



Agenda

Meeting: **Cabinet**
Date: **12 July 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 - 10)**

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 14 June 2023.

4. **General Fund Revenue 2022/23 Provisional Outturn (Pages 11 - 24)**

This report summarises the 2022/23 provisional outturn position (subject to external audit) for the General Fund revenue expenditure compared to the approved budget for the council.

5. **General Fund Capital Programme Provisional Outturn 2022/23 (Pages 25 - 34)**

This report provides the provisional outturn of the current financial position for the General Fund capital programme in 2022/23, based on expenditure to 31 March 2023, and identifies variances compared to the latest approved budget.

6. **Housing Revenue Account Revenue and Capital Financial Outturn 2022/23 (Pages 35 - 46)**

This report summarises the 2022/23 provisional outturn position (subject to audit) for the HRA revenue expenditure and HRA capital programme compared to both the latest approved budget and quarter 3 projections.

7. **2022-23 Annual Performance Report and Draft KPIs 2023-24 (Pages 47 - 104)**

This report sets out how the Council has delivered for local people in the district in 2022-23 in relation to the priorities documented within its Corporate Plan 'Creating Tomorrow Together' (2021-30) and presents amendments to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be used to monitor progress during the 2023-24 year.

8. **Information Governance - Data breaches update (Pages 105 - 116)**

At the meeting of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 7 March 2023, the Sub-Committee recommended that a report be brought before Cabinet to provide detail around the reported data breaches, and the measures put in place in order to prevent further breaches going forward. On 24 March 2023, Cabinet endorsed this recommendation.

9. **Princes Parade hoardings - Next Steps (Pages 117 - 122)**

This report seeks Cabinet approval to allocate funds from the existing Princes Parade implementation budget to scope out the steps required to remove the hoarding from the site. A further report will be brought back to Cabinet to consider the full implications and proposed next steps.

This report also informs Cabinet of the associated immediate actions that need to be addressed following their express desire to re-scope the place-shaping activities on the site.

10. **Green and Blue Infrastructure Action Plan (Pages 123 - 184)**

The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy is an evidence base document for the local plan and other future planning documents, as well as being a material consideration for planning applications. It could also provide information for other initiatives and joint working.

The Strategy has been subject to engagement and consultation with specific groups, organisations and Councillors since work commenced and this led to the publication of a Priorities and Opportunities Summary document for a final district wide consultation earlier in the year. This report provides a summary of the representations received and the proposed changes to the Strategy.

11. **Draft District-wide Carbon Plan (Pages 185 - 252)**

A draft District-wide Carbon Plan is being prepared for the council to play a leadership role in promoting partnerships for a carbon neutral district, as set out in the council's climate change and ecological emergency declaration. This report presents the draft District-wide Carbon Plan to Cabinet to seek approval to consult on the plan.

12. **Electric Vehicle Charging Points (Pages 253 - 262)**

This report provides an update on the off-street EV charging points rollout and makes recommendations for further chargepoints to be introduced at on-street sites.

13. **Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment (HEELA) (Pages 263 - 280)**

This report sets out what a HELAA is and how we plan to produce one. This is an important evidence base document needed when reviewing a local plan to identify sufficient land to meet the district's housing need over the plan period.

14. **Solar Park Opportunity - Lympe (Pages 281 - 290)**

This report sets out an opportunity for a solar park at Lympe, adjoining Otterpool Park and makes a recommendation that the opportunity be explored further.

15. **Ship Street Development - Update (Pages 291 - 298)**

This report outlines recent work that has been undertaken on the Ship Street development, and seeks additional pre-development works budget to be allocated to the project to ensure commercial viability of the development proposals and enable reports to be instructed which are required to be submitted as part of the Planning Application.

16. **Otterpool Park LLP - Appointments to the Otterpool Park LLP Board (Pages 299 - 324)**

This report makes recommendations regarding the board of Otterpool Park LLP and sets out proposed changes to increase the size of the board and to review the skills mix to reflect good governance principles and to support the delivery of this significant long-term place-shaping project.

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, 14 June 2023
Present	Councillors Mike Blakemore, Polly Blakemore, Gary Fuller, Jim Martin (Chairman), Tim Prater (Vice-Chair), Stephen Scoffham, Rebecca Shoob and Jeremy Speakman
Apologies for Absence	Councillors Rich Holgate
Officers Present:	Ewan Green (Director of Place), Katharine Harvey (Economic Development Advisor), Amandeep Khroud (Assistant Director), Susan Priest (Chief Executive), Jemma West (Democratic Services Senior Specialist) and Kate Wilson (Programme Manager - Folkestone Community Works CLLD Programme)
Others Present:	Councillor McConville.

NOTE: All decisions are subject to call-in arrangements. The deadline for call-in is Friday 23 June at 5pm. Decisions not called in may be implemented on Monday 26 June 2023.

1. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest at the meeting.

2. **Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20 April 2023 were submitted, approved and signed by the Leader.

3. **Folkestone Community Works programme**

The report set out the performance, achievements and closure arrangements for the Folkestone Community Works Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) programme which will end 30 June 2023. The council has been the accountable body for this European-funded programme since 2017.

A member raised concerns that funding had been given to a dormant company. He advised on the response from officers, which is set out below:

Purpose of the SME Business Grant

In November 2020 an application for an SME business grant was received from the applicant during his receipt of 12 hours business support provided through Social Enterprise Kent's Enterprising Opportunities project which was also supported through the FCW CLLD programme.

The company sought a capital equipment grant to purchase a 'live demonstration' cooking unit that would enable the company and small/micro hospitality/catering clients to deliver professional food demonstrations, educational content and cookery classes. Other uses indicated that this would act as a central point of focus for pop-up restaurants, be a live kitchen for focus groups involved in recipe and concept creation and be a centrepiece for video and photography shoots suitable for digital content. This was to be a fully portable kitchen unit that could be transported easily and safely for corporate events.

Due diligence on Application

An assessment of the application was completed by the PMT assessor on 12 January 2021 and the recommendation was to approve the grant subject to satisfactory checks, which included, amongst other things, clarifying the relationship between the company and its holding company. There was concern that there might be a breach of the linked company rules for ERDF funding.

Subsequently the application was discussed at the Local Action Group (LAG) meeting on 20 January 2021 and it was agreed that for the LAG to make a recommendation for approval, the relationship between the company and holding company needed to be clarified and whether a dormant company with no trading activity (although with an Active status) was eligible for ERDF funding. Consequently, the LAG gave approval subject to the assessor's recommendations being met and these points being clarified.

In a subsequent conversation and email exchange with the ERDF contract manager in the Managing Authority, the Programme Manager raised questions about whether the relationship between the companies breached linked company rules, particularly because information on both was limited due to appearing dormant in relation to filing accounts, but nevertheless had 'Active' status. An email received from the ERDF contract manager indicated that after liaising with the Greater South East Growth Delivery Team's Compliance Team, their view was that there was no issue with eligibility.

Subsequently the company requested additional funding due to a cost increase to £8,850 for the equipment arising from a fall in the Pound: Euro exchange rate. This increase was approved by the LAG through email exchanges.

The Local Decision Panel considered the LAG's recommendation to approve the application at the meeting on 19th October 2021. The programme manager reported that the due diligence undertaken by the finance team suggested a moderate financial risk because trading appeared to be dormant. However, the

applicant had demonstrated the availability of the match funding required and the query over the eligibility of a company that appeared to be dormant had been clarified with the managing authority who agreed it was eligible for a grant. The application was unanimously supported.

Confidence of using the grant for the purpose

The only grant funding payable through the SME business grant scheme is for expenditure already incurred and evidenced by the applicant.

A claim for the grant funding was received from the company in April 2022 and checks of the evidence were made, including reviewing quotes to demonstrate value for money (in line with council & ESIF procurement requirements), invoices for the goods from the supplier and defrayal evidence to the supplier showing that payments have been made from the grantee's business account. On approval of the claim the applicant was paid a grant of £8,790.81 on 30 May 2022.

Feedback since grant was issued

The applicant registered the details of the capital equipment items acquired with the grant in the asset register, as required as part of the claims process, and this was completed satisfactorily. The project has since faced several difficulties in setting up the equipment as a live demonstration cooking unit due to problems associated with the COVID pandemic at that time, and then subsequently due to energy supply issues on site. Personal problems faced by the applicant since has meant that the aspirations for the equipment are yet to materialise, but there is no reason to doubt that this will still happen.

Proposed by Councillor J Martin,
Seconded by Councillor Prater; and

RESOLVED:

1. That report C/23/01 be received and noted.
2. That the expected final financial and performance position of the Folkestone Community Works Community-Led Local Development (CLLD) Programme and the arrangements for the closure of the programme be noted.

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

REASONS FOR DECISION:

Folkestone & Hythe District Council is the accountable body for the Folkestone Community Works CLLD programme and the report provided Members with an oversight of the project outcomes.

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This Report will be made
public on 4 July 2023

Report Number **C/23/08**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Status: Non-Key Decision
Head of Service: Lydia Morrison – Director Corporate Services
Cabinet Member: Councillor Tim Prater

SUBJECT: GENERAL FUND REVENUE 2022/23 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN

SUMMARY: This report summarises the 2022/23 provisional outturn position (subject to external audit) for the General Fund revenue expenditure compared to the approved budget for the council.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because Cabinet needs to be informed of the council's General Fund revenue 2022/23 final outturn position.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note Report C/23/08.
2. To approve the carry forward of £1,253k unspent 2022/23 budgets to be allocated to the Carry Forward ear marked reserve.
3. To note that the provisional underspend of £993k will be transferred to overall General Fund working balances.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report sets out the General Fund provisional financial position at year end (subject to audit) and compares it against the latest approved budget.
- 1.2 The Chief Accountant and the Finance Team have now completed sufficient ledger closing entries to inform Cabinet of the draft provisional outturn for GF revenue for income and expenditure for 2022/23. There may be further adjustments to this as the accounts and external audit process is concluded, but these are not expected to be material or significantly change.
- 1.3 The council's Statement of Accounts (SoA) for 2022/23 is currently in production to reflect this financial data and the results of the final revenue outturn. It is anticipated that the draft SoA will be ready at the end of July and will be presented to a future meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee. The external audit of the SoA will commence later in the year as will be announced by the external auditor at the next Audit and Governance meeting on 20 July 2023.
- 1.4 In terms of financial reporting, the draft SoA presents the final GF outturn position in a different format as the accounts have to be prepared in a specific format to comply with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), which is a set of accounting standards introduced in 2001 to ensure consistency of financial reporting globally for most organisations.
- 1.5 For the purposes of this report, the GF provisional revenue outturn is presented in an expanded level of detail that represents the management structure of the council, it also is presented in the same improved format that was utilised for the Quarter three (Q3) budget monitoring reported to Cabinet on 25 January 2023.

2. GENERAL FUND PROVISIONAL OUTTURN – year 2022/23

- 2.1 The final GF outturn is shown in Table 1 below. It shows a net deficit for the year of £5.204m against the latest approved budgeted deficit of £6.196m. In overall terms this represents a favourable underspend variance of £0.993m compared to the latest approved 2022/23 budget.
- 2.2 It is important to note that this underspend position is net of any budget carry forward proposals (explained later in this report) and is after any previously agreed transfers to fund capital expenditure from revenue, together with the application of any approved reserves in-year to fund items including Covid reliefs previously awarded by the Government to businesses impacted by the pandemic. Relevant transfers have also been made to fund project expenditure from reserves such as Climate Change and High Street innovation fund. The GF provisional outturn also includes the application of any budget carry forwards brought forward from financial year 2021/22. Finally the GF provisional outturn includes all necessary accounting adjustments for accruals, prepayments, transfer payments and the set-aside of any amounts needed for provisions such as bad debts, plus the costs of borrowing, treasury management income and any grants received from central government or other public sector bodies.

2.3 A summary statement for the GF provisional outturn is provided below at Table 1 and the paragraphs that follow explain the various sections of the budget table and the reasons (variances) for the overall underspend. Paragraph 2.16 of the report also provides a detailed breakdown of the council's reserves and balances year-end position.

Table 1

GENERAL FUND NET REVENUE EXPENDITURE

Provisional Outturn report

General Fund Net Cost of Services	A	B	B-C	Q3 Variance reported Jan 23
	Latest Approved Budget	Provisional Outturn	Variance	
A) Service Team Budgets	£000	£000	£000	£000
Finance, Strategy & Corporate Services	7,763	7,454	(309)	19
Human Resources	627	669	42	81
Governance & Law	2,642	2,751	109	112
Leadership Support	771	957	186	190
Place	6,340	5,544	(796)	(155)
Economic Development	1,089	977	(112)	6
Planning	152	289	137	110
Operations	2,114	2,014	(100)	(160)
Housing	3,266	2,738	(528)	(301)
A) Total for Service Department Teams	24,762	23,392	(1,371)	(98)
B) Technical and Funding Budgets				
Unallocated Net Employee Costs	(195)	-	195	195
Internal Drainage Board Levies	493	506	13	13
Interest Payable and Similar Charges	801	586	(215)	(155)
Interest and Investment Income	(1,320)	(1,351)	(31)	105
New Homes Bonus Grant	(745)	(745)	-	-
Other Non-Service Related Government Grants	(1,858)	(3,386)	(1,528)	(771)
Town and Parish Council Precepts	2,659	2,659	-	-
Minimum Revenue Provision	1,667	1,747	80	-
Capital Expenditure Financed from Revenue	2,363	905	(1,458)	(1,059)
B) Total for Technical & Funding Budgets	3,865	921	(2,944)	(1,672)
C) Net Transfer to/from(-) Earmarked Reserves	(6,023)	(2,916)	3,107	1,889
D) TOTAL NET EXPENDITURE DEMAND (A+B-C)	22,604	21,397	(1,208)	119
E) Collection Fund (Council Tax and Business Rates)				
Business Rates - from the Collection Fund	(2,816)	(2,041)	775	(382)
Council Tax - demand the Collection Fund	(13,592)	(14,152)	(560)	(304)
E) Total for Collection Fund Demand	(16,408)	(16,193)	215	(686)
TOTAL GENERAL FUND BUDGET NET (D - E)	6,196	5,204	(993)	(567)

2.4 In preparing the table above, it should be noted that the Finance Team have used the improved reporting format that was adopted for Q3 budget monitoring which is in-line with the requirements of the Service Code of Practice (SERCOP) which is a reporting requirement of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA). The improvement in financial reporting is part of an on-going drive by the S151 Officer to ensure that financial information is transparent and easy to understand by recipients. The following paragraphs explain the various sections of Table 1 above.

- 2.5 In short, all direct Service or Team spending is shown in Section A of the Table. This covers the specific budgets used to fund services at the Council and includes budgets/costs for employees, transport, supplies and services, contracts, benefits, homelessness, and income from direct grants and fees and charges.
- 2.6 This is followed by a Section B in the table, called Technical and Funding Budgets which covers items of a more corporate funding nature such as capital financing costs, investment income, Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), levies, precepts and any other technical budget adjustments. These budgets/costs are kept separate for accounting and service classification reasons under the SERCOP.
- 2.7 Finally the three sections C and D and E of the Table identify :-
- Section C– identifies what is funded specifically from (or contributes to) reserves during the year it is important to note that some approved reserves have been applied in 2022/23 to fund service costs or technical items, i.e. New Homes Bonus. The use of these reserves is normally approved by Full Council as part of the Council Tax and budget setting process at the beginning of the financial year in February. Also, certain types of grant income or underspends are transferred to reserves in-year if they are required to be carried forward to the next financial year.
 - Section D – identifies what is to be funded from the Collection Fund, i.e. the Council Tax requirement approved annually by Council and the Business Rates income yield, both of these elements used to fund the overall General Fund Budget net expenditure demand which is show on line D) in the Table 1 above.
 - Section E – identifies the actual Collection Fund income amounts received for Business Rates income and Council Tax collection.
- 2.8 In considering the results in the Table above, the following paragraphs provide a high-level narrative to explain the reasons for the movements between the approved budget and the GF Outturn. Please note that there is also a detailed breakdown of all variances over £40k – attached as Appendix A.
- 2.9 In terms of Section A - Service Department / Teams – the overall spend against budget for the year has resulted in an underspend of £1.371m. The main factors for this are underspends that have arisen from the receipt of additional grant and/or income received in the final quarter of the year. Typically, some elements of grants / income always arrive in the latter part of the financial year and whilst this funding is welcomed, it can make budget monitoring difficult for all councils to predict between Q3 and Q4. Furthermore, the final position for actual income and expenditure is often affected by seasonal variations or different uptake levels which are only quantified once the final quarter period is closed. Finally, the year end position always has to be adjusted for any accruals, prepayments, receipts

in advance and transfer payments (such as council tax, housing benefit and rent allowances) and naturally these can impact upon the final position.

- 2.10 Many of the expenditure underspends have arisen due to planned management action to reduce spending in the year. As previously reported to Cabinet, the Chief Executive and the Corporate Leadership Team Directors asked all Budget Managers in December 2022 to rationalise spending where-ever possible for the remainder of the 2022/23 financial year and be prudent in the use of resources on discretionary items, but without compromising front line services to residents.
- 2.11 The key to this exercise was to adopt a “marginal gains approach”, i.e. small savings identified by every Manager (say for example on a supplies and service budget such as printing and stationery, holding a vacancy or suspending a subscription) will add up to a larger saving if all budget managers work together to achieve the same aim. Other areas such as income have also been reviewed and there has been a sharper focus on rationalising technical budgets that cover grants income, business rates income and capital financing costs.
- 2.12 Whilst the overall underspend reported in Section A of £1.371m is considered significant, it should be noted that this underspend represents just 5.5% of the overall total service department budget for the council in 2022/23 of £24.7m. In this context, the underspend can be viewed as reasonable (prudent) and not excessive and has not directly affected the quality of service provision to residents.
- 2.13 A more detailed breakdown of all the variances (£40k plus) that make up this £1.371m underspend is provided for information at Appendix A.
- 2.14 In terms of Section B – Technical and Funding Budgets – the overall outturn position has resulted in an underspend of £2.944m which is an increase of £1.27m from the Q3 position. This is attributable to three key variances. Firstly the council received £757k of additional Section 31 (S31) grant in 2022/23 to compensate the council for the final reliefs for small businesses following the Covid-19 crisis. It should be noted that this S31 is used to offset any deficits in the collection fund and a compensating deficit is shown in Section E of Table 1 above. Secondly, there has been a reduction of £1.458m to reflect the decrease in capital expenditure funded from Revenue due to slippage in the capital programme from the reprofiling of capital expenditure from 2022/23. The variations for this are shown separately on this Cabinet agenda in the Capital Outturn report for GF. Finally there is an underspend of £215k for Interest Payable as the council has managed to reduce its borrowing costs in 2023/23 by using short term borrowing at competitive rates plus the overall amount of borrowing required has been less due to the slippage in the capital programme.
- 2.15 It should be noted that any slippage in the capital programme will usually (subject to approval) roll forward to the next financial year and the Capital Outturn GF report (also on this agenda) identifies capital slippage that may have to be carried forward.

2.16 In terms of Section C – Net transfer from/to reserves, the reserves Table 2 below highlights the projected draws and latest balances of reserves that will be available at the end of the 2022/23 financial year.

Table 2 – Summary of General Fund Reserves and Balances 2022/23

Reserve	Balance at 1/4/2022 £'000	Projection £'000	Balance at 31/3/2023 £'000	Notes
Earmarked				
Business Rates	2,662	(904)	1,758	To support the Business Rate Retention scheme
Leisure Reserve	447	50	497	Leisure improvements - £250k ringfenced - maintenance
Carry Forwards	1,356	942	2,298	Previous years unused Budget carried forward
VET Reserve	287	(10)	277	Vehicle, equipment & technology replacement
Maintenance of Graves	12	0	12	Amounts in perpetuity for grave costs
New Homes Bonus (NHB)	1,997	(1,589)	408	Residual amount of remaining NHB
Corporate Initiatives	960	27	987	To support corporate plan and initiatives
IFRS Reserve	5	0	5	Accounting code changes support
Economic Development	1,985	(61)	1,924	Regeneration of District - capital and match funding required
Community Led Housing	310	(57)	253	Community Housing and affordable - ringfenced
Lydd Airport	9	0	9	Support costs ay Lydd Airport
Homelessness Prevention	958	(33)	925	Flexibly fund homelessness
High Street Regeneration	1,575	(342)	1,233	Regeneration in High Street areas - LU2
Climate Change	4,880	(224)	4,656	Achieve Carbon net zero by 2030-capital and revenue funding
Covid Recovery	3,526	(715)	2,811	Collection fund deficit 22/23 & 21/22
Total Earmarked Reserves	20,969	(2,916)	18,053	

Total General Fund Reserve	6,008	0*	4,222	*Note - requires 2022/23 addition to be added once determined and also note £1.786m allocated to 2023/24 Budget
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2.17 In summary, £2.916m of net reserves were utilised in 2022/23. Many of these draws on reserves were approved as part of the Budget process for 2022/23 examples being the use of New Homes Bonus and VET reserve. There were also draws made on reserves in the year to cover the costs of Covid-19 recovery, climate change and for regeneration purposes. There have been some reductions in the used of reserves applied to fund capital schemes. Finally there has been an increase in some reserves for amounts that are required to be carried forward to next financial year 2023/24. Paragraph 2.19 below outlines the carry forward requirements.

2.18 In terms of overall reserve levels, the combined earmarked reserves and the general fund reserves now stand at £22.27m which is higher than the forecast balance of £20.627m that was reported at Q3. It should also be noted that the overall revenue underspend of £993k in Table will be added to the general fund reserve if Cabinet agrees the recommendations in this report, which will increase the general fund reserve to £5.215m.

2.18 In terms of Section E of Table 1 – for Collection Fund – there are two variances. Firstly the business rate income is showing an overspend of £775k but this is compensated for by a similar amount of £757k of S31 Grant income which has been explained in paragraph 2.14 above. It should be noted that any S31 Grant has to be accounted for within the general fund and cannot be transferred to the collection fund due to regulation, hence the net neutral

position overall. Secondly the Council Tax income has increased by £560k (an underspend) as a result of higher levels of collection (above 97% for overall Council Tax collection) which is an excellent collection rate.

Budget carry forwards to 2023/24

- 2.19 Each financial year the council receives a number of grants government and some of these are ring-fenced, which means they can only be spent on a specific activity. They are effectively revenue grants and fortunately can be carried forward to future financial years if they remain unspent at year end. The council carries forward these amounts of unspent money as a reserve to be released in the following year.
- 2.20 As part of the provisional outturn process, provisional carry forwards of £1,253m have been approved by the Section 151 Officer as budgeted revenue expenditure relating to 2022/23 that be carried forward to 2023/24. Recommendation 2 of this report seeks confirmation of this position, and Appendix 2 outlines the proposed carry forwards by service area. The majority of these carry forwards relate to grant funding related but there are some other committed items of budget that are included in the list of carry forward which also qualify for budget carry forward.

3. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 3.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Significant amendments having to be made to the financial results following audit.	Medium	Low	The formal accounts will be prepared in accordance with professional standards and best accounting practice.

4. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

4.1 Legal Officer's Comments (AK)

There are no legal implications arising directly out of this report.

4.2 Finance Officer's Comments (LK)

This report has been prepared by Financial Services. There are therefore no further comments to add. The final outturn position will be reflected in the final Statement of Accounts for the council which audited by the council's external auditor later this year. Any changes from the provisional outturn numbers detailed in this report will be reflected in the final audited statement of accounts that will be approved by the Audit and Governance Committee.

4.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (HR)

The report does not cover a new service/policy or a revision of an existing service/policy and therefore does not require an Equity Impact Assessment.

4.4 **Communication Officer's Comments (KA)**

There are no significant communications implications arising directly out of this report.

4.5 **Climate Change Implications (AT)**

There are no climate change implications arising directly from this report. It updates Cabinet on this position following decisions taken at Cabinet and Full Council. Climate change implications of the various projects referenced in the report will be assessed as part of the development and implementation phases of those projects through the appropriate decision-making process.

5. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

Leanne Knight, Finance Specialist

Telephone: 01303 853515 Email: Leanne.knight@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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

Budget outturn and projection working papers.

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – List of revenue outturn variations above £40k

Appendix 2 – List of proposed budget carry forwards

Provisional Outturn Variance Analysis 2022/23 - EXTRACTS ONLY of key variances over £40k

APPENDIX 1

SERVICE DEPARTMENTS & TEAMS	Latest Approved Budget	Qtr 3 Projected Outturn	Provisional Outturn	Variance between Provisional Outturn and Latest Approved Budget	BRIEF EXPLANATION OF VARIANCE
REVENUE EXPENDITURE	£000	£000	£000	£000	
Human Resources					
Human Resoruce Team central costs	75	152	117	42	Advertising costs and supply side pressures due to inflation
Total Human Resources	75	152	117	42	Note - net of carry forward request of £11k
Finance, Strategy & Corporate Services					
Planning Policy	112	94	56	(56)	Reduced use of professional advice and fees
Community Infrastructure Levy	-	-	(52)	(52)	Additional CIL administration income - administration cost element
Climate Change Fees	141	241	228	88	Consultant support costs-offset from Climate Change Reserve
Corporate Management- Misc Expenditure	247	282	185	(62)	Overspend on external audit fees £40k, increases in treaury fee costs £22k
Covid-19	-	411	192	192	Covid-19 expenditure offset from Earmarked reserve
Homes for Ukraine	-	(38)	(44)	(44)	Ukraine Co-ordinator costs offset by income received from Kent County Council
Otterpool (Local Planning Authority)	(17)	107	28	45	Planning and temporary support costs
General Grants including UK prosperity grants	82	82	(232)	(314)	General grants & Napier Barracks income
Council Tax Collection	(413)	(340)	(285)	128	Reduction in Court Cost Income received - due to 97% collection rate
Council Tax Benefits	(15)	(15)	(277)	(262)	Aditonal discretionary CTAX rebate funding received (£414k), additional Energy Rebate payments £57k and Council Tax benefit payment administration costs £96k
Council Tax Reduction Scheme	(598)	(572)	(751)	(153)	Additional KCC grant funding plus unbudgeted Household Support payments offset by staffing costs to adminster scheme
Housing Benefits	(230)	(71)	(523)	(293)	Overpayment recovery susbidy and net difference on Rent Allowance subsidy & payments. The net difference on DHP subsidy & payments and lower than anticipated HB Admin grant £12k and receipt of Test & Trace grant (£236k)
Rent Rebates	316	197	162	(154)	Variance due to lower rent rebate payments and related subsidy
Finance	725	710	798	72	Net effect of staff vacancies and temporary staff costs
Treasury Management	50	50	98	48	Increase in Brokerage fees
Revenues & Benefits	700	624	582	(117)	Unbudgeted DWP & CTAX rebate grants
Strategy Policy & Performance	692	617	563	(128)	Vacancies and temporary staff savings
ICT Operations	1,497	1,425	1,328	(169)	Unbudgeted DCLG Cyber Security grant - £125k to be carried forward
Total Finance, Strategy & Corporate Services	3,289	3,335	2,058	(1,231)	Note (£845k) reflects carry forwards and reserve funding

SERVICE DEPARTMENTS & TEAMS	Latest Approved Budget	Qtr 3 Projected Outturn	Provisional Outturn	Variance between Provisional Outturn and Latest Approved Budget	BRIEF EXPLANATION OF VARIANCE
<u>Governance & Law</u>					
Conducting Elections	40	40	(12)	(52)	Underspend on election expenses
Communications	320	364	369	48	Filming for the council costs and reduced advertising income
Total Governance & Law	360	404	357	(3)	Note - net of carry forward request of £56k
<u>Leadership Support</u>					
Director of Transition and Transformation	3	51	51	48	Employee costs above budget
Director of Corporate Services	186	295	298	157	Overspend due to Interim Placements covering vacant posts
Total Leadership Support	189	346	349	205	Note - net of carry forward request of £8k
<u>Place</u>					
Recycling & Waste and Household Collection	439	599	144	(294)	Increase in waste contract recharges offset by additional green waste subscriptions income (£21k) and DCLG for funding for a recycling reward scheme. A funding bid was made jointly with Dover District Council and funding of £358,082 was received. Plans for a recycling reward scheme were not however progressed and the funding is not ring-fenced and contributes to the overall underspend. The claim against Veolia for costs related to the route optimisation project in 2021 has been settled. Settlement was agreed at £198K and covers the additional unbudgeted costs to the General Fund (additional working costs and garden waste rebate). This offsets any previous overspends for Waste Collections.
Hythe Swimming Pool	112	53	(11)	(124)	Surplus income following budget removal from Covid-19 period
Hackney Carriage Licensing	(104)	(112)	(153)	(49)	Additional income received against vehicle licensing and testing (£49k)
Cleansing	1,340	1,506	1,448	108	Increase in waste contract recharges £66k; additional costs for Weed spraying works £48k
Otterpool - Developer	4	(537)	(528)	(532)	Garden Communities Grant received (£525k) to fund capital in the technical budget section and is offset by a similar amount
Local Land Charges	(173)	(129)	(115)	59	Lower income received for fees due to economic downturn
Case Management (Place)	1,320	1,267	1,264	(56)	'Planning' post vacancy, and other short term vacancies
Total Place	2,937	2,646	2,050	(888)	Note - net of carry forward request of £9k

SERVICE DEPARTMENTS & TEAMS	Latest Approved Budget	Qtr 3 Projected Outturn	Provisional Outturn	Variance between Provisional Outturn and Latest Approved Budget	BRIEF EXPLANATION OF VARIANCE
<u>Economic Development</u>					
Regeneration & Economic Development	127	120	46	(81)	Reduced costs on various budgets including supplies and services, third party payments and staffing.
High Street Innovation Fund	421	423	254	(167)	Lower costs on High Street Fund projects offset by reserve funding
Folkestone CLLD	(9)	(9)	36	45	Additional costs for ERDF mid-term evaluation £14k; Reduced income £30k due to non-recoverable staffing costs - budget adjustment needed however scheme terminates 22/23.
RM Business Hub Grant Scheme	-	-	(125)	(125)	Balance of Romney Marsh funding received and grant payments, requested to be carried forward
UK Shared Prosperity Fund	-	-	(107)	(107)	Balance of funding received and supplier payments, carry forward requested
Total Economic Development	539	534	104	(435)	Note (£324k) reflects carry forwards and reserve funding
<u>Planning</u>					
Building Control	(292)	(223)	(198)	94	Lower building regulation fee income than anticipated £45k; Unbudgeted cost on Dangerous Structure work/assessment £50k
Development Control	(956)	(907)	(882)	74	Lower than budgeted Planning Application fees £137k and higher PPA & Pre-App fees (£63k)
Development Management	1,109	1,060	1,055	(55)	Net effect of vacancies & temporary staff (£55k)
Total Planning	(138)	(70)	(26)	113	
<u>Operations</u>					
Street Lighting	157	157	90	(67)	Underspend is due to LED Light work which has not yet been invoiced by KCC, this will be accrued for however there is a net underspend on this cost centre.
Off-Street Parking	(1,192)	(1,295)	(1,286)	(94)	£94k additional income from; Parking Charges, Parking Fines & Permits offset against RingGo processing fees.
On-Street Parking Enforcement	(320)	(429)	(514)	(194)	£194k additional income from; Parking Permits, Waivers and reduced expenditure costs
Coast Protection	(164)	(166)	(217)	(53)	Underspend on structural maintenance (£11k). Underspend on shingle clearance and buoys (£7k) Government Grant (£28k) Increased income on shingle extract licence (£7k)
Lifeline Facilities	(151)	(38)	(29)	122	Reduction in lifeline income £146k, saving against Staff Vacancy (£38k) and overspend against Consortium Maintenance £16k
Grounds Maintenance	1,520	1,537	1,596	76	Various vacancies, some covered by temporary staff, overall position on staffing (£27k). Other variances: Planting/Shrubs and general costs £47k; Vehicle maintenance and hire, and fuel £48k; less income £34k
Folca	152	166	95	(57)	Reduced Business Rates (£108k); income received for use of Folca (£15k); maintenance costs £11k; Utilities £54k
Connect 38	(1,177)	(1,177)	(1,006)	171	Net impact on unbudgeted service charges £242k; contribution received for remedial works (£79k) requested to be carried forward
Total Operations	(1,175)	(1,246)	(1,270)	(95)	Note (£79k) reflects carry forwards and reserve funding

SERVICE DEPARTMENTS & TEAMS	Latest Approved Budget	Qtr 3 Projected Outturn	Provisional Outturn	Variance between Provisional Outturn and Latest Approved Budget	BRIEF EXPLANATION OF VARIANCE
Housing					
Homelessness (Grant Funded Exp)	(62)	(99)	(193)	(131)	Additional grant income received (£83k); reduced spend on prevention fund and housing costs (£44k) requested to be carried forward homeless funds of £110k
FHDC Temporary Accommodation	(22)	(73)	(84)	(62)	(£55k) additional income due to Housing Benefit payments
Renovation Grants	-	-	(121)	(121)	DFG money offsetting capital expenditure - net neutral
Other Housing Improvement Services	100	100	(24)	(124)	Underspend on Home Safe Loans (£63k) Repaid Warm Home loans (£27k) and repaid Home Safe loans (£33k)
Compliance	245	207	196	(49)	Net effect of Compliance Specialist vacancy, temporary staff, recruitment finders fee, subscriptions & insurance costs (£49K)
Neighbourhood Management	623	600	571	(53)	Reduced spend on Your District Today (£21k) Savings to staff costs, insurance, equipment & uniforms (£32k)
Supported Housing	384	337	326	(58)	Staff related savings due to operational changes (£58k)
Housing Strategy & Support	193	146	146	(47)	Housing Strategy & Partnership Officer vacancy
Total Housing	1,462	1,241	817	(645)	Note (£198k) reflects carry forwards and reserve funding

Variations over £40k only					
Technical & Funding Budgets	Latest Approved Budget	Qtr 3 Projected Outturn	Provisional Outturn	Variance between Provisional outturn at Latest Approved Budget	BRIEF EXPLANATION OF VARIANCE
Interest Payable and Similar Charges	801	646	586	(215)	Interest savings from capital slippage - and lower costs
Other Non-Service Related Government Grants	(1,858)	(2,629)	(3,386)	(1,528)	Additional S31 grant and other technical grants
Capital Expenditure Financed from Revenue	2,363	1,486	905	(1,458)	Reduced capital expenditure due to slippage - less revenue funding requirement
Total Technical & Funding Budgets	1,306	(497)	(1,895)	(3,201)	
Net Transfer to/from(-) Earmarked Reserves	(6,023)	(6,400)	(2,916)	3,107	Net movement from reserves - reduced capital contributions needed
Transfer to/from(-) the Collection Fund					
Business Rates Income	(2,816)	(3,198)	(2,041)	775	Offset by Section 31 Grant from Other Non service grants
Demand on the Collection Fund	(13,592)	(13,896)	(14,152)	(560)	Additional council tax collection during the year

APPENDIX 2

List of Carry Forwards - propped for 2022/23 GF Revenue Outturn	£
<u>Finance, Strategy & Corporate Services</u>	
KCC Empty Homes Premium - Ringfenced Grant	152,861
UK Prosperity Fund Admin Support - Ringfenced Grant	147,000
Local Council Tax Administration - Ringfenced Grant	141,000
Cyber Security - Ringfenced Grant	125,000
<u>Economic Development</u>	
Romney Marsh Business Hub Grant Scheme	122,695
Levelling Up Ringfenced projects (Levelling Up Fund, UK Shared Prosperity and UK Rural)	93,052
High Street Funding - Ringfenced match funding	52,709
Folkestone Community Works - Ringfenced project costs	30,514
Kent Wildlife Trust critical site maintenance	9,950
District Tourism website - delays in project hence carried forward	9,500
Romney Marsh Partnership - Magnox contribution - Ringfenced grant	6,000
<u>Human Resources</u>	
Recruitment & advertising budgets carried forward as post still to be filled	11,379
<u>Governance & Law</u>	
Legal - professional advice and fees - ongoing cases	56,150
<u>Leadership Support</u>	
Funding for key projects which are ongoing	8,000
<u>Place</u>	
Crime Reduction - Ringfenced Grant	6,503
Pavement Licensing New Burdens - Ringfenced Grant	2,662
<u>Housing</u>	
Homelessness Prevention - Ringfenced Grant	110,786
Domestic Abuse 22/23 Ringfenced Grant	28,440
Civil penalty enforcement income - ringfenced	26,317
Rough Sleeping- Ringfenced Grant	13,400
Tenant Satisfaction Measures New Burdens - Ringfenced grant	11,476
Private Sector Housing - energy efficiency - Ringfenced Grant	8,297
<u>Operations</u>	
Contribution from Quinn estates remedial works at Connect 38 - Ringfenced	79,000
Total – Heads of Services	1,252,691

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This Report will be made public on 4 July 2023

Report Number: **C/23/07**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12th July 2023
Status: Non-Key Decision
Head of Service: Lydia Morrison – Director of Corporate Services
Cabinet Member: Councillor Tim Prater, Portfolio Holder for Finance

**SUBJECT: GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME PROVISIONAL
OUTTURN 2022/23**

SUMMARY: This report provides the provisional outturn of the current financial position for the General Fund capital programme in 2022/23, based on expenditure to 31 March 2023, and identifies variances compared to the latest approved budget.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because it needs to be kept informed of the General Fund capital programme outturn position and be appraised of any variations from the approved budget.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/23/07.

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 This report compares the 2022/23 provisional outturn (subject to audit) for the capital programme to the latest approved budget, agreed by Full Council on 22nd February 2023. Specifically, this report:-

- i) provides explanations of the key variances for schemes within the programme between the latest approved profiled budget and the outturn position for 2022/23,
- ii) considers the impact any changes to the overall capital programme will have on the financing resources required to fund it.

The Chief Accountant and Finance Team have now completed sufficient ledger entries to inform Cabinet of the provisional capital outturn position for the financial year 2022/23.

Full Council approved the latest budget for the Medium Term Capital Plan (MTCP) to 31 March 2028 on 22nd February 2023. This included the latest approved profiled budget of £20.885m for the current financial year.

2. CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 – PROVISIONAL OUTTURN

2.1 The provisional Capital Outturn for the General Fund Capital Programme for 2022/23 is £17,629,000, a reduction of £3,256,000 compared to the latest budget of £20,885,000. Full details of variations are shown in Appendix 1 to this report and the following table summarises the position across the council's service areas and outlines the impact on the capital resources required to fund the programme: The provisional outturn figures are subject to the conclusion of the Statement of Accounts process and the final audit of the accounts. The Statement of Accounts will be prepared by 31 July and the external audit will commence later this year.

General Fund Capital Programme Outturn	Latest Budget 2022/23	Actual 2022/23	Variance Budget to Outturn
<u>Service Units</u>	£'000	£'000	£'000
Operations	6,314	4,654	(1,660)
Corporate Services	2,194	2,077	(117)
Housing	1,555	1,634	79
Place	10,813	9,264	(1,549)
Governance, Law, Service Delivery	9	0	(9)
Total Capital Expenditure	20,885	17,629	(3,256)
<u>Capital Funding</u>			
Capital Grants	(4,089)	(3,390)	699
External Contributions	(780)	(26)	754
Capital Receipts	(2,388)	(1,830)	558
Revenue	(1,486)	(905)	581
Borrowing	(12,142)	(11,478)	664
Total Funding	(20,885)	(17,629)	3,256

2.2 The following table summarises the main reasons for the net reduction in the projected outturn compared to the latest budget:

Variations – 2022/23 Latest Profiled Budget to Outturn			
1	Reprofiling between 2022/23 and 2023/24	£'000	£'000
i)	Coast Protection - Coronation Parade, Folkestone	(742)	
ii)	Coast Protection - Coronation Parade annual monitoring	(4)	
iii)	Coast Protection - Greatstone Dunes Management & Study	(13)	
iv)	Coast Protection - Hythe to Folkestone Beach Management	(117)	
v)	Royal Military Canal footpath enhancements	(4)	
vi)	Public Toilet Enhancement Programme	(13)	
viii)	Biggins Wood Site Land Remediation Works	(293)	
ix)	Ship Street Site Folkestone (GF Element)	(192)	
x)	District Street Lights	(401)	
xi)	Coast Drive Seafront Development	(55)	
xii)	Coastal Park Play Equipment	(19)	
xiii)	Coastal Park Toilet and Concession	(31)	
xiv)	Replacement Asset Management System	(60)	
xv)	Radnor Park Footpath Resurfacing (FPPG Charity)	(13)	
xvi)	The Stade, Folkestone Rental Huts	(100)	
xix)	Additional Toilet Cleaners Vans	(33)	
xx)	Replacement Park Keeper's Vehicle	(27)	
xxi)	Otterpool Park Garden Town	(795)	
xxii)	Waste Contract - Acquisition of Vehicles and Equipment	(15)	
xxiii)	Area Officer Vans	(30)	
xxiv)	CLLD ERDF Capital Projects	(813)	
xxv)	UK Shared Prosperity Fund Capital Grants Scheme	(13)	
xxvi)	Server Replacement Programme	(13)	
xxvii)	ICT improvement costs (externally hosted Revenues & Benefits system)	(53)	
xxviii)	Website CMS replacement	(26)	
xxix)	Folkestone & Hythe Green Business Grant Scheme	(20)	
xxx)	FHDC Transformation	(15)	
xxxi)	Electoral Management System	(9)	
xxxii)	Empty Properties Initiative (KCC) - Loans to landlords	(25)	
xxxiii)	Temporary Accommodation (invest to save)	(94)	
xxxiv)	Home Safe Loans	(111)	
			(4,148)
2	Overspends		
i)	Lifeline Capitalisation	2	
ii)	Parking Services - Upgrade of Payment Options	13	
iii)	Princes Parade Leisure & Housing Development	427	
iv)	Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) & Loans	308	
v)	Other small overspends	142	
			892
	Total change in overall capital programme for 2022/23		(3,256)

2.3 The outturn for 2022/23 of £17.629m compared with the previous projected position of £20.885m reported to Cabinet on the 25th January 2023 was based on estimated information as at 31st November 2022. As the analysis in the table above shows, the main reason for the projected variance is

slippage in spending upon capital schemes which will require the reprofiling of expenditure from 2022/23 to 2023/24. Some capital schemes are more difficult to project accurately in terms of the timing of expenditure and, in some cases, the final cost. This is particularly the case with some of the property related initiatives where external factors such as negotiations over price, conveyancing and planning can have an impact on the timing and final cost of a scheme. The council remains on track to deliver the schemes within its overall approved Medium Term Capital Programme.

3. IMPACT OF PROGRAMME CAPITAL FUNDING RESOURCES

- 3.1 As summarised in section 2 of this report, the Council's capital expenditure for 2022/23 requires a significant level of borrowing to support it. Expenditure on the following capital schemes in 2022/23 is financed by borrowing :

2022/23 Expenditure financed by Borrowing	£'000
Coast Drive Seafront Development	39
Coastal Park Toilet and Concession	18
Otterpool Park	7,939
Oportunitas	1,500
Veolia Waste Contract	14
Temporary Accommodation	13
Princes Parade Leisure Centre	1,955
Total	<u>11,478</u>

- 3.3 The council's actual borrowing activity for the financial year will be covered in the Treasury Management Outturn Report for 2022/23 which Cabinet is due to consider later this summer. The Prudential Indicators outturn for 2022/23 will also be included in that report (as it is still being finalised), and will summarise the council's total debt, including that attributable to the Housing Revenue Account, at 31 March 2023 against its total borrowing need, known as the Capital Financing Requirement.
- 3.4 The £0.905m of revenue resources used to fund capital expenditure in the current financial year, summarised in section 2.1 of the report, is reflected in the General Fund outturn report for 2022/23, due to be considered by Cabinet as part of this agenda.

- 3.5 The table below shows latest position regarding the council's available capital receipts to fund capital expenditure.

Capital Receipts Position Statement	£'000
Capital Receipts brought forward as at 1st April 2022	(9,069)
Capital Receipts Received in 2022/23	(1,727)
Less:	
Committed towards General Fund capital expenditure	1,830
Committed towards HRA capital expenditure	1,063
Committed to fund future approved GF Capital Schemes	4,632
Funding Charity Loan	57
Contingency for urgent or unforeseen capital expenditure	500
Uncommitted Capital Receipts available to support new GF capital expenditure	2,714

- 3.5 Flexible Use of Capital Receipts Guidance – The Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) capitalisation direction currently allows local authorities to use capital receipts from non-HRA asset sales to meet one off revenue costs on schemes designed to reduce future revenue costs and/or transform service delivery. There are £0.971m of qualifying capital receipts held in the capital receipts reserve. There has been £90k of qualifying expenditure in 2022/23 and the remaining balance will be carried forward to 2023/24. The end date for the use of qualifying capital receipts is 2024/25.

- 3.6 Available resources to fund the slippage and reprofiling of capital expenditure to 2023/24, outlined in section 2 of the report, have been ring-fenced to meet this.

4. CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1 The projected outturn shown for the General Fund capital programme for 2022/23 reflects the position based on actual expenditure and forecasts at 31 March 2023.
- 4.2 The Council remains on track to deliver the schemes within its approved MTCP.
- 5.3 The outturn for the programme has required £11.478m of borrowing to support it.

6 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 6.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Capital resources not available to meet the cost of the new projects.	High	Low	Capital receipts required have already been realised for the majority of the programme. Schemes subject to future capital resources will only commence once these are realised. Schemes supported by grant funding will only commence once fully approved and committed by the relevant body. Prudential borrowing is only used for capital schemes expected to generate a net revenue benefit and/or future capital receipts
Cost of new projects may exceed the estimate.	High	Medium	A review of existing approved capital schemes has been undertaken as part of the update to the MTCP to assess the impact of current inflationary pressures affecting construction and engineering sector. Capital monitoring procedures in place allowing prompt early action to be taken to manage the risk effectively.
Expenditure planned to be met by grant is ineligible under the terms of the	High	Low	Prior to commitments being made the project manager to agree in advance

funding agreement			grant expenditure with the funding body. eligible with
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6. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

6.1 Legal Officer's Comments

There are no legal implications arising directly out of this report.

6.2 Finance Officer's Comments

This report has been prepared by Financial Services. There are no further comments to add. Any changes to the provisional outturn will be reflected in the final Statement of Accounts that will be finalised once the external audit is completed later this year. The Prudential indicators for the year will be presented to a future meeting of this committee with the annual Treasury Management report after July 2023 when the full Statement of Accounts are completed.

6.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications

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

6.4 Communication Officer's Comments

The play area improvements to be funded will be communicated widely subject to Full Council approval during 2022/23.

6.5 Climate Change Implications

There are no climate change implications arising directly from this report. It updates CLT on this position following decisions taken at CLT and Full Council. Climate change implications of the various projects referenced in the report will be assessed as part of the development and implementation phases of those projects through the appropriate decision-making process.

7. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

Daniella Loxton, Capital and Treasury Senior Specialist
Tel: 01303 853583. e-mail: daniella.loxton@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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

None

Appendices:

Appendix 1 – General Fund Capital Programme 2022/23 Projected Outturn

APPENDIX 1 - GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME OUTTURN 2022/23

By Head of Service

Item	Scheme	Latest Approved Budget	Outturn	Variance Budget to Outturn	Comments
		£000	£000	£000	
Andy Blaszkowicz - Director of Operations					
1	Coast Protection - Coronation Parade, Folkestone	749	7	(742)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
2	Coast Protection - Coronation Parade annual monitoring	4	0	(4)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
3	Coast Protection - Greatstone Dunes Management & Study	15	2	(13)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
4	Coast Protection - Hythe to Folkestone Beach Management	497	380	(117)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
5	Royal Military Canal footpath enhancements	20	16	(4)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
6	Lifeline Capitalisation	70	72	2	Slight over spend, representing a drawdown of the 2023/24 Budget.
7	Public Toilet Enhancement Programme	191	178	(13)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
8	Parking Services - Upgrade of Payment Options	75	88	13	Overspend resulting from change in specification to cashless machines
9	Biggins Wood Site Land Remediation Works	1,316	1,023	(293)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
10	Ship Street Site Folkestone (GF Element)	426	234	(192)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
11	Princes Parade Leisure & Housing Development	1,528	1,955	427	was reprofiled- the available budget is in future years
12	District Street Lights	793	392	(401)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
13	Coast Drive Seafront Development	94	39	(55)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
14	Coastal Park Play Equipment	62	43	(19)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
15	Coastal Park Toilet and Concession	50	19	(31)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
16	East Cliff Landfill Protection (FPPG Charity)	0	2	2	Preparatory works undertaken in 2022/23, drawdown of budget in 2023/24
17	Hawkinge Depot Upgrade	0	7	7	Preparatory works undertaken in 2022/23, drawdown of budget in 2023/24
18	Replacement Asset Management System	60	0	(60)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
19	Radnor Park Footpath Resurfacing (FPPG Charity)	40	27	(13)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
20	The Stade, Folkestone Rental Huts	100	0	(100)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
21	Additional Toilet Cleaners Vans	33	0	(33)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
22	Replacement Park Keeper's Vehicle	27	0	(27)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
23	Play Area Equipment (COMF)	164	164	(0)	
24	Connect 38 CAT A Works	0	6	6	Preparatory works drawdown of 2023/24 budget, to prepare unit for new tenant.
Total - Director of Operations		6,314	4,654	(1,660)	
Ewan Green - Director of Place					
	Land at Otterpool Lane	1,409	1,053	(356)	Re-profiled to 22/23
	Otterpool Park GardenTown Del Veh	50	61	11	
	Otterpool Further Investment	7,500	6,750	(750)	Re-profiled to 22/23
	Otterpool Park Masterplanning Costs	400	700	300	Re-profiled from 22/23
25	Otterpool Park Garden Town	9,359	8,564	(795)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
26	Waste Contract - Acquisition of Vehicles and Equipment	29	14	(15)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
27	Mountfield Road Industrial Estate Phase 2	478	478	0	
28	Area Officer Vans	30	0	(30)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
29	CLLD ERDF Capital Projects	867	54	(813)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
30	UK Shared Prosperity Fund Capital Grants Scheme	50	37	(13)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
31	Folkestone - A Brighter Future Project (LUF)	0	117	117	Preparatory works undertaken in 2022-23 works budgeted in 2023/24
Total - Director of Place		10,813	9,264	(1,549)	
Lydia Morrison - Director of Corporate Services					
29	PC Replacement Programme	35	44	9	Expenditure to be funded from the available 2023/24 budget allocation
30	Server Replacement Programme	60	47	(13)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
31	ICT improvement costs (externally hosted Revenues & Benefits system)	314	261	(53)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
32	Website CMS replacement	130	104	(26)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
33	Folkestone & Hythe Green Business Grant Scheme	50	30	(20)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
34	FHDC Transformation	105	90	(15)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
35	Oportunitas Loan and Share Capital Phase 2	1,500	1,500	0	
Total - Director of Corporate Services		2,194	2,077	(117)	
Amandeep Khroud - Governance, Law and Service Delivery					
36	Electoral Management System	9	0	(9)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
Total - Governance, Law and Service Delivery		9	0	(9)	
Gill Butler - Head of Housing					
37	Empty Properties Initiative (KCC) - Loans to landlords	300	275	(25)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
38	Temporary Accommodation (invest to save)	107	13	(94)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
39	Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) & Loans	1,000	1,308	308	Catch up of schemes delayed as a result of Covid funded from available Grant
40	Home Safe Loans	148	37	(111)	Slippage arising from delays in scheme, budget to be re-profiled to 2023/24
Total - Head of Housing		1,555	1,634	79	
TOTAL GENERAL FUND CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2021/22		20,885	17,629	(3,256)	
Funding Summary:					
	Capital Receipts	(2,388)	(1,830)	558	
	Government Grant	(4,089)	(3,390)	699	
	External Contributions	(780)	(26)	754	
	Revenue Reserves	(1,486)	(905)	581	
	Direct Revenue	0	0	0	
	Borrowing	(12,142)	(11,479)	663	
	Leasing	0	0	0	
TOTAL FUNDING		(20,885)	(17,629)	3,256	

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This Report will be made public on 4 July 2023

Report Number **C/23/14**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Status: Non-Key Decision
Head of Service: Lydia Morrison, Interim Director of Corporate Services
Cabinet Members: Councillor Tim Prater, Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance and Governance; Councillor Rebecca Shoob, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Homelessness

SUBJECT: HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT REVENUE AND CAPITAL PROVISIONAL OUTTURN 2022/23

SUMMARY: This report summarises the 2022/23 provisional outturn position (subject to audit) for the HRA revenue expenditure and HRA capital programme compared to both the latest approved budget and quarter 3 projections.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out below because it is essential that it is kept informed of the Housing Revenue Account final 2022/23 position.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note Report C/23/14.
2. To approve the carry forward of £77k unspent 2022/23 revenue and £3,354k capital budgets (see 2.2.10).

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report brings the 2022/23 financial monitoring to a conclusion. It sets out the HRA's provisional financial position at year end (subject to audit) and compares it against the latest approved budget and quarter 3 projections. The report covers both revenue and capital expenditure for the last financial year.
- 1.2 The Chief Accountant and the Finance Team have now completed sufficient ledger closing entries to inform Cabinet of the draft outturn for the HRA revenue and capital income and expenditure for 2022/23. There may be further adjustments to this as the accounts and external audit process is concluded, but these are not expected to be material or significantly change.
- 1.3 The Council's Statement of Accounts (SoA) for 2022/23 is currently in production to reflect this financial data and the results contained within the overall HRA revenue and capital outturn. It is anticipated that the draft SoA will be ready at the end of July and will be presented to a future meeting of the Audit & Governance Committee. The external audit of the SoA will commence later in the year as will be announced by the external auditor at the next Audit and Governance meeting on 20 July 2023.
- 1.4 In terms of financial reporting, the draft SoA presents the HRA revenue and capital outturn position in a different format as the accounts have to be prepared in a specific format to comply with International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), which is a set of accounting standards introduced in 2001 to ensure consistency of financial reporting globally for all organisations.

2. HRA REVENUE AND CAPITAL 2022/23 PROVISIONAL OUTTURN

2.1 Revenue outturn compared to latest approved budget

2.1.1 Below is a summary of the HRA net revenue expenditure for 2022/23.

HRA Net Revenue Expenditure 2022/23	Latest Approved Budget 2022/23	Provisional Outturn 2022/23	Variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's
Income	(17,258)	(17,205)	53
Expenditure	13,059	13,408	349
HRA Share of Corporate Costs	175	189	14
Net Cost of HRA Services	(4,024)	(3,608)	416
Interest Payable/Receivable	1,722	1,324	(298)

Pension Interest Cost	100	684	584
HRA Surplus/Deficit	(2,302)	(1,600)	702
Revenue Contribution to Capital	6,658	4,961	(1,697)
HRA share of pension reserve movement	(295)	(484)	(189)
Decrease/(Increase) to HRA Reserve	4,061	2,877	(1,184)

2.1.2 The table above shows that overall the draft position is a projected decrease in net expenditure of £1.184m for the HRA against budget. A full breakdown is shown at Appendix 1.

The main reasons for this are explained as follows:-

	£'000
Decrease in revenue contribution to capital (see 2.1.3 below)	(1,697)
Increase in interest and investment income (see 2.1.4 below)	(298)
Decrease in supervision and management (see 2.1.5 below)	(203)
Decrease in repairs and maintenance (see 2.1.6 below)	(158)
Increase in depreciation charges of fixed assets (see 2.1.7 below)	720
Decrease in rental income (see 2.1.8 below)	53
Other minor variances	4
Pension costs	395
Total net draft Housing Revenue Account variance*	<u>(1,184)</u>

* = compared to approved budget

2.1.3 The decrease in revenue contribution to capital mainly relates to re-profiling of capital works for i) the new build and acquisition programme ii) for windows & doors, re-roofing, door entry systems with anticipated schemes being re-profiled forward to financial year 2023/24.

