



Agenda

Meeting: **Cabinet**
Date: **22 March 2023**
Time: **5.00 pm**
Place: **Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone**

To: **All members of the Cabinet**

All Councillors for information

The cabinet will consider the matters listed below on the date and at the time and place shown above.

This meeting will be webcast live to the council's website at <https://folkestone-hythe.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>.

Please note there will be 37 seats available for members of the public, which will be reserved for those speaking or participating at the meeting. The remaining available seats will be given on a first come, first served basis.

1. **Apologies for Absence**
2. **Declarations of Interest (Pages 5 - 6)**

Members of the Council should declare any interests which fall under the following categories:

- a) disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI);
- b) other significant interests (OSI);
- c) voluntary announcements of other interests.

3. **Minutes (Pages 7 - 14)**

To consider and approve, as a correct record, the minutes of the meeting

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Email: committee@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk or download from our
website
www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

held on 22 February 2023.

4. **Oportunitas Limited - Progress report 2022/23 and Business Plan 2023/24 (Pages 15 - 40)**

This report proposes a Business Plan from the Board of Oportunitas Ltd (“the company”) covering its activities through to 31 March 2024. The report also provides a financial update for 2022/23. The report meets the requirement contained in the Shareholder’s agreement between the company and the Council.

5. **District, Parish and Town Council Elections - Kent scale of election fees (Pages 41 - 50)**

This report sets out the annual changes to the Kent scale of election fees of Folkestone & Hythe’s Returning Officer to undertake the arrangements for managing and conducting district, parish and town council elections from 01 April 2023.

6. **2021-22 Annual Equality Report (Pages 51 - 100)**

The Equality Act 2010 places a statutory duty on the council to prepare and publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. The draft Equality & Diversity Annual Report is therefore presented for consideration and approval prior to publication.

7. **Quarter 3 performance monitoring report 2022/23 (Pages 101 - 132)**

This report provides an update on the Council’s performance for the third quarter of the year covering 1st October 2022 – 31st December 2022. The report enables the Council to assess progress against the approved key performance indicators arising from the Council’s new Corporate Action Plan.

Key performance indicators will be monitored during 2022-23 and reported to CLT and Members quarterly.

8. **Review of Risk Management Policy & Strategy and Corporate Risk Register (Pages 133 - 166)**

This report presents an updated Risk Management Policy & Strategy for adoption by Cabinet. The Policy & Strategy provides a framework for the management of risk by Officers and Members.

This report also provides Cabinet with an updated Corporate Risk Register, as considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 15 March 2023.

9. **Local Authority Housing Fund (Pages 167 - 170)**

The Government has provisionally offered the Council £1.2m of Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) grant, to facilitate the purchase of ten

properties to temporarily accommodate Ukrainian and Afghan refugees in the district. The timeframe for the Council to confirm it wishes to accept the grant funding is very short. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Special Projects took an individual member decision and agreed that the Council should submit a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding to the Government by their deadline of 15 March 2023.

10. **FHDC Response to KCC Community Services Public Consultation (Pages 171 - 252)**

On 17th January 2023 KCC opened a public consultation on the closure of KCC buildings housing Children's Centres and Youth Hubs, Public Health Services for Children and Families, Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education), and Gateways. The public document on KCCs website shows the county-wide proposals for closures and repurposing of sites. A bespoke Folkestone and Hythe version was sent to the Council with a letter on 10th January 2023. Informal Cabinet requested a member briefing from KCC which was held on 9th February 2023 on how the proposals had been reached and impact on the district. This report sets out some key points relating to this consultation. FHDC's formal response back to KCC on the proposals is due 26th March 2023.

11. **Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): Proposed adoption of the Council's Modified CIL Charging Schedule (Pages 253 - 260)**

The council adopted the Core Strategy Review (CSR) in March 2022, and so it has been necessary for the council to amend the adopted CIL Charging Schedule to bring it 'in step' with the adopted CSR, as well as amendments to the CIL Regulations.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (2010) as amended, outlines the process for establishing a CIL scheme in an area. At its meeting of 20th July 2022, the Cabinet approved publication of the Draft Charging Schedule and associated documents for consultation (and public consultation took place between 22 August and 3 October 2022), and authorised the Council to submit the DCS and associated documents to the appointed external Examiner for independent examination in accordance with the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). The DCS was submitted for external Examination in November 2022, and the Examiner's report was received in February 2023.

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Declarations of Interest

Disclosable Pecuniary Interest (DPI)

Where a Member has a new or registered DPI in a matter under consideration they must disclose that they have an interest and, unless the Monitoring Officer has agreed in advance that the DPI is a 'Sensitive Interest', explain the nature of that interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a DPI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation permitting them to do so. If during the consideration of any item a Member becomes aware that they have a DPI in the matter they should declare the interest immediately and, subject to any dispensations, withdraw from the meeting.

Other Significant Interest (OSI)

Where a Member is declaring an OSI they must also disclose the interest and explain the nature of the interest at the meeting. The Member must withdraw from the meeting at the commencement of the consideration of any matter in which they have declared a OSI and must not participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter unless they have been granted a dispensation to do so or the meeting is one at which members of the public are permitted to speak for the purpose of making representations, answering questions or giving evidence relating to the matter. In the latter case, the Member may only participate on the same basis as a member of the public and cannot participate in any discussion of, or vote taken on, the matter and must withdraw from the meeting in accordance with the Council's procedure rules.

Voluntary Announcement of Other Interests (VAOI)

Where a Member does not have either a DPI or OSI but is of the opinion that for transparency reasons alone s/he should make an announcement in respect of a matter under consideration, they can make a VAOI. A Member declaring a VAOI may still remain at the meeting and vote on the matter under consideration.

Note to the Code:

Situations in which a Member may wish to make a VAOI include membership of outside bodies that have made representations on agenda items; 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. It should be emphasised that 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.

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Minutes

Cabinet

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone
Date	Wednesday, 22 February 2023
Present	Councillors John Collier, Ray Field, David Godfrey, Mrs Jennifer Hollingsbee (Vice-Chair), David Monk (Chairman), Stuart Peall, Tim Prater, Lesley Whybrow and David Wimble
Apologies for Absence	None.
Officers Present:	Andy Blaszkowicz (Director of Housing and Operations), James Clapson (Case Officer (Committee)), Ewan Green (Director of Place), James Hammond (Strategic Policy Officer), Amandeep Khroud (Assistant Director), Daniella Loxton (Capital & Treasury Senior Specialist), Lydia Morrison (Interim S151 Officer), Susan Priest (Chief Executive), Jonathan Smith (Senior Accountant), Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services), Brian Thompson (Interim Chief Financial Services Officer), Adrian Tofts (Strategy, Policy & Performance Lead Specialist), Lee Walker (Capital and Treasury Senior Specialist) and Jemma West (Democratic Services Senior Specialist)

NOTE: All decisions are subject to call-in arrangements, except for the decisions shown at Minute No's 78 (Folkestone – A brighter future: Delivering the Levelling Up Fund Project) and 82 (Highview Development: Project Update and Next Steps), which are exempt from call in under rule 7 'Call-in and urgency', part 6.3 of the constitution. The deadline for call-in is Friday 3 March at 5pm. Decisions not called in may be implemented on Monday 6 March 2023.

71. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

72. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 25 January 2023 were submitted, approved and signed by the Leader.

73. Investment Strategy 2023/24

The report set out the Council's proposed strategy for its service and commercial investments in 2023/24 to be approved by full Council.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,
Seconded by Councillor Peall; and

RESOLVED:

- 1. That report C/22/89 be received and noted.**
- 2. That it be recommended to Full Council that the 2023/24 Investment Strategy, including the Investment Indicators, set out in the appendix to the report be approved.**

(Voting figures: 9 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out because:-

- a) The Council must have regard to both CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities Local Government Investment Guidance when carrying out its duties under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- b) The Council is required to approve an Investment Strategy for the forthcoming year.

74. Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2023/24 and Treasury Management Monitoring Report 2022/23

The report set out the proposed strategy for treasury management for 2023/24 including Treasury Management Prudential Indicators. The report also provided a further update on the council's treasury management activities that have taken place during 2022/23 against the agreed strategy for the year. An addendum had been circulated prior to the meeting which set out a correction to paragraph 3.2 of the report.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

RESOLVED:

- 1. That report C/22/91 be received and noted.**
- 2. That the strategy for treasury management in 2023/24 set out in the report be approved.**
- 3. That the Treasury Management Prudential Indicators for 2023/24 set out in the report be approved.**

(Voting figures: 9 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations because:-

- a) The Council must have regard to CIPFA's Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services when carrying out its duties under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003, including approving an annual Treasury Management Strategy Statement in advance of the financial year.
- b) The Council's Financial Procedure Rules require an annual plan and strategy for treasury management to be approved in advance of the financial year.
- c) Both the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management and the Council's Financial Procedure Rules require Members to receive a report on the Council's treasury management activities during the year.

75. **Capital Strategy 2023/24 and Minimum Revenue Provision Statement 2023/24**

The report set out the council's proposed strategy in relation to capital expenditure, financing and treasury management in 2023/24 to be approved by full Council. The report also set out the Prudential Indicators for capital expenditure and the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement for 2023/24 to be approved by full Council.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

RESOLVED:

1. **That report C/22/95 be received and noted.**
2. **That it be recommended to Full Council that the 2023/24 Capital Strategy, including the Prudential Indicators, set out in appendix 1 to the report be approved.**
3. **That it be recommend to Full Council that the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement for 2023/24 set out in appendix 2 to the report be approved**

(Voting figures: 9 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out because:-

- a) The Council must have regard to both CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities and the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' Investment Guidance when carrying out its duties under Part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003.
- b) The Council is required to approve a Capital Strategy for the forthcoming year.
- c) The Council is required to approve a Minimum Revenue Provision statement for 2023/24 in advance of the start of the financial year.

76. **Draft Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Original Budget 2023/24**

The report set out the Housing Revenue Account ('HRA') Revenue and Capital Budget for 2023/24 and proposed an increase in weekly rents and an increase in service charges for 2023/24.

Proposed by Councillor Godfrey,
Seconded by Councillor Peall; and

RESOLVED:

1. That report C/22/92 be received and noted.
2. That it be recommended to Full Council that the Housing Revenue Account Budget for 2023/24 be approved (refer to paragraph 2.1 and Appendix 1).
3. That the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme budget 2023/24 be approved (refer to paragraph 4.1 and Appendix 2).
4. That it be recommended to Full Council that the increase in rents of dwellings within the HRA on average by £6.25 per week, representing a 7% increase with effect from 3 April 2023 be approved (refer to paragraph 3.2).
5. That it be recommended to Full Council that the increase in rents of shared ownership dwellings within the HRA by 7%, with effect from 3 April 2023 be approved (refer to paragraph 3.2).
6. That it be recommended to Full Council that the increase in service charges be agreed (refer to section 3.5).
7. That the Housing Revenue Account Medium Term Capital Programme 2023/24 – 2026/27 be approved (refer to paragraph 5.1 and Appendix 3).

(Voting figures: 8 for, 0 against, 1 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet is requested to agree the recommendations set out as the Local Government Housing Act 1989 requires the Council, as a Local Housing Authority, to keep a separate Housing Revenue Account and to produce estimates to ensure that the account does not go into deficit. The authority also has a duty to set and approve rents in accordance with government guidelines that are outlined in the self-financing determination. The Constitution requires that the annual Budget and any variations to the Budget are approved by Council.

77. General Fund Budget and Council Tax 2023/24

The report set out the final General Fund budget and Council Tax requirement for 2023/24, including that part of the local tax covering district and parish services.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

RESOLVED:

1. That report C/22/90 be received and noted.

2. That it be **recommended to Full Council** that the final 2023/24 General Fund budget be approved, as set out at paragraph 4.2.
3. That it be **recommended to Full Council** that a Council Tax requirement for 2023/24 of £14,289,513 be agreed.

(Voting figures: 7 for, 1 against, 1 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out because:

a) The District Council's General Fund budget and council tax requirement must be approved to enable Full Council to set the budget and the council taxes for 2023/24 in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992.

78. Folkestone - A Brighter Future: Delivering the Levelling Up Fund Project

The report sought approval to accept the Levelling Up Fund grant award following the success of the Council's application for Folkestone - A Brighter Future. The report sought approval to proceed with the project and provided an overview of the governance and delivery arrangements. The report sought agreement to enter into delivery agreements with Kent County Council and Creative Folkestone. The report also sought agreement to explore the potential for the Council to relocate from the Civic Centre to Folca.

It was agreed, in respect of recommendation 11, that the words "some of" be inserted prior to the word Folca 2.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,
Seconded by Councillor Peall; and

RESOLVED:

1. That report C/22/86 be received and noted.
2. That the successful outcome of the Levelling Up Fund bid: Folkestone - A Brighter Future be noted.
3. That the Government's Levelling Up Fund award of £19,791,819 be accepted.
4. That the Council enter into a Memorandum of Understanding with Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
5. That the arrangements detailed for governance and delivery of the overall project be noted.
6. That the Council enters into delivery partnership agreements with Kent County Council and Creative Folkestone.
7. That the Director of Place, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, project related Cabinet Portfolio Holders and the Corporate Leadership Team be authorised to progress delivery of the Levelling Up Fund project Folkestone - A Brighter Future.
8. That it be noted that a Stakeholder and Communications Strategy will be developed and implemented.
9. That it be noted that Member briefings will be held at key stages throughout the project.

10. **That it be noted that progress on delivery of the Levelling Up Fund project will be reported as part of the Council's quarterly corporate performance reporting.**
11. **That officers explore the potential of the Council relocating from the Civic Centre to some of Folca 2 and that the outcome of this be reported to Cabinet for further consideration ahead of a decision being made.**

(Voting figures: 9 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet agreement is required to accept the Levelling Up Fund grant and to enter into delivery agreements with external partners.

79. Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022

In accordance with the latest revisions made via the Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (England) (No. 2) Regulations 2019, from December 2020 local authorities must publish an Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS). The IFS document provides a summary of all financial and non-financial developer contributions relating to Section 106 Legal Agreements (S106) and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) within Folkestone & Hythe District for a given financial year. The report sought approval of the IFS, and identified the infrastructure needs, the total cost of this infrastructure, anticipated funding from developer contributions, and the choices the authority has made about how these contributions will be used.

Proposed by Councillor Wimble,
Seconded by Councillor Field; and

RESOLVED:

1. **That report C/22/87 be received and noted.**
2. **That the Council accepts the proposed Infrastructure Funding Statement contained in Appendix 1, which is to have immediate effect and be published immediately following Cabinet approval**

(Voting figures: 7 for, 2 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To replace the Regulations 123 List which has been deleted by legislation and replace with the Infrastructure Funding Statement in accordance with the regulations.

80. Consultation from Government on Proposed Changes to the National Planning Policy Framework

The report outlined proposed changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) currently being consulted on by the Department for Levelling-up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC). Responses to selected key consultation questions are given in Appendix 2. The consultation comments will be submitted to DLUHC as the district council's response.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

RESOLVED:

1. **That report C/22/85 be received and noted.**
2. **That the proposed consultation comments set out in Appendix 2, with any amendments Cabinet considers necessary, be approved as the district council's response to DLUHC.**

(Voting figures: 9 for, 0 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To enable the council to influence future national planning policy.

81. **Princes Parade - Proposal Received**

The report updated Cabinet following a proposal received recently from a private developer to acquire and develop out the Princes Parade site.

Proposed by Councillor Prater,
Seconded by Councillor Whybrow;

That the offer be noted, and no further action be taken.

(Voting figures: 2 for, 7 against, 0 abstentions).

The proposal was therefore LOST.

Proposed by Councillor Monk,
Seconded by Councillor Mrs Hollingsbee; and

RESOLVED:

1. **That report C/22/88 be received and noted.**
2. **That the offer be noted, and officers be instructed to consider the matter and potential next steps.**

(Voting figures: 7 for, 2 against, 0 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Cabinet has not previously considered this option and should be made aware of the offer, and consider if this matter should be pursued further.

82. **Highview Development: Project Update and Next Steps**

The report informed Members of the progress made since the last report in January 2022. The site now has planning permission for the development of 30 highly energy efficient homes for affordable rent (25) and shared ownership purchase (5). The report provides an update on the tender activity, levels of tenders received and the applications for external funding and the wider financial package for the scheme. The report also considered the scheme in the

wider context of a changed financial environment of higher interest rates, rising costs and the anticipated and competing capital costs of works on the existing stock, including the retrofit programme to raise energy performance levels. The report went on to consider alternative delivery options and makes recommendations to members on next steps.

Proposed by Councillor Godfrey,
Seconded by Councillor Peall; and

RESOLVED:

1. That report C/22/94 be received and noted.
2. That the works completed by officers to get the council to this point be noted.
3. That the significant financial implications and impact upon the overall HRA Capital Programme if the new build scheme was to go ahead be noted.
4. That option 4 be agreed (pause the project and reconsider options when the financial outlook is more positive and market conditions are more favourable be approved).
5. That officers explore Option 5 (to sell the site with the benefit of planning permission and demolition / ecology works completed).
6. That it be noted that officers will bring back a report following a marketing exercise for further decisions.
7. That it be noted that a small revenue budget of £20K per annum will be required for site maintenance and ecology management.
8. That the award of £465,000 from the Brownfield Land Remediation fund (BLRF) from One Public Estate and the fact that this may need to be repaid should the scheme not progress be noted.

(Voting figures: 8 for, 0 against, 1 abstentions).

REASONS FOR DECISION:

To ensure Members make properly informed decisions as to spending priorities in respect of the Housing Revenue Account and HRA Capital Programme and the many competing demands.

This Report will be made public on 14 March 2023

Report Number **C/22/104**

To: Cabinet
Date: 22 March 2023
Status: Non-Key Decision
Head of Service: Andy Blaszkowicz – Director of Housing and Operations
Oportunitas Chairman: Councillor Patricia Rolfe
Cabinet Member: Councillor David Monk, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance

SUBJECT: OPORTUNITAS LIMITED – PROGRESS REPORT 2022/23 & BUSINESS PLAN 2023/24

SUMMARY: This report proposes a Business Plan from the Board of Oportunitas Ltd (“the company”) covering its activities through to 31 March 2024. The report also provides a financial update for 2022/23. The report meets the requirement contained in the Shareholder’s agreement between the company and the Council.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because the Shareholder Agreement between the company and the Council requires a Business Plan to be approved for the next trading period.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/22/104.
2. To agree the Business Plan for Oportunitas Limited for the period through to 31 March 2024.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In line with the Shareholder's agreement between Oportunitas Limited ("the company") and the Council, this report;-
- i) provides a financial update on the company's activities in 2022/23 based on the period to 31 January 2023, and
 - ii) presents the company's proposed Business Plan for the 2023/24 financial year for Cabinet's approval.
- 1.2 The Council created the company in 2014 and provided it with a total initial capital investment of £4.78m in the form of 90% debt and 10% equity to acquire land and property primarily to provide residential properties to let to families at rent levels at or just below market rates. It was recognised at the time that, despite being the significant amount initially invested, further investment would be required for the company to trade sustainably in the long term while continuing to provide the council with a return on its investment.
- 1.3 On 28 February 2018, Cabinet approved a strategic financial review of the funding required to make the company financially sustainable in the long term while still providing a return to the Council as the sole shareholder. An additional capital investment of £6.9m was approved to enable the company to acquire further residential property for rent. The Council's overall investment in the company is now 58% debt and 42% equity.
- 1.4 In early 2020 the company agreed a deal to purchase 37 units of residential property 'off plan' from a development taking place at the site of the former Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) building in central Folkestone at a total cost of £6.45m. Phase 1 of the acquisition to purchase the former RVH building converted into 18 self-contained flats was completed in late October 2021. Phase 2 to acquire a new purpose built building of 19 self-contained flats at the site is due for completion in the autumn of 2023.
- 1.5 On 6 March 2023 the company's Board considered and approved their business plan for the period to 31 March 2024. This included an indicative financial forecast for the 2024/25 financial year, the first year the company receives the full financial benefit of its investment from RVH residential units.
- 1.6 At the same meeting the Board also received a financial update for 2022/23 for the period to 31 January 2023.

2. FINANCIAL UPDATE 2022/23

- 2.1 The company's financial update for 2022/23, based on activity to 31 January 2023, was reported to the Board on 6 March 2023 and is shown in appendix 1 to this report. The update shows the latest projected outturn for the profit and loss account compared to both the original forecast and previous projection for the current financial year, and an update on its investment in the RVH scheme.

2.2 In summary, the company's profit and loss account is projected to make an operating profit of £81k for the year, an increase of £84k compared to the original forecast loss of £4k. This is an improvement of about £21k compared to the figure previously reported to Cabinet on 25 January 2023 (minute 62 refers). The main reasons for the projected increase in the operating profit are:

Variiances 2022/23 Forecast to Projected Outturn		£'000
i)	Housing Portfolio Net Expenses – net reduction in part due to costs being deferred until 2023/24	92
ii)	Land Disposal – proceeds from sale of land at Leyburne Road, Dover to be paid to the Council rather than retained by the Company	(60)
iii)	Loan Interest – full utilisation of the loan to support the acquisition of the RVH scheme delayed until 2023/24	44
iv)	Operating Expenses – net reduction in costs	8
Total increase in operating profit		84

2.3 The profit and loss account excludes any change in unrealised property values. The company's property portfolio will be revalued as at 31 March 2023 ahead of finalising the accounts for the financial year. HM Land Registry data for 2022 shows local residential property prices have seen an average increase of about 12% for the year to 31 December 2022. The previous valuation of the company's portfolio as at 31st March 2022 valued the company's portfolio at over £9.1million.

2.4 The Oportunitas Board, at their meeting on 6 March 2023, expressed their disappointment about Cabinet's decision on 25 January 2023 to require the £60k proceeds from the sale of the surplus land at 84 Leyburne Road to be paid to the Council (minute 62 refers). The Board acknowledged Cabinet's decision was in accordance with the Shareholder Agreement, but previously Cabinet had approved the 2022/23 Business Plan with the forecast receipt being retained by the Company to support further investment in its housing stock.

2.5 The table below summarises the latest position for capital expenditure incurred on the RVH development:

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Contract Total	SDLT	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Agreed Sale Price	3.150	3.300	6.450	0.250	6.700
Paid to date	3.150	2.186	5.336	0.112	5.448
Balance	0.000	1.114	1.114	0.138	1.252

- 2.6 The funding of the capital expenditure incurred to date has been met from the proceeds of the Council's additional equity investment of £4.43m in the company and £1.0m of the agreed loan facility of £2.47m.
- 2.7 The latest projected financial benefit to the Council from the company in 2022/23 compared to the original estimate is shown in the table below:

	Estimate 2022/23 £'000	Projection 2022/23 £'000
Loan interest	286	242
Loan repayments	38	30
Sale proceeds	-	60
Staff costs - reimbursement	28	28
Members Allowances - reimbursement	12	10
Grounds Maintenance recharge	12	6
Total Benefit	376	376
Less, FHDC capital financing cost	(119)	332
Net Financial Benefit	257	44

- 2.8 The reduction in the benefit is mainly due to the Council having to make an annual Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge of £0.22m over 20 years from 2022/23 rather than 2023/24 on prudential borrowing incurred for the phase 2 equity funding previously made to the company of £4.43m.

3. BUSINESS PLAN - 1 APRIL 2023 TO 31 MARCH 2024

- 3.1 The Shareholder's agreement requires the company to have a current business plan approved by Cabinet. The Board approved the company's business plan for the 2023/24 financial year on 6 March 2023 and is shown in appendix 2 to this report.
- 3.2 Over the period of the business plan, the company is expected to complete the purchase of phase 2 of the RVH development meaning its property portfolio will increase to 75 residential units and one commercial unit. The increased investment by the company together with its revised capital funding structure of 58% debt to 42% equity means it is now expected to be financially sustainable in the long term.
- 3.3 The previous business plan financial projection included the following one-off special items originally intended to be incurred in 2022/23:

	£
i) External redecoration and repairs to 19 Castle Hill Avenue	35,200

ii)	External redecoration and repairs to 82/84 Leyburne Road	29,100
iii)	Stock condition survey	<u>20,000</u>
	Total special items (net)	<u>84,300</u>

It has not been possible to progress these in 2022/23. The stock condition survey is now expected to take place in 2023/24. The works to 19 Castle Hill Avenue and 82/84 Leyburne Road are planned to be undertaken over a two-year period spanning 2023/24 and 2024/25.

- 3.4 The company is forecast to make an operating loss of £50k in 2023/24 before returning a profit after tax of £40k in 2024/25, the first year it receives the full benefit of the additional revenue stream from the RVH development. The cumulative projected operating loss at 31 March 2024 is £446k. It is projected it will take about up to 8 years for the company to offset the accumulated loss. However, this is dependent on the outcome of the stock condition survey.
- 3.5 The business plan demonstrates the company's cash flow over the period will meet its obligations based on the approved funding arrangements in place with the Council.
- 3.6 The annual financial benefit to the Council from the company is projected to fall from a surplus of £44k in 2022/23 to a deficit of £113k in 2023/24, reducing slightly to a deficit of £105k in 2024/25. The Council has used prudential borrowing for the £6.9m investment in the company for the RVH development and, unfortunately, interest rates have risen over the past year leading to the increase in capital financing costs above. Previous modelling had assumed the Council's borrowing cost at an average rate of 1.5% whereas this is now at 4.5%. Additionally, the capital financing cost to the Council includes the statutory Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge required to be made on capital expenditure met from borrowing. The previous business plan assumed MRP on the prudential borrowing incurred for the RVH scheme would be applicable from 2023/24, however this is now required to be made from 2022/23 and £221k is included in the projected outturn for the year. The position is summarised in the table below:

	2022/23 Projected Outturn £	2023/24 Budget £	2024/25 Forecast £
Interest received	(242,142)	(307,376)	(323,083)
Loan repayments	(30,021)	(31,504)	(48,005)
Sale proceeds	(60,000)	-	-
<u>Cost reimbursement</u>			
Staff Cost	(28,000)	(28,560)	(29,131)
Members Allowances	(10,023)	(11,878)	(12,116)
Grounds Maintenance	(6,000)	(8,134)	(8,297)
Total Return	<u>(376,186)</u>	<u>(387,452)</u>	<u>(420,631)</u>

Total Capital Financing Cost	332,600	500,208	525,327
Net return	<u>(43,586)</u>	<u>112,756</u>	<u>104,696</u>

- 3.7 The company currently has an unrealised valuation gain of about £1.6m from its property portfolio. Proceeds from the sale of any property by the company, after tax and fees, are due to the Council. Therefore, the increase in the market value of the property portfolio provides the Council with a level of reassurance and security over its investment in the company.
- 3.8 In terms of future activities the company remains focused on completing the acquisition of phase 2 of the RVH scheme to enable it to become financially sustainable in the long term. The outcome of the stock condition survey will help to inform a longer term repairs, maintenance and improvements programme for the company. It may also help to inform on whether or not the company should consider reviewing its property portfolio in the longer term to ensure it continues to deliver an optimum financial return.
- 3.9 By the end of the next Business Plan period the company will have been in existence for 10 years. It is considered prudent that once the second phase of the RVH scheme has been completed and let the Council consider the future role and direction of company, including the financial benefit it provides.
- 3.10 Cabinet is asked to endorse the Business Plan for the period to 31 March 2024.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
The company fail to meet their interest and loan repayment obligations to the Council on time	High	Low	Regular financial updates from the Board to Cabinet to provide an early warning of any cash flow issues for the company. Loans are secured on the investment assets of the company.
Company continues to make operating	High	Medium	Approved additional Council investment of

losses threatening its long term sustainability			£6.9m in the company and the application of this as outlined in the business plan expected to ensure long term position
Cost of RVH scheme increases	High	Medium	The company has secured a fixed price contract with the developer to acquire the completed units
Unforeseen property maintenance costs and rising inflation reduce the company's ability to return to profit in the future	Medium	Medium	The Council's loan agreement provides the company with the cash flow capacity to meet the impact of further financial uncertainty over the period of the business plan. The stock condition survey will help to assess and plan for the future maintenance works.

5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

5.1 Legal Officer's Comments (NM)

There are no legal issues arising directly from this report.

5.2 Finance Officer's Comments (LW)

The Financial Update for 2022/23 shown in appendix 1 has been prepared by the Finance Specialist Team. The proposed business plan for 2023/24 shown in appendix 2, including the financial forecast and Shareholder benefit, has also been prepared in conjunction with the Finance Specialist Team. The net deficit to the Council as shareholder of £113k for 2023/24 is reflected in the General Fund budget for the year.

5.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)

The report does not cover a new service or policy or a revision of either and therefore does not require an Equality Impact Assessment.

5.4 Climate Change Implications [*Pilot reporting period*] (OF)

There are no climate implications arising directly from this report.

6. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

Andy Blaszkowicz, Director – Housing & Operations

Tel: 01303 853684 email: andy.blaszkowicz@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Lee Walker, Capital & Treasury Senior Specialist

Tel: 01303 853593. e-mail: lee.walker@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – Financial Update for 2022/23

Appendix 2 – Oportunitas Limited Business Plan 2023/24

Appendix 2.1 – Oportunitas Property Portfolio

Oportunitas Board Meeting 6 March 2023

Oportunitas Limited – Financial Update for 2022/23

Prepared by Lee Walker

Summary: This paper provides an update of the company’s financial position for the financial year ending 31 March 2023, based on income and expenditure to 31 January 2023, including the latest projected outturn for its trading activities. It also summarises the capital expenditure incurred to date on the Royal Victoria Hospital project and the funding used towards this and considers the impact to the delay on Phase 2 of the scheme.

Recommendations:

- 1) The Board note the latest financial position for 2022/23 outlined in this paper.**

1. Introduction and Background

1.1 This paper provides an update to the Board of the company’s financial position for the financial year ending 31 March 2023, based on income and expenditure to 31 January 2023. It provides the latest projected outturn for the company’s trading activities compared to the approved business plan for the year and explains the key variances. The paper summarises the capital expenditure incurred to date on the Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) project and the funding used towards this and considers the financial impact from the delay to Phase 2 of the scheme. A provisional outturn position for the financial year ending 31 March 2023 is planned to be reported to the Board at its next meeting.

2. Profit and Loss Account Projected Outturn 2022/23

- 2.1 The table below provides the latest projection of the outturn position of the company’s trading activities for the financial year to 31 March 2023, compared to the approved business plan forecast and the previous projection for the year reported to the Board on 22 November 2022.
- 2.2 The projected outturn shows an operating profit of £81k for the year, an improvement almost £85k compared to the loss of almost £4k in the business plan. The main reasons for this variance are outlined below:

Appendix 1 – Oportunitas Update 2022/23

Profit and Loss Account	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23	2022/23
		<i>Previous Projected Outturn</i>	<i>Latest Projected Outturn</i>	<i>Variance Budget to Latest Projection</i>
	Budget			
	£		£	£
Property Rental				
Rental Income	542,370	488,316	488,499	(53,870)
Other Income -Land Sale	60,000	60,000	0	(60,000)
Rental Expenses	(172,725)	(167,132)	(110,702)	62,023
Special Item - Stock Condition Survey	(20,000)	(20,000)	0	20,000
Special Item - Major External Repairs & Redecorations	(64,300)	0	0	64,300
Net	345,344	361,184	377,797	32,453
Grounds Maintenance				
Income	15,300	7,500	7,500	(7,800)
Expenses	(12,240)	(6,000)	(6,000)	6,240
Net	3,060	1,500	1,500	(1,560)
Overheads				
Directors Remuneration	(11,645)	(10,023)	(10,023)	1,622
FHDC Officer Support	(28,000)	(28,000)	(28,000)	0
Operating Expenses	(26,182)	(19,300)	(18,161)	8,021
Total Overheads	(65,827)	(57,323)	(56,184)	9,643
Loan Interest	(286,296)	(245,006)	(242,142)	44,154
P & L Operating Surplus / (Deficit) for period	(3,719)	60,355	80,971	84,690
P & L Operating Loss b/f	(468,772)	(468,294)	(477,686)	(8,914)
P & L Operating Loss c/f	(472,491)	(407,939)	(396,715)	75,776

Variations 2022/23 Business Plan to Projected Outturn £'000

- i) **Rental Income** – Reduction mainly due the delay in completing RVH Phase 2 until late 2023. (54)
- ii) **Housing Rental Expenses** – The reduction is mainly due to a savings on responsive maintenance works required to the stock (£45k) and the bad debts provision for rents (£17k). However, no works have yet been undertaken to repair the commercial unit at 15 Grace Hill which suffered extensive damage following a water leak earlier in the year. 62
- iii) **Special Items – Stock Condition Survey & External Repairs and Redecorations** – The stock condition survey (£20k) is now expected to take place in 2023/24 and will need to be completed before a decision can be taken to proceed with external repairs and redecoration works (£64k) which have also been deferred. 84

Appendix 1 – Oportunitas Update 2022/23

iv)	Land Sale – Pay receipt from the sale of surplus land at 84 Leyburne Road to the Council	(60)
v)	Grounds Maintenance – capacity to provide this service is now largely limited to tree maintenance work	(2)
vi)	Overheads Directors Remuneration – saving compared to budget	2
vii)	Overheads Operating Expenses – saving on budgeted contingency and other minor expenses	8
viii)	Loan Interest saving – the full utilisation of the loan element of the Council’s funding to support the acquisition of the RVH scheme has been delayed until 2023/24	44
	Total improvement in operating position compared to the business plan	84

- 2.3 **Land Disposal** - The sale of the surplus land adjacent at 84 Leyburne Road, Dover for £60k was completed on 24 October 2022. The legal agreement between the Council and the company requires proceeds from property sales to be paid to the Council unless agreed otherwise. The company’s business plan for 2022/23 approved by Cabinet on 23 March 2022, made specific reference to retaining the receipt from the sale to help additional operating costs for the stock condition survey and external redecoration and maintenance works at 19 Castle Hill Avenue and 82/84 Leyburne Road. However, Cabinet took the decision on 25 January 2023 to require the company to pay the receipt to the Council, as is their right under the Shareholder Agreement. The impact of this decision is covered in the proposed 2023/24 Business Plan report on this agenda.
- 2.4 **15 Grace Hill** – The Board is reminded that its insurer had repudiated a claim being made to cover the estimated cost of repair of £25k to the vacant office in the building following a serious leak due to the unit being vacant for a substantial period of time prior the incident. The Council’s Insurance Officer is continuing to pursue this matter with the insurer, however so far without success. No remedial works have been undertaken to the property and this will now be deferred until the new financial year.
- 2.5 The company’s accumulated operating loss is forecast to reduce by £81k to £396k at 31 March 2023. The Board is reminded that this loss excludes unrealised valuation gains on the company’s property portfolio which stands at £1,386k after tax at 31 March 2022. A further revaluation of the company’s property portfolio will be undertaken at 31 March 2023. Although, at the time of writing, these valuations are not available, HM Land Registry data for 2022 shows local residential property prices have seen an average increase of about 12% for the year to 31 December 2022. The previous valuation of the company’s portfolio as at 31st March 2022 valued the company’s portfolio at over £9.1million.

Appendix 1 – Oportunitas Update 2022/23

3 Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) Development

3.1 The table below summarises the latest position for capital expenditure incurred on the RVH development:

	Phase 1	Phase 2	Contract Total	SDLT	Total
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Agreed Sale Price	3.150	3.300	6.450	0.250	6.700
Paid to date	3.150	2.186	5.336	0.112	5.448
Balance	0.000	1.114	1.114	0.138	1.252

3.2 The funding of the capital expenditure incurred to date has been met from the proceeds of the Council's additional equity investment of £4.43m in the company and £1.0m of the agreed loan facility of £2.47m. The loan facility will be used to complete the purchase of phase 2 of the scheme over the remainder of the construction period, estimated to be completed in the autumn of 2023. Interest will accrue on this loan and becomes payable once the scheme is completed.

3.3 The impact of the delay to the completion of phase 2 of the RVH scheme was outlined to the Board at its last meeting and is reflected in the proposed 2023/24 Business Plan report on this agenda.



Oortunitas Board Meeting 6 March 2023

Oportunitas Limited – Business Plan 2022/23

Prepared by Lee Walker and Gavin Edwards

Summary: This paper presents a Business Plan for Oportunitas Limited for the 2023/24 financial year and provides an indicative financial forecast for the 2024/25 financial year. The preparation of an annual business plan, in advance of the financial year, is a requirement of the Shareholder’s Agreement with the Council. The business plan is required to be submitted to the Shareholder for approval.

Recommendations:

The Board agree the Business Plan for the 2023/24 be submitted to the Shareholder for approval.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document presents a business plan for Oportunitas Limited, the Council’s wholly owned housing and regeneration company, for the period 1 April 2023 through to 31 March 2024 and an indicative financial forecast for the financial year to 31 March 2025. Following success in the trading period from its inception in September 2014 to March 2023, Oportunitas will;-

- continue to invest in a Housing Acquisitions & Rental Programme – a land and property acquisition and conversion/refurbishment programme to provide residential properties to let to local people at rental levels at market rates, and
- explore commercial investment opportunities in line with its objectives, where the financial returns required in the Business Plan can be demonstrated.

1.2 The Company’s Objectives

1.2.1 The objectives are set out in Schedule 4 of the Shareholder’s Agreement. These objectives formalise the scope of the intended activities, and are stated as follows:

- To lead the co-ordination and brokerage of regeneration, economic and development activity;

Appendix 2 – Oportunitas Business Plan 2023/24

- To acquire housing and property to make available housing for rent and sale on a range of tenures including (but not limited to) shared ownership, shared equity, market sale and rent, affordable rent;
- To lead site development activity including securing private investment interest where appropriate;
- Facilitating partnership development arrangements to bring forward housing and employment site opportunities across the district of Folkestone & Hythe, including where appropriate joint ventures with other organisations;
- To develop residential housing either for market rent or private sale or in partnership with a registered provider of social housing;
- To develop or hold commercial employment or industrial uses of land and buildings;
- To develop or carry out such infrastructure works as are required to deliver any development or project;
- To commission conversion, improvement works and any other professional services relating to the Business;
- To carry out such trading activities as are identified in the Business Plan, initially relating to grounds and parks maintenance; and
- To carry out such trading activities as the Council and the company may agree from time to time.

1.3 Capital Funding Structure

1.3.1 Cabinet approved a revised capital funding structure for the company on 28 February 2018 which resulted in a debt to equity ratio of 58%:42%, summarised below:

	Debt £m	Equity £m	Total £m
Phase 1	4.31	0.48	4.79
Phase 2	2.47	4.43	6.90
Total	6.75	4.91	11.69
Ratio	58%	42%	

1.3.2 The capital funding structure was set to allow the company to become financially sustainable in the long term while providing a suitable return to the Council as the shareholder. As part of this, the debt funding was agreed at a market interest rate of 4.88%. Additionally as part of the funding agreement, a short-term loan facility of up to £0.3m was made available to the company to help manage its cash flows.

1.3.3 The phase 1 funding was fully utilised towards the cost of acquiring the company's original property portfolio of 38 residential units and 1 commercial unit up to 2018. The phase 2 funding is currently being used towards the acquisition of a further 37 units of residential property at the site of the former Royal Victoria Hospital (RVH) site in Folkestone, covered in more detail later in the Business Plan.

Appendix 2 – Oportunitas Business Plan 2023/24

2. STRUCTURE OF THE BUSINESS PLAN

- 2.1 The rest of this document will review the company's activities undertaken to date and outline what is planned for the next financial year.
- 2.2 Progress will be kept under review by the Board at regular intervals during the period of this business plan. If changes are necessary or amendments are made during this period the appropriate processes will be followed as laid out in the corporate control documents.
- 2.3 The final version of the business plan approved by the Board is required to be submitted to the Shareholder (Cabinet) for approval, expected to be the Cabinet meeting due on 22 March 2023.

3. BACKGROUND - ACTIVITY TO DATE

3.1 Housing Acquisitions and Rental Programme

- 3.1.1 Prior to the RVH investment, the company owned 38 residential units and one commercial unit which were providing it with the majority of its revenue. The 37 units being acquired at the RVH development mean the company expect to own 76 units in total by the end of 2023.
- 3.1.2 Smith Woolley are the company's managing agent for all bar two of the company's residential properties, with Reeds Rains being the managing agent for the other two.

3.2 Royal Victoria Hospital

- 3.2.1 As part of the company's commitment to explore commercial opportunities in line with its wider business objectives, Oportunitas committed to purchase 'off plan' from the developer at a cost of £6.45 million, the two phases of the proposed RVH development incorporating:
 - Phase 1: The regeneration and conversion of the existing hospital building into 18 units comprising of 15x 2 bedroom and 3x 1 bedroom apartments.
 - Phase 2: A newly developed block adjacent to the existing hospital building of 19 units comprising of 17 x 2 bedroom and 2 x 1 bedroom apartments.
- 3.2.2 Phase 1 of the development to convert the existing hospital building into 18 high quality residential units was completed and successfully transferred to company from the developer at the end of October 2021. All units were initially successfully let by December 2021 and are managed by Smith Woolley. This phase of the development now provides the company with an additional gross rental of about £216k per year, a yield of 6.8% against the purchase price.
- 3.2.3 The company's main focus for this business plan over the next twelve-month period is the delivery of phase 2 of the RVH development to bring forward a further 19 high quality units into the company's portfolio. The previous business plan anticipated this phase would be completed and let by December 2022. However, as previously reported to the

Appendix 2 – Oportunitas Business Plan 2023/24

Board, the contractor has experienced delays due, in part, to labour and materials shortages and prioritising work to the adjacent development for the Council's Housing Revenue Account new build scheme, which mean the completion of phase 2 is now expected for autumn 2023 with units let by December 2023.

- 3.2.4 This delay has had an adverse effect to the company's net financial position estimated to be approximately £82k over 2022/23 and 2023/24 compared to the previous business plan, outlined to the Board on 22 November 2022. Should there be any further delay to phase 2 of the scheme or it takes longer than anticipated to let all the units on completion then this is likely to adverse effect on the profit and loss position for the company and it will take longer to clear the accumulated losses outlined in section 4, below.
- 3.2.5 The acquisition of phase 2 of the completed scheme will generate an additional gross income of £214k per year which is a yield of about 6.5% on the investment. This yield is comparable with the existing property portfolio and in line with the company's target return.
- 3.2.6 In addition to the projected financial benefits to the company, the investment in the scheme continues to secure a regeneration benefit to this locally significant site within central Folkestone and will complement the Council's ambitious vision set out within its approved Place Plan for the future of Folkestone Town Centre.

3.3 Stock Condition Survey of the existing portfolio and EPC ratings

- 3.3.1 The proposed budget for 2023/24 includes £20k towards the cost of undertaking of a full stock condition survey on its portfolio to establish a detailed understanding of the general condition of its properties, deferred from 2022/23. The survey will enable the company to establish a longer-term plan for property maintenance as well as forecasting the future investment required.
- 3.3.2 Two properties within the portfolio are likely to require significant external maintenance and preventative work over the next couple of years – 82/84 Leyburne Road, Dover and 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone. £64k has been provided over 2023/24 and 2024/25 for the cost of these works. This work is expected to be subject to the outcome of the stock condition survey. Formal quotes will be obtained ahead of committing to the works.
- 3.3.3 The company will work towards ensuring that all properties within the portfolio achieve a minimum of an EPC grade C by 2030 in line with the Council's own HRA stock. The results of current EPCs will also be captured as part of a future stock condition survey undertaken and will provide the company with a baseline to then determine a future programme of priority of works for the retrofitting and upgrading of properties within the portfolio to ensure they meet the highest standards of energy efficiency.

3.4 Property Portfolio Value and Yield

- 3.4.1 In summary the current property portfolio;
- has its rents set a market rates,
 - is generating an average gross yield of 5.5%,
 - has seen its gross value increase by 18.8% or £1.628m since acquisition to 31 March 2022,

Appendix 2 – Oportunitas Business Plan 2023/24

A detailed list of the property portfolio with valuations and yields is shown in appendix 1 to the business plan.

3.4.2 The property portfolio is in the process of being revalued at 31 March 2023. Although, at the time of writing, these valuations are not available, HM Land Registry data for 2022 shows local residential property prices have seen an average increase of about 12% for year to 31 December 2022. The latest valuation of the company's portfolio as at 31st March 2022 valued the company's portfolio at over £9.1million.

3.5 Grounds Maintenance Activity

3.5.1 The company, originally offered a wide range of gardening and grounds maintenance services to both local residents and businesses that utilized the resources of the Council's Grounds Maintenance Unit as part of its diversified commercial offering. The company's previously approved business plan (2020-22) reflected a realignment of this service due to a reduction in the capacity to provide this service and the overall long term commercial viability of providing these services against local competitors within the market. The service has continued to focus on offering tree related work to external customers, which has allowed the company more widely to focus on seeking out development and investment opportunities within the property market to generate greater commercial returns for the shareholder. The service is projected to generate the company a net return of about £3k per annum.

4 COMPANY FINANCIAL POSITION

4.1 Current Position

4.1.1 The company's Balance Sheet to 31 March 2022 shows an accumulated profit of £908k. However, after excluding the unrealised property valuation gain of £1,628k and a deferred Corporation Tax provision of £242k, the accumulated operating loss since inception is £478k. As already reported to the Board earlier on today's agenda, the operating loss is projected to reduce by a £81k to £397k in the year to 31 March 2023.

4.1.2 Although the level of operating loss may appear concerning it is not unexpected. As the Board is aware, the company expected to continue to make an operating loss until it received the full benefit of the net revenue stream from its investment in the RVH scheme, now expected from 2024/25. The previous Business Plan forecast the accumulated operating loss to be about £472k at 31 March 2023. The main reason for the reduction of almost £84k in the loss to £388k is due to major repairs and stock condition survey now due to be carried out in 23/24.

4.2 Profit and Loss Projection for 2023/24 and Initial Forecast for 2024/25

4.2.1 The company is expected to make an operating loss of about £50k in 2023/24 before it is forecast to return a profit after tax of about £40k in 2024/25, the first year it is expected to receive the full benefit of its investment in the RVH scheme. This will leave the company with an accumulated operating loss £406k at 31 March 2025. Further detail of this shown in table 1 below:

Appendix 2 – Oportunitas Business Plan 2023/24

Table 1 Forecast Profit and Loss Account 2023/24 and 2024/25

<u>Profit and Loss Account</u>	2023/24	2024/25
	Budget £	Forecast £
Housing Rental		
Rental Income	562,830	704,908
Other Income	0	0
Rental Expenses	<u>(239,278)</u>	<u>(268,536)</u>
Net	323,552	436,372
Grounds Maintenance		
Income	10,167	10,371
Expenses	<u>(8,134)</u>	<u>(8,297)</u>
Net	2,033	2,074
Overheads		
Directors Remuneration	(11,878)	(12,116)
FHDC Officer Support	(28,560)	(29,131)
Operating Expenses	<u>(27,409)</u>	<u>(24,835)</u>
Total Overheads	(67,847)	(66,082)
Loan Interest	(307,376)	(323,083)
P & L Operating Surplus / (Deficit) for period	<u>(49,637)</u>	<u>49,281</u>
Corporation Tax	-	<u>(9,363)</u>
P & L Net Operating Surplus / (Deficit) for period	(49,637)	39,918
P & L Operating Loss b/f	<u>(396,714)</u>	<u>(446,351)</u>
P & L Operating Loss c/f	<u>(446,351)</u>	<u>(406,434)</u>

4.2.2 The budget for 2023/24 and 2024/25 includes provision for the following special items within the housing rental expenses:

	£
i) External redecoration and repairs to 19 Castle Hill Avenue (costs profiled equally 23/24 & 24/25)	35,200
ii) External redecoration and repairs to 82/84 Leyburne Road (costs profiled equally 23/24 & 24/25)	29,100
iii) Stock condition survey (23/24)	<u>20,000</u>
Total special items	<u>84,300</u>

Appendix 2 – Oportunitas Business Plan 2023/24

4.2.3 **Land Disposal** - The legal agreement between the Council and Oportunitas requires proceeds from the company's property sales to be paid to the council unless otherwise agreed. The existing business plan for 2022/23, which Cabinet approved on 23 March 2022, made reference to the company retaining the £60k receipt from the sale of surplus land at 84 Leyburne Road, Dover to help meet the cost of the special items outlined above. However, Cabinet decided at its meeting on 25 January 2023 the receipt should be paid to the Council in line with the shareholder agreement. The impact of this decision means the company will have to spread the major works planned for 19 Castle Hill Avenue and 82/84 Leyburne Road over the next two financial years rather than undertaken them together in 2023/24 to ensure it has the resources available to meet the cost.

4.2.4 It remains the company's aim to reduce its accumulated operating loss over time and to generate a return a surplus that could allow it to make a dividend payment to the Council as its shareholder or consider further property investments. Indicatively it may take between 6 to 8 years to offset the accumulated operating loss. However, this will be dependent on the outcome of the stock condition survey in particular.

4.3 Company Cash Flow Forecast

4.3.1 The company's cash flow forecast for the period of the business plan to 31 March 2024 and the year after is shown in the table below:

Table 2 Cash Flow Forecast

	31/03/2023	31/03/2024	31/03/2025
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Cash b/f	32	86	6
Acquisition RVH	(1,500)	(970)	0
P & L net position	81	(50)	40
Loan Repayments	(27)	(30)	(32)
Loan Funding	1,500	970	-
Equity Funding	0	-	-
Cash c/f	<u>86</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>15</u>

4.3.2 The cash flow forecast demonstrates the company can just about meet its existing commitments and planned expenditure for the next two years, including the investment in the RVH scheme, without having to call upon the £0.3m short-term loan facility available to it from the Council. However, should there be significant additional expenditure and/or reduction in income over the forecast period, then the facility will have to be utilised in part.

Appendix 2 – Oportunitas Business Plan 2023/24

4.4 Shareholder Benefit

4.4.1 The net shareholder benefit to the Council from Oportunitas for the period from 2022/23 to 2024/25 is shown in the table below:

Table 3 Shareholder Benefit

	2022/23	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
	Budget	Projected	Budget	Forecast
	£	£	£	£
Interest received	(286,296)	(242,142)	(307,376)	(323,083)
Loan repayments	(37,792)	(30,021)	(31,504)	(48,005)
Sale proceeds	-	(60,000)	-	-
<u>Cost reimbursement</u>				
Staff Cost	(28,000)	(28,000)	(28,560)	(29,131)
Members Allowances	(11,645)	(10,023)	(11,878)	(12,116)
Grounds Maintenance	(12,240)	(6,000)	(8,134)	(8,297)
Total Return	<u>(375,973)</u>	<u>(376,186)</u>	<u>(387,452)</u>	<u>(420,631)</u>
Total Capital Financing Cost	119,100	332,600	500,208	525,327
Net return	<u>(256,873)</u>	<u>(43,586)</u>	<u>112,756</u>	<u>104,696</u>

4.4.2 As the table above shows, the net return to the Council is expected to change from a budgeted surplus of 256k in 2022/23 to a deficit of £113k in 2023/24. The Council has used prudential borrowing for the £6.9m investment in the company for the RVH development and, unfortunately, interest rates have risen over the past year leading to the increase in capital financing costs above. Previous modelling had assumed the Council's borrowing cost at an average rate of 1.5% whereas this is now at 4.5%. Additionally, the capital financing cost to the Council includes the statutory Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) charge required to be made on capital expenditure met from borrowing. The previous business plan assumed MRP on the prudential borrowing incurred for the RVH scheme would be applicable from 2023/24, however this is required to be made from 2022/23 and £221k is included in the projected outturn for the year.

4.4.3 The company currently has an unrealised valuation gain of about £1.6m from its property portfolio. As with the sale of the land at Leyburne Road last year, proceeds from the sale of any property by the company, after tax and fees, are paid to the Council. Therefore, the increase in the market value of the property portfolio provides the Council with security over its investment in the company.

5. FUTURE ACTIVITIES

5.1 At this stage the company remains focused on completing the acquisition of phase 2 of the RVH scheme to enable it to become financially sustainable in the long term. The outcome of the stock condition survey will help to inform a longer term repairs,

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maintenance and improvements programme for the company. It may also help to inform on whether the company should consider reviewing its property portfolio in the longer term to ensure it continues to deliver an optimum financial return.

- 5.2 By the end of the next Business Plan period the company will have been in existence for 10 years. Once the second phase of the RVH scheme is completed it would be prudent for both the company and the Council, as the shareholder, to consider the future role and direction to be taken, including the financial benefit to both parties.

6. RISK MATTERS

6.1 *Company Risks Identified*

- 6.1.1 Table 6 below presents a matrix style assessment providing a judgement on the combination of probability/likelihood of occurrence and severity of impact on the Company. All risks will be kept under review during the year.

Table 6 Company risks - detailed assessment				
Company Risk		Prob-ability	Impact	Risk Management Action
LEGAL				
A	Contractual Disputes	Low	Medium	Governance structures in place to ensure that contracts which require Council approval are considered appropriately. Oportunitas will take appropriate legal advice before entering into contracts.
B	The balance between Council control and the Company's ability to deliver against its Business Plan results in the Company's inability to operate effectively	Low	High	Detailed definitions contained within the key corporate governance documents mitigate against this risk. Board is given adequate decision-making powers and independence.
LEGAL / FINANCE				
C	Breach of the Subsidy Control Act regarding the subsidy control in the public sector (previously governed by EU state aid rules)	Low	Medium	Independent legal advice sought when the company was established which confirmed Council's funding of the Company was compliant with state aid rules. The Council's funding of the Company remains compliant with the subsidy control commitments and will be reviewed again once the Subsidiary

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				Control Bill is enacted and the guidance notes produced.
FINANCE				
D	The Company fails to adhere to loan repayment obligations	Low	Medium	A repayment schedule is prepared and financial matters are discussed regularly with the board. Quarterly reports are given to Cabinet.
E	Failure of housing to be competitive and/or attractive to tenants	Low	Low	The acquisition programme is professionally managed to ensure a competitive product is offered.
F	Rental income returns fall short of projections included in the Business Plan	Low	Medium	Rental values are kept under review and financial implications reported to the Board. Changes will be made to activities if necessary and appropriate returns are not made.
G	Failure to arrange adequate insurance cover for the Company's liabilities and assets	Low	Medium	The Council's Finance Team is has appropriate insurance in place. The Shareholders Agreement enables the Company to purchase and maintain adequate insurance against all risks comparable to that insured by companies carrying out similar business
H	Failure to arrange adequate insurance cover for the Company's Directors	Low	Medium	The Company has insurance in place for its Directors against any liability which may be incurred in relation to their role as Company Director
I	Challenge from auditors (Council or external)	Low	Low	The Company has appointed its own external auditors and accountant.
J	Failure to comply with taxation laws (Corporation Tax and VAT)	Low	Low	The company will take independent tax advice.
K	Properties decrease in value resulting in an impairment	Low / Medium	High	The Company Board will keep under review and if necessary will look at options such as changing the mix of portfolio, refinancing or sale of properties.
L	Movement in interest rates	Medium	Medium	The Business plan will take into account the likelihood of medium to long term increases in interest rates

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				and the impact this will have on viability of future activities, adjusting activities accordingly.
FINANCE / OPERATIONAL				
M	Assumption of values for acquisition and refurbishment and rental yields proves to be inadequate	Medium	High	Need to regularly review the market conditions to ensure that the activity is managed within the overall budget envelope.
OPERATIONAL				
N	Mechanism for drawing down funding proves to be too slow and costly to facilitate delivery of acquisitions programme	Low	High	Facility is agreed for Council draw down process.
O	Higher level of voids than projected or rent arrears	Medium	High	A void rate of 3% has been included in the Business Plan and will be regularly reviewed. Rent arrears kept under review with immediate action taken for non-payment.
P	Price inflation for repairs, maintenance and operational costs of housing portfolio	Medium	Medium	Partly mitigated from ongoing review of rents. From 2024/25 company expected to return a profit and have increased financial capacity to meet inflationary cost pressures.
Q	Allowances for maintenance and repairs in the Business Plan prove to be inadequate	Low	Medium	This has been allowed for in the Business Plan and will be regularly reviewed.
R	Conflict of interest over workload priorities of Council and Company	Low	Medium	Council will retain control over the staffing of the Company. Council resources will be invoiced to the Company.
S	Lack of capacity to manage the Company's workload	Low	Medium	Staff resources carefully managed and balance of staffing needs regularly reviewed, with flexibility retained to provide additional capacity as required.
T	The Company is inadequately resourced in terms of	Low	Medium	As above.

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	management, accounting, legal and admin			
PROCUREMENT				
U	Failure to adhere to the Public Procurement Amendment etc) (EU Exit) Regulations 2020	Low	Low	Procurement rules transferred to the Company from the Council including the use of approved procurement frameworks.
OTHER				
V	Conflict of interest for members acting as Directors of the Company	Low	Medium	In accordance with the Council's constitution dispensations have been granted to Councillors allowing them to speak and vote at meetings where Company affairs are being discussed.
W	Company strays beyond its objectives	Low	High	Objectives clearly defined within governance documents and protected by annual Council approval of the Company's rolling Business Plan.
X	Inaccuracy in stock condition information on the properties prior to acquisition leading to unexpected maintenance costs	Low	Medium	Detailed stock condition information acquired prior to acquisition. Surveys undertaken as needed to ascertain expected maintenance costs.
Y	Inclusion of trading activities weakens the Company's strategic focus	Low	Medium	The Company will provide mechanism for invoicing private work and will not detract from the strategic objectives of the Company's programme of activities.

