significance	Alignment with Framework Objective(s)			
						1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Skills and Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
Canterbury	13 Canterbury Knowledge City:	Mixed	650+ direct	0	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
	14 Kent Medical School & Research Complex	Commercial	100+ (direct)	0	Strategic		✓	✓	
	15 Canterbury Innovation Centre II	Commercial	225 (direct)	0	Local		✓	✓	
	16 "Makers Space" and "Hot House"	Commercial	50 / year (direct)	0	Local		✓	✓	
	17 Canterbury Christ Church University EDGE Project	Mixed	70 (direct)	0	Strategic		✓	✓	
	18 Herne Bay Business Centre	Commercial	200 (direct)	0	Local		✓	✓	
	19 A28 Corridor:	Infrastructure	Unlocking 6000+	Unlocking 9,600+	Strategic	✓		✓	
	20 Milton Manor Roundabout	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Local	✓		✓	
	21 A2 slip at Bridge	Infrastructure	3000 (unlocked)	4000	Local	✓		✓	
	22 A2 offslip and park & ride relocation	Infrastructure	1685 (unlocked)	1150	Local	✓		✓	
	23 Wincheap Traffic Management Scheme	Infrastructure	600 (unlocked)	0	Local	✓		✓	✓
	24 Sturry Link Road	Infrastructure	1800 (unlocked)	4500	Strategic	✓		✓	
	25 Sturry Rd Integrated Transport Package	Infrastructure	1800 (unlocked)	4500	Local	✓		✓	
	26 Canterbury Eastern Bypass	Infrastructure	Unknown	0	Strategic	✓		✓	
	27 Canterbury Western Link Road	Infrastructure	Unknown	0	Strategic	✓		✓	
	28 Herne Bay Marina	Mixed	Unknown	0	Local	✓		✓	✓
	29 Whitstable Park & Ride	Infrastructure	Unknown	0	Local	✓			✓

Local Authority	Project Name	Scheme Type	Employment Outputs (if known)*	Housing Outputs (if known)	Significance	Alignment with Framework Objective(s)			
						1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Skills and Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
Dover	30 Whitfield:	Mixed	480	5,750	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
	31 Sewerage and Water Infrastructure	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Local	✓		✓	
	32 Bus Rapid Transit Scheme	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Local	✓		✓	
	33 White Cliffs Business Park (Phase 3)	Mixed	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
	34 Dover Town Centre Public Realm Improvements	Mixed	Unknown	Unknown	Local			✓	✓
	35 Dover Waterfront	Mixed	1,930	Unknown	Local			✓	✓
	36 Fomer Connaught Barracks	Mixed	Unknown	500	Local		✓	✓	✓
	37 Discovery Park, Sandwich	Mixed	Unknown	500	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
	38 Duke of York Roundabout Improvements	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic	✓		✓	
	39 A2 Improvements – duelling between Lydden and Dover Town	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic	✓		✓	✓
	40 Dualling of the Remainder of the A256	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
	41 Betteshanger Sustainable Park	Mixed	1000	Unknown	Local		✓	✓	✓
42 Open Golf at Sandwich	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic	✓				

Local Authority	Project Name	Scheme Type	Employment Outputs (if known)*	Housing Outputs (if known)	Significance	Alignment with Framework Objective(s)			
						1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Skills and Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping
Shepway	43 Folkestone Seafront & Town Centre:	Mixed			Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
	44 Folkestone Harbour and Seafront	Mixed	500	1,000	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
	45 Folkestone Creative Quarter	Commercial	300	0	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
	46 Folkestone Townscape Heritage Initiative	Mixed	0	0	Local			✓	✓
	47 Former Gasworks, Ship Street	Mixed	0	85	Local	✓			✓
	48 Shearway Business Park - Biggins Wood/Caesars Way	Mixed	Unknown	77	Local	✓	✓		
	49 Park Farm Industrial Estate - Silver Springs site	Commercial	Unknown	0	Local	✓	✓		
	50 East Kent College Folkestone Campus Extension	Mixed	Unknown	Unknown	Local		✓	✓	
	51 Princes Parade, Hythe	Mixed	Unknown	150	Local		✓		✓
	52 Romney Marsh Regeneration:	Mixed	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	
	53 Mountfield Road Industrial Estate/South New Romney	Mixed	700	400	Local	✓	✓	✓	
	54 London Ashford Airport	Mixed	1,680	0	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	
	55 Operation Stack Lorry Area	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic	✓		✓	
	56 M20 Junction 11 / Otterpool Park	Mixed	500	Up to 12,000	Strategic	✓	✓		✓
	57 Westenhanger Rail Station upgrade	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic	✓		✓	



Local Authority	Project Name	Scheme Type	Employment Outputs (if known)*	Housing Outputs (if known)	Significance	Alignment with Framework Objective(s)				
						1. Unlocking Growth through Infrastructure	2. Delivery of Business Space	3. Supporting Skills and Productivity within Business	4. Place Making and Shaping	
Thanet	58	Port of Ramsgate	Infrastructure	580	0	Strategic	✓	✓	✓	✓
	59	Thanet Parkway Station	Infrastructure	Unlocking 5,000	Unlocking 12,000	Strategic	✓		✓	✓
	60	Inner Route Improvement Strategy	Infrastructure	Unlocking 5,000	unlocking 13,300	Strategic	✓		✓	✓
	61	Westwood relief strategy	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Local	✓		✓	✓
	62	Margate Junction improvements	Infrastructure	Unknown	Unknown	Local	✓		✓	✓
	63	Advanced Manufacturing Park (Manston Business Park)	Commercial	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic		✓	✓	
	64	Creative Industries Workspace	Commercial	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic		✓	✓	✓
	65	Feasibility Modelling for Ramsgate, Margate and Viking Bay	Commercial	Unknown	Unknown	Local	✓	✓	✓	✓
	66	Ramsgate Heritage Action Zone	Commercial	Unknown	Unknown	Local				✓
	67	Theatre Royal	Commercial	Unknown	Unknown	Local				✓
	68	Dreamland and Sunshine Café Redevelopment	Commercial	200	Unknown	Local				✓
	69	Viking Bay	Commercial	Unknown	Unknown	Local				✓
	70	EuroKent Business Park	Mixed	Unknown	Unknown	Strategic		✓		
	71	Agri-tech Hub	Commercial	Unknown	Unknown	Local			✓	
	72	East Kent Broadstairs Campus Refurbishment	Mixed	Unknown	Unknown	Local			✓	

# **East Kent Growth Framework Evidence Report**

East Kent Regeneration Board

May 2017

**LICHFIELDS**

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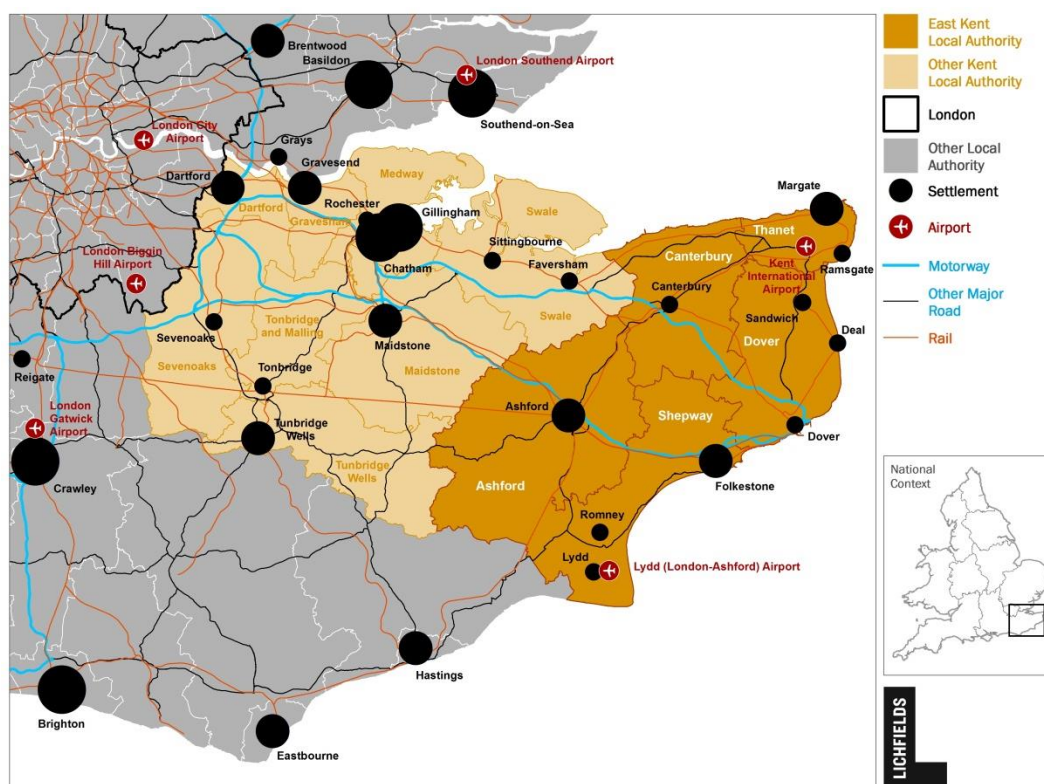
## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The East Kent Regeneration Board (‘EKRB’), comprising of Ashford Borough Council, Canterbury City Council, Dover District Council, Shepway District Council Thanet District Council and Kent County Council, commissioned Lichfields to provide analytical support for the development a new East Kent Growth Framework (‘EKGF’, ‘the Framework’).
- 1.2 The aim of the Framework is to set out the collective economic growth ambitions for East Kent and provide a strategic framework for investments and economic growth initiatives. It will support the EKRB to adopt a cohesive and consistent approach towards investment opportunities as future funding opportunities arise.

## Background and Purpose

- 1.3 East Kent includes the five local authority areas of Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Shepway and Thanet as shown in Figure 1.1. Throughout this report, ‘East Kent’ is used to refer collectively to these five local authority districts, which together form the area covered by the East Kent Regeneration Board.

Figure 1.1 Spatial Context of East Kent



Source: Lichfields

- 1.4 The EKRB comprises the five East Kent local authorities and Kent County Council. Board representatives include the Leaders and Chief Executive from each of the five East Kent Districts, together with the Kent County Council’s Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Corporate Director of Growth, Transport and Environment.
- 1.5 The EKRB agrees the investment and growth priorities in East Kent and identifies and takes forward collaborative working to achieve the common goal of achieving economic growth across East Kent.



## East Kent Growth Plan (2013)

- 1.6 The previous East Kent Growth Plan, ‘Open for Growth’, was published in 2013 by the EKRB and set out the area’s collective opportunities for growth, its investment priorities and the actions that need to be taken to drive them forward. It provided a new joint economic strategy to allow the five East Kent districts to work together to unlock East Kent’s key opportunities for new homes, new jobs and new business investment. It was accompanied by the East Kent Economic Review; a background document which informed the development of the Growth Plan by setting out a profile of the area.
- 1.7 In the intervening period since 2013, East Kent’s economy has undergone a number of changes and this new Framework is intended to provide an update of the earlier plan. Against the backdrop of an increasingly competitive environment for investment, the EKRB recognises that it is now more important than ever to understand and articulate what East Kent’s offer is going forward and how investment in East Kent will deliver growth for the local, sub-regional and regional economy. Crucially, it will identify and prioritise a series of key regeneration projects and schemes that have the potential to drive this growth if investment can be secured to kick-start their delivery.

## Methodology

- 1.8 This evidence report provides an analysis of existing evidence and data sources in order to establish the economic strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats faced by East Kent collectively and the five authorities individually. This analysis has been undertaken across three key themes or topic areas, namely ‘economy’, ‘people’ and ‘place’, as summarised in this evidence report.
- 1.9 The analysis draws upon existing evidence prepared at local authority, county and Local Enterprise Partnership scales supplemented by latest national datasets where available. The focus is on assimilating and synthesising existing information and intelligence to complement existing strategies and agreed approaches. It should be noted that this is not necessarily an exhaustive literature review but is based on a filtering of the existing evidence of most relevance to the analysis at the strategic level. Where possible, the report highlights key indicators for East Kent as a whole and for the component districts, although this is not possible in all cases.
- 1.10 An important consideration for any work of this type is that it is inevitably a point-in-time assessment. This study has incorporated the latest data and other evidence available at the point of preparation in late 2016. The accuracy of data derived from third party sources has not been checked or verified by Lichfields.

## Structure of the Report

- 1.11 The remainder of this document is structured as follows:
- Section 2.0 examines the economic fabric of the area with reference to economic growth and sectors.
  - Section 3.0 explores the area’s population and labour force profile.
  - Section 4.0 considers a range of place based factors in East Kent, in terms of recent patterns of development, market trends and growth capacity issues.
  - Section 5.0 brings together the thematic evidence to identify East Kent’s overarching strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

## 2.0 Economy

2.1 In order to understand the growth potential of East Kent’s economy, this section considers the scale of the area’s economy against comparator areas, recent and forecast trends in employment growth, and the degree of sector specialisation and growth potential that exists.

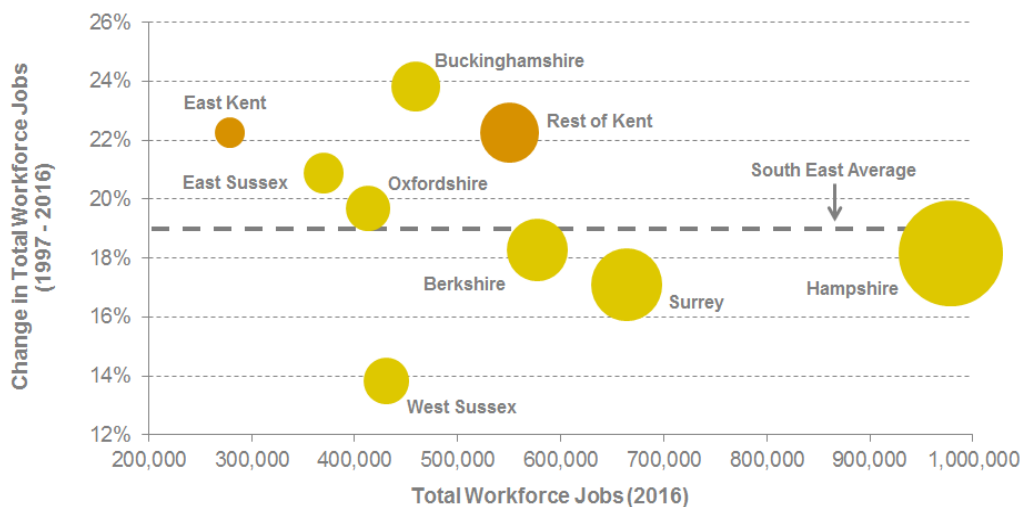
2.2 The following analysis is structured around four broad questions:

- How big is the economy?
- How is the structure of the economy changing?
- How are identified growth sectors performing?
- What is the future potential of East Kent?

### Employment Trends

2.3 In 2016, the East Kent economy supported a total of 278,600 workforce jobs, equivalent to around a third (34%) of all workforce jobs in Kent. As a whole, Kent represents the second largest of the South East counties in employment terms (as at 2016) and has also recorded strong job growth over recent years (since 1997), falling behind only Buckinghamshire (Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1 Employment Change by Counties of the South East, 1997-2016

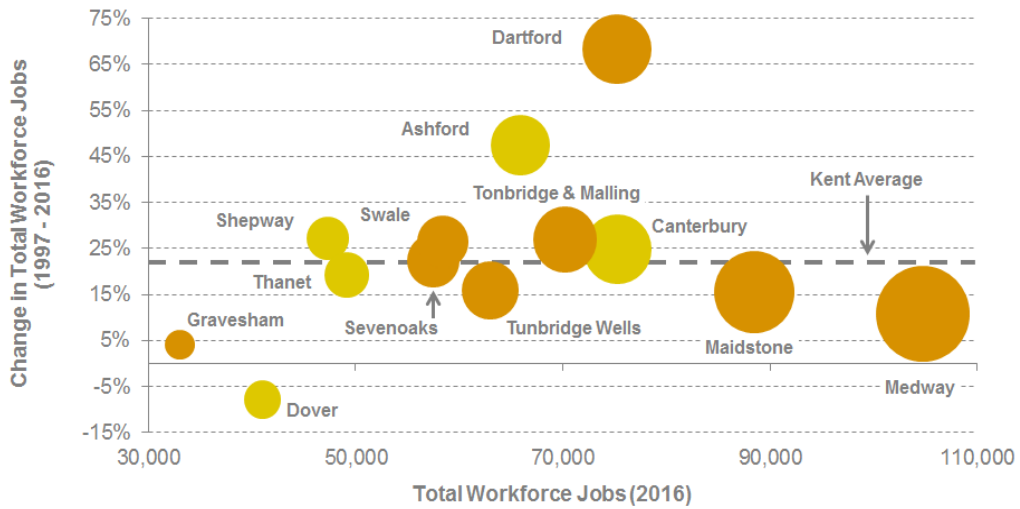


Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

2.4 Considered as a single entity, East Kent has generated strong employment growth rates during recent years, with total workforce jobs growing by just over 22% between 1997 and 2016, matching the scale of growth recorded in the rest of Kent over this period (Figure 2.1).

2.5 This overall trend masks significant variations at a more local level, within the East Kent sub-region. Figure 2.2 shows that over the 19 years to 2016, Ashford stands out as recording the most significant workforce job growth (at 47%), followed by Shepway (27%), Canterbury (25%) and Thanet (19%). The only authority area in East Kent to have recorded a decline in its employment base over this time period is Dover, where the stock of workforce jobs declined by around 3,500 or 8% (Figure 2.2).

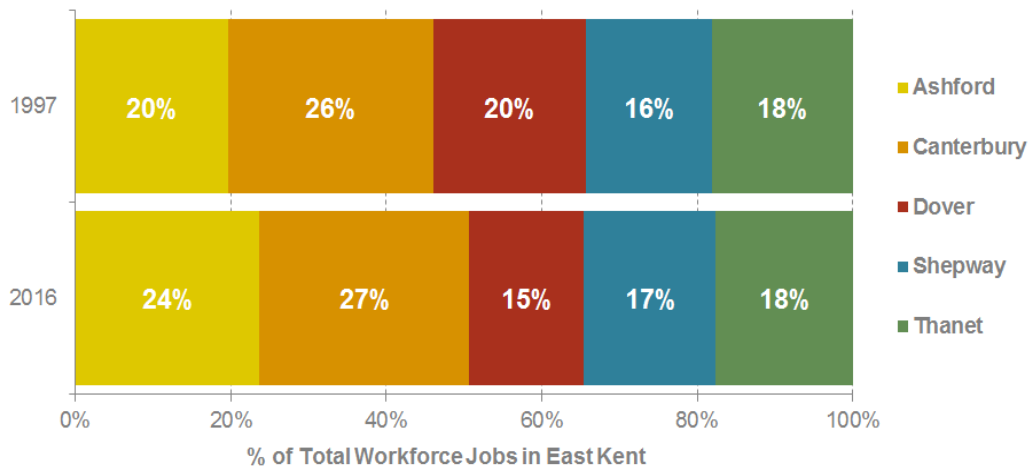
Figure 2.2 Employment Change by Kent Local Authority



Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

2.6 In absolute employment terms, Canterbury represents East Kent’s largest economy, and accommodates just over a quarter (27%) of the sub-region’s employment base. As shown in Figure 2.3, the share of East Kent’s employment is relatively uneven across individual local authority areas, with the two authorities of Ashford and Canterbury supporting more than half of all jobs in East Kent in 2016. By comparison, Dover’s share of total employment stands at 15% and this relative contribution has declined over the past 19 years.

Figure 2.3 Share of Total Workforce Jobs by East Kent Local Authority



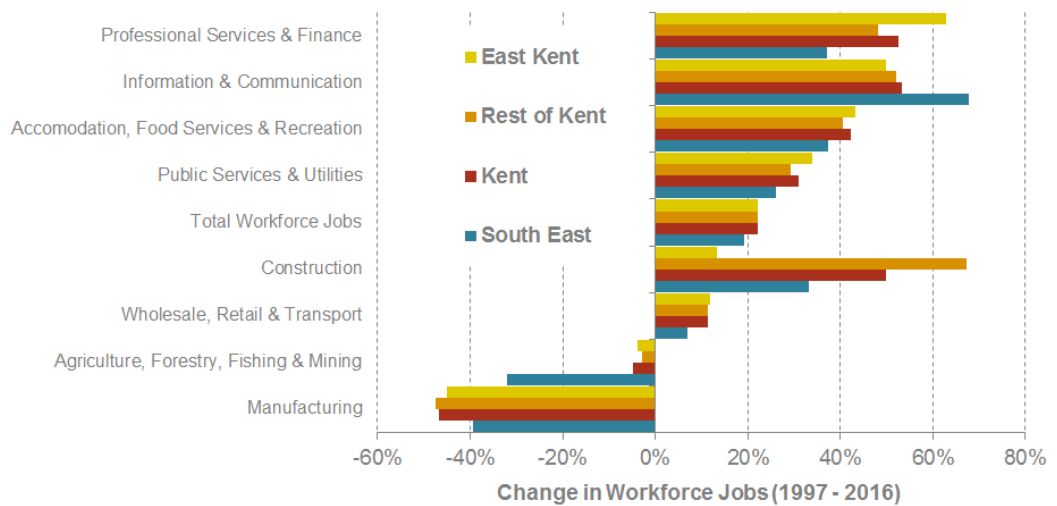
Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

2.7 These trends should be considered within the context of significant economic change, challenges and re-structuring within East Kent and the surrounding area over recent decades, including the closure of East Kent’s coalfields in the 1980s, the opening of the Channel Tunnel in 1994 and the announcement by Pfizer in 2011 that it intended to withdraw from Sandwich as part of a global restructure. This was followed shortly by Discovery Park’s designation as an Enterprise Zone which is now one of the largest business parks in Europe with a specialist focus on science and technology.

## Sector Composition and Specialisation

2.8 East Kent supports a diverse business base across a wide range of sector activities, with strong prospects to generate high levels of growth in the future. Recent job growth across the sub-region has been relatively strong in several high value office based sectors such as professional services, finance and ICT (Figure 2.4), particularly when compared with other parts of Kent.

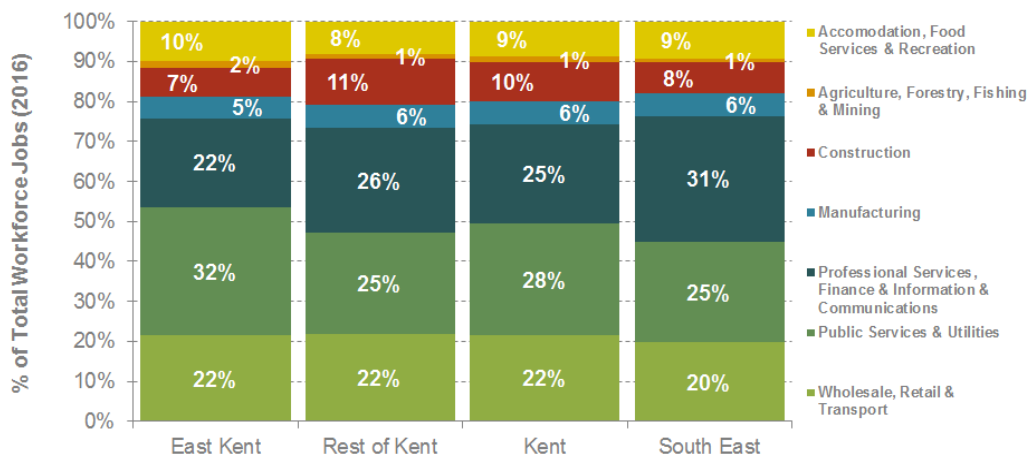
Figure 2.4 Employment Change by Sector, 1997-2016



Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

2.9 Despite this positive trend, the relative size of East Kent’s ‘knowledge based’ economy remains smaller than elsewhere in Kent and the wider South East, with a greater share of public sector jobs and a smaller share of higher value sector jobs compared with regional and sub-regional benchmarks (Figure 2.5).

Figure 2.5 Proportion of Employment by Main Sector



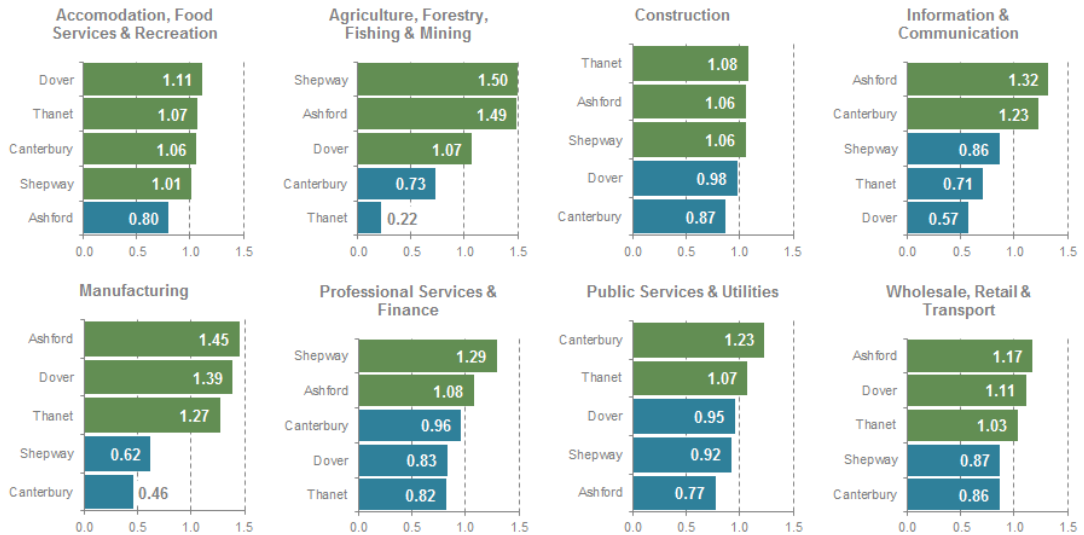
Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

2.10 Figure 2.6 shows how the sectoral composition of each economy in East Kent differs with reference to broad sectors. This indicates specialisation in some higher value ‘wealth-generating’ sectors such as information & communication, professional services and finance, mainly limited to Ashford, Canterbury and Shepway. Traditional industries such

as agriculture, manufacturing, construction and extractive industries and utilities are also prevalent, in all local authority areas except Canterbury.

2.11 Figure 2.6 also shows that for some sectors such as construction, accommodation, food and recreation services, local representation in employment terms is fairly similar within East Kent. However, for other sectors such as manufacturing, ICT and public services, much more of a variation is evident, underlining locally specific strengths and opportunities.

Figure 2.6 Sector Specialisation by East Kent Local Authority (Location Quotient)



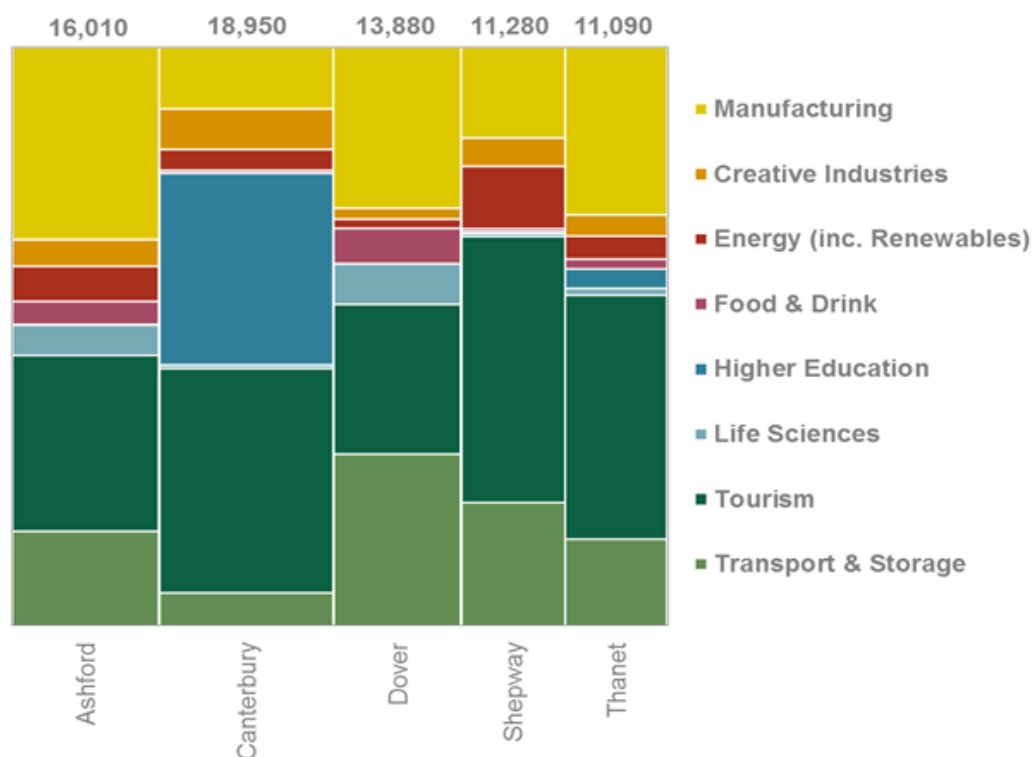
Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

Note: Location quotients based on East Kent average; values above 1 indicate over-representation, less than 1 indicates under-representation.

2.12 In the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan, seven key ‘sector groups’ were identified as providing particular opportunities for growth within the East Kent economy. Figure 2.7 below indicates that the scale and significance of these growth sectors varies by local authority, with notable concentrations summarised below for each local authority:

- **Ashford:** Manufacturing, life sciences
- **Canterbury:** Higher education, tourism
- **Dover:** Life sciences, transport and storage
- **Shepway:** Tourism, energy
- **Thanet:** Manufacturing, tourism

Figure 2.7 Growth Sector Representation



Source: ONS (Business Register and Employment Survey) / Lichfields analysis Note: refers to all manufacturing sectors

2.13 Within its Strategic Economic Plan, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) identifies a number of priority sectors for the SE LEP economy which have high growth potential and through which LEP-wide support for innovation can be targeted. These comprise: advanced manufacturing; life sciences/medical technologies; transport and logistics; low carbon environmental goods and services, creative, cultural and media and the visitor economy.

2.14 These broadly align with those sectors outlined in the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan as having opportunities for growth and the above analysis suggests there is a good spatial representation across the sub-region, albeit with locally specific clusters such as life sciences at Discovery Park, creative and media in Folkestone and Margate, and low carbon in Ramsgate, Whitstable and Dungeness.

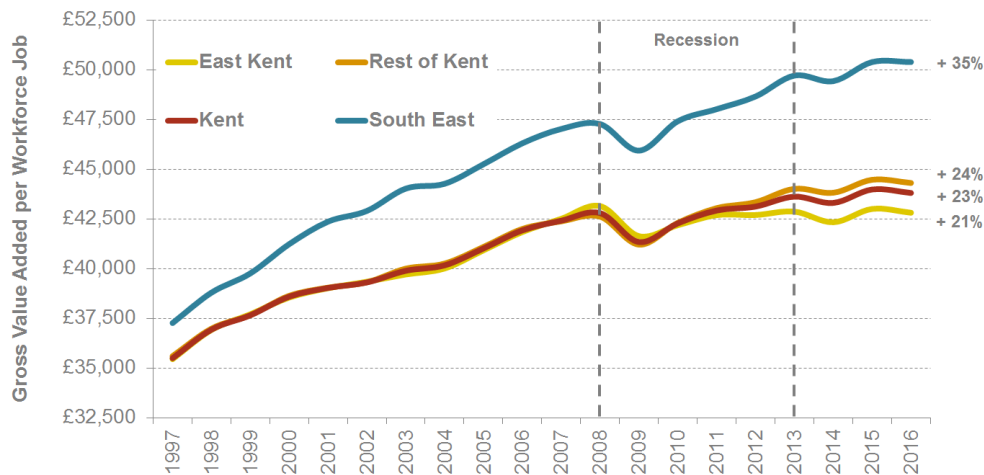
2.15 Nevertheless, the 2013 East Kent Growth Plan also acknowledged that the size of the knowledge economy relative to all employment remains smaller in East Kent than elsewhere in the country; while the indicators suggest that East Kent is making good progress and has a significant concentration of activity at Canterbury, it will need to maintain recent growth rates in order to catch up with more knowledge intensive parts of the country. This issue is not unique to East Kent, and the South East LEP recognises that the LEP area as a whole is relatively more reliant on wholesale, retail and accommodation, and construction jobs, with a lower proportion of employment is in high value 'knowledge economy' sectors.

2.16 This overall analysis of employment and sector distribution inevitably understates the importance of some growing sectors and parts of the economy that are small in overall employment terms, but important in their contribution to local output. An example is creative industries which have been playing an increasingly important role in driving economic growth and regeneration activity in key towns such as Folkestone and Margate.

## Economic Output and Productivity

- 2.17 Gross value added (GVA) provides a measure of the value of all the goods and services produced in an economy and can be used as an indicator of economic output, productivity or performance. This can be expressed in terms of the amount of GVA generated per workforce (workplace) job as shown in Figure 2.8.
- 2.18 This reveals a general trend of improving productivity in East Kent over the 19 year period to 2016 which is in line with wider sub-regional and regional trends. This is particularly the case over the first half of the period, although average levels of GVA per workforce job have remained largely unchanged since recession in 2008. This has resulted in a widening productivity gap between East Kent and the rest of Kent and the South East (Figure 2.8).

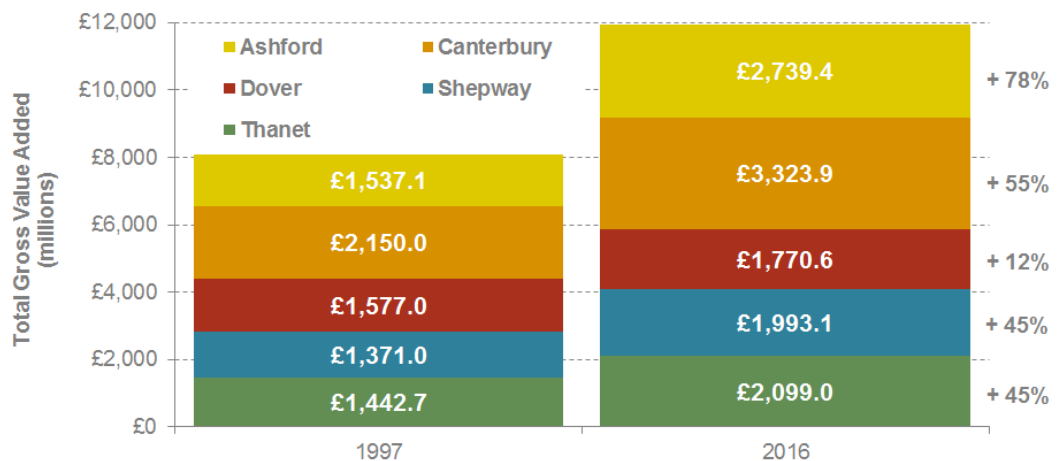
Figure 2.8 Workforce Productivity



Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

- 2.19 The total economic output measured in terms of Gross Value Added (GVA) of East Kent in 2016 was £11.9 billion. This is broken down by individual local authority area in Figure 2.9 below, emphasising the significant role played by Canterbury and Ashford in particular in driving this output both now (i.e. in 2016) and over the last 19 years; between 1997 and 2016, more than 60% of economic output growth in East Kent was recorded by Ashford and Canterbury.

Figure 2.9 Growth in Economic Output, 1997-2016



Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

2.20 Within East Kent, average levels of GVA generated per workforce job varies by local authority (Table 2.1). Canterbury and Dover stand out as recording the highest average workforce GVA; in Canterbury this is likely to reflect the presence of Universities and related knowledge based activity, while in Dover the presence of the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone and its cluster of high value R&D activity will help to explain the relatively high levels of GVA.

2.21 Meanwhile, Ashford records the lowest average levels of GVA per workforce job, reflecting its traditional industrial economic base.

Table 2.1 Productivity per Job (Gross Value Added)

Location	GVA per workforce job (2016)
Ashford	41,570
Canterbury	44,140
Dover	43,190
Shepway	42,140
Thanet	42,750
East Kent	42,810
Kent	43,800
South East	50,390
UK	47,250

Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

2.22 Table 2.1 also shows that East Kent performance (£42,810 GVA per job) as a whole still falls behind the wider Kent average (£43,800) as well as the equivalent metric for the South East and UK as a whole. This points to significant scope for improving the competitiveness of East Kent’s workforce.

### Future Growth Potential

2.23 Latest employment forecasts prepared by Experian indicate that East Kent has significant potential to grow its economy over the coming years in both employment and economic output (GVA) terms (Figure 2.10). This is equivalent to an increase of 36,500 workforce jobs (1,825 per year on average) and an increase of £6.2 billion in economic output (measured by GVA) (£309 million per year on average).

Figure 2.10 Employment and GVA Forecasts, 2016-2036



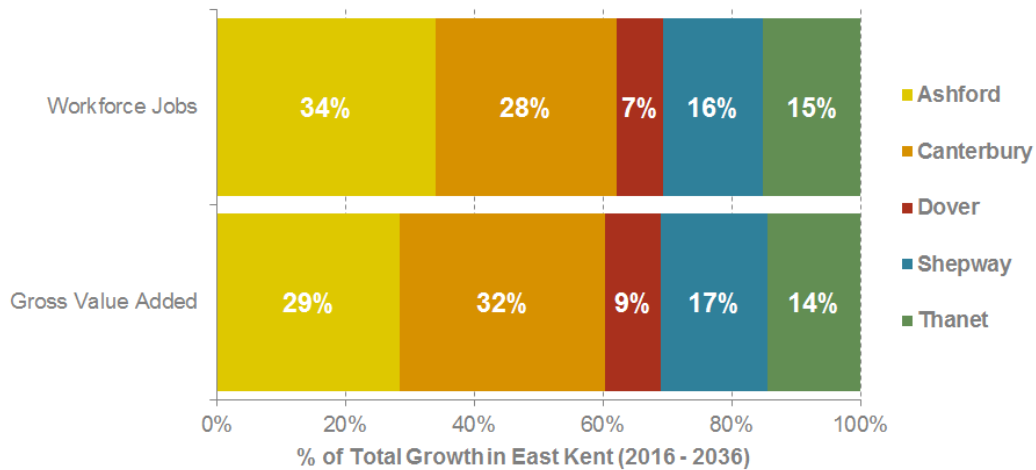
Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis



In proportionate terms, this projected growth for East Kent is lower for both employment and economic output than equivalent projections for the rest of Kent and the South East.

Ashford and Canterbury are expected to remain the main drivers of economic growth in East Kent over the 20 year period to 2036, with the other East Kent authorities of Dover, Shepway and Thanet anticipated to play a smaller role in proportionate terms (Figure 2.11).

Figure 2.11 East Kent Employment and GVA Forecasts



Source: Experian (September 2016) / Lichfields analysis

## Summary

- 2.24 East Kent accommodates a sizeable economy, and like the rest of Kent, has recorded strong levels of job growth in recent years. Within the sub-region itself, performance has been more varied. Along with Canterbury, Ashford represents the largest economic centre and key driver of growth in East Kent over recent years, consistently out-performing the other East Kent authorities across a range of economic indicators. By comparison, Dover, Shepway and Thanet have performed less well, yet still play an important role in accommodating some of the more traditional industrial activities such as manufacturing, hospitality and retail.
- 2.25 This resulting east-west divide in East Kent (in terms of economic profile and performance) has widened between the authority areas of Ashford, Canterbury and the remainder of the sub-region, in particular with Dover which has gradually played a less significant role in driving East Kent’s growth. This points to scope for improved economic performance in key locations going forward.
- 2.26 The latest economic forecasts underline East Kent’s strong growth potential over the next few years (albeit lower than that anticipated for Kent and the South East as a whole), with Ashford and Canterbury expected to build upon their recent track record of growth going forward. The indications are that targeted investment and policy interventions may be required to support future growth in Dover, Shepway and Thanet.

### 3.0 People

3.1 This section explores the population and labour force profile of East Kent, how this relates to commuting flows within and outside of the area and relative skills levels in different locations.

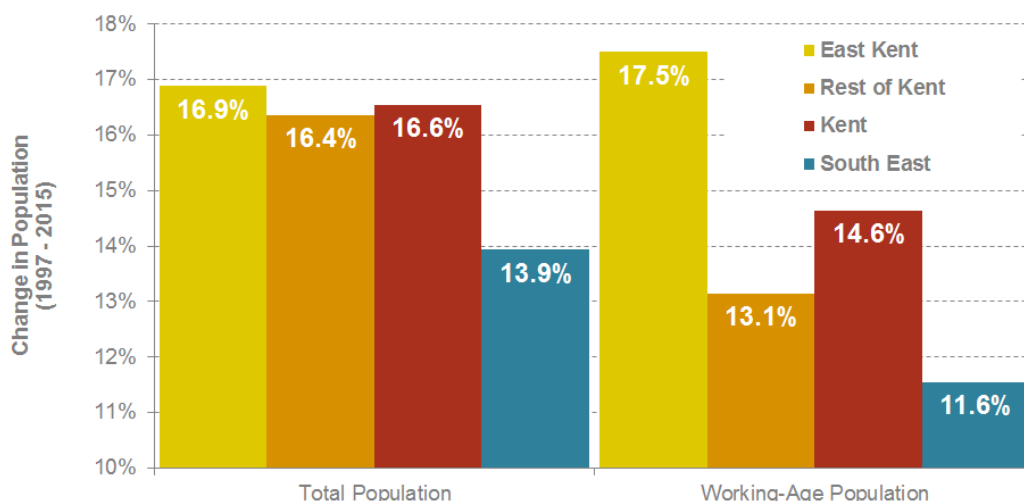
3.2 The following analysis is structured around four broad questions:

- What have been the key population trends?
- What are the key migration patterns to and from East Kent?
- How is the socio-economic profile changing?
- What is the profile of the workforce including commuting flows?

#### Population Trends

3.3 East Kent has performed relatively well over recent years in terms of population growth; total population in the sub-region stood at 647,250 in 2015, having increased by 93,500 or just under 17% since 1997 (Figure 3.1). This scale of growth outpaced both the Kent-wide and South East average over this period.

Figure 3.1 Total and Working Age Population Growth, 1997-2015



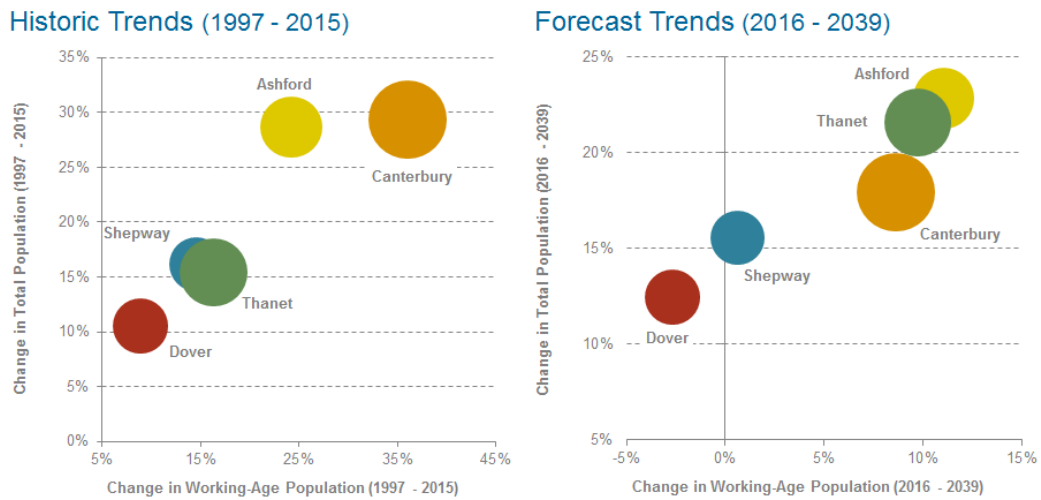
Source: ONS (Mid-Year Population Estimates) / Lichfields analysis

3.4 Figure 3.1 also shows that the working-age segment of the population (defined as those aged between 16 and 64) recorded particularly strong levels of growth over this 18 year period to 2015, also outpacing the equivalent scale of growth recorded in other parts of Kent, and the South East as a whole.

3.5 The authority areas of Ashford and Canterbury have played the most significant role in driving both total and working-age population growth in East Kent over recent years, followed to a lesser extent by Thanet, Shepway and Dover (Figure 3.2). In 2015, Canterbury recorded the largest population in East Kent, in both overall and working-age terms.

3.6 This trend was also highlighted in the previous 2013 East Kent Growth Plan, which noted that recent population growth had been concentrated in those parts of East Kent that have seen the largest amount of new housing development, with the strongest increases in Ashford and Canterbury.

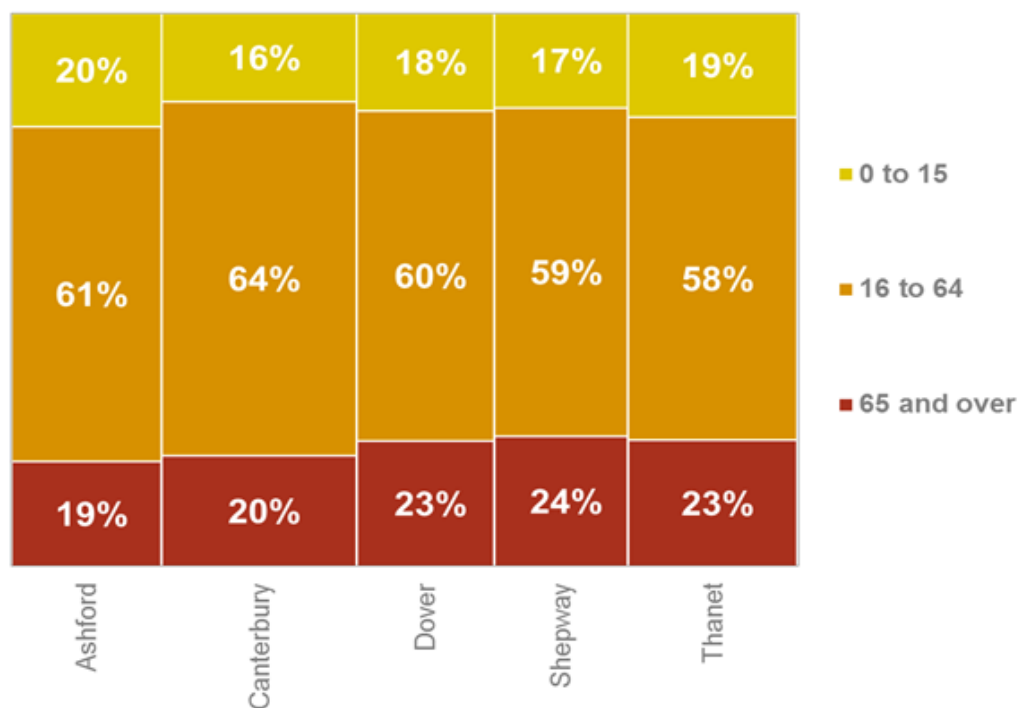
Figure 3.2 Working Age Population Growth



Source: ONS (Mid-Year Population Estimates / Sub-National Population Projections) / Lichfields analysis

- 3.7 As illustrated in Figure 3.2, most parts of East Kent are expected to see future population growth, although it is clear that some locations are expected to record a greater proportionate increase than others. Latest Government population projections suggest that Ashford, Thanet and Canterbury have the greatest scope for population growth over the next 23 years to 2039. For Ashford and Canterbury, this provides an opportunity to cement their role as key population centres in East Kent, while for Thanet this could provide a step change in the scale of population change and growth recorded in the District
- 3.8 Dover is expected to see an increase in its overall population but represents the only authority area in East Kent to see a forecast decline in its working-age population over the period to 2039, according to the latest baseline data.
- 3.9 It is also worth noting that implied population growth across the whole sub-region is anticipated to fall below historic trends, suggesting a gradual slow down over the coming years (Figure 3.2).
- 3.10 In 2015 (i.e. the latest year available), East Kent’s share of working-age population (at 61%) broadly reflected the wider Kent (61%) and South East (62%) averages. Within the sub-region, there is limited geographical variation, although the highest share of working-aged people can be found in Canterbury (Figure 3.3). Meanwhile, Ashford supports a slightly higher share of younger aged people (aged under 15) with Shepway, Thanet and Dover supporting a slightly higher share of older aged people (aged 65 and over).

Figure 3.3 Working Age Population Profile

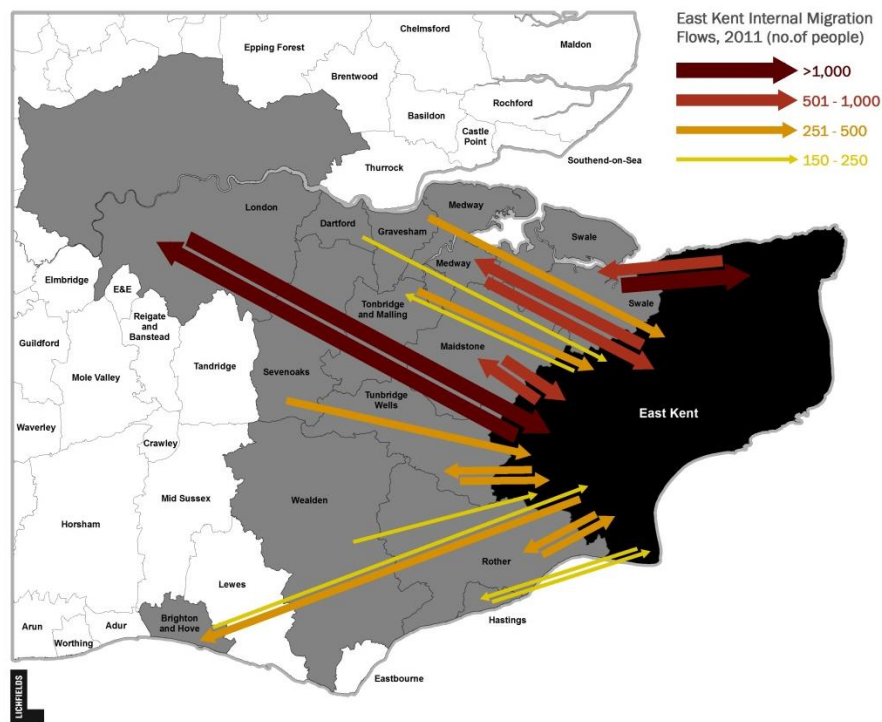


Source: ONS (Mid-Year Population Estimates) / Lichfields analysis

## Migration Flows

- 3.11 East Kent experiences significant migration flows with its surrounding hinterland (such as adjoining Kent authorities) as well internally, and these migration patterns are shown below in Figure 3.4. As a combined area, East Kent represents a net importer of migrants from elsewhere, particularly from Greater London and the Kent authorities of Swale, Maidstone and Medway.
- 3.12 Migration has formed an important part of East Kent’s population growth over recent years, and in-migration has in part been driven by the presence of nationally important planned growth points (such as Ashford) as well as the cluster of universities in Canterbury which has historically drawn in strong flows of students, many of whom stay in the area after graduation.

Figure 3.4 East Kent Migration Flows



Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis

3.13

As summarised in Table 3.1 below, four of the five local authority areas in East Kent received a net migration inflow at the time of the 2011 Census, the largest of which was recorded in Canterbury. Dover stands out as the only local authority in the sub-region to have recorded overall out migration in net terms, albeit this out flow was relatively small in absolute terms.

Table 3.1 East Kent Migration Flows

Location	In-Migration	Out-Migration	Balance
Ashford	3,300	3,150	+150
Canterbury	9,100	6,150	+2,950
Dover	2,170	2,200	-20
Shepway	2,990	2,250	+740
Thanet	3,520	2,810	+710
East Kent	21,090	16,560	+4,530

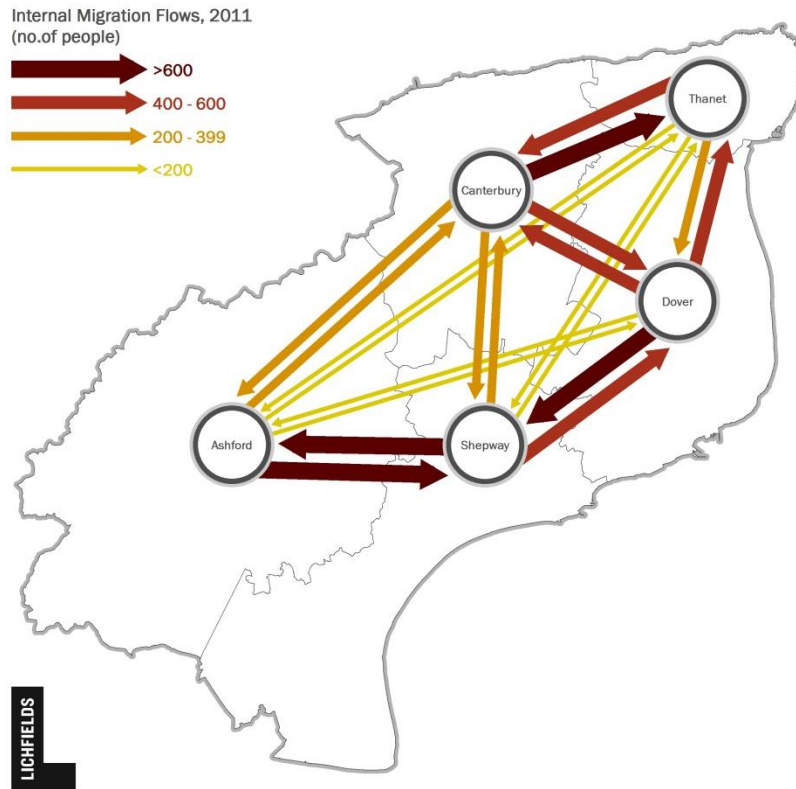
Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis

3.14

Internal migration patterns within East Kent show significant outward migration from Canterbury to elsewhere in the area, notably Thanet and Dover. 2011 Census net migration flows from within the area for each individual local authority are set out below, and indicate that Ashford, Shepway and Thanet all experience overall net in-migration from elsewhere within East Kent:

- Ashford: +110
- Canterbury: -310
- Dover: -50
- Shepway: +120
- Thanet: +130

Figure 3.5 East Kent Internal Migration Flows

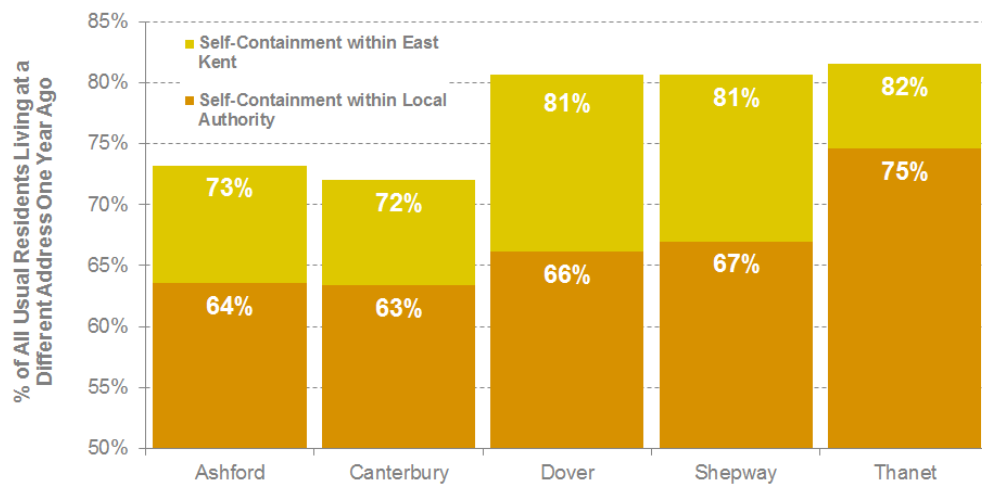


Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis

3.15

Data from the 2011 Census 2011 also shows that most people that move house in East Kent do so within the same local authority area or within the wider East Kent sub-region (Figure 3.5). This is particularly the case for residents of Thanet, Dover and Shepway, while residents of Ashford and Canterbury are more likely to have relocated from further afield.

Figure 3.6 Migration Self Containment



Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis

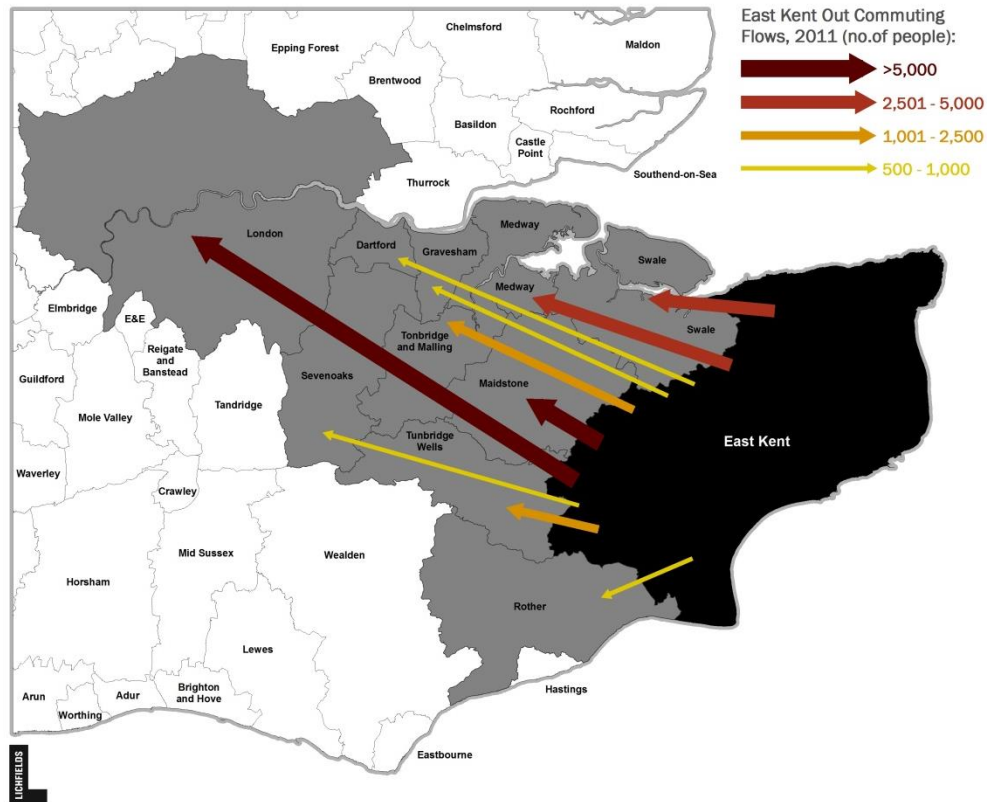
3.16

This data suggests that Canterbury acts as the main attractor of people into East Kent, although many of these people then migrate outwards from Canterbury to other parts of the area, in particular to the coastal authorities of Thanet and Dover.

## Commuting Flows

3.17 Drawing on 2011 Census data, it is possible to investigate commuting patterns relating to the volume of workers entering and exiting East Kent for employment. About 37,100 workers or 17% of the total living in East Kent commuted outside the area for their employment in 2011<sup>1</sup>. The most significant outflow of workers were to Maidstone, Swale and Westminster, while Medway and Tonbridge and Malling were also relatively popular commuting destinations (Figure 3.7). Greater London Boroughs accounted for around a third (32%) of East Kent’s out-commuters.

Figure 3.7 Out Commuting Flows from East Kent



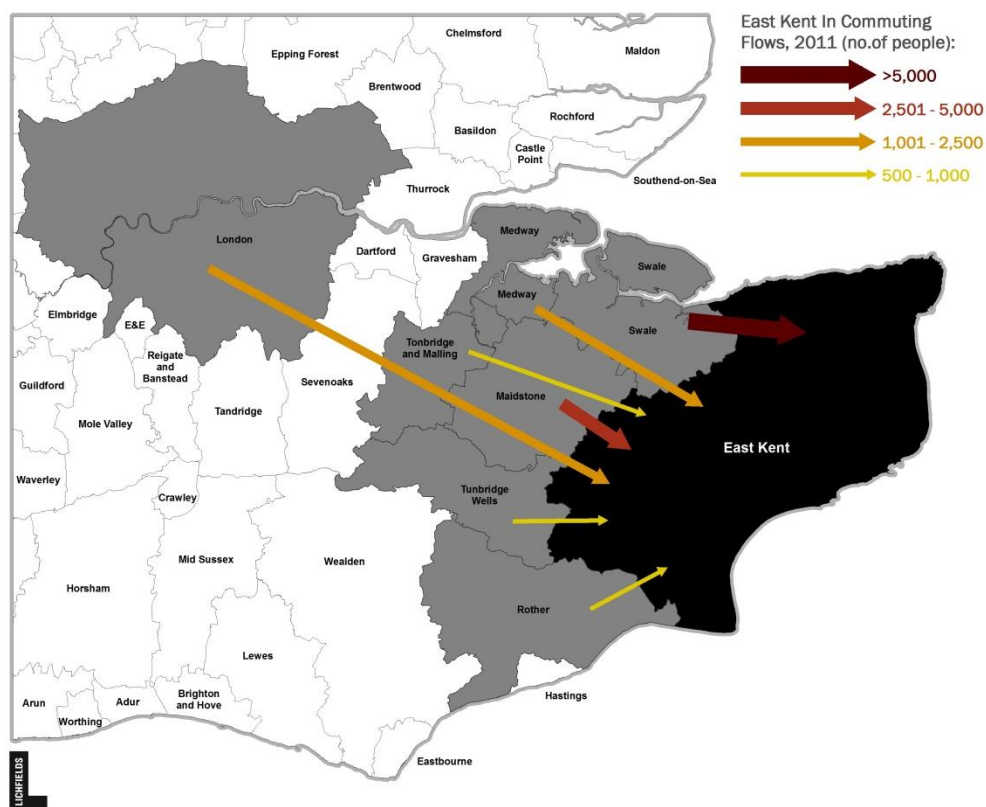
Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis

3.18 At the same time a large flow of workers travelled into East Kent for employment in 2011. These flows totalled approximately 17,600 workers, equivalent to around 9% of workplace jobs in East Kent. The largest inflow of workers came from the Kent authorities of Swale, Maidstone and Medway (Figure 3.8).

