



CABINET

Notice of a Meeting, to be held in the Council Chamber - Ashford Borough Council on Thursday, 13th June, 2019 at 7.00 pm.

The Members of the Cabinet are:-

- Cllr Clarkson – Leader of the Council
- Cllr Bartlett – Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Legal and Democracy
- Cllr Barrett – Portfolio Holder for Housing
- Cllr Bell – Portfolio Holder for Finance and IT
- Cllr Buchanan – Portfolio Holder for Environment and Land Management
- Cllr Clokie – Portfolio Holder for Regeneration and Corporate Property
- Cllr Feacey – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Leisure
- Cllr Gideon – Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Wellbeing
- Cllr Pickering – Portfolio Holder for Human Resources and Customer Services
- Cllr Shorter – Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development

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

Agenda

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| b) Other Significant Interests (OSI) | |
| c) Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests | |
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| To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 11 th April 2019. | |
| 4. To Receive any Petitions | |

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| 13. | Joint Transportation Board - Nomination and Membership | |
| | The Selection and Constitutional Review Committee held on the 23 rd May 2019 recommended to Cabinet that the following Members be appointed to the Joint Transportation Board – Cllrs Burgess, Forest, Heyes (Ch), Mrs Heyes, Krause, Michael, Ward. The Cabinet is asked to approve this recommendation. | |
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Declarations of Interest (see also “Advice to Members” below)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Advice to Members on Declarations of Interest:

- (a) Government Guidance on DPI is available in DCLG’s Guide for Councillors, at https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/5962/2193362.pdf
- (b) The Kent Code of Conduct was adopted by the Full Council on 19 July 2012, 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.

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Cabinet

Minutes of a Meeting of the Cabinet held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **11th April 2019**.

Present:

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

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

Apologies:

Cllrs. Barrett, Ovenden

Also Present:

Cllrs. Buchanan, Burgess, Hicks, Knowles, Link.

Chief Executive, Director of Law and Governance, Director of Finance and Economy, Head of HR and Customer Services, Head of Corporate Property and Projects, Head of Finance, Human Resources Manager, Policy Manager, Principal Solicitor for Property and Projects, Senior Accountant, Communications Officer, Member Services Officer, Member Services Manager (Operational).

Development Surveyor – Gen2.

415 Declarations of Interest

| Councillor | Interest | Minute No. |
|------------|---|------------|
| Buchanan | Made a Voluntary Announcement as his Son worked for Aspire Land Management. | 421 |

416 Minutes

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cabinet held on the 14th March 2019 be approved and confirmed as a correct record.

417 Leader's Announcements

The Leader advised that as this was the last Cabinet Meeting before the Local Elections on the 2nd May he did not have any specific announcements but wanted to wish everyone well in the weeks to come.

418 Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations to Cabinet – Planning and Air Quality

During its scrutiny of the Council's draft budget, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee expressed a desire to understand more about the Council's Section 106 process and current position, as well as plans for addressing staff shortages within the Planning and Development Service and the ongoing development of an Air Quality Strategy for the Council. In its review, the Committee had made six recommendations which were now presented to the Cabinet.

The Leader thanked the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for their report and advised that the Cabinet were minded to accept three of the six recommendations (iii, iv, and vi). It was considered that the other three recommendations (i, ii, and v) should not be accepted as they were premature at this stage.

Resolved:

- That**
- (i) planning applications must not be permitted to go to the Planning Committee for determination before the time for public consultation has elapsed.**
 - (ii) per the Constitution, planning applications must not be approved under delegated powers where the Ward Member has called the application in to the Planning Committee.**
 - (iii) the Council should engage with UK Power Networks to ensure that there is sufficient grid supply to meet demand for electric vehicle charging in new developments.**
 - (iv) the remaining three recommendations be not adopted.**

419 Adoption of Village Envelope Boundary Maps

The report sought Cabinet approval to adopt village envelope boundaries as informal guidance for development management purposes. These maps had been prepared in consultation with Parish Councils and Ward Members to indicate where the Council currently considered the existing built-up confines of settlements were. These would help clarify the written definitions in the Local Plan for the purpose of decision making on planning applications.

Both the Leader and Portfolio Holder said this had been an extremely worthwhile and positive exercise which had seen good engagement from local representatives.

Recommended:

- That**
- (i) the village envelope boundaries shown in the appendix to the report be adopted as informal guidance for development management purposes.**

- (ii) **authority be delegated to the Head of Planning Policy, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development, to amend, where relevant, a village envelope boundary to account for the construction of new development.**

420 Local Development Scheme (LDS) Update 2019

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which advised that the LDS was required under legislation and compliance with it was a matter of 'soundness' for Development Plan Documents (DPDs). It was therefore essential that it was kept up to date. The draft LDS 2019 set out the project plan and timetable for preparation of the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation DPD until the end of 2020. Both the draft LDS 2019 and the Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation DPD timetable conformed with the regulations.

Recommended:

That the Local Development Scheme 2019 be adopted, as required under Section 15 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011).

421 Personnel Policy Review – Grievance Resolution Policy

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which advised that as part of a wider programme of personnel policy reviews, the Cabinet was asked to consider and advise upon a proposed new Grievance Resolution Policy document, which materially altered existing policy. This policy replaced policy document G1 Grievance Procedure in the current Conditions of Service. He wanted to thank the HR Manager for her hard work in undertaking this review.

Resolved:

That the Grievance Resolution Policy document be approved and form part of the Conditions of Service.

422 Modern.Gov Roll Out and Members IT Scheme Update

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which detailed the progress made to date with the Modern.Gov 'Early Adopters Roll Out' to Elected Members and the subsequent revised IT Scheme for Elected Members from 2019. Further, it reported on the involvement of the IT and Digital Transformation Advisory Committee who had monitored progress over the last year. He explained that this represented a significant step change for the Council, but the experience of the Early Adopters had been good and the full roll out of Modern.Gov would bring significant benefits for the new Council. It would provide a common platform for Members to be able to access documents and communicate with the public and each other. He fully endorsed the proposals and hoped Members would fully embrace the new scheme which would allow further developments over time as well as significant savings in printing and postage costs. He said he also particularly wanted to thank the Member Services Officer who had led on this project for

the enormous amount of work she had put in, as well as the Member Services and IT Teams. The role of the IT and Digital Transformation Advisory Committee, chaired by Councillor Knowles, was also recognised.

Resolved:

- That (i) the progress to date be noted.**
- (ii) the amendments to the Members IT Scheme, including the use of ashford.gov email accounts for all Council business, as set out at Appendix B to the report, be supported and agreed.**

423 Appointment of Project Manager

The Portfolio Holder and Shareholder Representative introduced the report which advised that in accordance with the previously approved Business Plan for A Better Choice for Property Ltd, a significant expansion in the Company's residential portfolio had been supported. To enable this to continue, a Project Manager was now required and would be the second employee of the Property Company. The Trading and Enterprise Board had supported this appointment and Cabinet was asked to recommend approval of the post and remuneration package to Full Council. The post would be funded directly through project delivery finance.

Recommended:

That the appointment of, and remuneration package for a Project Manager, directly employed by A Better Choice for Property Limited, be approved.

424 Joint Transportation Board Minutes – 12th March 2019

Resolved:

That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Joint Transportation Board held on the 12th March 2019 be received and noted.

425 Ashford Town Centre Place Making Board Notes – 21st February and 6th March 2019

Resolved:

That the Notes of the Meetings of the Ashford Town Centre Place Making Board held on the 21st February and the 6th March 2019 be received and noted.

426 Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group Notes – 27th February and 15th March 2019

Resolved:

That the Notes of the Meetings of the Local Plan and Planning Policy Task Group held on the 27th February and the 15th March 2019 be received and noted.

427 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.

428 Strategic Acquisition – Matalan Site, Brookfield Road, Ashford

The report set out a proposal to purchase the freehold of the Matalan site in Brookfield Road, Ashford after the existing owners had brought the investment to the market in February. The site was a key strategic one and formed one of the gateways from rural to urban Ashford on the A28. The freehold was subject to a long lease from Matalan for a remaining term of six-and-a-half years and the Council had made an conditional offer for the property on the terms set out in exempt Appendix 2 to the report, subject to further due diligence and approval from both Cabinet and Council. The investments would provide an income stream to the Council on the basis set out in the report.

Cabinet Members were extremely supportive of the proposals and thanked the Officers involved for their hard work in bringing this proposal forward. The Deputy Leader said he also wanted to thank the Leader and the Chief Executive for leading the culture at the Council which put it in a position to identify and take advantages of opportunities such as this one.

Recommended:

- That**
- (i) the use of the Chief Executive’s urgency powers in relation to the submission of a bid to purchase the property be noted.**
 - (ii) the property as outlined within the report be purchased, subject to detailed due diligence being carried out to the satisfaction of the Chief Executive, Director of Finance and Economy and the Director of Law and Governance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and IT and the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Property.**
 - (iii) to finance the cost of the purchase as outlined in exempt Appendix 2 to the report, this be funded from prudential borrowing.**

- (iv) **authority be delegated to the Head of Legal and Democracy, in consultation with the Head of Corporate Property and Projects to agree, execute and complete all necessary documents required to give effect to the above recommendations.**

Agenda Item 6



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Agenda Item No: 6
Report To: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 13 June 2019
Report Title: Financial Outturn 2018/19
Report Author & Job Title: Lee Foreman – Senior Accountant
Maria Hadfield – Senior Accountant (Capital Monitoring)
Portfolio Holder Neil Bell
Portfolio Holder for: Finance & IT

Summary:

This report presents the outturn revenue position for the General Fund and the Housing Revenue Account for 2018/19 financial year.

It also presents the capital outturn for capital works and how these have been financed, reserve transfers, and a treasury management update.

In February, Cabinet received a forecast based on the third quarter's position which forecast a General Fund deficit of £104,000. This has slightly improved through the last quarter with a final outturn position of £72,000.

The Housing Revenue Account had net expenditure of £452,000 in year which represented a underspend of £0.7m against a budgeted spend of £1.2m.

Key Decision: NO

Significantly Affected Wards: All, none significantly

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

- I. Note the financial outturn for 2018/19**
- II. Note the Annual Treasury Management position and the strategic treasury management review shown at Appendix B**
- III. Approve the increase in the Coachworks budget from £850,000 to £950,000.**

Policy Overview: Upholding a strong focus on managing the Council's resources in line with the Council's Corporate Plan and the Medium Term Financial Plan is a top priority for the Council. This is exercised through our regular monitoring procedures and the responsibilities that managers have for the stewardship of budgets

Financial Implications: The General Fund outturn was a deficit of £72,000.

The Housing Revenue Account was underspent by £699,000.

Various transfers to and from reserves reflect the approved 2018/19 budget strategy and statutory requirements. The level of earmarked reserves (which includes developer contributions) at 31 March 2019 showed an increase of £4,137,000 compared to the start of the year.

Legal Implications

Equalities Impact Assessment

Please see the Budget setting process assessment

Other Material Implications:

None

Exempt from Publication:

Appendix B – Treasury Management Strategic Review is exempt on the grounds that it contains third party information that is not for third party disclosure.

Background Papers:

None

Contact:

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Maria.Hadfield@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330545

Report Title: 2018/19 Outturn Report

Introduction and Background

1. Following the closure of the 2018/19 service accounts this report provides Members with the outturn results for the General Fund (GF) and the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for 2018/19. It also covers outturn of capital spending and an update on treasury management.
2. The statutory deadline for closing and the Section 151 Officer (Director of Finance and Economy) signing off the accounts for presentation to our external auditors is the end of May.

Proposal/Current Position

3. Members are being asked to note the outturn results for 2018/19 for the GF and HRA, the in-year treasury management position and the content of the Strategic Investment Portfolio Review in addition to approving the increase in the Coachworks capital budget from £850,000 to £950,000.

2018/19 General Fund Outturn

4. Overall the final outturn position was £72,000 over the approved budget, as shown at **Table 1**, with further analysis, by service, at **Table 2**. This final position reflects a number of variances that occurred during the year. The most significant movements for each service area are explained below.

Chief Executive

5. This directorate delivered an overall saving of £39,000 in year. This was largely attributable to the Chilmington Management Organisation savings of £45,000 following the departure of the CMO Lead Officer.
6. The other services in this directorate, Communications and Marketing, Economic Development and Policy and Performance saw savings of £9,000 and a pressures of £11,000 and £3,000 respectfully.

Director of Finance and Economy

5. **Corporate Property & Projects** had an overall overspend of £692,000 of which £394,000 had previously been reported.
6. In the last quarter further pressures emerged from delays in occupancy at Park Mall and International House which has led to an increases in non-recoverable service charges, reduction in forecast rents receivable and business rates liabilities totalling £240,000. Following changes in the insurance category ratings, additional insurance premiums of £86,000 have also become payable.
7. Some of the forecasted repairs and maintenance work did not come forward in Q4 which reduced the previously reported repairs and maintenance forecast by £30,000.
8. **Finance and ICT** had an overall pressure of £70,000 at year end against a forecast surplus of £255,000 at Q3.

9. The movement of £325,000 throughout at Q4 included £130,000 of Strategic Corporate costs that were not funded from reserves and £130,000 increase in the write off provision.
10. Other significant pressures arising in the last quarter included additional software costs of £40,000 and an increase in bank charges of £30,000.
11. **General Fund Housing** is reported an annual pressure of £362,000 of which £173,000 did relate to the Housing Options Team.
12. The Housing Options Team has reported pressure from Bed and Breakfast costs throughout the year, although the Q3 forecast was £36,000 over the final outturn indicating that further anticipated pressures did not materialise. There was also a reduction in rent deposits held at year which resulted in a £80,000 reduction in liabilities being posted back to the general fund.
13. Pressure in Q4 was due to the Facilities Management Team which saw an increase of £161,000 over Q3 forecasts. This pressure is largely due to civic centre building maintenance and adaptations of £85,000, and new equipment and furniture costs of £50,000.
14. Other pressures included increased grounds maintenance costs at the Chilmington Gypsy Site of £30,000 and a staffing pressure in the Housing Strategy and Enabling Team of £22,000.

Director of Law & Governance

15. **Community Safety and Wellbeing** delivered an annual saving of £95,000 for 2018/19. This was largely delivered by Parking Services that generated additional income of £70,000 and made a £30,000 saving on lease payments.
16. **Legal and Democratic Services** had a small increase in pressure for Q4 of £7,000 which see them recognises an overall pressure of £161,000 as previously reported.

Director of Place & Space

17. **Culture** had an exceptionally busy year and delivered numerous events above its usual programme including the much-acclaimed Snowdogs Trail, and the WW1 commemorative events. These extra activities were largely funded through reserves although the service did report an overall pressure of £278,000 in year.
18. The additional expenditure was largely due to an increase in utility costs at the Stour Centre which where £170,000 over budget as a result of ongoing problems with the CHP pump, and the settlement of previous years utility bills.
19. Other expenses included non-recoverable insurance costs and rental income not being received as budgeted.
20. **Environmental and Land Management**, this area had a surplus of £311,000 at year end which was a further saving of £141,000 on those reported in Q3.
21. This area saw continued growth in subscriptions to the Garden Waste service which saw additional income of £110,000 received. Other areas in the service such as bulky waste collections and cemeteries saw better than expected income figures totalling £37,000.

22. Savings on costs were also generated from Public Conveniences, Canine Control and Pest control services totalling £48,000.
23. The Aspire grounds maintenance team made savings of £25,000 for the year which included £102,000 of salary savings. Some of these savings were used to fund new operational equipment within the service.
24. The **Planning** service experienced recruitment difficulties through 2018/19 and defended significant planning applications which contributed to an overall pressure of £60,000 for the service. To reduce the level of overspend the service depleted its planning reserve of £192,000, and was supported by the £200,000 service contingency budget. A breakdown of the significant budget movements are detailed below:-
 - £353,000 pressure in consultant costs to deliver day to day services
 - £149,000 saving in salaries to support consultant costs
 - £197,000 additional planning income
 - £215,000 pressure from consultant costs for defending appeals
 - £77,000 pressure on consultant enforcement costs
 - £55,000 pressure from general consultancy advice
 - £73,000 pressure for costs associated with local plan
 - £25,000 of other general pressures in service
 - £192,000 transfer from planning reserve
 - £200,000 funding from service pressure contingency

Capital Charges and Net Interest

25. Capital and Net Interest is covered in the Treasury Management section of this report (from paragraph 46).

Table 1 – General Fund Budget Outturn - Directorate

| | Revised Budget 2018/19 A £'000 | Final Outturn 2018/19 B £'000 | Variance (B-A) £'000 | Movement from Quarter 3 £'000 |
|----------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Chief Executive | 1,226 | 1,187 | (39) | (18) |
| Director of Finance & Economy | 2,965 | 4,089 | 1,124 | 672 |
| Director of Law & Governance | 1,960 | 2,037 | 77 | (106) |
| Director of Place & Space | 10,367 | 10,356 | (11) | 80 |
| Net Service Expenditure | 16,518 | 17,669 | 1,151 | 628 |
| Capital Charges and net interest | (3,388) | (3,422) | (34) | 220 |
| Revenue Contribution to Capital | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Levies, Grants and Precepts | 256 | 255 | (1) | (1) |
| Contribution to reserves | 1,028 | 145 | (883) | (717) |
| Budget Requirement | 14,414 | 14,647 | 233 | 130 |
| Financing: | | | | |
| New Homes Bonus | (2,478) | (2,501) | (23) | (23) |
| Business Rates | (4,538) | (4,849) | (311) | (310) |
| Council Tax | (7,395) | (7,225) | 170 | 170 |
| Total | 3 | 72 | 69 | (32) |

Table 2 - General Fund Outturn – Service

| | Revised Budget 2018/19 A £'000 | Final Outturn 2018/19 B £'000 | Variance (B-A) £'000 | Movement from Quarter 3 £'000 |
|---|---|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| Chilmington Management Organisation | 74 | 29 | (45) | (14) |
| Corporate Policy, Economic Development & Communications | 1,152 | 1,158 | 6 | (4) |
| Corporate Property & Projects | (1,546) | (854) | 692 | 283 |
| Finance & ICT | 3,828 | 3,898 | 70 | 349 |
| Housing Services | 683 | 1,045 | 362 | 40 |
| Community Safety and Wellbeing | 505 | 410 | (95) | (80) |
| HR & Customer Services | 47 | 58 | 11 | (33) |
| Legal & Democratic Services | 1,408 | 1,569 | 161 | 7 |
| Culture | 3,242 | 3,520 | 278 | 222 |
| Environmental & Land Management | 5,181 | 4,870 | (311) | (141) |
| Planning | 1,944 | 2,004 | 60 | 37 |
| Recharge Adjustment | 0 | (38) | (38) | (38) |
| Net Service Expenditure | 16,518 | 17,669 | 1,151 | 628 |
| Capital Charges & Net Interest | (3,388) | (3,422) | (34) | 220 |
| Levies, Grants and Precepts | 256 | 255 | (1) | (1) |
| Contribution to Reserves | 1,028 | 145 | (883) | (717) |
| Budget Requirement | 14,414 | 14,647 | 233 | 130 |
| Financing: | | | | |
| New Homes Bonus | (2,478) | (2,501) | (23) | (23) |
| Business Rates | (4,538) | (4,849) | (311) | (310) |
| Council Tax | (7,395) | (7,225) | 170 | 170 |
| | 3 | 72 | 69 | (32) |

Collection Fund Outturn

26. The Collection Fund is the statutory mechanism by which income gathered by a billing authority (in this case, Ashford Borough Council) from Council Tax and Business Rates is distributed to Government and precepting authorities (KCC, Fire, Police and Parishes).
27. Overall the collection rates for both Council Tax and Business Rates have been high in 2018/19 at 99.1% and 95.5% respectively. The Business Rates collection statistic is slightly lower than in previous years due to a rise in business's going into liquidation and debt being written off.

Council Tax

28. The year-end position for Council Tax shows an overall surplus of £833,000, comprising £297,000 residual amount from 2017/18 and £536,000 in year surplus. This will be divided between the major precepting authorities, with the Council's share being around 9%. The in-year surplus is in line with the estimates reported throughout the year, it is as a result of more Band D properties than anticipated.

Table 3 - Council Tax Position

| | Outturn (net) to 31/03/19 |
|--|--------------------------------------|
| | £'000 |
| Opening Surplus | (2,297) |
| Surplus distributed to Major Preceptors | 2,000 |
| 2018/19 | |
| Amount of Council Tax to be paid to Major Preceptors | 76,522 |
| Amount of Council Tax billed | (77,082) |
| In Year Write Off's | 24 |
| In year (Surplus)/Deficit | (536) |
| | |
| Overall (Surplus)/Deficit | (833) |

Business Rates

29. Net rates payable by ratepayers is broadly in line with the 2018/19 forecast.
30. Following the introduction of check, challenge and appeal the number of appeals coming forward has substantially reduced. All Kent authorities have therefore reviewed their appeals provision and recalculated the potential risk to be 2.7% of net rates payable. For Ashford this has meant that the amount set aside in the budget for appeals for 2018/19 has been substantially reduced. The effect of this review has resulted in an in year surplus of £1.715m.
31. Overall the collection fund has a surplus of £222,000, the Council's share of this surplus is £88,689.

Table 4 - Business Rates Position

| | Original Budget 2018/19 | Outturn (net) 2018/19 |
|---|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 |
| Opening (Surplus)/Deficit | | 1,800 |
| Deficit recovered from Major Preceptors 2018/19 | | (307) |
| Amount of Business Rates to be paid to Major Preceptors | 48,830 | 48,830 |
| Amount of Business Rates Billed | (51,995) | (51,225) |
| Other Items Charged to the Collection Fund | 264 | 337 |
| Bad Debts/Appeals | 2,901 | 343 |
| In year (Surplus)/Deficit | 0 | (1,715) |
| | | |
| Overall (Surplus)/Deficit | 0 | (222) |

32. The Council continues to be a member of the Kent Business Rates Pool, the benefit of the Pool is that the levy paid to Government (£130,000) is significantly lower than if we had acted individually (£1.636m), resulting in a net benefit of £1.506m. Under the pooling agreement for 2018/19 Ashford Borough Council retains 30% (£452,000) of this benefit, a further 30% goes to Kent County Council, 30% is put into a 'Growth Fund' for Economic Development within Ashford, with the remaining 10% (£151,000) being put aside for use as a Safety Net Reserve to mitigate risk. The benefit of the levy was not included in the budget and has therefore been transferred to a reserve to mitigate future economic risk from business rates fluctuations.
33. During 2018/19 Ashford along with all the principal authorities in Kent became part of the Government's 100% Business Rates Pilot. Ashford has benefitted by £930,000 of growth retention in its own right. Additionally the East Kent Cluster, which is made up of Ashford, Canterbury, Dover, Folkestone and Hythe and Thanet has £4.816m of growth, designated for Housing and Commercial Growth within the area, a decision is yet to be made on the funds distribution within the cluster.

Transfers to/from Reserves

34. Earmarked reserves are balances held for specific purposes, at the end of the year transfers are made to and from earmarked reserves increased by £4.13m which was largely due to additional Business Rates Income.
35. The significant reserve movements are:-
- Transfer of £1.83m to the Business Rate Income Reserve.
 - £2.7m to the Economic Risk Reserve. As the council becomes more commercial in its activities, this reserve is designed to mitigate the risk that these commercial activities may bring. The intention was to make this reserve 15% of the net budget requirement and this has now been achieved.
 - £400,000 has been transferred to the service pressure reserve.
 - £923,000 was used from the S106 Unapplied Grants reserve.
36. The current General Fund balance is £2.28m which is in line with the minimum balance of 15% of the Net Budget Requirement which equates to £2.28m for 2019/20. However as mentioned above the Economic Risk Reserve has been significantly increased and offers considerably protection to general reserves.

Table 5 - Summary of Earmarked Reserves

| | Balance at 31st March 2018 £'000 | 2018/19 Transfers £'000 | Balance at 31st March 2019 £'000 |
|--|---|--|---|
| General fund general reserves | (2,552) | 277 | (2,275) |
| Earmarked general fund reserves | | | |
| Fund future expenditure | (7,194) | (5,044) | (12,238) |
| Provide for purchase/maintenance of assets | (4,203) | (113) | (4,316) |
| Required by statute reserves | (196) | 37 | (159) |
| Developer Section 106 contributions | (7,320) | 1,095 | (6,225) |
| Earmarked Reserves | (18,913) | (4,025) | (22,938) |

2018/19 Housing Revenue Outturn (HRA)

37. The outturn on the HRA is showing net expenditure at year end of £452,000 which represents an underspend of £699,000 against the original budget of £1.151m. This underspend will be put back into the HRA reserves to be used on future projects that form part of the HRA Business Plan.
38. Expenditure on Repairs and Maintenance was £728,000 over budget for the year, £200,000 of this overspend was as a result of Asbestos Testing. £350,000 was spent on works that will be recovered from leaseholder in future years. The remaining overspend was as a result of costs being transferred from the capital programme which were funded in year.
39. The underspend in 'other' is largely due to a contribution from the Major Repairs Reserves which has been used to fund in year capital expenditure. Although this has reduced the Major Repairs Reserve it has allowed the underspend in other to be transferred to the general housing reserves which is more flexible.
40. The net slippage between the other and major repairs allowance is due to some slippage in programmed works and impairments.