Appendix 2.1 - Oportunitas Limited Property Portfolio at 31 March 2022

ITEM NUMBER	ASSET REFERENCE	PROPERTY ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	TENANCY TYPE	UPDATED VALUATION 31/03/2022
1	AR0001	Flat 1, 2 Walter Tull Way, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	180,000
2	AR0002	Flat 2, 2 Walter Tull Way, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	172,000
3	AR0003	4 Walter Tull Way, Folkestone	2 bed house	12 months assured shorthold	275,500
4	AR0004	6 Watler Tull Way, Folkestone	2 bed house	12 months assured shorthold	275,500
5	AR0005	16 Walter Tull Way, Folkestone	3 bed house	12 months assured shorthold	301,000
6	AR0006	2 Grove Terrace, Folkestone	4 bed house	12 months assured shorthold	260,000
7	AR0007.1	Flat 1, 15 Grace Hill, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	122,500
8	AR0007.2	Flat 2, 15 Grace Hill, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	114,000
9	AR0007.3	Flat 3, 15 Grace Hill, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	118,000
10	AR0007.4	Flat 4, 15 Grace Hill, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	111,500
11	AR0007.5	Flat 5, 15 Grace Hill, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	111,500
12	AR0007.6	Commercial Unit, 15 Grace Hill	Office space	Break clause after 3 years. Full repairing lease	81,000
13	AR0008.1	Flat 1, 82 Leyburne Road, Dover	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	118,000
14	AR0008.2	Flat 2, 82 Leyburne Road, Dover	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	137,500
15	AR0008.3	Flat 3, 82 Leyburne Road, Dover	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	139,500
16	AR0008.4	Flat 4, 82 Leyburne Road, Dover	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	131,500
17	AR0009.1	Flat 1, 84 Leyburne Road, Dover	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	118,000
18	AR0009.2	Flat 2, 84 Leyburne Road, Dover	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	137,500
19	AR0009.3	Flat 3 84 Leyburne Road, Dover	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	139,500
20	AR0009.4	Flat 4, 84 Leyburne Road, Dover	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	131,500
21	AR0009.5	Building Plot 84 Leyburne Road, Dover	Land	n/a	60,000
22	AR0010.1	Flat 1, 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	159,000
23	AR0010.2	Flat 2, 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	171,500
24	AR0010.3	Flat 3, 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	210,000
25	AR0010.4	Flat 4, 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	164,500
26	AR0010.5	Flat 5, 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	159,000
27	AR0010.6	Flat 6, 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	159,000
28	AR0010.7	Flat 7, 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	146,000
29	AR0010.8	Flat 8, 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	146,000
30	AR0010.9	Flat 9, 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	138,750
31	AR0010.10	Flat 10, 19 Castle Hill Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	140,000
32	AR0011.1	Flat 1, 84 Sidney Street, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	98,500
33	AR0011.2	Flat 2, 84 Sidney Street, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	116,250
34	AR0011.3	Flat 3, 84 Sidney Street, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	116,250
35	AR0011.4	Flat 4, 84 Sidney Street, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	137,000
36	AR0012.1	Flat 1, 1 Claremont Road, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	101,500
37	AR0012.2	Flat 2, 1 Claremont Road, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	111,500

Appendix 2.1 - Oportunitas Limited Property Portfolio at 31 March 2022

ITEM NUMBER	ASSET REFERENCE	PROPERTY ADDRESS	DESCRIPTION	TENANCY TYPE	UPDATED VALUATION 31/03/2022
38	AR0012.3	Flat 3, 1 Claremont Road, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	116,500
39	AR0012.4	Flat 4, 1 Claremont Road, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	111,500
40	AR0012.5	Flat 1a, 1 Claremont Road, Folkestone (formerly Flat 5)	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	120,500
41	AR013.1	Flat 1, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	194,000
42	AR013.2	Flat 2, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	194,000
43	AR013.3	Flat 3, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	183,500
44	AR013.4	Flat 4, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	183,500
45	AR013.5	Flat 5, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	183,500
46	AR013.6	Flat 6, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	188,750
47	AR013.7	Flat 7, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	188,750
48	AR013.8	Flat 8, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	222,500
49	AR013.9	Flat 9, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	222,250
50	AR013.10	Flat 10, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	183,500
51	AR013.11	Flat 11, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	183,500
52	AR013.12	Flat 12, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	200,000
53	AR013.13	Flat 13, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	167,500
54	AR013.14	Flat 14, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	200,000
55	AR013.15	Flat 15, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	146,750
56	AR013.16	Flat 16, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	1 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	146,750
57	AR013.17	Flat 17, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	175,000
58	AR013.18	Flat 18, 10 Radnor Park Avenue, Folkestone	2 bed flat	12 months assured shorthold	172,000
				Total	£9,194,500

This Report will be made public on 14 March 2023



Report Number **C/22/100**

To: Cabinet
Date: 22 March 2023
Status: Non key Decision
Responsible Officer: Amandeep Khroud, Democratic Services and Law
Cabinet Member: Councillor David Monk, leader of the council

SUBJECT: District, Parish and Town Council Elections – Kent scale of election fees

Summary: This report sets out the annual changes to the Kent scale of election fees of Folkestone & Hythe’s Returning Officer to undertake the arrangements for managing and conducting district, parish and town council elections from 01 April 2023.

Reasons for recommendations:

The scale of fees enables a fair and reasonable recharge to be made by Folkestone & Hythe District Council to town and parish councils for their elections.

Recommendations:

1. To receive and note report C/22/100.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 For a district election (including by-elections), Section 36 (4) of the Representation of the People Act 1983 states that the council may set a maximum scale of charges for the Returning Officer to use. The legislation states that a Returning Officer's expenses for conducting an election shall be paid by the council but if a scale is set, the expenses shall not exceed those laid down in the scale.
- 1.2 For parish/town council elections, Section 36 (5) states that the council may similarly set a maximum scale of charges for the Returning Officer to use, which the district council is responsible for paying, but which shall be repaid to the district council by the parish council for which the election is held, if the district council so requires it to be paid. It is the policy of this council that parish councils are required to pay for their own elections and by-elections.
- 1.3 In Kent, the costs of conducting district, borough, town and parish elections are applied through the Kent Scale of Fees, which since 1998 has largely mirrored the National Scale.
- 1.4 Each year the Kent Association of Electoral Registration Officers and their staff (KAEROS) submit the Kent Scale to the Joint Kent Chiefs (JKC) for approval. After it has been agreed, the final draft is submitted to local authorities across Kent for council adoption. This scale is then adopted by all 13 local authorities in Kent as the maximum amounts for Returning Officers to charge for conducting local elections, a neighbourhood planning referendum and parish polls.
- 1.5 A variant of the scheme is also adopted by the County Council with amendments for Deputy Returning Officers to manage and conduct elections on the county's behalf.
- 1.6 Cabinet agreed at its meeting on 23 March 2016 to:
 - 1.6.1 Automatically adopt annually revised versions of the Kent scale of fees and charges in line with the NJC pay award;
 - 1.6.2 agree the revised Kent scale of fees and charges takes effect on 01 April of each year; and
 - 1.6.3 instruct officers to submit a report to Cabinet, as soon as possible after any pay award that changes the Kent scale of fees and charges.
- 1.7 This report is submitted to inform Cabinet of the changes (maximum fees) that will take effect from 01 April 2023.

2. THE KENT SCALE OF ELECTION FEES

- 2.1 The Kent scale of election fees is revised each year in accordance with the annual National Joint Council APT & C pay award; the current fees will be

revised in line with the NJC local government pay award for 2023/24 which averages a 2% increase across all spinal points. There has been an uplift for Presiding Officers (10%) and Poll Clerks (5%) in this scale for the additional responsibilities associated with the verification and audit maintenance of Voter ID, which is implemented from the May 2023 elections.

- 2.2 With the exception of polling staff, their travel costs and official poll card delivery costs, the scale uses a “per elector” charge on which to base its charges e.g. Scale item 22 - The present maximum charge per 500 electors or part in a contested election for the employment of persons in connection with the counting of votes, clerical and other assistance required by the Returning Officer is £81.28.
- 2.3 Poll cards are only a statutory requirement at national elections, referendums and district elections.
- 2.4 Poll cards at parish elections are only sent out if the parish or town council so require by way of notification to the Returning Officer not later than noon on the nineteenth day before an election. However, if the poll is combined, an official poll card must be sent. Part of the combined costs may be recovered from the parish or town council.
- 2.5 Without adopting a scale of election fees the Council will be obliged to pay the Returning Officer’s expenses without setting what it considers a reasonable scale of expenses applicable to district, town and parish elections in Folkestone & Hythe. In addition, the scale does provide some indication to parish and town councils of the likely costs they will be liable to incur if there are contested elections in their area.
- 2.6 In the interests of transparency the Kent scale of fees (which represents the maximum) is published on the Folkestone & Hythe District Council website.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

3.1 There perceived risks are as follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Failure to adopt a scale of fees.	Low	Low	Adopt scale of fees.

4. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

4.1 Legal Officer’s comments (AK)

All legal issues are set out in the report

4.2 Finance Officer’s comments (CS/LM)

The proposed changes in fees and charges represent a marginal increase on the existing position and will therefore have a minimal impact on the financial position.

4.3 **Diversities and Equalities implications (PB)**

No diversity and equalities implications.

4.4 **Climate Change Implications (AT)**

No climate change implications.

5. **CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

Paul Butler, Democratic Services and Elections Lead Specialist

Tel: 01303 853188

Email: paul.butler@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

None

Appendix:

Appendix 1: Kent scale of fees from 01 April 2023

ELECTORAL REGISTRATION OFFICERS AND STAFF (Kent AEROS) – SCALE OF FEES

Proposed scale of fees for District/Borough and Parish Council elections and Neighbourhood Referendum held on or after 1st April 2023

1. The scale of fees are normally uplifted annually, using the NJC pay award for local government and approved by the Kent Chief Executives Group, however the NJC award is yet to be agreed.
2. Kent County Council's scale of fees uses a calculation based upon per 1000 electorate. Kent AEROS' scale uses a calculation of per 500 electorate because of small parishes.
3. Kent Chief Executives agreed to a review of the Kent Scale of Fees and moving over to an hourly rate. This review will take place after the 4th May 2023 elections.

	Item	Current 2022/23 £	Proposed 2023/24 £
Stationery and Equipment			
1.	Printing and publishing all notices, forms and other documents, providing stationery and sundries, and other miscellaneous expenditure including postage, telephone calls and faxes		
2.	Stationery and equipment at each polling station, including depreciation	Reasonable and appropriate cost	Reasonable and appropriate cost
3.	Hire of any building or room for the purpose of the election and the expenses attending the use of any building or room, including temporary polling stations if necessary		
4.	Fitting-up polling stations including the provision, transport and erection of voting		

	compartments, the hire of necessary furniture (where this is not otherwise available) and the return to store afterwards		
5.	Ballot Papers – provision and printing		
6.	Register of Electors – purchase		
7.	Printing or production of official poll cards and postal vote packs		
8.	Delivery of official poll cards by hand	Second class postage rate	Second class postage rate
Travelling expenses			
9.	Travelling expenses to DRO's staff to make arrangements for the poll or otherwise in connection with the conduct of the election	50p per mile	50p per mile
10.	Presiding Officer travelling expenses	15.94	15.94
11.	Poll Clerk travelling expenses	9.26	9.26
12.	Travelling expenses for staff in connection with the counting of votes, at the discretion of the DRO	9.26	9.26
Polling Station Staff			
13.	One Presiding Officer at each Polling Station – single election	232.38	255.62
14.	For each PO at a Polling Station – combined election or difficult station due to local circumstances (at the discretion of the Returning Officer (RO))	285.46	314.01

15.	For a PO who acts as a supervisor at a Polling Place where there is more than one Polling Station	(additional) 11.26	(additional) 12.39
16.	Supervising Officer (SO) – for every 10 polling station overseen	232.38	255.62
17.	For each Poll Clerk (PC) at a Polling Station – single election	145.16	152.42
18.	For each Poll Clerk at a Polling Station – joint election or difficult station due to local circumstances (at the discretion of the Returning Officer (RO))	172.61	181.24
19.	For each training session provided by the DRO for Presiding Officers, Poll Clerks or count staff	199.21	199.21
20.	For each Presiding Officer and Poll Clerk attending training	51.58	51.58
21.	An allowance for each polling station to have available a mobile phone on polling day	5.58	5.58
22.	For the employment of persons in connection with the counting of the votes, clerical and other assistance required by the RO – for each 500 electors or part in a contested election	81.28 (per 500)	81.28 (per 500)
23.	For the employment of persons in connection	79.67	79.67

	with the issue and opening of postal ballot papers – for each 100 postal voters or part		
24.	For the recount of votes – for each 500 electors or part	4.68	4.68
25.	Payment to the District/Borough for the use of Council staff to support the RO in the conduct of elections as follows:		
(a)	Contested election – (i.e. without District/Borough) for each 500 electors (or part)	62.96 (per 500)	62.96 (per 500)
(b)	Contested joint election (i.e. with District/Borough) – for each 500 (or part)	31.49 (per 500)	31.49 (per 500)
26.	Contested single election – payment to DRO for the management and conduct of the election – for each 500 electors or part	35.19	35.19
27.	Contested joint election – payment to DRO for the management and conduct of the election – for each 500 electors or part	48.58	48.58
28.	For each Counter attending training	16.72	16.72
29.	For each Count Supervisor and Count General Assistant attending training	33.45	33.45
30.	Reasonable refreshments for staff involved in the verification and count	Maximum £5.47 per head	Maximum £5.47 per head

31.	Payment to District/Borough Council for the use of Council staff at an uncontested election – for each 500 electors or part	17.36 (per 500)	17.36 (per 500)
32.	RO fee for the conduct of elections as follows:		
(a)	Uncontested District/Borough election – single fee	60.26	60.26
(b)	Uncontested Parish election – single fee	20.66	20.66
33.	For clerical and other assistance required by the Returning Officer at an uncontested election – for each 500 electors (or part)	22.11	22.11

Notes

1. The fees are calculated on the number of local government electors on the register of electors and entitled to vote at the last day for publication of the notice of election.
2. At parish polls the fees relating to polling staff **may** be pro rata.
3. **Items 10, 11 and 12** – variable mileage rates may be applied where fixed travel is considered appropriate.
4. **Item 24** – in special circumstances, the RO may recover actual costs
5. **Item 31** – the payment referred to applies (in the case of a parish election) to each ward of the parish.

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This Report will be made public on 14 March 2023



Report Number **C/22/103**

To: Cabinet
Date: 22 March 2023
Status: Non-Key Decision
Director: Amandeep Khroud – Assistant Director:
Governance and Law
Cabinet Member: Councillor Jennifer Hollingsbee – Deputy Leader &
Cabinet Member for Communities

SUBJECT: EQUALITY & DIVERSITY ANNUAL REPORT 2021-22

SUMMARY: The Equality Act 2010 places a statutory duty on the council to prepare and publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the Public Sector Equality Duty. The draft Equality & Diversity Annual Report is therefore presented for consideration and approval prior to publication.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The council needs to ensure that it meets the statutory requirements of the Public Sector Equality Duty. The report demonstrates the council's commitment to positively contributing to the advancement of equality and good relations, summarises the activities undertaken in 2021-22 to promote equality, diversity, and inclusion, and highlights the positive measures that have been taken to remove barriers, improve access to services, and increase customer satisfaction.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/22/103.
2. To consider and approve the draft Equality & Diversity Annual Report outlined in Appendix 1.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Equality Act 2010 created a Public Sector Equality Duty. In essence, this duty requires public authorities to consider how they could positively contribute to the advancement of equality and good relations. It requires equality considerations to be taken into account when making decisions and reflected in the design of policies and the delivery of services. While compliance is a legal obligation, the duty should be viewed as beneficial for organisations; the aims of better informed public sector decision-making and policy development should lead to services that effectively and appropriately meet diverse user needs and to increased customer satisfaction.
- 1.2 The Public Sector Equality Duty is made up of a general equality duty, which is the overarching requirement of the Public Sector Equality Duty, and 'specific duties', which are designed to ensure public authorities meet the general equality duty.
- 1.3 The general equality duty came into force in April 2011 and states that in the exercise of their functions a public authority must have due regard to the need to:
- Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Equality Act;
 - Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not; and
 - Foster good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and those who do not.

Having due regard for advancing equality involves:

- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by people due to their protected characteristics;
- Taking steps to meet the needs of people from protected groups where these are different from the needs of other people; and
- Encouraging people from protected groups to participate in public life or in other activities where their participation is disproportionately low.

Having due regard for fostering good relations involves tackling prejudice and promoting understanding.

The Act states that compliance with the equality duty may involve treating some people more favourably than others.

- 1.4 The Public Sector Equality Duty covers the nine protected characteristics outlined in the Equality Act, which are:
- Age
 - Disability
 - Gender Reassignment
 - Pregnancy and Maternity

- Race
- Religion or Belief
- Sex
- Sexual Orientation
- Marriage and civil partnership¹.

2. THE ANNUAL EQUALITY & DIVERSITY REPORT

- 2.1 The 'specific duties' outline a statutory requirement for public authorities to publish information annually to demonstrate compliance with the general equality duty (outlined in paragraph 1.3).
- 2.2 The current publication is over 12 months old so an updated version is now required. This report has been presented much later than anticipated during the year due to a time lag in the publication of some data sets used for the report from external sources that reflect the 2021/22 year, notably the 2021 Census results that have been incorporated into this edition report where available.
- 2.3 This annual report has therefore been updated in order to demonstrate the council's compliance with the general Public Sector Equality Duty and commitment to its principles. The report:
- Provides a range of demographic and socio-economic information. This can be used to understand more about the needs of our local communities and those that may be affected by council services, policies and practices and in order to inform decision-making and policy development.
 - Demonstrates how the council has engaged with the community, taken actions to enable better understanding of different customer needs and ways to support them, and considered potential equality and diversity implications prior to making decisions.
 - Outlines the activities the council has undertaken over the past year to promote equality, diversity and inclusion amongst its workforce, Members and within the community, and the positive measures that have been taken to remove barriers, improve access to services and increase customer satisfaction.
- 2.4 The 'specific duties' also outline the requirement for the council to prepare and publish equality objectives that it thinks it should achieve in order to meet the general equality duty every four years. These equality objectives are outlined in the council's current Equality and Diversity Policy (2021-25) and reproduced in section 6 of the Equality & Diversity Annual Report (Appendix 1).

¹ Only the first aim of the general equality duty applies to this characteristic, meaning that public authorities need to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination against someone because of their marriage or civil partnership status in the workplace. The other aims (advancing equality and fostering good relations) do not apply.

- 2.5 Once considered and approved by Cabinet, the Equality and Diversity Annual Report will be published on the Equality and Diversity page of the council's website.

3. IMPACT ON CORPORATE STRATEGY AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT

- 3.1 A number of actions have taken place in 2021-22 in support of the delivery of the Corporate Plan and these are highlighted in the annual report (Appendix 1). The council has a number of strategies, policies and strategic projects in place to meet the current and anticipated needs of a diverse district and will continue to use this type of information to inform service design, policy development and future decision-making.

- 3.2 The report highlights activities that have taken place in 2021-22 to support different customer needs, to promote equality, diversity and inclusion, and the positive measures that have taken place to remove barriers, improve access to services and increase customer satisfaction. Areas of note include:

- The successful retention of the Customer Service Excellence accreditation and being awarded with two additional compliance plusses following assessment in September 2021. One of the additional compliance plusses was awarded in particular for: Increasing use of real time analytics to fully understand the needs and expectations of customers.
- Following the reintroduction of Housing Landlord Service back into the council in October 2020, work has been undertaken during the year to embed and develop the service including:
 - The development and launch of the new Strategic Tenants Advisory Panel – a group of council tenants from a wide variety of backgrounds, including people with disabilities and from different ethnic backgrounds, who work with senior officers at a strategic level to scrutinise performance and to hold the landlord to account.
 - A new Tenant Engagement Strategy has been developed and the associated Action Plan to ensure tenant engagement work develops and increases.
 - Spending over £500,000 on aids and adaptations to help council tenants with disabilities to live safely and comfortably in their homes.
- Following the creation of a dedicated Welfare Team within the council in 2019 to support customers and signpost them appropriately, the team have administered a number of different Government funding streams to maximize and target support to the most vulnerable qualifying residents during the year. Funding streams have enabled payments to be made from the: NHS Test and Trace (self-isolation), Household Support, Discretionary Housing and Council tax financial support funds.
- The rebuilding of the My Account service to be “mobile first” in order to reflect customers’ needs. Improvements were also made to the customer journey in the year that included improved functionality for reporting missed bins and the continued development of online forms to allow

customers to access more council services online at the touch of a button.

- The Council achieving a Gold Award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme during the year and is now recognised with the highest award for its role in employing and supporting persons who serve and protect our country.
- Supporting communities to re-engage back into society and seek ongoing help as a result of the pandemic through the allocation of Contain Outbreak Management Funding (COMF) towards community projects including: Age UK Hythe & Lyminge Winter Grants scheme, Citizens Advice Bureau's COVID Recovery Support and The Rainbow Centre's Healthy Food Support programme.
- We have continued to support charities, voluntary and community groups through awarding 190 Ward Grants, provided over £50,000 of funding for community projects through our Local Children's Partnership Group, and awarded Grant Agreements to organisations that support vulnerable residents and health and wellbeing across the district, including Folkestone Sports Centre Trust and the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- The Folkestone Community Works Programme has continued to address issues faced by the most vulnerable in the district by funding projects that are working to improve access to services and opportunities for businesses and residents within the Central and East Folkestone wards. During the year, council-funded projects have provided professional support for residents who decided their route to economic independence was through self-employment, or had a need to supplement their income by creating a 'tabletop' business by using a skill or hobby to generate additional income.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

4.1

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Failure to fulfil statutory obligations imposed by Public Sector Equality Duty	High	Low	Preparation and publication of Equality & Diversity Annual Report

5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

5.1 Legal Officer's Comments (NM)

Legal implications and the council's statutory obligations are set out in the body of the report.

5.2 Finance Officer's Comments (LW)

There are no direct financial implications associated with the report

5.3 Human Resources (RB)

There are no direct Human Resource implications emanating from this report.

5.4 **Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)**

The report provides information that may support informed decision making, outlines the council's achievements in advancing equality in 2021-22, and fulfils the council's statutory obligations.

5.5 **Communications (KA)**

Many of the very positive aspects of the Equality and Diversity report have already been communicated externally. There is, however, a refreshed positive impact to be gained by listing all the elements together whilst communicating the report's publication.

5.6 **Climate Change (AT)**

No direct impacts arising from the publication of this report (Appendix 1), as the report is a factual update on activity over the last monitoring year (2021/22). However, several of the projects detailed in the report have the potential to impact positively on climate change considerations, such as bringing long-term empty homes back into use, which will reduce the use of resources in construction, and funding for the community hubs and Citizens Advice Bureau, which has the potential to alleviate fuel poverty.

6. **CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting:

Gavin Edwards

Performance and Improvement Specialist

Tel: 01303 85 3436

Email: gavin.edwards@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Draft Equality & Diversity Annual Report 2021-22



Annual Equality and Diversity Report

A reflection on the 2021-22 Year

Published: Xx 2023



Folkestone & Hythe

District Council

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Foreword

Thank you for taking the time to read the council's Equality and Diversity Annual Report.

This report has been produced in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty created by the Equality Act 2010. The purpose of this document is to:

- Provide a range of demographic and socio-economic information. This can be used to better understand the needs of our local communities and those that may be affected by council services, policies and practices, and in order to inform decision-making and policy development.
- Demonstrate how the council has engaged with the community, taken actions to enable better understanding of different customer needs and ways to support them, and considered potential equality and diversity implications prior to making decisions.
- Outline the activities the council has undertaken during 2021-22 to promote equality, diversity and inclusion both amongst its workforce (officers and members) and within the community, and the positive measures that have been taken to remove barriers, improve access to services and increase customer satisfaction.

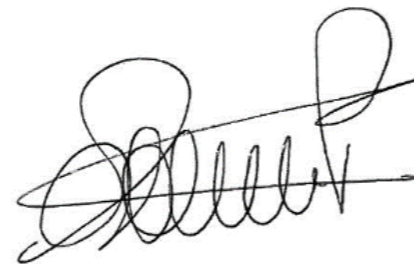
We hope that you find this document useful and informative. Further information, including the council's related Equality and Diversity Policy, can be found at: <https://folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/your-council/policies-plans-and-documents/equality-and-diversity>

Alternatively you can contact us at: policy@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Yours sincerely,



Clr Jenny Hollingsbee
Deputy Leader of the Council and
Cabinet Member for Communities



Dr Susan Priest
Chief Executive



Section 1

Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

Introduction: The council has undertaken numerous projects throughout 2021/22 against the backdrop of recovery from the pandemic.

This section looks in more detail at some of the engagement activities we conducted over the year to promote equality, diversity and inclusion. Our achievements are fully detailed in [2021-22 Annual Performance Report: 'A snapshot of our year'](#)

01 Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

Folkestone & Hythe Housing Service

The new in-house housing landlord service was introduced in October 2020 and 2021/22 was spent embedding and developing the service. Key areas of work included:

- The development and launch of the new Strategic Tenants Advisory Panel – a group of council tenants from a wide variety of backgrounds, including people with disabilities and from different ethnic background. The panel works with senior officers at a strategic level to scrutinise performance and to hold the landlord to account.
- A private Facebook group just for council tenants and leaseholders has been set up to facilitate agile 2-way communication.
- A Tenant Engagement Strategy has been developed and the associated Action Plan to ensure tenant engagement work develops and increases.
- A manager from the Housing Team is a standing member of the council’s District Vulnerability Panel, ensuring that any concerns about vulnerable or potentially vulnerable tenants can be promptly raised in a multi- disciplinary setting.
- A re-launch and strengthening of the Independent Living Forum, where tenant representatives of the sheltered (elderly) housing service meet to discuss issues relevant to them.
- Increasing the frequency of printed publications that are sent by post to all tenants from twice a year to quarterly.
- The engagement and involvement of council tenants from all backgrounds is encouraged and enabled by the provision of multiple contact methods including online, by telephone and in person via home visit.
- Staff have access to professional translation and interpretation services.

We have continued to work on delivering homes that meet the needs of our changing population and during the 2021/22 year we have:

- Delivered a total of 44 new affordable homes with partners for rent and shared ownership continuing to boost the supply of much needed homes in the district.
- 298 hospital admissions prevented or hospital discharges accelerated as a result of Private Sector Housing Team and partner intervention.

- Brought 44 long term empty homes within the district back into use.
- Improved 287 private sector homes for local people as a result of enforcement action and the provision of the Disabled Facilities Grant, Winter Warmth and Home Safe loans.
- Awarded a total of 68 disabled facilities grants to support those with disabilities adapt their own homes
- We have invested over £570,000 on disabled aids and adaptations to our council housing stock to help council tenants with disabilities live safely and comfortably in their homes. The following major and minor disabled adaptations work was undertaken during year:

Major Works		Minor Works	
Job Type	Number of Jobs	Job Type	Number of Jobs
FFS/Bathroom Refurbs	40	Grab Rail, Handrails etc.	139
Door Widenings & New Doors (internal & external)	10	Kitchen & Bathroom Alterations	34
Groundwork (ramps, paths, driveways, patios etc.)	32	Door Widenings & New Doors (internal & external)	13
Kitchen Refurb Works	1	Groundwork (ramps, paths, driveways, patios, fencing, permissions etc.)	27
Stairlifts	23	Galvanised Rails Only	22
Whole House Refurb Works	4		

The Council has continued to implement its Homelessness Prevention Strategy, working closely with our local partners, including the Rainbow Centre and Porchlight, to deliver a range of services to prevent vulnerable people from becoming rough sleepers and, where people are already rough sleepers, provide services to support them to access accommodation and help move to a more settled way of life. The services include:

01 Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

- The provision of outreach services to identify and verify people rough sleeping in the district.
- The provision of emergency accommodation to help people move away from the street.
- Sign-posting to mental health and other support services.
- Support to assist people to access long-term accommodation both within the social and private housing sectors.
- Support services to prevent tenancy breakdown and a potential return to the streets.
- The provision of accommodation services for the most entrenched rough sleepers, including intensive housing support.
- Joint working with other services, in particular the Rainbow Centre and Porchlight, in scoping the development of all year-round accommodation for rough sleepers, pending their move on into secure housing, with the provision of emergency pods for immediate access.

The council provides funding to the Rainbow Centre in Sandgate Road, Folkestone, to enable them to provide a range of support services to vulnerable people with a history of rough sleeping or who are living in insecure accommodation. People assisted through the service during the year are then being helped into longer term accommodation.

The council also supports the Rainbow Centre to deliver the Winter Shelter project, providing emergency accommodation to vulnerable homeless people during the winter months. A total of 29 people were supported through the project over the winter period until the end of June 2022, with a further Winter Shelter for 2022/23 ongoing.

Engagement with local Armed Forces Community

The Folkestone & Hythe District has a long tradition of cooperation between its civilian community and the local armed forces. In 2021/22, engagement activities were still affected by the pandemic but we continued to support the local armed forces community.

In December 2021, the council held an event at Westenhanger Castle for the re-signing of the Armed Forces Covenant 10 years after we were the first district council in the country to sign it. The event was attended by 45 invited guests including Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Chair of Kent County Council, Mayors and representatives from the military and veteran communities.

The council has various armed forces personnel within its workforce, including veterans, a Cadet Forces Adult Volunteer, and military spouses. We were awarded the Defence Employers Recognition Scheme Gold Award in March 2021, the highest award for being a forces friendly employer. The Armed Forces Champion and Armed Forces Lead Officer attended the Gold Award ceremony at The Hon Artillery Company, London on 17th November 2021.

The Folkestone 'Armed Forces Veterans Support' monthly drop-ins recommenced in July 2021 after being suspended due to the pandemic. A new drop-in started at the Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre in November 2021. The importance of the Drop-ins are demonstrated by feedback from one veteran:

"Just thought I'd give you an update on my situation. I got my job back as Groundsman in Hythe which lead me to getting a job with London Stadium. After a season almost two I moved upwards and got a job with West Ham united as Groundsman. My ending up on the street and walking into your drop in was the beginning of my wake up call to never give up. I got help I turned my life around and I haven't looked back. I now live in London to be close to my work however I'm often down in Hythe to visit my friends and watch the odd football match. I see it as home even though I come from Glasgow, Hythe is where my heart is "

Support has been provided to the Gurkha veteran community in Cheriton who were able to open their own community centre in October 2021. The Council in partnership with Kent Coast Volunteering and Kent County Council supported the delivery of the new Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre. The centre is run by the Folkestone Nepalese Community (FNC), a charitable incorporated organisation and includes welfare support office, a meeting room, event and socialising spaces, and an IT room. The council has supported the project through its ward grant scheme and some funding towards core costs. Support and advice was offered throughout, while the Local Area Officers also helped with redecorating the interior of the centre.

The council's lead Armed Forces officer has attended a range of meetings, briefings and events throughout the year, including Kent & Medway Armed Forces Lead Officer meetings, Unit Welfare Officer meetings and the Kent & Medway Civilian Military Partnership board meetings and attended the virtual Kent & Medway Armed Forces Covenant Conference in October 2021 and the Armed Forces Champions Conference in February 2022.

01 Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

Engagement with the wider community

During the period 1st April 2021 – 31st March 2022, there were new pieces of work that helped support communities re-engage back into society and seek ongoing help as a result of the pandemic. Using Contain Outbreak Management Funding, some key organisations were grant funded to deliver a range of projects. Some grants provided ongoing support to address winter needs from Nov 2021 to March 2022, while others were more Summer based projects and projects with schools. These are listed below:

Organisation	Name of Project
Citizens Advice Bureau	Covid Recovery Support
Shepway Sports Trust 3	Active Sports
Folkestone Sports Centre Trust	Active Hawkinge
Age UK South Kent Coast	Covid Recovery, Impact of Covid and Winter Pressures facing Older People in our community
Age UK Hythe	Winter Grants
Rainbow Centre	Healthy Food Support
Spectrum Arts	Hummingbird Life Hub
Folkestone Youth Project	Community Embrace and Lift
Leas Lift Lockout	Leas Lift Lockout Community Project
SpaceHive – using KCCs Crowd Fund Platform	Crowd Funding Kent -To enable grass roots organisations to crowd fund for their project ideas. Workshops for project creators and various rounds of funding have been delivered in the District

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The council hosted the annual ‘Meet the Funders’ event in person on 4th November 2021. The event attracted over 60 attendees who had the opportunity to hear from funders including the National Lottery, Kent Community Foundation and CrowdFund Kent and then have a 15-minute face to face meeting to discuss their project funding needs.

Our community networking events recommenced face to face in March 2022. The first event held at the Folkestone Nepalese Community Centre was on the topic of ‘All about Volunteering’ and 25 participants attended the event, and over 85% rated the event ‘good’ or ‘very good’ across all the evaluation criteria.

Two half-day training sessions were delivered online: ‘Setting Up Your Group’ in May 2021 (13 attendees), and ‘Running Your Group’ 9th February 2022 (10 attendees) with very positive feedback received on both sessions.

The council facilitated the establishment of the District Food Network. The Network is chaired by Sarah Montgomery from The Rainbow Centre. The group meets once every two months and has supported delivery of the Community Fridge, the Hythe Pantry and other food related projects. The group also produced the ‘Food Resources in Folkestone & Hythe’ guide.

In July 2021, the White Cliffs Community Rail Partnership (a partnership with Dover District Council) organised a successful event marking the 60th Anniversary of the electrification of the south coast railway, re-enacting the 1961 event which saw mayors from towns along the route join the train and celebrate at the end of the line. All our mayors joined the train from Westenhanger to Sandwich where we had a presentation and afternoon tea.

We attended two information sharing events at Romney Marsh Community hub aimed at older people within the community, one on 29th October 2021 and one on 28th March 2022.

Annual Grant Funding

The council has continued to support charities, the voluntary and the community sector through grants. Kent County Council worked with the District Council to distribute RECONNECT funding across a range of themes aiming to reconnect young people back into society following the pandemic.

Our Local Children’s Partnership Group (LCPG) distributed over £50,000 of funding towards local community projects for young people, and delivery by funded organisations was adapted around Covid-19 restrictions to ensure the LCPG priorities below could continue to be addressed:

- Raising aspiration and educational attainment, and extending employment opportunities.
- Creating Safe and Resilient Communities.
- Enhancing communication skills as a foundation for life.

01 Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

During 2021/22, 190 Ward Grants, totalling over £89,000, have benefitted local charities and community groups, further enhancing the council's involvement with local communities, and assisted with the delivery of efficient and effective projects and services to ward areas.

In 2021-22 annual grant funding was renewed by the council for the following community organisations, many of which adjusted their activities to deliver online services when the coronavirus lockdown occurred:

- **Shepway Sports Trust:** To provide accessible sports and play-based facilities and activities within the district, focusing on reducing health inequalities and engaging children and young people in order to encourage health lifestyles as well as reduced anti-social behaviour. Following the coronavirus pandemic new ways to reconnect with young people to take part in sports activities were successfully developed (including the RECONNECT programme) and with the opening of the new urban skate park at F51 in March 2022.
- **Folkestone Sports Centre Trust:** To provide accessible sports and wellbeing facilities and activities for all age groups within the district. The Trust continues to recover from the pandemic but is developing exciting new programmes including sky walk (a new high ropes project and refurbishing ski slope facilities).
- **Active Sport Kent (previously known as the Kent County Sports Partnership):** To improve access to sports clubs and coaching activities across the district. The partnership ran conferences and webinars and provided support and guidance to sports clubs and leisure providers on how to access funding and deliver alternative online provision where the pandemic was still impacting delivery.
- **Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB):** To deliver debt, legal, housing and consumer advice on the council's behalf and working closely with council teams. The CAB was extremely busy addressing problems of hardship and dealing with residents adversely affected by the pandemic (e.g. through job losses or furlough).
- **Academy FM:** To support a community radio station which promotes the district, works with young people, aids community interaction and raises awareness of local issues and activities. The station continued to promote local initiatives, including promotion of the community hubs for support and advice.
- **Red Zebra:** To support the running of volunteer networking sessions across the district to increase volunteering, support the voluntary and community sector as well as improve health and wellbeing. Red Zebra delivered a number of these sessions online.

- **Folkestone Quarterhouse:** To deliver a programme of visual, performance and musical arts, educational and performance activities to families, schools and hard to reach groups in the district. Although the Quarter House was closed due to the pandemic, Creative Folkestone were able to deliver online services including projects with schools and other organisations. The range of online projects increased and other events took place in the community as services returned back to normal.

In December 2021 the council also agreed to join the Crowdfund Kent scheme that was launched previously by Kent County Council in February 2021 to contribute match funding to local projects that participate via the Spacehive Crowdfunding platform. In early 2022, the details were agreed and a partnership was established with Kent County Council. The Spring 2022 round closed at the end of April 2022 and the district council's contributions were agreed in May/June so will feature in next year's report covering the 2022/23 year.

Kent Reconnect Funding

As part of the recovery from the C-19 global pandemic, Kent County Council provided Reconnect funding based on a number of themes to enable young people to reconnect back into society. As a result during Summer 2021, the Reconnect Programme allocated £2.5m to Local Children's Partnership Groups (LCPGs) to fund three rounds of locality grants.

The £2.5m was allocated to LCPGs based on child population numbers and indices of deprivation. The district was allocated **£164,580** and the spend against each round of funding is provided below. Because of delivery timescales, the project wasn't managed strictly against financial years but against the whole project timeline (June 2021 – August 2022).

The three rounds of Reconnect funding bids resulted in allocations as below and projects delivered covering the period April 1st 2021 – Summer 2022 are described.

- **Round 1 (June 2021) – summer provision for 2021 £45,796**
- **Round 2 (October 2021) – on-going provision until summer 2022 £58,747**
- **Round 3 (February/March 2022) – summer provision for 2022 £60,037**

01 Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

The Reconnect grants covered many projects including outdoor activities, building resilience, reading projects etc.

It is important to note that Folkestone and Hythe District will have benefited from Countywide Reconnect funded projects, for example, the Anxiety Based School Avoidance Programme, the A for Attendance Programme as well as additional services commissioned through Reconnect, such as the You Are Not Alone service.

In addition some themes relating to reconnecting young people back into society had their own ring fenced funding and a sports based theme was one example of this, and the council was allocated £31,599. The Reconnect leisure centre grants ran from February 2022 – August 2022 so a part of the financial year for this report was covered by these.

The district still benefits from the Early Help grants that the Folkestone & Hythe LCPG manage. Funding panels review bids received and the below are the projects funded during 2021/22. The funds allocated for our District total £55,840 and were awarded to the following projects:

Grant	Organisation	Programme	Programme Description
Early Help Grant 2021/22	Rising Sun Domestic Violence and Abuse Service	All About Me	Provide a 10-week trauma-informed one-to-one programme (or occasionally small group mentoring) for 26 children/young people aged 5 to 11 and their parents who have been affected by domestic abuse.
Early Help Grant 2021/22	Shepway Sports Trust	Fit and Fed Programme	Providing free holiday activities and lunches for 77 vulnerable children. The children will also have the opportunity to access the first ever multi-storey indoor skatepark in the world when it opens in Folkestone in 2021
Early Help Grant 2021/22	Skill Horizons	Be Part of the Solution	Project engaging 90 pupils in year 6 (with up to 400 family members indirectly) facing the transition from Primary to Secondary School. The project will be working with each group once a week over 12 weeks that is designed to develop long term positive emotional health and wellbeing through outdoor learning.
Early Help Grant 2021/22	Excelsior Safeguarding Community Interest Company	Need to Know - Josh's Story	Transition support for Year 6 primary school children to reduce adolescent risk, develop consequential thinking and support positive choices

Grant	Organisation	Programme	Programme Description
Early Help Grant 2021/22	Woodpecker Wood Community Interest Company	Where education meets the outdoors	Project supporting the most vulnerable young people not in education, employment or training (known as NEET) (18 from the district aged 16 - 19 years) were helped through a process of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - raising self-esteem and confidence - developing team working and work-related skills - accrediting them with a range of appropriate qualifications - improving their functionality with English and Maths qualifications - moving them into a sustained destination - increasing the aspirations of young people unable to access further education opportunities

Folkestone & Hythe Community Safety Partnership (F&H CSP)

During 2021-22 the statutory F&H CSP have continued to meet progress key activity including the administration of Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) funding to deliver projects to vulnerable and diverse communities across the district. These included:

- Urban Pastors – continuing to carry out night time sweeps of key locations to address Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and any support needed for vulnerable people they may have come across.
- Aspire – ongoing engagement and support to homeless individuals and liaising with appropriate agencies.
- Ring door bells to support victims of Domestic Abuse.
- Collaborative working with Kent Police's Violence Reduction Unit (VRU) to support the police with the provision of knife wands (to detect people who may be carrying concealed weapons) for premises such as pubs.
- Safety in the Night time Economy – Collaboratively working with Kent Police by attending over 20 night-time venues during the evening on Saturday 27 November 2021 and giving out hundreds of 'spiking prevention' beer mats along with safety advice and information to those running the venues as well as their patrons.
- Folkestone Collective: A project providing landlord liaison/Accommodation Support for prison releases as well as work experience development opportunities for ex-offenders.

The CSP continues to ensure training is provided to key partners and agencies on issues such as PREVENT, knife crime and inputs to consultation documents e.g. the Kent and Medway Gangs' Strategy.

The Community Safety Unit (CSU) has also continued to help to deliver a number of successes - such as implementing closure orders on premises where antisocial or criminal behaviour is taking place, tracing missing persons and tackling homelessness - through the close partnership working that these meetings enable.

01 Our Achievements and Engagement Activities

The Community Safety Unit (CSU) weekly meeting saw an increase in partnership engagement and attendance, as the online meetings allowed more partners to attend with between 30-40 people from different agencies attending regularly. The CSU meetings have helped to deliver a number of successes - such as implementing closure orders on premises where antisocial or criminal behaviour is taking place, tracing missing persons and tackling homelessness - through the close partnership working that these meetings enable.

Napier Barracks

The Use of Napier Barracks continues and partner agencies worked with the managing agents to deal with issues such as littering and anti-social behaviour. The site is largely settled and ongoing education continues. Outbreaks of infectious diseases are well controlled and non-governmental organisation groups provide a range of activities on site.

In November 2021 additional pressure from the use of two hotels to house Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Minors (UASC) was managed. The work to ensure young people were safe and occupied with activities was key.

Community Hubs

The three community hubs based at: **Folkestone:** run by Age UK South Kent Coast; **Hythe:** run by Age UK Hythe & Lyminge; and **Romney Marsh:** run by the Romney Marsh Community Hub have continued to provide support to people within the district in a variety of ways, including:

- Hosting partner agencies and events; for example, digital inclusion events, drop-in sessions by Council welfare officers to assist vulnerable people fill in Household Support Fund forms, Dementia Cafes, etc
- Assisting in the development of a community fridge as part of the District Food Network
- Helping with work to support Ukrainian refugees, including collecting and distributing donations, hosting drop-in sessions, and distributing mobile phones and SIM cards on behalf of the council
- Giving food and fuel vouchers and other support to vulnerable people through the Contain Outbreak Management fund (COMF).

In 2021/22, the community hubs dealt with:

Over 2,000 shopping requests

Over 16,000 welfare calls

Over 45,000 incoming calls and emails from residents

Over 500 prescription collections

Over 8,000 requests for information and advice

Section 2

Understanding our Customers

Introduction

In this section we look at the council itself, how we are filling our statutory duties and how we are targeting our services to the particular needs of our residents.

02 Understanding our Customers

Equality Impact Assessments

Under the Equality Act 2010 there is no longer a requirement to produce Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs). However, the council believes it is good practice to have an EIA framework in place in order to fully consider any potential equality implications prior to making decisions. As such, the council is committed to ensuring that EIAs are completed when the council introduces or significantly revises a policy or service and that they are carried out in the correct manner, including, for example, appropriate consultation with affected parties.

EIAs are most often conducted when a new or significantly revised policy or service is set to be considered by elected Members, normally at Cabinet Committee stage. Further information, including copies of reports and associated EIAs, can be found at: <https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/moderngov/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>

During 2021-22 the council completed the following EIAs:

- **Folkestone and Hythe Community Safety Partnership – Partnership plan 21-24**
- **Safeguarding Policy**
- **General Fund Revenue Budget 2022/23**

In addition, all reports that are submitted to council Committees or the Corporate Leadership Team require comments on equality implications from the officer leading on equality and diversity. This further ensures that potential implications are considered prior to making decisions.

Understanding Our Customers through Consultation

Consultation provides an important means of understanding the needs of service users and local residents. It also allows the council to assess what impact decisions will have on different groups.

The following public consultations were undertaken during 2021-22:

- **Core Strategy Review Main Modifications**
- **Proposals for parking controls to be introduced in the East Cliff Gardens, The Durlocks, Wear Bay Road area, Folkestone.**
- **Proposals for the extension of controlled parking zone G1 to include Seagrave Road etc.**
- **Proposals for parking controls to be introduced in Seawall, Dymchurch**
- **New Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) 2022-2025**
- **Renewal of the Anti-social behaviour (ASB) Public Spaces Protection Order 2022-2025**

Improving our Customer Experience

Customer Service Excellence

In September 2021, we successfully retained the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation. The accreditation is a government standard developed to offer a practical tool for driving customer-focused change within organisations. The independent assessor continues to be impressed with our commitment to deliver excellent customer service and awarded us with a further 2 'compliance plus scores as part of his inspection. The overall number of compliance pluses awarded for the three year period (2019-21) is 17, which is the highest number we have been awarded since first achieving the standard back in 2013.

The additional two compliance plus scores were awarded for:

- Increasing use of real time analytics to fully understand the needs and expectations of customers. Work by the Welfare team has been seen as being leading edge and the council has been approached to help other authorities gain a better understanding of their own customers. The adaptation of policies and procedures (and the development of new ones where needed) to make sure customer needs were properly identified and met where possible.
- The staff survey showed that people wanted to feel more appreciated and valued and a range of initiatives have been put in place to help with that including 121 meetings between the Chief Executive and managers (not just her direct reports), improved communications from the senior team to staff to celebrate success and to thank people, additional leave approved this year between Christmas and New Year as a thank you to staff for success in external awards.

Examples of feedback from the independent assessor highlighted the following positive aspects of our services:

- *“Specific work done to identify vulnerability and what this means for service provision”*
- *“Staff going above and beyond what could be expected”*
- *“Strong partnership working to support residents”*

02 Understanding our Customers

Improving our Customer Experience (continued)

Web Chat Service:

We have various mechanisms to support customers to access services and information, including the customer access point, telephone appointments, translation and British Sign language service on request and a visiting officer service for council tax and benefits.

Our Web Chat service continues to be a popular way to contact us and in 2021-22, 89.65% of customers who rated the service stated they were happy with the service they received.

Feedback for the web chat service is continually monitored and reflects how useful many of our customers find this service.

Some examples of feedback received, includes:

- *"Awesome help and advice. Right on point and very straight forward, helped me immensely :-)"*
- *"Both people I spoke to were very helpful and courteous. I appreciate this chat facility, because being partially deaf I find the telephone very difficult to use"*
- *"Always helpful and very quick response, all my issues have been resolved quickly"*
- *"I do find the "chat" is very helpful. It is as helpful as actually speaking to someone and a lot easier to make contact than on the phone. I am normally a bit of a dinosaur when it comes to modern technology, but I have been very pleased with how easy this was, not really knowing what was going to happen when I first clicked on chat"*
- *"Really good and so perfect speaking to a real person. Very helpful and got my problem resolved immediately. Thank you for providing this service."*
- *"Great having chat options.... !! quick fast and accessible..."*
- *"It is made it for me. I am not very good with technical things and texting"*
- *"Helpful advice thank you. Love using live chat as I dont really like talking on phones"*
- *"Excellent rapid and understanding response to my request. Thank you."*

My Account and Website Accessibility:

We have continued to develop our online services and the systems development team have reviewed the look and feel of MyAccount. When it was launched in August 2020 it was primarily designed for viewing on computers. Data that shows the ways customers interact when using MyAccount was reviewed, and this showed that most

customers were using a type of mobile device e.g. Phone or tablet. MyAccount was rebuilt to be "mobile first" to reflect our customer's needs. In addition, following feedback, the customer journey was improved and links from the MyAccount now take them directly to a relevant form and not to a website page. The waste functionality has also been improved and a report made for missed bins now goes directly to Veolia for them to action without the need for any human interaction, this has improved and sped up requests made by customers. Online forms are continuing to be developed and as at 31/03/22 there were 165 available to our customers. The take up of MyAccount continues to be positive and at the end of March 2022 58.04% of households had signed up.

The website platform functionality has been reviewed and is going to be replaced in 22/23.2023. This will provide more functionality when building the content and enable us to make further improvements to meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG).

Welfare Team:

The work on identifying vulnerable customers has grown since 2019 and led to the creation of a dedicated welfare team trained to support customers and signpost them appropriately.

During 2021/22 the Council has been administering different Government funding streams to maximise and target support to the most vulnerable qualifying residents. The Council received 492 applications for discretionary housing payments and made 393 awards during the year to a value of £288,890. On top of this the team also received 697 applications for Financial Support Payments (for Council Tax) and made 493 awards, supporting residents with £246,771 in awards.

The Council also administered the NHS Test and Trace (self-isolation) payment scheme, paying £231,000 (462 awards from 597 applications) in the standard scheme and £175,500 (345 awards from 925 applications) from the discretionary scheme to support working residents on low income who were unable to work due to self-isolation rules.

In October 2021 Government allocated additional funding to Councils to support vulnerable households under a new scheme called the Household Support Fund. This funding was for the purpose of supporting households who would otherwise struggle to buy food or pay essential utility bills or meet other essential living costs or housing costs. Eligible spend included food, energy and water payment support. It also included essentials linked to energy and water such as sanitary products, warm clothing, soap, blankets, boiler service/repair and purchase of equipment including..

02 Understanding our Customers

Improving our Customer Experience (continued)

Welfare Team (continued):

...fridges, freezers, ovens, etc. The funding had to be used by 31 March 2022 and at least 50% of the funding must have been used for vulnerable households with children.

The Council received funding of £171,358.62 from Kent County Council. Following the positive work that the Council carried out in allocating funds the Council also received an additional £50,000 of funding that was spent to support even more residents in the district. The breakdown of this support is listed below:

Household Support Fund split by Household Composition			
	Households with children	Households without children	Total
Spend	£167,459	£53,900	£221,359
Volumes	893	526	1,419

Folkestone Community Works:

The Folkestone Community Works programme area has continued operating throughout the Covid pandemic to address issues faced by the most vulnerable in the district by funding projects that are working to improve access to services and opportunities for businesses and residents within the Central and East Folkestone wards.

During the year, the council developed funded projects providing professional support for residents who decided their route to economic independence was through self-employment, or had a need to supplement their income by creating a 'table top' businesses by using a skill or hobby to generate additional income. The easy access to e-commerce through Ebay and other social media platforms has opened the door to everyone. This support helps residents to work through their ideas and understand how they could make it a reality by demystifying the process.

In addition, the council has continued to fund support for existing businesses through 1-2-1 advice and grants to navigate and adapt to the unusual and changing environment they are operating within, with the aim to retain and increase the number of employees

Folkestone Safe Haven:

The [Folkestone Mental Health Safe Haven](#) continues to provide an important service within the district to support people who are struggling with their mental health. Established in 2019/20, the Folkestone Mental Health Safe Haven was started in collaboration with the Roger De Hann Charitable Trust who worked with the council to help establish a connection with the Rainbow Centre to ensure the Haven has a permanent base within Folkestone town centre for people to access ongoing advice and support. The service operates 365 days a year and opening times are Mon – Fri 18.00- 23.00 and weekends and bank holidays 12.00 – 23.00.

The services of the Folkestone Mental Health Safe Haven are heavily promoted with multi-agency partners through the Folkestone & Hythe Community Safety Partnership and Community Safety Unit. Posters are displayed on the council's website and shared via social media channels. Details of the service are also cascaded to the community hubs so they can help signpost people to these services.

Developing Our Staff

All staff are required to undertake specific equality and diversity e-learning on a regular basis. We also provide safeguarding training to ensure staff know how to support vulnerable people, and we deliver training on preventing extremism, which gives our staff an understanding of radicalisation and who can be drawn into it.

We support staff in understanding people with different support requirements and currently have staff and Councillors trained as Dementia Friends. We now have 46 Mental Health First Aiders (9% of our workforce) so that we can better support those customers struggling due to the pandemic or other pressures they may be under. In other areas we ensure staff get the additional training they need to understand customer groups (e.g. specialist training on mental health in the Revenues and Benefits team and hoarding in the Housing team).

In addition, we run a Management Development Programme on an ongoing basis and offer formal management qualifications that enable our middle managers and team leaders to understand how to further equality and diversity in the workplace and how best to work well with people from a variety of backgrounds. Recognising the demographic profile of our staff we offer a range of flexible development opportunities and put on shorter courses or split over different days to enable part-time staff to attend. We also avoid running training during school holidays to give our staff who are parents the best chance of being able to attend. We record our training and staff briefings to ensure everyone has the opportunity to access this information.

Section 3

Understanding Our Workforce

Introduction

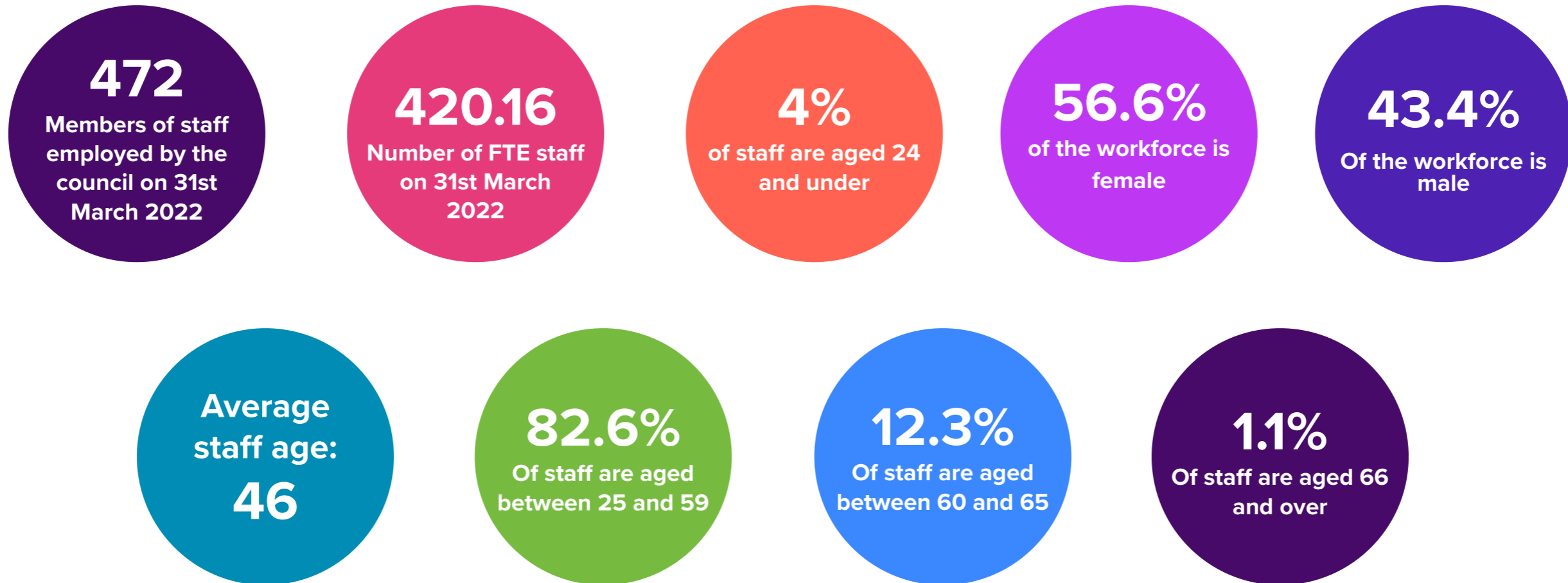
In this section we provide a brief overview of the characteristics of our own workforce.

On 31st March 2022 there were 472 members of staff employed by Folkestone & Hythe District Council. The number of full time equivalent staff was 420.16. Looking at the 2021/22 year as a whole, the average headcount was 461 and the average number of full time equivalent staff was 413.56.

03 Understanding Our Workforce

Folkestone & Hythe District Council - Workforce Profile

All figures used in the workforce profile below are as at 31st March 2022 and include staff the council directly employs.



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Number of staff by age and sex:

Age	16-19	20-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60	Total
Female	2	19	58	66	90	32	267
Male	5	23	31	49	66	31	205
Total	7	42	89	115	156	63	472

03 Understanding our Workforce

Ethnicity and Disability

- 4% of the council's workforce have declared a disability.
- 87.1% of the council's workforce have indicated that they are from white ethnic backgrounds and 6.3% from black and minority ethnic groups. The remaining 6.6% have not declared their ethnicity.

Working Hours and Pay Grade

- 24.8% of the council's workforce are part-time and are contracted to work 36 hours per week or under.
- Analysis shows a correlation between sex and working hours. 75.2% of part-time staff are female. Further analysis of sex, working hours and pay can be found on the gender pay gap reporting section of the council's website: <https://folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/reducing-the-gender-pay-gap>

Page 73 Turnover

- 49 people left the council's employment during 2021/22. This represents a crude staff turnover rate of 10.63%. The 'crude' turnover figure includes reasons such as redundancy (including voluntary redundancy) and those engaged on a casual, seasonal or short-term basis to, for example, provide maternity cover or support the annual electoral registration canvass. The voluntary turnover rate, which counts resignations only, was 8.46%

Staff Grievances

- There were no staff grievances raised relating to equality in 2021/22.

Year	Total	Equality Related
2015/16	0	0
2016/17	1	0
2017/18	1	0
2018/19	1	0
2019/20	1	0
2020/21	1	1
2021/22	0	0

Policies and Practices

The council is committed to promoting equality and diversity through its employment policies and practices.

- Our robust recruitment processes and associated manager training ensure that employment and promotion practices are fair, non-discriminatory and support equality of opportunity.
- Our job evaluation process ensures we pay our staff fairly and equally through assigning the same pay grade to roles of equal value.
- The council has a People Strategy in place to support our smarter, agile, working culture. Working flexibly is encouraged and supported, with the majority of staff having the ability to work flexible hours and in a range of locations including from home. The council's agile working framework was launched in June 2021 alongside a set of principles to better enable flexible working approaches.
- Prior to recruiting externally, or seeking candidates for promotion, if a post is full-time we carefully consider whether it could be undertaken on a part-time or job share basis.
- Working part-time can impact on the ability to attend training courses, which may then impact on career progression. We therefore consider our training programmes carefully and offer a range of flexible development opportunities. When considering our training courses we increase accessibility by putting on shorter courses, split the training over different days, or record sessions so they can be viewed at any time.
- If members of staff have concerns these can be raised with managers, or formally through the council's whistleblowing or grievance procedures. Management training takes place to support equality, diversity and inclusion, and to ensure that any concerns are acted upon swiftly and appropriately.
- All staff undertake specific equality and diversity training when they first join the council and then on a regular basis thereafter. We also have a range of initiatives and learning and development activities aimed at furthering equality, diversity and inclusion. Further information on these can be found in the Developing Our Staff section.

Section 4

Understanding our Communities

Introduction

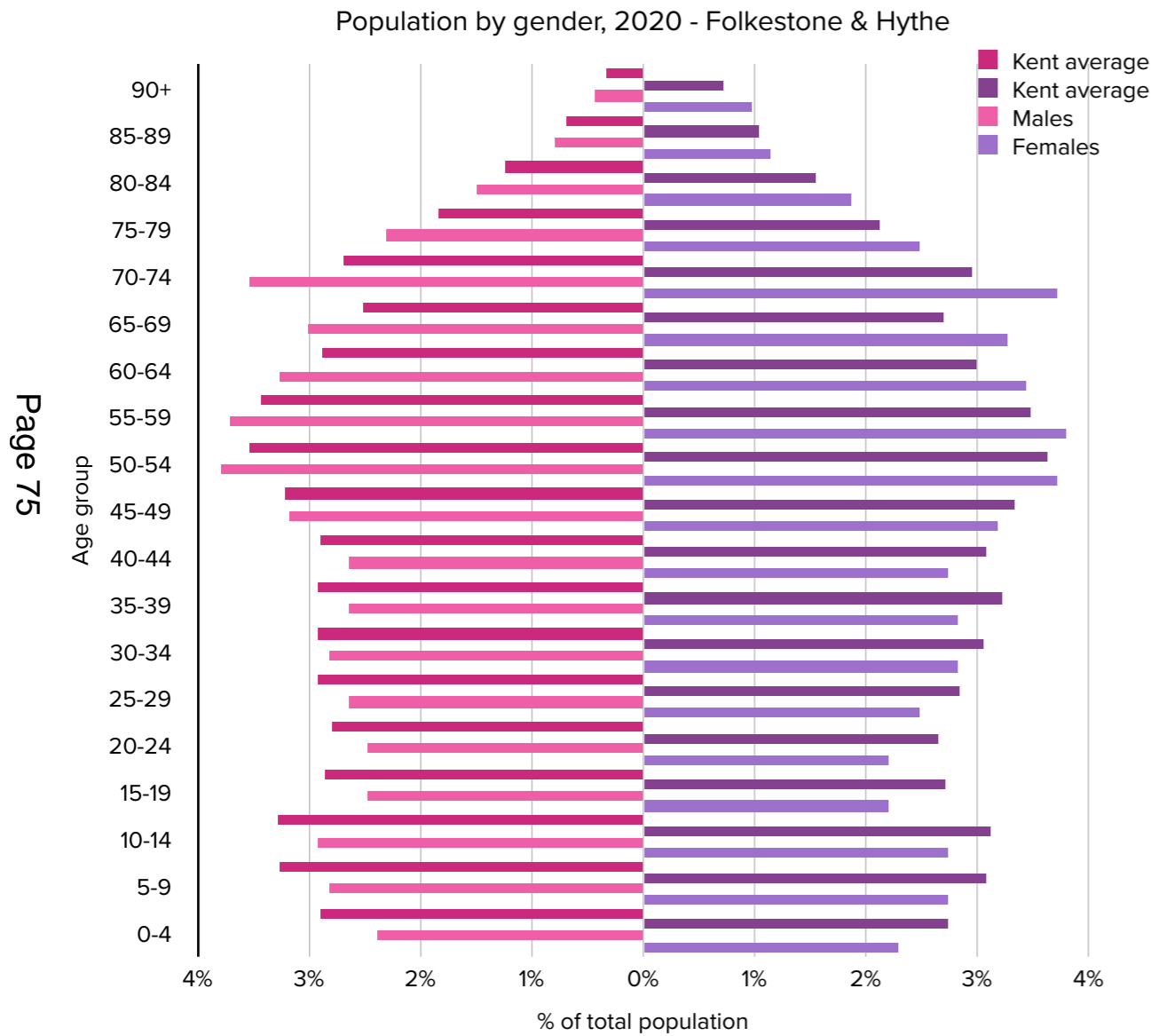
This section provides a brief overview of the characteristics of the district's population and draws comparisons with Kent and the wider South East. We outline the age profile of the district, the proportion of males and females in each age group, and how the population is likely to change over the coming years. We then go on to look at the ethnicity, religion and health of our communities. We finish by considering the economic profile of the district, including employment rates, income and deprivation.

04 Understanding our Communities

Age and Sex:

Overview

In the graph below, blue shows the proportion of males in each age group and peach females. The blocked sections show the Kent average for each age group.

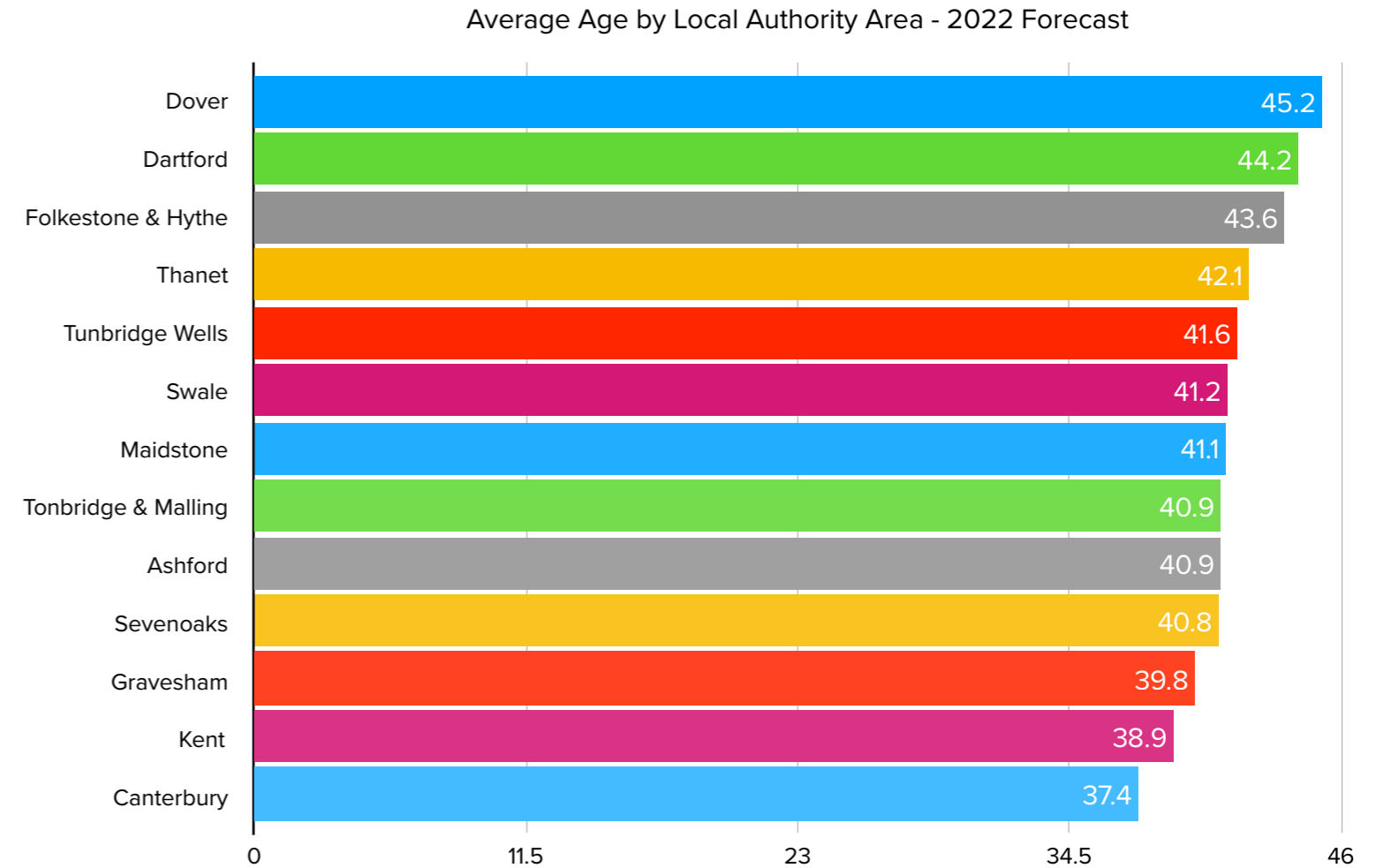


Source: KCC District Profile/ ONS, 2020 mid-year population estimates

There is a lower proportion of residents aged under 45 when compared to Kent overall. The district has a larger percentage of residents aged over 45.

The male to female ratio changes with age. There are more males under the age of 55 than there are females. From age 50 + there are more females than males.

Then average Folkestone & Hythe resident is 43.6 years old, which is the third highest in the County when compared to other local authority areas. The graph below shows the lowest average age to be in Canterbury at 37.4 years old.



Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021

43.6 years old
The age of the average Folkestone & Hythe Resident

37.4 years old
The average age of a Canterbury Resident. The lowest out of all Kent local authority areas

04 Understanding our Communities

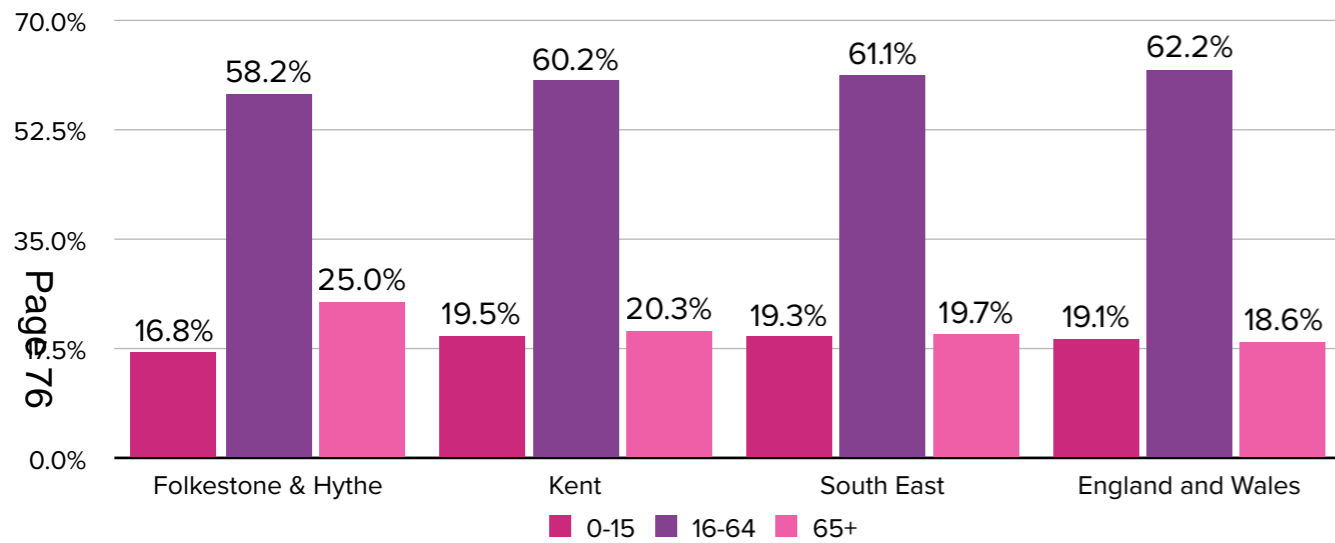
Age and Sex (continued):

The average male living in the Folkestone & Hythe district (at 43.6 years) is younger than the average female (45.6 years).

In comparison with regional and national figures, Folkestone & Hythe has:

- A lower than average proportion of residents aged under 15
- A lower than average proportion of residents of 'working age' between 16 and 64
- A higher than average proportion of residents aged 65 and over

Population by age group - Mid Year 2020 Population Estimates



Source: KCC District Profile / ONS, 2020 mid-year population estimates

Children and Young Adults:

Age group	No.	% of Folkestone & Hythe population	% of Kent overall*
0-3 – Early Years Children	4,100	3.5%	5.9%
4-10 – Primary Age Children	8,400	7.3%	5.9%
11-18 – Secondary age children	9,900	8.6%	6%

Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021

Working Age' Population (16-64):

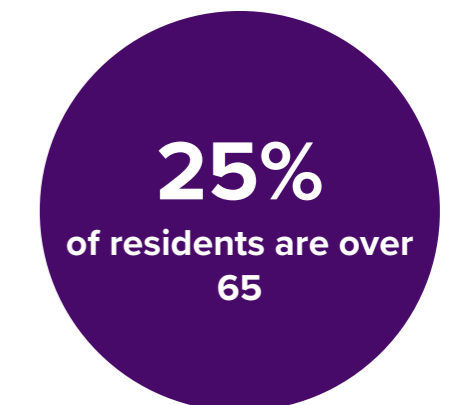
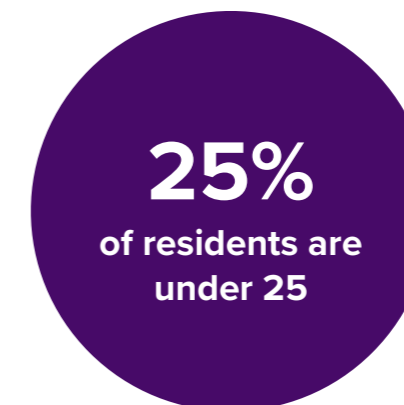
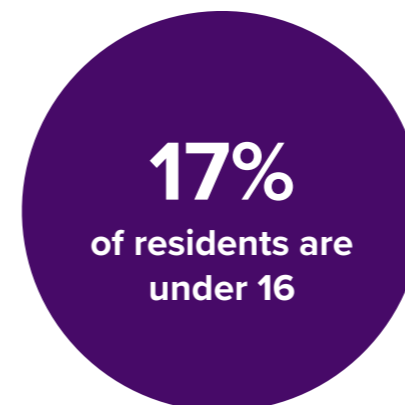
Folkestone & Hythe	Number	%
16-64	64,280	58.4 % of Folkestone & Hythe residents are 16-64
Female	32,567	57.8% of females in the district are 16-64
Male	31,713	59.0% of males in the district are 16-64

Source: ONS, 2021 mid-year population estimates

Older Population:

Age Group	Number	% of Folkestone & Hythe Population
65-69	7,300	6.3%
70-74	7,600	6.6%
75-79	6,600	5.7%
80-84	3,800	3.3%
85-89	2,400	2%
90 and over	1,600	1.3%

Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021



04 Understanding our Communities

Population Changes and Forecasts

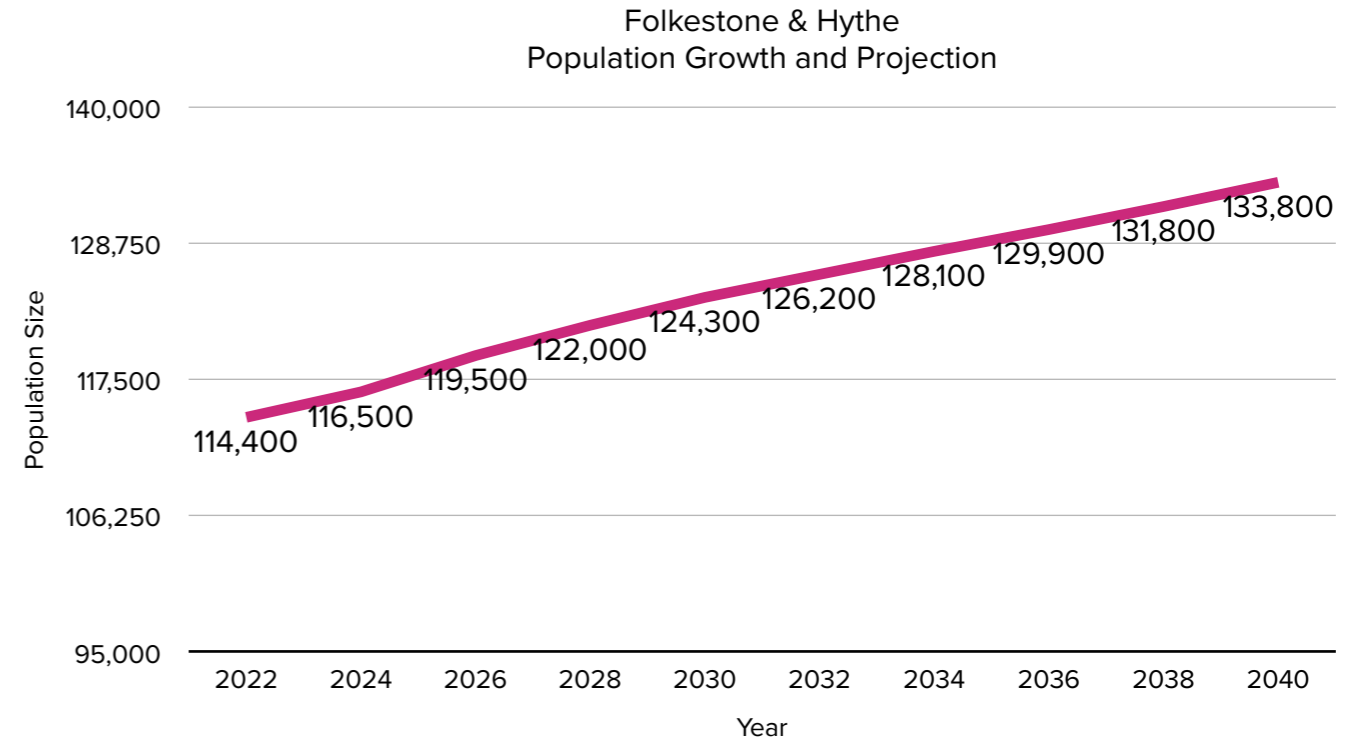
Historical Population Growth

The most recent population figures based on 2021 KCC housing led forecasts estimate that the population of Folkestone & Hythe to be 114,400. This accounts for 7% of the total population within the Kent County Council area.

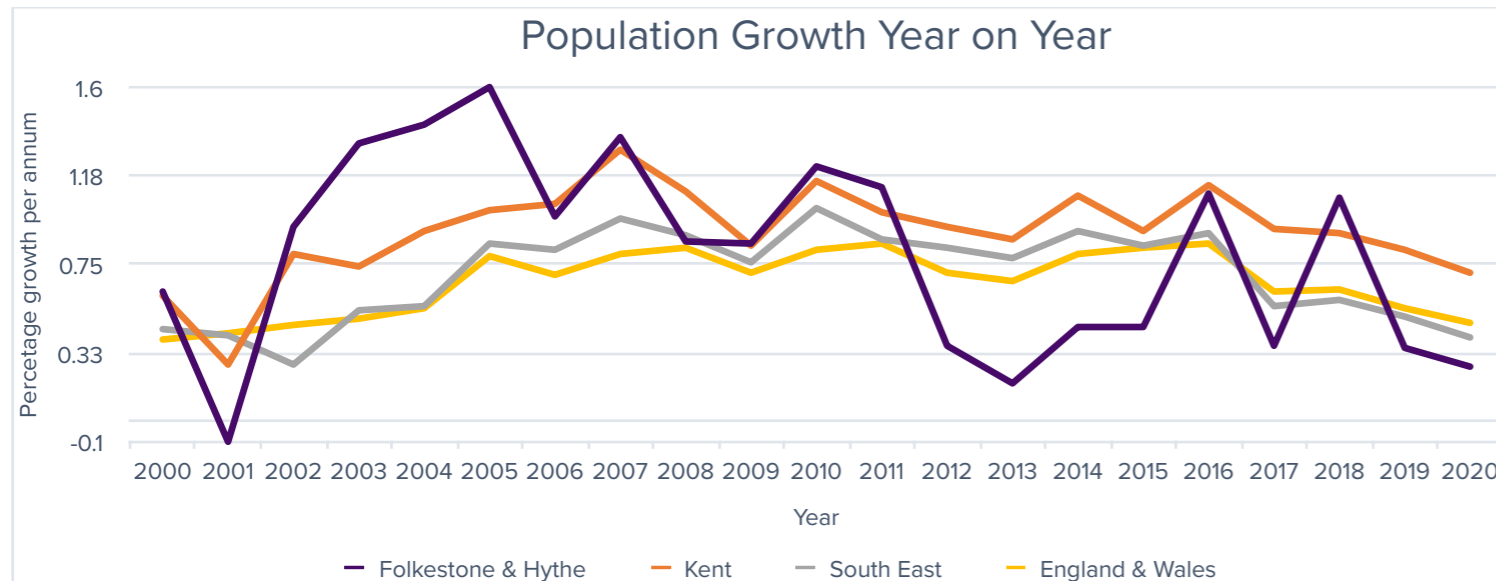
In 2012 the population of Folkestone & Hythe stood at 108,600. In the ten-year period between 2012 and 2022, Folkestone & Hythe's population grew by 5.3%. This is, however, below regional and national averages.

Over the last 10 years (2010-2020) population growth across the south east has risen more quickly averaging 0.74% per annum in comparison to England and Wales, which averaged 0.72% per annum. Kent experiences higher annual growth in comparison, averaging a population increase of 0.97% per annum over the same time period. As a smaller geographical area, population growth in Folkestone & Hythe is much more sporadic, with localised factors a major contributory factor. The most recent data shows an estimated population increase of 0.52% between 2021 and 2022.

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Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021



Source: KCC Interactive mid-year population estimate toolkit 2021 (2000-2020 period)

Population Changes

Historically, Folkestone & Hythe's population growth has varied between different age brackets. In the 20 year period between 2000 and 2020 the most significant population growth was amongst those aged between 45 and 70, with residents in this age bracket increasing by 39.3%. The number of residents aged under 45, however has remained largely the same over this period, increasing by only 0.73%.

When considering residents over the age of 65 specifically, between 2000 and 2020 there was an increase of 45%, from 19,300 to 28,000 people. It is forecasted that this will increase by a further 14,400 over the subsequent 20 years, a rise of 50.8%. Conversely, the number of residents of 'working age' (between the ages of 16 and 64) are forecast to rise by 9.3% and those under the age of 15 are expected to shrink by 0.52%.

Population Growth Forecasts

Folkestone & Hythe's population is forecast to rise by nearly 16.9% over the next 18 years, reaching an estimated 133,800 by 2040, while Kent as a whole is expected to grow by 18.1% over the same period. Estimates, however, do not take into account any future developments in the district.

04 Understanding our Communities

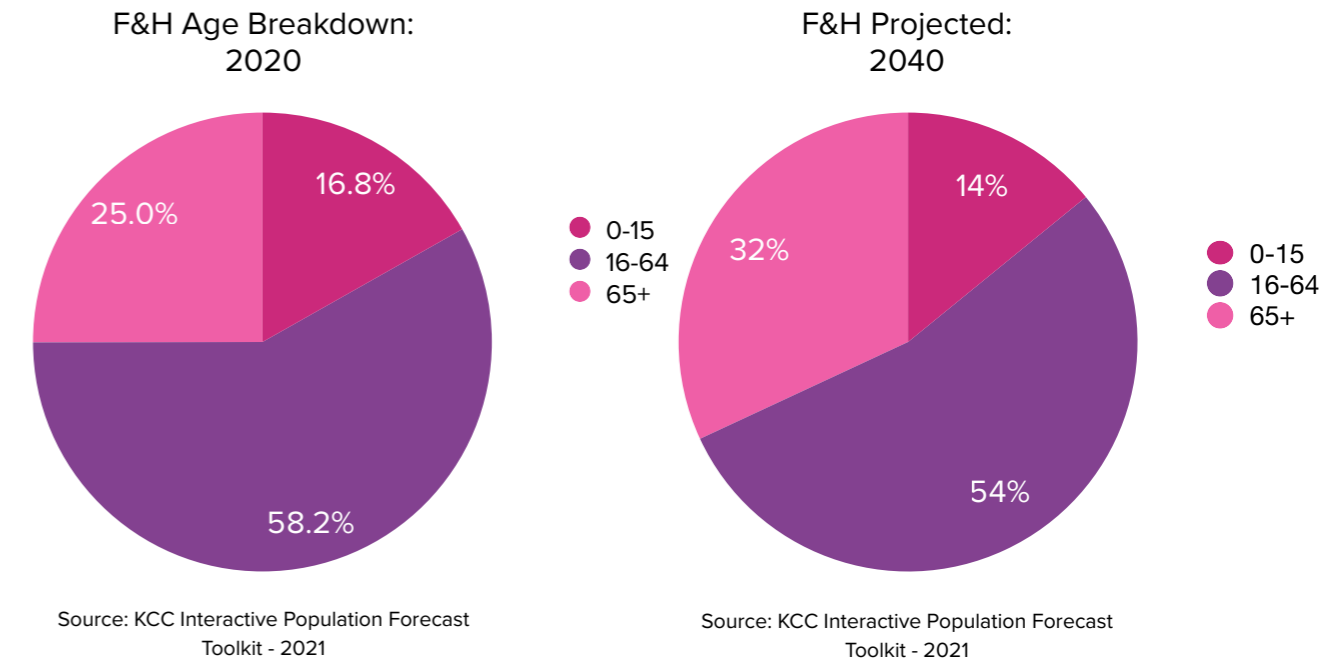
Population Changes

Current Population Projections: Folkestone and Hythe (2022-2040):

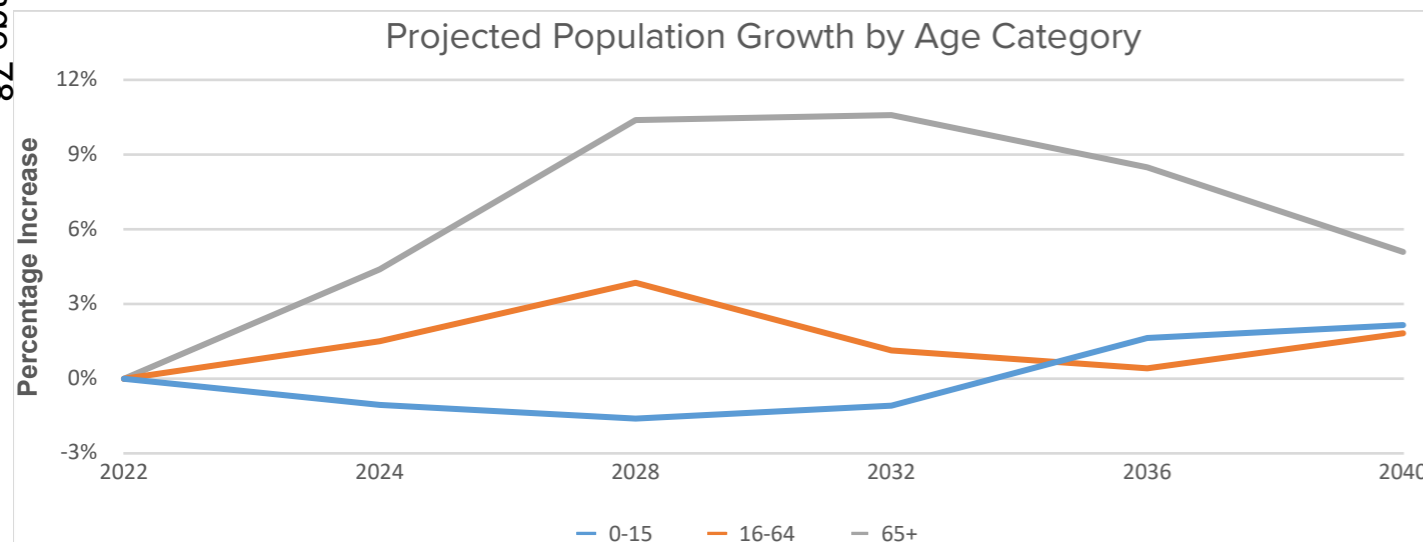
Year	Total Population	Age Group		
		0-15	16-64	65 and over
2022	114,400	18,900	66,200	29,300
2024	116,500	18,700	67,200	30,600
2028	122,000	18,400	69,800	33,800
2032	126,200	18,200	70,600	37,400
2036	129,900	18,500	70,900	40,600
2040	133,800	18,900	72,200	42,700

Source: KCC Interactive Population Forecast Toolkit - 2021

of the population over the age of 85, are notable rising from 3,900 in 2020 to 7,000 by 2039.



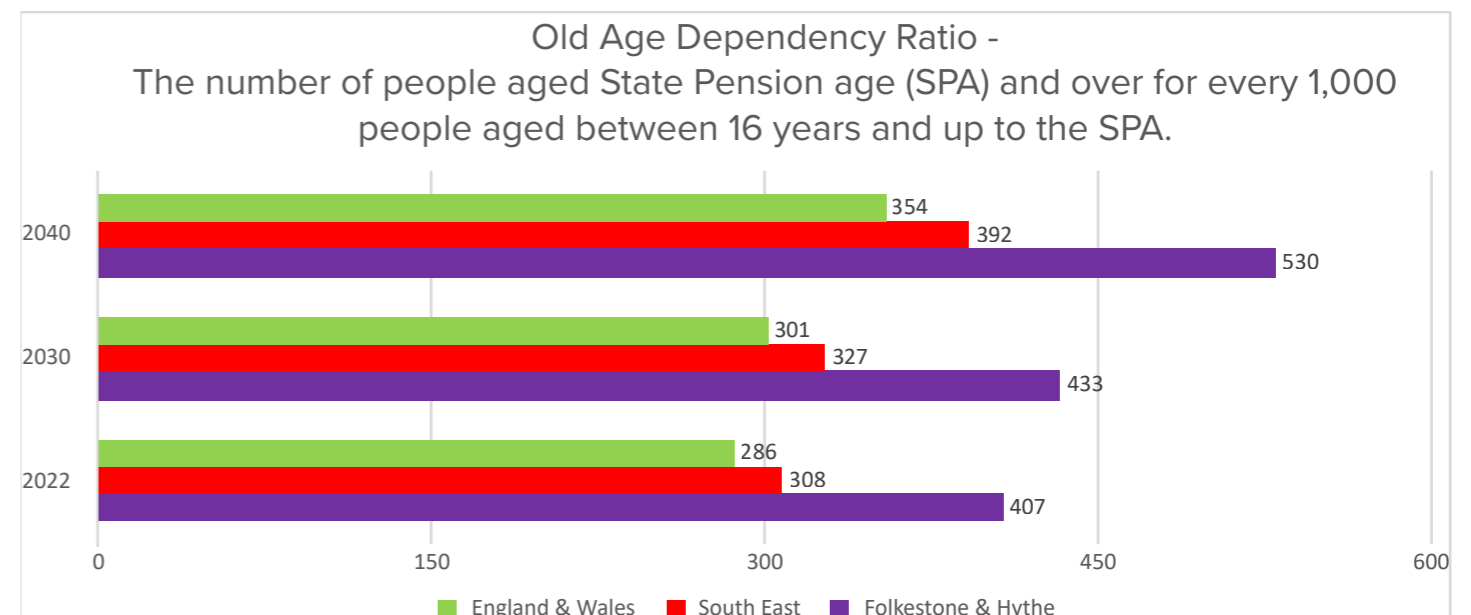
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Residents over the age of 65 currently account for 25% of Folkestone & Hythe's population. By 2040 this is expected to have increased by 6.9% a more significant increase than the 5.7% anticipated across Kent.

The concept of an 'ageing population' is, of course, not solely confined to the Folkestone & Hythe district and the Office for National Statistics (ONS) forecast continued growth in the proportion of the population aged over 65 across the UK. However, future estimates for Folkestone & Hythe, particularly relating to a proportion

The graph below shows that the number of people aged state pension age (SPA) and over for every thousand people aged 16 years up to the SPA (known as the Dependency Ratio) is projected to grow significantly faster for Folkestone & Hythe from 407 in 2022 to 530 in 2040 than for the South East region and England & Wales.



Source: Census 2021 – Sub national aging tool

04 Understanding our Communities

Population: Household Composition

The 2021 census reported 48,338 households in the Folkestone & Hythe district.

66.6% of households lived in accommodation that was owned (either outright, with a mortgage, or part-owned through a shared ownership scheme), 10.8% lived in homes that were social rented (including through F&HDC) and 22.5% lived in homes that were privately rented. The remaining percentage lived under other arrangements.

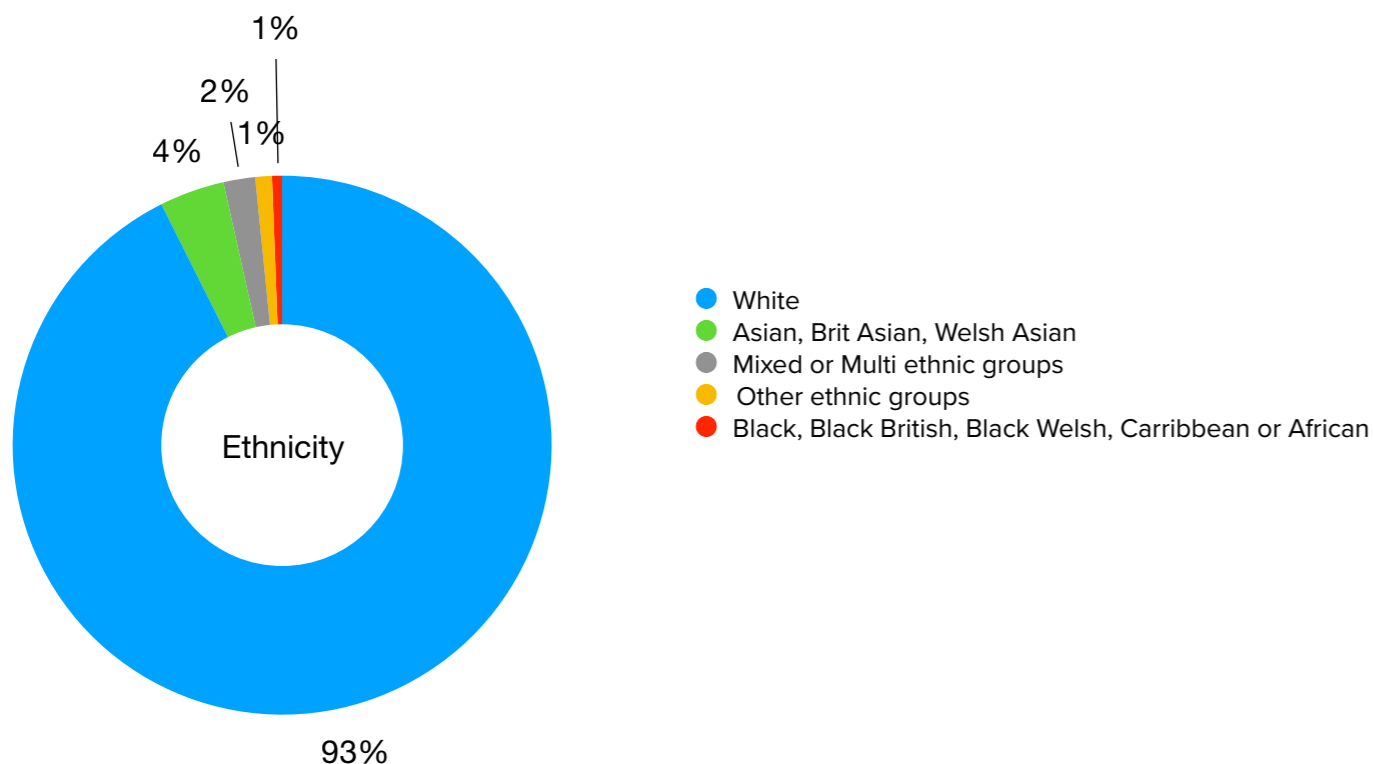
Nearly 70% of all households in the district were composed of one or two people.

Of the 48,338 households in the district, a third were one-person households. 45% of those that lived on their own were aged over 65.

The majority (61.8%) were single family households. The 2021 census classified these by the “type of family” (married, same-sex civil partnership or cohabiting couple family, or lone parent), by the number of dependent children, or recorded that all occupants were over the age of 65. 32.5% of households were one person households and 5.7% were classed as other household types. Source: 2021 Census.

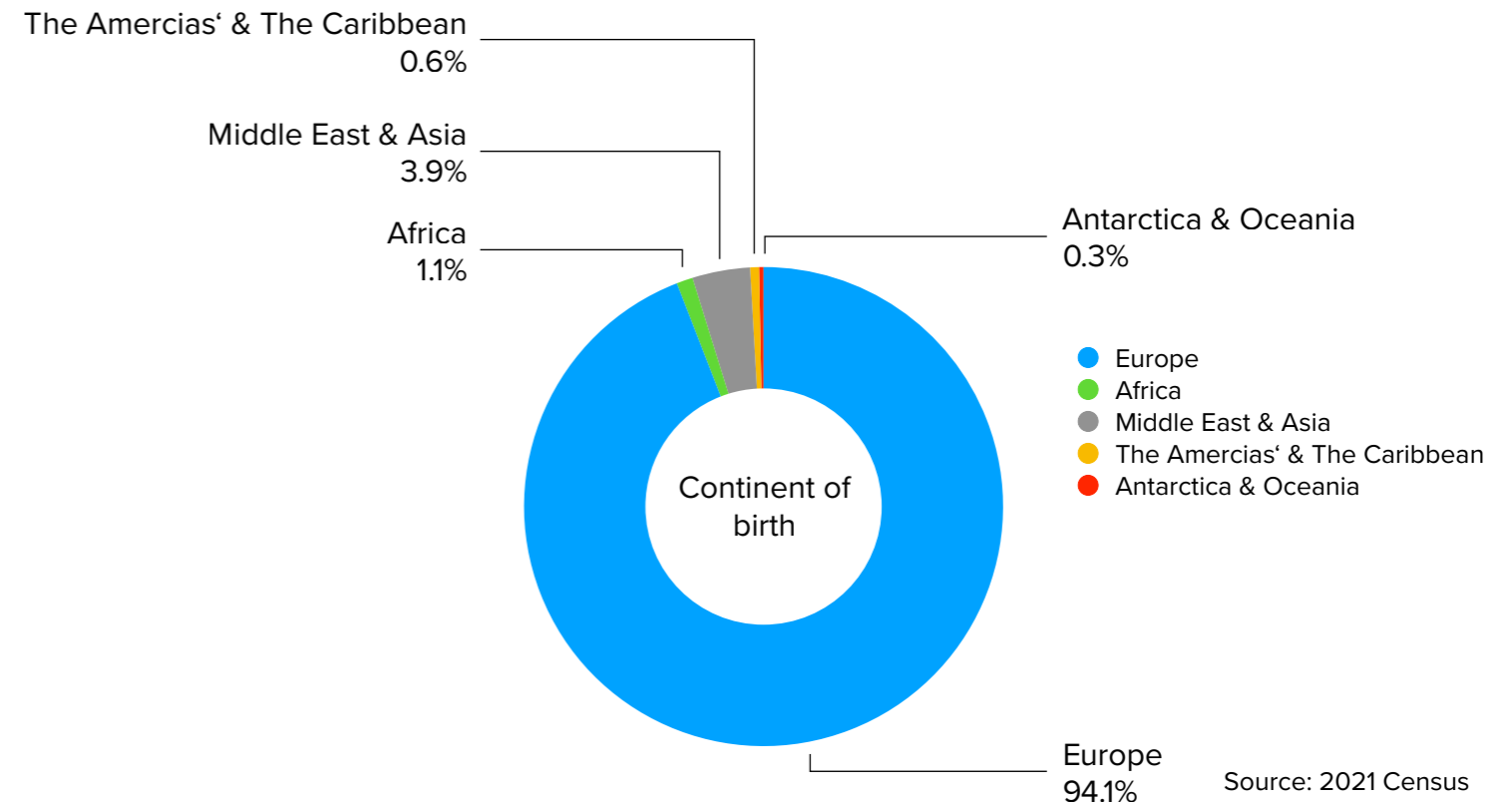
Ethnicity

The 2021 census shows that 92.6% of Folkestone & Hythe’s population are from white ethnic backgrounds followed by Asian, British Asian or Asian Welsh (3.9%), Mixed or multiple ethnic groups (1.9%), Other ethnic groups (1.0%) and Black, Black British, Black Welsh, Caribbean or African (0.6%), as defined by census category.



10.5% of Folkestone & Hythe residents were born outside the UK. 7% of those born outside the UK have been resident in the UK for over 10 years. The chart below shows the continent of birth for the district’s residents:

Folkestone & Hythe Residents: Continent of Birth



2.3% of households in Folkestone & Hythe do not contain any people that have English as their main language. This is lower than the national average (7.1%). Source: 2021 census

In 2021/22 a total of **1,657** households approached the council as homeless and made applications under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996. 1,345 (92%) applicants stated they were from white ethnic backgrounds and 25 (2%) from Asian ethnic backgrounds, 1% were from Black ethnic backgrounds, 2% from mixed ethnicity backgrounds and 16% did not state their ethnicity.

On 31st March 2022, there were 1,464 applications on the housing waiting list. Of these, 1,345 (92%) stated they were from white ethnic backgrounds, 25 (2%) from Asian ethnic backgrounds, 18 (1%) from Black ethnic backgrounds, 34 (2%) from mixed ethnicity backgrounds, 2 (0.1%) from Arab backgrounds and 41 (16%) did not state their ethnicity.

04 Understanding our Communities

A total of 308 applicants were housed in 2021/22. Of those housed, 288 (94%) were from white ethnic backgrounds and 7 (2%) from Asian backgrounds, 2 (0.6%) from black backgrounds, 1 (0.4%) from an Arab background. 4 (1%) were mixed ethnicity and 6 (2%) declared no ethnicity.

Religion

Of all residents in the district, the largest proportion (48%) declared that they were Christian in their religion. However, a significant proportion (41.8%) declared that they had no religion. Other faiths were less represented in the district population: 1.5% of residents declared that they were Hindu, 2% Buddhist, 1% Muslim and 0.1% Jewish.'

Source: 2021 Census

Health

Overview

6.9% of Folkestone & Hythe residents describe their health as bad or very bad. This is slightly higher than the national average (England & Wales: 5.4%).

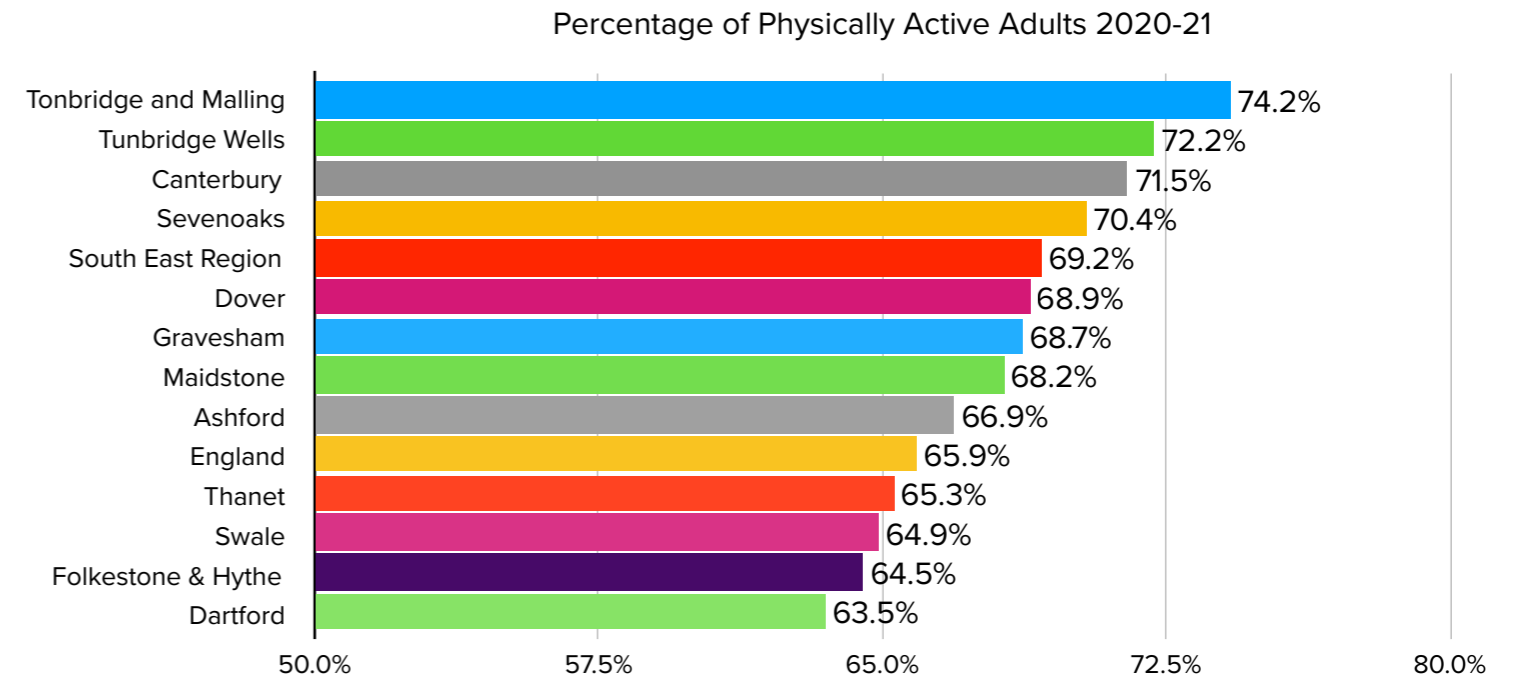
Over 20% of those that live in the district indicated that their day-to-day activities are limited by a long-term health problem or disability. This is higher than Kent (16.9%), south east (15.1%), and national (England: 17.2%) comparisons.

Source: 2021 Census

The data on physical fitness, obesity, alcohol-related hospital admissions, self-harm and smoking prevalence set out on, were sourced from the latest Public Health England's - Public Health Outcomes Framework:

Physical Fitness

In 2020-21 64.5% of Folkestone & Hythe adults were classed as 'physically active' below the English national average. The following graph sets out how Folkestone & Hythe compares with other Kent Local Authority areas:

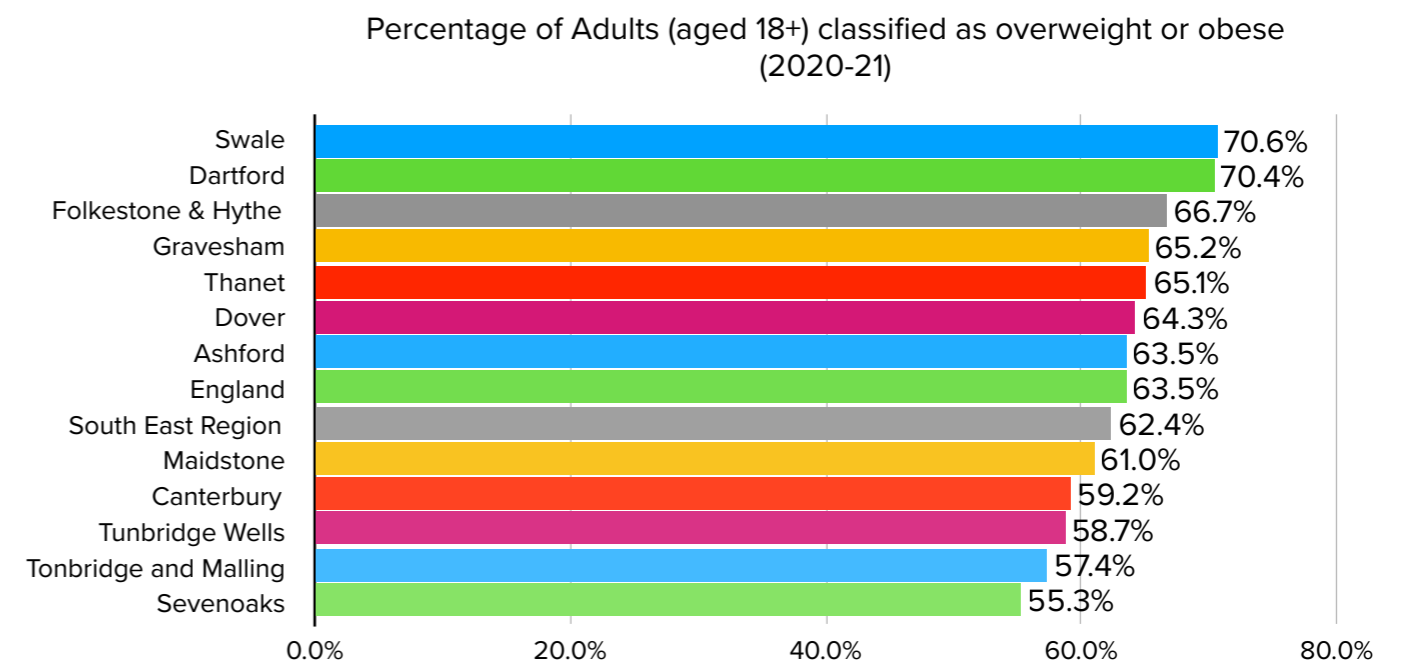


Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Obesity

In 2020-21, 66.7% of adults in the district were classified as overweight and the latest data from 2019/20 shows 35.9% of 10-11 year olds (Year 6 school age) were classified as obese. Both figures are above the South East and national averages.

The following graphs set out how Folkestone & Hythe compares with other Kent Local Authority areas for obesity in both adults and Year 6 school age children:

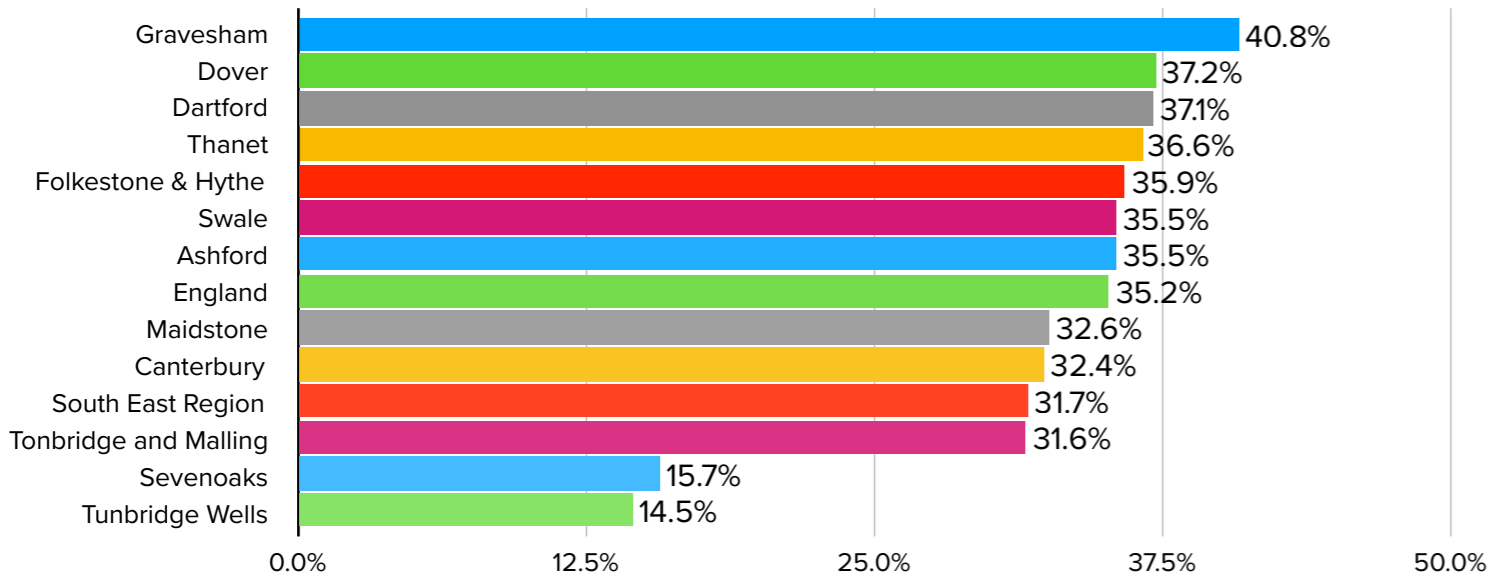


Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

04 Understanding our Communities

Obesity (Continued)

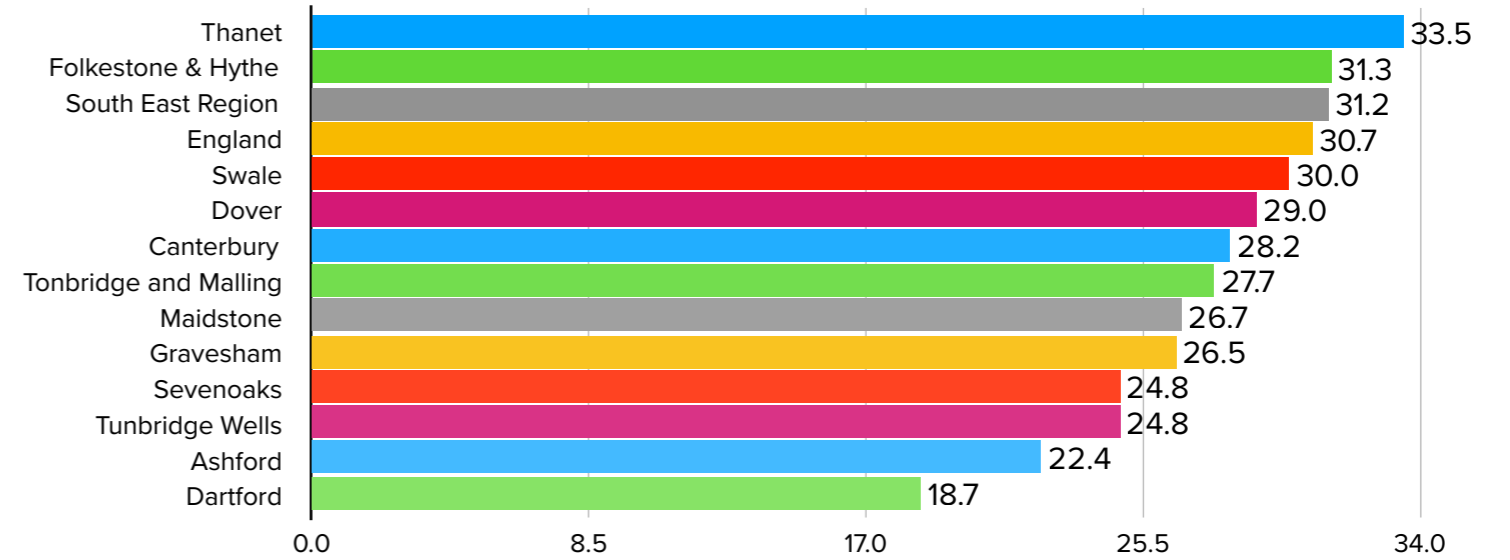
Prevalence of overweight Year 6 children (Including obesity) (2019-20)



Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

However, the rate of alcohol-specific hospital stays among under 18s in the district is above the average across England with 31.3 per 100,000 recorded, compared with 30.7 per 100,000 nationally. The graph below sets out how Folkestone & Hythe compares with other Kent Local Authority areas:

Hospital Stays for alcohol specific conditions per 100,000 - Under 18s (2017-19)

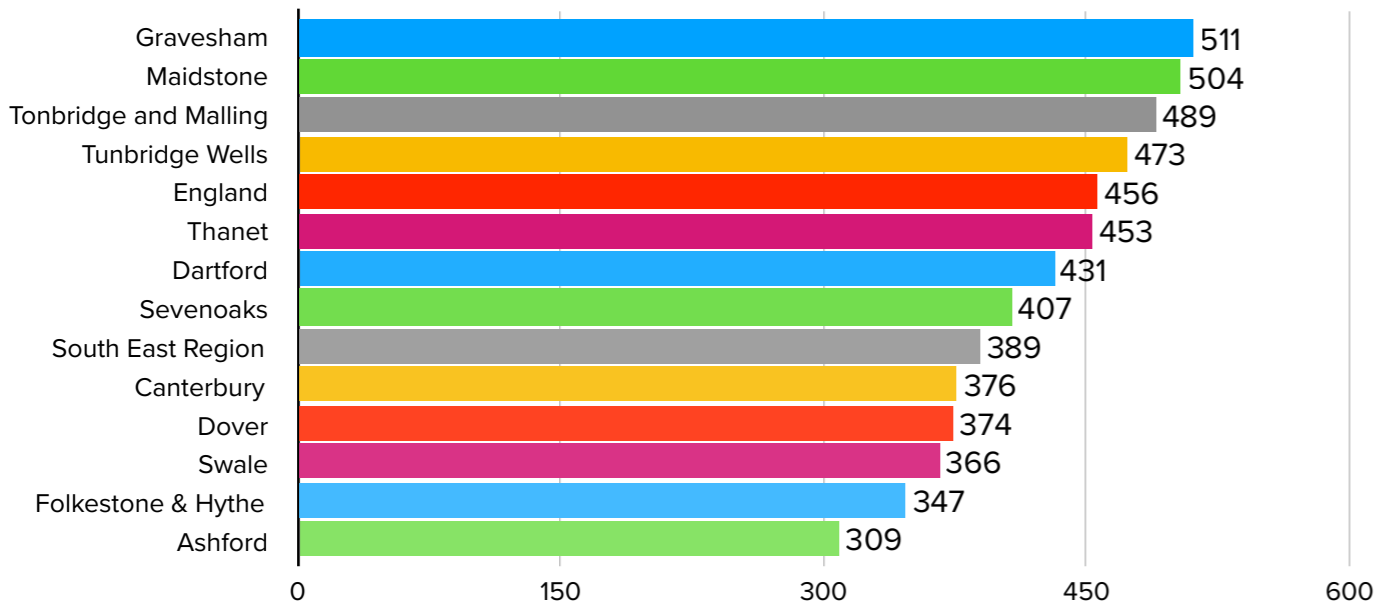


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Alcohol-related hospital admissions

The rate of alcohol-related harm hospital admissions for adults is better than the average across England with 347 per 100,000 recorded in the district during 2020-21, compared with 456 per 100,000 in nationally.