<sup>1</sup> Excluding ‘other’ categories of commuters: Mainly work at or from home, No fixed place, Outside UK, Offshore installation



Figure 3.8 In Commuting Flows to East Kent



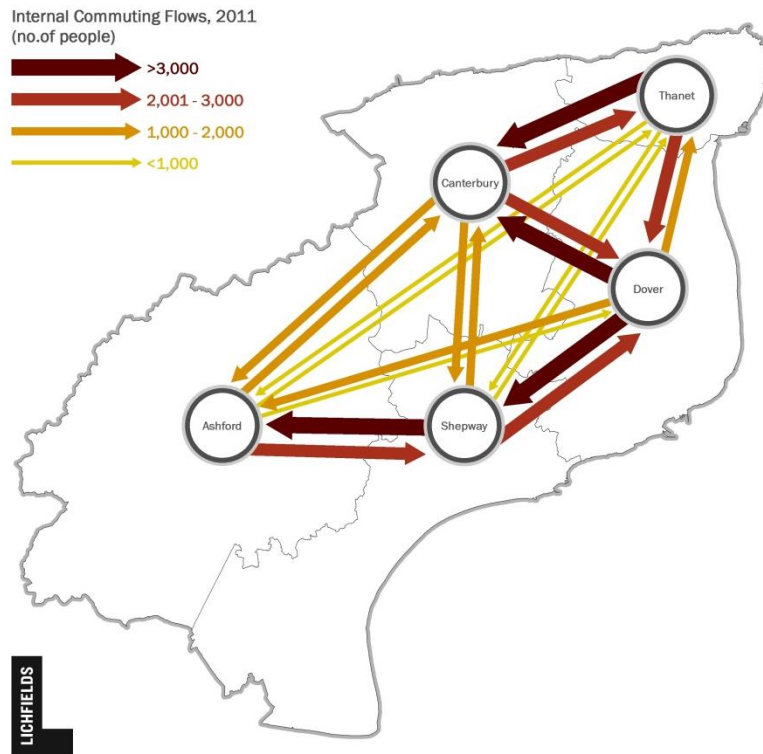
Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis

- 3.19 In contrast to the relatively dispersed outflow of workers from East Kent, the inflow of workers came from a more concentrated area generally not extending far beyond Kent itself (Figure 3.8).
- 3.20 On balance, East Kent can be characterised as a net exporter of labour with a large net outflow of around 19,500 workers. However the significant outflow of workers from the area should also be considered in the context of an overall self-containment rate of 83%<sup>2</sup>, which indicates that the majority of workers live and work locally within East Kent.
- 3.21 Considering East Kent as a single labour market area (i.e. excluding all commuting flows to/from East Kent), Figure 3.9 shows that Ashford and Canterbury are both net importers, playing an important role in providing employment opportunities for both residents of their own districts and the authority areas of Thanet, Dover and Shepway, all of which are net exporters of labour in East Kent terms. It illustrates an east-west split in terms of the labour profile of individual authorities, with the larger centres of Ashford and Canterbury ‘drawing in’ strong flows of East Kent commuters at the expense of the eastern coastal authorities.

<sup>2</sup> Excluding ‘other’ categories of commuters: Mainly work at or from home, No fixed place, Outside UK, Offshore installation

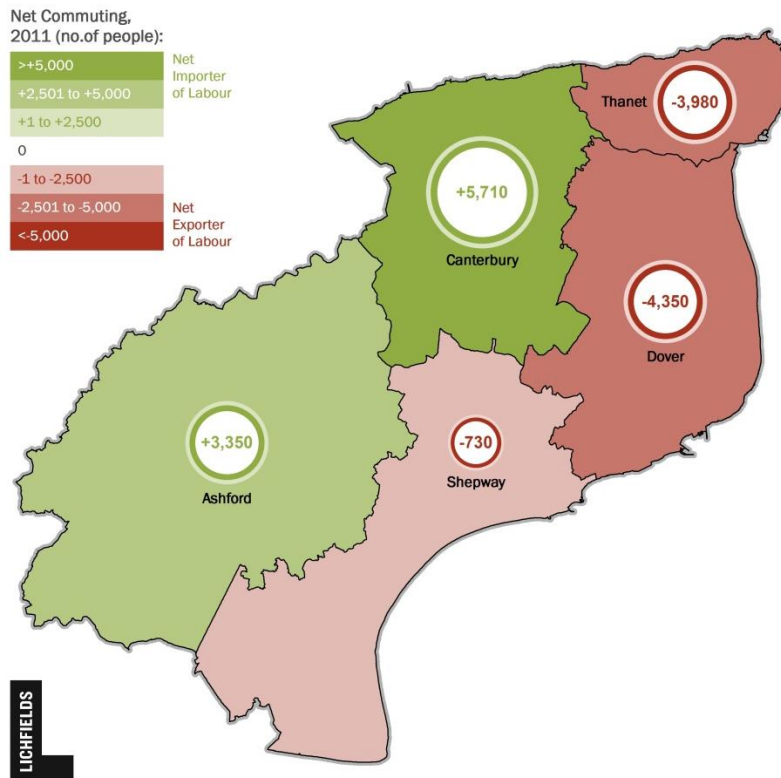


Figure 3.9 Internal Commuting Flows within East Kent



Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfield analysis

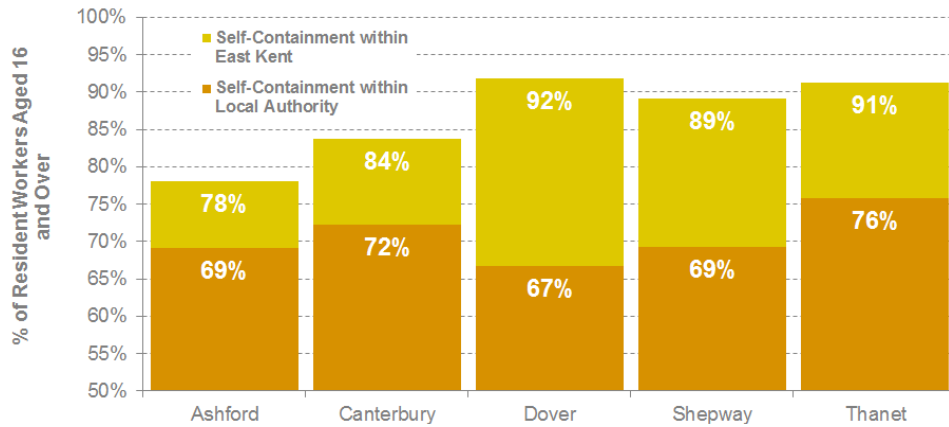
Figure 3.10 Net Commuting Balance by East Kent Local Authority



Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis

3.22 Census 2011 data also shows that labour self-containment within East Kent is highest in the most eastern local authorities of Dover, Thanet and Shepway, with working residents of Ashford and Canterbury more likely to commute outside of the sub-region for their work (Figure 3.11).

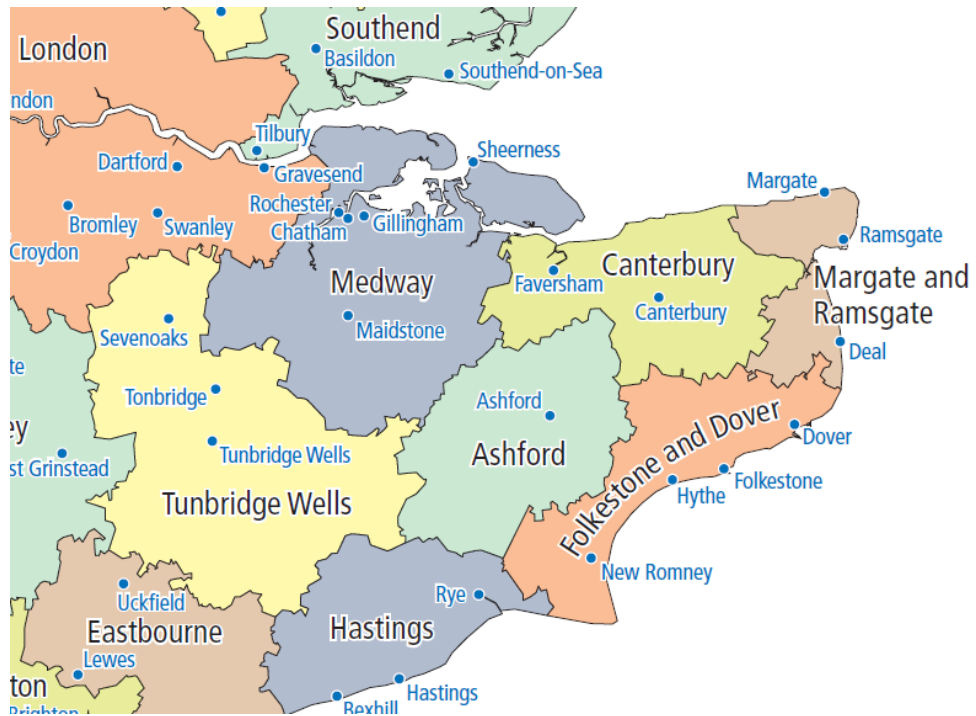
Figure 3.11 Commuting Self Containment



Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis

3.23 In 2015, the ONS used 2011 Census data on home and work addresses to define 228 Travel to Work Areas (TTWAs) that cover the whole of the UK. This assessment identified four TTWAs that cover the East Kent sub-region; Canterbury, Margate and Ramsgate, Folkestone and Dover, and Ashford (Figure 3.12). This underlines the significant role played by the centres of Ashford and Canterbury in providing employment opportunities for the wider area. By contrast, the coastal stretch from New Romney in the south to Margate in the north is characterised by a larger number of smaller centres, which only when grouped together, form their own labour market area.

Figure 3.12 2011 Travel to Work Areas

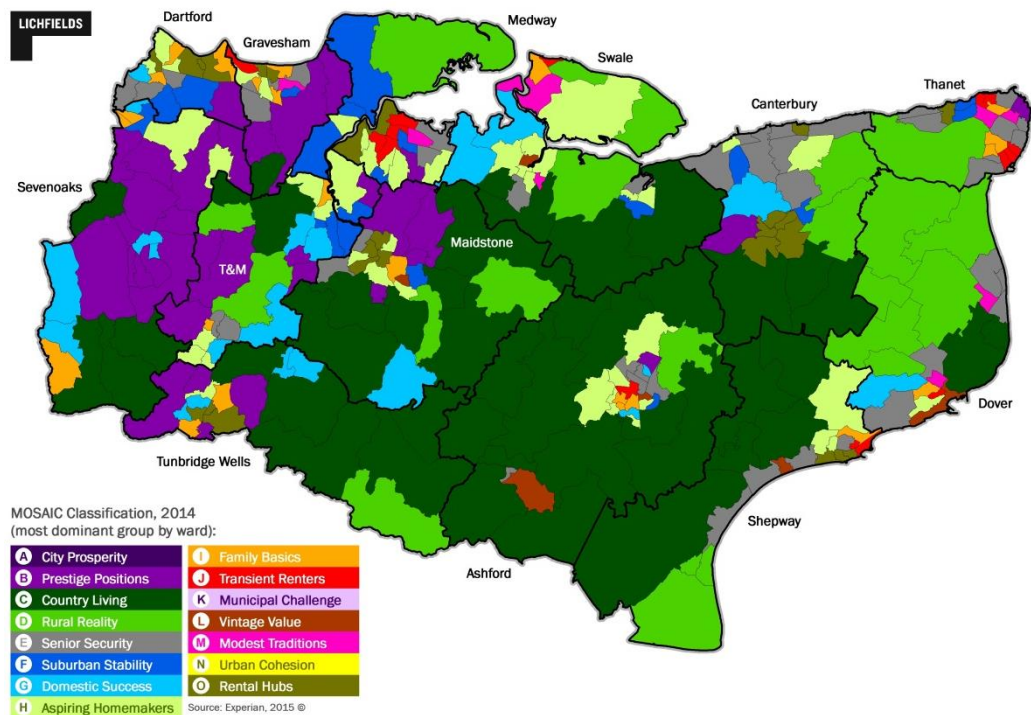


Source: ONS

## Socio-Economic Profile

- 3.24 A guide to the characteristics and mix of different communities is available from Experian's Mosaic dataset. Widely used in policy making as well as commercial research, Mosaic uses a range of datasets to build a profile of any local population based on a series of person-type, household types and group typologies. These consumer classifications are designed to help understand the demographics, lifestyles, preferences and behaviours of the UK adult population in detail at small geographic levels. Mosaic classifies areas into one of fifteen categories dependent on the prevailing patterns. This analysis has been undertaken for East Kent and is set out in Figure 3.13 overleaf.
- 3.25 This identifies a mixed socio-economic profile with significant areas of the sub-region characterised by 'country living' and 'rural reality' socio-economic groups, with large stretches of the coastline within Shepway, Dover, Thanet and Canterbury accommodating clusters of retired residents falling within the 'senior security' group.
- 3.26 It also shows that Canterbury city, parts of Ashford town and Folkestone attract those on starter salaries (young workers) in the 'Rental Hubs' as well as 'Aspiring Home Owners' who typically comprise younger working families. Compared with the rest of Kent, there is a very low concentration of more affluent socio-economic groups such as 'city prosperity' and 'prestige positions' in East Kent, with rare pockets found to the north of Ashford town, to the east of Canterbury city and within the Kingsgate area of Margate (Figure 3.13).
- 3.27 The LEP notes within its Strategic Economic Plan that economic activity is not evenly spread across the LEP area, with unemployment tending to be higher in more peripheral parts of the LEP, particularly in the coastal communities including Thanet.

Figure 3.13 Socio-Economic Classification by Ward



<b>A</b> City Prosperity	High value properties in central city areas, those living there have high status jobs and low car ownership.
<b>B</b> Prestige Positions	High value detached homes, those living there tend to be married couples with older children working in managerial/senior positions.
<b>C</b> Country Living	Attractive detached homes in rural locations, homeowners tend to be well-off and there is high car ownership. There is also a higher rate of self-employment.
<b>D</b> Rural Reality	Affordable value homes in rural locations including villages. Those living here are mostly homeowners and agricultural employees.
<b>E</b> Senior Security	Homeowners in comfortable homes including elderly singles and couples. Those living here tend to be low mileage drivers.
<b>F</b> Suburban Stability	Suburban mid-range homes (3 bedrooms). Those living here tend to be older families with some adult children at home.
<b>G</b> Domestic Success	Upmarket suburban housing (3 or 4 bedrooms) owned with a mortgage. Those living here tend to be families with children.
<b>H</b> Aspiring Homemakers	Private suburbs with affordable housing costs. Those living here tend to be younger households in full time employment on starter salaries.
<b>I</b> Family Basics	Those who live here tend to be families with children aged between 25 and 40. Some may own low cost housing while some will rent from social landlords.
<b>J</b> Transient Renters	Those who live here tend to be singles and sharers who are privately renting low cost housing, typically terraced properties. There is generally a low length of residence.
<b>K</b> Municipal Challenge	Those who live here tend to be social renters living in low cost housing with a low income. There are often few employment options in these locations.
<b>L</b> Vintage Value	Those living here tend to be elderly and living alone on low incomes in small houses and flats.
<b>M</b> Modest Traditions	Those living here tend to be mature homeowners on modest incomes living in affordable housing in suburban locations.
<b>N</b> Urban Cohesion	Those living here tend to be multicultural settled extended families living in the city suburbs who own their properties (3 bedrooms).
<b>O</b> Rental Hubs	Those living here tend to be 18 and 35 singles or sharers living in urban locations within the private rental sector.

Source: Experian, 2014 ©

## Qualifications and Skills

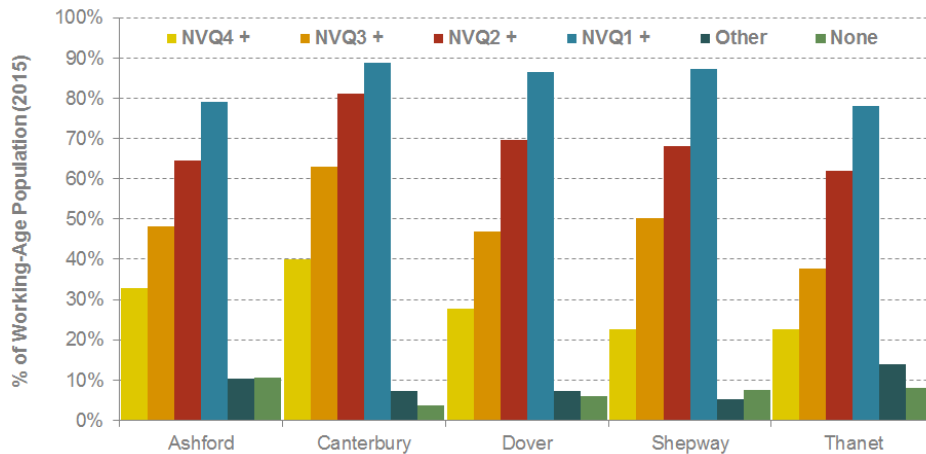
3.28

Figure 3.14 shows that Canterbury and Ashford support the most qualified working-age population in East Kent in terms of NVQ attainment, while Thanet and Shepway score lowest on this measure. This trend was also noted in the previous East Kent Growth Plan. On NVQ Level 4 and above (i.e. degree level qualification and above), only Canterbury

exceeds Kent, South East and UK wide averages, while Dover, Thanet and Shepway all fall below the LEP-wide average.

3.29 Whilst the proportion of working-age residents holding no qualifications is generally low across East Kent, it stands out at 10% in Ashford indicating the presence of some particular skills gaps and challenges.

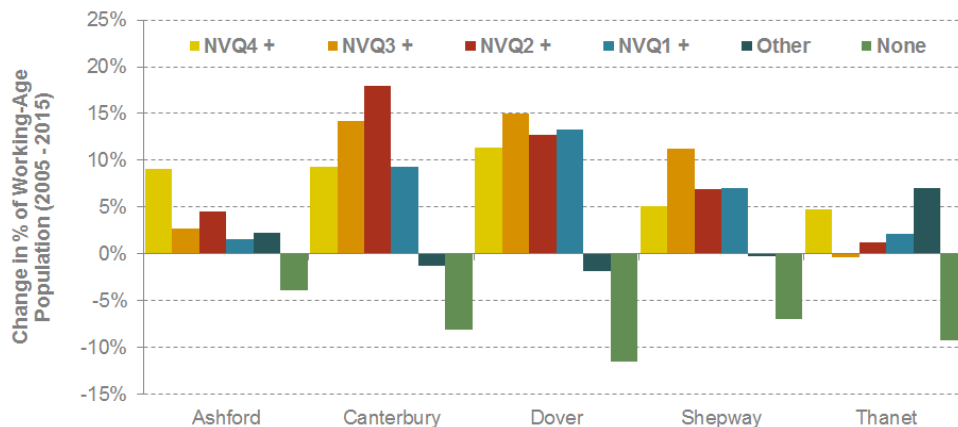
Figure 3.14 NVQ Attainment Levels by Local Authority



Source: ONS (Annual Population Survey) / Lichfields analysis

3.30 Over the last 10 years, the most significant improvement in working-age resident skills was recorded in Dover (particularly in regards to higher level NVQ4+ and NVQ3+ skills), and to a lesser extent Canterbury (Figure 3.15). In contrast, little change was recorded in Thanet or Ashford, although the proportion of working-age residents holding no qualifications fell right across East Kent, suggesting that the sub-region’s resident skills base has been gradually improving in recent years.

Figure 3.15 Change in NVQ Attainment by Local Authority, 2005-2015



Source: ONS (Annual Population Survey) / Lichfields analysis

3.31 The South East LEP notes that the resulting effect of this below average higher level skills attainment is that companies have been finding it hard to recruit due to skills shortages in recent years. In its SEP, it notes that revenue funding rates are not high enough to enable colleges and providers to make long term investments in their infrastructure to align with skills priorities, particularly in high cost areas such as Advanced Manufacturing. In the absence of higher funding rates, a more focused and locally led investment in skills



infrastructure, managed by SE LEP, would support better alignment with priority sectors, including the purchase of specialist equipment to support new programmes.

- 3.32 The previous East Kent Growth Plan acknowledged the significance of East Kent's higher education base and noted that whilst at county-wide level, Kent performs fairly well in the number of graduates from Kent institutions going on to secure employment in the county, Kent is less successful in attracting back to the county those graduates who moved away to study.
- 3.33 More recent data published by Kent County Council<sup>3</sup> suggests that Kent has become more successful in attracting (back) and retaining graduates within its workforce, although London continues to provide a key draw. The analysis also shows that Kent proves to be a popular employment destination for people who studied outside of Kent, mainly graduates from neighbouring authorities, or other authorities in the South East.

## Summary

- 3.34 East Kent's population has seen significant change over recent years, including strong population growth. Echoing the situation under the 'economy' theme, a notable east-west divide is evident, with Ashford and Canterbury expected to continue to drive population growth and this will be vital for economic sustainability and vitality going forward.
- 3.35 Part of this recent population change has been driven by migration flows and East Kent is a net importer in migration terms. Canterbury in particular plays a key role in attracting people to East Kent, and its geographical location (alongside Ashford's) partly explains this dynamic. By contrast, Thanet, Dover and Shepway are all more self-contained in migration terms. Once here, many of East Kent's residents move elsewhere within the sub-region, in particular to the coastal authorities.
- 3.36 In labour market terms East Kent is characterised by its strong economic relationships with the wider sub-region and other parts of Kent (and London) and its overall role as a net exporter of labour. Again, an east west split is evident, with Ashford and Canterbury (as East Kent's largest economies) drawing in significant flows of workers from Dover, Thanet and Shepway.
- 3.37 Whilst a number of local TTWAs are evident, this analysis underlines the need for strong connectivity and accessibility between East Kent's key locations and employment centres in order to facilitate the flexible movement of labour and match local residents with suitable employment opportunities.
- 3.38 East Kent has a mixed socio-economic profile but with generally fewer high value household groups and a higher concentration of households facing multiple socio-economic challenges when compared with the rest of Kent. There are also notable pockets of young professionals and families in the sub-regions key towns (such as Folkestone, Dover and Ashford), with clear opportunities through planned development and regeneration to broaden this demographic mix in future.

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<sup>3</sup> Kent County Council Business Intelligence Report, Origin and Destination of Graduates in Kent 2013/14, September 2015

## 4.0 Place

4.1 This section considers a range of place based factors in East Kent, in terms of recent patterns of development, market trends and growth capacity issues.

4.2 The following analysis is structured around four broad questions:

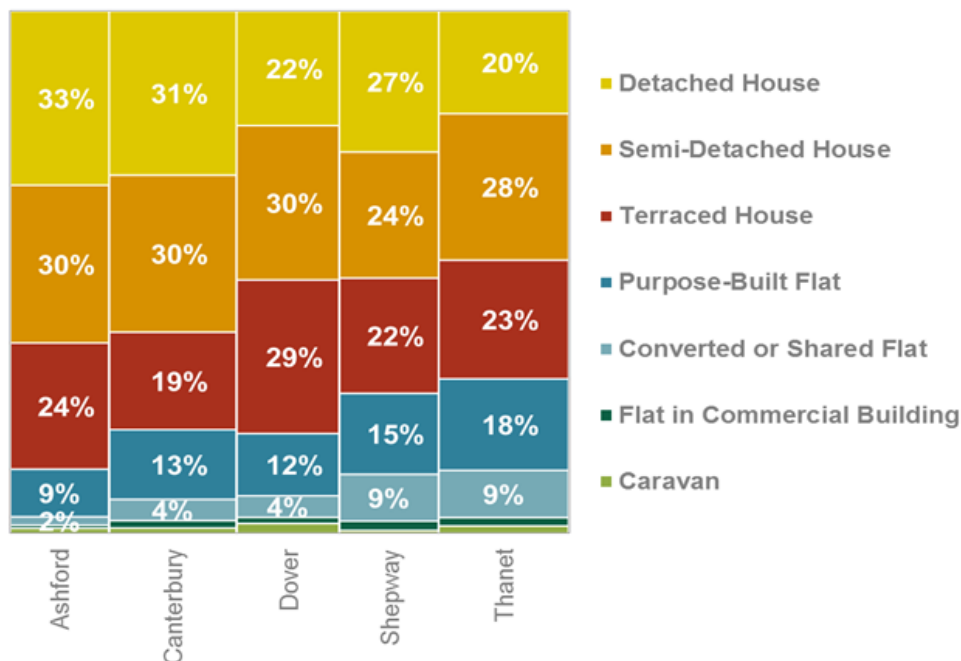
- What is the structure of the housing stock?
- How do affordability challenges vary across East Kent?
- What are the identified infrastructure challenges (and opportunities)?
- What is the profile of the commercial property market?

### Housing Stock and Change

4.3 The profile and nature of existing housing stock varies across the East Kent authority areas, with a greater proportion of houses (detached and semi-detached) found in Ashford and Canterbury and the greatest prevalence of flats (purpose built or converted) in Thanet and Shepway (Figure 4.1).

4.4 Housing stock has a key role to play in influencing housing market choices, particularly for those people who might be moving into East Kent. It has an important influence upon the ability of East Kent as a whole and individual local authority areas within the sub-region to attract and retain particular segments of the population, and also impacts upon affordability and patterns of migration (as described in section 3.0) for example if housing aspirations of particular groups cannot be met.

Figure 4.1 Housing Stock by Dwelling Type

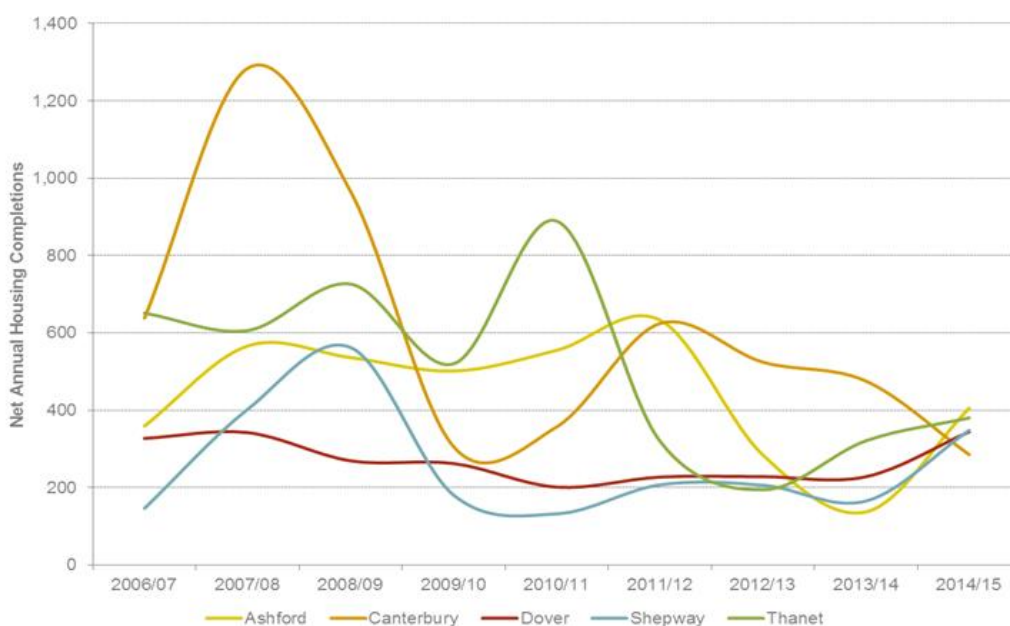


Source: ONS (2011 Census) / Lichfields analysis

4.5 Recent rates of housing delivery across East Kent are summarised in Figure 4.2 below, based upon completions data reported in each local authority's recent annual monitoring reports. The overall trend is one of a gradual slowdown in housing development since

2006/07 following the onset of recession, but with positive signs of a recovery more recently.

Figure 4.2 Housing Completions by Local Authority



Source: Local authority annual monitoring reports / Lichfields analysis

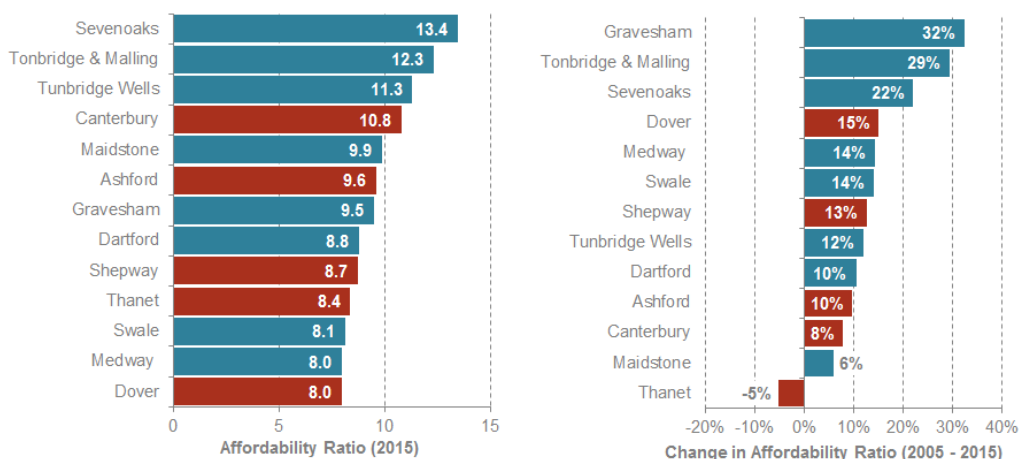
- 4.6 Whilst housing completions have inevitably fluctuated year-on-year (due to the uneven nature of individual sites and schemes being built out), the authority areas of Thanet, Canterbury and Ashford have consistently outperformed the coastal authorities of Dover and Shepway over recent years, making the most significant contributions towards new housing supply in East Kent over this period.