2.1.4 The increase in interest and investment income is due to the increase in the bank base rate which has increased markedly throughout the financial year to a current rate of 5.00%, resulting in higher than anticipated interest-earning balances on the HRA. The lower interest payable relates to lower refinancing costs for the HRA debt portfolio for 2022/23 than had originally been planned when the original budget was set; these costs are now expected to be a factor in 2023/24.

2.1.5 The decrease in supervision and management is largely due to a reduction in professional advice and fees of £241k relating to completed projects, offset partially by higher costs related to void properties (e.g. council tax and utility costs) and ultimately resulting in the £203k underspend.

2.1.6 The decrease in repairs and maintenance relates to a net decrease in costs for i) responsive repairs, including projected contract inflation, and ii) unbudgeted costs for disrepair compensation claims, offset by a change to

a 'repair or replace' policy for window servicing and lower fire alarm renewal costs.

- 2.1.7 The increase in depreciation charges for fixed assets is due to an increased asset valuation of council stock of approximately 20% at 31 March 2022, after the budget for 2022/23 was set. This has the effect of increasing the depreciation charged. It should, however, be noted that the increased depreciation charge provides a matched increase to the Major Repairs Reserve (see 2.2.11 below) which is used to fund capital spending. In turn, a corresponding saving has been made to the projected outturn for the revenue funding of capital expenditure, offsetting the increase in the depreciation charge.
- 2.1.8 The decrease in income is largely due to i) rent voids for garages and ii) reduced income from service charges. Note, however, that the impact on income has been partially mitigated through a reduction in void garages owing to improvement works on the garage stock. Some of the aforementioned reduction in net income is offset by higher dwelling income resulting in the £53k variance to budget.
- 2.1.9 Overall, the HRA reserve at 31 March 2023 is expected to be higher at £7.1m compared with £6.0m in the original approved budget. This increase is welcomed due to the extensive de-carbonisation programme the HRA is to undertake over the next four years of the HRA Capital Programme.

2.2 Capital outturn compared to latest approved budget

- 2.2.1 The table below shows that the HRA Capital programme has spent £5.1m less than the latest approved budget.

HRA Capital Programme 2022/23	Latest Approved Budget 2022/23	Final Outturn 2022/23	Variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's
HRA Capital programme	14,825	9,746	(5,079)

- 2.2.2 The main reasons for the £5.1m variance compared to the latest approved budget, are as follows:

HRA Capital Programme

	Variance £000's
New Builds/Acquisitions (see 2.2.3 below)	(1,998)
Thermal Insulations (see 2.2.4 below)	(1,273)
Re-roofing (see 2.2.5 below)	(771)
Re-wiring (see 2.2.6 below)	(335)
Fire protection works (see 2.2.7 below)	(299)
Windows & Doors (see 2.2.8 below)	(247)

Treatment works (see 2.2.9 below)	(110)
Other minor variances	(46)
Year-end movement compared to latest approved budget	(5,079)

- 2.2.3 The decrease in new build/acquisition expenditure relates predominantly to the Highview scheme which is no longer progressing forward due to the need to extensively fund other capital projects such as the decarbonisation programme. In terms of development schemes, it should however be noted that a carry forward is requested of £105k for the Ship Street build scheme. The budget for this scheme was added to the HRA capital programme following a decision of full Council in September 2022 (see Council report A/22/17); the HRA portion of the overage scheme budget was not spent in 22/23 but this will be required in 23/24 as the scheme progresses.
- 2.2.4 The decrease in thermal insulations expenditure relates to delays with SHDF Wave 1 moving forward and a carry forward of £1,272k is requested to allow for completion of works in 2023/24 (as is required under the grant funding agreement).
- 2.2.5 The decrease in re-roofing expenditure relates to delays in the procurement process. The delay in awarding the contract and the time of year when works can commence i.e. potentially unfavourable weather conditions has resulted in the reduction in the actual spend overall.
- 2.2.6 The decrease in re-wiring expenditure is due to the reduction of works required during 2022/23.
- 2.2.7 The decrease in fire protection works expenditure is largely due to the extensive works at both Prescott House and Romney Marsh House being delayed until 2023/24. A carry forward of the underspend is requested to conduct and complete the works in 2023/24.
- 2.2.8 The decrease in expenditure for windows & doors expenditure relates to the procurement contract with one supplier which totals £400k; re-procurement for the remainder of the budget was required, resulting in the variance noted for this year. A carry forward of the underspend is requested to conduct and complete the works in 2023/24.
- 2.2.9 The decrease in treatment works spend also relates to a carry forward request of £110k to fund major projects such as Moore Close in 2023/24. More detailed appraisals of the treatment works and pumping stations are required reducing the need for committed spend in 2022/23, with those appraisals to take place in 2023/24.
- 2.2.10 A breakdown of all proposed HRA Carry Forwards is shown on Appendices 1 and 2 in the 'carry forwards requests' column, with brief justifications contained within the comments.

2.2.11 The following table compares the resources required to finance the actual outturn for the HRA capital programme in 2022/23. The total variation shown below corresponds to the figure in section 2.2.1 above.

2022/23 HRA	1-4-1 Capital Receipts	Revenue Contribution	Grants Funding	HRA Other Capital Receipts	Major Repairs Reserve	Total
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Projected Outturn	1,062	4,961	639	0	3,084	9,746
Approved	2,279	6,658	0	3,489	2,399	14,825
Variation	(1,217)	(1,697)	639	(3,489)	685	(5,079)

3. CONCLUSION

- 3.1 The HRA revenue outturn projection for 2022/23 forecasts £1.184m lower expenditure than the latest approved budget for the reasons set out at section 2.1.2 of this report.
- 3.2 The HRA capital outturn projection for 2022/23 forecasts £5.079m lower expenditure than the latest approved budget. It is recommended that £3.431m of capital carry forwards are approved to account for slippage in the capital programme for the reasons outlined at section 2.2.2 above.
- 3.3 The provisional outturn for both the HRA revenue expenditure and capital programme for 2022/23 reflects the position based on actual expenditure at 31st March 2023.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 4.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Capital receipts (including right to buy sales) do not materialise	Medium	Low	The capital programme uses realised capital receipts only.
Insufficient capacity to manage delayed expenditure along with new year programme	Medium	Medium	The 2023/24 capital programme will need to continue to be reviewed to take account of the capacity to manage the programme including the slippage from 2022/23.

Significant amendments having to be made to the financial results following audit.	Medium	Low	The formal accounts have been prepared in accordance with professional standards and best accounting practice.
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5. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

5.1 Legal Officer's Comments (EC)

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

5.2 Finance Officer's Comments (JS/LW/ST)

This report has been prepared by Financial Services. There are no further comments to add.

5.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)

There are no equality and diversity implications arising from this report. The report does not cover a new service/policy or a revision of an existing service or policy therefore does not require an EIA.

5.4 Climate change (OF)

There are no climate change implications arising from this report.

Consideration should be given to ensure that houses are built, repaired and upgraded using materials and techniques that are suitable to our changing climate.

6. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

Jonathan Smith, Senior Accountant
Tel: 01303 853780
Email: jonathan.smith@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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

Budget projection working papers

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Housing Revenue Account revenue budget outturn report

Appendix 2 Housing Revenue Account capital programme outturn report

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HRA REVENUE PROVISIONAL OUTTURN - 2022/23 POSITION STATEMENT

Appendix 1

	A	B	B-A			REASON
	Latest Approved Budget	Provisional Outturn	Variance	Carry forward requests	Q3 Variance reported Jan 2023	
	£'000	£'000	£'000		£'000	
HOUSING PORTFOLIO						
INCOME						
Dwelling rents	15,817	15,845	-28		-46	See report note 2.1.8
Non-dwelling rents	342	285	57		44	See report note 2.1.8
Charges for services and facilities	1,047	1,023	24		34	See report note 2.1.8
Contributions from general fund	52	52	0			
Total Income	17,258	17,205	53	0	32	
EXPENDITURE						
Repairs and maintenance	4,091	3,933	-158		77	Unbudgeted costs and contract inflation, offset by lower window servicing and fire alarm renewal costs (see report note 2.1.6). Reduction in professional advice and fees for completed projects, offset partially by inflationary price increases & void costs (see report note 2.1.5). A carry forward is requested for unspent feasibility studies of £77k.
Supervision and management	6,425	6,222	-203	77	-209	
Rents, rates and taxes	22	33	11		0	
Depreciation charges of fixed assets	2,399	3,119	720		685	
Debt management expenses	23	26	3		0	Increased depreciation charge following asset revaluation (see report note 2.1.7)
Bad debts provision	100	75	-25		0	
Total Expenditure	13,059	13,409	349	77	553	
Net	-4,199	-3,796	403		585	
HRA Share of Corporate and Democratic Costs	175	189	14			
Net Cost of HRA Services	-4,024	-3,608	417		585	
Interest payable	1,633	1,526	-107		-123	Reduced financing costs (see report note 2.1.4).
Interest and investment income	-11	-202	-191		-191	Increased interest rates (see report note 2.1.4).
Pension Interest Cost	100	684	584		0	
(SURPLUS)/DEFICIT	-2,302	-1,600	703	0	271	
MOVEMENTS IN HRA BALANCE FOR 2022/23						
Revenue contribution to capital	6,658	4,961	-1,697		-3,248	Re-profiling of the new build & acquisition and capital works programme (see report note 2.2.2)
HRA Share of pension reserve movement	-295	-484	-189		0	
Surplus/deficit for the year	-2,302	-1,600	703		271	
(Increase)/Decrease in Net Movement in HRA Balance	4,061	2,877	-1,184		-2,977	
Transfers to earmarked reserves	0	77	77			Transfer to earmarked feasibility studies reserve (carried forward from above)
HRA General Reserve balance brought forward	-10,065	-10,065	0		0	
HRA General Reserve balance carried forward	-6,004	-7,111	-1,107	0	-2,977	

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PORTFOLIO AND SCHEMES	A	B	B-A		Q3 Variance reported Jan '23	Comments
	Latest Approved Budget	Provisional Outturn	Variance	Carry Forward Requests		
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
HOUSING PORTFOLIO						
1. Planned Improvements						
Windows & Doors	732	485	-247	247	-292	Multiple contracts for windows and doors; additional procurement for the unspent portion of the budget was required. Carry forward requested for capital works slippage given the delays caused by the need to procure for the unspent portion.
Re-roofing	800	29	-771	771	-640	Underspend due to reprocurement of contract. Carry forward requested for capital works slippage.
Heating Improvements	649	631	-18		0	Last quarter spend was restricted to breakdowns only to prevent overspend of budget
Kitchen Replacements	580	546	-34		0	Slight drop off in achieving programme of works by Mears & Bell
Bathroom Improvements	444	442	-2		0	
Voids Capital Works	300	300	0		0	
Disabled Adaptations	450	477	27		0	Over spend due to increase in OT referrals for works.
Sheltered Scheme upgrades	80	80	0		0	
Rewiring	437	102	-335		0	Underspend due to lack of works required
Lift Replacement	60	0	-60		-30	Inspections to Lifts did not find any that required replacement budget.
Thermal Insulation	1,450	177	-1,273	1,272	0	Carry forward requested for £1,272k, due to delays with SHDF Wave 1 and overspend on Ross House due to increased material costs
Fire Protection Works	800	501	-299	299	0	Full budget was not reached due to extensive works at Prescott House & Romney Marsh House being delayed until 23/24 and delays with material deliveries has meant that works on other sites will not be completed & fully invoiced until the new financial year.
Smoke/CO/ Smoke Detectors	38	37	-1		0	
Door Block Entry	409	263	-146	146	-250	Underspend resulted from delays with awarding contract to Metroline. Contract did not start until July 2022. Carry forward of £146k requested to complete works in 23/24.
Communal Areas	104	104	-1		1	
Ross House	900	496	-404	404	0	Carry forward of £404k requested
SHDF Wave 1	0	295	295		0	Grant funding for Wave 1 held on Balance Sheet (nets off with 'Decarbonisation Grant' in the funding section below)
SHDF Wave 1 - Capital Works	0	343	343		0	Grant funding for Wave 1 held on Balance Sheet (nets off with 'Decarbonisation Grant' in the funding section below)
	8,233	5,309	-2,924	3,139	-1,211	
2. Major Schemes						
External Enveloping *	392	392	0		0	
Garages Improvements	150	148	-2		0	
Treatment Works	110	0	-110	110	0	Carry forward of £110k requested to fund major projects such as Moore Close in 23/24, following more detailed assessment of capital works required.
	652	541	-112	110	0	
3. Environmental Improvements						
Environmental Works	30	21	-9		0	Limited works identified
New Paths	50	23	-27		0	Limited works identified
Play Areas	10	0	-10		0	No spend on Play Areas required in 2022/23
	90	44	-46	0	0	
4. Other Schemes						
New Builds/Acquisitions	5,802	3,804	-1,998	105	-1,684	Acquisition underspend £191k and New Build underspent by £1,703k due to the Highview scheme not progressing. A carry forward request of £105k is made for the HRA element of the Ship Street scheme; the budget of £105k was added to the HRA capital programme following full council's approval in September 2022 but was not spent in 2022/23.
EKH Single System	48	48	0		0	
	5,850	3,852	-1,997	105	-1,684	
TOTAL	14,825	9,746	-5,079	3,354	-2,895	
FUNDING						
Major Repairs Reserve	2,399	3,084	685		685	
Revenue Contribution	6,658	4,961	-1,697		-3,248	
Decarbonisation Grant	-	639	639		-	
1-4-1 Capital Receipts	2,279	1,062	-1,217		-332	
HRA Other Capital Receipts	3,489	-	-3,489		0	
TOTAL FUNDING	14,825	9,746	-5,079	3,354	-2,895	

* This includes all items of the property structure that is external, such as roof, chimneys, gutters, fascias, eaves and repointing.

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This Report will be made public on 4 July 2023

Report Number **C/23/09**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12th July 2023
Status: Non Key Decision
Assistant Director: Amandeep Khroud - Assistant Director - Governance, Law & Service Delivery
Cabinet Member: Councillor Tim Prater – Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Governance

SUBJECT: Annual Performance Report 2022-23 and Draft KPIs 2023-24

SUMMARY: This report sets out how the Council has delivered for local people in the district in 2022-23 in relation to the priorities documented within its Corporate Plan 'Creating Tomorrow Together' (2021-30) and presents amendments to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be used to monitor progress during the 2023-24 year.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a) The Council is committed to monitoring performance across all 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/23/09.
- 2. To note the 2022-23 Annual Performance Report set out in appendix 1.
- 3. To note the end of year performance data for the 2022-23 year set out in appendix 2.
- 4. To approve the proposed amendments to KPIs for monitoring during the 2023-24 year set out in appendix 3.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Council's Corporate Plan 'Creating Tomorrow Together (2021-30) 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 coming three years to 2024. The service ambitions are:

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

1.2 The 6 guiding principles, which the Corporate Plan states will be at the heart of everything we do and will run through all our activities, are:

- Sustainable Recovery;
- Locally Distinctive;
- Greener Folkestone & Hythe;
- Transparent, Stable, Accountable & Accessible;
- Working Effectively with Partners; and
- Continuous Improvement.

1.3 For each service ambition, three-year priorities have been identified. To support the Council in delivering against these priorities, the Council has produced a detailed action plan covering a three-year period to 2024 with supporting KPIs. Quarterly performance reports based on approved KPIs have been reported to Finance & Performance Scrutiny Subcommittee and Cabinet throughout this year to enable members of the Council and the public to scrutinise performance against strategic deliverables and key indicators in accordance with the approved Corporate Action Plan.

2. Annual Performance Report 2022-23

2.1 The Council has continued to pursue an ambitious corporate agenda in 2022-23 and the annual report, set out in Appendix 1, is a testament to the hard work and resilience of teams across the organisation in contributing towards the priorities set out in the Corporate Plan.

2.2 Some of the highlights from the year include:

- The granting of outline planning permission for a new garden town at Otterpool Park that will provide 8,500 homes, a new town centre, shops, leisure, educational and cultural facilities and employment land.
- The council's successful application to Government's Levelling Up Fund (LUF) resulting in an award of £19.8 million. The bid was submitted in early July 2022 following extensive public consultation on projects to deliver the priorities set out in the Folkestone Place Plan. The awarded funds will enable a sustainable, attractive and welcoming gateway to be created for Folkestone town centre as well as ensure the second phase of Folca is progressed by establishing new uses for the site.

- The successful re-application for the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation during the year. The accreditation is a Government standard developed to offer a practical tool for driving customer-focused change within organisations. The independent assessor was very impressed with the Council's ongoing commitment to customer service and awarded 16 compliance pluses for showing innovative practice, delivering a service that is over and above what the customer could normally expect.
- A new Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was developed by the council to set out how residents are consulted on local planning matters. The draft document was consulted on between October and November 2022 and was adopted by the council in December 2022. The new SCI will ensure community involvement is effective at all stages of the planning process.
- The council working alongside the local Ukrainian community, and a small number of local volunteers and Kent County Council to support the delivery of Ukrainian language lessons for children at Sunflower House, Folkestone. The programme, which was championed by our newly arrived Homes for Ukraine residents (many of whom are teachers by profession), welcomed around 20 children on a twice weekly basis to learn the Ukrainian language, learn the wider Ukrainian curriculum and to build friendships with other children across our district.
- A successful application to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, with the Council being awarded the sum of £1million. The funds will be allocated in phases across the next 3 years, with £100,035 being awarded for financial year 2022-23. The funds allocated in this period were utilised partly to give support to low-income households with energy efficient solutions to help reduce their costs. In addition, funds were used to contribute to the Rainbow Centre's mobile van and pantry project as well as to the community hubs across the district to support those who are most in need.
- The Folkestone and Hythe Place Panel has met 8 times during the year to consider proposals for development across the district. The independent advice, which often reinforces officer views, supports the Council's aim of securing high quality, sustainable design and regeneration across the district.
- The completed roll out of electric vehicle (EV) charging points in the district's car parks. A total of 103 EV charging points were installed in 26 car parks across Folkestone & Hythe and with the upgrade of the six existing points and the 23 charging points provided by commercial businesses means EV owners now have even a greater choice and more flexibility to charge their vehicles.
- Successful retention of the prestigious Green Flag Award for The Lower Leas Coastal Park, Kingsnorth Gardens, Radnor Park and the Royal Military Canal. The award is the international quality mark for parks and green spaces which display the highest environmental standards, are beautifully maintained and have excellent visitor facilities.
- The formation of the Carbon Innovation Lab (CI-Lab), an informal group of invited stakeholders, including businesses, community groups and special interest groups, to share ideas and collaborate to promote and deliver low carbon initiatives and to draft a District Wide Carbon Plan.
- The council joined the UK100, a network of local authorities, to help achieve its climate change objectives during the year. The UK100 undertakes research and publishes findings on a range of topics, including transport, homes and buildings, energy, waste reduction, green finance, and clean air. It works with Government ministers and civil servants to influence policy on these issues. The council has pledged to use its influence as part of the UK100 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions both internally and with residents and businesses.

- The successful award of £2million from the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) in 2022 to install energy efficiency upgrades for some of the council's housing stock. Work is underway on retrofitting 125 of the council's poorest performing social homes to bring them up to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C rating using this funding, ready for low carbon heating. In March 2023, the council was successful in securing a further £2.6 million of government funding as part of SHDF Wave 2 that will help to secure improvements to a further 300 social homes over a two-year period.
- 14 new homes were made available for affordable rent in Radnor Park Road, Folkestone during late 2022. The homes consisting of a mixture of one- and two-bedroom flats in two small blocks have been finished to a high standard and are of low cost for the residents to live in, thanks to their high standards of energy efficiency.

2.3 These achievements have been attained despite the wider ongoing financial challenges associated with inflation and the cost-of-living crisis on the council's operations. Given this, it is inevitable that some areas of performance measured by KPIs have fallen short during the year, most notably in bringing forward new council housing due to contract availability, landlord finances and the rising cost of materials. Other reasons include: current legislation guiding homelessness approaches; temporary staff resourcing issues within some teams; and seasonal factors affecting activities, including recycling collections.

2.4 Where performance has not been achieved, explanations have been sought from the relevant Service Leads and noted in Appendix 2.

3. KPIs in 2023-24

3.1 The draft Corporate Action Plan and supporting Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) were originally presented to Overview & Scrutiny Committee in September 2021 before being approved at Cabinet in October 2021 (report ref: C/21/40) and this has shaped the quarterly performance reporting to members throughout the 2022-23 year.

3.2 The development of the Corporate Action Plan provided the opportunity to refresh the approach to KPIs and identify a number of KPIs relevant to the high-level actions documented. The 2022-23 list has been reviewed, and the majority of the indicators will remain the same for 2023-24, albeit with some minor alterations. This will, however, continue to ensure the provision of a comparative baseline where possible with the previous financial year within future performance reporting to members.

3.3 A total of 60 KPIs are proposed for monitoring in the 2023-24 year and these indicators are set out in Appendix 4 and, for completeness and transparency, the proposed changes made against 2022-23 are set out in Appendix 3. In summary, the following KPIs are proposed to be removed:

A Vibrant Economy:

KPI Description	Reason for Removal
Total Folkestone & Hythe High Streets funds allocated	High Streets Fund closed to new applications during November 2022 with the agreement of Cabinet.
Total funds allocated from the Folkestone Community works Programme	The Folkestone Community Works Programme's delivery period for funded projects ceases on 30 June 2023. This means funded projects are unable to claim any expenditure defrayed after the 30 June.

A Thriving Environment:

KPI Description	Reason for Removal
Number of new electric vehicle charging points installed within district owned car parks	This project was completed in Quarter 3 of the 2022-23 year. A total of 103 charging points have now been installed within 26 car parks across the district.

Quality Homes & Infrastructure:

KPI Description	Reason for Removal
Percentage reduction in homelessness	We take a combined approach to reducing homelessness and our KPIs and targets for number of approaches, preventions and rough sleepers already measure this effectively.

3.4 The following are KPIs proposed for introduction:

Positive Community Leadership:

KPI Description	Reason for introduction
Number of Community Safety projects delivered	There are a number of different projects carried out to assist with either education or encouragement to change or be aware of behaviours. This can range from anything to do with providing safe spaces for those who are in fear of physical or mental abuse, working with the NHS around health matters, and providing an opportunity for the residents to question the Police and Community Safety Unit (CSU) in a Local Engagement Meeting, which enable the residents to understand how the Police and CSU can help or support them, bring concerns that they feel need to be addressed or providing an accessible opportunity for residents to feel they

	<p>are being listened and to hold the relevant service accountable.</p> <p>Projects are a vital piece of work that CSU do to mitigate any potential Anti-social behaviour (ASB) issues in the future, keeping people safe, educating parents to the possible risks or concerns that their children may be involved with or working in specific areas due to concerns of ASB, threats or abuse and providing a multi-agency approach (including our internal teams) to tackle other issues that impact on the community and cause alarm or distress.</p> <p>Projects are used to design out any issues that are being experienced in the community, raising awareness, education is given to inform parents, neighbours or communities and to reduce ASB</p>
<p>Number of households in the district receiving support through the UKSPF</p>	<p>As part of the council's approved investment plan to support the delivery of funds awarded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) requires us to publish outputs of how the funding is helping residents across the district. A number of other outputs and outcomes have been established, but are quite particular, but the indicator proposed for the KPI list is wide ranging and clearly depicts the success of the fund.</p>

A Thriving Environment:

KPI Description	Reason for introduction
<p>Number of Breaches issued under the Public Space Protection Order</p>	<p>This gives a record of how much enforcement work is done that breaches the PSPO. This includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anti-social alcohol consumption 2. The use of intoxicating substances 3. Urinating, spitting or defecating 4. Begging (antisocial) 5. Anti-social street entertainment 6. Unauthorised street fundraising and marketing (Chugging) 7. Unauthorised camping <p>Whilst much of the engagement is done through communication and encouraging people to do something without issuing a warning or Fixed Penalty Notice under the PSPO, they are required to stop what they are doing within a period given</p>

	and if they fail to do that, they can be prosecuted for a breach of the PSPO, resulting in a fine and a criminal record.
ASB enforcement action taken (incl CPWs and CPNs)	Whilst some actions of visitors, residents or those who work in the area, have a detrimental affect or they can either caused alarm or distress to those in the local area, a Community Protection Warning (CPW) or Community Protection Notice (CPN) is used to manage that situation. A CPW/CPN is a tool to help with managing a problem and gives an insight as to the number issued by the team and any prosecutions undertaken. If a CPW/N is breached and the CPN, the case is sent to legal for prosecution.

4. Risk Management Issues

4.1 The follow risk management issues have been considered as part of this report:

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.
The Council is non-compliant with its statutory key performance indicators (KPIs).	High	Medium	Regular monitoring of statutory key performance indicators with actual or projected non-compliance escalated to Corporate Leadership Team so that prompt remedial action can be taken, and if necessary additional resources allocated, to address poor performance.

5. Implications:

5.1 Please give consideration to the following and provide information here (if relevant):

- **Legal (NM)** - There are no legal implications or risks arising directly out of this report. The Key Performance Indicators (as amended) 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.
- **Finance (DL)** – There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. There is a presumption that targets will be delivered within existing resources of relevant departments and that officers will regularly review the level and prioritisation of resources required to achieve the targets agreed by Cabinet at the start of the year. Adverse performance for some indicators may have financial implications for the Council. In the event that targets cannot be achieved within the agreed envelope of resources officers are expected to raise the issue through the appropriate channels as the needs arise.
- **Human Resources (RB)** – There are no direct Human Resource implications emanating from this report. The council has a People Strategy in place to support the delivery of the corporate plan and achievement of associated KPIs.
- **Equalities (GE)** - Equality Impact Assessments (EIAs) are carried out on 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.
- **Climate Change (OF)** - There are no climate change implications arising from this report. The District Wide Carbon Plan is currently being developed with the help of the Carbon Innovation Lab. KPI's will be agreed upon once the plan has been approved by cabinet later in the year. Projects and/or proposal arising as a result will be subject to climate impact assessment where applicable.

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 & Improvement Specialist

Tel: 01303 853 436
gavin.edwards@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Appendices

Appendix 1: Annual Performance Report 'A snapshot of our year' 2022-23

Appendix 2: 2022-23 End of Year KPI Data

Appendix 3: 2022-23 vs 2023-24 KPIs changes

Appendix 4: 2023-24 KPIs (Clean List)

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Folkestone & Hythe District Council Annual Performance Report

Appendix 1: A snapshot of our year: 2022-23

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

Your Council - An Overview

There is a three tier local Council system in Kent made up of the county council, 12 district and borough councils, parish and neighbourhood councils, alongside Medway Council operating as a unitary. There are 13 wards in the district currently represented by 30 elected councillors.

Folkestone & Hythe District Council is responsible for the delivery of many different public services. Some of our key priorities include planning for a successful local economy with a diverse range of employment opportunities, delivering excellent value and high performance in service delivery, and working together to support the life of our communities. Services provided include managing development through making decisions on planning applications, household waste collection and recycling, street cleaning, car parks and on-street parking, environmental health, housing and homelessness, managing local parks and open spaces and supporting local culture and leisure activities and facilities.

The Council has won or retained the following awards in 2022/23



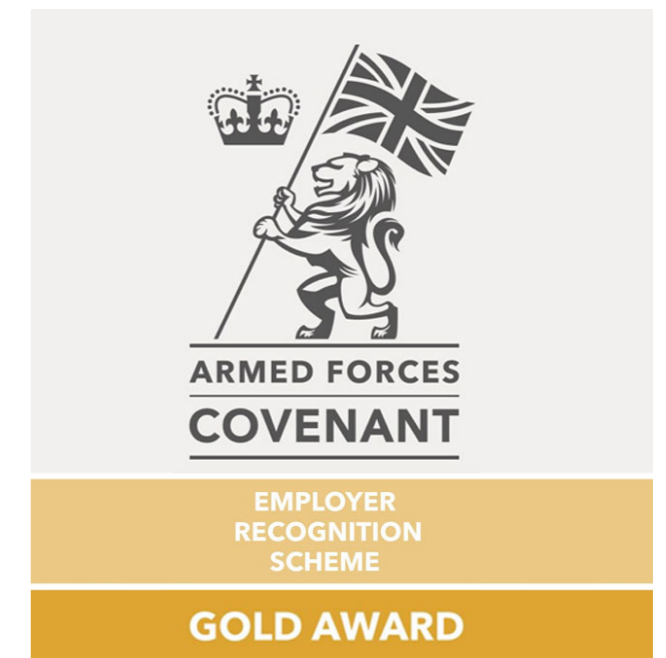
Successful reapplication of the Customer Service Excellence Award.

Awarded 16 compliance pluses for showing innovative practice, delivering a service that is over and above what the customer could normally expect and showing practice that could be usefully shared with other organisations.



Winner of Benefits and/or Welfare Reform Team of the Year at the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation's Performance Awards (IRRV).

Highly commended in the Excellence in Social Inclusion category.



Gold Award winner in the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS) in recognition of the council's work in employing and supporting persons in the armed forces community.

Service Ambition 1

Positive Community Leadership

Our priorities:

- **Improve physical and mental health & Wellbeing**
- **Safer Communities**
- **Supporting & Empowering our Communities**

01 Positive Community Leadership in 2022/23

- A new Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was developed by the council to set out how residents are consulted on local planning matters. The draft document was consulted on between October and November 2022 and was adopted by the council in December 2022. The new SCI will ensure community involvement is effective at all stages of the planning process, including when the council prepares a new local plan and when it makes decisions on planning applications, consults on planning appeals and takes enforcement action.
- Following a successful bid for funding through the Changing Places Fund Round 2, the Council was awarded a £205,000 grant to pay for the construction of three new Changing Places toilets. The facilities are planned to be built at the Lower Leas Coastal Park and Folca in Folkestone, and at the Coast Drive Destination Project in Greatstone. Changing Places toilets are designed to meet the needs of disabled children and adults with complex care needs who rely on carer support, and have more space and appropriate equipment than standard disabled toilets. With support from the local organisation Need2Change, a bid was submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities in 2022, and a grant was awarded in February 2023 for delivery of the new facilities in the financial year 2023/24.
- The council's efforts in supporting vulnerable members of the community have once again been recognised by a panel of judges and have been awarded Benefits and/or Welfare Reform Team of the Year at the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation's Performance Awards (IRRV), and have also been highly commended in the Excellence in Social Inclusion category with judges praising work that had been undertaken to engage with and help harder-to-reach groups in the district, such as armed forces veterans. In addition, the judges were also impressed by the £221,000 worth of projects delivered in the district through the Household Support Fund - some of which included delivering beds to children sleeping on mattresses or on the floor.
- The district hosted the eighth annual Kent & Medway Civilian-Military Armed Forces Covenant Conference in June 2022. The event was attended by more than 150 people, including serving and former personnel from all the services, public sector and other organisations, including service charities. The theme of the day, organised by the Kent & Medway Civilian Partnership Board, was promoting a greater understanding and awareness of the needs of the armed forces community. Service children, housing, homelessness, employment and service charities were all discussed. There was also an update on the new Armed Forces Act and what it means in practice.
- The council successfully re-applied for the Customer Service Excellence (CSE) accreditation during the year. The accreditation is a Government standard developed to offer a practical tool for driving customer-focused change within organisations. The independent assessor was very impressed with the council's ongoing commitment to customer service and awarded 16 compliance pluses for showing innovative practice, delivering a service that is over and above what the customer could normally expect and showing practice that could be usefully shared with other organisations. This is the highest number of compliance pluses we have been awarded in one go and continues to be great recognition for the service we provide.
- A summit on the rising cost of living took place in September 2022 in the council chamber. The event was designed to ensure the council was working effectively in partnership with local organisations and the voluntary sector to assist residents who might face challenges around food, warmth and energy during the coming winter months. Voluntary organisations across the district were invited to discuss how best to help residents faced with rapidly rising costs. These included Kent Police, Citizens Advice and representatives from the health and education sectors.



The district hosted the eight annual Kent & Medway Armed Forces Covenant Conference



Revenue & Benefits team were awarded Benefits and/or Welfare Reform Team of the Year at the Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation's Performance Awards (IRRV)



Successful reapplication of the council's Customer Service Excellence accreditation with 16 compliance pluses

01 Positive Community Leadership in 2022/23

- A total of 168 individual ward grants totalling over £89,000 were awarded during the year to benefit local charities and community groups across the district including: The Bayle Residents Association, CARM (Caring All Together Romney Marsh), Folkestone Festivals, Hythe Environmental Community Group, Kent Coast Volunteering, Future Skills Community Interest Company and Action on Homelessness in Folkestone.
- The Council supported 377 households with Discretionary Housing Payment support. This support included short-term help with rental top ups and help with rent in advance/ deposits and arrears payments to help residents improve their housing situation and afford to move to more suitable and affordable accommodation. The total support offered was £244,238 funded by the Department for Work and Pensions and Kent County Council via the Household Support Fund. The Council has also supported 567 households with Council Tax payments (for those in receipt of Council tax Reduction) by reducing bills for the year by a total value of £252,717.
- The Council has been able to utilise analytical information it holds to identify and contact over 200 households in the district that were not maximising their income and has been able to offer additional Council Tax Reduction of £84,262 that would have otherwise been unclaimed during the year.
- In February 2023, four district warm spaces in the district helping residents struggling with the increased costs of heating their homes have been boosted with additional funding. The Council has received the funding from UK Power Networks, as part of the distribution network operator's initiative to ramp up support for customers over the winter. The £27,300 contribution will go towards the warm spaces offered by the district's community hubs in New Romney, Hythe and Folkestone and the Nepalese Community Centre in Folkestone. The money has helped with the additional costs of opening and running the warm spaces and enabling fuel vouchers to be given to those attending who are most in need. Between February and March 2023, 222 people accessed the Warm Spaces, 146 Fuel Vouchers were handed out to the value of £6,450, 133 people received Personalised

Energy Saving Advice and 97 were signed up to the Priority Service Register.

- The council produced a handbook to support Ukrainians arriving in the district and their hosts providing guidance on many issues and advising people where to get support. The handbook covered topics including welfare and finance, emergency food, health (including mental health), education and other assistance for children and young people, sports and leisure, and housing. In addition to the handbook (which was translated into Ukrainian and Russian), a dedicated email address and phone line was established for people to ask questions.
- The council has also worked alongside the local Ukrainian community, and a small number of local volunteers and Kent County Council to support the delivery of Ukrainian language lessons for children at Sunflower House, Folkestone. The programme, which was championed by our newly arrived Homes for Ukraine residents (many of whom are teachers by profession), welcomed around 20 children on a twice weekly basis to learn Ukrainian language, learn the wider Ukrainian curriculum and to build friendships with other children across our district. Our local volunteers provide English lessons at the same time for around 15 parents/carers and this complements and is in addition to existing English for speakers of other languages courses.
- Following a successful application to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, the sum of £1m was awarded to Folkestone & Hythe District Council. The funds are allocated in phases across 3 years, with the council being awarded £100,035 for financial year 2022-23. The funds allocated in this period were utilised partly to give support to low-income households with energy efficient solutions to help reduce their costs. In addition, funds were used to contribute to the Rainbow Centre's mobile van and pantry project as well as to the community hubs across the district in providing support to signpost those who are most in need.



The council has supported households during the year through allocation of funds from the Household Support Fund as well as identified additional households eligible for council tax reduction.



The Folkestone Nepalese Centre was one of four warm spaces established in the district.

01 Positive Community Leadership in 2022/23

The council's Community Safety Unit (CSU) has worked on the following community initiatives with Folkestone & Hythe Community Safety Partnership (CSP) during the year, including:

- **Folkestone Jubilee Festival:** The Community Safety Unit hosted an exhibition stand in June 2022 to promote general safety information with a focus on how to report issues in the local area. The team shared details about safety apps and handed out a variety of safety leaflets which provided details about keeping children safe and how to report information to the council and police.
- **Folkestone Pride:** In July 2022, the Community Safety Unit hosted a stand where the team wore their Pride wrist bands and engaged with over 200 people. Discussions with the public covered personal safety in the community including topics such as violence against women and girls. Safety whistles were handed out and the team promoted safety apps. The team also handed out spikey bottle stoppers and provided advice about safer socialising.
- **Gaming Bus:** The Kent and Medway Prevent team bought their Gaming – Awareness of Hate and Extremism event to the district. The gaming bus visited the Lower Leas Coastal Park at the end of July 2022 and was fully equipped with virtual reality games such as FIFA to provide a fun, interactive and safe space where the Community Safety partners and the Prevent team could share important messages and raise awareness with young people and their families about countering hateful extremism and spreading awareness around gaming safely online. Around 30 children boarded the bus and the team engaged with over 65 people about hate and extremism on the day.
- **Welcome event for Ukrainians** – In September, the Community Safety team attended an event at the Folkestone Quarterhouse to meet Ukrainians and their hosts to offer guidance on everything from nursery placements to job skills over a cuppa and cake and form new friendships. Organisations were on hand offering advice on benefits, family matters, housing, jobs and more. Over 100 people attended the welcome event.
- **Ask Angela Campaign:** Shops in Folkestone town centre have thrown their support behind a safe space scheme to help anyone feeling anxious, overwhelmed or worried about their personal

safety. Bouverie Square retailers have joined the scheme which is using the same discreet approach as the 'Ask for Angela' bar and club safety campaign. Shop staff will recognise if anyone approaches them and 'asks for Angela' that this is a code-phrase for requiring help and possibly a place of safety. The scheme has been launched by the Folkestone & Hythe Community Safety Partnership and most of the shops taking part will be displaying 'Ask for Angela' stickers in their Windows.

- **Self Defence Classes:** The Community Safety Team arranged free self-defence classes for women and girls in April and for boys under 18 in June 2022. The sessions were held at Folkestone Sports Centre and lasted for 5-weeks.. The sessions focused on confidence, situational awareness (avoiding situations in the first place), conflict de-escalation and techniques.
- **Violence Against Women and Girls (Walk and Talk):** In July a walk and talk took place with representatives from the Community Safety Team, Kent Police and Home-Start Shepway. The representatives walked through Folkestone town between 4.00pm to 6.00pm handing out information about personal safety and safer socialising. The group also promoted various safety apps and handed out personal safety equipment. This engagement activity was designed to target those working and socialising in the evening.
- **Folkestone Youth Hub Festival:** In August, the Community Safety Unit had a stand on the grounds of Mundella Primary Playing Field supporting Kent County Council Youth Hub. This was an interactive festival for the whole family to enjoy with games, music, and karate amongst other activities. The team handed out safety information for both adults and children including information about the mental health services available to them.
- **Operation Henosis:** Monthly multiagency operations have continued throughout the year between the Council's Community Safety Unit, licencing and environmental enforcement teams joining with Kent police to patrol hot spot areas of Folkestone. During these operations the officers have engaged with local businesses and homeless people and patrolled locations suffering from problems of anti-social behaviour. The teams completed door knocks to neighbourhoods where issues have been raised, they also posted flyers through doors about how to report to the council and police.



CSU and Enforcement teams out with Kent Police as part of Op Henosis



The Gaming Bus came to the district to raise awareness of hate and extremism with young people.



CSU officers at the Folkestone Youth Hub Festival

Service Ambition 2

A Thriving Environment

Our priorities:

- Ensure an excellent environment for everyone
- Grow the circular economy & reduce waste
- Increase our resilience to climate change

02 A Thriving Environment in 2022/23

- During the year, the Council began developing a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for the district. A comprehensive evidence-gathering exercise was undertaken in 2022 to map the district's network of green spaces and water bodies. The strategy found that the district supports many rare habitats and species, including Turtle Doves and chalk grassland orchids. The draft strategy identifies fifteen strategic priorities, including the need to: protect and enhance core sites and improve links; mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change; improve cycling and walking routes; support people in taking exercise and engaging with nature for their physical and mental health; and protect water resources and incorporate sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) into new developments. The draft strategy was published for public consultation from November 2022 to January 2023 and a revised version will be taken back to the council for adoption soon.

- Page 65 Folkestone and Hythe joined with the county council and other Kent district and borough councils in a group-buying scheme to secure discounts on the installation of solar panels and battery storage for domestic and community buildings. Interest in the Solar Together Kent scheme has been high, and installations took place throughout 2022 and early 2023. At the end of the 2022/23 scheme 1,638 solar panels have been installed across the district, delivering carbon savings of around 150 tonnes a year, contributing to total carbon savings across Kent and Medway of approximately 1,510 tonnes a year.

- In June 2022, the Council formed the Carbon Innovation Lab (CI-Lab), an informal group of invited stakeholders, including businesses, community groups and special interest groups, to share ideas and collaborate to promote and deliver low carbon initiatives and to draft a District Wide Carbon Plan. Emerging from the CI-Lab, we have the Folkestone & Hythe's Sustainable Futures Forum with a vision to engage and empower local people by giving them a platform to showcase their sustainable ideas and projects for a more sustainable future for our community. The first project delivered a 'TEDx-style' event comprising a series of community engagement events culminating in the main event on the 29th of April 2023 that will

featured eight residents delivering talks on projects/initiatives they are doing to impact positively our environment.

- The district's waste operator Veolia achieved a 5% drop in carbon emissions. As part of its contract with the council, Veolia has committed to support the council's objective of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030. Reporting its 2022 figures compared to the previous two years Veolia has attributed the drop in emissions partly to a reduction in the fuel consumption of its vehicles. This is due to equipping new vehicles with electric bin lifts under the new contract and making sure that routes are as efficient as possible and unnecessary journeys reduced.
- Work on rolling out electric vehicle (EV) charging points in the district's car parks was completed during the year. A total of 103 EV charging points were installed in 26 car parks across Folkestone & Hythe and - with the upgrade of the six existing points and the 23 charging points provided by commercial businesses - this means EV owners now have even a greater choice and more flexibility. The new points were installed by Connected Kerb, one of the UK's biggest providers and offer a mixture of fast 7kW and 22kW charging, depending on the location.
- Four of the district's beautiful parks continued to fly the Green Flag after retaining their status for the 2022/23 year. The Lower Leas Coastal Park, Kingsnorth Gardens, Radnor Park and the Royal Military Canal have all been awarded the prestigious accolade once again. The Green Flag award is the international quality mark for parks and green spaces which display the highest environmental standards, are beautifully maintained and have excellent visitor facilities.
- The council joined a network of local authorities to help achieve its climate change objectives during the year. The UK100 undertakes research and publishes findings on a range of topics, including transport, homes and buildings, energy, waste reduction, green finance, and clean air. It works with Government ministers and civil servants to influence policy on these issues. The council has pledged to use its influence as part of the UK100 to reduce greenhouse gas emissions both internally and with residents and businesses.



Green Flag Awards were successfully retained for Lower Leas Coastal Park, Radnor Park, The Royal Military Canal and Kingsnorth Gardens during the year.



The council joined the UK100 network of local authorities to use its influence to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



A total of 103 EV charging points were installed in 26 car parks across the district.

02 A Thriving Environment in 2022/23

- The use of chemicals in all council managed parks, gardens and play areas has been reduced. Figures show that for the period 2015 to 2021, pesticide and herbicide use fell from a peak of 75 litres to just 14.5 litres in 2021 - an 80% drop. The council's grounds maintenance department has kept the use of pesticides and herbicides to a minimum for several years and following a motion agreed by full council in 2019, efforts have been made to find effective alternative methods. There are still a limited number of situations where chemicals will still be needed, such as to treat invasive weeds like Japanese knotweed and giant hogweed with work continuing to check for new technology and best practice to further reduce the use of pesticide & herbicides.
- A total 48 community environmental volunteer events have been supported by council's Local Area Officer Team during the year. The team have worked with a variety of local community groups and organisations including, The Hythe Environmental Group, 99 Squadron Air Cadets, 1st Cheriton Scouts, Elham and Lyminge Parish Councils, Stowting Wombles as well as local schools and youth organisations. Events undertaken in the year have included, stream cleans, area clean ups and litter picks with 1,155 attendees helping to collect 1,089 bags of litter to help keep the district clean and tidy.
- The Environmental Enforcement Team have worked hard during the year to ensure the district remains a clean and tidy place for both residents and visitors. The following work has been undertaken during the year:
- Dog fouling is an ongoing issue around the district, some areas more than others. Officers have worked hard to patrol problem hot spots and review signage in these areas with tired and worn signs being replaced as well as having good positive engagement with members of the public to encourage them to report fouling cases. In addition there has been active promotion of a new 'It's up to you to pick up our poo' campaign to remind dogs owners of their responsibility to pick up waste after them or face a fine of up to £1,000.
- A high number of visitors enjoyed the Warren during the year. Officers have actively patrolled this area making a visible presence over varied terrain, engaging with holiday makers and tackling issues, including camping, littering and dog fouling. Several successful Community Protection Warnings were issued

to unauthorised campers. Officers also had to extinguish a potential bushfire where campers had left burning embers during a drought period on a windy day. A new camera was erected at the site, together with a sign relating to fly-tipping to deter offenders.

- Work has been undertaken with Kent Police on Operation Piglet. Oil theft has increased and in specific areas throughout the district have either been targeted for theft or used to dump empty canisters. Good relations have been built with the public which has resulted in footage being shared that has been passed onto Kent Police. Officers have actively worked with businesses to educate them on the safe storage of canisters and we have utilised our field cameras to support surveillance.
- A series of early morning patrols have been conducted starting at 06:00am targeting both waste and dogs on beaches. Key areas of our coastline were patrolled to ensure that waste is being disposed of responsibly and bins are regularly emptied. Signage has been erected instructing visitors to take waste home and not leave items next to bins and on the beach. Fixed penalties were issued to visitors who left waste along the coastlines.
- Dog Control Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs) placing restrictions on dog fouling (across the district), dogs off leads (on selected areas and dates) and dog bans were reviewed and updated by officers during the year. The review involved working through the public consultation taking into consideration all feedback and presenting the information received, updating the PSPO and signage in the relevant areas.
- A number of successful prosecutions were secured by officers against those who committed environmental crimes in the district during the year, some examples are as follows:
 - An individual fined £796 for failure to pick up dog faeces on Foord Road, Folkestone
 - An individual fined £488 for the breaching of the dog Public Spaces Protection Order on The Leas, Folkestone
 - An individual fined £796 for a littering offence on Bradstone Road, Folkestone



Environmental Enforcement on early morning patrol inspecting rubbish dumped irresponsibly



'It's up to you to pick up your poo' campaign signage to remind dog owners of their responsibility to pick waste after them.



New signage being put up by Environmental Enforcement Officers on dog fouling

Service Ambition 3

A Vibrant Economy

Our priorities:

- **Reinvigorate the high streets**
- **Support a vibrant & diverse business community**
- **Help people access jobs & opportunity**
- **Grow the skills we need for the future**

03 A Vibrant Economy in 2022/23

- In January 2023, the council was successfully awarded a £19.8 million share of the Government's Levelling Up Funding (LUF). The bid was submitted in early July 2022 and followed extensive public consultation earlier in the 2022 year on possible projects to deliver the priorities set out in the Folkestone Place Plan. The funding will:
 - Enable a sustainable, attractive and welcoming gateway to be created for Folkestone town centre with a green park replacing the bus station in Bouverie Square.
 - Enable the second phase of Folca to be progressed by establishing new uses for the site, with an intended focus on public services, retail, leisure and business uses for the rejuvenated building.
- Works to bring the Folca building in Folkestone back into use began in early March 2023. The building will be separated into two parts: the Edwardian part of the site in Bouverie Place and the Art Deco section in Sandgate Road. The Levelling Up Fund award will partly support the refurbishment of the Art Deco section of the building. New uses for this part will be explored – with an intended focus on public services, retail, leisure and business uses for the rejuvenated building.
- The council in partnership with technology company Bulbtown launched the ExperienceFH app in November 2022. The mobile based app is free to download, and the supporting website gives instant access to a range of promotional offers, discounts, and events from businesses across the district. Local business can sign up at no cost and list their location and opening hours or highlight special offers. Residents and visitors can also check out the very best of what is on offer locally by using ExperienceFH at home or whilst they are out and about. The development of the app was funded using the district's share of the government's Welcome Back funding - designed to reinvigorate high streets following the pandemic.
- In 2022 we introduced a new Green Business Grant Scheme to help smaller businesses to become more energy efficient. Grants of up to £10,000 are available to support businesses (up to £25,000 in exceptional circumstances). The scheme will run

until 31 March 2024 or until the fund is exhausted. So far, 16 applications have been made to the grant scheme. Applications have come a wide range of organisations including a sports trust, community interest company, hotel, financial business, events venue and arts organisation.

- The Romney Marsh Business Hub Grant Scheme was launched in April 2022 which allowed any business leasing an office at the business hub to apply for a non-repayable grant of up to £10,000 with no fund matching required. The grants can be used for office furnishings and computer equipment, and in certain cases can fund the first 3 months rental payments for the business. To date, all businesses that occupy an office at the hub have applied for and have been successfully awarded grant funding totalling £37,706.
- A successful bid was made to the rural England prosperity fund, with the council being awarded £571,000. The funding will be received during financial year 2023-24. This scheme provides funding to support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy. This includes support for framers to diversify their incomes, as well as support for organisations to deliver new and improved community services and for business to benefit the local economy.
- Having been open for applications since 2019, the high street fund grant scheme closed to new applications during November 2022. During financial year 2022-23, a further 12 projects were approved prior to the scheme closure with funding totalling £126,094 being awarded. Since the scheme was launched in 2019, a total of 49 businesses have been successfully awarded funding, with a total of £554,362 being paid to date. Example of projects include shop and restaurant refurbishments, public realm projects and events.



Artist impression of Bouverie Square, Folkestone to be delivered thanks to funding from the Levelling Up Fund.



Tenants at the Romney Marsh Business Hub have benefitted from a grant scheme for new equipment and furnishings.



ExperienceFH app launched in partnership with Bulbtown gives instant access to a range of promotional offers, discounts, and events from businesses across the district.

03 A Vibrant Economy in 2022/23

- The Council in conjunction with the Romney Marsh Partnership and The Education People organised the first 'Romney Marsh Inspires' skills festival in July 2022. The festival hosted at The Marsh Academy in New Romney was opened to Students from Years 8, 10 and 12 attended during the school day and the event was then opened up to the wider Marsh community. All visitors learnt about local opportunities and support services and skills, and the day included workshops run by Kent Choices, LifeSkills, Digital Kent and Social Enterprise Kent.
- **Folkestone Community Works:** The Folkestone Community Works programme, part funded by European Structural and Investment Funds, has continued to provide grant funding and free business advice for local businesses and potential entrepreneurs situated in central and east Folkestone. During the 2022/23 year, 36 grants have been awarded to the value of £524,161 from the scheme that have helped support a number of local businesses, projects and charities including:
 - **Custom Food Lab (CFL):** A social enterprise based on the belief that food is a basic building block of culture, health and stability. The Locavore Growing Project, at Martello Primary School in east Folkestone, is at the heart of its operation. The project holds regular volunteering sessions, family gardening and workshops. Groups involved with the garden include Martello pupils, young people from The Beacon Plus, and residents of Napier Barracks. A grant from Folkestone Community Works (FCW) has enabled CFL to buy an accessible compost toilet, chicken coop and outdoor kitchen. Other items include a solar panel kit with batteries for charging electrical tools, forest school kit and sandpit. As well as the equipment, the money has paid for business development support and for a specialist advisor to create a project manual for sharing community growing and organising practices.
 - **Rainbow Centre:** The charity used the awarded funding from Folkestone Community Works (FCW) to buy a much-needed new phone system, computers and other equipment. The centre helps support individuals and families experiencing deprivation or hardships through various food services (including the new Hythe Pantry), advice for homeless people, and a winter shelter.
- **DB Fabrication:** A Folkestone based business that fabricates street furniture for local authorities, artworks for galleries, art institutions and individual artists, as well as designing and producing props for production companies and tv channels. The funding awarded from Folkestone Community Works has enabled the business to upgrade four of their machines to take on different types of jobs so they can compete with much larger businesses in the same field.
- **Amor Europe:** A Christian charity based in Folkestone that has three areas of work, all focussing on children: building homes (currently in Mexico, South Africa, Moldova and Kenya); training church leaders (Africa and Asia) and eradicating waterborne disease by installing water filters (The Gambia, Ukraine and Burkina Faso in West Africa). Funding awarded from Folkestone Community works will help with the technical costs for the next two years of reporting on the impact of the water filters using a world-class system.
- **Digital Inclusion Support Scheme:** The scheme provides hardware and connectivity solutions for those aged over 16 living in the town's central and east wards who have previously not been able to access the internet. Those eligible to join the scheme are given a laptop and/or a connection solution that enables internet access for 12 months. In addition, they are offered support sessions and one to one support to improve their entrepreneurial skills. The project is funded by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), through the Folkestone Community Works (FCW) programme and Kent County Council's Helping Hands scheme which is tackling digital exclusion across the county.
- **Open Doors:** A free drop-in session for people aged 16 and over, who live in the Harbour, Central or East Folkestone wards and who are into all things digital. It is run by Screen South, with funding from Folkestone Community Works. At the event, visitors had a chance to try virtual reality, have a go at a gaming programme and animation, and discover field recording and sound effects. The Open Doors team were also on hand to offer practical next steps to getting on the career ladder.



The Rainbow Centre benefited from a new phone system thanks to FCW funding.



The Custom Food Lab benefited from new equipment and business development support thanks to FCW funding.



FCW funding awarded to Amor Europe will support them with costs for reporting on the impact of water filters in eradicating waterborne diseases in overseas countries.

Service Ambition 4

Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Our priorities:

- **Improve outcomes & support for homeless people**
- **Deliver sustainable, affordable housing**
- **Deliver a safe, accountable housing service**
- **Digital inclusion & connectivity**
- **Deliver a sustainable new development at Otterpool Park**

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure in 2022/23

- In April 2023, outline planning permission was granted for a new garden town at Otterpool Park that will provide 8,500 homes, a new town centre, shops, leisure, educational and cultural facilities and employment land. The new community will offer more than 9,000 new job opportunities centred on the former Folkestone Racecourse site at Westenhanger Station, celebrate the cultural heritage of Westenhanger Castle positioned within an enhanced central park. Approximately 50% of the site will be allocated as accessible green space.
- We developed the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Charging Schedule Review last year and consulted on the schedule between August and October 2022. The schedule was passed to an independent examiner for a public examination at the end of November 2022. The independent examiner was entirely satisfied with the schedule, writing in his report that it would provide an appropriate basis for the collection of the levy, and recommended it for approval. The charging schedule was adopted by full Council on 29 March 2023. This is the culmination of a significant amount of work and is an excellent result which the council, parish and town councils and other organisations can use to secure new infrastructure across the district.
- The Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund (SHDF) is for local authorities, providers of social housing and charities that own social housing to bid for funding from government to install energy efficiency upgrades in their housing stock. In 2022 we were successful in securing £2 million from SHDF (Wave 1), supported by £1 million of council funds. The award was one of the largest in England for any district/borough council and one of only two awards in Kent. Work is underway on retrofitting 125 of the council's poorest performing social homes to bring them up to Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) Band C rating using this funding, ready for low carbon heating. It is estimated that these measures will yield savings of 254 tonnes of carbon emissions or 919,000 kWh heating energy a year. Ross House in Folkestone was chosen as a demonstrator project

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for the first 16 homes, and work is now progressing on the remaining 109 homes.

- A larger bid for Wave 2 of the SHDF was submitted to secure improvements to a further 300 social homes over a two-year period. The government announced on 22 March 2023 that the council had been successful in securing £2.6 million of government funding as part of Wave 2.1. The government funding will be matched by the council, bringing the total spend on improving the homes and wellbeing of tenants to £5.2 million.
- Over this last year, the Ship Street project has taken several steps closer to submitting a planning application for the strategic housing-led development on the site. Over the summer, ground investigations have informed the Council on current site conditions, and with support from Homes England, in December 2022 London based consultants Arup & Partners were appointed to deliver the design works in conjunction with Fletcher Priest Architects. A second public engagement event was held in March 2023 which presented the evolving designs for the site. The design for this former Gas Works brownfield site is being developed to deliver a quality, sustainable development with new public realm including a green link through the site, and a pocket park on Foord Road. A planning application is due to be submitted in Summer 2023, with remediation works and development on site currently programmed to commence in Spring 2024.
- Work has begun on a new road opening up 10 acres of land in Folkestone for new housing. Seventy-seven homes are planned for the southern area of the Biggins Wood site. When they are built 14 will be offered at affordable rent to those on the housing waiting list and nine will be for shared ownership. A commercial area will also be developed on the site offering up to 5,600 square metres of space for new and existing businesses. The £1.15m grant from the government's Brownfield Land Release Fund has helped to fund preparation work on the former brickworks site.



Artist impression of Otterpool Park, the district's new garden town



Artist impression of Ship Street in Folkestone



Artist impression of Biggins Wood in Folkestone

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure in 2022/23

- The site of a derelict building in Cheriton has been transformed into 27 new homes for local people. The mix of three and four-bedroomed houses and 18 two-bedroomed apartments have been built at the former Brockman Centre in Cheriton High Street. The properties will be offered at social rent and managed by housing association, Moat Homes. The development was officially handed over by Leath Park Developments and main contractor Jenner Group in November 2022 with new tenants moving in before Christmas.
- Following a consultation during the year, tenants living in council managed homes in the Folkestone and Hythe district are now to be offered lifetime secure tenancies. Since 2013 tenants have typically been placed on a 'fixed-term' tenancy which ended after a certain period of time. However, 80% of the 300 tenants who responded to a Council consultation were in favour of scrapping fixed term tenancies. The lifetime tenancies have the same terms and conditions as 'fixed term' tenancies but offer tenants more security and will also mean tenants will not have to go through the tenancy review process every four years.
- 14 new homes were made available for affordable rent in Radnor Park Road, Folkestone during late 2022. The homes consisting of a mixture of one- and two-bedroom flats in two small blocks have been finished to a high standard and are of low cost for the residents to live in thanks to their high standards of energy efficiency. All of the new homes have now been occupied having been let to local people with a wide range of housing needs.
- During the year, the housing service has launched a new Tenancy Welfare and Sustainment Fund in response to feedback from front line housing staff. Staff had identified that for some council tenants, the lack of a relatively small amount of money to fix a specific problem was causing a real issue. The new fund was introduced based on the principle of 'small amounts, big impact'. The fund can be used to assist tenants who have a specific need that they do not have the funds to resolve and that could impact on their tenancy. The funds allocated so far have been used to help tenants purchase white goods, cleaning equipment, skips to assist with de-cluttering properties and some gardening assistance.

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- The Better Care Fund (BCF) is allocated to the Council from central government each year for the council to help disabled and elderly people adapt their homes (Disabled Facilities Grants). The Private Sector Housing Team also use this fund to help people who are medically fit to be discharged from hospital but have issues with safety or disrepair in the home. The BCF funded a Housing and Health Co-ordinator at the William Harvey Hospital to work alongside the NHS discharge teams to support patients with housing related barriers to going home. This could be a deep clean and declutter or using our handy-person service to bring a bed from upstairs to downstairs, fit a key safe or a handrail. In 2022/23 the Hospital Discharge and handy person schemes together supported 308 people in our district with faster hospital discharge or prevention from admission into hospital or care settings. This not only saves the NHS money and unblocks beds for those who need them, but also helps people to remain independent and safe in their own homes
- The Private Sector Housing (PSH) Team responded quickly in March 2022 to develop a programme of inspections for the Homes for Ukraine Scheme. The government announced the scheme and expected councils to act immediately. The PSH Team, alongside staff from housing case management, health & wellbeing and customer services rose to the challenge and implemented a scheme within a couple of weeks. Inspections commenced in early April 2022. An inspection form was developed in partnership with our neighbouring Local Authorities in Kent and the PSH team worked in partnership with case officers in housing and customer services to organise a booking and reporting system. Appointments were booked for PSH officers to visit and carry out the safety checks in the hosts' homes and the results were reported back to enable the host to receive their "thank you" payment for helping a Ukraine refugee (or family of refugees) and give the green light for the refugees to travel to the host's home. Since April 2022, the team have inspected 154 homes and deemed the majority of these to be suitable and safe for refugees to stay in. Inspections continue as and when they are required.



Opening of 27 new homes for local people in Cheriton



14 New homes delivered for affordable rent in Radnor Park Road, Folkestone



Tenants living in council managed homes are now being offered lifetime secure tenancies following a council consultation with tenants.

Register for **'My Account'** - The easy way to access Council information:

- Pay your council tax and view your previous council tax bills
- Find your bin collection day
- See planning applications within a 500m radius of your registered property
- Report missed bins and dog fouling
- View a history of your council tax reductions and housing benefits
- View details of your local councillors..... and more!

To register and go find out more information about 'My Account' please visit: www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/myaccountinfo

It's clear, simple and fast and is also available on your tablet and mobile.

Website: www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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Folkestone & Hythe District Council

Appendix 2: 2022-23 End of Year Data

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Number of new priority play areas improved by the Council	3	0	0	0	1 site per year	1	3	✓
	<p><i>No priority play areas were improved by the council during Quarter 4. Earlier in the year during Quarter 1 the following sites were improved:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The installation of a new 10m diameter rope climbing frame, new teen shelter adjacent to the basketball court and a replacement spring rocker at Cheriton Recreation round funded through COMF (Contain Outbreak Management Fund) funding June 2022.</i> <i>The Bounty shipwreck in the Lower Leas Coastal Park replaced with a new larger Ship modelled after The Santa Maria completion in May 2022.</i> <i>Oak Drive in St Mary's Bay which is a SIPA (Strategically Important Play Area) full refurbishment completed in June 2022.</i> 							
Average number of days to process new claims for Housing Benefit from the date complete evidence is received.	4.5	4.9	4.5	3.7	7 Days (Monthly)	3.4	4.4	✓
Average number of days taken to process new claims for Housing Benefit	13.2	12.7	10.8	10.2	17 Days (Monthly)	12.2	11.7	✓
% food premises broadly compliant (equivalent to 3 rating)	97.8%	97.53%	96.6%	96%	95% (Quarterly)	97%* (Average Q3 and Q4 only)	96.98% (Average)	✓
	<p><i>In Quarter 4, 96% of food premises in the business were found to be broadly compliant in the district, the percentage achieved is based on a total of 101 premises being inspected in the period.</i></p>							
Number of community safety events held and projects delivered	3	9	15	8	10 (Annual)	14	35	✓
	<p><i>In Quarter 4, a total of 8 community safety events or projects were delivered by the Community Safety Unit that included:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local Engagement Meeting January 2023: <i>Folkestone & Hythe Community Safety Partnership held its 'Local Engagement Meeting' at Hawkinge Community Centre. Representatives from Kent Police, Folkestone & Hythe Community Safety Unit, Kent County Council Community Wardens, Neighbourhood Watch, Hawkinge Town Council, and local churches all attended. The event covered neighbourhood updates, general concerns, and Public Spaces Protection Orders.</i> 							

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
							<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Folkestone Talks: <i>The Community Safety Team attended the event run by the Turner Stone Community Hub in March where all different people from the local community came and spoke to children to give them an understanding of the community and wider society. The overall event was an opportunity to share skills, knowledge and experiences which will enrich the lives of young people across Folkestone.</i> • Foord Road South: <i>Both Community safety and Environmental Enforcement teams along with Mick Cronin, Community Liaison Officer for Kent Police visited Foord Road South. Mick Cronin is spearheading the Foord Road South project with support from the community safety team following issues, regarding litter, anti-social behaviour, and safety problems with the steps. The officers also spoke to residents in the area and offered advice and support where necessary.</i> • Bouverie Place Safe Space Training: <i>The Community Safety Team delivered training alongside the Folkestone Area Partnership Against Crime (FAPAC) to staff of Bouverie Place retail stores on how to use radios and what to do when dealing with someone who needs help.</i> • Bouverie Place Safe Space Stand: <i>Community safety officers and representatives from MIND, The Rainbow Centre and HomeStart Shepway came together to promote the 'Ask Angela' initiative that is being rolled out in the retail outlets at Bouverie shopping centre.</i> • 99 (Folkestone) Squadron Air Cadet talk: <i>On 30 January, the Folkestone & Hythe community safety officers visited the 99 (Folkestone) Squadron RAF Air Cadets at Ship Street in Folkestone. They spoke to the cadets about keeping safe in the community both when out and about on their own and with friends. The officers also spoke about their roles and partner agencies they work with.</i> • National Coast Watch Institution talk: <i>The community safety team met with Robert Wiltshire, Manager of the National Coast Watch Institution. The team were there to provide a talk on community safety that was very positively received that they have been asked to return and provide safeguarding training to all their members.</i> • Community Safety Partnership Roadshow: <i>The event hosted on 17th March provided an opportunity for the partnership to promote all the work undertaken during the year and make plans for the coming year, it gave an opportunity for multi-agency partners to meet. Over 50 people attended.</i> 	

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Retain Green Flags for the Coastal Park, Royal Military Canal, Kingsnorth Gardens and Radnor Park sites	-	-	-	-	4 (Annual)	4	4	✓
Number of enforcement notices served (e.g. Abatement Notices, Community Protection Notices)	18	13	2	14	*70 (informal) (Annual)	65 (Total)	47 (Total)	X
Page 78	<p>The overall number of enforcement notices served has outturned below its annual target at the end of the year for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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. 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: - <ul style="list-style-type: none"> engaging with the subject of the complaint, acting as mediators between two or more parties, helping subjects to minimise any nuisances caused, for example suggesting and facilitating practical solutions and engaging with family members, property owners, other authorities or care/support networks to make a positive impact. <p>This approach is often successful but difficult to capture in terms of notices not issued.</p> 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. The change in legislation will therefore result in a change in targets for 2023/24. Long-term sickness in the Environmental Enforcement Team and voluntary retirement of one officer has impacted on the number of Fixed Penalty Notices (FPNs) issued. Recruitment has taken place during the year for a new enforcement officer for the team. 							

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Number of Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) issued	15	26	6	23	15 (Annual)	-	70 (Total)	✓
Fixed Penalty Notices issued for Low level Enviro-crime (littering, dog control)	33	52	32	52	*300(informal) (Annual)	-	169 (Total)	X
	<p><i>The target for both low level and high level FPNs has not met target 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, another on a phased return to work following an operation and a voluntary retirement of one officer.</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 in Folkestone. Working to improve education and resident engagement on issues as well as engagement with other teams to tackle Anti-social behaviour.</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	7	*25(informal) (Annual)	-	20 (Total)	X
	See comment above							

02 A Thriving Environment

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Percentage of streets surveyed clear of litter within the district	98.23%	95.25%	94.44%	96.38%	95% (Monthly)	92.2% (Average Q3-Q4 only)	96% (Average)	✓
<p><i>A total of 580 inspection surveys of streets were carried out by monitoring officers in Quarter 4 in locations including: Folkestone, Sandgate, Hawkinge, Brookland, Brenzett, Littlestone, Greatstone.</i></p>								
Number of community environmental volunteer events supported	17	13	11	7	15 (Quarterly)	76 (total)	48 (total)	X
<p><i>The number of environmental events supported was under target during Quarter 4 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	1,278	1,523	1,160	1,622	1200 (Quarterly)	10,118 (total)	5,583 (total)	✓
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)	30 hours (Average)	48 hours (Average)	✓
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)	See note below	2 charging points per car park (Annual)	18 (cumulative)	103 (cumulative)	✓
<p><i>This project was completed in Quarter 3. A total of 103 charging points have now been installed within 26 car parks across the district.</i></p>								
Percentage of street lighting within the district converted to LED	27.9% (cumulative)	30% (cumulative)	30% (cumulative)	43% (cumulative)	100% completion by March 2023	13.26% (cumulative)	43% (cumulative)	X
<p><i>Phase 1 upgrade (321 assets) completed, and an application has been made to KCC to adopt the assets.</i></p> <p><i>Work on Phase 2 commenced in Quarter 4 with 43% of the overall total assets now upgraded. Expected completion is now in June 2023 due to delays in securing the extra funding needed.</i></p>								

02 A Thriving Environment

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Number of missed bin collections per 100,000	40.77	39.84	33.48	32.97	50 (Monthly)	89.1 (Average)	36.7 (Average)	✓
Percentage of household waste recycled	47.7%	44.6%	43.3%	42.4%	50% (Monthly)	45.3% (Average Q1-Q3 only)	44.6% (Average)	X
	<p><i>Our recycling rate is on par with national averages. When considering the total amount of waste presented by - and collected from - households in the district, the recycling rate is a simple weight ratio of recyclable material compared to non-recyclable material. Increasing this is reliant on residents separately presenting as much recyclable material as possible. Whilst the underlying rate of dry recycling remained steady throughout 2022/23, the composting rate – which is a significant contributor to the recycling rate – experienced a decrease in tonnages collected (possibly because of the very dry weather in 2022), negatively affecting the overall recycling rate.</i></p>							
Number of days to remove fly-tipped waste on public land once reported	1	1	1	1	1	10 (Average)	1 (Average)	✓
	<p><i>A total of 436 incidents of fly-tipped waste were dealt with on public land within the district during Quarter 4. The breakdown is as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>January - 184</i> <i>February – 141</i> <i>March - 111</i> 							
Percentage of compliant air quality monitoring sites	100%	100%	100%	100%	100% (Quarterly)	100% (Average)	100% (Average)	✓
Enforcement - Percentage of successful prosecutions (Incl Fly-tipping and Littering)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100% (Quarterly)	100% (Average)	100% (Average)	✓
	<p><i>A total of three prosecutions were secured during Quarter 4 for the following:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Littering in August 2022 Proved in absence: Fine £440, Costs £180, Victim Surcharge £176 = Total £796</i> <i>Breach of PSPO (dog fouling) in August 2022 Proved in absence: Fine £440. Costs £180, Victim Surcharge £176 =Total £796</i> <i>Breach of PSPO (dog off lead) in August 2022 Guilty plea: Fine £220, Costs £180, Victim Surcharge £88 =Total £488</i> 							

03 A Vibrant Economy

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Total Folkestone & Hythe High Streets funds allocated	76.42% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £99,998 <i>allocated in Q1</i>	85.98% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £459,517 <i>allocated in Q2</i>	86.00% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £1,000 <i>allocated in Q3</i>	86.49% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £14,478 <i>allocated in Q4</i>	100% of the funds allocated	57% (total)	86.49% (total)	X
Page 82	<p><i>There were no High Street Fund grants approved in Quarter 4 as result of the fund having closed to new applications during November 2022, the last remaining new application was approved during Quarter 4 for £14,478. During the span of the scheme, a total of 49 projects were successfully approved for funding across our district. This amounted to £741,712 of funding being approved. Some projects were not realized or were partially delivered. To date, £554,362 has been paid to successful high street fund grant applicants. The remaining four outstanding projects are currently in the process of being progressed towards a conclusion and grant payment.</i></p> <p><i>Total funds utilised since inception is £2,594,761. The remaining unallocated funds (14%) from the £3 million originally allocated to this scheme sits in the council's earmarked reserves. Aside from approved high street fund grants, funds were also used for a variety of district projects. This also includes £250,000 earmarked towards the levelling up fund projects.</i></p>							
Number of engagements undertaken by the Folkestone & Hythe Place Panel on projects of scale or strategic significance.	4	1	2	1	3 (Annual)	5 (total)	8 (total)	✓
Total funding allocated from the Romney Marsh Business Hub grant support scheme	7.14% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £9,981 <i>allocated in Q1</i>	12.22% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £7,126 <i>allocated in Q2</i>	12.22% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £0 <i>allocated in Q3</i>	27% <i>(allocated since fund inception)</i> £20,599 <i>allocated in Q4</i>	70% of available funds allocated in 2022-23	0% (total)	27% (total)	X

03 A Vibrant Economy

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
	<p><i>During Quarter 4, a further three applications were given grant funding approval, taking the total to five approvals with an allocation to £37,706 so far and representing 27% of the total allocation. The target was not met largely due to only five of the 14 offices having been leased at the business hub. However, all five tenants have applied for and have been approved for grant funding, therefore 100% of tenants at Quarter 4 had been granted funding. It should also be noted that there is no requirement to exhaust the entire £140,000 allocation on this scheme, as remaining funds will be utilised for other initiatives on the Romney Marsh.</i></p>							
Number of Folkestone & Hythe businesses accessing business support and grants from public sector programmes	19	4	8	28	10 (Annual)	52 (total)	59 (total)	✓
Page 83	<p><i>During Quarter 4, a total of 28 grants were given approvals. This comprised 21 small and medium-sized enterprise (SME) grants, 1 grant approval for the high street fund, 3 for the Romney Marsh Business hub grant scheme, and 3 grant approvals for the green business grant scheme. The high street fund and Folkestone Community Works grant schemes are now both closed to new applications. Further applications are being progressed for the green business grant scheme, and further applications are anticipated for the Romney Marsh Business Hub grant scheme as additional offices become leased during 2023-24. Also, there were 8 organisations receiving business advice for Folkestone Community Works.</i></p>							
Number of businesses or potential entrepreneurs/ new start-ups signposted to support programmes and events to facilitate growth	65	15	12	9	50 minimum (Annual)	56 (total)	101 (total)	✓
	<p><i>Businesses on our database were encouraged to promote their job vacancies via our presence at Folkestone jobs fair during Quarter 4. Other ad-hoc support was given during Quarter 4 and the year as a whole. This consisted of emails, in person meetings and telephone conversations. Signposting also took place to Folkestone Works business support website.</i></p>							
Number of businesses engaged with in the district to support growth and retention of local people	17	14	18	19	12 (Annual)	15 (total)	68 (total)	✓
	<p><i>During Quarter 4, 19 businesses were engaged with to support growth and the retention of local people. These included Duo Technology, Martello Building Consultancy, LVB Creative, Romney Hythe & Dymchurch Railway, Disruptive Urbanism, Profile Architects, Beresfords Accountants, Motis Estates, Holiday Extras, Oak Creative, Alliance Building, The Workshop, Clifton Hotel, Sai Care Homes, Basepoint Business Centre, Stagecoach, Screen South, Folkestone College.</i></p>							

03 A Vibrant Economy

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Total funds allocated from the Folkestone Community Works Programme	90% (cumulative)	85% (cumulative)	75% (cumulative)	97% (cumulative)	100% of the allocated funds spent by end of 2022/23	71% (cumulative)	97% (cumulative)	X
	<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 30 June 2023.</i></p> <p><i>By the end of Quarter 4 (Jan - March) 2023, funded projects had claimed total expenditure worth £1,574,422 which represents 60% of the value of the signed grant funding agreements. In this period, the amount of funds under GFA increased from £2,005,967 to £2,627,917 which is reflected in the drop in the percentage of funding claimed under contract when compared to Q3.</i></p> <p><i>During this period, the council took up the opportunity to request an extension to the delivery phase of the programme from 31 March 2023 to 30 June 2023, which subsequently was been granted. This extension has provided the opportunity for grantees including businesses and main projects such as Folca2 to access and defray further funds.</i></p> <p><i>In addition, over 40 local residents participated in sessions to develop their entrepreneurial skills delivered by funded projects lead by Social Enterprise Kent, The Princes Trust, Screen South, and TNB Skilling Ltd.</i></p>							

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Numbers of new homes built within the district	-	-	-	-	622 homes (Annual)	454	522**	-
	<p><i>**The Housing Information Audit for 2022/23 is yet to be undertaken so an estimated figure (522) has been taken based on the number of new homes identified as 'under construction' in the Housing Information Audit 2021/22. The final figure will be confirmed following completion of the audit.</i></p>							
Percentage reduction in homelessness	-	-	-	-	5% based on 2020 data	See comment in 2021-22 end of year data.	See comment below	-
Page 85	<p><i>Reducing homelessness across the district is a service ambition for the Council. As part of our suite of KPIs below, we measure the number of homelessness approaches to the Council, the number of homelessness preventions we secure, and the number of people sleeping rough in the district. As you will see, the volume of people approaching the service has increased over the past year, as have the number of people sleeping rough. Some of these will be housed in temporary accommodation until we can find a more suitable home for them. However, we have managed to secure alternative long-term accommodation (preventions) in 200 cases, a real-terms improvement of 132 from the previous year (68 preventions).</i></p>							
Number of homelessness approaches (includes Triage, Prevention, Relief & Decision cases)	408	453	421	496	No Target	1,619 (Total)	1,780 (Total)	-
	<p>Information only (no target). We had the highest volume of approaches in quarter four, and the long-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.</p>							
Percentage of homelessness approaches closed as 'homelessness prevented'	9.76%	8.61%	17.1%	9.88%	4%	4.20%	11%	✓
	<p>Aim to maximise (on target). This measures the number of preventions as a total of all the approaches made to the Council. Preventions are where accommodation has been secured for 6 months or more. We secured 49 preventions over quarter four and 200 for the year (11%). Performance has improved overall this year, compared to 2021-22.</p>							

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Average number of rough sleepers in the period	11	12	10	5	<6	5.63 (Average)	10 (Average)	X
	<p>Aim to minimise (off target). This has been a challenging area for us, as the number of people sleeping rough in the district has increased over the past year. 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.</p>							
Average number of households in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation	2	3	5	12	0	2.3 (Average)	6 (Average)	X
	<p>Aim to minimise (off target). This has increased to an average of 12 at any one time, over the past quarter. The average for the year is 6. 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	26	27	24	<35	29 (Average)	27 (Average)	✓
	<p>Aim to minimise (on target). This has decreased, on average, by 3 over the past quarter. The average for the year is 27, remaining 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	9	5	15	21	70 (Annual)	49 (Total)	50 (Total)	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (off target). 21 long-term empty homes were brought back into use in the last quarter in Hythe and Folkestone, with 50 completed for the 2022/23 year. The target has not been met but there are over 70 further units in progress, and these will contribute to 2023/24 figures. Progress has been relatively slow again this year, due in part to the cost-of-living crisis, availability of additional finance, increased costs of building materials and low supply of building contractors.</p>							

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Affordable homes delivered by the Council and its partners	33	10	38	22	80 (Annual)	44 (Total)	103 (Total)	✓
	<p>Aim to maximise (on target). 22 affordable homes were delivered across the district in Folkestone, New Romney, Sellindge and Cheriton during the last quarter, bringing the total for the year to 103 (exceeding target). This is an overall improvement on 2021-22 which saw 44 delivered in total, with many projects brought forward into this year.</p>							
Affordable homes for low-cost home ownership delivered by the Council and its partners	17	4	4	1	32 (Annual)	0 (Total)	26 (Total)	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (off target). Of the 103 affordable homes delivered in 2022/23 (see previous KPI,) 26 are designated for 'low-cost homeownership'. This puts us closer to our target of 32. Delivery in this area has significantly improved since 2021-22, which saw no homes delivered at all during the year.</p>							
Private sector homes improved as a result of intervention by the Council	77	110	110	140	200 (Annual)	287 (Total)	437 (Total)	✓
Council home new builds and acquisitions started on site	0	0	0	0	20 (Annual)	30 (Total)	0 (Total)	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (off target). No progress to report on this KPI this year. Key projects (such as Highview), which were due to commence in the 2022/23 financial year, have been delayed. It is unclear when we will see any movement on these projects. Progress has been impacted by contractor availability, landlord finances and rising costs of materials.</p>							
Percentage of properties that meet the decent homes standard	96.51%	96.71%	96.95%	97.02%	99% (Monthly)	97.69%	97.02%	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (within 5% of target). Since April 2022, we have removed 34 properties from the Decent Homes failures list, with 101 total failings reported at year end. We are making a coordinated effort between the planned, compliance and repairs teams to work through the outstanding properties on the list.</p>							
Properties with a valid LGSR	99.93%	99.58%	99.79%	99.62%	100% (Monthly)	-	99.62%	X

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
	<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 quarter four, 11 properties were outstanding and therefore non-compliant. Fallout from the ending of the Gas Call contract and the mobilisation of the new Swale heating contract has caused some delays completing these inspections.</p>							
Blocks with a valid Fire Risk Assessment	100%	100%	100%	98.31%	100% (Monthly)	-	98.31%	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (within 5% of target). Ensuring all applicable communal housing blocks have a valid Fire Risk Assessment in place is a mandatory requirement. 3 out of 178 were outstanding at the end of the period. These have subsequently been completed and we are reporting 100% at the time of writing.</p>							
Blocks with valid (in date) Electrical Certificate (EICR)	95.17%	97.2%	100%	98.6%	100% (Monthly)	-	98.6%	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (within 5% of target). Electrical Installation Condition Report (EICR). Ensuring all applicable communal housing blocks have a valid, in date, EICR is a mandatory requirement. 2 out of 143 were outstanding at the end of the period. These have subsequently been completed and we were back to 100% at the time of writing</p>							
Domestic properties with a valid (in date) EICR	92.14%	92.96%	94.86%	95.84%	100% (Monthly)	-	95.84%	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (within 5% of 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. 3,226/3,366 were in place at the end of the period (140 outstanding).</p>							
Properties Asbestos compliant (Communal)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100% (Monthly)	-	100%	✓
	<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%	92.86%	100% (Monthly)	-	92.86%	X
	<p>Aim to maximise (off 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. 1 of 14 was outstanding at the end of the period.</p>							

04 Quality Homes and Infrastructure

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
% of major planning applications to be determined within statutory period (including any agreed extension of time)	83.33%	100%	100%	83%	60% (Quarterly)	86%* (Average)	92% (Average)	✓
	<p><i>Major' Applications in Q4: Total Decisions: 6; 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> <p><i>*Outturn Figure for 2021-22 year has been adjusted when preparing this report to reflect the average of the 12-month period as opposed to the four quarters. (Previous figure: 87.2%) The 2022-23 Outturn figure reflects average of the 12-month period.</i></p>							
% of minor applications to be determined within the statutory period (including any agreed extension of time)	84%	85%	88%	90%	70% (Quarterly)	80%* (Average)	86% (Average)	✓
	<p><i>Please see comment above</i></p> <p><i>'Minor' Applications in Q4: Total Decisions: 50; Determined in agreed time: 45</i></p> <p><i>*Outturn Figure for 2021-22 year has been adjusted when preparing this report to reflect the average of the 12-month period as opposed to the four quarters. (Previous figure: 82.4%) The 2022-23 Outturn figure reflects average of 12-month period.</i></p>							
% of other planning applications to be determined within statutory period (including any agreed extension of time)	88.45%	87%	93%	93%	85% (Quarterly)	93%* (Average)	91% (Average)	✓

Transparent, Stable, Accountable and Accessible

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
	<p><i>Please see comment under major planning applications KPI.</i></p> <p><i>'Other' Applications in Q4: Total Decisions: 149; Determined in agreed time:138</i></p> <p><i>Outturn Figure for 2021-22 year has been adjusted when preparing this report to reflect the average of the 12-month period as opposed to the four quarters. (Previous figure: 91.2%) The 2022-23 Outturn figure reflects average of 12-month period.</i></p>							
Council tax collection	28.39% (Cumulative)	56.01% (Cumulative)	82.49% (Cumulative)	97.12% (Cumulative)	97.3% (Annual)	96.3% (Cumulative)	97.12% (Cumulative)	X
	<p><i>The ongoing cost of living crisis hitting all households has made the collection of council tax more difficult during the 2022/23 year.</i></p>							
Business Rates collection rate	36.65% (Cumulative)	63.33% (Cumulative)	86.65% (Cumulative)	98.26% (Cumulative)	97.5% (Annual)	96.81% (Cumulative)	98.26% (Cumulative)	✓
Increased take-up of My Account and online transactions	6.69%	2.92%	1.18%	1.54%	10% (Annual)	32.56% (Cumulative)	12.33% (Cumulative)	✓
	<p><i>In Quarter 4 a total of 752 customers have registered for My Account an increase of 1.54%. Since the launch of the service in August 2020, a total of 35,909 customers have registered for the service equating to 69.14% take up so far.</i></p>							
Lifeline - Number of calls answered within 60 seconds	98.4%	98.4%	97.9%	98.6%	97.5% (Monthly)	-	98.3% (Average)	✓
Lifeline - Number of calls answered within 180 seconds	99.8%	99.7%	99.8%	99.8%	99% (Monthly)	-	99.7% (Average)	✓

Transparent, Stable, Accountable and Accessible

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
All Freedom of Information / Environmental information Requests to be responded to within the statutory period of (20 working days or lawful extension).	85.54%	91.79%	84.67%	89.54%	90% (Monthly)	73.1% (Average)	87.89% (Average)	X
	<p><i>Performance has shown an improvement this year when compared 2021-2022. A new Case Officer was appointed at the end of November 2022 which has been a positive factor for this improvement and further development and training will support the team aim to achieve target. We have identified additional resource to support the team during periods of absence and high workloads.</i></p>							
All Subject Access Request responses to be provided within the statutory period (1 calendar month or lawful extension).	70.59%	100%	77.78%	61.54%	90% (Monthly)	25.9% (Average)	77.48% (Average)	X
Page 91	<p><i>The number of subject access requests (SARs) responded to has shown significant improvement when compared with last year. A new Case Officer was appointed at the end of November 2022 which has been a positive factor for this improvement and further development and training will support the team aim to achieve target. We have identified additional resource to support the team during periods of absence and high workloads.</i></p>							
Percentage of data breaches assessed within 72 hours to decide if it is reportable to the ICO.	88.89%	83.3%	53.8%	66.66%	100% (Monthly)	100% (Average)	73.16% (Average)	X
	<p><i>The percentage of data breaches assessed in time was under target during Quarter 4 because 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. These are the same issues that the Information Governance team have been faced with throughout the year.</i></p> <p><i>The Specialist has found that most breaches happen when officers accidentally enter and select the incorrect email address or postal address when sending correspondence to a resident. The issues have continued to be raised with managers, and council-wide emails sent out to reiterate that all Council officers hold responsibility for assisting the Information Governance Team with investigating data breaches. It is our aim to make breach identifying and reporting second nature to officers, and not something to feel concerned about. Breaches will happen for as long as humans are there to make human errors, and it's important that we log the instances internally when it does occur. In the odd event where a breach occurs through other means, these are used to fine tune the general training provided and to streamline processes; to try to prevent them occurring again.</i></p>							

Transparent, Stable, Accountable and Accessible

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met	
Page 92	<p><i>Although there has been an increase in the amount of data breaches being reported, we don't believe that that means there has been an increase in breaches occurring. We believe that many breaches have previously been unreported. We have worked hard to bring awareness to Council employees, and to give them the tools needed to recognize and report breaches to the InfGov Team. Although this has led to breach reporting increasing, there is still some work to be done with staff so that they recognize the urgency of this, so that they can be assessed within the 72 hours. The Specialist has started to arrange additional training that will be supplied to teams during their monthly meetings. Further to this, we are looking to include additional education during a segment of a future staff briefing meeting.</i></p> <p><i>During this financial year, a new Specialist has been appointed from the Case Management team. They have been providing training to help with improving overall resilience in the assessment breaches moving forwards. Furthermore, general InfGov training is ongoing with several members of Case Management (Corporate Services) involved, which will enable the Specialist to focus on work within their own queue, as they are currently providing ongoing resilience to the Case Management team whilst a new member is learning.</i></p> <p><i>The Specialist has also begun working on several report features within the Salesforce CRM system used for cases – this should enable us to be able to run instant reports that will flag any areas and directorates within the Council who are frequently responsible for late breach reports or not recognizing breaches when they should be. Focused training can then be offered to these teams. We are also starting to record 'near misses' where there was the potential for a breach to occur, so that they can be used to learn from.</i></p>								
	Percentage of reportable data breaches that were submitted to the ICO within 72 hours.	-	50%	0%	0%	100% (Monthly)	100% (Average)	16.67% (Average)	X
		<p><i>In Quarter 4, just like Quarter 3, there was only one case that was required to be submitted to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). The Data Protection Officer made the decision to ask the IT Systems team if they were able to monitor how many times a webpage with a breach was viewed before it was taken down, which delayed the final breach report to the ICO. The ICO decided that no further action was required for this breach. It's unfortunate that the percentage can be so drastically affected by the outcome of a single case, but this is unfortunately the nature of dealing with such low quantities.</i></p>							

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Appendix 3

Corporate Action Plan - KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2022-23 - Proposed changes for 2023-24				Time Period	TARGET	Service Area	Notes	Colour Key
POSITIVE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP								Green - Same as Last year (2022-23)
Number of new priority play areas improved by the Council		Annual	1 site per year	Estates and Assets				Revision to existing KPI
Average number of days to process new claims for Housing Benefit from the date complete evidence is received.		Monthly	7	Revenue and Benefits				New KPI
Average number of days taken to process new claims for Housing Benefit		Monthly	17	Revenue and Benefits				Removed for 2023-24
% food premises broadly compliant (equivalent to 3 rating)		Quarterly	95%	Environmental Health and Licensing				
Number of community safety events held and projects delivered		Annual	10	Community Safety				
Page 95	Number of Community Safety projects delivered		Annual	4	Community Safety		There are a number of different projects carried out to assist with either education or encouragement to change or be aware of behaviours. This can range from anything to do with providing safe spaces for those who are in fear of physical or mental abuse, working with the NHS around health matters, and providing an opportunity for the residents to question the Police and Community Safety Unit (CSU) in a Local Engagement Meeting, which enable the residents to understand how the Police and CSU can help or support them, bring concerns that they feel need to be addressed or providing an accessible opportunity for residents to feel they are being listened to and to hold the relevant service accountable.	
	Number of households in the district receiving support through the UKSPF		Annual	1,000 over three years to March 2025 (See notes)	Economic Development		As part of the council's approved investment plan to support the delivery of funds awarded from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF), the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) requires us to publish outputs of how the funding is helping residents across the district. A number of other outputs and outcomes have been established, but are quite particular, but the indicator proposed for the KPI list is wide ranging and clearly depicts the success of the fund. Target to be 1,000 households over the three year period to March 2025: Year 1 - 200 Year 2 - 300 Year 3 - 500	
A THRIVING ENVIRONMENT								
Retain Green Flags for the Coastal Park, Royal Military Canal, Kingsnorth Gardens and Radnor Park sites		Annual	4	Grounds Maintenance				
Number of enforcement notices served (e.g. Abatement Notices, Community Protection Notices)		Annual	*45 (informal)	Environmental Protection			Target previously 70* Informal in 2022-23	
Number of Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) issued		Annual	40	Environmental Protection			Target previously 15 Annually in 2022-23. Target increased.	

Fixed Penalty Notices issued for Low level Enviro-crime (littering, dog control)	Annual	*200(informal)	Environmental Protection	Target previously 300* (informal) in 2022-23
Fixed Penalty Notices issued for High level Enviro-crime (large Fly-tipping)	Annual	*20(informal)	Environmental Protection	Target previously 25* (informal) in 2022-23
Number of Breaches issued under the Public Space Protection Order	Annual	*10 (informal)	Community Safety	<p>This gives a record of how much enforcement work is done that breaches the PSPO. This includes:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Anti-social alcohol consumption 2. The use of intoxicating substances 3. Urinating, spitting or defecating 4. Begging (antisocial) 5. Anti-social street entertainment 6. Unauthorised street fundraising and marketing (Chugging) 7. Unauthorised camping <p>Whilst much of the engagement is done through communication and encouraging people to do something without issuing a warning or Fixed Penalty Notice under the PSPO, they are required to stop what they are doing within a period given and if they fail to do that, they can be prosecuted for a breach of the PSPO, resulting in a fine and a criminal record.</p>
ASB enforcement action taken (inc CPWs and CPNs)	Annual	*20 (informal)	Annual	Whilst some actions of visitors, residents or those who work in the area, have a detrimental affect or they can either caused alarm or distress to those in the local area, a Community Protection Warning (CPW) or Community Protection Notice (CPN) is used to manage that situation. A CPW/CPN is a tool to help with managing a problem and gives an insight as to the number issued by the team and any prosecutions undertaken. If a CPW/N is breached and the CPN, the case is sent to legal for prosecution.
Percentage of street surveyed clear of litter within in the district	Monthly	95%	Waste Services	
Number of community environmental volunteer events supported	Quarterly	15	Local Area Officers	
Number of recorded SOD It interventions completed	Quarterly	1200	Local Area Officers	
Average time for anti-social or offensive graffiti to be removed from the time of being reported	Quarterly	48 Hrs	Local Area Officers	
Number of new electric vehicle charging points installed within district owned car parks	Annual	2 charging points per car park*	Transportation	This project was completed in Quarter 3 of the 2022-23 year. A total of 103 charging points have now been installed within 26 car parks across the district.
Percentage of street lighting within the district converted to LED	Annual	100% completion by Autumn 2023	Transportation	100% Completion now by Autumn 2023. Previously March 2023.
Number of missed bin collections per 100,000	Monthly	50	Waste Services	
Percentage of household waste recycled	Monthly	50%	Waste Services	
Number of days to remove fly tipped waste on public land once reported	Monthly	3 Days	Waste Services	
Percentage of compliant air quality monitoring sites	Quarterly	100%	Environmental Protection	
Percentage of successful prosecutions (Including fly tipping and Littering)	Quarterly	100%	Environmental Protection	
A VIBRANT ECONOMY				
Total Folkestone & Hythe High Streets funds allocated	Annual	100% of the funds allocated	Economic Development	Removed: High Streets Fund closed to new applications in November 2022.

Number of engagements undertaken by the Folkestone & Hythe Place Panel on projects of scale or strategic significance.	Annual	3	Planning	
Total funding allocated from the Romney Marsh Business Hub grant support scheme	Annual	70% of available funds allocated in 2023-24	Economic Development	Target was 70% by end of 2022-23. Other than continued promotion of both the hub offices and the grant scheme itself, we have limited influence over fulfilment of this target, because it is both dependant on businesses leasing an office at the hub and then going on to apply for the grant.
Number of Folkestone & Hythe businesses accessing business support and grants from public sector programmes	Annual	10	Economic Development	
Number of businesses or potential entrepreneurs/ new start-ups signposted to support programmes and events to facilitate growth	Annual	50 minimum	Economic Development	
Total funds allocated from the Folkestone Community works Programme	Annual	100% of the allocated funds spent by end of September 2023	Economic Development	Removed: The Folkestone Community Works Programme's delivery period for funded projects ceases on 30 June 2023. This means funded projects are unable to claim any expenditure defrayed after the 30 June.
Number of businesses engaged with in the district to support growth and retention of local people	Annual	12	Economic Development	
QUALITY HOMES AND INFRASTRUCTURE				
Numbers of new homes built within the district	Annual	622 homes	Strategy, Policy and Performance	
Percentage reduction in homelessness	Annual	5% based on 2020 data	Housing Service	Removed: We take a combined approach to reducing homelessness and our KPIs and targets for number of approaches, preventions and rough sleepers already measure this effectively.
Number of homelessness approaches (includes Triage, Prevention, Relief & Decision cases)	Monthly	No Target	Housing Service	
Percentage of homelessness approaches closed as 'homelessness prevented'	Monthly	4%	Housing Service	
Average number of rough sleepers in the period	Monthly	<6	Housing Service	
Average number of households in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation	Monthly	0	Housing Service	
Average number of households in Temporary Accommodation	Monthly	<35	Housing Service	
Long-term Empty Homes brought back into use	Annual	70	Housing Service	
Affordable homes delivered by the Council and its partners	Annual	80	Housing Service	
Affordable homes for low cost home ownership delivered by the Council and its partners	Annual	32	Housing Service	
Private sector homes improved as a result of intervention by the Council	Annual	200	Housing Service	

Council home new builds and acquisitions started on site	Annual	20	Housing Service	
Percentage of properties that meet the decent homes standard	Annual	99%	Housing Service	
Properties with a valid LGSR	Monthly	100%	Housing Service	
Blocks with a valid Fire Risk Assessment	Monthly	100%	Housing Service	
Blocks with a valid Legionella Risk Assessment	Monthly	100%	Housing Service	
Blocks with valid (in date) Electrical Certificate (EICR)	Monthly	100%	Housing Service	
Domestic properties with a valid (in date) EICR	Monthly	100%	Housing Service	
Properties Asbestos compliant (Communal)	Monthly	100%	Housing Service	
Insurance visits completed on communal lifts (LOLER)	Monthly	100%	Housing Service	
% of major planning applications to be determined within statutory period including any agreed extension of time	Quarterly	60%	Development Management	
% of minor applications to be determined within the statutory period including any agreed extension of time	Quarterly	70%	Development Management	
% of other planning applications to be determined within statutory period including any agreed extension of time	Quarterly	85%	Development Management	
TRANSPARENT, STABLE, ACCOUNTABLE & ACCESSIBLE				
Council tax collection	Annual	97.3%	Revenue and Benefits	
Business Rates collection rate	Annual	97.5%	Corporate Debt	
Increase take up of MyAccount and online transactions	Annually	8%	Systems Development	Target revised - Previously 10% annual in 2022/23
All Freedom of Information / Environmental information Requests to be responded to within the statutory period of (20 working days or lawful extension).	Monthly	90%	Democratic Services and Information Governance	
All Subject Access Request responses to be provided within the statutory period (1 calendar month or lawful extension).	Monthly	90%	Democratic Services and Information Governance	
Percentage of data breaches assessed within 72 hours to decide if it is reportable to the ICO.	Monthly	100%	Democratic Services and Information Governance	
Percentage of reportable data breaches that were submitted to the ICO within 72 hours.	Monthly	100%	Democratic Services and Information Governance	
Lifeline - Number of calls answered within 60 seconds	Monthly	97.5%	Lifeline	
Lifeline - Number of calls answered within 180 seconds	Monthly	99.00%	Lifeline	

Appendix 4

Corporate Action Plan - KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2023-24		Time Period	TARGET	Service Area	
POSITIVE COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP					
Number of new priority play areas improved by the Council		Annual	1 site per year	Estates and Assets	
Average number of days to process new claims for Housing Benefit from the date complete evidence is received.		Monthly	7	Revenue and Benefits	
Average number of days taken to process new claims for Housing Benefit		Monthly	17	Revenue and Benefits	
Page 99	% food premises broadly compliant (equivalent to 3 rating)		Quarterly	95%	Environmental Health and Licensing
	Number of community safety events held and projects delivered		Annual	10	Community Safety
	Number of Community Safety projects delivered		Annual	4	Community Safety
	Number of households in the district receiving support through the UKSPF ¹		Annual	1,000 over three years to March 2025	Economic Development
A THRIVING ENVIRONMENT					

Retain Green Flags for the Coastal Park, Royal Military Canal, Kingsnorth Gardens and Radnor Park sites	Annual	4	Grounds Maintenance
Number of enforcement notices served (e.g. Abatement Notices, Community Protection Notices)	Annual	*45 (informal)	Environmental Protection
Number of Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) issued	Annual	40	Environmental Protection
Fixed Penalty Notices issued for Low level Enviro-crime (littering, dog control)	Annual	*200(informal)	Environmental Protection
Fixed Penalty Notices issued for High level Enviro-crime (large Fly-tipping)	Annual	*20(informal)	Environmental Protection
Number of Breaches issued under the Public Space Protection Order	Annual	*10 (informal)	Community Safety
ASB enforcement action taken (inc CPWs and CPNs)	Annual	*20 (informal)	Annual
Percentage of street surveyed clear of litter within in the district	Monthly	95%	Waste Services
Number of community environmental volunteer events supported	Quarterly	15	Local Area Officers
Number of recorded SOD It interventions completed	Quarterly	1200	Local Area Officers
Average time for anti-social or offensive graffiti to be removed from the time of being reported	Quarterly	48 Hrs	Local Area Officers
Percentage of street lighting within the district converted to LED	Annual	100% completion by Autumn 2023	Transportation
Number of missed bin collections per 100,000	Monthly	50	Waste Services

Percentage of household waste recycled	Monthly	50%	Waste Services
Number of days to remove fly tipped waste on public land once reported	Monthly	3 Days	Waste Services
Percentage of compliant air quality monitoring sites	Quarterly	100%	Environmental Protection
Percentage of successful prosecutions (Including fly tipping and Littering)	Quarterly	100%	Environmental Protection
A VIBRANT ECONOMY			
Number of engagements undertaken by the Folkestone & Hythe Place Panel on projects of scale or strategic significance.	Annual	3	Planning
Total funding allocated from the Romney Marsh Business Hub grant support scheme	Annual	70% of available funds allocated in 2023-24	Economic Development
Number of Folkestone & Hythe businesses accessing business support and grants from public sector programmes	Annual	10	Economic Development
Number of businesses or potential entrepreneurs/ new start-ups signposted to support programmes and events to facilitate growth	Annual	50 minimum	Economic Development
Number of businesses engaged with in the district to support growth and retention of local people	Annual	12	Economic Development
QUALITY HOMES AND INFRASTRUCTURE			
Numbers of new homes built within the district	Annual	622 homes	Strategy, Policy and Performance
Number of homelessness approaches (includes Triage, Prevention, Relief & Decision cases)	Monthly	No Target	Housing Service
Percentage of homelessness approaches closed as 'homelessness prevented'	Monthly	4%	Housing Service
Average number of rough sleepers in the period	Monthly	<6	Housing Service

Average number of households in Bed and Breakfast Accommodation	Monthly	0	Housing Service
Average number of households in Temporary Accommodation	Monthly	<35	Housing Service
Long-term Empty Homes brought back into use	Annual	70	Housing Service
Affordable homes delivered by the Council and its partners	Annual	80	Housing Service
Affordable homes for low cost home ownership delivered by the Council and its partners	Annual	32	Housing Service
Private sector homes improved as a result of intervention by the Council	Annual	200	Housing Service
Council home new builds and acquisitions started on site	Annual	20	Housing Service
Percentage of properties that meet the decent homes standard	Annual	99%	Housing Service
Properties with a valid LGSR	Monthly	100%	Housing Service
Blocks with a valid Fire Risk Assessment	Monthly	100%	Housing Service
Blocks with a valid Legionella Risk Assessment	Monthly	100%	Housing Service
Blocks with valid (in date) Electrical Certificate (EICR)	Monthly	100%	Housing Service
Domestic properties with a valid (in date) EICR	Monthly	100%	Housing Service
Properties Asbestos compliant (Communal)	Monthly	100%	Housing Service
Insurance visits completed on communal lifts (LOLER)	Monthly	100%	Housing Service

% of major planning applications to be determined within statutory period including any agreed extension of time	Quarterly	60%	Development Management
% of minor applications to be determined within the statutory period including any agreed extension of time	Quarterly	70%	Development Management
% of other planning applications to be determined within statutory period including any agreed extension of time	Quarterly	85%	Development Management
TRANSPARENT, STABLE, ACCOUNTABLE & ACCESSIBLE			
Council tax collection	Annual	97.3%	Revenue and Benefits
Business Rates collection rate	Annual	97.5%	Corporate Debt
Increase take up of MyAccount and online transactions	Annually	8%	Systems Development
All Freedom of Information / Environmental information Requests to be responded to within the statutory period of (20 working days or lawful extension).	Monthly	90%	Democratic Services and Information Governance
All Subject Access Request responses to be provided within the statutory period (1 calendar month or lawful extension).	Monthly	90%	Democratic Services and Information Governance
Percentage of data breaches assessed within 72 hours to decide if it is reportable to the ICO.	Monthly	100%	Democratic Services and Information Governance
Percentage of reportable data breaches that were submitted to the ICO within 72 hours.	Monthly	100%	Democratic Services and Information Governance
Lifeline - Number of calls answered within 60 seconds	Monthly	97.5%	Lifeline
Lifeline - Number of calls answered within 180 seconds	Monthly	99.00%	Lifeline

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This Report will be made public on 4 July 2023



Report Number **C/23/12**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Status: Non key
Responsible Officer: Amandeep Khroud, Assistant Director of Governance, Law and Service Delivery
Cabinet Member: Councillor Fuller, Cabinet Member for Resident Engagement and Accountability

SUBJECT: INFORMATION GOVERNANCE – DATA BREACHES

SUMMARY: At the meeting of the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee held on 7 March 2023, the Sub-Committee recommended that a report be brought before Cabinet to provide detail around the reported data breaches, and the measures put in place in order to prevent further breaches going forward. On 24 March 2023, Cabinet endorsed this recommendation.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet are asked to note the report in order to offer reassurance that the authority is taking measures to reduce the number of data breaches.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/23/12.

1. **BACKGROUND**

1.1 On 7 March 2023, the Key Performance Indicators for the third quarter of 2022/23 were reported to the Finance and Performance Scrutiny Sub-Committee. The Sub-Committee raised concerns around the reporting of data breaches.

1.2 The relevant performance figures, as well as the more recent figures for the fourth quarter and end-of-year position commentary, are shown in the table below:

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
All Subject Access Request responses to be provided within the statutory period (1 calendar month or lawful extension).	70.59% 12/17	66.67% 6/9	77.78% 7/9	61.54% 8/13	90% (Monthly)	28.95% (Average) 11/38	68.75% (Average) 33/59	X

1.3 The number of subject access requests (SARs) responded to over 2021/22 has shown significant improvement when compared with the previous financial year.

1.4 The resignation of one Case Officer and the subsequent appointment of another Case Officer into the Information Governance Specialist’s role has had an impact on request turnaround times from Q3 onwards, particularly in the month of November. A new Case Officer was 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.

Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Percentage of data breaches assessed within 72 hours to decide if it is reportable to the ICO.	77% 10/13	70% 7/10	46% 6/13	67% 10/15	100% (Monthly)	100% (Average) 15/15	65% (Average) 33/51	X
Description	Q1 Actual 2022-23	Q2 Actual 2022-23	Q3 Actual 2022-23	Q4 Actual 2022-23	Target	2021-22 Comparison	2022-23 Summary	Target Met
Percentage of reportable data breaches that were submitted to the ICO within 72 hours.	n/a (no major breaches)	50% 1/2	0% 0/1	0% 0/1	100% (Monthly)	100% (Average) 4/4	25% (Average) 1/4	X

- 1.5 During this financial year, a new Specialist has been appointed from the Case Management team. They have been providing both resource and training to assist with improving overall resilience within Case Management. Furthermore, general InfGov training is ongoing with several members of Case Management (Corporate Services) involved, which will enable the Specialist to focus on work within their own queue, as they are currently providing ongoing resilience to the Case Management team whilst a new case officer is training.
- 1.6 Over the 2022/23 financial year, the new Specialist has been working with the Case Management Team Leader and Case Management Lead to bring more awareness to staff on what data breaches are and the importance of reporting them. This was in response to the discovery of several unreported breaches, which officers failed to report as they didn't recognise them as such. More training and education has been pushed through, and this has led to an increase in the amount of reports that are being reported.
- 1.7 In 2022/23, the information governance team have been notified of 51 breaches, four of which met the threshold to report to the ICO. A full breakdown of all reported breaches is shown at Appendix 1.
- 1.8 Whilst there has been an increase in these breaches being reported, these haven't been meeting the target for them to be assessed within 72 hours, over the 2022/23 financial year. This is largely down to service areas and individual officers not reporting them to the Information Governance Team promptly, with some still not being reported at all, or from the report being delayed through using the incorrect channels. This directly impacts the KPI for reports made to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) within 72 hours, as the report is sometimes only made to the Information Governance Team once 72 has already passed. As the number of

breaches having to be reported is so low, missing the target for one of these drastically will often affect the KPI by 100%.

- 1.9 Most breaches that are occurring are minor, and are occurring through human error. This is usually through an officer accidentally entering the wrong contact to send emails to. Something else that seems to be occurring is where previously an officer has amended the contact address on the Council tax system, and general correspondence is subsequently sent to the incorrect address. In each instance here, the officer's line manager had a one to one meeting with them; explaining what they did wrong, how to avoid it in future and exactly why it's so important. Line managers will then usually hold a team meeting where they discuss how to avoid data breaches through their specific roles.
- 1.10 As a response to officers sending emails to the wrong recipient, a warning was added to Outlook earlier in the year which alerts officers if they are sending an email to anyone outside of the council domain. However, many emails are sent through the Salesforce system, and this safeguard cannot be applied within the system.
- 1.11 Officers will make small errors in their day-to-day work, and no amount of training will ever eliminate the potential for human error. The team have fairly recently been pushing data breach awareness amongst all staff, it would seem that the increase in cases is simply due to the breaches being recognised and reported; rather than being dismissed as an easy mistake. If we were receiving numbers of breach reports that were as low as previously, this would be of greater concern.
- 1.12 Although there is more awareness within the Council now, there is still some work to be done with staff so that they recognise the urgency of the situation, to enable cases to be assessed within the statutory 72 hours. The Specialist has started to arrange additional training that will be supplied to individual teams during their monthly meetings. A training session for all management has been arranged to take place in October 2023. Further to this, we are looking to include additional education for all colleagues during a segment of a future staff briefing meeting.
- 1.13 The Specialist has found that most breaches occur when officers accidentally enter and select the incorrect email address or postal address when sending correspondence to a resident. The issues have continued to be raised with managers, and council-wide emails sent out to reiterate that all Council officers hold responsibility for assisting the Information Governance Team with investigating data breaches. It is our aim to make breach identifying and reporting second nature to officers, and not something to feel concerned about. Breaches will happen for as long as humans are there to make human errors, and that it's important that the instances are logged internally when it does occur. In the odd event where a breach occurs through other means, these are used to fine tune the general training provided and to streamline processes; to try to prevent them occurring again.

- 1.14 Currently, every member of staff is required to undertake annual GDPR e-learning training, and pass a test to demonstrate that they have understood the material. At present, 15% of staff have not recently carried out the GDPR training. This can be for reasons such as officers being on maternity leave or long-term sick leave. The new e-learning system enables managers to check officer progress against e-learning and it is the responsibility of managers to ensure that officers reporting to them complete the required e-learning training.
- 1.15 In addition, in December 2022 the Case Management Lead (Corporate Services) provided some additional training to the Customer Services Team. Officer training will be ongoing in the form of a presentation and Q&A session from the Information Governance Specialist. The training will cover how to spot a data breach, the importance of speed, how to report them and what the implications for the council may be. In addition, a more targeted approach will be taken to training. This involves identifying those teams with a higher rate of data breaches, using the new reporting features on Salesforce and raising awareness with those services with further education from the Specialist.
- 1.16 The main concern is the delay between officers becoming aware of a breach, and it actually being reported to the Information Governance team. This is the main factor with cases that aren't assessed within 72 hours of the council becoming aware of the breach, and subsequently being reported to the ICO within 72 hours (if needed). Each time this happens, the Information Governance Specialist will discuss this with the officer's line manager to ask that the sense of urgency is conveyed. This is reiterated to service area leaders when breaches are being investigated. This was included in a council-wide email, and subsequent reminder of the reporting process via Salesforce.
- 1.17 There have been several Council-wide 'reminder' emails from Information Governance management and senior colleagues over this period (and before) surrounding the importance of reporting data breaches, which has then resulted in breaches being reported more frequently. There is certainly more awareness surrounding them, which is positive. The team are working to make the thought of discussing potential data breaches less daunting, so that officers are confident and comfortable enough to report them. There has been a clear increase in data breach related calls and queries being sent to the specialist. Encouraging the comfortable discussion of these is vital in ensuring that they are reported as quickly as possible. This may also be a factor in the increase in reports being made.
- 1.18 The Specialist has begun working on several report features within the Salesforce CRM system used for cases – this should enable us to be able to run instant reports that will flag any areas and directorates within the Council who are frequently responsible for late breach reports or for failing to recognise them. Focused training can then be offered to these teams. We are also starting to record 'near misses' where there was the potential for a breach to occur, so that they can be used as opportunities to learn from. An example of the new report features can be seen at Appendix 2 to this report.

- 1.19 Overall, Information Governance is working in the most collaborative, organised, and effective way that it ever has, despite the loss of vital resource from the Case Management Team. Given time, the Case Management Team will be more knowledgeable, self-sufficient, and resilient, which in turn will enable the Specialist to focus on their own workload fully. As awareness continues to spread through the Council, as will staff's knowledge surrounding data breach reporting. We expect to see both an increase in reports and an increase in willingness from colleagues, which in turn will lead to KPI targets being met.
- 1.20 It should be noted that the information governance team are a high profile team within the organisation who face exceptional scrutiny and high work pressures, and cases are becoming increasingly complex. There is a tight labour market in terms of the information governance skillset and this presents a risk to the council.
- 1.21 Elected Members also have a responsibility in reporting data breaches. Given that there a number of newer Members following the election, training on this responsibility, and how breaches should be reported will be offered in due course.
- 1.22 An internal Corporate Governance Group has been set up recently, with the remit of critical friend and facilitator on governance and risk based questions. The group incorporates all chief officers and other key officers within the organisation. They will receive regular reports on information governance issues such as organisational data breaches, enabling more robust corporate scrutiny.

2. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 2.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Non compliance, subsequent risk of financial penalty from the ICO.	High	Low	Continue to ensure compliance with ICO requirements within the information governance team. Continue to offer ongoing targeted training for teams with a high number of data breaches.
Resourcing and retention of skilled staff	High	Medium	Ongoing support to be offered to information governance team officers.
Reputational risk if a serious breach were to be reported	High	Medium	Continue to ensure awareness around the consequences of data breaches, and provide

			ongoing training to officers.
Likelihood of further data breaches	High	High	Regular reminders to be given to council officers on the importance of reporting breaches as soon as they happen, in order to meet ICO deadlines.

3. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

3.1 Legal Officer's Comments (AK)

The potential legal issues are covered in the main body of the report. It is vital that all officers exercise caution when handling data and any breaches are reported to the Information Governance team without delay so that appropriate action can be taken.

3.2 Finance Officer's Comments (TM)

There are no finance implications relating to this report.

3.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)

There are no equality and diversity issues directly arising from this report.

3.4 Climate Change Implications (OF)

There are no climate implications arising from this report.

4. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

Jemma West
 Democratic Services Senior Specialist
 01303 853369, Jemma.west@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Zoe Law
 Case Management Lead (Corporate Services)
 01303 853241, zoe.law@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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

None.

Appendix 1 - Full breakdown of all reported breaches
Appendix 2 – Example of the new reporting features referenced at paragraph 1.18

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Case Detailed Status ↑	Subject	Reportable to ICO?	Assessed within 72 hours
Breach not reported	00083123 DB - Council Tax Letter Sent to Incorrect Address	No	No
	00086740 DB - Inappropriate Disclosure of Internal Job Application to Applicant's Manager	No	Yes
	00086881 DB - Incorrect email address provided by applicant	No	No
	00093174 DB - Letters incorrectly printed double sided	No	Yes
	00093764 DB - MyAccount Council Tax Data Disclosure to Father of Resident	No	No
	00096522 DB - Canvass details sent to incorrect parties due to issue with UPRNs	No	Yes
	00098201 DB - Planning Letter Sent to Incorrect Business	No	Yes
	00098511 DB - DPA Form Sent to Incorrect Authority	No	No
	00102125 DB - Incorrect Name Applied to Council Tax Letter	No	No
	00104073 DB - Double Sided Remittance Sent to Incorrect Customer	No	Yes
	00107639 DB - Resident's Letter Sent to Ex-Partner At Previous Address	No	Yes
	00110200 DB - 14 Customer's D/D Confirmations Posted to Resident - Ctax Ref - 12275339	No	No
	00111055 DB - Balance Letter Sent to Incorrect Customer	No	No
	00111377 DB - Parking Query Correspondence Sent to Resident Instead of Council Officer	No	No
	00111650 DB - AoE Letter Sent to Incorrect Workplace Twice	No	No
	00112469 DB - Liability Order Letter Emailed to Ex-Partner With New Address	No	No
	00112932 DB - Email Sent to Personal Inbox Instead of Work Inbox	No	No
	00114781 DB - Council Tax Letter Sent to Incorrect Address	No	No
	00114894 DB - Council Tax Bill Sent to Wrong Resident	No	No
	00117548 DB - Lost Work Laptop	No	No
	00121467 DB - Unredacted Document Sent to Requester & WhatDoTheyKnow.com	No	No
	00122318 DB - Receipt Sent to Incorrect Recipient	No	Yes
	00125576 DB - Council Tax Details Emailed to Unrelated Party	No	Yes
	00128013 DB - Social Worker of Resident Told Namesake's DoB in Call	No	Yes
	00128874 DB - Business Rates Customer Email Sent to Container Renting Company	No	Yes
	00129745 DB - Housing Options Email Sent to Incorrectly Spelled Address	No	Yes
	00130044 DB - Officer Name Left Unredacted on Public Planning Portal	No	Yes
Subtotal	Sum	0	12
	Count	27	
Breach reported	00098967 DB - Unredacted Spreadsheet of Residents in Temporary Accommodation Released Under FOI	Yes	No
	00095055 DB - Double printed letter	Yes	No
	00114988 DB - Corporate Debt Emails Sent to Resident Instead of Council Officer Over Year	Yes	No
	00129786 DB - Unredacted Planning Application Made Live on Public Register	Yes	No
Subtotal	Sum	4	0
	Count	4	
Ineligible	00083186 DB - Confidential Comments Published to Planning Applications	No	No
	00128030 DB - Safeguarding Details Shared Between RTC & FHDC	No	Yes
	00100364 DB - Fraud Investigator Confirmed Maiden Name of Resident with Neighbour	No	No
	00106233 DB - Accusation of Disclosure of Resident's Data by Officer to Neighbour	No	No
	00110795 DB - Documentation Posted to Customer	No	No
	00112421 DB - Meeting Invite Emailed to Wrong Contact	No	Yes
	00114863 DB - Email Sent to Incorrect Spelling of Resident Email Address	No	No
	00122956 DB - Licensing Objection Comment Quoted on Kent Online	No	No
	00128572 DB - Complainants Name Given to Complaint Subject By Officer	No	No
Subtotal	Sum	0	2
	Count	9	
Recorded as Near Miss	00087622 DB - Email address CC'd in error	No	No

		000086138 DB - Salesforce email sent to wrong recipient due to autofill error	No	Yes
		00090174 DB - Allotment Query Accidentally Sent to & Published on WhatDoTheyKnow.com	No	No
		00092100 DB - Council Tax Letter Sent to Incorrect Resident of Same Name	No	No
		00092844 DB - Housing Tenancy Letters Sent With Incorrect Names	No	No
		00093017 DB - Incorrect Address Used for Company RE: Council Tax Accounts	No	No
		00093449 DB - iTrent Password Reset Error	No	No
		00095083 DB - NNDR Data Sent to Personal Email Address	No	No
		00126480 DB - DPA Request Sent to Officer's Personal Email	No	Yes
		00130120 DB - Payment Receipt Sent to Misspelled Email Address	No	Yes
		00130555 DB - Email Chain Forwarded to Officer's Personal Address	No	Yes
Subtotal	Sum		0	5
	Count	11		
Total	Sum		4	19
	Count	51		

Appendix 2

Data Breaches 2023/24

As of 2023-07-03 15:30:40 Greenwich Mean Time/GMT • Generated by Information Governance & Data Protection Specialist • Sorted by Subject (Ascending)

Filtered By
 Date Field: Opened Date equals Custom (01/04/2023 to 31/03/2024)
 Show: All cases
 Units: Days
 Subtype equals Data Breaches
 Subject does not contain DUPLICATE
 Subject does not contain SPAM

Subtype ↑	Case Detailed Status ↑	Date/Time Opened	Subject	Assessed within 72 hours	Overdue Due to Service Area	Reportable to ICO?	Directorate	Service Area
Data Breaches	Breach not reported (minor breach)	06/04/2023 12:15	00131966 DB - New Beach Hut Tenant Details Sent to Previous Tenant	Yes	No	No	Strategy, Policy & Performance	Legal
		22/05/2023 14:48	00138217 DB - Parking Response Letter Sent to Incorrect PCN Challenger	Yes	No	No	Place	Case Management (Place)
		25/05/2023 11:07	00138789 DB - Flyposting Letter Posted to Wrong Address	No	Yes	No	Place	Case Management (Place)
		30/05/2023 12:34	00139313 DB - Social Housing Addresses Disclosed Through FOI Request	Yes	No	No	Corporate Services	Case Management (Corporate Services)
		08/06/2023 14:28	00140992 DB - Unredacted Planning Comment Published to Online Public Portal	Yes	No	No	Place	Case Management (Place)
		14/06/2023 10:13	00141853 DB - Third Party Database of Residents Hacked/Stolen/Compromised	No	Yes	No	Corporate Services	Finance
		23/06/2023 13:00	00143315 DB - Assumption of Liability Uploaded to Public Planning Portal	No	Yes	No	Place	Case Management (Place)
Subtotal	Sum			4	3	0		
	Count	7						
Ineligible (not a breach)		06/06/2023 13:11	00140514 DB - Council Tax Letter Potentially Sent to Incorrect Address	Yes	No	No	Corporate Services	R&B
		12/06/2023 16:22	00141493 DB - General Parking Services Correspondence Sent to Wrong Spelling of Email	Yes	No	No	Place	Customer Services
Subtotal	Sum			2	0	0		
	Count	2						
Recorded as Near Miss (Not a breach)		25/04/2023 09:54	00134398 DB - Real Customer Details Used to Test New System	Yes	No	No	Place	Case Management (Place)
Subtotal	Sum			1	0	0		
	Count	1						
Subtotal	Sum			7	3	0		
	Count	10						
Total	Sum			7	3	0		
	Count	10						

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This Report will be made public on 4 July 2023



Report Number **C/23/16**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Status: Non key decision
Responsible Officer: Andy Blaszkowicz – Director, Housing & Operations
Cabinet Member: Cllr Jim Martin – Leader of the Council

SUBJECT: PRINCES PARADE HOARDING - NEXT STEPS

SUMMARY:

This report seeks Cabinet approval to allocate funds from the existing Princes Parade implementation budget to scope out the steps required to remove the hoarding from the site.

This report also informs Cabinet of the associated immediate actions that need to be addressed following their express desire to re-scope the place-shaping activities on the site.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

The new administration has expressed their desire to remove the site hoardings as soon as practicable, and to consult with the community and their representatives on the end-uses for the Princes Parade site. As a first step officers need to procure the necessary technical input to report on the ground conditions to specify the actions and costs required to remove the hoardings to re-open part / all of the site to the public.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/23/16.
2. To agree that the environmental and cost estimate reports are funded from the existing Princes Parade implementation budget for 2023/24, in order that the implications of removing the hoarding are fully understood.
3. To authorise the Director of Housing & Operations to terminate any unnecessary contracts outlined in section 4 of the report and negotiate exit fees.
4. To agree that as the analysis concludes, the Leader with consultation with the portfolio holders for finance and for communities, will consider a report which will outline the implications, required actions, costs and budget available to remove the hoarding and consultation next steps.
5. To note that a further report will be prepared for Cabinet in due course following the public engagement on the options for the future use of the site.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In December 2022 cabinet agreed to pause the Princes Parade project and just to do the necessary works to implement the planning permission (C/22/73).
- 1.2 In May 2023, the new administration immediately made their intentions clear to “save” the site and the Leader subsequently agreed (report A/23/02) to the submission of a non-material amendment application to the LPA to extend the implementation date by 3 years. This extension of time provides opportunity for the new Administration to reconsider options and allow engagement with the community and their representatives on the future uses of the site before further formal decisions are made.
- 1.3 The Administration has also made it clear that they would like the hoarding removed as soon as practicable. As the council is aware that contaminants exist it is not immediately possible to remove the hoardings without fuller consideration of how the site can be made safe for public access, or partial access.

2. REMOVAL OF HOARDING

- 2.1 To inform the next steps an environmental consultant will need to be procured and commissioned to analyse the existing ground conditions at Princes Parade informed by the recent investigations for the leisure centre project. The scope of that work will consider two broad options for opening up the site:
 - i) full public access; or
 - ii) site partially fenced with a chestnut-pale type fence for example, with only the existing footpath through and around the perimeter of the site made available.
- 2.2 A cost estimate report carried out by a quantity surveyor will need to be instructed from the budget and will form part of the work following receipt of the environmental report.
- 2.3 The ground conditions report, including necessary costed actions, will importantly include a risk assessment to advise the Council on the remediation and mitigation of contamination necessary in order to meet the requirements of Part IIA of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- 2.4 The cost of the consultancy work (Environmental Consultant and Quantity Surveyor) outlined above (paragraphs 2.1-2.3) can be accommodated within the current approved budget for the implementation of the planning permission for Princes Parade as agreed in Report C/22/73. To date £157,940 has been spent from the £250,000 budget approved for 2023/24 leaving a figure of £92,060 available to carry the necessary works.
- 2.5 A quotation for removing the hoarding was obtained in December 2022 and the estimated cost was £100K. At that time the company who installed the

hoarding stated that they would be prepared to buy back the hoarding from the Council at 15% (£47K) of the original purchase cost. This quotation will need to be updated as the hoarding is now older and in a worse condition than at the time of the quotation.

- 2.6 Budget would also need to be made available if chestnut-pale type fencing is to be installed around part or all of the site. All works would need to be procured in line with the council's procedures should this be the supported course of action.
- 2.7 Permission from Historic England will need to be obtained for any of the new fence structure that is within the boundaries of the Royal Military Canal. Consent is required to erect fencing within the scheduled monument area and for any activity or excavations greater than 100mm depth within the scheduled monument boundary.
- 2.8 An Individual Decision Notice report will be prepared for the Leader with consultation with the portfolio holders for finance and for communities, which will outline the implications, required actions, costs and budget available to remove the hoarding and erect a new fence.
- 2.9 It is anticipated that costs associated with the removal of the hoarding and erection of a new fence will be met from the existing capital budget.

3. FUTURE OPTIONS & PUBLIC CONSULTATION

- 3.1 Following the immediate work outlined in section 2, officers will then work closely with Members to prepare an engagement plan to consult with the public for the future use of the site. These proposals will be detailed in the Individual Decision Notice Report prepared for the Leader as set out in paragraph 2.8.
- 3.2 In due course when the initial work has been completed and the Council has feedback from the community a further report will be brought back to Cabinet to consider the future options for the site.

4. FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

- 4.1 The following immediate consequences of reconsidering the uses of the Princes Parade site are outlined below. Cabinet is advised that until such time that formal decisions are made, the full financial implications of the wider capital project spend to date remains unclear.
- 4.2 **Southern Water** – Southern Water have delayed their programme on site by 12 months, but still have works currently programmed to commence at Princes Parade in October 2023. They are currently storing pipes elsewhere on behalf of the Council at a cost of £1,704.23 a month until the contract is terminated. This contract will need to be terminated and a settlement figure negotiated.
- 4.3 **UKPN** – Termination of the contract will have price increase implications for any infrastructure that may be required if future electrical capacity is required

to the site. In the absence of any clear plan, this contract will need to be terminated.

- 4.4 **Land Agent** - Agent fees will be due for work to date carried out on behalf of the Council to negotiate the sale of land to the Developer at Princes Parade and South Road. These are circa 1% of the agreed purchase costs - £98,500 for Princes Parade and £61,450 for South Road. Officers will negotiate the fees payable with the land agent.
- 4.5 **BAM and Faithful & Gould Contracts** – These are currently on hold and will need to be terminated.
- 4.6 **Housing Developer** – The developer will need to be formally advised that the Council is reviewing its intentions for the site. The developer has a current live reserved matters application with the Local Planning Authority which has incurred significant cost to them.
- 4.7 **Seapoint Canoe Centre** – The council will need to formally advise the Seapoint Canoe Centre (SCC) that it is reviewing its intentions for the site. There will be implications if the concrete platform and retaining wall as part of the Princes Parade project is not provided. This will have consequences for Seapoint Centre as the concrete foundations will not be constructed for their proposed new building. The SCC's accommodation was also temporarily relocated within the site but connections to water and electricity have not been provided, meaning the old containers are unable to be disposed of until the new containers are connected. This situation will need to be resolved and it may have financial implications for the council to consider.
- 4.8 **Hythe Pool** – ongoing maintenance requirements will need to be assessed and considered against budget assumptions in the MTFS. Budget implications will be included as part of the next steps considerations.
- 4.9 **Seapoint play area** – the timber play area is reaching the end of its life and the play equipment requires replacement. This was due to be replaced as part of the wider Princes Parade project and is classed as a Priority Play Area in the Council's Play Area Strategy. There is currently no budget set aside for this outside of the wider Princes Parade budget and the implications will be considered as part of the next steps considerations.
- 4.10 **Seapoint Car Park** – the car park surface requires maintenance, a new parking meter is required to be brought into line with meters across the district that accept card payments, and EV charging points will need to be installed (works currently on hold awaiting the new car park construction). Again, the budget implications will be considered as part of the next steps considerations.
- 4.11 **Brownfield Land Release Fund** – the grant of £2m will need to be returned to government if the site is not released by the council for housing. This will be considered as the options for the future of the site are considered, and government colleagues advised accordingly.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

5.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Implications of the Environmental Protection Act are not fully understood	High	Medium	Commission independent environmental report to understand the level of remediation required in order to open the whole / part of the site for public access.
Options for future use of the site not affordable by the Council	High	High	Employ a cost consultant / Quantity Surveyor to cost the recommendations of the Environment Report and consider associated cost implications.

6. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

6.1 Legal Officer's Comments (NM):

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. However, as set out in the report, there are consequences in terminating the project and Legal Services will assist as and when required with the various points raised.

6.2 Finance Officer's Comments (DL):

The cost of the consultancy work (Environmental Consultant and Quantity Surveyor) outlined in this report (paragraphs 2.1-2.3) can be accommodated within the current approved budget for the implementation of the planning permission for Princes Parade as agreed in Report C/22/73. To date £157,940 has been spent from the £250,000 budget approved for 2023/24 leaving a figure of £92,060 available to carry the necessary works.

6.2 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE):

There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report. Any future decision on the use of the site will be subject to public engagement with the community at the appropriate time.

6.4 Climate Change Implications (OF):

There are no climate implications arising from this report however reports and proposals arising from the ground conditions survey to be carried out will need to be assessed for any climate implications as applicable.

7. 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 and Operations

Telephone: 01303 853684

Email: Andy.Blaszkowicz@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 4 July 2023



Report Number **C/23/10**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12th July 2023
Status: Key decision
Responsible Officer: David Whittington Strategy & Policy Senior Specialist
Cabinet Member: Cllr Stephen Scoffham, Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment and Biodiversity & Cllr Jim Martin, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Otterpool Park and Planning Policy

SUBJECT: GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

SUMMARY:

The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy is an evidence base document for the local plan and other future planning documents, as well as being a material consideration for planning applications. It could also provide information for other initiatives and joint working.

The Strategy has been subject to engagement and consultation with specific groups, organisations and Councillors since work commenced and this led to the publication of a Priorities and Opportunities Summary document for a final district wide consultation earlier in the year.

This report provides a summary of the representations received and the proposed changes to the Strategy.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

So that Cabinet can approve the proposed changes and the use of the documents as part of the Local Plans evidence base. The documents may also be used to identify joint working opportunities and to prioritise future actions.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/23/10.
2. That Cabinet approves:
 - i) The proposed changes to the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy (see Section 4); and
 - ii) The use of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and the draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Priorities and Opportunities Summary document as set out in Section 5.

1. BACKGROUND

1.1 Many environmental features make up green infrastructure, such as parks, gardens and allotments. This also includes water environments (termed 'blue infrastructure'). An important feature of green and blue infrastructure is that networks are strategically planned and that spaces and places are connected. Some green and blue infrastructure is publicly accessible, but it does not need to be accessible to be valuable.

1.2 The importance of green and blue infrastructure in planning is set out in Government policy and guidance. This has been reflected in the Council's own planning policy documents such as the Core Strategy Review and the Places and Policies Local Plan as well as other council documents such as the Corporate Plan and Carbon Action Plan. These are summarised below.

Government Policy

1.3 Positive planning for green infrastructure is a requirement of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Paragraph 20 of the NPPF sets out that strategic planning policies should:

“set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for ... d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation.”

1.4 The development of Green Infrastructure Standards was a core commitment of the Government's 25 Year Environment Plan. Natural England have developed a comprehensive Green Infrastructure Framework which includes principles, standards, maps, process journeys and a planning and design guide. Mandatory biodiversity net gain, as set out in the 2021 Environment Act, will be applied in England through amending the Town and Country Planning Act (TCPA). The Government has stated that this will apply from November 2023 for developments in the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, unless exempt. It will apply to small sites from April 2024.

1.5 Also established under the Environment Act were Local Nature Recovery Strategies. This provides the opportunity to deliver an ecologically coherent and landscape scale, strategic approach to nature recovery. The Council is a partner in the LNRS that is being developed by Kent County Council. The Act establishes two mechanisms to support the delivery of local nature recovery strategies:

- mandatory biodiversity net gain
- a strengthened biodiversity duty on public authorities

The strategies will identify where action to achieve net gain will have the most impact and encourage action in these locations through the way net gain is calculated. All public authorities will also have to have regard to relevant local nature recovery strategies under the strengthened biodiversity duty.

Development Plan Policies

- 1.6 A range of green and blue infrastructure priorities have been identified in the Council's Development Plan documents, the Core Strategy Review and the Places and Policies Local Plan (PPLP). The principal policies in the Core Strategy Review are CSD4 Green Infrastructure of Natural Networks, Open Spaces and Recreation and Policy CSD5 - Water and Coastal Environmental Management.
- 1.7 Green infrastructure is also fundamental to the proposed new garden settlement which is recognised by the Core Strategy Review in policies SS7 New Garden Settlement – Place Shaping Principles and Policy SS8 New Garden Settlement – Sustainability and Healthy New Town Principles.
- 1.8 In the Places and Policies Local Plan the relevant policies are Policy NE1 - Enhancing and Managing Access to the Natural Environment; Policy NE2 - Biodiversity; and Policy NE3 - Protecting the District's Landscapes and Countryside.

Corporate Plan & Carbon Action Plan

- 1.9 Green and blue infrastructure are important to the service ambitions of the Corporate Plan 2021-30: Creating Tomorrow Together, particularly 'A thriving environment' as well as the Corporate Plan's guiding principles of a 'Greener Folkestone and Hythe', 'Locally distinctive' and 'Working effectively with partners'.
- 1.10 The Corporate Action Plan 2021-24 includes 'Ensure a clean, attractive and safe environment for residents, visitors and businesses', 'Improving cycling and walking routes', 'Take positive measures to encourage biodiversity' and 'Ensure the Garden Town is developed in a sustainable way in line with the agreed Otterpool Park Charter'.
- 1.11 Action 33 in the Carbon Action Plan is to complete this Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy. The Priorities and Opportunities that have been identified in the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy also provide natural solutions to meeting the challenges of climate change.

2. SUMMARY OF THE GREEN & BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

- 2.1 Consultants were commissioned to work on an update of the 2011 Green Infrastructure Plan. They carried out a comprehensive evidence-gathering exercise which was followed by an analysis that included mapped datasets and the review of documents and strategies, from both Folkestone and Hythe and other organisations.
- 2.2 The Strategy sets out the district's strategic network of green and blue infrastructure and provides an assessment of the needs and opportunities, strategic priorities and future actions. It provides evidence to support spatial planning in the district. The summary is backed up by a more detailed Main Report.

2.3 Five evidence areas are described and assessed in the Strategy. These are:

- Biodiversity, trees and woodlands;
- Access, recreation and active travel;
- Health and wellbeing;
- Blue infrastructure and the coast; and
- Landscape character and heritage.

2.4 Each area includes a section on “Drivers of Change, Pressures and Threats” followed by a section on “Needs, Opportunities and Priorities”. The latter section sets out the projects and opportunities which would apply across the whole district and which are not confined to a particular geographic area.

2.5 The Strategy also considers the areas of the district and in this section the priorities and actions are examined in more detail. The areas reflect the Character Areas in the Core Strategy:

- Folkestone & Hythe Town;
- Romney Marsh; and
- The North Downs.

Key findings of the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy

2.6 The key findings of the Strategy were:

- Due to the variety and extent of important habitats the district supports many specialised and rare species, such as Turtle Doves and Chalk Grassland Orchids;
- Green infrastructure is important in supporting a landscape-scale or ‘nature network’ approach, through securing biodiversity value in a planned way. Green infrastructure also helps to bring nature into urban centres, which also connects people with wildlife;
- Overall, Folkestone and Hythe’s tree canopy is around 8% of its area, less than half of the Kent average of 17%. There is a distinct north-south divide in the district. Romney Marsh ward was reported as having the lowest level of canopy, at 1.1%. However, given the history and character of the area this is to be expected;
- Climate Change vulnerability mapping by Natural England indicates that the fragmented, wetland and low-lying habitats around Romney Marsh are highly vulnerable;
- Development has been identified as the greatest pressure on Kent habitats, through loss of land and increased population. This pressure can be mitigated through obligations on developers to deliver biodiversity net gain;
- The location of new development, especially larger developments, will increase recreational use in new areas of the district;
- The transport corridor of the M20/A20, rail line and Channel Tunnel Rail Link is a significant barrier to access for Folkestone and other settlements to the south;
- Safety is an important consideration for users. Overgrown areas, poor sight lines, vandalism and litter can increase perceptions of lack of safety;

- Evidence shows that spending time in nature is also good for mental wellbeing.

2.7 The Strategy sets out fifteen 'strategic priorities'. These are:

Protect, enhance and improve the core biodiversity sites and take action for priority species. <small>(ref. BTW 1)</small>	Create an ecologically resilient network to join habitats, allow species to move and to help nature adapt to climate change. <small>(ref. BTW 2)</small>	Link people and nature. <small>(ref. BTW 3)</small>	Adapt and mitigate for climate change impacts. <small>(ref. BTW 4)</small>
Ensure development is sustainable. <small>(ref. BTW 5)</small>	Ensure that greenspace provision keeps pace with population growth and provides for Folkestone and Hythe's future residents. <small>(ref. AR 1)</small>	Support increased active travel, to relieve congestion and air pollution and encourage healthy living through a strategic cycle network and walking routes. <small>(ref. AR 2)</small>	Maximise the benefits of recreation and access to Folkestone and Hythe's unique landscapes and greenspaces, whilst ensuring that this does not have a negative impact on them, their special character or their biodiversity. <small>(ref. AR 3)</small>
Support people in taking healthy exercise and engaging in nature for both their physical and mental health. <small>(ref. HW 1)</small>	Provide access to green infrastructure close to home and which is inclusive for all. <small>(ref. HW 2)</small>	Initiate local evidence-informed research to understand the impact that accessible greenspace has on local health outcomes, especially for disadvantaged groups. <small>(ref. HW 3)</small>	Protect water resources and protect and enhance the biodiversity value of water and wetland habitats. <small>(ref. BIC 1)</small>
Incorporate SuDs schemes into new development and retrofit into existing green infrastructure where such an approach is appropriate to help address flooding issues. <small>(ref. BIC 2)</small>	Strengthen and reinforce landscape character and ensure green and blue infrastructure enhances and fits with local landscape character. <small>(ref. LH 1)</small>	Ensure heritage is recognised in green infrastructure planning, interpretation, and tourism. <small>(Ref. LH 2)</small>	

2.8 Priorities and opportunities are then identified for each of the strategic priorities. These are set out after each of the subject sections in a table. As these are wide ranging, there are a number that are not within the control of the district council and will need to be delivered in partnership or by other organisations.

2.9 To stress that the council cannot deliver the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy on its own, actions are set out according to the following coding:

- **A** – Actions within the control of Folkestone & Hythe District Council.
- **B** - Priorities within the scope of influence of F&HDC. Potential to be delivered by other organisations or in partnership with F&HDC.
- **C** – Priorities of importance in the district but not in control of F&HDC. Delivered by other organisations.

3. STAKEHOLDER AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

3.1 At the start of the study, questionnaires were sent to parish councils and organisations (including statutory bodies). This was followed by virtual workshops and meetings to explore green and blue infrastructure priorities with stakeholders, parish & town councils and district councillors. The findings from the workshops and the consultation responses were used to shape the draft Strategy.

- 3.2 A draft version of the document was the subject of a ‘focused’ consultation with parish and town councils and other organisations in 2022. The summary document was produced as a response to representations during that consultation.
- 3.3 The next stage in the process was to publish the Priorities and Opportunities Summary document for public consultation to seek the views of residents, groups and organisations. This took place earlier this year. The purpose of the consultation was to identify which actions should be prioritised, to identify joint working opportunities with other organisations and to foster public ownership of the document so that individuals may be inspired to undertake their own actions.
- 3.4 The next section of this report summaries the responses to the consultation and proposes the next steps. **Appendix A** sets out the responses and the proposed Council responses to them.

4. RESULTS OF THE CONSULTATION ON THE PRIORITIES AND OPPORTUNITIES SUMMARY DOCUMENT

4.1 The Council received 52 responses from 20 individuals, organisations and groups. Overall comments were supportive and complimentary. Public bodies, such as Highways England and the Coastal Communities Body, were generally supportive and were open to joint working on any project that may come forward. Southern Water suggested some changes to reflect specific design criteria for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and building design. Kent County Council was also supportive overall but suggested a number of minor amendments on a range of issues including Public Rights of Way (PROW) and Heritage. Some individuals, whilst supportive, expressed some scepticism about the council meeting the objectives. Comments received included:

- The ‘delivery’ aspect needs further explanation.
- Targets should be produced.
- Past council decisions do not align with the recommendations.
- Maybe over ambitious as a strategy.
- Domestic gardens are key but have largely been ignored in the report.
- Business parks need to be considered, not just residential.
- More trees should be planted as part of planning applications.
- Has it been produced independently from other areas of the council? For example, Otterpool is only mentioned twice.
- A very important omission is the older generations, especially those in their seventies and beyond.
- Active Travel is positive but has a fundamental flaw in that it needs to address the issue of the vehicle.
- Use less concrete in the pavilion at Dymchurch.
- Certain actions in Romney Marsh could apply to the two other character areas.

4.2 Suggested projects were:

- Create a new Linear Walkway along the old Harbour Line Railway.
- As a resident that contributes to the cost of maintaining a communal garden on the Leas (which are all owned by the Folkestone Estate) I would be pleased to help with engagement with local residents and the Folkestone Estate to improve the gardens for wildlife.
- Pent stream has not been identified, and the potential for FHDC to enhance and restore parts of the stream and its corridor have not been acknowledged.
- To significantly enhance the ecology of the Lower Radnor Park site, and un-culvert watercourses in some other greenspaces, creating some floodplain habitats.

Proposed Changes

- 4.3 Following the consideration of the comments, only minor changes are proposed. **Appendix A** sets out the proposed responses against each of the comments.
- 4.4 As a summary, the changes relate to:
- Adding references and further information relating to clean beaches and bathing water quality;
 - Adding reference to the potential for trees and greening of industrial areas;
 - Add reference to the current (2021-2024) National Lottery Heritage Fund project Kent's Magnificent Moths in the main report;
 - Amending text commenting on the drainage network to reflect Southern Water's suggestion;
 - Clarifying issues with SuDS, such as heritage features (KCC);
 - Add a sentence to highlight heritage and health benefits (KCC).
 - Adding reference to the Pent Stream.
 - Adding cross-references to Kent County Council's guidance on Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
- 4.5 It is also proposed to review the actions listed and rationalise them, taking out any duplication.
- 4.6 The following points, raised through the consultation, are particularly highlighted for comment:
- **Delivery** - Several of the representations made related to delivery. Many of the actions identified in the Strategy within the remit of the Council are mainly covered by planning policy (such as provision of open spaces in new development) or through the maintenance of council owned land, so should be within the council's power to implement or influence. However, further discussions would have to take place with other organisations to see how joint or independent actions could be met. The potential for Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding is also raised in the council's responses to the consultation comments; this is identified in the district's Infrastructure Schedule (November 2022) but would need to be balanced against other infrastructure demands.

- **Targets** - Related to delivery is the setting of targets. The Environment Act sets targets for biodiversity net gain that new developments will have to meet. In addition, the emerging Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which is being undertaken by the Kent Nature Partnership, is likely to set targets the council could use for the G&BIS. Targets for the council's own land could be explored with the grounds maintenance team, subject to the budget and operational demands. However, as the strategy is a high-level document encompassing the work of many different stakeholders, it is not considered feasible to introduce targets at this stage (for example, hectares of land restored or kilometres of waterway stabilised through planting).
- **Pent Stream** - The issue of the Pent Stream was not raised in earlier consultations but has been highlighted by two respondents during this recent consultation. There are instances of flooding from the Pent Stream and it is a Rapid Response Catchment and, therefore, there are wider issues. It is proposed to add reference to the Pent Stream as a potential project for further investigation. However, as any green infrastructure flood alleviation measures would need the agreement of a wide range of stakeholders, including the Environment Agency, Kent County Council, Parish and Town Councils, landowners and others, it is considered that it would not be possible to be more definitive in the current strategy.
- **Southern Water** - The final issue to raise is that Southern Water has requested that Action BIC 1.3 – should be moved from C to B delivery category which moves it into an area where FHDC have influence. BIC1.3 is to:

'Achieve good status for watercourses. This includes a range of actions - improve fish passage, naturalise hard engineered riverbanks, reduce silt and enrichment from agriculture, improve highway runoff.'

It is suggested that this action should remain in category C as the council has limited influence on this; Kent County Council is the highways authority and lead local flood authority, Southern Water has statutory duties, landowners and the Environment Agency will also be major stakeholders.

5 HOW THE DOCUMENT WILL BE USED.

- 5.1 **Appendix B** sets out the final Strategy document (new text is highlighted in yellow). It will be used to identify projects to support the development strategy identified in the Development Plan. It will also be an evidence document which developers can draw upon when they are considering new proposals (therefore it will be a material consideration).
- 5.2 It may also be used to allocate funding from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) for local, parish council-led schemes, as well as district-wide schemes, using relevant district or parish council CIL funding streams. (The emerging Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy is referenced in the draft

CIL Infrastructure Schedule recently consulted on as part of the review of the council's Community Infrastructure Levy Revised Draft Charging Schedule (2022.)

- 5.3 In the longer term it is proposed to use the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy as the basis for a new Supplementary Planning Document to provide detailed guidance. It will also form the evidence base for the next local plan, which the team are in the early stages of preparing evidence for. The Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, currently before Parliament, will require local planning authorities to produce design codes as part of the government's planning reforms. National guidance states that design codes should cover networks of spaces, open space provision, working with water, sustainable drainage, biodiversity net gain, street trees and other elements of green and blue infrastructure, which the strategy can support. The strategy can also be used as an evidence base document for other council strategies such as the developing District-wide Carbon Action Plan.
- 5.4 It is proposed that the strategy will be monitored through the Authority Monitoring Report, which the strategy team publishes annually, and through the Climate & Ecological Emergency Working Group.

6. OPTIONS

- 6.1 The Strategy is an evidence base document for the Council's development plan and other future guidance documents. It is also a document that could help the evidence for other Council documents and strategies, such as the developing District-wide Carbon Action Plan. The options to consider are:
- i. Do not adopt the Strategy; or
 - ii. Adopt the Strategy.
- 6.2 The Strategy is both referred to with the Local Plan as well as being an evidence base document; to not adopt it would therefore have an impact on the delivery of the Natural Environment policies. The Strategy has been subject to consultation with Council Members, parish and town councils and specific groups and organisations, including statutory bodies. Although not a statutory document given the comprehensive consultation it carries significant weight in its own right.
- 6.3 It will enable the Council to focus efforts to enhance the natural environment including biodiversity where the most gains can be made and where the need is greatest. The Strategy through the consultation is imbued with a sense of ownership of the document by the stakeholders that took part in the various consultation exercises. The extensive evidence gathering forms the basis for the Council to engage in further work on green and blue infrastructure, subject to resources, and provides opportunities for further community engagement.
- 6.4 The documents also provide a mechanism for the Council to enact the new requirements placed upon it by the Environment Act in the most cost-effective way where they can most benefit the natural environment of the district as well as its community.

6.5 For these reasons it is recommended that the council adopt the Strategy, the second option.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

7.1 There is not a great deal of risk management involved with the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy. A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
That the strategy has limited impact on the green and blue infrastructure in the district	high	medium	<p>Consultation will help foster ownership with the public.</p> <p>Identifying and working with partners would ensure successful implementation.</p> <p>Using the strategy for general evidence for planning applications and for basis of a future Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).</p>

8. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

8.1 Legal Officer’s Comments

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. (NM)

8.2 Finance Officer’s Comments

There are no financial implications at present (RH)

8.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications

There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report. The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy will be subjected to a public consultation, if agreed by Cabinet to encourage a wider range of views on the ‘priorities and opportunities’ documented within strategy. The council should ensure suitable awareness is raised of the public consultation through its communication channels at the appropriate time. (GE)

8.4 Climate Change Implications (HS)

The issue of climate change is considered throughout the Green & Blue Infrastructure Action Plan both in terms of as a driver of change and potential solutions. It helps to identify natural solutions to the various impact

of climate change and as such contributes both to the aims of the reducing the Council's and District's carbon emissions to net zero by 2030.

9. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

Hazel Sargent Strategy & Policy Specialist
Telephone: 01303 853318
Email: hazel.sargent@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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

Appendices:

Appendix A: Comments on the Priorities and Actions Summary Document and Council Responses

Appendix B: Copy of proposed final draft of the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Priorities and Opportunities Summary document (new text is highlighted).

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ID	Organisation Details	What does your comment relate to? - Which Section does your comments relate to?	Which Action - Please state which 'Priority and Opportunities' would you like to comment on?	Your Representation - Please write your comments below.	Response and action
4	Regional Planning Lead Southern Water	Introduction		<p>We support Folkestone & Hythe's development of a Blue Green Infrastructure Strategy. Having reviewed this with interest, Southern Water confirms that we support the majority of content.</p> <p>As you may be aware, Southern Water is progressing consultations on the Water Resources Management Plan and the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan*, both of which have natural overlaps with this Blue Green Infrastructure Strategy. There are also links to the CSO pathfinders work we are progressing. There will clearly be some opportunities for co-development and funding across these overlaps. We have therefore provided a few comments below in the hope that these are helpful to you in finalising the Strategy.</p> <p>* https://www.southernwater.co.uk/our-story/water-resources-management-plan/wrmp24-survey https://www.southernwater.co.uk/dwmp https://www.southernwater.co.uk/our-performance/storm-overflows</p> <p>Page 2 Strategic Priorities Report (p3 of the Main report): Might clean beaches and bathing water quality be captured somewhere here?</p> <p>Page 6 of main report: Map specific opportunities for the use of 'nature-based solutions' to wider environmental problems like flooding, climate change mitigation and adaptation or poor water quality - Southern Water's DWMP team shared the attached map should this help you identify some of the opportunities for rainwater separation. Please also see - https://www.southernwater.co.uk/our-performance/storm-overflows/pathfinder-projects.</p>	<p>Reference to clean beaches and bathing water quality to be added in Main Report.</p> <p>Further information on Southern Water's Water Resources Management Plan and the Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan to be added to Main Report for completeness.</p> <p>To be referenced in Priorities and Opportunities Report as appropriate.</p> <p>Pathfinder projects noted as potential projects - although none currently within F&HD. These types of projects were discussed with KCC flood management team and potential is identified with an action to further develop this approach.</p>
14	Local resident	Introduction		<p>I appreciate it is a very ambitious strategy which is great but I wonder whether it is really feasible. Since moving to this area ten years ago I have read many strategies from all levels of local government and many seem to come to little or nothing because of lack of commitment, management and governance. This one is very important and I hope it succeeds, maybe there needs to be something in the Introduction to assure people of the Council's commitment.</p> <p>Although a strategy I feel there is a need to explain how things will be achieved ie who is going to implement the actions required and who is going to ensure they happen. Like so many strategies there is little or nothing said about the importance of residents/public playing their part. This is such an important matter for which everybody needs to take responsibility in some way and whilst I note mention is made of engagement I feel residents and community groups especially need to be invited to be actively involved in any discussions, plan making and activities - they should play their part in achieving the actions identified Shouldn't the sea/coast be shown as Blue Infrastructure also? There are historical assets in the sea and on the shoreline, as well as wildlife and these should be covered also.</p> <p>Many parishes and towns have their own strategies/plans as does KCC eg New Romney Socio-Economic Plan which covers some of the areas/topics mentions - I feel it is important that there is joined up activity/thinking to avoid duplication and waste of resources/time/finances.</p> <p>Page 4 - mention is made of supporting people but nothing about involving people, letting people take some responsibility - I see this as a strategic priority - community groups exist who already make efforts to improve the environment bu planting trees, shrubs and plants and they take advantage of the schemes set up by the likes of the Woodland Trust and others offering free packs of trees/shrubs - these groups should be involved, encouraged, supported as should schools and clubs/organisations like scouts, cubs and beavers - mention is made of developers and SuDs but nothing about providing trees on streets and gardens and yet the district has a below average tree canopy, especially on The Marsh - I see this as a strategic priority - it would be good to see an education programme aimed at adults and children especially so that they understand what is going on, the importance of doing something, and what they can do to help the environment and their own health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>BTW3 contains a set of actions which relate to getting people involved in delivery of the GBI strategy, but these are also included throughout, for example FHS2.7, FHS2.16, which cover the points raised. Gardens are referenced in action FHS 2.1, FHS 2.7, RM9, BTW 3.8, BTW5.2, HW 1.6, therefore are covered fairly comprehensively. The sea and coast is included, but more fully in the evidence report.</p> <p>Further information will be included as per comment on bathing waters and reference to Marine Protected Areas within the Priorities and Opportunties Summary document.</p> <p>Street trees are included in action FHS2.4, but are the responsibility of KCC.</p>
34	Local resident	Biodiversity, Trees & Woodlands	Needs, Opportunities and Priorities- Biodiversity, Trees and Woodlands BTW 2.6 - Recommendation	<p>BTW 2.6 - Seek to create mosaics and overall abundance of wildlife alongside the protection of specific habitats and species. Recommended change: BTW 2.6 - Seek to create mosaics and overall abundance of wildlife including in gardens and business parks/industrial estates alongside the protection of specific habitats and species .</p> <p>Gardens Domestic gardens are a key repository of biodiversity but have largely been ignored in this report. Minimalist garden designers, laziness and lack of education are all factors resulting in many gardens being covered with hard standing. This trend needs to be reversed and the Council has a part to play in both educating and actions via the planning system.</p> <p>Business Parks/Industrial Estates Mini Forests Business Parks/Industrial Estates are in the main vast slabs of hard standing. There is no reason for the absence of trees and hedges on these sites. Research in Australia has shown that it is not so much connected wildlife corridors that are necessary but well sited staging posts for flora and fauna. This is sufficient to enable species to function. Industrial Estates have a part to play. When they are being designed from scratch they should include areas set aside for tennis court sized Mini Forests [1] and provide for hedges on the periphery. This would provide staging posts on the site itself. Buildings should be designed around these pocket sized areas and any changes to the site, similarly. On established Industrial Parks there are tennis sized pockets of land available on some sites and the Council, through the planning process, should ensure that these pockets are used for planting. Not only would this enhance biodiversity, it would make the estates better places to work, while for the tenants/owners Mini Forests have the advantage of being low maintenance. Tennis court sized Mini Forests have been grown in inner London on tiny portions of land [2] , albeit that some of these have been in public parks (most recent at Eel Brook Common and Normand Park in Fulham [3]). By being both first mover in a region and specifically targeting Industrial estates - this would provide good publicity for the Council. It is also the type of initiative that could be supported by corporate sponsorship, as is the case in central London.</p> <p>[1] https://earthwatch.org.uk/get-involved/tiny-forest?gclid=EAlaIqobChMIherRoZvH_AIVBe3tCh1pRQsvEAAAYASAAEgIffvD_BwE https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/article/why-tiny-forests-are-popping-up-in-big-cities [2] https://www.timeout.com/london/news/a-mini-forest-is-being-planted-in-the-middle-of-chelsea-102121 [3] https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/articles/news/2022/03/two-more-tiny-forests-come-fulham.</p>	<p>Gardens are referenced in action FHS 2.1, FHS 2.7, RM9, BTW 3.8, BTW5.2, HW 1.6, therefore are covered fairly comprehensively.</p> <p>Industrial areas are included in BIC 2.2 in relation to SuDS schemes but not in relation to trees.</p> <p>Reference to the potential for trees and greening of industrial areas to be included.</p>

10	Local resident	Biodiversity, Trees & Woodlands	Biodiversity, Trees and Woodland section of Priorities and Opportunities Summary p8. Reference to Special Species p32-33. FHS 1.3; FHS 2.1; FHS2.6 Biodiversity, trees and Woodlands section of Main Report p23 Notable Species	Both the Summary document and the Main Report are welcomed and supported. They provide a well laid-out and clear explanation of the needs, opportunities and priorities, as well as setting out excellent details and clarity on the areas for action and key delivery necessary to address the fundamental challenges presented across the District. Biodiversity, Trees and Woodland section of Priorities and Opportunities Summary p8. Reference to Special Species Under the paragraph on the Sussex Emerald moth, a more general reference should be made to the current (2021-2024) National Lottery Heritage Fund project Kent's Magnificent Moths, led by Butterfly Conservation. This is focusing on helping to save and celebrate some of the UK rarest and most beautiful moths that are still present in East Kent (East Kent supports a nationally important assemblage of some of UK's rarest moth species). As well as the Sussex Emerald, other rare moth species recorded in the F&HDC area include Marsh Mallow moth on Dungeness. Under the paragraph on the Short-haired Bumblebee, it would be more correct to say that the reintroduction of the Short-haired bumblebee appears not to have been successful (as of 2022). However, the project has produced evidence to show successes in restoring and enhancing pollinator habitat which appear to be benefitting several other UK rare and vulnerable bumblebee species, for which Romney Marsh and Dungeness are regarded a national stronghold. p32-33. FHS 1.3; FHS 2.1; FHS2.6 Strong support is given to the priorities and opportunities where reference is made to pollinator corridors, pollinator habitats and encouraging people and organisations to take action for pollinators. One of the targets of Kent's Plan Bee - Kent County Council's Pollinator Action Plan - is to encourage and support Kent's District and Borough Councils to produce and deliver their own Pollinator Action Plan. The Priorities and Opportunities Summary could make a commitment to produce such a Pollinator Action Plan for Folkestone and Hythe District, which could strongly support the overall delivery of the F&HDC Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. Biodiversity, trees and Woodlands section of Main Report. p23 Notable Species Paragraph under Sussex Emerald Moth - as above - "a more general reference should be made to the current (2021-2024) National Lottery Heritage Fund project Kent's Magnificent Moths, led by Butterfly Conservation. This is focusing on helping to save and celebrate some of the UK's rarest and most beautiful moths that are still present in East Kent (East Kent supports a nationally important assemblage of some of UK's rarest moth species). As well as the Sussex Emerald, other species recorded in the F&HDC area include Marsh Mallow moth on Dungeness." p34 Reference to Buglife's B-Lines project is welcomed.	Support for the GBI strategy is noted. Kent's Magnificent Moths to be added - specific projects are contained in the Main Report due to space restrictions in Priorities and Opportunities Report. The need for a pollinator network in the Otterpool development is contained in Core Strategy 2022 Policy SS7 and is included in Policy NE2 (Biodiversity) and the supporting text of the Places and Policies Local Plan 2020. A Pollinator Action Plan may be appropriate in the future following further information arising from the forthcoming Local Nature Recovery Strategy developed by the Kent Nature Partnership.
36	Kent Country Council	Access, Recreation and Active Travel	Public Rights of Way (PROW): The County Council welcomes the positive incorporation of the PROW network within the Strategy and is supportive of the relevant policies and objectives that are included. In respect of page 15, KCC would request that the Strategy is amended to include reference to the PROW network as an integral part of the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). The County Council would also request the inclusion of the active travel opportunities and countryside access provided by the PROW network.	Page 15, role of PROW in active travel to be added.	
5	Regional Planning Lead Southern Water	Blue Infrastructure and the Coast	We would like to comment on some text on page 82 and 'Priority and Opportunities' BIC1 and BIC2 Needs, Opportunities and Priorities Blue Infrastructure and the Coast (p24 of the Priorities and Opportunities Summary, p84-85 of the Main report) - BIC1 research has shown that quality of watercourses is largely affected by diffuse sources, and as local authority responsibilities include land and highways drainage, we see BIC1.3 (below) as partly within Folkestone & Hythe's influence. As such the Delivery of this should perhaps be categorised as 'B' rather than 'C'? In addition, local authorities might also influence instances of property misconnections (for example of foul drainage to surface water sewers) that can also affect watercourse quality. 'BIC1.3 - Achieve good status for watercourses. This includes a range of actions - improve fish passage, naturalise hard engineered riverbanks, reduce silt and enrichment from agriculture, improve highway runoff.' BIC2 - could the proposed SuDS commitments eg ' <i>incorporate SuDS schemes into new development and retrofit into existing green infrastructure where such an approach is appropriate to help address flooding issues</i> ' be strengthened with the following additions: - ' <i>Rainwater for new developments will not be connected to the existing foul/combined sewer system</i> ' - ' <i>We will work with utility partners to encourage property owners to disconnect rainwater at source from foul water system</i> ' - ' <i>We will progressively increase the green areas in the urban areas to reduce rainwater runoff that causes flooding and discharges from storm overflows to protect homes and businesses and local rivers and the sea</i> ' and - ' <i>We will encourage all developers to design in green roofs and water saving measures to create sustainable homes</i> '.	Page 82 of the main report - please could we amend the following sentence as suggested 'An increased frequency of intense rainfall events due to climate change, combined with a drainage network that quickly reaches capacity, will lead to <u>more rapid and</u> more frequent <u>overloading of the drainage network and localised flooding</u> .' Page 82 - will amend to 'An increased frequency of intense rainfall events due to climate change will lead to more rapid and more frequent overloading of the drainage network and localised flooding.' The council considers that it is appropriate that this action remains within the 'C' category. Kent County Council is the highways authority with responsibility for highways drainage and the lead local flood authority for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS). Southern Water is investigating misconnections through GIS analysis and is refining a prioritised list of opportunities based on its analysis. While the council will assist other organisations where it has the powers and resources to do so, we consider that these actions are primarily within the remit of other organisations. Places & Policies Local Plan Policy CC3: Sustainable Drainage Systems sets out general principles for sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) that cover some of the points raised here. More detailed guidance is provided by Kent County Council, as the lead local flood authority, in its 'Masterplanning for SuDS' guide and in the 'Kent Design Guide – Making It Happen Sustainability (Drainage Systems)'. The council does not consider that it would be beneficial to repeat that guidance here, but we will amend the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy to refer to Kent County Council's detailed SuDS guidance.	
18	Local resident	Blue Infrastructure and the Coast	Page 22/23 - I sense a careful use of wording to avoid reference to the wastage of water due to old and burst water supply pipes and the perhaps illegal release of effluents into the waterways and sea - I feel this should be stated and qualified by saying that efforts will be made to support actions and work with those responsible to reduce and eliminate these issues Page 23 - again the public and communities are not involved - they are being encouraged to get out and about, cycling and walking, and they are likely to notice issues, and could be encouraged to be on look out - they should be encouraged to report issues and participate in achieving desired outcomes.	Reference to clean beaches and bathing water quality to be added, as per comment 4. Old pipes and illegal discharge beyond scope of this strategy.	
40	Kent Country Council	Blue Infrastructure and the Coast	BIC 2 STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Incorporate SuDS schemes into new development and retrofit into existing green infrastructure where such an approach is appropriate to help address flooding issues Heritage Conservation: The County Council notes that SuDS may have both direct and indirect unintended adverse impacts on the historic environment. Direct impacts could include damage to known heritage assets, for example, if a historic drainage ditch is widened and deepened as part of SuDS works. Alternatively, they may directly impact on unknown assets such as when SuDS works damage buried archaeological remains. Indirect impacts are when the ground conditions are changed by SuDS works, thereby impacting on heritage assets. For example, using an area for water storage, or improving an area's drainage can change the moisture level in the local environment. Archaeological remains in particular are highly vulnerable to changing moisture levels which can accelerate the decay of organic remains and alter the chemical constituency of the soils. Historic buildings are often more vulnerable than modern buildings to flood damage to their foundations. When SuDS are planned, it is therefore important that the potential impact on the historic environment is fully considered and any unavoidable damage is mitigated. This is best secured by early consideration of the local historic environment following consultation with the Kent Historic Environment Record (HER) and by taking relevant expert advice. KCC has recently produced guidance for SuDS and the historic environment (Appendix A), which provides information about the potential impact of SuDS on the historic environment; the 4 range of mitigation measures available; and how developers should proceed if their schemes are believed likely to impact on heritage assets. The County Council would therefore advise that this guidance is taken into consideration when SuDS are planned.	Noted. The potential for damage to heritage features from SuDS will be added into the Main Report.	

39 Kent Country Council	Blue Infrastructure and the Coast	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)	Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS): The County Council, as Lead Local Flood Authority, is generally pleased with the contents of the Strategy, particularly the use of SuDS and seeking to maximise their use to improve and manage the risk of flooding, with the ancillary benefits these features can provide. In respect of page 23 of the document, which states, 'Green infrastructure assets are important areas in which to implement or retrofit SuDS', while KCC supports this principle as it promotes the use of SuDS, it should be emphasised that it is not only Green infrastructure assets where these features can be retrofitted. Certain SuDS features including rain gardens, specialised tree pits and permeable paved surfaces are particularly suited to retrofitting in urbanised areas, and the County Council would recommend that this is mentioned within the text. The Strategy seems to consider this when discussing the spatial areas on page 32, Folkestone town centre regeneration through the Place Plan should incorporate the recommended green and blue infrastructure elements to improve the public realm and make spaces more attractive, although the County Council would encourage the opportunity for the retrofitting of SuDS in the urban landscape to take advantage of the wider benefits they provide. KCC would appreciate the opportunity to attend any workshops or partnership working discussions that Folkestone and Hythe District Council may have in the future with regards to implementing any of the proposals mentioned in the Strategy from a SuDS viewpoint. The County Council would highlight the rain gardens that have been installed with Dolphins Road, Folkestone as an example of the possibilities that can be fitted within the urban environment.	As noted, tree pits, permeable paving is mentioned in Spatial Area actions, but will be made clearer in text as well. Need for Place Plan to incorporate GBI noted. Offer of partnership working and Dolphin Road project noted.
6 Kent Downs AONB	Landscape Character and Heritage	Page 93	Typo - under Environmental opportunities it should state 'Working in partnership with THE Kent Downs Area' of Outstanding Natural Beauty UNIT to identify management opportunities in accordance with their management plans. We would also comment that the Management Plan is the adopted plan of Folkestone and Hythe District Council for the management of the AONB, so would suggest amending 'their' to 'the'.	The Kent Downs AONB Unit' and THE Kent Downs AONB Management Plan amendments to be made.
41 Kent Country Council	Landscape Character and Heritage		Heritage Conservation : The text reviews the historic nature of the district's landscape and correctly highlights the contribution that heritage makes to its attractiveness. The combination of heritage and landscape has other benefits, however, and KCC recommends that these are mentioned in the text. In particular: Heritage can provide strong social and health benefits through improving quality of life and activities that encourage physical and mental health and well-being, reduce social exclusion and crime; and Heritage can provide a valuable educational resource that can contribute local context to curriculums at all stages and an available and accessible resource for local schools and colleges. The emerging Folkestone and Hythe Heritage Strategy reviews the heritage of the district and considers both its vulnerabilities (mostly arising from inappropriate development) and the place-making, economic and social benefits that could arise from managing it sensitively, including during green and blue infrastructure projects. It is therefore advised that the Heritage Strategy is referenced in this text. To fully appreciate Folkestone and Hythe's landscape character and incorporate it into Green infrastructure effectively, it is first important to understand it. The main method for investigating historic landscape character is by Historic Landscape Characterisation. This is a method of assessing the pattern of tracks, lanes, field boundaries and other features that comprise the historic character of the modern landscape. This has been completed for the Hoo Peninsula, but not for Folkestone and Hythe. The Kent Historic Landscape Characterisation (2001) has identified the broad historic character of the landscape of Kent but more detailed refinement is needed to bring the baseline data for Folkestone and Hythe up to a similar standard. The County Council would welcome further engagement on this matter.	Comments as highlighted will be added to the Main Report, and in summary to Priorities and Opportunities Report if room, to reference that - <i>Heritage can provide strong social and health benefits through improving quality of life and activities that encourage physical and mental health and well-being, reduce social exclusion and crime; and Heritage can provide a valuable educational resource that can contribute local context to curriculums at all stages and an available and accessible resource for local schools and colleges.</i> Heritage Strategy is comprehensively referenced in the Main Report. Not all source strategies can be referenced in the Priorities and Opportunities report. Request for more work on baseline Historic Landscape Characterisation noted.
21 Local resident	Folkestone Town, Hythe and Saltwood		Priorities and Opportunities - it would be good to see mention of collaborative thinking/action of the three tiers of local government to achieve the aims mentioned - much of what is said could apply to the other two spatial areas and vice versa.	There are several actions in Spatial Areas which are common to all of them and some are already included in the overarching actions contained within the topic themes. The Spatial Area and overarching theme actions will be reviewed to reduce duplication. Actions which are common to all Spatial Areas will be collated and presented as such.
19 Local resident	Romney Marsh		Priorities and Opportunities - it would be good to see mention of collaborative thinking/action of the three tiers of local government to achieve the aims mentioned - much of what is said could apply to the other two spatial areas and vice versa - reinstating hedgerows/trees and planting more to increase the canopy needs to be mentioned - need to consider ways of getting the older age groups more active and mobile as they probably account for most of the poor health - need to consider ways of looking after the older generations so that they feel more included, less isolated, cared for and respected - consider creating communities eg retirement villages to improve social contact and opportunity to get involved with nature and the environment - housing developments, existing and new, and all residential areas should have wildlife corridors to enable movement of wildlife eg frogs, toads, newts, hedgehogs etc	There are several actions in Spatial Areas which are common to all of them and some are already included in the overarching actions contained within the topic themes. The Spatial Area and overarching theme actions will be reviewed to reduce duplication. Actions which are common to all Spatial Areas will be collated and presented as such. Other comments noted. Provision of wildlife corridors in development is an area for planning policy.
35 Local resident	Romney Marsh	Needs, Opportunities and Priorities - Romney Marsh	There are 4 initiatives in this section characterised as (c) Low Actions whereas 3 should be classed as (B) Medium Actions as the Council certainly has a role to play. Action RM 13 is difficult to understand and needs rewording, albeit that the Ukraine war makes it unlikely that access will be provided to military ranges. The actions should also be more ambitious and there should be more of them. A number of the actions mentioned in Needs, Opportunities and Priorities in relation to Folkestone Town, Hythe and Saltwood should have their equivalent written into the Needs, Opportunities and Priorities for Romney Marsh, for example, FHS1.3, FHS1.4, FHS2.5, FHS2.6,FHS2.7,FHS2.16 and FHS2.17.	Four actions listed as 'C' category - RM 3 - PROW, see comment 43. RM 6 legacy of Fifth Continent - not a FHDC project or role, Kent Wildlife Trust project. RM12 - Golf courses - see next comment.RM 14 work with MOD. All are appropriately category C as not areas in which FHDC is involved or in which it has responsibility. No amendment. RM 13 Suggested amendment underlined to improve clarity - Provide more information in tourism material on the biodiversity value of the area and raise awareness <u>of the biodiversity interest and sensitivity of the area</u> with tourism businesses. Comment suggests the following from the Folkestone and Hythe Spatial Area are included for Romney Marsh. FHS 1.3 Improve biodiversity connections across this area through hedgerows, pollinator corridors and other measures appropriate to the landscape character. FHS 2.5 Incorporate biodiversity features in all parks in the urban area, including playing pitch areas, managed by Folkestone and Hythe District Council. FHS 2.6 Encourage increases in biodiversity in the significant green infrastructure assets which are privately owned, or which are schools ground, playing fields or cemeteries – for example through tree planting, wildflower areas, linkages for wildlife movement, pollinator areas and other measures. Foster collaborative improvements between landowners in areas which are identified as green corridors. FHS 2.7 Enthuse and engage residents to incorporate wildlife features into gardens, to install swift boxes and create hedgehog highways, and to appreciate value of wildflower and unown areas within the urban fabric. FHS 2.16 Engage with active community and environmental groups in this area to take forward projects and generate local ideas and increase environmental volunteering. FHS 2.17 Develop a green schools programme to increase wildlife, plant trees to increase shade, wildflower meadows, bird and bat boxes, bug houses and growing food, to increase awareness and engagement in the natural world and special wildlife of the area There are several actions in Spatial Areas, including these, which are common to all of them and some are already included in the overarching actions contained within the topic themes. The Spatial Area and overarching theme actions will be reviewed to reduce duplication. Actions which are common to all Spatial Areas will be collated and presented as such.
				Note - FHS 1.4 Ensure core biodiversity sites in good condition – Seabrook Stream SSSI, Lypnpe Escarpment SSSI, Saltwood Valley LWS, Paraker Wood and Seabrook Stream LWS and Folkswood LWS. Woodland as part of Shornclyffe. See next in reference to

RM 12 and Recommendation RM 12 - Work with golf courses to improve wildlife and pollinator habitats. This action should be changed to (B) Medium Actions and reworded:

RM 12 - Work with golf courses to improve wildlife and pollinator habitats and agree improvement targets for the next decade .

It should also be complemented with a new point similar to FHS1.4 -Let's call it RM 16 RM16

New Action RM16 - Ensure Dungeness, Romney Marsh and Rye Bay SSSI is in good condition

Note:

(a) The Focus should be on this large SSSI as its area covers the other core biodiversity sites in the area.

(b) The additional policy is required since the Dungeness Complex Sustainable Access and Recreation Management Strategy (2017) (SARMS) document is focussed primarily on access to the Dungeness Peninsular and the need to possibly restrict access to prevent damage to protected habitats - not damage arising from irresponsible management.

Comment:

Golf courses are an area in which the Council can have influence outside the planning process. The Council should be more actively supporting Natural England and using its 'soft power'.

For example, The Fifth Continent Landscape Partnership Scheme achieved little despite its laudable ambitions partly because it did not get the support it deserved from essential bodies in the area which punch ahead of their weight in terms of environment and heritage assets, such as Littlestone Golf Club. When the project started, the Council ought to have written to the Golf Club's management, first, to raise awareness of the project, but also to encourage the Golf Club to participate.

Without this support, the scheme manager and biodiversity officer of the Fifth Continent Project faced repeated refusals by Littlestone Golf Club's management to engage with them. This resulted in the Fifth Continent project failing to: (a) include the Golf Club in important environmental work and (b) the extensive history attached to this Golf Course being excluded from the Heritage aspect of the programme. For example, the Golf Club is inextricably linked to the history of Littlestone and was used extensively by previous Prime Ministers - all colour that adds to the historical narrative of Romney Marsh.

Littlestone Golf Course's management of the course from an environmental viewpoint has deteriorated markedly over the last decade, leading to a noticeable decline in biodiversity. The rough on the Club's two courses was covered in wildflowers but after years of saturation with herbicides many of the species have been almost wiped out. There has been wilful lying to Natural England about this spraying and management has misrepresented the advice given by Natural England to its members, both in respect to planning and other issues. By contrast major links courses which Littlestone Golf Club is attempting to emulate have nature stewardship programmes including Royal St George's at Sandwich, the most prestigious course in the region. Even Lydd Golf Club, considered inferior by Littlestone Golf Club, is undertaking work to improve biodiversity on the course.

RM9 and Recommendation

RM9 - Engage with local communities to take action for pollinators in the villages of the Marsh - on verges, gardens, churchyards and open spaces.

Reword to:

RM9 - Engage with local communities to take action for pollinators in the towns and villages of the Marsh - on verges, gardens, churchyards and open spaces.

Comment and Recommendations

Gardens are an important source of biodiversity - and in some cases, an important source of native orchids. This applies to the Littlestone Conservation Area which has historically been an important source of Autumn Ladies Tresses both in the gardens and on the verges. Their incidence is now dying fast because of gardening practices, mostly due to ignorance. There has also been wilful destruction of highly diverse mature gardens within this conservation area with change of ownership. This has at times occurred at the height of the bird nesting season.

The Council must play its part by implementing 'No Mow May' strategies for verges in the towns, villages and roads throughout the district and by informing residents about the reasons for the practice. It should also warn residents that it is an offence to disturb nesting birds Under the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981 (as amended) and that should residents wish to cut or remove shrubs and trees, this cannot be done during the bird nesting season which is the period from March 1st to July 31st.

Dissemination could be achieved by the Council sending relevant material to the heads of all Residents Associations (for further circulation) in the district, including Littlestone Conservation Area Residents Association (LCARA).

Another addition

RM17- Produce a Place Plan for improving biodiversity on Industrial Estates

Comment

New Romney industrial estate

This large estate has space and lends itself to mini forests and hedging on its periphery. It may in some cases be appropriate and preferred to let nature take its course on tennis court sized plots and allow them to fill with say bramble. Indeed, there are overgrown plots which should be considered for conservation purposes on this estate. The important thing is to have these small plots of biodiversity on site.

Comment re. setting targets against action 'RM12 - Work with golf courses to improve wildlife and pollinator habitats.' This is an 'C' action for FHDC. It is not in remit of FHDC to suggest that targets should be set for a landowner. The condition of the SSSI is the role of Natural England. No amendment.

Request for new action 'RM16 - ensure that core biodiversity sites are in good condition.' This is not needed in the Spatial Area actions as it is covered by action BTW 1 and the associated sub-actions. Duplications like this will be removed in the review of actions.

There are several actions in Spatial Areas which are common to all of them and some are already included in the overarching actions contained within the topic themes. The Spatial Area and overarching theme actions will be reviewed to reduce duplication. Actions which are common to all Spatial Areas will be collated and presented as such.

See above for response to comment re. working with golf course. No amendment.

Amendment to RM9 to include 'towns'.

Gardens are referenced in action FHS 2.1, FHS 2.7, RM9, BTW 3.8, BTW5.2, HW 1.6, therefore are covered fairly comprehensively.

As per comment 34, biodiversity inclusion in industrial estates to be added to Main Report as currently only relates to water quality / water runoff.

An additional action around improving industrial estates would need to be included for all areas. It would be more appropriate to include all businesses as other business premises have green and blue infrastructure. The role of business will be added to overarching theme actions under BTW3 'Linking people and nature'.

Comments around No Mow May noted.

Noted. To amend.

There are several actions in Spatial Areas which are common to all of them and some are already included in the overarching actions contained within the topic themes. The Spatial Area and overarching theme actions will be reviewed to reduce duplication. Actions which are common to all Spatial Areas will be collated and presented as such.

7 Kent Downs AONB The North Downs Page 119

Typo - Should read 'Sites of SPECIAL Scientific Interest' not 'Sites of Special Interest'.

22 Local resident The North Downs

Priorities and Opportunities - it would be good to see mention of collaborative thinking/action of the three tiers of local government to achieve the aims mentioned - much of what is said could apply to the other two spatial areas and vice versa

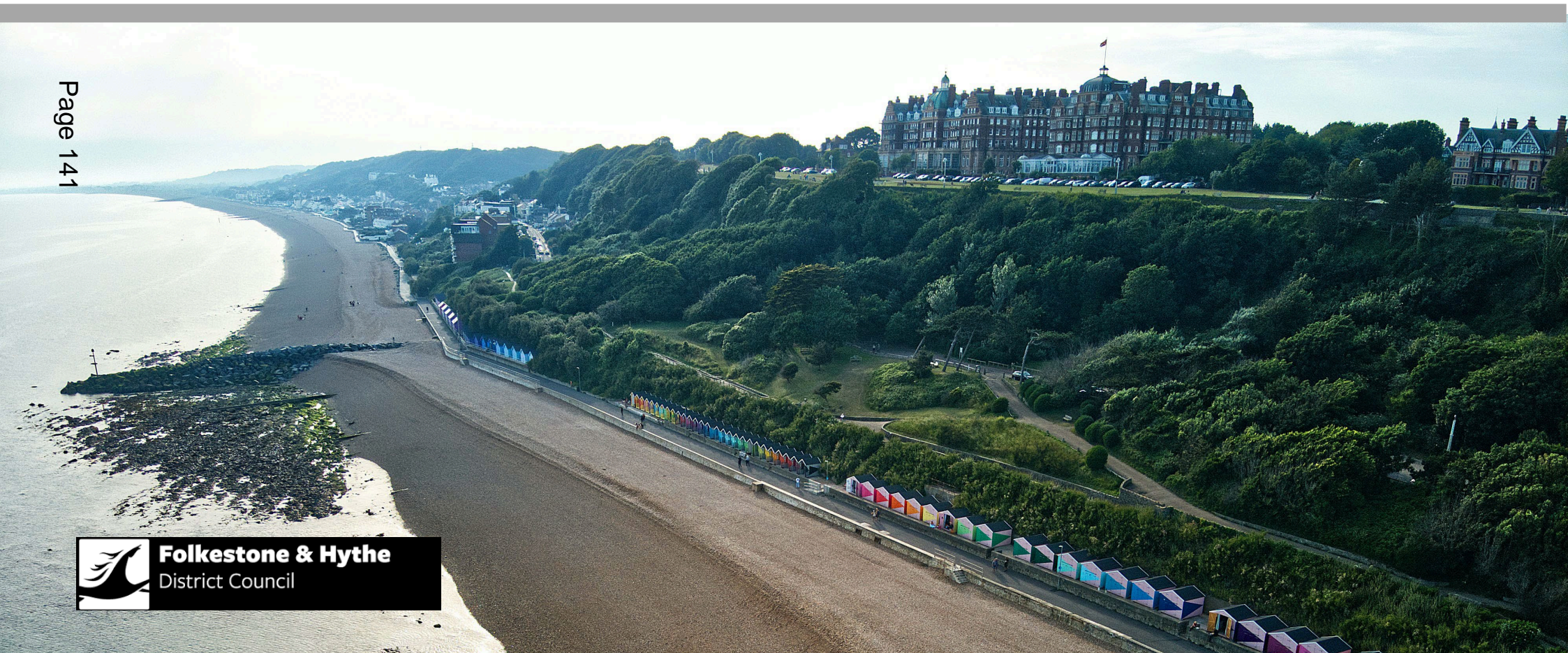
44 Kent Country Council	The North Downs	ND 14 Investigate natural solutions to flood management	Heritage Conservation: It should be noted that the extreme water movements involved in flood storage, and resulting waterlogging and drying sequences, could damage or even destroy heritage assets, whether built structures, landscape features or buried archaeological remains. KCC would welcome being consulted in advance of any proposed modifications.	Comment 40 along similar lines re. possible damage to heritage features from water and SuDS. Amendment to be made in Main Report.
8 Kent Downs AONB	The North Downs	ND1 Page 122	Typo 'Working in partnership with THE Kent Downs Area's' of Outstanding Natural Beauty to identify management opportunities in accordance with their management plan's . We would also comment that the Management Plan is the adopted plan of Folkestone and Hythe District Council for the management of the AONB, so would suggest amending 'their' to 'the'.	Noted. To amend.

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Folkestone and Hythe District Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Priorities and Opportunities Summary

June 2023 FINAL (CLT) v1.2

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Front cover - Folkestone





Introduction

About this Strategy

This is the summary document of the main report and has been created for the council's consultation on the identified priorities and opportunities. It summarises the main report, which sets out the district's strategic network of green and blue infrastructure and provides an assessment of the needs and opportunities, strategic priorities and future actions. The strategy provides evidence to support spatial planning in the district.

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The strategy is ambitious and not all actions can be delivered by Folkestone and Hythe District Council. Although this is a document produced by Folkestone and Hythe District Council, improving green and blue infrastructure will require action by many different organisations, groups, communities and individuals. The priorities and actions set out a broad ambition to improve green and blue infrastructure in Folkestone and Hythe district. Some of these can be delivered by Folkestone and Hythe District Council. However, many will need to be delivered in partnership or by other organisations, and many will require additional funding.

Five evidence areas are described and assessed - biodiversity, trees and woodlands; access, recreation and active travel; health and wellbeing; blue infrastructure and the coast and landscape

Dungeness
character and heritage. Strategic priorities (see next page) are set out for each of these themes. There are also priorities set out for three spatial areas – Folkestone town, Hythe and Saltwood, Romney Marsh and the North Downs.

What is Green and Blue Infrastructure?

Many environmental features make up green infrastructure including water environments (termed 'blue infrastructure'). An important feature of green infrastructure is that networks are strategically planned and that spaces and places are connected. Some green infrastructure is publicly accessible, but it does not need to be accessible to be valuable.

Each component part of green infrastructure has the potential to deliver wider benefits, including recreation, biodiversity, health, climate change mitigation and adaptation and water quality. When planned, designed and managed as a network, these benefits are maximised. Although this report is set out in themes, an important aspect of green infrastructure planning is to take a multidisciplinary approach and to seek opportunities which address issues across many areas.

Green and blue infrastructure networks cross local authority boundaries and this strategy considers biodiversity, strategic access routes, watercourses and other green and blue infrastructure across neighbouring authority boundaries.

Strategic Priorities for Green and Blue Infrastructure in Folkestone and Hythe District

Protect, enhance and improve the core biodiversity sites and take action for priority species.

(ref. BTW 1)

Create an ecologically resilient network to join habitats, allow species to move and to help nature adapt to climate change.

(ref. BTW 2)

Link people and nature.

(ref. BTW 3)

Adapt and mitigate for climate change impacts.

(ref. BTW 4)

Ensure development is sustainable.

(ref. BTW 5)

Ensure that greenspace provision keeps pace with population growth and provides for Folkestone and Hythe's future residents.

(ref. AR 1)

Support increased active travel, to relieve congestion and air pollution and encourage healthy living through a strategic cycle network and walking routes.

(ref. AR 2)

Maximise the benefits of recreation and access to Folkestone and Hythe's unique landscapes and greenspaces, whilst ensuring that this does not have a negative impact on them, their special character or their biodiversity. (ref. AR 3)

Support people in taking healthy exercise and engaging in nature for both their physical and mental health.

(ref. HW 1)

Provide access to green infrastructure close to home and which is inclusive for all.

(ref. HW 2)

Initiate local evidence-informed research to understand the impact that accessible greenspace has on local health outcomes, especially for disadvantaged groups.

(ref. HW 3)

Protect water resources and protect and enhance the biodiversity value of water and wetland habitats.

(ref. BIC 1)

Incorporate SuDs schemes into new development and retrofit into existing green infrastructure where such an approach is appropriate to help address flooding issues.

(ref. BIC 2)

Strengthen and reinforce landscape character and ensure green and blue infrastructure enhances and fits with local landscape character.

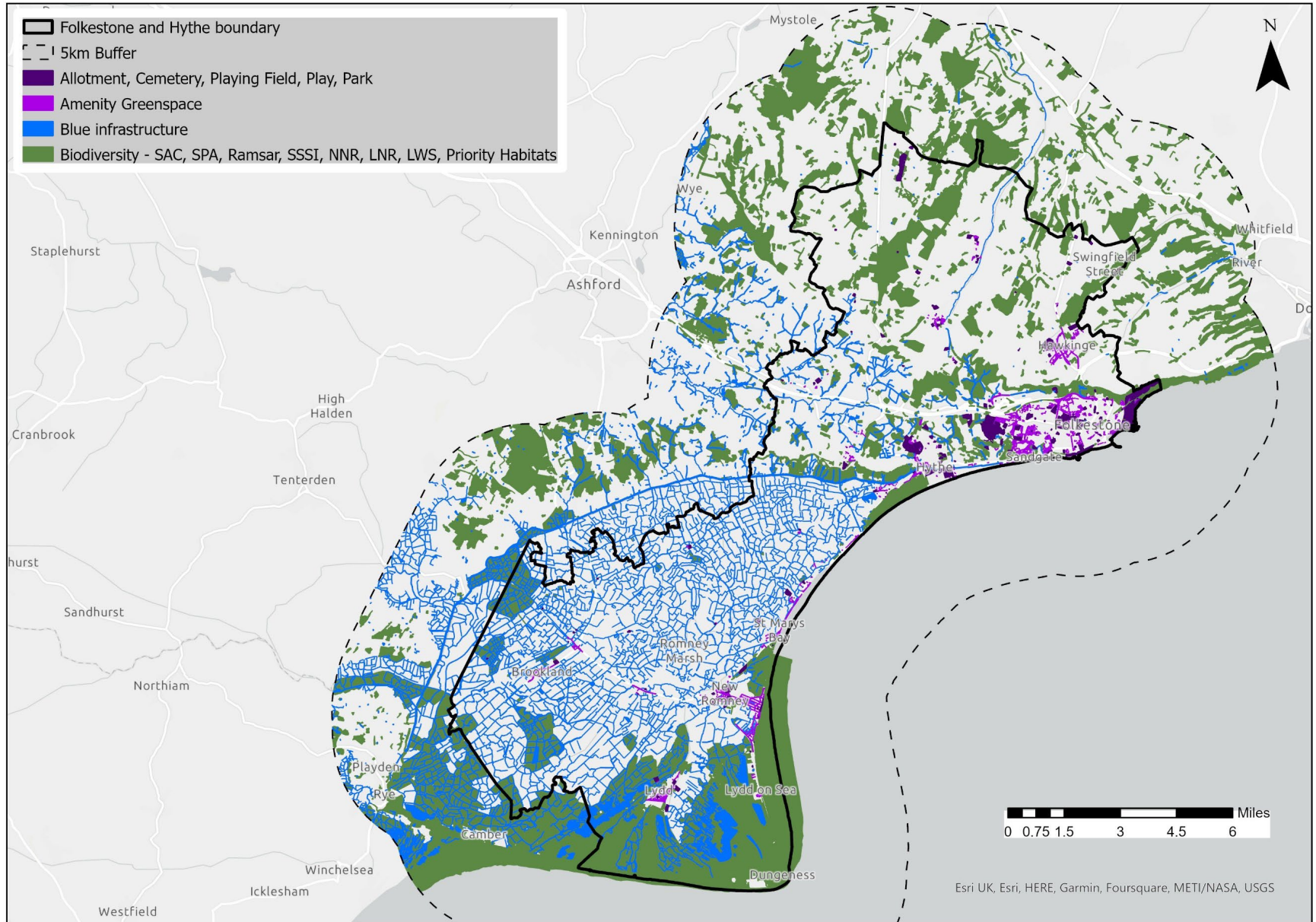
(ref. LH 1)

Ensure heritage is recognised in green infrastructure planning, interpretation, and tourism.

(Ref. LH 2)

Overview of Folkestone and Hythe District's Green and Blue Infrastructure Network¹

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The Challenges of Climate Change

Climate change is one of the biggest challenges being faced by society. The impacts of climate change are already evident and will become more severe and widespread as temperatures rise.

Kent's geographical location, long coastline and its population density means that it is likely to suffer from some of the severest impacts of climate change in the United Kingdom.² Predictions suggest that in Kent there will be hotter and drier summers with more heatwaves and drought, and warmer and wetter winters with heavier rainfall and more flooding. There will also be a rise in sea-level changing coastal dynamics.

Climate change will also place pressures on biodiversity. Many species and habitats are strongly influenced by temperature and rainfall and the interactions between these. Evidence from Natural England shows that the fragmented, wetland and low-lying habitats of the Romney Marsh are vulnerable, as well as the Elham Valley chalk stream and the Royal Military Canal. Smaller, disconnected, habitats are also more vulnerable.

Green and blue infrastructure can help to tackle climate change both through adaptation and mitigation. It is an essential tool and often provides solutions which are more cost effective than engineered approaches. Green and blue infrastructure also provides additional benefits, such as spaces for recreation. The graphic on the right shows ways that green and blue infrastructure can help to tackle climate change.



Managing surface water – help to manage surface water and sewer flooding by reducing the rate and volume of runoff, intercepting water, helping it to infiltrate into the ground and providing storage areas.



Managing high temperatures – particularly in urban areas. Evaporative cooling and shading can ensure that towns and cities are comfortable places.



Carbon storage and sequestration – storing carbon in soils and vegetation.



Material substitution – replacing materials such as concrete and steel (which need fossil fuels consumption in their production) with sustainably managed wood and other natural materials.



Providing low carbon fuels – replacing fossil fuels with lower carbon alternatives, including bio-energy, wind and hydro.



Reducing the need to travel by car – providing local recreation areas and green travel routes to encourage walking and cycling.



Helping species to adapt – providing a more vegetated and permeable landscape through which species can move northwards to new 'climate spaces'.



Reducing soil erosion – using vegetation to stabilise soils that many be vulnerable to increasing erosion



Managing water resources – provide places to store water, allow water to infiltrate into the ground sustaining aquifers and river flows, catch sediment and remove pollutants ensuring maintaining water quantity and quality.



Food production – providing environmentally sustainable food production that delivers food security.

Folkestone and Hythe District's Green and Blue Infrastructure

Biodiversity, Trees and Woodlands

Folkestone and Hythe district has outstanding biodiversity. Within the district are examples of many of Kent's important habitats – including chalk grassland, ancient woodland, marsh and coastal cliffs and shingle. These expansive areas of nature conservation habitats in turn support a host of rare and important species.

A unique and diverse coastline

One of the district's most renowned areas, which is both nationally and internationally important, is the vegetated shingle at Dungeness. This, the largest cusped foreland in Britain, is the most diverse and extensive area of stable vegetated shingle in Europe. There is a stark wild beauty and distinctive character unique to Dungeness.

Dungeness supports unique flora and fauna. The area is highly protected by international and national nature conservation designations for habitats, birds and other species. In the centre is a RSPB reserve, itself home to 600 plant species, as well as birds. The flooded gravel pits and saline lagoons provide habitats for migratory and coastal birds and unique invertebrates such as the lagoon cockle.

Dunes are also an important coastal feature. At Greatstone-on-Sea there are a range of dune habitats, including mobile dunes, fixed

dunes and scrub. At Romney Warren there is a stable dune system which has developed over ancient shingle ridges.

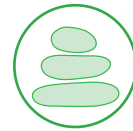
To the north of the district the coast has a different aspect. The Warren, both a Site of Special Scientific Interest and a Local Nature Reserve, is formed by slumped chalk cliffs, creating an undulating undercliff which is important for wildlife. Chalk grassland wildflowers grow alongside woodland plants and coastal specialists and around 150 species of birds can be found here. It is also an exceptional site for its geology and holds a wealth of fossils.

Glorious grasslands

Much of Folkestone and Hythe is grassland. Although most of this is improved for pasture, there are also some very special grasslands.

On flat land of the low-lying Romney Marsh lies coastal and floodplain grazing marsh. Much of this land has been reclaimed from wetter land and is criss-crossed with a network of ditches which control water levels. The ditches and drainage channels, and the sheep which graze the Marsh, are historic and iconic features. The marshes support many rare species, including water voles, wetland birds and birds of prey, such as the marsh harrier.

Chalk grassland is a scarce habitat for which the district is also important. Chalk grasslands support a large range of flora, as well as many insects, including rare and beautiful butterflies. There is chalk grassland along the Kent Downs. Much of this is protected including the internationally important Folkestone to Etchinghill Escarpment Special Conservation Area (SAC) and the smaller Parkgate Down (SAC).



94% of Kent's coastal vegetated shingle is found in Folkestone and Hythe district, at Dungeness and nearby coastline.



16.5% of Kent's coastal sand dunes are also in the district, second only to Dover.



The district has 15.7% of Kent's coastal and floodplain grazing marsh.



Folkestone and Hythe district has 20.3% of Kent's lowland calcareous grassland, second only to Dover district. It also contains 98.5% of the area of internationally important chalk grassland in the county.



Overall, Folkestone and Hythe's tree canopy is around 8% of its area, less than half of the Kent average of 17%. Romney Marsh ward was reported as having the lowest level of canopy, at 1.1%.



57% of Folkestone and Hythe's woodland is ancient.

Special species

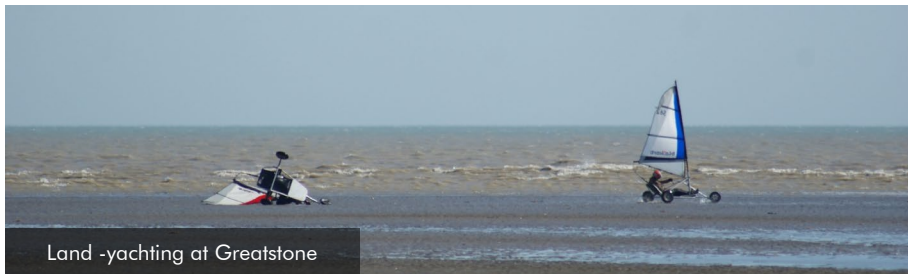
The variety of habitats in turn support special and rare species. It is not possible to list them all, but on the following page are some of species for which the district is important.

Dungeness Complex Sustainable Access and Recreation Management Strategy (2017) (SARMS)⁴

This strategy covers an extensive stretch of coast between Rye Harbour in East Sussex and Littlestone in Folkestone and Hythe district. The entire area is protected by several overlapping nature conservation designations and is particularly important for coastal vegetated shingle and over-wintering birds. It is also a popular holiday and recreation area, with tourism important to the local economy.

The SARMS is a joint strategy with Rother District Council, required to support their respective Local Plans. The strategy addresses recreational pressure and provides a strategic, cross-boundary approach to issues relating to disturbance to ensure that any increase in recreational use resulting from the planning policies of either council does not adversely impact the integrity of these internationally important wildlife sites.

The strategy sets out measures which are needed as mitigation for planning policies, including monitoring visitors and birds, signs, voluntary codes of conduct and an oversight group to deliver the strategy. It also recommends several other actions which would support the necessary mitigation measures.



Land -yachting at Greatstone

Special Species

Sussex Emerald Moth (*Thalera fimbrialis*) This very rare moth is only found in coastal vegetated shingle with Dungeness a stronghold. The Marsh Mallow Moth (*Hydraecia osseola hucherardi*) is also present at Dungeness.

Short-haired Bumblebee (*Bombus subterraneus*) This bumblebee was once widespread but it declined severely and declared extinct in 2000. A Bumblebee Conservation Trust project⁵ has helped landowners to provide flower-rich meadows around Romney Marsh and Dungeness, following reintroduction in 2009, and the species is making a comeback.

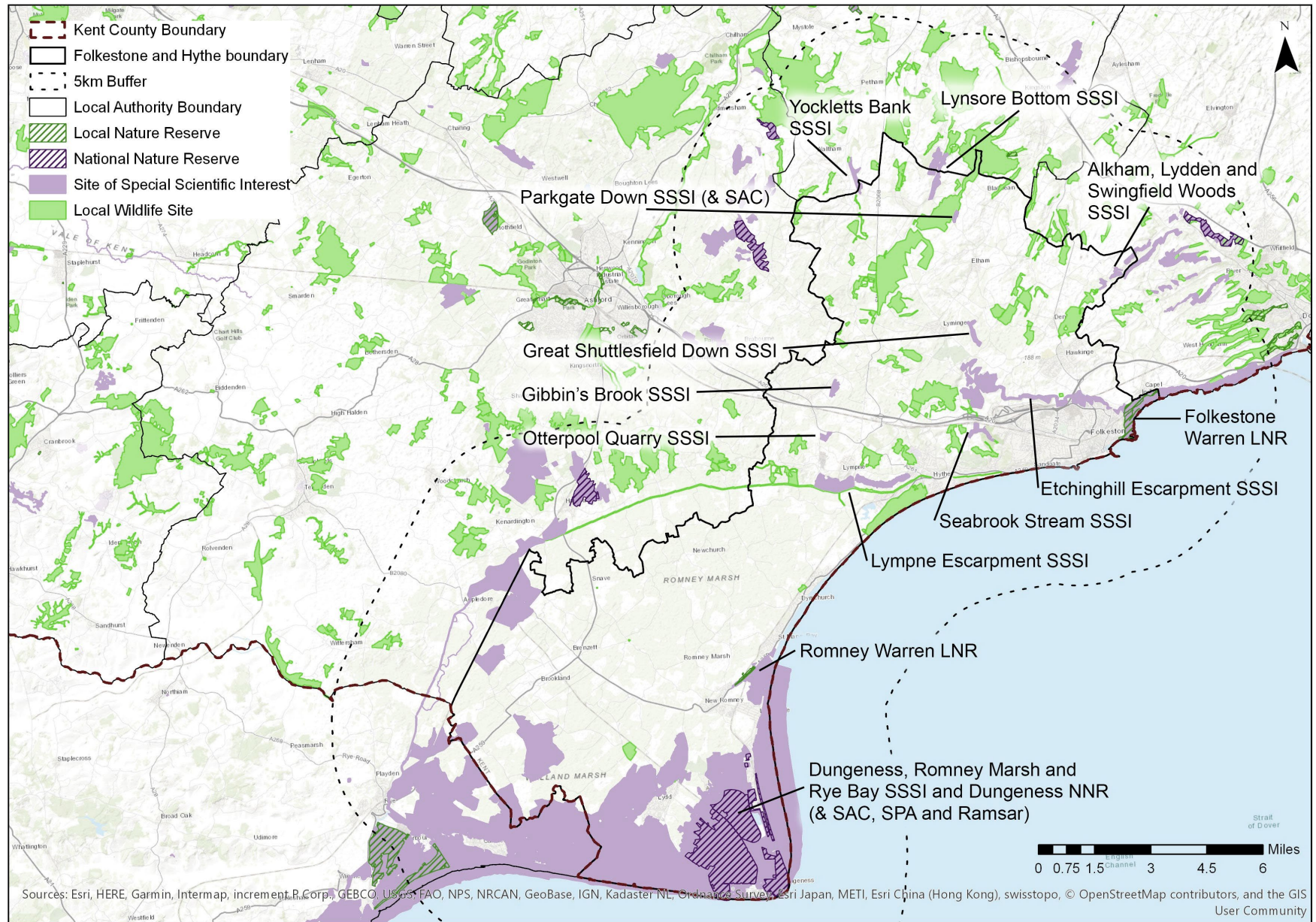
Turtle Doves (*Streptopelia turtur*) The Turtle Dove is the UK's fastest declining bird species and is threatened with global extinction. The RSPB's 'Turtle Dove Friendly Zones' are areas where efforts are concentrated to help this species to survive, and there are two within Folkestone and Hythe district. The Romney Marsh is also important for other farmland birds.

Medicinal Leeches (*Hirudo medicinalis*) The medicinal leech is the only British leech capable of sucking blood from humans. Millions of leeches were harvested for phlebotomy (bloodletting) and by the beginning of the 20th century it was declared extinct in the British Isles. However scattered populations have been found including in the Romney Marsh.

Chalk Grassland Orchids The chalk grasslands are home to several rare orchids, including monkey orchid (*Orchis simia*), late and early spider orchids (*Ophrys fuciflora* and *Ophrys sphegodes*), musk orchid (*Herminium monorchis*), lady orchid (*Orchis purpurea*) and burnt tip orchid (*Orchis ustulata*).

Plan 1:
Folkestone and Hythe District's
Designated
Nature
Conservation
Sites - National
and Local
Importance

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Trees and woodlands

Street trees, woodland trees and trees in parks or private gardens together form the tree canopy. Overall, Folkestone and Hythe has less than half the tree canopy cover of the average across Kent. Romney Marsh ward has the lowest level of canopy and Hythe the highest.⁶

Woodland is also not evenly spread across Folkestone and Hythe district and there is a wide variation in woodland cover. Almost all woodland is concentrated in the north eastern area of the district.

Just over half of the woodland in the district (57%) is ancient.⁷ This is woodland which has been in existence since at least 1600 AD.

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These woodlands can be especially important for wildlife with a rich array of species associated with them. Ancient woodland is classed as 'irreplaceable' under the National Planning Policy Framework.

Opportunities to increase woodland and trees across the district should be sought. Opportunities to increase woodland and trees across the district should be sought. Opportunities for increasing tree cover are possible on both publicly owned land and private land. Local authorities, private individuals, landowners, businesses and industrial estates all have a role to play in increasing tree cover across Folkestone and Hythe.

One of the more publicised diseases which is seriously affecting trees in Folkestone and Hythe district and across east Kent is ash dieback. This is a fungal infection of native, and some non-native, ash trees. Due to the way the disease spreads, through dead leaves on the ground, it can seriously affect ash in woodland settings.

Restoring ecological networks

To restore nature and functioning ecological networks, nature needs to be supported at a large scale across the landscape.⁸ Green infrastructure is important in supporting a landscape-scale or 'nature network' approach, through securing biodiversity value in a planned way.

What is needed to restore functioning ecological networks is:

- Improving the quality of current sites by better habitat management;
- Increasing the size of current wildlife sites;
- Enhancing connections between, or join up, sites, either through physical corridors or through 'stepping stones';
- Creating new sites; and
- Reducing the pressures on wildlife by improving the wider environment, including through buffering⁹ wildlife sites.

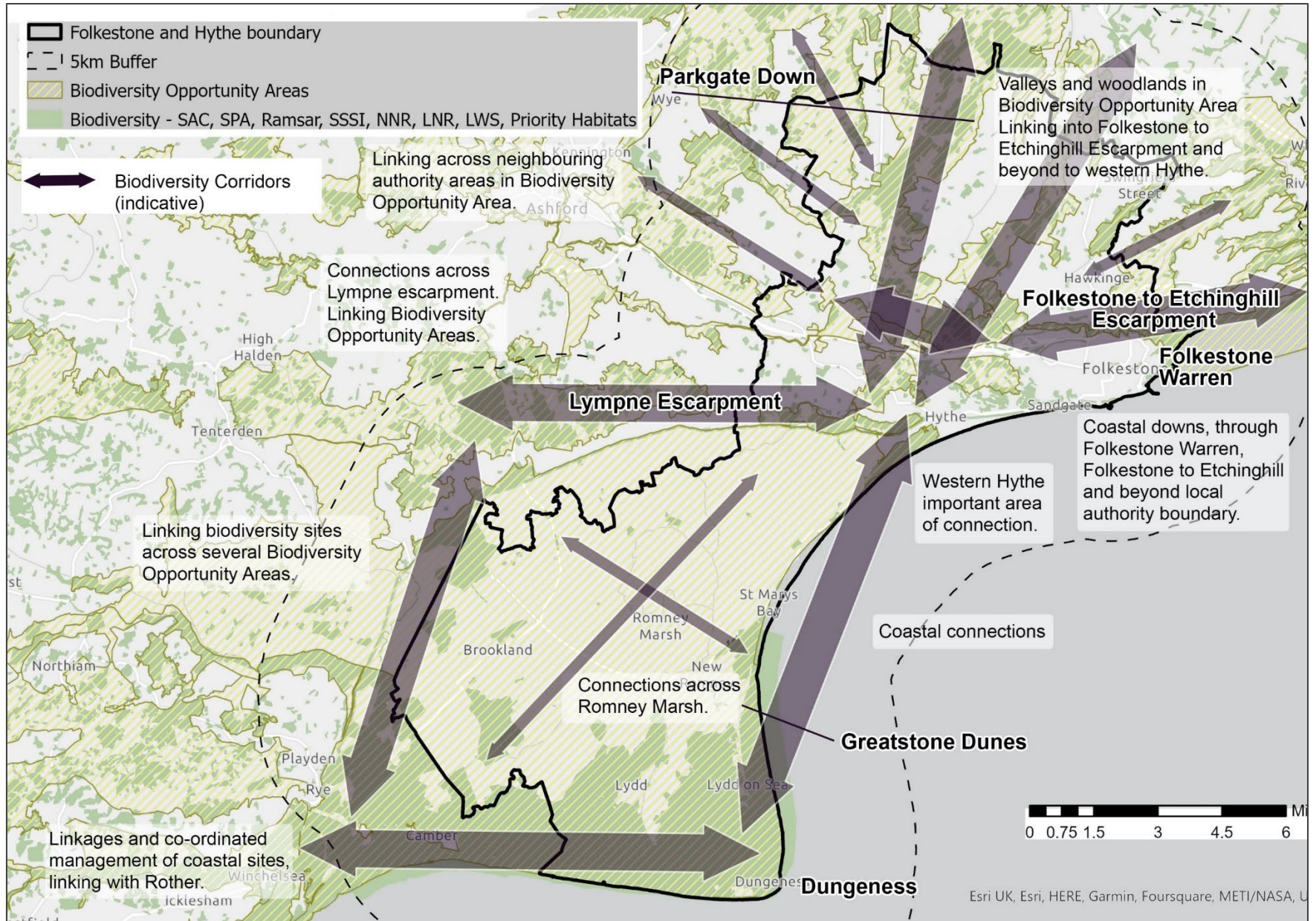
Summarised as: 'More, bigger, better and joined.'

Biodiversity Opportunity Areas reflect areas where there are already nature conservation sites which could benefit nature through being improved and joined up. Kent Nature Partnership is also working on the Kent Local Nature Recovery Strategy, which will also reveal priority areas for conservation action in the district. Other organisations have also highlighted important areas, for example Buglife,¹⁰ which show insect 'pathways' through town and countryside.

Plan 2 shows some of the important biodiversity linkages.

Plan 2:
Connections
for Nature

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Needs, Opportunities and Priorities – Biodiversity, Trees and Woodlands

A
Actions within the control of Folkestone and Hythe District Council.

B
Priorities within the scope of influence of F&HDC. Potential to be delivered by other organisations or in partnership with F&HDC.

C
Priorities of importance in the district but not in control of F&HDC. Delivered by other organisations.

	Priority and Opportunities	Delivery
BTW 1	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Protect, enhance and improve the core biodiversity sites and take action for priority species	
BTW 1.1	Protect and enhance the sites which form the core of the biodiversity network – those sites designated for nature conservation and those with known biodiversity value.	B
BTW 1.2	Ensure that Folkestone and Hythe-owned sites with nature conservation value are protected and their value enhanced, bringing declining sites into good condition and reducing sources of harm.	A
BTW 1.3	Protect, enhance and seek to expand areas of Kent Biodiversity Strategy priority habitats which are notable within Folkestone and Hythe - chalk grassland, traditional orchards, coastal and floodplain grazing marsh.	B
BTW 1.4	Protect and seek to increase populations of Kent Biodiversity Strategy priority species which are notable within the district.	B
BTW 1.5	Work with Rother District Council and other partners to deliver measures set out in the 'SARMS' to ensure sustainable recreation across the Dungeness Complex.	B
BTW 2	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Create an ecologically resilient network to join habitats, allow species to move and to help nature adapt to climate change	
BTW 2.1	Reduce sources of harm to biodiversity sites.	B
BTW 2.2	Develop ecologically resilient and varied landscapes through conserving and enhancing local variation within sites and habitats and making space for the natural development of rivers and coasts.	B
BTW 2.3	Establish ecological networks through habitat protection, restoration and creation, joining up nature conservation sites across the landscape and joining woodlands and hedgerows.	B
BTW 2.4	Integrate climate change adaptation and mitigation into conservation management, planning and practice.	B
BTW 2.5	Work with partners to deliver a resilient ecological network, including increasing biodiversity in cemeteries, privately own green and blue infrastructure assets, schools and businesses, and with neighbouring authorities to develop connections over local authority boundaries.	B
BTW 2.6	Seek to create mosaics and overall abundance of wildlife alongside the protection of specific habitats and species.	B
BTW 2.7	Work with the Kent Nature Partnership to develop and deliver a Local Nature Recovery Strategy as part of the National Nature Recovery Network.	A
BTW 2.8	Sustain a healthy tree stock of council-owned trees and seeking an increase in trees and canopy cover overall on council-owned land.	A

Priority and Opportunities	Delivery
BTW 2.9 Increase the number of wildflower verges.	B
BTW 3 STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Link people and nature	
BTW 3.1 Celebrate and raise awareness of Folkestone and Hythe's iconic species and habitats and the need to conserve them.	B
BTW 3.2 Get people involved in conservation activities, including action for pollinators, biodiversity improvements and tree planting.	B
BTW 3.3 Support local people, parish and town councils, businesses and community organisations in taking community action for nature.	B
BTW 3.4 Promote the action of residents and businesses to improve wildlife through, for example, gardening for wildlife, pollinator projects, wildflower meadows, connecting habitats, hedgehog highways and installing swift boxes.	B
BTW 3.5 Incorporate nature into Folkestone and Hythe-owned parks and amenity spaces so that people can experience nature close to where they live and create stepping stones for wildlife, for example through permanent wildlife areas such as wildflower meadows, or through initiatives such as 'No Mow May'.	A
BTW 3.6 Designate more Local Nature Reserves to increase the hectare provision per 1,000 people with a more even distribution across the district.	A
BTW 3.7 Improve school grounds, including tree planting, growing spaces and wildflower gardens.	B
BTW 3.8 Link green and blue infrastructure with the vibrant arts and cultural community in the district.	C
BTW 4 STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Adapt and mitigate for climate change impacts	
BTW 4.1 Bring forward nature-based solutions as cost-effective, climate adapted and biodiversity-supporting alternatives to 'grey' engineering solutions.	B
BTW 4.2 Increase tree and woodland cover and increase canopy cover, following the 'right tree, right place' principle. Increase street trees in all urban areas.	B
BTW 4.3 Develop a tree and woodland strategy to ensure tree planting follows principle of 'right tree right place', to promote sustainable woodland management, to plan for the effects of ash dieback and to increase the overall canopy of Folkestone and Hythe.	A
BTW 4.4 Identity habitat areas within Folkestone and Hythe for protection as carbon sinks and wildlife habitats.	A
BTW 5 STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Ensure development is sustainable	
BTW 5.1 Deliver biodiversity net gain and investigate the viability of an uplift from the statutory 10%, subject to viability and soundness testing.	A
BTW 5.2 Incorporate biodiversity into housing developments, including hedgehog highways, swift boxes and biodiversity-friendly planting in streets and gardens.	A

Access, Recreation and Active Travel

Access to greenspaces supports health, wellbeing and quality of life

Access to greenspace, the countryside and the natural environment is important for health and both physical and mental wellbeing. Active travel, through cycling and walking, also supports health, as well as reducing congestion and pollution. Access to nature can also help people to connect to nature and become more involved and engaged in caring for it.

There are a wide range of accessible greenspaces in Folkestone and Hythe. Some of these are owned and managed by Folkestone and Hythe District Council, but some valuable spaces are managed by other organisations. These include parks, semi-natural green spaces, amenity greenspace areas, play and sport areas. Green corridors are a key component of the open space network in Folkestone and Hythe, for example the Royal Military Canal.

Folkestone and Hythe's Open Space Strategy assesses the quantity, accessibility, quality and value of open spaces in the district. The report recommends a quantity standard of 2.89 hectares per 1,000 people. The assessment showed that there are high quality green spaces in the district, including three which have the prestigious Green Flag Award. It recommends that larger open spaces should be enhanced and that local scale open spaces are provided and improved, particularly in areas with high levels of deprivation and where communities do not have access to gardens or open spaces.

The area below the Leas at Folkestone was created in 1784 when a landslip produced a new strip of land between the beach and the new cliff line. The Upper Leas gardens on the cliff-top and the Lower Leas gardens along the foot were created in the late 19th century to attract Victorian holiday makers. There is a fun zone in the park and the largest free play area in the South East.

Lower
Leas
Coastal
Park

The Warren was formed from landslips which took place over the last 200 years. In 1924 the land was gifted to the people of Folkestone. Scrub has developed over what was once bare land, but there remain areas of flower-rich grassland. Chalk grassland wildflowers grow alongside woodland plants, while the sea air promotes rock sea lavender and rock samphire. It is of national importance for wildlife and geology and is a Site of Special Scientific Interest and Local Nature Reserve.

East Cliff
and The
Warren

Brockhill Country Park sits on the former Brockhill Park Estate, historically linked to Saltwood Castle. The estate was bought by Kent County Council in 1947 and opened to the public in 1986. Once part of the estate of a Norman manor, Brockhill Park has a central lake, open grassland and meadows, a picnic area, a new play area and refreshments at Brockhill Café. The park is rich in wildlife and is a Site of Nature Conservation Interest.

Brockhill
Country
Park

Active travel

Active travel means walking or cycling as a means of transport rather than for leisure. Active travel allows people to be physically active as part of their daily lives, bringing health and wellbeing benefits as well as saving money. It helps both the environment and health through reducing air pollution and climate change gases. It can not only help to reduce congestion; in urban areas it may also provide a quicker

journey than by motor vehicle. Investment in active travel also makes economic sense, with a high benefit to cost ratio for many schemes.



Sustrans National Cycle Route Way Post at Hythe

A well-designed, accessible environment can encourage people to walk or cycle. People cycle more when there is cycle infrastructure and separation from traffic. Conversely, a lack of routes, poor information, concerns over safety and the speed and convenience of motorised transport all create barriers to people choosing active travel. The desire to cycle and walk is influenced not only by distance, but also by the quality of the experience.

Folkestone and Hythe District Council has developed a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). Urban Folkestone and Hythe are the focus of the LCWIP as the main centres of population and the need for travel to work, school and other destinations. The LCWIPs sets out plans for a network plan for walking and cycling and infrastructure improvements to support this.

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Public rights
of way

The public rights of way network is also an important component of access to the countryside and green spaces **and to support active travel.**

There are in the district cover 578 km or 359 km of public rights of way in the district. There are more footpaths (for walking only) than other types of public rights of way.

There are many promoted routes which use public rights of way within the district, including the England Coastal Path, the Elham Valley Way, the North Downs Way, the Royal Military Canal, and the Saxon Shore Way.



Public footpath in Elham

Needs, Opportunities and Priorities – Access, Recreation and Active Travel

A
Actions within the control of Folkestone and Hythe District Council.

B
Priorities within the scope of influence of F&HDC. Potential to be delivered by other organisations or in partnership with F&HDC.

C
Priorities of importance in the district but not in control of F&HDC. Delivered by other organisations.

	Priority and Opportunities	Delivery
AR 1	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Ensure that greenspace provision keeps pace with population growth and provides for Folkestone and Hythe's future residents.	
AR 1.1	Ensure that greenspace provision meets the standards set out in Folkestone and Hythe's Local Plan and that development delivers greenspace provision to meet the needs of new residents (no net loss).	A
AR 1.2	Manage greenspaces to ensure that they can accommodate high levels of visits, and the increased level of visits post-Covid 19 pandemic, providing infrastructure and maintenance to meet high demand.	B
AR 1.3	Seek new greenspace in areas where there is a deficit.	B
AR 1.4	Where development is taking place, ensure that public rights of way are improved and, where possible, provide multi-user and traffic-free routes and new connections.	A
AR 1.5	Invest in public rights of way, particularly those linking town and countryside, to ensure they are accessible to a wide range of people.	B
AR 1.6	Plan strategically to ensure accessible greenspace, cycle routes, walkable spaces and public rights of way are connected, especially in areas of development, so that opportunities are not lost and gains are delivered.	B
AR 2	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Support increased active travel, to relieve congestion and air pollution and encourage healthy living through a strategic cycle network and walking routes.	
AR 2.1	Make civic spaces and public realm more accessible, attractive and welcoming to encourage people to walk and cycle.	B
AR 2.2	The LCWIP will identify new routes for walking and cycling for active travel and where possible these might be dovetailed with opportunities for leisure routes and access to greenspace.	B
AR 2.3	Ensure urban public rights of way are more fully utilised, keeping them clear from fly tipping, signing them and upgrading for cycling use where possible.	B
AR 2.4	Develop urban promoted walking trails.	B
AR 3	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Maximise the benefits of recreation and access to Folkestone and Hythe's unique landscapes and greenspaces, whilst ensuring that this does not have a negative impact on them, their special character or their biodiversity.	
AR 3.1	Use the district's outstanding landscape, heritage and biodiversity to promote tourism in a sustainable way, whilst avoiding damage and negative impacts on the environment, landscape and biodiversity sites (see also priority 1.5 – biodiversity, trees and woodlands re. implementation of the SARMS).	B
AR 3.2	Ensure that promotional materials and tourism promotion includes information for visitors on how to minimise the impact of their visit.	B
AR 3.3	Use access to green spaces as a catalyst for more community engagement in their care and knowledge of their uniqueness.	B

Health and Wellbeing

The benefits
of being
physically
active
outdoors

Being physically active is strongly linked to better health and wellbeing. It is well established that there is a link between physically inactive and many chronic health conditions, including coronary heart disease, stroke, cancer, type 2 diabetes and mental health problems. Physical activity in the natural environment also has a greater impact on mental health than exercising indoors, improving self-esteem, positive mood and anxiety levels.

Walking is one of the easiest, most accessible and cost effective ways for most people to increase their physical activity but gaining the physical and mental benefits of access to green space can take many forms. This can include gardening, creating art, feeding the birds, picnicking or enjoying the beach. The whole range of green and blue infrastructure is important and can support physical and mental health. Even just being able to view nature can be beneficial.



Folkestone Half Marathon Passes the Metropole Building, Upper Leas

Health in Folkestone and Hythe

The health of people in Folkestone and Hythe is varied. Life expectancy for both men and women is similar to the England average, but in the most deprived areas life expectancy is 6.9 years lower for men and 5.4 years lower for women than in the least deprived areas.

Levels of access to open space vary considerably across Folkestone and Hythe. There are several areas of poor health where there is also low greenspace. Whilst many are clustered in urban areas, there are some areas of poor health in rural areas where there is low access to greenspace. Here, public rights of way are important. However, it is also clear that some communities with poor health outcomes have very good access to greenspace, such as some urban areas of Folkestone.

Provision for people living with disability

Disability will affect many people during their lifetime. Only 17% of disabled people were born with their impairment and most disabled people acquire their disability later in life.

People living with disabilities also have specific access needs. This can be physical improvements or more information on how accessible places are. It is important that open spaces and public rights of way are made as accessible as possible to that people can benefit from the health and wellbeing gains from being outdoors, throughout their lives and no matter what form of disability they may be living with.

Covid-19 pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic underlined the importance of outdoor space for physical exercise and mental health. Many people benefitted from accessing greenspace during the pandemic and its social restrictions.

However, it also highlighted differences in levels of visiting greenspace in different socio-economic groups carried on through the pandemic. Those groups less likely to visit greenspaces (lower income groups), or those who lived further away, visited these spaces less than more advantaged groups.



Race for Life for Cancer research, Folkestone

Needs, Opportunities and Priorities – Health and Wellbeing

A
Actions within the control of Folkestone and Hythe District Council.

B
Priorities within the scope of influence of F&HDC. Potential to be delivered by other organisations or in partnership with F&HDC.

C
Priorities of importance in the district but not in control of F&HDC. Delivered by other organisations.

Priorities and Opportunities		Delivery
HW 1	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Support people in taking healthy exercise and engaging in nature for both their physical and mental health.	
HW 1.1	Update and revise promoted routes using public rights of way in both urban and rural areas, providing more information on accessibility.	B
HW 1.2	Improve the accessibility, facilities and quality of Folkestone and Hythe owned parks and greenspaces and the public realm for those with mobility impairments and other disabilities.	A
HW 1.3	Through green social prescribing, encourage local NHS partnerships to develop healthy walking groups, as well as outdoor activities for those suffering from other conditions for example social isolation and anxiety.	B
HW 1.4	Provide information on accessibility to greenspaces so that those with mobility impairments or other disabilities feel confident to access more spaces, routes and parks.	A
HW 1.5	Use the interest and increased visitation generated through the Covid-19 pandemic to provide more information to people on where they can visit and how to visit responsibly.	B
HW 1.6	Create more spaces to support community growing – allotment facilities, gardens, edible trails and green walls and educate and support residents in utilising these.	B
HW 1.7	Create new promoted routes and circular routes near areas with new development to access the countryside and natural environment so that new populations can actively enjoy the outdoors.	B
HW 1.8	Improve the urban/rural interface and routes to the countryside improving accessibility of urban edge routes, e.g. removing stiles, installing handrails, improve surface.	B
HW 1.9	Ensure new development includes good quality and well-managed greenspaces, sports and play facilities to cater for the increase in population.	A
HW 2	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Provide access to green infrastructure close to home and which is inclusive for all.	
HW 2.1	Plan for a reduced car Folkestone and Hythe – planning strategically to link public rights of way, cycle routes and greenspaces.	B

Priorities and Opportunities		Delivery
HW 2.2	Ensure that high quality greenspace and green infrastructure is provided through new development so that everyone has access to greenspace close to home.	A
HW 2.3	Use green infrastructure in civic spaces and urban streets to make these places more attractive for walking and cycling, improving health and reducing car travel.	B
HW 2.4	Make routes and spaces as accessible as possible so they are available to a wide range of people with different abilities.	B
HW 3	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Initiate local evidence-informed research to understand the impact that accessible greenspace has on local health outcomes, especially for disadvantaged groups.	
HW 3.1	Support meaningful engagement to understand why some communities do not use greenspace, even when it is relatively close, to reveal the complex and diverse ways greenspace is thought about and used.	B
HW 3.2	Monitor and evaluate local changes in access to greenspace, in conjunction with health data over time, to understanding of what works, for whom and how.	B

Blue Infrastructure and the Coast

A blue district

Blue infrastructure in its many forms is an important feature of Folkestone and Hythe district. There are a range of blue infrastructure features including the extensive ditches and wetlands of the Romney Marsh, the Nailbourne chalk stream, and saline lagoons and larger pools around Dungeness and Lydd.

The Royal Military Canal stretches 28 miles from Seabrook near Hythe, through the Romney Marsh to Cliff End in East Sussex. After Hadrian's Wall and Offa's Dyke, it is the third-longest defensive structure in the UK. It was constructed between 1804 to 1809 and part of the canal is a Scheduled Monument for its heritage value. The Royal Military Canal is also an important recreational feature. A path runs alongside the canal and it is possible to walk the entire length and to cycle along some sections.

Royal Military Canal

Through Elham and Wingmore is the Nailbourne. For much of the year this 'watercourse' is dry. It is a chalk 'bourne' – a stream which only appears after successive seasons of high rainfall and when ground water levels are high enough. For centuries the belief that the nailbournes rose once every seven years and that their appearance would bring bad luck and disaster, give them the name 'woe waters'.

'Woe waters'

Boardwalk to protect shingle vegetation, Lade beach

Much of the Romney Marsh lies below the high tide level, requiring a complex network of drainage structures to prevent the area from flooding. A network of streams, ditches, drains, cuts, dykes and main sewers cross the Marsh and empty into the sea or the Royal Military Canal. The history of land drainage on the Marsh stretches back to at least the 13th Century. The ditches and sewers also provide rich habitat for a wide range of wildlife, including declining species such as water voles.

Romney
Marsh

The rich and varied coastline of Folkestone and Hythe is one of the district's greatest assets. The coastline is also lined with beaches which are popular with residents and visitors alike and are important to the district's economy. Bathing water quality is monitored at six points and most of these are excellent or good.¹¹

There are two Marine Conservation Zones (MCZs) near the district. The Dover to Folkestone MCZ is an inshore site of wave-cut intertidal chalk platforms with a highly diverse range of habitats and species, including sea slugs, brittlestars and young lobsters. The Folkestone Pomerania lies further into the English Channel, with varied sediment and rock habits supporting worm reefs.

Around Dungeness, Lydd and Lade are a series of lakes. These pits and hollows are either flooded former gravel workings, saline lagoons or natural freshwater lagoons. These areas are important for newts and water voles as well as birds. There are saline lagoons across the area, including in the RSPB Reserve – a very rare habitat. Some of the lakes are used for watersports.

Pools rich
in wildlife

Areas in Folkestone and Hythe are at risk of flooding from a number of sources, including tidal and surface water flooding, as well as flooding from groundwater, streams, ditches and the coast. Storm events and surges can also affect the district. For example, flooding along the Pent Stream is caused by poor urban drainage and high intensity storm events. There is also a risk of tide-locking in the future as a result of a rise in sea level. However, many areas benefit from the protection provided by a diverse range of flood defence infrastructure.

The Seabrook Stream to the west of Hythe is a SSSI. The stream flows through a valley rich in wildlife and a range of fen and wet woodland habitats and supports a nationally important range of craneflies. Brockhill Country Park lies in a similar valley, with wetland habitats modified in Victorian times to create a pleasure garden. This site also supports a wide range of craneflies and other invertebrates.

Seabrook
Stream
SSSI

Most of the coastline is protected by sea defences in the form of seawalls and shingle beaches. These areas need to continue to be defended to protect settlements, some of which are low lying. The shoreline along the eastern side of Dungeness Point and to the north is accreting with shingle which helps to naturally form a defence. Ongoing sea level rise will result in a significant narrowing of intertidal areas ('coastal squeeze'), which has the potential to

have an impact upon the nature conservation areas as well as the tourism economy.

Surface and groundwater water quality is vitally important for water supply, general amenity, recreation, fisheries and nature conservation and supports domestic, industrial and agricultural uses. Folkestone and Hythe is an area of serious water stress as identified by the Environment Agency.¹² South East Water and Affinity are the statutory water suppliers in Folkestone and Hythe district. There is a shared interest in the protection of groundwater supplies and water quality. **There are opportunities for greater use of nature-based solutions to water quality and management issues, working with partners, including Southern Water and Kent County Council to take forward new approaches and solutions.**

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Climate change will inevitably result in an increased risk of flooding from all sources. **An increased frequency of intense rainfall events due to climate change will lead to more rapid and more frequent**

overloading of the drainage network and localised flooding. The reliance on coastal flood defence infrastructure will increase over the next century. It is therefore necessary to ensure that new development is designed so that these residual risks are mitigated.¹³

Sustainable Drainage Schemes (SuDS) are a useful way to help to manage surface water flood risk. Natural features like swales, ponds, tree pits and rain gardens allow water to soak into the ground or to evaporate, reducing the need for traditional piped drainage. SuDS can also provide amenity value, reduce the impacts of climate change and create spaces for nature. Green infrastructure assets are important areas in which to implement or retrofit SuDS but they can also be retrofitted into urban and developed areas through solutions such as rain gardens, specialised tree pits and permeable paved surfaces. Care should be taken when installing SuDS to ensure that no damage is caused to biodiversity, landscape or heritage features.



Folkestone beach

Needs, Opportunities and Priorities – Blue Infrastructure and the Coast

A
Actions within the control of Folkestone and Hythe District Council.

B
Priorities within the scope of influence of F&HDC. Potential to be delivered by other organisations or in partnership with F&HDC.

C
Priorities of importance in the district but not in control of F&HDC. Delivered by other organisations.

Priorities and Opportunities		Delivery
BIC 1	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Protect water resources and protect and enhance the biodiversity value of water and wetland habitats.	
BIC 1.1	Raise awareness of the outstanding water, wetland, coastal and marine habitats of the district, both to residents and organisations, and promote ways in which everyone can help to conserve and protect them.	B
BIC 1.2	Support actions to reduce water consumption.	C
BIC 1.3	Achieve good status for watercourses. This includes a range of actions - improve fish passage, naturalise hard engineered riverbanks, reduce silt and enrichment from agriculture, improve highway runoff.	C
BIC 1.4	Ensure measures are taken to mitigate, where possible, against the impact of climate change on habitats, including coastal squeeze.	B
BIC 1.5	Encourage the installation of low water input planting in open spaces and parks and in new development (in both shared greenspaces).	B
BIC 1.6	Ensure water-based recreation and wildlife interests are in balance – ensure biodiversity interests are properly taken into account and protected.	B
BIC 2	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Incorporate SuDS schemes into new development and retrofit into existing green infrastructure where such an approach is appropriate to help address flooding issues.	
BIC 2.1	Integrate SuDS into the design of new green infrastructure rather than a separate feature e.g. tree pits with water storage capacity and consider and include future maintenance of the system in the early stages of SuDS design. SuDS should be designed to support biodiversity and amenity uses.	A
BIC 2.2	Support efforts to tackle diffuse pollution from urban centres and industrial areas e.g. through the implementation of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS).	B
BIC 2.3	Incorporate SuDS into new development where appropriate and ensure maintenance.	A
BIC 2.4	Utilise existing greenspace to incorporate SuDS scheme where these can address a need to control flooding.	B

Landscape Character and Heritage

A landscape
of contrasts

The district has a remarkably rich and diverse landscape and heritage. This landscape character underpins Folkestone and Hythe's green and blue infrastructure assets, providing a unique 'sense of place'. There are three main character areas in the district.

The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty designation is testament to the scenic qualities and natural beauty of this character area (see Elham Valley, photo to left).¹⁴

Agriculture is important in forming the landscape, with mixed farming of arable, livestock and horticulture have co-existed for centuries. The woodlands, many of which are ancient, are a prominent feature of the landscape and chalk grassland is particularly notable.

North
Downs
Character
Area

Remote coombes in the scarp slope at Etchinghill overlook Asholt Wood, one of the best examples of ash coppice in Kent, although now significantly affected by ash dieback. At the base of the scarp springs emerge between the chalk and gault clay and feed streams which flow towards the coast.

The network of public rights of way includes ancient trackways along the ridge.



Elham valley

The Romney Marshes is an open landscape of reclaimed, low-lying marshland. This unique area has a character all of its own and contains a wealth of wildlife and geomorphological features.

Dungeness is of international importance for its geomorphology, plants, invertebrates and birds. Home to some of the UK's rarest species, it is protected by nature conservation designations. Dungeness and Rye Harbour comprise the largest cusped shingle foreland in Europe, one of the few such large examples in the world.

Romney Marsh Character Area

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The Romney Marsh is one of the most fertile areas of Kent, with a particularly long growing season.¹⁵ Farming on Romney Marsh has changed greatly with a change from sheep pasture to arable land and intensification. As farming changes, traditional features are lost from the landscape, for example lookers' huts and hedgerows.

Scattered settlements are linked by long, straight, open roads and have a distinctive architectural character, including weatherboarding and hung tiles. Many have medieval churches at their core.

Pressures of sea level rise and climate change will create coastal change. Much of the area is below the high tide level and at risk of flooding.



Romney Marsh

This character area runs parallel to the North Downs, between the downland and the Romney Marsh. The major transport corridor of the Channel Tunnel rail link passes through this area. Part of the Kent Downs AONB extends into this area around west Hythe.

Wealden Greensand Character Area

The Hythe scarp is highly visible from the flat marsh, forming a long hillside of rough grassland, dotted with scrub with arable fields on the lower slopes towards Aldington. Several large deciduous woodlands break up the sweep of the landform. Between these woodlands there are spectacular views across Romney Marsh and the English Channel. The Royal Military Canal, running along the base of the scarp, acts as the 'backbone' of the area.

A rich and diverse heritage

Folkestone and Hythe district has a remarkably rich and diverse heritage that is important in shaping the district's historic sense of place and distinct character. There is also a wealth of heritage highlighting the importance of the district for defence, tourism and trade. **Heritage can provide strong social and health benefits through improving quality of life as well as providing a valuable educational resource.**

Heritage can provide strong social and health benefits through improving quality of life as well as providing a valuable educational resource.

There are several notable green and blue spaces which are important green and blue infrastructure assets and heritage features, for example the Royal Military Canal. There are opportunities to bring heritage and open space management together to benefit communities and visitors.



Royal Military Canal at Hythe

Two Cinque Ports, Hythe and New Romney, lie within the district. Folkestone also has valuable heritage assets as a cross-channel port and a rich fishing heritage. The harbour itself has played essential roles during important historical events that include wartime, the arrival of the railway and the commencement of tourism.

By the end of the 19th century Folkestone, along with neighbouring Sandgate, had developed into a fashionable seaside resort, with luxurious hotels and seaside amenities. Dymchurch, St Mary's Bay and Romney Sands also became popular destinations.

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The district's proximity to the continent has continually placed it on the front line against foreign invasion. An outstanding legacy of defence is evident in the remains of fortifications along the coast and inland, representing the nation's responses to foreign threats and its defence strategies. The Napoleonic period defences are of outstanding importance. At various points Folkestone, Hythe and Lydd have become major garrison towns. The district contains a wide collection of Second World War heritage assets, including sites associated with air defence, coastal defence, troop support and supply, anti-invasion works, and civil defence.

The district also has several historic parks and gardens. Whilst reduced in size, the heritage of these parks, their buildings and gardens are distinctive. The archaeology of blue infrastructure – rivers, river valleys and the marine and coastal environment – is also an important feature of Folkestone and Hythe district. A religious heritage is evident in religious buildings and ruins.



St Thomas à Becket, Fairfield, Romney Marsh

Needs, Opportunities and Priorities – Landscape Character and Heritage

A
Actions within the control of Folkestone and Hythe District Council.

B
Priorities within the scope of influence of F&HDC. Potential to be delivered by other organisations or in partnership with F&HDC.

C
Priorities of importance in the district but not in control of F&HDC. Delivered by other organisations.

Priorities and Opportunities		Delivery
LH 1	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Strengthen and reinforce landscape character and ensure green and blue infrastructure enhances and fits with local landscape character.	
LH 1.1	Manage woodland, aiming for a linked network of woodland, shaws and hedgerows, and replace dead ash with alternative species as appropriate. Restore characteristic landscape features such as hedgerows and woodlands. Ensure new tree establishment associated with climate mitigation respects and enhances landscape character and qualities.	C
LH 1.2	Protect and enhance the landscape and views in the Kent Downs AONB and its setting, support the co-ordinated management of the landscape and habitats, promote wildlife value, enable and manage access for recreation, with reference to the Kent Downs AONB management plan and landscape character assessment.	B
LH 1.3	Strengthen and reinforce natural features like watercourses as accessible green corridors linking built up areas with the wider countryside.	B
LH 1.4	Develop strategies for partnership working to enhance the landscape, for example for woodland and farmland management.	C
LH 1.5	Strengthen and reinforce landscape structure in the urban–rural fringe areas. Ensure that the edges of new and existing urban and rural settlements blend comfortably with the surrounding countryside.	B
LH 1.6	Protect water resources, wetland habits, fen and reedbed, chalk grassland, traditional orchards and other heritage landscape features.	B
LH 1.7	Ensure that new development recognises landscape character in proposals and seeks to conserve and enhance landscape features and, where development is within or impacts on the Kent Downs AONB, have particular regard to the natural beauty of protected landscape.	A
LH 1.8	Protect the naturalness and landscape character of the districts unique and varied coastal landscapes.	B
LH 2	STRATEGIC PRIORITY: Ensure heritage is recognised in green and blue infrastructure planning, interpretation, and tourism.	
LH 2.1	Promote and enhance heritage assets.	B
LH 2.2	Improve accessibility of heritage sites through sustainable transport links and enhanced interpretation (where appropriate) and community engagement.	B
LH 2.3	Identify heritage and local distinctiveness which can be used to guide future development.	A
LH 2.4	Identify and protect important viewpoints of heritage assets and ensure that the historic natural environment is respected and interpreted through new development.	A
LH 2.5	Protect archaeological sites and promote public awareness, and access where possible.	B

Spatial Areas

Introduction

The three distinct areas within Folkestone and Hythe district are covered in this section. The North Downs makes up the northern part of the district and is mostly in the Kent Downs AONB. The main urban areas are Folkestone, Hythe and, in the future, Otterpool Park. To the south lie the marshes and coast of Romney Marsh and Dungeness. These areas align with the Core Strategy.

Page 172 The actions in the spatial areas are of specific relevance to each area. They complement and add to the actions listed previously under the themes, which are also relevant to the spatial areas.

Community action at the local level is particularly important. Communities, businesses, parish and town councils and individuals all have a role to play in improving green and blue infrastructure in their local areas - in particular:

- Develop and implement plans for biodiversity, for example for pollinators, hedgehog highways, swift boxes, 'micro meadows' for wildflowers or tree and hedge planting;
- Improvements for biodiversity in all green and blue infrastructure, whether they are local authority-owned or are in schools, private gardens, businesses, cemeteries or elsewhere;
- Raise awareness and celebrate the outstanding local biodiversity, landscapes, heritage and cultural assets.



New Romney

Folkestone Town, Hythe and Saltwood

Parts of Folkestone are densely populated urban areas but there are also some larger areas of green and blue space, for example Radnor Park. Following the coast are the urban areas of Seabrook, Hythe and Saltwood.

The coastal beaches and parks are important for tourism and recreation. To the east is East Cliff and Warren Country Park and to the south of Folkestone is The Leas and Lower Leas Coastal Park.

There is access along the coastal promenade and the beachfront. At Seabrook, near Princes Parade, the Royal Military Canal begins, with a cycling and walking route alongside.

There are several corridors of linked green infrastructure assets in Folkestone town. These corridors highlight opportunities to improve linkages across the town, perhaps through sympathetic management, but improvements elsewhere in the urban area are not excluded. The whole of the town is also covered by a 'B-Line' highlighting potential importance for pollinator species, highlighting the potential to improve area for pollinator species throughout urban Folkestone and Hythe.

Access out of Folkestone to the north is restricted by transport infrastructure. There are some access routes but these are limited. There is, however, a 'green chain' around Folkestone and Hythe which could be improved and promoted.

In the 2021 Folkestone Town Centre 'Place Plan' there are several green and blue infrastructure actions and recommendations which should be prioritised as part of any regeneration of the town centre.

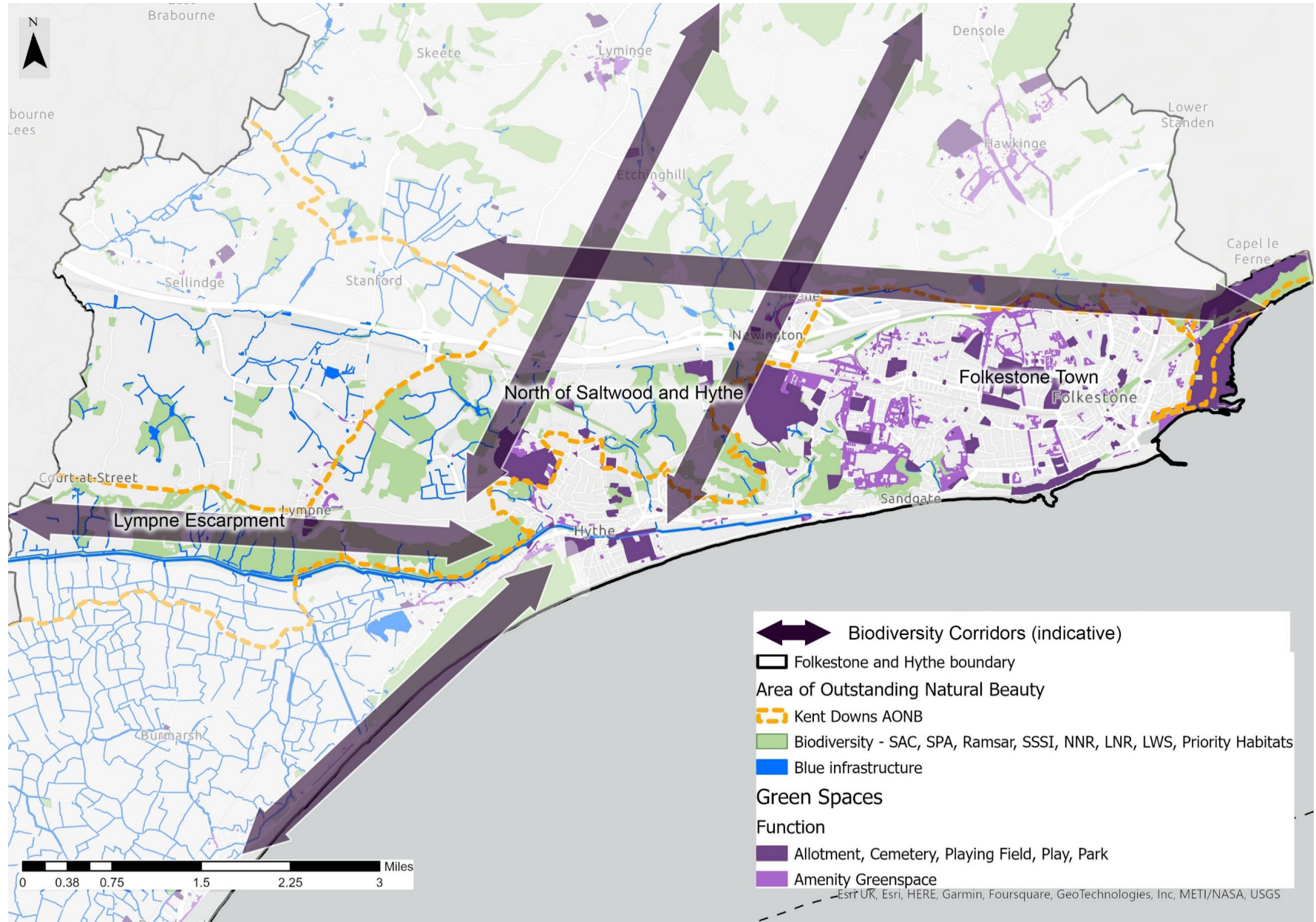
On the western side of Folkestone the urban area gives way to an urban edge landscape with many areas of green infrastructure. This leads to an area to the north of Saltwood and Hythe, bounded by urban areas to the east and south, with Otterpool Park planned along the western edge. Most of this area is within the Kent Downs AONB.

The landscape is intimate and enclosed with historic elements which create a strong sense of place. Saltwood Castle stands in a tiny area of ornamental parkland on the edge of an unspoilt valley. It is also an important area for biodiversity corridors and most is within the Mid Kent Greensand and Gault Biodiversity Opportunity Area, with links to other Opportunity Areas to the north and south.

This is an important area for recreation for current and future residents, particularly as there are only two access points across the transport corridor in the north. A large, and growing, local population could put pressure on recreation facilities within the landscape. Providing high quality, well managed multifunctional paths to recreational spaces such as Brockhill Country Park that can accommodate high levels of use will help to protect more fragile elements of the landscape.

Plan 3:
Folkestone
Town, Hythe
and Saltwood
Area

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Needs, Opportunities and Priorities – Folkestone Town, Hythe and Saltwood Area

See also actions listed under topic chapters.

A
Actions within the control of Folkestone and Hythe District Council.

B
Priorities within the scope of influence of F&HDC. Potential to be delivered by other organisations or in partnership with F&HDC.

C
Priorities of importance in the district but not in control of F&HDC. Delivered by other organisations.

Priorities and Opportunities		Delivery
FHS 1	<p>Take a holistic view and develop a plan for biodiversity, landscape, blue infrastructure and access in the Focus Area north of Saltwood and Hythe. To include interface with urban fringe and to accommodate new Otterpool development. To encompass:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Good quality connections and investment in public rights of way, especially existing promoted routes and routes to Brockhill Country Park; – Increase accessibility of routes (remove stiles, improve surfaces); – Link to existing promoted routes (Royal Military Canal, Saxon Shore Way, Elham Valley Way); – Produce map to show network of public rights of way, cycling routes and quiet lanes to help users and minimise wandering off of public rights of way. Ensure good waymarking on public rights of way; – Rationalise dead end routes. Seek east-west routes where these are lacking; – Assess likely impact of ash dieback on woodlands and hedgerows and mitigate for this; – Improve biodiversity connections across this area through hedgerows, pollinator corridors and other measures appropriate to the landscape character 	B
FHS 2	<p>Develop a 'Bees Please for Folkestone' project – improvements across the town and beyond to create an urban pollinator haven. Projects to increase wildflowers and pollinators would also help other wildlife. Use the project to engage residents and raise awareness. Potential to link with arts. More wildflowers could be incorporated into the many close mown areas in Folkestone, including parks, sports areas, amenity grassland, The Leas, road verges and the communal gardens of apartments. Use as a visitor economy unique selling point.</p>	A
FHS 3	<p>Folkestone town centre regeneration through the Place Plan should incorporate the recommended green and blue infrastructure elements to improve the public realm and make spaces more attractive.</p>	A
FHS 4	<p>Improve access across the barrier of the transport corridor north of Folkestone through ensuring safe and well-maintained routes and promotion.</p>	B
FHS 5	<p>Ensure that the woodland at Shorncliffe development is entered into sustainable management for recreation and wildlife and consider designating as a Local Nature Reserve.</p>	A
FHS 6	<p>Cheriton area has poor access out of urban area to countryside areas beyond and low provision of green space, although it does have large areas of amenity grassland. Invest in access and biodiversity at Cheriton Recreation Area as a significant area of greenspace. Improve quality of amenity green spaces in the area for wildlife and recreation.</p>	A

Priorities and Opportunities		Delivery
FHS 7	Promote a 'green chain' of access routes around Folkestone and promote access to these sites. Invest in public rights of way linking town and countryside to ensure they are accessible to a wide range of people. Ensure recreation is sustainable and does not damage sensitive biodiversity features, through monitoring and management measures as necessary, e.g. through installing interpretation and including information in promotional materials.	B
FHS 8	Ensure urban public rights of way are more fully utilised, keeping them clear from fly tipping, signing them and upgrading for cycling use where possible.	C
FHS 9	Develop urban walking routes to link open spaces and the coastal sites.	B
FHS 10	Connect with Folkestone's arts community to bring alive the unique and special wildlife, habitats and heritage of the area, e.g. through artwork, events, installations, festivals.	C
FHS 11	Produce and implement management plan for Folkestone Warren Local Nature Reserve to implement biodiversity management and sustainable recreation.	A
FHS 12	Investigate the potential for existing open space and the provision of new SuDS suitable to help alleviate surface water flooding in areas where it is a problem, such as along the Pent Stream.	B

Romney Marsh

This unique area has a character all its own, and a unique historic landscape that has evolved over thousands of years. Its long and complex natural history is primarily one of land reclamation.

Dungeness is undoubtedly the jewel in the crown for biodiversity in this area. A continual balance needs to be struck in an area that is internationally important for geomorphology and wildlife but where local communities strive to make a living and enjoy the natural assets on their doorstep. Pressures from visitors on these areas are addressed through the delivery of the Sustainable Access and Recreation Management Strategy (SARMS).

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Farming on Romney Marsh has changed over past decades, both in terms of the type of farming (conversion of sheep pasture to arable land) but also its increased intensification. Nevertheless, the network of ditches and wetlands make this area important for wildlife.

The Open Spaces Strategy shows that some areas in the Romney Marsh area, including New Romney, are currently below the quantity standard. The Open Space Strategy recommends existing green links and corridors should be strengthened including the extensive beaches, cliff-tops and the Royal Military Canal.

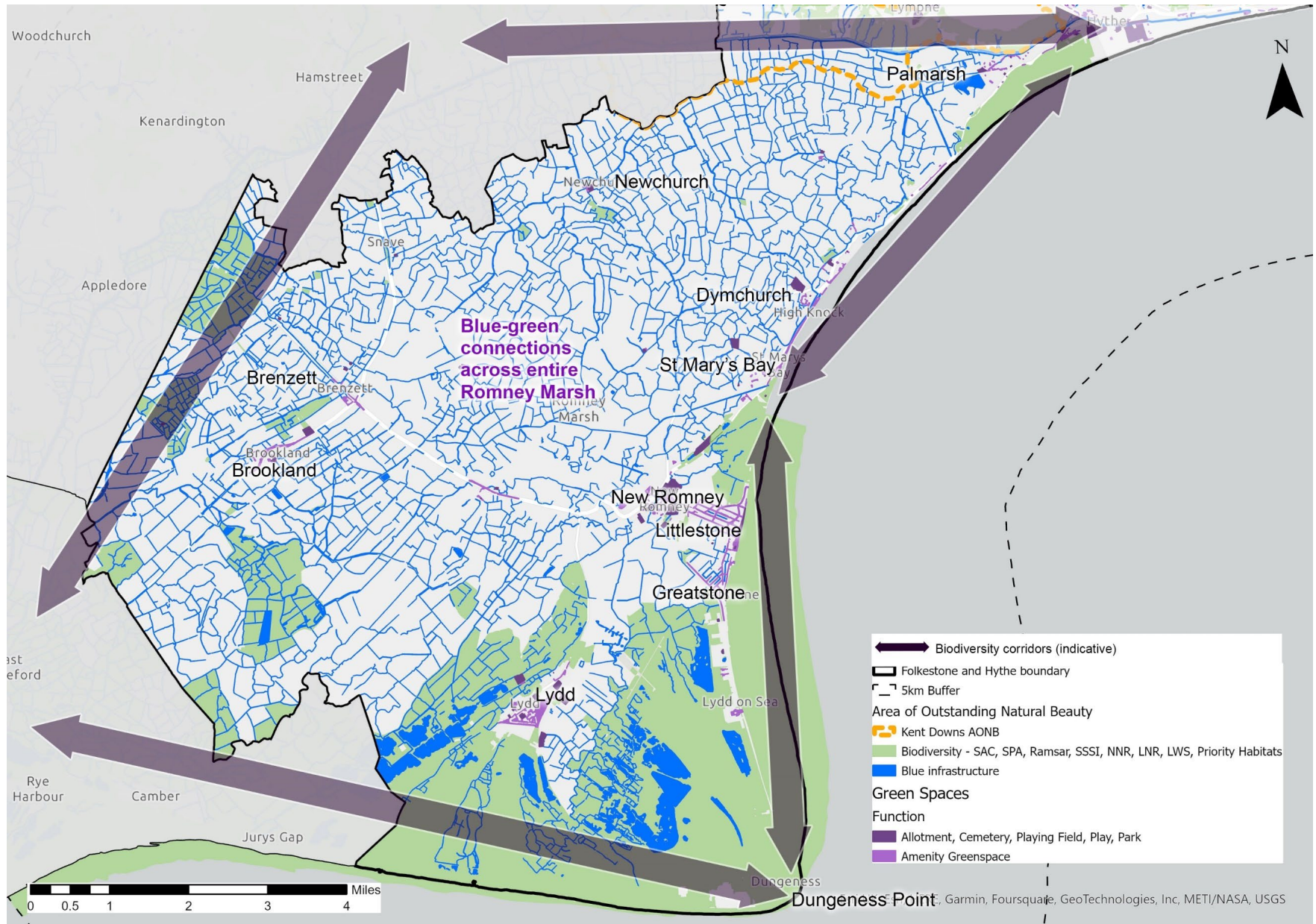
There are also pockets of poor health in the Romney Marsh area, in New Romney, St Mary's Bay and Dymchurch.



Dungeness

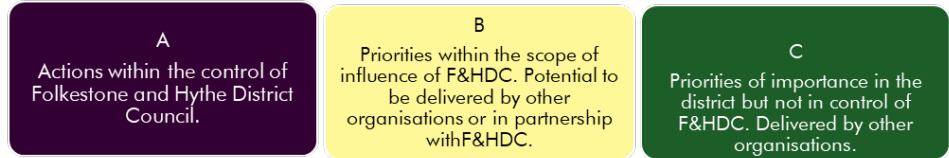
Plan 4:
Romney Marsh
Area

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Needs, Opportunities and Priorities – Romney Marsh Area

See also actions listed under topic chapters.



Opportunities and Priorities		Delivery
RM 1	Consider new cycle path from Lydd to New Romney to take traffic off the road and create a family-friendly route. Employees of the Dungeness Power Station would also benefit if a cycle path was installed along Dungeness Road.	B
RM 2	Provide a range of promotional materials for walking and cycling to promote sustainable tourism. Highlight the area's outstanding heritage and biodiversity assets.	B
RM 3	In many areas public rights of way are the main areas for recreation. Invest in these and promote them for tourism, recreation and health benefits. Improve accessibility of public rights of way to support health and wellbeing.	C
RM 4	Plan strategically to ensure destination green spaces such as Dungeness RSPB, Dungeness Point, the Royal Military Canal, Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Railway and the coast are connected through promotional routes.	B
RM 5	Seek ways to continue legacy projects from the Fifth Continent scheme: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Restoring vegetated shingle habitat across Dungeness foreland; 'Blue lanes' - creating optimal ditch conditions for wildlife through physical works and education; Green lanes for bumblebees through improved highway cutting regimes and engaging with the community and landowners. 	C
RM 6	Implement <i>The Cinque Ports Cycle Route</i> - to link Folkestone seafront to Lydd in line with LCWIP strategy.	A
RM 7	Support access and recreation to the coast to benefit communities, the economy and health and wellbeing, while also taking full account of the recommendations in the SARMS.	B
RM 8	Produce integrated management plan for Greatstone Dunes addressing issues and ensuring sustainable management.	A
RM 9	Work with golf courses to improve wildlife and pollinator habitats.	C
RM 10	Provide more information in tourism material on the biodiversity value of the area and raise awareness of the biodiversity interest and sensitivity of the area with tourism businesses.	B
RM 11	Work with Ministry of Defence to increase access biodiversity and potentially access, where these do not on land holdings.	C
RM 12	Work with neighbouring authorities and partners to extend the Royal Military Canal cycle route to benefit the overall visitor offer for the area, taking into account recommendations in the SARMS.	B

The North Downs

To the north of Folkestone is the North Downs area. Most of this area is within the Kent Downs AONB.

The landscape is a patchwork of arable, livestock and horticulture farming which have co-existed for centuries. Churches, villages, parkland and heritage features are important, telling the story about the area's development and identity.

Woodlands, many of which are ancient, are a prominent in the landscape and chalk grassland is particularly notable. There are also large publicly accessible woodlands managed by the Forestry

Commission. Some of the chalk grasslands are designated for their international importance and support rare wildlife.

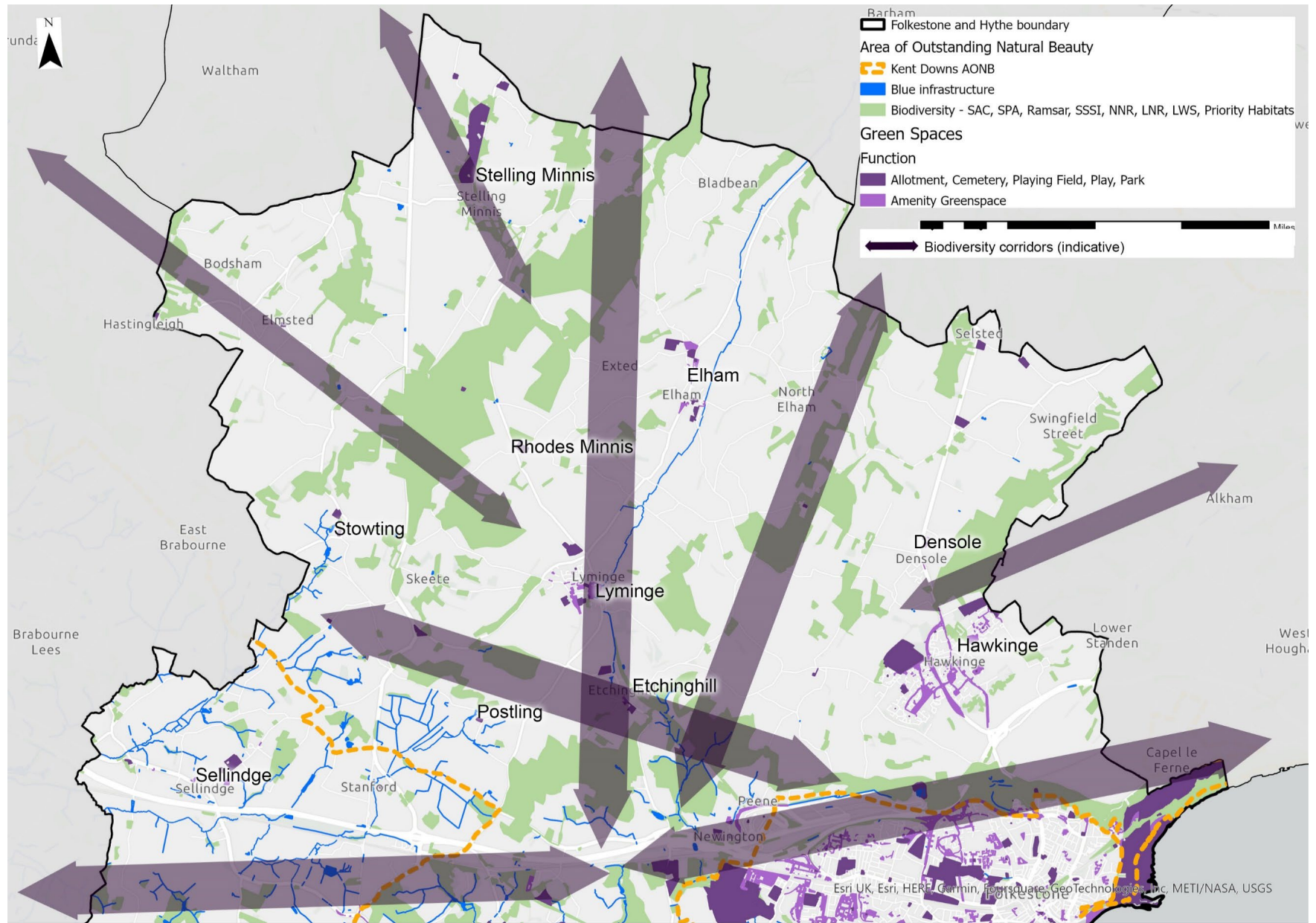
Public rights of way criss-cross the area, including ancient trackways. Promoted routes include the North Downs Way, Saxon Shore Way and the Elham Valley Way. Networks of narrow, winding lanes have hollowed-out the hillsides where they descend and climb the scarp during centuries of use.^{xvi}

Between Lyminge, through Elham and Wingmore is the course of the Nailbourne, a chalk 'bourne' which only flows at some times of the year.



Plan 5: North Downs Area

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Needs, Opportunities and Priorities – North Downs Area

See also actions listed under topic chapters.

A
Actions within the control of Folkestone and Hythe District Council.

B
Priorities within the scope of influence of F&HDC. Potential to be delivered by other organisations or in partnership with F&HDC.

C
Priorities of importance in the district but not in control of F&HDC. Delivered by other organisations.

Opportunities and Priorities		Delivery
ND 1	Protect the tranquillity of the landscape and sensitively manage, promote and celebrate the area's rich cultural and natural heritage, famous landmarks and views for future generations. Working in partnership with the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Unit to identify management opportunities in accordance with the management plan.	B
ND 2	Explore potential opportunities to work with the Forestry Commission and Ministry of Defence to improve public access and public recreation within woodland areas.	C
ND 3	Conserve and appropriately manage ancient trackways such as the North Downs Way and the Pilgrims' Way and strengthen the network through high quality interconnecting routes, increasing the benefits of these routes for biodiversity, health and local businesses.	C
ND 4	Recognise and manage the impact of increased visitor numbers on sensitive sites.	B
ND 5	In many areas public rights of way are the main areas for recreation. Invest in these and promote them for tourism, recreation and health benefits. Improve accessibility of public rights of way to support health and wellbeing.	C
ND 6	Develop measures to address the lack of biodiversity and flooding problems associated with the Nailbourne.	A
ND 7	Assess the impact of ash dieback on the landscape and nature conservation interests and, working with local communities, take steps to mitigate impacts.	B
ND 8	Investigate natural solutions to flood management, where there are problems within the North Downs area and where watercourses in the North Downs lead to flooding downstream, such as along the Pent Stream which flows through Folkestone.	B

Endnotes

¹ SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest; NNR – National Nature Reserve; LNR – Local Nature Reserve; SAC – Special Area of Conservation; SPA – Special Protection Area; LWS – Local Wildlife Site; Ramsar – wetland designated under the Ramsar Convention on Wetlands of International Importance; Priority habitats – habitats identified as rare under the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 section 41.

² <https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/environmental-policies/climate-change/kents-changing-climate>

³ Figures on habitat in this section from Kent Habitat Survey (2012).

⁴ Shepway District Council and Rother District Council. (2017). Dungeness Complex Sustainable Access and Recreation Management Strategy (SARMS).

⁵ <https://www.bumblebeeconservation.org/short-haired-bumblebee-reintroduction-project/>

⁶ Kent County Council. (2020). Canopy Cover Assessment - Kent Districts and Folkestone and Hythe. Kent Environment Strategy).

⁷ From National Forest Inventory and Natural England data. Total woodland calculated at approximately 2,210 hectares with ancient woodland approximately 1,320 hectares.

⁸ Lawton, J.H., *et al* (2010) Making Space for Nature: a review of England's Wildlife Sites and Ecological Network. Report to Defra. Natural England provides more detail on developing 'Nature Networks'. Natural England. (2020). *Nature Networks: Evidence Handbook*. NERR081; *Nature Networks: A Summary for Practitioners*. NERR082.

⁹ Sensitive management around sites to help protect them and increase biodiversity.

¹⁰ <https://www.buglife.org.uk/our-work/b-lines/>

¹¹ However St Mary's Bay has recently been of poor quality.

¹² Environment Agency. (2021). Water Stressed Areas – Final Classification 2021.

¹³ Folkestone and Hythe District Council. (2015). Folkestone and Hythe Strategic Flood Risk Assessment.

¹⁴ Natural England. (2013). National Character Area Profile 119 The North Downs.

¹⁵ Natural England. (2013). National Character Area Profile 123 The Romney Marshes.

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This Report will be made public on 4 July 2023



Report Number **C/23/15**

To: CABINET
Date: 12 July 2023
Status: Non-key decision
Responsible Officer: Olu Fatokun, Low Carbon & Sustainability Senior Specialist
Adrian Tofts, Strategy, Policy & Performance Lead Specialist
Cabinet Member: Councillor Stephen Scoffham, Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment and Biodiversity

SUBJECT: DRAFT DISTRICT-WIDE CARBON PLAN

SUMMARY: A draft District-wide Carbon Plan is being prepared for the council to play a leadership role in promoting partnerships for a carbon neutral district, as set out in the council's climate change and ecological emergency declaration. This report presents the draft District-wide Carbon Plan to Cabinet to seek approval to consult on the plan.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To progress with the climate change and ecological emergency declaration requirement "*To develop a strategy for Folkestone and Hythe District Council to play a leadership role in promoting community, public and business partnerships for this Carbon Neutral 2030 Commitment throughout the District*".

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/23/15.
2. To note the work on the Carbon Innovation Lab and Sustainable Futures Forum already underway (Appendix 1).
3. To agree the draft District-wide Carbon Plan for public engagement (Appendix 2) subject to any amendments agreed through recommendation 5.
4. To agree the proposed approach to public engagement and draft consultation questions (Appendix 3) subject to any amendments agreed through recommendation 5.
5. To agree that the Policy & Performance Lead Specialist in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment and Biodiversity, make any amendments to the District-wide Carbon Plan and consultation questions to reflect the comments of Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, prior to public engagement.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1. The council declared a climate change and ecological emergency on 24 July 2019. The text of the declaration can be viewed here: [\(Public Pack\)Minutes Document for Council, 24/07/2019 19:00 \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](#) The declaration covered a wide range of activity, from the council's own estate and operations, to wider district emissions and work with partners.
- 1.2. The declaration called for the council *“To develop a strategy for Folkestone and Hythe District Council to play a leadership role in promoting community, public and business partnerships for this Carbon Neutral 2030 Commitment throughout the District”* and *“To achieve this, create a Carbon Action Plan based on practical frameworks and advice ...”*
- 1.3. Analysis of the council's estate and operations concluded that the council's own emissions amounted to 1,536 tCO₂e (tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent) at a base year of 2018/19. Data published by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy (BEIS)¹ for 2018 show that emissions arising from buildings, transport and activities across the Folkestone & Hythe district amounted to 409,500 tonnes of CO₂. Emissions from the council's estate and operations therefore amounted to less than 0.4 per cent of the district total, and so collaborative working across the district will be essential to meet the net zero target.

2. CARBON INNOVATION LAB

- 2.1. A proposal was put to Cabinet on 23 March 2022 (C/21/94) for the council to establish a 'Carbon Innovation Lab' (CI-Lab) to address the district-wide commitment, building on a similar group that has successfully operated for around two years at the London Borough of Hounslow.
- 2.2. The CI-Lab is an informal and inclusive group of representatives from the community, business, special interest groups and academics. The objectives of the CI-Lab are to:
 - Develop and deliver actions to reduce carbon emissions and the impact of climate change through collaboration across our communities, businesses and farming enterprises across the district.
 - Understand the opportunities and address local hurdles to achieving net zero, including signposting to resources, and support applications for funding opportunities to enable the transition.
 - Develop a District-wide Carbon Plan for both urban and rural areas of Folkestone & Hythe with administrative support from the district council and deliver quick results where possible.
- 2.3. The CI-Lab has held five meetings to date. Four potential projects have emerged from the discussion, as well as the need to promote active community engagement to drive interest in the District-wide Carbon Plan. The members of the CI-Lab, who attend on a voluntary basis, have shared

¹ Now the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ)

experience of their own projects and a support network is beginning to develop.

- 2.4. Table 1 below details the four emerging projects. Further projects may emerge as the discussion continues, for example around regenerative farming and land management.

	Project 1	Project 2	Project 3	Project 4
Focus	Eco-schools Pilot	Local businesses becoming greener	Energy Efficiency to reduce the cost of living in Privately Occupied homes	Cycle and footpath improvements

Table 1- Emerging Projects from the CI-Lab

- 2.5. Updates on the work of the CI-Lab have been given to the Climate and Ecological Emergency Working Group and a summary was also provided to Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 25 April 2023 (OS/22/12) as part of a general update on the council's climate change work.

3. FOLKESTONE & HYTHE SUSTAINABLE FUTURES FORUM

- 3.1. Project 2 above is being taken forward by officers with the support of Liu Batchelor of LVB Creative, a member of the CI-Lab and a coach, TEDx Folkestone Curator and media producer. This has led to the creation of the Folkestone & Hythe Sustainable Futures Forum (SFF). The role of the SFF is to be the 'umbrella' brand for the delivery of initiatives emerging from the CI-Lab or taking place across the district with the support of the CI-Lab.
- 3.2. The project aimed to engage and empower local businesses, community groups and people by giving them a platform to showcase their ideas and projects for a more sustainable future for our district, by providing coaching support to develop their projects into actions that will inspire others.
- 3.3. The scope of the project was to deliver a series of talk videos featuring local businesses, community groups, special interest groups and the people of Folkestone & Hythe District. This was supported by a series of community engagement events including question and answer sessions, development workshops for speakers and engagement campaigns on Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn as well as the council's website (Carbon Innovation webpage). The project culminated in an event that took place at the Burlington Hotel, Folkestone on the 29 April 2023.
- 3.4. Officers have received a number of positive comments from participants following the April event, which include the following:
- *The event was very well organised, the speakers were inspirational and provided a lot of useful information. It was nice to engage with the community.*

- *Greater awareness of the live projects will allow me to potentially recommend these when working with local businesses to improve collaboration.*
 - *We are keen to expand your approach to Thanet and have resolved to be a change agent and to make this happen.*
 - *The gathering was with a lot of positive vibes, it needs more regulatory involvement, to scale up the meeting from the community, Council to county, and to open a channel to integrate the possibilities with the Government a CSR [Corporate Social Responsibility] or sustainable channel of appreciation.*
 - *Great selection of speakers and breakout sessions.*
 - *I met two attendees who are keen to train staff in the principles of sustainability, the aim is to get buy-in for change.*
 - *An amazing model on how communities can come together, sharing ideas and plans for a better more sustainable future.*
- 3.5. LVB Creative produced an Impact Report following the April event and this is included as **Appendix 1** to this report.
- 3.6. Given the success of the April event, it is intended to continue with an annual Sustainable Futures Forum event, with smaller meetings in between, perhaps on a quarterly basis.

4. DISTRICT-WIDE CARBON PLAN

- 4.1. Officers have prepared a draft District-wide Carbon Plan, with the ideas and input of the CI-Lab, and the draft is included as **Appendix 2** to this report.
- 4.2. As the scope of the district-wide plan is far-reaching, and beyond the ability of the council to fund or implement itself, it is intended to use the public consultation to identify additional partner groups and projects that are currently underway or planned; this information will be brought together to produce a final version of the plan later in the year, making it a collective plan for the whole district.
- 4.3. The draft plan is currently divided into five chapters. It is intended to add further chapters, with detailed actions and monitoring, following the public consultation. The proposed structure of the plan is as follows:
- **Chapter 1** will include a forward and introduction to be drafted with the Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment and Biodiversity for the public consultation.
 - **Chapter 2** sets out the legislative and policy background at international, regional and local level.
 - **Chapter 3** sets out the scale of carbon emissions at district level and the main sources of the emissions, using the BEIS dataset (see paragraph 1.3 above). This chapter outlines the different spheres of influence that the district council has, ranging from areas where it has direct control through to areas where it only has limited influence.

- **Chapter 4** sets out examples of actions that can be taken within these different scopes of influence, and opportunities that carbon reduction can create. This can be added to following the public consultation, for example, with actions to improve biodiversity and enhance the resilience of ecosystems, promote sustainable farm and land management.
 - **Chapter 5** provides examples of activities that are already underway across the range of transport, residential, commercial, other activities and land use absorption and biodiversity enhancement, as a prompt to further discussion. It will be particularly important to engage children and young people in these activities.
 - The public consultation is intended to identify new partners and projects that organisations are currently delivering, are planning to deliver or can contribute to in partnership with others, and these will populate an Action Plan that will form the basis of **Chapter 6**. Public consultation will hopefully identify inspiring projects across the district and help bring together groups to share resources.
 - A monitoring plan will follow in **Chapter 7** after the public consultation that will identify key indicators that will be monitored to assess progress to a carbon neutral future and critical points that may trigger a review of the plan.
 - A conclusion and summary will follow in **Chapters 8 and 9** after the public consultation.
- 4.4. Proposed consultation questions are included as **Appendix 3** to this report. It is planned that the consultation will include:
- Consultation materials on the council’s website, including a professionally produced version of the draft plan set out in Appendix 2, with illustrations and graphics, designed with the council’s Communications Team. This will be accompanied by questions that can be answered through the council’s consultation portal.
 - Engaging with schools and higher education institutions, as well as organisations such as Kent Wildlife Trust, the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, the Woodland Trust and others, including professional bodies.
 - Social media activity to publicise the consultation, working with the Communications Team.
 - Officer attendance at selected venues in locations in the Romney Marsh, North Downs and Folkestone and Hythe areas of the district, with display materials, leaflets and questionnaires. These in-person events could be held as specially arranged sessions or as stalls or ‘pop-ups’ at existing events, such as summer fairs.
 - A targeted questionnaire to households in Folkestone & Hythe district. While the above methods are likely to attract comments from people already interested in climate change issues, it is important that we understand the general knowledge of and concern about climate change and commitment to action among the district’s residents. It is therefore proposed to use specialists in Canterbury City Council to undertake a

targeted survey of representative Folkestone & Hythe residents. (This approach was used in November 2020, alongside an open consultation exercise, to inform Folkestone and Hythe's Corporate Plan 'Creating Tomorrow Together'.)

- 4.5. Given the success of using a specialist media producer for the Sustainable Futures Forum (Section 3), there is potential to use a similar approach in consultation on the District-wide Carbon Plan.

5. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

- 5.1. The draft District-wide Carbon Plan was discussed by Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27 June 2023 (OS/23/01).

- 5.2. The committee made the following points in relation to the draft plan:

- The engagement should include schools and colleges, as younger generations will be most impacted by the effects of climate change.
- There will need to be a mechanism for monitoring and review of the plan to ensure that actions are completed.
- It would help to have an executive summary or a 'plan on a page' to make the document more accessible.
- Risks need to be fully considered when the action plan is being drafted.
- Shorter, targeted questionnaires, focussing on particular topics, should be considered (e.g. waste, energy).
- In focussing on transport, domestic, commercial and industrial emissions the carbon and environmental impact of waste should not be overlooked.
- The role of public transport is important, especially as Stagecoach is cutting bus services in the district.
- The Sustainable Futures Forum could consider focussing on specific topics for future events.
- The approach of staging 'TEDx-style' events could be valuable for school children and young people, especially in the more deprived areas of the district, and help participants learn presentation and public speaking skills.
- The council's webpages need to be reviewed to bring climate change information and projects together.

6. NEXT STEPS

- 6.1. Following comments raised by Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet, officers will prepare any resulting amendments in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment and Biodiversity. A consultation version of the plan will be published and public engagement will begin.
- 6.2. Following the public engagement, officers will review the comments and the results of the targeted questionnaire. The CI-Lab (Section 2) could be used

to provide another perspective on the emerging issues and recommend ways in which they could be addressed.

- 6.3. Subject to the issues raised in the engagement, a report could be taken to Overview and Scrutiny Committee later in the year, summarising the results of the engagement and questionnaire exercise, with proposed amendments to the plan. The amended plan could then be taken to Cabinet for adoption later in 2023.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 7.1. A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
That the District-wide Carbon Plan fails to bring together groups and individuals to deliver joint action.	High	Medium	Undertake wide public consultation through different channels, using professional expertise where necessary. Create an implementation group to ensure that actions in the plan are delivered to schedule.
That the District-wide Carbon Plan fails to deliver significant reductions in carbon emissions.	High	Medium	Undertake regular monitoring and review of the plan to identify additional or amended actions.

8. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

8.1. Legal Officer's Comments (NM)

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

8.2. Finance Officer's Comments (LK)

Any consultation or consultancy costs would be met from the existing climate change budget.

8.3. Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)

There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report. The district wide carbon action plan is proposed for consultation with the public. Access to the consultation and the proposed action plan should be provided in a range of formats to ensure its accessible for all.

8.4. **Climate Change Implications (AT)**

There are no direct climate change implications arising from this report. If approved by Cabinet, the draft plan would be subject to public consultation with individuals, community groups and others across the district. When the final plan is produced following the consultation there are could be significant positive carbon reduction and biodiversity impacts, depending on the range of actions identified.

9. **CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS**

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

Olu Fatokun, Low Carbon Senior Specialist
Telephone: 07950 880 543
Email: olu.fatokun@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Adrian Tofts, Strategy, Policy & Performance Lead Specialist
Telephone: 01303 853438
Email: adrian.tofts@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Sustainable Futures Forum – Impact Report

Appendix 2: District-wide Carbon Plan – Draft Plan for Public Consultation

Appendix 3: District-wide Carbon Plan – Draft Public Consultation Questions

Folkestone & Hythe

**SUSTAINABLE
FUTURES FORUM**

Impact Report





CAMPAIGN VISION

To engage and empower local people by giving them a platform to showcase their sustainable ideas and projects for a more sustainable future for our community

PROGRESS TO DATE

PHASE 1: DEC - FEB

Extensive outreach and public engagement campaign including video, social media, events, press, and email; raising awareness of the campaign and inviting local people to submit their sustainable ideas and projects.

PHASE 2: MAR - APR

Delivery of a coaching programme to support selected speakers in the development of TEDx style talks about their projects - delivered at a community event comprising of talks, and workshop advice, discussions, facilitated networking/partnership development. The event was also live streamed.





Sat 29th April

FINALE EVENT

The Finale event
in numbers



EVENT OVERVIEW

Hosted at The
Burlington Hotel

Sell out event

150

Ticket sold

10

Talks

9

Workshops

18

Volunteers

Attendees from business, community, and general public

Talks: 8x TEDx style speakers, and 2 talks from council members

Facilitated workshops, lead by key local organisation inc Low Carbon Kent/KCC, Social Enterprise Kent, Growing Kent & Medway, ESG at Saga, South Kent Mind.

Volunteers from local community; sustainability experts, Carbon Innovation Lab members, and Napier Barracks



BREAKOUT WORKSHOPS

18 *Workshop & Discussion sessions*

Specific sessions designed for:

- 1) Individuals,
- 2) community groups, and
- 3) businesses.

Topics Including; Circular economy, climate anxiety, behaviour change, advice for VCSE & businesses, and partnership 'match-making' between volunteers, community groups, local business, and sustainable suppliers.



PROFESSIONAL LIVE STREAM BROADCAST

117

Online Views

”Well done on a fab event, I’ve been watching it back today and listening to the speakers...some brilliant ideas.

So sorry I couldn’t attend but the option to re-watch has worked really well.”

Helen - Head of CSR, Saga



PROFESSIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY

Speaker photos, videos of their talks, and radio interview opportunities - all provided to help them promote their projects

ATTENDEE FEEDBACK

100%

Respondents who rated
the event 7 and above
out of 10

83%

Respondents who said
they were highly likely to
make new or additional
behaviour changes





”Speakers were very professional, fascinating to hear what is being done locally, breakout sessions were interesting and practical. A very positive vibe.”

ATTENDEE FEEDBACK



”The event was very well organised, the speakers were inspirational and provided a lot of useful information, it was nice to engage with the local community”

ATTENDEE FEEDBACK



"I am now inspired to take more action myself, and plan to buy more locally grown produce rather than using the supermarket."

ATTENDEE FEEDBACK



Dec 22 - May 23

FULL CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

The full campaign
programme in numbers

FULL CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

10

PR/Press
opportunities

10

Public
events

80

Event
attendees

14

Coaching
sessions

8

TEDx style
talks

33

Projects
submitted

45

Videos/local
people & projects



LOCAL PROJECTS PROMOTED

8 Projects developed &
delivered as TEDx style talk

Projects promoted as
video showcase **13**

33 Project applications, and
signposting provided

Local project adverts
promoted on live stream **8**





COACHING PROGRAMME

6 Week intensive speaker
coaching programme

30 Hours of 1-2-1 &
group coaching

11 People/projects
taking part

PUBLIC PROGRAMME

3 Open community
workshops, supporting

16 projects over
6 hours of coaching



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SOCIAL MEDIA

34,146

Instagram Impressions

32,110

Facebook content reach

39,261

Linkedin Impressions

3,622

Website views



PRESS/PR

3 BBC Radio Kent
Interviews

AcademyFM Radio **4**
Interviews

2 Folkestone Foghorn
features

Kent Live/
Herald Article **1**

3 Speaking
opportunities

Public Engagement **5**
events

NEXT STEPS



PHASE 3: MAY

Currently in progress

Publication of speakers TEDx style talks and post event public engagement campaign - engaging and inspiring the public with local initiatives in their area.

For the speakers, there is an opportunity to apply for funding to further development of their projects, and supported by further business/project coaching to help implement their ideas.



THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Any further questions, input or support please contact:
Liu@LVBcreative.com or Olu.fatokun@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk



FOLKESTONE & HYTHE
Sustainable Futures Forum

WWW.SUSTAINABLEFUTURESFORUM.COM

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Draft – District-Wide Carbon Plan Part 1

1.0 Executive Summary

1.1 Forward

1.2 Summary

1.3 Introduction

2.0 Policy Drivers

2.1 Global, National, Regional and Local Context

Several policies at the global, national, regional and local levels of institutions and government set out guidance and targets to tackle climate change.

2.1.1 Global

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) established a global environmental accord to combat "dangerous human interference with the climate system" overseeing the implementation of The Paris Agreement set a legally binding international accord on temperature change adopted in 2015, which places a world commitment to limit warming to 1.5 – 2° Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

In addition, the United Nations (UN) adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. This initiated a global urgent call for action to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all by 2030. Climate change is embedded throughout the goals and specifically addressed in Goal 13 – *'to take imperative action to combat temperature change and its impacts'*.

The United Nations Conference of the Parties on Biodiversity in December 2022 (COP15) agreed a number of global targets for 2030 including:

- The effective conservation and management of at least 30 per cent of the world's lands, inland waters, coastal areas and oceans, with emphasis on areas of particular importance for biodiversity and ecosystem functioning and services (informally referred to as the '30 by 30' deal).
- Reducing global food waste by half and significantly reducing over-consumption and waste generation.
- Reducing by half both excess nutrients and the overall risk posed by pesticides and highly hazardous chemicals.

The 2021 United Nations Climate Change Conference at COP26 that took place in Glasgow was intended to further accelerate actions towards the goals of the Paris Agreement and the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. In addition, COP27 took place in the Egyptian coastal city of Sharm el-Sheikh and concluded with a historic decision to establish and operationalise a loss and damage fund for vulnerable countries hit by climate-induced disasters. As Antonio Guterres stated in opening COP27:

"The global fight will be won or lost in this crucial decade ... Humanity has a choice: co-operate or perish."

2.1.2 National

The Climate Change Act, as amended in 2019, sets a binding target to reduce the United Kingdom's (UK's) greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050 compared to 1990 levels, placing a duty on public sector organisations to reduce emissions while adapting to climate change. In addition, the Climate Change Act 2008 (2050 Target Amendment) Order 2019 later passed increases the UK's commitment to a 100% reduction in emissions by 2050.

Furthermore, the Net Zero Strategy: Build Back Greener published in 2021 sets out how the UK will manage its carbon budgets and its vision for a decarbonised economy by 2050. Legislation to protect and enhance the environment is also set out in the Environment Act 2021. The Government's policy for new development is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (2021) and more detail is provided in Planning Practice Guidance which is updated periodically. Planning Practice Guidance sets out guidance on a range of topics including how planning can address climate change challenges, where evidence can be found and how local planning authorities can identify mitigation measures. National planning policies and guidance are then used by local authorities to draft their local plans which set out where development should take place and what standards it should meet.

2.1.3 Regional

In Kent, local government responsibilities are divided between Kent County Council and the lower-tier borough and district councils. At the county level, following the declaration of a climate and ecological emergency in 2019, Kent County Council developed the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (ELES) to facilitate the agreement to achieve net zero emissions in Kent and Medway by 2050. Folkestone & Hythe District Council is working with Kent County Council to support the implementation of the ELES across the district.

Kent County Council is the determining authority for minerals and waste development and sets out policies for these types of development in its Minerals and Waste Local Plan. Kent County Council is also the local transport authority and is currently developing the Local Transport Plan 5 (LTP5). This will set out the transport plan for 2037 considering integrated strategies such as the ELES and other sub-national strategies within the southeast. LTP5 will have a strong focus on reducing carbon emissions from transport by promoting public transport and active travel for shorter journeys, for example by encouraging cycling and walking. Kent County Council is also the lead local flood authority and has developed policies for the provision of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) as part of new developments.

The Kent Nature Partnership has developed the Kent Biodiversity Strategy 2020 to 2045 (February 2020) which aims to deliver, over a 25-year period, the maintenance, restoration and creation of habitats across the county and ensure that the county's terrestrial and water environments regain and retain good health.

In addition, Kent County Council is the authority responsible for producing a new plan introduced by the Environment Act 2021, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy

1. [Climate change – Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

(LNRS), working with district and borough councils and others across Kent. The purpose of the LNRS is to help with nature recovery, support gains in biodiversity, incorporate nature recovery objectives into the planning system and help to deliver national environment targets.

2.1.4 Local

In parallel with Kent County Council, Folkestone & Hythe District Council also declared a climate and ecological emergency in 2019 committing to reducing emissions from its operations and estate to net zero by 2030 as demonstrated in 33 actions undertaken in the Folkestone & District Carbon Action Plan. The council is reviewing the plan to measure progress so far and identify if additional projects will be required to deliver our net zero goal.

This declaration also committed the council to “Develop a strategy for Folkestone and Hythe District Council to play a leadership role in promoting community, public and business partnerships for this Carbon Neutral 2030 Commitment throughout the District.” This district-wide plan is intended to help deliver this commitment.

2.2 Corporate Plan: Creating Tomorrow Together

Our Corporate Plan - Creating Tomorrow Together: 2021-30 was developed with climate change embedded into the council’s vision for the district. For example,

- Service ambition 1: Positive community leadership by working to support and empower our communities e.g., the formation of the Carbon Innovation Lab (CI-Lab) to develop this District Wide Carbon Plan.
- Service ambition 2: A thriving environment – Ensure a clean, attractive, and safe environment for residents, visitors and businesses.

The corporate plan is also governed by the Greener Folkestone & Hythe guiding principle. This says that we will “encourage and create a more sustainable district by consuming fewer natural resources.”

2.2.1 Local Plan and Core Strategy Review

It is recognised that climate change is a major issue that will impact planning, development and land use alongside the opportunities to address the green skills gap and foster growth in a green economy. As a result, it was considered in the Places & Policies Local Plan (2020) which sets out a vision for future development across the district incorporating climate change and the natural environment. Climate change is also a key consideration in the Core Strategy Review (2022) in long-term planning for development to 2037.

We are required to take into account national planning policy (see section 2.1.2) in drawing up our local plan and taking decisions on planning applications. Local plans must be reviewed at least every five years, or sooner if circumstances change. We are currently reviewing our local plan. The review will reflect national climate change policy and best sustainable development practices elsewhere. In addition, it will reflect Government reforms to the planning system introduced through new legislation and guidance.

1. [Climate change – Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

2.3 Climate Risk and Vulnerability Assessment

It is imperative to assess and understand the risks posed by climate change to Folkestone & Hythe District (the district) to enable us to build long-term resilience while adapting to climate change.

Most of the population of the district live in coastal towns where areas may be prone to flooding from the sea, rivers and other sources. The north of the district consists of a large area of land that is nationally protected by the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) designation, with attractive villages and wooded landscape, forming part of an area that extends from the white cliffs of Dover to the Surrey and London border. The Romney Marsh area, to the south of the district, is a unique environment reclaimed from the sea over many centuries. It has seaside towns and remote villages and hamlets. The wide expanses of rich agricultural land are crossed by a network of drainage channels and the area is generally protected by sea defences.

The district is already experiencing the potential impacts of warmer, wetter winters and hotter, drier summers. These will have long-term impacts on our community's quality of life, health, well-being, and economy. The impact on the flora and fauna of the district is already apparent; evidence from Natural England shows that the district has a number of highly vulnerable habitats, including rivers and watercourses on the Romney Marsh, areas of coastal and floodplain grazing marsh, chalk rivers and vegetated coastal shingle. As the ecological base is eroded, positive feedback loops may exacerbate the problems we already face.

The effects of climate change will also impact on the productivity of the district's farmland, raising problems of food security. This suggests that the diversification of crops and local food production will be increasingly important to try to increase our self-sufficiency and reduce the impacts of transporting food over long distances.

The extent of flood risk in the district has been mapped in our Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) which was published in 2015. This assessment incorporates the impacts of climate change and the protection of existing flood defences. This study is currently being updated to take account of recent projections of changing weather patterns and sea level rises.

Kent and Medway produced the Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment (CCRIA) in 2019 detailing an assessment of the current and future risks, opportunities and impacts of climate change as well as setting out how Kent and Medway will respond to climate change by building long-term resilience while benefiting from the opportunities it presents in its Climate Adaptation Programme. The council is working with Kent County Council on the implementation of the Climate Adaptation Programme.

3. Purpose and Scope

3.1 Role and Remit of Folkestone & Hythe District Council

1. [Climate change – Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

The scope of this district-wide carbon plan covers the broader need to encourage and influence the reduction of carbon emissions across the district. This plan is not intended to cover the emissions of the council's operations and estate as these are reported separately.

It is imperative to state that decarbonisation of the district will rely on the entire district, including communities, residents and businesses being concerned and taking positive actions to vary behaviours if we are to achieve net zero. Currently there is widespread concern about the state of the environment, which is articulated by national and local interest groups, but also acknowledged by large numbers of people of all social groups and ages. Harnessing these concerns and directing them in positive and hopeful directions is the long-term ambition of this plan.

The council understands the various levels of control and influence it has in meeting the challenges of climate change across the district and will seek to explore the opportunities that adapting to our changing climate may present. We will be guided by:

1. The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) report on Local Authorities and the Sixth Carbon Budget which sets out a model of influence highlighting the vital role of the council in influencing local emissions.
2. The people of Folkestone & Hythe District expressed through the voices of the Carbon Innovation Lab (CI-Lab) as well as the views of parish councils, local businesses, community groups, interest groups etc which will be gathered through consultation on this draft plan.

Figure 1: Levers of Influence



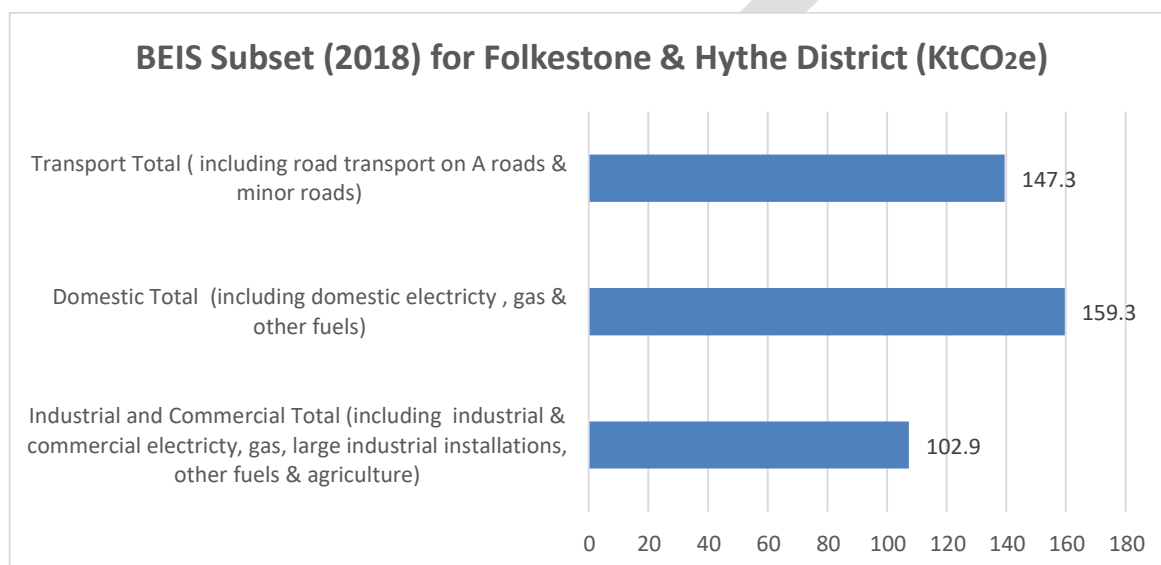
Source: 'Onion diagram' based on internal Centre for Sustainability model and amended for this report.

3.2 District-wide Emissions Profile & Baseline (BEIS data)

1. [Climate change – Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

The Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)^[1], now the Department for Energy Security & Net Zero (DESNZ) publishes a set of emissions data which is within the scope of local authorities to influence. For Folkestone & Hythe District, the BEIS data suggests that at a base date of 2018, 409.5 ktCO₂ (thousand tonnes of carbon dioxide) were within the scope of the council to influence. The council's emissions (from estate and operations) for 2018/19 were 1,536 tCO₂e. This shows that the council has direct control only over a small portion of the district emissions (which is less than 0.4% of the total district emissions) and demonstrates that collaborative working across the district is essential if we are to meet our net zero targets.

Figure 2: Folkestone & Hythe District-Wide Emissions Profile



There is no universally accepted definition of 'net zero'. However, the Carbon Trust suggests definitions of what net zero means for countries, cities, regions and companies.^[1]

For regions, the Carbon Trust says that to achieve net zero an area will need to:

- Set and pursue an ambitious target for all relevant greenhouse gas emissions to pursue a pathway that limits global warming to 1.5°C. Any remaining hard-to-decarbonise emissions can be compensated for with certified greenhouse gas removal (GGR) methods.

In determining what greenhouse gas emissions are relevant, we have used the district-wide profile provided by BEIS (see section 3.2 above).

Regarding greenhouse gas removal, there are several potential methods. The Carbon Trust references the Royal Society's report 'Greenhouse Gas Removal' (2018)^[2] which discusses afforestation, coastal habitat restoration and other methods. Any solution must remove emissions permanently. In addition, a solution must not rely on unproven technology or have negative impacts on other areas, for example, damaging valuable habitats by planting trees that are not suited to an

1. [Climate change – Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/Climate%20change)

area. In most cases a local scheme is likely to be the most effective solution, as it can be more easily managed and monitored, giving confidence to local people that action is happening. Planting woodlands or recreating coastal habitats can be effective solutions that can directly benefit residents.

3.4 The Five Pillars of Focus

Table 1 below shows the main emissions sources attributable to the district, identified through the BEIS data subset along with other considerations, these are being regarded as the five pillars of focus through which the district can start to reduce emissions, as at the 2018 base date.

Table 1: District-Wide Emission Sources (as at 2018 base date)

Pillars	Emissions Source	Emissions (KtCO ₂)	Percentage Contribution (%)
1.	Road Transport	147.3	36.0
2.	Residential	159.3	38.9
3.	Commercial & Industrial (including the BEIS figures for industry, commercial, public sector and agriculture categories)	102.9	25.1
<i>Total comprising:</i>			
<i>Industry – 26.0</i>			
<i>Commercial – 35.2</i>			
<i>Public sector – 33.1</i>			
	<i>Agriculture – 8.6</i>		
	Total	409.5	100
4.	Other activities (e.g., water conservation and waste management)	Not specifically included in the BEIS subset of data, but the treatment of waste, water and food production are important district-wide considerations.	
5.	Land use Absorption (e.g., land use, land-use change and forestry)	Not specifically included in the BEIS subset of data, but a small proportion of total emissions are reabsorbed through land use, such as woodland and habitat creation and boosting these activities will have carbon and biodiversity benefits.	

4. Defining the level of influence

4.1 The council understands that it can be an influencer of change within the district. It is actively working to support local businesses, community groups and the people of Folkestone & Hythe District and implementing measures to reduce carbon emissions across the district. However, it has only direct control over its operations and estate, which only account for less than 0.4% of district emissions.

4.1.1 Direct Control

1. [Climate change – Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

The council has direct control over how it will reduce emissions from its operations and estate including communal areas of the sheltered housing stock. However, it only has an indirect influence on reducing emissions from the general council housing stock as the tenant will determine the energy supplier and how the energy is used. Direct control relates mostly to scope 1 (direct greenhouse gas emissions) including council-owned or controlled mobile combustion sources such as petrol and diesel fuel consumed in vans and cars, combustion of fuels in stationary sources (e.g., natural gas, burning oil, gas oil and LPG consumed within council buildings) and scope 2 emissions (electricity indirect greenhouse gas emissions) including emissions from the generation of purchased electricity, heat or steam that is consumed in the council's own or controlled equipment or operations (e.g., buildings and street lighting). For example, the council is making progress across the 33 actions set out in the Carbon Action Plan 2021 and is currently reviewing the Carbon Action Plan to update and improve its effectiveness.

The council has already:

- Reviewed the energy efficiency performance and condition of all its social homes and has a programme in place to upgrade their energy efficiency and improve the health and well-being of our tenants. This requires substantial resources and investment to achieve net zero in operation. The council is actively seeking and has recently been successful in bidding for financial support from the Government, for example, through bids to the Government's Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund.
- Reviewed the carbon emissions and comfort levels in the sheltered housing portfolio. The council has an improvement plan that includes improving the energy efficiency and introducing low-carbon heating and electricity generation of these buildings to help contribute to the overall aim of reaching net zero for its operations and estate by 2030.
- Commenced a trial to create a 'decarbonisation plan' for a complex commercial building. A decarbonisation plan for a specific commercial building aims to work towards reducing emissions through multiple measures in the fabric, controls, low-carbon electricity and space heating.
- The council has to make sure that social houses in the district meet the required energy efficiency standards; this will increase in a phased approach over the next few years. The council also can seek to influence (where applicable) property developers, homeowners and landlords to do the same in residential and commercial properties.

4.1.2 Indirect Control

The council has less control over wider emissions that arise within the district, such as emissions from private homes and businesses, transport and other activities, however, it is aware that it has an influential role. It will leverage this role of influence to encourage local businesses, communities, and people to invest in a net zero future. Other actions include scope 3 emissions (other indirect greenhouse gas emissions including emissions generated by business travel and water) that will contribute to wider district emissions. For example, the council is currently undertaking a trial where all procurement contracts include carbon reduction requirements.

Furthermore, the council has committed to leading by example as follows:

1. Collaborating with developers and individual homeowners to encourage the introduction of net zero measures in the design of our buildings. This is done through the development of a net zero toolkit to provide simple guidance on the most effective sustainability measures.
2. Setting out environmental plans and policies for the district that recognise the importance of our green and blue infrastructure to remove carbon from the atmosphere and enhance biodiversity. This will promote biodiversity and be an asset to all our residents. Delivery of individual projects will need the collaboration of a wide range of partners, including landowners, volunteers and local interest groups. These partners include town and parish councils, developers and others.
3. Adopting an open, collaborative approach and actively supporting our residents, businesses, urban and rural communities and local environmental groups to deliver their low-carbon projects and initiatives. This includes grants, such as the Green Business Grant, and joint initiatives, such as Solar Together Kent. The collaboration includes communicating the tangible and intangible benefits of the council's investment in low-carbon projects.
4. Collaborating with Kent County Council and electricity grid distribution operator to develop a strategic local area energy plan. Over time this will deliver the infrastructure to support decarbonisation across the district.
5. Collaborating with a network of local authorities through UK100 to achieve its climate change and environmental protection objectives.

4.1.3 Place shaping

The council sets out policies to shape the development and conservation of the district's towns, villages, open spaces and countryside through the development plan. This comprises the Places & Policies Local Plan (2020) and Core Strategy Review (2022).

The Places and Policies Local Plan (PPLP) sets out the energy hierarchy as a sequence for reducing carbon emissions, starting with reducing the need for energy by making changes to the design and fabric of a building ('fabric first'), then using energy more efficiently within the building, before using energy from renewable or low carbon technologies and finally ensuring that any fossil fuels that are required are used as efficiently as possible.

This is supported by the Core Strategy Review (CSR) which aims to minimise carbon emissions by reducing emissions from new buildings. Policy SS3: Place-Shaping and Sustainable Settlements Strategy states that proposals should be designed to contribute to local place-shaping and sustainable development *"through appropriate sustainable construction measures, including water efficiency and a proportion of energy from renewable/low carbon sources on new-build development"*.

Other policies from these plans seek to: enhance the district's biodiversity and its green infrastructure (PPLP policy NE2, CSR policy CSD4); protect and enhance its

1. [Climate change – Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

water and coastal environment (PPLP policies NE8 and NE9, CSR policy CSD5); promote sustainable development (PPLP policy CC2); improve health and wellbeing (PPLP policy HW2); support active lifestyles as part of new developments (PPLP policy HW3); and promote active travel such as walking and cycling (PPLP policy HW4, CSR policy SS3).

Other organisations also produce plans and strategies that influence the council’s planning decisions and landowners’ and estate managers’ decisions. These include the Management Plan for the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) (2021-2026) and other guidance produced by the AONB partnership for the Kent Downs area.

Various plans and strategies will also be developed as the District-wide Carbon Plan is completed and implemented, such as Local Nature Recovery Strategies mandated by the 2021 Environment Act. Kent County Council and partners will develop the Local Nature Recovery Strategy when more detailed guidance is published by the Government.

4.1.4 Partnership and Engagement

The council recognises that in some ways it can enable actions through partnership working, initiating and promoting best practices to influence carbon emissions reductions, such as leading the way on electric vehicle charging points, with the installation of 132 charging points in 26 car parks across the district.

In other ways, we can engage through communication, awareness raising, and consulting with local businesses, community groups and the people. This will lead to a variety of behaviours that promote our move towards a low-carbon future. For example, the Carbon Innovation Lab (CI-Lab) is an informal voluntary forum to drive forward local action to reduce carbon emissions in the district that the council helps to facilitate. The CI-Lab has already had an impact with the development of the Folkestone & Hythe Sustainable Futures Forum TEDx-style event and talk videos which provided a platform for our residents to share and develop their sustainable ideas into deliverable actions – from small projects to larger programmes.

4.2 Challenges, Risks and Opportunities

Climate change will present challenges, risks and opportunities. How we address these will be crucial to the future of the district. This is because climate change will have a long-lasting impact on the people, place and economy of the district. Therefore, it poses several challenges to the district, as outlined below.

4.2.1 Challenges

Several barriers need to be addressed before net-zero targets can be achieved such as:

Challenges	Description
Support & Guidance	Lack of consistent long-term national government support and guidance or changing national guidance with the reform of the planning system and the creation of new government departments.

1. [Climate change – Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

Finance	High and uncertain costs to transition to a low carbon economy. Lack of capacity to bid for available government funding and apply for private and community finance to invest in the low-carbon infrastructure.
Lack of Control	Little or no control over some of the higher sources of emissions such as road transport and existing residential properties. These sources may be influenced more by other organisations, such as National Highways or the National Grid and rising energy costs.
Costs	High capital costs to switch to low-carbon energy technologies for the average individual and organisation even though these are offset over time by the reduced cost of energy.
Planning	Restrictions under current planning rules and the robustness of planning policies in implementing mitigation and adaptation measures. Proposals to reform the planning system are currently being considered by Parliament through the Levelling-up and Regeneration Bill.
Resources	Increasing government cuts result in significant staffing issues to deliver the scale of carbon activities needed. Lack of knowledge and a detailed understanding of the most significant issues surrounding climate change and where gains can be made. Competing requirements for limited funds, time and commitment from all stakeholders
Local electrical grid capacity	Lack of adequate grid electricity capacity to support wide-scale electrification in transportation and buildings. Extended lead times and high connection costs to the existing grid infrastructure, even for small-scale initiatives.
Regional and national policies	Targets set by the national or regional policy are often outside of the council's direct control such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o transport o health services and buildings o education services and buildings

4.2.2 Risks

Measures need to be put in place to manage and adapt to climate risks such as:

Risks	Description
Weather	UK Climate Projections predicts hotter, drier summers and warmer wetter winters for the Kent and Medway region, including potential impacts on farming and food production, water treatment, rivers and coasts, and localised flash flooding.
Buildings & Infrastructure	Potential damage to buildings & infrastructure from increasing floods, storms, winds and rain. Increase in costs of maintenance and repair and remediation of affected areas.

1. [Climate change – Folkstone & Hythe District Council \(folkstone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkstone-hythe.gov.uk)

Roads & Transport	Increase in the likelihood of weather damage and potholes to the road and rail infrastructure. Increase the risk of disruption to travel and potential impact on air quality.
Health and Well-being	Potential risks to health and well-being because of heat waves, cold snaps, flooding and storms include the impact on water quality and sewerage disposal, grid blackouts alongside risks to people's homes and health. Potential reduction in air quality during warm, still and dry spells where emissions may be retained in the local atmosphere and rise to more dangerous levels.
Natural environment	Potential risks to loss of natural capital, green infrastructure, increasing urban heat effect, and the spread of pests and diseases affecting native species and rare habitats. Potential risks of unsustainable use of agricultural fertilisers and runoff into rivers affecting oxygen levels and the local habitats.
Managing conflicting priorities	Implementing low-carbon solutions in isolation may have detrimental impacts on other areas of the economy or environment. The need is a consistent and integrated approach developed over time and in a collaborative manner with all stakeholders to reduce risks.

4.2.3 Opportunities

The council recognises that we cannot achieve net zero alone. However, we can act as an influencer of change and support the inspiring work local people and organisations already undertake throughout the district. Focusing on our five priority pillars, we will seek to tackle climate change challenges as set out below.

- **Transportation**

With road transport being a significant source of carbon emissions in the district (around 36 per cent of the district's emissions at the 2018 base date), the council continues to work closely with Kent County Council to reduce emissions from our roads, for example by influencing the development of the Local Transport Strategy 5. (Motorways and trunk roads are operated and maintained by National Highways and are outside the scope of the BEIS dataset in section 3.4 above.) We are also taking the opportunity to reduce emissions from transportation by rolling out electric vehicle charging points in car parks across the district and encouraging taxi drivers to switch to electric or hybrid modes of transportation. We continue to support active travel initiatives and develop cycle routes throughout the district. Ambitious regeneration plans for the Folkestone town centre, for example, assisted by an award from the Government's Levelling Up Fund will provide improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure, an improved public realm, remodelled road junctions and enhanced links to Folkestone Central railway station.

1. [Climate change – Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

However, not all journeys can be made by walking or cycling, so improved public transport will also be vital to reducing carbon emissions from transport. We will continue to influence Kent County Council, the local transport authority, as well as the rail and bus companies that provide the services.

Further opportunities will be created following the announcement that the sale of new petrol and diesel cars sales will stop from 2030. We hope that the increase in charging points will encourage people to use electric vehicles for commuting, business and leisure use.

- **Residential**

We are always exploring ways to influence this emission source, which accounted for around 39 per cent of the district's emissions at the 2018 base date. For example, the council is taking part in the county-wide Solar Together Kent project; a solar panel and battery storage group-purchase scheme which has been extended for another year to 2023/24. The scheme allows residents and small businesses to install solar panels on their homes and businesses at an affordable price. It also provides battery storage to make maximum use of renewable energy. With a typical home solar panel installation providing savings of around 0.74 to 0.94 tonnes of carbon emissions a year, the current phase of Solar Together Kent could yield carbon savings of around 100 to 125 tonnes a year for the district, or around 1,000 to 1,250 tonnes a year in total across the Kent and Medway area.

As part of the decarbonisation plans for its sheltered housing schemes and other buildings, the council is actively seeking to incorporate renewable generation technologies such as solar PV panels and heat pumps as well as reduce their energy consumption by improving insulation.

The council actively signposts to support (financial and other) for our residents and homeowners to benefit from the move towards a net zero future, most recently financial support to install measures that reduce energy consumption in our homes and businesses, such as the Government's Green Homes Grant.

Opportunities will also exist to encourage energy efficiency and the uptake of low carbon technologies by homeowners and landlords with the view to the government enforcing landlords to meet the minimum energy efficiency performance standards EPC B and C by 2025 for all new tenancies and from 2028 for existing tenancies. For example, the council, as a major landlord, has decided to reduce emissions from our council housing stock. This will reduce energy bills and improve tenants' health and well-being. This includes current work to upgrade 109 homes of our housing stock to EPC C rating through the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund wave 1 award. The successful award of £2.6m through wave 2 of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund will help the council to improve a further 300 social homes over two years.

- **Commercial and Industrial**

The commercial and industrial sector accounted for around 25 per cent of the district's emissions at the 2018 base date. (For this category we have combined the BEIS figures for commercial, industrial, public sector and agriculture.) The way we

1. [Climate change – Folkestone & Hythe District Council \(folkestone-hythe.gov.uk\)](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)

are influencing this emission source is by evaluating social and environmental considerations in procurement and contracting. Sustainability is becoming an increasingly important factor in businesses' long-term viability and we anticipate that this will create an opportunity for the council to promote the benefits of greening our businesses. This may help local firms win contracts. Grants and funding for district businesses and support for funding applications are promoted on the council's website.

- **Other activities (e.g., water conservation and waste management)**

Reducing, reusing and recycling waste is central to our waste management and we are influencing this emission source by promoting this throughout the council's practices and the wider district. Recently, we recorded a 5% drop in carbon emissions in 2022 by the district's waste operator. We recognise the potential of a local circular economy to create and support local small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). We also recognise the potential to reduce carbon emissions associated with raw materials extraction and landfill.

- **Land use Absorption (e.g., land use, land-use change and forestry)**

As set out in section 3.2, tree planting and the creation of new habitats has the potential to absorb carbon emissions that cannot be removed earlier in the process. The council will look to influence this emission source through the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. This will promote tree planting and habitat creation as part of the proposed developments. We will also work with Kent County Council on a Local Nature Recovery Strategy for Kent, which is a requirement arising from the Environment Act. Climate change also presents an opportunity for the district to protect its natural capital, reduce the use of pesticides, improve biodiversity, improve air quality and deliver other benefits. For example, as part of its own grounds' maintenance work, the council plants native and semi-native trees, maintain wildflower areas around the district to benefit bees and other pollinators, and supplies summer and winter bedding plants 100 % peat free.

5. Our Approach

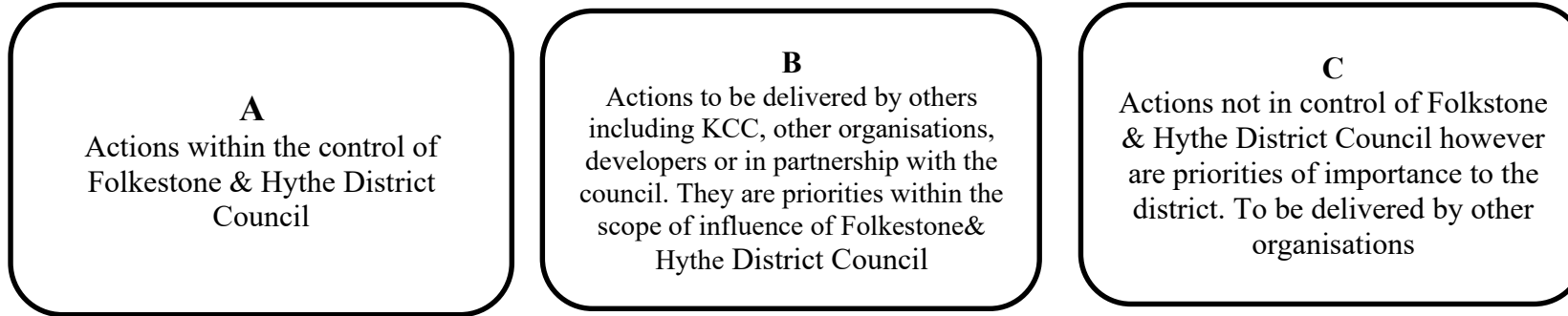
5.1 Where we are now.

These are examples of actions that are currently being undertaken by the council, other organisations, businesses and local groups across the five pillars of focus.

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The five priority pillars of focus are as follows:

Keys



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Pillars	Actions	Delivery
Transport	Promoting active travel by promoting walking and cycling, launching campaigns, improving walking, and cycling infrastructure and use of public transport to encourage people to use alternative modes of transportation.	A & B
	Working with local transport providers and Kent County Council to improve public transportation services, including better connectivity and increased frequency of bus services to make public transport a more attractive and viable option for residents.	B & C
	Encouraging the use of electric vehicles by installing electric vehicle charging points in car parks across the district and providing a salary sacrifice scheme for the purchase of electric vehicles for staff.	A, B & C
	Through the Climate Change Network, taxi drivers are being encouraged to switch to electric vehicles and working with partners to secure funding to further support the transition to an electric vehicle future.	A, B & C
	Encourage and support businesses to promote a switch to sustainable modes of transportation as the choice of travel.	C

Pillars	Actions	Delivery
Residential	Residents are encouraged to make their homes more energy efficient through various schemes such as the Green Homes Grant and the Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA).	A
	A Kent-wide scheme "Solar Together Kent" to purchase solar panels and battery storage is being promoted to residents and businesses.	A, B & C
	Residents were encouraged to make low-cost or no-cost energy-efficient tips through the Share the Warmth Campaign.	A
	Launching educational campaigns to raise awareness about climate change and encourage residents to act.	A
	Incorporating climate change into Local Plans to ensure sustainable new developments with minimal environmental impact.	A
	Providing practical, easy-to-follow advice using the Net Zero Toolkit. The toolkit provides a pathway for this transition by giving step-by-step guidance on embedding 'green by design' into projects.	A & B
	District warm spaces to provide warm spaces in the district's community hubs in New Romney, Hythe and Folkestone and the Nepalese Community Centre to help residents struggling with increased heating costs.	A & C
	Signposting to available low-carbon funding options and advice.	A & B

Pillars	Actions	Delivery
Commercial & Industrial	Working with businesses, charities and other organisations to reduce energy consumption, promote low-carbon technologies and sustainable transportation.	A, B & C
	Energy efficiency grants such as the green business grant encourage businesses to become more energy efficient.	A & B
	Planning policies that encourage new developments to be designed and built energy-efficiently and in an environmentally sustainable way.	A & B
	Upgrading 321 adoptable streetlights to LED in phase 1 of the programme.	A & B

Pillars	Actions	Delivery
Other activities (water conservation and waste management)	Promoting waste efficient practices and water conservation by working with the water resource management plans.	B & C
	Working with Kent County Council to promote sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) to manage surface water runoff and reduce flooding risk while preserving natural water resources.	A & B
	Recycling by implementing a comprehensive recycling scheme to reduce waste in the district which allows residents to recycle a wide range of materials such as paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and plastic as well as encouraging waste reduction through various initiatives such as promoting reusable bags, cups, and water bottles.	B
	Explore opportunities to promote a circular economy where applicable.	A & B
	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA)	A & B

Pillars	Actions	Delivery
Land use Absorption including Local Nature Recovery Strategy, improving biodiversity	Working with key stakeholders to manage and maintain the district's coastal environment, which includes areas of special scientific interest and significant habitats for wildlife.	A & B
	Improving biodiversity by protecting and enhancing local green and natural spaces. This includes initiatives such as creating wildlife corridors and promoting native plant species.	A & B
	Implementation of the Green Infrastructure Strategy to ensure that networks are strategically planned and that spaces and places are well connected. This will deliver wider benefits, including recreation, biodiversity, health etc.	A & B
	Working with Kent County Council on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.	A & B

Several other projects and initiatives that are positively impacting our environment are being delivered by local groups, businesses and partners within the CI-Lab with help from the council where applicable including:

Folkestone & Hythe Sustainable Futures Forum (SFF) was created to foster community engagement with the main aim to deliver various projects arising from the CI-Lab and across the district which the council will facilitate. The first SFF project is a TEDx-style talk video and event. This included a series of community engagement events to bring together businesses, community groups and individuals

to deliver inspiring talks showcasing inspiring projects or initiatives or ideas ongoing in the district culminating in a main event that took place on the 29th of April 2023.

Incredible Edible Cheriton & Broadmead was founded in 2019 to create edible spaces in Cheriton and Broadmead. They have installed planters along Cheriton High Street with edible food for humans and plants for pollinators. They grow fruits, vegetables and flowers, set up a community fridge, and explore community composting. They operate a “help yourself” policy and practice a “no-dig” policy on all plots to encourage carbon capture.

Elham Environment Group aims to reduce carbon emissions within the local community and was awarded money in a Kent County Council competition. With the money, they designed 'Operation Energy Saver'. In this operation, the Energy Saving Trust conducted a carbon audit of a sample of properties in the village and distributed free energy-saving light bulbs supplied by Electricity Supply Utilities to participants in the audit. They arranged with a local solar photovoltaic (PV) supplier a bulk discount scheme for residents. They have held three eco-fairs to showcase energy-saving technologies and are focusing on improving biodiversity in their public spaces.

Hythe Environment Community Group founded in 2011 and changed to its current name in 2017 provides a community-led approach to making the Hythe area a more fulfilling, sustainable and environmentally aware place to live in. They aim to help the local community to reduce reliance on fossil fuels, reduce excess waste, improve recycling etc. It consists of sub-groups delivering various pieces of work such as free home visits with a thermal camera to review energy use, growing hops in gardens and community spaces, organising apple pressing days, seed, plant and produce swaps, gleaning, fruit tree grafting and pruning courses, advice and guidance to schools on pollinator-friendly projects, the drop-off point for recycling small electrical waste among others.

Kent Community Energy is a community energy society working across Kent, developing and owning renewable energy projects and advancing energy efficiency and retrofit. They are a sister society to Orchard Community Energy, which operates across Swale and Medway, a member of Community Energy South and Community Energy England and have delivered projects including grants for Folkestone Youth Project's Urban Wilderness space at The Shed and for the Hythe Community Orchard. They are developing fuel poverty, energy efficiency and retrofit projects and seeking to install community-owned solar on commercial rooftops including in the Folkestone and Hythe district.

Sandgate Community Gardens founded in 2019 set up their first garden in Enbrook Park growing organic fruit, herbs, and flowers for pollinators and vegetables using 'no dig' methods. They have also planted fruit and nut orchards in Sandgate Park and Golden Valley Park (or Fremantle Park) growing include herbs, flowers and perennial fruit and vegetables which people can help themselves to along

with five small vegetable plots for local families with hop plants being cultivated there as part of the Hythe Hops Scheme. Specialising in advising on organic, 'no dig' growing methods and composting to households and organisations.

The Touchbase Community Garden affectionately referred to by Touchbase members as 'the farm' is a sustainable growing project run by Touchbase Care. Touchbase is a community group for adults with disabilities and neuro-diverse conditions. They grow vegetables which when harvested are used in their community kitchen, providing healthy daily meals for members in their care centre as well as catering services for local businesses and events in the local area. The produce from the garden allows them to reduce the carbon impact of their catering as well providing meaningful well-being activities for their members. Their focus in 2023 is to increase biodiversity in the space by planting fruit trees and a sensory garden, which is focused on supporting biodiversity in the space.

Environmental work in schools – Schools across the district have been undertaking inspiring work to connect their pupils to the environment around them. The council is facilitating Hawkinge Primary School, Seabrook Primary School and the Turner Schools to encourage participation in the Eco-Schools Programme to be recognised as empowering young people to make a difference in their school, local community and the environment around them. Eco-Schools is an international programme that provides a structured approach to environmental education in schools.

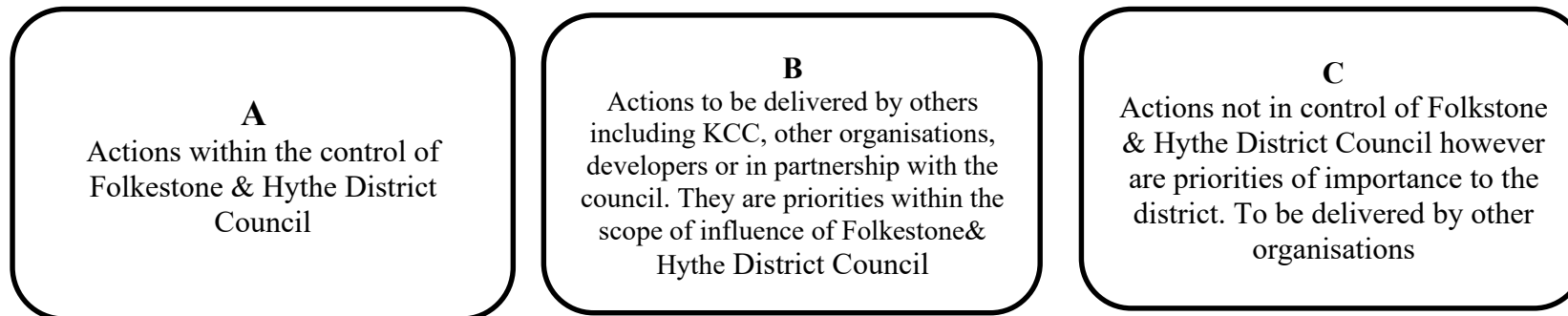
The District Food Network - The Folkestone and Hythe District Food Network (DFN) was set up in 2021 to gain a better understanding of needs across the Folkestone & Hythe District Council area and to enable everyone to know who is delivering what food services to which groups of service users. It is open to all organisations that provide food services and provides a forum in which they can communicate, share information and coordinate their activities. Members of the network can lend their different areas of expertise to identify barriers that prevent access to good food and to work together to address gaps in service provision.

5.2 Setting the Vision - What a Sustainable Folkestone & Hythe District should look like

Folkestone & Hythe District Council will continue to support the UK's response to climate change by making sustainable progress to deliver the net zero vision. We will commit to doing everything within our power and influence to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while working with local businesses, groups and residents. By prioritising the health and resilience of our residents, and listening to and supporting our communities, we build consensus for long-term, sustainable solutions and actions that deliver multiple benefits as we transition to a low-carbon district.

5.3 Where We Want to Be.

Everyone living and working in the district will have to work together and share knowledge if we are to navigate our way from where we are now to where we want to be. In achieving a thriving local low-carbon economy, active mobility would be the option of choice to travel around the district, and homes incorporating low-carbon technologies as a standard, increase recycling and expand recycling into re-purposing of our domestic consumables. Working with communities to create biodiversity-friendly green spaces with planting and management, promoting high recycling rates and maintaining investment in low-carbon technologies.



Pillar 1: Road Transport

Theme	Areas of Action	Key Partners	Delivery
Physical Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitate the improvement of cycle networks and footpaths. 2. Facilitate the improvement of digital connectivity to reduce travel needs. 3. Continue to explore the rollout of electric vehicle charging points across the district. 4. Explore the provision of car clubs within the district. 5. Explore the provision of e-bikes and bike storage facilities. 6. Encourage inward investment in the right low-carbon infrastructure for the district, which could include the Council investing in low-carbon heating schemes which include private sector residents and businesses. 7. Lobbying the government for a more joined-up and affordable public transport system. 	Department for Transport Kent County Council Transport Cycle Clubs Schools and Colleges Town and Parish Councils Residents	A, B & C
Social Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote inclusive active travel by prioritising walking, cycling, car-sharing and public transport infrastructure to be the option of choice to travel within the district. 2. Promote the positive impact on health, well-being and socio-economic benefits of switching to sustainable and secure modes of transportation. 3. Encourage residents to use public transport. 		

		4. Encourage car sharing as a travel option more widely		
Communications & Involvement		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with schools to promote Kent County Council's Bikeability programme to get more pupils cycling. 2. Encourage local taxi policy to include requirements to move to ultra-low emissions vehicles. 3. Work with Kent County Council to influence the Local Transport Plan 5. 4. Actively collaborate with residents on improvement to local greenways, footpaths and cycle routes. 5. Promote walk to school schemes. 		

Pillar 2: Residential

Themes	Area of Actions	Key Partners	Delivery
Physical Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Promote skills training and career pathways in local carbon technologies through our schools and colleges that will address the current skills gap across all ages. 2. Encourage improvement of resilience in building designs through the Local Plan 	Registered landlords Residents associations House developers/builders Homeowners Town and Parish Councils Local community groups F&HDC Landlords Forum Alliance of Folkestone Residential Association	A, B & C
Social Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide advice on energy efficiency measures, waste minimisation and water conservation. 2. Actively identify and support vulnerable and low incomes homes by signposting available funding options for home energy improvement. 		
Communication & Involvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Signpost to available national grants and resources. 		

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Collaborate with other Local Authorities to take competitive advantage of collective purchasing power for low-carbon technologies. 3. Provide support and guidance to the private rented sector and private landlords on energy efficiency measures and compliance with energy efficiency requirements. 4. Communicate with our residents to demonstrate the benefits of low-carbon technologies in the district. 5. Respond to consultations to try to influence the Government's planning reforms so that climate change mitigation and adaption are at the heart of the new planning system. 		
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Pillar 3: Commercial and industrial

Themes	Area of Actions	Key Partners	Delivery
Physical Infrastructure	1. Facilitate Town Centre Regeneration	Kent County Council Public Sector Landowners Commercial Landowners Businesses Town and Parish Councils Folkestone Hythe and District Hotel and Catering Association	A, B & C
Social Infrastructure	1. Raise awareness of the financial and reputational benefits of reducing their environmental impacts on businesses.		
Communication & Involvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Signpost to business grants and resources 2. Work with the Federation of small businesses to identify areas of support. 3. Promote circular economy where applicable. 		

Pillar 4: Other activities including water conservation and waste management.

Themes	Area of Actions	Key Partners	Delivery
Physical Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support Kent County Council to promote reduction, reuse and recycling and encourage waste minimisation. 2. Encourage and support local food growing and production. 3. Facilitate the development of repair cafes and collection points for recyclables. 4. Promote and support tree planting. 	Kent County Council Waste infrastructure Providers Schools and Colleges Allotment Associations Town and Parish Councils Community growing groups	A, B & C
Social Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Explore ways to protect and improve air and water quality. 2. Engage with Southern Water to promote water quality. 		
Communication & Involvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Collaborate with Kent County Council to reduce waste production. 2. Respond to consultations to try to influence the plans of water companies, so that water conservation, leakage reduction and effective wastewater treatment are given the highest priority. 3. Explore working in partnership with water companies to achieve your common aims 		

Pillar 5: Land use Absorption including Local Nature Recovery Strategy, improving biodiversity.

Themes	Area of Actions	Key Partners	Delivery
Physical Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide support to Kent County Council on the development of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. 2. Explore ways within the community to implement the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. 3. Promote and support community planting of gardens, orchards, and wildflower meadows, promoting pollinator-friendly planting, and developing natural green spaces. 4. Collaborate with Kent County Council on options for Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDs) in collaboration with the water and sewage providers where applicable. 5. Create opportunities for carbon offset planting and protecting the coastline. 	Landowners Allotment associations Health care providers Community groups Food groups Schools and colleges Farmers	A, B & C
Social Infrastructure	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide support for local food growing and production. 2. Support local agriculture to improve and maintain hedgerows as a place for nature 		
Communication & Involvement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Work with Kent County Council on the implementation of the Climate Adaptation Programme for Kent and Medway. 		

5.4 How do we fund our vision?

We recognise that funding and resources are critical to the delivery of the actions in the plan however, the council along with other local authorities is limited in their ability to deliver the net zero due to a lack of consistent and sufficient funding. This means that the costs involved in moving towards net zero as a district are greater than the council's resources and we are critically aware of the need for immediate actions as well as long-term planning.

Traditionally funds are related to specific district programmes that support the delivery of national or regional climate policy and have come from a combination of the council's funds with significant matched funding support from the central government which the council typically applies for the funding from central government through a time-limited bid window and may sometimes be unsuccessful.

The council will play a role to identify, signpost and utilise the power of collective action and specifically:

- new sources of funding will be needed for climate projects and will need to come from additional partners for example the council and community working with the private sector with appropriate governance, consultation and compliance structures.
- Resources from working in collaboration and supporting community-led projects and roll-out with a net zero objective.

Collaborative and long-term working with residential and commercial landlords to incentivise and support their transition to carbon new-zero in the built environment

6. Action Plan

Where applicable, the council will:

1. Work with private investors to co-fund key local infrastructure projects.
2. Enhance the council's capability to continue to identify and bid for government funding for appropriate local projects.
3. Strengthen the partnership with the communities and local economy to bring forward climate projects in collaboration with others.
4. Embed and communicate the cross-cutting principles of net zero into all the projects where the council has a role or influence, including redevelopments and regeneration activity within the district, recognizing that net zero is to the economic and social benefit of all.
5. Build the quantified district plan to demonstrate the financial and social benefits of carbon net zero projects and the impact on the place.

6. Engage with local stakeholders, such as the local grid infrastructure services, to deliver key improvements to the electricity grid to support the transition to net zero.

It is therefore critical to stress the need for significant government funding, other ongoing external funding sources and contributions from partners, businesses and our communities.

7. Monitoring and Evaluating Progress -To include how we will monitor progress and incorporate lessons learnt from the process. Accurate monitoring and measurement of the plan are critical to the success of the plan and are the responsibility of all parties and residents. We will continue to use nationally supported indicators from the central government to measure and report carbon emissions against the targets. Within the district, we will create our community-level plan and monitoring to net zero and adopt an open style of communication and action.

8. Conclusion

9. Summary Table by Pillar as an appendix

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District-Wide Carbon Plan (DWCP)- Proposed Questions for Consultation

A draft version of the District Wide Carbon Plan has been produced and this consultation is to find out whether residents, businesses, groups etc support the DWCP.

Through the consultation, we wanted to find out whether there is broad support for our ambition and priorities. We cannot tackle climate change alone and need support from residents, partners and businesses. The consultation aims to find out if there were priorities that have more or less support or whether there is anything we had missed.

Proposed Questions for Public Consultation & Canterbury Council Targeted Consultation		
Section 1: About you		
	Questions	Proposed Options
1.	Who is responding to this consultation?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual • A Community Group • A Private Sector Organisation • A Public Sector Organisation • A Voluntary Sector Organisation • A Social Enterprise • A Charity • A Faith Group • A Special Interest Group • Others, please state
2.	In which area of Folkstone & Hythe District do you live or are based?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Broadmead • Cheriton • East Folkestone • Folkestone Central • Folkestone Harbour • Hythe • Hythe Rural • New Romney

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Downs East • North Downs West • Romney Marsh • Sandgate • Walland and Denge Marsh • Others, please state
3.	Please provide the first part of your home or organisation postcode e.g., TN12 or CT20 (This will help understand in more detail how engaged different parts of Folkestone & Hythe District have been in the consultation)	Comment box
4.	What is your connection to Folkestone & Hythe District (you can select multiple answers, for example, if you are both a resident and work in the district)*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resident • Local community group • Local Charity Organisation • Parish Council • Town Council • Business • Charity • School or College • I work in the area • Other
5.	Please select your age group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under 16 • 16-24 • 25-34 • 35-44 • 45-54 • 55-64 • 65+ • Prefer not to say
6.	Gender orientation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female • Male • Other

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer not to say
Section 2: Your Views on Climate Change		
1.	How concerned are you about the current and future impacts of Climate Change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extremely concerned. • Very concerned • Not concerned at all • Undecided
2.	How important is climate change to you?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very important • Important • Less important • Not important • Undecided
3.	Are there any specific climate-related events or incidents that have personally impacted you or someone you know?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Comment
4.	How have the specific climate-related events or incidents impacted you or someone you know e.g., financial, health, well-being etc?	Please comment
5.	Are you willing to make personal lifestyle changes to reduce your environmental impact? If so, what changes are you willing to make?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very willing • Somewhat willing • Not very willing • Not at all willing • Comment
6.	Are you aware of the impact that individual behaviour and lifestyle choices can have on climate change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Comment
Section 3: About the Plan		
1.	What is your overall view of the Draft District Wide Carbon Plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I support the plan. • I support some of the actions but not others. • I don't support the plan

2.	Are there any specific aspects of the plan that you particularly do not support? Why?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment
3.	Do you agree with the Five Priority Pillars of Focus (they are based on available data)?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No
4.	Based on the information detailed in the plan, what date do you support as realistic for the district to reach net zero?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2030 • 2040 • 2050 • Other
5.	The Plan details the Five Priority Pillars of Focus that we need to address based on available data to tackle climate change. Please rate the Five Priority Pillars of Focus ranking each one from 1-5 with (5) = very important and (1)= not at all important. (This is to help us focus on the most important priority pillar(s) to you).	
	Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
	Residential	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
	Commercial & Industrial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
	Other activities (water conservation and waste management)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 • 2 • 3 • 4

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5
	Land use Absorption including Local Nature Recovery Strategy, improving biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 • 2 • 3 • 4 • 5
6.	Are there any other actions that you think are important to reduce carbon emissions from any of the Five Priority Pillars of Focus that the plan has not covered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please comment
7.	Are there other high-level areas that you think are important to reduce carbon emissions that the plan has not covered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please comment
8.	Do you think the district-wide carbon plan adequately addresses the unique challenges and opportunities of your community and/or the district?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Comment
Section 4: Challenges, Risks and Opportunities		
1.	The Plan outlines some of the challenges and risks of climate change for the district, do you agree?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I agree. • I agree with some but not others. • I do not agree. • Others, please comment
2.	In your opinion, what are the most pressing climate challenges and risks facing the district today?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please comment
3.	The Plan outlines some opportunities that climate change presents to the district, do you agree?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I agree. • I agree with some but not others. • I do not agree. • Others, please comment
4.	In your opinion, what are the opportunities present by climate change to the district today?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please comment
Section 5: Where we are now		
1.	The Plan provides some examples of actions that are going on across the district to tackle climate change. Are you aware of any projects/initiatives linked to	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please comment

	any of the Five Priority Pillars of Focus in the plan? Please provide details e.g., websites, social media or contact details where possible.	
2.	Are there actions you can take now or within the next 5 years that can support any of the Five Priority Pillars of Focus? Please comment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please comment
Section 6: Where we want to be		
1.	The Plan outlines how we will work together to reduce carbon emissions across the district. Do you agree?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I agree. • I agree with some but not others. • I do not agree. • Others
2.	Do you know of any other specific measures or actions that the district can take to address climate change?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Please comment
3.	How can the council help you take action to contribute to achieving any of the Five Priority Pillars of Focus?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please comment
Section 7: About funding our vision		
1.	Are you aware of any innovative funding sources, community funds or strategies that could be used to support our net zero vision?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Please comment
2.	How would you prioritise funding between adaptation measures (such as storm drains and flood prevention) and mitigation efforts (such as tree planting, renewable generation and energy efficiency measures) to address climate change?	Please comment
3.	Do you have any potential concerns or considerations regarding the funding of climate change initiatives that you believe should be addressed?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Comment
Section 8: About monitoring and evaluation of progress		
1.	Do you agree that the Carbon Innovation Forum should transition to an implementation group to help monitor and evaluate the progress of actions within this plan?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No • Please comment
2.	Do you agree that the CI Lab should support and signpost local tasks and finish groups of your local emerging projects/ideas?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Yes • No

		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Please comment
3.	Are there any existing frameworks or models for monitoring and evaluating carbon action plans that you think should be considered?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Yes• No• Please comment
4.	How likely are you to support and participate in community initiatives that promote environmental conservation and sustainability?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Very Likely• Somewhat likely• Not likely

DRAFT

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This Report will be made public on 4 July 2023



Report Number **C/23/13**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Status: Non key
Responsible Officer: Frederick Miller, Transportation Lead Specialist
Cabinet Member: Cllr Polly Blakemore, Transport, Regulatory Services and Building Control

SUBJECT: ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS

SUMMARY: This report provides an update on the off-street EV charging points rollout and makes recommendations for further chargepoints to be introduced at on-street sites.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations because:

1. Installing further EV charging points on-street will help to meet the growing demand for publicly available chargepoints across the district.
2. Additional charging points will help contribute to the council's actions to reduce carbon emissions to net zero by 2030.
3. In many parts of the district, private off-street parking is unavailable to residents. By installing chargepoints on-street, residents without private off-street parking can enjoy the benefits of charging their electric vehicles at home.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/23/13.
2. To agree to a joint on-street EV charger trial with KCC to test and fully understand the on-street EV charger delivery.
3. That the choice of locations for the trial be agreed by the Cabinet Member for Transport.
4. That officers continue to engage with KCC to understand the potential for joint working ahead of a potential larger LEVI roll out by KCC in the coming months and years.
5. That officers report the outcome of the trial with recommendations ahead of the potential larger LEVI roll out by KCC.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The project to install EV charging points in car parks across the district is now complete. This project saw the installation of 103 fast charging points in 26 car parks across the district, which are shown on the council's website.
- 1.2 The 12-year concession contract was won by Connected Kerb in 2021 through a joint procurement exercise with KCC and 5 other districts. The contract includes a 10% revenue share back to the districts.
- 1.3 The off-street charging points were installed at different dates in 2022, with the first six units installed in February 2022 in The Paddocks Car Park, Hythe and High Knocke Car Park, Dymchurch.
- 1.4 The total number of charging sessions across the 26 car parks between February 2022 and May 2023 was 11578. Tram Road car park has seen the highest number of sessions -2620 (23% of all sessions), since the units were installed there in March 2022. The busiest month was April 2023 with 1257 sessions across all 26 car parks. A full breakdown of the charging sessions each month by car park is shown in Appendix 2.
- 1.5 The demand for EV charging points continues to grow. The records show EV chargepoint usage in May this year has more than doubled when compared with the same period last year. KCC's research into demand for EV charging infrastructure indicates that Folkestone & Hythe would need around 242 charging points by 2028 and 369 by 2030. These numbers include charging points provided by the private sector.
- 1.6 F&H is currently leading the way with EV chargepoint installations in Kent. However, to achieve the targets set for 2028 and 2030, further units are required.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 In order to meet the predicted demand, it is necessary to expand the network further, particularly in residential streets where there are high proportions of housing without access to private off-street parking.
- 2.2 Kent County Council (KCC) have recently issued guidance on the installation of on-street EV chargepoints. The guidance does not permit the use of their lamp columns, but charging hubs or post mounted charging units can be introduced on the highway under section 115 of the Highways Act 1980.
- 2.3 Appendix 1 contains a list of potential sites for on-street EV chargepoints. This list has been drawn using a combination of business and resident requests, and site selection tools by EV Chargepoint providers. Subject to further feasibility studies by UK Power Networks, a minimum of four charging points could be installed at each location, and where possible up to six. This would potentially add around 120-180 EV chargepoints to the district's charging infrastructure.
- 2.4 The Department for Transport (DFT) recently announced Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Fund (LEVI) funding for Tier 1 authorities. The LEVI Fund is primarily targeted at addressing the need for EV charging in areas with lower levels of residential off-street parking, as EV owners who park on-street will need to rely more heavily on the public charging network.
- 2.5 KCC have approached officers to discuss possible options surrounding a joint on-street EV charger trial, with potential funding being brought from the LEVI Pilot scheme, to test the end to end process of on-street EV charger delivery and the results of different approaches to site selection and

implementation. A small number of sites will be selected from the list of potential locations for this trial.

- 2.6 The trial is expected to start in October/November 2023, and will last for a minimum period of 12 months.
- 2.7 Officers will engage with KCC to understand the potential for joint working ahead of a potential larger LEVI roll out by KCC in the coming months and years and will make further recommendations to Cabinet.

3 IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The proposal is to carry out a joint on-street EV charger trial, where the full cost of the EVCPs, including the installation and operation is met by government grant (namely Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding) and the supplier. There will be no financial cost to the council.
- 3.2 It should however be noted that in some of the potential sites, there is a huge demand for parking spaces. There is a possibility that utilisation of some the EV bays is going to be low initially, so restricting them for EV use will make parking even more difficult for residents.
- 3.3 The list of potential sites has been developed using specialist sites identification methods and requests from residents and businesses in these areas. In all sites, there is already EV ownership or potential purchase of EVs is imminent. It is also important to ensure that enough chargepoints are available ahead of demand to encourage more people to make the switch.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that:
 - a) Officers carry out a joint on-street EV charger trial with KCC to test and fully understand the on-street EV charger delivery.
 - b) A small number of sites be selected from the list of potential locations and agreed by the Cabinet Member for Transport.
 - c) Officers continue to engage with KCC to understand the potential for joint working ahead of a potential larger LEVI roll out by KCC in the coming months and years.
 - d) Officers report the outcome of the trial with recommendations ahead of the potential larger LEVI roll out by KCC.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 5.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
There is a risk that some of the potential sites will not have sufficient electricity capacity for the charging points when the feasibility surveys are carried out.	Medium	Medium	Supplier will be urged to upgrade the network to accommodate the charging units or find nearby alternative locations.
There is a risk that utilisation of the EV	Medium	High	EV chargepoints need to be

<p>bays will be low initially, so restricting them for EV use only will cause parking difficulties for residents.</p>			<p>installed ahead of demand. Officers will monitor the use of the EV bays. Restricting the use of bays will require an amendment to the Traffic Regulation Orders. Extensive consultations will be carried out before any changes are made to TROs.</p>
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6. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

6.1 Legal Officer's Comments (NM)

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

6.2 Finance Officer's Comments (TM)

There are no finance implications relating to this report.

6.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (FM)

Officers will ensure that the new EV charging points meet accessibility standards developed by the British Standards Institution and the DFT. This ensures accessibility for all users, including disabled and older people.

6.4 Climate Change Implications (FM)

The provision of EV charging points is one of the many actions the council is taking to tackle carbon emissions. A lack of chargepoints is often cited in consumer research as a key reason as to why some people will not consider buying an EV. Increasing access to and availability of chargepoints is therefore key to encouraging people to make the switch.

7. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

Frederick Miller, Transportation Lead Specialist
 Telephone: 01303 853207
 Email: frederick.miller@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report: **None**

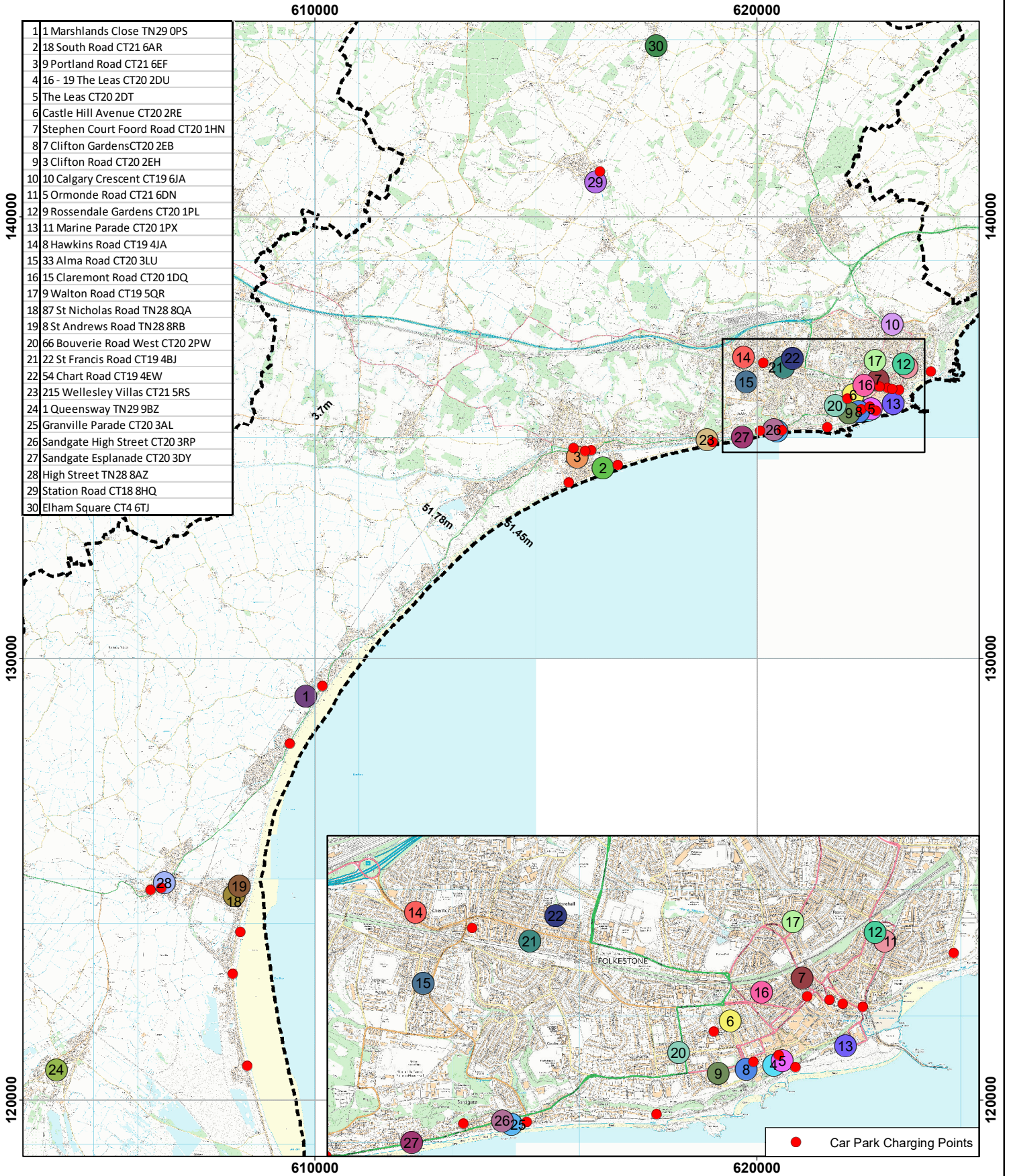
Appendices:

Appendix 1: List of potential on-street sites

Appendix 2: Breakdown of charging sessions in car parks

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Potential on street charging points.

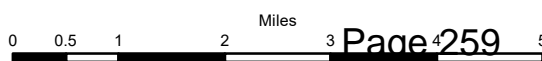


Drawn date:
18 May 2023

Drawn by:
Brian Harper

Drawing ref:
FHDC/TM/FM

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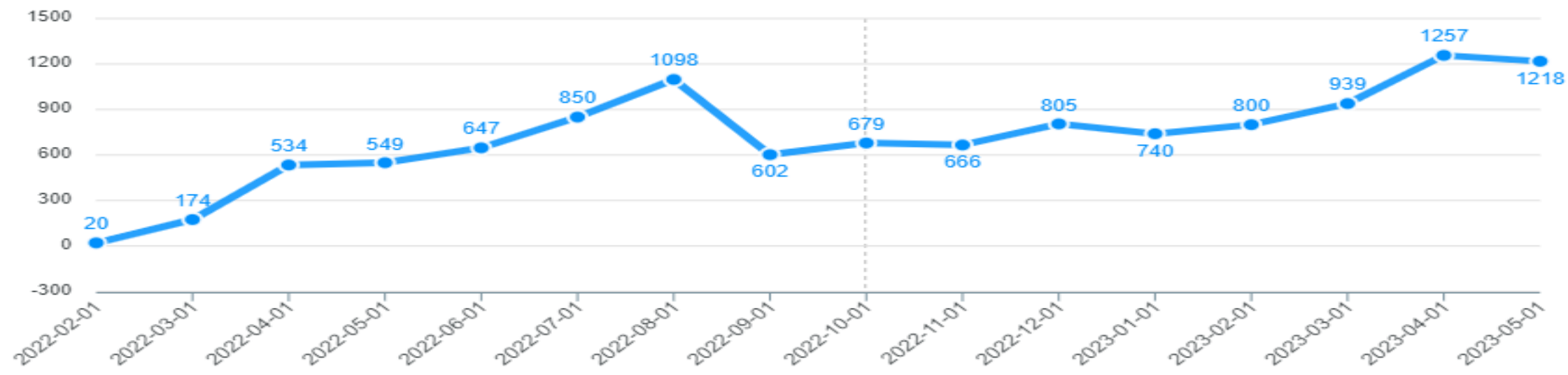
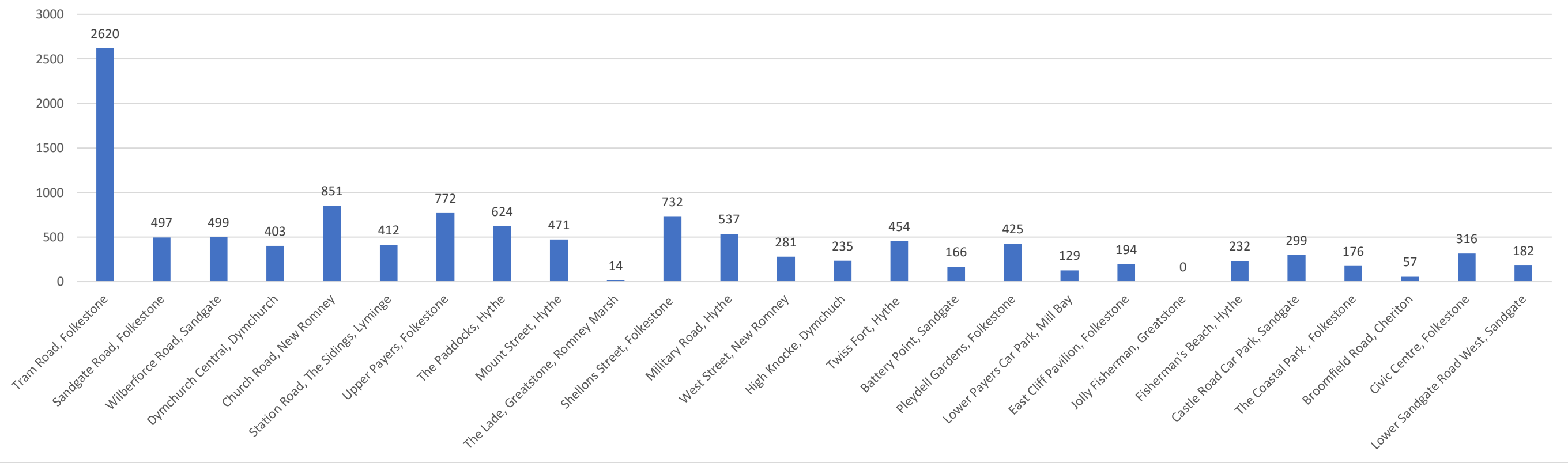
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APPENDIX 2

Charging Sessions

Car Park	EVCPs	Feb-22	Mar-22	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Apr-23	May-23	
1 Tram Road, Folkestone	6	-	15	168	209	211	269	293	108	125	174	136	109	152	158	272	221	2620
2 Sandgate Road, Folkestone	6	-	-	-	-	10	26	42	25	67	43	35	24	40	47	64	74	497
3 Wilberforce Road, Sandgate	4	-	32	90	45	41	65	94	38	9	4	7	4	10	21	17	22	499
4 Dymchurch Central, Dymchurch	6	-	-	-	31	29	47	102	14	14	0	3	10	18	10	53	72	403
5 Church Road, New Romney	4	-	-	-	28	63	68	77	67	71	53	63	63	64	93	82	59	851
6 Station Road, The Sidings, Lyminge	4	-	-	-	-	16	33	35	15	35	33	27	39	55	47	30	47	412
7 Upper Payers, Folkestone	4	-	-	-	-	28	33	61	50	48	76	79	68	76	85	89	79	772
8 The Paddocks, Hythe	4	17	111	58	33	21	31	32	26	22	11	60	20	42	46	41	53	624
9 Mount Street, Hythe	3	-	-	-	-	15	74	40	36	49	27	46	42	28	34	39	41	471
10 The Lade, Greatstone, Romney Marsh	4	-	-	-	-	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	1	14
11 Shellons Street, Folkestone	2	-	-	116	113	116	103	29	14	15	21	56	37	9	14	68	21	732
12 Military Road, Hythe	2	-	-	56	32	26	35	77	63	30	21	34	30	19	47	37	30	537
13 West Street, New Romney	2	-	-	26	34	25	24	21	12	25	11	13	10	10	28	24	18	281
14 High Knocke, Dymchurch	2	3	16	20	24	36	18	38	6	11	2	2	16	5	12	10	16	235
15 Twiss Fort, Hythe	2	-	-	-	-	-	14	61	42	29	25	49	50	39	44	50	51	454
16 Battery Point, Sandgate	4	-	-	-	-	-	10	43	20	11	5	10	6	5	8	23	25	166
17 Pleydell Gardens, Folkestone	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	26	34	47	50	55	41	43	40	47	42	425
18 Lower Payers Car Park, Mill Bay	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	8	6	8	9	5	9	11	29	34	129
19 East Cliff Pavilion, Folkestone	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	17	18	11	19	7	8	4	20	42	48	194
20 Jolly Fisherman, Greatstone	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0
21 Fisherman's Beach, Hythe	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	24	17	16	34	45	25	27	38	232
22 Castle Road Car Park, Sandgate	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	29	26	18	36	55	53	66	299
23 The Coastal Park, Folkestone	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	8	12	13	30	20	19	38	36	176
24 Broomfield Road, Cheriton	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	9	9	10	2	6	10	5	57
25 Civic Centre, Folkestone	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	16	28	36	43	43	67	83	316
26 Lower Sandgate Road West, Sandgate	8	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	22	30	25	26	43	36	182
		103																11578

Total number of EV Charging sessions



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This Report will be made public on 4 July 2023



Report Number **C/23/11**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12th July 2023
Status: Non key
Responsible Officer: Rebecca Chittock, Strategy & Policy Senior Specialist
Cabinet Member: Cllr Jim Martin, Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Otterpool Park and Planning Policy

SUBJECT: Housing and economic land availability assessment (HELAA)

SUMMARY: This report sets out what a HELAA is and how we plan to produce one. This is an important evidence base document needed when reviewing a local plan to identify sufficient land to meet the district's housing need over the plan period.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

To allow initial steps to be taken to update the supply of development land within the district to provide evidence for a review of the local plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/23/11.
2. To agree that officers carry out a call for sites and methodology public consultation in early autumn 2023, subject to any recommendations of Cabinet regarding the process.
3. Cabinet gives delegated authority to the Assistant Director of Governance, Law & Service Delivery, in consultation with the Leader, to make any minor amendments to the methodology following consultation.

1. INTRODUCTION

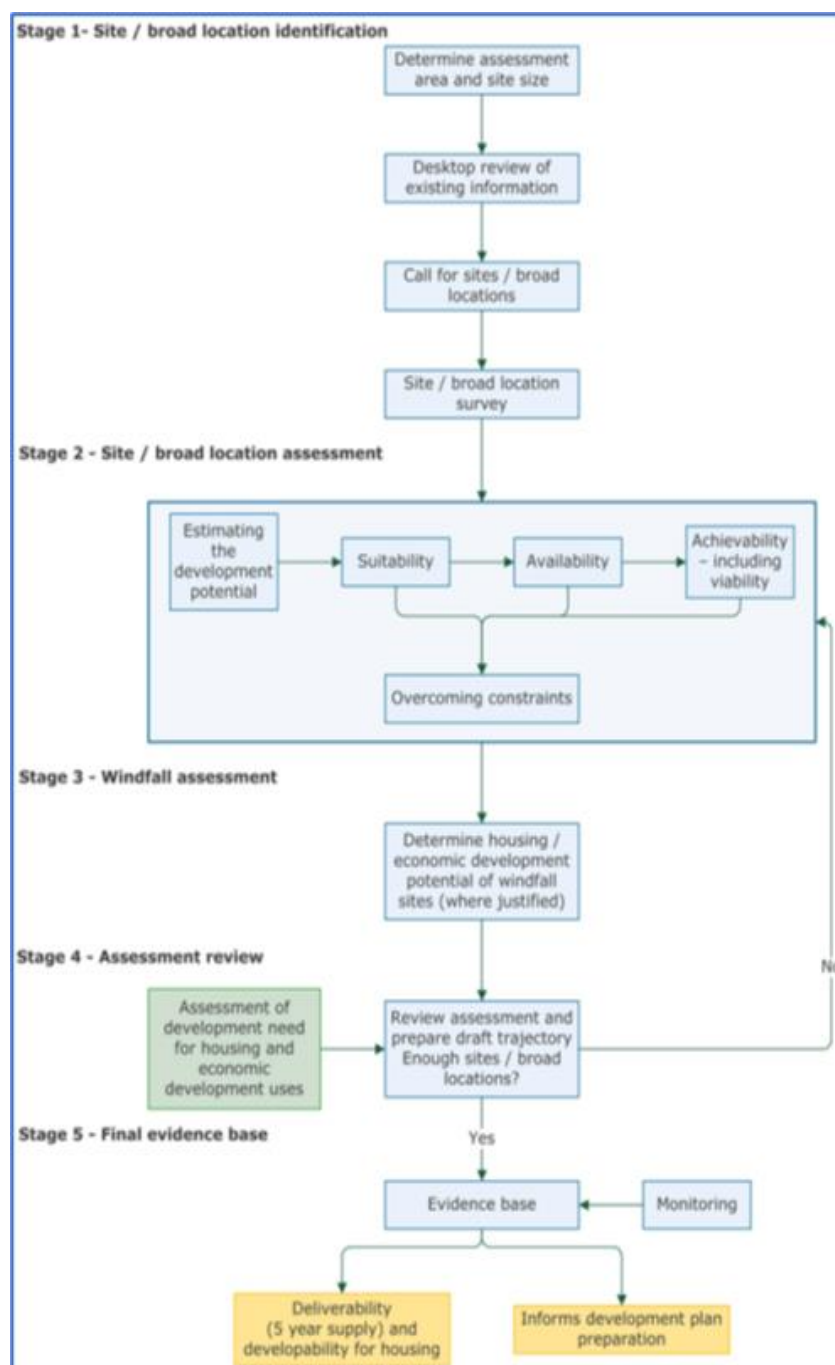
- 1.1 The council has two recently adopted local plans, the Places and Policies Local Plan (PPLP) in 2020 and the Core Strategy Review (CSR) in 2022. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) currently states that local planning authorities (LPA) should review their plans at least once every five years taking account of any changes in national policy or changing circumstances affecting the area (Paragraph 33). However, the government is proposing to bring in fundamental changes to the planning system through the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill, which is currently before the House of Lords. There are proposals for local authorities to produce new style local plans within a 30-month timescale, when the bill becomes law.
- 1.2 To prepare for this, ahead of the new legal requirements coming into force, work is beginning on reviewing the evidence base so that the council is best placed to begin a new local plan when the statutory requirements are confirmed.
- 1.3 The NPPF requires LPAs to produce as part of their evidence base a strategic housing land availability assessment (SHLAA) to identify sufficient land to meet their housing need over the plan period (NPPF, paragraph 68). While this evidence will inform the preparation of the new local plan, the NPPF makes it clear that local authorities should undertake regular reviews of these assessments (NPPF, paragraph 122).
- 1.4 The National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) goes on to state that local planning authorities may carry out land availability assessments for housing and economic development as part of the same exercise, in order that sites may be identified for the use(s) which is most appropriate (Paragraph: 001 Reference ID: 3-001-20190722).
- 1.5 The previous SHLAA was undertaken in 2009/10, updated in 2011/12, 2015/16, 2016/17 and last updated in 2017/18. The SHLAA identified and assessed more than 500 sites; 55 sites were allocated for development in the Places and Policies Local Plan and Core Strategy Review.
- 1.6 Therefore, to inform the preparation of a new local plan the Strategy and Policy Team are proposing to start work on producing a housing and economic land availability assessment (HELAA) for the district. The HELAA will identify the location of potential housing, employment and other sites (where appropriate) in the district to inform plan-making, decision-taking and the identification of a 5-year supply of housing land. It does not in itself determine whether a site should be allocated for development but is the first step in the process.
- 1.7 The purpose of the HELAA is to:
 - Identify sites and broad locations with potential for development;
 - Assess their development potential; and
 - Assess their suitability for development and the likelihood of development coming forward (availability and achievability).

- 1.8 It is intended to carry out a separate and parallel process to identify sites to be considered for new open spaces, local green spaces, and Biodiversity Net Gain sites. It is proposed that this would follow the same timescales as the HELAA process. Sites with potential as green spaces would then be assessed and could feed into the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy, the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (a strategic plan being prepared by Kent County Council for the Kent and Medway) or local plan policies which protect sites and areas from development.

2. WHAT PROCESS WILL WE FOLLOW?

- 2.1 The NPPG sets out guidance on the methodology to be used when carrying out a HELAA, detailing what inputs and processes can lead to a robust assessment of land availability. The suggested NPPG methodology is set out in Figure 1 below. It is also available to view at [land-availability.pdf \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://land-availability.pdf.publishing.service.gov.uk). A site assessment form is included as Appendix A to this report. We propose to follow the broad stages set out in this diagram and consult on this methodology at the same time as the call for sites consultation is carried out.
- 2.2 While the broad methodology is set out in national planning guidance, there are some judgements that will need to be made on the detailed suitability of sites that local people, parish and town councils and others may wish to comment on. These could include issues such as whether different weighting should be given to previously developed (brownfield) sites and greenfield sites and whether the proposed threshold distances to particular services (such as shops or GP surgeries) are appropriate for rural and/or urban areas.
- 2.3 For these reasons it is proposed to run the methodology consultation in parallel with the 'call for sites' consultation. This exercise will provide people with the opportunity to comment at an early stage and will provide support if the council's approach is challenged later by objectors or the planning Inspectors at the examination. Officers are in the process of procuring a digital engagement and analysis platform (see paragraph 4.4 below) that should allow the assessment process to be rerun quickly with amended criteria, so if changes are made following consultation on the methodology this should not impact significantly on timescales.

Figure 1- Methodology flowchart



3. WHAT TYPES OF SITES ARE WE LOOKING FOR?

3.1 The council must consider the need for all types of development in preparing the local plan and we propose to look for sites for the following types of development:

- Homes – sites suitable for development for houses, sheltered housing or flats.
- Self-build homes – sites suitable for individuals or groups to build their own homes.

- Sites suitable to also add to the Brownfield Land Register.
- Gypsy and traveller pitches – sites suitable for pitches for gypsy and travellers or plots for travelling showpeople.
- Employment and retail – sites suitable for shops, offices, manufacturing, warehouses or other types of business activity.
- Community – sites suitable for health, community, or religious buildings.
- Leisure – sites suitable for sports, leisure or recreation buildings and spaces.
- Mixed-use – sites suitable for a mix of uses, such as developments including new homes, offices and leisure facilities or flats above shops.

3.2 In addition, capacity for the treatment and recycling of waste is known to be a constraint within the district and so it is proposed to contact Kent County Council to see whether there would be any value in including sites for waste processing and recycling facilities as part of the HELAA ‘call for sites’ process. If any sites were identified, they would need to feed into the assessment process for the county council’s draft Minerals and Waste Local Plan 2023-38.

3.3 The new local plan will not identify every development site in the district; it would not be possible or practical to identify very small sites in the local plan. This is why, as part of the HELAA process, we are proposing to look for sites capable of delivering five or more dwellings, or for economic development sites of 0.25 hectares (or 500 square metres of floor space) or more. Smaller sites (such as back gardens that could accommodate a single house) will continue to come forward as planning applications and do not need to be submitted for assessment through the HELAA process; an allowance will be made for these smaller ‘windfall’ sites in the new local plan, based on past trends, so they will still be accounted for in the district’s housing land supply.

4. HOW WILL WE IDENTIFY SITES AND BROAD LOCATIONS WITH POTENTIAL FOR DEVELOPMENT?

Desktop analysis

4.1 The NPPG makes it clear that LPAs should not simply rely on sites that they have been informed about, but actively identify sites through a desktop review process that may assist in meeting the development needs of an area. This could include identifying surplus public sector land, existing housing allocations and land allocated or with permission for other uses which may no longer be required for those uses. We also propose to contact larger landowners, government departments and institutions to see if they have surplus land that could be considered for development.

Call for sites

4.2 One of the main ways for us to identify potential sites, is to ask people to put forward sites for the council to assess: this is known as a ‘call for sites’. We intend to carry out a call for sites to provide an opportunity for members of the public, landowners, developers, parish and town councils and others to promote sites to be assessed for their suitability and deliverability for development. It is important to try and reach as wide an audience as is

practicable so that those not normally involved in property development have the opportunity to contribute. We will work closely with the communications team to ensure that the purpose and status of the HELAA is explained as clearly as possible before the 'call for sites' begins.

- 4.3 The call for sites will be advertised widely through the council's social media channels, planning agents' forum, local press and targeted mailouts for example to developer groups and promoted with town and parish councils.
- 4.4 The team is procuring new software to improve the digital services that we offer in plan making. The new software will be used to expand the call for sites process by enabling us to have two different routes for sites to be submitted on our web portal. One route will be aimed at members of the public and one for developers and landowners. The route aimed at members of the public is a simpler route requiring less information. Responders will have the option to select the site boundary on a map, or upload an image/video, they will also be able to select the land use they want to put the site forward for and add any additional information. Officers can then check land registry details and contact landowners to see if they would be willing to bring the land forward.
- 4.5 The call for sites route aimed at developers and landowners will ask for more detailed information from responders when submitting sites, including the following:
 - site location, including a map;
 - ownership details;
 - land registry information;
 - suggested potential type of development;
 - the scale of development;
 - constraints to development; and
 - an indication of potential build out timescale where known.
- 4.6 We will adhere to data protection regulations when personal identifying details are submitted alongside sites (such as people's signatures, personal telephone numbers, email addresses and postal addresses); however it is proposed that the submitted land parcels will be published for public viewing alongside the name of the individual or organisation that submitted the site. It is important to note that where land has changed ownership in the recent past, the ownership details can be readily obtained from the land registry and these records also include some contact details, such as postal addresses.

5. HOW WILL WE ASSESS THE SITES?

- 5.1 All sites submitted and those identified by the team will need to be assessed using the same methodology. For this technical process a HELAA form has been created to collate the information and enable the assessment process to be clear and concise (Appendix A). People will be directed in the first instance to the new digital platform (see paragraph 4.4) to enter the information and digitise the site's boundaries themselves. The digital platform will be structured to capture the same information that is set out in the fields in the form in Appendix A.

- 5.2 Some of the information needed to populate the form will come direct from responders who submit sites, and some may need to be obtained from further investigations and consultation with internal teams, such as property, development management, housing, economic development and environmental health, and external colleagues such as Kent Highways, the Environment Agency, the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Unit and infrastructure providers. In addition, there may be some sites where it would be necessary to seek comments from neighbouring local authorities, for example if the site adjoins the district's boundary. Officers will also visit the sites to take photographs, verify the submitted information and record any other relevant information.
- 5.3 The form is set out in five stages and a site must successfully pass each stage before progressing to the next more detailed stage. The previous SHLAA used a traffic light system (green, amber, red) to record the outputs of the assessment, however this time around we are proposing to make the system clearer and more concise with sites being either in or falling out of the assessment process. However, where constraints have been identified, the assessment will need to consider what action could be taken to overcome them before the site is removed. If land is submitted by a person that does not own it, or have authorisation from the owner to do so, the site's availability will need to be checked before the site can be assessed.
- 5.4 The first two stages assess the suitability of a site for development, for example by checking the size of the site, whether it has any national or local designations (SSSI, AONB etc), the site's relationship to nearby settlements and if there would be an impact on the wider area if it were to be developed. We are proposing to prioritise brownfield sites at this point.
- 5.5 Then the form examines the likelihood of development coming forward by gathering information on the availability and achievability of the site. The NPPG advises that a site is considered achievable for development where there is a reasonable prospect that it will be developed at a particular point in time. The team will need to make a judgement about the economic viability of the site, and the capacity of the developer to complete and let or sell the development over a certain period. (Some digital platforms include a viability module that can generate indicative costs and profits based on different development types which would make this part of the process much quicker).
- 5.6 The form also assesses the timescale within which each site is capable of development. Given that the new local plan, when drafted, will be looking forward at least fifteen years, these time periods are split between 1-5 years and 6-15 years. The advice of developers and local agents could be helpful here, in assessing lead-in times and build-out rates by year.
- 5.7 Once the sites have been assessed, the development potential of all sites can be collected to produce an indicative trajectory. This will set out how much housing and the amount of economic development that can be provided, and at what point in the future (i.e. within years 1-5 and years 6-15 and beyond).

- 5.8 Depending on the number and suitability of sites submitted, and the development targets emerging from government when the new local plan is being drafted, the 'call for sites' process may have to be repeated if additional sites need to be identified.
- 5.9 When the assessment is complete the promoters of the sites will be given the opportunity to fact check the information contained in the assessments for their own sites and respond accordingly. If the assessment concludes that the site is not appropriate for development, the landowner or promoter will be given the opportunity to question the reasons for this or submit further supporting information, if necessary.

6. WHAT STATUS WILL THE HELAA HAVE?

- 6.1 When the HELAA process is complete, a summary document and the individual site assessments will be published on the council's website. The finalised HELAA should be seen as a wide-ranging 'pool of sites' which will be used to inform possible choices for a new local plan, when considered with other evidence and the council's corporate objectives. It is an aid to plan-making only, presenting the facts about available land. It is not a statement of council policy and does not rank or compare sites, other than identifying them as included or excluded (see paragraph 5.3).
- 6.2 The HELAA is a technical evidence document and does not have the formal, legal status of a local plan. It does not allocate land, pre-empt, or prejudice any decision the council may make in the future on any site or settlement and does not alter any existing policies or land use designations as set out in the development plan. In essence, it is a 'sifting' exercise that looks at the land promoted for development and assesses each individual site on the same basis.
- 6.3 If a site scores positively in the HELAA assessment, the council may still decide not to include it in the new local plan, if, for example, sufficient land has already been identified. (As noted in section 1, the previous assessment identified more than 500 sites and 55 were allocated in the development plan.) If a site scores negatively it is unlikely to be included in the local plan, but the landowner can still submit a planning application for development on the site and the council will have to decide the application based on its merits and any other relevant information.
- 6.4 The council will need to keep the HELAA under regular review and update appendices as necessary, for example, if sites are sold, landowners' intentions change, or the closure of facilities or provision of new infrastructure alters the conclusions of site assessments. As noted in section 1, national planning policy states that these assessments should be regularly reviewed.

7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Although not a local plan document itself, the HELAA will be an important step in producing the next local plan. Interest among developers, parish and town councils and special interest groups is likely to be high and

communications will need to be clear if people are to understand the purpose of the 'call for sites' exercise and status of the HELAA document.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

8.1 A summary of the perceived risks follows:

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
That the assessment is not produced in a timely way and holds up progress on a new local plan.	High	Low	New legislation is currently before Parliament and the timescale for planning reform is not clear at this stage. However, by working on new evidence now, the council will be best placed to meet new requirements when they come into force. The council can also make the process more efficient by making maximum use of technology, reducing the use of paper forms and encouraging participants to supply full information with their submissions.
That the assessment process is challenged by a dissatisfied landowner or developer.	Medium	Medium	Consulting on the methodology will show that the council has been transparent about the process. A new digital platform should aid record keeping and ensure that decisions on sites are properly evidenced and recorded.
That a planning Inspector finds failings in the assessment process at a future public examination of	High	Low	Consulting on the methodology will show that the council has been transparent about the process. The council is proposing to follow the broad methodology set out in

the new local plan.			national planning guidance, subject to any detailed amendments that might be identified from consultation on the methodology.
That the findings of the assessment or the circumstances of particular sites become out-of-date.	High	Medium	The assessment will need to be regularly reviewed to ensure that conclusions on the suitability of sites does not change. If planning reform introduces significant changes to national planning policy or guidance these will need to be assessed and may require a review of the assessment.

9. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

9.1. Legal Officer's Comments (NM)

The NPPF requires every local planning authority to assess the amount of the land that is available for housing and economic development in its area. The HELAA will ensure that the Council is complying with the NPPF requirements.

9.2. Finance Officer's Comments (LK)

The approved 23/24 budget includes a growth item of £20k for new Local Plan software. Therefore, the costs associated with producing and implementing the HELAA, including procuring new software, will be contained within the approved budget.

9.3. Diversities and Equalities Implications (RC)

The new software the team are procuring will improve the digital services that the team are able to offer in plan making, making it more straight forward for members of the public to put forward sites in the HELAA process.

9.4. Climate Change Implications (AT)

There are no climate change implications arising directly from this report. As set out in Section 6 of the report, the HELAA does not allocate sites for development – it is evidence that will inform the next local plan. The local plan will need to go through a process of sustainability appraisal (SA) and habitat regulations assessment (HRA) at key stages in its preparation and

will be subject to an examination-in-public, and the results of these processes will inform the local plan allocations.

10. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

Rebecca Chittock, Strategy & Policy Senior Specialist

Telephone: 01303 853337

Email: Rebecca.chittock@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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

Appendices:

Appendix A: HELAA Form

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HELAA Assessment Form

<i>HELAA Ref:</i>		<i>Date submitted:</i>	
<i>Site Address:</i>		<i>Area (ha):</i>	
		<i>Method of Identification:</i>	
		<i>Date of site visit:</i>	
<i>Ownership / promoter name:</i>		<i>Planning History</i>	
<i>Ownership contact details</i>			

Site Location / Site Boundary

Site Photo

Site Photo

Site Photo

Proposed Site Use:

Site use 1

Site use 2

Site use 3

- Residential
- Employment
- Retail
- Tourism and Leisure
- Gypsy and Travellers
- Other

Stage 1: Initial Assessment on suitability

A	Is the size of the site 0.25ha or over (or capable of delivering 5 or more dwellings)	
B	<p>Has the site ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • been allocated for housing; <u>or</u> • been identified as suitable in previous assessments; <u>or</u> • had planning permission; <u>or</u> • there has been a positive change in circumstances; <u>or</u> • is a new site? 	
C	<p>Is the site within or does it contain any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SAC • SSSI • National Nature Reserve • Ramsar • SPA • Extreme Flood Hazard (as defined in the SFRA for the year 2115) • Ancient Woodland • Scheduled Monument • Registered Parks and Gardens • Channel Tunnel Safeguarding • Minerals and Waste Safeguarding (DM8 and other policies in Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plan) 	

Proceed to Stage 2?	
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Stage 2: Detailed Assessment on suitability

A	<p>Relationship to the settlement hierarchy? – <i>Settlement name. Is it a town, a service or rural centre, primary or secondary village? Is it infill or extension?</i></p>	
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B	Is the site previously developed (brownfield)?	
C	Physical or Infrastructure Constraints:	
	i) Can a suitable access to the highway network be created?	<i>* Insert Highways England / KCC Highways comments</i>
	ii) Is there adequate highway capacity?	<i>* Insert Highways England / KCC Highways comments</i>
	iii) Is there a suitable point of connection to water supply?	
	iv) Is there a suitable point of connection to foul sewage network?	
	v) Is there adequate sewage capacity?	
	vi) Is there suitable point of connection to electricity supply?	
	vii) Are there electricity pylons on site?	
	viii) Is there contamination or any hazardous risk? <i>– has the site any history of being used for landfill, industrial processes, petrol station, railway land etc.</i>	
	ix) Are there adverse ground conditions? <i>- has the site any known land instability issues (as per Policy NE6); or had previous use for mining / mineral extraction?</i>	
	x) Is there difficult topography?	
	xi) Is there a watercourse or waterbody within or near the site?	
	xii) Is it in flood zone 2?	
	xiii) Is it in flood zone 3? <i>- If yes hazard rating 2115 with climate change - Nil/Low/Moderate/Significant</i>	
D	Could the development potentially have a detrimental impact on any of the following?	
	i) Townscape <i>– Existing urban structure and grain, massing and scale of built form, legibility, landmarks, vistas and skyline.</i>	
	ii) Landscape <i>– Landscape and visual impact, capacity and sensitivity, scale of growth (see AECOM, Landscape Assessment,)</i>	
	iii) AONB and its setting <i>- Infill development or extension.</i>	<i>* North Downs AONB comments</i>
	iv) Agricultural land classification	
	v) Is the site affected by Nutrient Neutrality?	<i>* Environment Agency comments</i>
	iv) Kent BAP sites (Now Biodiversity Opportunity Areas) <i>– see KLIS</i>	<i>* Natural England's comments</i>
	v) Tree Preservation Orders <i>– Individual or blanket TPO's, could blanket TPO be refined?</i>	
	vi) Heritage Asset and its setting <i>– Conservation area, listed building, non-designated heritage asset, area of archaeological potential?</i>	
	vii) Historic Park/Garden or Square <i>- see PPLP Policy HE4</i>	
	viii) Local Wildlife Site	<i>* Kent Wildlife Trust comments</i>
	ix) Protected Open Space <i>- playing fields,</i>	<i>* Sport England comments</i>
E	Has the site been identified to be retained in the Employment Land Review?	

F	Sustainable Location. Using the most direct route, is the site within 400m (desirable) or 800m (acceptable) of the following?	
	• A bus stop or railway station	
	• A primary school	
	• A convenience store	
	• Within 1km of a GP surgery	
G	External Environmental Factors	
	Would the amenity of residents be adversely affected by any external environmental factors? – are there any neighbouring uses and/or infrastructure that would create noise, light, sound pollution.	

Proceed to Stage 3?	
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Stage 3: Deliverability

A	Do any of the following factors affect the availability of the site?	
	i) Multiple Ownership/Ransom Strip? <i>Have land registry details been provided? (Append to form)</i>	
	ii) Existing Tenancy/Lease Agreement? <i>If yes, has a copy of tenancy and/or lease agreement be provided? (Append to form)</i>	
	iii) Willingness of the Owner(s) to Sell? <i>If yes, has a signed letter / agreement be provided? (Append to form)</i>	
	iv) Willingness of the Developer to Develop? <i>If yes, has a signed letter / agreement be provided? (Append to form)</i>	
	v) Occupied by use unlikely to Cease	

Proceed to Stage 4?	
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Stage 4: Achievability

A	Market Interests	
	i) Compatible with adjacent uses	
	ii) Land Values compared with Existing and Alternative Uses	

CONCLUSIONS

Completed by

Signed

Date

This report will be made public
on 4 July 2023



Report Number **C/23/17**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Status: Non - Key Decision
Responsible officer: Andy Blaszkowicz – Director, Housing & Operations
Ewan Green – Director of Place
Cabinet Member: Councillor Martin, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member
for Otterpool Park and Planning Policy
Councillor Scoffham, Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment
and Biodiversity
Councillor Speakman, Cabinet Member for Assets and
Operations

SUBJECT: SOLAR PARK OPPORTUNITY - LYMPNE

SUMMARY: This report sets out an opportunity for a solar park at Lympne, adjoining Otterpool Park and makes a recommendation that the opportunity be explored further.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out below so that the opportunity to establish a solar park at Lympne can be explored further.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. To receive and note report C/23/17.**
- 2. That Cabinet provide authority for the Otterpool Park LLP to explore the opportunity of a solar farm at Lympne as described in this report.**
- 3. To continue with the soft market testing exercise to explore the options available to the Council of developing a Solar Park at Lympne.**
- 4. To note that a detailed business case on the proposal will be developed by the Otterpool Park LLP and brought back to Cabinet for further consideration.**

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The team at Otterpool Park have identified an opportunity to deliver a solar park on Council owned land to the southwest of the proposed town which it is recommended should be explored further.

2. Potential Site

- 2.1 The land for the potential solar park is on the boundary of Otterpool Park, this land is shown red on the attached plan (Appendix 1).
- 2.2 The land is currently occupied by a farmer under a Farm Business Tenancy for which the Council receives a rental income.

3. Should the Council Pursue this Opportunity?

- 3.1 The team at Otterpool Park has produced a note (appendix 2) setting out what they perceive to be the benefits of a solar park. It is, of course, for the Council to assess these benefits, the costs of pursuing this idea and consider these against the Council's other priorities.
- 3.2 It is proposed to continue with a soft market testing exercise to explore the benefits of such a scheme without entering into any formal commitment.
- 3.3 Following the soft market testing exercise a detailed business case will be developed and brought back to Cabinet for consideration.
- 3.4 The team at Otterpool Park will develop the business case with support from officers at the council including the Chief Officer for Corporate Estate and Development and the Council's Low Carbon Advisor.
- 3.5 The business case will detail a number of considerations as set out (but not limited to) below-
- Environmental Impact of the scheme
 - Various operating models and income potential
 - Power generation capacity
 - Implications to the Otterpool Park development grid connections and possible cost savings
 - Planning considerations
 - Risk analysis of the project

4. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

4.1 Legal Officer's Comments (AK)

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report. Having said this it is vital that legal advice is sought at each stage of this project including the delivery of proposals outlined in this report.

4.2 Finance Officer's Comments (BT)

This proposal would need a full financial feasibility study and risk assessment to assess whether this is a financially viable project and that the possible rewards will outweigh the potential risks, including the investment required to develop such a solar park. Investments in technology often carry significantly higher risks when compared to other council capital investment projects such as land and/or housing.

Members of the Cabinet should be aware that two months ago, it was reported that Toucan Energy, one of the largest solar park owners in the UK left an outstanding debt of £692 million to Thurrock Council in Essex. Thurrock council issued a S114 notice in December 2022 and are currently under inspection as a result of government intervention.

The soft market testing and investigative work that is required by the LLP will probably require additional resources via further loan financing from the council as the LLP rely solely on council loan funding to provide their operational budgets as they do not have their own source of income.

The council will have to identify additional internal budget resources to execute the feasibility work if this cannot be contained within existing budgets of the council.

4.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)

There are no equality and diversity implications directly arising from this report.

4.4 Climate implications (OF)

There are no climate implications arising from this report however if the proposed solar farm becomes viable, there are several positive climate implications such as a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, generation of renewable energy, energy independence and resilience etc. Proposals arising as a result of the exploration will be subject to climate impact assessment as applicable.

5. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

Ewan Green (Director of Place) and Andy Blaszkowicz (Director of Housing and Operations).

Email: ewan.green@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk/Andy.blaszkowicz@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report.
None

Appendices to this report

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Plan of site

Appendix 2: Note prepared by Otterpool Park Team

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Appendix 2 – Note prepare by Otterpool Park Team

SOLAR PARK OPPORTUNITY

LYMPNE Kent

The opportunity to deliver a solar park on Folkestone and Hythe District Council (FHDC) land on the boundary of Otterpool Park presents an effective solution to lower electrical demand and demonstrate an exemplary approach to community power generation and use. The site covers 20 hectares of agricultural land and is owned by Folkestone and Hythe District Council (FHDC).

Showcasing better practice demonstrates sustainable leadership at a local and national level and accelerates the transition towards cleaner, more secure and affordable supplies of home-grown energy. This reflects a world where the **economics have changed, and renewable options are increasingly the cost-effective choice**¹. This opportunity will inspire local authorities to deploy similar solutions on strategic land projects across the UK where they share the responsibility to encourage the increase of green energy supplies locally.

Renewable Benefits

1. Within the Carbon Action Plan dated February 2021², **the Council have set out their commitment to take opportunities to be an influencer of change and support measures to reduce carbon emissions** within the district.
2. The **Council's commitment follows the approach established within The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)** that explains that all communities have a responsibility to help increase the use and supply of green energy.
3. Potential suppliers have assessed the generating capacity of the site. **Between 30% to 40% of power demand from Otterpool Park could be met by on-site power generation and storage from**

¹ Ofgem discussion paper, Net Zero Britain: developing an energy system fit for the future, July 2022

² Folkestone & Hythe District Council, 2021, Carbon Action Plan, ([F&HDC Carbon Action Plan](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk) ([folkestone-hythe.gov.uk](https://www.folkestone-hythe.gov.uk)) (February 2021)

solar.

4. The availability of this land adjacent to the **Otterpook Park Development brings together an efficient land use scenario** by offering three essential elements in one place:
 - a. power generation,
 - b. power demand (in the form of housing), and
 - c. availability of a new modern distribution network delivered as part of the Otterpool Park Development.
5. In Spring 2022, **85% of people said that they supported the use of renewable energy³**, such as wind power, solar energy and biomass to provide electricity, fuel and heat. Public perception is on the side of green energy making this a great **opportunity to promote the Council's carbon commitment and delivery of practical measures that raise public awareness.**
6. The **opportunity to showcase better practice demonstrates sustainable leadership at local and national levels** and would lead the industry on similar sites across the UK.

Commercial

1. Organisations will design, build, finance and operate the solar farm and set out financial modelling that demonstrates commitment and governance over the lifetime of the facility (this is a normal industry requirement). **There is no planning, build or operational cost to FHDC.**
2. External advice by BNP Paribas projects that land values associated with this solar park will increase significantly.
3. **If a lease were offered there would be a net improvement of income** from a solar farm operation compared with agricultural use.
4. Traditionally the total power demand at Otterpool Park is met by the area-wide distribution network operator via a new grid connection.

³ Department of Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, 2022, BEIS Public Attitudes Tracker: Energy Infrastructure and Energy (16 June 2022).

On-site power **generation and storage will reduce the size of this connection and decrease costs paid to UKPN.** This could significantly improve the cashflow of the LLP.

Soft Market Testing

1. **Market testing is currently underway to explore options and improve the opportunity scope** with industry leaders. This is planned for completion at the beginning of July 2023.
2. Opportunities have been invited from Eon Energy, SNRG (backed by Centrica), EDF Energy and Private Energy Partners.

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This Report will be made public on 4 July 2023



Report Number **C/23/19**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Status: Non key Decision
Responsible Officer: Andy Blaszkwicz, Director, Housing & Operations
Cabinet Member: Councillor Jim Martin - Leader of the Council

SUBJECT: SHIP STREET DEVELOPMENT - UPDATE

SUMMARY: This report outlines recent work that has been undertaken on the Ship Street development, and seeks additional pre-development works budget to be allocated to the project to ensure commercial viability of the development proposals and enable reports to be instructed which are required to be submitted as part of the Planning Application.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Work has been proceeding at pace with the appointed design team to produce a commercially viable development scheme for the site. Following pre-application meetings with the Local planning Authority (LPA) it has become apparent, that to de-risk the site and bring it forward for future development, further reports are required to be submitted with the planning application.

This report seeks additional pre-development works budget to appoint consultants to complete the documents required to accompany the planning application and ensure a commercially viable scheme. Without these additional reports, the planning application is likely to be conditioned pending their completion. This approach is required to reduce the potential risk of significant delays to the project programme and to increase the attractiveness of the site to the market, and potential development partners.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1. To receive and note report C/23/19.**
- 2. To note the works carried out to date.**
- 3. To approve the additional £15k grant funding application to Homes England, to assist with the ongoing viability and sensitivity analysis of the proposed development, and to give delegated authority to Officers to accept the grant on award.**
- 4. To agree that budget of £115k is vired from MB07 to NR33 to enable officers to instruct the additional reports required for the planning submission (see paragraph 3.3 of this report).**

5. To note that Cabinet have previously agreed expenditure will be split between the General Fund and HRA (70:30 respectively), the additional budget recommended as part of this report will be sourced solely from the HRA; this impacts the previous expenditure split arrangements. As such, Cabinet are asked to approve that for any future receipts for the Ship Street scheme, the first £115k should be utilised to redress the balance between the General Fund and HRA, with any remaining surplus then divided according to the relevant shares.
6. To note the project timeline and next steps.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Cabinet have previously agreed a budget for Ship Street of £230K (C/17/50). Approximately £120K of this was spent on site investigation works, wall surveys, site management, consultants, initial capacity studies and a resident engagement event. This left approximately £110K of available budget. In September 2022 Cabinet agreed to allocate additional funding of £350k to supplement the existing capital budget for the Ship Street design development (C/22/38). Homes England have recognised the sites strategic significance within the town, and awarded the Council with £60k funding to assist with the design development, bringing the projects total approved budget to deliver the planning application to £640k split 70%/30% between the general fund and HRA.
- 1.2 Through the design development process and recent decisions affecting other Council development projects, it has become apparent that to successfully bring the site forward and enable development, the council require thorough de-risking of the site. Viability and sensitivity analysis at an early stage within the project is also essential to ensure a viable and attractive development to present to the market. This will ensure the optimal use of the Council's and Homes England's resources in addressing market failure and enabling the site to come forward.
- 1.3 Reports identified in addition to those already commissioned that are required to be submitted with the planning application to reduce conditions on the permission and to ensure compliance with planning policy, include:
 - A Remediation Strategy to inform of future remediation requirements for the proposed development,
 - Further Ecology surveys to inform of any reptile and bat presence on the site,
 - A Health Impact Assessment as required by planning policy for developments over 100 units,
- 1.4 Additional work to ensure financial viability of the proposed development prior to planning submission includes:
 - Viability and sensitivity modelling and analysis of the proposed design to ensure a commercially viable development, and to inform this report,
 - A current market appraisal of sales values, and
 - A Quantity Surveyors cost estimate report on the development build cost.
- 1.5 Alongside the design development, Officers are currently considering a range of delivery options including a development agreement with building lease, a joint venture, and outright disposal. The option to have the scheme delivered by a developer rather than by the Council, may prove most prudent to the council when considering inflation, interest rates and current headroom pressures on the HRA budget.
- 1.6 Officers are working closely with the project team to ensure a commercially viable development, that is acceptable to the market. This approach is

essential to be able to present the development to the market and to ensure the Council attracts a development partner to bring the site forward.

2. RECENT WORK

- 2.1 A tender process was carried out using the Homes England Multi-disciplinary Framework, and Ove Arup & Partners (Arup) were appointed as the multi-disciplinary team to bring forward the design proposals for the Ship Street Development through to planning submission.
- 2.2 A second public engagement event was held in March 2023 at the Quarterhouse to inform residents of emerging plans for the site, and gave the opportunity for the project and design teams to consider any comments at that stage in the design process.
- 2.3 Two pre-application meetings have been held with the Local Planning Authority and a pre-application meeting has been held with Kent Highways on the proposed design. A Design Review Panel was held in May 2023 which scrutinised the emerging design and suggested amendments to the design which have been considered as part of the ongoing design process.
- 2.4 Positive discussions continue regarding the project and potential funding with Homes England and One Public Estate. Homes England have offered an additional £15k towards the viability and sensitivities analysis of the proposed development, and this award is in the process of being finalised with officers.
- 2.5 An application was submitted to the Brownfield Land Release Fund in March 2023 for funding towards site remediation works. Officers are awaiting the outcome of this application.
- 2.6 There has been continued engagement with key stakeholders including Creative Folkestone.

3 BUDGET AND FUNDING

- 3.1 The estimated cost of the professional fees to appoint the design team including the associated consultants to get the Council to RIBA stage 3 and submission of a planning application in September 2022 was c.£500K. Additional reports and fees now identified are outlined below.

Report	Fee Quote received (excluding VAT)
Remediation Strategy	£21,500
Further ecology surveys and report	£24,705
Health Impact Assessment	£5,000
Market Valuation Report	£1,800
QS support and Cost Estimate report	£4,000
Planning submission fee	£34,589
<i>Contingency</i>	<i>£23,406</i>
Total	£115,000

- 3.2 As referred to in paragraph 2.4 Homes England have offered additional funding of £15K towards the viability and sensitivity model and report. A contingency has been included in the above breakdown in the event Homes England are not forthcoming with this commitment.
- 3.3 Cabinet is asked to approve that the £115k budget for 23/24 is vired from the HRA new build feasibility studies budget (MB07) to the HRA New Build budget, to cover the additional sums required for the work and reports outlined above in 3.1 and to also include a contingency. This £115k is therefore an extension of the overall budget from the £640k originally approved by Cabinet (C22/38) to a total of £755k. