



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Notice of a Meeting, to be held in the Virtual Meeting - Teams Meeting on Tuesday, 14th July, 2020 at 5.00 pm.

The Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee are:-

Councillor Ovenden (Chairman)

Cllrs. Burgess, Chilton, Farrell, Howard-Smith, Iliffe, Krause, Ledger, Link, Mulholland, Conservative vacancy and Ashford Independent vacancy.

Agenda

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1. Apologies/Substitutes	
To receive Notification of Substitutes in accordance with Procedure Rule 1.2 (c)	
2. Declarations of Interest	1 - 2
To declare any interests, which fall under the following categories, as explained on the attached document:	
a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI)	
b) Other Significant Interests (OSI)	
c) Voluntary Announcements of Other Interests	
See Agenda Item 2 for further details	
3. Minutes of the last Meeting	3 - 6
To approve the Minutes of the last Meeting	
4. O&S Annual Report	7 - 14
5. Annual Performance Report	15 - 40
6. Tracker	41 - 42

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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 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 alone, such as:

- Membership of amenity societies, Town/Community/Parish Councils, residents' groups or other outside bodies that have expressed views or made representations, but the Member was not involved in compiling or making those views/representations, 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: Where an item would be likely to affect the financial position of a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc.; OR where an item is an application made by a Member, relative, close associate, employer, etc., there is likely to be an OSI or in some cases a DPI. ALSO, holding a committee position/office within an amenity society or other outside body, or having any involvement in compiling/making views/representations by such a body, may give rise to a perception of bias and require the Member to take no part in any motion or vote.]

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 alongside the Council's Good Practice Protocol for Councillors dealing with Planning Matters. See <https://www.ashford.gov.uk/media/2098/z-word5-democratic-services-constitution-2019-constitution-of-abc-may-2019-part-5.pdf>
- (c) Where a Member declares a committee position or office within, or membership of, an outside body that has expressed views or made representations, this will be taken as a statement that the Member was not involved in compiling or making them and has retained an open mind on the item(s) in question. If this is not the case, the situation must be explained.

If any Member has any doubt about any interest which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Director of Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer, or from other Solicitors in Legal and Democracy as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes of a Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Tannery Lane, Ashford on the **10th March 2020**.

Present:

Cllr. Ovenden (Chairman)

Cllrs. Chilton, Farrell, Howard-Smith, Iliffe, Krause, Ledger.

Apologies:

Cllr. Burgess, Michael, Mulholland.

Also Present:

Head of Corporate Policy, ED & Communications, Head of Planning & Development, Compliance and Data Protection Manager, Economic Development Manager, Economic Development Officer, Governance & Data Protection Officer, Policy & Scrutiny Officer, Member Services Officer.

346 Minutes of the Last Meeting

Resolved:

That the Minutes of this Committee held on the 11th February 2020 be approved and confirmed as an accurate record, subject to the following amendments:

Minute 299 should read “...Kent Police aimed to recruit 472 Officers in the next 12 months...”

Minute 299 should read “...Ashford was not currently in the Top 5; this was reviewed on a monthly basis and founded on intelligence plus threat and risk assessments.”

A Member further added an amendment to the Minutes of the Meeting held on 21st January 2020, where Minute 270 should read “...the topic relating to Elwick Place be removed, since this issue had been picked up by another Committee and was therefore no longer appropriate.”

347 Report on Broadband and promotion of Fibre to the Premises

The Economic Development Manager introduced this item and explained that the report had been produced in response to a request from the O&S Committee in correlation to the Local Plan Policy EMP6 implementation. Early dialogue between

developers and providers had resulted in a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), and this would be consulted on over the next few months.

The report was then opened up to the Committee and the following questions and points were raised: -

- The Chairman asked how enforceable the SPD would be and could construction be delayed if the developers did not comply. The Head of Planning & Development explained that it largely came down to the logistics of viability and competing priorities. Ashford was in a robust position as they were pioneering this policy and had not yet been through the process. The Economic Development Manager added that the Government were driving forward with this issue and there were only a few other similar policies nationally. It was expected that this would also drive value into developments.
- In response to a question around the Local Plan Policy on page 12 of the report, the Economic Development Manager confirmed that a calculation for the method to determine sites with 10 or more employees in the rural areas could be provided to developers, as guidance based on the area and use class of a development portion would be applied to the Employment Schemes.

Resolved

That the report be received and noted.

348 Quarter 3 Corporate Performance Report 2019/20

The Governance & Data Protection Officer introduced this item which summarised performance against the Council's suite of Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) for Quarter 3. He explained that moving forward there may be variations to the KPI's in response to the review of the Corporate Plan.

Areas for the Committee to note in particular included page 18 KPI44 and KPI45 where an associated housing benefits award accuracy indicator had recently been created by the Department for Work and Pensions and the figures reflected positively on Ashford. KPI23 on page 23 of the report related to the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme and Ashford Borough Council were attending the Local Government Chronicle Awards on the 18th March as they had been nominated for an award under the Diversity and Inclusion category for their work on the Programme.

The report was then opened up to the Committee and the following questions and points were raised: -

- In relation to KPI08: New Business Support, a Member asked what the nature of the support was. The Economic Development Manager explained that there were several methods including a triage system whereby clients could email, telephone or speak to an Advisor face-to-face. The Council and Chamber of Commerce had also held discussions with the Jobcentre so that

people looking to start up their own businesses or become self-employed would also have access to these support channels.

- The Chairman asked for more information in relation to KPI38; Speed of Major Planning Application Decisions. The Head of Planning spoke to the Committee about the recent problems experienced in the Planning Department, which had contributed to the % of applications falling below the 60% threshold. A drop in staffing levels had resulted in the team being unable to maintain sufficient monitoring of applications. The backlog at its worst had stood at 1100 applications, but this had now fallen to 650. He added that it was important to be aware that the speed element of the Governments monitoring was over a 24 month period, as opposed to monthly performance. Quarter 3 showed an improvement and it was the Departments priority to maintain the progress they had recently made.
- In response to a question regarding homelessness and annual comparison of figures, the Governance & Data Protection Officer confirmed that a number of Housing reports were brought to the Cabinet throughout the year. A yearly comparison could also be included within the Corporate Performance Report.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

349 Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme 2020/21

The Policy & Scrutiny Officer introduced this item and confirmed that the Tracker had been updated to reflect the discussion at the last O&S meeting. Management Team had seen the Work Programme and Matrix and had commented positively stating that it was well thought out. It had been suggested that the Procurement Team make a presentation to the Committee at some point this year regarding the procurement of external contracts. The Policy Team were also currently drafting a scope for the Digital Transformation Task Group, which was anticipated to be ready by the end of April.

The report was opened up to the Committee and the following questions and points were raised: -

- A Member requested that the subject of the Vicarage Lane development be brought back to the Committee, after the Project Manager had recently left the Council, and this was agreed.
- In response to a question asking for a report offering clarification around Section 106 monies and where these should be allocated, the Head of Planning spoke in detail to the Committee. He explained that essentially the prerequisite for Section 106 funding came from a need within the community, and this was contained within the Local Plan. There was however a necessity now to develop a more strategic set of processes round that. A viability discussion was one way to ensure S106 funding was allocated appropriately.

The Chairman added that S106 allocation was more frequently being seen spread around the Borough as opposed to being contained within the area of development, and this seemed to counteract the idea that S106 was there to mitigate the impact of new housing developments. A Member suggested that it would be beneficial for Ward Members to be involved with S106 discussions and the Chairman added that the Committee would like to receive a report on this topic.

- A suggestion was made that the Committee receive an update on the position of Ashford College, after it had entered administration and certain courses on offer at the College had since been withdrawn. The Economic Development Manager agreed that it would be useful to understand East Kent College's plans if they were to take over operation of the Ashford Campus in the near future and would look at inviting a representative at the appropriate time to come and present to all Members and provide an opportunity for questions.

Resolved:

That the report be received and noted.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20



ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Councillor Noel Ovenden

I am pleased to present the annual report on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at Ashford Borough Council. Key activities undertaken by the Committee over the last municipal year are detailed within the report. To summarise, the Committee have looked at matters such as how the council communicates with the public in its Ashford For campaign, the performance of Aspire Landscape Management since the service has been brought back in house, and also the proposed masterplan for the village of Wye.

Covid-19

The impact of COVID-19 on Ashford Borough from March of this year is yet to be determined as crisis continues at this time. However, there is scope for the committee to exercise its function when considering our response to the crisis.

I would like to thank all of the Officers who have been involved with reviews during the year and have assisted the Committee proficiently. Thanks must also go to the Members of the Committee and non-committee Members who have played an active role at meetings regarding various matters such as scrutiny of the budget for 2019/2020.

Looking towards the future, the Committee looks to have a full and busy year ahead with dealing with the council's recovery from COVID-19 and also some major topics being brought forward such as digital transformation.





AN INTRODUCTION TO OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The Local Government Act 2000 (the Act) introduced a requirement that councils with a 'Leader and Executive' arrangement must include the provision of one or more Overview and Scrutiny Committees within their council structure.

Under section 21 of the Act, the council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee has power to submit reports and make recommendations to the Cabinet or full Council on any aspect of council business or any matter affecting the Borough or its residents.

The constitution of Ashford Borough Council contains provisions for a single Overview and Scrutiny Committee to carry out the functions detailed in the Act, although the Committee may assemble task groups from its membership for specific reviews.

In the 2019/20 municipal year the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had 12 members, appointed in line with the broad political balance of the council. The roles of Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee were appointed to opposition members, although the Committee operates apolitically in its discussions, with all members of the Committee working together to ensure that the council and its services are acting effectively and efficiently.

Following the local elections in May 2019, the political makeup of the council and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee changed for the last municipal year. Members were provided with introductory training in preparation for a new committee on the role, purpose and powers of Overview and Scrutiny was arranged through the Centre for Public Scrutiny. A training session was attended by members of each political group on the Council and key staff involved in the delivery of the scrutiny function.

MATTERS SCRUTINISED BY THE COMMITTEE

Since May 2019, the Committee has considered a number of items related to the council's operations and the wider issue affecting the borough and its residents. These include:

- PERFORMANCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF ASPIRE LANDSCAPE MANAGEMENT
- WYE MASTERPLAN DEVELOPMENT AND CONSULTATION
- ASHFORD COLLEGE UPDATE
- BROADBAND AND PROMOTION OF FIBRE TO THE PREMISES

The Committee also considers some items on annual basis, namely:

- SCRUTINY OF THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT BUDGET (CARRIED OUT BY A TASK AND FINISH GROUP)
- A REPORT OF THE ASHFORD COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP
- A REPORT ON SAFEGUARDING ADULTS AND CHILDREN AT RISK
- A SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT FOR THE COUNCIL'S WORKFORCE
- THE COUNCIL'S QUARTERLY CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORTS.





BUDGET SCRUTINY TASK GROUP

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a duty to scrutinise the council's draft Capital and Revenue budgets. In 2019/20, the Committee assembled a cross-party task and finish group whose remit included ensuring that the draft 2019/20 budget was achievable and deliverable in line with the council's 5 year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the council's adopted corporate priorities.

The group consisted of 5 cross-party Members and met with various Directors and Heads of Service to ask further questions. The group targeted Planning and S106 in its first meeting which looked at the delivery of the service's restructure and management of risks regarding S106 funding.

The second meeting looked at Commercial Property and the council's income from its property company, A Better Choice for Property.

The final meeting was set aside to look at an analysis of the council's reserves, the Capital Plan, Business Rates, Council Tax and Universal Credit. A wrap up meeting followed to also answer any additional queries the group wanted to bring forward.

The Task Group made a total of six recommendations in regards to the budget for 2020/21 that they believe will assist in managing any risks within services in the year.

WYE3 MASTERPLAN

Following a Cabinet decision made in September 2018 to defer the adoption of the WYE3 Masterplan, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that it would be beneficial to examine and develop the consultation process before reconsideration by Cabinet.

A cross party Task Group was set up comprising of 5 Members and conducted an in depth review of the processes and practices followed in developing and consulting on the WYE3 Masterplan.

The role of the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group in conducting this review was twofold – first, to review the masterplan development and consultation processes to establish the veracity of any claims of process failures, and secondly to provide recommendations for improvements in process that will be of benefit for the future.

In conducting its review, the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group considered a range of written and oral evidence regarding the development of and consultation on the draft WYE3 Masterplan.

A total of 12 recommendations were made to Council in September 2019 with the view that they would enable improvements to the council's processes for future masterplanning and consultation exercises. The focus of these recommendations were based around a number of themes such as traffic, resourcing and governance, and consultation and communication.

ASPIRE

In October 2016, Ashford Borough Council made the decision to adopt an in house grounds provider, Aspire Landscape Management. An update report on the progress of Aspire was then presented to Cabinet in January 2019. Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee felt that it would be beneficial to review whether the Aspire had achieved its expected goals and outcomes so far.

The Head of Environment and Land Management presented a report to the Committee and noted that the Aspire service had been hugely successful across areas of the Borough.

The Committee discussed the expansion of the Aspire services to developing areas across the Borough and it was noted that Aspire would have an opportunity to put in competitive bids when appropriate to do so.

Overall, Members supported and commended the Aspire team for its excellent service and supported plans for further development of the in-house service.

ASHFORD FOR YOU

In light of its first year of publications, the Committee requested a review of the council's residents' magazine, Ashford For You. In particular, members wanted to look at how receptive residents had been during its first year and what the plans were for development/digitisation of the magazine and other communications in the future.

A presentation was brought to a Committee meeting led by the Communications and Marketing Manager to explain to Members the various ways that the council had communicated with residents.

Members were invited to ask questions and discuss the magazine. Overall, it highlighted that the magazine was of an excellent standard, however, advised that more could be done to provide coverage to the more rural areas of the Borough. Other questions were aimed at understanding the cost implications of the magazine and if this was value for money. Overall the Committee supported the continuation of magazine and look forward to learning of its future developments.

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Ashford
Borough Council



Annual Performance Report 2019-2020

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Message from the Leader

Welcome to the final Annual Report of our Corporate Plan 2015-2020, which reflects on the achievements and milestones seen across our borough over the last year.

With the opening of the Curious Brewery; The Coachworks; the arrival of the new tenants at Elwick Place; the Designer Outlet expansion; the opening of a modernised Danemore and Junction 10A, to name only a few of the exciting changes to have happened in the last year, it is clear Ashford is a borough we all should be proud to call home.

Whilst the coronavirus is a setback to our economic and social journey and although priorities will need reassessing, it is clear from the way the community has rallied that we will come through, we will reconnect with family and friends, we will rebuild our economy and we will be a thriving community once again.



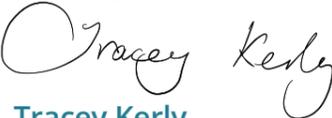

Gerry Clarkson, CBE
Leader, Ashford
Borough Council

Message from the Chief Executive

I hope that you enjoy reading our Annual Report – it offers just a snapshot of some of the good work which has gone on over the last year as well as some key milestones that have been reached across the Corporate Plan period.

With our entrepreneurial approach, careful planning and collective working our services have remained first-rate whilst ensuring our contribution to your Council Tax can remain low. The year has seen some fantastic achievements with the modernisation of Danemore, our continued commitment to reducing homelessness with schemes like our Christchurch Lodge project, and town centre and cultural events such as the Illuminates and Create festival.

With the end of the period came the first weeks of the coronavirus pandemic and I want to offer my condolences to all of you who have lost loved ones. Whilst we will need time to reflect and assess how our services may need to adapt, it is clear that our communities are strong and closer than ever.



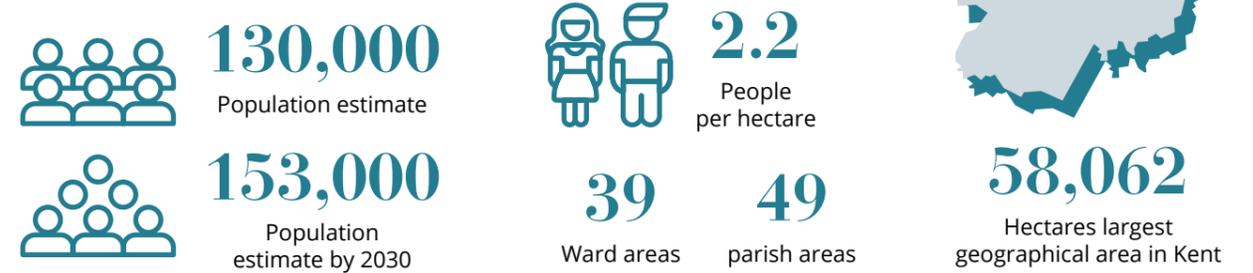
Tracey Kerly
Chief Executive,
Ashford Borough Council



KEY FACTS AND FIGURES

- Office for National Statistics Mid Year 2019
- KCC Housing Led forecast (Nov 2019), Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council
- Office for National Statistics
- Office for National Statistics
- Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings - resident analysis 2019
- Annual Population Survey
- 2019 Mid Year Population Estimates, Office for National Statistics
- Office of Rail and Road

Size



Health



80.6
Life expectancy at birth – male



84.2
Life expectancy at birth – female



Economy



£609.10
Median Weekly Resident Earnings, 2019

(higher than the Great British average slightly lower than the Kent average)

28.9%

NVQ4+ level qualification or above placing Ashford in the bottom 20% of authorities in England.



Diversity

40.7yrs
Mean age



25.1%
Proportion of population 19 and under



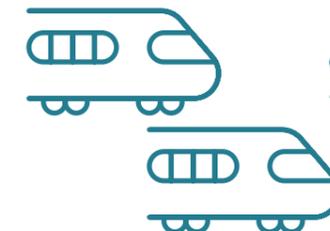
19.4%
Proportion of population aged 65 and over



Transport



4,102,872
trips Ashford International Station



200,000
increase on the previous year

CORPORATE PLAN 2015-2020



CORPORATE PLAN 2015-2020

The council's current Corporate Plan is now approaching its conclusion. Over the last five years we have prioritised our actions based upon the five priorities detailed below, with an aspiration to make Ashford borough an attractive place where people and businesses want to settle.

ENTERPRISING ASHFORD

Promote growth and achieve greater economic prosperity for Ashford borough. We will 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.



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.

CORPORATE PLAN HIGHLIGHTS



Dec 2015 Elwick Place plans approved

Multi-million pound plans approved to provide Ashford with a town centre boutique cinema, family hotel and restaurants and cafes. **Opened in December 2018.**

Jun 2016 Local Plan to 2030 consultation opened

The plan set out the land that needs to be provided in the borough to accommodate new homes and jobs up to 2030. **Adopted in February 2019.**

Jul 2016 Funding support agreed for new college

The Cabinet agreed recommendations including providing additional funding support, helping delivery of the new campus to come forward sooner.

Opened September 2017.

Aug 2016 Consultation on plans for Ashford's new M20 10a Junction

Plans to build a new junction on the M20 went to consultation following the acceptance of the application by the Planning Inspectorate.

Opened to traffic October 2019.

July 2016 Ashford Commercial Quarter

Cabinet approved planning for this significant commercial development. The re-generation will attract important inward investments and generate jobs for the area.

Opened July 2018.

Feb 2017 Work begins at Danemore, Tenterden

Works commenced on the construction of 34 sheltered scheme apartments for local residents and 4 bungalows for private sale. **Opened April 2019.**

Feb 2017
'One You', the new health shop comes to Ashford; following its success, moved to larger premises in July 2019.

Nov 2018 Snowdogs discover Ashford

Inspired by the much-loved animated film The Snowman and The Snowdog, Ashford's Snowdog trail celebrated the film's themes of life, love, loss, friendship, companionship, strength and kindness.

Apr 2018 Designer Outlet expansion

£90m Designer Outlet expansion drives long term growth. **Opened November 2019.**

Apr 2018 'Ashford For You' magazine launches

The 24 page, quarterly magazine is distributed to all households in the borough and covers what's going on in the local area, profiling services, people and places.

Jul 2018 The Coachworks vision outlined

The council commissioned Carl Turner Architects to create a vision to breathe new life into disused industrial buildings in Dover Place, close to the international train station.

Opened in stages during 2019.

Oct 2018 Beacon unveiled

As part of commemorations throughout 2018 for the 100th anniversary of the signing of the Armistice at the end of the First World War, a brand new Civic Beacon was unveiled – the first of its kind for Ashford town.

ENTERPRISING ASHFORD



Following the opening of the anchor tenants of the Picturehouse Cinema and Travelodge Hotel at our Elwick Place site in December 2018, this year has seen the announcement and opening of a number of new tenants including award-winning Kentish independent food and drink brand Macknade and Dansaki, an Afro-Caribbean restaurant which is set to open imminently under the Travelodge hotel offering a fine dining experience in a cosy and welcoming atmosphere.

In October, The Ashford International Model Railway Exhibition Centre set up temporary home in unit 2 to showcase its plans to create a permanent visitor attraction in the town and, in January, Snap Fitness, one of the world's fastest growing gym and fitness club franchises, opened in unit 8, which is located on the first floor of the cinema, restaurant and leisure development.

Guy Hollaway Architects' design for Elwick Place was also selected as a finalist in the 'Retail and Leisure Architect of the Year' category at the 2019 Building Design Architect of the Year Awards.

The year has seen key developments in our town centre's offer, with the opening of the Curious Brewery in a town centre position directly opposite the train station. A brand new, state of the art, multi-million pound cathedral of brewing with a bar, first class

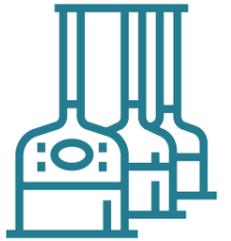
restaurant and inspired landscaping. The Curious Brewery opened its doors in May providing a fantastic addition to the town centre offer and providing an additional employer to the town.

The year also saw the phased opening of The Coachworks developed by Turner Works. The Coachworks, a 'meanwhile' development, revived a disused industrial building in Dover Place which has added further vitality to our commercial quarter. Turner Works have developed an imaginative and innovative concept for us, unlike anything else in Kent, using the existing fabric of the buildings they have created: The Yard Bar, an outdoors entertainment space; The Platform, a new shared office space in the old corn store; and the Hot House, which provides room for food stalls and event space.

Strategic property investment in the town continued during the year, with our acquisition of the Matalan site with the aim of securing a commercial income; and the acquisition of the Home Plus site for redevelopment by our property company, A Better Choice for Property Ltd.

We have long campaigned for the delivery of extra road transport capacity to cater for the town's future needs. This year has seen the opening of Junction 10a, maintaining our borough as one the best connected in the area.

The year has seen key developments in our town centre's offer, with the opening of the Curious Brewery in a town centre position directly opposite the train station.



The junction will support the local economy and improve the infrastructure of the town.