## Housing Affordability

- 4.7 As noted in section 3.0, whilst Canterbury acts as the main attractor of people into East Kent, many people then migrate outwards from Canterbury to other parts of the area, in particular to the coastal authorities of Thanet and Dover. One reason why these patterns of migration, particularly internally, are important in relation to housing market choices relates to affordability. Affordability in the East Kent area varies by local authority, but affordability issues (due to the high cost of housing) are most pronounced in Canterbury and Ashford. Figure 4.3 below shows affordability ratios based on the cost of a median dwelling compared to median earnings in each local authority.
- 4.8 Although Canterbury is the primary destination for migrants moving into East Kent, the evidence suggests that people are unable to afford to stay within the City as their housing requirements change. This affects a number of different types of households including single people, couples and those starting a family for reasons of affordability, but also the types of housing required to accommodate their needs.
- 4.9 Figure 4.3 also shows that the greatest change in affordability ratios has occurred in Dover and Shepway over the past 10 years; although this has helped to bridge the gap between the East Kent authorities, Dover and Shepway continue to represent some of the most affordable local authority areas in East Kent in relation to house prices.



Figure 4.3 Housing Affordability Ratio by Local Authority



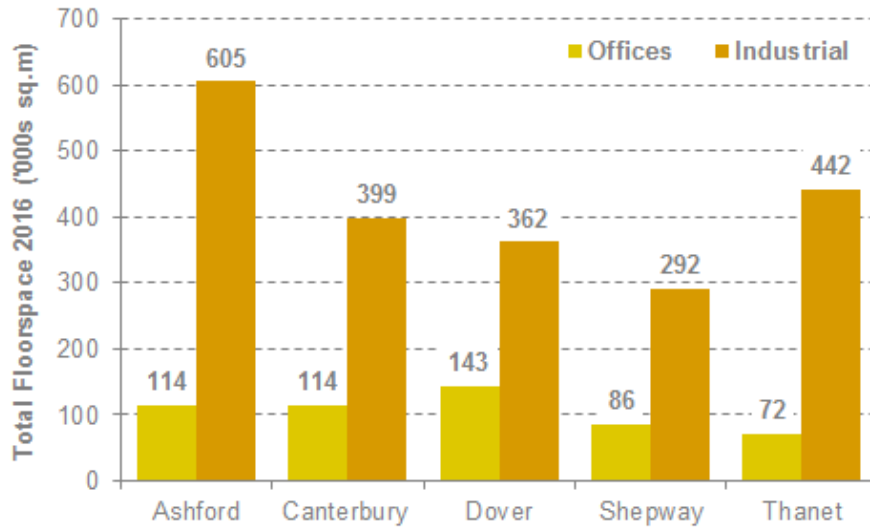
Source: CLG Live Table 576 / Lichfields analysis

- 4.10 The South East LEP identifies two central housing challenges faced by the LEP area; building more houses each year and rebuilding confidence in housing markets in many of its coastal communities and other communities where there are concentrations of severely deprived neighbourhoods. These are areas where the dysfunctional private rented housing sector is currently holding back economic regeneration.

### Business Floorspace

- 4.11 In 2016, East Kent recorded approximately 2.6 million sq.m of B class employment floorspace, comprising office, factory and warehouse space. This represents just over a third (34%) of the Kent-wide total.
- 4.12 The largest concentration of overall space is found in Ashford (27% of East Kent total), the smallest in Shepway (14% of East Kent total), with Dover, Canterbury and Thanet all recording a similar scale of total employment floorspace (Figure 4.4).
- 4.13 Based on 2016 VOA data, Ashford is by far the largest industrial centre in East Kent with just under 30% of the total stock of industrial accommodation. Of all five local authority areas, Dover records the largest stock of commercial office floorspace, partly reflecting the presence of large office premises at the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone.

Figure 4.4 Employment Floorspace by Local Authority, 2016

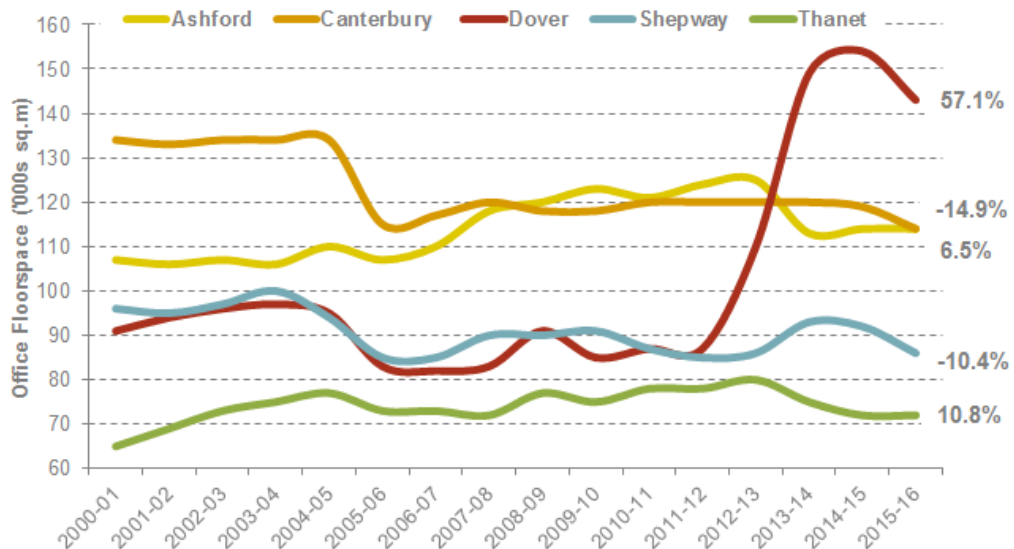


Source: Valuation Office Agency / Lichfields analysis

4.14 Over the last 15 years, the stock of office floorspace in East Kent has increased by around 7%, although the pattern of new development has varied and fluctuated over this time. This scale of growth is consistent with the Kent-wide average, and slightly above the South East equivalent.

4.15 Within East Kent, this overall growth has been driven by Dover, and to a lesser extent, Thanet and Ashford (Figure 4.5). The significant spike in office development in Dover recorded between 2012 and 2015 is understood to relate to the reclassification by the VOA of floorspace formerly occupied by Pfizer at Discovery Park. These increases have helped to offset losses of office space recorded in Canterbury and Shepway over the last 15 years.

Figure 4.5 Office Floorspace by Local Authority

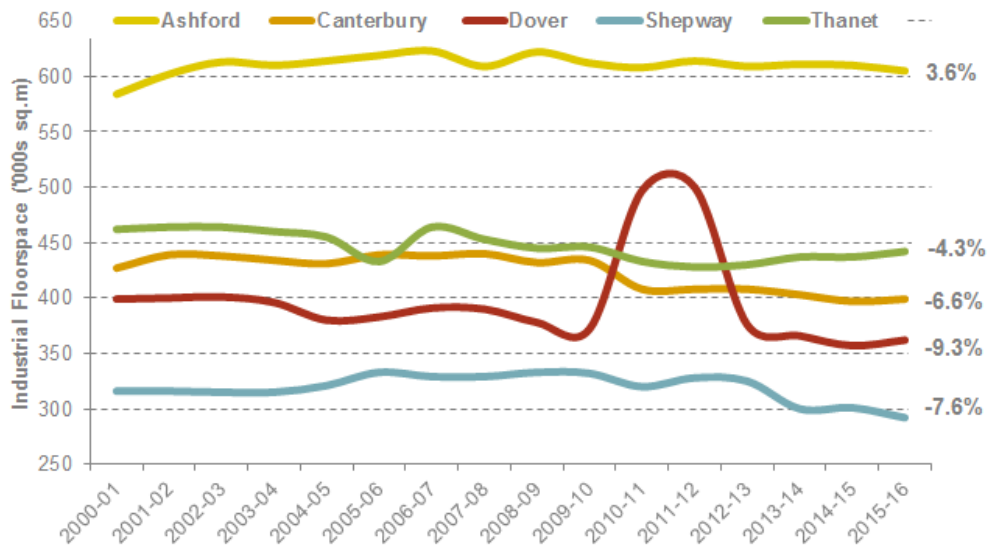


Source: Valuation Office Agency / Lichfields analysis

4.16 The pattern of industrial floorspace change in East Kent has been more even over recent years, with Figure 4.6 illustrating a gradual decline in overall space equivalent to -4%

between 2000 and 2016. This scale of decline was slightly higher than that recorded across Kent (-1.8%) and the South East (0.9%) as a whole over this period.

Figure 4.6 Industrial Floorspace by Local Authority



Source: Valuation Office Agency / Lichfields analysis

4.17 Ashford was the only East Kent authority to see an increase in industrial floorspace over this time. The significant rise and then decline in industrial floorspace shown in Figure 4.6 for Dover between 2010/11 and 2012/13 is understood to relate to the reclassification by the VOA of floorspace formerly occupied by Pfizer at Discovery Park, and has little overall effect on the scale of industrial floorspace decline recorded over the 15 year time series.

### Commercial Property Market Trends

4.18 In overall terms, East Kent’s commercial property offer is characterised as fairly diverse, with different locations offering distinct selling points and competitive advantages. Given its strategic accessibility via road and rail, Ashford is likely to be the area’s strongest location to attract mobile investment, although Canterbury maintains a strong retail, leisure and office offer, particularly associated with the City’s higher education presence.

4.19 Further east, the authority areas of Dover, Thanet and Shepway all have ambitious proposals to develop their economic base and business offer, including through the Otterpool Park Garden Town, Advanced Manufacturing Park at Manston and redevelopment of the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone in Sandwich.

4.20 The recent EU referendum vote and resulting economic uncertainty is anticipated to have an impact upon commercial property markets across the country with investor and developer confidence likely to be hit in the short term at least. Nevertheless, sentiment in commercial property appears to be the most positive it has been for many years. While central London offices are still the outperforming market segment, some investors and developers are also looking further afield in an attempt to access stock and achieve good returns.

4.21 Within parts of East Kent, relative values between the cost of land and development and achievable rents/values are currently insufficient for speculative development to occur, and that this is unlikely to change over the short term. This position is not unique to East

Kent; this ‘viability gap’ represents a key barrier to new development across many parts of the wider South East and East Kent in particular, especially within more economically marginal locations and outside of the strongest performing commercial locations.

4.22 The latest (2016) Kent Property Market Report<sup>4</sup> provides a comprehensive overview of recent trends and future prospects for the sub-region’s commercial property markets, and a summary of key points relevant for the EKGf are provided below.

- 1 Whilst at the macro level growth has slowed recently, the economy is forecast to expand over the coming months. Britain’s decision to leave the EU has led to considerable policy uncertainty and this is likely to persist for some time as the nature of the UK’s exit is worked out and may impact on investment decisions. However, **Kent remains a favourable business location**, with relatively more affordable business and residential property than other parts of the South East, and will remain a vital gateway to continental Europe regardless of the Brexit impact.
- 2 Kent’s occupational market has seen continued activity over recent months and **growing office demand from high value industries** such as the life sciences, creative and technology industries as well as those in the finance and business services sector. High quality affordable office stock and accessibility to London and European markets that surpasses most South East locations, are key drivers. This upturn in demand is reflected by increased rental values and hardening of yields.
- 3 The county’s **industrial and distribution sector saw a year of strong occupational demand**. Average prime rents rose by nearly 7% driven by a number of key lettings, in part reflecting the county’s strategic position in distribution networks and activity. The industrial sector is also seeing greater demand from more technical industry sectors, providing encouraging signs for long-term performance.
- 4 The county’s retail sector will not be immune to economic uncertainty, although Kent’s historic and coastal towns are well placed to benefit from the sudden sharp depreciation of sterling attracting more tourist spending, while **established shopping towns and centres will inevitably maintain their appeal**.
- 5 The county is **seeing much-needed housing development** across a mix of new communities and town centre schemes. The improved performance of Kent’s residential market is evident in the migration of developers from other areas of the home counties across the Kent border. There is also increased demand from build to let investors (particularly in locations such as Ashford) reflecting improved transport accessibility and the quality of town centre life.
- 6 Longer term, the regeneration of Kent’s towns will not only improve performance of the county’s retail centres and residential markets, but also boost their appeal to business. Recent activity has demonstrated that companies, workers and residents seeking a quality urban environment, with strong transport links, are drawn by the county’s regeneration schemes and towns offering a critical mass of skilled labour.

4.23 Linked to this last point, the SE LEP also recognises that its coastal communities are a defining feature of South East England and require bespoke, co-ordinated programmes of investment to enable them to generate the returns available from the enterprise and employment, culture and heritage that their location provides.

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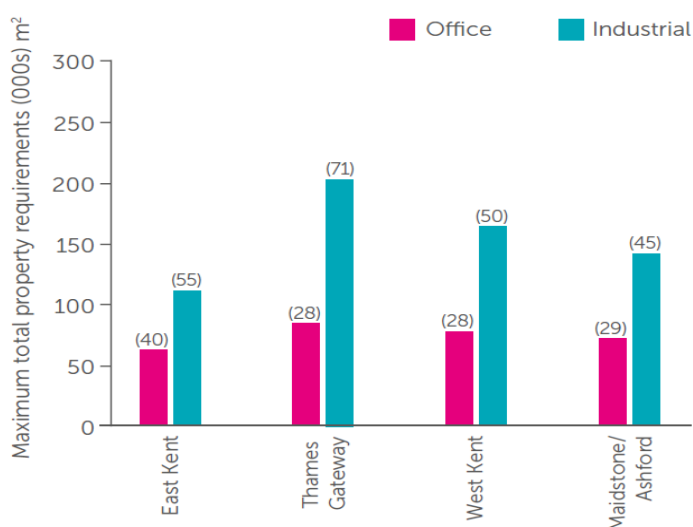
<sup>4</sup> 2016 Kent Property Market (Kent County Council, Caxtons and Locate in Kent)

## Inward Investment

4.24 Locate in Kent – Kent and Medway’s investment promotion agency – maintains a client database that holds details of the property requirements of companies looking to relocate to or expand in Kent. The 2016 Kent Property Market Report provides a summary of recent inward investment trends in the county.

4.25 At the end of June 2016, there were 274 active inward investment projects in Kent. Of these, 183 (67%) had a potential requirement for property or land, equivalent to a total of 298,605sq.m. The highest demand for industrial properties was focused in Thames Gateway, followed by East Kent, West Kent and Maidstone/Ashford. Office demand was more likely to favour Thames Gateway locations, followed by Maidstone/Ashford and West Kent (Figure 4.7).

Figure 4.7 Total office and industrial property demand by sub-region, June 2016

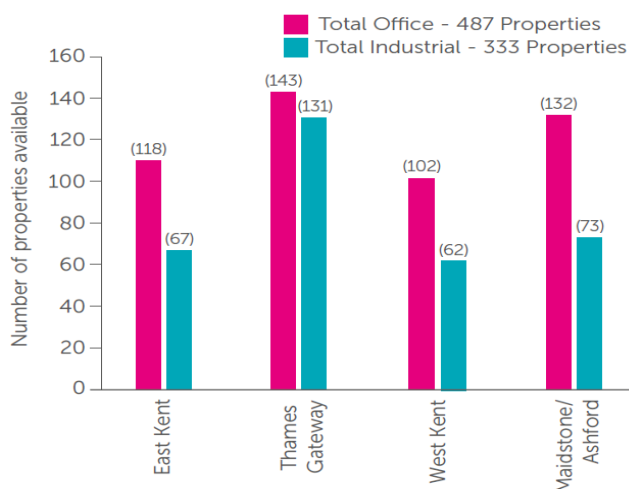


Figures in brackets = no. of active projects at June 2016  
 (NB. Some projects may have had demands for property in more than one area of Kent.)

Source: 2016 Kent Property Market (Kent County Council, Caxtons and Locate in Kent)

4.26 At the end of June 2016, a total of 820 properties were registered on Locate in Kent’s property database. 41% of this supply was industrial in nature, and 59% office. The greatest number of properties overall were available in Thames Gateway, followed by East Kent, Maidstone/Ashford and West Kent (Figure 4.8).

Figure 4.8 Property supply by area, June 2016



Figures in brackets = number of properties logged on Locate in Kent's property database at June 2016

Source: 2016 Kent Property Market (Kent County Council, Caxtons and Locate in Kent)

4.27 This analysis suggests that East Kent is well placed to accommodate inward investment activity in future if it can maintain a good supply of suitable premises and development opportunities in the right locations.

### Infrastructure and Connectivity

4.28 A significant amount of evidence base work has recently been undertaken on infrastructure issues and priorities within East Kent including a Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF) for Kent and Medway<sup>5</sup> which provides a framework for identifying and prioritising investment in infrastructure across the sub-region. Where possible, key findings from this work are incorporated into the summary provided below.

### Overarching Themes

4.29 East Kent enjoys a unique position as a gateway between Europe, London and the rest of the UK, and benefits from a stock of nationally significant infrastructure, including:

- The only High Speed Line currently in the UK providing fast journey times between the sub-region's key settlements and London;
- Europe's busiest passenger port at Dover, with plans for Port expansion;
- Cross-Channel services via Eurotunnel and international passenger rail services via Eurostar from Ashford;
- Strategic road infrastructure from the Channel to London and the rest of the UK, in particular the A20/ M20 and the A2/M2 corridors;
- Strategic access to Thanet provided by the A299 Thanet Way via the M2.

4.30 Within its Strategic Economic Plan, the South East LEP recognises that the area's sea ports – and the road and rail networks that serve the ports – provide the UK's most important gateway to the rest of the world.

<sup>5</sup> Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework, AECOM September 2015

4.31 In addition to these strategic networks, East Kent also accommodates a number of under-utilised economic assets such as London Ashford Airport (Lydd) in Shepway, which provide further economic growth opportunities should new investment come forward.

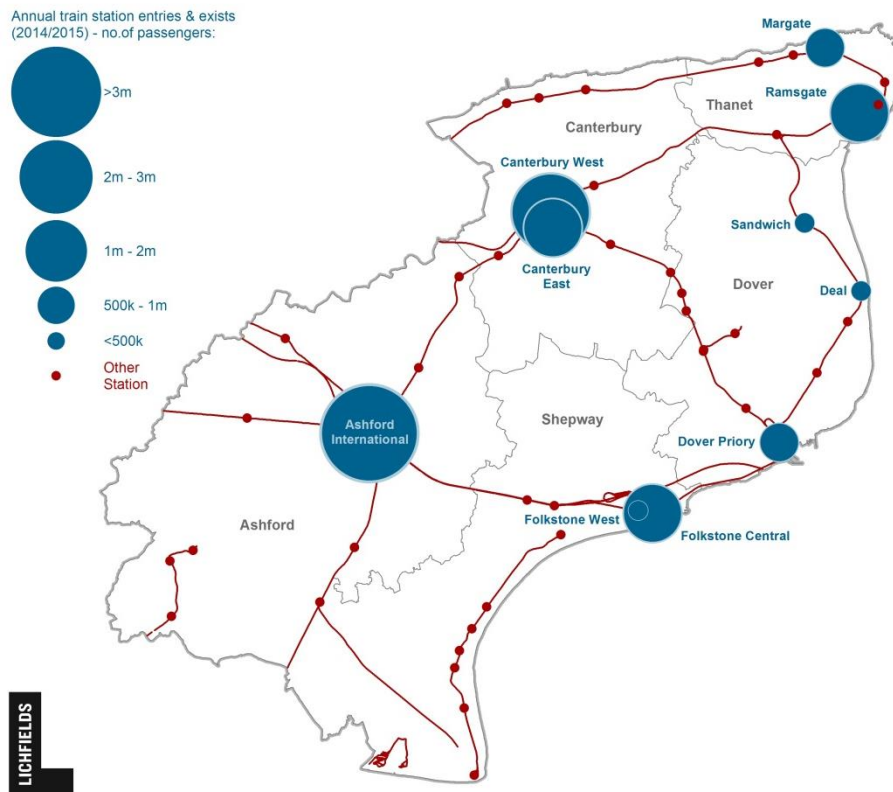
4.32 Whilst strategic routes to and from East Kent are good, the previous Growth Plan noted that the dominance of London-to-coast corridors within East Kent’s transport system and the fact that no single centre is sufficiently dominant to warrant a radial network means that some connections within East Kent are fairly weak, such as road connectivity between Thanet and Ashford. Furthermore, the strategic network suffers from a number of bottlenecks and congestion points which if not addressed, could act to impede future growth within East Kent, and there remains a need to secure comparatively smaller amounts of investment to maximise the local benefits of High Speed One.

**Rail Infrastructure**

4.33 Data from the Office of Rail and Road illustrates the uneven pattern of train station usage across East Kent (as at 2014/15), with the highest volume of entries/exists recorded at Ashford International and Canterbury West (Figure 4.9). By contrast, stations in Shepway (Folkestone West and Central), Dover (Dover Priory, Deal and Sandwich) and Thanet (Margate and Ramsgate) accommodate much lower volumes of passenger usage.

4.34 These patterns are inevitably closely linked with labour market flows, with commuting data presented in section 3.0 showing strong labour market relationships between East Kent and London, facilitated by Ashford and Canterbury’s competitive journey times to the Capital, while strong station usage here can also be explained by their respective roles as key employment hubs within the sub-region.

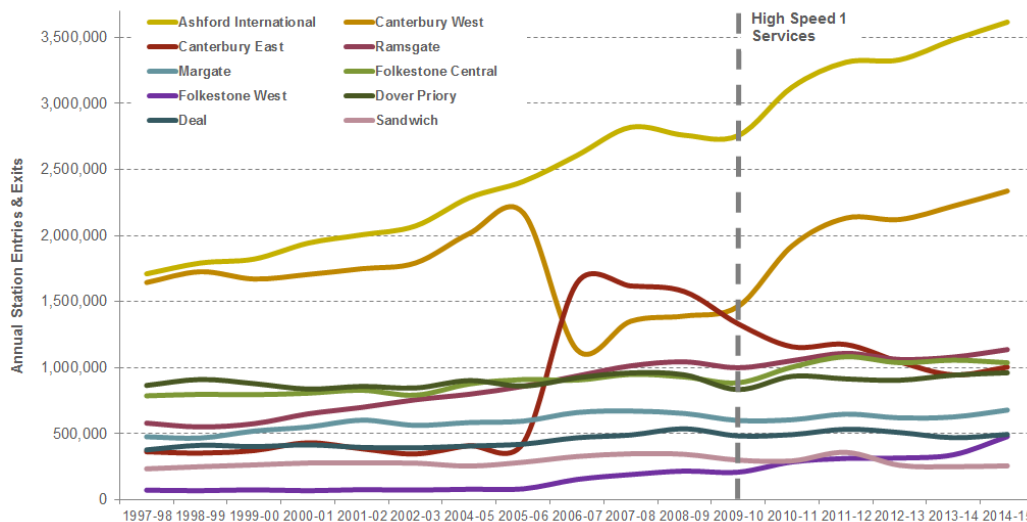
Figure 4.9 Annual Station Entries and Exits (2014/15)



Source: Office of Rail and Road 2014-15 / Lichfields analysis

- 4.35 Rail station usage in East Kent has increased since the recent introduction of high speed rail services (Figure 4.10) and station usage has consistently been highest at Ashford International and Canterbury West over the last 16 years.

Figure 4.10 Annual Station Entries and Exits



Source: Office of Rail and Road 2014-15/ Lichfields analysis

- 4.36 High speed domestic rail services have significantly reduced journey times between East Kent and London since the introduction of the new service in December 2009. To date, these benefits have primarily been felt in Ashford, and to a lesser extent in Folkestone and Canterbury, all of which are now within an hour of central London via High Speed One (HS1) services.
- 4.37 Further east, the Thanet towns have benefited from improved journey times via HS1, but remain relatively disadvantaged within the East Kent context. Recent investment has recently been secured to improve the Ashford to Ramsgate route, allowing Thanet to benefit to a greater degree from HS1. Figure 4.10 shows that passenger usage of rail stations in Thanet, Dover and Shepway has increased more gradually over recent years when compared with Ashford and Canterbury. Some locations that remain dependent on more localised services (such as Whitstable and Herne Bay on the North Kent line) continue to experience lengthy journey times, which in some cases have deteriorated as timetables have been changed to accommodate the HS1 schedule. The opportunity therefore exists for residents of these parts of East Kent to further benefit from improved connectivity presented by the sub-regions rail infrastructure, subject to necessary investment in more localised connections.
- 4.38 The need for investment in Kent's existing rail infrastructure has recently been articulated by the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership who are currently preparing a Rail Strategy for Kent & Medway in order to link new investment opportunities with planned population and job growth in the area. Key priorities relating to East Kent include:
- Ensuring that the new Thameslink services to the city via London Bridge and Blackfriars from the Maidstone East line and Medway Towns are introduced successfully in 2018;
  - More intensive use of the HS1 infrastructure to deliver growth in Thames Gateway, Ashford, Canterbury, Folkestone, Dover and East Kent;



- Improve access to services at stations, more car parking, integrated transport cycle and walking access; and
- Maintain international access to Ashford.

### Highways Infrastructure

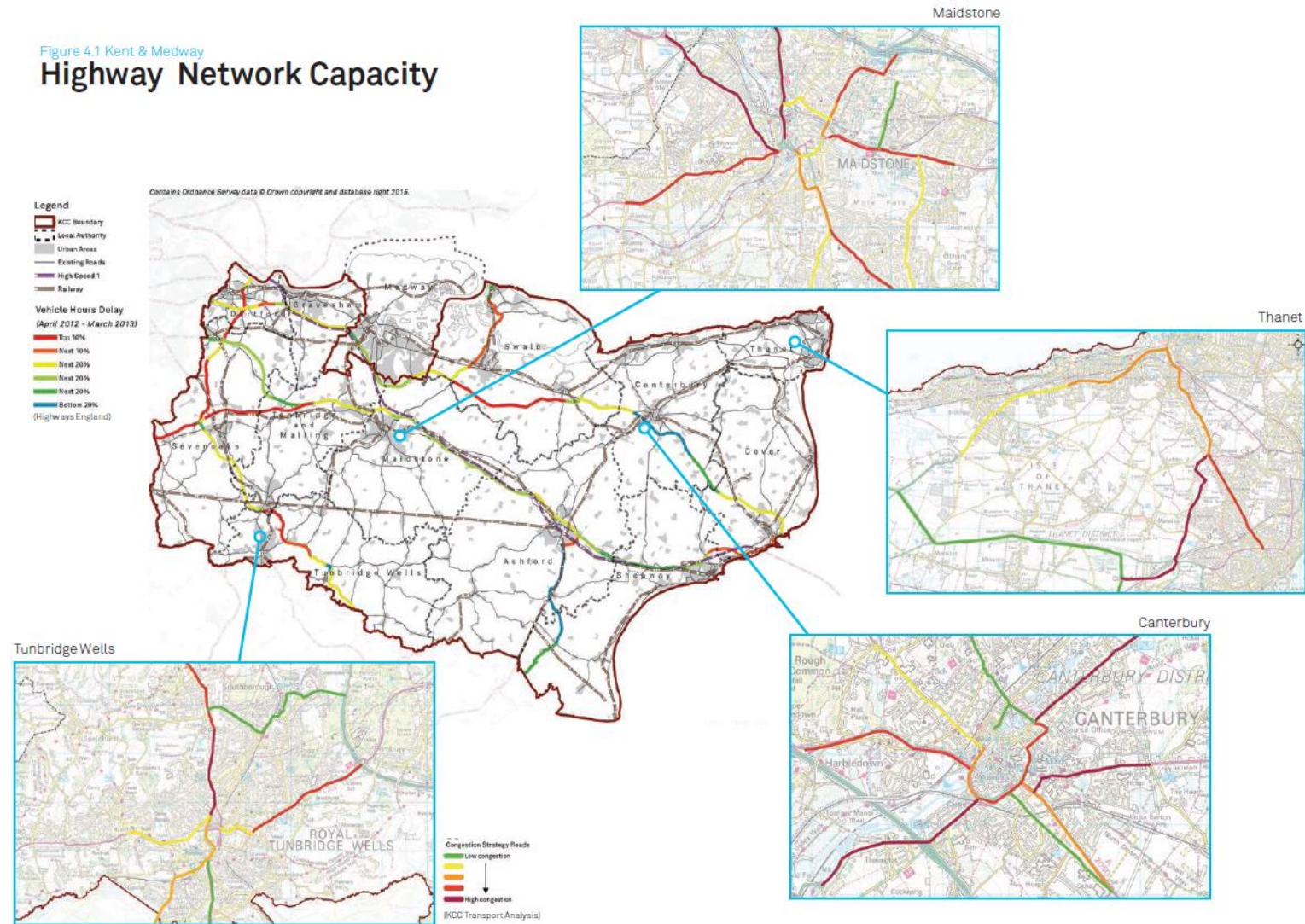
- 4.39 The Kent and Medway GIF notes that the sub-region is currently facing increased congestion, on both road and rail. Major routes such as the M20, A2/M2 and A21 form important local and strategic links that when congested result in delay on the wider local network. The study acknowledges that with increasing congestion in Kent’s major town centres such as Ashford and Canterbury, growth across the County will be constrained without investment in increasing capacity.
- 4.40 Kent and Medway’s highways play a significant role in carrying strategic through traffic as well as intra-urban movements. Current levels of congestion on Highway’s England’s road network and locally within key urban centres across Medway and Kent are shown in Figure 4.11 below, indicating that much of Kent’s strategic road network and the key urban centres witness delay during peak periods. The growth proposed will further add to this congestion unless suitable intervention is implemented.
- 4.41 Of major sub-regional significance is the Government’s planned Lower Thames Crossing for which a preferred route comprising a bored tunnel crossing under the River Thames east of Gravesend and Tilbury was announced in April 2017.<sup>6</sup> The Crossing has the potential to generate significant economic benefits and growth opportunities for East Kent if the area’s road networks can be upgraded to effectively facilitate the enhanced connectivity brought about by this new crossing.
- 4.42 SELEP’s recent response to the Highways England consultation<sup>7</sup> states that the Lower Thames Crossing is strongly supported by businesses in the South East and has an important contribution to make to the UK’s current productivity challenge and need to increase exports by opening new routes. The view of businesses in the LEP area is that there will be wider opportunities for their growth potential with an opening of this additional route, connecting the south to the north and vice versa while opening up access to wider European networks.
- 4.43 The major ports in the area, including at Dover and Folkestone, are reported to be particularly strong supporters of the proposed crossing and are all planning for increased throughput which will have a significant impact on the highways network. It will also enable Kent County Council’s policy objective of “bifurcation” to be implemented, splitting traffic to and from Dover between the M2/A2 and M20/A20 corridors. The aim is to create a high quality strategic corridor that will cater for the significant growth of the port and release capacity on the M20.