Table 6 – 2018/19 Housing Revenue Account Outturn

| Budget Page | Revised Budget 2018/19 A £'000 | Outturn 2018/19 B £'000 | Variance (B-A) £'000 | Movement from Quarter 3 £'000 |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Income | (24,979) | (25,357) | (378) | (70) |
| Supervision and Management | 5,267 | 5,224 | (43) | 61 |
| Repairs and Maintenance | 3,418 | 4,142 | 724 | 728 |
| Other | 17,445 | 13,303 | (4,142) | (2,796) |
| Net Revenue Expenditure | 1,151 | (2,688) | (3,839) | (2,077) |
| Capital Works - Decent Homes | 4,620 | 4,640 | 20 | 13 |
| <i>Capital Works financed by:</i> | | | | |
| Major Repairs Allowance | (4,620) | (1,500) | 3,120 | 3,127 |
| Contribution to/(from) Major Repairs Reserve | | | | |
| Total Net Expenditure | 1,151 | 452 | 699 | 1,063 |

41. The forecast surplus of £452,000 will be put back to HRA Revenue reserves, which have a closing balance, at 31 March 2019, of £6.237m. This reserve balance is a key part of the 30 year HRA Business Plan.

Capital Outturn

42. In addition to the Revenue Budget the Council continued to operate a Capital Programme.
43. As part of the closing process the capital spending for the year is assigned to various assets, and the funding source identified. Details of capital spend and financing are contained in the 2019/20 Budget Book which is available on the Council's website. A change to the published capital plan is required and Cabinet is asked to approve an increase in the Coachworks budget by £100,000 making the overall capital budget £950,000.
44. The Council uses many sources of funding for projects including Section 106 Developer Contributions and Homes & Community Agency Grants, as well as other grants and the Council's own capital receipts, revenue reserves and prudential borrowing.
45. Major projects during 2018/19 included:
 - e. Elwick Place - During the year work on site was completed in line with the build schedule, and there were no significant variations to the build specification and the expected completion date of December 2018 was achieved. Expenditure incurred in 2018/19 is £16.826m.
 - f. Industrial units at Carlton Road have been purchased for economic and regeneration purposes £7.129m.
 - g. Grant received from DCLG of £8m has been distributed to Highways England to facilitate the completion of works to junction 10A of the M20 motorway
 - h. A further £3.267m has been spent purchasing existing social housing and £2.305 on building new social housing stock.
 - i. Danemore sheltered housing accommodation redevelopment has been completed incurring final costs of £4.320m
 - j. £4.640m was spent on the existing housing stock to ensure Decent Home Standards are maintained

Table 7 – Summary of Capital Spending and Financing

| | £'000 |
|---|---------------|
| General Fund Capital Expenditure | 37,348 |
| HRA Capital Expenditure | 15,184 |
| Total Expenditure | 52,532 |
| Funding | |
| Capital Receipts | 5,826 |
| 1-4-1 Capital Receipts (ring fenced for affordable housing) | 1,761 |
| Repairs and Renewals reserve | 20 |
| Earmarked Reserves | 544 |
| External Grants and Contributions | 9,374 |
| Developer Contributions | 596 |
| GF Revenue Contributions | 48 |
| HRA Revenue Contribution | 4,753 |
| Major Repairs Reserve | 4,640 |
| Prudential Borrowing | 24,970 |
| Total Funding | 52,532 |

Table 8 – Capital Receipts

| | £'000 | Total Received £'000 |
|--|--------------|---------------------------------|
| Right to Buy Sales Receipts | | 3,788 |
| Less | | |
| Admin Costs | (2) | |
| Government share (Pooling liability) | (486) | (488) |
| Other HRA Capital Receipts | | 103 |
| Less costs | | (27) |
| General Fund Capital Receipts | | 746 |
| Less costs | | (24) |
| Total Capital Receipts | | 4,098 |
| Housing Revenue Account Receipts | | |
| <i>Unringfenced receipts</i> | | (1,344) |
| <i>1-4-1 capital receipts for affordable housing</i> | | (2,175) |
| Total HRA Receipts | | (3,519) |
| General Fund Receipts | | (579) |

2018/19 Treasury Management Position (Capital Charges and Net Interest)

46. Capital charges and net interest had a surplus of £34,000 in year, this was as a result of changes in collection fund opening balances of £637,000 and a surplus in treasury management activity of £637,000.
47. The £637,000 saving in treasury management activity represents savings in debt expenses of £228,000 as the strategy to borrow short term from other local authorities was continued. Treasury management income for short term investing increased by £246,000 following rate rises and larger than expected short term balances.
48. The investment in the CCLA Property Fund continued its good performance and generated additional income of £27,000. Higher than expected interest payments were also received from the Council's subsidiary (£60,000) as it continues to expand.
49. The total value of loans outstanding with the Council's subsidiary at year end totalled £27.6m.

Equity Funds

50. Equity Fund interest would have been below par at year end as a number of intended strategic placements had been deferred following a review in August 2017. However, following a further comprehensive review of the Council's strategic investment positions the decision was taken to redeem shares in two funds. These redemptions realised a net gain to the Council which contributed to an overall surplus of £100k in the equity fund budget line. The Strategic Treasury Management review is shown at **Appendix B** and covers this in more detail.
51. A full schedule of the treasury management positions as at 31 March 2019 are shown at **Appendix A**.

Implications and Risk Assessment

52. The figures in the Accounts may change if the audit identifies a need, this may lead to a change in outturn.

Consultation Planned or Undertaken

53. As part of routine budget monitoring all budget holders are consulted about their outturn estimates and this forms the basis of the outturn forecasts. Services have been consulted for explanations of variances.

Next Steps in Process

54. This report has been prepared alongside this statement of Accounts. The Accounts will be audited during June and signed off during July at the Audit Committee.
55. The closing position helps inform the 2018/19 outturn and any changes to the current year will be presented to Members in the first Budget Monitoring report.

Portfolio Holder's Views

56. To be given at meeting

Contact and Email

Lee Foreman - 01233 330509 – Lee.Foreman@ashford.gov.uk
Maria Hadfield 01233 330545 – Maria.Hadfield@ashford.gov.uk

Treasury Management Portfolio as at 31 March 2019

| Counter Party | Deal Date | Rate % | Amount £ | Fair Value £ | Comment |
|-------------------------------------|------------|--------|-------------------|-------------------|--------------------|
| Investment Accounts | | | | | |
| Goldman Sachs | Various | 0.53% | 50,000 | 51,295 | ** |
| ICD Portal - Black Rock | Various | 0.75% | 1,831,000 | 1,831,000 | * |
| ICD Portal - Invesco | Various | 0.78% | 10,034,000 | 10,034,000 | * |
| Payden Global MMF | Various | 0.91% | 3,000,000 | 2,987,369 | ** |
| Total Investment Accounts | | | 14,915,000 | 14,903,664 | |
| Long Term Investments | | | | | |
| Local Authority Investments | | | | | |
| Blaenau Gwent | 21/10/2014 | 2.00% | 3,000,000 | 3,000,000 | Matures 21/10/2019 |
| Property Investment | | | | | |
| CCLA Local Authority Property Fund | Various | 4.20% | 11,000,000 | 12,304,463 | |
| A Better Choice of Property Ltd.*** | Various | | 275,001 | 272,765 | |
| Equity Funds** | | | | | |
| UBS Multi Asset Income Fund | 26/08/2015 | 2.01% | 2,993,552 | 2,928,661 | ** |
| Schroder Income Maximiser | 03/11/2015 | 7.68% | 992,152 | 1,007,291 | ** |
| CCLA Diversified Income Fund | Various | 3.23% | 3,000,000 | 2,980,611 | ** |
| Investec Diversified Income Fund | 28/03/2019 | 4.31% | 2,500,000 | 2,491,856 | ** |
| Total Long Term Investments | | | 23,760,705 | 24,985,647 | |
| Total Investment Portfolio | | | 38,675,705 | 39,889,311 | |

* Money Market Fund (MMF) are AAA rated deposit facilities which have variable rates of interest but have constant

** Equity funds and the Property fund have variable rates of interest and also have fluctuating capital values, the amount stated is the current fair value.

*** A Better Choice Of Property Ltd. is a solely owned subsidiary of ABC - valued at 31 March 2019.

Debt Portfolio as at 31 March 2019

| Counter Party | Deal Date | Rate % | Amount £ | Fair Value | Comment |
|----------------------------------|------------|---------|--------------------|------------|-------------------------|
| Temporary Borrowing | | | | | |
| Greater Manchester Pension Fund | 11/06/2018 | 0.80% | 15,000,000 | | Maturity 21/05/2019 |
| Somerset Pension Fund | 06/09/2018 | 0.97% | 8,000,000 | | Maturity 05/04/2019 |
| Greater London Authority | 28/09/2018 | 1.02% | 25,000,000 | | Maturity 05/04/2019 |
| Durham County Council | 31/10/2018 | 0.92% | 8,000,000 | | Maturity 30/04/2019 |
| London Borough of Newham Council | 21/11/2018 | 0.90% | 5,000,000 | | Maturity 23/04/2019 |
| Leicester City Council | 07/01/2019 | 1.00% | 10,000,000 | | Maturity 08/07/2019 |
| West Midlands Police | 26/02/2019 | 1.00% | 5,000,000 | | Maturity 27/08/2019 |
| Total Temporary Borrowing | | | 76,000,000 | | |
| Long Term Borrowing | | | | | |
| Public Works Loan Board*** | various | various | 113,664,150 | | Maturity Date - various |
| Total Long Term Borrowing | | | 113,664,150 | | |
| Grand Total Borrowing | | | 189,664,150 | | |

*** HRA borrowing

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

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Agenda Item No: 7
Report To: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 13 June 2019
Report Title: The Ashford Borough Council Annual Performance Report 2018/19
Report Author & Job Title: Will Train
Senior Policy and Scrutiny Officer
Portfolio Holder: Cllr. Gerry Clarkson, Leader of the Council

Summary: The 2018/19 Annual Performance Report provides a summary of some of the achievements and milestones of Ashford Borough Council over the course of the last financial year as well as providing commentary on key performance indicators from across the council's services.

The report reflects on what has been achieved across the borough and through the work of the council's services in the context of the priorities of the corporate plan and incorporates the quarter 4 2018/19 performance report along with data from quarters 1 to 3.

The production of an annual report forms a crucial part of the council's overall arrangements to demonstrate good governance and accountability. The revised 'Delivering Good Governance in Local Government' framework, produced by CIPFA and SOLACE and published in April 2016, notes that such reporting demonstrates good practices in transparency, reporting, openness and engagement to deliver effective accountability.

Key Decision: NO

Significantly Affected Wards: None

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

- I. Note the contents of the annual performance report and approve its publication on the council's website**

Policy Overview: The Annual Report offers another means by which the Council can embrace the transparency agenda and provide a reflection on the performance and achievements of the previous financial year.

Financial Implications: None

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Legal Implications | None |
| Equalities Impact Assessment | Not required as the annual report is a record of past performance and does not propose new action for the council. |
| Other Material Implications: | None |
| Exempt from Publication: | NO |
| Background Papers: | None |
| Contact: | will.train@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330394 |

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT
2018-2019



MESSAGE FROM THE LEADER

As we approach the end of the council's current corporate plan, it is appropriate to reflect on both the achievements of the borough and its future. Our latest annual report shows that the council continues to operate well and deliver high quality, well-resourced services for residents and businesses in the borough; whilst also delivering key strategic priorities such as the Local Plan to 2030 and the first phases of development at Chilmington.

The year ahead promises to be an exciting one for the borough, with new developments such as The Coachworks and the Designer Outlet Extension adding to the town's offer and helping to build a renewed sense of civic pride in the borough. I look forward to sharing more of Ashford's continued progress with you all in future issues of *Ashford for You* and next year's annual report.



GERRY CLARKSON, CBE
Leader, Ashford Borough Council



MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

The maintenance of effective and good value for money services for residents whilst keeping council tax at the lowest level of any Kent district is a testament to the council's entrepreneurial approach. Through careful planning and working in conjunction with local and regional partners, the council has earned its reputation as an exemplary local authority, delivering transformative change for everyone in the borough and setting a standard for others to follow.

This year, we will be developing priorities for our next corporate plan, covering the period up to 2025, with input from our partners, parish councils, and most importantly our residents.



TRACEY KERLY
Chief Executive, Ashford Borough Council



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| Message from the Leader | 1 |
| Message from the Chief Executive | 1 |
| Facts about the Borough | 2 |
| The Corporate Plan 2015-2020 | 3 |
| Enterprising Ashford | 5 |
| Living Ashford | 7 |
| Active and Creative Ashford | 11 |
| Attractive Ashford | 13 |
| Our Underpinning Principles | 15 |

Cover photos (from top right)

River Stour, Ashford
High Street, Tenterden (credit: Ady Kerry)
Elwick Place, Ashford (credit: Ady Kerry)
Ashford Snowdogs, Civic Centre, Ashford

Rear cover photos (from top right)

Ashford International Station
Battle's Over: A Nation's Tribute, Ashford
High Street, Tenterden
Chilmington Green masterplan

FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT ASHFORD BOROUGH



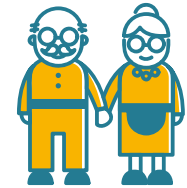
83% of residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live



4,950 homes in the borough are owned by the council, with 72% of these built since 1945



54% of residents feel the council keeps them well informed



24% of residents will be aged 65 and over by 2030



3.9 million passengers used Ashford International in 2017/18



Ashford is the least densely populated borough in Kent (2.2 people per hectare)



Life expectancy at birth is higher than the national average for both men and women



47% of residents agree that the council provides value for money



93% of planning applications were approved in 2018/19



29.1% of the borough's residents are qualified to NVQ4 level



Ashford is the top recycling authority in Kent and 27th nationally



58.5% of adults are physically active, above the national average



Small businesses account for 80% of employers in the borough



Average weekly resident earnings for full time workers were £574.90 in 2018



12.9% of residents are employed in the knowledge economy



127,500 people live in the borough (2017 mid-year estimate)

THE CORPORATE PLAN 2015 - 2020

Memorial Gardens, Ashford

The council's Corporate Plan sets out our priorities for the future, and our aspirations for a borough where people want to live and businesses want to locate. The five priorities of the Corporate Plan are detailed below.

ENTERPRISING ASHFORD

Promote growth and achieve greater economic prosperity for Ashford borough. Work to secure inward investment to create a wide range of jobs carried out by a highly skilled workforce.

- A vibrant town centre and a supporting business centre
- A range of jobs with an emphasis on increasing skills levels
- Creating a new local plan that provides for economic growth by allocating sufficient space for new businesses and encourages a range of jobs, especially higher skilled jobs
- Well-planned and well-resourced infrastructure to maintain Ashford's prime location status
- A thriving rural tourism economy and successful rural enterprise.

LIVING ASHFORD

Secure quality homes across the borough, catering for a range of ages, tenures and need, in well planned and attractive new places.

- Identify an adequate supply of housing to meet the range of housing needs
- Create a supply of town centre housing to suit emerging new markets
- Help people meet their housing needs and aspirations
- Maintain assurance of confidence in the planning system



THE CORPORATE PLAN 2015 - 2020

ACTIVE AND CREATIVE ASHFORD

Provide or enable a range of quality leisure and cultural activities where people can make healthy and affordable lifestyle choices and enjoy assets that create attractive, desirable and active communities.

- Delivery of the best mix of sports, cultural, recreational experiences supporting a range of health and wellbeing benefits for residents of all ages and abilities
- Innovative ways for people to choose active lifestyles
- Grow our cultural offer to be a successful and alternative destination
- Maximise the value of our key green sites

ATTRACTIVE ASHFORD

Achieve an environment that creates higher standards of public space design, alongside improved standards of presentation of key green spaces. Safeguard and conserve our local heritage and areas of outstanding landscape quality to ensure the very best attractive environment with thriving and vibrant town centres.

- Improve and safeguard the quality and presentation of the borough, recognising its unique environment, countryside, local heritage and tourism offer
- Delivery of best mix of new and existing parks and green spaces, incorporating quality public art and cutting edge design
- Strengthen tourism and local heritage offer

OUR UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

Remain a well-resourced council, with effective governance, high quality services, good communications, safe surroundings, demonstrating good compliance and high standards.

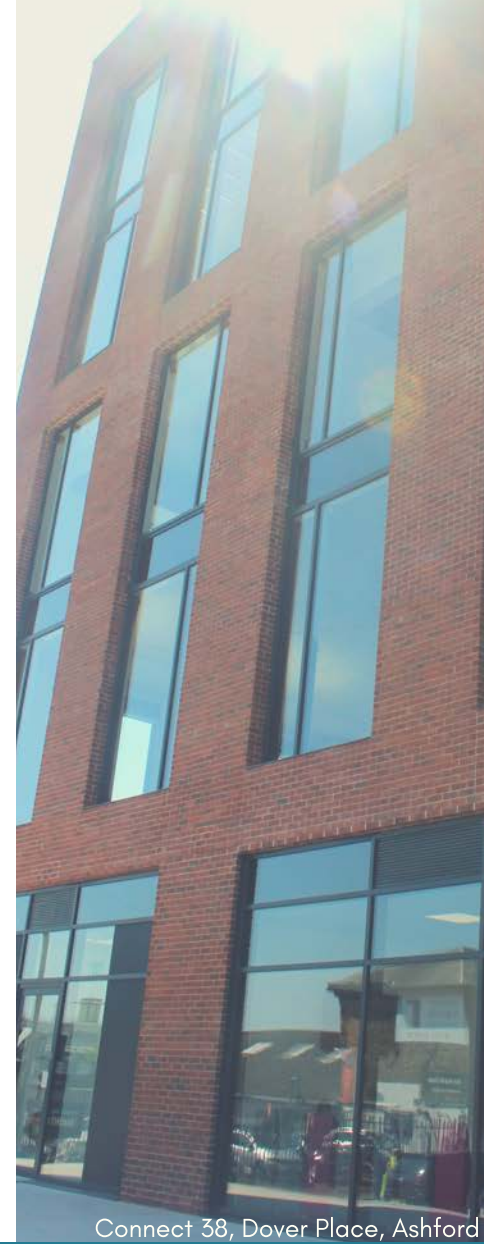
- A viable and sustainable replacement for formula grant, generating an additional £2m per annum by 2020
- Maintain a strong and effective governance framework
- A fair deal for all our residents and businesses through the use of council powers to ensure quality and compliance
- Proactive, useful, relevant and accessible communications and marketing

ENTERPRISING ASHFORD

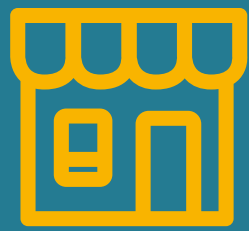
2018/19 has seen a number of key developments for the town centre come to fruition with the delivery of the first phase of the Commercial Quarter in Connect 38, the largest office block to be built in Kent for 20 years, along with other commercial developments such as Elwick Place, the Curious Brewery and the Ashford Designer Outlet Extension adding to the changing skyline of the town, while exciting new ventures such as The Coachworks and the redevelopment of the former Mecca Bingo Hall will bring new life to the town through increasing the social and cultural offer of Ashford while delivering a boost to the nighttime economy.

The council's efforts have resulted in year on year increases in footfall in the town centre in defiance of trends seen across the country, whilst national and international press coverage showcasing the town and the council's approach has continued to drive interest and inward investment.

Connectivity remains key to delivering the effective economic growth of the borough, and the delivery of junction 10a of the M20 (currently under construction) along with the continuation of Eurostar services at Ashford International will ensure that Ashford remains the ideal location for business.



Connect 38, Dover Place, Ashford



Vacancy rates in Park Mall have remained at a low level throughout 2018/19, with 29 of 32 units occupied throughout the year - an occupancy rate of 91%. The council offers ongoing support to traders in Park Mall and has seen footfall in the shopping centre grow steadily each year since it was acquired by the council.

Independent traders such as Made in Ashford, The Little Teapot, Emporia Fabric and Craft, Snap Jewellery and The Record Store ensure a diverse offer within the centre alongside national chains; whilst council-led initiatives such as the 'Splashes of Summer' and Snowdogs Art Trail have provided new experiences in the town to further boost footfall.

Made in Ashford, Park Mall, Ashford

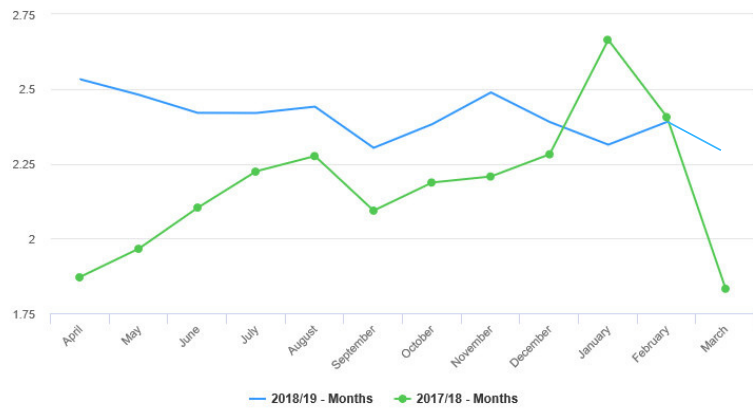




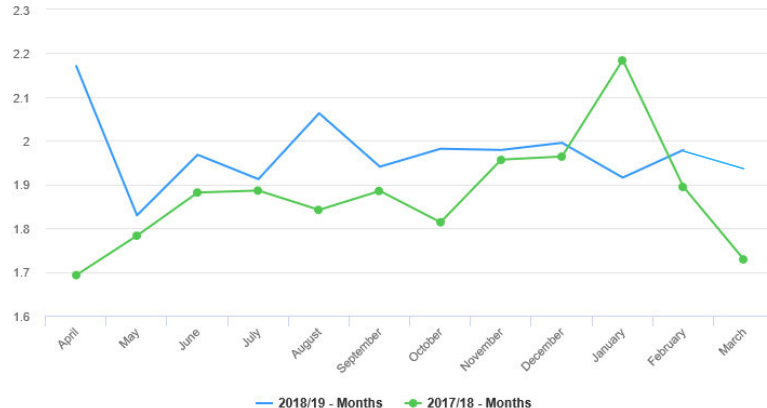
Income for car parks in Ashford town centre increased by 14% in 2018/19 from the previous year, with an above trend increase in October and November coinciding with the 'Snowdogs Discover Ashford' art trail. Whilst income for Tenterden car parks does not follow as predictable a month to month trend as Ashford, 2018/19 has showed a 2% increase in total annual income from 2017/18. Parking provision in Ashford also increased with the opening of the Elwick Place car park in December 2018 delivering 282 additional parking spaces.

The average spend per user across all council owned car parks in Ashford and Tenterden has increased ahead of parking charge increases, showing that people are spending more time in both towns and so demonstrating increased confidence in the borough's town centres. Average spend in Ashford for 2018/19 rose from £2.18 to £2.40, whilst average spend in Tenterden rose from £1.88 to £1.97 over the same period. Strong increases in average spend for both centres in January align with the post-Christmas sales.

Average user spend per session in GBP, Ashford car parks 2017-2019



Average user spend per session in GBP, Tenterden car parks 2017-2019



The council collected 99.13% of owed National Non-Domestic Rates (business rates) in the 2018/19 financial year against a target collection rate of 99%. The council has maintained its discretionary rate relief scheme and provides proactive support to businesses experiencing hardship to assist them in continuing to trade.

Through its service level agreement with the Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce, the council provided support to 102 pre-start and start-up businesses in the Borough in 2018/19. The council also works with established traders to facilitate the expansion of their businesses, such as with Made in Ashford, which has taken on additional space in Park Mall to open a plastic free market.

The council has also brought forward a number of town centre events in the last year to provide new experiences for visitors. The 'Splashes of Summer' campaign in July and August 2018 increased footfall and trade for town centre businesses through a series of family-friendly events and activities provided by LoveAshford.com and designed to animate the town centre.

In March 2019, the Cabinet endorsed the Ashford Town Centre Framework, created in response to the findings of the 2018 town centre consultation and the challenges facing the high street. The Framework sets out a vision and objectives to ensure the success and vitality of the town centre for future generations, as well as an ambitious and exciting programme of projects and activities to be implemented over the next five years.

LIVING ASHFORD

The adoption of the Local Plan to 2030 by the council in February 2019 sets an approach for the borough which aims to make sure that future development is well planned, helping to create great spaces and strong communities and providing a consistent approach to planning across the whole borough.

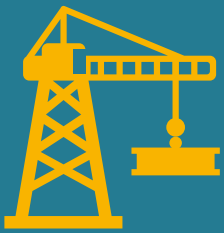
Ashford Borough Council's reputation for excellence in the housing sector continued to earn national recognition in 2018/19, with the authority nominated for UK Housing and Housing Heroes awards, as well as receiving special recognition for its commitment to welcoming and resettling Syrian refugees.

The council's New Build Affordable Homes Programme 2018–2022 seeks to continue the modernisation of existing sheltered housing schemes and bring forward the delivery of new affordable housing within the borough, whilst continuing the council's existing programme of street purchases and buying back ex-council house properties where appropriate. Through a series of strategic acquisitions of market rent properties, the council's property company has sought to provide a preferable private rented sector offer.



Finberry, Ashford

46 new build affordable houses were delivered by Ashford Borough Council in 2018/19, including the delivery of 34 units of affordable rented older persons accommodation at the multi-million pound modernisation of the Danemore sheltered housing scheme in Tenterden. Modelled on the multi-award-winning, dementia friendly Farrow Court scheme developed by the council in South Ashford, the new accommodation units are built to a high quality and are care ready. The council purchased 10 on-street properties in 2018/19 to bolster the resilience of its housing stock and continued to work with registered providers of social housing, who delivered 99 affordable rented and shared ownership properties in 2018/19.