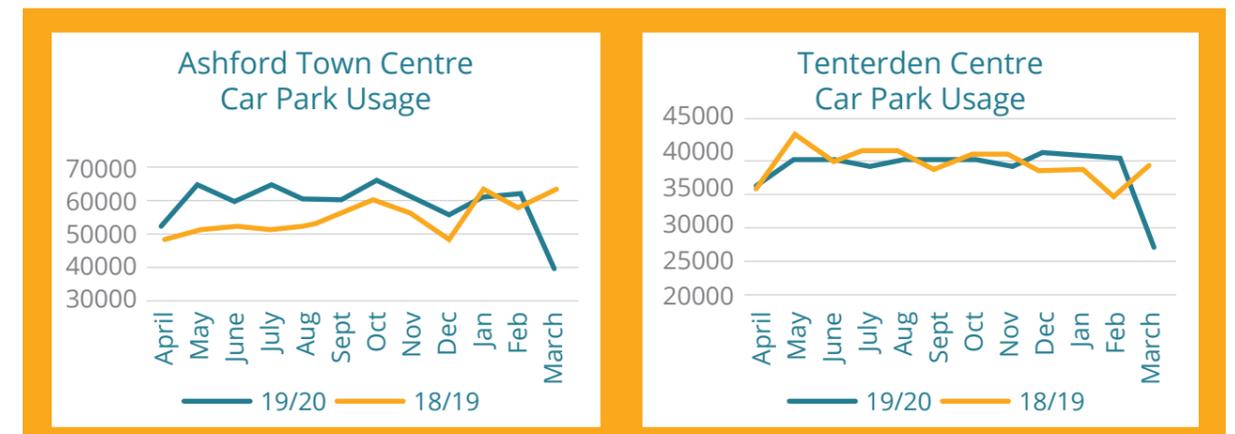
Whilst our town centres, like most across the country, are going through a period of change, with every retail loss being unfortunate, we are committed to supporting our town centres: the hearts of our communities.

Occupancy rates in our Park Mall shopping centre have remained high throughout the year with an average of between 2-3 units out of 32 being vacant at any one time. We offer ongoing support to traders in Park Mall which has seen footfall in the shopping centre grow steadily since it was acquired by the council.

We ran a series of events throughout the year in the town centre to help boost footfall and this year these have included The 'Great British Bark Off', The 'Day of the Dead' Halloween Spooktacular and the 'Illuminates' events.

With our emerging ideas for the former Mecca Bingo site, it is hoped we will be able to revitalise the town centre ensuring our town remains an attractive and safe place to live and visit, where people feel welcome and have a sense of community and belonging.

Car park usage in Ashford town centre has performed well across the year, consistently returning a higher usage figure across the year compared to the previous year. The introduction of social distancing measures at the end of March has significantly reduced car park usage and this will continue into the following months. Over the coming year automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology will be introduced to Elwick Place car park to make it easier to use. Our Tenterden car parks have seen a comparable usage to the previous year.



LIVING ASHFORD

During the year, Danemore sheltered housing scheme in Tenterden re-opened, marking a major landmark in the multi-million pound modernisation plans for our sheltered housing schemes. The new look Danemore provides 34 homes for affordable rent for older people, together with four chalet bungalows to be sold on the open market.

Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal officially opened Danemore in February.

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Five years after we launched the innovative Christchurch House project that has succeeded in benefitting homeless households and saved local taxpayers money, this year we have unveiled plans following the same blueprint for Christchurch Lodge.

Hoping to open in the autumn Christchurch Lodge a former disused home in Beaver Road is to be converted into eight homes, capable of accommodating up to 25 people. An extensive refurbishment programme is underway to add facilities like a communal kitchen, dining room and laundry room.

Following the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act we have seen an increase in homelessness approaches to us and the number of homelessness preventions has risen significantly. As such, we have had to respond proactively and schemes such as Christchurch House and Lodge are a crucial element of this.

Also during the year, our work to welcome Syrian refugees was nationally recognised. Our proud record of welcoming more vulnerable families from war-torn Syria than any other district in Kent, and indeed across the South East outside of London, has been recognised in the annual LGC Awards 2020 nominated in the Diversity and Inclusion category.



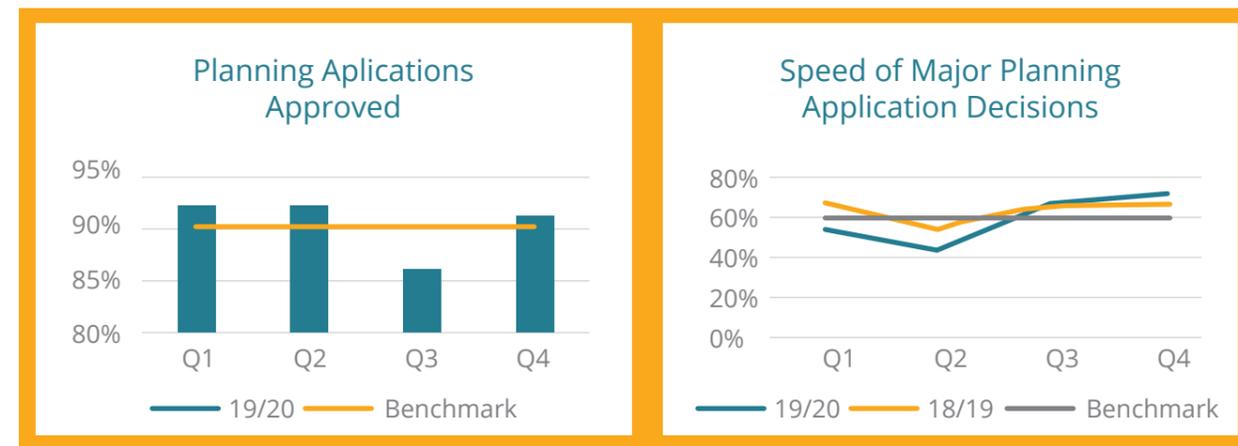
Our New Build Affordable Homes Programme 2018-2022 seeks to continue the modernisation of existing sheltered housing schemes and brings forward the delivery of new affordable housing within the borough, whilst continuing the council's existing programme of street purchases and buying back ex-council house properties where appropriate. 15 new build affordable houses were delivered by Ashford Borough Council in 2019/20 with more planned. We purchased 41 on-street properties in 2019/20 to bolster the resilience of its housing stock and continued to work with registered providers of social housing, who delivered 143 affordable rented and shared ownership properties in 2019/20.

During the year, over £1.05m was spent by us on disabled facilities grants across 70 properties making lives easier and, in many cases, allowing our residents to continue to live comfortably in their homes.



Following the adoption of our Local Plan 2030 in February 2019 which sets out the strategic priorities for development in the borough, work is either ongoing or has concluded on neighbourhood plans for: Bethersden, Boughton Aluph and

Eastwell, Charing, Pluckley, Rolvenden, Smarden, Tenterden and Wye, helping local communities to influence the planning of the area in which they live and work.



We will always work with planning applicants to ensure a satisfactory outcome is reached when planning applications are submitted; planning application approvals remained relatively consistent at around the benchmark figure of 90% throughout 2019/20.

We are, however, aware that due to fluctuating caseloads and vacancy levels in the planning department our performance against the government's target for the speed of major planning applications decisions has, at times throughout the year, fallen below our expectations. The performance threshold for speed of major decisions is set at 60% over a rolling 24 month period ending Q2 each year. In Q2 2019/20 performance for major speed was 65.5%. However, this fell to 60% in Q4. Our focus over the coming year will be this performance measure to ensure it is improved.

ACTIVE AND CREATIVE ASHFORD



During the year we provided funding to enable the Ashford One You shop to relocate to a larger unit within Park Mall. Since opening in February 2017, the One You shop has provided support to Ashford communities in tackling their health and wellbeing concerns, with more than 4,000 people having visited the One You shop to date.

July also saw the launch of the 'Woodchurch Wagon', a 16-seater minibus; the second vehicle in a wellbeing initiative created by Ashford Borough Council and named 'Community Connect'.

Woodchurch parish councillors have been working, in partnership with us, to arrange the provision of the service. The vehicle was named by children from Woodchurch Primary School.

July saw the return of Create Festival, already one of the South East's biggest and longest established free music festivals. This year marked the 24th year of the festival and was headlined by iconic Britpop band The Lightning Seeds.

The Great British Bark Off provided residents and visitors to the town with a fun, free family event.