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<sup>6</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-lower-thames-crossings-to-cut-congestion-and-create-thousands-of-jobs>

<sup>7</sup> South East Local Enterprise Partnership, Response to the Lower Thames Crossing Route Consultation 2016

Figure 4.11 East Kent Highway Network Capacity



Source: Growth and Infrastructure Framework for Kent and Medway (September 2015)



## Infrastructure Priorities

4.44 Existing infrastructure capacity issues for each local authority in East Kent are summarised in Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1 Summary of Existing Capacity Issues

Location	Existing Capacity Issues
Ashford	Capacity issues with operation of M20 (schemes identified) Public transport linkages required between town and growth points Existing highway capacity issues at town centre ringroad (schemes identified) Major priorities for Ashford include the J10a, A28 and Ashford International signalling projects
Canterbury	Ring Road a key constraint A2 Junction has limited movement A28 Corridor from Thanet to Ashford a major barrier to east Kent growth Comprehensive package of transport schemes identified – no major areas of concern
Dover	Port activity causes congestion on A20 and A2 corridors Development in the north of Dover dependent upon delivery of public transport connectivity Developments identified within Flood Zone 3 Issue with capacity for treating sewage arising from new houses at Whitfield
Shepway	A20 Congestion issues due to Port Activity Congestion within Folkestone (a number of schemes already identified) Flood risk a significant issue for existing and proposed development, with ongoing investment requirements.
Thanet	Transport improvements to allow for evolution of Westwood Cross Improved accessibility to London and rest of Kent through reduced rail times and new parkway station Regeneration of coastal towns to stimulate wider investment and meet demands from new development Investment in Inner Traffic Circuit to address bottlenecks and unlock development Need to recognise variable land values within the district and address their impact on viability

Source: Growth and Infrastructure Framework for Kent and Medway (September 2015)

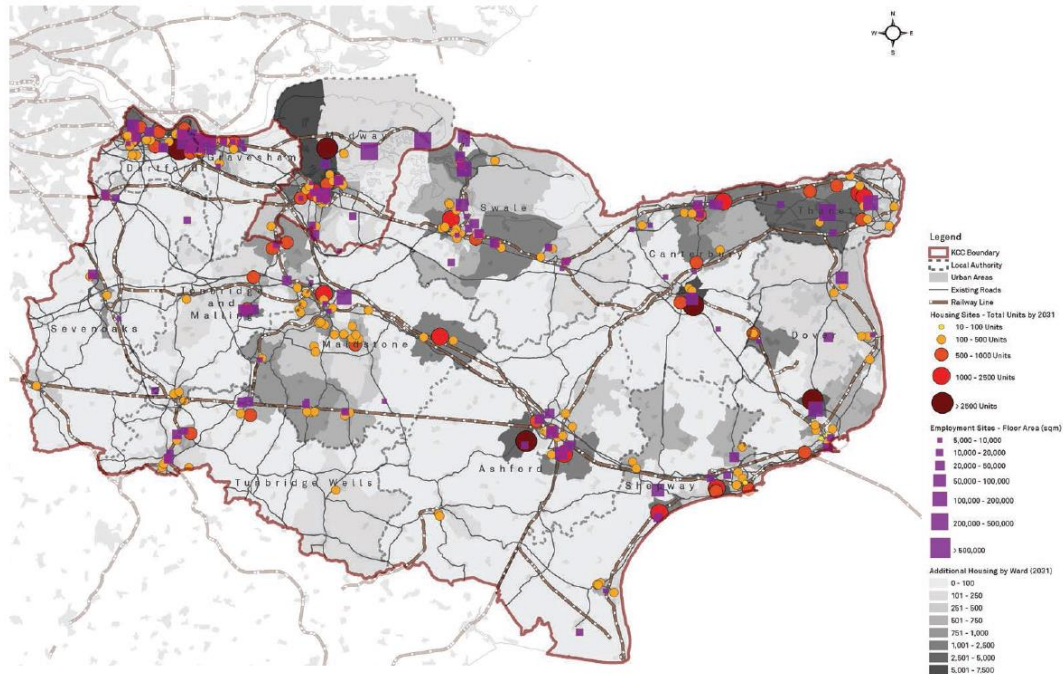
4.45 The GIF states that addressing capacity issues on the transport network requires careful consideration of where growth is likely to take place and the movement of people in the future. A Census-based analysis of where trips from proposed growth locations in Kent would occur suggested that commuting in the County will predominantly take place intra-district, which suggests that most residents of Kent will continue to work in the same area as where they live. Specifically:

- 79% of all new commuting trips are forecast to remain within the County;
- Dartford will generate 16% of all new work based trips, followed by Maidstone (14%), Medway (13%) and Canterbury (14%);
- London will receive 17% of all new commuting trips, a large proportion expected by rail; and
- Largest trip containment within Thanet at 70%, followed by Canterbury (66%) and Tonbridge and Malling (63%).



4.46 Overcoming these capacity issues will be crucial if the sub-region’s growth potential – as illustrated in Figure 4.12 below – can be realised over the coming years.

Figure 4.12 Housing and Employment Growth in Kent and Medway



Source: Growth and Infrastructure Framework for Kent and Medway (September 2015)

4.47 The South East LEP’s Strategic Economic Plan identifies 12 growth corridors/areas together providing the focus for infrastructure investment. This includes the ‘HS1, A2, A20 & A29’ growth area which is estimated to have capacity for 30,000 new homes and 20,000 jobs by 2021. Key priorities include:

- 1 The opening of High Speed One has dramatically improved access to East Kent, opening up a new corridor for growth – with plans in place for further journey time reductions. Ashford is Kent and Medway’s fastest growing urban centre outside the Thames Gateway; planned investment in M20 Junction 10a will help to unlock Ashford’s growth potential, helping to deliver around 10,000 jobs and 7,000 homes.
- 2 On the A2, Canterbury is an important university city. Beyond Canterbury on the A2, the Port of Dover is already Europe’s largest passenger port and with major plans for expansion. However, significant investment will be required if the area’s long term opportunities are to be realised, in particular in improving the A2 to link an expanded Port of Dover with the planned Lower Thames Crossing.
- 3 North of Dover, Discovery Park at Sandwich has become England’s most successful Enterprise Zone. At Margate and Ramsgate, prospects for growth have been enhanced by investment in transport and cultural infrastructure.
- 4 Folkestone is also benefiting from reduced journey times on High Speed One, and is now within an hour’s journey time of London. This is making a difference to the town’s creative and visitor economy, with the development of Folkestone Creative Quarter and the revitalisation of Folkestone Seafront underpinned by the successful Folkestone Triennial.

## Broadband Connectivity

- 4.48 Availability of broadband has significant positive economic, environmental and social impacts. Recent research<sup>8</sup> emphasises that at the local level economic impacts arise from construction effects, productivity growth, enterprise creation, job creation and increased labour force participation. Broadband is also an enabler for international trade and innovation. BT estimate that for a typical rural area in the South East superfast broadband could lead to an annual increase in GVA of 0.3% per annum over 15 years<sup>9</sup>. The availability and quality of broadband coverage are increasingly essential to the relative attractiveness of an area to do business. The Government's Universal Service Commitment aims to ensure that everyone will have access to at least basic broadband (with a download speed of 2 Mbs). However, as bandwidths available in urban areas improve it is possible that a 'digital-divide' is emerging.<sup>10</sup>
- 4.49 Improving East Kent's broadband connectivity has long been recognised as a priority and the 'Making Kent Quicker' programme covers a range of projects that Kent County Council is leading to improve broadband infrastructure and services across the county. The aim of the programme is to bring superfast broadband to more than 140,000 homes and businesses. To date, this work has already brought superfast broadband to over 120,000 homes and businesses, who would otherwise have been left with no, or slow broadband.
- 4.50 Kent County Council is currently working with the Government's broadband agency, Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) on a second project to further extend the reach of superfast broadband. In Kent, this aims to achieve 95% coverage by the end of 2017 and 95.7% coverage by September 2018. This still leaves a number of East Kent communities with relatively slow access and a number of projects are underway within the East Kent districts to provide solutions to improve speeds in the remaining communities where market failure can be demonstrated.

## Summary

- 4.51 The rate of new housing development in East Kent has been uneven over recent years, characterised by a general slowdown following the recession. The reasons for this lumpy and uneven pattern of delivery are manifold, not least as a direct result of land supply and allocations. The authority areas of Canterbury and Ashford have seen the most significant volume of new development, but their housing stock remains the least affordable of all East Kent authority areas.
- 4.52 It offers a range of housing choices, albeit provision varies within the sub-region with greater availability of houses in Ashford and Canterbury, and flats in Thanet and Shepway. This will inevitably influence East Kent's ability to attract and retain particular population groups, including those of working-age and able to contribute to wider economic growth.
- 4.53 East Kent accommodates a relatively buoyant and diverse commercial property market, and although growth in its business space has been sluggish over recent years (due to generally limited levels of new development), recent property market intelligence indicates a positive outlook. Ashford represents the largest commercial centre in terms of stock of employment space and industrial space in particular, with Dover accommodating East Kent's largest stock of office space (due in part to the presence of Discovery Park). Local property agents and stakeholders believe that the planned regeneration of a number of East Kent's town centres will be an important step in maintaining the sub-region's attractiveness to business.

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<sup>8</sup> UK Broadband Economic Impact, Literature Review, SQW, February 2013

<sup>9</sup> Social Study 2012 The Economic Impact of BT in the United Kingdom and the South-East, Regeneris

<sup>10</sup> UK Broadband Economic Impact Study, Impact Report, SQW, November 2013

- 4.54 The sub-region enjoys a unique position as a gateway between Europe, London and the rest of the UK, and as a result benefits from a stock of nationally significant infrastructure. Nevertheless, its key routes suffer from congestion and this is set to increase as new development continues unless interventions are made to enhance capacity and facilitate cross-county transport links.
- 4.55 A number of locally significant infrastructure capacity issues have been identified by the recent Growth and Infrastructure Framework for Kent and Medway and the strengthening of existing key routes will be vital if the scale of planned new housing and commercial development can be achieved.

## 5.0 Bringing the Evidence Together

- 5.1 This evidence report brings together a range of data and intelligence to provide a broad strategic narrative of how East Kent's economy, people and place have changed over recent years and articulate the sub-region's collective strength as a location for growth. A summary of East Kent's challenges and opportunities to future economic growth is presented in Table 5.1 overleaf.
- 5.2 Considering East Kent as a single economic entity provides a helpful starting point in developing and showcasing this offer, yet it inevitably masks more local level trends and the specific economic objectives being pursued by each constituent local authority area. Analysis presented within this report shows that relative economic performance varies considerably within East Kent, with the sub-region characterised by a notable east-west divide between Ashford and Canterbury to the west, and the coastal authorities of Dover, Thanet and Shepway to the east.
- 5.3 Part of the success of individual locations in East Kent has been driven by relative attractiveness of these places to residents and businesses. The regeneration of key towns (with a particular focus on town centres) has long been recognised as an economic strategy priority for East Kent authorities although these plans have been slow to come forward (not helped by the recent recession). Various elements of the evidence gathered as part of this report (including as part of the commercial property market and infrastructure themes) point to the catalytic role that these schemes are expected to play in boosting the economic performance of individual locations and East Kent overall.
- 5.4 East Kent benefits from a stock of nationally significant infrastructure that reflects its gateway location. Whilst these key pieces of infrastructure have helped to open up growth opportunities through enhanced connectivity and capacity, these benefits have been unevenly felt across East Kent and infrastructure capacity issues are now emerging right across the sub-region. For example, the London to coast corridor is well served but intra-East Kent links can be comparatively poor. Viability issues in many parts of East Kent also mean that development schemes can stall or fail to come forward as a result of infrastructure 'show stoppers'.
- 5.5 Whilst East Kent's commercial property market is relatively diverse and buoyant with recent intelligence pointing to a positive market outlook, delivery of new commercial space has been limited over recent years and viability challenges mean that much of East Kent's business space is now becoming relatively outdated and in need of redevelopment. It represents an attractive location for inward investment provided that a suitable portfolio of sites/supply can be unlocked and well serviced by infrastructure.
- 5.6 From a sector perspective, East Kent accommodates a number of clusters of high value economic activity, but these tend to be concentrated in relatively isolated pockets, with limited evidence of 'spill over' effects into wider parts of the sub-region's economy. Evidence points to a widening productivity gap between East Kent and the wider sub-region, as well as within East Kent itself. Its resident skills base has been improving over recent years, but still lags behind wider regional and LEP benchmarks. Together, these trends have the potential to inhibit innovation and productivity within East Kent's business base and restrict its ability to compete at a broader regional and national scale for labour, residents and business. Continued investment in education and training provision linked to particular local sector priorities will therefore be important.



Table 5.1 East Kent SWOT analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strong working-age population and employment growth in recent years</li> <li>• Rising skill levels and improved productivity across all local authorities</li> <li>• Relatively high levels of labour self-containment in Dover, Shepway and Thanet</li> <li>• Success in attracting in-migrants, particularly to Ashford and Canterbury</li> <li>• Quality of life advantages and cultural offer</li> <li>• Competitive travel times to London and relative ease of commuting to the Capital</li> <li>• Major higher education offer</li> <li>• Comparative affordability of housing and commercial space</li> <li>• Strong demand for commercial space</li> <li>• Presence of strategic infrastructure giving excellent access to London, continental Europe and the wider South East region</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uneven spatial distribution of growth</li> <li>• High value sectors currently clustered in a small number of locations</li> <li>• Widening productivity gap between East Kent and wider region since the recession reflecting drop in recent investment</li> <li>• Uneven qualification attainment levels and below regional average in all areas except Canterbury</li> <li>• Housing affordability issues particularly in Canterbury and Ashford</li> <li>• Pockets of socio-economic deprivation, particularly in some coastal communities</li> <li>• Congestion issues on some parts of the strategic infrastructure network, including Operation Stack</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Representation across multiple growth sectors, and access to range of economic assets</li> <li>• Space to grow with significant unrealised development schemes and projects (to enable both housing and employment development)</li> <li>• Councils taking a proactive approach to making land available for development</li> <li>• Capacity to grow usage of High Speed 1 and to increase service provision</li> <li>• Forecast population, employment and economic output growth</li> <li>• Increasing demographic and socio-economic diversity, including more young people, families and share of working-age population</li> <li>• Potential to retain a greater share of high-skilled out-commuters and graduates from HE institutions to generate more business start-ups</li> <li>• Regenerating East Kent’s town centres to boost resident and business attractiveness</li> <li>• Increased joint working between East Kent local authorities could lead to greater capacity and capability to coordinate investment and economic development policy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher recent economic growth in Ashford and Canterbury (compared to other areas in East Kent) expected to continue</li> <li>• Cross-county infrastructure constraints impacting ability to deliver strategic housing and employment growth</li> <li>• Lack of infrastructure investment could limit economic growth potential of East Kent and wider UK economy</li> <li>• Limited housing market choices outside of Ashford and Canterbury</li> <li>• Under-performance of town centres and need to support long-term regeneration</li> <li>• Losses of employment space, and lower land values and viability issues constraining new commercial development particularly in Dover, Shepway and Thanet</li> <li>• Lack of comprehensive improvements to the M2/A2 route from the planned Lower Thames Crossing to the Port of Dover</li> <li>• Lack of long-term solution to address lorry parking issues associated with Operation Stack</li> <li>• Future customs arrangements following Brexit currently unknown but may adversely impact functioning of Port of Dover and Channel Tunnel</li> <li>• Impact of Brexit on the flow of people and trade across the Channel</li> </ul>

Source: Lichfields analysis



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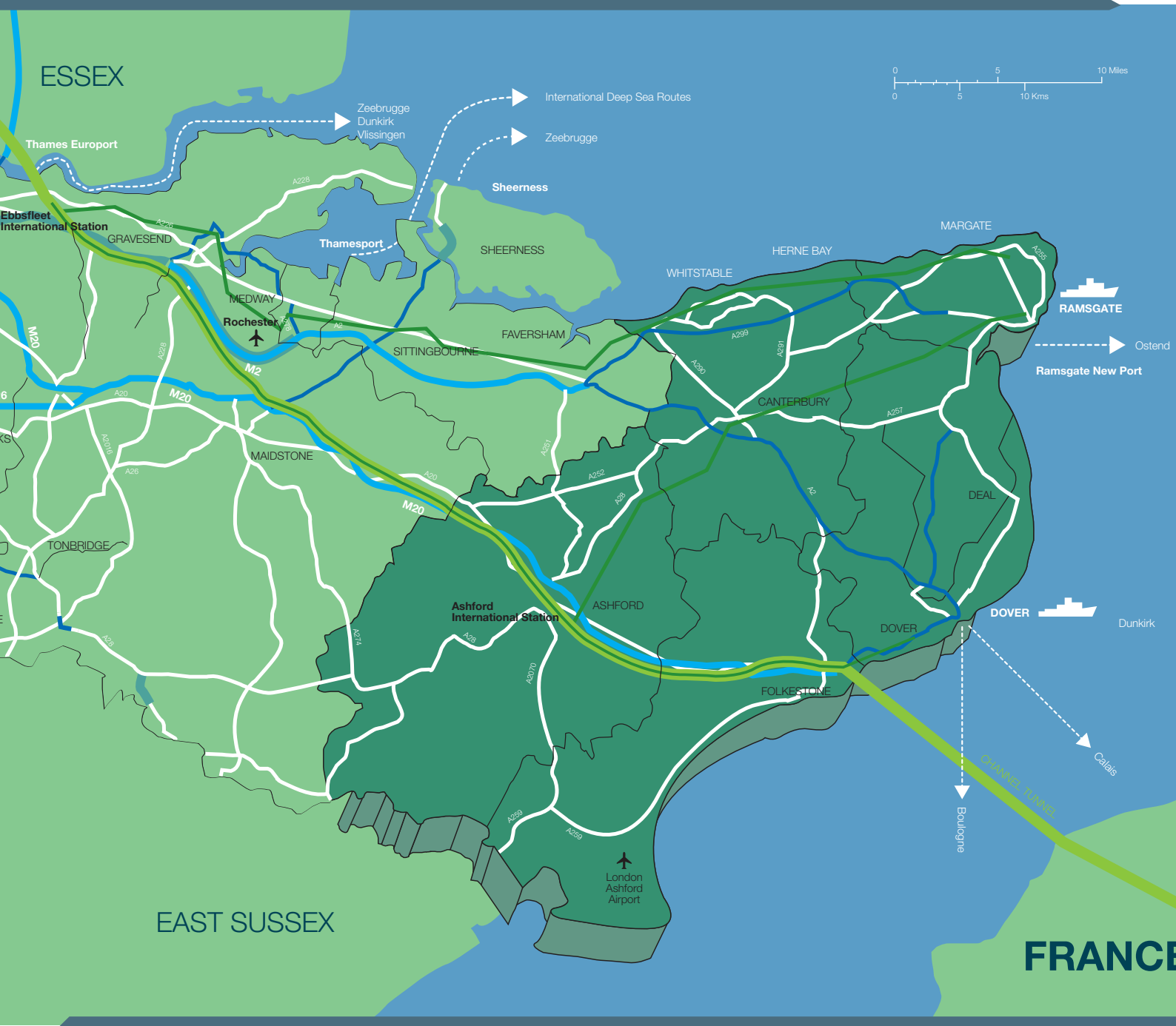
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# East Kent - The Gateway to UK plc



# Foreword

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**40% of UK trade to Europe goes through the Channel Tunnel and ports of Dover and Ramsgate in East Kent.**



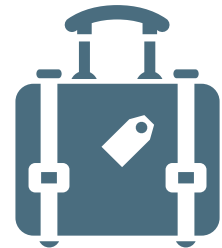
**East Kent generates £11.9 billion to the UK economy (2016).**



**East Kent's two largest universities together - output of £900 million (2014), employ 7,800 people, attract almost £32,000 HE students.**



**95,599 people of working age = 42% of those in Kent, 16% in SE LEP area, 1% in GB.**



**HS1 - 10million passengers each year.**



**Channel Tunnel - has average of 57,000 passengers per day; since opening has had 25 million trucks, transported more than 320 million tonnes of freight goods and seen 390 million passengers using its services.**



**238,000 total employment = 38% of total employment in Kent, 15% in SELEP area, 1% in GB.**



**£510 million tourism-related spend (2015).**

# About East Kent

- East Kent provides the largest single access to the country [stats to be used to convey scale]
- We play a critical role in the overall prosperity of the UK offering direct access to X [number of destinations]
- The return on investing in East Kent will help UK plc to prosper and help us to fulfil our ambitions for growth and bring economic prosperity.
- We are a significant economic sub-region (generating £11.9 billion to the UK economy (2016)) offering unrivalled potential for and an aspiration for growth
  - We have distinct characteristics that support our potential for growth
  - a rapidly-expanding base of high growth sector
  - proximity to London and mainland Europe
  - excellent international connectivity
  - world-class education institutions
  - incredible quality of life assets in beautiful coastal and rural settings

## Why Invest in East Kent

- Growth will be achieved through targeted investment in four key objectives:
  - 1. Unlocking growth through infrastructure** - a need for sites for development, an effective transport and digital infrastructure and targeted upgrading of our road and rail networks (particularly High Speed 1) to enhance domestic and international connectivity.
  - 2. Delivery of business space** – high quality flexible modern commercial space is needed in the right locations to support our existing businesses while attracting new investors.
  - 3. Supporting skills and productivity** – creating an environment for innovation in productivity and the creation of talent will strengthen us further.
  - 4. Place making and shaping** – investment will make East Kent a location of first choice that retains and attracts young people, families and entrepreneurs, while at the same time maximising the potential of the natural assets we hold, enhancing our town centres and ensuring a high quality built environment.

- Our investment plans are in line with the Government's own National Infrastructure Commission report which prioritises the three Cs – Congestion, Capacity and Carbon (launched on 13th October 2017).
- Our proposed investments aim to capitalise further benefits arising from HS1 and the proposed Lower Thames Crossing, with positive impact on the rest of the country including the Midlands Engine and the Northern Powerhouse, and to realise appropriate solutions to Operation Stack and the impacts of Brexit
- We have a strong track record of the East Kent local authorities working together to plan for and execute investment

## Our Investment Priorities

- Our four critical East Kent nationally significant investment priorities are:
  - **Strategic network improvements to A2/M2** - required to support the new Lower Thames Crossing, the growth of Canterbury and the ports of Dover and Ramsgate;
  - **M20/A20 improvements** - including junction 10A, the proposed lorry holding area, HGV overnight parking and access to Dover;
  - **Improvements to rail capacity, speeds, frequency and associated infrastructure** - including Ashford SPURS, Westenhanger Station enhancement, and Thanet Parkway; and
  - **A28 corridor artery** – stretching across East Kent from Margate in Thanet to Ashford via the City of Canterbury this includes eight separate but connected transport infrastructure projects to improve road links, address bottlenecks and ease problems of congestion.
- Our East Kent Economic Growth Framework sets further specific investment priorities to achieve long-term economic growth across East Kent and have the capacity to deliver 86,300 new dwellings and 47,400 jobs in East Kent over the next 10 years.





## East Kent is home to:

HS1 – the only High Speed rail service to Europe providing direct links to 11 major european cities

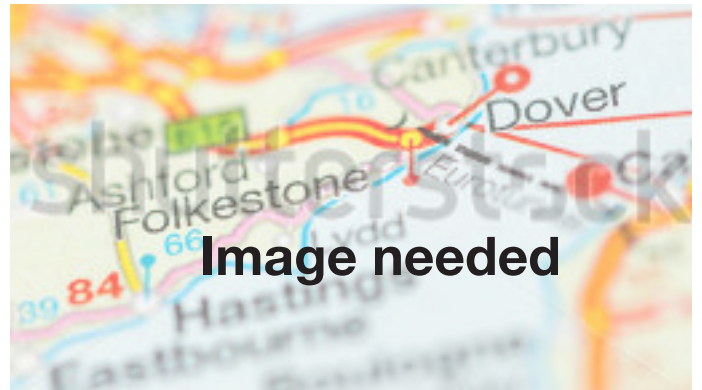
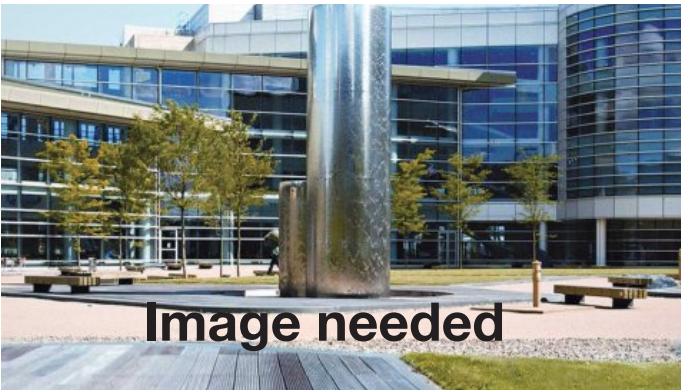


An Enterprise Zone at Discovery Park

Major employers including P&O, Saga, Premier Foods, Coty Rimmel, Cummins Power, Bretts, Vattenfall, Wahl and EDF



21 miles away from France



76.5 miles of stunning accessible coastline



## Contact us:

- Ashford Borough Council: ??????
- Canterbury City Council: ?????
- Dover District Council: ?????
- Shepway District Council: ?????
- Thanet District Council: ?????

**Agenda Item No:** 13  
**Report To:** CABINET  
**Date of Meeting:** 7<sup>TH</sup> December 2017



**Report Title:** **Response to public consultation on the proposed 'Main Changes' to the draft Local Plan to 2030 and proposed submission of the Plan for public examination**

**Report Author & Job Title:** Simon Cole (Head of Planning Policy)

**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. Clokie (Planning & Development)  
**Portfolio Holder for:**

**Summary:** The new Local Plan to 2030 will replace the adopted Core Strategy 2008 and the other geographically based Development Plan Documents that form part of the Borough's current development plan, except for the Chilmington Green AAP.

A draft version was subject to public consultation in summer 2016 and a series of proposed main changes to the draft Plan were consulted upon for 8 weeks this summer. A summary of the representations received and the responses to them are attached to this report.

The Cabinet is now asked to approve the final submission version of the Local Plan to 2030 and recommend that the Full Council approves the submission of the Plan for public examination.

**Key Decision:** NO

**Significantly Affected Wards:** ALL

**Recommendations:** **The Cabinet is recommended to:-**

- I. Approve the schedule of responses to the public consultation on the proposed 'Main Changes' to the Regulation 19 draft Local Plan to 2030 (published in July 2017), attached as Appendix 2 to this report;**
- II. agree the proposed further minor amendments to the Regulation 19 version of the Local Plan to 2030 set out in Appendix 3 to this report;**
- III. Recommend to Full Council to authorise the Head**



**of Planning to submit the Local Plan to 2030 attached as Appendix 1 to this report (as amended by the further minor amendments in Appendix 3) to the Secretary of State for independent public examination;**

- IV. grant delegated authority to the Head of Planning to:**
- a. make any further modifications he considers necessary or desirable before or during the examination,**
  - b. ask the Inspector to recommend modifications to the draft Local Plan under Section 20 (7C) of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, if such modifications are considered necessary to make the Plan sound and/or compliant with legal requirements; and,**
  - c. take any action he deems necessary to progress the draft Local Plan through the examination process.**

**Policy Overview:** The submission of the Local Plan to 2030 means that the policies contained therein may be considered to have more weight in the decision-making of the Council in respect of planning applications than previously has been the case, although policies in adopted Development Plan documents will still have the greater weight.

**Financial Implications:** The submission of the Local Plan will trigger the formal examination process. This has significant resource implications including providing for the subsequent costs of the Planning inspectorate in carrying out the examination but these have been assessed and budgeted for based on a reasonable assessment of the length of the examination.

**Legal Implications:** In preparing a Local Plan, the Council has to comply with procedural and legal duties as set out in its Statement of Community Involvement and in statutes, regulations and guidance (para. 12 refers). The Council will prepare and submit to the Planning Inspectorate statements setting out in detail how these duties have been complied with, and the Inspector's tasks will include considering whether he/she is satisfied that this has been done. Should he/she not be so satisfied, then he/she has the power to bring the Examination to a halt and to ask the Council to undertake further work, and/or to reject the Plan entirely. This is considered a very unlikely outcome, given the work which the Council has undertaken up to this point.

**Equalities Impact** See Attached.

**Assessment**

**Other Material Implications:** None

**Exempt from Publication:** **NO**

**Background Papers:** None

**Contact:** Simon.cole@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330642

## **Report Title: Response to public consultation on the proposed 'Main Changes' to the draft Local Plan to 2030 and proposed submission of the Plan for public examination**

### **Introduction and Background**

1. The Local Plan to 2030 will replace the adopted Core Strategy 2008 and the other geographically based Development Plan Documents that form part of the Borough's current development plan, except for the Chilmington Green AAP. It will also replace any existing 'saved' planning policies from the Borough Local Plan 2000 when it has been adopted.
2. Preparation of the evidence base that supports the Local Plan to 2030 commenced several years ago following the introduction of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in 2012. The NPPF set out the Government's new policies for Plan-making replacing the more centralised, top-down approach that existing via regional plans previously and laid out the expectations that Local Plans need to meet in order to be considered soundly based when examined.
3. Since 2012, a number of further refinements to the planning system and the need to address changing housing requirements in particular has meant that further updates have been needed to the Plan's evidence base to ensure that it is as robust as possible when it came to be formally submitted for examination.
4. In June 2016, the initial Regulation 19 draft version of the Plan was published for public consultation with the Council receiving approximately 2900 responses from a wide variety of local residents and other stakeholders. The need to respond to increased household projections for the borough published by the Office for National Statistics in 2016 led to a further series of proposed 'Main Changes' to the Local Plan being published for public consultation for 8 weeks in July and August 2017. Around 1150 responses were received in response to this consultation.

### **Proposal/Current Position**

5. Since the closure of the proposed 'Main Changes' public consultation on the 31<sup>st</sup> August, officers have been considering the representations received and a schedule of proposed responses is attached as Appendix 2 to this report for approval. In summary, no further main changes to the Local Plan are now proposed although a suite of further minor amendments are proposed in the schedule set out separately in Appendix 3 to this report. Cabinet is asked to agree these further minor amendments which will then be incorporated into the text of the version of the Local Plan attached to this report prior to formal

submission. No additional pre-submission consultation is required on these suggested amendments.

6. If no additional 'Main Changes' are to be made to the Plan, it is now open for the Council to progress to the next stage of the Plan-making process by formally submitting the Local Plan to the Secretary of State for public examination. This is known as the 'Submission' version of the Plan.

## **Implications and Risk Assessment**

7. When the Local Plan is formally submitted to the Planning Inspectorate (on behalf of the Secretary of State), the public examination process will commence. An Inspector will be appointed to oversee the examination process and he/she will normally then draw up a list of matters they wish to see discussed at the examination hearings. The scope of these matters are, of course, a matter for the Inspector but they would normally include fundamental issues such as the overall amount of housing and employment land the Plan is making provision for; the planning strategy adopted in the Plan for the allocation of sites to meet housing and employment requirements; whether there is sufficient land identified to meet 5 year housing land supply targets; the consideration of 'omission site' proposals promoted by developers and whether the development management 'topic-related' policies are reasonable and consistent with NPPF policy.
8. The examination process enables the Inspector to invite specific parties to hearing sessions to discuss the merits of the Plan – these will normally be those parties seeking changes to the Plan with the Council acting on behalf of all those who support the Plan as submitted.
9. Following the examination hearings, the Inspector will prepare a report for the Council. The report may find the Plan sound as it was submitted or unsound but with the opportunity to make it sound through changes recommended by the Inspector. In the latter case, the Council needs to have indicated in advance that it is happy for the Inspector to make such recommendations and this is strongly advised to avoid an 'all or nothing' outcome.
10. In a worst case scenario, the Inspector may consider that the Plan cannot be remedied through amendments in a way that could make it sound. In these circumstances, the Council would be advised what further work it needs to undertake before it could be properly examined again. This outcome is reasonably rare but it can elongate the examination process considerably. The Inspector will normally highlight any fundamental problems to the Council in advance of the examination hearings and give the Council the opportunity to withdraw the Plan from the examination process. Officers are confident that the Local Plan to 2030 has been soundly prepared and whilst it is reasonable to anticipate that the Inspector may consider some amendments are required, these should not relate to fundamental matters which might cause the examination process to stall.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

11. Members are referred to the attached Assessment. There are no significant implications identified in respect of the nine protected characteristics.