The loss of rental income on void social rented and affordable properties has been kept low through 2018/19 due to the council minimising void turnaround times. As a percentage of the total rent roll, rent loss on social rented properties fell from 0.36% in quarter 1 to 0.24% in quarter 4, whilst rent loss on affordable properties fell from 1.42% to 1.06% over the same period.



Chilmington Discovery Park (Artist Impression)

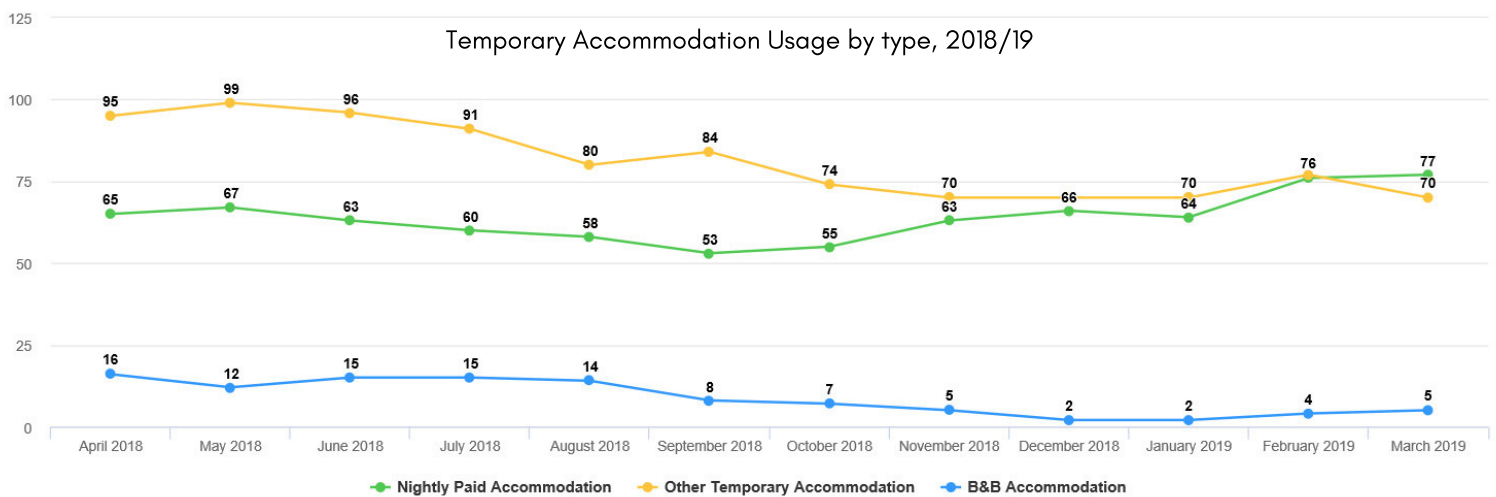


The council administered over £1m of disabled facilities grant adaptations in 2018/19, across more than 80 properties - representing the busiest year for the council in respect of disabled facilities grant cases. The council also spent more than £480,000 on disabled adaptations for council tenancies, with works ranging from fitting handrails to shower and wet room installations.

The introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018 expanded the duties of the council in regard to addressing homelessness. In 2018/19, the council prevented 349 households from becoming homeless through actions such as negotiating continuations of tenancies and rent reviews to enable households to remain in their existing accommodation. The council also provided homelessness relief for 250 households through securing alternative accommodation.



Through securing alternative short term accommodation, both provided directly by the council and through other registered housing providers, the council has sought to limit the use of bed and breakfast accommodation to extreme emergency cases only. As a result, the number of households placed in bed and breakfast has reduced steadily through 2018/19, from 15 households at the end of quarter 1 to five households at the end of year.



Danemore, Tenterden



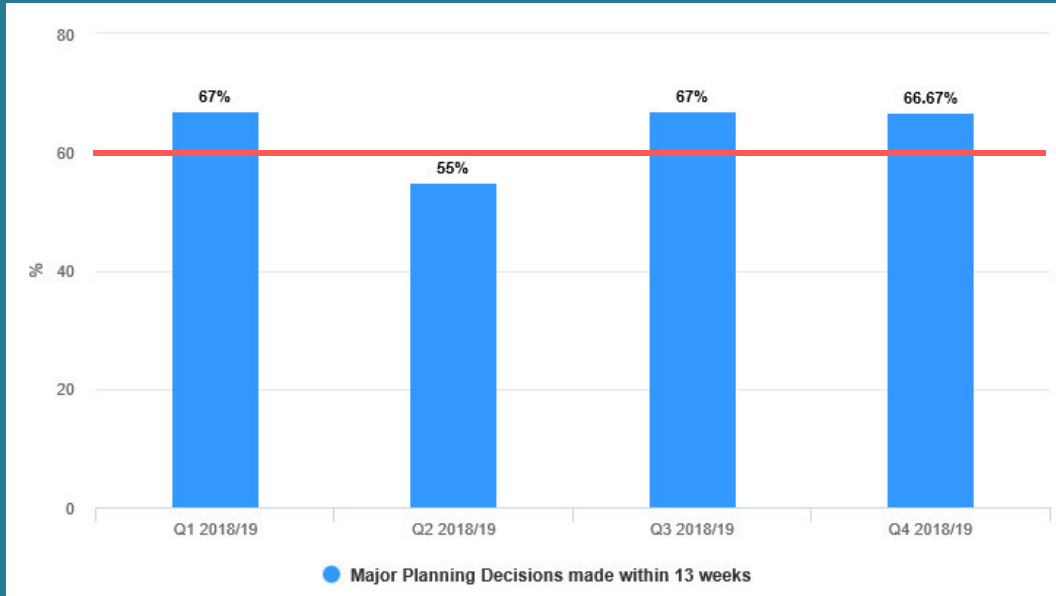
Right to buy application processing times remained well within statutory targets throughout 2018/19, with average turnaround times for confirming the eligibility for right to buy of 9.43 days for tenants living in an ABC property for more than three years (against a 28 day target) and 9.83 days for tenants living in an ABC property for less than three years (against a 56 day target).

The council received and investigated 251 complaints regarding the condition of private rented sector accommodation in 2018/19, of which 119 were resolved informally. Such complaints can vary in their complexity and the scale of any corrective works required by the landlord, and so resolution can be a lengthy process.

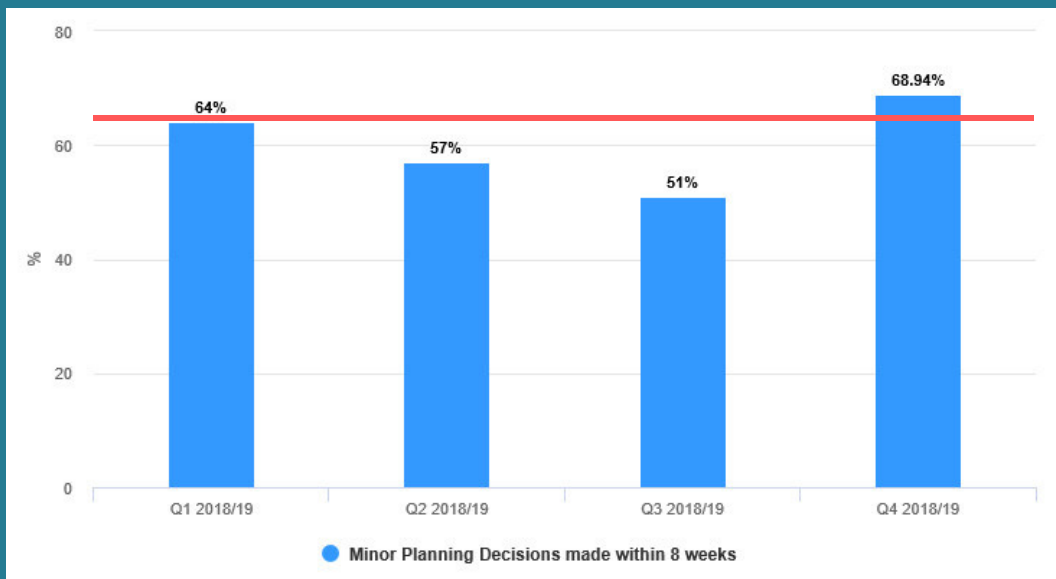




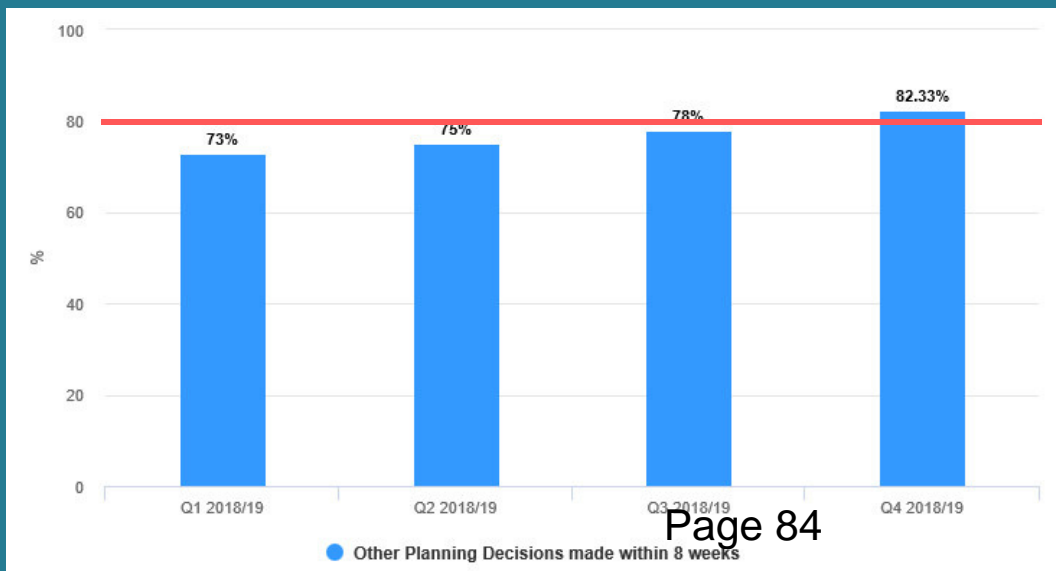
Planning application approvals remained above 90% throughout 2018/19. Despite unexpected pressure in-service arising from a high vacancy rate, the council has continued to process and approve large volumes of planning applications. Pragmatic and consistent planning enforcement remains a priority for the service, with 36.5% of planning contraventions occurring in 2018/19 resolved informally.



The percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks remained above the 60% government target in three of four quarters. Due to the small number of complex cases involved, performance against this target can be volatile. A drop below target occurred in quarter 2 due to staff shortages, however performance returned above target for quarters 3 and 4.



Minor planning application processing times have been down against the central government target of 65% through much of 2018/19 due to staff vacancies within the planning and development service. Through concerted recruitment efforts and the careful use of consultants, performance has returned above target in quarter 4.



'Other' planning applications represent a significant proportion of the caseload for the Planning and Development Service. Staff shortages through 2018/19 have caused a decline in performance against the target of 80%, however this decline has been reversed through the year, with performance above target for quarter 4.



The council's environmental health team carries out hygiene and food safety inspections on all food premises in the borough throughout the year, as well as running food hygiene training courses open to all catering businesses. The percentage of businesses in the borough with a food hygiene rating of at least three stars out of five has been above 98% for the entirety of 2018/19.

Ashford Lifeline is a 24 hour service providing an instant response at the touch of a button, giving a personal security system to enable residents who live alone to so do independently and safely. The council sets high standards for call answer speeds through the system, and 99.8% of calls were answered within 60 seconds in 2018/19. The annual customer survey of lifeline users in 2018/19 showed that 91.8% of customers are satisfied with the service.



Ashford Borough Council has a state of the art CCTV monitoring centre which provides remote CCTV monitoring to both public spaces and private businesses and plays a major role in detecting and deterring crime and antisocial behaviour. To ensure the efficacy of this service, 2018 saw the council begin a programme of upgrading its CCTV cameras.



Ashford Monitoring Centre, Ashford



The council collected 98.11% of owed council tax in 2018/19. Whilst Ashford Borough Council collects council tax from residents of the borough, only around 10 pence of every pound of council tax collected funds Ashford Borough Council services, with the remainder funding Kent County Council, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and (in parished areas) Parish or Town Councils.

The Revenues and Benefits team process both new benefit claims and changes of circumstance for existing claims for residents. In 2018/19, new benefit claims were processed in an average of 24.56 days against a target of 28 days; whilst changes of circumstance have been processed in an average of 2.77 days against a target of 10 days.







ACTIVE AND CREATIVE ASHFORD

The council's continued commitment to safeguarding and improving the health and wellbeing of the borough's residents and providing high quality cultural and leisure experiences saw a range of initiatives and projects delivered in 2018/19.

In October, the Ashford One You Shop was a runner-up in the prestigious 'Health on the High Street' award at the Royal Society of Public Health awards, recognising the work of the One You Shop in supporting communities to tackle their health and wellbeing concerns. With the aid of funding provided by the council, the One You Shop will complete a relocation into larger premises within Park Mall in early summer 2019.

Providing a quality leisure offer to enable residents to lead healthy, active lives remained paramount in the council's priorities in 2018/19, with the council approving consultation on a new walking and cycling strategy, opening the Repton Connect Community Centre and facilities and providing a range of new open spaces and play areas across the borough.

The Snowdogs Discover Ashford art trail showcased 35 giant Snowdog sculptures designed by local and regional artists, alongside 19 Snowpups created by local schools around the town. The trail drew huge public interest over its 10 week duration and a closing auction of the sculptures raised over £140,000 for Pilgrim's Hospice.

2018/19 also saw one of the council's Big 8 projects, delivery of a purpose-built home for the Jasmin Vardimon Dance Company, given two major boosts with the council approving development of a site on Ashford's Henwood Industrial Estate and Arts Council England approving a grant of over £3m towards the ground-breaking project.



Create Festival 2018, Victoria Park



Ashford's free annual musical extravaganza, Create Festival, drew 12,000 people to a sun-drenched Victoria Park in 2018 to see more than 30 talented entertainers perform across four stages, complimented by local street food traders, theatre and children's entertainments.

The council continues to support the voluntary sector and individual projects that help deliver services and improve facilities for the community. Between April and December 2018, the council administered over £166,000 worth of grants to rural and urban initiatives serving borough communities at a ratio of 1.04:1 between urban and rural awards.





The council maintains a large number of play areas throughout the borough and audits these on an annual basis to determine their play value and condition. The latest audit showed that of 54 council owned play areas, 57% were 'satisfactory' or 'excellent', with 18 of an 'excellent' standard and 13 of a 'satisfactory' standard. This represents a 10% increase on the previous year, where 14 play areas were 'excellent' and 11 were 'satisfactory'. The council also opened two new play areas in 2018/19 - Bridgefield Park in Park Farm East and Bulleid Place in Newtown.

Kestrel Park Play Area, Ashford



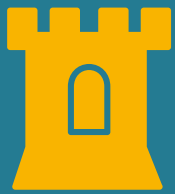
The council owns a number of leisure facilities across the borough which are managed in partnership with local trusts and councils, providing a wide range of activities to enable residents to live healthy, active lives. In 2018, there were 11,408 total memberships across the four main leisure sites (Stour Centre, Julie Rose Stadium, Tenterden Leisure Centre, Kingsnorth Recreation Centre).



In 2018, the council and Ashford Leisure Trust began the process of procuring a new leisure operator for the main leisure facilities in the Ashford area to enable significant investment in leisure provision to meet the needs of the borough's growing population.

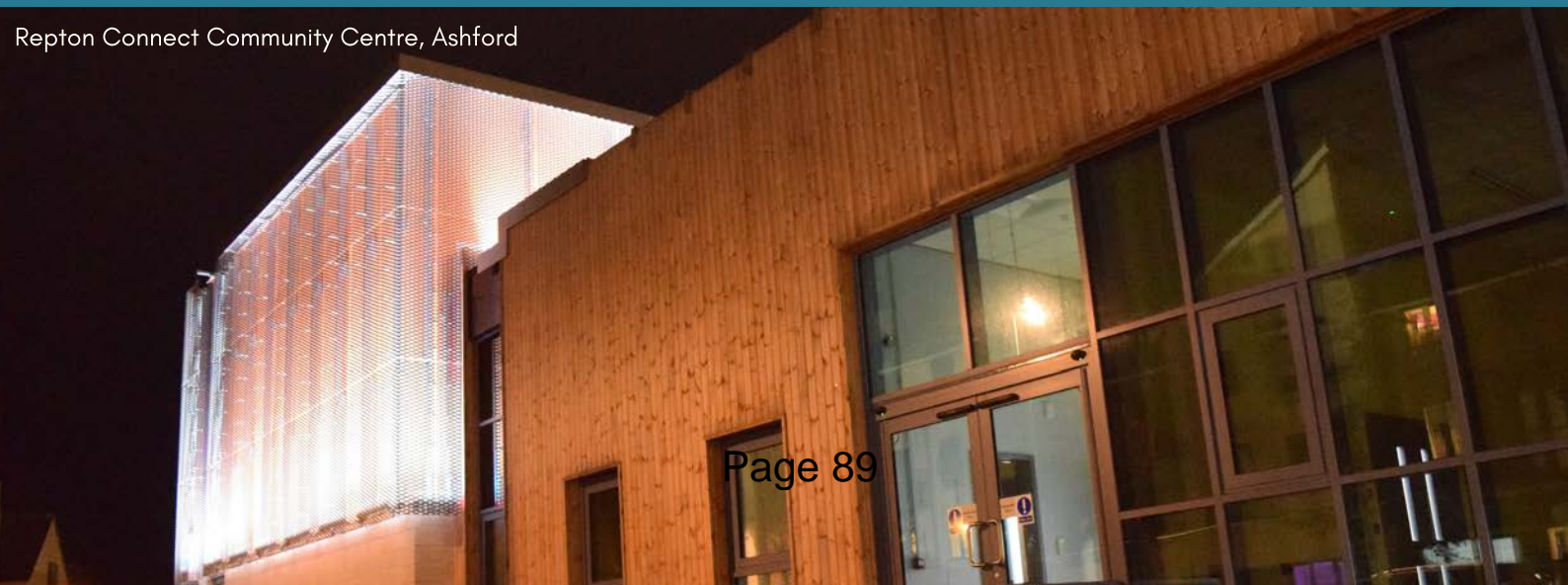
Ashford is home to the UK's first One You shop which provides free health services, support and advice to the public. Now into its third year of operation, the One You shop has delivered 4,626 health interventions, and in January 2019 saw its highest footfall to date, with 292 people accessing services.

ONE YOU



The Ashford Visitor Information Centre relocated to a spacious and user-friendly site (incorporating an exhibition space) on the ground floor of the Ashford Gateway Plus in 2018. Since relocating, the percentage of tourism related contacts made in-person has increased by an average of 18% per month against the previous year's performance, with a significant increase coinciding with the Snowdogs Discover Ashford art trail.

Repton Connect Community Centre, Ashford



ATTRACTIVE ASHFORD

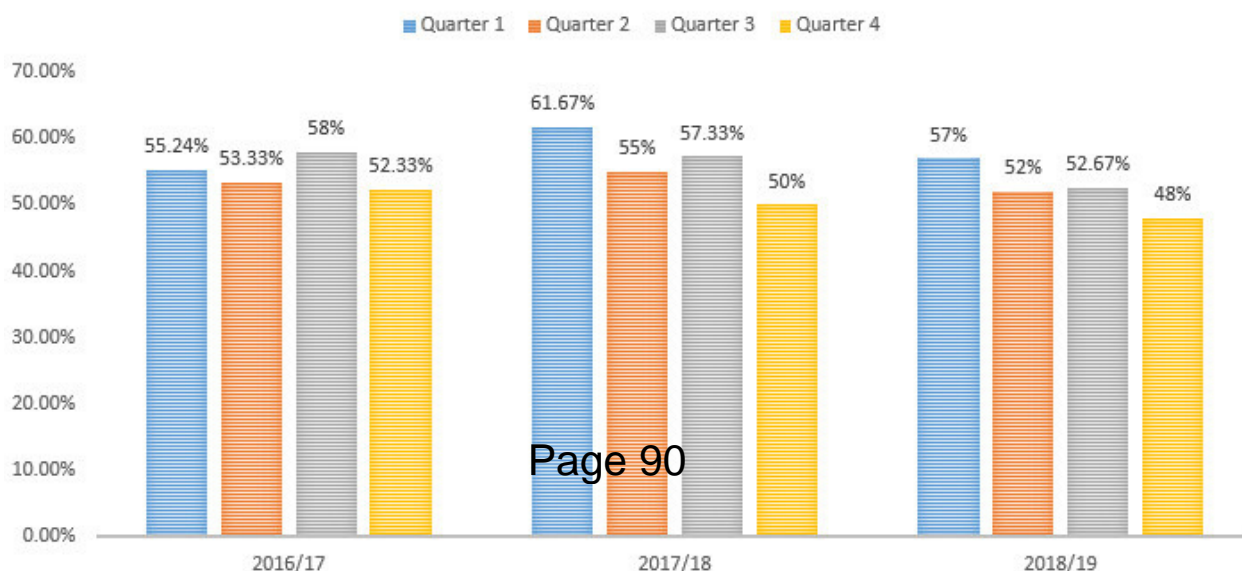
2018/19 saw the council's in-house grounds maintenance service, Aspire Landscape Management, complete two successful years of operation. Since its inception, the service has grown significantly and remarkably achieved three ISO standards simultaneously in 2018. The council also secured £167,000 of funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to develop a bid to restore and improve Victoria Park.

A number of commemorative events took place in 2018 to mark the centenary of the armistice. The renowned Fields of Battle, Lands of Peace photographic exhibition went on display in Ashford's Memorial Gardens as part of its national tour in June 2018; a commemorative paving stone was laid in Charing to honour the only Victoria Cross recipient to be born in the borough and Ashford took part in the national commemorative event, Battle's Over: A Nation's Tribute with a service of remembrance set against a poppy tribute in Ashford's North Park. Thanks to support from residents, the poppy tribute raised nearly £5,000 for the Ashford branch of SSAFA.

2019 saw the start of a year-long programme of events, campaigns and initiatives in support of the Year of the Environment as part of the council's aim to connect, protect and enhance the environment. The council also committed to reducing plastic waste at 2018/2 Create Festival and adopted a new Air Quality Strategy in March 2019.



The council maintained its position as the top recycling authority in Kent and moved to 27th in the UK recycling league table (up from 35th) for its performance in 2017/18. Recycling rates for the past three years are shown below and whilst the borough's rates have dipped below the 50% target in quarter 4 of 2018/19, this follows the trend of previous years. Throughout 2018/19, the council has utilised targeted education campaigns to assist residents in maximising the amount of waste recycled.





The success rate for refuse collections has remained high throughout 2018/19, with 99.96% of refuse collections per 100,000 collections made being successful across the year. Focused education and awareness campaigns led by the council's Environment and Land Management service have helped residents to increase the amount of waste recycled and minimise contamination of recyclates.

The 2018 residents survey included a range of questions related to recycling and the attitudes of the borough's population towards it, the results of which have been used to inform the council's approach to education around waste and recycling. The results recorded that 69% of residents recycled everything that they could, compared to only 3% saying they did not recycle. For food waste recycling, 77% of residents responded that they participated in this on a weekly or daily basis, with 18% noting that they did not take part in food recycling.



Residents were also asked what they normally do if they have more recycling than will fit in their green bin. 40% of respondents said that they would take it to the household waste recycling centre and 29% would place it next to their green bin in a clear sack for collection. Only 13% of respondents said they would place the additional recycling in their refuse bin.

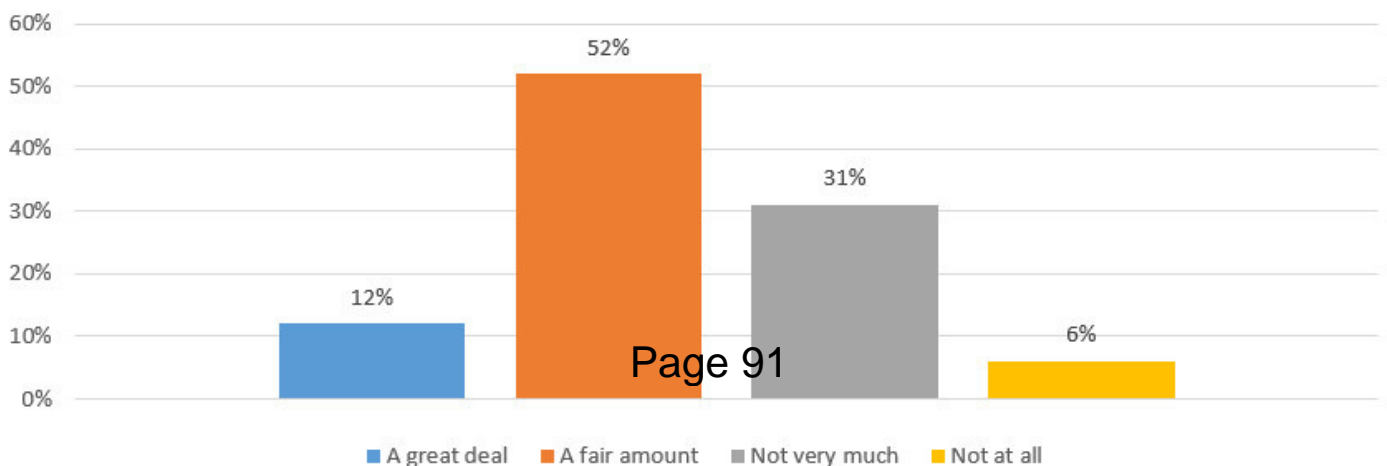


Battle's Over: A Nation's Tribute
North Park, Ashford

The survey also asked residents how satisfied they were with a range of council services, which showed that the highest satisfaction rates were with the council's refuse collection service (77% satisfied) and the borough's parks (71% satisfied) and play areas (62% satisfied). Residents were also asked to what extent they felt the council was committed to improving the local area, with 64% of respondents believing that the council is very or fairly committed to local area improvements.