Alcohol Related Harm - Hospital admissions per 100,000 (2020-21)

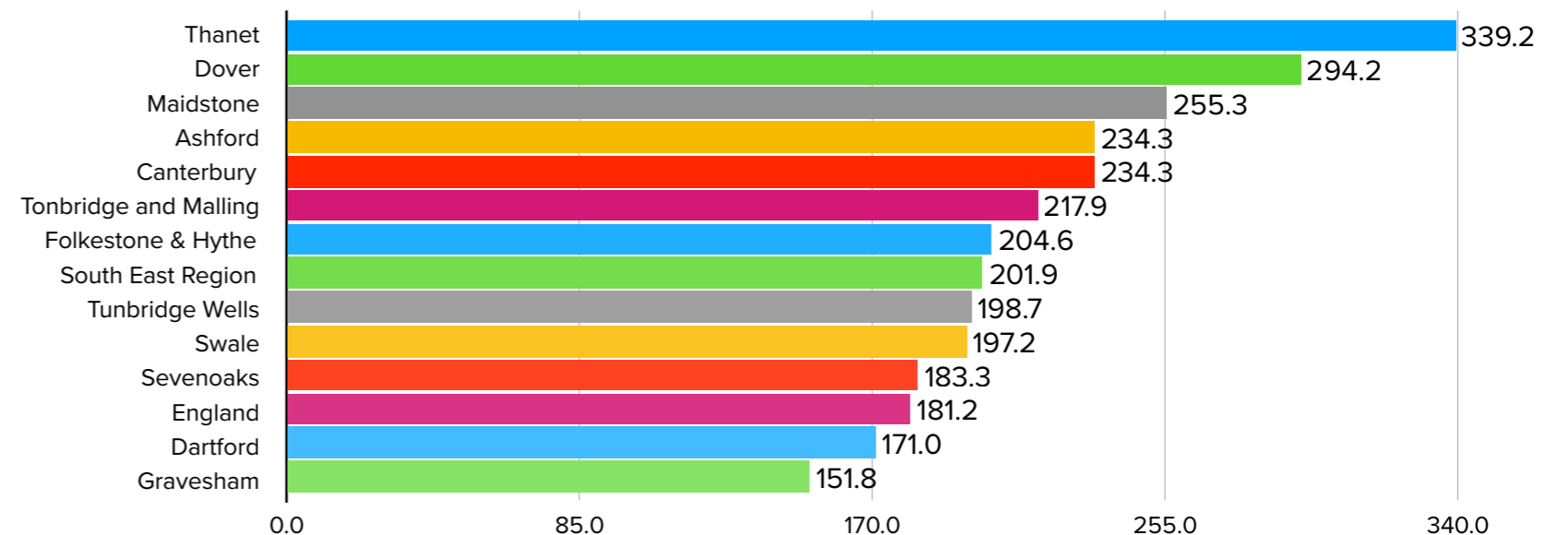


Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

Emergency Hospital Admissions for intentional Self-Harm

The number of emergency hospital admissions for intentional self-harm in the district in 2020/21 was 204.6 per 100,000, which is above both the regional and national average. The graph below sets out how Folkestone & Hythe compares with other Kent Local Authority areas

Emergency Hospital Admissions for intentional Self-Harm per 100,000 (2020-21)

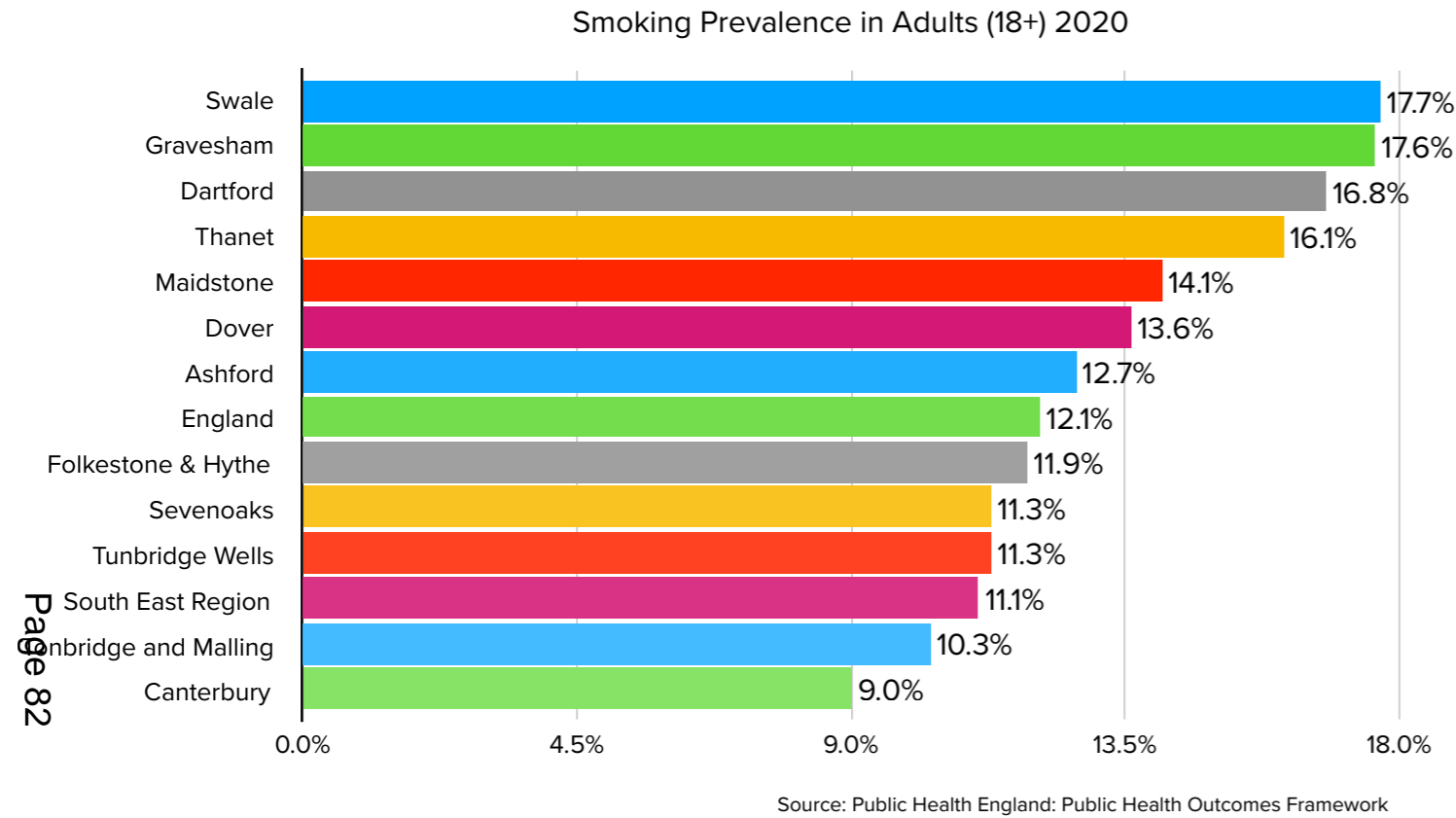


Source: Public Health England: Public Health Outcomes Framework

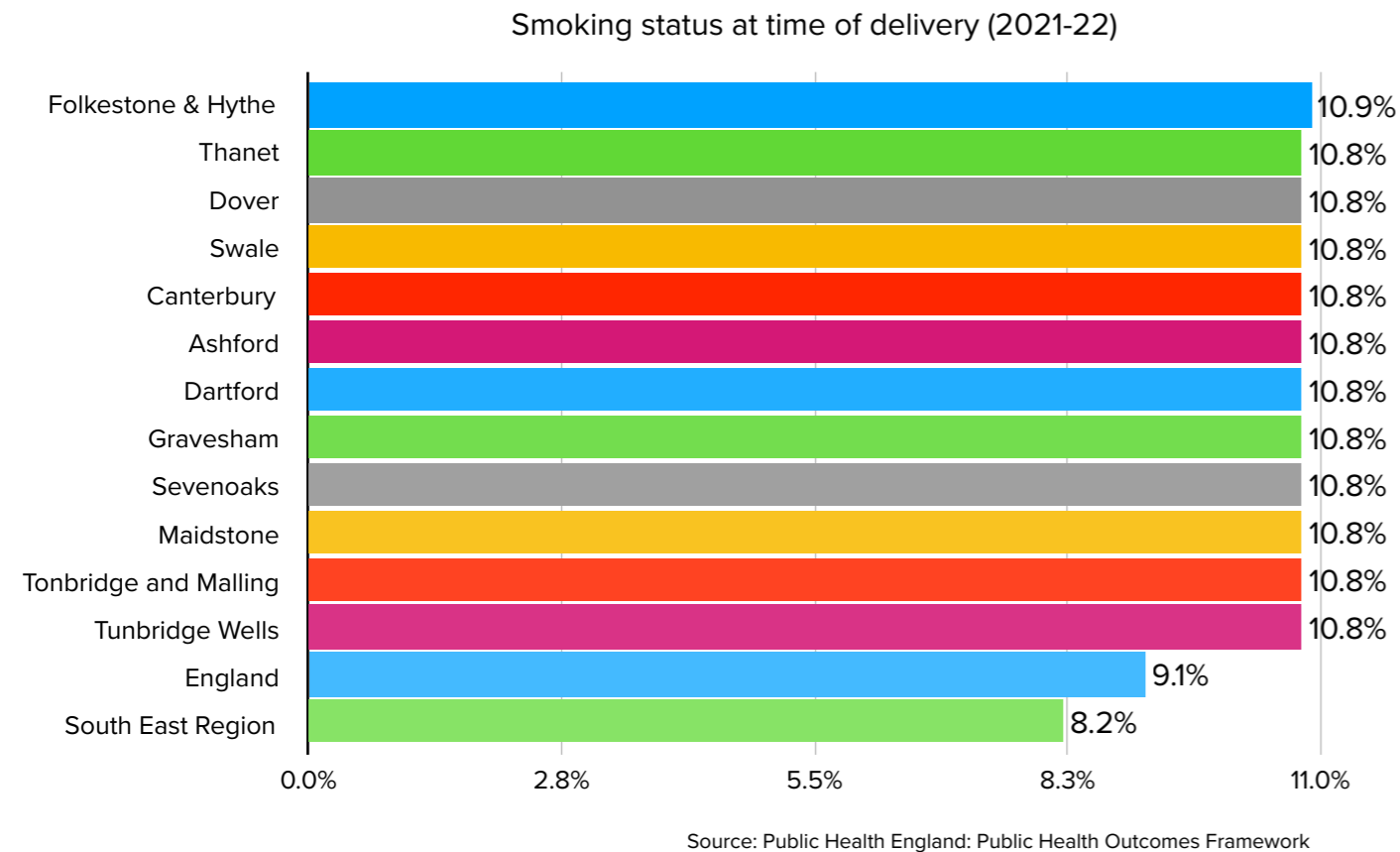
04 Understanding our Communities

Smoking

11.9% of those over the age of 18 are smokers. However, those smoking at the time of delivery (a determinant of child health) is significantly worse than average.

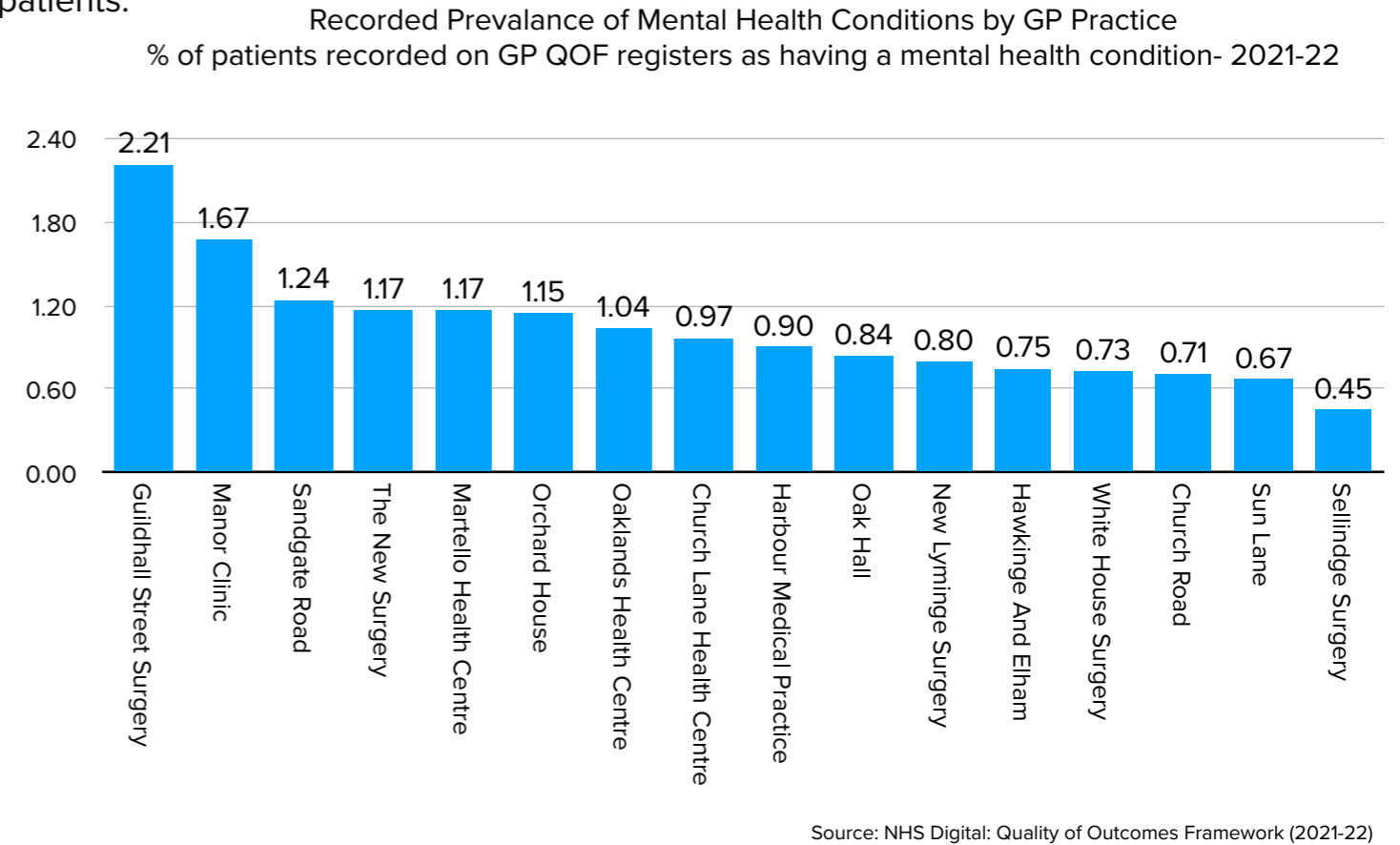


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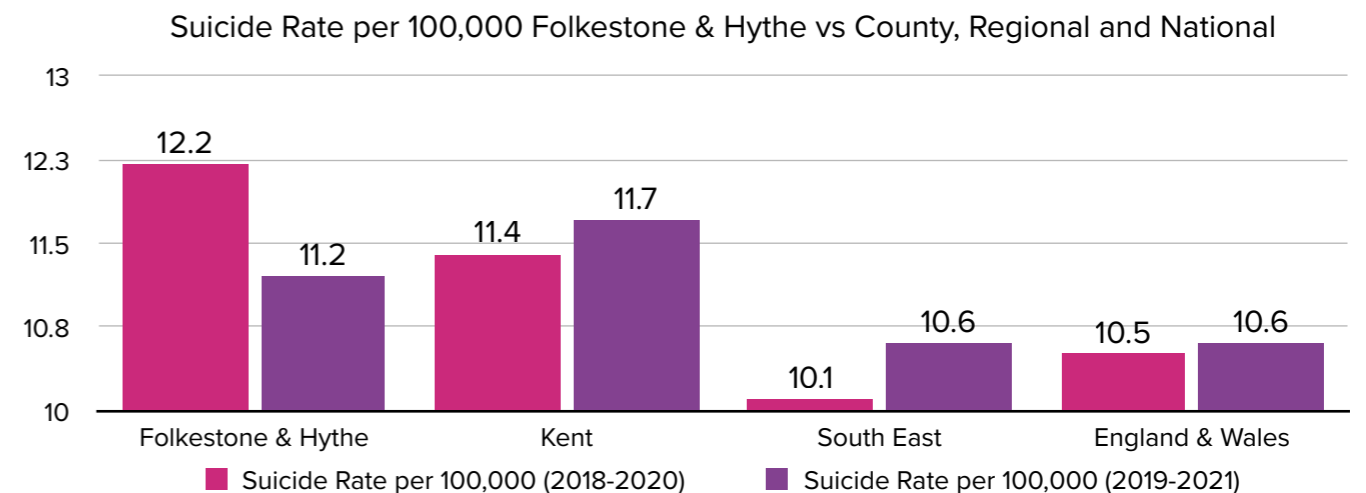


Mental Health and Suicide

The prevalence of mental health conditions in 2021-22 by GP practice in the graph below shows Guildhall Street Surgery (Folkestone) as recording the highest prevalence (2.21%) and Sellindge Surgery recording the lowest (0.45%) on the register of their patients:

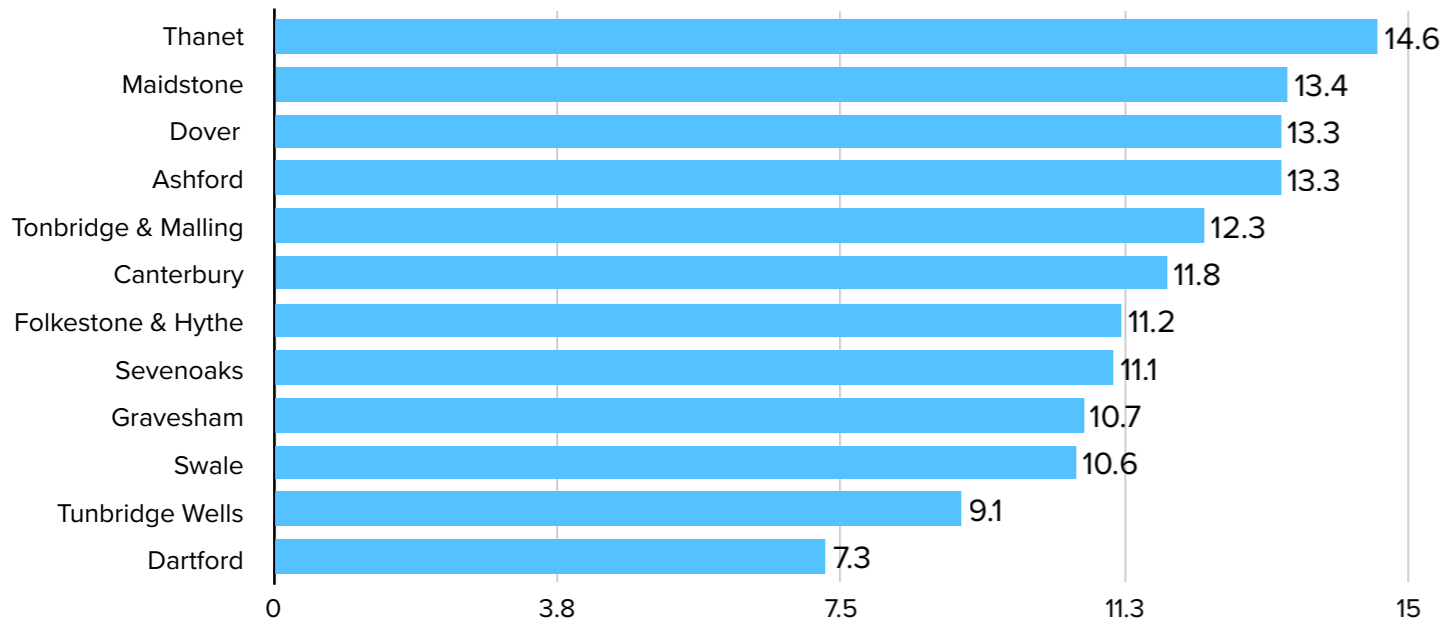


The suicide rate in the district is above the average for Kent, the South East and England & Wales as a whole. Data for the period from 2019 to 2021 recorded by the ONS shows the rate at 11.2 per 100,000 of the population, the seventh highest amongst the Kent districts. The rate across Kent overall was 11.7, 10.6 in the South East and 10.6 nationally (England & Wales).



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Suicides per 100,000 of population by Kent Local Authority Area (2019-21)

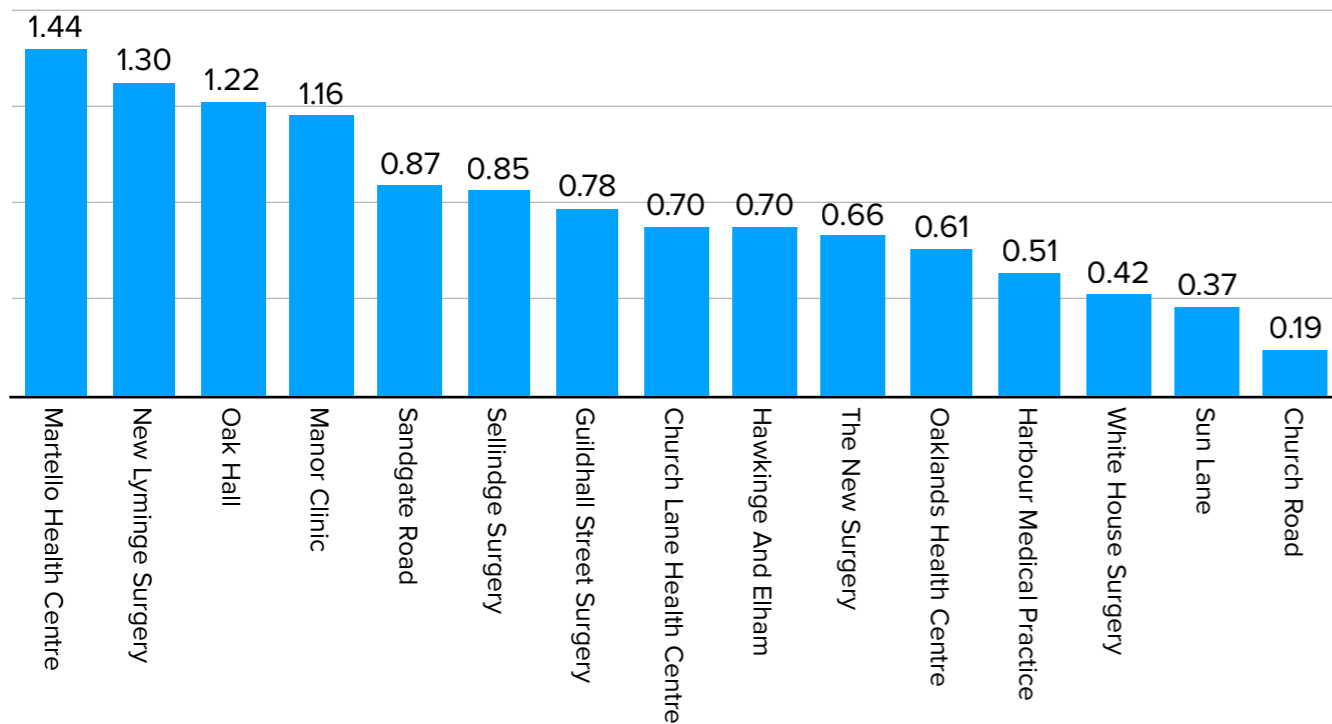


Source: ONS Suicides in England and Wales by Local Authority (2022)

Learning Disabilities

The latest figures recorded in 2021/22 on the prevalence of learning disabilities by GP practice show a variance across the district with the highest at Martello Health Centre in Dymchurch (1.44%) and the lowest at Church Road Surgery in Lyminge (0.19%).

Recorded prevalence of learning disabilities by GP Practice
% of patients recorded on GP QOF registers as having a learning disability - 2021-22

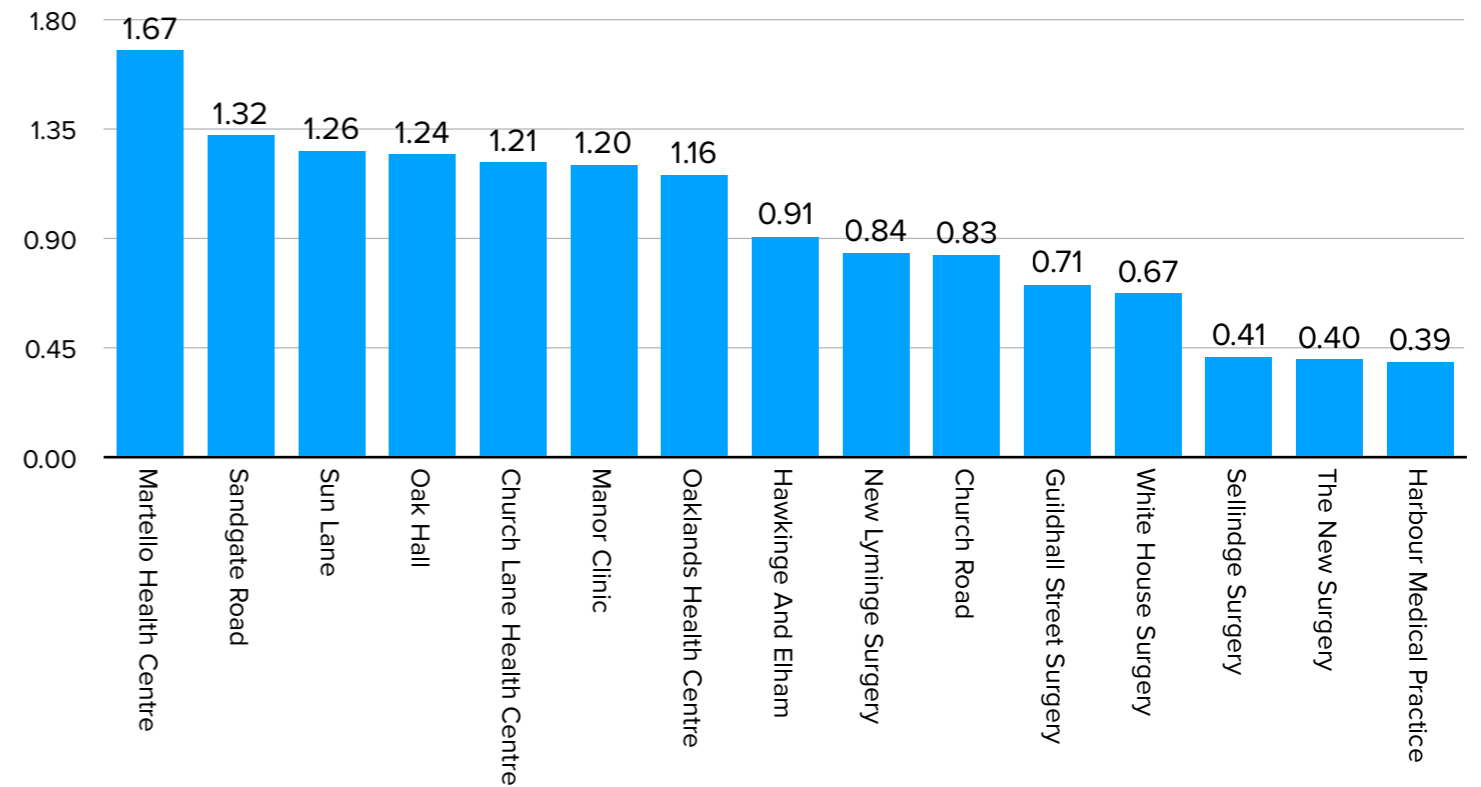


Source: NHS Digital: Quality of Outcomes Framework (2021-22)

Dementia

The latest data recorded in 2021-22 for prevalence of dementia by GP surgeries shows a variance across the district with the highest number being recorded at Martello Health Centre in Dymchurch (1.67%) and the lowest at the Harbour Medical Practice in Folkestone (0.39%).

Recorded dementia prevalence by GP Practice
% of patients recorded on GP QOF registers as having a dementia 2021-22



Source: NHS Digital: Quality of Outcomes Framework (2021-22)

Births & Deaths

In the recent past there have generally been more deaths per year in the district than births. This trend has continued with the latest figures from 2021 showing 978 live births and 1,287 deaths. This is in contrast with the picture for Kent as a whole, where the live birth rate is higher than the death rate.

Source: ONS, Births in England and Wales: Summary Tables, 2021

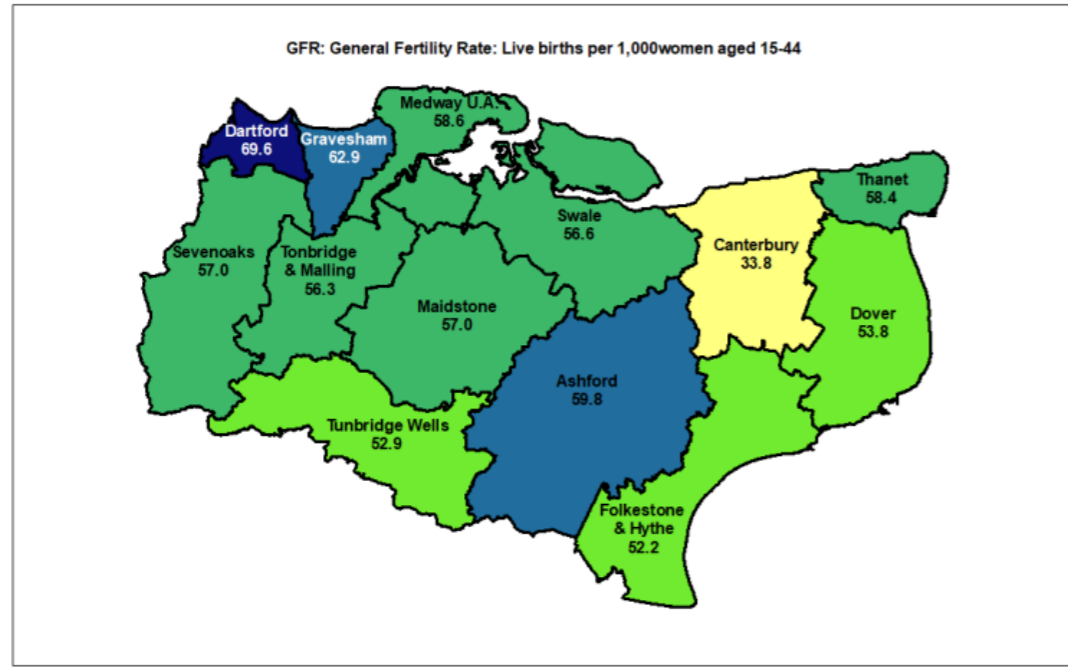
ONS: Deaths registered monthly in England and Wales, 2021

04 Understanding our Communities

General Fertility Rates

The General Fertility Rate (GFR) is the number of live births per 1,000 females aged between 15 and 44.

2020 General Fertility Rate: Local Authority Areas in Kent



This map produced by KentAnalytics, Kent County Council
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In 2020 the GFR for Folkestone & Hythe was measured at 52.2. This is the second lowest rate when compared with other Kent local authority areas in the County (see the map above).

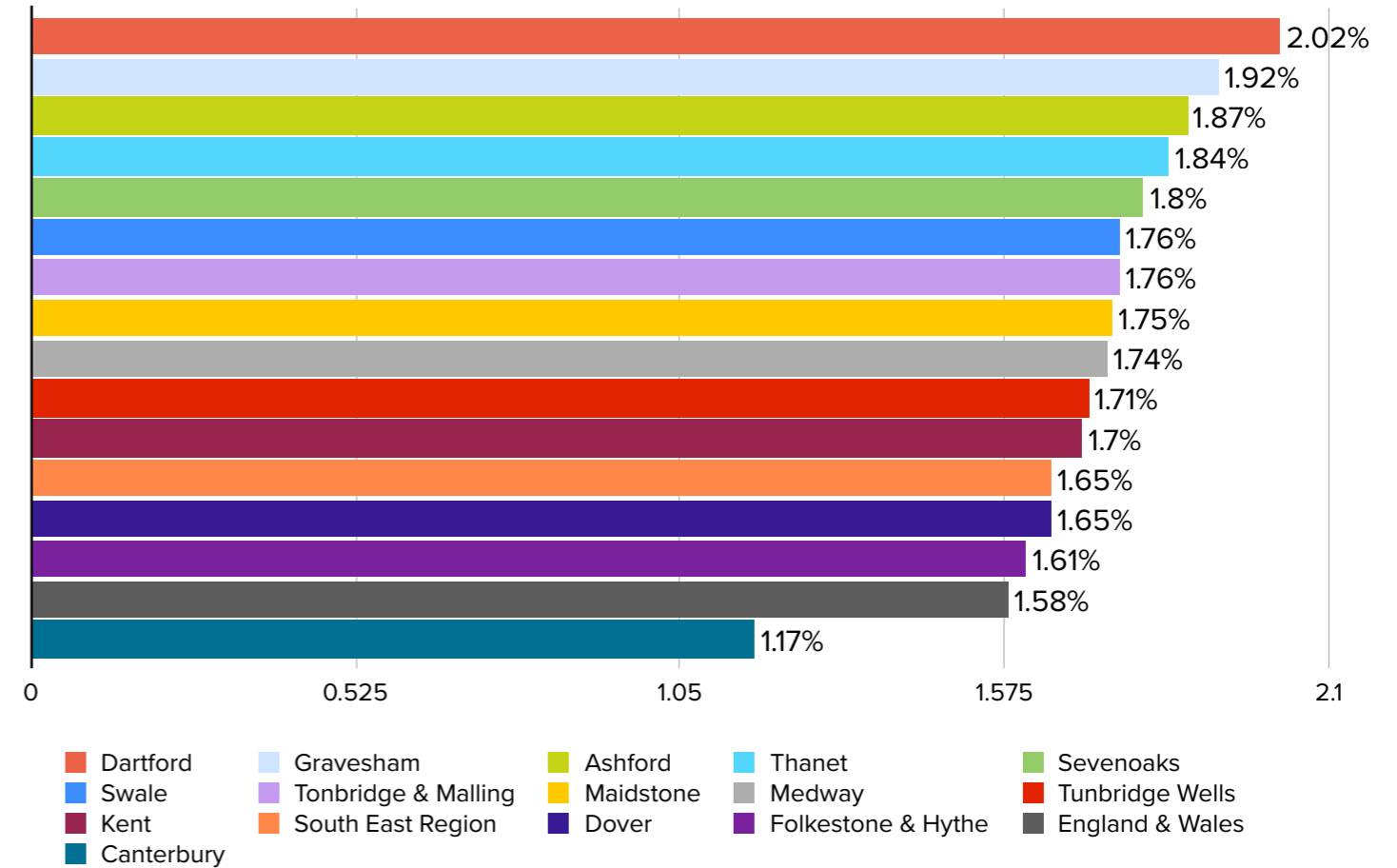
Source: KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin – Births & Deaths in Kent 2020

Total Fertility Rates

The total fertility rate is defined as 'the average number of live children that a group of women would bear if they experienced the age-specific fertility rates of the calendar year throughout their childbearing lifespan'.

Folkestone & Hythe has the second lowest total fertility rates (1.61) in 2020 compared with East Kent local authority areas. The following graph shows the total period fertility rate for the district to be below the Kent (1.70) and South East Region (1.65) averages, but above average for England and Wales (1.58).

TFR Total Period Fertility Rate 2020

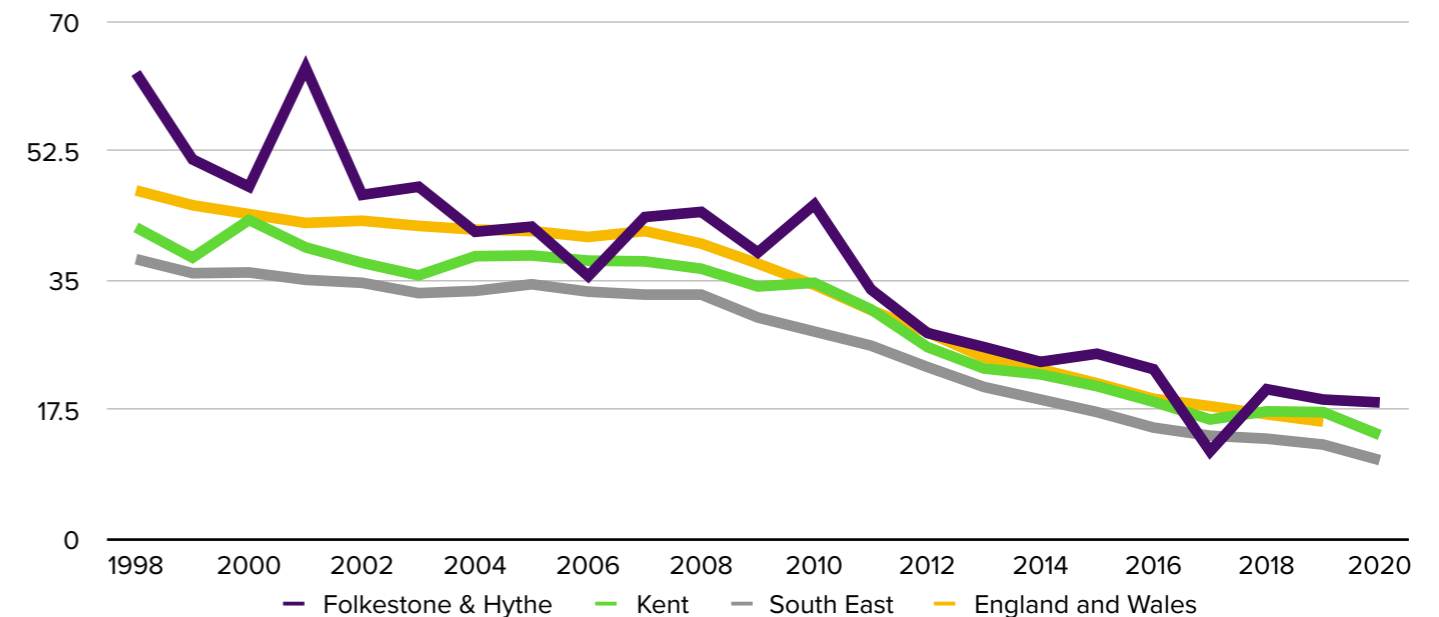


Source: KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin – Births & Deaths in Kent 2020

Teenage Pregnancies:

Under 18 conception rate – An Historical Comparison:

Under 18 Conceptions (Per 1,000 population) 1998-2020

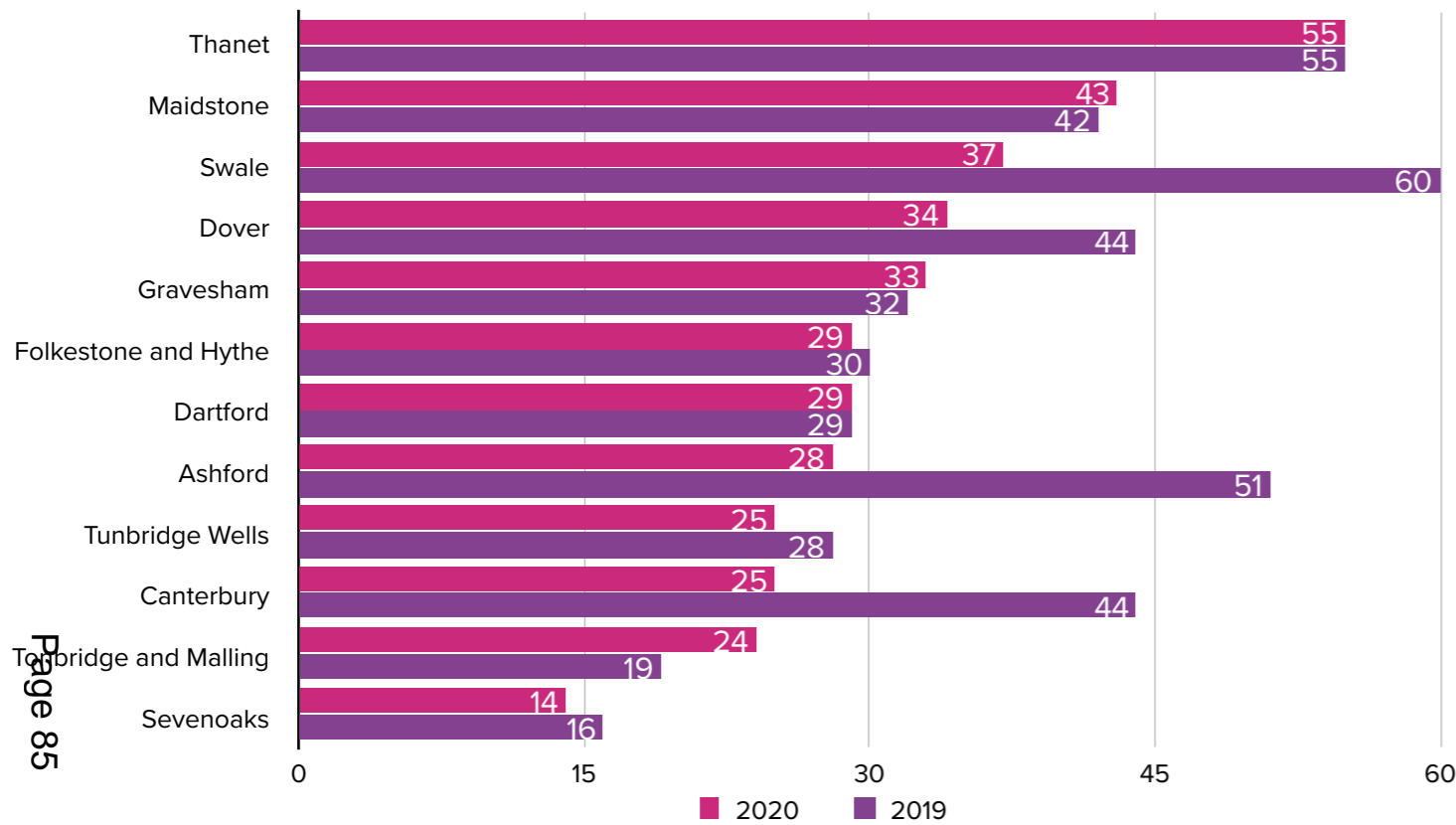


Source: ONS Conception Statistics 2020

04 Understanding our Communities

Teenage Conceptions: A Kent Comparison

Number of under 18 conceptions by Kent local authority area in 2019 vs 2020



Source: ONS Conception Statistics 2020

The latest ONS data on conceptions from 2020 in the above graph shows all Kent local authorities ranked from highest to lowest in terms of under 18 conceptions. Thanet was recorded as having the highest number in 2019 and 2020 with 55 conceptions. Folkestone & Hythe, previously recorded a total of 30 conceptions in 2019, which decreased slightly to 29 in 2020. Sevenoaks recorded the lowest number within the County in 2020.

Life Expectancy

The latest available data from the 2018-2020 period shows the average life expectancy of a Folkestone & Hythe resident to be similar to the national average:

	Folkestone & Hythe	Kent	South East	England
Female	82.9	83.2	84.1	83.1
Male	78.3	79.6	80.5	79.6

Source: ONS: Life expectancies for local areas of the UK: Between 2001-03 and 2018-20

At the age of 65 years, the average female in the Folkestone & Hythe District lives for a further 21.3 years, with the average male living for a further 18.6 years.

Source: ONS: Life expectancies for local areas of the UK: Between 2001-03 and 2018-20

Disability Benefits

11.5% of Folkestone & Hythe residents claim disability benefits, defined as including Disability Living Allowance / Personal Independence Payments or Attendance Allowance. Across all Kent authorities, Thanet (at 12.2%) has the highest percentage of disability benefit claimants. The table below shows the proportion of each age bracket claiming disability benefits and how this compares with county, regional and national figures.

	Folkestone & Hythe	Kent	South East	England & Wales
Overall	11.5%	8.6 %	7.2%	8.7%
0-15	7.2%	6.1%	4.7%	4.8%
16-64	8.3%	6.0%	4.9%	6.1%
65+	21.5%	18.5%	16.2%	20.8%
Young People (24 and under)	7.5%	6.0%	4.6%	4.7%

Source: KCC District Profile/ DWP, February 2022

There are a number of reasons why people may claim disability benefit and people may claim for more than one condition. Looking at why people in Folkestone & Hythe district claimed the benefit, figures show that 63.5% of disability benefit claimants in the district claim due to a physical disability, and in addition 17.5% of the total also claimed for a mental health condition, and 14.7% of the total due to a learning difficulty.

People Providing Unpaid Care

Age Range	Percentage
65 and over	24.8%
16-64	72.9%
0-15	2.3%

04 Understanding our Communities

Percentage of age groups claiming carers allowance

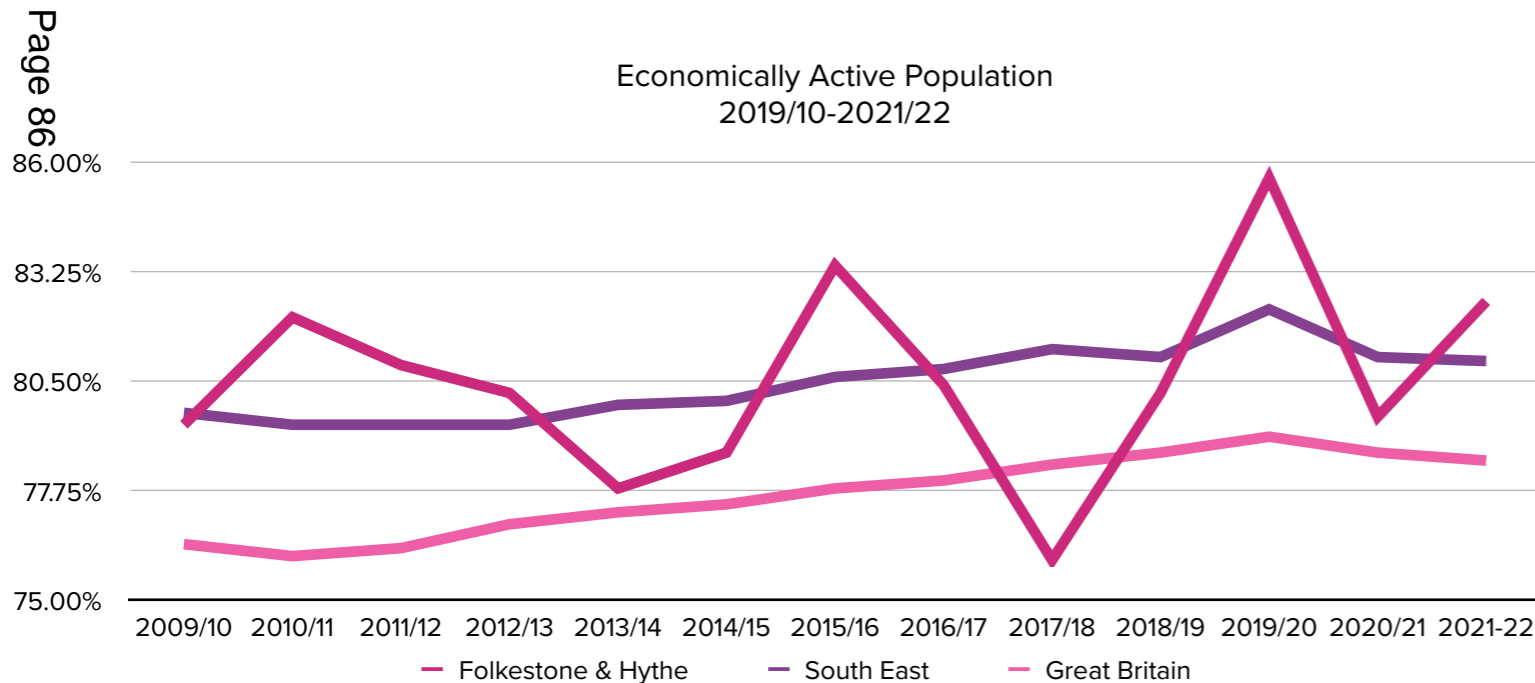
Age Range	Folkestone & Hythe	Kent	Great Britain
16-24	0.9%	0.7%	0.7%
25-64	3.6%	3.0%	2.8%
65 and over	2.5%	2.2%	2.7%

Source: KCC District Profile/ DWP Longitudinal Study, February 2022

Economic Profile

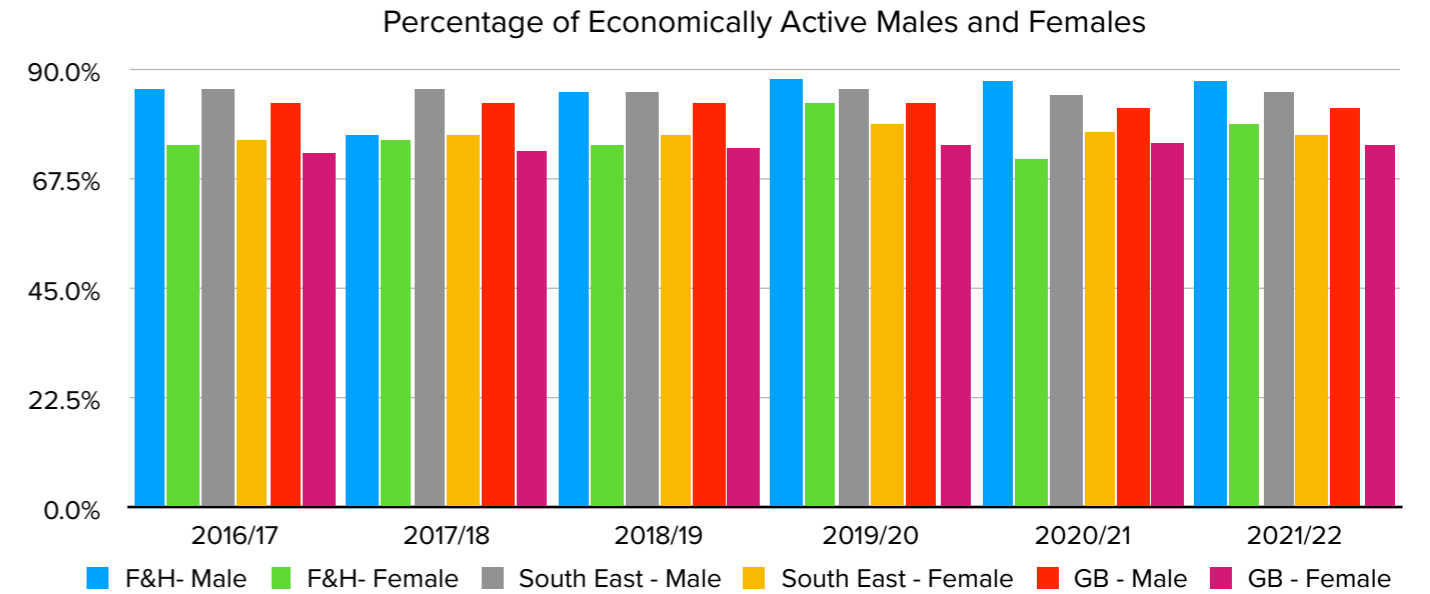
Labour Supply & Economic Activity

In 2021-22, 82.5% of those aged between 16 and 64 were 'economically active', defined as 'either in employment or unemployed and available for and actively seeking work' compared with 79.6% in 2020-21.



Source: NOMIS

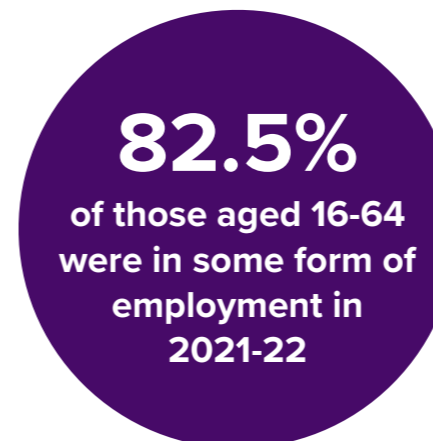
There has historically been some differential between the proportion of economically active men and women. In 2016/17 for example, 85.9% of males were economically active in comparison to 74.8% of females. In 2021-22, both the proportion of economically active females increased slightly to 78.7% and the proportion of economically active males increased to 87.5%. The following graph shows the trend for the previous five years:



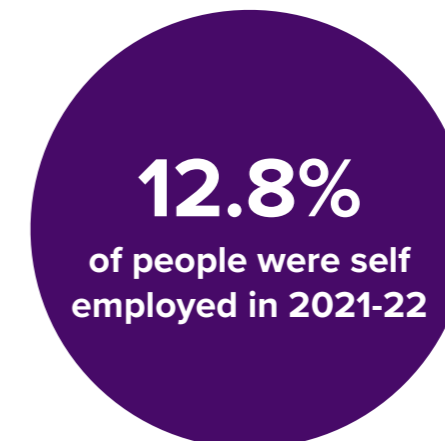
Source: NOMIS

In 2021/22, 82.5% of those aged 16-64 were in some form of employment. The majority of people aged 16-64 who were classed as employees increased from 65.5% in 2020/21 to 67.1% in 2021/22. The number of those classed as self-employed has decreased from a high of 20.8% in 2019/20 to 11.9% in 2020/21 as a likely result of the pandemic. In 2021-22, the figure has increased slightly to 12.8%.

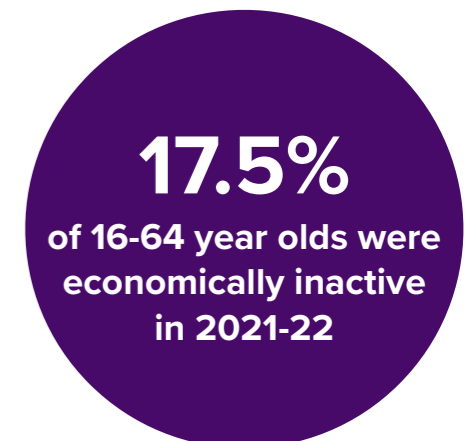
The proportion of residents classed as 'economically inactive' has shown a decrease this year. In 2021/22 17.5% of those aged 16-64 were unavailable to work because of family commitments, retirement or study, or unable to work through sickness or disability compared with 19.5% in 2020/21. The figure for 2021/22 is now below the average when compared to the south east (19%), and below the average for Great Britain as whole (21.5%).



Source: NOMIS



Source: NOMIS



Source: NOMIS

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Employment by Occupation: Proportion of those in Employment in 2022

	Folkestone & Hythe	South East	Great Britain
Soc 2010 major group 1-3	51.8%	55.9%	51.4%
1 Managers, directors and senior officials	11.8%	12.7%	10.3%
2 Professional occupations	21.0%	27.1%	25.8%
3 Associate professional & technical	16.1%	15.8%	15.0%
Soc 2010 major group 4-5	17.0%	18.0%	18.7%
4 Administrative & secretarial	#	10.1%	10.1%
5 Skilled trades occupations	#	7.9%	8.6%
Soc 2010 major group 6-7	16.4%	13.6%	14.6%
6 Caring, leisure and Other Service occupations	#	7.7%	7.9%
7 Sales and customer service occs	#	5.8%	6.6%
Soc 2010 major group 8-9	14.8%	12.5%	15.3%
8 Process plant & machine operatives	!	4.2%	5.7%
9 Elementary occupations	#	8.2%	9.6%

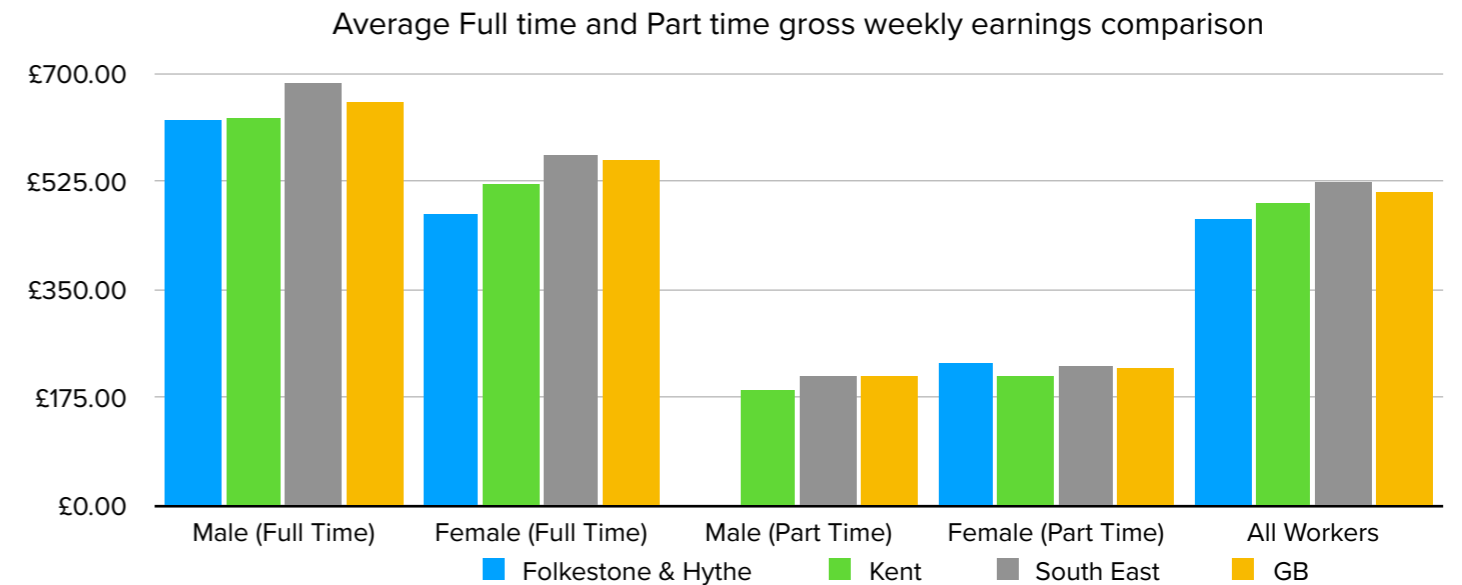
Source: NOMIS

Earnings and Income

The average gross earnings for a Folkestone & Hythe resident are £563.80 per week which is lower than those for the average Kent resident (£631.50 per week), the south east (£646 per week) and Great Britain as a whole (£599.50 per week).

Source: NOMIS, Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings, 2021

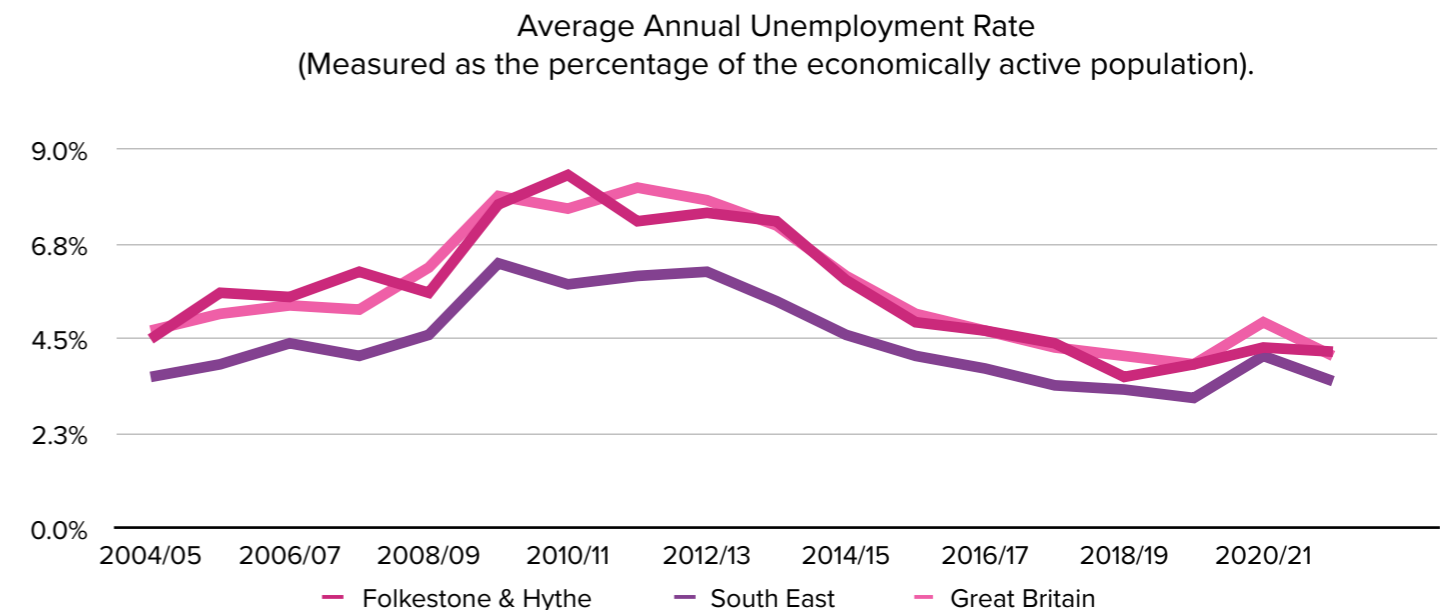
There are, however, variations between the earnings of men and women, and those in full time and part time employment. The graph below sets out these earnings:



Source: NOMIS, Annual Survey of Hours & Earnings, 2021

Unemployment and Working Age Benefits

The unemployment rate in the district has decreased slightly from 4.3% in 2020/21 to 4.2% in 2021/22.



Source: NOMIS

04 Understanding our Communities

Unemployment and Working Age Benefits (continued)

The 'claimant count' is the proportion of those aged 16-64 claiming benefits principally for the reason of being unemployed. At the end of 2021-22 the claimant count recorded a decrease within the district from 7.3% in March 2021 to 4.7% in March 2022. The current count is still higher in comparison to the south east (3.2%) and national average (4.1%). Local, regional and national averages have all shown decreases as a likely result of the COVID 19 restrictions being lifted.

When we consider claimant count by age, there appears to be a higher claimant count amongst 18-21 year olds

Age Range	Folkestone & Hythe	South East	Great Britain
18-24	3.9%	2.9%	3.6%
(of which 18-21)	0.2%	0.1%	0.2%
25-49	6.3%	3.5%	4.6%
50+	6.9%	3.5%	4.7%

Source: NOMIS 2022

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Deprivation

Folkestone & Hythe is a diverse district. Not dissimilar to other local authority areas in East Kent, it has areas that are within the most deprived 10% of England and areas that are within the least deprived 10%.

Source: Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (MHCLG), 2019

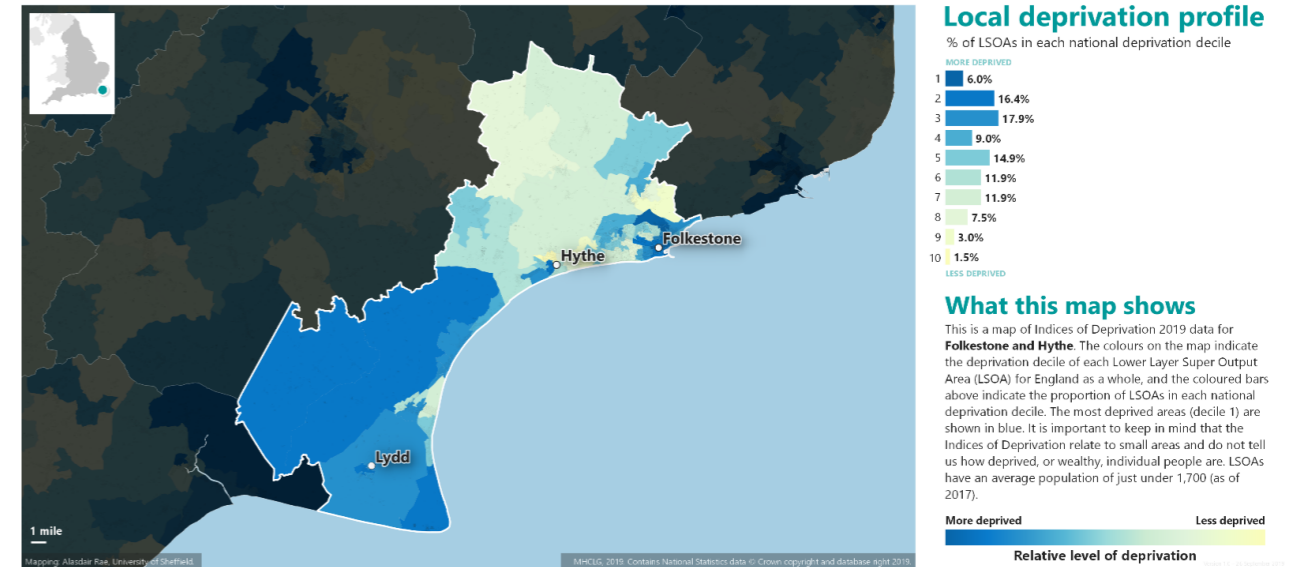
The map below shows the latest indices of multiple deprivation (2019) based on combined data from income, employment, education, skills and training, health deprivation and disability, crime, barriers to housing and services as well as living environment deprivation. The darkest blue areas show the worst deprivation. Data is split into areas generated by the Office for National Statistics based on population size called Lower Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) rather than by electoral ward.

LSOA Definition: Lower-Layer Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are small areas designed to be of a similar population size, with an average of approximately 1,500 residents or 650 households. There are 32,844 Lower-layer LSOAs in England. LSOAs are a standard statistical geography produced by the Office for National Statistics for the reporting of small area statistics.

English Indices of Deprivation 2019

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government

FOLKESTONE AND HYPHE



Above: Map of Folkestone & Hythe showing a 2019 profile of deprivation. Darker coloured areas on the map represent the more deprived areas and lighter coloured areas least deprived.

The table below shows how Folkestone & Hythe compares to other Kent local authority areas in an Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD):

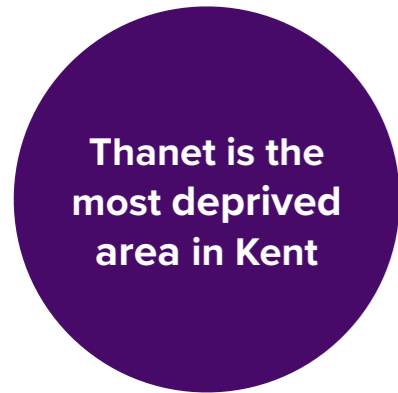
Local Authority	IMD - Rank of average score* (Out of 317 local authorities in England)	Ranking for Deprivation in Kent
Thanet	30	1
Swale	56	2
Folkestone & Hythe	90	3
Dover	113	4
Gravesham	123	5
Dartford	154	6
Ashford	158	7
Canterbury	179	8
Maidstone	185	9
Tonbridge and Malling	234	10
Sevenoaks	251	11
Tunbridge Wells	274	12

Source: Ministry of Housing Communities & Local Government (MHCLG), 2019

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Table Notes

***IMD - Rank of average score:** The average score summary measure is calculated by averaging the Lower Layer Super Output Area (LSOA) scores in each larger area after they have been population weighted. The resultant scores for the larger areas are then ranked, where the rank of 1 (most deprived) is given to the area with the highest score.



Source: MHCLG 2019



Source: : MHCLG 2019



Source: MHCLG 2019

Seven Domains of Deprivation:

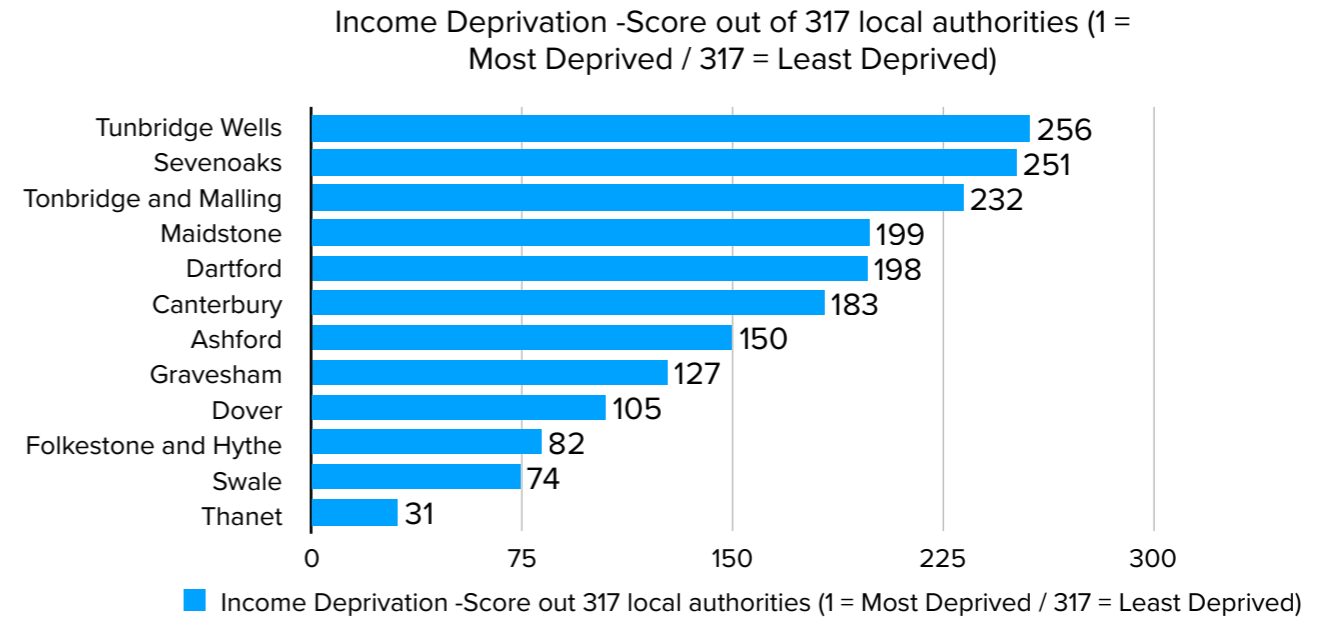
The rank of average score provided to an area is calculated using an area's individual scores across the seven Domains of Deprivation (DoDs):

1. Income
2. Employment
3. Education
4. Health
5. Crime
6. Barriers to housing and services
7. Living environment

Each of the above domains is based on a suite of indicators that are used to calculate an overall ranking for each local authority area.

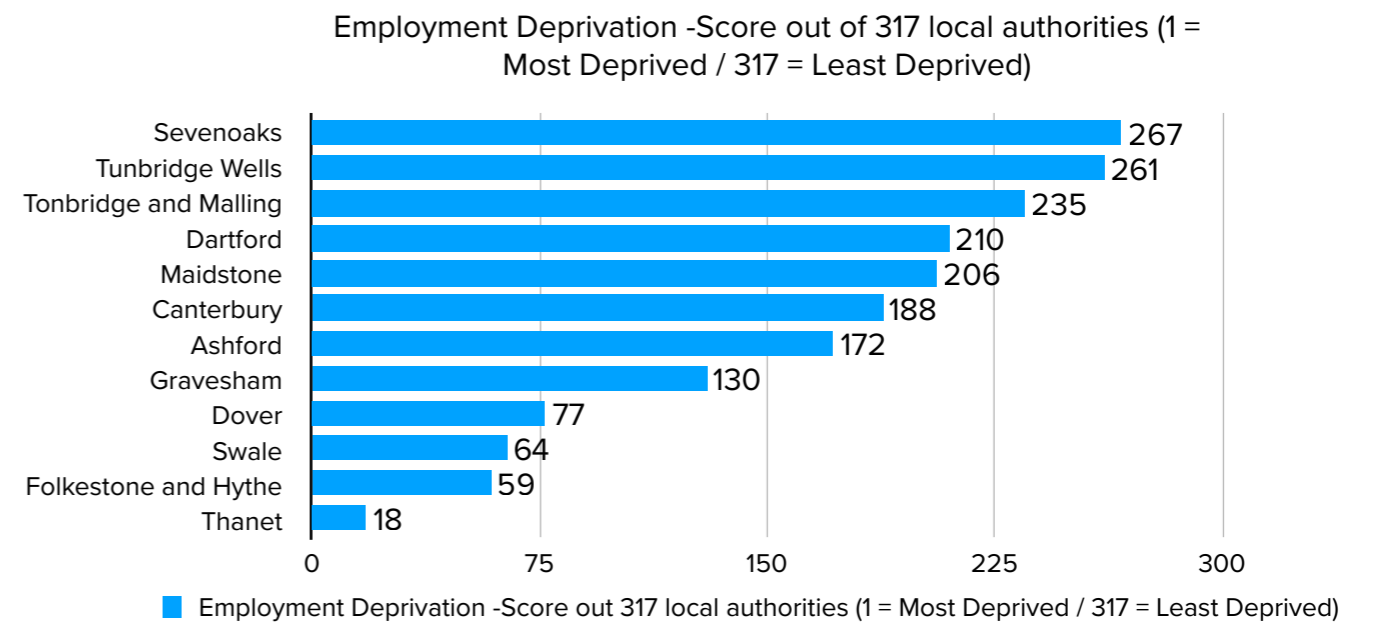
The following graphs show how the district compares with other Kent local authority areas on the Seven DoDs, where the ranking of 1 is classed as 'most deprived' and 317 'least deprived'.

1. Income:



The above graph shows Tunbridge Wells to be the least income deprived and Thanet to be the most income deprived. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the third most deprived for income out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

2. Employment:

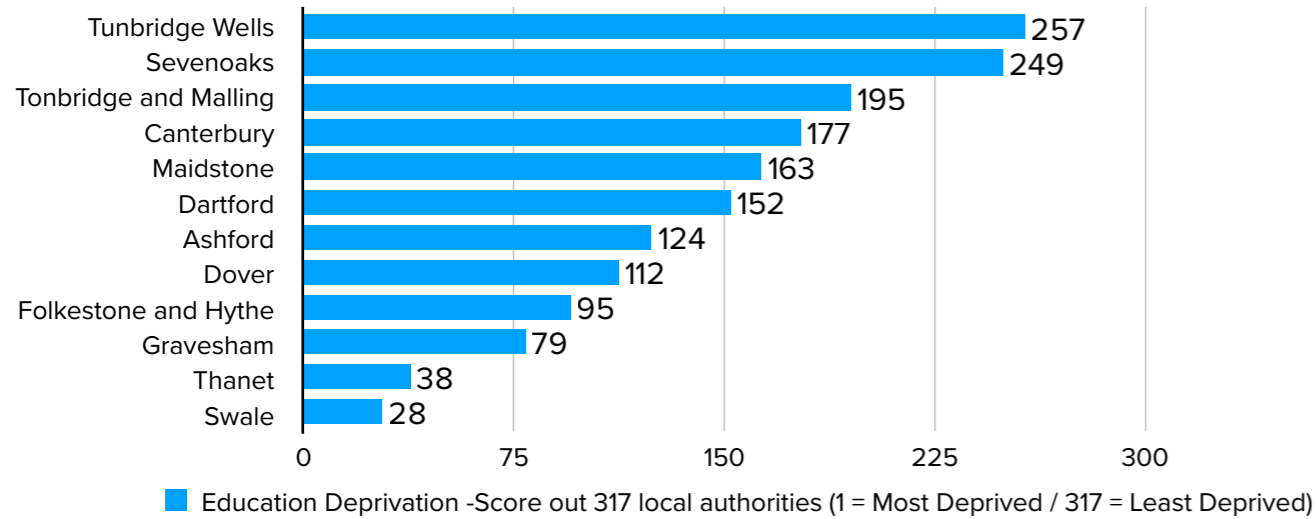


The above graph shows Sevenoaks to be the least employment deprived and Thanet to be the most employment deprived. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the second most deprived for employment out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

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3. Education:

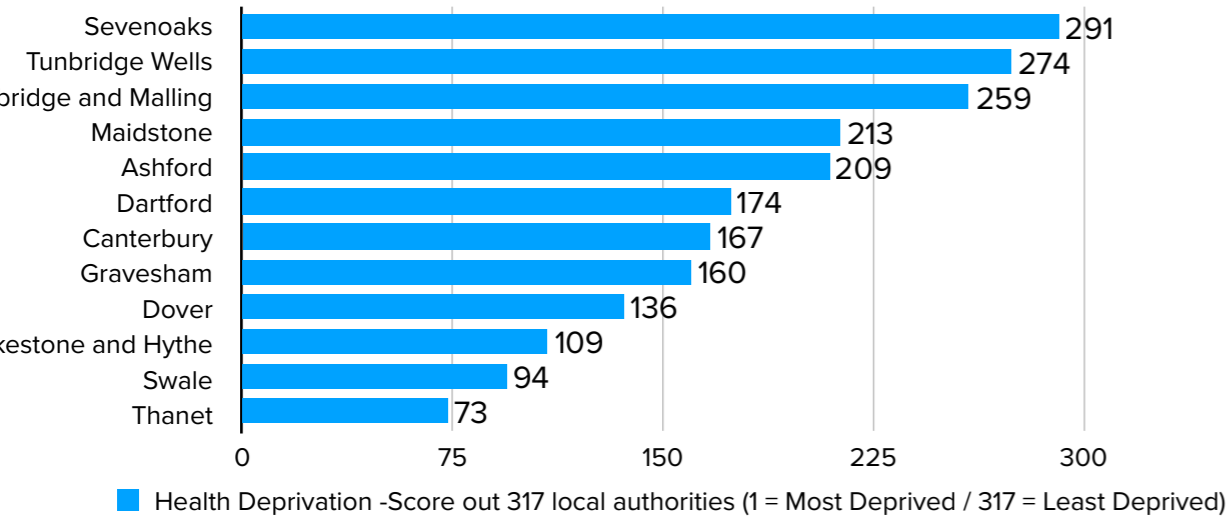
Education Deprivation -Score out of 317 local authorities (1 = Most Deprived / 317 = Least Deprived)



The above graph shows Tunbridge Wells to be the least education deprived and Swale to be the most education deprived. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the fourth most deprived for education out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

4. Health:

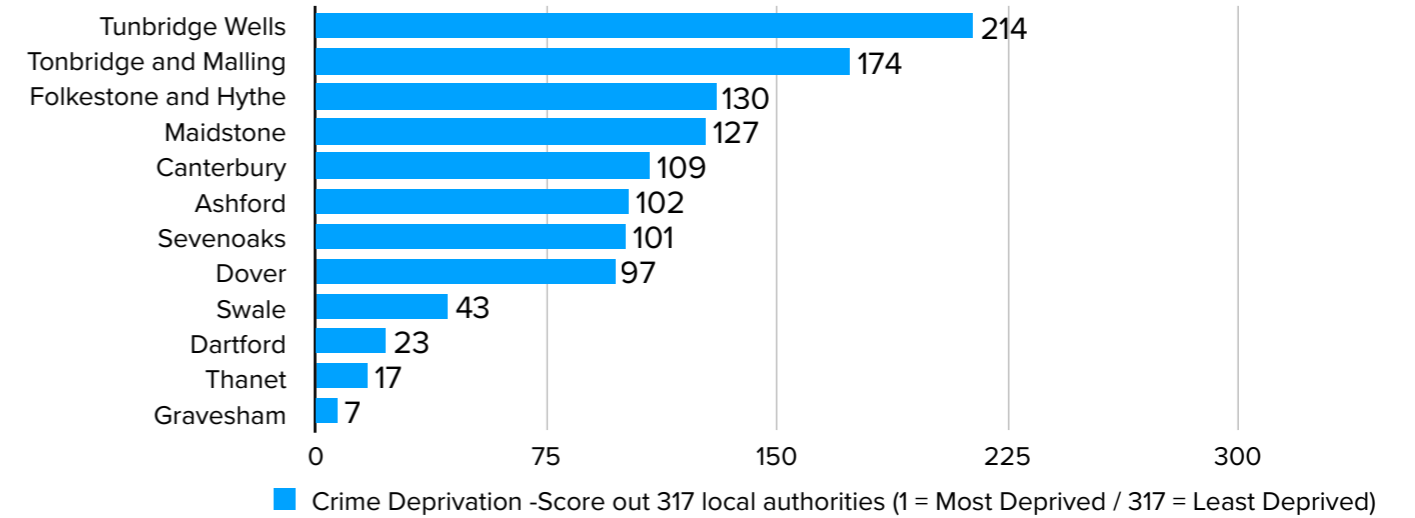
Health Deprivation -Score out of 317 local authorities (1 = Most Deprived / 317 = Least Deprived)



The above graph shows Sevenoaks to be the least health deprived and Thanet to be the most health deprived. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the third most deprived for health out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

5. Crime:

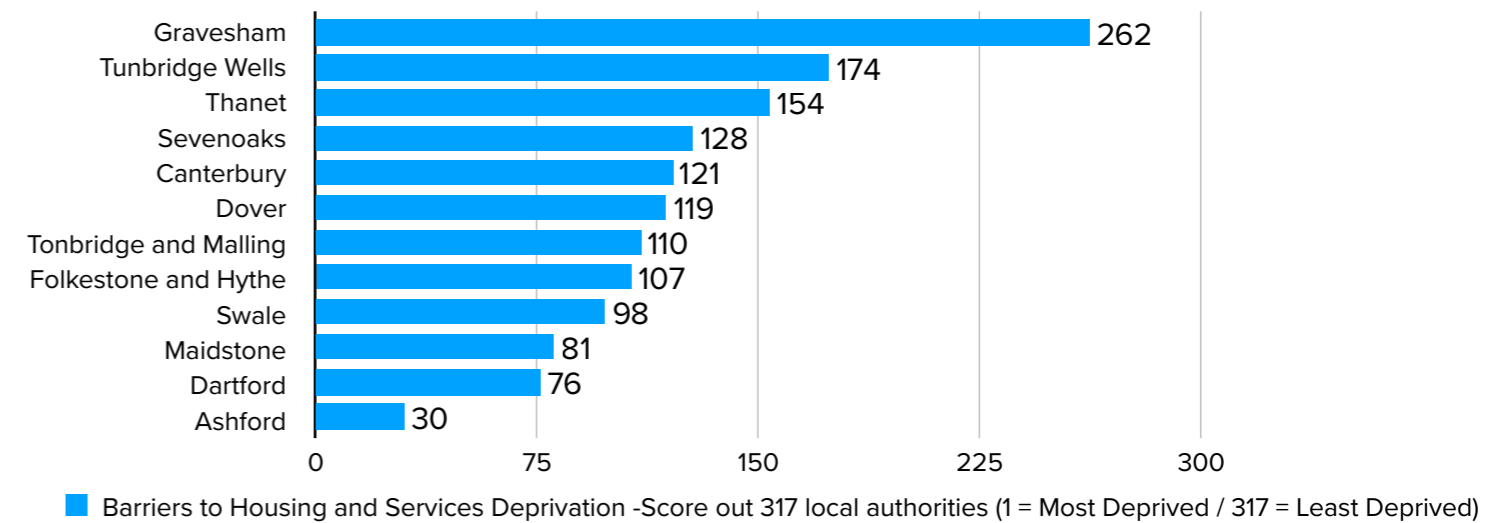
Crime Deprivation -Score out of 317 local authorities (1 = Most Deprived / 317 = Least Deprived)



The above graph shows Tunbridge Wells to be the least crime deprived and Gravesham to be the most crime deprived. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the third least deprived for crime out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

6. Barriers to Housing Services

Barriers to Housing and Services Deprivation -Score out of 317 local authorities (1 = Most Deprived / 317 = Least Deprived)

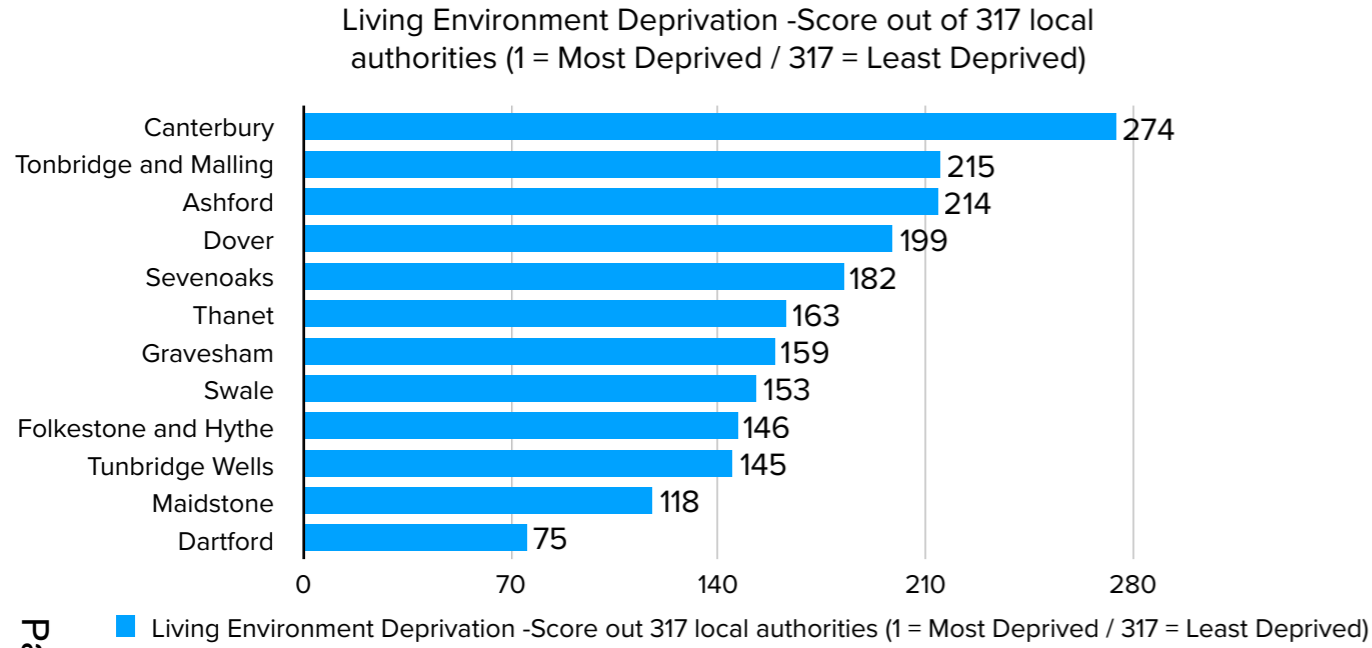


The above graph shows Gravesham to be the least deprived in relation to barriers to housing and services and Ashford to be the most deprived in this area. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the fifth most deprived for barriers to housing and services out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

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Seven Domains of Deprivation (continued):

7. Living Environment:



The above graph shows Canterbury to be the least deprived in relation to Living Environment and Dartford to be the most deprived in this area. Folkestone & Hythe is ranked as the fourth most deprived for living environment out of the twelve Kent local authority areas.

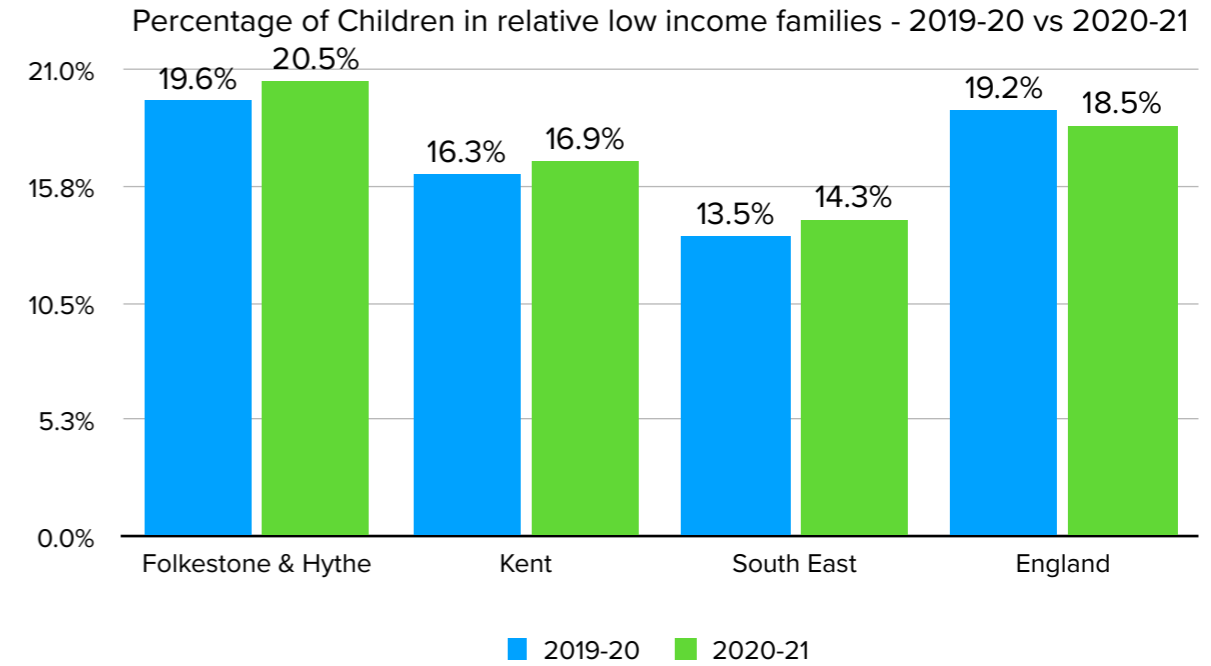
Child Poverty:

Child poverty figures show the proportion of children living in relative low income families.

Relative low income is defined as a family in low income before housing costs in the reference year.

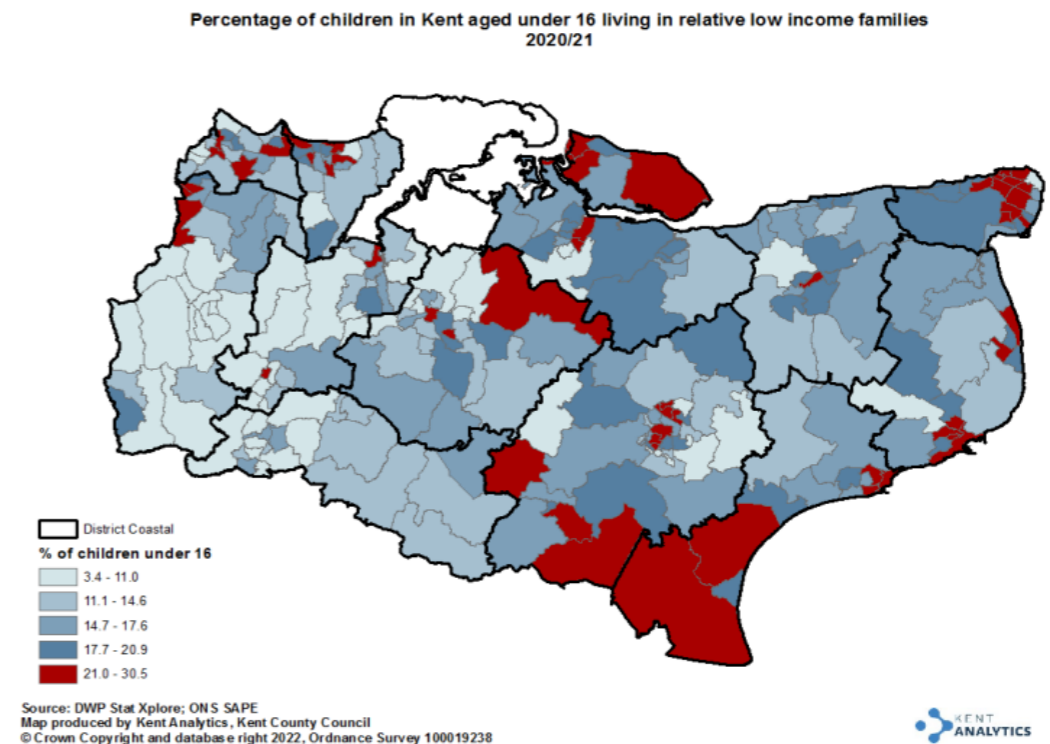
The latest data from 2020/21 shows that 20.5% of children are in relative low income families in Folkestone & Hythe and this is “significantly worse” than the average across Kent and the South East.

The following graph provides a comparison between the 2019/20 and 2020/21 years.



Source: Table 11b KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin 2022 – Children in Poverty

The heat map below shows the percentage of children living in relative low income families across Kent wards in 2020/21. In Folkestone & Hythe, the map shows the highest proportion of children living in relative low income families (shaded in dark red) to be situated in the Folkestone Central, East and Harbour wards as well in the Romney Marsh and Walland and Denge Marsh wards in the western part of the district.



04 Understanding our Communities

Data Sources:

The most up-to-date data at the time of publication has been utilised when compiling this demographic and socio-economic information. Further information can be found at the following sources:

General:

The 2021 district profile, published by Kent County Council's Strategic Business Development & Intelligence Unit on 26th October 2022, contains data from the ONS mid- 2020 population estimates as well as the 2011 census:

[Area profiles - Kent County Council](#)

Population:

Census 2021 (Interactive Maps) - [Census Maps - Census 2021 data interactive, ONS](#)

KCC Interactive mid-year population estimate toolkit: provides access to population estimates by gender and single year of age for all 12 Kent local authority districts and Kent County as a whole back to 2000: https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/excel_doc/0009/12879/Interactive-mid-year-population-estimates-toolkit.xlsm

KCC Housing Led Forecasts Interactive population toolkit (2021):

https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/excel_doc/0019/12880/Interactive-population-forecast-toolkit.xlsm

ONS: Births in England and Wales: Summary Tables (2021)

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/livebirths/datasets/birthsummarytables>

ONS: Deaths Registered monthly in England and Wales (2021)

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/deaths/datasets/monthlyfiguresondeathsregisteredbyareaofusualresidence>

ONS: Conception Statistics – England and Wales (2019)

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/birthsdeathsandmarriages/conceptionandfertilityrates/datasets/conceptionstatisticsenglandandwalesreferencetables>

ONS: Life expectancy for local areas of the UK: between 2001 to 2003 and 2018 to 2020 [Life expectancy for local areas of the UK - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

KCC Births and Deaths in Kent - 2020

https://www.kent.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0003/13827/Births-and-deaths-bulletin.pdf

Labour market profiles of the district are constantly updated by the ONS National Online Manpower Information System (NOMIS): <http://www.nomisweb.co.uk/reports/lmp/la/1946157318/printable.aspx>

NOMIS: annual survey of hours and earnings (2021)

<https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/datasets/asher>

Health:

Public Health England's [-Public Health Outcomes Framework \(Folkestone & Hythe\) - at a glance summary \(phe.org.uk\)](#)

KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin 2022 – Children Poverty:

[Children in Poverty 2022 \(kent.gov.uk\)](#)

[Suicides in England and Wales by local authority \(2022\) - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](#)

[Quality and Outcomes Framework, 2021-22 - NHS Digital](#)

Deprivation: Ministry of Housing Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) - English indices of multiple deprivation 2019

<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

Section 5

Compliments, Feedback and Complaints

Introduction

In this section we provide an outline of the comments we have received from customers relating to equality and diversity matters.

The council records compliments, feedback and complaints received from customers. These are categorised, analysed and reported on so that improvements can be made to services.

Further information can be found at: <https://folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/your-council/council-information/make-a-complaint-or-compliment>

05 Compliments, Feedback and Complaints

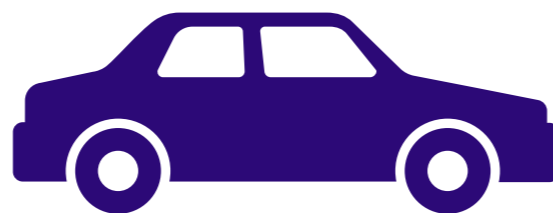
Compliments, Feedback and Complaints - Overview in 2021-22:

During 2021-22 the council received 364 complaints and 190 compliments. Of the 364 complaints received:



Stage One complaints are investigated and responded to by the complaints investigator or the specialist of the relevant service area. If the complainant is not satisfied with the response their complaint will be progressed to Stage Two, where it is investigated by the senior officer of the service area to which the complaint relates.

Of the 364 complaints received, two were related to equality and diversity issues. The nature of the complaints related to:



Parking permit process discriminates against those who do not have access to a computer



Online services not being usable due a disability

Section 6

Equality Objectives

Introduction

In this Annual Equality and Diversity Report we have given an overview of the issues affecting the district, the policies and procedures the council has in place and the work we are doing, on our own and with our partners to address these issues.

The Equality and Diversity Policy (2021-25) guides this work and has an associated action plan. The final section provides an update on these actions.

06 Equality Objectives

	Action	Lead Function	Deadline	2021-22 update
	1. Ensuring Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are completed where they are required (i.e. where the council introduces a new policy or service, or where there is a significant revision to an existing policy or service) and that they are carried out in the correct manner (e.g. with appropriate consultation with affected parties).	Performance and Improvement Specialist	Ongoing	EIAs are documented as part of the service planning process annually and managers complete EIAs when a policy or service is introduced or revised. The EIAs undertaken during the year have been documented in section 2 of this report.
	2. To introduce a dedicated complaints report that will focus on equality related issues that arise under the council's corporate complaints policy and will reported to the Corporate Leadership Team on a six month basis to assist with identifying and addressing any equality related issues within a council service.	Case Management	Ongoing	The dedicated complaints report now also includes specific reference to any complaints regarding equality related issues. These are easily identifiable for reporting purposes on the council's internal IT platform. Any complaints regarding this are considered accordingly and the necessary steps taken regarding improvements, changes in policies/procedures etc.
Page 96	Involving services users and local communities (including people with protected characteristics) in the design of council services.	All Service Leads	Ongoing	Housing Online is due to be launched in January 2023. This will sit within our Corporate MyAccount platform and will enable tenants to self-serve. A wide range of tenants are currently testing the test build and their feedback will be taken into account before the build is finalised
	All managers undertaking stage 2 EIA exercise will consult appropriately and publish the results.	All Service Leads	As required	No Stage 2 EIAs required to be completed during the year.
	4. Routinely publishing the result of consultation exercises on the council website and disaggregating the results (where possible) for different equality groups.	All Service Leads	As required	During the year, the council undertook the following public consultations to encourage local people to have their say helping to assess what impact proposed decisions will have on different groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Core Strategy Review Main Modifications • Proposals for parking controls to be introduced in the East Cliff Gardens, The Durlocks, Wear Bay Road area, Folkestone. • Proposals for the extension of controlled parking zone G1 to include Seagrave Road etc. • Proposals for parking controls to be introduced in Seawall, Dymchurch • New Dog Control Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) 2022-2025 • Renewal of the Anti-social behaviour (ASB) Public Spaces Protection Order 2022-2022

06 Equality Objectives

	Action	Lead Function	Deadline	2021-22 update
Page 9 of 10	5. Run training for staff on the particular issues faced by minority and vulnerable groups to support them to deliver appropriate services to ALL customers (e.g. Dementia awareness).	Organisational Development	Ongoing	<p>Our focus this year has been on mental health and how it impacts staff and customers. This includes: men’s mental health; self-harm awareness, post-natal depression awareness, schizophrenia awareness and understanding phobias for the Revenues and Benefits team, and hoarding training for those in Housing.</p> <p>We now have 46 Mental Health First Aiders (9% of our workforce) so that we can better support those customers struggling due to the pandemic or other pressures they may be under.</p> <p>We have also had training on gender identity and menopause, understanding & supporting customers with serious illnesses.</p>
	To ensure councillors and staff receive regular updates on Prevent, Safeguarding vulnerable people and partnership working as part of the council’s wider role.	Community Safety Specialist Health, Wellbeing & Partnerships Senior Specialist	Ongoing	<p>This work has been undertaken in various ways including councillor meetings to look at PREVENT and safeguarding.</p> <p>The Safeguarding policy reviews allows members to also receive updates. Information is cascaded to key staff. Management meetings and staff briefings have also allowed for sharing of information.</p>

06 Equality Objectives

	Action	Lead Function	Deadline	2021-22 update
7	Equality and diversity training is part of our induction and for all staff to undertake a mandatory refresh e-learning module every 3 years.	Organisational Development	Ongoing	We continue to require regular equality diversity and inclusion training (EDI). As at November 2022, 87% of staff were up to date with their EDI e-learning. In January we will be pushing for further completion.
8.	Increase options for customers to connect and transact with us online to help focus resources on supporting customers who are not able to go online as defined within the council's Customer Access Strategy.	All Service Leads	Ongoing	<p>As above, Housing Online. This will alleviate resource pressures to ensure that those who are more vulnerable or have more complex enquiries can contact us easily via other methods.</p> <p>Customers are encouraged and supported to sign up and transact with us through the MyAccount online service. Up to March 2022 30,143 of residents had signed up for this service. Customers can also contact us through our web chat service. Customers are supported to use the self-serve tablets if required in the Customer Access Point.</p>

06 Equality Objectives

	Action	Lead Function	Deadline	2021-22 Update
9.	Produce a ‘Resident Involvement Strategy’, ensuring that involved residents reflect the diversity of the council’s tenants and leaseholders.	Housing Operations Lead Specialist	March 2021	The Tenant Engagement Strategy was updated in May 2022, detailing the particulars of engagement activity including, amongst other things, the set up of the Strategic Tenants Advisory Panel (STAP) as well as other forums, groups and tenant champions.
10.	We will continue to evaluate our resourcing strategies, maximise accessible development opportunities, and promote flexible working approaches to support equality and diversity in our workforce.	Human Resources	Ongoing	<p>The council’s agile working framework was launched in June 2021 alongside a set of principles to better enable flexible working approaches.</p> <p>The council’s People Strategy was also launched in 2021 to support a culture that, amongst other things, supports smarter agile & flexible working. The review and development of our recruitment and retention strategies is also a theme within our People Strategy.</p> <p>Recording of training sessions has advanced accessibility as they can be viewed at any time. The development of hybrid training sessions in 2022/23 will further advance this.</p> <p>Planning for specific management training on recruitment and selection strategies and practices took place in 2021/22 and was delivered in May 2022.</p>



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This Report will be made public on 14 March 2023



Report Number **C/22/102**

To: Cabinet
Date: 22nd March 2022
Status: Non-Key Decision
Director: Amandeep Khroud – Assistant Director:
Governance and Law
Cabinet Member: Councillor David Monk, Leader and Cabinet Member
for Finance

SUBJECT: QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022/23

SUMMARY: This report provides an update on the Council's performance for the third quarter of the year covering 1st October 2022 – 31st December 2022. The report enables the Council to assess progress against the approved key performance indicators arising from the Council's new Corporate Action Plan.

Key performance indicators will be monitored during 2022-23 and reported to CLT and Members quarterly.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) The Council is committed to monitoring performance across all of its corporate service ambitions to ensure progress and improvement is maintained.
- b) The Council needs to ensure that performance is measured, monitored and the results are used to identify where things are working well and where there are failings and appropriate action needs to be taken.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/22/102.
2. To note the performance information for Quarter 3 2022-23 in Appendix 1.
3. To consider the recommendation of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee from their meeting held on 7 March, as set out at paragraph 2.5.4 of the report.

1. QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2022-23

- 1.1.1 The Council's corporate plan 'Creating Tomorrow Together' 2021-30 was adopted by Full Council on 24th February 2021 (Report ref: A/20/10).
- 1.1.2 The Corporate Plan is built on 4 key service ambitions and 6 guiding principles. Each service ambition has a number of priority areas identified within it; these priorities will be the focus of Council activity over the remaining period of the three years from 2021 to 2024. The service ambitions are set out below:

Service Ambitions

- Positive Community Leadership
- A Thriving Environment
- A Vibrant Economy
- Quality Homes and Infrastructure

- 1.1.3 The Plan also adopted 6 Guiding Principles, which would apply to the approach taken by the Council in undertaking its duties and these were: Sustainable Recovery; Locally Distinctive; Greener Folkestone & Hythe; Transparent, Stable, Accountable & Accessible; Working Effectively with Partners and Continuous Improvement.
- 1.1.4 To support the council in delivering against its priorities documented in the corporate plan, a detailed action plan covering a three-year period to 2024 and supporting KPIs for the current financial year was adopted by Cabinet on 20th October 2021 (Report ref: C/21/40).
- 1.1.5 The Quarterly Performance Report (Appendix 1) has been produced to summarise the Council's performance for Quarter 3 (1st October to 31st December 2022).
- 1.1.6 Quarterly Performance Reports enable Finance & Performance Scrutiny Subcommittee, Cabinet, other Members of the Council and the public to scrutinise the performance of the Council against strategic deliverables and key indicators in accordance with the approved Corporate Action Plan.
- 1.1.7 Where the performance indicator is not being met, explanations have been given from the relevant Service leads and noted in the report.
- 1.1.8 The performance indicators which have fallen below target are monitored by the Council's Performance & Improvement Specialist who will work with the relevant Service Manager to identify appropriate action that can be taken to resolve the situation.

2. PERFORMANCE – EXCEPTION REPORTING

2.1 Service Ambition 1: Positive Community Leadership

2.1.1 No new improvements to priority play areas have taken place during Quarter 3, a total of three priority play areas had previously received improvements earlier on in the year. Capital growth requests to make improvements to the accessible play space within the Lower Leas Coastal Park have been submitted for the 2023-24 year.

2.1.2 The average number of days taken to process new claims for Housing Benefit has shown an improved position in Quarter 3 compared to the previous quarter, achieving 10.8 days. This is continuing to help residents on low income understand more quickly what support is available to them for their housing costs.

2.1.3 A total of fifteen community safety events/projects were delivered during the quarter that included:

- **Halloween Events x3** – Community Safety Officers hosted three separate event stalls with leaflets outside Lidl in Hawkinge, Bouverie Place Shopping Centre in Folkestone and Sainsbury's in Hythe. The team provided safety advice for those wishing to enjoy trick and treating during Halloween and encouraged participants to be respectful. "No trick or treating" posters were handed out to people who did not want to answer their doors to trick or treaters.
- **Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Youth walk and talk** - The Community Safety Team along with Kent Police and Kent County Council (KCC) Youth team conducted a walk and talk with local children visiting hotspots - Payers Park, Little Radnor, and Kingsnorth Gardens. The event provided a key opportunity to engage with young people and helped to boost the children's confidence in highlighting their concerns to the Police. They were also shown where the police station and the Civic Centre were located.
- **Safety in Schools** - On 14 and 15 November 2022, the Community Safety Officers visited Earlscliffe in Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone, an independent boarding school for international students. The officers, supported by Kent Police, met with the school's Head Teacher and Compliance Manager. The officers gave a talk about staying safe while out in Folkestone and the surrounding district, and what to be aware of (including where to report incidents). The officers also talked about road safety as the visit coincided with the national Road Safety Awareness Week.

2.2. Service Ambition 2: A Thriving Environment

2.2.1 32 fixed penalty notices were issued for low level environmental crime, including, fly-posting, littering, dogs off leads, failure to display smoke-free signs at premises and on vehicles and smoking within designated smoke-free premises and vehicles.

2.2.2 The Local Area Officer Team have supported a total of 13 community volunteer environmental events during the quarter working with volunteers from St Eanswythe School, Hythe Environmental Group, Hawkinge

Environmental Group and SAGA. The volunteers across all these events collected 294 bags of litter to help keep local areas around the district clean and tidy.

- 2.2.3 A total of 1,160 See it, Own it, Do it Interventions have been actioned by the Local Area Officer Team to help ensure the district remains a welcoming and attractive place to live, work and visit. The team have undertaken graffiti clearance at locations across the district, removing flyposting and worked in conjunction with KCC to lead on running weekly remediation sessions for young offenders that sees them clearing leaves from pavements, painting out graffiti, clearing overgrown areas, including alleyways that contributes towards keeping local areas clean for residents and visitors alike.
- 2.2.4 The number of missed bin collections per 100,000 continues to an improving trend during the quarter achieving 33.48 when compared with same period last year (57.23) following the rectification of operational issues associated with the implementation of the new waste contract that were experienced during the first half of last year.
- 2.2.5 The result for the Percentage of Household Waste Recycled in Quarter 2 has been confirmed as 44.6%, the below target result was as result of reduced household garden waste collection tonnages due to the hot weather experienced in Summer 2022. The recycling tonnage data for the final month of Quarter 3 (December 2022) is currently unavailable as this is provided by Kent County Council and is typically supplied 1-2 months in arrears. The overall result achieved will be published as part of the 2022-23 Annual performance report.
- 2.2.6 A further 30 electric vehicle charging points have been installed within car parks in the district during the quarter bringing the cumulative total of operating points to 103 so far. The new units were rolled out across seven sites in Folkestone, Sandgate, Hythe and Greatstone to further help residents and visitors to charge their electric vehicles in the district.

To monitor:

- 2.2.7 The number of Community environmental events supported by the Local Area Officer team fell under target during the quarter due to cancellation of events as result of bad weather and the reprioritizing of resources to focus on completing See it, Own it, Do It interventions raised across the district.
- 2.2.8 The percentage of streets surveyed clear of litter was under target in the quarter achieving 94.44% as result of falling leaves adding an extra layer of challenge to keeping the street scene tidy due to the trapping and masking litter on the ground. Dedicated resource has been allocated towards leaf clearance, and as the leaves finish dropping by the end of the quarter performance standards should return to normal again.
- 2.2.9 No new street lighting was converted to LED in the district during Quarter 3. Additional funding had been required for phase 2 (742 street light assets) to carry out this work due to increased costs and the unforeseen

replacement of a significant number of columns in the previous phase. The additional funding required for Phase 2 was only approved in January 2023 with works at the time of writing this report now currently underway with parts being ordered, but under revised timescales with overall completion now due by the end of May 2023.

2.3 Service Ambition 3: A Vibrant Economy

2.3.1 There were no High Street Fund grants approved in Quarter 3, however a £1,000 was allocated from the fund to be used for design work for a new high street lighting project. One application is currently being assessed for consideration in Quarter 4. The High Street Fund stopped receiving applications in November 2022 and the scheme has an end date for spend of 31st March 2023. Since the scheme launched in 2019, 48 projects were successfully approved for funding across our district. To date, 38 of these have received their grant payments, this amounting to over £483,000. The £450,000 allocated in Q2 for the Levelling Up Fund project will be utilised following the application to Government being successful. Total funds allocated since inception is £2,580,283. This figure may become adjusted as Officers continue to work with approved applicants to progress completion of outstanding projects. The remaining unallocated funds (14%) from the £3 million originally allocated to this scheme sits in the council's earmarked reserves. The final performance of the fund will be presented in the Quarter 4 monitoring report.

2.3.2 A total of 18 businesses have been engaged with in the district by the Economic Development team to help support business growth and retention of local jobs. The businesses engaged with include: The Burlington Hotel, Saga, Folkestone Harbour & Seafront Company, Duo, Folkestone Workshop, Stagecoach, Romney Tweed, Beresfords Accountants, Martello Building Consultancy, Folkestone College, SBS Ltd, Creative Folkestone, Gopak Ltd, Sleeping Giant Media, Clifton Hotel, Sai Care Homes, Disruptive Urbanism.

2.3.3 Total funds allocated from the Folkestone Community Works programme were 75% by the end of Quarter 3 with all funded projects having claimed expenditure worth £1,495,457 since the programme's inception in 2018. The drop in value from the previous quarter is due to the amount of funds under grant funding agreements increasing from £1,716,081 to £2,005,967. There are still funds available to be allocated with a significant number of SME (small- and medium-sized enterprise) applications expected to be submitted to meet the January 2023 deadline.

In addition to the business support that continues to be delivered by Social Enterprise Kent, The Prince's Trust and Screen South, TNB Skilling Ltd was also awarded funding to deliver entrepreneurial skills to 30 residents interested in being involved in the hair and beauty sector.

To monitor:

- There were no approvals of new applications for the Romney Marsh Business Hub grant support scheme in Quarter 3. However, additional offices have been leased at the Romney Marsh Business hub. As a result, three further applications have been received for grants that will be brought to decision panels during Quarter 4. Should these applications be approved for the values requested, this would take the overall allocation to 28.10%. Businesses can only apply for this grant if they lease an office at the business hub, therefore there is limited influence over fund allocation other than continued promotion of the hub and the scheme itself. The grant scheme will continue forwards into the new financial year to support the occupation of the nine remaining office units at the hub.

2.4 Service Ambition 4: Quality Homes and Infrastructure

- 2.4.2 A further 38 affordable homes were delivered by the Council and its partners during the quarter, bringing the total to 81 so far since the start of the financial year, exceeding the end of year target of 80 homes. The 38 new homes were delivered in Shornecliffe, Sellindge and Folkestone.
- 2.4.3 A further 110 private sector homes were improved during the quarter as a result of intervention by the Council helping to continually improve the standards and compliance of properties within the sector.
- 2.4.4 100% of blocks within the council's housing stock had valid fire risk, asbestos, lift safety, legionella assessments and electrical certification (EICR) in place at the end of the quarter.
- 2.4.5 The percentage of homelessness approaches closed as 'homelessness prevented' has shown an improvement when compared with the same period last year with 72 preventions over the quarter, bringing the total to 151 for the year to date, exceeding the target.

To monitor

- 2.4.6 The number of homelessness approaches to the Council continues to remain high with 421 approaches in the quarter. The increases seen can be attributed to several factors, including the end of Covid and the reinstatement of eviction proceedings within the courts; the ongoing cost-of-living crisis that has seen huge increase in private rents nationally and changes in statutory legislation that have increased the number of households/groups who can apply as homeless to any local authority area. The correlation between these factors and approaches continues to be kept under close review.
- 2.4.6 96.95% of properties met the decent homes standard at the end of the quarter. An ongoing planned programme of works is in place to bring these properties back to standard and meet the target. Since April 2022, we have removed 32 properties from the decent homes failures list, with 103 total failings reported at the end of Quarter 3 (a net improvement of 8 over the last quarter).

- 2.4.7 99.79% of properties had a valid Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR) certificate in place at the end of the quarter. At the end of Quarter 2, a total of 12 properties were outstanding for checks and renewal of certification. At the end of Quarter 3 this has been reduced to six properties, with appointments made to gain entry following the council's Controlled Access procedure. At the time of writing one property remains outstanding.
- 2.4.8 The number of empty homes brought back into use is currently forecasted to be under target for completing 70 by year end. A total of 29 homes have been completed and brought back in use since April, however, approximately 50 'no use' empty loan units are in the pipeline for completion this year. Progress continues to be slow for a number of reasons, including contractor availability, landlord finances and price rises in materials.
- 2.4.9 The number of people sleeping rough decreased to an average of 10 over Quarter 3 but remains under target. The annual rough sleeper count carried out on the 29 November 2022 reported 12 people sleeping rough in the district on that night. The opening of the winter shelter has helped reduce the number since then, with the latest weekly count at the end of January being six. Several new cases have moved into the district this year and a lot of work has been done to reduce rough sleeping from the highest position of 18 in early September 2022. Work is continuing with council partners to find suitable long-term accommodation and support services for them.

2.5 Transparent, Stable, Accountable & Accessible

- 2.5.1 In Quarter 3, a further 615 new customers registered for the My Account service equating to an additional 1.18% take up when compared to residential properties. Since the launch of the service in August 2020, over 35,115 customers have registered equating to 67.61% take up so far, helping residents to access a range of council information and services online.

To monitor

- 2.5.2 The number of Freedom of Information (FOI)/ Environmental Information Requests (EIR) and Subject Access Requests (SARs) being responded to within statutory timeframes have fallen below target during the quarter due to the resignation of one Case Officer, and the subsequent appointment of another case officer into the Information Governance Specialist role has impacted on request turnaround times. A new Case Officer has since been appointed at the end of November 2022 and this additional resource will help to ensure future performance will continue to improve to the required standard.
- 2.5.3 The percentage of data breaches assessed in time was under target as a result of some cases not being reported to the Information Governance Specialist through the correct channels and the reporter/officers not assisting investigations within the required timeframe. The issues have

been raised with managers, and a council-wide email sent out to reiterate that all Council officers hold responsibility for assisting the Information Governance Team with investigating data breaches. During this period, a new specialist has also been appointed from the Case Management team with training taking place that will help with improving overall resilience in the assessment breaches.

2.5.4 The percentage of data breaches assessed to decide if it is reportable to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO) was under target during Quarter 3 as a result of an individual case not being assessed within the defined 72-hour period. This was due to information on the breach not being reported by a department to the Information Governance (IG) team through the correct reporting channel. The breach once received by the IG team was assessed within 72 hours where it was deemed to be reportable to the ICO. Further training on the correct procedure for reporting breaches was swiftly undertaken with the department in question to ensure this error does not occur again. This matter was discussed at the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee at their meeting on 7 March 2023, and they made a recommendation that Cabinet ask for a briefing note on data breaches, the type of training being undertaken and who the training is being provided to, in order to give members some reassurance.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

3.1 The following perceived risks are set out in the table below:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
The Council’s strategic objectives are not met.	High	Medium	Monitor progress against performance indicators and take remedial action for those areas where targets and actions are unlikely to be achieved.
The key performance indicators (KPIs) do not link to the objectives of the Council’s Corporate Action Plan.	High	Medium	Monitor progress against key performance indicators and take remedial action for those areas where targets and actions are unlikely to be achieved.

4. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

4.1 **Legal Officer’s Comments (EC)** - There are no legal implications or risks arising directly out of this report. The Key Performance Indicators must continue to take account of both existing and new statutory duties and responsibilities that are imposed on the Council by the Government. Failure to do so will put the Council at risk of legal challenge by affected residents and/or businesses. Whilst reporting on performance is not a statutory

requirement, it is considered best practice to review the Council's progress against the Corporate Plan and Service Plans on a regular basis.

- 4.2 **Human Resources Comments (RB)** - There are no direct Human Resource implications emanating from this report. The council's People Strategy has been created to support the corporate plan and achievement of associated KPIs.
- 4.3 **Finance Officer's Comments (LK)** - There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.
- 4.4 **Climate Change (AT)** – No direct implications arising from this report. The report provides an update on the Council's performance covering 1st October 2022 – 31st December 2022. The report does not propose new projects, policies or strategies but provides an update on actions that are already in progress. Some of the environmental projects that the council is currently undertaking are summarised in the report in Section 2.2 'A Thriving Environment' and in Appendix 1, Section 02 'A Thriving Environment'.
- 4.5 **Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)** - Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are systematically carried out for any services, projects or other schemes that have the potential to impact on communities and / or staff on the grounds of particular protected characteristics or socio-economic disadvantage. Over the course of the year, performance against some indicators might potentially have equality and social inclusion implications, if performance is not at an acceptable level. These will be highlighted as necessary in the corporate performance reporting, along with details of the steps that will be taken to address these.
- 4.6 **Communications Comments (KA)** - The communications team will use these KPIs as appropriate in their promotion of council services.

5. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting.

Gavin Edwards – Performance and Improvement Specialist

Tel: 01303 85 3436

Email: gavin.edwards@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Quarter 3 2022/23 Key Performance Indicators Report

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Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Quarter 3 Performance Report (October-December 2022)

Your Cabinet Members



Cllr David Monk
Leader of the Council



Cllr Jennifer Hollingsbee
Deputy Leader of the
Council and Cabinet
Member for Communities



Cllr John Collier
Cabinet Member for
Property Management &
Grounds Maintenance



Cllr David Godfrey
Cabinet Member
for Housing and Special
Projects



Cllr Stuart Peall
Cabinet Member for
Enforcement, Regulatory
Services, Waste &
Building Control



Cllr Lesley Whybrow
Cabinet Member for the
Environment



Cllr Tim Prater
Cabinet Member for
Revenues, Benefits,
Anti-Fraud and Corruption



Cllr David Wimble
Cabinet Member for the
District Economy



Cllr Ray Field
Cabinet Member for
Transport and
Digital Transformation

Your District - An Overview

Our district is situated on Kent's south east coast and covers an area of 140 square miles. It is a place of variety and contrast with a landscape characterised by rolling chalk downland, wooded valleys, wild marshes, and a 26-mile coastline. The district has a population of approximately 113,300 of which 57.4% (32,900) of female residents and 59.1% (33,100) of males are of working age.

Our principal town, Folkestone, is home to just under half the district's population. It is also the area's commercial hub, particularly for creative and digital media - one of the UK's fastest-growing sectors. The Creative Quarter in Folkestone's Old Town is home to a thriving collection of artists' studios and creative businesses and offers artists, retailers and business-people the chance to become part of this lively and ever-growing community.

As well as its strong creative focus, the district attracts a variety of innovative small and medium size businesses (SMEs) and is home to strong brand names including Saga, Eurotunnel, Holiday Extras, the Aspinall Foundation and Church & Dwight.

The historic town of Hythe is the district's second centre of population and one of two ancient Cinque Ports in the district. Its central feature is the Royal Military Canal, built for defence against invasion in the Napoleonic wars with France. To the west are the wide-open spaces of Romney Marsh, home to New Romney, our second Cinque Port; Lydd, a member of the Confederation of Cinque Ports as a 'limb' of New Romney, and a number of smaller coastal communities. Contrasting with the wild expanse of marshes are the North Downs, a ridge of chalk hills that stretch from Dover to Farnham. The Downs are home to pretty villages, including Elham, Lyminge and Postling, hidden valleys and thriving vineyards.

Although the district is rural and coastal in character, it is very well connected. The M20 offers easy access to London and other major motorway networks, London is under an hour away via High Speed 1 (HS1) from Folkestone and we have unrivalled access to mainland Europe via the Channel Tunnel.

We think our district is a great place to live, work and visit. It's where the past has made its mark and where a bright new future is unfolding. As the local authority for the district, we have a key role to play in shaping that future.



The Old High Street, Folkestone



Royal Military Canal, Hythe



Dungeness, Romney Marsh

Introduction

In February 2021, we published our Corporate Plan ‘**Creating Tomorrow Together**’, a 34-page document setting out our over-arching principles and service ambitions up until 2030 following approval by councillors.

The plan identifies the main priorities and themes of the council, including the key role we are playing in leading the district's recovery from the coronavirus pandemic over the first three years from 2021 to 2024.

The name of our corporate plan was inspired by the excellent relationships and networks which the council already has - and will continue to build on for the benefit of residents. It also alludes to the recovery work already being undertaken.

The plan was subject to public consultation in late 2020 and incorporates the key points raised during the consultation period to ensure it reflects the needs and ambitions of our residents, businesses and key stakeholders across the district.

The plan is focused on four service ambitions which are priority areas of action that relate to the key services that the council plans, delivers and commissions and six guiding principles that guide everything that we do (**see summary image**).

The adopted service priority actions as part of the plan have been further developed into a corporate action plan, with progress against the plan itself monitored annually, and the plan will be comprehensively reviewed in 2024 to ensure it remains appropriate for the district.

A copy of our corporate plan can be found here: [Creating Tomorrow Together – Corporate Plan 2021-30](#)

The following sections set out our performance against the four Corporate Plan service ambitions for quarter 3 of 2022/23 (October to December 2022), using a simple ‘red’, ‘amber’, ‘green’ rating. They also show the detailed performance figures behind the rating. For comparison, the figures for last year, and for the third quarter of the 2022/23 monitoring year, are also provided.