## Consultation Planned or Undertaken

12. As referred to earlier in this report, there has been substantial consultation undertaken at various stages of the Plan-making process. This will be fully set out in the Council's evidence base (Regulation 22 Consultation Statement) but has included both informal consultation during the 'Plan-it Ashford' exercises undertaken with different communities and groups during 2012/13 and the formal consultation exercises on the draft plan and its proposed changes in 2016 and 2017. There has also been regular liaison with neighbouring local authorities and KCC in order to address the requirements of the 'Duty to Co-operate' that LPAs are required to meet in plan-making.
13. Within the Council, the Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group has driven the Local Plan-making process forward and shaped the strategy and content of the Plan as it now stands. At its meeting on the 22<sup>nd</sup> November, the Task Group considered and endorsed the Submission version of the Plan.

## Other Options Considered

14. The option to delay submission of the Local Plan to make further 'main changes' has been considered by officers and members of the Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group. Representations from many different parties in response to the July / August 2017 'Main Changes' public consultation propose a wide range of changes to the Local Plan. Those from landowners and developers tend to object that the Plan does not allocate sufficient land for housing and that the specific sites they are promoting should therefore be included in the Plan.
15. In contrast, many local residents and some Parish Councils consider that too much land has been identified for housing and should be scaled back. Specific objections to particular site allocations make up the majority of the representations received.
16. In practice, such representations are to be expected and are a normal part of the plan-making process. It is unrealistic to expect that a Local Plan can accommodate the views of all stakeholders. Any further main changes to the draft Plan would require another minimum 6 week public consultation exercise to be undertaken prior to the formal submission of the Plan for examination. This delay to the submission of the Plan would also run the significant risk of the Council being unable to take advantage of the transitional arrangements identified in the recent DCLG consultation on 'Planning for the right homes in the right places' which enables Local Planning Authorities to submit their Local Plans on the basis of existing evidence of housing need for their area. A delay in submission may require the Council to review this central aspect of the Plan which may result in further consequential delay.
17. In any event, officers consider that the Submission version of the Local Plan before Members now (a composite of the 2016 draft and the proposed main and minor amendments made in 2017 plus the further minor amendments now proposed in the appendix to this report) is a sound document and offers the right strategy and policies for the future planning of the borough and any

additional main changes are not necessary. Two formal rounds of public consultation has provided opportunities for comments and issues to be raised and it is reasonable now to expect the Planning Inspectorate to consider those outstanding objections to the Council's Plan.

## **Next Steps in Process**

18. The authorisation of Full Council is needed to enable the Council to submit the Local Plan for examination and hence the Cabinet is asked to recommend that Full Council gives this authorisation when it meets on 14<sup>th</sup> December.
19. If Full Council gives authorisation to submit the Plan, then officers will assemble the Submission version of the Plan and the necessary background evidence documents and send these to the Planning Inspectorate prior to the 31<sup>st</sup> December. Contact has been made with the Inspectorate to advise them of this scenario and we have been sent the Inspectorate's standard Service Level Agreement to sign. The SLA indicates that the examination hearings will normally commence within 14 weeks of submission of the Plan, which would mean the hearings commencing in early April 2018.

## **Conclusion**

20. The Submission of the Local Plan for examination is a key milestone. It signifies a passing of the Plan-making process from the Council to the Planning Inspectorate and marks the conclusion of the Council's deliberations on the content of the Plan it wishes to see adopted.
21. The scale of consultation, both formal and informal, throughout the process to date has been very significant and where it has reasonable to address objectors' concerns, then the Plan has been amended accordingly. Unlike all previous Local Plans for the borough dating back to the early 1980s which have been prepared in the context of either County-level Structure Plans or regional Plans, this is the first to require the Council to establish and set its own housing target for the borough in a Local Plan. Dealing with this issue, as well as the more traditional challenge of identifying where new development should take place, has brought particular challenges to the preparation of this Local Plan.

## **Portfolio Holder's Views**

22. I particularly want to thank the officers for their hard work and perseverance in producing this Borough plan which now sets out the context in which all planning in the borough will be organised over the next decade. It ensures the maintenance of the borough's country ambiances; whilst at the same time balances the abnormality factors with the need for extra housing.
23. This plan sets out our demands for building quality, internal living space, and affordable housing ratios. It is now incumbent on all colleagues' members and officers to ensure that its policies and guidelines are maintained and delivered.

## Contact and Email

24. Contact for this report: [simon.cole@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:simon.cole@ashford.gov.uk); tel: 01233330642

**Agenda Item No:** 14  
**Report To:** Cabinet  
**Date of Meeting:** 07 December 2017  
**Report Title:** Short Stay Accommodation  
**Report Author & Job Title:** Sharon Williams  
Head of Housing  
**Portfolio Holder** Cllr. White  
**Portfolio Holder for:** Housing



**Summary:** The Economic and Regeneration Investment Board (ERIB) agreed the purchase of 112 Beaver Lane in May 2017. This report updates on the progress for the proposal to convert the property into our second short stay accommodation facility together with details of the necessary budgets.

**Key Decision:** NO

**Significantly Affected Wards:** Beaver Ward

**Recommendations:** **The Cabinet is recommended to:-**

- I. Approve that a capital budget of £500,000 is allocated to enable the conversion works at 112 Beaver Road to create a short stay accommodation facility.

**Policy Overview:** The Council has a statutory duty to accommodate those households who are considered to be homeless and in priority need. The duty arises immediately where the Council has reason to believe that a household is homeless within 28 days. This has often led to a reliance on bed and breakfast accommodation but the Council identified a priority to identify property suitable for conversion into short stay accommodation as an alternative to bed and breakfast.

**Financial Implications:** The purchase of 112 Beaver Road as a suitable property for conversion into short stay accommodation was approved by the Economic and Regeneration Investment Board (ERIB). The purchase sum offered was £446,000.

The financial implications are set out in Appendix 2.



<b>Legal Implications</b>	The Council duties towards the homeless are set out in the Housing Act 1996, amended by the Homelessness Act 2003. The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 has received Royal Assent and comes into effect in April 2018.
<b>Equalities Impact Assessment</b>	Not Required
<b>Other Material Implications:</b>	The proposed conversion works are subject to the completion of the purchase of 112 Beaver Road and subject to achieving planning consent.
<b>Exempt from Publication:</b>	<b>NO</b>
<b>Background Papers:</b>	<b>None</b>
<b>Contact:</b>	Sharon.williams@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330803

## Report Title: Short Stay Accommodation

### Introduction and Background

1. The Council has an immediate duty to accommodate households who they have reason to believe are homeless and in priority need. Unfortunately, this often means that the only accommodation available is expensive bed and breakfast placements (B&B).
2. Legally the Council is obliged to restrict the length of stay in B&B for families to a maximum of 6 weeks, which adds pressure due to the limited availability of suitable housing stock.
3. The Council's existing short stay accommodation, Christchurch House, provides 8 units of accommodation and has proved to be an efficient way of meeting the Council's duty to provide interim temporary accommodation. Had it not been for this project the Council's bed and breakfast costs would be much higher. On average Christchurch House saves the Council approximately £100,000 in B&B costs per annum. Apart from the obvious efficiencies of the Council investing in its own short-term accommodation provision. This type of facility also provides a better quality of accommodation than in commercial B&B.
4. Currently numbers in B&B remain high due to an insufficient supply of accommodation compared to demands from homelessness and the housing register.
5. In view of the above pressures in providing accommodation for homeless households, both families and single people, the Council has agreed to the purchase of another property at 112 Beaver Road, Ashford. This property is suitable for conversion into an additional short stay accommodation facility for families.

### Proposal/Current Position

6. A property has been identified at 112 Beaver Road, which is the vicarage attached to Christ Church. Approval was sought and agreed at ERIB for the purchase of the Vicarage, and an offer of £446,000 was made and accepted. Currently the legal processes in connection with the purchase are proceeding and completion is expected in the near future.
7. Conversion work is required to enable this property to be utilised for short stay accommodation for homeless families at an expected cost of up to £500,000.
8. This project is about achieving better control of costs for the council in an area of statutory work that continues to show increasing demand. The project should be seen as an 'invest to save' project and it is anticipated that the

operating and financing costs will be covered by rental income and service charge.

9. An outline of the proposed works is provided at Appendix 1. These works are expected to take approximately 16 weeks to complete. The Council has submitted a planning application for consent to complete the conversion.
10. In view of the urgent need for this type of accommodation, preliminary work has commenced ahead of the completion of the purchase to draw up the specification and investigations are being undertaken into working with an existing procurement framework at risk so that the Council can be ready to award the contract and commence work as soon after completion as possible.
11. This report seeks members agreement to the allocation of a capital budget to cover the costs of the conversion work.

### **Implications and Risk Assessment**

12. The conversion works cannot commence until the purchase has completed, this has been delayed while the seller establishes title for the purchase of 112 Beaver Road.
13. A planning application has already been submitted in anticipation of completion and the relevant preparatory work is being undertaken to prepare the specification for the work to enable the Council to tender the works. However the Council will not be able to enter into a contract for this work until completion has been achieved.
14. Members are asked to agree that a capital budget of £500,000 be allocated for the costs of the conversion works.
15. An operational budget has been drawn up based on the costs of operating Christchurch House which provides a similar number of units. A copy of the operational budget is at Appendix 2. It can be seen from the Operational budget shown at Appendix 2 that the projected income covers operational costs including debt repayment and that the debt will be repaid within 25 years.

### **Equalities Impact Assessment**

16. Not required

### **Consultation Planned or Undertaken**

17. Consultation has taken place with the ward member. A further consultation event is planned to take place with local residents after the purchase of 112 Beaver Road has completed.

### **Other Options Considered**

18. Since the successful project at Christchurch House, Christchurch Road officers have been trying to identify another suitable property to convert for this purpose, however despite an extensive search this is the only property currently identified as suitable for this project.

### **Reasons for Supporting Option Recommended**

19. Tackling homelessness is one of the key priorities of the Housing Framework and the Homelessness Strategy, as well as a statutory duty for the authority. The provision of another short stay facility was endorsed as a corporate priority and was identified as a priority in the Homelessness Strategy approved by members on 13 October 2016. This project is one of a number of key action points designed to address and manage homelessness within Ashford and was identified by Members of the Cabinet as a high priority to achieve as swiftly as possible.
20. The need for such a provision is even more evident given the likely impacts of the Homelessness Reduction Act, which will increase the level of duties upon the local authority and comes into force on 01 April 2018.
21. Provision of better quality, more closely managed, temporary accommodation will assist in achieving more settled outcomes for households by identifying health and care needs, and addressing these, at an early stage.

### **Next Steps in Process**

22. Once the purchase of 112, Beaver Road has completed the Council will invite tenders for completion of the works, using an existing procurement framework.

### **Conclusion**

23. The conversion works at 112 Beaver Road to create a short stay accommodation facility for homeless families require a capital budget allocation of up to £500,000.
24. This project will assist the council to control expenditure on bed and breakfast accommodation and provide a good standard of accommodation for homeless households.

### **Portfolio Holder's Views**

25. This is an important project which will not only improve the quality of short stay accommodation for homeless families, but will also create significant savings compared to the costs of using B&B accommodation. I fully support the recommendation to allocate a capital budget to support the conversion works at 112, Beaver Road.

### **Contact and Email**

26. Sharon Williams Head of Housing – [Sharon.williams@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:Sharon.williams@ashford.gov.uk)

## Appendix 1 – Breakdown of works required.

### Context

The property is a substantial Victorian house build with three floors and a basement. It's construction is traditional masonry construction and because of it's age solid wall and purlin roof structure. The building has had minimal maintenance and since intended disposal has suffered from leaks.

The large living rooms and bedrooms present an opportunity to split the property into 8 rooms for short stay accommodation and associated washing facilities, communal kitchen and laundry.

The rear garden requires minimal work to provide a private area for residents. Externally the visual appearance of the accommodation remains unchanged.

### Proposed works

#### General

- Remedial works to correct damp and water ingress
- Removal of any deleterious materials
- Other repairs identified in survey, replacement of windows.

#### Accommodation

- Sub division of housing into the 8 compartments with wash facilities.
- Compartmentation of the building to comply with building Act:
  - Fire spread which will include a sprinkler system
  - Noise reduction between accommodation
- Insulation of the building fabric to increase thermal resistance, this is in conjunction with replacement windows and new efficient heating system.
- Installation of the new building services
  - New gas fired space heating system, zoned to correspond with accommodation.
  - New electrical wiring to whole property to accommodate the greater demand.
  - New bath, toilet and shower facilities whether common or ensuite.

#### Communal

- Communal facilities on the ground floor which include:
  - Kitchen with multiple sinks and cookers
  - Large dining area
  - Sufficient storage of ingredients and equipment for food preparation
- Garden refurbishment

Appendix 2 – Operational budget

Appendix 3 – Procurement programme

Appendix 4 – Elevations

	Outlay	Number	Capital costs
Purchase Price	446,000	1	£445,000
Stamp duty	12,250	1	£12,250
Fit out	500,000	1	£500,000
Other	100,000		
	-		
	-		
	-		
	-		
Capital Cost	1,058,250	3	

Asset Life (years)	25	
Interest Rate	2.50%	Based on 25 year swap plus 1%
Inflation assumption	2.00%	
Discount Rate applied	4.50%	

Notes	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
<b>Outgoings for ABC</b>											
Staff costs Christchurch1 costs are currently 30,500, hours will be recoverable from tenants	33,088	33,750	34,425	35,114	35,816	36,532	37,263	38,008	38,768	39,543	40,334
Concierge costs (based on christchurch1)	2,000	2,040	2,081	2,123	2,165	2,208	2,252	2,297	2,343	2,390	2,438
Maintenance costs Based on Christchurch1	4,000	4,080	4,162	4,245	4,330	4,417	4,505	4,595	4,687	4,781	4,877
Health & Safety Based on Christchurch1	200	204	208	212	216	220	224	228	233	238	243
Operational equipment Based on Christchurch1	3,000	3,060	3,121	3,183	3,247	3,312	3,378	3,446	3,515	3,585	3,657
Telephones Based on Christchurch1	800	816	832	849	866	883	901	919	937	956	975
TV Licence Based on Christchurch1	150	153	156	159	162	165	168	171	174	177	181
Council Tax	1,390	1,418	1,446	1,475	1,505	1,535	1,566	1,597	1,629	1,662	1,695
Gas Based on Christchurch1	900	918	936	955	974	993	1,013	1,033	1,054	1,075	1,097
Electricity Based on Christchurch1	4,000	4,080	4,162	4,245	4,330	4,417	4,505	4,595	4,687	4,781	4,877
Water & Sewerage Based on Christchurch1	1,800	1,836	1,873	1,910	1,948	1,987	2,027	2,068	2,109	2,151	2,194
Cleaning materials Based on Christchurch1	400	408	416	424	432	441	450	459	468	477	487
Window Cleaning Based on Christchurch1	140	143	146	149	152	155	158	161	164	167	170
Insurance Based on Christchurch1	600	612	624	636	649	662	675	689	703	717	731
Laundry Based on Christchurch1	3,000	3,060	3,121	3,183	3,247	3,312	3,378	3,446	3,515	3,585	3,657
		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Sub total</b>	<b>55,468</b>	<b>56,578</b>	<b>57,709</b>	<b>58,862</b>	<b>60,039</b>	<b>61,239</b>	<b>62,463</b>	<b>63,712</b>	<b>64,986</b>	<b>66,285</b>	<b>67,613</b>
<b>Income for ABC</b>											
Income from Housing Benefit 8 units, 52 weeks a year, £156.69 per week	(65,183)	(66,487)	(67,817)	(69,173)	(70,556)	(71,967)	(73,406)	(74,874)	(76,371)	(77,898)	(79,456)
Income from personal charges 8 units, 52 weeks a year, £10 per week	(4,160)	(4,243)	(4,328)	(4,415)	(4,503)	(4,593)	(4,685)	(4,779)	(4,875)	(4,973)	(5,072)
Recover of concierge costs Recoverable from tenants (based on christchurch)	(2,000)	(2,040)	(2,081)	(2,123)	(2,165)	(2,208)	(2,252)	(2,297)	(2,343)	(2,390)	(2,438)
Voids 2% voids (30 void occurrences at 1.5 days each)	1,304	1,330	1,357	1,384	1,412	1,440	1,469	1,498	1,528	1,559	1,590

Savings from B&B costs	8 units, 52 weeks a year, £268.12 per week (reduced by 10% based on voids) less income from housing benefits based on the same	(41,719)	(42,554)	(43,405)	(44,273)	(45,158)	(46,061)	(46,982)	(47,922)	(48,880)	(49,858)	(50,855)
<b>Sub total</b>			0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total Revenue Costs		(111,759)	(113,994)	(116,274)	(118,600)	(120,970)	(123,389)	(125,856)	(128,374)	(130,941)	(133,560)	(136,231)
Financing Costs												
Interest and capital - annuity		57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>1,146</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>(1,128)</b>	<b>(2,301)</b>	<b>(3,494)</b>	<b>(4,713)</b>	<b>(5,956)</b>	<b>(7,225)</b>	<b>(8,518)</b>	<b>(9,838)</b>	<b>(11,181)</b>
<b>NPV</b>	<b>4.50%</b>	958,813	(52,578)	(51,320)	(50,094)	(48,894)	(47,725)	(46,583)	(45,469)	(44,381)	(43,320)	(42,282)
	<b>(9,781)</b>											
<b>IRR</b>	<b>4.59%</b>											
<b>Yield</b>	<b>-10.6</b>											
<b>Net Yield</b>	<b>-5.32</b>											
<b>Debt</b>												
Opening Balance		1,058,250	1,027,269	995,514	962,965	929,602	895,405	860,353	824,425	787,599	749,852	711,161
Interest		26,456	25,682	24,888	24,074	23,240	22,385	21,509	20,611	19,690	18,746	17,779
Repayment		(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)
Closing Balance		1,027,269	995,514	962,965	929,602	895,405	860,353	824,425	787,599	749,852	711,161	671,503
		1,001,959.23	(57,416)	(58,565)	(59,738)	(60,931)	(62,150)	(63,393)	(64,662)	(65,955)	(67,275)	(68,618)
Property Residual Value		1079415	1101003.3	1123023.37	1145483.83	1168393.51	1191761.38	1215596.61	1239908.54	1264706.71	1290000.84	1315800.86

12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
41,141	41,964	42,803	43,659	44,532	45,423	46,331	47,258	48,203	49,167	50,150	51,153	52,176	53,220
2,487	2,537	2,588	2,640	2,693	2,747	2,802	2,858	2,915	2,973	3,032	3,093	3,155	3,218
4,975	5,075	5,177	5,281	5,387	5,495	5,605	5,717	5,831	5,948	6,067	6,188	6,312	6,438
248	253	258	263	268	273	278	284	290	296	302	308	314	320
3,730	3,805	3,881	3,959	4,038	4,119	4,201	4,285	4,371	4,458	4,547	4,638	4,731	4,826
995	1,015	1,035	1,056	1,077	1,099	1,121	1,143	1,166	1,189	1,213	1,237	1,262	1,287
185	189	193	197	201	205	209	213	217	221	225	230	235	240
1,729	1,764	1,799	1,835	1,872	1,909	1,947	1,986	2,026	2,067	2,108	2,150	2,193	2,237
1,119	1,141	1,164	1,187	1,211	1,235	1,260	1,285	1,311	1,337	1,364	1,391	1,419	1,447
4,975	5,075	5,177	5,281	5,387	5,495	5,605	5,717	5,831	5,948	6,067	6,188	6,312	6,438
2,238	2,283	2,329	2,376	2,424	2,472	2,521	2,571	2,622	2,674	2,727	2,782	2,838	2,895
497	507	517	527	538	549	560	571	582	594	606	618	630	643
173	176	180	184	188	192	196	200	204	208	212	216	220	224
746	761	776	792	808	824	840	857	874	891	909	927	946	965
3,730	3,805	3,881	3,959	4,038	4,119	4,201	4,285	4,371	4,458	4,547	4,638	4,731	4,826
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>68,968</b>	<b>70,350</b>	<b>71,758</b>	<b>73,196</b>	<b>74,662</b>	<b>76,156</b>	<b>77,677</b>	<b>79,230</b>	<b>80,814</b>	<b>82,429</b>	<b>84,076</b>	<b>85,757</b>	<b>87,474</b>	<b>89,224</b>
(81,045)	(82,666)	(84,319)	(86,005)	(87,725)	(89,480)	(91,270)	(93,095)	(94,957)	(96,856)	(98,793)	(100,769)	(102,784)	(104,840)
(5,173)	(5,276)	(5,382)	(5,490)	(5,600)	(5,712)	(5,826)	(5,943)	(6,062)	(6,183)	(6,307)	(6,433)	(6,562)	(6,693)
(2,487)	(2,537)	(2,588)	(2,640)	(2,693)	(2,747)	(2,802)	(2,858)	(2,915)	(2,973)	(3,032)	(3,093)	(3,155)	(3,218)
1,622	1,654	1,687	1,721	1,755	1,790	1,826	1,863	1,900	1,938	1,977	2,017	2,057	2,098



(51,872)	(52,909)	(53,967)	(55,046)	(56,147)	(57,270)	(58,415)	(59,583)	(60,775)	(61,991)	(63,231)	(64,496)	(65,786)	(67,102)
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
(138,955)	(141,734)	(144,569)	(147,460)	(150,410)	(153,419)	(156,487)	(159,616)	(162,809)	(166,065)	(169,386)	(172,774)	(176,230)	(179,755)
(69,987)	(71,384)	(72,811)	(74,264)	(75,748)	(77,263)	(78,810)	(80,386)	(81,995)	(83,636)	(85,310)	(87,017)	(88,756)	(90,531)
57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437	57,437
(12,550)	(13,947)	(15,374)	(16,827)	(18,311)	(19,826)	(21,373)	(22,949)	(24,558)	(26,199)	(27,873)	(29,580)	(31,319)	(33,094)
(41,269)	(40,280)	(39,316)	(38,374)	(37,455)	(36,559)	(35,685)	(34,831)	(33,999)	(33,186)	(32,392)	(31,618)	(30,861)	(30,122)

671,503	630,853	589,188	546,480	502,705	457,836	411,845	364,704	316,385	266,857	216,092	164,057	110,722	56,053
16,788	15,771	14,730	13,662	12,568	11,446	10,296	9,118	7,910	6,671	5,402	4,101	2,768	1,401
(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)	(57,437)
630,853	589,188	546,480	502,705	457,836	411,845	364,704	316,385	266,857	216,092	164,057	110,722	56,053	17

(69,987)	(71,384)	(72,811)	(74,264)	(75,748)	(77,263)	(78,810)	(80,386)	(81,995)	(83,636)	(85,310)	(87,017)	(88,756)	(90,531)
1342116.88	1368959.22	1396338.4	1424265.17	1452750.47	1481805.48	1511441.59	1541670.42	1572503.83	1603953.91	1636032.99	1668753.65	1702128.72	1736171.29





**Agenda Item No:** 15  
**Report To:** Cabinet  
**Date of Meeting:** 7th December 2017  
**Report Title:** **Public Health Matters – Smoke-free Civic & Stour Centre grounds**  
**Report Author & Job Title:** Sheila Davison – Head of Health, Parking & Community Safety  
**Portfolio Holder** Councillor Bradford - Portfolio Responsibility for Highways,  
**Portfolio Holder for:** Wellbeing and Safety



**Summary:** This report seeks cabinet support for the introduction of a trial scheme to promote the Civic & Stour Centre as smoke-free grounds. This forms part of the Ashford Health & Wellbeing Board's work programme which is helping to create a healthy environment for our residents, visitors and employees. It supports the council's welfare initiatives and the Stour Centres wellbeing objectives.

**Key Decision:** NO

**Significantly Affected Wards:** Not applicable

**Recommendations:** **That cabinet supports the introduction of a trial scheme to promote the Civic & Stour Centre as smoke-free grounds.**

**Policy Overview:** Smoking is a priority area for the Ashford Health & Wellbeing Board. This proposal builds on other projects undertaken by the Council including smoke-free play areas and school gates. It is in accordance with the Council's corporate plan.

**Financial Implications:** There will be initial set-up costs, including signage, advertising consent, creation of communication resources and so on. These will not be significant.

**Legal Implications:** The scheme, as it applies to the existing external areas, is not legally enforceable. In the case of Council employees, however, the current smoking policy, and the areas covered by that policy remain operational and can be enforced through the conditions of service. While the extended area will not be enforced, the situation will be monitored over the 18-month trial period. If the spirit of this change is ignored then we will need to incorporate this within a subsequent review of the smoking policy. The dropping of cigarette ends will be enforced through the Council's littering controls.

**Equalities Impact Assessment:** See Appendix D

**Other Material Implications:** None

**Exempt from Publication:** **NO**

**Background Papers:** **None**

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## **Report Title: Public Health Matters – Smoke-free Civic & Stour Centre Sites**

### **Purpose of the Report**

1. This report seeks cabinet supports for the recommendation to introduce a trial scheme to promote the Civic & Stour Centre as smoke-free grounds. The trial to run for an 18-month period starting in late January 2018.

### **Proposal under consideration**

2. To widen the smoke-free perimeter around the Civic & Stour Centre to include land up to the roadway that runs through the grounds as well as the footpath alongside the river adjacent to the Stour Centre, towards the station. People who smoke or vape will be asked to stand outside this area. Suitable signage will be provided to indicate the grounds are smoke-free area.

### **Why do this?**

3. The reasons for promoting the Civic & Stour Centre going tobacco free are compelling for anyone working to improve health and wellbeing. Smoking remains the leading cause of premature death in the UK and is responsible for half of the health gap between the poorest and most affluent communities. This is an opportunity that we must take and act upon, not only to reduce the burden of smoking on our health services, but also to reduce ill health and save lives and thus bring huge benefits for individuals, their families and friends.
4. The cost of smoking in Ashford alone amounts to £39.8m per annum. £23.2m of this are costs to local businesses and employers in loss of productivity and sickness absences. £5.2m is attributed to treating smoking related ill health in the NHS and a further £0.3m due to passive smoking. Nearly £3m is spent on the effects of smokers' and ex-smokers' poor health later in life as a result of smoking related illness.
5. The government has set a national target for reducing smoking prevalence to 12% by 2022 which means Ashford will need to reduce its current prevalence figure by a further 5.4%. This is one of the initiatives we will use to work towards this target by motivating and supporting people to quit smoking.
6. Details on how Ashford is intending to tackle smoking are outlined in the Ashford Smoking Action Plan available within the papers for the last Ashford Health & Wellbeing Board meeting available at <http://vm-abcapps/committeeSystem/CommitteeDetails.aspx?CommitteeId=71>.
7. Further information on Ashford smoking prevalence is provided at Appendix A.

## **Objectives for introducing smoke-free grounds**

8. These are:
  - To help create a 'new normal' whereby people become accustomed to not expecting to smoke on sites which are working to improve health and wellbeing
  - To support workplace health & welfare and to encourage and support our staff and others who wish to stop smoking
  - To support other health related bodies who are or are working towards becoming smoke-free sites e.g. the local hospital
  - To support the Ashford Health & Wellbeing Board reduce smoking prevalence and help KCC to achieve its health & wellbeing objectives
  - To build on our smoke-free school gates and play areas projects
  - Reduce the harms caused by second hand smoke

## **Scope**

9. Signage will be placed around the perimeter of the Civic & Stour Centre site asking smokers not to smoke within the immediate vicinity of the both buildings and sections of the car park closest to the Civic & Stour Centre buildings.
10. Clarity over the area covered is important particularly for members of staff as there will be no designated area for smoking and it will be expected that staff move beyond the boundary of the designated area if they need to smoke. It is proposed that vaping be treated in the same way as smoking for the purpose of this scheme.
11. A map showing the proposed smoke-free area is provided at Appendix B. The existing areas used by smokers and vapers will no longer be so "designated".

## **Timing**

12. It is proposed to introduce the scheme in late January 2018 as soon as the required advertising consent has been obtained for the signage. It is proposed to operate the scheme for an 18-month trial period. This will provide time to assess its success in terms of compliance and identify any necessary changes within the Council's policy or other arrangements.

## **Compliance and support to quit smoking**

13. This is not about forcing people not to smoke in what is a public space but about asking and encouraging them not to smoke on our site. It is about getting them to think about where they smoke, to support them to stop smoking and help to create a healthy environment for all. Staff, tenants & visitors to the Civic & Stour Centre will be given sufficient advance warning and clear information so they know what to expect. HR and Customer Services will

provide support to staff who would like support to give up smoking. Training will also be offered to staff to become quit coaches so that they can provide practical advice on stopping smoking and can signpost people to quitting support.

14. With regard to Council employees, smoking in areas that are not permitted is already covered by our Conditions of Service and employees who breach the policy may be liable to disciplinary action.
15. Anyone who drops a cigarette end on the site can, however, face enforcement action under the Council's littering provisions.
16. There is a risk that the request not to smoke in the extended area will be ignored and this is increased by the fact there is no intention, or indeed ability, to enforce the enlarged area. The aim is, however, to encourage and support people to give up smoking rather than punishing them.
17. ONE YOU services will provide access to quitting support, and we will run our usual wellbeing initiatives providing smoking quit club run in January each year by the NHS and supporting the Stoptober initiative or other national smoking days.
18. Smoke-free public places is about creating a 'new normal'. There is no intention to make any changes to the Council's Smoking Policy, although a review will be undertaken after the trial to determine if the policy requires amendment.

## **Council's Smoking Policy**

19. At present, the Council's Smoking Policy states that staff can only smoke or vape when working or visiting any workplace owned or managed by the Council if they are at least 5m from any door, openable window or air intake. It further states that smoking while on duty will only be allowed in designated smoking areas.
20. A copy of the Council's current Smoking Policy is provided at Appendix D.