Residents Survey 2018 - "How committed is the council to improving the local area?"



OUR UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

As part of the council's aim of providing proactive, useful, relevant and accessible communications, April 2018 saw the publication of the first issue of *Ashford for You*, a quarterly magazine distributed to all households in the borough covering events, services, people and places. The magazine has been well received by residents and bolsters the council's communications output.

In striving for improvements to the governance of the council, 2018 also saw Ashford welcome the Local Government Association (LGA) to conduct a 'peer review' of the council's performance and service delivery. The LGA praised the council's approach, ambition and impact, noting the strong, passionate and purposeful leadership and the clear expression of corporate priorities.

Recognition of those who contribute to the borough's success also featured highly in the council's work this year, with the return of the Civic Awards and the launch of the Ashford Ambassador Award recognising individuals who make a significant contribution to the development, wellbeing, strength and civic dignity of the Borough. The inaugural award was presented to Dr Lilian Turoiu of the Romanian Cultural Institute as part of a ceremony unveiling a statue of Queen Marie of Romania in Elwick Place.



Alex Chinneck Artwork
Kent Woolgrowers Site, Ashford

With the introduction of the General Data Protection Regulation in 2018, additional pressures were placed on the council in regard to data protection and security. Improvements in data retention, privacy and the integrity of data sharing agreements have helped to minimise data breaches, with only 2 major personal data breaches occurring in 2018/19. Both of these breaches were reported to the Information Commissioner's Office, who deemed that no further action was required in regard to either.

Transparency in the council's governance remains paramount. The council responded to 1,005 freedom of information requests in 2018/19, of which 98.1% were completed within the statutory 20 working day time limit.



Designer Outlet Underpass improvement works
Ashford





At the start of the 2018/19 financial year the council surveyed 10,000 households to gather their views on the borough and the services provided by the council. The results of this survey have informed the council's work in 2018/19 and will continue to do so as the council moves into its next corporate plan period.

HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH THE WAY THE COUNCIL RUNS ITS SERVICES?



73%

Very or fairly satisfied

Very or fairly dissatisfied

14%



TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK THE COUNCIL UNDERSTANDS THE NEEDS OF ITS CUSTOMERS?



64%

A great deal or a fair amount

Not very much or not at all

36%



TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU AGREE YOU CAN INFLUENCE THE DECISIONS THE COUNCIL MAKES?



18%

Strongly or tend to agree

Strongly or tend to disagree

58%



HOW SATISFIED ARE YOU WITH YOUR LOCAL AREA AS A PLACE TO LIVE?



83%

Very or fairly satisfied

Very or fairly dissatisfied

10%



The council welcomes the government's requirement for large organisations to be more transparent on gender pay and will nurture our culture of supporting women in the workplace and ensuring that success is defined by talent, not gender or circumstance. The council's gender pay gap - the difference in average pay between the men and women in the workforce, expressed relative to men's earnings - was 15.8% in 2018/19, down from 16.2% in 2017/18.



The council's digital transformation programme enables residents to engage with the council digitally for many services, such as reporting environmental issues using the council's 'Report It' app, however a large number of enquiries are handled by our dedicated customer service team. Despite being a high demand service, the average call wait time for 2018/19 was in line with target at 1 minute and 38 seconds.

The council has committed to handling complaints effectively, fairly and in a timely manner. With a clear focus on getting service delivery right first time, the council seeks to minimise complaints and seek to resolve any received as early as possible. Of 233 complaints received in 2018/19, 83% were resolved on page one of the formal complaints procedure, increased from 81% in 2017/18.





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Agenda Item No: 8
Report To: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 13 June 2019
Report Title: Ashford's approach to health and wellbeing
Report Author & Job Title: Angela d'Urso, public health advisor
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Jo Gideon
Portfolio Holder for: Community safety and wellbeing

Summary: This report highlights some of Ashford's activity during 2018/19 to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. It also highlights changes made in approach and new priorities for delivery during 2019/20 and onwards. The report also seeks to amend Ashford's constitution in order to enable effective partnership working at the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership.

Key Decision: Yes

Significantly Affected Wards: All

Recommendations: The Cabinet is recommended to:

- I. **Note the achievements made by the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board (AHWB) in 2018/19.**
- II. **Note the work undertaken by partners in 2018/19 to improve Ashford's response to local, sub-regional and regional health and wellbeing issues – resulting in the establishment of the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership (AHWP) and the East Kent Health Improvement Partnership (EKHIP).**
- III. **Agree to delegate authority to the head of community safety and wellbeing as the council's representative on the AHWP and the EKHIP. Decisions are likely to be around the priorities of the groups, as well as activities to deliver them, subject to consultation with the portfolio holder for community safety and wellbeing as required.**
- IV. **Note the action plans to deliver the priorities of the AHWP and note there may be future resource implications in delivery.**

Policy Overview: The council has an emerging corporate plan, with an emerging priority to create strong communities that are healthy and

active.

There are a number of national, regional and sub-regional strategies and plans that focus on health and wellbeing, and which impact across a range of partners, including the NHS long term plan, the CCG commissioning plan and the Joint Kent and Medway Health and Wellbeing Board's Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Financial Implications:

It is likely some specific projects within the action plans will require funding. This will happen through the council's project initiation document (PID) process. Resource allocation as connected to the delivery of the emerging corporate plan will be fully scoped out as part of the planning process.

Legal Implications

There are no legal implications in relation to the disbanding of the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board and the creation of the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership. Our constitution should be updated to reflect the changes made and to respond to recommendations above, if agreed by Cabinet.

Equalities Impact Assessment

Not required

Other Material Implications:

None

Exempt from Publication:

No

Background Papers:

None

Contact:

angela.durso@ashford.gov.uk – 07765 897 208

Ashford's approach to health and wellbeing

Introduction and background

Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board 2018/19 activity

1. A significant amount of work was undertaken by the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board (AHWB) in 2018/19, with a number of success stories. A full annual report can be found as Appendix 1.

Other council activity contributing the health and wellbeing agenda

2. The council undertakes a wide range of activity across a number of services and departments that supports the health and wellbeing of our residents. Some of our recent activity is outlined below.
3. A draft **cycling and walking strategy** was agreed by Cabinet in March 2019. This new strategy will bring together policies and related actions with the aim of increasing the proportion of journeys made by active travel modes. Plans include the provision of new or improved cycling and walking infrastructure, increasing cycling and walking participation by promoting safer cycling, active promotion of cycling and walking and the support for cycling and walking based tourism. Consultation with community groups, parish councils and local interest groups is currently taking place before formal adoption.
4. We recognise that **high quality, accessible green spaces** contribute significantly to residents' health and wellbeing. We have been working closely with our communities and partners to submit a Heritage Lottery Fund bid for £4.4 million to deliver the Victoria Park masterplan, including a community hub, a new play provision, increased range of activities on offer, volunteering opportunities and improved safety and security. We will find out if we are successful in July 2019.
5. The year of the environment campaign recognises the impact that our surroundings can have on our mental and physical health. Our **Ashford in Bloom** gardening competition includes a category for best communal garden, supporting the provision of fresh fruit and vegetables for the local community and providing a place to reduce social isolation or offer space to exercise.
6. The council agreed a new **air quality strategy** in March 2019. This new strategy will help preserve our good air quality standards and also commits to action to tackle reduced health outcomes where poorer air quality is having a detrimental impact.
7. Finally, we are involved in a number of partnerships that focus on health and wellbeing in the respective specialist areas, for example the Kent Housing and Health Forum.

Proposals / issues for consideration

Redeveloping our approach

8. The AHWB has worked during 2018/19 to agree new ways of working for 2019/20 and beyond. This was prompted by a changing health and wellbeing landscape at a national, regional and local level.
9. It was very clear that partners believed there was a need to review their focus and key principles for the future were agreed as:
 - That the delivery of certain strategic priorities would be better served by working at a sub-regional level
 - That a local group was required to ensure the delivery of the bespoke Ashford approach to health and wellbeing

Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership

10. It was agreed by all partners that the Board be disbanded in preference for the establishment of a locally focused Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership (AHWP). The terms of reference as developed for this partnership are attached at Appendix 2.
11. The AHWP aims to improve health and wellbeing outcomes in Ashford, ensuring bespoke delivery tailored to our needs and our communities. The AHWP has the following priorities:
 - Inequalities
 - Infrastructure
 - Innovation
12. Each priority has an action plan, as attached at Appendix 3. Each priority will have a lead (who will chair the sub group meetings, drive delivery and report to the AHWP) and a sponsor (who will champion the work within the partnership and across systems). The leads and sponsors will attend the main meetings of the AWHP to ensure the partnership drives the delivery of the action plans through effective performance management.
13. More details of the AHWP can be found in the annual report at Appendix 1.

East Kent Health Improvement Partnership

14. Working with our partners, we are in the process of establishing the East Kent Health Improvement Partnership (EKHIP). This new partnership will include Kent County Council, East Kent district councils, clinical commissioning groups, health and wellbeing service providers and elected members.
15. The EKHIP will:
 - Ensure that the needs and priorities of East Kent residents as identified by EKHIP and local health and wellbeing partnerships are adequately reflected within the work and approach of the Kent and Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Board (the statutory Board for Kent), as well as ensure delivery of KMJHWP priorities as relevant.
 - Agree an annual sub-regional priority through an agreed partnership framework process – this will allow for effective sub regional working and

- exploitation of synergies in order to maximise resources (including co-commissioning) and outcomes
- Focus on health and wellbeing issues that are difficult to address at a borough level whether that be due to:
 - Geographical focus of some partners
 - Complexity or scale of issue, including required systems transformation
 - Where a coherent approach is important to achievement e.g. behaviour change campaigns

16. More details of the EKHIP can be found in the annual report in Appendix 1.

Implications

Resource implications

17. Work is ongoing in order to ensure the best approach to how the council resources the health and wellbeing agenda. This is unlikely to involve any growth in the establishment, but may involve reallocation of existing resources.

Financial implications

18. In order to deliver health and wellbeing services meaningfully, resource investment will likely be required. This will happen through the council's project initiation document (PID) process. Resource allocation as connected to the delivery of the emerging corporate plan will be fully scoped out as part of the planning process.

Constitutional implications

19. Our constitution should be updated to reflect the disbanding of the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board (AHWB), the creation of the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership (AHWP) and to reflect the delegated authorities as outlined in the recommendations.

Equalities impact assessment

20. An equalities impact assessment is not necessary for this report, although they will be carried out as required for discrete project activity, in relation to the inequalities priority particularly.

Consultation planned or undertaken

21. Consultation of all partners has been undertaken and the outcomes of the consultation have been fundamental to the development of both new partnerships and the future way of working. All partners are supportive of the direction of travel and proposals were formally agreed by the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board.

22. In relation to discrete projects emerging from the priority action plans, consultation will be carried out as required. We will work closely with partners to ensure a partnership approach to consultation and to creating an ongoing dialogue with our communities.

Other options considered

23. The council could decide not to be part of the two new partnerships, although this would have a significant impact upon the delivery of health and wellbeing interventions across the borough and would have a detrimental impact upon the leadership role of the council.

Reasons for supporting option recommended

24. Strong communities that are healthy and active is an emerging priority for our developing corporate plan. Health and wellbeing issues are of increasing importance to our communities. Supporting the new partnerships will enable us to respond to the health and wellbeing issues within the borough and improve outcomes for our communities.

Next steps

25. The meetings of the AHWP are taking place, with sub groups being established to ensure delivery of the priority action plans.
26. Sub regional meetings have taken place to shape the EKHIP, with the inaugural meeting planned for September 2019.
27. Ashford Borough Council's wider health and wellbeing approach will be explored in full as part of the corporate planning process, which will begin in 2019/20.

Conclusion

28. Ashford Borough Council is committed to excellence in health and wellbeing and work will continue in 2019/20 and beyond to ensure we deliver against our commitments and plans.

Portfolio holder's views

29. This report shows the excellent work that happens across the council and partners to deliver best quality health and wellbeing services and standards. I would like to recognise the work of other Cabinet colleagues and partners in driving this agenda forward in their own areas.

Contact and email

Angela d'Urso, public health advisor
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APPENDIX 1

ASHFORD HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD

ANNUAL REPORT 2018/19



a year's overview

INTRODUCTION

Who we are

Health and Wellbeing Boards were introduced by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. Establishing Boards was a statutory requirement for all upper tier authorities. Although not an upper tier authority, Ashford Borough Council established a health and wellbeing board in 2013.

Partners on the Board have included Ashford Borough Council, Kent County Council, Ashford Clinical Commissioning Group, health care providers such as GPs and the voluntary sector.

The Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board operates within a wide partnership framework, including the Kent and Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Board (KMJHWB), which is the statutory Board for Kent. Please see page 12 of this report for a map of the partnership environment for 2019/20 and onwards.

What do we do?

Essentially, we work together to tackle some of the most pressing health and wellbeing issues in Ashford. Our work ranges from sharing intelligence and information, to working together to redesign services and systems, to developing new approaches and innovative interventions.

We share the view that health and wellbeing issues must be tackled not only to improve the lives of our residents, but also to prevent future unmanageable pressure on public services.

Achievements in 2018/19

A significant amount of work has been undertaken by the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board in 2018/19, as detailed in the following sections.



THERE'S ONLY ONE YOU

The One You shop is our flagship response to improving health and wellbeing - it's a free to access service based in a converted shop in Ashford town centre, providing free health services, support and advice. Since launching in February 2017 the shop has gone from strength to strength. In 2018 we were one of three shortlisted for a national Royal Society of Public Health award in the Health on the High Street Category - a fantastic partnership achievement!

18.1%

Ashford adults smoke

67.1%

Ashford adults are overweight



Smoking is still the biggest cause of preventable ill health and premature mortality - more information on this can be found in a later section of this report.

Obesity is also a significant concern or Ashford:

- 67.1% of adults in Ashford are overweight. This is higher than the national average of 61.3% and the Kent average of 59.7%

- 18.4% of children in Ashford aged 10 -11 are classified as obese

There are health inequalities in our borough. Life expectancy for men is 4.9 years lower in the most deprived areas of Ashford compared to the least deprived areas.

The One You shop focuses on services for adults, with the aim of reducing smoking rates and obesity rates and decreasing health inequalities. We know the key to sustainable change is helping people to make their own healthier choices.

Feb 2017 - Apr 2019

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES

4,701

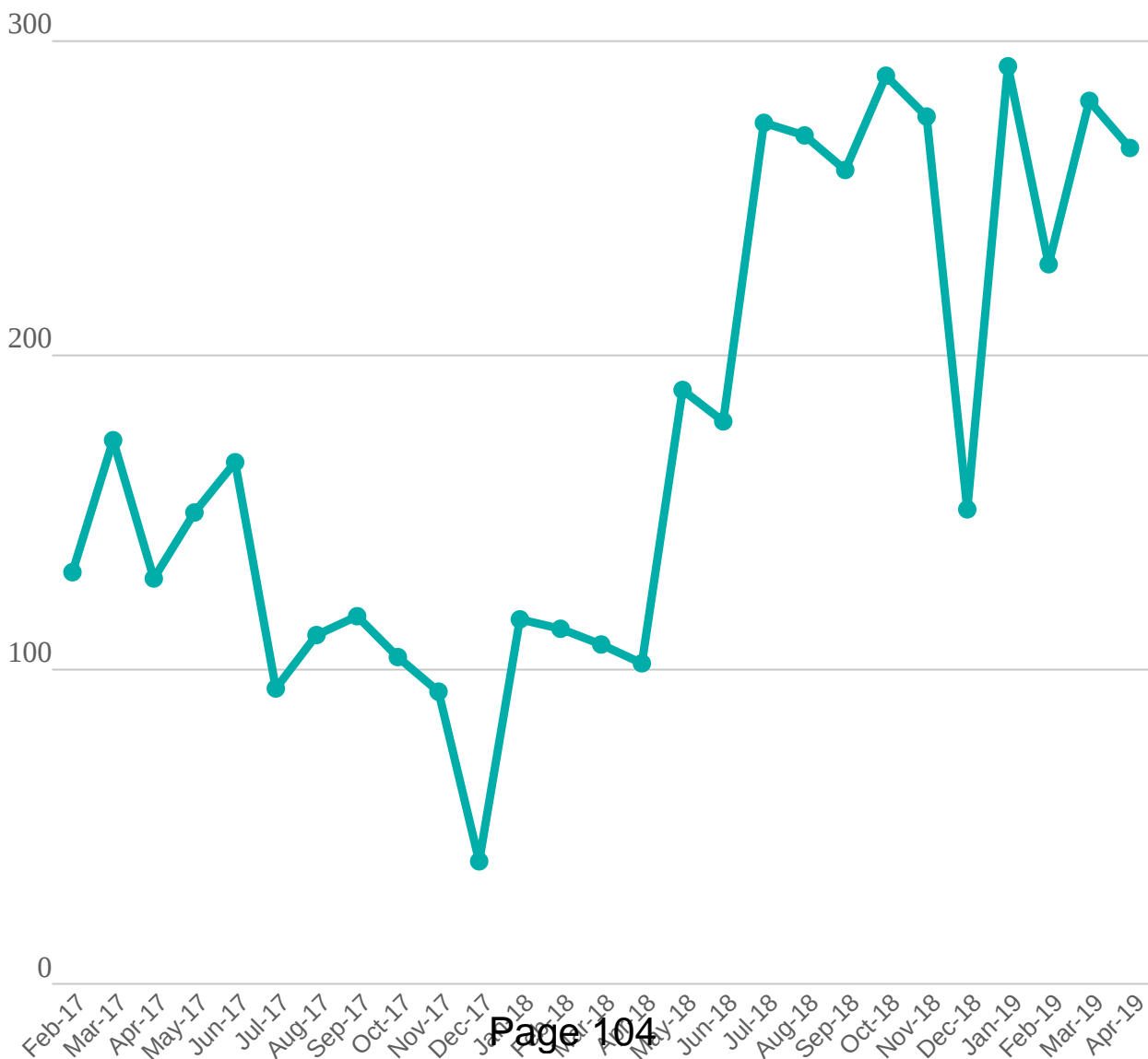
visits to the One You

5,488

interventions delivered

The One You shop has seen significant successes since it's launch in February 2017. In 2017/18, there were 979 visitors to the shop. In 2018/19, there were 2,753 visitors to the One You shop, against a target of 1,423.

The below chart shows the number of visits to the shop every month since it opened.

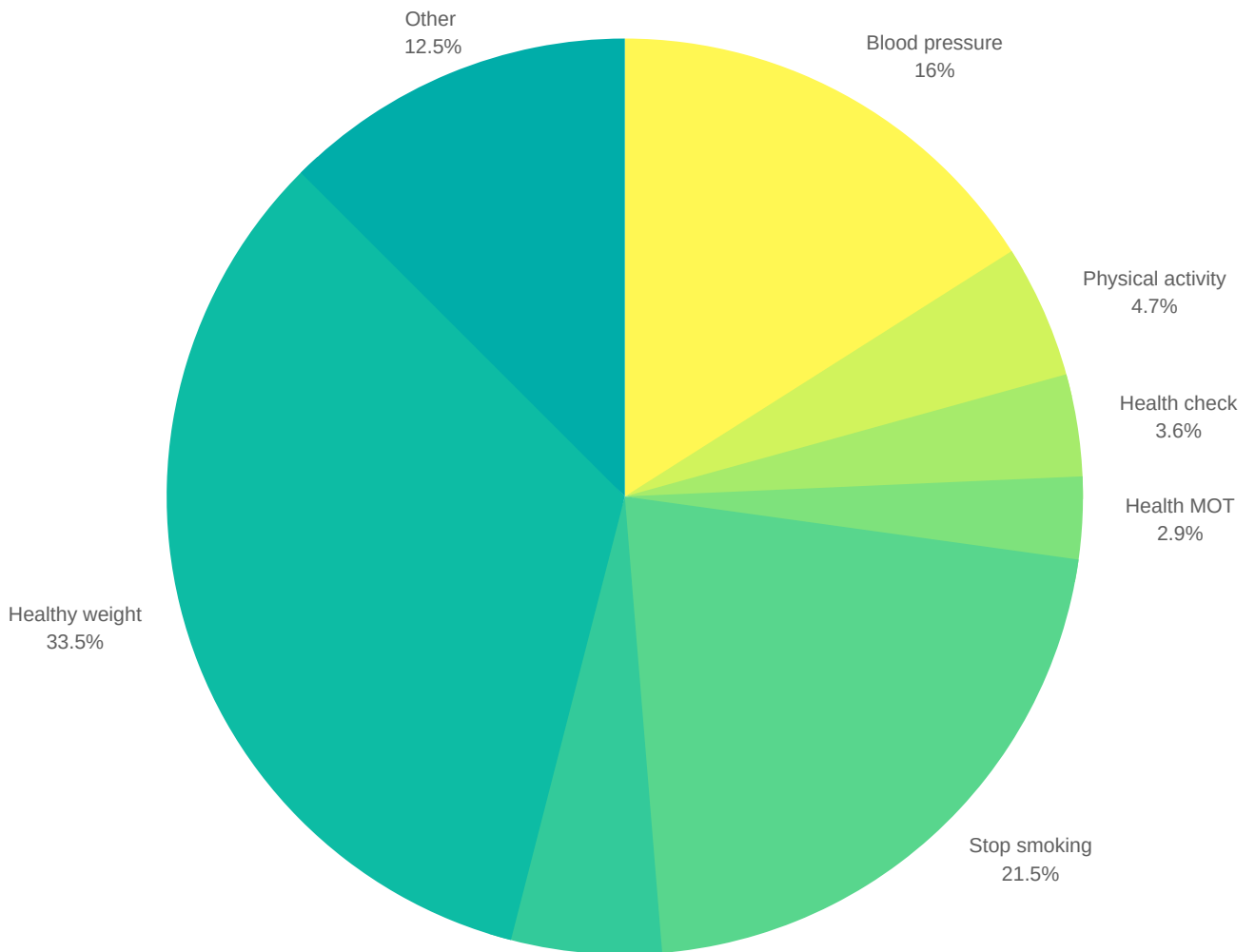


Right place, right time

SERVICES PEOPLE NEED

Of the range of interventions accessed, 33% are healthy weight services, 21.5% are stopping smoking and 16% are blood pressure.

The One You offers a range of other services by working with partners. Services available at the One You include mental health, dementia friends, breastfeeding support, debt advice and food parcels.



making impacts

FOR THOSE IN NEED

Our data and intelligence tells us there are places and people in more need of help to change than others. The One You always has an open door to all, but we also build pathways to reach out to those in most need.

Based on data from February 2017 - April 2019, 1,506 (32%) of customers visiting the shop lived in the 6 most deprived wards in Ashford (Stanhope, Aylesford Green, Norman, Victoria, Beaver and Bockhanger). This group has received 1,859 interventions (34% of all interventions).

Unsurprisingly, residents of Victoria wards have made visits to the One You shop, as well as received more interventions than other Ashford wards.

Victoria has the highest obesity rates in Ashford and our data tells us that residents of Victoria are accessing the healthy weight services more than any other ward in Ashford.

Victoria also has the highest number of people accessing stop smoking support with 121 interventions, followed by 112 interventions accessed by Godinton residents.

The second table shows the five wards with the highest rates of attendance at the One You. Work will continue into 2019/20 to continue to increase the footfall of the shop from the most deprived areas in the borough, as well as ensuring excellent promotion and communication across the borough, ensuring anyone who needs help can access the One You.



| Ward | Healthy weight | Stop smoking | Walks | Blood pressure | Health trainer / lifestyle advisor | Health check/ MOT | Other | Total |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-------|----------------|------------------------------------|-------------------|-------|-------|
| Stanhope | 32 | 40 | 10 | 13 | 11 | 2 | 17 | 125 |
| Aylesford Green | 63 | 54 | 8 | 25 | 10 | 14 | 29 | 203 |
| Norman | 81 | 40 | 17 | 19 | 8 | 16 | 25 | 206 |
| Victoria | 281 | 121 | 43 | 127 | 21 | 36 | 87 | 716 |
| Beaver | 116 | 92 | 11 | 92 | 12 | 22 | 21 | 366 |
| Bockhanger | 107 | 17 | 7 | 80 | 7 | 9 | 16 | 243 |
| Total | 680 | 364 | 96 | 356 | 69 | 99 | 195 | 1,859 |

| Ward | Ashford ward deprivation rank | Number attending | Number of interventions |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|-------------------------|
| Victoria | 4 th | 583 | 716 |
| Stour | 13 th | 394 | 425 |
| Godinton | 24 th | 335 | 390 |
| North Willesborough | 21 st | 303 | 364 |
| Beaver | 5 th | 293 | 366 |
| Total | | 1,325 | 1,545 |

it's not just numbers

WHAT DO OUR SERVICE USERS SAY?



Thank you for your help today. I've been struggling to find good healthy recipes.

Thank you for all the support you offer us. It's wonderful feeling like we can just drop in to the Booth of Truth or for blood pressure monitoring and always see a friendly face.

It's just wonderful that this is so easy to access. And free!

I can't say enough how much I value the girls in the shop. They're always there to make sure I'm OK. I've told all my friends about you!