Hosted by Loveashford in partnership with Emergency Exit Arts, the Great British Bark Off combined a dog show with a Great British Bake Off inspired cake competition for local businesses.

Over 30 dogs were entered into the show, which had four categories: best owner-dog relationship, most unusual talent, best story and best celebrity look-a-like.



December saw a series of events under the Illuminities banner. A five minute digital display was projected on the side of International House, celebrating Ashford's rich heritage and history with a festive twist. This event coincided with the opening of the Coachworks in Dover Place.

For two nights Ashford also became a Winter Forest, made up of a trail of illuminated trees dotted around the town centre and Elwick Place. The trees were Ashford-themed, showcasing the town's rich history, famous landmarks, and illustrious residents for a striking installation.

The following weekend, the Carnival of the Baubles filled the town. Starting at Elwick Place, a procession of giant, illuminated baubles, decorated by children from six Ashford primary schools made its way down Bank Street to the Lower High Street.

August saw Ashford celebrate the 100th anniversary of the presentation of our iconic Mark IV. We are so fortunate to have this incredibly unique and rare artefact, monument and memorial; it's important to celebrate its history and continue to tell the story of why it's here, and what it represents.

ATTRACTIVE ASHFORD



July saw cabinet approval of a draft masterplan for Conningbrook Lakes Country Park which will provide a mix of recreational facilities for residents and visitors alike to enjoy while protecting the rich natural environment.

We have been awarded more than £3 million from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and The National Lottery Community Fund to revitalise Victoria Park.

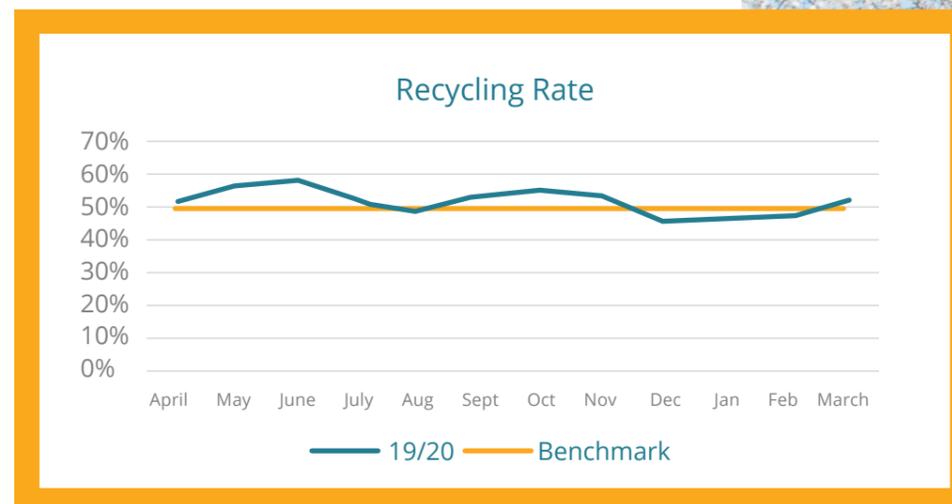
The funding means we can deliver our exciting plans to redevelop and restore one of Ashford's oldest and most-loved green spaces, working with the local community, volunteer groups and the Friends of Victoria Park.

Proposals include a new children's play area, improvements to the river, improved lighting across the park, and a new community hub building with café, and new toilets. The iconic Grade II Listed Hubert Fountain and the surrounding piazza area will also be restored and repaired.

We have continued our strong recycling performance, maintaining our position as the top recycling authority in Kent in 2018/19, with a percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting figure of 53.4%.

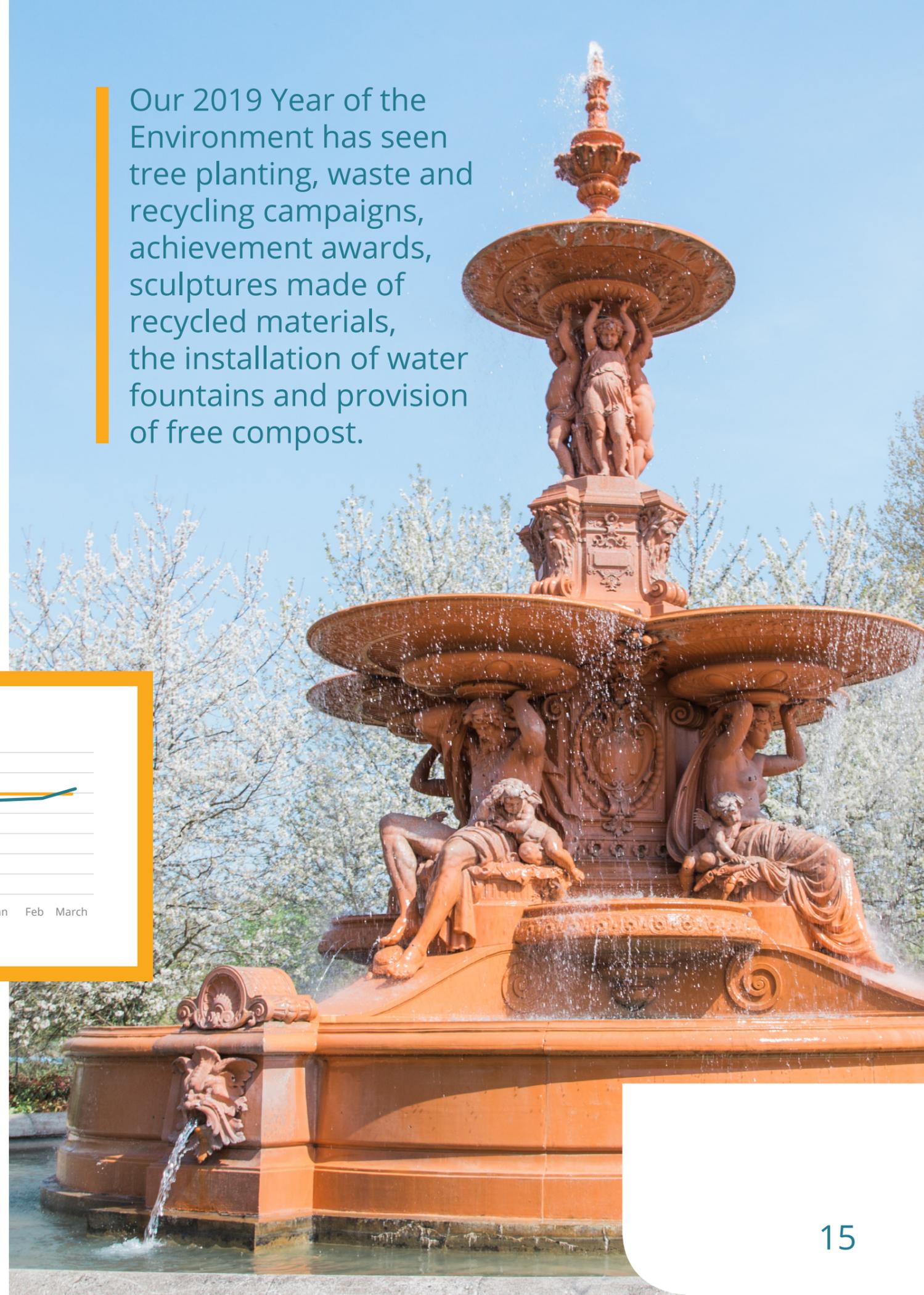
This performance continues into 2019/20 as shown. Focused education and awareness campaigns led by the council's Environment and Land Management service have helped residents to increase the amount of waste recycled and minimise contamination.

The success rate for refuse collections has remained high throughout 2019/20, with 99.97% of refuse collections per 100,000 collections made being successful across the year.



Our 2019 Year of the Environment has seen tree planting, waste and recycling campaigns, achievement awards, sculptures made of recycled materials, the installation of water fountains, provision of free compost as well as pumpkin and Christmas tree recycling campaigns.