## **Costs**

21. Going smoke-free is about much more than requiring smokers to move away from the Civic and Stour Centre to smoke - it is primarily about helping staff who smoke to quit and raising public awareness at the same time. There are initial set-up costs, including new signage, advertising consent and creation of communications resources and so on. Investment will also be need in terms of staff time supporting staff and providing access to quitting support. Fewer employees that smoke pose a potential saving to employers through reduced sick leave and improved productivity costs.



## **Will this mean staff take longer breaks to smoke?**

22. The Council will do all it can to help its staff who smoke to quit, or for those who aren't ready to stop in one step, to reduce the harm from smoking. Over time, the number of smokers will reduce and therefore the time taken for breaks will diminish. The Council's Smoking Policy covers recording time taken during smoking breaks and this also includes time vaping.

## **Will people smoking at the boundary of the site brings its own problems?**

23. The boundary has been set to avoid smokers being displaced to neighbouring residential premises. This is one reasons why North Park has not been included in the scheme.
24. If the right building blocks are in place, the number of people smoking on the site will be minimised. This includes:
  - Clear communications, so that employees, others working at the Civic Centre and Stour Centre know in advance of coming that they won't be able to smoke or vape on-site
  - On-site quitting advice and support for all employees and those who work or visit us.

## **Implications and Risk Assessment**

25. The scheme as it applies to the extended external areas is not legally enforceable. In the case of Council employees, however, the current Smoking Policy, and the areas covered by that policy remain operational and can be enforced through the conditions of service as relevant to the Council's existing smoking policy.
26. While the extended area will not be enforced, the situation with regard to Council's employees will be monitored over the 18-month trial period. If the spirit of this change is ignored then we will need to incorporate this within the review of the smoking policy. The dropping of cigarette ends will be enforced through the Council's littering controls and this covers all users of the grounds i.e. staff and public alike.

## **Equalities Impact Assessment**

27. Members are referred to the equality impact assessment provided at Appendix D.
28. This concludes that smoke-free grounds is being pursued on an equitable basis. It does not breach any human rights but acknowledges that there is great public health good that can be achieved those smoking-free programmes. All staff will have access to quit support and they are permitted to smoke outside the designated smoke-free area. The policy promotes positive health and

wellbeing for all. Smokers may see this as an infringement upon their perceived right to smoke. This is not however specific to protected characteristic groups. The policy builds on existing council activity in this area and it will help to reduce smoking prevalence as not smoking in public areas become the norm.

## **Consultation Planned or Undertaken**

29. The proposals have been developed collaboratively with the Ashford Smoking Task Group and have the full support of KCC Public Health. The proposals are backed by the Ashford Health & Wellbeing Board and have significant support from the Portfolio Holder with responsibility for Wellbeing and Safety, KCC Director of Public Health and Ashford Borough Council Chief Executive.
30. The proposals have been developed with Ashford Leisure Trust (ALT) who are keen to introduce smoke-free grounds as this aligns with their core health and welfare objectives.
31. An on-line survey was conducted of Civic Centre staff and this was also made available to our tenants (i.e. Public Health England, DSA & Chapel Down) and also and the Ashford Leisure Trust. A hard copy survey form was made available at both the Civic Centre & Stour Centre receptions for visitors to both buildings.
32. The results of the survey, which closed on the 31st October 2017, showed support for introducing smoke-free grounds. In total 214 responses were received with 70.19% supporting the introduction of smoke-free grounds within the Civic and Stour Centre. There were 26.92% against the proposal and 2.88% were unsure. Details of the responses to the survey questions, including the issued raised within a free text area of the on-line survey, were shared with the Joint Consultative Committee (JCC) that considered this proposal on the 2nd November 2017.
33. A summary of the additional comments received via the survey are summarised below. They are grouped into those comments against the proposal and those in support:

### ***Against***

- a. The current arrangements are adequate
- b. Concern that the scheme would create additional work for officers whose time would be better spent on other issues
- c. There haven't been concerns raised so why introduce the changes
- d. Represents unnecessary interference into people's lives
- a. Smokers should have a properly designated smoking area which is a safe area for them
- b. Smokers are considerate and not affecting other users of the grounds
- c. Being able to take a smoking break reduces stress
- d. Standing in the rain to smoke is not helpful
- e. The area currently used by smokers (i.e. the Stour Centre undercroft) doesn't affect anyone and should be preserved
- f. Could push smokers into Mill Court or onto North Park

- g. There is nothing worse than witnessing staff grouped outside public buildings smoking, better to designate a single location within the grounds but away from windows & pedestrian routes
- h. Question over how the area would be enforced in relation to the public
- e. Concerns relevant to use of illegal drugs in the vicinity
- f. Staff will have further to go for the smoking breaks
- g. Breach of smokers' rights
- h. Unlikely to be successful if not enforceable
- i. Smoking is legal and this proposal marginalises smokers even more
- j. Smoking is an addiction and requires support to quit rather than segregation and alienation
- k. Need to prevent anti-social behaviour under the Stour Centre rather than including illegal drug use

### **Support**

- a. Smoking should be discouraged on all council land
- b. Staff should not be able to use the flexi-scheme during core hours to take a smoking break, it gives a poor impression to visitors
- c. Prevents staff time being wasted
- d. Allowing smoking breaks is unfair on non-smokers
- e. Some private sector companies only permit smoking during lunch hour
- f. The proposal should also apply to vapers
- g. Staff should not smoke, even if it is away from the building
- h. Support is available to help people quit and the scheme will help encourage more to quit
- i. The distance smokers are being asked to move away is not far
- j. The proposal is a declaration of our support for staff wellbeing and residents
- k. Smoke-free areas are beginning to be common place
- l. The area should be larger to encompass the skate park, old KCC car park area and land right up to the river
- m. There is too much smoking under the Stour Centre currently
- n. The current 5m rule doesn't work as smoke can still drift into the building, the new area will provide proper protection
- o. Smoking should be totally banned
- p. Staff should not be exposed to second-hand smoke when on the way to and from the office
- q. Current area used by smoke is visible to public and young people and is not ideal. Importance setting a good example to the young people in the Civic and Stour centre grounds and related to this the suggestion that the skate park could be included
- r. Important part of motivating change

- 34. In total, comments were received on 104 surveys.
- 35. The proposals (which at that time suggested vaping would not be included in the widened smoke-free area) were considered by the JCC on the 2nd November 2017.
- 36. While many of the points raised at JCC reflected the feedback from the survey, it is appropriate to reflect the discussion that took place. An extract from the minutes of the meeting is provided as follows (minute reference JCC 2/11/17):

- There was some unease about the how the proposals would be policed and enforced. They were not legally enforceable and there were currently no proposals to amend the existing Smoking Policy or Conditions of Service. Penalty Charge Notices could not be issued although anyone who dropped a cigarette end on the site could face enforcement under the Council's littering provisions. The situation would be monitored over the 18-month trial period and if the spirit of the change was ignored it may need to be incorporated in to a subsequent review of the Policy.
- On the issue of enforcement, it was considered that different standards would be applied to members of staff and the public, and this would be unfair. Whilst staff may not be disciplined in the traditional sense, they would inevitably be targeted more readily than members of the public. In addition, there was a perception that one of the main drivers for this was the fact that members of the public often gathered under the sheltered car park to smoke cannabis, and staff were being punished for this which again appeared unfair.
- The current arrangements provided a designated sheltered area for smoking and surely this was preferable to having smokers scattered in different locations out in the open air, including potentially in the middle of North Park, the public pathways approaching the Civic/Stour Centre and the Mill Court housing area.
- People knew where the existing area was and could avoid it if they wanted to. If the idea was to make smokers less visible, and second hand smoke less prevalent, this was likely to have the opposite effect. It was considered that not enough thought had gone in to this element of the proposals and there were other ways of achieving the same objectives.
- Vaping had not been included in the proposals, but some staff had expressed the view that they found this more anti-social than smoking and as there was no firm evidence about the safety or otherwise of vaping and an admission that further research was needed, should this not be treated the same as smoking? [It was] advised that whilst vaping may be considered anti-social, the smoking measures had been proposed for health reasons rather than anti-social ones. Many smokers found e-cigarettes helpful for quitting and remaining a non-smoker. E-cigarettes also carried a fraction of the risk associated with cigarettes (around 95% safer).
- Motivation to quit smoking was an emotive point but it was considered that the majority of smokers would give up when they were ready to do so, rather than because they were told to do so.

37. The JCC requested that the feedback be included within this report and the points raised be further considered. The necessary consideration has taken place and addressed within the next section of the report.

## Other Options Considered

38. Not implementing the proposal is an option, however, this would miss the opportunity to promote smoke-free areas and reduce smoking prevalence.
39. The possibility of extending the area further e.g. into North Park, was considered, however, there is a desire not to have a boundary from the smoke-free area that is close to residential premises i.e. Mill Court. The proposed area is also naturally marked by roads/paths and takes in the existing smoke-free play areas. The displacement of smokers will be considered as part of the schemes evaluation.
40. In regard to council employees, an alternative option would be to immediately alter the smoking policy to prohibit smoking within the expanded area. A trial period will, however, provide an opportunity to gauge support for the scheme and overcome any potential challenges without the threat of employment sanctions. The scheme is aimed at helping smokers and the trial will also provide an opportunity to give quick support.
41. The policy is not, however, preventing for staff from smoking, just asking them to move a little further from the building. In fact the distance between the area currently used by the majority of smoker is only a matter of meters away from the new boundary. Staff are not being asked to stop smoking, they are just being asked to move to another area. The area currently used by smokers is in any case some distance from the building in order to avoid doors and windows. Further comment on the fairness of the scheme is provided within the attached Equality Impact Assessment. With regard to staff being more visible, as a consequence of removing the 'designated' area, it maybe that staff are less likely to congregate in a single location and therefore less likely to draw attention to the public. It is noted that the number of smokers as a percentage of total Council's employees is relatively low (estimated at approximately 3% i.e. 12 smokers of ) and therefore the impact on the public in terms of visibility is not considered to be significant especially when weighed against the potential benefits of the scheme.
42. In the survey and proposal as submitted to JCC, vaping was permitted within the smoke-free area. The proposal was made on the basis that many find switching to e-cigarettes useful which quitting smoking and Public Health England estimates that e-cigarettes are around 95% less harmful than tobacco. There are currently 2.9 million vapers in the UK – around 97% of users are current or former smokers. The Government made the positive decision to feature use of e-cigarettes in this year's Stoptober campaign.
43. The results of the survey (as supported by JCC) do, however, indicate, that most who thought smoke-free grounds should be introduced and the area widened, also thought that vaping should be treated in the same way. Of those who supported the proposals, 122 **also** wanted vaping treated in the same way as smoking, as opposed to 26 who supported the proposal regarding smoking **but not** vaping. The proposal as presented in this report has therefore been modified to consider this view. The difficulty of distinguishing cigarette smoke from vape from e-cigarettes was also a consideration when making this change to the original proposal.

## **Reasons for Supporting Option Recommended**

44. The option recommended will achieve the necessary behaviour change overtime and provide additional motivation for people to quit smoking.

## **Next Steps in Process**

45. If agreed, the proposals will be implemented towards the end of January 2018. The necessary signage will be installed before then and communication with staff and public.
46. The operation of the scheme will be reviewed in 18-months from the date of implementation. Depending on the outcome of the trial, the Council's Smoking Policy will be reviewed. Evaluation will can include an assessment of compliance levels, identification of any issues relevant to the actual defined area, review of signage locations, level of complaint/compliments, press coverage analysis. It will also be important to look at take up of quit support, adapt or enhance arrangements to support staff to quit (i.e. is there more that we can do), the current evidence for an against permitting vaping within the grounds, wider smoking prevalence trends, and most importantly feedback from those who work or visit the Civic and Strour Centre.

## **Conclusion**

47. Achieving further reductions in smoking prevalence is challenging but the bottom line is clear: we need to support smokers not to smoke. Having a smoke-free site illustrates our commitment to reduce smoking prevalence within our community and line with our health and wellbeing aspirations. This is about providing community leadership for what is a vitally important public health issue.

## **Portfolio Holder's Views**

48. I could not be more supportive of this proposal. It is imperative for the Council, and indeed other public bodies, to lead the way in reducing smoking prevalence and doing this in a way that supports people. We have a real opportunity through this and other initiatives such as smoke-free play areas and school gates to demonstrate our commitment to our community's health and wellbeing.

**Councillor Brad Bradford - Portfolio Responsibility for Highways, Wellbeing and Safety**

## **Contact and Email**

49. Sheila Davison – Head of Health, Parking & Community Safety – 01233 330224

# Statistics on Smoking in Ashford

January 2017

## A significant Health Issue

### Raising Awareness

Ashford HWB is committed to helping reduce smoking prevalence in the Ashford population.

### Smoking and health

Smoking is a risk factor for lung cancer, COPD, heart disease and cancers of the lip, mouth, throat, bladder, kidney, stomach, liver and cervix.

### Smoking rates

The highest levels of smoking are estimated in:

**22.5%**  
Stanhope ward

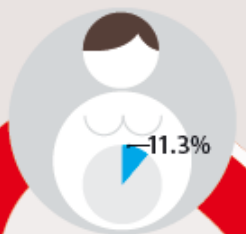
**20.9%**  
Victoria ward

**20.8%**  
Norman ward

**20.8%**  
Aylesford Green

### Smoking in pregnancy

In 2015-16 11.3% of births were to women who were smokers in pregnancy.



### Cost

Each year, smoking in Ashford costs the community £34.3m and the NHS across Ashford £5.5m.

£34.3m



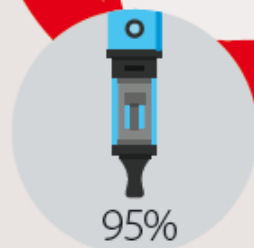
### Smoking rates among young people

Some Youth Workers in Ashford will become Quit Coaches to support young people who want to give up smoking.

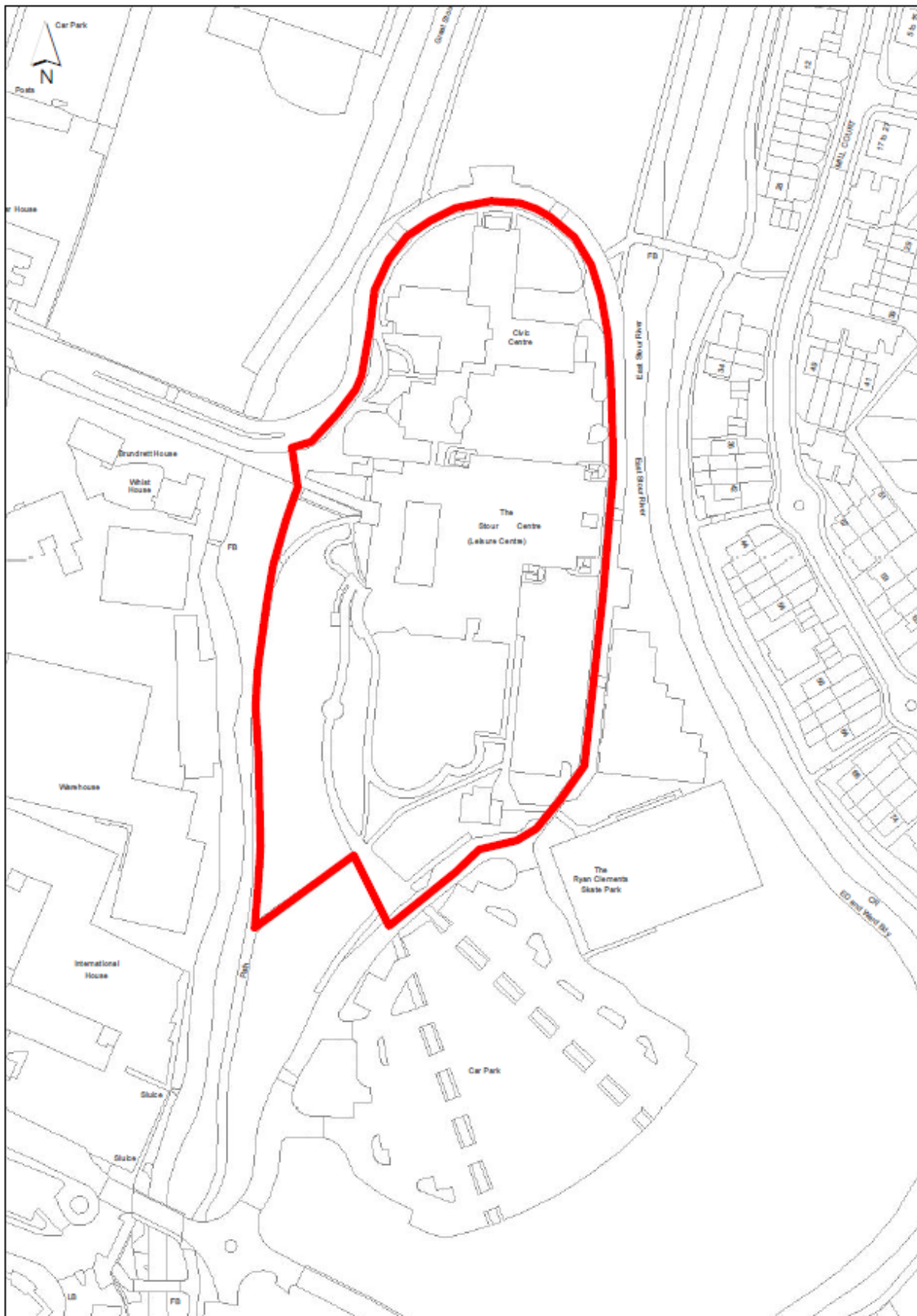


### E-cigarettes

Public Health England reports that e-cigarettes are around 95% less harmful than tobacco.



# Appendix B – Smoke-free area





## Appendix C – Current Council Smoking Policy

### Smoking

- [Introduction](#)
- [General principles](#)
- [Definition of the workplace](#)
- [Permitted smoking areas](#)
- [Time recording](#)
- [Lease cars](#)
- [Clients](#)
- [Residential accommodation](#)
- [Buildings leased or hired to other parties](#)
- [Occupational health](#)
- [Enforcement](#)
- [Responsibilities](#)

#### **1 Introduction**

- 1.1 Second hand exposure to tobacco smoke is recognised to be a risk factor for lung cancer and heart disease in non-smokers, as well as many other illnesses.
- 1.2 The Council acknowledges that breathing people's smoke is a public health hazard. Therefore, the following policy has been agreed between the Council, Unison and the Staff Representatives concerning smoking in the workplace.
- 1.3 This policy also complies with the smoke free provisions of the Health Act 2006.

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#### **2 General principles**

- 2.1 This policy seeks to guarantee non-smokers the right to work in air free of tobacco smoke, while also taking account of the needs of those who smoke. The majority of premises directly managed by the Council will be designated smoke free. This includes not only the smoking of tobacco in all forms, but also the smoking of herbal substitutes.
- 2.2 Although they fall outside the scope of current smoke-free legislation, the Council also prohibits the use of electronic cigarettes in the workplace.
- 2.3 Smoking, in all forms, will not be allowed in any part of a building or vehicles owned or managed by the Council. Smoking while on duty will only be allowed in designated, outdoor areas.

#### **3 Definition of the workplace**

- All indoor premises owned or operated by the Council;

- All official vehicles will be smoke free at all times (including the Mayor's car and vehicles carrying the Council's logos).

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## **4     *Permitted smoking areas***

- 4.1 Staff working at or visiting any workplace owned or managed by the Council whilst on duty may only smoke when they are at least 5 metres from any door, openable window or air intake.
- 4.2 Staff using the permitted smoking areas are responsible for maintaining the tidiness and cleanliness of the areas by ensuring the appropriate disposal of cigarette butts etc.

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## **5     *Time recording***

- 5.1 Staff taking time to smoke must log in and log out on their Portal Timesheets.
- 5.2 Managers are required to monitor the recording of their staff's smoking breaks to ensure that there is no abuse of this provision.

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## **6     *Lease cars***

- 6.1 An officer with a lease car must not smoke in their car whilst conveying passengers as part of their official duties.

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## **7     *Clients***

- 7.1 Officers are not permitted to smoke while in the homes of clients regardless of whether or not the client smokes. If clients insist on smoking in front of officers the officer should ask the client to stop, providing they feel it is safe to do so. Officers may report the incident to their line manager who should write formally to remind the client of our policy.

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## **8     *Residential accommodation***

- 8.1 Officers working at or visiting in the course of their duties any residential accommodation must not smoke. Residents may smoke in their own rooms.

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## **9     *Buildings leased or hired to other parties***

- 9.1 The relevant service areas are responsible for ensuring that the person in control of the premises is informed that the building must be smoke free and it is their duty to prevent users from smoking whilst the building is leased/hired to them.

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## **10    Occupational health**

10.1 An officer who is seeking assistance to give up smoking should contact their GP for advice on practical support or the NHS Stop Smoking services.

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## **11    Enforcement**

11.1 Employees who breach this policy may be liable to disciplinary action.

11.2 Staff should be aware that they may be liable for a fixed penalty fine outside this policy in the same way as all members of the public are.

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## **12    Responsibilities**

12.1 Managers are responsible for informing their staff of this policy and to enforcing it by taking action where there are breaches.

12.2 The Head of Personnel and Development is responsible for:

- Informing all applicants to posts that that the Council has smoke free workplaces;
- Informing staff of facilities offered to assist them to stop smoking;
- Updating this policy.

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*Policy Agreed: JCC September 2014*

## Appendix D

# Equality Impact Assessment

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1. An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) is a document that summarises how the council has had due regard to the public sector equality duty (Equality Act 2010) in its decision-making. Although there is no legal duty to produce an EIA, the Council must have **due regard** to the equality duty and an EIA is recognised as the best method of fulfilling that duty. It can assist the Council in making a judgment as to whether a policy or other decision will have unintended negative consequences for certain people and help maximise the positive impacts of policy change. An EIA can lead to one of four consequences:

- (a) No major change – the policy or other decision is robust with no potential for discrimination or adverse impact. Opportunities to promote equality have been taken;
- (b) Adjust the policy or decision to remove barriers or better promote equality as identified in the EIA;
- (c) Continue the policy – if the EIA identifies potential for adverse impact, set out compelling justification for continuing;
- (d) Stop and remove the policy where actual or potential unlawful discrimination is identified.

### Public sector equality duty

2. The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the council, when exercising public functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- (a) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- (b) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;

(c) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it (ie tackling prejudice and promoting understanding between people from different groups).

3. These are known as the three aims of the general equality duty.

### Protected characteristics

4. The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine protected characteristics for the purpose of the equality duty:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership\*
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

\*For marriage and civil partnership, only the first aim of the duty applies in relation to employment.

### Due regard

5. Having 'due regard' is about using good equality information and analysis at the right time as part of decision-making procedures.

6. To 'have due regard' means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities the council must consciously consider the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations. This can involve:

- removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics.
- taking steps to meet the needs of people with certain protected characteristics when these are different from the needs of other people.

- encouraging people with certain protected characteristics to participate in public life or in other activities where it is disproportionately low.
7. How much regard is 'due' will depend on the circumstances. The greater the potential impact, the higher the regard required by the duty. Examples of functions and decisions likely to engage the duty include: policy decisions, budget decisions, public appointments, service provision, statutory discretion, decisions on individuals, employing staff and procurement of goods and services.
8. In terms of timing:
- Having 'due regard' should be considered at the inception of any decision or proposed policy or service development or change.
  - Due regard should be considered throughout development of a decision. Notes shall be taken and kept on file as to how due regard has been had to the equality duty in research, meetings, project teams, consultations etc.
  - The completion of the EIA is a way of effectively summarising this and it should inform final decision-making.
- A public authority cannot satisfy the duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken.
  - The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.
  - The duty is a non-delegable one. The duty will always remain the responsibility of the public authority.
  - The duty is a continuing one so that it needs to be considered not only when a policy, for example, is being developed and agreed but also when it is implemented.
  - It is good practice for those exercising public functions to keep an accurate record showing that they have actually considered the general duty and pondered relevant questions. Proper record keeping encourages transparency and will discipline those carrying out the relevant function to undertake the duty conscientiously.
  - A public authority will need to consider whether it has sufficient information to assess the effects of the policy, or the way a function is being carried out, on the aims set out in the general equality duty.
  - A public authority cannot avoid complying with the duty by claiming that it does not have enough resources to do so.

### Case law principles

9. A number of principles have been established by the courts in relation to the equality duty and due regard:
- Decision-makers in public authorities must be aware of their duty to have 'due regard' to the equality duty and so EIA's must be attached to any relevant committee reports.
  - Due regard is fulfilled before and at the time a particular policy is under consideration as well as at the time a decision is taken. Due regard involves a conscious approach and state of mind.

The Equality and Human Rights Commission has produced helpful guidance on "Meeting the Equality Duty in Policy and Decision-Making" (October 2014). It is available on the following link and report authors should read and follow this when developing or reporting on proposals for policy or service development or change and other decisions likely to engage the equality duty. *[Equality Duty in decision-making](#)*

<b>Lead officer:</b>	Sheila Davison
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Decision:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy, project, service, contract</li> <li>• Review, change, new, stop</li> </ul>	To introduce smoke-free grounds around the Civic and Stour Centre. This represents an amendment to the current arrangements and will be operated on a trial basis for 18-months starting 1 January 2018.
<b>Date of decision:</b> The date when the final decision is made. The EIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	7 December 2017
<b>Summary of the proposed decision:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims and objectives</li> <li>• Key actions</li> <li>• Expected outcomes</li> <li>• Who will be affected and how?</li> <li>• How many people will be affected?</li> </ul>	<b>Aim and objective:</b> Smoke-free areas are part of a wider aim to reduce smoking prevalence. The objectives are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To help create a 'new normal' whereby people become accustomed to not expecting to smoke on sites which are working to improve health and wellbeing</li> <li>• To support workplace health &amp; welfare and to encourage and support our staff and others who wish to stop smoking</li> <li>• To support other health related bodies who are or are working towards becoming smoke-free sites e.g. the local hospital</li> <li>• To support the Ashford Health &amp; Wellbeing Board reduce smoking prevalence and help KCC to achieve its health &amp; wellbeing objectives</li> <li>• To build on our smoke-free school gates and play areas projects</li> <li>• Reduce the harms caused by second hand smoke</li> </ul> <b>Key actions:</b> To introduce a voluntary smoke-free area providing signage and using other communication methods. Also to provide support to those wishing to quit smoking. <b>Expected outcomes:</b> Reduction in smoking prevalence and all associated health and welfare benefits. <b>Who will be affected and how:</b> <i>Internal staff resources:</i> Staff will be asked not to smoke or vape in the new area. The existing smoking area will no longer be so designated.

	<p><i>Businesses:</i> No direct consequences. Tenants of the Civic Centre and their employees will also be encouraged not to smoke within the Smoke-free area.</p> <p><i>Public.</i> There is no intention, or indeed possibility, of enforcing the smoke-free area.</p> <p><b>How many people will be affected:</b></p> <p>'The public' refers to all those using Civic and Stour Centre. As the policy is likely to attract attention beyond the borough boundaries there is potential to influence others.</p>
<p><b>Information and research:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline the information and research that has informed the decision.</li> <li>• Include sources and key findings.</li> </ul>	<p>The proposals build on guidance issued by Public Health England. See also the National and Kent tobacco control and smoking strategies.</p>
<p><b>Consultation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What specific consultation has occurred on this decision?</li> <li>• What were the results of the consultation?</li> <li>• Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics?</li> <li>• What conclusions can be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics?</li> </ul>	<p>Staff consultation via survey money also made available to ALT for their staff. Survey form provided at Civic Centre and Stour Centre reception for those who visit both buildings. Survey also made available to Civic Centre tenants.</p> <p>No public consultation other than via the reception surveys.</p> <p>Scheme developed in consultation with KCC Public Health and will the support of the Ashford Smoking Task Group and parent Health &amp; Wellbeing Board.</p> <p>Consultation with HR and legal colleagues on the implications.</p>
<p><b>Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics.</b></p> <p>When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.</p>	

<b>Protected characteristic</b>	<b>Relevance to Decision</b> High/Medium/Low/None	<b>Impact of Decision</b> <b>Positive</b> (Major/Minor) <b>Negative</b> (Major/Minor) <b>Neutral</b>
<u>AGE</u> Elderly	None	Positive (minor)
Middle age	None	Positive (minor)
Young adult	None	Positive (minor)
Children	None	Positive (minor)
<u>DISABILITY</u> Physical	Low	Negative (minor)
Mental	None	Positive (minor)
Sensory	None	Positive (minor)
<u>GENDER RE-ASSIGNMENT</u>	None	Positive (minor)
<u>MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP</u>	None	Positive (minor)
<u>PREGNANCY/MATERNITY</u>	None	Positive (minor)
<u>RACE</u>	None	Positive (minor)
<u>RELIGION OR BELIEF</u>	None	Positive (minor)
<u>SEX</u> Men	None	Positive (minor)
Women	None	Positive (minor)
<u>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</u>	None	Positive (minor)

<p><b>Mitigating negative impact:</b></p> <p>Where any negative impact has been identified, outline the measures taken to mitigate against it.</p>	<p>The policy promotes positive health and wellbeing. Those who smoke will however have further to go to access an area not covered by the smoke-free area. The distance is, however, minimal and the current 'designated' smoking area is, by necessity, at a distance for the building or windows.</p>
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**Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty? No**

Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's *Essential Guide*, alongside fuller *PSED Technical Guidance*.

Aim	Yes / No / N/A
1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	No
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No

<p><b>Conclusion:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish.</li> <li>• There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see guidance above ).</li> <li>• Advise on whether the proposal meets the aims of the equality duty or whether adjustments have been made or need to be made or whether any residual impacts are justified.</li> <li>• How will monitoring of the policy, procedure or decision and its implementation be undertaken and reported?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Equality considerations:</b> Smoke-free grounds is being pursued on an equitable basis. It does not breach any human rights but acknowledges that there is great public health good that can be achieved those smoking-free programmes. All staff will have access to quit support and they are permitted to smoke outside the designated smoke-free area. The policy promotes positive health and wellbeing for all. Smokers may see this as an infringement upon their perceived right to smoke. This is not however specific to protected characteristic groups. The policy builds on existing council activity in this area and it will help to reduce smoking prevalence as not smoking in public areas become the norm.</p> <p><b>Monitoring the</b> success or otherwise will be monitored over the 18-month trial period.</p> <p><b>Equality Duty:</b> The extended smoke-free area does not have any adverse impact by disadvantaging any of the equality groups.</p>
<p><b>EIA completion date:</b></p>	<p>24 October 2017</p>

## Trading and Enterprise Board

Minutes of a Meeting of the Trading and Enterprise Board held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **6<sup>th</sup> November 2017**.

### Present:

Cllr. Bell (Chairman);

Cllrs. Bradford, Burgess, Galpin.

In accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2 (iii) Councillor Burgess attended as Substitute Member for Councillor Clokie.

### Apologies:

Cllrs. Clokie, Ovenden.

