

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Held at:	Council Chamber - Civic Centre Folkestone
Date	Tuesday, 23 April 2024
Present	Councillors James Butcher, Bridget Chapman, Laura Davison (Chair), Anthony Hills, Anita Jones, Alan Martin, Elaine Martin, Connor McConville and John Wing (Vice-Chair)
Apologies for Absence	None.
Officers Present:	Alex Baker (Committee Services Officer), Andy Blaszkowicz (Director of Housing and Operations), Ewan Green (Director of Strategy and Resources), Jake Hamilton (Committee Services Officer), Dee Elson (Control Centre & Resilience Manager), Adrian Hammond (Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager), Amandeep Khroud (Assistant Director) and Susan Priest (Chief Executive).
Others Present:	Doug Bannister (Chief Executive of the Port of Dover), Natalie Benville (Regional Affairs Manager of Eurotunnel), Nadeem Aziz (Chief Executive of Dover District Council), Jamie Pout (Deputy Leader of Dover District Council), Chris Johnson (Chair of Hawkinge Town Council), John Neale (Chair of Newington & Penne Parish Council), Councillors Jim Martin, Tim Prater, Polly Blakemore, Rebecca Shoob, Paul Thoms, Tony Cooper, Jeremy Speakman, David Godfrey and Belina Walker.

48. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors James Butcher and John Wing both declared voluntary interest as Directors of Oportunitas.

49. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 February 2024 were submitted, approved, and signed by the Chair.

50. **Minutes of the Finance and Performance Sub-Committee**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 March 2024 were submitted, approved, and signed by the Chair.

51. **KRF Planning - EU Entry / Exit System (ESS)**

Toby Howe, Highways & Transport Strategic Resilience Manager and Andy Jeffery, Head of Resilience & Emergency Planning at Kent County Council (KCC) introduced the item and provided members and guests with a presentation on the EU Entry / Exit System (EES) which is due to be implemented later this year.

The following guests were invited to speak:

Doug Bannister, Chief Executive of the Port of Dover.
Natalie Benville, Regional Affairs Manager of EuroTunnel.
Nadeem Aziz, Chief Executive of Dover District Council.
Mr Jamie Pout, Deputy Leader of Dover District Council.
Chris Johnson, Chair of Hawkinge Town Council.
John Neale, Chair of Newington & Penne Parish Council; and,
Dee Elson, Council Centre & Resilience Manger (FHDC).

Doug Bannister advised members on how the Port of Dover plans to tackle the upcoming implementation of the EU Entry / Exit System. Followed by Natalie Benville, who shared a short presentation with members (attached).

Jamie Pout and Nadeem Aziz shared their concerns and insights for Dover and the surrounding authorities.

Chris Johnson and John Neale also shared the concerns raised by residents within their wards.

Dee Elson provided members with a short presentation (attached) on how Folkestone and Hythe District Council is preparing for the EES.

Throughout the meeting members raised several points, including:

- Several members raised the importance of communication with residents on the lead up to the implementation, and during operation TAP and Brock (if stood up).
- Members also asked if back up plans had been considered if technical problems arise at the Port of Dover and/or Eurotunnel – Both Doug Bannister, and Natalie Benville confirmed plans were being discussed.
- Members were also concerned with motorists' welfare should the EES result in long delays and queuing traffic – Andy Jeffrey, advised there is ongoing planning and discussions around welfare and making sure people are prepared when travelling.

- Members asked how town and parish councils and communities can provide ideas and feedback – It was confirmed that FHDC would have a dedicated email address (EES@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk), which could also be fed into impact groups. Toby Howe also advised both Chris Johnson and John Neale that he is happy to arrange a meeting between himself and Hawkinge Town Council and Newington & Peene Parish Council to discuss concerns.
- Members asked whether further updates could be provided – The EES item is part of the OSC Work Programme 24/25, and it was also advised that an update would be provided to the Folkestone & Hythe's District & Parish Council Joint Committee later this year.

52. **Motion from Council (29/11/2023)**

Adrian Hammond, Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager introduced the item.

The report considered the potential impacts for the district, of Kent County Council's decision to end its accommodation and support provision for care leavers once they reach the age of nineteen.

Following the introduction, Members raised several points, including:

- Members raised the questions on what the district, neighboring authorities and members could do to elevate the potential issues and concerns.
- Members asked for clarification on why the risk assessment outcome had been set at medium, in respect of the likely impact for the young people affected (as detailed in paragraph 4) the Risk Management Issues table) – The Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager explained that the council currently does not know how many individuals will be affected and that the assessment could change when further information is known over the coming months.
- As per paragraph 3.4 and 3.5 of the report. Members asked whether the council would look to work with other organisations to tackle this issue – It was confirmed that the council will look and continue to work with organisations in and outside the district. However, the assistance available from other partners would not be as intensive as the support currently available from KCC.
- Members raised concerns around allocations, and what might happen when young adults approach the council - The Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager advised members that the council will continue to work with Housing Associations and Private Landlords to try and mitigate issues that arise, along with the use of the councils own housing stock and temporary accommodation. It was noted that although the council sometimes temporarily houses individuals outside of the district, the council recognises individual needs and support networks, and does its most to re-house those individuals within the district.

- Members asked whether there is a more detailed breakdown of the number of young adults coming of age, and whether this would be part of the councils monitoring process – Officers advised that this data could potentially be obtained from KCC and potentially be included as part the council’s monitoring process.
- Members asked for information around the current processes for care leavers and what services are offered to them - The Housing Strategy & Homelessness Manager explained that services offered included help with obtaining accommodation through private landlords, help in applying to the housing waiting list in order to access social housing and sign posting to support services.
- Member asked whether further updates would be provided – It was advised that officers could look to bring further updates to members later in the year.

Proposed by Councillor Connor McConville,
Seconded by Councillor James Butcher; and,

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report OS/23/14.**
- 2. To comment on the points set out in the report; and,**
- 3. That a further update be brought to the committee at a later date.**

(As there was no dissent the recommendations were approved by affirmation of meeting)

53. Overview and Scrutiny Forward Plan 24/25

The Chair and Amandeep Khroud, Assistant Director - Governance, Law, and Democracy, introduced the item.

The report set out a proposed work programme for Overview and Scrutiny work for the municipal year 24/25.

Following the introduction, it was suggested that the ‘Oportunitas – review of strategic funding assessment’ and the ‘UKSPF & REPF’ as seen within appendix 1 of the report could be brought to the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee.

Proposed by Councillor Anita Jones,
Seconded by Councillor Connor McConville; and,

Resolved:

- 1. To receive and note report OS/23/12.**

2. **To adopt and implement the Scrutiny work programme, set out in paragraph 1.3 of the report, for the municipal year 24/25, with the following minor amendments:**
 - a. **Item 5 (EES) to be amended to a reserve item; and,**
 - b. **Item 10 (Corporate plan) to be implemented as a main item.**
3. **To note paragraph 1.4 of the report.**

(As there was no dissent the recommendations were approved by affirmation of meeting)

54. **Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report**

Councillor Laura Davison, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, introduced the item.

The report set out the work that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Finance and Performance Sub-Committee have completed during 2022/2023.

Both the Chair of Overview and Scrutiny and the Chair of the Finance & Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee thanked members and officers for their hard work.

Members then thanked Councillors Laura Davison and Connor McConville for their dedication and work in chairing both Committees.

Proposed by Councillor Elaine Martin,
Seconded by Councillor Bridget Chapman; and,

Resolved:

1. **To receive and note report OS/23/13.**

(As there was no dissent the recommendations were approved by affirmation of meeting)

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EU Entry Exit System (EES)

What you need to know....

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Toby Howe IEng MICE
H&T Strategic Resilience Manager

Minute Item 51



What is EES?

EES is a new electronic system that will collect and process data on the entry, exit, and refusal of third-country nationals crossing the external borders of the Schengen Area.

EES will be used by border guards and enforcement authorities to track the movements of non-EU citizens and to prevent irregular migration and security threats.



- EES is currently scheduled to be implemented in the Autumn of 2024, with **October 6th** being highlighted as a probable date.
- The Port of Dover and Eurotunnel have juxtaposed borders, meaning that at these two portals all checks are carried out this side of the Channel.
- Prior to a first crossing, all third-country nationals must register for the system, which includes providing biometric data such as a facial photograph and fingerprint identification.



- Under current plans, the registration must happen at the portal and must be supervised by officers from Police aux Frontières (PaF).
- Eurotunnel are developing a location within their site to be able to carry out registration.
- Port of Dover are continuing to develop plans, however, there is very limited space in the buffer zone between the Eastern Docks roundabout and the French Customs booths.