Our 2019 Year of the Environment has seen tree planting, waste and recycling campaigns, achievement awards, sculptures made of recycled materials, the installation of water fountains and provision of free compost.



OUR UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

At July's meeting of Council, it was announced that a key element of the council's new five year corporate plan would be a stride towards carbon neutrality with an aspiration for the council to be 80% carbon neutral by the end of that corporate plan 2025, and to be completely carbon neutral by the end of 2030.

As part of our aim to providing proactive, useful, relevant and accessible communications, we have continued the publication of our quarterly magazine 'Ashford for You' distributed to all households in the borough covering events, services, people and places. The magazine continues to be well received by residents and supports our communications output.

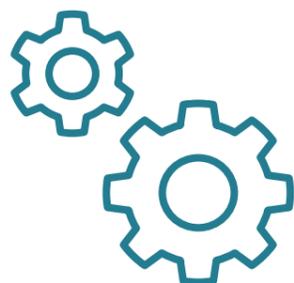
Transparency in all we do remains one of our key underlying principles as well as publishing as much information as we can on our transparency pages during the year we received 915 Freedom of Information requests responding to 97% of these within the statutory 20 working day time limit.

We continue to welcome the government's requirement for large organisations to be more transparent on gender pay, and will use this opportunity to nurture our culture of supporting women in the workplace, ensuring

success is defined by talent, not gender or circumstance. As of the 31 March 2019 our mean (average) gender pay gap in hourly pay stands at 13.5% with a median (mid-point) gender pay gap in hourly pay at 22.4%.

We continue to deliver our digital delivery programme which has the aims of both improving the customer experience and realising capacity to ensure a sustainable council for the future.

With the introduction of the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines which came into force in September 2019, our website has undergone a transformation to be accessible to all members of the public. Some work includes editing the wording of the website content and converting documents to formats so that they can be accessed by all users. The council's accessibility score has increased from 60% to 98% as of February 2019 as a result of this work. Furthermore, the launch of our 'Your Ashford' app has enabled access to just under 80 different services from the convenience of a mobile app.



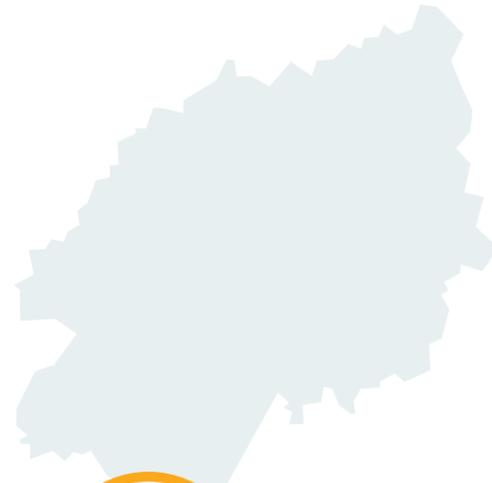
RESIDENTS SURVEY

In 2018, we asked residents to share their views on life in Ashford and their opinions on the council and its service. We used these to shape our future plans and work to improve our services.

In January and February 2020 we have conducted a similar survey based on the same methodology.

We will use the results to develop new strategies to further improve the services we deliver to residents and shape our new Corporate Plan and Carbon Neutral Strategy.

Although the results are still being analysed we are able to share some of our preliminary findings.



Page 24

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?



Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Ashford Borough Council runs its services?



To what extent do you think Ashford Borough Council understands the needs of customers?



To what extent do you agree you can influence the decisions that Ashford Borough Council makes?



How satisfied are you with parks in the borough?



How satisfied are you with bin collection?



How satisfied are you with council car parks?



THE FUTURE



Emerging Corporate Plan, Covid-19 and Recovery

When we embarked on developing our new corporate plan in the autumn of 2019 it couldn't be envisaged that we would be in the throes of a global pandemic in the spring of 2020. We will need to take time to reflect on the effect the coronavirus pandemic has had on all of our lives and the provision of our services before considering our Corporate Plan for the future.

lives, strengthens our resolve to ensure we strive to deliver our vision.

Since the Autumn of 2019 we have been working with a wide range of stakeholders to develop our long-term aspirations for the borough. This work was nearing completion as the coronavirus epidemic became widespread in the UK. Immediately, our attention and resources focused on supporting vulnerable people, maintaining vital community services and assisting local businesses.

In the short to medium term we will work towards a Recovery Plan that sets out steps that we can take to support our economy, local communities and residents, to recuperate from the wide ranging impacts of the coronavirus and to build back better, rather than purely seek a return to, the pre-pandemic normal.

As we recover from the effects of the global pandemic, it is important to have in place a strategic plan to ensure we have a clear view of what needs to be done to continue to support recovery, strengthen resilience, and promote a prosperous and more inclusive future.

As we emerge from the recovery phase, a delivery plan will be developed to set out how we will achieve this long term aspiration.

Page 25 The work that had commenced on the new corporate plan highlighted a strong desire to focus our efforts on enabling all our communities to be places to be proud to live in, to strengthen their resilience and ensure everyone has the opportunity to realise their own goals and aspirations.

It is important that we do not lose sight of where we want to be and how we can work together to ensure we can achieve our goals and aspirations for the future. In setting our priorities for the next corporate plan we sought the views of many organisations to agree a long term vision for the borough. This vision is supported by having a strong local economy, a flourishing natural environment and a range of cultural and leisure offerings that appeal to everyone.

At a time when we have had to take a look at what is important to us, caring for each other and valuing what we have and what others do to support us in our daily



Ashford Borough Council is committed to being open and transparent and we follow the code of recommended practice for local authorities on data transparency. As well as our performance reports we produce a number of monitoring reports which are made available on our webpages including:

- Annual Governance Statement
- Statement of accounts and Budget books
- Quarterly Financial monitoring report
- Medium term financial monitoring report
- Housing current delivery reports
- Planning updates and many more.

Annual KPI report 2019/2020

Service Performance

Finance and IT

Nationally available statistics

The latest data tables on local government finance including Ashford Borough Council, covering borrowing and investment, capital payments and receipts, local Council Tax support, quarterly revenue outturn and receipts of Council Taxes and national non-domestic rates are available [here](#).

Annual (2019/20) KPIs

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
KPI13 Business Rates Collection	% of national non-domestic rates collected by the council - cumulative figure per month	30.25%	24.75%	✓	55.89%	49.5%	✓	81.81%	74.25%	✓	99.1%	99%	✓	Business rates collections have matched the target for the year. It should be noted that the target for collections is 99% across the financial year, with a Quarterly projection of collection rates set as target for each quarter.
KPI43 Council Tax Collection Rate	Council Tax Collection Rate	30.38%	24.5%	✓	58.35%	49.12%	✓	86.11%	73.5%	✓	98.1%	98.25%	✓	Note for 2019/20 annual target has been projected equally across each quarter.
KPI44 Benefit Change of Circumstance Processing	Average time taken to process a benefit change of circumstance in no. days	2.82	10	✓	2.64	10	✓	2.61	10	✓	2.29	10	✓	Benefit change of circumstance processing times remain well within target limits for Quarter 4 and across the year.
KPI45 Benefit New Claim Processing Time	Average time taken to process a new benefit payment claim in no. days	25.63	28	✓	23.5	28	✓	22.27	28	✓	22.97	28	✓	Processing times for Quarter 4 and across the year remain within target.