### Also Present:

Cllr. Shorter (in his capacity as Director of A Better Choice for Building Consultancy Ltd)

Head of Corporate Property and Projects (in his capacity as Director of A Better Choice for Property Ltd), Accountancy Manager (in her capacity as Director of A Better Choice for Property Ltd), Building Control Manager (in his capacity as Director of A Better Choice for Building Consultancy Ltd), Economic Development Manager (in his capacity as Director of A Better Choice for Building Consultancy Ltd), Senior Accountant, Commercial Development and Regeneration Officer, Trainee Accountant, Senior Member Services Officer.

## 203 Declarations of Interest

<b>Councillor</b>	<b>Interest</b>	<b>Minute No.</b>
Burgess	Made a 'Voluntary Announcement' as a private landlord.	205, 206, 207

## 204 Minutes

### Resolved:

**That the Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2017 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.**

## **205 A Better Choice for Property Ltd – 2016/17 Audited Accounts**

The Senior Accountant introduced the report which presented the External Audit findings report and Statement of Accounts for the 2016/17 financial year for A Better Choice for Property Ltd. He advised that no major issues had been identified which was both refreshing and reassuring, and only one minor adjustment had been made relating to deferred tax.

Following a question from a Member, it was clarified that the figures on page 44 of the report had already been adjusted to reflect their value in thousands and the table's header column was an error.

### **Resolved:**

**That the 2016/17 Statement of Accounts and External Audit Findings report for A Better Choice for Property Ltd. be received and noted.**

## **206 A Better Choice for Property Ltd – Half Yearly Update on Performance**

The report of the Senior Accountant focused on the financial performance of the Company for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 and included two key financial statements, the Statement of Comprehensive Income and the Statement of Financial Position.

### **Resolved:**

**That the unaudited accounts for the period 1<sup>st</sup> April to 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 for A Better Choice for Property Ltd. be received and noted.**

## **207 A Better Choice for Property Ltd – Update on Recruitment**

The Head of Corporate Property and Projects (in his capacity as Director of A Better Choice for Property Ltd) advised that as part of the Company's Business Plan it had been accepted that for the Company to be able to realise its growth plans it needed to employ a dedicated member of staff. This had been agreed by this Board at its last meeting in July, and since then work had been undertaken on a job description and package for a Senior Commercial Development Manager. After lengthy discussions and a lot of work on HR issues, this had now been agreed by the Company Board. A proposal had been put out to the market and they were now awaiting applications. It was advised that as the proposed spend of the funding allocated differed to that agreed at the last TEB, the Board would need to approve that detail before the final appointment was made.

**Resolved:**

**That the update be received and noted and the Board receive a further report to its next meeting to approve the detail of the allocation of the previously released funds ahead of the final recruitment.**

## **208 Appointment of Auditors – Update on Position**

The Senior Accountant explained that at the Company AGMs in July, Directors had been advised that following the abolition of the Audit Commission the Companies now had the option to go out to the market to seek an external auditor. The appointment of an auditor had therefore been deferred in order to carry out a market testing exercise. He had been in discussions with Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) and they had confirmed that the Companies no longer had to use PSAA accredited firms (the 'Big 5') and they would be able to appoint smaller audit companies. Following discussions the Board was of the opinion that, considering the size of the Companies at present, a smaller and more affordable external auditor would be preferable and agreed to ask the Senior Accountant to come forward with a recommendation for the appointment of a smaller company to be agreed at the next meeting.

**Resolved:**

**That the update be received and noted and the Board receive a report back at its next meeting with a formal recommendation for the appointment of an external auditor.**

## **209 Exclusion of the Public**

**Resolved:**

**That pursuant to Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item as it is likely 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 Paragraph 3 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.**

## **210 A Better Choice for Building Consultancy Ltd – Business Case**

The full Business Plan/Options Appraisal was presented to the Board along with a summary of the plan and key recommendations of the Company Board. Both Councillor Shorter and the Building Control Manager (in their capacity as Directors of the Company) ran through the report and all of the options that had been considered, explaining the rationale for the conclusion at paragraph 5 of the report. The Economic Development Manager (in his capacity as a Director) and the Senior

Accountant further advised that work would continue to be undertaken and to conclude the business of the Company as well as finalising the Company Accounts for 2016/17. These would be presented to this Board in due course.

It was clarified that if the Company was put in to dormancy, it could be revived in the future if alternative opportunities arose, and the experience of this exercise would serve well for the future.

Councillor Shorter said he wanted to thank the Trading and Enterprise Board for giving the Company time and space to formulate a Business Plan and to properly consider its future. In turn the Board said it wished to register its thanks to the Economic Development Manager for his efforts in resolving some of the contractual issues that had arisen and managing the situation whilst the appointment of a new Building Control Manager was made.

**Resolved:**

**That following the Company Board's decision to not pursue becoming an Approved Inspector, and moving discretionary services back to the in-house Building Control team, the Company accounts should be finalised and the Company be put in to dormancy.**

## **211 Date of Next Meeting**

**Post Meeting Note: The date of the next meeting has been agreed as Monday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2017 at 9.30am in the Council Chamber.**

DS

**Notes of a meeting of the  
Ashford Strategic Delivery Board  
Friday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at 10.00am**

**Present:**

**Board Members**

Cllr Gerry Clarkson (Chairman) – Leader, ABC  
Rt Hon Damian Green MP  
Cllr Paul Clokie – Portfolio Holder for Planning, ABC  
Cllr Graham Galpin – Portfolio Holder for Corporate Property, ABC  
Cllr Matthew Balfour - KCC, Cabinet Member for Transport and Environment  
Cllr Mark Dance - KCC, Cabinet Member for Economic Development  
Tracey Kerly – Chief Executive, ABC  
Barbara Cooper – KCC, Director – Growth, Environment and Transport  
Chris Moore – Homes and Communities Agency  
Paul Harwood - Highways England  
Mat McLoughlin – Hadlow Group (Substitute for Mark Lumsdon-Taylor)

**Non Board Members**

Cllr Mike Bennett, ABC  
Cllr Jessamy Blanford, ABC  
Cllr Gareth Bradford, ABC  
Mark Ellerby, Network Rail  
Richard Alderton, ABC  
Paul McKenner, ABC  
Lois Jarrett, ABC  
Andrew Osborne, ABC  
Simon Cole, ABC  
Christina Fuller, ABC  
Stewart Smith, ABC  
Steve Parish, ABC  
Lorna Ford, ABC  
Len Mayatt, ABC  
Nicholas Clayton-Peck, ABC  
Jamie Cox, ABC  
Hannah Clayton-Peck, ABC  
Stephen Gasche, KCC  
Matt Hogben, KCC  
Danny Sheppard, ABC

**Apologies**

Mark Lumsdon-Taylor – Hadlow Group  
Katie Stewart – KCC

Item	Notes	Action
1.	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed all those present. He thanked those who had attended the Breakfast Briefing prior to the meeting and trusted all had found it useful.</p>	
2.	<p><b>Ashford International Station Spurs</b></p> <p>Mark Ellerby, Network Rail, introduced this item and gave a presentation on the project to date and the timetable going forward. He said he had good news to present in that the project had already begun ‘on the ground’ and would be delivered on schedule. This was in no small part down to the work of the Project Governance Board and the support of partners. Signalling work would also be completed without any disruption to existing Eurostar services, which had not always looked possible and was a credit to them. The signalling parts of the project were due for completion by the end of February 2018, platform gauging works to be completed shortly afterwards, with new International train services commencing from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018.</p> <p>The Chairman said that the work undertaken to get to this stage had been outstanding, particularly to ensure no interruption to service, and he asked Mark to relay the Board’s pleasure to his colleagues.</p> <p>Stephen Gasche advised that the project was well within its financial envelope and would be delivered for below the £10.5m funding allocated. They were meeting with Eurostar in March to review the launch and they would take the opportunity to raise a potential enhancement of services from Ashford – particularly to Lille and Brussels.</p> <p>In response to a question about resilience, Mark Ellerby advised that they had a vast amount of spare parts for the signalling (indeed all that were in existence) and the parts themselves had a low failure rate and a 45 year lifespan, so there was no concern about resilience.</p>	
3.	<p><b>Conningbrook Country Park</b></p> <p>Steve Parish and Len Mayatt gave a presentation outlining this emerging new project. The presentation gave an overview of the site location and the existing land use. It also focussed on the emerging development opportunities of housing, expansion of the Julie Rose Stadium leisure offer, delivery of a pub/restaurant/hotel, extended sailing and</p>	

	<p>water sport facilities and provision and car parking. Section 106 money should soon start to come through from the housing development and there were already plans to use this to provide a circular walk throughout the entire park, a large destination play area, links to cycling routes, public art and further leisure opportunities. Len Mayatt advised that Conningbrook was an important site and a hub for leisure in Ashford's emerging development plans. A lot of work had been undertaken to improve water quality at the lake to enable it to stay open for leisure events. In the past it had suffered from invasive aquatic weed and blue/green algae, but a combination of the dye that had been applied this year, and the new aeration system to be installed in December 2017, were considered to be sufficient to solve the problems going forward. There was great demand from water sports clubs to use the lake and pressure to provide a hub building which could provide dedicated shower and changing facilities.</p> <p>The Chairman said that Conningbrook was a 'jewel in the Borough's crown and advised that the only remaining stumbling block to their ambitious plans for this site was the purchase of the former KCC depot. They already owned the land on three sides of the depot and wanted to acquire it from KCC in order to provide the water sports changing facility. He was hopeful that sensible discussions could be held shortly over this relatively small piece of land. Mark Dance advised he was on the case and was already discussing this matter with KCC Property. He said that he and Barbara Cooper would accelerate matters as this was potentially a considerable resource for the County and he wanted it to be up and running by next spring.</p> <p>Lois Jarrett referred to the recently completed highway works at the A2070 'pinch-point' which had been delivered by KCC and had been extremely important in improving connectivity in the area. The Chairman concurred and thanked KCC for the amount of highway works they were currently delivering in the Borough.</p>	<p><b>MD/BC</b></p>
<p>4.</p>	<p><b>Newtown Works</b></p> <p>Stewart Smith introduced this item and gave the Board an overview of the site, which included the 330m Grade II listed railway sheds. He showed some drone footage showing the extent of the site. The intention of the project was to deliver a mixed use development of residential, commercial and cultural uses on this previously allocated site, whilst at the same time making use of the historic sheds. It had remained undeveloped for some time due to viability issues but it was</p>	



	<p>now hoped that they were in a position to move forward following more positive discussions with the landowners. An application was being made to the Housing Infrastructure Fund and if that bid was successful it would solve the funding gap itself, but if not, there was also a Plan B in place, and a Heads of Terms that all parties had signed up to.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that this was a scheme that ABC was very keen to see succeed. It was patently more than a standalone housing development and the wider implications could not be emphasised enough. These included the enabling affect it would have on other developments as well as the jobs it would create, its effect on tourism (through AIMREC) and the positives of its proximity to the expanded Designer Outlet. The improved outlook it would give to people arriving at the International Station was also important. Chris Moore re-iterated that recent negotiations with the landowner had been positive and they were now certainly keen to engage. The outcome of the Housing Infrastructure Fund bid would be known by late November/early December.</p>	
5.	<p><b>Elwick Place</b></p> <p>Paul McKenner said that the scheme had moved on considerably in recent weeks. Since the last meeting contractors had been appointed and started work on site. The overall completion date of December 2018 was still well on schedule. Cinema and hotel operators were signed up and efforts were now focussed on re-engaging with the market to assess interest in the A3 units. The Elwick 2 site, for circa 200 apartments was also progressing and Officers were hoping to put a formal proposal to the ABC Cabinet/Full Council shortly.</p>	
6.	<p><b>Commercial Quarter</b></p> <p>Paul McKenner advised that all would have witnessed the emergence of the impressive new office building on the Dover Place car park which formed Phase 1 of the scheme. Work was ahead of schedule with completion now expected by March 2018 (rather than May), with offices being occupied by April. The project would also unlock a wider range of interlinked initiatives in addition to the office space, such as car parking, taxi waiting provision and access to and from the International Station. A brief for the Ashford Digital Hub project was being sent out the following week.</p>	

7.	<p><b>Designer Outlet Expansion</b></p> <p>Lois Jarrett advised that the non-material amendment application submitted in February 2017 had necessitated a number of relatively minor changes to the S106 and planning conditions. These related to minor layout and elevation changes and a reconfiguration of the restaurant quarter, and had all been agreed and signed. Some internal moves had commenced with offsite highway works and construction on site due to start between November 2017 and January 2018. Completion was still expected by the end of 2019 and the intention was to keep the Centre open throughout construction. A new contractor had been appointed and meetings with ABC Planning Officers were planned for the coming weeks.</p>	
8.	<p><b>Ashford College</b></p> <p>Mat McLoughlin introduced this item on behalf of Mark Lumsdon-Taylor. He advised that the new campus and the Phase 1 building had been completed in Summer 2017 and opened for students in September. It had already proved a great success and there was much more to come. A new coffee shop (open to the public) would open in the New Year, hair and beauty courses would be launched from January 2018 and a fine dining restaurant (again open to the public) would be introduced in Summer 2018. In terms of Phase 1, it was a complete 'good news story'. It had all been built to budget, student levels had been higher than expected and people were travelling from both Canterbury and Folkestone to use the facility. Phase 1a had begun and they were aiming to complete by April 2019 with it fully operational by that Summer. Detailed design work would be completed by December 2017, with a contractor appointed by Spring 2018 and work to start next May/June. Phase 2 was embryonic at this stage, but the target completion date was Summer 2020 at the very latest, and discussions with KCC Property had already commenced. He concluded by advising that Hadlow Group were pleased with the ongoing support of ABC, KCC and the SELEP as well as the local MP and thanked them for their partnership.</p>	
9.	<p><b>Junction 10A</b></p> <p>Paul Harwood advised that the Development Consent Order (DCO) Examination had concluded over the Summer and they were now awaiting a decision on grant of the DCO from the Secretary of State by 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2017. No major problems were expected and they were continuing design work with their contractor. There would be a meeting in the</p>	

	<p>coming weeks regarding the Barrey Road issue and he was hoping for a more positive outcome for both businesses and residents. Assuming there were no unforeseen delays they were hoping to start work on site in Spring 2018.</p>	
10.	<p><b>Jasmin Vardimon</b></p> <p>Christina Fuller said that there was a commitment and passion to providing the Jasmin Vardimon Company (JVC) with a new facility at Javelin Road. A Growth Fund bid of £2m had been submitted to support the build out and a decision was expected in December 2017. JVC had been successful with bids for funding from Arts Council England (ACE) and had also received National Portfolio Status which guaranteed ACE funding each year from 2018-22. This was an achievement that should not be underestimated.</p> <p>The Chairman wanted to thank KCC for their input and for taking on the lead role in this project. Barbara Cooper explained that the hard work would continue on the business case and site plans over the coming weeks and months to secure a sustainable future for JVC.</p>	
11.	<p><b>Chilmington Green (Strategic Issues and Community Management Organisation (CMO))</b></p> <p>Lois Jarrett explained that on the strategic side, access roads were now open and early access works had commenced. She thanked Jo Davies at KCC Adoptions for her hard work on this. The first reserved matters application for housing had been registered (346 dwellings) from Hodson Developments and applications from the other three developers were expected before Christmas, bringing registered applications to around 1000 dwellings. On site construction for the first dwellings was expected by Spring 2018 and construction on the first school to commence during Summer 2018. Regarding the A28 widening and junction improvement works, Barbara Cooper advised that KCC was working hard to address the outstanding objections from statutory organisations.</p> <p>In terms of the CMO, Lois Jarrett advised that set-up has been slightly delayed due to delays in construction of housing, but with first occupation now predicted for December 2018, this would also be the date for a 'live' CMO. In the meantime work would continue with the shadow CMO to try and avoid last minute decision making, however the Board noted concerns about delays in decisions from developers on the key matters required to set up the CMO.</p>	

12.	<p><b>Items for January's Ashford Strategic Delivery Board</b></p> <p>The Chairman advised that these would include the Ashford Town Centre Framework and Victoria Park Rejuvenation.</p>	
13.	<p><b>Dates of Next Meetings</b></p> <p>Friday 26 January 2018  Friday 27 April 2018  Friday 27 July 2018  Friday 26 October 2018</p>	

Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Danny Sheppard:  
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## **Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group**

Notes of a Meeting of the Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group held on the **3<sup>rd</sup> November 2017**.

### **Present:**

Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman);  
Cllr. Clokie (Vice-Chairman)

Cllrs. Mrs Blanford, Bradford, Mrs Dyer, Galpin, Shorter, Smith, Suddards.

### **Apologies:**

Cllrs. Dehnel, Pickering.

### **Also Present:**

Cllrs. Mrs Bell, Bell, Bennett, Burgess, A. Howard.

Simon Cole – Head of Planning Policy; Ian Grundy (IG) – Principal Policy Planner; Carly Pettit (CP) – Policy Planner; Matthew Nouch – Policy Planner; Helen Garnett – Policy Planner; Richard Alderton – Corporate Director (Place and Space); Jennifer Shaw – Housing Strategy Manager; Jeremy Baker – Principal Solicitor (Strategic Development); Rosie Reid – Member Services and Ombudsman Liaison Officer.

## **1 Declarations of Interest**

- 1.1 Councillor Clarkson made a Voluntary Announcement as he was a Director for A Better Choice for Property Ltd and a member of the Weald of Kent Protection Society.
- 1.2 Cllr Smith made a Voluntary Announcement as he was Treasurer of the South Willesborough and Newtown Community Group.
- 1.3 Cllr. Shorter made a Voluntary Announcement as he was a Director of A Better Choice for Building Consultancy Ltd and Kent Play Clubs.
- 1.4 Cllr. Clokie made a Voluntary Announcement as he was a Member of the Weald of Kent Protection Society, Tenterden and District Residents Association and Campaign to Protect Rural England.

## **2 Notes of the Meetings of 13<sup>th</sup> September and 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017**

- 2.1 The Notes of the Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group Meetings held on 13<sup>th</sup> September 2017 and 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017 were approved.

### **3 Draft Response to DCLG Consultation ‘Planning for the Right Homes in the Right Places’**

- 3.1 The Head of Planning Policy introduced this item. He explained that, although this item had been discussed at length at the last meeting, it was on the agenda at this meeting so that Task Group members would have an opportunity to discuss and agree the final response, which had to be submitted by 9<sup>th</sup> November. Cabinet members had also been invited to attend this meeting in order to assist in finalising the Council’s response.
- 3.2 It was agreed that the questions and responses would be considered in individual order, and the following amendments were made:

#### Question 1(a)

A Member expressed concern about the wording of the penultimate paragraph, and it was agreed that the reference to Ashford would be removed and replaced with ‘largely rural districts’.

#### Question 5(a)

The importance of the transitional arrangements should be emphasised to allow the Council to take advantage of the existing methodology.

#### Question 5(c)

Amend typo in first paragraph. Emphasis to be given to the first sentence of the second paragraph to indicate the importance of this issue.

#### Question 7(b)

Change response to “Yes”.

#### Question 7(c)

Change response to “No”.

#### Question 8

Amend typo in last paragraph.

#### Question 10(a)

Emphasis to be put on the question of what will replace SHMA. A well-defined protocol is required in its place, and the onus should be on Central Government to clarify this point.

#### Question 12

Emphasis to be placed on the requirement for a proactive role from central government where investment in public infrastructure to assist the delivery of housing can be subject to competitive bidding processes and where it can take a significant time for funds to come forward.

### Question 13

Amend typos, and third sentence to include “developers”. Add that this needs to form part of the review of the NPPF/practice guidance.

### Question 14

More emphasis on final paragraph.

### Question 17(c)

Comment on this question detailing publicity work currently undertaken by the Council and ideas for improvements.

### Question 18(a)

Reinforce final paragraph.

### Question 19

Amend second paragraph to say that the proposed approach **must** be changed through revisions to the NPPF to create the right conditions for housing delivery on the ground.

Responses to Questions 1(b), 2, 3, 4, 5(b), 6, 7(a), 9(a), 9(b), 10(b), 11(a), 11(b), 15, 16, 17(a), 17(b), 18(b), 18(c), were agreed.

- 3.3 Members agreed that Officers should produce an amended set of responses, and circulate these to Task Group and Cabinet members within the next few days so the final response could be endorsed. The final response would be tabled at Cabinet on 9<sup>th</sup> November.

## **Resolved**

- i) That the Task Group agrees the proposed responses to the consultation questions, subject to the amendments above, and subject to the final responses being circulated to Task Group and Cabinet members for endorsement.**

## **4 Duty to Cooperate Update**

- 4.1 The Head of Planning Policy introduced this item. He explained that an issue had recently arisen with a representation from another authority and he and the Chief Executive had met with Officers from that authority. He had been asked to update the Task Group with the results of that meeting. He reported that the other authority had agreed to withdraw their representation on the basis that a Statement of Common Ground would be drawn up between the two Authorities that would establish more formalised discussions together with other relevant councils on how to meet housing requirements. The Chairman wished to thank the officers for resolution of this issue, and confirmed that Members would be pleased to have further conversations with that authority at a future date.

**Resolved**

- i) **That the report be received and noted.**

## **5 Main Changes to the Local Plan 2030 – Public Consultation July 2017 – Site Proposals**

- 5.1 The Policy Planner (CP) introduced this item and gave a presentation which covered the site comments received and options for dealing with these. She explained that the presentation was an update from the report as it included more recent information.
- 5.2 The Principal Policy Planner (IG) introduced the item on Omission Sites. He explained that 22 new sites had been submitted during Summer 2017 as part of the consultation exercise. 10 of these sites were remaining after first stage Sustainability Appraisal screening. Some of these sites would be decided by the Planning Committee in due course if planning applications were received.
- 5.3 Members instructed Officers that the Local Plan must be submitted to the Planning Inspector by the end of 2017. The Head of Planning Policy confirmed that the Local Plan would be submitted electronically, and a paper version would follow thereafter. It was currently anticipated that the examination hearings would be scheduled for April/May 2018 but this would be subject to confirmation by the Planning Inspectorate following submission of the Local Plan.

**Resolved**

- i) **That the Task Group agrees the proposed approach to dealing with the site allocation policy issues, as outlined in the report.**
- ii) **That the information on Omission Sites be received and noted.**
- iii) **That the Task Group instructs Officers that the Local Plan 2030 must be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate before the end of 2017.**

## **6 Date of Next Meetings**

- 6.1 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2017 – CR2 – 9.30am  
5<sup>th</sup> January 2018 – Council Chamber – 10am

Councillor Clarkson (Chairman)  
Local Plan & Planning Policy Task Group

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Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact Rosie Reid:  
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**Agenda Item No:** 19

**Report To:** CABINET

**Date:** 7<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2017

**Report Title:** SCHEDULE OF KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN

**Report Author and Job Title:** Danny Sheppard, Senior Member Services Officer

**Portfolio Holder:** Portfolio Holders are individually specified in the attached Schedule.



<b>Summary:</b>	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

**Significantly 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

**Legal Implications:** n/a

**Equalities Impact Assessment** n/a

**Other Material Implications:** Nil

**Exempt from publication:** No

**Background** None

**Papers:**

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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; Gareth Bradford; Paul Clokie; Graham Galpin; Alan Pickering; Neil Shorter; and Gerald White.

*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 The Town Hall, 24 High Street, Tenterden, during opening hours, or at [www.ashford.gov.uk/councillors\\_and\\_committees.aspx](http://www.ashford.gov.uk/councillors_and_committees.aspx)*

Decision Item	Report Summary	Relevant Portfolio Holder	Report Author	Open or Exempt	Added to Schedule
<b>7<sup>th</sup> December 2017</b>					
Draft Budget 2018/19	<i>To present the preliminary draft service budget and outline MTFP for the purposes of subsequent formal scrutiny by the O&amp;S Task Group and public consultation.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Ben Lockwood	Open	9/12/16
Council Tax Base 2018/19	<i>To present for approval the estimated 2018/19 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	9/12/16

<b>Decision Item</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Open or Exempt</b>	<b>Added to Schedule</b>
Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2017 – 2047	<i>An annual update of the HRA Business Plan financial projections. This report updates the position for the period 2017-47.</i>	Cllr White	Sharon Williams	Open	9/12/16
Chilmington Community Development Strategy	<i>To present an analysis of the consultation with residents and stakeholders and an understanding of the key principles upon which the strategy is based. Members will be requested to adopt the strategy and to agree for the Director of Law and Governance and Head of Cultural Services to negotiate an SLA with the CMO (once created in circa May 2017) to deliver the strategy utilising the S106 sum for community development.</i>	Cllr Clokie	SallyAnne Logan/ Christina Fuller	Open	31/8/17
Discretionary Business Rates Relief Scheme		Cllr Shorter	Ben Lockwood	Open	14/9/17
East Kent Growth Framework	<i>To endorse the East Kent Growth Framework.</i>	Cllr Clarkson	Andrew Osborne	Open	16/10/17
Submission Version of Ashford Borough Local Plan 2030	<i>To cover the responses to the most recent public consultation on the proposed 'main changes' and seek the Cabinet's approval of the final, submission version of the Local Plan.</i>	Cllr Clokie	Simon Cole	Open	21/9/17

<b>Decision Item</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Open or Exempt</b>	<b>Added to Schedule</b>
Purchase of Site for Short Term Temporary Accommodation	<i>To update on the progress for the proposal to purchase 112 Beaver Lane and convert the property into the Council's second short stay accommodation facility and to agree details of the necessary budgets.</i>	Cllr White	Sharon Williams	Open	16/10/17
Smoke-free Civic & Stour Centre Grounds	<i>To update Members on the aspiration for the Civic and Stour Centre grounds to be smoke-free. This is a part of the Ashford Health &amp; Wellbeing Board's work helping to create a healthy environment for our residents, visitors and employees.</i>	Cllr Bradford	Sheila Davison	Open	17/10/17
Victoria Quarter Development (Jemmett Road)		Cllr Shorter	Ben Lockwood	Exempt	8/11/17
<b>11<sup>th</sup> January 2018</b>					
Revenues & Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule	<i>Proposed formal write-off of debts</i>	Cllr Shorter	Peter Purcell	Open (Exempt Appendix)	13/1/17
Ashford College Update	<i>To update members on the progress made by Ashford College, both in terms of the new campus developments as well as improvements to the curriculum offer.</i>	Cllr Clarkson	Andrew Osborne	Open	2/8/17

<b>Decision Item</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Open or Exempt</b>	<b>Added to Schedule</b>
Tenterden Leisure Centre Redevelopment Plans		Cllr Bennett	Ben Moyle	Open	21/9/17
Singleton Environment Centre – Lease Negotiations	<i>To present the approach and explain the discussions to date with Great Chart with Singleton Parish Council who wish to see the Centre remain a community facility with an environmental focus and has confirmed their wish to set up a trust entity to take on the lease and operation of the centre.</i>	Cllr Bennett	Sarah Barber/ Christina Fuller	Open	13/10/17
Homeless Reduction Strategy	<i>To outline what the new Homeless Reduction Act duties will be, the likely staffing resources needed to cover these duties and the tools that the Council has available to deliver the new service.</i>	Cllr White	Rebecca Wilcox	Open	15/6/17
<b>8<sup>th</sup> February 2018</b>					
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report</i>	Cllr Shorter	Maria Seddon	Open	10/2/17
Revenue Budget 2018/19	<i>To present the draft revenue budget for 2018/19 to the Cabinet for recommendation to Council.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Ben Lockwood	Open	10/2/17

<b>Decision Item</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Open or Exempt</b>	<b>Added to Schedule</b>
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-Peck	Open	10/2/17
Annual Report of Work Undertaken on Domestic Abuse and to Support Victims of Domestic Abuse	<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.</i>	Cllr Bradford	James Hann/ Elizabeth Mannington	Open	10/2/17
Cemetery Memorial Safety Policy	<i>Report back on adoption of policy and set of operational guidelines to manage the forward process relating to the safe management of memorials in Ashford.</i>	Cllr Mrs Bell	Tracey Butler	Open	26/2/16
SWAN Centre Pavilion	<i>To seek authority to proceed with a project to replace the outdated and inadequate football changing facilities at the Swan Centre in South Willesborough and replace them with new fit for purpose facilities by working with the local community football club and Kent County Football Association.</i>	Cllr Bennett	Len Mayatt	Open	15/6/17
Wye 3 Masterplan		Cllr Clokie	Mark Chaplin	Open	6/10/17

<b>Decision Item</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Open or Exempt</b>	<b>Added to Schedule</b>
<b>8<sup>th</sup> March 2018</b>					
Annual Pay Policy Statement	<i>A review of the annual Pay Policy Statement and Ashford Living Wage Allowance</i>	Cllr Pickering	Michelle Pecci	Open	10/3/17
Leisure Procurement		Cllr Bennett	Christina Fuller	Open	21/9/17
Opt-to-Buy and Keyworkers		Cllr White	Sharon Williams/ Rebecca Wilcox	Open	9/10/17
<b>12<sup>th</sup> April 2018</b>					
<b>10<sup>th</sup> May 2018</b>					
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report</i>	Cllr Shorter	Maria Seddon	Open	12/5/17
<b>14<sup>th</sup> June 2018</b>					
Final Outturn 2017/18	<i>Final budget outturn for previous financial year.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Ben Lockwood	Open	16/6/17



<b>Decision Item</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Open or Exempt</b>	<b>Added to Schedule</b>
Annual Report and Quarter 4 Performance Report 2017/18	<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>	Cllrs Clarkson/ Shorter	Nicholas Clayton-Peck	Open	16/6/17
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 Clokie	Lois Jarrett	Open	16/6/17
<b>12<sup>th</sup> July 2018</b>					
Revenues & Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule	<i>Proposed formal write-off of debts</i>	Cllr Shorter	Peter Purcell	Open (Exempt Appendix)	14/7/17
Town Centre Annual Report		Cllr Galpin	Jo Wynn-Carter	Open	14/7/17
<b>9<sup>th</sup> August 2018</b>					
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-Peck	Open	11/8/17

<b>Decision Item</b>	<b>Report Summary</b>	<b>Relevant Portfolio Holder</b>	<b>Report Author</b>	<b>Open or Exempt</b>	<b>Added to Schedule</b>
Corporate Commercial Property – Annual Report	<i>To advise of the revenue performance of the Council’s corporate property portfolio during the last financial period and to advise of proposals to increase profitability in the coming financial period.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Stewart Smith	Open	11/8/17
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report</i>	Cllr Shorter	Maria Seddon	Open	11/8/17
<b>13<sup>th</sup> September 2018</b>					
<b>11<sup>th</sup> October 2018</b>					
Medium Term Financial Plan	<i>To ask Cabinet to note the Medium Term Financial Plan ahead of this year’s Budget process.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Maria Seddon	Open	13/10/17
<b>8<sup>th</sup> November 2018</b>					
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-Peck	Open	11/11/16
Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report	<i>Quarterly budget monitoring report.</i>	Cllr Shorter	Maria Seddon	Open	11/11/16

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28/11/17