We came to have our health checks here about a year ago. It was very worthwhile- my wife had high blood pressure picked up. She is now on medication. Recently she was informed she had high cholesterol. We were given a list of foods to avoid from our GP but were still confused. It was great to be able to come here and have everything explained to us and pick up some leaflets. Thanks very much.

The One You

DEVELOPING OUR SERVICE OFFER

The fantastic success of the shop has meant that we have outgrown our current premises more quickly than we ever expected to. In 2018/19 Ashford Borough Council agreed to invest a sum of money to enable the shop to move to a new, improved location. It has been a real partnership effort to design and create the facility - with help from Community Payback, B&Q, Tesco, DCB, Benchmarx and Price's.

The new shop will include some fantastic new facilities, which will enable us to improve the service offer to Ashford residents, including:

- Increasing the number of consultation rooms, providing space for an increased footfall, as well as increasing the number and type of interventions on offer - ensuring a holistic approach to health and wellbeing
- A new kitchen space - ensuring practical learning, not just the theory. The kitchen will also enable some wraparound support service delivery, for example for parents and carers to learn how to cook for weaning babies
- A new exercise space - ensuring we provide practical support to those wanting to lead more active lifestyles
- Providing a Changing Places standard bathroom - improving accessibility to the town centre in general and ensuring dignity for all when using the bathroom
- Providing a public seating area with toys - we hope it will be used by all, including parents who need a place to feed their babies
- Increasing our income generation opportunities and moving us towards the aim of commissioned clinical service delivery within the One You



SMOKING CESSATION



Stopping smoking

Smoking is still the biggest cause of preventable ill health and premature mortality. Based on 2018 data:

- 18.1% (17,500) of Ashford adults smoke - 3.2% higher than the national average and 1.8% higher than the Kent average
- 12.3% of expectant mothers are smoking in pregnancy, higher than the national average of 10.7%

The Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board has developed a number of interventions to support people to stop smoking, including smoke free school gates, smoke free zones (including around the council's civic centre) and a number of programmes delivered at the One You shop.

Illegal tobacco

Illegal tobacco can take many different forms, such as illicit (illegally imported and without the appropriate health warnings), counterfeit tobacco (illegally made) and genuine tobacco (smuggled into the county without duty being paid). We know that tackling the illegal tobacco market helps support smokers to quit.

In February 2019 a multi-agency operation was held in Ashford to target illegal tobacco. Three shops in the town centre were targeted by multi agency teams.

The raid was a big success, with approximately 65,000 illegal cigarettes seized, with a street value of £16,250 or £32,500 if they had been legal UK packs.

last year's

DEMENTIA ACTION

In 2018/19 training events were held for all partners to improve awareness of dementia and ensure services were delivered appropriately in this context.

Danemore

Ashford Borough Council has a multi-million pound modernisation plan for its sheltered housing schemes. Danemore has been devised in recognition of the need to make special provision for the needs of an ageing population - by 2026 it is anticipated that around 40% of the residents will be aged over 50. Danemore is dementia friendly throughout - including colour schemes, light, corridor lengths, pattern and memory shelves.

Danemore is modelled on Farrow Court, the council's £17 million flagship sheltered housing scheme. An event was held at Farrow Court during Dementia Action Week in 2018. Guests included Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board members, including Kent County Council and the Ashford Clinical Commissioning Group.

Dementia action week

In May 2018 we worked with Ashford and Canterbury Dementia Action Alliance (ACDAA) to hold a series of events during Dementia Action Week to promote awareness of dementia.

A hand crafted memory tree was located in a number of locations, including the One You shop for people to write a special memory onto a printed leaf and attach it to the tree. It was also located in the council offices for a period of time.



The tree's final outing was to the Kent Dementia Awards in October, where it was displayed together with other memory trees from around the county - creating a 'forest of thought'. The memories written have been recorded and shared with the Ashford and Canterbury Dementia Action Alliance.

our vision

THE FUTURE

Partners worked throughout 2018/19 to critically examine our direction of travel, and had some challenging discussions about issues within the existing Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board.

All partners agreed that they wanted to make changes, and as a result, the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board closed at the end of 2018/19 and two new partnerships have been established.

The Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership

The Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership (AHWP) will deliver continuous improvements in health and wellbeing services and outcomes at a local level, ensuring bespoke delivery tailored to our needs and our communities.

The AHWP has the following priorities:

- Inequalities - addressing health and wellbeing inequalities across the borough. The best use of partnership data and intelligence will be made in order to inform the most effective targeting of our resources. Areas of focus might include life expectancy, smoking, obesity, substance misuse excess, winter deaths or social isolation
- Infrastructure -all partners working to bring care as close to home as possible and a high calibre, fully functioning health workforce

- Innovation - ensuring we continue to lead the way in high quality, effective responses to health and wellbeing issues affecting our communities, including continually improving our flagship One You service offer

The composition of the AHWP recognises the need for a coordinated, partnership approach to addressing health and wellbeing needs and related problems across the borough - we know working in partnership is the only way to achieve our shared aims.

The Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership will have its first meeting in July 2019. Terms of reference and priority action plans have already been agreed by all partners. Three new sub groups to deliver the priority action plans have been set up and work is already progressing.



leading the way

A SUB REGIONAL APPROACH

As part of our work to develop our new approach approach, we have recognised the vital importance of closer sub regional working. We have led the way in setting a new sub regional direction of travel, working closely with partners across east Kent.



Working with our partners, we are in the process of establishing the East Kent Health Improvement Partnership (EKHIP). This new partnership will include Kent County Council, district councils, clinical commissioning groups, health and wellbeing service providers and elected members.

The EKHIP will:

- Ensure that the needs and priorities of East Kent residents as identified by EKHIP are adequately reflected within the work and approach of the KMJHWB, as well as ensure delivery of their priorities as relevant.

- Agree an annual sub-regional priority through an agreed partnership framework process – this will allow for effective sub regional working and exploitation of synergies in order to maximise resources (including co-commissioning) and outcomes

- Focus on health and wellbeing issues that are difficult to address at a borough level whether that be due to:

- Geographical focus of some partners
- Complexity or scale of issue, including systems transformation

- Where a coherent approach is important to achievement e.g. behaviour change campaigns.

appendix 1

PARTNERSHIP ENVIRONMENT



Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership

Terms of Reference

Introduction

This document sets out the ways in which the partner agencies that comprise the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership (AHWP) will work together to strategically oversee the delivery of the priorities identified and detailed in the AHWP action plan.

The composition of the AHWP recognises the need for a coordinated, partnership approach to addressing health and wellbeing needs and related problems across the borough.

The AHWP will ensure effective strategic planning and use of resource (including commissioning), a coordinated approach to meeting statutory requirements and timely delivery of activity to deliver priority outcomes.

Partnership environment

The AHWP sits within a wider framework of partnerships. See Appendix 1 for further detail.

AHWP vision

The AHWP will, through effective partnership working, deliver continuous improvement in health and wellbeing services / outcomes for the people of Ashford. This will include an annual priority setting process, which will inform agreed action plans for delivery.

AHWP aims and priorities

The AHWP aims to improve health and wellbeing outcomes in Ashford, ensuring bespoke delivery tailored to our needs and our communities.

The AHWP has the following priorities:

- **Inequalities** - focus is annually reviewed based on Public Health England data (currently includes reducing smoking, reducing obesity, giving every child the best start in life, substance misuse, improving air quality, improving housing to improve health and wellbeing [with a focus on reducing excess winter deaths])
- **Infrastructure** – ensuring we are able to bring care as close to home as possible and that we have a high calibre, fully functioning health workforce
- **Innovation** – including continually improving our flagship One You service offer

Each priority will have a lead (who will chair the sub group meetings, drive delivery and report to the AHWP) and a sponsor (who will champion the work within the partnership and across systems). The leads and sponsors will attend the main meetings of the AHWP – although as non-voting members where they are not otherwise contained in the membership of the terms of reference. Each AHWP members will be assigned a priority area to champion into the wider partnership and organisational environment.

Membership

The following organisations/departments/roles are represented as the core membership:

| Organisation / group | Position / detail |
|------------------------------|---|
| Ashford Borough Council | Cabinet member for community safety and wellbeing (Chair) |
| | Head of community safety and wellbeing |
| Clinical Commissioning Group | Head of Local Care for Ashford |
| | Lay member for patient and public engagement |
| Ashford providers | East Kent One You Locality Lead, Kent Community Health Foundation Trust |
| | Chair of Ashford GP Federation |
| | William Harvey Hospital representative |
| Partnerships | Chair of Ashford Local Children's Partnership Group |
| Service user representation | Patient Participation Group representative |

Each member has one vote. The Chair has the casting vote.

There will be a wider invitation list to the meetings of the AHWP for example Kent County Council representatives, Ashford planning service representatives, the leads and sponsors of the priority action plans and other key officers. These attendees will not have a vote.

Individuals and organisations with known expertise and knowledge may be requested to attend meetings as observers. Observers may participate in meetings but shall have no decision-making powers. If a member would like an observer to attend a meeting, they should seek the permission of the Chair.

Quorum

A valid quorum for meetings is half of the members with the right to be heard. This is the minimum requirement for a decision to be taken. No decision shall be taken without:

- One local authority representative
- One CCG representative
- One provider representative
- One patient / partnership representative

Membership expectations

- To attend the meetings of the AHWP and when they cannot attend to send a named deputy who has been briefed prior to their attendance. The named deputy will have full voting rights
- To have authority to be able to take action and make decisions as required
- To commit to developing an appropriate level of understanding around health and wellbeing issues, policy and practice as required
- To work together productively to overcome any cross-organisational barriers
- To take the lead on the delivery of specific priorities or actions as required

Chair

The role of the Chair is to ensure:

- The AHWP and related sub groups are delivering agreed activity as outlined in the annual action plan, with quarterly performance reporting by exception and an annual performance report produced
- Priorities are reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis
- Governance, including the delivery groups and related action plans, is annually reviewed

The lead officer of the AHWP will act as vice chair as required.

Confidentiality

All attendees have a duty of confidentiality regarding all information disclosed, shared and discussed between and during AHWP meetings. There will be occasions when selected information must not be disclosed outside the AHWP. The person disclosing such information is responsible for identifying it as confidential at the time it is given and for ensuring that its confidential status is identified in all relevant written material. Any challenge to the confidentiality of information will be referred to the Chair, whose decision on the matter will be final.

Administrative support

The administration of the AHWP shall be managed by Ashford Borough Council.

Meeting frequency

The AHWP will meet three times per annum. The AHWP may request sub-group meetings on particular topics more frequently.

Performance indicators

The AHWP will agree a number of outcome indicators related to the action plans. These will provide a performance framework to capture progress and to identify and tackle emerging issues. They will be reported on by exception at each AHWP meeting and an annual performance report shall be produced.

Subgroups

These are established as required by the action plan priority sponsors. Each sub group should have a full terms of reference and should work on a task and finish basis.

Any other subgroup required can be established at the discretion of the Chair.

Urgent matters

Decisions may be made about urgent matters without a group meeting providing the written consent of the Chair is sought and given. In this case the Chair must ensure that every effort has been made to consult informally with members and report any decisions taken at the next meeting.

Representation at EKHIP

The lead officer of the AHWP will attend the EKHIP on behalf of the AHWP and it is their role to ensure a two way flow of information between the partnerships to deliver the above.

Appendix 1

Kent and Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Board

The Kent and Medway Joint Health and Wellbeing Board (KMJHWB) is a statutory body established by the Health and Social Care Act 2012. The Act specifies a minimum membership, which has been extended to include representation of the district councils.

East Kent Health Improvement Partnership

The East Kent Health Improvement Partnership (EKHIP) is a sub-regional group that feeds into the KMJHWB. The EKHIP will:

- Seek to reflect the updated aims and objectives of the KMJHWB and support sub regional delivery of these in any way possible
- Ensure that the needs and priorities of East Kent residents as identified by EKHIP are adequately reflected within the work and approach of the KMJHWB
- Escalate issues to the KMJHWB, where they cannot be addressed at an East Kent or Local level
- Agree an annual sub-regional priority through the agreed partnership framework process – this will allow for effective sub regional working and exploitation of synergies in order to maximise resources (including co-commissioning) and outcomes
- Focus on health and wellbeing issues that are difficult to address at a local borough level whether that be due to:
 - Geographical focus of some partners
 - Complexity or scale of issue
 - Where a coherent approach is important to achievement e.g. behaviour change campaigns

Appendix 3

Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership

Priority - Inequalities

Lead - Angela d'Urso

Sponsor - Chris Morley

| Outcome | Focus | Activity | Priority | Timescale | Lead | Resources | Performance measures | R/A/G | Progress update |
|---|--|---|----------|-----------|------------------|---|---|-------|-----------------|
| Behaviour change in our communities | Improve public knowledge and skills to take responsibility for their own health outcomes | Explore best practice of approaches within schools, undertake audit of the Ashford offer, assess areas of highest inequalities and obesity concerns and develop Ashford approach | H | 2019/20 | SH | | Q1 - audit undertaken | | |
| | | Capacity build communities to deliver their own healthy and active schemes - a new post is being created to lead on this activity. To include Man vs Fat | H | 2019/20 | SH | Ad'U | Develop JD in line with needs, grading etc. Recruitment process to appoint officer for the beginning of 2019/20 Agreed workplan, including key elements of portfolio action plans moving forward | | |
| | | Comms campaign to build public awareness and deliver behaviour change e.g. Fizzy February, portion sizes (for the under 5s especially), recipes | H | 2019/20 | Ad'U | EE | Comms strategy developed and being delivered - to focus on a general health approach | | |
| | Enabling behaviour change | Focus on partnership responses in relation to the delivery of the air quality strategy | H | 2019/20 | Corporate policy | Ad'U | Q1 - Officer appointed Air quality action group established Full action plans developed for each priority Measures to be confirmed when action plan finalised | | |
| | | Increase smoke free areas and develop carrot and stick approach around their introductions | M | 2019/20 | Ad'U | | WHH discussions in 2019 Q1/2 review possible public locations for a smoke free environment, developed to proposal stage | | |
| | | Work to prevent / tackle clustering of fast food outlets, particularly around schools | M | 2019/20 | Ad'U | Licensing, planning | Q1 - scale of issue mapped and interventions explored | | |
| Reducing differences in life expectancy and health outcomes | Key inequalities as identified by data | Priority areas agreed, with targeted intervention developed as required. Groups to be assessed include: Learning and/or physical disabilities Frailty Dementia Substance and alcohol misusers Carers Homelessness Foodbank users, frees school meals Health related worklessness Mental health / suicide Sexual health Geographical hotspots Routine and manual workers Men Excess winter deaths | H | 2019/20 | Ad'U | As required per the identified group and action taken | To be developed, for example could be: Build links with the Ashford food bank and promote options for accessing the food - for example school breakfast clubs, after school clubs etc. Develop a scheme whereby a monthly box of raw ingredients (flour, sugar etc..) can be delivered to those people who attend programmes such as Little Cooks | | |

Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership
Priority - Innovation
Lead - Mark Cummings
Sponsor - Sadia Rashid

| Outcome | Focus | Activity | Priority | Timescale | Lead | Resources | Performance measures | R/A/G | Progress update |
|---|---|---|----------|--------------------------|-------------|------------------|--|-------|-----------------|
| One You flagship | | | | | | | | | |
| Continually improving the One You service offer | A new and improved One You location | Continue to increase the the number of people using the shop and the number of interventions delivered, including through development of new interventions based on new facilities e.g. physical exercise, healthy cooking, baking for mental health etc., and new referral pathways including social prescriptions Deliver a launch event and related communications strategy, with a specific launch event for primary care to create increased referral pathways Promotional campaign undertaken - to include a billboard, the back of parking tickets etc. Generate income in line with new facilities | H | Q1 2019 for launch event | MC and Ad'U | One You team | Interventions developed and targeted Increased footfall Increased walk ins Increased booked appointments Increased income generation | | |
| | Ensure services are targeting inequality in health outcomes | Develop targeted interventions and specific health events for those with lower engagement rates e.g. men, wards with lowest attendance as compared to highest needs, business link schemes with large manual workforces etc. To include working with ABC leads to maxime referral pathways around smoke free school gates + scheme, increasing smoke free areas, illicit tobacco raodshows, anti smoking sessions for school children etc. | H | 2019/20 | MC and Ad'U | One You team, EE | Interventions developed More people coming to the shop and satisfied with the service offer Increase in attendance of individuals in need from those groups with lowest attendance rates | | |
| Leading the way in local care | | | | | | | | | |
| Bringing care closer to home | Bringing care options closer to those in most need | Explore opportunities to create a health village, designing in the easiest access to health care for those with the highest needs / most vulnerabilities. Explore opportunities to deliver the outcome in other ways, including building on the success of the One You model. | M | 2019 | CCG | Planning | Q1 - exploration phase completed, project activity for future quarters agreed | | |

Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership
Priority - Infrastructure
Lead - Head of Local Care for Ashford CCG
Sponsor - CCG estates Ashford

| Outcome | Focus | Activity | Priority | Timescale | Lead | Resources | Performance measures | R/A/G | Progress update |
|---|---|---|----------|-----------|---------------|-----------------|---|-------|-----------------|
| Estates | | | | | | | | | |
| Sustainable GP practices | Delivering the Ashford CCG estates strategy | Developing a new approach to S106 contributions to health - designing a forward funding loan, ensuring the estates strategy is delivered as efficiently and effectively as possible | H | 2019 | CCG, CF, Ad'U | Planning, legal | Q1 - Agree terms of loan and secure all necessary agreements | | |
| Creating infrastructure for future need | Responding to the STP approach | | M | 2019 | CCG, CF, Ad'U | Planning, legal | | | |
| Workforce | | | | | | | | | |
| Clear pathways to clear job roles are available | Growing the future workforce | Explore opportunities around local schools and colleges in terms of work experiences, establishment links, mentoring schemes, taster days etc | M | Q1 2019 | GP rep | LCP Chair, RI | Q1 - exploration phase completed, project activity for future quarters agreed | | |
| Attracting and keeping the workforce | A quality and affordable home is accessible | To explore in there are any oportunities for supporting key workers through better access to housing | M | Q1 2019 | RW | Planning, Ad'U | Q1 - exploration phase completed, project activity for future quarters agreed | | |
| | Ashford as a destination of choice | Building on effective promotional approaches, a campaign to encourage the workforce to Ashford focusing on key educational pathways, institutions, events etc | H | 2019/20 | Ad'U | Comms | Q1 - campaign designed with mapped out timeline to target activity | | |
| | Enabling access to the workforce | Explore options around schemes to support those accessing a second undergraduate degree with no access to student loans and possible opportunities to encourage links to Ashford | M | Q1 2019 | GP rep | Ad'U | Q1 - exploration phase completed, project activity for future quarters agreed | | |

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Agenda Item No: 9
Report To: Cabinet
Date of Meeting: 13 June 2019
Report Title: Ashford Borough Heritage Plaque Scheme
Report Author & Job Title: Elizabeth Fagg
Heritage Development Officer
Portfolio Holder: Cllr Peter Feacey
Portfolio Holder for: Culture

Summary: To agree the establishment of an Ashford Borough Heritage Plaque Scheme so that noteworthy individuals or buildings from Ashford's past that are not widely known or formally recognised across the borough will have a permanent acknowledgment of their existence. The scheme will address this invisibility, celebrate those past Ashford residents and buildings and promote Ashford's history and heritage to support civic pride.

Key Decision: YES

Significantly Affected Wards: All wards in the borough

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

- I. Support the establishment of an Ashford Borough Heritage Plaque scheme, including the details of the eligibility criteria, scoring and decision making process and design of the plaque as outlined within the report;**
- II. Commit to a growth budget of £25,000 (to be taken from reserves) to allow the scheme to be established;**
- III. Agree that the Head of Culture in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture be authorised to execute and complete all necessary documentation to give effect to the above recommendations.**

Policy Overview: The project responds to Priority 4 of the Corporate Plan (Attractive Ashford: Countryside and Townscape, Tourism and Heritage) and to the Council's Heritage Strategy.

Financial Implications: A sum of £25,000, which is to be funded from reserves, is being sought which will cover the cost of the plaques, the installation, listed building consent fees, where applicable,

and the development of an online trail app.

| | |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Legal Implications | The permission of the property owner will need to be sought to enable plaques to be installed and so a legal agreement or license will need to be entered into for each plaque erected. Depending on the status of the building, it may also be necessary to obtain Listed Building consent. |
| Equalities Impact Assessment | An Equalities Impact Assessment is not required as the project involves the 'celebration' of historic/deceased figures and decisions or actions stemming from the project will not have equalities impacts on residents. |
| Other Material Implications: | None |
| Exempt from Publication: | NO |
| Background Papers: | None |
| Contact: | Elizabeth.fagg@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330229 Heritage Development Officer |

Report Title: Ashford Borough Heritage Plaque Scheme

Introduction and Background

1. During the work of developing the Ashford Town Centre Heritage Trail, it became apparent that there were many noteworthy individuals from Ashford's past that were not widely known or formally recognised across the borough. Many of these individuals are noted in the trail, however, there is no permanent visible acknowledgment of their existence. The exception being plaques that have been erected in the past for Sir John Furley (founder of the St John Ambulance) in both North Street and Park Mall and for Francis Epps (who founded Hopewell in Virginia) in North Street.
2. The establishment of a heritage plaque scheme is supported in the Council's recently adopted Heritage Strategy, which states in Objective Three (Point 13.6.1) that 'The tourism and visitor potential and economic benefits of the borough's historic environment and heritage assets will be increasingly recognised' while Objective Four is focused on 'Increasing public understanding of, engagement with, access to and enjoyment of the historic environment'.
3. A formal heritage plaque scheme will address this invisibility and celebrate past Ashford Borough residents, other noteworthy individuals with local connections and historically significant buildings, to promote local heritage and civic pride. The scheme could, subject to approval by members, also include new plaques for Sir John Furley and Francis Epps and also potentially be extended to include buildings of note.
4. The objectives of the scheme will be to:
 - a) identify and enhance important heritage assets across the borough;
 - b) reinforce the existing Conservation Area designations and possibly encourage future conservation and to raise awareness of Ashford's intangible and tangible heritage to both residents and visitors and;
 - c) increase borough-wide engagement in Ashford's history by generating civic pride and creating a sense of place and identity.

Proposal

5. It is proposed that the scheme be named the Ashford Borough Heritage Plaque Scheme, but possibly abbreviated to the 'Green Plaque Scheme' given it is proposed that the plaques are to be green. It is recommended not to adopt the Blue Plaque scheme in order to not only differentiate the scheme from the traditional 'blue plaque' scheme in many other town and cities, but also to reflect the Council's corporate colours and Garden of England location.

6. The design of the plaque, similar to other heritage plaques around the country, will include the name of the nominee, a brief description of their lifetime contribution and/or profession and their date of birth. The plaque will also feature the Ashford Borough crest in full colour. A draft design concept is attached to this report for approval.
7. A two stage eligibility criteria and scoring process is proposed. These criteria have been adapted from the national guidelines of the English Heritage Blue Plaque Scheme. The first stage will be focused on whether:
 - i. there is an original, publically accessible physical site or building associated with the nominee;
 - ii. that the person commemorated has been dead for at least 20 years (or deceased until the centenary of their birth) to allow for a period of reflection and the benefit of hindsight;
 - iii. there is demonstrable evidence of their stay in the Ashford Borough.
8. If the nominees meet all the criteria of the first stage, they will then be scored against the second stage eligibility criteria. There are 5 second stage criteria which the nominee will be scored against which are:
 - i. the nominee is recognised locally
 - ii. the nominee is also recognised nationally or internationally
 - iii. the nominee is an exceptional or outstanding person and the well-informed passer-by will recognise their name
 - iv. the nominee is regarded as being eminent by a majority of members of their profession or calling
 - v. the nominee has genuinely contributed to human welfare or happiness and deserves recognition

For each criteria met, the nominee scores one point and therefore they can score a maximum of 5 points. It is suggested that only nominees that achieve a score of three or more are recommended to the selection panel. Some exceptional cases may not meet the criteria, but could still be considered on a case by case basis.

9. In addition to agreeing the eligibility and scoring criteria, the scheme will also involve researching and verifying historical evidence to support nominations; establishing building ownerships and drawing up legal agreements with property owners; establishing any planning consents, such as Listed Building consent that may be needed and identifying the installation process.
10. It is also proposed that a publicity campaign is launched to announce and promote the scheme and that as part of the scheme's legacy an online trail is developed to support the physical trail.

11. It is proposed that a selection panel is formed of council members that will agree the recommended nominees.

Handling

12. Officers in Cultural Services have already carried out research to identify a number of possible nominees from across the borough and so it is proposed that two nominees are put forward in order to get the project started and to thoroughly test the eligibility criteria and understand any issues that may arise relating to legal agreements with owners, planning consents and installation.
13. Once any initial issues have been ironed out, it is proposed that the scheme is opened up to the community for public nominations and that once received these nominations are judged against the eligibility and scoring process as outlined above.
14. It is proposed that Cultural Services will manage the eligibility and scoring process and put forward recommendations to a selection panel that the Cabinet believes appropriate. The panel will endorse those recommendations it wishes to take forward and the Head of Culture, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture, will manage the process under delegated authority.
15. It is suggested that the scheme is an on-going rolling programme, where nominations can be submitted at any time, but that the scheme is reviewed in 18 months to ensure that it is fit for purpose and the budget available is sufficient.
16. It is anticipated that initially there may be an influx of nominations when the scheme is first launched, which will require significant officer support. Thus no guarantee on when plaques will be produced and installed can be provided after an application has been made and agreed by the selection panel. It is expected that the panel will meet quarterly in the first year of operation.
17. It is also difficult to estimate the length of time from initial application to a plaque being placed on a building and formally promoted as each nominee or building may need detailed permissions and further research.

Implications and Risk Assessment

18. In order to maintain the integrity and credibility of the proposed scheme, it is important to ensure that the eligibility criteria and scoring are met and not compromised. This may mean that fewer nominations than anticipated are received. This will be monitored and the scheme criteria reviewed annually. Ensuring that adequate historical background research is carried out on the nominees as well as ensuring that the criteria are met, will avoid any potential public objections to the choice of plaque subject and any resulting negative PR.
19. It should also be noted that the scheme is dependent on the consent and agreement of building owners for plaques to be installed and to remain in place if ownership of the building subsequently changes.

Financial Implications

20. It is estimated that each plaque will cost in the region of £1,710 to £2,710 meaning that between nine to fourteen plaques could be erected within the budget being sought. The estimated financial breakdown is as follows:
- Design and production of each plaque – £600
 - Installation of each plaque (dependent on location and height, fixings, type of building and contractor used) – £500 - £1000
 - Legal agreements (possible property owners' solicitor fees) – £500-£1000
 - Planning consents (advertisement consent, if needed) – £110.

Consultation Planned or Undertaken

21. The Council's Planning Conservation Officer has been consulted on the scheme and is supportive of the proposal. The Ashford Borough Museum Society also supports the proposal.

Other Options Considered

22. An online-only trail where users could hover over a map and see virtual plaques and find out more information about the subjects was considered, but rejected as the purpose of the scheme is to encourage personal visits to the site and have a physical location where the nominee is celebrated.

Next Steps in Process

23. Subject to the approval of the scheme by Cabinet, two nominees will be put forward to test the whole process for instance the eligibility and scoring criteria, landowner legal agreements and installation. Officers in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Culture will agree these two nominees. Once any initial issues have been resolved, the full 'green plaque' scheme will be launched and opened up for public nominations.

Portfolio Holder's Views

24. I do fully support the recognition of people who have made a contribution to the borough and the nation. This type of scheme helps to raise awareness of our rich heritage and highlights those individuals for both residence and visitors.

Cllr Peter Feacey – Portfolio Holder for Culture, Tourism and Leisure

Contact and Email

Elizabeth Fagg, Heritage Development Officer:

Email: Elizabeth.fagg@ashford.gov.uk

Tel: 01233 330299



ASHFORD
BOROUGH COUNCIL

| | |
|---|---|
| Agenda Item No: | 10 |
| Report To: | Cabinet |
| Date of Meeting: | 13 June 2019 |
| Report Title: | Reorganisation of the Planning & Development Service |
| Report Author & Job Title: | Tim Naylor - Head of Planning and Development |
| Portfolio Holder Portfolio Holder for: | Cllr. Shorter - Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development |
| Summary: | The Cabinet are requested to consider the proposals in the report, the impact this will have on the delivery of service priorities and the consultation process followed. |
| Key Decision: | NO |
| Significantly Affected Wards: | None specifically |
| Recommendations: | The Cabinet is recommended to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">I. Note the recommendation of the Joint Consultative Committee of 25 April 2019II. Approve the implementation of the reorganisation of the Planning and Development Service as outlined by this reportIII. Approve the potential redundancy costs in the event that officers are not able to be assimilated or redeployed. |
| Policy Overview: | Managing Restructure, Redundancy and Organisational Change policy |
| Financial Implications: | In the budget for 19/20 the resources for the service have been increased by £250k to cover the costs outlined in the reorganisation. In the MTFP this additional resource will taper off over a number of years as efficiencies from digital transformation are realised. Moving forward the structure as currently drafted would place a financial pressure on the service. The pressure is to be managed through a combination of factors - driving efficiencies, vacancy management, fee income and the improved usage of Planning Performance Agreements. Alternatively the service could look for a reduction in existing establishment. In the event that assimilation is unsuccessful for employees in Group One and no other suitable alternatives are available, Cabinet is asked to approve |

the potential redundancy cost of £27,276.99 for potentially one of these officers.

Legal Implications: None

Equalities Impact Assessment See Attached

Other Material Implications: None

Exempt from Publication: N/A

Background Papers: JCC Report and minutes of 25 April 2019

**Contact: Tim Naylor – Head of Planning and Development
tim.naylor@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: (01233) 330 239**

1 Background

- 1.1 This paper sets out proposals for the modernisation of the Planning and Development Service to enable it to deliver an effective service as Ashford Borough ambitiously develops. With a demanding housing land supply target, central Government's focus on housing delivery; and the sheer rate of change taking place in the Borough there is a step-change in the demands now placed on the Planning and Development Service. The recent Corporate Peer Review identified the need to ensure that resource allocations are assessed to enable the organisation to respond to these needs and to meet the borough's ambitions.
- 1.2 The planning service within the Council has also faced challenges in recent times, namely staff turnover and difficulty in recruiting new permanent staff in a very competitive market. The service has focused on managing the day to day activity but has not invested enough time on the way we work - improving processes, use of IT and efficiency measures. As caseload has risen, alongside an unprecedented number of large-scale applications, the service has begun to struggle as a result and performance and customer care has dropped.
- 1.3 It is important, however, not to lose sight of the very positive health check earlier this year undertaken by the LGA Planning Peer Review. The fundamentals of the service – including its professionalism; its ability to work with partners and its high emphasis on design quality all remain true and are factors to be proud of. Building on that solid core, combined with a review and service modernisation undertaking, will ensure it is fit for purpose and has the necessary capacity and capabilities to operate effectively in the coming years.
- 1.4 Key issues arising from the LGA Planning Peer Review included:
 - Secure the staff resources needed to deliver the full planning service, including specialists

- Consolidate a robust enforcement service with a further improvement plan for the service taking advantage of the additional staff capacity created
- Reviewing our approach to customer service across the board to identify and tackle any weak areas
- Review timing and procedure of major pre-application/ development team service and the use of Planning Performance Agreements to enable better process and customer experience for developers - identifying non-negotiables clarifying design parameters early
- Delivery of an adopted Local Plan
- Review of s106 processes (and future CIL requirements) to enable improved strategic oversight and improved governance to streamline and clarify the process
- Define and recalibrate the nature, extent, and purpose of guidance requested and provided by legal services.

2 Rationale for Change

2.1 The service has been assessed by the Head of Planning and Development through discussions with staff in planning and other services, members, applicants, other stakeholders and community representatives. After considering these views, along with the two, independent Peer Reviews, seven themes have been identified which need to be central to the way in which the Planning Service moves forward. Taken together these form the rationale for the changes to the organisation of the Planning Service that are set out in the remainder of this report.

2.2 These are the themes where we need to focus our efforts:

- **Growing our own** – *provide opportunities for staff progression as part of a structured career development process and review our career grades and graduate entry processes to help develop core skills and broad experience.*
- **Pro-active working across the Council** - *Review the way we work to help shape a structure and develop processes and a culture that fosters cross service working that more effectively integrates into corporate priorities across the various service functions in the wider Council.*
- **Innovation and leadership** - *Create the conditions where innovation and new ideas are developed and led by senior managers within the service. Challenge and encourage staff at all levels to think and operate differently.*
- **Integration and cohesion** - *Build stronger and closer working between the teams within the service – improving collaboration and dialogue, flexible working across teams and promoting a positive attitude to professional challenge at all levels.*
- **Prioritisation and pragmatism** – *Promote a pragmatic approach within our working practices, enabling prioritisation and compromise and providing early, clear and consistent views in negotiation with applicants.*
- **Greater delegation** – *Enabling and supporting staff at all levels by having faith in their ability, being aware of risks but not being unduly risk averse and learning by mistakes.*
- **Customer care plan** – *Review how best can we serve our customers by learning from feedback and being more aware of customers' needs.*

- 2.3 The re-organisation aims to provide a context within which staff are encouraged and empowered to take decisions based on clear risk assessment and not to fear mistakes. Succession planning, enhancement of graduate entry programmes, developing and growing our own are also key principles which the new structure will be based upon. In addition, the need to work in a project environment, premised on matrix working across the functions to engender a sharing of ideas and knowledge, whilst ensuring an efficient and optimal use of resources and helping to consolidate resilience is the way forward for the service.
- 2.4 A re-organisation will need to be supported through a commitment to cultural change. Cultural change is as important as the re-organisation itself, if not more so, and needs to happen as part of a continuous process as practices develop and the new ways of working mature.
- 2.5 Change is also required in the way the senior management of the service operates. This team has a critical role to play working together to drive the changes needed to secure our ambition for the service. The professional skills are very strong – as acknowledged by the Planning Peer Review – but more time needs to be devoted to jointly driving change in the way we work and achieving the key themes identified above, including working across teams in a supportive way; fully developing our staff; delivering better customer service and playing a wider role supporting corporate activity.
- 2.6 A modernising of the service is needed which takes account of the resources at our disposal and the need to deliver efficiencies and optimise service delivery through new ways of working. This modernisation of the Planning and Development service is essential to meet the aspirations and ambitions of the Council.
- 2.7 Without a consolidated, robust and aligned management team, many of the issues needing to be tackled across the service cannot be adequately addressed. It is concluded that the current resource levels to manage the service at this level is inadequate and needs strengthening. Even with the proposed capacity in place this will not in itself resolve all issues needing to be tackled - training, development, coaching, mentoring and away days will be necessary and available as part of the ongoing process.
- 2.8 In its overall review of the Planning and Development Service the Planning Peer Review of Spring 2018, states the service is already performing at a good level. The Local Plan has successfully undergone its public examination and is moving to adoption. The scale of development taking place in and around Ashford Town in recent years has grown significantly and housing delivery is keeping pace with local plan requirements. The Planning Service has successfully defended attempts by predatory developers to exploit perceived weaknesses in housing land supply in three high profile planning inquiries, all subsequently withdrawn by the developer.
- 2.9 These successes demonstrate that high quality skills, expertise and professionalism exists across the service. The current service structure does not however use these skills to optimal effect. Senior managers are often concentrating on delivering professional services with less time spent managing and developing their teams' capacities; driving innovation and efficiency. The effectiveness of the hard work and commitment of dedicated officers can

sometimes be dissipated by not working as effectively as needed across team boundaries within the service and with other services.

2.10 There are several structural inconsistencies that exist across the various functions of the service which I believe undermine our ability to provide best-practice spatial planning/ development management:

- The development management function and supporting specialist functions are fragmented;
- The Council's positive commitment to place-making is not expressed as a structural element of the service;
- Urban design and heritage expertise, key place-making tools, appear to not be distributed and aligned in a logical manner
- The key focus needed on infrastructure planning and delivery does not have the profile and focus needed;
- The policy function is a relatively narrow one where there is the potential for expansion into related areas of activity.

2.11 In addition many longstanding day to day working practices remain in continued existence. The following areas have received little modification or the innovative consideration required to respond to the requirements of changing service delivery demanded by the external factors of increased delivery requirements and improved performance:

- Revised report writing and re-engineering of planning committee
- Agility in decision making in Development Management (DM) based on careful risk profiling
- Attitudes to customer care
- Use of available data to anticipate and manage resource allocation to avoid backlogs
- Raising the profile of the Enforcement function
- Greater alignment in the working between the wider DM and Policy functions
- Improved workshopping across the service and cross-corporately

2.12 It is essential however for the context above to be viewed against a backdrop of increasing volumes of work. Planning applications received have risen significantly during the course of past years in addition to which finalising the latter stages of the Local Plan and its recent successful adoption has brought about a significant volume of strategic growth activity on allocated sites. Annual totals of applications received has steadily grown from 2439 in 14/15 to 2768 in 17/18 and continues to rise. The growth experienced in these areas coupled with the ambitions set out in the Corporate Plan for the town centre and other corporate priorities beyond should be recognised as significant drivers for additional resources and the need for transformative ways of working in order to embrace these challenges.

3 The Change Proposals

3.1 This consultation paper responds directly to observations made in the Corporate Peer Challenge regarding '*Capacity to deliver and customer access*'. The

changes proposed within this paper are not budget driven and include a proposal to increase the number of staff in the Planning and Development service.

- 3.2 The focus is mainly on altering the way posts are organised so that the service can rise to current and future expectations that the service and Council are facing. The restructure aim is to strengthen the current service and not make post holders redundant.
- 3.3 As identified above the Planning and Development Service at Ashford has considerable high-quality skills, expertise and professionalism with the potential to perform well. This section explores and explains the rationale as to how the service can become more effective and achieve additional efficiencies through improved alignment, smarter working and adopting a lean and unencumbered set of processes.
- 3.4 A planning service has several key components that it must deliver successfully to be an effective local planning authority. Planning should be seen as an integrated process at the heart of the Council's activities and outputs rather than a separate function. That process should be focused on taking the corporate vision and giving it spatial expression in the Council's Development Plan and then co-ordinating other services in the delivery of that vision. Its mode of operation should be flexible, creative and pro-active rather than regulatory and reactive. It should have a realistic, reasonable and flexible budget.
- 3.5 The constituent parts of a planning service go under different names, but the essential elements are described below.

4 Spatial Planning

- 4.1 Plans are dynamic documents, in fact to be effective, they are dynamic processes that constantly seek to respond to market signals, development pressures and political (national, regional and local) priorities. The right planning response to a cluster of stimuli may be at any number of levels within the overall process. The service must be attuned to these signals, process them and craft the right response from the planning authority so that the borough continues to deliver its planning and development agenda effectively.
- 4.2 The existing policy function is narrow in its scope, being focused heavily on the local plan, and is operationally somewhat isolated from other corporate functions in the authority and sometimes even those within the rest of the planning service.
- 4.3 A more broadly-based Spatial Planning function is required to provide the capacity and influence to help deliver the Council's corporate agenda and effectively discharge responsibilities in the following two main groupings:
 - Plan-making and Infrastructure strategy
 - Place-making

These areas are explored in more detail below.

Plan making - delivery

4.4 The statutory Local Plan is one of the few strategic documents extending many years into the future that is central to the Council's corporate strategy as a key driver of growth for the borough and considering environmental protection. This function will have an empirical understanding of the borough and be responsible for the planning, co-ordination and monitoring of the spatial response to the pressures that the borough is facing and those that are expected to emerge in the future.

4.5 The function will have primary responsibility for the development for the Local Plan and Development Plan and its components, particularly Development Plan Documents, working closely with other parts of spatial planning, development management and the wider Council functions to develop policy and other responses.

Plan making - Infrastructure

4.6 An expanding area of work is infrastructure planning and delivery. This is increasingly seen as an integral part of a pro-active planning service that is geared towards delivery, and for Ashford, where growth and infrastructure provision are both vital and intrinsically linked. The timely provision of appropriate supporting infrastructure is increasingly seen by communities as one of the main impediments to supporting new development, especially strategic development. How the infrastructure function is structured, where and how it sits within the service and how it interfaces with the wider corporate agenda are key considerations. Our strategic focus on infrastructure delivery needs to be intensified.

4.7 The function will monitor the provision of development, and be responsible for the production and maintenance of an Infrastructure Delivery Plan to:

- review the optimal approach for securing planning obligations following anticipated government changes for s106/ CIL that are emerging
- develop the context for an infrastructure policy SPD
- orchestrate infrastructure delivery co-ordination and governance as part of the wider corporate agenda working with partners
- provide expertise regarding viability etc.

4.8 This will entail managing s106 and CIL allocation and it's spend in response to development needs, including the identification of possible additional sources of funding. This team is therefore uniquely placed, in an anticipated revised CIL world, to drive the active delivery of infrastructure to support the development pipeline that Ashford faces.

Place making

4.9 Our planning service has a long and proud record of driving high quality place making – an approach strongly supported by elected members. Place-making skills and expertise should remain strong within the planning service and these should include heritage and urban design, as well as the necessary planning officer functions. These skills are most effective when deployed in an integrated and co-ordinated way, within the overall context of a responsive spatial planning service, rather than as a provision of narrow specialisms. The team will be

responsible for the delivery of focused policy work, such as design guidance on key sites and Supplementary Planning Documents, and contributing to major planning applications, particularly in the pre-application stage when it is easiest to shape emerging proposals. This integrated service will strengthen our approach to quality place-making and will extend beyond the traditional planning function influence and drive the Council's wider ambitions to regenerate the town centre and its environs.

5. The wider Development Management (DM) function

- 5.1** The DM function is a combination of complex systems for handling a high caseload but at the same time weighing competing and often complex issues in a balanced and transparent way. The outcome is the creation of a series of successful places, delivered via the planning application process that will create the future Ashford. This is the implementation arm of the Local Plan. It is crucial that a council's DM function performs to a high level, is pro-active, has a delivery/implementation mind-set and delivers excellent customer service.
- 5.2** In Ashford the execution of the development management function is currently split into a number of sub-functions – Chilmington and design, strategic sites, householder and enforcement, planning applications. It is my view that the current structure dilutes the focus that is necessary on enabling the programming and delivery of the larger strategic development workload on the one hand, and the complex, caseload and process management needed to handle the bulk of day to day case. If these are separated and additional management capacity introduced this will allow for the forward looking, innovative and proactive management needed to keep these vital functions fit for purpose and delivering to consistently high quality with great customer care.
- 5.3** Development Management and the Strategic Sites (excluding Enforcement) have a current establishment of 24 FTE including one Graduate post. This excludes support staff and includes the management team. The gross service output with this level of establishment was 2729 cases closed and determined in 2017 and 2633 cases determined in 2018. Compliance and Monitoring are also managed within this team. The service has recently experienced difficulty managing staff vacancies but has sought to support this with the use of temporary staff where necessary. A backlog built up during the summer of 2018 but the service has largely recovered its position and continues to meet the Planning Guarantee.
- 5.4** A common output benchmark established in 2002 in the document Resourcing of Local Planning Authorities, prepared for the Department of Transport, Local Government and the Regions (DTLR) by Arup Economics in conjunction with Bailey Consultancy suggested an output of 150 cases per planning officer in a year. A more recent piece of work by the Planning Advisory Service (PAS) in 2012/13, Resourcing in Planning Services: Benchmark Roundup suggested that the average LPA was processing 144 cases per officer in a year. It is acknowledged that these figures hides a wide range of actual caseloads at different authorities but it is useful to have something to benchmark against. The

range depending on the grade of officers can go from 60 per year as high as 260 a year.

- 5.5** These functions will need to be designed so that the right operational leadership can be deployed in the right areas. The existing broad DM function is to be reshaped across two teams - Development Management and Strategic Development and Delivery and their make-up is explored in more detail below.

6. Strategic Development and Delivery

- 6.1** The proposed structure redefines the team that will primarily deal with large planning applications. In addition the section will have other collective responsibilities associated with enabling delivery and place making, aligning with wider corporate growth objectives. This team will need the resources, skills and capabilities to engage in a proactive way with applicants and developers of strategic applications, including the Council's own developments. A key part of the role of this section will be to work in collaboration with the Place making team and Enabling, Delivery and Programme Management section and other council functions to continue delivering place making quality and in developing a culture of quality as a fundamental structural component of delivery.
- 6.2** Major projects will need to be 'managed' from pre-application to completion – often with the use of Planning Performance Agreements – so that negotiation takes place when the scope to change a scheme is greatest and to build confidence with applicants. Helping to remove uncertainty over timescales, the policy position and the outcomes sought by negotiation will improve the prospects of securing the best possible scheme. Developers generally dislike uncertainty and the more uncertainty that exists the less room there is likely to be for successful negotiation.

Strategic Applications

- 6.3** It is becoming increasingly clear that a role is required that provides a clear and specific lead contact on the larger strategic applications. While a major part of this role is 'Planning', providing the go-to person for promoters of major developments, (alongside the head of planning and development), additional skills are necessary to bring the 'whole' project together including an enabler that pro-actively clears blockages, maintains partnership relationships and manages progress to keep delivery programmes on track. It is therefore important that this person has the space and ability to concentrate on the enabling and delivery of this important area of DM work.
- 6.4** The workflow of strategic applications is not steady and resourcing a separate team would result in it, at times, being either over or under employed. We need a more flexible and resilient way forward and one that enables staff from the wider DM function to develop their skills and careers.
- 6.5** A successful approach is for a Strategic Development and Delivery section to operate as a virtual team, employing effective matrix working to optimise the number of officers (from the main DM teams) who can deal with strategic applications, alongside their other casework. What this means in practice is that

any DM officer from the planning service can deal with a strategic application (if they are skilled enough) but when they do, they report to the Strategic Development and Delivery section lead rather than their normal section lead. This approach will create the culture and procedures where other officers (such as urban design and heritage specialists, whether located in a spatial planning or strategic development and delivery section) routinely work together successfully on projects. This will be crucial to successfully tackling the development pressures that the borough is to increasingly face.

Planning Enforcement

6.6 The enforcement service in Ashford is a critical part of the service and one in which the Council, in recent years, has made a major investment. The community has the right to expect that significant abuses of the planning system should be tackled and our track record in doing just that continues to improve. Team members are naturally solution focussed (creative), good communicators and understand what it means to the community to be able to demonstrate there is an ongoing and monitored approach to the implementation of development on the ground.

6.7 A renewed enforcement policy has been developed whilst new ways of working are being designed and employed to ensure that it is as efficient and effective as possible. Prioritising work based on its potential adverse impact is key and having systems in place that can avoid investigating technical or marginal breaches will be important for team resources. The imposition of conditions on planning permissions that are either unenforceable or unnecessary will also need to be addressed through new protocols. These new system interventions will optimise the efficiency and effectiveness of the service within existing resources. After these have been put in place a judgement can be made at that time whether additional resources are necessary.

6.8 Much has been done to strengthen the team which has led to demonstrable improvements in performance. There is a working Enforcement Plan that has prioritised reactive work. There is further work to do to address how the team can:

- Strengthen the relationship with professional agents and small developers and builders through conditions monitoring and enforcement;
- Support Local Development Order (LDO) monitoring and enforcement – should they be introduced in Ashford;
- Launch a s215 Programme working with other enforcement agents across the Council;
- Carry out further Direct Action to close the enforcement loop;
- Promote the successes of the team;
- Help local communities understand the scope (but also the limitations) of what planning enforcement can achieve;

- Consider the possible use of Proceeds of Crime Act powers where appropriate regarding planning breaches resulting in illegal income.

This team works in a targeted way to tackle key enforcement issues – tactical judgements are needed on how workload is prioritised and how complex cases are handled. In some ways there are parallels with the bespoke attention needed to deliver strategic sites in a carefully considered way suiting the individual circumstances of each case. It is important for the enforcement function to have the appropriate profile to match the importance in which it is viewed corporately. It is proposed that this team will form part of the wider strategic development and delivery team.

7. Development Management

7.1 The vast majority of planning applications and other approvals are dealt with by the Development Management Team. Work here is intensive and unrelenting and staff in the team need support at various levels. This is a complex, process-driven service needing a management tier with the capacity to drive service modernisation, improvement and performance management as well as providing a clear professional leadership to help colleagues handle the difficult judgements often needed.

Planning Applications

7.2 This team will continue to deal with DM functions, except enforcement. Strategic applications development and delivery applications would also be excluded from the management responsibilities of this area and will be managed in the Strategic Development and Delivery Team using the matrix management approach.

7.3 This service needs the resources, procedures and systems to enable the more transactional planning application work (including adverts, trees and appeals) to be dealt with efficiently. It is proposed the function should be organised into a single team with a team manager providing strategic oversight of both the planning applications team and the building control team. Leaders of these teams will deputise for the team leader as required.

Building Control

7.4 The responsibility for the day to day running of the Building Control function is carried out by one manager. The existing team structure is a flat structure with the manager being responsible for line management of seven officers.

7.5 During the past twelve months there have been movements within the team providing an opportunity to review and reflect on the roles undertaken by Team Leader and Surveyors.

7.6 The team leader role currently encompasses responsibilities that could be delegated further down the structure, releasing the team leader's capacity to provide more strategic leadership around service innovation and future service

development. A new post of Deputy Team Leader will allow for the Team Leader to delegate during absences and to take on a number of existing tasks currently undertaken by the manager.

7.7 Currently the building control function sits alongside and separate from the other service functions of Development Management, Planning Policy and Support Services & Property information. It is important that the future structure encourages close interaction between the functions and their respective skill sets. For example, building control needs to be involved in the pre-application process. It also has a key role in the 'quality place' monitoring process (especially relevant at Chilmington) and the emerging South Ashford Garden Community and future urban expansion areas such as Court Lodge, Kingsnorth Green, Waterbrook and Conningbrook. It is considered that the success of quality place would be enhanced from synergies gained by operating within development management.

7.8 For the reasons given above it is proposed that the building control function should be located and managed within the development management function to help provide more cohesive and integrated service delivery.

8. Enabling, Delivery and Programme Management

8.1 It has become clear that the sheer complexity of delivering the many major sites around Ashford in a timely way to meet our housing delivery requirements, whilst also delivering quality place-making and good infrastructure, requires a new approach. We need to work proactively with the development industry and other stakeholders and oversee and help manage the wider programme of delivery.

8.2 It is acknowledged that a greater corporate focus is required to support the delivery of large emerging projects such as Chilmington, Court Lodge and Kingsnorth Green. It is important that the Council is adequately equipped as these projects change focus from what has been purely a Planning process to what is essentially the delivery of a wider programme of interdependent projects to establish a consolidated South of Ashford community.

8.3 Careful consideration has been given to the skills needed and structure, requiring insight and drawing on learning derived from other similar areas. Approaches developed and adopted for the delivery of large urban expansion projects at Northstow: Cambridge's New Town and Whitehill & Borden in East Hampshire have informed these proposals. Since Autumn 2018 Ashford has been collaborating with the RegenCo team from East Hampshire District Council originally constituted to provide oversight of the delivery of Whitehill and Bordon. Focused governance, proactive partnership working, and Corporate oversight is essential for the effective delivery of urban expansion areas referred to above. Core strategic requirements of this functional area will include:

- Client relationship building and relationship management of key development partners and agencies (KCC & HE);

- Managing the Council's longer relationship with emerging communities through vehicles such as the Community Management Organisation (CMO) at Chilmington;
- Wider fund raising;
- Communications and marketing
- Community development;
- Establishing wider Corporate governance through using the Ashford Strategic Delivery Board's alignment with the Delivery and Implementation Board and the orchestration of the Delivery Managers Group;
- Orchestrating and aligning project management systems, protocols and process across the service;
- Project Programming and integration with developers' consultants to ensure milestones, interdependencies and contingent triggers are identified and built in to the partnership governance.

8.4 These functions may be considered to be outside the remit of the conventional DM process, however such requirements are increasingly seen as the essential attributes of a pro-active and delivery focussed planning service. It is necessary to augment traditional skills sets across a broad range of complementary skills to facilitate fully integrated and responsive service delivery.

8.5 Collaborative cross-service and cross-corporate working will be a significant component of the work of this section. Providing oversight to ensure alignment between the outcomes emerging from the work of officers in the Strategic Development and Delivery and Place Making sections and other council functions respectively, and to support these functions to ensure that a culture of quality place making is an embedded and an integral component of delivery.

8.6 This function will provide high level support to ensure the cross-corporate/ partnership programme management and coordination of large-scale development sites. In this way it will support the Strategic Development and Delivery Team and ensure a genuinely corporate response across the Council (and partner organisations) to respond to the particular challenges of delivering these large-scale developments. This function will specifically bring valuable project and programme management capacity and capability.

8.7 By adopting a matrix working approach it will be necessary to draw on valuable complementary skills existing elsewhere within the service and across the organisation. A good understanding and use of project management is required to ensure that sufficient resource exists in areas involved in the matrix and appropriate training will be provided to support this.

8.8 Matrix working can generally be achieved to good effect where in-house skill and capacity exists to enable resources to be balanced to maintain the core service delivery of these functional areas. Where a capacity deficit is identified, additional resource may be required at times to strengthen proposed structures.

8.9 Given the outward facing and overarching strategic emphasis of this function and its key role in helping enable delivery, it is necessary that its focus is closely aligned with the Head of Service and reports directly to him.

9. Business Support, Property Information and Office Management

9.1 This is a key functional area within service. The wider service and particularly DM and BC need to be supported by a technical and administrative function that ensures that these vital requirements are performed accurately, consistently and efficiently.

9.2 This team currently provides support mainly for the DM function, but it should be expanded to orchestrate the administrative and technical support across the whole planning service. The de-centralised technical support functions which currently exist in Building Control and Enforcement are to be integrated into this centralised function.

9.3 Adoption of such an arrangement will provide increased resilience and enable a responsive and more efficient management of workload pressures across the service.

9.4 To maintain continuity of service delivery existing staff expertise is to be allocated to respective functions as currently arranged. To provide a more responsive operating model with greater resilience however, these functions are to be managed centrally and orchestrated through a matrix management governance process.

10. Staffing Implications

10.1 The total headcount for the service is increasing by 6. It is proposed that two existing posts will be deleted from the establishment requiring two post holders to be put at risk of redundancy but it is considered that there is a role for everyone and consultation with affected individuals will discuss suitable roles in the proposed structure.

10.2 The proposed model highlights post holders who are affected in one of three different ways.

10.3 GROUP ONE - Post significantly affected. Two post holders (Joint Development Control Managers) are significantly affected as it is proposed that their roles are deleted from the establishment under the proposals highlighted. Affected post-holders will be placed at risk of redundancy as part of the consultation process and the Team Leader Planning Applications post has been identified as a post that they may assimilate into via a selection interview process. Post holders in this group will be invited to individual

consultation meetings as detailed below. Other suitable roles will be discussed with the two affected postholders.

- 10.4** GROUP TWO - Some contractual change proposed for this group. This group of post-holders are being consulted with regarding a proposed change to terms and conditions. This level of change is around job title, role focus, reporting line, number of reportees etc as reflected in the proposed job descriptions. It is not considered to be so material that the post is deleted or changed so fundamentally affecting, grade, salary or professional status. Post holders in this group will be invited to individual consultation meetings.
- 10.5** GROUP THREE - Some contractual change is suggested in the future - this group of post holders are being involved in the consultation process as a whole although will not be invited to individual consultation meetings at this stage. Although no formal changes are being proposed for this group at the present time there are some implied changes that are being proposed which this group are invited to comment upon in order that this and any later consultation is meaningful.

11. Proposals

- 11.1** It should be understood that in tandem with the new structure there will need to be a programme of process mapping and digital transformation supported by a new planning system to replace the existing Acolaid system which is soon due to be un-supported by the supplier.

11.2 Proposed new posts for the Planning and Development Service

| Post | Grade | Total Cost |
|---|-----------|----------------|
| Development Management Manager | MG5 | 72,250 |
| Deputy Team Leader Strategic | MG7 | 55,030 |
| Place-making Team Leader | MG6 | 63,980 |
| Business Support Officer | SCP 16-21 | 20,030 |
| Digital Project Officer | SCP 20-25 | 24,970 |
| 1 x Graduate Posts | SCP 20-25 | 27,050 |
| 1 x Graduate Posts | SCP 20-25 | 27,050 |
| Additional costs associated with regrades | NA | 5,500 |
| Deletion of Joint Development Control Manager | MG6 | (68,980) |
| | | 226,880 |

The new posts are identified in the diagrams below.

11.3 Proposed structure for the Planning and Development Service

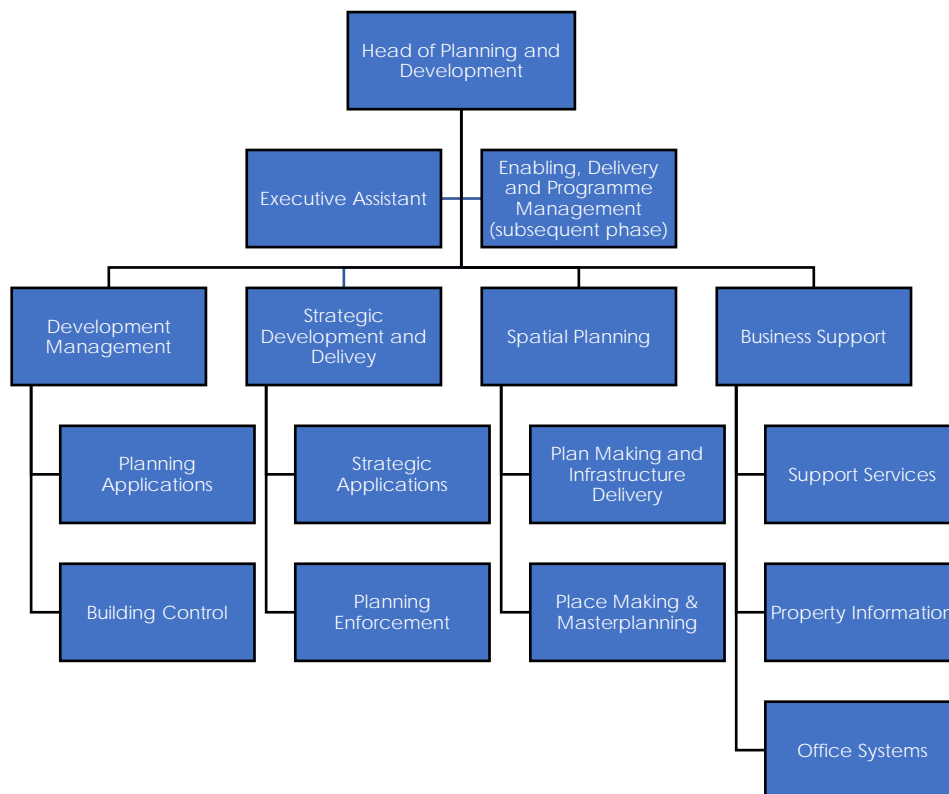


Figure 1: Planning and Development Service: Proposed Structure

The structure, responsibilities and staffing levels for the five main sections of:

- Development Management,
- Spatial Planning,
- Strategic Development and Delivery,
- Business Support, Property Information and Office Management
- Enabling, Delivery and Programme Management

These are explained in the following paragraphs. The new posts are indicated (new post).

11.4 Development Management

The section should be led by a DM Manager and be organised into two teams with the following main responsibilities:

Planning Applications

- Pre-application advice
- Determining planning and related applications
- Conditions approval
- Defending planning appeals on cases handled by the team

Building Control

- Pre-application advice
- Determining building regulations applications
- Dangerous structures

- Other statutory Building Regulation responsibilities
- Providing expert advice as part of the Quality Place process

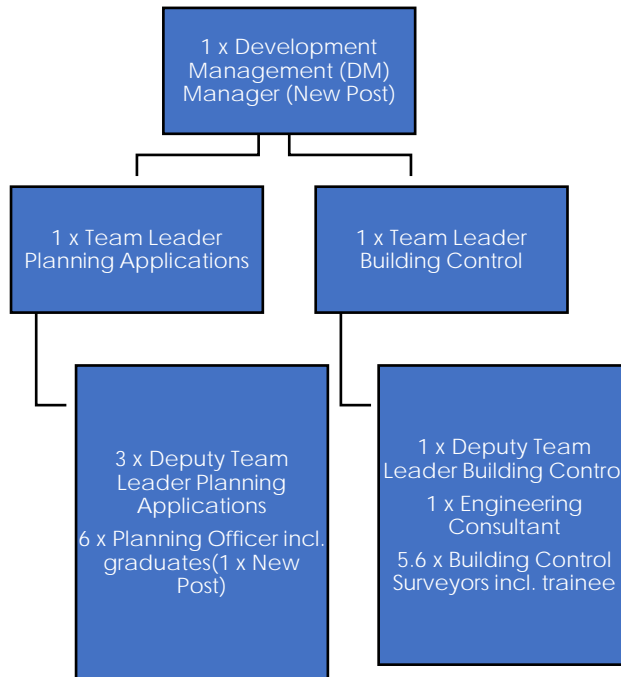


Figure 2: Proposed structure: Development Management

11.5 Strategic Development and Delivery

The section should be led by a Strategic Development and Delivery Manager and be organised into two teams with the following main responsibilities:

Strategic Applications

- Pre-application advice
- Determining planning applications
- Defending planning appeals
- Discharge the place-making function through the practical application of co-ordinated planning and urban design skills
- Strategic pre-application activity
- Inputting into the production of design guides, masterplans, planning briefs and other documents that are focused on development delivery

Planning Enforcement

- Investigation of planning breaches
- Resolution of breaches
- Taking enforcement action
- Prosecutions
- Direct action
- Defending planning appeals

The proposed structure of the function is set out in the diagram below.

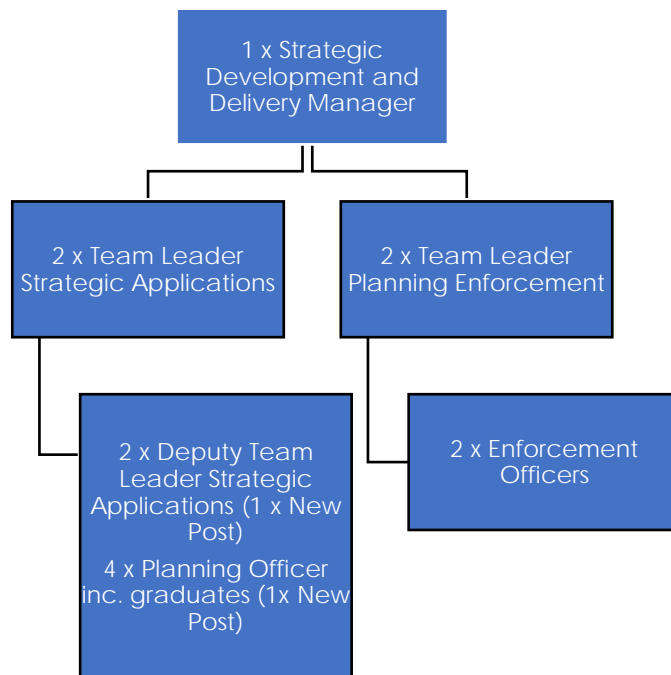


Figure 3: Proposed structure: Strategic Development and Delivery

11.6 Spatial Planning

The section led by a Spatial Planning Manager is to be organised into three teams with the following main responsibilities:

Plan-making and infrastructure strategy:

- Planning research & evidence base
- Planning monitoring & AMR
- Strategic vision & planning policy development
- Neighbourhood planning
- Heritage asset protection and policy preparation
- Natural asset protection
- Responding to Govern, Mayor of London and other 'external' planning policy items
- LDD development monitoring
- Supporting the delivery of major projects by agencies as Highways England (such as M20 J10a) and KCC.
- Working with DM on policy evolution and application
- Supporting DM on pre-application policy advice
- Lobbying for key infrastructure
- S106 database and monitoring
- CIL review
- SPD infrastructure policy
- Infrastructure Delivery Plan

Place-making:

- Discharge the corporate place-making function through the practical application of co-ordinated planning, architecture, urban design, landscape architecture and heritage skills

- Strategic pre-application activity
- Commenting on key planning applications
- Production SPDs and other planning guidance documents that are focused on development delivery, such as design guides, masterplans and planning briefs.

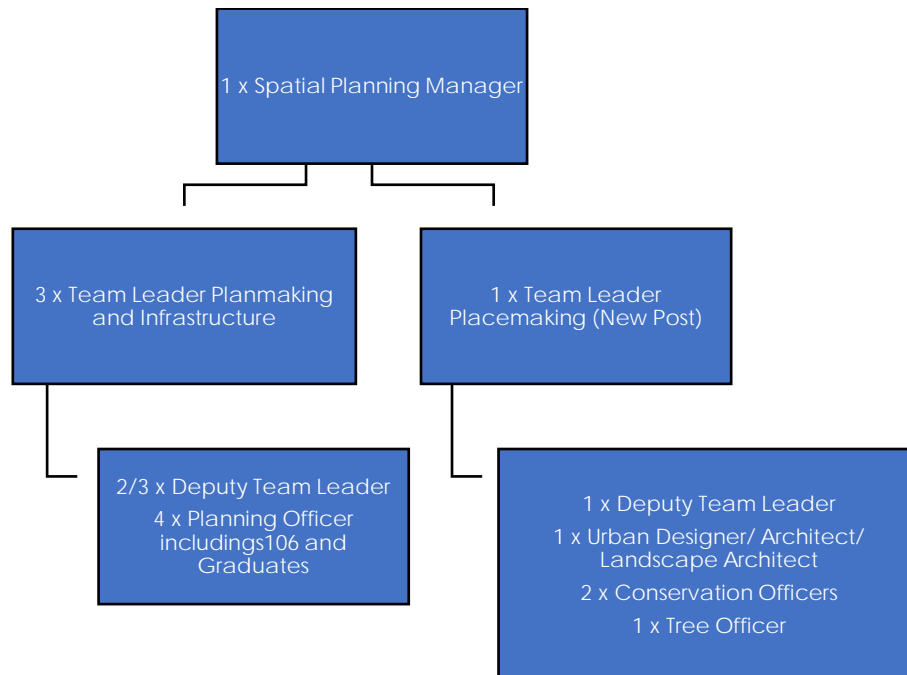


Figure 4: Proposed structure: Spatial Planning

11.7 Enabling, Delivery and Programme Management

Identified as additional functional requirement of service delivery this section is to be led by an Enabling and Delivery Programme Manager. As a new structural component which does not immediately affect the staff involved in the re-organisation of the Planning and Development Service the composition and breakdown of main responsibilities of this function are to be progressed as part of a subsequent phase.

11.8 Business Support

Support Services

- Administrative and technical support across Planning and Development Service functions
- Customer service and information
- IT systems, development and transformation
- Financial management and budgets
- Programme and project management support
- Validation

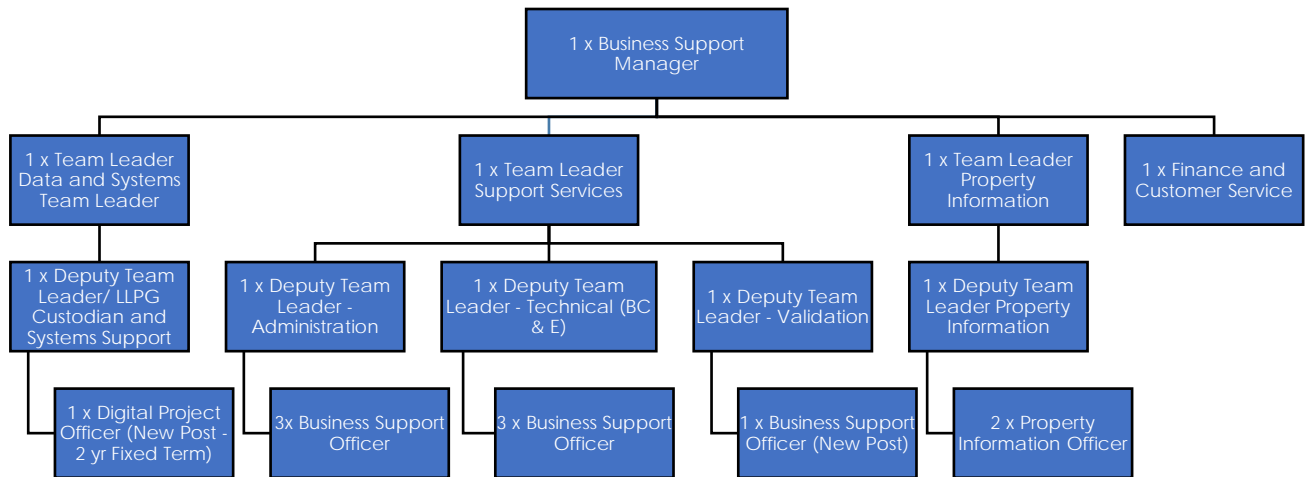


Figure 5: Proposed structure: Business Support, Property Information and Office Management

12.The Matrix Working Environment

- 12.3 Matrix working removes traditional silo working and vertical reporting lines and provides opportunities to bring cross-functional teams together with shared accountability and responsibility for delivery of specific goals and projects.
- 12.4 Working in this way enables a focus on business priorities and short-term goals, which can lead to higher productivity and faster growth. This, in turn, requires employees to work differently, becoming more flexible in their skill application as they carry out multiple and often competing activities, while dealing with ambiguity and uncertainty as the priorities change in response to market needs.
- 12.5 Matrix management is ideal for sharing talents and skills across departments. It's an especially handy system when developing new projects – allowing individuals from all different functions to organise under a project manager to create something new and unique. This gives the team the ability to draw upon diverse skill sets from multiple disciplines, which strengthens the overall project team.
- 12.6 The advantage is that because matrix structures retain an organisation's functional structure, they allow for the rapid creation of efficient project structures that employ many members of the organisation's functional structure but without disrupting or destroying the structure in the process.
- 12.7 There are pros and cons to every management structure and approach, and this holds true for matrix management. It is not ideal in every circumstance, and it can create stress for participants where the demands exceed the time, resources or the ability to juggle priorities all of which require the commitment

of managers to ensure success. Conversely it can also offer benefits through access to specialised knowledge as a basis for personal growth and development.

- 12.8 Matrix approaches to projects are typically less expensive than establishing dedicated project teams, and the diversity of the team members makes them superior to many purely functional teams.
- 12.9 Succeeding with matrix management requires the active involvement of all parties.

13 Equalities Impact Assessment

- 13.1 Members are referred to Appendix 1.

14 Consultation Undertaken

- 14.1 Members are referred to Appendix 2.

15 Next Steps

- 15.1 The two officers at risk of redundancy (Group 1) are to go through a selection process following the formal consultation that has taken place. The timing of which is contingent on Cabinet approval. If approved assimilation is to be considered, with a selection process to follow should assimilation not be possible. The assimilation and selection process is to take place during the course of June 2019.
- 15.2 Officers identified in Group 2, those with some contractual change, have been issued with revised and evaluated JD's as part of the consultation process. Organisational changes affecting these staff are to commence following the Cabinet decision. Sequential adjustments to service structure is to be programmed to coincide with the recruitment of the new posts outlined in the proposed structure. The appointment of new staff is to coincide with further consultation involving Group 3 officers as the structural composition of the reorganisation and integration of wider service functions starts to take hold.
- 15.3 The internal and external recruitment process for new management posts is to take place simultaneously. Given anticipated contractual notice periods commencement dates for any external candidates is likely to be September/October 2019. Subject to successful recruitment it is anticipated that the reorganisation process will reach a conclusion in Spring 2020. That said, new ways of working and associated management practices involving adjustments in culture which are currently underway are projected to be part of a sustained transformation.

- 15.4 Development and integration of Enabling, Delivery and Programme Management function. Identification and development of corporate project leads required to orchestrate the delivery of Town Centre projects, South of Ashford Garden Community and Newtown Works.
- 15.5 Regular monitoring and review is to take place during the implementation of the reorganisation to assess progress and make adjustments as required to maintain alignment with the intended vision, key themes and the necessary efficiencies of service delivery.
- 15.6 It is proposed that a process of financial monitoring against the MTFP is to take place to understand and inform where and how growth is managed as a part of transformation of the planning process.

16 Conclusion

- 16.1 The proposed changes aim to achieve the overall vision of the paper and proper and meaningful consultation has taken place as detailed.

17 Portfolio Holders Views

- 17.1 I am supportive of the proposals and timelines outlined in this report and would like to express my thanks to Cllr Clokie the outgoing Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development for his contributions.
- 17.2 I would ask that Council members and officers recognise the need for a re-setting of the Planning and Development Service. It is essential to improve the service provided to residents and developers so that the growth and development of the borough is orchestrated in a controlled, efficient manner that optimises not only the opportunity to enhance the reputation of Ashford but to act as a catalyst for even greater prosperity for all. Following discussions with the Head of Service for Planning and Development, I consider that the proposed reorganisation will enable the planning and development service to build on previous success but tackle some of the challenges they encountered during 2018. I am supportive of the proposals and timelines outlined and would like to express my thanks to Cllr Clokie the outgoing Portfolio Holder for Planning and Development for his contributions and stewardship regarding this report.

18 Contact and Email

Contact: Tim Naylor – Head of planning and development
Email: tim.naylor@ashford.gov.uk

Equality Impact Assessment

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](#)

| | |
|--|--|
| Lead officer: | Joy Cross – HR Manager |
| Decision maker: | Cabinet |
| Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, project, service, contract • Review, change, new, stop | Proposed review of planning and development service |
| Date of decision: The date when the final decision is made. The EIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision. | June 2019 |
| Summary of the proposed decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes • Who will be affected and how? • How many people will be affected? | Proposed new structure of planning and development service, including changes to terms and conditions of employment and potential deletion of posts. |
| Information and research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the information and research that has informed the decision. • Include sources and key findings. | Initial Informal Consultation |
| Consultation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What specific consultation has occurred on this decision? • What were the results of the consultation? • Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics? • What conclusions can be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics? | Consultation was undertaken as detailed above which resulted in the report The policy document complies with UK employment law and our Conditions Of Service. |

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.

| Protected characteristic | Relevance to Decision High/Medium/Low/None | Impact of Decision Positive (Major/Minor) Negative (Major/Minor) Neutral |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <u>AGE</u> Elderly | None | Neutral |
| Middle age | None | Neutral |
| Young adult | None | Neutral |
| Children | None | Neutral |
| <u>DISABILITY</u> Physical | None | Neutral |
| Mental | None | Neutral |
| Sensory | None | Neutral |
| <u>GENDER RE- ASSIGNMENT</u> | None | Neutral |
| <u>MARRIAGE/CIVIL PARTNERSHIP</u> | None | Neutral |
| <u>PREGNANCY/MATERNITY</u> | None | Neutral |
| <u>RACE</u> | None | Neutral |
| <u>RELIGION OR BELIEF</u> | None | Neutral |
| <u>SEX</u> Men | None | Neutral |
| Women | None | Neutral |
| <u>SEXUAL ORIENTATION</u> | None | Neutral |

Mitigating negative impact:

Where any negative impact has been identified, outline the measures taken to mitigate against it.

n/a

Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty?

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 | n/a |
| 2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it | n/a |
| 3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it | n/a |

Conclusion:

- Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish.
- There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see guidance above).
- 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.
- How will monitoring of the policy, procedure or decision and its implementation be undertaken and reported?

Due regard has been paid to equality through the drafting of documentation by qualified HR professionals trained in equality issues and review of relevant employment case law.

Via consultation with affected employees.

The council's revised policy register will assist services to meet this

EIA completion date:

12.04.19

Appendix 2: Consultation Undertaken

1. The reorganisation proposal highlights post holders (by post number) who are affected in one of three different ways:
2. GROUP ONE - Posts significantly affected
3. GROUP TWO - Some contractual change proposed
4. GROUP THREE - Some contractual change is suggested in the future
5. As part of the formal process the consultation paper was sent to the Unison Branch Chair and Branch Secretary on 12th March 2019.
6. The consultation paper was sent to JCC staff side representatives on 12th March 2019.
7. The final consultation paper was sent to the service Portfolio Holders Cllr Clokie after 12th March 2019.
8. A group meeting was arranged on 12th March 2019 with affected employees in Groups One and Two to distribute the consultation paper and advise on the proposals contained within. Unison were invited to attend this informal meeting.
9. The Consultation Paper was intended to be distributed to Group three shortly thereafter and was distributed on 13th March 2019.
10. Two affected staff in Group One were notified in writing of their at-risk status on 12th March 2019 and invited to an individual formal consultation meeting.
11. Fourteen affected staff in Group Two were invited to an individual formal consultation meeting, correspondence sent on 12th March 2019
12. Post holders in Group Three were be provided with a copy of the consultation report and invited to comment outside of a formal consultation meeting. Comments are invited up to 5th April 2019
13. A Frequently Asked Questions document was also issued to all employees in the service to assist understanding on 14th March 2019.
14. Fifteen formal individual consultation meetings took place between 22nd March and 4th April 2019.
15. Unison attended consultation meetings as required and took an active role, asking questions around assimilation and job evaluation specifically.

16. Four officers brought a workplace colleague to the meeting or a unison representative.
17. One officer asked for a copy of the Head Of Service JD, this was provided.
18. Two officers asked for copies of other officers JDs these were provided with the consent of those officers.
19. Second formal individual consultation meetings were not required prior to JCC but further consultation meetings will be required as detailed below.
20. Written submissions were not required by officers who had a consultation meeting although they were accepted where officers wished to make a written submission in addition to the comments made in the consultation meeting.
21. A total of 31 written submissions were received up to 8th April and all comments were submitted to JCC.
22. As part of the consultation process, the proposals and consultation process were presented to the JCC for consideration on 25th April 2019.
23. A detailed discussion took place at JCC around the Consultation Feedback areas highlighted in the JCC report, namely General, Consultation Process, Job Descriptions, Matrix Management, Team Split, Enforcement, Spatial Planning, Strategic Applications , Building Control, Enabling & Delivery, Business Support and Funding.
24. Within the JCC meeting Unison tabled a paper calling for the JCC paper to be withdrawn and further detail provided regarding the proposed second stage of the process. This was not accepted owing to the significant delay it would cause within the process and the fact that the second stage of the consultation process would revert back to JCC anyway.
25. Matters discussed within the JCC meeting are detailed in the meeting minutes and members' attention is specifically drawn to this detail in the discussion areas of: an apparent discrepancy in figures, whether the approach was too top heavy, no SPD on clean air strategy, whether the programme management function should be included in the first stage of the restructure, the proposed future placement of the building control function, feelings from staff that the consultation had been too rushed, and that their comments had not been fully responded to, the cultural change proposals and whether these would help retain staff and also if there was enough support for the administration team. A strong requirement for a 12 month review of the reorganisation was also expressed.
26. Following JCC affected employees will be contacted or invited to an additional individual formal consultation meeting and advised of the outcome of JCC.

27. Employees in Group Two will be consulted with regarding the specific changes to their job descriptions. (contractual changes to terms and conditions).
 28. If the proposals are accepted affected employees in Group One will be consulted with regarding an appropriate assimilation process and invited to take part in an assimilation process.
 29. Affected employees in Group One will also be invited to apply for suitable alternative internal vacancies.
 30. Employees in Group One have already been consulted with regarding a potential selection process that may be used.
 31. Employees in Group One will be consulted with regarding the outcome of the assimilation and recruitment processes.
 32. In the event that no suitable alternatives are available, affected employees will be consulted with regarding the termination of their employment for reasons of redundancy.
 33. In accordance with the Managing Redundancy Restructure and Organisation change policy voluntary redundancy applications are invited.
 34. Affected employees selected for redundancy, following a consultation process as set out above will subsequently be served with their notice of termination by reason of redundancy and provided with information regarding their right of appeal against this decision.
 35. Any potential terminations of employment, by reason of redundancy, following consultation as set out as above will be served with statutory notice.
 36. Following completion of this stage of the process, consultation will commence for employees in Group Three, this second stage of the consultation process will include a review of the career grade structure.
-

NOTES OF THE ECONOMIC REGENERATION & INVESTMENT BOARD

28th March 2019

Attending: Cllr. Clarkson (Chairman)
Cllr. Galpin
Cllr. Ovenden
Cllr. Shorter

Also Present: Cllr. Clokie
Cllr. White

Chief Executive
Principal Solicitor for Property & Projects
Commercial, Development & Regeneration Officer
Head of Corporate Property and Projects
Development & Regeneration Manager
Head of Culture
Head of Planning and Development
Communications & Marketing Manager
Director of Finance and Economy
Head of Finance
Commercial Development Manager
Member Services and Ombudsman Complaints Officer

Archie Cowan – Gen2

| | ACTION |
|--|---------------|
| <p>1. Declarations of Interest</p> <p>Archie Cowan declared an interest in agenda item number 4 – proposed sale of Elwick (Phase 2), as he was part of the consultancy who had indicated an interest in the site. He would leave the Chamber for the entire item.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that the agenda would be re-ordered so that the the items relating to the proposed sale of Elwick (Phase 2) and the Elwick A3 update would be discussed at the end of the agenda after Archie Cowan had left the meeting.</p> | |
| <p>2. Notes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>The Notes of the Meeting of the Economic Regeneration and Investment Board on 18th January 2019 were received and noted.</p> | |

| | |
|--|--------------------|
| <p>3. KCC/ABC Joint Venture Proposition</p> <p>The Commercial, Development & Regeneration Officer introduced this item and highlighted the key points in the report. He explained that this was an information report to Members, seeking guidance on a future approach and the level of support the Council wished to provide to the project. He said that the costs provided in the report were indicative assumptions only and that they were still to be confirmed by KCC.</p> <p>Members were pleased that KCC had taken on this project, but felt the Council must consider carefully the risks relating to any investment. Members felt that further financial information was required in order to make any firm decision. A Member said that he would like specific calculations on the cost of the industrial units with potential voids versus the expense to the Council of buying the fabric of the proposed studio building. It was agreed that another meeting was required on this issue once further financial information was available. Members indicated that at present they were not inclined to become involved in ownership relating to this project, but would consider investment in the industrial units in due course, if the finances proved viable.</p> <p>Action: to be discussed at the next meeting, once further financial information was provided by Officers.</p> | <p>PMcK</p> |
| <p>4. Coachworks</p> <p>The Head of Corporate Property and Projects introduced this item and highlighted the key aspects of the report. He said this was an information report to advise Members on the progress of this project.</p> <p>Members were pleased to note that the project was moving at pace. However, they expressed concern that a supervisor should be in place to ensure that the contractor was using processes in line with the Council's principles, and to oversee the details of the project. The Head of Corporate Property and Projects advised Members that a dedicated in-house resource had been put in place to undertake client supervision on this project.</p> | |
| <p>5. Housing Acquisitions Update</p> <p>The Development & Regeneration Manager introduced this item and drew Members' attention to the main points in the report.</p> <p>In response to a question, the Development & Regeneration Manager said that it was intended to sell 7 of the new homes on the open market. Members questioned the need to sell any homes in this way. The Development & Regeneration Manager replied that it was desirable to provide a mix of private and Affordable Housing as this would help to bring the site forward. Members sought reassurance that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) had the authority to become involved in a</p> | |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>commercial venture. The Principal Solicitor advised that the land would sit within the General Fund (GF) until it was used for housing purposes as defined by the legislation. Once the land was used for housing purposes then any income or expenditure associated with that land needed to be accounted for in the HRA.</p> <p>A Member asked that the text within the report be amended so that 'subsidy' was replaced by 'sale of property contributions'.</p> <p>Members requested that Officers produce a protocol and justification of the intended process of moving funds from the GF to the HRA in this way.</p> <p>Action: Members agreed the proposed acquisition. Officers to produce a protocol and justification of the process of moving funds from the GF to the HRA.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">GH</p> <p style="text-align: center;">PMCK/SH</p> |
| <p>6. Strategic Acquisition</p> <p>This item was introduced by Archie Cowan, who highlighted the main points within the report.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that a bid had been made during the week under the Chief Executive's delegated powers. This was an excellent commercial opportunity and Officers had moved swiftly to secure it. However, the Council's offer was subject to approval by this Board, Cabinet and Council.</p> <p>In response to a question, Archie Cowan said that an asbestos survey had been undertaken to clarify the situation, and the results were clear.</p> <p>A Member said that he supported the Council's bid but that he wanted the new Administration and Officers, in due course, to undertake an assessment of the Council's future aspirations for the site.</p> <p>A question was asked whether the lease was secure under the Landlord and Tenants Act 1954. Archie Cowan responded that the Council would be entitled to serve relevant notices upon a tenant to achieve repossession on the grounds of development. However, a court process would need to be pursued.</p> <p>Members noted that there was a Compulsory Purchase Order for Kent Highways to widen the A28 on part of the site.</p> <p>Action: Members agreed the proposed acquisition and that a report should go to Cabinet and Council in April.</p> <p>(Archie Cowan left the Chamber)</p> | <p style="text-align: center;">PMcK</p> |

| | |
|--|----------------------------|
| <p>7. Proposed Sale of Elwick (Phase 2)</p> <p>PMcK introduced this item. He said that current market testing indicated interest from several potential investors.</p> <p>Members acknowledged that it had been the intention previously to sell this land. However, they now considered that this was potentially a very valuable piece of land which could be crucial in the future plans for regeneration of the town centre. The Chairman said there was now unanimous agreement amongst Members that they no longer wanted to see this site used predominantly for residential purposes. It was agreed that the Leader and the Chief Executive would seek a meeting with the developer/landowner to discuss further. This matter would be discussed again at a future Board meeting.</p> <p>Action: the Leader and Chief Executive to meet with the developer/landowner, and the item to be brought back to a future Board meeting.</p> | <p>TK/ PMcK</p> |
| <p>8. Update on Elwick A3 units</p> <p>The Commercial, Development & Regeneration Officer introduced this item and ran through the main points of the report.</p> <p>Members were pleased to note the positive position regarding potential tenants. The Chairman also advised that Picturehouse reported a successful first three months of operation.</p> | |
| <p>9. Any Other Business</p> <p>The Chairman advised that, following the sale of the Connect38 building, the Council would be in receipt of overage payment. Members considered that this was a positive outcome from the Council's original investment in the commercial quarter. A Member said the Council should set up a reporting system for the outcome of investments in the long term. He suggested that a confidential report should go to Cabinet periodically advising Members on investment outturns.</p> | <p>PMcK</p> |

Queries concerning these minutes? Please contact membersservices@ashford.gov.uk
 Agendas, Reports and Minutes are available on: www.ashford.moderngov.co.uk

Agenda Item No: 12
Report To: CABINET
Date: 13TH JUNE 2019



Report Title: SCHEDULE OF KEY DECISIONS TO BE TAKEN

Report Author and Job Title: Danny Sheppard, Member Services Manager (Operational)

Portfolio Holder: Portfolio Holders are individually specified in the attached Schedule.

| | |
|-----------------|--|
| Summary: | To set out the latest Schedule of Key Decisions to be taken by the Cabinet of Ashford Borough Council. |
|-----------------|--|

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:

Contacts:

danny.sheppard@ashford.gov.uk – Tel: 01233 330349

**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; Paul Bartlett; Bill Barrett; Neil Bell; Andrew Buchanan; Paul Clokie; Peter Feacey; Jo Gideon; Alan Pickering; and Neil Shorter.

Copies of the reports and any other relevant documents that are submitted to the Cabinet in connection with a proposed decision will be available for inspection, or on screen, five clear days before the decision date at the Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford and at The Town Hall, 24 High Street, Tenterden, during opening hours, or at <https://ashford.moderngov.co.uk>

| Decision Item | Report Summary | Relevant Portfolio Holder | Report Author | Open or Exempt | Added to Schedule |
|--|--|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 13th June 2019 | | | | | |
| Final Outturn 2018/19 | <i>Final budget outturn for previous financial year.</i> | Cllr Bell | Maria Stevens | Open | 18/6/18 |
| Corporate Performance Report (Quarter 4) and Annual Performance Report 2018/19 | <i>To give Members and residents an overview of how the council is performing with a key performance 'snapshot' and the Annual Report will build upon the contents of quarterly performance monitoring, but will also include the following information – An Introduction from the Leader and Chief Executive; Facts and figures about Ashford; Timeline of key achievements in the Borough over the calendar year; Borough achievements; and a Financial Summary.</i> | Cllr Bell | Will Train | Open | 18/6/18 |

| Decision Item | Report Summary | Relevant Portfolio Holder | Report Author | Open or Exempt | Added to Schedule |
|--|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board – Annual Update 2018/19 and the Way Forward | <i>To update Cabinet on the work of the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Board in 2018/19, to discuss the changes made in local and sub-regional approaches and seek approval of the creation of the Ashford Health and Wellbeing Partnership as a result and to note the priorities and activity for 2019/20</i> | Cllr Gideon | Angela d'Urso/ Sheila Davison | Open | 7/11/18 |
| Ashford Heritage Plaque Scheme | <i>To agree the establishment of an Ashford Borough Heritage Plaque Scheme so that noteworthy individuals or buildings from Ashford's past that are not widely known or formally recognised across the Borough will have a permanent acknowledgment of their existence.</i> | Cllr Feacey | Sarah Barber | Open | 21/3/19 |
| Planning Reorganisation | <i>To consider the proposals in the report, the impact this will have on the delivery of service priorities and the consultation process followed.</i> | Cllr Shorter | Tim Naylor | Open | 8/4/19 |
| 11th July 2019 | | | | | |
| Revenues & Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule | <i>Proposed formal write-off of debts</i> | Cllr Bell | Nic Stevens | Open (Exempt Appendix) | 13/7/18 |

| Decision Item | Report Summary | Relevant Portfolio Holder | Report Author | Open or Exempt | Added to Schedule |
|---|--|----------------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Statement of Licensing Policy 2019-2024 | <i>To seek Cabinet approval to go out to public consultation on draft version of the revised policy.</i> | Cllr Gideon | Trevor Ford | Open | 10/4/19 |
| Conningbrook Masterplan | <i>To introduce the draft masterplan which provides a conceptual plan for the park and the main features to be delivered within it, with S106 contributions from current and potential future developments. The report will also confirm indicative costs and delivery timescales.</i> | Cllr Feacey | Len Mayatt | Open | 4/9/18 |
| Conningbrook H2 and Country Pub/Hotel | <i>To endorse the progression of legal agreements with Bretts to allow them to progress a planning application for H2 with a view to a subsequent land sale and with Bretts and Shepherd Neame to allow for the sale of the land for the Country Pub/Hotel.</i> | Cllr Clokie | Archie Cowan | Open | 16/5/19 |
| Householder Duty of Care Fixed Penalty Notice | <i>To ask the Cabinet to approve the application of a penalty for Householder breach duty of care and to confirm the amount of penalty to be applied.</i> | Cllr Buchanan | Mark Goodman | Open | 11/4/19 |
| Adoption of the WYE3 / WNP11 Masterplan | | Cllr Shorter | Simon Cole | Open | 23/5/19 |

| Decision Item | Report Summary | Relevant Portfolio Holder | Report Author | Open or Exempt | Added to Schedule |
|--|---|---------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 8th August 2019 | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 12th September 2019 | | | | | |
| Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report | <i>Quarterly budget monitoring report</i> | Cllr Bell | Maria Stevens | Open | 10/8/18 |
| Corporate Performance Report | <i>To give Members and residents an overview of how the council is performing with a key performance ‘snapshot’.</i> | Cllr Bell | Will Train | Open | 10/8/18 |
| Corporate Commercial Property Strategy – 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 Clokie | Paul McKenner | Open | 14/9/18 |
| Animal Licensing Policy | <i>To approve an animal licensing policy based on changes in legislative framework and responsibility.</i> | Cllr Gideon | Angela d’Urso/ Sheila Davison | Open | 4/12/18 |
| 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 Shorter | Tim Naylor | Open | 18/6/18 |

| Decision Item | Report Summary | Relevant Portfolio Holder | Report Author | Open or Exempt | Added to Schedule |
|---|--|---------------------------|------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| Government Housing Green Paper – Ashford Promise and Fixed Term Tenancies | | Cllr Barrett | Anthony Crossley | Open | 8/5/19 |
| Royal Military Canal | | Cllr Feacey | Len Mayatt | Open | 21/2/19 |
| Play Plan | | Cllr Feacey | Amanda Scott | Open | 16/5/19 |
| 10th October 2019 | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 14th November 2019 | | | | | |
| Corporate Performance Report | <i>To give Members and residents an overview of how the council is performing with a key performance 'snapshot'.</i> | Cllr Bell | Will Train | Open | 9/11/18 |
| Medium Term Financial Plan | <i>To ask Cabinet to note the Medium Term Financial Plan ahead of this year's Budget process.</i> | Cllr Bell | Maria Stevens | Open | 9/11/18 |
| Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report | <i>Quarterly budget monitoring report.</i> | Cllr Bell | Maria Stevens | Open | 9/11/18 |

| Decision Item | Report Summary | Relevant Portfolio Holder | Report Author | Open or Exempt | Added to Schedule |
|---|---|---------------------------|-----------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Corporate Plan – Approval to Commence Consultation on Draft Corporate Plan 2020 | | Cllr Clarkson | Jennifer Shaw | Open | 11/3/19 |
| 5th December 2019 | | | | | |
| Draft Budget 2020/21 | <i>To present the preliminary draft service budget and outline MTFP for the purposes of subsequent formal scrutiny by the O&S Task Group and public consultation.</i> | Cllr Bell | Maria Stevens | Open | 7/12/18 |
| Council Tax Base 2020/21 | <i>To present for approval the estimated 2020/21 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 Bell | Maria Stevens | Open | 7/12/18 |
| Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Business Plan 2019 – 2049 | <i>An annual update of the HRA Business Plan financial projections. This report updates the position for the period 2019-49.</i> | Cllr Barrett | Sharon Williams | Open | 7/12/18 |
| 16th January 2020 | | | | | |
| Revenues & Benefits Recommended Write-Offs Schedule | <i>Proposed formal write-off of debts</i> | Cllr Bell | Nic Stevens | Open (Exempt Appendix) | 11/1/19 |

| Decision Item | Report Summary | Relevant Portfolio Holder | Report Author | Open or Exempt | Added to Schedule |
|--|---|---------------------------|------------------------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 13th February 2020 | | | | | |
| Financial Monitoring – Quarterly Report | <i>Quarterly budget monitoring report</i> | Cllr Bell | Maria Stevens | Open | 15/2/19 |
| Revenue Budget 2020/21 | <i>To present the draft revenue budget for 2019/20 to the Cabinet for recommendation to Council.</i> | Cllr Bell | Maria Stevens | Open | 15/2/19 |
| 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 Bell | Will Train | Open | 9/2/18 |
| 12th March 2020 | | | | | |
| Annual Pay Policy Statement (Including Review for 2020/21) | <i>A review of the annual Pay Policy Statement and Ashford Living Wage Allowance</i> | Cllr Pickering | Michelle Pecci/ Joy Cross | Open | 15/3/19 |
| Corporate Plan - Report on Consultation Findings and Approval to Publish Corporate Plan 2020 | | Cllr Clarkson | Jennifer Shaw | Open | 11/3/19 |

| Decision Item | Report Summary | Relevant Portfolio Holder | Report Author | Open or Exempt | Added to Schedule |
|----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|---------------|----------------|-------------------|
| 2 nd April 2020 | | | | | |
| | | | | | |
| 14 th May 2020 | | | | | |
| | | | | | |

***If you wish to contact a Report Author by email, unless stated otherwise, the addresses are;
first name.surname@ashford.gov.uk***

Tabled Paper - Cabinet – 13th June 2018

Correction of Council Tax and Business Rates Collection rates referenced in Paragraph 27 of Agenda Item 6.

Supplementary detail for the loans outstanding to the Council from its subsidiary as referenced in paragraph 49 and details of the HRA borrowing as referenced in Appendix A.

As reported:-

Collection Fund Outturn

26. The Collection Fund is the statutory mechanism by which income gathered by a billing authority (in this case, Ashford Borough Council) from Council Tax and Business Rates is distributed to Government and precepting authorities (KCC, Fire, Police and Parishes).
27. Overall the collection rates for both Council Tax and Business Rates have been high in 2018/19 at 99.1% and 95.5% respectively. The Business Rates collection statistic is slightly lower than in previous years due to a rise in business's going into liquidation and debt being written off.

As Amended:-

Collection Fund Outturn

26. The Collection Fund is the statutory mechanism by which income gathered by a billing authority (in this case, Ashford Borough Council) from Council Tax and Business Rates is distributed to Government and precepting authorities (KCC, Fire, Police and Parishes).
27. Overall the collection rates for both Council Tax and Business Rates have been high in 2018/19 at 98.11% and 99.13% respectively. The Business Rates collection statistic is slightly lower than in previous years due to a rise in business's going into liquidation and debt being written off.

Detail of Loan Balances with A Better Choice for Property Ltd.

Breakdown of Outstanding Loans between Ashford Borough Council and A Better Choice for Property Ltd. its solely owned subsidiary. Breakdown of £27.6m referenced in Paragraph 49.

Schedule of Loans to A Better Choice for Property Ltd.

| Loan Ref | Date of Advance | Maturity Date | Amount Borrowed | Applicable Rate | Outstanding as at 31/03/2019 |
|-----------------------|-----------------|---------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------------------|
| Loan 2 | 07/11/2014 | 08/09/2019 | 600,000 | 3.693% | 583,272 |
| Loan 3 | 12/02/2015 | 11/02/2040 | 400,000 | 2.827% | 354,113 |
| Loan 4 | 27/03/2015 | 08/09/2019 | 120,000 | 3.678% | 116,325 |
| Loan 5 | 28/10/2015 | 08/09/2019 | 125,000 | 3.741% | 122,727 |
| Loan 6 | 18/12/2015 | 08/09/2019 | 345,000 | 3.744% | 337,042 |
| Loan 7 | 26/02/2016 | 08/09/2019 | 1,495,000 | 3.738% | 1,466,417 |
| Loan 8 | 10/08/2016 | 08/09/2019 | 560,000 | 3.515% | 551,528 |
| Loan 9 | 21/07/2017 | 20/07/2067 | 1,445,000 | 3.040% | 1,433,817 |
| Loan 10 | 01/11/2017 | 08/09/2019 | 400,000 | 3.556% | 398,425 |
| Loan 11 | 15/12/2017 | 08/09/2019 | 277,000 | 3.582% | 274,807 |
| Loan 12 | 25/03/2018 | 24/03/2068 | 240,000 | 3.061% | 238,015 |
| Loan 13 | 04/05/2018 | 03/05/2068 | 2,490,000 | 3.127% | 2,510,672 |
| Loan 14 | 05/06/2018 | 04/06/2068 | 1,196,311 | 3.064% | 1,202,737 |
| Loan 15 | 05/07/2018 | 04/07/2068 | 113,000 | 3.101% | 113,329 |
| Loan 16 | 25/09/2018 | 24/09/2068 | 823,000 | 3.193% | 819,986 |
| Loan 17 | 17/10/2018 | 16/10/2068 | 659,000 | 3.450% | 669,303 |
| Loan 18 | 02/11/2018 | 01/11/2068 | 820,000 | 3.307% | 831,101 |
| Loan 19 | 09/11/2018 | 08/11/2068 | 6,517,425 | 3.292% | 6,601,125 |
| Loan 20 | 01/02/2019 | 31/01/2069 | 93,890 | 3.099% | 94,354 |
| Loan 21 | 04/02/2019 | 03/02/2069 | 7,103,180 | 3.099% | 7,136,440 |
| Loan 22 | 22/02/2019 | 21/02/2069 | 809,240 | 3.030% | 811,732 |
| Loan 23 | 04/03/2019 | 22/02/2069 | 941,360 | 3.095% | 943,521 |
| Total Borrowed | | | 27,573,406 | | 27,610,789 |

In some cases the amount outstanding is greater than the amount borrowed, this is due to outstanding interest being added to the amount outstanding at year end.

Detail of PWLB Loans outstanding

All these loans are as a result of the HRA Buyout. This is a breakdown of the £113.4m referenced in Appendix A.

| Date of Advance | Loan Ref Number | Date of Repayment | Amount Outstanding | Rate |
|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------|--------------------|--------|
| 28/03/2012 | 499502 | 28/03/2020 | 5,000,000 | 1.99% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499501 | 28/03/2021 | 2,000,000 | 2.21% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499500 | 28/03/2022 | 7,000,000 | 0.86%* |
| 28/03/2012 | 499516 | 28/03/2022 | 2,000,000 | 2.40% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499514 | 28/03/2023 | 2,000,000 | 2.56% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499507 | 28/03/2024 | 3,000,000 | 2.70% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499503 | 28/03/2025 | 3,000,000 | 2.82% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499505 | 28/03/2026 | 1,000,000 | 2.92% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499496 | 28/03/2027 | 1,000,000 | 3.01% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499509 | 28/03/2028 | 2,000,000 | 3.08% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499497 | 28/03/2029 | 2,000,000 | 3.15% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499510 | 28/03/2030 | 2,000,000 | 3.21% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499498 | 28/03/2031 | 8,000,000 | 3.26% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499511 | 28/03/2032 | 9,000,000 | 3.30% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499499 | 28/03/2033 | 10,000,000 | 3.34% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499512 | 28/03/2034 | 11,000,000 | 3.37% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499506 | 28/03/2035 | 12,000,000 | 3.40% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499513 | 28/03/2036 | 9,000,000 | 3.42% |
| 28/03/2012 | 499515 | 28/02/2037 | 16,713,000 | 3.44% |
| 29/03/2011 | 498502 | 29/03/2061 | 5,951,150 | 5.26% |
| | | Total | 113,664,150 | |

* Variable Rate Loan, the others are fixed rate

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