Housing

Nationally available statistics

The latest data tables on local government housing including Ashford Borough Council, covering social housing sales, homelessness, and affordable housing supply are available at the following links:

[Social housing sales](#)

[Homelessness](#)

[Housing statistics](#)

[Affordable housing supply](#)

Annual (2019/20) KPIs

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
KPI14 Page 28 Rent void loss	Rent loss on void social rent properties as a % of the rent roll for HRA social properties	0.21%	0.3%		0.34%	0.3%		0.22%	0.3%		0.3%	0.3%		Q4 Total Rent Loss = 54,249 Debit Raised = £18,100,060 TOTAL RENT LOSS = 0.3%
KPI14A Affordable rent void loss	Rent loss on void affordable rent properties as a % of the rent roll for HRA social properties	0.93%	1%		0.97%	1%		0.81%	1%		0.66%	1%		Q4 Total Rent Loss = 27,212. Total Debit Raised = 4,126,001 TOTAL VOID LOSS = 0.66%
KPI15 Council Affordable Housing - New Build	No. of additional new build affordable homes delivered by council housing	0	N/A		4	N/A		7	N/A		4	N/A		In Q4 the council completed on four bungalows in Ragstone Hollow, Aldington. These were 2 x 2-bed bungalows and 2 x 3-bed bungalows. The council was also hoping to complete on 2 x 2-bed bungalows at The Weavers in Biddenden but slight slippage and the coronavirus pandemic has meant that the handover for these units is likely to be in May or June 2020.
KPI15A	No. of additional on-	0	N/A		6	N/A		11	N/A		24	N/A		In Q4 the council completed on 24

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
Council Affordable Housing - On-Street Purchases	street purchase affordable homes delivered by council housing													properties through its street purchase programme A further 21 homes are now going through the conveyancing process and are with colleagues in legal. We await details of completion dates.
KPI16 Registered Provider Affordable Housing Completions	No. of new affordable homes delivered by registered providers	16	N/A		66	N/A		44	N/A		17	N/A		<p>There have been 17 affordable housing completions in Q4 as follows.</p> <p>Golding Homes - Finberry site - 7 x 2 bed flats; 3 x 4 bed houses; 1 x 3 bed house. All shared ownership.</p> <p>Town & Country Housing - St Margaret's Place, Biddenden - 6 x 2 bed houses, all affordable rent.</p> <p>There are also 6 properties due to complete by the end of the month -</p> <p>Moat Housing - Tenterden - 2 x 1 bed flats; 4 x 2 bed flats. All affordable rent.</p>
KPI17 B&B Accommodation	No. of people placed in Bed and Breakfast accommodation	2	0		0	0		3	0		16	0		<p>Information recorded monthly with final month of the quarter recorded as a KPI snapshot.</p> <p>As at end January. 3 placements made recently due to emergencies and no other accommodation being available. Planned move on for all 3 households</p> <p>As at end of Feb. 3 people accommodated from the street homeless population</p>

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
KPI18 Nightly Paid Accommodations	No. of people placed in Nightly Paid accommodation as at the end of the reporting period	88	N/A		88	N/A		78	N/A		81	N/A		<p>At end of March 16 placements, instruction by Government to place all rough sleepers in accom due to coronavirus measures.</p> <p>Information recorded monthly with final month of the quarter recorded as a KPI snapshot.</p> <p>As at end of January 86. Increase in number due to increase demand throughout month. Historically this month is always busy.</p> <p>As at end of Feb 122. Rise in numbers due to the after Christmas busy period.</p> <p>At the end of March 81. Figures return to the trend.</p>
KPI19 Other Temporary Accommodations	No. of people placed in Other Temporary accommodation	48	N/A		42	N/A		39	N/A		55	N/A		<p>Information recorded monthly with final month of the quarter recorded as a KPI snapshot.</p> <p>As at end January 38. Continuing to decrease the PSL stock and use of own stock as TA.</p> <p>As at end of Feb 57. Numbers higher than usual due to post Christmas busy period.</p> <p>As at end of March 55. Figures returning to trend.</p>
KPI20 Homelessness Presentations	No. of homelessness presentations	391	N/A		453	N/A		426	N/A		469	N/A		<p>Throughout January. Significant increase from last month. January historically a busy month due to the fall outs from the Christmas period</p>

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
s														and notices now being served by landlords, 175. Throughout Feb. Large number of approaches in a shorter month. Still seeing some fall outs from over the Christmas period, 173. March figures Lower than normal approaches due to coronavirus.
KPI21 Homelessness Preventions (still in accommodation)	No. of households where homelessness was prevented	64	N/A		58	N/A		59	N/A		41	N/A		7 in Jan, 18 in Feb and 16 in March.
KPI22 Homelessness Reliefs (no accommodation)	No. of households where homelessness was relieved	43	N/A		50	N/A		52	N/A		12	N/A		3 in Jan, 8 in Feb, 1 in March low figure likely due to the coronavirus.
KPI23 ¹ Refugee Resettlement	No. of households/persons resettled in the Borough under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Programme	1	N/A		4	N/A		2	N/A		0	N/A		Arrivals of 2 families which had been planned for in March 2020 have been delayed due to Covid-19 travel restrictions. No date is yet set for resumption of planned resettlement but Home Office and partners are evaluating and updating risk assessments in order to be ready to resume as soon as restrictions permit.
KPI25 RTB2 28 day processing	Average time taken to process an RTB2 form with 28 day	11	28		7.45	28		14.36	28		9.23	28		Average turnaround of RTB2 response to right to buy applications for the last quarter well within the 28

¹ KPI23 and KPI24 reflect a similar indicator KPI23 no. of households whilst KPI24 no. of individuals making up the household figure. For ease of understanding KPI24 has been removed from this report with the information contained added to the note of KPI23

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
time	target time admitting or denying the right to buy													day target. Note, once a completed application is received the council is required to admit or deny the application within 28 days.
KPI25A RTB2 56 day processing time	Average time taken to process an RTB2 form with 56 day target time admitting or denying the right to buy	12	56		10.5	56		15	56		20.67	56		Average turnaround of RTB2 response to right to buy applications for the last quarter well within the 56 day target. Note, once eligibility is confirmed the council is required to provide an offer notice within 56 days.
KPI26 Disabled Facilities Grants Completed	No. of disabled facilities grants administered by the council	13	N/A		19	N/A		16	N/A		22	N/A		Slightly down on last year but 70 completed cases represents a good year.
KPI27 Disabled Facilities Grant Spend	Average spend per disabled facilities grant administered	£158,838.66	N/A		£237,981.52	N/A		£373,511.48	N/A		£282,234.04	N/A		All of the budget has been spent this year.
KPI30 PSH Number of new service requests	No. of complaints received regarding poor conditions in the private rented sector	60	N/A		55	N/A		98	N/A		63	N/A		During this period in particular we saw a decrease in complaints. Covid response influenced final weeks of the year with officers redeployed to aid.
KPI32 Number of new complaints cases opened	No. of complaints regarding poor conditions in the private rented sector resolved with formal action	2	N/A		2	N/A		27	N/A		3	N/A		Due to the Covid response the cases running were placed on hold although no new action from these cases required formal action to date. Continued informal action is still underway working with contractors and landlords.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
KPI32A Gas Safety Certificates	% of ABC properties with up to date gas safety certificates	99.87%	100%		100%	100%		99.99%	100%		99.93%	100%		This month is showing the start of a decline in compliance due to the early effects of tenants self-isolating and withdrawing from interaction with the landlord due to the effects of CV-19. At this point there were seven overdue properties.