Creating Tomorrow Together: Corporate Plan 2021-30

Service ambition 1: Positive community leadership	Service ambition 2: A thriving environment	Service ambition 3: A vibrant economy	Service ambition 4: Quality homes and infrastructure
Priorities in the next three years	Priorities in the next three years	Priorities in the next three years	Priorities in the next three years
Improve physical and mental health & wellbeing	Ensure an excellent environment for everyone	Reinvigorate the high streets	Improve outcomes & support for homeless people
Safer communities	Grow the circular economy & reduce waste	Support a vibrant & diverse business community	Deliver sustainable, affordable housing
Supporting & empowering our communities	Increase our resilience to climate change	Help people access jobs & opportunity	Deliver a safe, accountable housing service
		Grow the skills we need for the future	Digital inclusion & connectivity
			Deliver a sustainable new development at Otterpool Park

In everything we do we will follow these guiding principles:

Sustainable recovery We will do all we can to ensure a strong recovery for the district from the effects of COVID.	Locally distinctive We will protect the special distinctive and diverse nature of our district - working with our key partners to enhance it.	Greener Folkestone & Hythe We will encourage and create a more sustainable district consuming fewer natural resources.	Transparent, stable, accountable and accessible We will be financially sustainable and communicate effectively with our communities in an accessible way.	Working effectively with partners We will engage with partners to understand the vital role they play and work collaboratively with them to ensure the best outcomes for our residents.	Continuous improvement We will embed a culture of continuous improvement, seeking feedback and being innovative and creative to find new ways to deliver services.
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Above: Corporate Plan - Service Ambitions and Guiding Principles

01 Positive Community Leadership

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Number of new priority play areas improved by the Council	1	3	0	0		1 site per year	✓
	<i>No improvement works undertaken during Quarter 3. Capital growth requests for improvements to the accessible play space within the Coastal Park submitted for 2023-24.</i>						
Average number of days to process new claims for Housing Benefit from the date complete evidence is received.	2.9	4.5	4.9	4.5		7 Days (Monthly)	✓
Average number of days taken to process new claims for Housing Benefit	8.7	13.2	12.7	10.8		17 Days (Monthly)	✓
Percentage of food premises broadly compliant (equivalent to 3 rating)	96.6%	97.8%	97.53%	96.6%		95% (Quarterly)	✓
	<i>Quarter 3, 96.6% of food premises in the business were found to be broadly compliant in the district, the percentage achieved is based on a total of 114 premises being inspected in the period.</i>						
Number of community safety events held and projects delivered	12	3	9	15		10 (Annual)	✓
	<p><i>In Quarter 3, a total of 15 community safety events or projects were delivered by the Community Safety Unit that included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Halloween Events x3 – Community Safety Officers hosted three separate event stalls with leaflets outside Lidl in Hawkinge, Bouverie Place Shopping Centre in Folkestone and Sainsbury’s in Hythe. The team provided safety advice for those wishing to enjoy trick and treating during Halloween and encouraged participants to be respectful. No trick or treating posters were handed out to people who did not want to answer their doors to trick or treaters.</i> <i>Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) YOUTH walk and talk - The Community Safety Team along with Kent Police and KCC Youth team conducted a walk and talk with local children visiting hotspots - Payers Park, Little Radnor, and Kingsnorth Gardens. The event provided a key opportunity to engage with young people and helped to boost the children’s confidence in highlighting their concerns to the Police. They were also shown where the police station and the Civic Centre were located.</i> 						

01 Positive Community Leadership

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target

- **Safety in Schools** - On 14 and 15 November 2022, the Community Safety Officers visited Earlscliffe in Shorncliffe Road, Folkestone, an independent boarding school for international students. The officers, supported by Kent Police, met with the school's Head Teacher and Compliance Manager. The officers gave a talk about staying safe while out in Folkestone and the surrounding district, and what to be aware of (including where to report incidents). The officers also talked about road safety as the visit coincided with the national Road Safety Awareness Week.
- **Op Henosis** - On 22 November 2022, the Community Safety officers joined forces with the Police, Licensing and FAPAC (Folkestone Area Partnership Against Crime, with one group heading to the Harbour and the others patrolling Folkestone town centre.
- **Winter Well** – Folkestone & Hythe District Council partnered with the NHS and Social Enterprise Kent to host a drop in Winter Well event on 12th November 2022 at the Folca building from 10am until 2pm. The Community Safety Team were in attendance sharing safety information.
- **Road Safety in Evening Economy** – The Community Safety team teamed up with the Parking Enforcement team and headed to West Parade area in Folkestone. Parking Enforcement issued fifteen penalty charge notices.
- **Adult Safeguarding Week** – National Safeguarding Adults Awareness week was held across the region to help raise awareness of adult abuse.
- **Turner Free School** - On 6 December 2022, the Community Safety Officers attended the Turner Free School launch event. The officers spoke about the impact of ASB (anti-social behaviour) and highlighted the responsibilities of Community Safety Team and the work they do to protect the community. Steve Carley one of the Urban Pastors from Cheriton Baptist Church also attended. The school will be having their own Hub for agencies to work from.
- **Knife Operations x2**- Community Safety Officers attended a knife arch event held at the Skuba Bar in Folkestone on 9 December. Knife arches are designed to act as a deterrent and make people think twice about coming out with a deadly weapon. Other venues had metal detector wands out which had been provided previously by the Community Safety Partnership. The second Knife arch was held at the Party Bar in Tontine Street.
- **AFRA**- Jon O'Connor from the Alliance of Folkestone Residents Associations along with Scott Butler, our Community Safety Specialist attended the crime and safety event on 3 December at Woodward Hall, St Eanswythe's School at the Bayle in Folkestone. Thirty-five residents gathered to hear about current crime issues and initiatives. Scott Butler shared his desire to work alongside partner agencies with schools and education services including social care and youth services.
- **Street Count** - On 29 November 2022, the Community Safety Team took part in the annual winter street count. The twelve rough sleepers found sleeping outside were spoken to by partner agencies. The Rainbow Centre, Folkestone & Hythe District Council, Porchlight and many other partners are committed to supporting those in the district who find themselves homeless or at risk of becoming so.

02 A Thriving Environment

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Retain Green Flags for the Coastal Park, Royal Military Canal, Kingsnorth Gardens and Radnor Park sites	-	-	-	-	-	4 (Annual)	-
	<i>This indicator is collated on an annual basis and not available quarterly. A figure will be available at the end of Quarter 4</i>						
Number of enforcement notices served (e.g. Abatement Notices, Community Protection Notices)	8	18	13	2		*70 (informal) (Annual)	X
Page 117	<p><i>The overall number of enforcement notices served is likely to outturn below its annual target at the end of the year for the following reasons:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Targets are informal and where compliance has been achieved at a first stage further action has not been required. An example of this is the relationship between Community Protection Warnings and Community Protection Notices. CPWs (on target) are the first stage and a CPN is only required if compliance is not achieved.</i> <i>2. Prior to issuing formal notices, the Environmental Protection Team (in line with the Enforcement Policy) will attempt informal action to resolve the complaint. This is common with noise nuisance, odour, smoke etc. Informal action includes: -</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• engaging with the subject of the complaint,</i> <i>• acting as mediators between two or more parties,</i> <i>• helping subjects to minimise any nuisances caused, for example suggesting and facilitating practical solutions and</i> <i>• engaging with family members, property owners, other authorities or care/support networks to make a positive impact.</i> <p><i>This approach is often successful but difficult to capture in terms of notices not issued.</i></p> <i>3. The statutory powers that had been previously given to local authorities in the form of Section 108 notices was removed in 2020. The notices originally required any person believed to be able to give any information relevant to any examination or investigation to answer the questions put to them. These were used regularly and were a good means of investigating the matter. Historically these would be included in the figures and the results now will show a much lower rate.</i> <i>4. Long-term sickness in the Environmental Enforcement Team in Q3 and Q4 will impact on the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued.</i> 						

02 A Thriving Environment

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Number of Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) issued	-	15	26	6		15 (Annual)	✓
Fixed Penalty Notices issued for Low level Enviro-crime (littering, dog control)	-	33	52	32		*300(informal) (Annual)	X
Page 118	<p><i>The target for both low level and high level FPNs is not likely to be met due to the following mitigating factors:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The team have experienced resourcing issues during the year due to two officers being on sick leave and another on a phased return to work following an operation.</i> <i>The team's time during the year has been focused on other operational matters including;</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Additional time spent on investigating larger fly tipping cases to build cases for prosecution with Council's Legal Services team.</i> <i>Keeping fly tipping hot spot areas tidier, notably Dover Road and Foord Road South.</i> <i>Working with Napier Barracks on educational presentations and site visits – including cleansing of waste such as bottles and cans or cooking paraphernalia and general waste.</i> <i>Additional joint site visits with residents to view areas of concerns in respect of waste or dog fouling around Napier Barracks and open spaces.</i> <i>Undertaking public consultation and implementation of the new Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) for dog control.</i> <i>Additional joint working with partners e.g Operation Assist with Kent Police, requiring a day of stopping vans and trucks to check for waste carriers licences to reduce instances of fly-tipping.</i> <i>Changes in behaviours with residents and visitors to the area – whilst this has not eradicated the issues, public opinions are changing around plastic pollution affecting marine life (waste on beaches), clearing up after pets and changes in opinions around disposable BBQs – Supermarkets refusing to sell them in major stores.</i> 						
	Fixed Penalty Notices issued for High level Enviro-crime (large Fly-tipping)	-	5	7	1		*25(informal) (Annual)
	See comment above						

02 A Thriving Environment

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Percentage of streets surveyed clear of litter within the district	92.29%	98.23%	95.25%	94.44%		95% (Monthly)	X
	<p><i>A total of 234 inspection surveys of streets were carried out by monitoring officers in Quarter 3 in locations including: Sellindge, Lydd, Snave ,Brookland ,Brenzett, New Romney ,Hythe, Paddlesworth and Folkestone.</i></p> <p><i>Falling leaves during this quarter add an extra layer of challenge to keeping the streetscene tidy, i.e. potentially trapping / masking litter on the ground, however, dedicated resource is allocated to leaf clearance, and by the end of the quarter when leaves have finished dropping standards approach / return to normal again.</i></p>						
Number of community environmental volunteer events supported	28	17	13	11		15 (Quarterly)	X
	<p><i>The number of environmental events supported was under target during the quarter due to the cancellation of events as result of bad weather and the reprioritizing of resources to focus on completing See it, Own it, Do It interventions raised across the district.</i></p>						
Number of recorded See it, Own it, Do it (SOD It) interventions completed	2,772	1,278	1,523	1,160		1200 (Quarterly)	X
Average time for anti-social or offensive graffiti to be removed from the time of being reported	48 hours	48 hours	48 hours	48 hours		48 Hrs (Quarterly)	✓

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Number of new electric vehicle charging points installed within district owned car parks	-	53 (cumulative) <small>(53 now installed out of 94 planned)</small>	73 (cumulative) <small>(73 now installed out of 94 planned)</small>	103 (cumulative)		2 charging points per car park (Annual)	✓
Page 120	<p><i>A further 30 new EV charging points have been installed in Quarter 3 and are now fully operational within 26 car parks in the district bringing the cumulative total to 103. The new units are operational in the following locations:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jolly Fisherman, Greatstone - 4 • Fishermans Beach, Hythe - 2 • Castle Road Car Park, Sandgate - 4 • The Coastal Park Car Park - 4 • Broomfield Road Car Park - 4 • Civic Centre Car Park - 4 • Lower Sandgate Road West Car Park – 8 <p><i>The remaining units will be commissioned in Coast Drive Car Park by the end of 2023. This delay is due to planned development works.</i></p>						
	Percentage of street lighting within the district converted to LED	0% (cumulative)	27.9% (cumulative)	30% (cumulative)	30% (cumulative)		100% completion by March 2023
	<p><i>Phase 1 upgrade (321 assets) completed, and an application has been made to KCC to adopt the assets.</i></p> <p><i>No new street lighting was converted to LED in Quarter 3 as additional funding had been required for phase 2 (742 street light assets) to carry out this work due to increased costs and the unforeseen replacement of a significant number of columns in the previous phase. The additional funding for Phase 2 was only approved in January 2023 and work is now underway to deliver this phase, with the parts now being ordered. Phase 2 is now to be completed by the end May of 2023.</i></p>						
Number of missed bin collections per 100,000	57.23	40.77	39.84	33.48		50 (Monthly)	✓

02 A Thriving Environment

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Percentage of household waste recycled	45.1%	47.7%	44.6%	TBC		50% (Monthly)	X
	<p>The Quarter 2 figure for recycling is 4% higher than the same period last year. Garden waste collections are hugely influential to the figures during this quarter and the exceptionally hot summer of 2022 would have reduced garden waste tonnages collected, suppressing the recycling %.</p> <p>The recycling tonnage data for the final month of Quarter 3 (December 22) is currently unavailable - this is provided by Kent County Council and is typically supplied 1-2 months in arrears.</p>						
Number of days to remove fly-tipped waste on public land once reported	1	1	1	1		3 Days (Monthly)	✓
Page 121	<p>A total of 251 incidents of fly-tipped waste were dealt with on public land within the district during Quarter 2. The breakdown is as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October – 111 • November – 77 • December - 63 						
Percentage of compliant air quality monitoring sites	100%	100%	100%			100% (Quarterly)	✓
Enforcement - Percentage of successful prosecutions (Incl Fly-tipping and Littering)	100%	100%	100%			100% (Quarterly)	✓
	<p>A total of two prosecutions were secured during Quarter 3 for the following:</p> <p>Breaches of Community Protection Notices served for accumulations of waste on domestic premises at two Council Houses in Folkestone:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Costs - £855, Fine - £600, Victim Surcharge: £60 2) Costs - £480, Fine - £440, Victim Surcharge: £44 						

03 A Vibrant Economy

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Total Folkestone & Hythe High Streets funds allocated	59% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £0 allocated in Q3	76.42% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £99,998 allocated in Q1	85.98% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £459,517 allocated in Q2	86.00% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £1,000 allocated in Q3		100% of the funds allocated	X
Page 122	<p><i>There were no High Street Fund grants approved in Quarter 3, however £1,000 was allocated from the fund to be used for design work for a new high street lighting project. One application is currently being assessed for consideration in Quarter 4. The High Street Fund stopped receiving applications in November 2022 and the scheme has an end date for spend of 31st March 2023. Since the scheme launched in 2019, 48 projects were successfully approved for funding across our district. To date, 38 of these have received their grant payments, this amounting to over £483,000. The £450,000 allocated in Quarter 2 for the Levelling Up Fund project will be utilised following the application to Government being successful. Total funds allocated since inception is £2,580,283. This figure may become adjusted as Officers continue to work with approved applicants to progress completion of outstanding projects. The remaining unallocated funds (14%) from the £3 million originally allocated to this scheme sits in the council's earmarked reserves. The final performance of the fund will be presented in the Quarter 4 monitoring report.</i></p>						
Number of engagements undertaken by the Folkestone & Hythe Place Panel on projects of scale or strategic significance.	0	4	1	2		3 (Annual)	✓
Total funding allocated from the Romney Marsh Business Hub grant support scheme	-	7.14% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £9,981 allocated in Q1	12.22% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £7,126 allocated in Q2	12.22% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £0 allocated in Q3		70% of available funds allocated in 2022-23	X

03 A Vibrant Economy

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
	<p><i>There were no approvals of new applications for the Romney Marsh Business Hub grant support scheme in Quarter 3. However, additional offices have been leased at the Romney Marsh Business hub. As a result, three further applications have been received for grants that will be brought to decision panels during Quarter 4. Should these applications be approved for the values requested, this would take the overall allocation to 28.10%. Businesses can only apply for this grant if they lease an office at the business hub, therefore there is limited influence over fund allocation other than continued promotion of the hub and the scheme itself. The grant scheme will continue forwards into the new financial year to support the occupation of the nine remaining office units at the hub.</i></p>						
Number of Folkestone & Hythe businesses accessing business support and grants from public sector programmes	6	19	4	8		10 (Annual)	✓
Page 123	<p><i>During Quarter 3, a total of 8 applications were given approvals via our internal led grant schemes. This comprises the following: 2 x Green Business Grant Scheme applications and 6 x Folkestone Community Works applications. Further applications are currently under evaluation for these schemes, in addition to the Romney Marsh Business Hub grant scheme.</i></p>						
Number of businesses or potential entrepreneurs/new start-ups signposted to support programmes and events to facilitate growth	6	65	15	12		50 minimum (Annual)	✓
	<p><i>A minimum of 12 businesses were engaged with during Quarter 3 which resulted in meetings in person. These included giving advice and signposting to grant and support schemes within our district. An example of this is L&B restaurants, who own several premises and employ a significant number of people within Folkestone. A site visit was made, where advice was given regarding the green business grant and other potential funding streams. In addition, 4 x newsletter emails were sent to the 832 businesses on our database signposting them to our internal led grant schemes and also to highlight the launch of Experience FH app for businesses.</i></p>						
Number of businesses engaged with in the district to support growth and retention of local people	3	17	14	18		12 (Annual)	✓
	<p><i>During Quarter 3, 18 businesses were directly engaged with to support growth and the retention of local people. These included: Burlington Hotel, Saga, Folkestone Harbour & Seafront Company, Duo, Folkestone Workshop, Stagecoach, Romney Tweed, Beresfords Accountants, Martello Building Consultancy, Folkestone College, SBS Ltd, Creative Folkestone, Gopak Ltd, Sleeping Giant Media, Clifton Hotel, Sai Care Homes, Disruptive Urbanism.</i></p>						

03 A Vibrant Economy

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Total funds allocated from the Folkestone Community Works Programme	83% (cumulative)	90% (cumulative)	85% (cumulative)	75% (cumulative)		100% of the allocated funds spent by end of 2022/23	✓
	<p><i>The KPI is an accumulative figure for the programme which has been running since 2018 and the figure represents the amount of European Structural Investment Funding (ESIF) allocated to the funded projects that has been spent. Funded projects must defray allocated funds by 31 March 2023.</i></p> <p><i>By the end of Quarter 3 (Oct -Dec) 2022, funded projects had claimed expenditure worth £1,495,457 which represents 75% of the value of the signed grant funding agreements. The drop in value from Quarter 2 is due to the amount of funds under GFA increasing from £1,716,081 to £2,005,967. There are still funds available to be allocated with a significant number of small and medium sized enterprise (SME) applications expected to be submitted to meet the January 2023 deadline.</i></p> <p><i>In addition to the business support that continues to be delivered by Social Enterprise Kent, The Prince's Trust and Screen South, TNB Skilling Ltd was awarded funding to deliver entrepreneurial skills to 30 residents interested in being involved in the hair and beauty sector.</i></p>						

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Numbers of new homes built within the district	-	-	-			622 homes (Annual)	-
	<i>This indicator is collated on an annual basis and not available quarterly. A figure will be available at the end of Quarter 4.</i>						
Percentage reduction in homelessness	-	-	-			5% based on 2020 data	-
	<i>This indicator is collated on an annual basis and not available quarterly. A figure will be available at the end of Quarter 4.</i>						
Number of homelessness approaches (includes Advice, Prevention, Relief & Decision cases)	396	408	453	421		No Target	-
Page 125	Information only (no target). We had fewer approaches than the previous quarter, although the longer-term trend is an overall increase in the number of people approaching the service since 2021-22. The increases seen can be attributed to several factors, including the end of Covid and the reinstatement of eviction proceedings within the courts; the ongoing cost-of-living crisis that has seen huge increase in private rents nationally and changes in statutory legislation that have increased the number of households/groups who can apply as homeless to any local authority area.						
Percentage of homelessness approaches closed as 'homelessness prevented'	4.80%	9.76%	8.61%	17.1%		4%	✓
	Aim to maximise (on target). This measures the number of preventions as a total of all the approaches made to the Council. Performance has improved on Quarter 2, and we have seen an overall improvement so far this year, compared to 2021-22. We secured 72 preventions over the quarter, with a total of 151 for the year-to-date (11.7%).						
Average number of rough sleepers in the period	8.9	11	12	10		<6	X

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
	<p><i>Aim to minimise (off target). The number of people sleeping rough decreased to an average of 10 over Quarter 3. The annual (national- remove national) rough sleeper count carried out on the 29 November reported 12 people sleeping rough in the district on that night. The opening of the winter shelter has helped reduce the number since then, with the latest weekly count at the end of January being 6. Several new cases have moved into the district this year and a lot of work has been done to reduce rough sleeping from the highest position of 18 in early September 2022. We continue to work with our partners to find suitable long-term accommodation and support services for them.</i></p>						
Average number of households in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation	3	2	3	5		0	X
	<p>Aim to minimise (off target). This has increased, on average, by 2 over the quarter. Ideally, the council would like to see no households placed in B&B accommodation. However, many rough sleepers are housed in B&B as a temporary measure. The Housing Options team are working to enable these clients to move into suitable long-term accommodation in the district.</p>						
Average number of households in Temporary Accommodation	27	27	26	27		<35	✓
	<p>Aim to minimise (on target). This has increased, on average, by 1 over the quarter. However, we remain within target (35 or fewer). The aim is to enable households to move into suitable long-term homes, rather than temporary accommodation, and the Housing Options team continue to work towards this.</p>						
Long-term Empty Homes brought back into use	17	9	5	15		70 (Annual)	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (off target). 15 long-term empty homes were brought back into use in the last quarter in Folkestone and Hythe with 29 completed for the year-to-date. Although not yet meeting target, several 'no-use empty loan units' are still in the pipeline for completion this year. Progress has been slow for a number of reasons including contractor availability, landlord finances and price rises in materials.</p>						
Affordable homes delivered by the Council and its partners	11	33	10	38		80 (Annual)	✓
	<p>Aim to maximise (on target). 38 affordable homes were delivered in the last quarter in Shorncliffe, Sellindge and Folkestone bringing the total for the year-to-date to 81 (exceeding target). This is an overall improvement on 2021-22 which saw 44 delivered in total, with many projects brought forward to this year.</p>						

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Affordable homes for low-cost home ownership delivered by the Council and its partners	0	17	4	4		32 (Annual)	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (off target). Of the 81 affordable homes delivered to date (see previous KPI,) 25 are designated for 'low-cost home-ownership' with 4 delivered in the last quarter in Shorncliffe, Sellindge and Folkestone. This puts us four fifths of the way towards our year-end target of 32. Delivery in this area has significantly improved since 2021-22, which saw no homes delivered at all that year.</p>						
Private sector homes improved as a result of intervention by the Council	49	77	110	110		200 (Annual)	✓
Council home new builds and acquisitions started on	0	0	0	0		20 (Annual)	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (off target). No progress to report on this KPI so far this year. Key projects (such as Highview), which were due to commence in the current financial year, have been delayed. It is unclear whether we will see any movement on these before year-end. Progress has been impacted by contractor availability, landlord finances and rising costs of materials.</p>						
Percentage of properties that meet the decent homes standard	98.14%	96.51%	96.71%	96.95%		99% (Monthly)	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (within 5% of target). Since April 2022, we have removed 32 properties from the Decent Homes failures list, with 103 total failings reported at the end of December 2022 (this is a net improvement of 8 over the last quarter).</p>						
Properties with a valid LGSR	-	99.93%	99.58%	99.79%		100% (Monthly)	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (within 5% of target). Landlord Gas Safety Record (LGSR). Undertaking annual gas safety checks is a mandatory requirement. At the end of December 2022, 6 properties were non-compliant (an improvement of 6 from Quarter 2) with appointments made to gain entry following the council's Controlled Access procedure. At the time of writing, 1 property was outstanding.</p>						
Blocks with a valid Fire Risk Assessment	-	100%	100%	100%		100% (Monthly)	✓

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
	<p>Aim to maximise (on target). Ensuring all applicable communal housing blocks have a valid Fire Risk Assessment in place is a mandatory requirement. 180/180 in place at the end of the quarter.</p>						
Blocks with a valid Legionella Risk Assessment	-	100%	100%	100%		100% (Monthly)	✓
	<p>Aim to maximise (on target). Ensuring all applicable communal housing blocks have a valid Legionella (Water Safety) Risk Assessment in place is a mandatory requirement. 23/23 in place at the end of the quarter.</p>						
Blocks with valid (in date) Electrical Certificate (EICR)	-	95.17%	97.2%	100%		100% (Monthly)	✓
Page 128	<p>Aim to maximise (on target). Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR). Ensuring all applicable communal housing blocks have a valid, in date, EICR is a mandatory requirement. 143/143 in place at the end of the quarter.</p>						
Domestic properties with a valid (in date) EICR	-	92.14%	92.96%	94.86%		100% (Monthly)	✗
	<p>Aim to maximise (off target). Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR). It is a mandatory requirement that social housing landlords complete a new EICR on all applicable domestic (i.e. tenanted) properties at least every 5 years. 3,193/3,366 were in place at the end of the quarter. This is an improvement of 65 since Quarter 2 (173 still outstanding).</p>						
Properties Asbestos compliant (Communal)	-	100%	100%	100%		100% (Monthly)	✓
	<p>Aim to maximise (on target). Ensuring all applicable communal housing blocks have a valid Asbestos Assessment in place is a mandatory requirement. 104/104 in place at the end of the quarter.</p>						
Insurance visits completed on communal lifts (LOLER)	-	100%	100%	100%		100% (Monthly)	✓
	<p>Aim to maximise (on target). Lifting Operations and Lifting Equipment Regulations (LOLER). Ensuring all communal lifts in our blocks have had an inspection and are certified safe, is a mandatory requirement. 14/14 in place at the end of the quarter.</p>						

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
% of major planning applications to be determined within statutory period <i>(including any agreed extension of time)</i>	83.33%	83.33%	100%	100%		60% (Quarterly)	✓
Page 129	<p><i>'Major' Applications in Q3: Total Decisions: 5; Determined in agreed time: 5</i></p> <p><i>The percentage figures (Major, Minor, Other) represent all decisions which have been made either within the original target time period specified by statute or an extended time period agreed/requested by an applicant.</i></p> <p><i>In some cases the agreed time period is requested for a number of reasons such as:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>to manage workloads caused by a need to seek further information</i> <i>delays caused by awaiting consultee responses</i> <i>seeking amendments to improve the scheme to make it acceptable and/or raise the quality of the built environment</i> <p><i>In some instances, applicants ask for an extension of time to allow them an opportunity to amend a proposal to overcome officer and consultee concerns.</i></p>						
	% of minor applications to be determined within the statutory period <i>(including any agreed extension of time)</i>	73.21%	84%	85%	88%		70% (Quarterly)
	<p><i>Please see comment above</i></p> <p><i>'Minor' Applications in Q3: Total Decisions: 49; Determined in agreed time:43</i></p>						
% of other planning applications to be determined within statutory period <i>(including any agreed extension of time)</i>	88.07%	88.45%	87%	93%		85% (Quarterly)	✓
	<p><i>Please see comment above</i></p> <p><i>'Other' Applications in Q3: Total Decisions: 166; Determined in agreed time:154</i></p>						

Transparent, Stable, Accountable and Accessible

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
Council tax collection	81.98% (Cumulative)	28.39% (Cumulative)	56.01% (Cumulative)	82.49% (Cumulative)		97.3% (Annual)	✓
Business Rates collection rate	80.68% (Cumulative)	36.65% (Cumulative)	63.33% (Cumulative)	86.65% (Cumulative)		97.5% (Annual)	✓
Increased take-up of My Account and online transactions	5.8%	6.69%	2.92%	1.18%		10% (Annual)	✓
	<p><i>In Quarter 3, a total of 615 customers have registered for My Account an increase of 1.18%. Since the launch of the service in August 2020, a total of 35,115 customers have registered for the service equating to 67.61% take up so far.</i></p>						
Lifeline - Number of calls answered within 60 seconds	-	98.4%	98.4%	97.9%		97.5% (Monthly)	✓
Lifeline - Number of calls answered within 180 seconds	-	99.8%	99.7%	99.8%		99% (Monthly)	✓
All Freedom of Information / Environmental information Requests to be responded to within the statutory period of (20 working days or lawful extension).	84%	85.54%	91.79%	84.67%		90% (Monthly)	✗
	<p><i>Performance has shown slight improvement when compared with the same quarter of last year, however due to the resignation of one Case Officer, and the subsequent appointment of another Case Officer into the Information Governance Specialist's role has impacted on request turnaround times during the quarter, particularly in the month of November. A new Case Officer since been appointed at the end of November 2022 and this additional resource will help to ensure future performance will continue to improve to the required standard.</i></p>						
All Subject Access Request responses to be provided within the statutory period (1 calendar month or lawful extension).	43.75%	70.59%	100%	77.78%		90% (Monthly)	✗

Transparent, Stable, Accountable and Accessible

Description	Q3 2021-22 Comparison	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	On Target
	<p><i>The number of subject access requests (SARs) responded to has shown significant improvement when compared with the same quarter of last year, however due to the resignation of one Case Officer and the subsequent appointment of another Case Officer into the Information Governance Specialist's role has impacted on request turnaround times during the quarter, particularly in the month of November. A new Case Officer since been appointed at the end of November 2022 and this additional resource will help to ensure future performance will continue to improve to the required standard.</i></p>						
Percentage of data breaches assessed within 72 hours to decide if it is reportable to the ICO.	100%	88.89%	83.3%	53.8%		100% (Monthly)	X
Page 131	<p><i>The percentage of data breaches assessed in time was under target during Quarter 3 as a result of some cases not being reported to the IG Specialist through the correct channels and the reporter/officers not assisting investigations within the required timeframe. The issues have been raised with managers, and a council-wide email sent out to reiterate that all Council officers hold responsibility for assisting the Information Governance Team with investigating data breaches. During this period, a new Specialist has also been appointed from the Case Management team with training taking place that will help with improving overall resilience in the assessment breaches moving forwards.</i></p>						
Percentage of reportable data breaches that were submitted to the ICO within 72 hours.	100%	-	50%	0%		100% (Monthly)	X
	<p><i>In Quarter 3, there was only one case that was required to be submitted to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). This was passed to the Information Governance Specialist later than the 72-hour period to be assessed. Further training on the correct procedure for reporting breaches was swiftly undertaken to reduce the risk of any future reporting errors.</i></p>						

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This Report will be made public on 14 March 2023



Report No **C/22/99**

To: Cabinet
Date: 22 March 2023
Status: Non key
Head of service: Charlotte Spendley, Director – Corporate Services
Cabinet Member: Councillor David Monk – Leader and Portfolio Holder for Finance

SUBJECT: REVIEW OF RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY & STRATEGY AND CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

SUMMARY: This report presents an updated Risk Management Policy & Strategy for adoption by Cabinet. The Policy & Strategy provides a framework for the management of risk by Officers and Members.

This report also provides Cabinet with an updated Corporate Risk Register, as considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 15 March 2023.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

A clear framework as outlined within the Strategy will ensure consistency in approach across the organisation, provide clarity of roles with respect to Risk Management and enable progress towards an embedded Risk Management culture within the organisation.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/22/99.
2. To adopt the proposed Risk Management Policy & Strategy.
3. To note the current Corporate Risk Register.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Risk Management Policy and Strategy was last refreshed in March 2022. At that time the strategy was comprehensively reviewed and updated, the current proposed amendments are relatively minor.
- 1.2 Effective risk management is a key framework in the management of a complex organisation such as Folkestone & Hythe District Council. The strategy seeks to provide Members and officers with a clear framework to work within, as well as supporting the development of a risk management culture within the Council.
- 1.3 The Financial Procedure Rules state:
“It is the overall responsibility of the Cabinet to approve the Council’s Risk Management Policy and Strategy, review it on an annual basis and to promote a culture of risk management awareness throughout the Council.”
- 1.4 This report seeks to support Cabinet in fulfilling this responsibility.

2. CHANGES TO THE POLICY & STRATEGY

- 2.1 The objectives of the Policy are to create a mature approach to risk management within the Council, where risk based decision making is undertaken and risk management becomes proactive and embedded in our normal management and business processes. The proposed document is appended to this report (Appendix 1)
- 2.2 As stated above, given the previous thorough updating of the Policy, the amendments now being suggested are fairly limited. The first proposed change is on page 9 of the document and relates to the rating of how likely it is that a risk will occur. The current assessment of likelihood is set out below –

Likelihood

Rating	Score	Likelihood Descriptors (Any, not all)
Very Likely	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than 85% chance of occurrence• Regular occurrence• Circumstances frequently encountered
Likely	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More than 65% chance of occurrence• Likely to occur within next 12 months• Circumstances have been encountered
Unlikely	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 31%-65% chance of occurrence• Likely to happen within next 2 years• Circumstances occasionally encountered
Rare	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Less than 30% chance of occurrence• Circumstances rarely encountered or never encountered before

- 2.3 It is proposed that the definition of Unlikely should change from 31% to 65%, to 31% to 50%. With a consequent change in Likely from more than 65% to more than 50%. The Risk Management Group (RMG) thought the proposed definitions were more appropriate and consistent with how risks on the Corporate Risk Register had been rated.
- 2.4 The second proposed change to the Policy is to include a paragraph about the RMG. It was felt by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) that they were too heavily involved in writing updates to the Corporate Risk Register. The Chief Officers are more directly involved in managing risk and so are better placed to describe and rate both existing and emerging risks. Therefore, it was decided that a RMG should be formed of the Chief Officers and that CLT could then move to exercising oversight rather than direct control of the Corporate Risk Register.
- 2.5 The RMG had its first meeting in February and the proposed text for inclusion in the Policy (see page 14 of Appendix 1) is given below –

Chief Officers & Assistant Directors meet quarterly as the Risk Management Group (RMG). This group will discuss emerging corporate risks and updates to risks already recorded on the Corporate Risk Register. The proposed amendments and additions will then be sent to CLT for review.

- 2.6 The final proposed change to the Policy is to include two additional columns in the Risk Register. These additional columns cover key controls or sources of assurance and the direction of travel and have been recommended by the external auditor. The proposed new layout is shown on the final page of the Policy together with the current layout.
- 2.7 The Strategy and Policy will be considered by the Audit and Governance Committee on 15 March and any relevant feedback provided to the Cabinet ahead of their decision.

3. CURRENT RISK REGISTER

- 3.1 The updated Corporate Risk Register has been appended in full to this report (Appendix 2). Additionally, the Risk Matrix, which is a pictorial snapshot of the current level of risks faced by the Council is provided as Appendix 3.
- 3.2 The current Corporate Risk Register identifies 16 risks, which can be categorised as 1 moderate, 6 high and 9 extreme level risks. The update includes 3 new risks –

•	C14 – Levelling up Fund. The award of Levelling up Funding is very good news. However, it does involve complex, high value projects that will be a challenge to deliver on time.
•	C15 – Sports and Leisure Provision. This risk captures concerns about the future provision of leisure facilities in the district in view of issues with the proposed leisure centre at Princes Parade, the pool at Hythe and the Folkestone Sports centre Trust.

•	C16 – Fraud and Corruption. This risk has been drafted in response to a recommendation from Internal Audit and reflects the need for fraud and corruption to be recognised as a significant corporate risk.
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3.3 The update also includes the re-scoring of 2 risks –

•	C1 – Organisational Capacity. This has been re-rated from a high (9) to an extreme risk (12). This reflects the high level of concern across several service areas and the significant work necessary to address these issues.
•	C6 – Cost of Living. This has been re-rated from an extreme (12) to a high risk (9). This is due to the level of resilience shown by council services in responding to the cost of living crisis.

3.4 Additionally, a number of risks have been renamed, actions completed, and new actions identified.

3.5 The Risk Register will continue to be monitored and will be updated and reported to the next Audit & Governance Committee in July. The Risk Register should be a fluid document that will see risks being rescored regularly to reflect current circumstances, and a number of changes are reported to each meeting of the Committee.

4. SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

4.1 The establishment of a Risk Management Group is part of the continued process of embedding Risk Management across the organisation. Further work is underway on risk management awareness and strengthening the value of all risk registers.

4.2 The external auditor has recommended the inclusion of two extra columns in the Corporate Risk Register to cover key controls or sources of assurance and the direction of travel. These items will be discussed at the next meeting of the Risk Management Group and the Register will be expanded to comply with the recommendation.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

5.1

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Failure to adopt a Risk Management Policy & Strategy will cause inconsistencies in approach across the Council	High	Low	A revised Policy & Strategy document has been prepared and relevant officers consulted.

Failure to have a current Risk Management Policy & Strategy adopted will affect the Councils ability to deliver effectively on its Corporate Plan objectives	High	Low	A revised document has been prepared for adoption that provides for the management of Corporate Plan Objective risks.
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6. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

Legal Officer's Comments (AK)

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report

Finance Officer's Comments (CS)

There are no direct financial implications from this report.

Diversities and Equalities Implications (CS)

There are no direct diversities or equalities issues arising from this report.

Climate Change Implications (BP)

There are no climate change implications arising directly from this report. The Risk Register includes an item (C8) detailing the risks associated with achieving the Council's ambitions on climate change.

7. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting

Bob Palmer, Interim Assistant Director – Corporate Services

Telephone: 07933 172374

Email: robert.palmer@[folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](mailto:robert.palmer@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

Charlotte Spendley, Director – Corporate Services and Section 151 Officer

Telephone: 01303 853420

Email: charlotte.spendley@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Risk Management Policy & Strategy

Appendix 2: Corporate Risk Register

Appendix 3: Risk Matrix

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Risk Management Policy & Strategy

March 2023



Section 1 - Risk Management Policy

1. Policy Statement

The Risk Management Policy of Folkestone & Hythe District Council (FHDC) is to adopt best practice in the identification, evaluation, and cost-effective control of risks.

Risk is a factor of every-day life and can never be eliminated completely. FHDC is exposed to risk through threats to service provision, failure to deliver its strategic objectives and from the potential of lost opportunities.

All employees must understand the nature of risk and accept responsibility for risks associated with their area of authority. The necessary support, assistance and commitment of senior management will be provided.

Ultimately, effective risk management will help ensure the Council maximises its opportunities and minimises the risks it faces, improving our ability to achieve our strategic objectives and have an effective and sound system of governance in place. This framework will be particularly helpful in moving towards a more commercial approach.

2. Objectives

2.1 The council's risk management objectives are to:

- Develop a balanced approach to managing the wide range of business risks facing the Council which may prevent the Council from achieving its strategic objectives.
- Manage risk in accordance with legislation and best practice.
- Embed risk and opportunity management into the culture of the organisation.
- Establish a common understanding of the Council's expectations on risk management with partners, providers and contractors.
- Anticipate and respond quickly to change.
- Minimise the total cost of risk.

2.2 These objectives will be achieved by:

- Establishing a risk management organisational structure to act in an advisory and guiding capacity and which is accessible to all employees.
- Adopt processes, which demonstrate the application of risk management principles across the whole council.
- Providing risk management training as necessary.
- Devise and maintain contingency plans in key risk areas to secure business continuity where there is a potential for an event having a major impact upon the council's ability to function.
- Have a proactive approach to managing and anticipating events before they happen through maintaining effective communication and the active involvement of councillors and officers.
- Monitor arrangements continuously, learning from our mistakes and near misses.

3. Review period

In line with our policy to follow best practice, the Risk Management Policy & Strategy will be reviewed annually, to capture developments in relevant risk management approaches.

Section 2 – Risk Management Strategy

1. Introduction

1.1 Risk management will help identify and deal with key corporate risks facing the organisation in the pursuit of its objectives; it is an essential part of good management, not simply a compliance exercise.

2. What is risk management?

2.1 “It is the process whereby organisations methodically address the risks attaching to their activities with the goal of achieving sustained benefit within each activity and across the portfolio of all activities.” (*A Risk Management Strategy* by the Institute of Risk Management)

2.2 Risk Management is a fundamental part of good management practice for Directors, Assistant Directors, Heads of Service and other managers when planning and setting objectives, assessing adequacy of controls (both financial and service delivery) and monitoring performance. Risk management is a key way in which the Council manages its business. It is essential that risk management is embedded into corporate processes including (but not limited to):

Policy Making and Review	Strategic and Financial Planning
Service Design and Delivery	Performance Management
Change Management and Transformation	Project Management
Business Continuity Planning	Information Management

2.3 Risk management signifies the culture, processes, and structures inherent within the Council that are directed towards the effective management of potential opportunities and threats.

2.4 As well as safeguarding against potential threats and acting as an early warning system, risk management is a useful tool for exploiting opportunities.

3. The benefits of good risk management

3.1 Good risk management supports the achievement of the Council’s objectives and has a crucial role to play in ensuring that Folkestone & Hythe District Council is well run. Risk management is about managing the threats that may hinder delivery of our priorities and core services and maximising the opportunities that will help deliver them. It is important that risk management is aligned to the service plans, MTFs, Corporate Plan, policy making, performance management and strategic planning of the organisation.

3.2 The key benefits of a systematic approach to risk management are:

- Protects and enhances the reputation of Folkestone & Hythe District Council

- It provides a framework for future activity to take place in a consistent manner
- Contributes to a more efficient use of capital and resources
- Assists in the protection and enhancement of assets
- Optimises operational efficiency and focus

4. Types of risk – corporate, operational, project and partnership

4.1 Risk is defined as anything that may have an impact on the Council's ability to achieve its objectives. The risks can be internal, external, strategic (or corporate) or those arising from major projects. Risk can be categorised for recording purposes under the following headings:

- **Corporate (Strategic)**
- **Operational (Departmental)**
- **Partnership**
- **Project**

4.2 Corporate risks

These are risks that need to be considered when looking at the medium to long term objectives of the Council. Corporate risks would typically be identified and addressed within the Council's Corporate Plan or Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). A range of external factors or influences need to be considered in the identification of risks and the following sub-categories (this is not an exhaustive list but intended to provide guidance) should be used to assist:

- **Political** – those associated with a failure to deliver either local or central government policy and how those policies impact on, or influence, the Council and its community.
- **Economic** – those affecting the ability of the Council to meet its financial commitments such as inflation rates and interest rates, also unemployment rates can directly impact on the community and pose risks to the achievement of the Council's economic priorities.
- **Social** – those relating to the effects of cultural and demographic changes (language, religion, educational attainment, income level, occupation, family structure) which impact on the Council's ability to achieve its objectives.
- **Technological** – includes the consequences of internal technological failures on the Council's ability to deliver its objectives and to innovations in technology that can affect the Council and its community, such as increasing expectations of technological solutions to match other sectors.
- **Legislative** – those associated with current or potential changes in national or European law (as remains appropriate to UK) as well as policies that the Council has itself set.

- Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental – those relating to environmental impacts of climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, water consumption, flooding, weather related risks, ground conditions and broader sustainability matters.
- Competitive – those affecting the competitiveness of the service (where appropriate) and/or its ability to deliver value for money.
- Customer – those associated with the failure to meet the current and changing needs and expectations of customers, keeping track of customer expectations, and viewing the service through the eyes of the customer.
- Reputation – those relating to public confidence and failure to recruit high calibre staff.

4.3 Operational risks

These are generally identified and managed by Assistant Directors, Chief Officers and Service Managers as part of their operational business remit. The key risk areas that they need to manage are:

- Service delivery/performance
- Political/reputation
- Health & Safety
- Technology/Data Protection
- Financial

It is important to think about how the operational risks that managers and staff will encounter in the daily course of their work can be identified and how any changes could undermine the business of the Council. Using the following sub-categories should act as a guide:

- Professional – those associated with the nature of each profession.
- Financial – those associated with financial planning and control and the adequacy of insurance cover.
- Legal – those related to possible breaches of legislation, breach of contract, negligence, etc.
- Physical – those related to fire, security, accident, prevention and health and safety.
- Contractual – those associated with the failure of contractors to deliver services or products to agreed cost and specification.
- Technological – those relating to reliance on operational equipment and electronic data and information.
- Environmental – those relating to pollution, noise, or the energy efficiency of ongoing service operations.
- Human Resources – those relating to staff issues.

4.4 Partnership risks

Folkestone & Hythe District Council works with a range of partners to deliver services. It is important that those partners are brought into the risk management framework to ensure that risks to the Council are not overlooked.

Risks are identified and addressed in formal partnership agreements and contracts as appropriate. The primary risks are:

- Financial – failure to understand the potential financial liabilities associated with partnership arrangements.
- Reputation – loss of public confidence.
- Contractual – contract requirements not delivered.
- Legal – failure to understand the potential legal liabilities associated with partnership arrangements.
- Service failure – the associated risk of increased costs.

4.5 Project risks

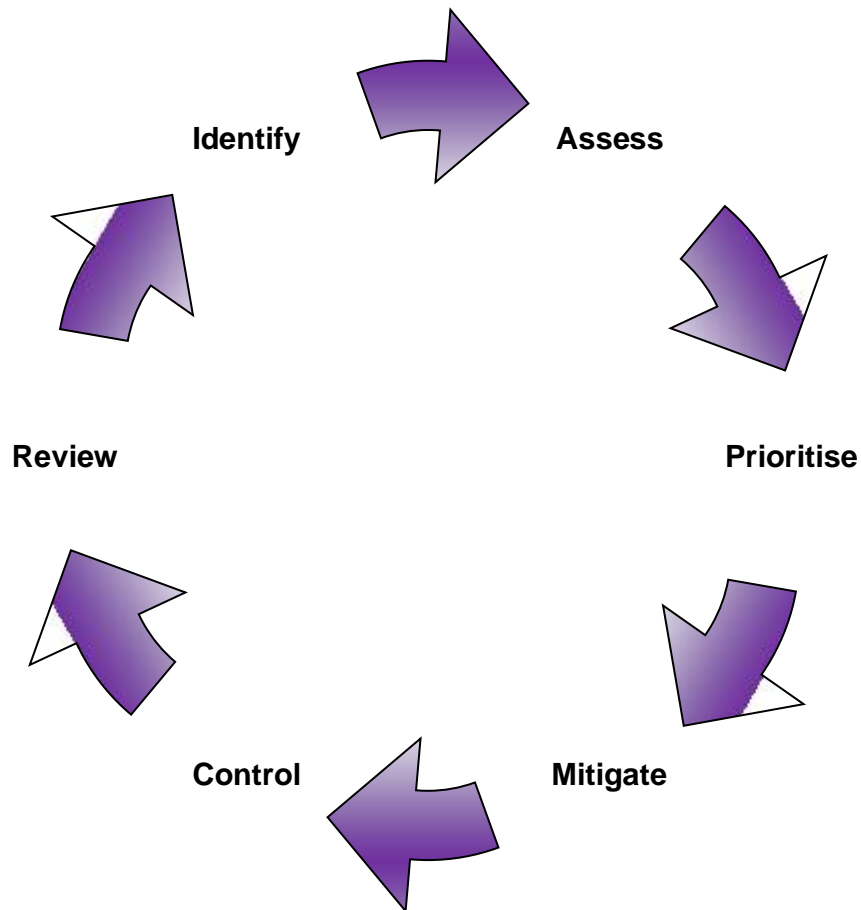
Folkestone & Hythe District Council has several major strategic projects that require risk mapping. These projects will have inherent risks and opportunities. Where the project poses a significant risk or is of strategic importance to the delivery of the Corporate Plan an overall risk should be identified within the corporate risk register. The project itself should have a project risk register that is managed by the Project Lead/ Project Sponsor. The project risk register will typically be compiled by holding workshops with the key stakeholders. The initial risk register will be signed off by the appropriate Project Board and then reported to them on an exceptional basis via the normal project highlight reports.

5. Risk management cycle

5.1 There are several steps in the cycle of identifying and managing risks within the Council. These should be as follows:

- **Identify** – a need to identify the potential risks that may arise if informed decisions are to be made about policies or service delivery methods.
- **Assess** – available data should be used to provide information to help assess the probability of any risk arising or the potential impact on activities undertaken.
- **Prioritise** – action determined on the tolerance and aversion to risk, balanced against the availability of limited resources.
- **Mitigate** – should the risk be terminated, tolerated, treated or transferred.
- **Control** – once the appropriate action is determined for each risk, the process of controlling that risk can commence. This will either involve minimising/eliminating the risk and/or alleviating its potential impact.
- **Review** – risk management needs to be seen as a continuous process. It is essential that the incidence of risk be reviewed to see whether it has changed over time.

5.2 The risk review cycle is captured in the diagram below, which emphasises the need for risk to be embedded as an ongoing process throughout the organisation (diagram 1):



6. Risk identifying, assessing and prioritising

6.1 Risk assessment is about asking:

- What can go wrong?
- What are the opportunities that may be missed?
- What is the likelihood of it going wrong?
- What is the impact should it go wrong?
- What can be done to mitigate the risk?

6.2 This approach can be applied to decisions made every working day, at all levels of the Council. However, to ensure appropriate risk management is embedded throughout the organisation formal risk identification is also necessary to capture the key risks faced and identify appropriate mitigation.

6.3 A risk is broken down into likelihood and impact and each is scored out of four. Likelihood represents the statistical chance of an event taking place. Such events are summarised into four broad headings: rare, unlikely, likely and very likely. Impact represents the expected disruption to the Council and summarised into four broad headings: minor, moderate, significant and severe. These two figures are multiplied together to give the risk score. This is shown in the Risk Scoring Matrix below. The risk scores then provide an overall ranking for each risk.

6.4 Risk Management Matrix

Likelihood	Very Likely (4)	Moderate (4)	High (8)	Extreme (12)	Extreme (16)
	Likely (3)	Low (3)	Moderate (6)	High (9)	Extreme (12)
	Unlikely (2)	Very low (2)	Low (4)	Moderate (6)	High (8)
	Rare (1)	Very low (1)	Very low (2)	Low (3)	Moderate (4)
		Minor (1)	Moderate (2)	Significant (3)	Severe (4)
	Impact				

6.5 The definitions of likelihood and impact are outlined below, these are intended as guidance:

Likelihood

Rating	Score	Likelihood Descriptors (any, not all)
Very Likely	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 85% chance of occurrence • Regular occurrence • Circumstances frequently encountered
Likely	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More than 65-80% chance of occurrence • Likely to occur within next 12 months • Circumstances have been encountered
Unlikely	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 31%-65% chance of occurrence • Likely to happen within next 2 years • Circumstances occasionally encountered
Rare	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Less than 30% chance of occurrence • Circumstances rarely encountered or never encountered before

Impact

Rating	Score	Impact
Severe	4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of service for a significant period • Fatality to an employee, service user or other • Failure to meet major corporate objective • Breach of law • Financial loss in excess of £500k
Significant	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial loss in excess of £250k • Intervention in running a single service area • Significant or disabling injury • Failure to achieve a high-profile major service objective • Breach of contractual arrangement
Moderate	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Service interruption • Injury to employee, service user or other • Financial loss between £50k-£250k • Adverse media coverage/ high levels of service user complaints • Failure to achieve a service objective
Minor	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor service disruption/ short term inconvenience • Financial loss less than £50k • Isolated service user complaints • Failure to achieve a team objective

6.6 The resultant scores from the matrix should be assigned actions as per the following table:

1 – 2 is Very Low Risk	Acceptable risk No further action or additional controls required Only log on risk register if there is a need to document and monitor or there is a likelihood the risk profile will change.
3 and a 4 from a 2x2 are Low Risk	A risk at this level may be acceptable Maintain existing controls if any, no further action or additional controls required
4 – 6 is Moderate Risk	Not normally acceptable Efforts should be made to reduce the risk, provided this is not disproportionate Determine the need for improved control measures
8 – 9 is High Risk	Not acceptable Appropriate action must be taken to manage the risk A number of new control measures may be required
12 – 16 is Extreme Risk	Not acceptable Immediate, urgent action must be taken to manage the risk A number of new control measures will be required

6.7 Once risks have been scored consideration should be given to who is the most appropriate person to own the risk and at what level of the organisation the risk should be managed. The general guidance is that a moderate-high risk rating triggers discussions with management and potential escalation of

the risk. It should be noted that risk escalation is not about changing the ownership of the risk; it is about escalating the profile of the risk and raising awareness of the risk at appropriate levels in the organisation. Raising the profile of the risk could be about decision making, resources required to mitigate the risk or that the impact cuts across different perspectives of the organisation, e.g. programme, operational, strategic, and the risk should therefore be assessed from those perspectives if it has not been already. Decisions can then be made on the appropriate mitigating action (see Section 7 below).

7. Mitigating actions to control the risk

7.1 Once a risk has been identified, analysed and profiled, there are four ways, the 4 T's, to control the risk:

- **Treat** – action should be taken to reduce the likelihood of the risk occurring, or the severity (impact) of the consequences if it does. Identify and put in place mitigating actions that reduce the risk to an acceptable level.
- **Transfer** – the risk is transferred, partially or fully, to a third party (e.g. contractual agreement/insurance) to share the risk exposure. This may have a cost attached and whilst the financial risk may be transferred, a reputational risk may remain with the Council. Insurance is not available for everything. Sometimes, while it is possible to transfer the activity to a third party, you can still retain the liability if things go wrong.
- **Tolerate** – some risks can be tolerated without any further action being taken, if both the likelihood and impact of the risk are low. For some risks, no further action may be possible, or the cost may be disproportionate to the potential benefit gained (consideration should be given to a contingency plan for handling the impact if the risk crystallises). It is still important to log and monitor the risk because retaining a risk should always be an informed decision and not retained by default.
- **Terminate** – sometimes a risk is so far outside the risk appetite, or it is assessed as having such a severe impact that you have to stop the activity or function that gave rise to the risk (where possible).

7.2 Risk Appetite

7.2.1 This can be defined as the amount of risk the Council is willing to take in pursuit of its objectives. A well-defined risk appetite means members and officers are clear about which risks are acceptable and which risks should be avoided. Risk appetite should be at the heart of how we do business and sets the tone for the risk culture across the Council.

7.2.2 The Council's approach is to be innovative where it can be and to seek continuous improvement in the identification and delivery of services. It prides itself on having in place robust risk management at all levels across the organisation to encourage a risk cautious/risk aware approach and less of a risk averse approach. Innovation and opportunities are taken within the Directorates whilst managing and addressing the barriers to success of their objectives. It is recognised

that the attitude towards risk will differ across the Directorates, from risk aware to risk averse as the Council seeks to operate within a framework of compliance, delivering value for money and strong corporate governance. The Council's risk appetite has to be determined by individual circumstances but for example, for risk on matters of compliance with the law the appetite for risk will be very low.

- 7.3 If the option is to treat or control the risk, then a decision needs to be made on the best control(s) to put in place. Controls need to be proportionate to the risk and need to give reasonable assurance that the loss will be confined to within an acceptable level for the authority.

8. Risk Monitoring and Review

- 8.1 Risks are to be monitored according to the level of risk noted on the risk matrix above; this will also dictate the level of management attention required. Service departments are responsible for ensuring all staff know how to identify a risk for monitoring by management.

- 8.2 Regular monitoring and review must be carried out by the risk owner, however risk should be discussed regularly at team meetings and one to one meetings if appropriate.

- 8.3 Risks should be reviewed at appropriate intervals and the risk review process should not be overly onerous. As a general rule, risks with a higher risk rating should be reviewed more frequently while risks with a lower risk rating require less attention; however, the risk assessment should be used to decide the most appropriate review period. If the risk profile is low but is expected to be volatile, then it could warrant more frequent review. Conversely, a high rated risk may not be expected to change over a 6-month period so reviewing monthly would be an unnecessary burden. A risk response of tolerate would also indicate that a longer review period could be appropriate.

- 8.4 Questions to ask during monitoring and review:
- Is the risk still relevant?
 - Is there any movement in the score?
 - Are the controls still in place and operating effectively?
 - Has anything occurred which might change its impact and/or likelihood?
 - Have potential opportunities been considered and maximised?
 - Have any significant control failures or weaknesses occurred since the last monitoring exercise? If so, does this indicate whether the risk is increasing or decreasing?
 - If the risk is increasing do I need to devise more controls or think of other ways of mitigating the risk?
 - If the risk is decreasing can I relax some of the controls?
 - Are controls/actions built into appropriate documented action plans?
 - Are there any new emerging risks?
 - Have any of the existing risks ceased to be an issue and can therefore be closed? If so, complete a final review to identify the reasons for closing

and close the risk and ensure that any relevant lessons learned are documented and or shared as appropriate.

9. The Corporate Risk Register

- 9.1 The Council's Corporate Risk Register is the core element of the arrangements laid out in this strategy as it represents an articulation and assessment of key risks facing the organisation. As such only the key risks identified in the Council's Corporate Plan and MTFs would typically be included in the Corporate Risk Register. In addition where appropriate emerging or changing operational or partnership risks identified by Chief Officers / Assistant Directors that have a significant bearing on the organisation will be discussed with CLT (Corporate Leadership Team) to determine whether these risks need to be included on the Corporate Risk Register.
- 9.2 On reviewing the Corporate Risk Register, officers will have reference to both Cabinet reports and decisions taken, as well as reviewing motions and decisions taken by Full Council to ensure all corporate risks are given due consideration and captured in the register if relevant.

10. Operational (Departmental/Service) Risk Registers

- 10.1 The Operational Risk Registers should be subject to a routine monthly review and rigorous quarterly assessment at the relevant Departmental Management Team meetings.
- 10.2 A risk identified as 'red' on the risk matrix will need escalating to CLT and may be included in the corporate risk register to raise the profile and ensure it is being sufficiently managed and controlled.
- 10.3 There may be frequent changes to the Operational Risks and particularly to the sensitivity of some of them during the monthly and quarterly reviews. The Risk Management process should fully recognise this and have procedures in place for highlighting these to the Audit & Governance Committee much sooner if necessary, including, although not restricted to, reporting through audit and other inspection reporting.

11. Responsibility and ownership of risk management

All Members, managers, employees and partners must proactively engage with risk management and the potential impact of risks on achieving objectives. Managers at all levels are responsible for the collation and management of risks within their area, using risk registers. It is everyone's job to identify risks and report them to their manager/director. Clear identification of roles and responsibilities is paramount to ensuring the successful adoption of risk management and its embedding into the culture of the Council. This strategy supports the roles and responsibilities as outlined in the Financial Procedure Rules, Section C. In addition, this section sets out how these responsibilities are to be applied.

11.1 Cabinet and its Elected Members

Cabinet and its Elected Members are to oversee the effective management of risk throughout the Council. They set the direction and have ultimate accountability for the risk and related control environment. As such Cabinet will endorse the Council's Risk Management Policy and Strategy and review the Corporate Risk Register annually, following these documents being reviewed by the Corporate Leadership Team and the Audit and Governance Committee. It is also expected that relevant risks are discussed at monthly Portfolio Holder Meetings with Directors / Assistant Directors.

11.2 Corporate Leadership Team

The Council's Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) are to ensure that the Council manages risk effectively through the development and embedding of the Risk Management Strategy plus monitoring its implementation and development. CLT will review the Council's Risk Management Policy and Strategy and Corporate Risk Register annually, ahead of these documents going to Cabinet and the Audit and Governance Committee.

CLT will undertake a formal quarterly review of the Corporate Risk Register and will also actively consider emerging or changing risks on a regular basis.

11.3 Assistant Directors/Chief Officers

The Corporate Services Director will have overall accountability for overseeing the Council's risk management framework and ensuring that the ownership and governance arrangements outlined within this strategy are adhered to.

Assistant Directors and Chief Officers are to manage risk effectively in their service areas. It is also their role to consider risks to services being delivered in partnerships and to work with partnerships to develop partnership risk registers. As such it is expected that Heads of Service work with their Managers and Team Leaders to develop and maintain Operational (Departmental) Risk Registers for their business unit, as well as lead or commission project/partnership risk registers where appropriate. Chief Officers / Assistant Directors will also be responsible for determining when operational risks reach such a level that they should be escalated to CLT for consideration of their inclusion in the Council's Corporate Risk Register.

Chief Officers & Assistant Directors are responsible for ensuring their risk registers remain current and relevant and are encouraged to have emerging risks as a standing item on their Team Leader meeting agendas.