- Currently, the buffer zone within the Port is the only area where EES registration can be carried out.
- This could mean lengthy delays for all tourist traffic entering the Port.
- Any queuing tourist traffic outside the Port will impact the outbound freight (85% of which is from Schengen areas)
- Significant queuing could become very frequent at Kent borders with Europe





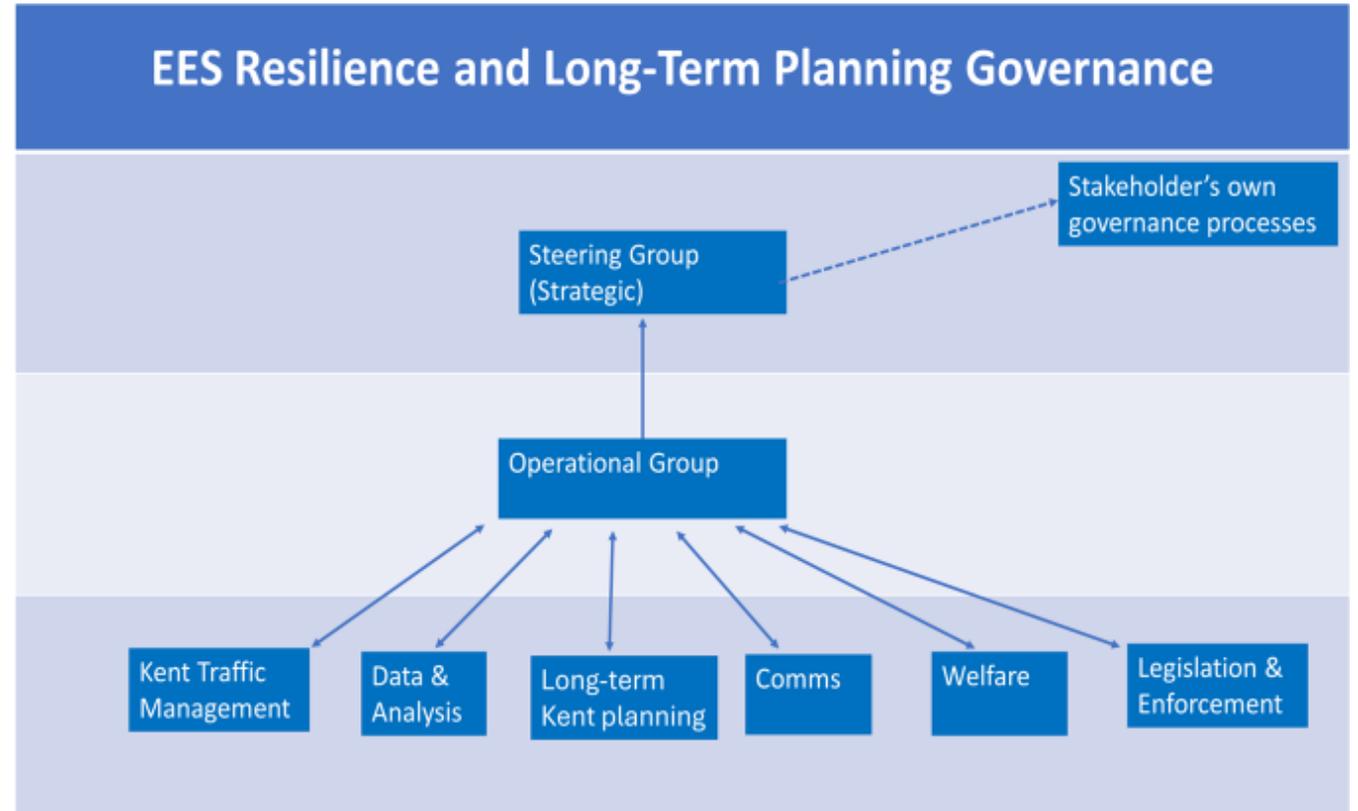
- Dover TAP and Operation Brock could become a more permanent feature, rather than only being deployed than at peak times.





- Whilst remote registration is technologically possible it is not currently available.
- The EU is developing a ‘back-end’ solution for such a possibility but leaving the ‘front-end’ to countries and organisations.
- It is therefore unlikely that remote registration will be available for some time, due to EU legislation.

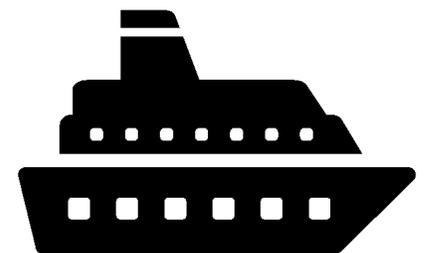
- Planning for the implementation of EES is ramping up across Whitehall and other bodies.
- Working with DfT, a number of Task and Finish Groups covering issues such as Traffic Management, Enforcement and Legislation and Welfare have been established.
- A multi-agency steering group will provide overview and an escalation forum.



The impact of EES on Kent is expected to be far greater than what was forecast for the exit from the EU.

EU Exit planning was focussed on delays to freight whereas the impact of EES will be an impact on travellers to the EU, as well as freight.

There is legislation in place to ensure that freight uses a prescribed route to the portals. It is not possible to legislate that passenger vehicles do the same.



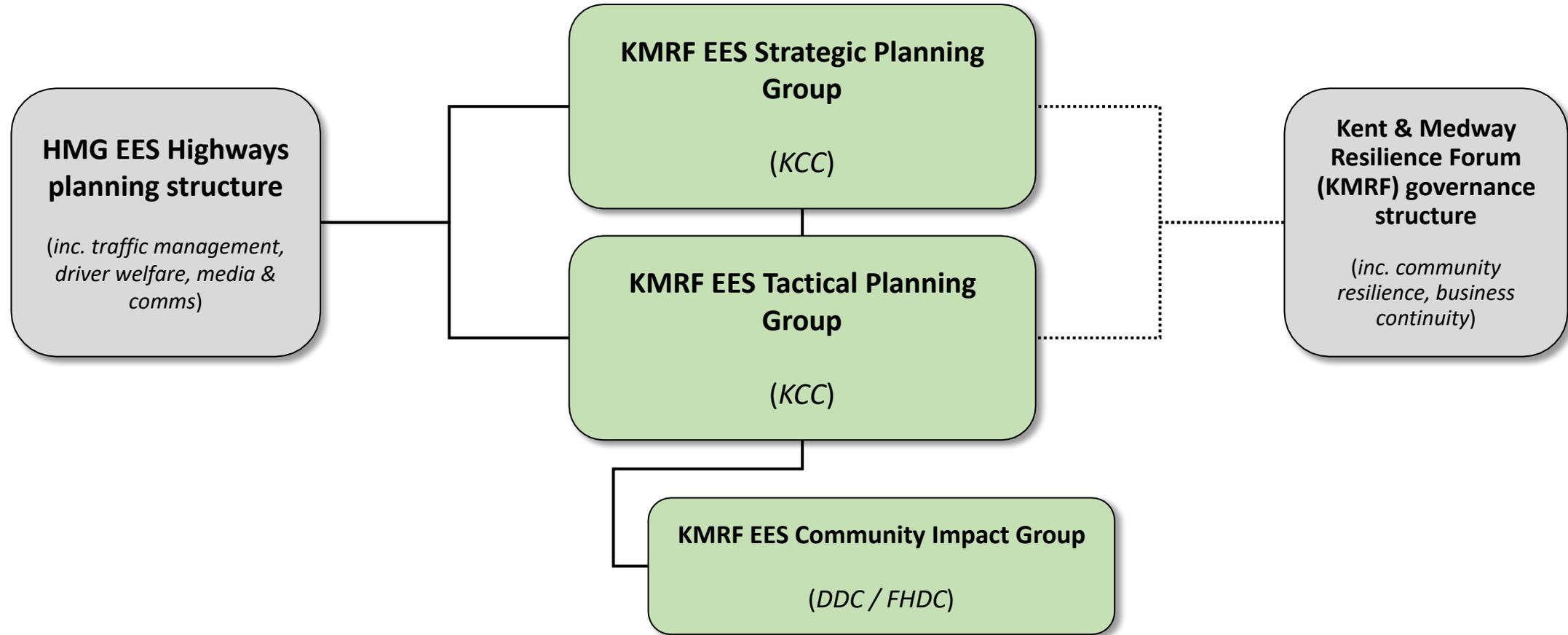
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KMRF EES Planning Phase – Structure Chart

(v.2.0. April 2024)



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WHAT IS FHDC DOING TO PREPARE FOR EES

KRF meetings with a wide range of partners...

- Community Impact Group
- Tactical Co-ordination Group
- Strategic Co-ordination Group
- Driver Welfare Group
- Internal EES meeting Group
- Comms Cell

What's happening in F&H?

- Explaining EES to alert residents and businesses.
- Providing advice how the district can prepare for EES.
- Gathering information on potential community impacts.
- Encouraging the development of business continuity plans (BCPs), and updating the Council's BCPs.
- Promoting the use of a specific email address to gather local intelligence EES@Folkestone-Hythe.gov.uk
- Raising awareness on the role of cllrs in an emergency by promoting the LGA
'A Councillor's guide to civil emergencies'
<https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/councillors-guide-civil-emergencies>
- Planning further training for both cllrs and staff.
- Participating in multi-agency exercises to prepare.

Questions?