Planning and Development

Nationally available statistics

The latest data tables on Local Government Planning including Ashford Borough Council, covering the speed and quality of planning decisions are available at the following link:

[Live tables on planning application statistics](#)

Annual (2019/20) KPIs

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
KPI37 Planning Application Approvals	% of planning applications approved	92%	90%		92%	90%		86%	90%		91%	90%		Although every effort is made to work with applicants to negotiate a successful outcome, refusals are at times necessary to ensure planning policy is followed.
KPI38 Speed of Major Planning Application Decisions	% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (or within such extended period as agreed in writing between the applicant and the local authority)	53%	60%		43%	60%		67%	60%		71%	60%		KPI38 Is not the current measure of planning performance for major applications. Govt. sets the performance threshold for speed of major decisions at 60% measured over a rolling 24 month period ending Q2 each year. If an LPA falls below the 60% threshold they may be 'designated'. In

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
														<p>Q2 19/20 performance for major speed was 65.5%. However, this fell to 60% in Q4.</p> <p>Therefore the Council is at risk of designation if it does not significantly improve performance on Major applications in Q1 and Q2. The planning service is focused on performance improvement to avoid designation.</p>
KPI39 Speed of Non-Major Planning Application Decisions	% of minor and other planning applications determined within 8 weeks (or within such extended period as has been agreed in writing between the applicant and the council).	87%	70%		82%	70%		79%	70%		88%	70%		<p>KPI39 Is not the current measure of planning performance for non-major applications. Govt. sets the performance threshold for speed of non-major application decisions at 70% measured over a rolling 24 month period ending Q2 each year.</p> <p>If an LPA falls below the 70% threshold they may be 'designated'. In Q2 19/20 performance for non-major speed was 82%. This was 81% in Q4 significantly above the designation level.</p>

Environment and Land Management

Nationally available statistics

Waste data from UK local authorities is reported to WasteDataFlow with statistics available at the following links.

[WasteDataFlow](#)

[Waste and recycling statistics](#)

Annual (2019/20) KPIs

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI52 Recycling Rate	% of borough waste recycled or composted	55.67%	50%		52%	50%		51.67%	50%		49.33%	50%		Performance across the year averages out at 52% recycle rate.
KPI53 Refuse Collection Success Rate	% of successful refuse collections per 100,000 refuse collections made.	99.97%	99.97%		99.97%	99.97%		99.97%	99.97%		99.97%	99.97%		Target consistently met

Culture

Annual (2019/20) KPIs

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI48	% of Ashford TIC contacts made in person	55.55%	N/A		53.8%	N/A		54.88%	N/A		Data Unavailable			January 45.32% February 48.22% March figures unavailable due to office closure.

Community Safety and Wellbeing Annual (2019/20) KPIs

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
KPI02 Ashford Town Centre Car Park Usage	No. of vehicles parking in Ashford town centre car parks as recorded by Parking Services	177,236	N/A		184,631	N/A		180,130	N/A		162,222	N/A		Coronavirus lockdown in place- car parks heavily affected in Q4.
KPI03 Ashford Town Centre Car Park Income	Income for Ashford town centre car parks - cash, card and mobile transactions combined	£420,166.73	N/A		£426,434.72	N/A		£435,885.63	N/A		£377,854.42	N/A		Coronavirus lockdown in place- car parks heavily affected in Q4.
KPI04 Ashford Town Centre Car Park average spend	Average spend per visit - Ashford town centre car parks	£2.37	N/A		£2.31	N/A		£2.42	N/A		£2.32	N/A		Coronavirus lockdown in place- car parks heavily affected in Q4.
KPI05 Tenterden Car Park Usage	No. of vehicles parking in Tenterden car parks	114,786	N/A		118,543	N/A		119,210	N/A		107,403	N/A		Coronavirus lockdown in place- car parks heavily affected in Q4.
KPI06 Tenterden Car Park Income	Income for Tenterden car parks - cash, card and mobile transactions combined	£220,273.75	N/A		£226,055.06	N/A		£230,938.92	N/A		£186,200.63	N/A		Coronavirus lockdown in place- car parks heavily affected in Q4.
KPI07 Tenterden Car Park average spend	Average spend per visit - Ashford town centre car parks	£1.92	N/A		£1.91	N/A		£1.94	N/A		£1.72	N/A		Coronavirus lockdown in place- car parks heavily affected in Q4.
KPI133 Food	% of businesses in	98.43%	98.5%		98.68%	98.5%		98.26%	98.5%		99%	98.5%		Performance against this KPI remains

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
Hygiene Rating	the borough with a food hygiene rating above 3*													fairly consistent. Contractor used to assist with backlog in last quarter.
KPI34 Lifeline Call Answer Speed	% of lifeline calls answered within 60 seconds	99.81%	97%	✓	99.74%	97%	✓	99.64%	97%	✓	99.6%	97%	✓	Above TSA requirement

Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications Annual (2019/20) KPIs

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status										
KPI01 Park Mall Vacancy Rates	No. of vacant units within Park Mall - collected quarterly through survey carried out by Economic Development	2	0	✓	3	0	⚠	2	0	✓	3	0	⚠	Coronavirus started having an impact through March with the lockdown coming into effect at the end of the month. This is likely to have a strong negative impact on vacancy rates moving forward
KPI08 New Businesses Supported	No. of pre-start and start up businesses supported by Ashford Borough Council through service level agreement with Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce - data provided by Chamber of Commerce to Economic Development	6	36	✓	8	36	✓	14	36	✓	13	36	✓	13 businesses supported in Q4. Changes to the webpages, Ashford For webpages and links to the Invicta Chambers of Commerce helping to increase the ease with which businesses can access support.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI55 FOI Response Rate	% of freedom of information requests responded to within 20 working days	95.5%	95%		98.4%	95%		98%	95%		96%	95%		During the quarter 241 requests were received with 10 answered outside the ordinary 20 working day timeframe.
KPI56 Major Personal Data Breaches	Number of major personal data breaches recorded (as required to be reported to the Information Commissioner's Office)	1	0		0	0		0	0		0	0		Of the incidents reported to the data protection team none were of a nature which required externally reporting to the ICO in Q4.

Corporate Property Information relevant to the Corporate Plan or KPIs

Corporate Property Performance Annual Report 2018/19. The revenue generated by the Council's corporate property portfolio contributes significantly to the Council's income. This is a periodic report last taken to [Cabinet](#) in September 2019.

HR and Customer Services Information relevant to the Corporate Plan or KPIs

Pay Policy Statement- Annual Review. The Localism Act 2011 requires the Council to publish an Annual Pay Policy Statement; this report reviewed the current Pay Policy statement, ensuring it is up to date and reflects the council's approach to pay. This is a periodic report last taken to [Cabinet](#) in March 19.

Gender Pay Gap Statistics - March 2019. We continue to welcome the government's requirement for large organisations to be more transparent on gender pay and publish our statistics annually on our [website](#).

Annual (2019/20) KPIs

Code & Short Name	Description	Q1 2019/20			Q2 2019/20			Q3 2019/20			Q4 2019/20			Latest Note
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
KPI64	Average wait time for customer service calls - to be benchmarked with results across Kent	0h 01m 34s	0h 01m 38s		0h 01m 28s	0h 01m 38s		0h 00m 56s	0h 01m 38s		0h 01m 08s	0h 01m 38s		Target of 1m 38s consistently met throughout the year.

Contact and Email

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report Tracker – 14th July 2020

Current Work Programme			
Report Title	Date due to O&S	Reporting Service	Scope of what is to be scrutinised
Digital Transformation	Ongoing (Final Report due September 2020)	HR and Customer Services Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications.	Recommended for the work programme by the Budget Scrutiny Task Group to examine how far digital transformation has progressed in all services.
Homelessness	Postponed	Housing	Briefing on homelessness in the Borough.
Carbon Neutral Strategy	Postponed	Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications	A review of the council's Carbon Neutral Strategy and action plan.
Update on Vicarage Lane Project	Postponed	Corporate Property and Projects	A summary of the council's current position regarding the appointment of a Project Manager for the Vicarage Lane Project.
Corporate Plan and Economic Development Strategy	Postponed	Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications	Scrutiny of the vision for the next Corporate Plan and the Economic Development Strategy.
External Contract Procurement	Postponed	Corporate Property and Projects	A presentation on the procurement process for external contracts and determine where scrutiny could be beneficial.
Annual Sickness Report including Recruitment and Retention	September 2020	HR and Customer Services	An annual report to O&S regarding staff sickness in the council. This will also include a wider 'Corporate Health' analysis that will also have a focus on recruitment and retention in services.
Consultation and Engagement	Later 2020	Corporate Policy, Economic Development and Communications	Involvement and engagement of the public with the consultation process for corporate issues.

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Agenda Item 6

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