[Chief Officers & Assistant Directors meet quarterly as the Risk Management Group \(RMG\). This group will discuss emerging corporate risks and updates to risks already recorded on the Corporate Risk Register. The proposed amendments and additions will then be sent to CLT for review.](#)

11.4 All Council Staff

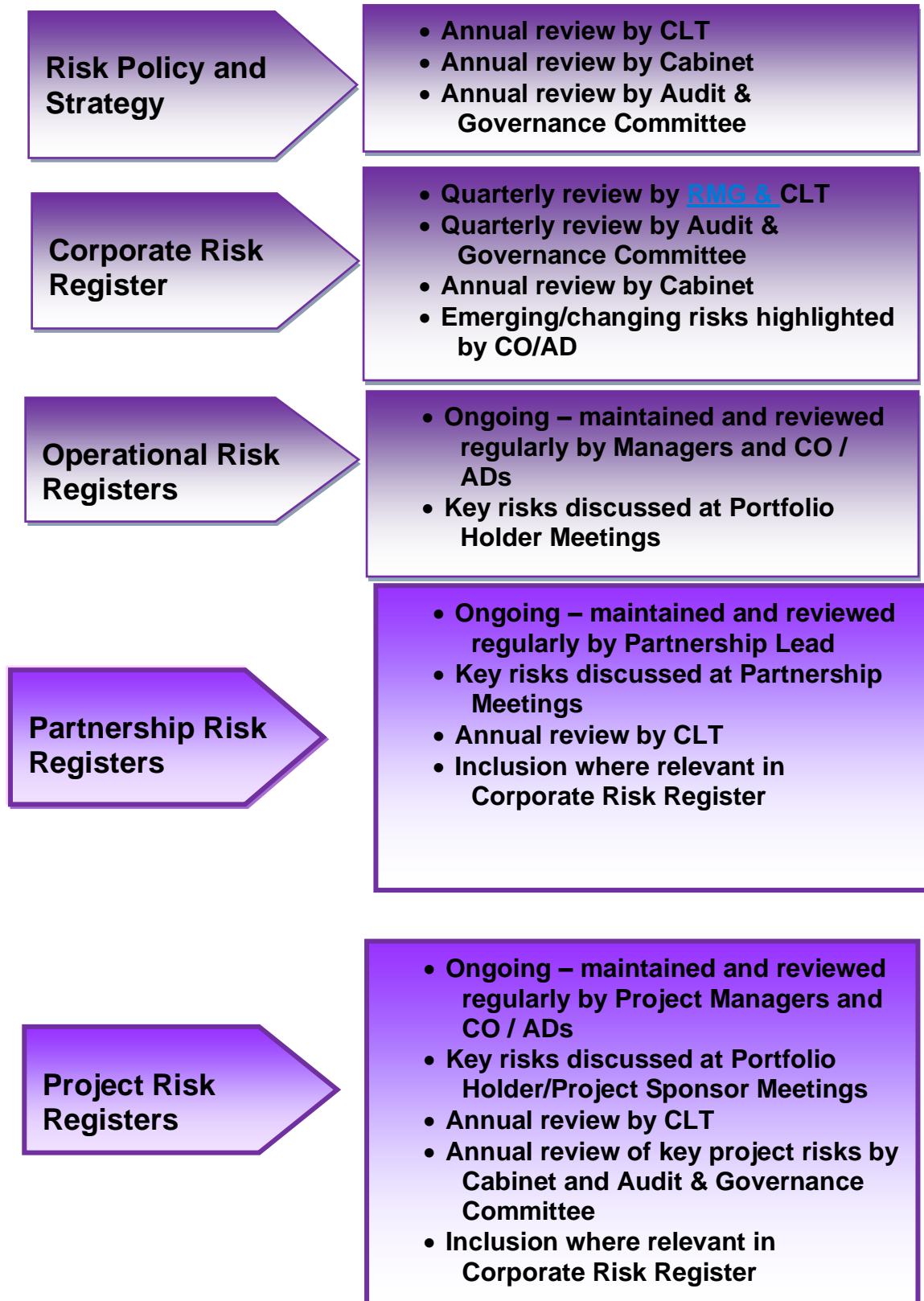
All Council staff are expected to manage risk effectively in their day-to-day tasks and to work with their line manager to assess areas of risk within their role. Also, Council staff should be familiar with the Council's Risk Management Strategy and comply with Health and Safety procedures. If any staff member feels they require training on either Risk or Health and Safety, they are to raise this in their monthly one-to-one with their Team Leader. Staff should also take responsibility to escalate risks to their manager so appropriate controls can be agreed.

11.5 Audit and Governance Committee

Audit and Governance Committee are to review the effectiveness of the Council's risk management arrangements, and to seek assurance that action is being taken to mitigate those risks identified. As such an update on the Corporate Risk Register will be presented at each Quarterly Audit and Governance Committee. In addition, the Audit and Governance Committee will review the Council's Risk Management Policy and Strategy and Corporate Risk Register annually, ahead of these documents going to Cabinet.

12. Governance and Reporting

In line with the responsibility and ownership details outlined above the following diagram (diagram 3) details the governance and reporting timetable arrangements for both the Risk Management Policy and Strategy and the Corporate Risk Register.



13 Culture, Awareness and Training

- 13.1 To ensure risk management is effectively implemented, all FHDC Members and officers should have a level of understanding of the Council's risk management approach and regard risk management as part of their responsibilities.
- 13.2 Managing risk should be firmly embedded in everyone's thinking, behaviours and actions.
- 13.3 Having developed a robust approach and established clear roles and responsibilities and reporting lines, it is important to provide Members and officers with the knowledge and skills necessary to enable them to manage risk effectively.
- 13.4 A range of training methods are being developed to meet the needs of the organisation and include:
- Formal risk management training
 - E-learning
 - Risk workshops

14 Links to other policies and procedures

- 14.1 Business Continuity Management (BCM) - having in place appropriate and fully tested business continuity plans helps officers to manage threats or incidents that may occur, that have the potential to disrupt the delivery of services or the conduct of Council business. The aim of BCM is to ensure the Council is resilient to interruptions in the delivery of its business-critical services and to return to 'business as usual' as quickly and efficiently as possible. Business Continuity Management is a cyclical process and is designed to manage and control risks which can be described as 'low likelihood, high impact' events. It involves four stages: understanding the organisation; determining the Business Continuity Strategy; developing and implementing the BCM plans; and exercising, maintaining and reviewing BCM.
- 14.2 Health & Safety - the Council recognises that effective management of health and safety supports the delivery of our services for the residents of Folkestone & Hythe. As part of the overall risk management culture and process, good health and safety management will help reduce injury and loss, help promote a healthy workforce, help protect all who are affected by the Council's activities and ensure we comply with our legal duties. Forming part of the Council's Health and Safety Management System, our Health and Safety Policy explains what is necessary to manage health and safety effectively and in line with legislation. It identifies roles and responsibilities and provides specific guidance on health and safety risk assessment techniques, implementing and reviewing controls as well as special guidance on issues relating to special risk groups. The risk management principles of the Council's Health and Safety policy are in accordance with the principles established within this policy. It is recognised, however, that as a discipline in its own right, health and safety practice, risk management tools and techniques can be

specialist in nature. Therefore, please refer to the Health and Safety Policy for additional information and guidance.

- 14.3 A Programme Management Office has been established with a lead professional having oversight to ensure outcomes are delivered within a robust governance arrangement whilst being on time and within budget. Working in a matrix approach across the wider organisation to ensure the ambitions can be realised. They have responsibility for the development of a programme management framework approach to high-profile projects, including training and support to individual project leads and ensuring best practice. The key source of knowledge bringing the key corporate projects together to ensure that the critical inter-dependencies are recognised. A new Project Management Toolkit is being prepared and a key part of this will be supporting the risk management policy with project risk registers and specific guidance on risk assessment for projects.

15. Supporting Documents

Corporate Risk Register
Operational Risk Registers
Project Risk Registers
Partnership Risk Registers
Financial Procedure Rules

Folkestone & Hythe District Council- Risk Register layout

Current layout in place 2022/23

Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Current Score			Mitigation scheme (Tolerate, Treat, Transfer, Terminate)	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Target Score		
					Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total

Proposed amended layout with additional columns for 2023/24

Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Key Controls or Sources of Assurance	Current Score			Direction Of Travel	Tolerate Treat Transfer Terminate	Proposed Actions	Timing	Target Score		
						Likelihood	Impact	Total					Likelihood	Impact	Total

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Corporate Risk Register

Link to Corporate Plan	Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Current Score			Mitigation scheme	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Target Score			
						Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total	
All Priorities	C1	Organisational Capacity	Susan Priest (Chief Exec); Cllr David Monk (Leader)	Diverse political make-up of Council with range of Council motions to manage. Limited capacity, challenging recruitment market & shortage of many specialist skills available in key fields such as Development Control, Climate Change, Strategic Development, Environmental Health, Finance & Building Control. Particular concern over Building Control with key staff due to retire. Workforce pressures remain high for key contractors such as Veolia and Mears, and in seasonal roles for Grounds Maintenance. Reputational risk exposure if not sufficiently managed.	Capacity proposals agreed by Cabinet in 2021 to address strategic projects capacity. Agile working introduced to attract skilled workforce. Succession planning being undertaken by Organisational Development (OD) for all Directorates. New grow our own initiative. Use of specialist recruiters to target hard to fill roles and interim resource to fill key roles. Targeted service reviews taking place to consider future delivery options where gaps are emerging. Widened span of control for some Chief Officers to cover gaps.	3	3	4	9	12	Treat	Ongoing	2	2	4
Page 159 SA 4: Quality homes and infrastructure	C2	Otterpool Park development	Ewan Green (Director of Place); Cllr David Monk (Leader)	Delivery of a new Garden Town which will present complex planning issues, requirement for robust stewardship and governance arrangements, management of financial exposure risks and require new connections to be established with key partners to enable the scale and complexity of delivery. The project involves significant amounts of borrowing and further increases in interest rates would impact on the development.	LLP established and Board appointed, Business Plan for 2021-2026 considered and update agreed January 2022. Framework for updated Business Plan considered by O&S in November 22. Budget commitment made within MTCP. Regular Owners Committee Meetings. Internal Corporate Oversight Group established. Core Strategy adopted March 2022. Paper agreed by Cabinet on appropriate separation of duties for Members and Officers. Strategic Land Agreement concluded. Agreement from Cabinet to establish a Stewardship Vehicle and explore a Collaboration Agreement with Homes England.	3	3	3	9	9	Treat	Planning Permission Q2 2023 S106 Q1 2024	2	3	6

Link to Corporate Plan	Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Current Score			Mitigation scheme	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Target Score		
						Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total
All Priorities	C3	Medium Term Financial Strategy Uncertainty of Future Funding	Charlotte Spendley (S151 Officer); Cllr David Monk (Leader)	Central Government continues to indicate a Fair funding review will be delivered to fundamentally change LG funding. However, continued delays suggest that implementation may not occur until as far forward as 2025/26. Will need to plan within climate of uncertainty. Lack of certainty on Business Rates Localisation and reset and also other funding streams such as the end of New Homes Bonus also brings uncertainty. A 3 year funding settlement was announced from 2022/23, however this settlement means a cash-flat position for 2023/24 and 2024/25. The Council awaits the outcome of the Autumn Statement from the Chancellor of the Exchequer to provide further clarity on the national and local picture for public finance. National economic climate creating significant additional pressures and uncertainty. The Council received the Autumn Statement in November 2022 and its was announced that the Fair Funding Review will now be pushed back to 2025/26. A one year settlement was received in December 2022 for the 2023/24 Budget with the promise of new policy guidelines for 2024/25 but with no new figures. There is no news on the Business Rates retention scheme reforms. The National economic and financial climates remains pressured and uncertain.	Officers regularly attending briefings on future LG funding. Updated MTFS was considered by O&S/Cabinet/Council in November outlining scale of medium term gap. S151 Officer part of Kent Finance Officers Group. Regular updates provided to Members on the current year position. MTFS position determined following significant modelling and having taken advice from advisors. Member training & senior officer session took place in November covering economic picture and LG Funding.	4	4	16	Treat	Officers will continue to attend briefings on LG Funding and brief members. Update to the MTFS to be reported in November, followed by the Budget Strategy update agreed by Cabinet in December. Plans to be drafted for Budget savings targets for Budget Managers for 23/24 cycle of budget now set following MTFS. Update to HRA Business Plan will be made for 2023/24 Specialist advisors engaged to undertake this. A review of inflationary pressures across the council underway to assess impact and options.	Ongoing	2	3	6
All Priorities	C4	Failure to deliver Strategic Projects due to volume & scale of projects, alongside the council facing increased financial pressures in an uncertain economic climate.	Andy Blaszkwicz (Housing & Operations Director) & Simon Baxter (Chief Officer Development); CLT; Cllr David Godfrey (Housing, & Special Projects)	Ambitious Strategic & Housing development agenda identified of a complex nature presenting planning risks, financial exposure risks and require new connections to be established with key partners to enable delivery e.g.grant funding, joint venture partners. Failure to attract relevant grants including Levelling Up Fund, Brownfield Sites Fund, Homes England etc. and a changed economic climate results in affordability concerns for the council.	Experienced resource within projects team. Work ongoing with Homes England, DLUHC, One Estate etc to secure further funding. Engaging specialist advice where required. Review of strategic projects undertaken to consider whether to continue or to pause until there is a more favourable economic climate and business cases for investment are strong.	3	3	9	Treat	Establishment of PMO approach to roll out consistent principles for managing projects corporately. Finance, Housing & Strategic Projects teams working collaboratively to introduce new housing scheme appraisal system.	Completed initial addressing of capacity, maintain progress	2	2	4
All Priorities	C5	Organisational non compliance with constitution requirements, emerging and new legislative and regulatory requirements and associated new burdens	Susan Priest (Chief Exec); Cllr David Monk (Leader)	FHDC operates in a complex regulatory and legislative environment. Risk of challenge over planning decisions (Secretary of State or Judicial Review) could create reputational damage and delay projects, landlord statutory obligations and Regulator of Social Housing, etc. Implications arising from changing legislative and regulatory environment (eg Environment Act 2021, Procurement Act expected Autumn 2023 etc), presents increased risk to authority in meeting the emerging requirements with sufficient resources and skills to fulfil statutory duties and demands. Staff required to be well-trained and aware of associated governance matters, including adherence to processes and procedures. Reputational risk to authority if risk occurs.	Legal support embedded in key project teams. External specialist advice sought where required. Monitoring of potential changes to planning and environmental legislation. Refreshed training and development programmes offered to staff. Governance action plan prepared with progress regularly monitored by CLT. New performance review template prepared to remind managers of the range of governance matters to check.	2	4	8	Treat	Continued external advice sought when required. Use of professional specialists (Legal, Finance, Development, Procurement) in key projects. Ongoing monitoring and regular reporting on compliance built into CLT monitoring reporting for key projects. Internal Audits commissioned to review areas of concern. Refreshed training and support materials available for staff to support ongoing learning and development. Additional resource focused on compliance. Regular review of governance action plan by CLT.	Ongoing	2	2	4

Corporate Risk Register

Link to Corporate Plan	Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Current Score			Mitigation scheme	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Target Score		
						Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total
SA1: Positive community leadership	C6	Cost of living pressures put unsustainable demands on council services	Susan Priest (Chief Exec); Cllr David Monk (Leader)	With the current economic situation and unknown further cost of living pressures predicted, communities require ongoing support. Vulnerable residents require appropriate access to services and effective signposting to specialist providers of support.	Well established connections made with a variety of partners including the voluntary community sector and specialist support agencies. Community hubs established for responsive work. Consideration given to the use of available UKSPF funds to support cost of living pressures for residents. Successful bid made to UK Power Networks for funding to support warm spaces.	4	3	12	Treat	Ongoing role of Community Hubs to continue based on value demonstrated through the pandemic. UKSPF proposed being used to target support for cost of living. Following on from the Cost of Living Summit, an information leaflet has been produced and work is being done to record and co-ordinate warm spaces.	Ongoing	3	2	6
All Priorities	C7	Failure to deliver Strategic Project - Princes Parade	Andy Blaszkowicz (Housing & Operations Director) & Simon Baxter (Chief Officer Development); CLT; Cllr David Godfrey (Housing, & Special Projects)	Failure to secure pre-commencement conditions and necessary license & contract agreements to achieve planned start on site. Potential JR process relating to residential site affecting cashflow position of scheme. Updated MTFS and wider economic landscape requires revaluation of the scheme. Failure to implement planning permission and secure the £20m + asset value of the Princes Parade site to deliver a Leisure Centre, Commercial and Residential development. Lack of financial and staff resources to effectively deliver the project. Elevated financial risk to the authority with uncertainty surrounding delivery route, potential write off and associated reputational damage.	Resource deployed to evaluate options for the scheme giving consideration to affordability, deliverability, planning, economic, community considerations. Project spend suspended. Members agreed resources to carry out actions to implement the planning permission (deadline date 17th July 2023.) Clarity on project delivery options (beyond planning matters) including potential sale of site, given priority attention with associated financial implications arising being carefully appraised and considered by members.	4	4	16	Treat	Portfolio Holder briefings and member decision required on options appraisal. Members to consider next steps once the planning implementation is secured. Review of financial plan for delivery options of the scheme to be carried out with associated financial implications given priority attention.	Ongoing	2	2	4
SA2: A thriving environment	C8	Failure to achieve Carbon Neutral ambitions by 2030	Charlotte Spendley (S151 Officer); Cllr Lesley Whybrow (Environment)	Council resolution to commit to reduce the Council's estate and operations to zero net carbon by 2030. Competing demands to be managed and interdependencies to be considered.	Climate and Ecological Working Group established and meeting regularly. Carbon Action Plan agreed. Additional resources secured. Staff & Member training commenced. Impact statements being trialed in Cabinet Papers from July 21 onwards. Social Decarbonisation Funding secured. A Carbon Innovation Lab has been established and has held three five meetings so far. Enhanced communications to maintain high profile on the issue.	4	3	12	Treat	Action plan to be delivered and reviewed regularly to ensure actions make the most of the opportunities to reduce carbon emissions from the council's estate and operations. Ongoing work particularly within specialist teams including procurement to create internal frameworks to inform decisions taken and reduce estate emissions. Consultancy services procured to assist in updating Carbon Action Plan. A bid will be has been submitted for the second round of the Social Decarbonisation Fund. Work required on HRA aspects as ambition cannot be funded from existing HRA resources (see risk 4 above). Working with a consultant through CI Lab on engagement events to widen participation.	Ongoing	3	2	6

Link to Corporate Plan	Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Current Score			Mitigation scheme	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Target Score		
						Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total
SA4: Quality homes and infrastructure	C9	Housing deliverability Tenant safety - capital programme/ Asset Management Health & Safety, Compliance / retrofit /Net Zero Carbon agenda	Andy Blaszkowicz (Housing & Operations Director); Cllr David Godfrey (Housing) & Gill Butler (Chief Officer, Housing)	Delivery against expectations investment /retrofit social housing (Net Zero Carbon), asset management, meeting legislation - decent homes standards, Health & Safety / building safety as well new consumer standards - Tenant Satisfaction Measures etc. HRA Business Plan viability /against expectation of HRA new build. Resource issues. Risk that we fall short on compliance / legislation which may cause problems with Regulator of Social Housing in 24/25. Also risk that we will have too many properties left to retrofit 2025-30 to EPC 'C' - dependent on Wave 2 decision. Combination of restrictions on rent increases, higher borrowing costs and significant capital works that are unavoidable may call viability of HRA into question over medium term.	Successful Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund Wave 1 bid £2M/£900K (HRA commitment). Some skilled Temp. officers in place to manage SHDF 22/23. Housing Asset Management Strategy commitment to have all homes to Energy Performance Certificate C by 2030. Competing demands from the Net Zero Carbon agenda & meeting Health & Safety /Compliance legislation - will place future retrofit programme at risk - if no Wave 2 funding secured for 23-25 this will leave 700+ 800 + properties.	3	4	12	Treat	Housing Asset Management Framework in place. Retrofitting /Net Zero Carbon agenda - developing a Housing Carbon Reduction Plan / contract procurement /stock management process in place - planned works module on IT system. Resources - recruiting to vacant posts. HRA Business Plan - to determine priority of spend level of Wave 2 Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund bid.	22/23 -Ongoing	2	3	6
SA2: A thriving environment Page 162	C10	Waste Collection & Street Cleansing Disruption	Ewan Green (Director of Place); Cllr Stuart Peall (Waste)	Service delivery failure or disruption to contract performance resulting in poor service to our residents, reputational damage, financial costs, impact on clean and attractive environment for residents, visitors and businesses. Possible triggers include - 1. Contractor service failures. 2. Weather disruption. 3. Disruption to transportation routes, fuel supplies and availability of HGV drivers. 4. Industrial action. 5. Pandemic/Covid Absences. 6. Volume of unacceptable littering behaviour 7. Introduction of new burdens and / or unforeseen service requirements arising from the implementation of new Government policy (e.g. Environment Act)	1. Regular monitoring of contract performance by Waste Team. 2. Joint approach with DDC as part of the Waste Partnership. 3. Use of contract performance clauses e.g. performance deductions. 4. Updated Business Continuity Plans. 5. Regular monitoring of contractor resource levels e.g. drivers and crews. 6. Targeted communications about taking home / disposing of waste responsibly. 7. Early impact assessment of implications of new policy burdens, working with DCC and the Kent Resources Partnership.	3	3	9	Treat	Continue the relevant actions as set out in 'Actions In Place'. Targeted communications.	Ongoing	2	2	4

Corporate Risk Register

Link to Corporate Plan	Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Current Score			Mitigation scheme	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Target Score		
						Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total
All Priorities	C11	Cyber Threat	Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services); Cllr Ray Field (Transformation, Digital, IT & Customer)	All ICT systems face cyber threats resulting in a number of possible outcomes including but not limited to - prolonged loss of access to FHDC network and key systems potential loss of data prolonged disruption to service delivery data breaches which could result in substantial financial penalties from the ICO	The council has a number of layers of anti virus security both internally and externally (e.g. on the Kent Connects network). All systems and equipment are in support at all times including cloud hosted systems and updated regularly with security patches. There are Acceptable Use and Information Security policies in place which contain incident reporting procedures to provide guidance for staff. The Acceptable Use Policy has been updated in 2023. Staff have to undertake security awareness training on an annual basis. The number of routes by which a virus could enter the network have been curtailed. Backups are held which would enable systems to be rebuilt in the event of a loss of data which are tested annually. The council maintains its compliance with government standards which includes rigorous testing of security and if necessary monitoring remedial actions.	3	4	12	Treat / Tolerate	Maintain current position of providing staff ICT equipment needed to carry out their roles. 2023 version of the Acceptable Use Policy reverts to position that work devices are for work purposes only and removes some of the freedom of personal use. Project to reduce data held on the network is being developed. This will reduce risk of virus infection spreading, raise awareness of staff of importance of good data management, reduce effort required if restoration necessary. Continue to monitor security systems and solutions and upgrade/renew as priority over other ICT works. Continue to educate users and carry out targeted email campaigns so staff and councillor awareness remains high. Renew the council "Cyber Essentials" accreditation, and enhance if necessary. Continue to migrate systems to the cloud in line with the 2023 ICT Strategy where better security can be provided by vendors on a larger scale and also reduced risk of cross contamination between key systems compared to hosting in local data centre. Council made a bid for DLUHC grant funding for improving cyber security and awarded £125k. A plan is being developed to make best use of this grant.	Ongoing	3	2	6
All Priorities	C12	Economic Climate	Charlotte Spendley (Director of Corporate Services); Cllr Lesley Whybrow (Environment)	Due to world-wide economic factors, CPI inflation rates have increased at rapid rates and currently (November 22) CPI sits at 11.1% (December 22) CPI sits at 10.5% . Cost increase pressures for pay, prices and contracts have necessitated price changes to the estimates of future projects and also the council's MTFS projections. These have to be funded and increase pressure on the MTFS funding gap. Inflation likely to drive higher cost demands that may exceed what has been allowed for in the MTFS. The consequence of this is that budget reductions will be required to maintain service levels within cost, and/or projects may have to be delayed or deferred. Inflationary pressures may challenge scheme feasibility. The state of the economy is likely to impact upon collection rates for major income streams including housing rents, council tax and business rates. As a consequence of high inflation, interest rates are also rising which again influences the cost of future projects and the cost of borrowing which can have a material effect on viability of these schemes.	This is being kept under review by CLT and the finance/case management team for existing contracts and any significant cost increases or shortfalls in income will be highlighted to CLT. Further guidance is awaited from Central Government on how Council's will be compensated for inflationary pressures, for example, will the Business Rates multiplier be increased by CPI rates or will the Council be compensated through the Provisional Local Government settlement. Pay and price negotiations are on-going with suppliers and in respect of pay awards. The Autumn Statement received in November 2022 has confirmed that CPI inflation will be used as the basis to compensate Councils for the multiplier cap freeze.	4	3	12	Treat/ Tolerate	To ensure Value for Money in all contracts and projects and mitigate as far as possible to avoid entering into fluctuating value contracts. Inflation assumptions in MTFS have been updated and any impact of additional funding pressures have been projected and the additional pressures that this may bring to the Council are identified within the funding gap. The Local Government Association and other relevant bodies are lobbying Central Government for compensatory adjustment within the Provisional Local Government settlement to help Councils balance their budgets.	Ongoing	3	3	9

Corporate Risk Register

Link to Corporate Plan	Risk ID	Risk Name	Risk Owner	Risk Description & Triggers	Actions in place	Current Score			Mitigation scheme	Proposed Actions	Timeframe	Target Score		
						Likelihood	Impact	Total				Likelihood	Impact	Total
SA1: Positive community leadership	C13	May 2023 Elections	Susan Priest (Chief Exec & Returning Officer)	Delays to secondary legislation and Electoral Commission Guidance obstructing planning for & delivery of election. May 2023 Elections will be first requiring voter ID and problems may arise with both the software and the ID supplied by electors. Likely to add to requirements for polling stations, additional pressures on staff and need for support from police.	This is being kept under review by the elections lead specialist and liaison ongoing with other authorities and DLUHC.	3	4	12	Treat	Continue to work with electoral and district council networks/LGA to pressure DLUHC to urgently bring forward legislation. Apply similar pressure to Association of Electoral Administrators and Electoral Commission to issue guidance with ample time to implement changes.	May-23	2	3	6
SA4: Quality homes and infrastructure, SA2: A thriving environment	C14	Levelling Up Fund Folkstone	Ewan Green (Director of Place); Cllr Wimble (District Economy)	Delivery of a £22m Levelling Up Programme for Folkstone will present complex project management issues, requirement for robust governance arrangements, management of budget, comprehensive comms and engagement strategy along with strong stakeholder engagement. The project also has a challenging timetable set by DLUHC	The project has started ahead of the funding agreement. FHDC and KCC have procured the design consultant for the highways aspects of the scheme. FHDC have also procured the Folca element of the LUF.	2	4	8	Treat	Awaiting detailed Memorandum of Understanding and administration requirements from DLUHC. A clear governance structure is proposed. A delivery agreement with KCC is being drafted. A resource structure has also been proposed to ensure strong delivery team is in place to deliver against the challenging timetable. A comprehensive list of Project Management Office documents are being populated and will be managed accordingly	Completed initial addressing of capacity, maintain progress	2	2	4
SA1: Positive community leadership	C15	Sports and Leisure Provision in the District	Ewan Green (Director of Place); Cllr Jennifer Hollingsbee (Communities)	The provision of sports and leisure facilities within the district is under pressure from several risk factors. 1. High energy costs have had a significant impact on the leisure sector that have high energy usage notably swimming pools. 2. Wage inflationary pressures have driven up staffing costs. 3. Shortages of trained staff (e.g. lifeguards and training instructors) and its operational impact. 4. The high cost of maintaining often ageing leisure facilities (e.g. Hythe Pool constructed in 1974). 5. The reliance of many community leisure facilities on external funding (e.g. FSCT grant and Sports England funding). 6. The ageing population and increased need for targeted wellbeing programmes (e.g. obesity) have increased community demand but with no national funding structure.	1. Council funding of local facilities either directly (e.g. Hythe Pool) or through grant support (e.g. FSCT). 2. Worked carried by the Council promoting the Health & Wellbeing agenda and identifying external funding schemes.	4	3	12	Treat	1. Replacement for Hythe Swimming Pool. 2. Continued grant support for FSCT. 3. New leisure centre facility planned for Otterpool Park.	3-10 years	2	3	6
SA1: Positive community leadership	C16	Fraud and Corruption	Charlotte Spendley (S151 Officer); Amandeep Khroud (Monitoring Officer); Cllr Prater (Portfolio Holder Revenues, Benefits, Fraud & Corruption)	The Council could suffer a loss due to the mis-use of Council assets; potential reputational damage; potential impact of government grants; potential impact on residents and businesses if Council funds or resources are subject to fraud or corrupt practises.	Internal Audit review all key systems vulnerable to fraud and corruption regularly, undertaking appropriate checks and report to management and Audit & Governance Committee. Anti-Fraud, Corruption, Bribery and Whistleblowing Policy in place. Annual staff training available. Dedicated and trained Council Fraud Investigator. Work undertaken to review NFI data which provide additional checks to identify fraudulent claims and identify fraud. Robust system controls tested regularly	3	2	6	Treat	Continue to build on use of data analytics including the utilisation of government initiatives and in house resources. A fraud risk assessment should be undertaken to evaluate fraud risks including the development of a fraud action plan. Add to the existing Fraud reporting arrangements to include a summary of all suspicions and outcomes of investigations, and be presented to Corporate Leadership Team and the Audit and Governance Committee on a regular basis. Fraud data published under the Transparency Code 2015 must include all types of fraud suspected, reported and investigated.	Ongoing	2	2	4

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Likelihood	Very Likely (4)			C8 - Carbon Neutral Ambitions C6 - Cost of Living C12 - Economic Climate C15 - Leisure Provision	C3 - MT Financial Strategy Uncertainty C7 - Princes Parade
	Likely (3)		C16 - Fraud & Corruption	C1 - Organisational Capacity C2 - Otterpool Park C4 - Strategic Projects C10 - Waste & Street Cleansing C6 Cost of Living	C1 - Organisational Capacity C9 - HRA Deliverability C11 - Cyber Threat C13 - May 2023 Elections
	Unlikely (2)				C5 - Legislative and Regulatory Non Compliance C14 - Levelling Up
	Rare (1)				
		Minor (1)	Moderate (2)	Significant (3)	Severe (4)
	Impact				

Key to colour coding



extreme risk
 high risk
 moderate risk
 low risk
 very low risk

Items shown in *italics* are new or re-scored risks.

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This report will be made public on 14 March 2023

Report Number **C/22/98**

To: Cabinet
Date: 22 March 2023
Status: Non - Key Decision
Responsible Officer: Andy Blaszkowicz
Cabinet Member: Councillor David Godfrey, Cabinet Member for Housing and Special Projects

SUBJECT: LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND

SUMMARY:

The Government has provisionally offered the Council £1.2m of Local Authority Housing Fund (LAHF) grant, to facilitate the purchase of ten properties to temporarily accommodate Ukrainian and Afghan refugees in the district. The timeframe for the Council to confirm it wishes to accept the grant funding is very short. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Special Projects took an individual member decision and agreed that the Council should submit a non-binding Memorandum of Understanding to the Government by their deadline of 15 March 2023.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out in this report because: -

- a) The LAHF covers 40-50% of the purchase cost for ten properties, plus a further £20K per property for other associated costs.
- b) The properties will be used initially to house Ukrainian and Afghan refugees, but can subsequently be used to accommodate households on the housing list.
- c) Approximately 100 Ukrainian households have been accommodated in the district under the Ukrainian Settlement Programme, some of these households are likely to need to move into alternative accommodation over the coming months.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note this report.
2. To note the Individual Member Decision taken by The Cabinet Member for Housing & Special Projects to submit the Memorandum of Understanding for the LAHF Scheme.
3. To confirm that the Council should participate in the LAHF initiative and purchase ten properties to accommodate refugees from Ukraine and Afghanistan.
4. To note the match funding requirements of the scheme and how this is proposed to be met from Council resources.
5. To agree that a further report is tabled at Full Council to add the scheme to the HRA Capital Programme.

1. Introduction & Background

- 1.1 The Government has recently announced details of a national £500million scheme to enable local authorities to purchase properties in their area to accommodate both Ukrainian and Afghan refugee households for an initial period of 3 years. The properties will form part of the Council's Housing Revenue Account stock and can subsequently be used to accommodate households from the Council's housing waiting list.
- 1.2 The Council has been allocated a provisional grant sum of £1.2million to facilitate the purchase of ten properties in the district. Nine of the properties are required to be 2 or 3-bedroom homes and one is required to be a 4-bedroom home.
- 1.3 The grant will be paid in 2 tranches, the first (30%) in March 2023 and second tranche (70%) during 2023/24 as property purchases are progressed. The grant covers 40% of the purchase price for 2/3-bedroom properties and 50% in the case of the 4-bedroom property. The Government will also be providing an additional £20k grant per property to cover any additional cost incurred, including stamp duty and costs to get the property ready for occupation.
- 1.4 The Council is expected to fund the remaining acquisitions costs through its own resources. This is expected to be in the region of £1.2M-£1.5M. It is proposed that the Council should utilise the following existing resources for this purpose:
- The Council's Housing Revenue Account agreed new build and acquisition resources.
 - Ukrainian households grant assistance funding held by the Council (received from central Government).
 - Affordable housing developer contributions held by the Council.
- 1.5 The Council is required to complete all of the property purchases by 30th November 2023. An initial review of the local market has shown there are several suitable properties currently available, and it is fully anticipated that other viable properties will become available over the coming months.
- 1.6 Due to the extremely short-time frame set by the Government, the Cabinet Member for Housing and Special Projects agreed that the Council should submit the necessary Memorandum of Understanding to the Government by 15 March 2023. Cabinet is asked to agree that the Council should participate in the LAHF initiative and purchase the required ten properties.

2. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 2.1 A summary of the perceived risks is as follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
The scheme cannot be	Medium	Low	The proposed resources are set out

delivered within resources available to the Council			in section 1.4 of this report. The grant funding from Government will cover 40-50% of the property acquisition costs. Additionally the resources outlined in 1.4 are anticipated to be sufficient to cover the match funding element. Once the final resource allocation has been determined a report to Full Council will need to be submitted.
The Council is unable to acquire the properties within the agreed timeframe.	Medium	Low	Officers will regularly review the local market to identify suitable and viable properties.

3. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

3.1 Legal Officer's Comments (NM)

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. The MOU is not a binding but sets out the understanding between the parties for the use of the funding. Legal Services will review the MOU and advise accordingly.

3.2 Finance Officer's Comments (CS)

The proposed matching funding is anticipated to be in the region of £1.2-1.5 million. Section 1.4 outlines where this match funding could be identified from within existing council resources. The HRA Capital Programme for 2023/24 has £1 million allocated for the HRA acquisition programme. The Homes for Ukraine Grant currently has in the region of £400k available. And further resources are anticipated to be able to be identified from Section 106 contributions. The budget for the whole scheme (including the LAHF grant funded element) will require a decision from Full Council for it to be incorporated in the HRA Capital programme and budget.

3.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (AH)

The properties purchased through this scheme will be specifically (initially) be made available as homes for refugee households from Ukraine and Afghanistan.

3.4 Climate Change Implications (AH)

There are no implications arising directly from this report. Wherever possible, the Council will work to improve the energy efficiency of the properties purchased.

4. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officers prior to the meeting.

Adrian Hammond, Lead Specialist, Strategic Housing

Telephone: 01303 853392

Email: adrian.hammond@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

None.

This Report will be made public on 14 March 2023



Report Number **C/22/101**

To: CABINET
Date: 22 March 2023
Status: Non key decision
Responsible Officer: Jyotsna Leney
Cabinet Member: Cllr Jennifer Hollingsbee, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Communities

SUBJECT: FHDC Response to KCC Community Services Public Consultation

SUMMARY: On 17th January 2023 KCC opened a public consultation on the closure of KCC buildings housing Children’s Centres and Youth Hubs, Public Health Services for Children and Families, Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education), and Gateways. The public document on KCCs website shows the county-wide proposals for closures and repurposing of sites. A bespoke Folkestone and Hythe version was sent to the Council with a letter on 10th January 2023. Informal Cabinet requested a member briefing from KCC which was held on 9th February 2023 on how the proposals had been reached and impact on the district. This report sets out some key points relating to this consultation. FHDC’s formal response back to KCC on the proposals is due 26th March 2023.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To agree the Council response to the KCC consultation on the proposed closure of building in the district using the online feedback form and covering the points listed in section 3.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To note the report C/22/101.
2. To authorise the Director of Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, Lifeline, Area Officers & Street Homeless to submit the Council’s consultation response based on the key issues outlined in section 3. of the report.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 KCC launched their public consultation on Community Services on 17th January 2023. The full public consultation document available on the KCC website (<https://letstalk.kent.gov.uk/community-services-consultation>) explains the financial background to the consultation, with the need for KCC to make financial savings in the coming years. The document proposes the closure of a number of buildings (or operations from non KCC owned buildings), with services affected being co-located with other services in various locations. The scope of the review covers:

- Open Access Children's Centres and Youth Hubs
- Public Health as it relates to the Open Access Family Hubs Transformation
- Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
- Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education)
- Gateways

1.2 A bespoke version of the document sent to the Council on 10th January 2023 (please refer to Appendix 1) contains additional information specific to Folkestone and Hythe District, including demographic data and which wards have the highest levels of deprivation within the district.

1.3 KCC also set up a number of public drop-in events for the Folkestone and Hythe District. Two events were held in Folkestone and representations were made to KCC to hold an additional one on the Romney Marsh, due to the impact of the two children's centre closures in that area. However, KCC made the decision to deliver the drop-in sessions only in Folkestone and not expand any further.

1.4 When the consultation was announced, KCC offered to provide a members briefing session and this took place on 9th February 2023. Headline messages from the KCC briefing were:

- The closures are required due to large costs associated with repairs and ongoing maintenance, the need to address carbon emission reductions.
- The rationalising of services and bringing services into closer alignment to best serve the community.
- The idea of co-locating services in other KCC buildings, including libraries, was presented as well as the need to carry out more outreach in the community.
- There will be a focus in talking services to where residents are in most need.
- There will be reinvestment of resources back to enable service redesign. KCC have stated that around £4million would be reinvested back into services.

2. Folkestone and Hythe Proposals and Key Considerations

2.1 KCC are proposing to close 48 buildings in total across the county, of which five are located within Folkestone & Hythe District. Of the proposed closures within the district, four are Children's Centres or Youth Hubs, and one is a service for adults with learning disabilities:

Ward.	Building.	Potential Outcome.	Nearest alternative.	Distance Miles.
Childrens Centres and Youth Hubs				
4 Folkestone Central.	Five (Shepway Youth Hub).	Moving in to Folkestone Early Years Children's Centre.		1.0
			Caterpillars Children's Centre.	2.1
9 North Downs East.	Hawkinge Childrens Centre.		The Village Children's Centre.	2.7
			Folkestone Early Years Children's Centre.	2.8
			Caterpillars Children's Centre.	3.0
11 Romney Marsh.	Dymchurch Children's Centre.		New Romney Children's Centre.	3.9
13 Walland and Denge Marsh.	Lyddle Stars Childrens Centre.		New Romney Children's Centre.	4.2
Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities				
1 Broadmead.	Folkestone Sports Centre.		Phase II.	14

2.2 KCC has assessed the proposed closures using a set of scoring indicators for each ward:

- Deprivation
- % of the population aged 0-15
- Deprivation Affecting Children
- % of reception age children who are overweight or obese
- % of deliveries to teenage mothers
- % of low birth weight live babies
- % of people over 65 living alone
- Deprivation Affecting Older People
- Long term unemployment
- Ethnic diversity
- % of pupils achieving a pass in English and Maths at GCSE
- % of people who report a long-term illness or disability
- Population growth
- Population density
- Digital exclusion
- Transport connectivity
- Broadband speed

2.3 For every ward in the county, a score of 1 for the lowest 20% and 5 for the top 20% to those adversely impacted by each of the above indicators was given. This gave a total "score" for each ward; allowing KCC to categorise each ward from greatest to lowest overall need. This was used to provide a snapshot of what overall need was likely to be across the whole of the county and enabled KCC to create a first draft of the buildings they would retain and those they would leave.

2.4 Some additional analysis of the closures across Kent is shown in the table below summarising the proposed closures across the county by district. This shows that Folkestone & Hythe District has the joint sixth highest percentage of total closures, and the joint third highest absolute number of closures:

Total Closures (Children’s Centres, Youth Hubs, Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities, and Adult Education)

District	Buildings Remaining	Buildings Closing	Total Buildings	Percentage Closure
Ashford	6	3	9	33%
Canterbury	8	6	14	43%
Dartford	5	7	12	58%
Dover	4	3	7	43%
Folkestone and Hythe	7	5	12	42%
Gravesham	8	1	9	11%
Maidstone	6	4	10	40%
Sevenoaks	4	5	9	55%
Swale	7	5	12	42%
Thanet	8	4	12	33%
Tonbridge and Malling	6	1	7	14%
Tunbridge Wells	3	4	7	57%

(Green indicates lowest percentage closures, red highest).

- 2.5 In total the District would be left with 4 x Family Hubs (formerly Children’s Centres/Youth Hubs), 2 x Centres for Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities and 1x Community Learning and Skills building (Adult Education). In addition 8 Libraries would be retained and it is proposed that some existing services move to these locations.

3. Response to KCC

- 3.1 It is proposed to use the points listed in 3. to form the Council response to KCC. This will be submitted by Officers, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Communities, Lifeline, Area Officers & Street Homeless, via an online form. A copy of the consultation questionnaire is attached as Appendix 2.
- 3.2 Whilst KCC have explained the rationale for closures there are a number of issues which may form part of the consultation response:
- The reduction in the number of children’s centres on the Marsh and the lack of viable alternatives. There are transport and associated cost issues in accessing children’s centres located further from the Marsh, which should be considered as part of the response. KCC should explore all options to link with other public and voluntary groups in the Marsh area which have existing buildings and deliver services (e.g. Romney Marsh Community Hub and Romney Resource Centre.)
 - It would be helpful for KCC to provide more information on scoring for transport connectivity for the Marsh area. Transport is critical for access to the Children’s Centre for very rurally isolated communities.

- Proposals for reinvestment should include the potential to link up with other service providers including voluntary, community and social enterprise groups.
- The number of children accessing free school meals could be another indicator unless included in the wider indicator of deprivation affecting children?
- It would be helpful to understand why a true co-located building has not been considered suitable for this District and that co-location with non KCC services is looked at as an option especially where there are pressures facing KCC elsewhere.
- Critical services need to be safeguarded (e.g. our community hub model) as potential cuts to their wellbeing contracts may impact on local services. They have been critical in supporting families through many issues including the Covid pandemic, Cost of living crisis and Ukraine. A portion of the £4 million repurposed funds should support not just outreach but other essential delivery in the community aligned to existing delivery models.
- In making the financial savings from closing buildings, a proportion of funding should be allocated to supporting the redesign of services which can be delivered by joining with other operators of buildings. For example where the Youth Hub is closing and moving its operations to the Early Years Centre in Folkestone there is opportunity to work alongside the Sports Trust who are based in the building opposite at F51.
- Input to the way the family hub model (see 3.3 below) is to work, aligning with both the LCPG, CSP and CSU will be welcomed including consideration of funding for these to join up with providers as per examples cited above.
- FHDC would welcome the opportunity to be involved in any discussions on where and how alternative service delivery provision could be realised (e.g. opportunity for schools to offer some of the services impacted for example by the closure of children's centres).
- There are some concerns over the security and ongoing condition of any vacant buildings pending sale. This may attract vandalism and anti-social behaviour which would have additional impact on the community and local Council services in dealing with issues.
- FHDC would appreciate early notification that any reductions in service provision from existing levels will be underpinned by work on community reassurance (ongoing communications and media opportunities) to try to maintain community confidence in affected areas.
- FHDC would welcome the opportunity to work alongside KCC to co-design any new outreach models to ensure communities are well supported and to link with joint engagement opportunities etc.

3.3 In November 2021, the Government launched plans for the roll out of a national Family Hubs programme. The Government's vision is to develop the Family Hubs Model Framework across all Local Authorities in the country. The Government has supported this ambition with dedicated funding to transform community-based provision and Kent was identified as one of 75 eligible Local Authorities to apply for this funding. This model will help with the join up of services and potentially the investment in this will make for a more integrated approach in managing key KCC services. KCC should review the use of this funding to assess if it can be used to support the provision of services in line with the consultation.

- 3.4 External stakeholders were contacted to seek their views in order to further inform the Council response - most responded to say that they would be submitting their organisation's own response direct to KCC. A key concern raised by the Community Hubs across the District is that funding for various wellbeing contracts that are paid for by KCC (commissioned by Social Enterprise Kent) would cause adverse impact. Although this is related to possible cuts in the VCS sector and not the closure of the buildings, there are some indirect opportunities from this in terms of collocating services.
- 3.5 Cabinet is asked to consider the key issues outlined above and agree that these form the Council response to the KCC consultation.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 The key risks are outlined below:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Lost opportunities in joining with other service	High	Medium	To encourage KCC to consider alternative ideas for joining up services
Community support reduced due to cuts in funding to other sectors	High	High	To look at synergies, co-location opportunities and alternative service provision with KCC

5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

5.1 Legal Officer's Comments (NM)

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report

5.2 Finance Officer's Comments (RH)

There are no specific financial implications resulting to this report, however it is noted that there may be further work to be undertaken, when a decision is reached, on how any reinvestment funds would be best used across the district.

5.3 Equalities and Diversities comments (GE)

The family hub model and more outreach in the community is welcomed as a way of reaching vulnerable people and wider sectors of the community. However, a reduction in key services e.g. access to children's centres on the Marsh could negatively impacted equal access and support needed for some vulnerable groups.

5.4 Climate Change Implications (AT)

Kent County Council's consultation document (page 30) states that the proposals could save around 500-800 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions, representing a 5% reduction in the carbon emissions from the county council's operations (although it is not stated over what period the reduction will be realised). However, the document makes it clear that this reduction relates only to the emissions attributable to Kent County Council's estate and operations, and KCC cannot model what impact the proposed changes will have on the emissions of service users and other organisations. The rationalisation of services into a smaller number of buildings has the potential to increase emissions from transport, if service users and employees have to travel greater distances to access the facilities and cannot do this easily by public transport. There is likely to be a reduction in the emissions from the buildings themselves, if older, less energy efficient county council buildings are disposed of, but this will depend on how the redundant sites are redeveloped. Any proposals for the redevelopment of former KCC sites within Folkestone & Hythe will need to meet policies in the district's Local Plan, building regulations or any updates to these standards that may be introduced by the time planning applications are submitted.

6. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Councillors with any questions arising out of this report should contact the following officer prior to the meeting.

Jyotsna Leney
Health Wellbeing and Partnerships Senior Specialist
Tel: 01303 853460
Email: jyotsna.leney@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1: FHDC report on closures compiled by KCC
Appendix 2: KCC Communities Consultation Questionnaire

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COMMUNITY Services Consultation Design Handbook

Folkestone & Hythe
Locality



COMMUNITY Services Consultation

Design Handbook



Alternative Formats: If you need this document in an alternative format, please email alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

Kent County Council (KCC) is running a consultation to find out what you think about proposals for a new way of accessing community services.

Please read the accompanying full consultation document.

The **services included** in these proposals are:



Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities.



Community Learning and Skills
(Adult Education)



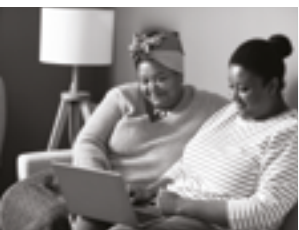
Children's Centres and Youth Hubs
(Open Access services)



Public Health Services including Health Visiting and Counselling for children and young people.



Gateways
(Buildings where multiple services, both Council and partners, are delivered. People can also get help to access other services, i.e. help to complete Blue Badge application forms)



Key to the design handbook

This document tells you about the design process we have used and **what that means at a district level.**



Local Area Overview – gives a snapshot of key needs data and the basis for the proposal.



Data - Full data packs are available as an appendix to the consultation document.



Buildings and Outreach – maps will illustrate the proposed changes. The icons are not site specific but placed within the ward to show how they are spread across the district.

Where and when we deliver outreach is based on need and demand and won't always be in the same places.

Ward Maps - Kent is made up of 271 wards which are small sub-divisions of the county's 12 districts and we have used them to map the likelihood of need for our services.



Digital - this delivery method is considered universal to ensure Community Services are accessible and gain maximum reach.



Co-location - we are proposing to have more than one service located from our buildings where possible. Nothing has been decided yet and we are still carrying out studies to decide if these would work practically.



Transport - We have used transport data to check our design places community buildings within 30-minutes on public transport from households in Kent.



Why are we suggesting change?

We are facing a number of challenges and we are **looking ahead to secure positive outcomes for our residents** in the years to come.



- ✓ **Reduce the high costs** associated with maintaining a large number of buildings.
- ✓ **To find savings** so that we can balance the budget.
- ✓ **To meet the commitments we made** in our Net Zero action plan by 2030.
- ✓ **To provide effective support** to residents in need of our services.

To address these challenges we are proposing to **reduce our estate and to co-locate services**.

The Needs Framework

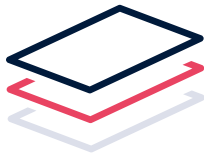
We are committed to providing effective support to residents in need of our services, so this is at the forefront of any proposals for change.

We have considered a range of data to **understand the challenges faced by communities** across the county. We call this the **Needs Framework**.

We then used this as a tool to identify, consider and propose change with services through workshops and regular discussions.



Data



How we have used data

We started by looking at a variety of indicators of need across all the wards in the county. We looked at specific combinations of indicators for each service*.

*The exception to this is Gateways which were placed last in the design, once we had identified the need for multiple services.

Indicator

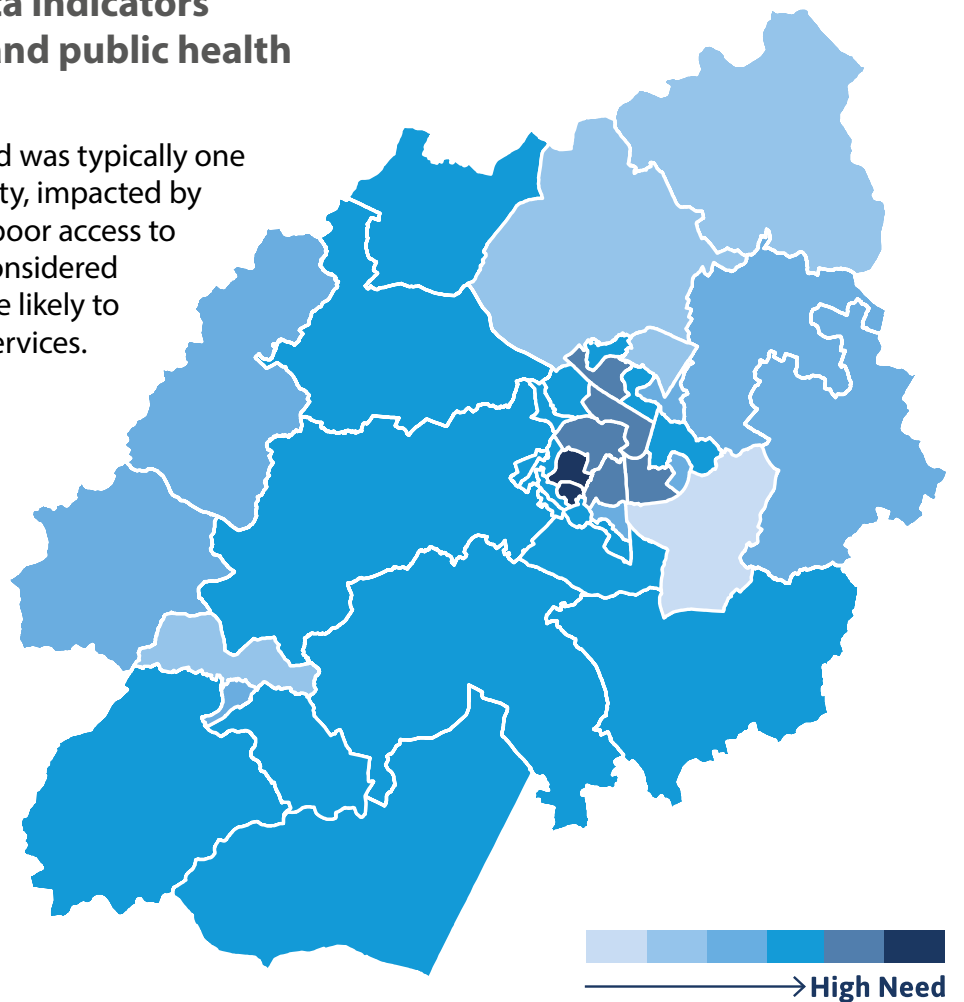
Indicator	Open Access	Public Health	Community Learning and Skills	Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
Deprivation affecting children and older people.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Long term unemployment.	✓	✓	✓	
Ethnic diversity.	✓	✓	✓	
Educational attainment.	✓	✓	✓	
Long term illness and disability.				✓
% of ward population aged 0-15.	✓	✓		
Reception age children who are overweight or obese.	✓	✓		
Deliveries to teenage mothers.	✓	✓		
Low birth weight infants.	✓	✓		
Over 65s living alone.			✓	
Population increase.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Population Density.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Digital Exclusion.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Transport Connectivity.	✓	✓	✓	✓
Broadband Speed.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Data

Service specific consideration of the data
By considering data sets for each service, we can see **where need is highest at a ward level.**

This example uses data indicators for children's services and public health in Ashford.

A ward considered as high need was typically one that had high population density, impacted by high levels of deprivation and poor access to transport or the internet. We considered that in these areas, residents are likely to need more support from our services.





Data

This example shows you what the data tells us about Ashford

We built a view of each of Kent's 12 districts:

Ashford



● **Ashford is a large geographical area** which is urban with significant rural classification, meaning access for some areas can be challenging. **Stanhope has the highest population density. Kingsnorth Village & Bridgefield, Godinton and Repton** wards have all seen high population growth.



● **Broadband speed** in most areas of Ashford is better than or the same as the UK average.



● **92.7% of households** in Ashford are currently within 30 mins of one of our buildings using public transport.



● **21% of Ashford's population is aged 0-15 years** of age. Just over 25% of the population is aged 60 and over. **Tenterden North** has the highest proportion of over 60's but the lowest proportion of children.

2.5% of Ashford's 18-65 year old population is estimated to have a learning disability.

Ashford has a population of **132,752** according to the 2021 census with estimations of this increasing to around **169,000** by 2040.



● **Aylesford & East Stour, Beaver, Bockhanger, Stanhope and Upper Weald** wards are all measured as having areas of high deprivation correlating with long term unemployment levels. Ashford is however **under the long-term unemployment national average**.



● **68% of Ashford falls into the high digital user category**, highlighting an appetite for digital and the **ability to engage with digital services**.



● In the 2018/19 Academic year, **66% of Ashford pupils** achieved a standard pass in **Maths and English GCSE**, which is the Kent average.



Ashford district has **39 electoral wards**.



How we have considered the people that use our services

Services added a **final layer of information about the people who already use our services** and how they access them. We identified some of the following indicators:

Indicator	Open Access	Public Health	Community Learning and Skills	Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities
Numbers of adults with learning disabilities in each district.				✓
Forecast population of 0-5 year olds in 2040.	✓	✓		
Children whose main language is not English.	✓	✓		
Children with Education Health and Care Plan (EHCP).	✓	✓		
Children eligible for Free School Meals.	✓	✓		
0-19 social care referrals.	✓	✓		
Children in care.	✓	✓		
Children with Fixed Term Exclusions.	✓	✓		
Young people known to the Youth Offending team.	✓	✓		
Early help episodes.	✓	✓		
Service demand data.	✓	✓	✓	✓

Using the framework

The Needs Framework

The Needs Framework was the starting point for the proposals but it does not provide a perfect formula for decision making. The proposals set out in this document are the result of many months of refinement following collaborative workshops and meetings between service teams, the KCC property team and a dedicated project team.

The result of our work was a holistic view of needs which was used as the basis for conversations with service teams about how our existing buildings could meet the identified needs.

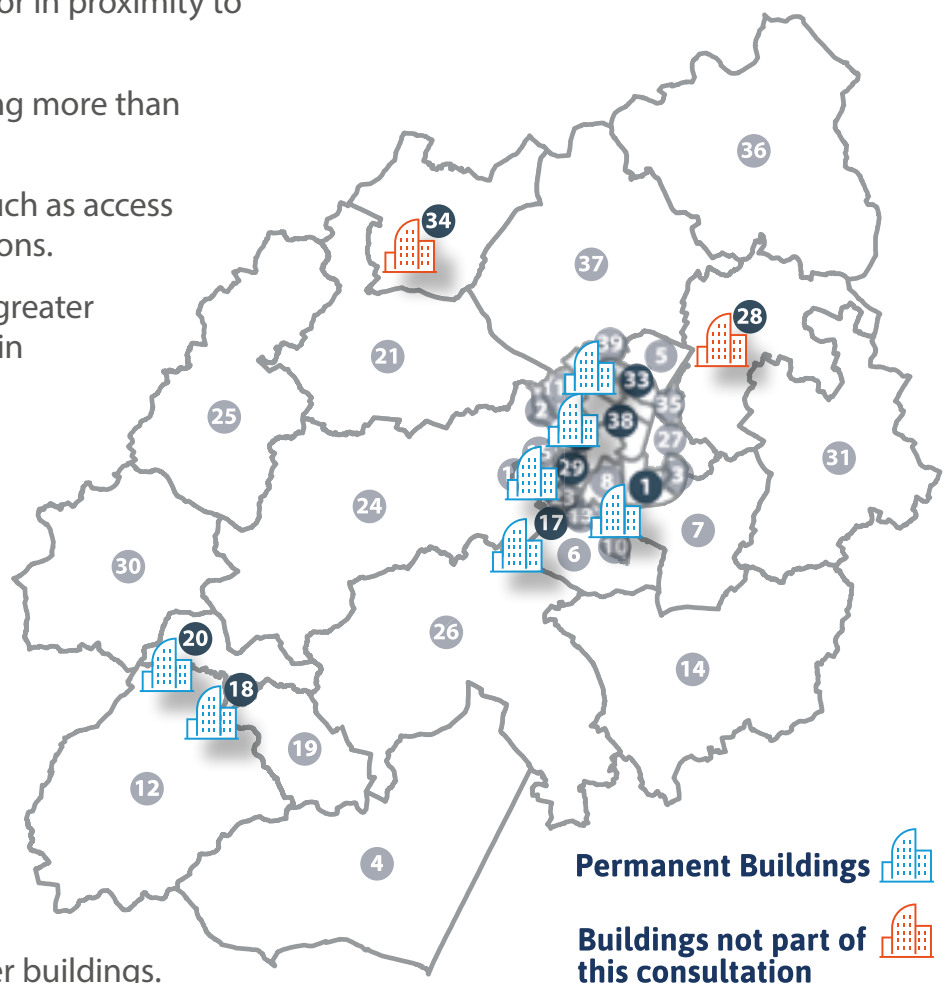


Using the framework

A further key step in the development of our proposals was to look at practical considerations relating to our estate. Through ongoing conversations with both service teams and the KCC property team, we continued to consider whether the proposed network of permanent buildings would meet the identified need.

Factors we considered when reviewing our estate:

- What buildings we currently have in wards with the highest need.
- Whether there is a suitable building in a neighbouring ward.
- Whether a building is in a good location with access by public transport or in proximity to shops or other services.
- The potential for co-locating more than one service.
- Any building constraints such as access issues or required adaptations.
- Maintaining a percentage greater than 85% of residents within 30 minutes travel time on public transport to one of our buildings.
- Whether the number of buildings supports the number of service users we currently have in an area.
- Whether outreach could be a more effective way of meeting the identified need.
- Whether there is capacity to host outreach from other buildings.



Our work so far has led us to propose working from **fewer permanent buildings**, meaning that some of our buildings would close.

We also want to **co-locate more of our services**, meaning that more than one service would be available from the buildings you might visit.

However, we don't just deliver our services from permanent or fixed locations. We have ambitions to **develop our outreach and digital offers**, to enhance our resident experience and and future-proof access to our services.

Now that you've read about the design process we have used, we will show you what that means in your district.

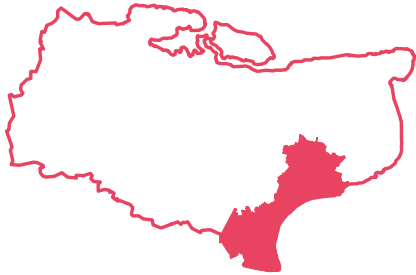


Folkestone & Hythe



Locality Design

Folkestone & Hythe



● **Folkestone & Hythe** is mainly urban classification. A third of wards are within a rural and fringe setting, which means there is mixed accessibility. **Folkestone Central and East Folkestone wards are areas of high density. Cheriton and Folkestone Central wards have seen the highest population growth** for the District.



● **Broadband speed** in most areas of Folkestone is **better than or the same as the UK average.**



● **97.5% of households** in Folkestone and Hythe are currently **within 30 mins of one of our buildings** on public transport.



● **17% of Folkestone & Hythe's population is aged 0-15 years** of age. 32% of the population is aged 60 and over. **Romney Marsh and Hythe have the highest proportion of over 60's** but the lowest proportion of children.

2.4% of Folkestone & Hythe's 18-65 year old population is estimated to have a **learning disability.**

Folkestone & Hythe has a **population of 109,757** according to the 2021 census with estimations of this **increasing to around 134,000 by 2040.**



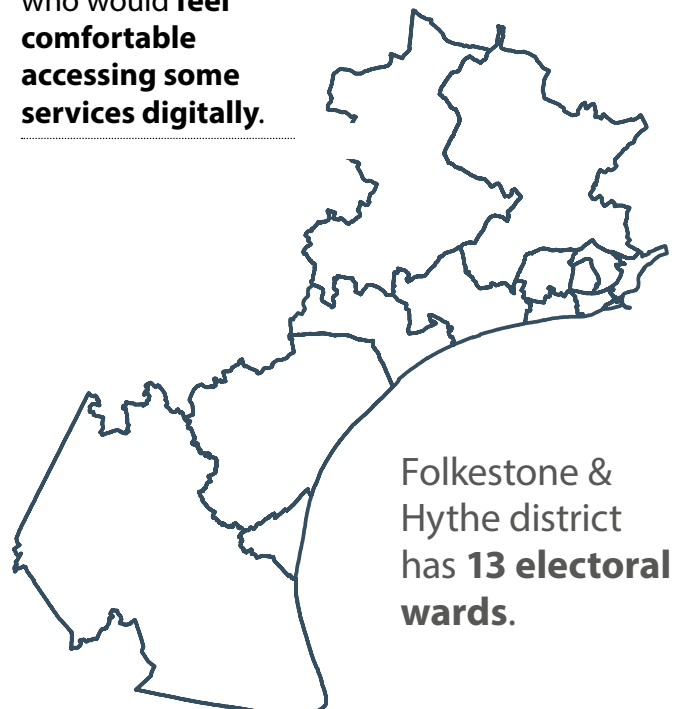
● **Broadmead, East Folkestone, Folkestone Central, Folkestone Harbour, Hythe, Romney Marsh and Walland & Denge Marsh** wards are all measured as having areas of **high deprivation.** **East Folkestone, Folkestone Central and Folkestone Harbour** wards have high levels of long term unemployment with the **Folkestone & Hythe** District above the long-term unemployment national average.



● In the 2018/19 Academic year, **58% of Folkestone & Hythe pupils** achieved a standard **pass in Maths and English at GCSE** compared to 66% in Kent.



● **28% of residents** in Folkestone and Hythe are low level users, however, **30% of residents** are identified as those who would **feel comfortable accessing some services digitally.**



Folkestone & Hythe district has **13 electoral wards.**

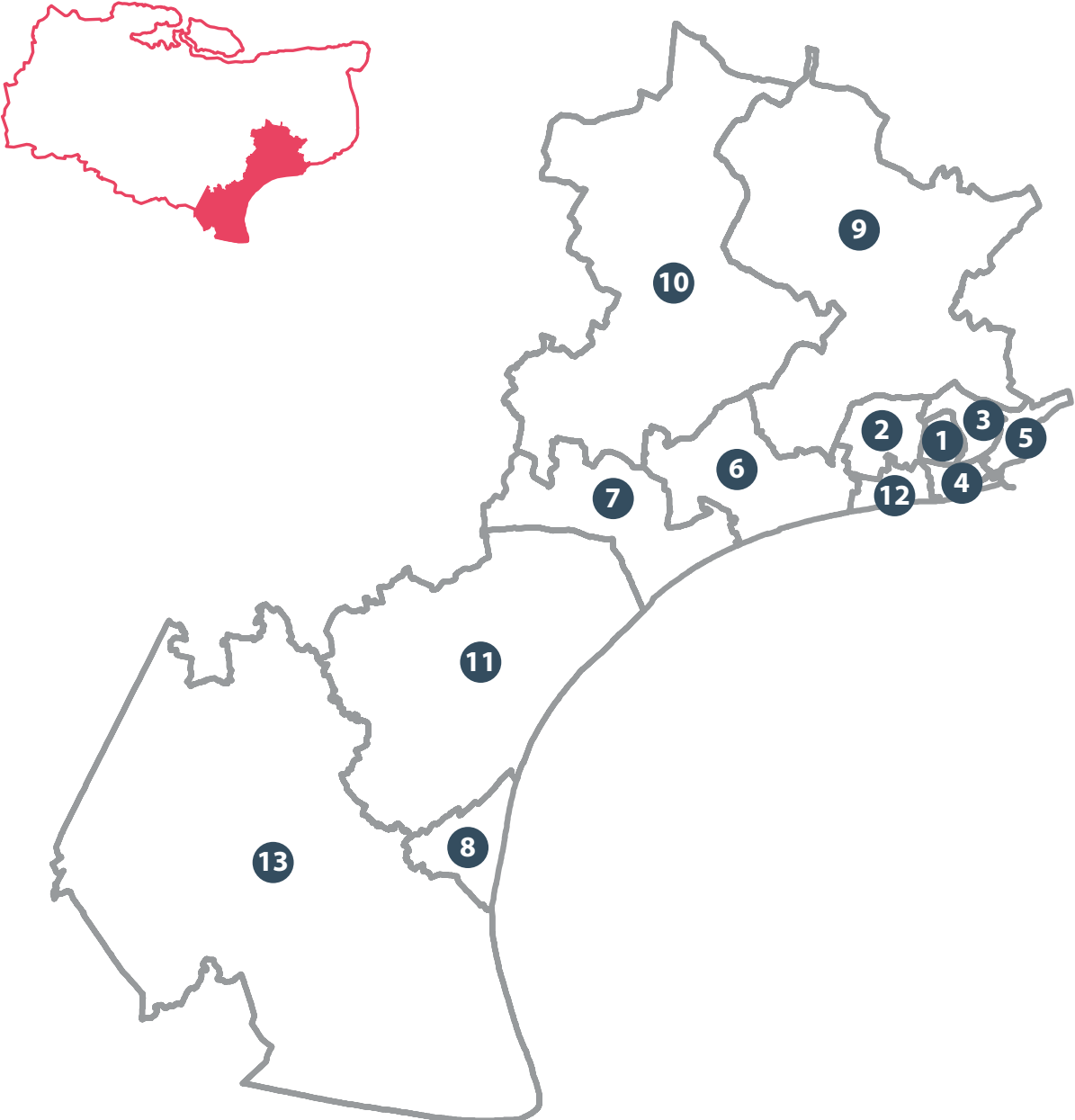
Folkestone & Hythe

by ward

Folkestone & Hythe district has **13 electoral wards**.

1 Broadmead	8 New Romney
2 Cheriton	9 North Downs East
3 East Folkestone	10 North Downs West
4 Folkestone Central	11 Romney Marsh
5 Folkestone Harbour	12 Sandgate & West Folkestone
6 Hythe	13 Walland & Denge Marsh
7 Hythe Rural	

Folkestone & Hythe



Buildings we are proposing to deliver services from in Folkestone & Hythe

Ward.	Building.
Family Hubs	
2 Cheriton.	Caterpillars Children’s Centre.
3 East Folkestone.	The Village Children’s Centre.
4 Folkestone Central.	Folkestone Early Years Centre.
8 New Romney.	New Romney Children’s Centre.

Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities

6 Hythe.	Bridge Resource Centre.
8 New Romney.	Phase II.

Community, Learning & Skills

4 Folkestone Central.	The Cube. The Pottery.
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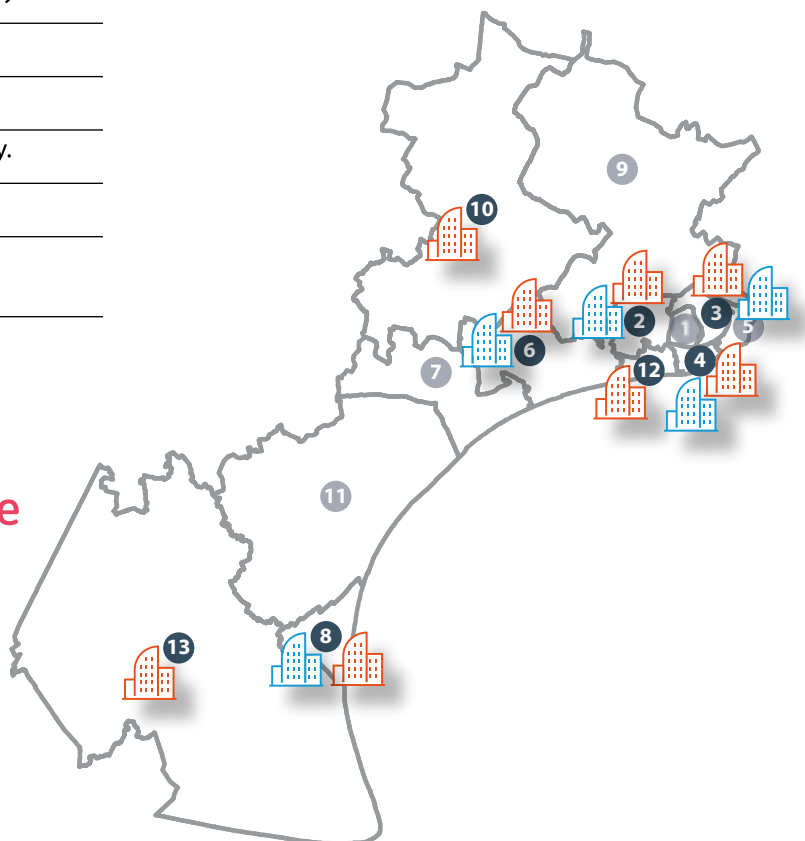
Libraries

2 Cheriton.	Cheriton Library.
3 East Folkestone.	Wood Avenue Library.
4 Folkestone Central.	Folkestone Library.
6 Hythe.	Hythe Library.
8 New Romney.	New Romney Library.
10 North Downs West.	Lyminge Library.
12 Sandgate & West Folkestone.	Sandgate Library.
13 Walland & Denge Marsh.	Lydd Library.

Folkestone & Hythe district by ward

Permanent Buildings 

Buildings not part of this consultation 

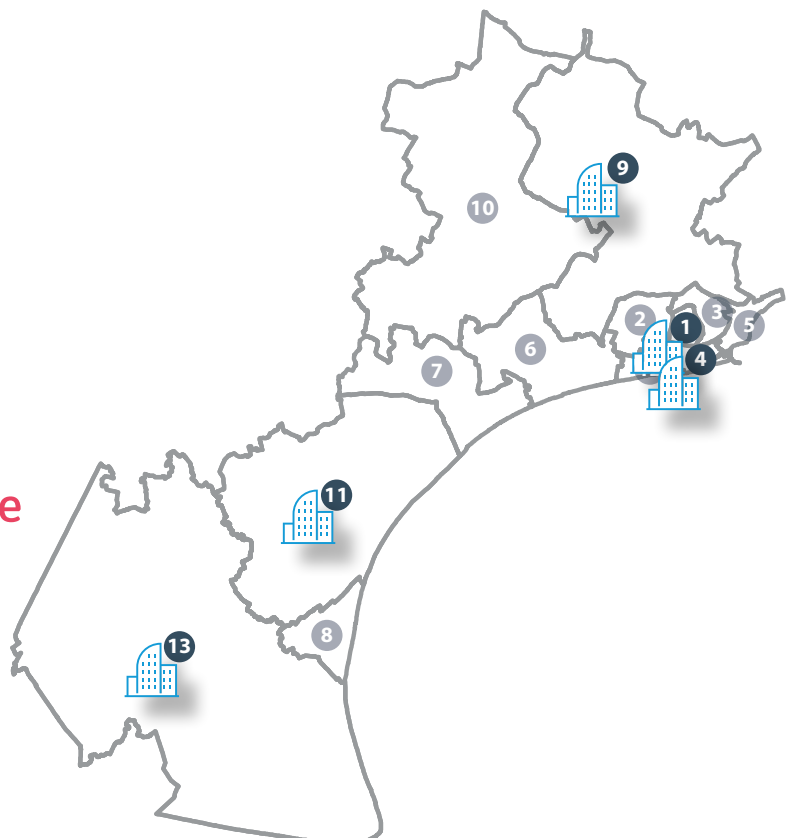


Buildings we are proposing to leave in Folkestone & Hythe

Ward.	Building.	Potential Outcome.	Nearest alternative.	Distance Miles.
Childrens Centres and Youth Hubs				
4 Folkestone Central.	Five (Shepway Youth Hub).	Moving in to Folkestone Early Years Children's Centre.		1.0
			Caterpillars Children's Centre.	2.1
9 North Downs East.	Hawkinge Childrens Centre.		The Village Children's Centre.	2.7
			Folkestone Early Years Children's Centre.	2.8
			Caterpillars Children's Centre.	3.0
11 Romney Marsh.	Dymchurch Children's Centre.		New Romney Children's Centre.	3.9
13 Walland and Denge Marsh.	Lyddle Stars Childrens Centre.		New Romney Children's Centre.	4.2
Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities				
1 Broadmead.	Folkestone Sports Centre.		Phase II.	14

Folkestone & Hythe district by ward

Permanent Buildings 



How need has informed the design in Folkestone & Hythe

Our proposals have been based on data and evidence, including service user needs, transport and broadband connectivity.



1 Folkestone Central is a densely populated area with **complex needs**. We would retain our **permanent buildings** for use by multiple services including a **Gateway**.



2 East Folkestone, Folkestone Central have a high concentration of **children impacted by deprivation**. **Family Hubs** would operate from **permanent buildings** in these wards as well as in areas experiencing **low pupil attainment** coupled with **digital exclusion and poor Broadband connectivity** such as **New Romney**.



3 Walland and Denge Marsh has several areas of need surrounding **child health, deprivation and poverty**, as well as **poor transport links and slow Broadband speeds**. This area would benefit from **outreach from Family Hubs for parenting support, and infant feeding**.



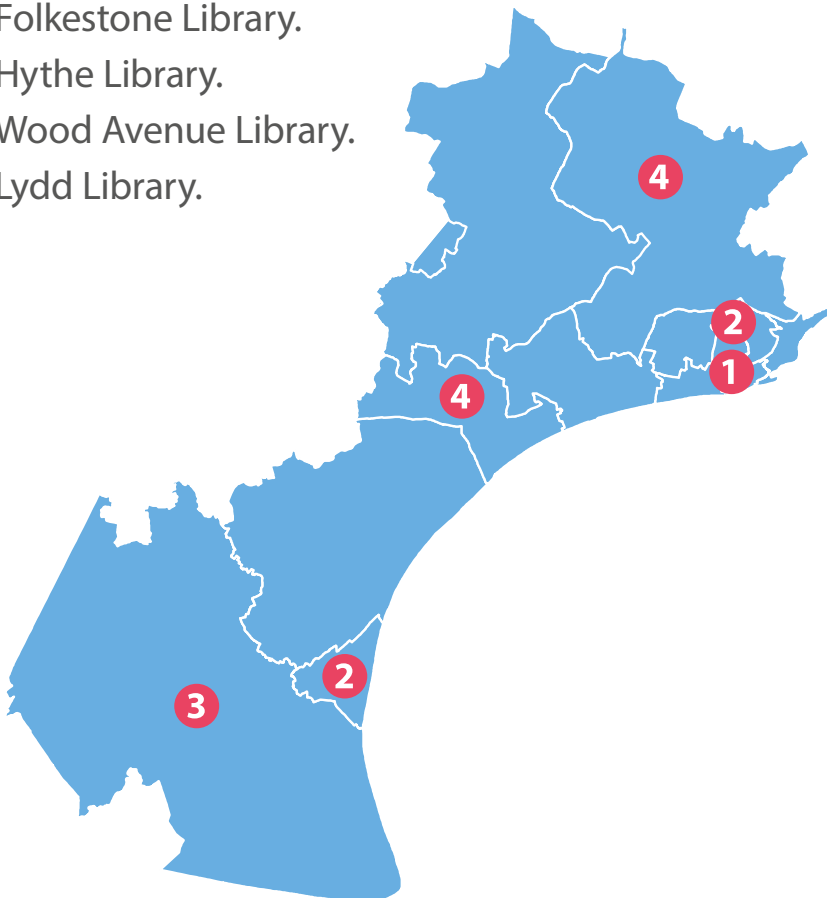
4 Residents with lower levels of need, or those in rural areas such as **North Downs East** or **Hythe**, can **engage with services** through **digital offers**.





By working better together, services **could deliver outreach** in the following buildings:

- Folkestone Early Years Centre.
- New Romney Children's Centre.
- New Romney Library.
- Folkestone Library.
- Hythe Library.
- Wood Avenue Library.
- Lydd Library.



We are also looking to explore future opportunities to **share buildings with partners including the Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise sector** who can also support localised need e.g. Foodbanks.

Access to our buildings

Being able to access a community building for support, even if not the specific service they need, will be **key for helping** to connect the most **vulnerable groups in Folkestone & Hythe**.

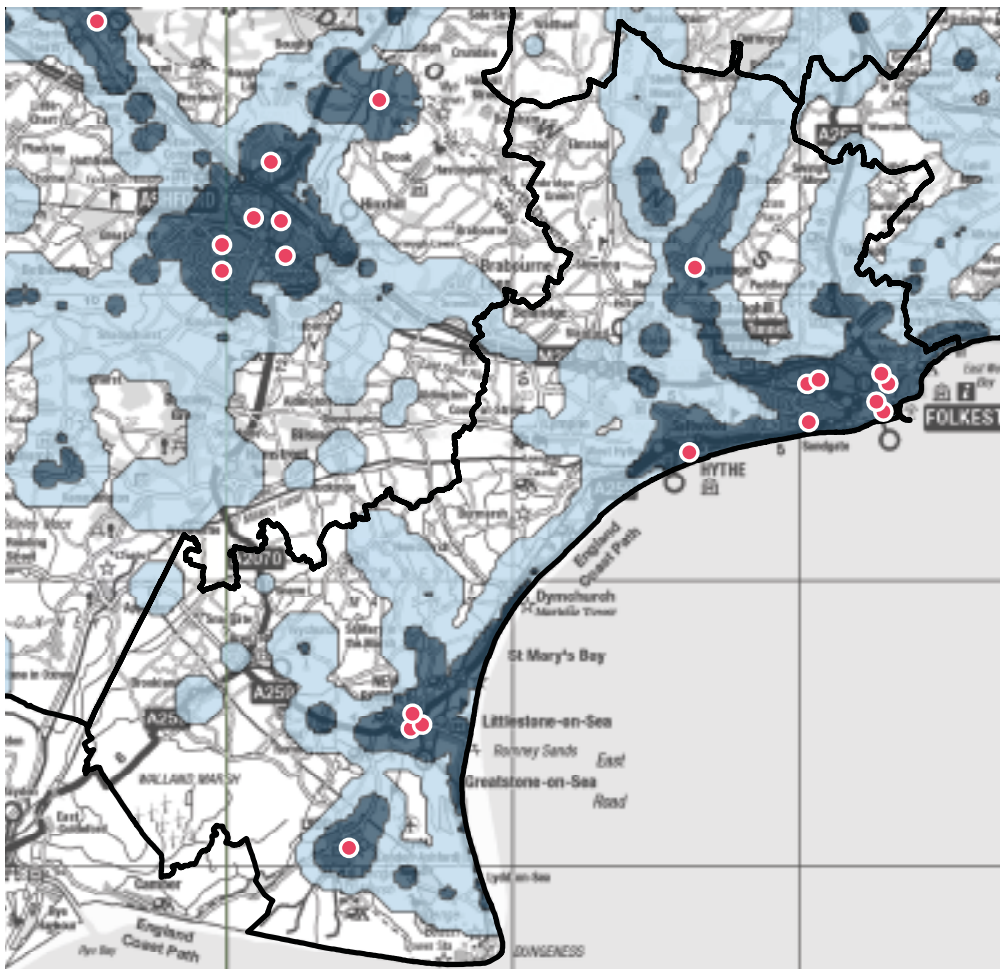


In the future, Folkestone & Hythe would have:

4 Family Hubs, **8** Libraries, **1** Community Learning and Skills building, **2** Centres for Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities.

Access to a community building

Total Folkestone & Hythe Households.	50,284
% of Folkestone & Hythe Households in 30 Minute Public Transport Catchment of a community services building.	97.5%
Folkestone & Hythe Households within 30 Minute Public Transport Catchment of a community services building.	49,006
Folkestone & Hythe Households Outside 30 Minute Public Transport Catchment of a community services building.	1,278



Building 

0-15 minutes travel on public transport 

15-30 minutes travel on public transport 

How could services be delivered in Folkestone & Hythe?

We want our model to be **flexible to the demands and needs of the community**, making it sustainable for the future.



Examples of current outreach in Folkestone & Hythe:

To reach families who may not be able to access our centres we run activities like **Bug Hunt Bonanza at Mundella Playing Field**.

We know that **young people** can't always get to a designated youth hub in the evenings so we offer **detached youth work** like our **gaming bus** which travels round the district to places like **Lydd and New Romney** reaching more young people.

Public health services use space in **Hythe** and propose to use **Lydd** for Health Visiting Services such as **Child Health Clinics and Infant Feeding support**.

Community Learning and Skills use 10 outreach locations including **Lympne Church of England Primary School** to deliver Family Programmes and **Hawkinge Village Hall** Languages and Communication courses where demand is outside of permanent buildings.

Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities have nearly 50 clients across the District offering services such as Gardening Sessions at **Romney Marsh Community Hub** and **Hythe Library** for art exhibitions.

Ben lives in rural Hythe but travels to Folkestone for work. He only really uses technology for his social networks, gaming and some limited online shopping. He would benefit from an app he can use in a more social way to access services, such as community learning services.



Please note outreach points are subject to demand, need and resources, the above is a representation of what could be delivered in Folkestone & Hythe.

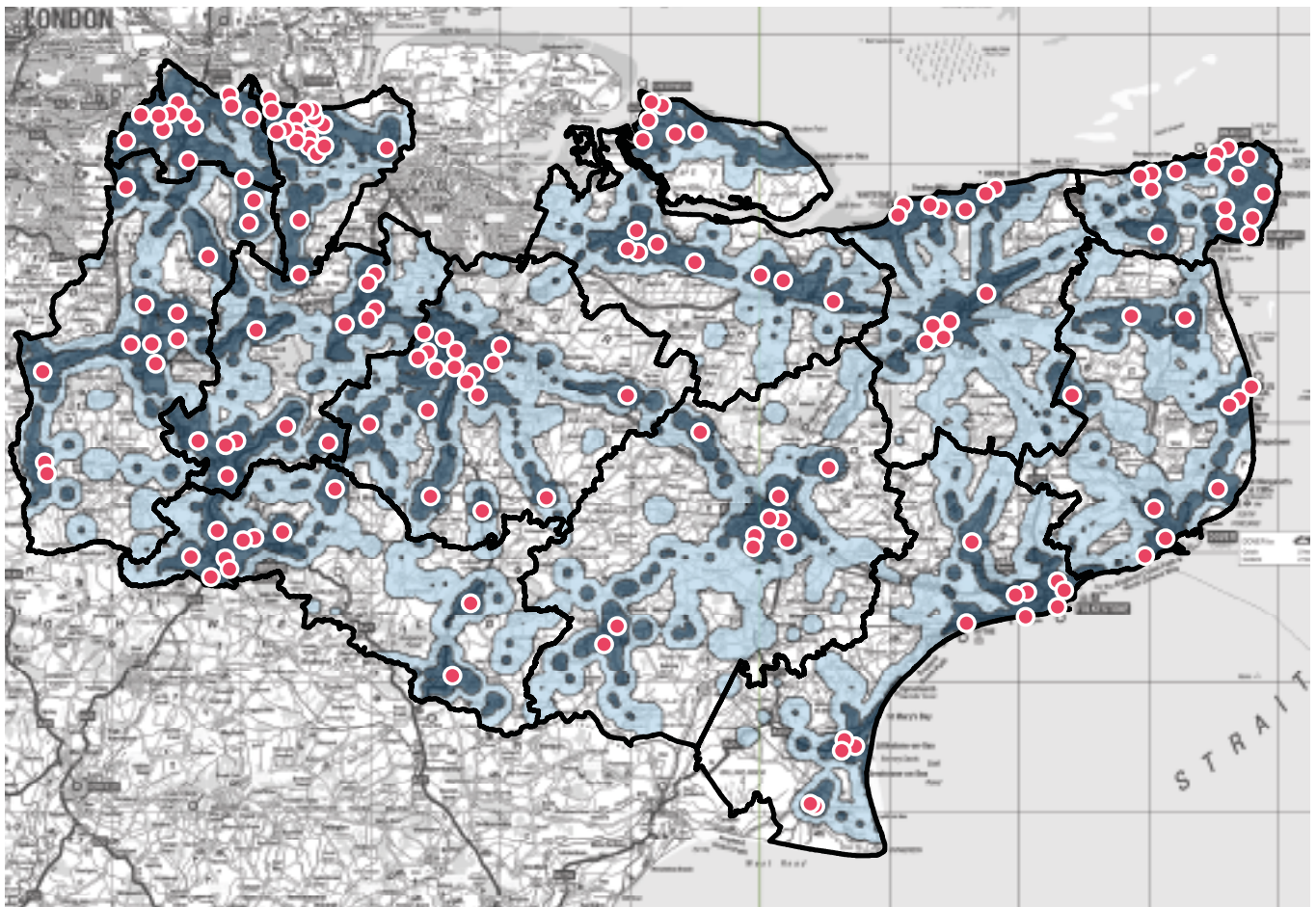
Kent wide



Access to our buildings

Being able to access a community building for support, even if not the specific service they need, will be **key for helping** to connect the most **vulnerable groups across the county**.

97% of Kent households will be within 30 minutes travel time of at least one of our buildings, using public transport.



Building 

0-15 minutes travel on public transport 

15-30 minutes travel on public transport 



COMMUNITY
Services Consultation

Design Handbook

Folkestone & Hythe Locality



Community Services Consultation

Public consultation 17 January to 26 March 2023

Consultation Questionnaire

We recommend that you read the Community Services consultation document before answering the questions.

To take part in the consultation please go to www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation to complete the online questionnaire.

Alternatively, fill in a Word/paper version and return it by email:
communityservicesfeedback@kent.gov.uk

Or you can post it to: **Freepost KENT COMMUNITIES**

Following the end of the consultation we will take all responses into consideration and produce a consultation report. We expect a final decision on the proposals to be made later in the summer of 2023.

If you have any questions, please contact us on communityservicesfeedback@kent.gov.uk or telephone us on 03000 419815. This number goes to an answering machine which is monitored during office hours. You can also meet us at a drop-in event. Details of these events are in the consultation document and on the consultation webpage.

Alternative formats: If you require any of the consultation material in an alternative format or language, please email: alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk or call: 03000 42 15 53 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 42 15 53). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

Privacy: Kent County Council (KCC) collects and processes personal information in order to provide a range of public services. KCC respects the privacy of individuals and endeavours to ensure personal information is collected fairly, lawfully, and in compliance with the General Data

Community Services Consultation

Public consultation 17 January to 26 March 2023

Protection Regulation and Data Protection Act 2018. Read the full Privacy Notice at the end of this document.

Community Services Consultation

Public consultation 17 January to 26 March 2023

Section 1 – About you

Q1. Please tell us in what capacity you are completing this questionnaire:

Please select the option that most closely represents how you will be responding to this consultation. *Please select **one** option.*

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | As a Kent resident |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | On behalf of a friend or relative (please complete this questionnaire using their information) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | As a resident from somewhere else, such as Medway |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | As a representative of a local community group or residents' association |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | On behalf of an educational establishment, such as a school or college |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | On behalf of a Parish / Town / Borough / District Council in an official capacity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | As a Parish / Town / Borough / District / County Councillor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | As a Kent business owner or representative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | On behalf of a charity, voluntary or community sector organisation (VCS) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | As a KCC employee (Kent resident) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | As a KCC employee (non-Kent resident) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other, please specify: |

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Q1a. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please tell us the name of your organisation. Please write in *below*.

Q2. Please tell us the first five characters of your postcode:

Please do not reveal your whole postcode. If you are responding on behalf of an organisation, please use your organisation's postcode. We use this to help us to analyse our data. It will not be used to identify who you are.

Q3. How did you find out about this consultation? Please select all that apply.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Facebook |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Twitter |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | From a friend or relative |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Kent.gov.uk website |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | At a KCC building (e.g. children's centre, youth hub, library, Gateway, Adult Education centre) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Local KCC County Councillor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | District Council / Councillor |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Newspaper |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Poster / postcard |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | An email from KCC |

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KCC's staff intranet

From another organisation

Other, please specify:

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Q4. Please tell us how often you use the services listed below.

(There will be another question later in this section where you can tell us which services other people in your household use).

Please select **one** option per row.

Service	At least once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Twice a year	Less regularly	Used it in the past	Never used this service
Children's Centres							
Youth Hubs							
Health Visiting Service (Public Health)							
Children and Young People's Counselling Service (Public Health)							
Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities							
Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education)							
Gateways							

Community Services Consultation

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Q4a. Please tell us how you use these services.

Please select **one** option per row.

Service	In person at a building	Online	Both	I don't use this service
Children's Centres				
Youth Hubs				
Health Visiting Service (Public Health)				
Children and Young People's Counselling Service (Public Health)				
Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities				
Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education)				
Gateways				

Q5. Please tell us how often other people in your household use the services listed below.

Please select **one** option per row.

Service	At least once a week	Once a fortnight	Once a month	Twice a year	Less regularly	Used it in the past	Never used this service
Children's Centres							
Youth Hubs							
Health Visiting Service (Public Health)							

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Children and Young People's Counselling Service (Public Health)							
Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities							
Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education)							
Gateways							

Q5a. Please tell us how other people in your household use these services.

Please select **one** option per row.

Service	In person at a building	Online	Both	They don't use this service
Children's Centres				
Youth Hubs				
Health Visiting Service (Public Health)				
Children and Young People's Counselling Service (Public Health)				
Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities				
Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education)				
Gateways				

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Section 2 – Designing the new way of delivering services

Q6. We have designed the proposals by looking at where people have the highest need for our services. How much do you agree or disagree with this approach?

*Please select **one** option.*

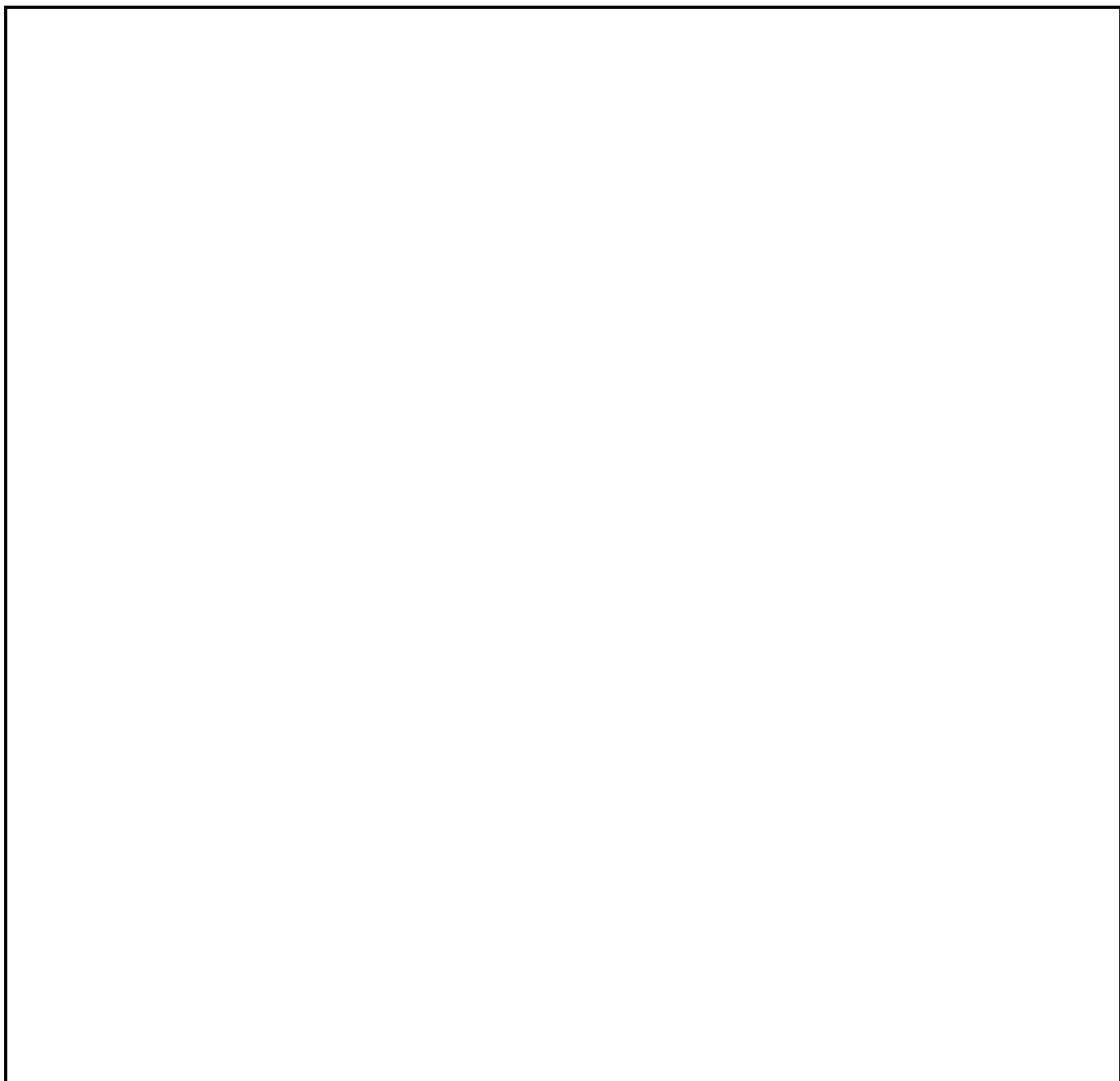
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

We have used a lot of data and information to help us understand where need for our services is highest across Kent. This is shown in the consultation document.

Q7. If you think we have missed out any data that should be used, please tell us what it is below.

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We propose to co-locate services from more of our buildings. This means people will be able to access more than one KCC service from some of our buildings. Proposed co-locations are shown in the consultation document.

Q8. How much do you agree or disagree with the proposal to co-locate some of our services, as explained in the consultation document?

*Please select **one** option.*

<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Neither agree nor disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

Q9. What do you think is important for us to consider when co-locating services?

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'Outreach' is the delivery of a service which does not take place from a dedicated or permanent space. Examples could include using a village hall, community centre or other building on a temporary basis when there is a need for a service. We already deliver some of our services by outreach.

Q10. If you have any comments you would like to make about delivering services through outreach, please tell us below.

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Accessing services digitally means using a computer, mobile phone, tablet or other device to look up information about services or to join sessions or activities virtually. We would like to understand if there are any reasons you may not be able to do this.

Q11. Please select from the list below the statements that may apply to you about accessing KCC services digitally. Please select *all that apply*.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am confident about doing things online |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't know how to do it |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't feel confident using technology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't think it's safe using technology to access services. I'm concerned about the security of my information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I find KCC's digital services and information too difficult to use |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't have a device (computer, mobile phone, tablet) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I don't have the internet at home |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | My internet is too slow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Paying for devices and internet connection (including mobile data) is too expensive |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other, please specify: |

Q12. What is important to you when accessing services online?

Community Services Consultation

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Section 3 – Buildings

Our work so far has led us to propose working from fewer permanent buildings, meaning that some of our buildings would close. This is because we need to reduce our costs and reduce our carbon emissions. Using the Needs Framework to design where and how we deliver services means we will be able to meet community needs with fewer permanent buildings.

Q13. How much do you agree or disagree with the proposal to have fewer buildings?

*Please select **one** option.*

- | | |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Strongly agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Tend to agree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Neither agree nor disagree |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Tend to disagree |

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<input type="checkbox"/>	Strongly disagree
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't know

The consultation document provides information on the buildings we propose to no longer use.

We'd like you to tell us which buildings you have comments about and then tell us what impact you think the proposed changes would have on you or someone in your household.

The next questions about buildings are in **four parts**. You can make comments about all the services in this consultation, or just the one(s) that impact you. **Please skip the questions that are not relevant to you.**

Community Services Consultation

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Part A

Children's Centres and Youth Hubs (Open Access)

Q14. Please use the box below to write in the name(s) of the building(s) (and district) you would like to tell us about regarding Children's Centres and Youth Hubs (Open Access).

Q14a. Please tell us how you think you or the people in your household will be impacted by the proposal for the building(s) you have identified.

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Health Visiting Service (Public Health)

Q14b. Please use the box below to write in the name(s) of the building(s) (and district) you would like to tell us about regarding the Health Visiting Service (Public Health).

Q14c. Please tell us how you think you or the people in your household will be impacted by the proposal for the building(s) you have identified.

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Children and Young People's Counselling Service (Public Health)

Q14d. Please use the box below to write in the name(s) of the building(s) (and district) you would like to tell us about regarding the Children and Young People's Counselling Service (Public Health).

Q14e. Please tell us how you think you or the people in your household will be impacted by the proposal for the building(s) you have identified.

Community Services Consultation

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The new Family Hubs Model

As explained in the consultation document, we have recently taken a key decision to accept Transformation Status from the Department for Education which means significant investment will be provided by Government to enable the change to the Family Hub model.

In a Family Hub, several different organisations and their services work in partnership together. The Government's guidance on Family Hubs suggests the provision that should be linked together to create the 0–19-year-old offer, or 0-25 for those with special education needs or disabilities (such as children's centre services, youth services and Public Health provision such as Health Visiting). However, our proposals about where to locate Family Hubs, where to provide outreach, and where to co-locate with other KCC services have been informed by the Needs Framework we have developed.

Q15. What do you think is important for us to consider when we transition to the Family Hub model?



Community Services Consultation

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Community Services Consultation

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Part B

Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities

Q16. Please use the box below to write in the name(s) of the building(s) (and district) you would like to tell us about regarding Community Services for Adults with Learning Disabilities.

Q16a. Please tell us how you think you or someone in your household will be impacted by the proposal for the building(s) you have identified.

Community Services Consultation

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Community Services Consultation

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Part C

Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education)

Q17. Please use the box below to write in the name(s) of the building(s) (and district) you would like to tell us about regarding Community Learning and Skills (Adult Education).

Q17a. Please tell us how you think you or someone in your household will be impacted by the proposal for the building(s) you have identified.

Community Services Consultation

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Part D

Gateways

Q18. Please use the box below to write in the name(s) of the building(s) (and district) you would like to tell us about regarding Gateways.

Q18a. Please tell us how you think you or someone in your household will be impacted by the proposal for the building(s) you have identified.

Community Services Consultation

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Community Services Consultation

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Section 4 – Other options and comments

Q19. Please tell us if there are any other options you think we should consider, or if you have any other comments you wish to make about the proposals in this consultation.

Community Services Consultation

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Community Services Consultation

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Section 5 – Equality Analysis

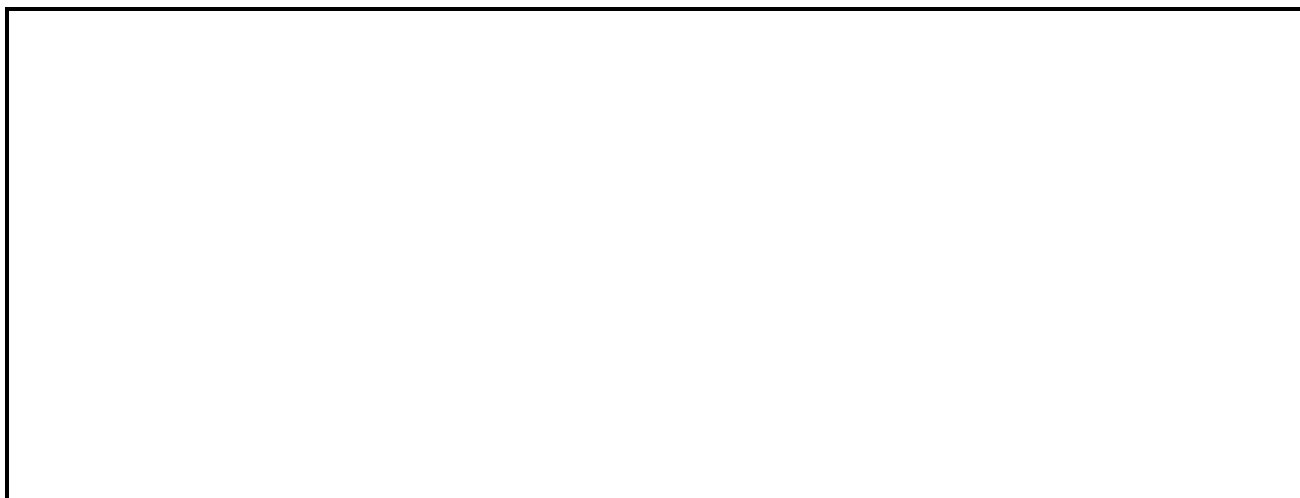
To help ensure that we are meeting our obligations under the Equality Act 2010 we have prepared a set of Equality Impact Assessments (EqIAs) on the proposals.

An EqIA is a tool to assess the impact any proposals would have on the protected characteristics: age, disability, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, race, religion or belief, and carer's responsibilities. The EqIAs are available online at www.kent.gov.uk/communityservicesconsultation or on request.

Q20. We welcome your views on our equality analysis and if you think there is anything we should consider relating to equality and diversity. Please add any comments below.

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Section 6 – More about you

We want to make sure that everyone is treated fairly and equally, and that no one gets left out. That's why we are asking you these questions. We'll only use the information to help us make decisions and improve our services.

If you would rather not answer any of these questions, you don't have to.

It is not necessary to answer these questions if you are responding on behalf of an organisation.

Q21. Are you...? Please select *one* option.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Male
<input type="checkbox"/>	Female
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

Q22. Is your gender the same as your birth? Please select *one* option.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Yes
<input type="checkbox"/>	No
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say

Q23. Which of these age groups applies to you? Please select *one* option.

0-15	<input type="checkbox"/>	16-24	<input type="checkbox"/>	25-34	<input type="checkbox"/>	35-49	<input type="checkbox"/>	50-59	<input type="checkbox"/>
60-64	<input type="checkbox"/>	65-74	<input type="checkbox"/>	75-84	<input type="checkbox"/>	85+ over	<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>

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Q24. Which of the following applies to you? Please select those that apply.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I/we have children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I am / we are expecting a child |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I/we do not have children |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I prefer not to say |

Q24a. If you answered 'I/we have children' to Q24, which of the following age groups does your child/children fall into? Please select *all that apply*.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 0-1 year old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 to 5 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 6 to 10 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 11 to 19 years old |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I prefer not to say |

Q25. Do you regard yourself as belonging to a particular religion or holding a belief? Please select *one* option.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I prefer not to say |

Q25a. If you answered 'Yes' to Q25, which of the following applies to you? Please select *one* option.

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Christian |
|--------------------------|-----------|

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- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Buddhist |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Hindu |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Jewish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Muslim |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Sikh |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Other |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I prefer not to say |

If you selected Other, please specify:

The Equality Act 2010 describes a person as disabled if they have a long standing physical or mental condition that has lasted, or is likely to last, at least 12 months; and this condition has a substantial adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. People with some conditions (cancer, multiple sclerosis and HIV/AIDS, for example) are considered to be disabled from the point that they are diagnosed.

Q26. Do you consider yourself to be disabled as set out in the Equality Act 2010? Please select *one* option.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Yes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | I prefer not to say |

Q26a. If you answered 'Yes' to Q26, please tell us the type of impairment that applies to you.

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You may have more than one type of impairment, so please select all that apply. If none of these applies to you, please select 'Other' and give brief details of the impairment you have.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Physical impairment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Sensory impairment (hearing, sight or both)
<input type="checkbox"/>	Longstanding illness or health condition, such as cancer, HIV/AIDS, heart disease, diabetes or epilepsy
<input type="checkbox"/>	Mental health condition
<input type="checkbox"/>	Learning disability
<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say
<input type="checkbox"/>	Other

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A Carer is anyone who cares, unpaid, for a friend or family member who due to illness, disability, a mental health problem or an addiction cannot cope without their support. Both children and adults can be carers.

Q27. Are you a Carer? Please select **one** option.

- Yes
- No
- I prefer not to say

Q28. Are you ...? Please select **one** option.

- Heterosexual/Straight
- Bi/Bisexual
- Gay man
- Gay woman/Lesbian
- I prefer not to say
- Other

Other, please specify:

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Q29. To which of these ethnic groups do you feel you belong? Please select **one option.**
(Source 2011 Census)

White English	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White & Black Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Scottish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White & Black African	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Welsh	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed White & Asian	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Northern Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mixed Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Irish	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British Caribbean	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Gypsy/Roma	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British African	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Irish Traveller	<input type="checkbox"/>	Black or Black British Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>
White Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>	Arab	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British Indian	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	<input type="checkbox"/>	I prefer not to say	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	<input type="checkbox"/>		
Asian or Asian British Other*	<input type="checkbox"/>		

*Other - If your ethnic group is not specified on the list, please describe it here:

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire; your feedback is important to us.
All feedback received will be reviewed and considered.

Closing date for responses: 26 March 2023

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Consultation Privacy Notice

Last updated: 30 December 2021

Who are we?

We, Kent County Council (KCC), take our privacy obligations seriously and we've created this privacy policy to explain how we treat your personal information collected in this questionnaire. Personal information is information we hold which is identifiable as being about you.

Our collection, use and disclosure of your personal information is regulated under the United Kingdom Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018. We are responsible as 'controller' of that personal information for the purposes of those laws. Our Data Protection Officer is Benjamin Watts.

The personal information we collect and use

Information collected by us

In the course of responding to consultations published by Kent County Council we collect the following personal information when you provide it to us:

- responses to questionnaire / consultation
- equalities data collected through questionnaire response - age, sex, gender identity, ethnicity, religion or belief, sexuality, disability, pregnancy or maternity or if you are a Carer
- employment and education details
- postcode.

We ask you not to provide information that will identify you in your response in this questionnaire.

You do not need to submit any equalities or postcode information if you do not want to. KCC is committed to the principle that all our customers have the right to equality and fairness in the way they are treated and in the services that they receive. Any information you do give will be

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used to see if there are any differences in views for different groups of people, and to check if services are being delivered in a fair and reasonable way.

We will not ask you to provide your name, email or full home address. If you provide this information, it will not be entered into spreadsheets or databases used to process response data and will not be used in producing reports. We will follow our Data Protection policies to keep your information secure and confidential. Your equality data will be anonymised before it is shared with external organisations who have been commissioned on individual projects to undertake analysis and reporting on our engagement and consultation activities.

How we use your personal information

We collect and use this information in order to:

- understand your views about a particular topic or KCC activity
- analyse consultation and engagement activity
- inform KCC's future strategy, policy, service design and budget planning
- undertake equality monitoring.

We may use your postcode to analyse the geographical spread of responses and in some cases to understand in more detail how responses are impacted by location. We will only ask you for the first five characters of your postcode to avoid being able to identify specific households in less populated areas.

We may use your postcode to carry out a type of profiling to estimate which one of a number of lifestyle groups you are most likely to fall into. We do this using geodemographic segmentation tools. We do not make any decisions about individual service users based solely on automated processing, including profiling.

How long your personal data will be kept

We will hold any personal information provided by you in this questionnaire for up to six years following the closure of a consultation. Our Retention Policy is available from our website or on request.

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We rely on UK GDPR Article 6(1)(e): 'processing is necessary for the performance of a task carried out in the public interest' and Article 6(1)(c) 'for compliance with a legal obligation to which the controller is subject' as our lawful basis.

We rely on Article 9(2)(g) 'processing is necessary for reasons of substantial public interest' (statutory etc. and government purposes, equality of opportunity or treatment) as the lawful basis on which we collect and use your special category data.

The processing is necessary for our statutory purposes including equalities monitoring or to understand the potential impact of proposals on conditions related to special category data within your response (e.g. when identifying or keeping under review the existence or absence of equality of opportunity or treatment between groups of people with the view to enabling such equality to be promoted or maintained.) It is necessary for identifying or keeping under review the existence or absence of equality of opportunity or treatment between groups of people with the view to enabling such equality to be promoted or maintained. You can read [KCC's Equality Policy on our website](#) or on request.

Who we share your personal information with

We may share your personal data and feedback with those listed below:

- services within the Council who are responsible for the management of the engagement or consultation activity
- a third-party supplier who has been contracted to independently analyse the consultation responses
- organisations such as schools and academies with whom we may be consulting in partnership or on behalf of
- district or borough councils or government departments with whom we may be consulting in partnership or on behalf of.

We will share personal information with law enforcement or other authorities if required by applicable law.

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Any personal information provided that could identify you will be removed before consultation results are published.

We use a system to log your feedback, which is provided by Bang the Table Pty Ltd.

Your rights

Under UK GDPR you have a number of rights which you can access free of charge which allow you to:

- know what we are doing with your information and why we are doing it
- ask to see what information we hold about you
- ask us to correct any mistakes in the information we hold about you
- object to direct marketing
- make a complaint to the Information Commissioner's Office.

Depending on our reason for using your information you may also be entitled to:

- ask us to delete information we hold about you
- have your information transferred electronically to yourself or to another organisation
- object to decisions being made that significantly affect you
- object to how we are using your information
- stop us using your information in certain ways.

We will always seek to comply with your request, however, we may be required to hold or use your information to comply with legal duties.

For further information about your rights, including the circumstances in which they apply, see the [guidance from the UK Information Commissioner's Office \(ICO\)](#) on individuals' rights under UK GDPR.

If you would like to exercise a right, please contact the Information Resilience and Transparency Team at data.protection@kent.gov.uk.

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Keeping your personal information secure

We have appropriate security measures in place to prevent personal information from being accidentally lost or used or accessed in an unauthorised way. We limit access to your personal information to those who have a genuine business need to know it. Those processing your information will do so only in an authorised manner and are subject to a duty of confidentiality.

We also have procedures in place to deal with any suspected data security breach. We will notify you and any applicable regulator of a suspected data security breach where we are legally required to do so.

Who to contact

Please contact the Information Resilience and Transparency Team at data.protection@kent.gov.uk to exercise any of your rights, or if you have a complaint about why your information has been collected, how it has been used or how long we have kept it for.

You can contact our Data Protection Officer, Benjamin Watts, at dpo@kent.gov.uk. Or write to Data Protection Officer, Kent County Council, Sessions House, Maidstone, Kent, ME14 1XQ.

The United Kingdom General Data Protection Regulation also gives you the right to lodge a complaint with the Information Commissioner who may be contacted at <https://ico.org.uk/concerns> or telephone 03031 231113.

For further information visit <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/about-the-website/privacy-statement>.

This Report will be made public on 14 March 2023



Report Number **C/22/106**

To: Cabinet
Date: 22nd March 2023
Status: Key Decision
Responsible Officer: Lydia Morrison – Interim Director Corporate Services
Cabinet Member: David Monk – Leader of the Council

SUBJECT: Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL): Proposed adoption of the Council's Modified CIL Charging Schedule

SUMMARY:

The council adopted the Core Strategy Review (CSR) in March 2022, and so it has been necessary for the council to amend the adopted CIL Charging Schedule to bring it 'in step' with the adopted CSR, as well as amendments to the CIL Regulations.

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Regulations (2010) as amended, outlines the process for establishing a CIL scheme in an area. At its meeting of 20th July 2022, the Cabinet approved publication of the Draft Charging Schedule and associated documents for consultation (and public consultation took place between 22 August and 3 October 2022), and authorised the Council to submit the DCS and associated documents to the appointed external Examiner for independent examination in accordance with the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). The DCS was submitted for external Examination in November 2022, and the Examiner's report was received in February 2023.

The purpose of this report is to:

- Report back on the outcome of the external examination – the Examiner's report of February 2023, concluded that the Council's CIL Draft Charging Schedule provided an appropriate basis for the collection of the levy in the District.
- Present for consideration the final draft of the Council's CIL Charging Schedule, recommending Cabinet approve the final draft, before a report is taken to Council on 29 March 2023, recommending adoption of the Charging Schedule. The proposed start date for adoption of the revised Charging Schedule is 1 April 2023

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/22/106.
2. To note the findings of the Report on the Examination of the Folkestone & Hythe District Council Community Infrastructure Levy Modified Draft Charging Schedule (February 2023).
3. To forward the report on the proposed adoption of the Community Infrastructure Levy Modified Draft Charging Schedule (April 2023) and Infrastructure Schedule for consideration and adoption by Council at their meeting of 29 March 2023.

1. PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

- 1.1 The continued collection of CIL will ensure that the Council continues to maximise collection of developer contributions toward infrastructure costs, as part of the planning process. It will operate in conjunction with a scaled back planning obligations regime, as set out by the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). CIL is a non-negotiable standard rate that developers will need to pay on different types of development in different parts of the district, as set out by the final draft of the Council's Charging Schedule (appendix 1).
- 1.2 The Charging Schedule has undergone a round of public consultation and was submitted for independent examination in public (EIP), in November 2022. Following consideration by the Examiner, the EIP was conducted by written representations, with this process concluding in February 2023. The Inspector's written report was delivered to the Council on Wednesday 22nd February 2023.

2. EIP EXAMINER'S REPORT

- 2.1 The Examiner's report concluded that the revised FHDC CIL Charging Schedule provides an appropriate basis for the continued collection of the levy in the District. Further to this the Examiner concluded that the Council had sufficient evidence to support the Charging Schedule and can show that rates are set at a level that will not put proposed developments at risk on grounds of viability.
- 2.2 The Examiner sets out his conclusions in paragraph 58 of his report, as repeated below:

58. I conclude that the MDCS for the Folkestone & Hythe Community Infrastructure Levy, submitted for examination on 24 November 2022, subject to making the modifications set out in Examiner's Modification EM1 in the appendix below, satisfies the requirements of Section 212 of the 2008 Act and meets the criteria for viability in the 2010 Regulations (as amended). I therefore recommend that the Charging Schedule be approved.

- 2.3 Examiner's modification EM1 is presented below. This modification has been incorporated with the final version of the DCS that is for consideration.

Modification that the examiner specifies so that the Charging Schedule may be approved:

Modification	Reference	Modification
EM1	Tables 1 and 2 CIL charges	Replace Tables 1 and 2 of the CIL charges in the MDCS with the Tables below

Table 1: CIL Charges for residential developments by zone

Development type	CIL rate (£ per sq m)			
	Zone A	Zone B	Zone C	Zone D
Residential development All development within Use Class C3	£0	£62.94	£125.88	£157.35
	£0			
Residential development on strategic site allocations	£0			

Notes:

The stated rates apply from 1 January 2023 and are subject to annual revision on the 1 January each year

Strategic site allocations comprise:

- North Downs Garden Settlement (SS6 to SS9)
- Sellindge Strategy Phases 1 and 2 (CSD9)
- Folkestone Harbour & Seafront (SS10)
- Shorncliffe Garrison (SS11)
- New Romney Strategy (CSD8)
- Nickolls Quarry strategic allocation, Hythe (Figure 5.6)

Table 2. CIL charges for retail development

Zone	Retail Development	CIL Rate (£ per sq m)
Folkestone Town Centre Area	All convenience and comparison retail and other development akin to retail	£0
Otterpool Park strategic allocation	All convenience and comparison retail and other development akin to retail	£0
Rest of district	Supermarkets, superstores, and retail warehousing (net retail selling space of over 280 sq m) (a & b)	£125.88
Rest of district	Other large-scale development akin to retail (net retail selling space of over 280 sq m) (c)	£125.88
Rest of district	Other retail development and developments akin to retail (net retail selling space up to 280 sq m)	£0

3. CIL ADOPTION

- 3.1 Given the findings of the EIP Examiner's report, there are no reasons why the Council should not proceed to formal adoption of its revised CIL Charging Schedule, and supporting policies on CIL payments by instalments, and

discretionary payments in kind, which mirror the CIL Charging Schedule adopted in August 2016. The CIL regulations require CIL to be adopted by Council. Therefore, following Cabinet consideration, it is recommended that the Council adopts CIL at its meeting of 29th March 2023, with the 1 April 2023 set as the start date for the collection of CIL, in accordance with Regulation 25 of the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended).

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Perceived Risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative Action
Cabinet does not endorse the final draft of CIL Charging Schedule for adoption	5	1	Given Cabinet and full Council's endorsement of the approach through the recent adoption of the Core Strategy Review, this is not considered a high risk.

5. IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Legal Officer's Comments (NM)

The modified CIL charging schedule has been prepared, consulted upon and independently examined under the provisions of the CIL Regulations 2010 (as amended). There are no wider legal implications.

5.2 Finance Officer's Comments (LM)

The details of the proposed new charging schedule is detailed in the body of this report. The proposed start date for adoption of the revised Charging Schedule is 1 April 2023. CIL monies will still be monitored, managed and utilised in line with existing Council policies, processes and procedures.

5.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)

There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

5.4 Climate Change (OF)

There are no climate implications arising from this report.

5.5 Communications (KA)

There are no communications implications arising directly from this report.

Reporting officer

James Hammond
Strategy & Policy Senior Specialist

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Community Infrastructure Levy Charging Schedule (for adoption) (April 2023)

Appendix 2: Infrastructure Funding Gap Statement (November 2022)

Appendix 3: FHDC Infrastructure Schedule (October 2022)

Appendix 4: FHDC CIL Viability Modelling Report (October 2022)

Appendix 5: Final report on the Examination of the Folkestone & Hythe District Council Community Infrastructure Levy Modified Draft Charging Schedule (March 2023)

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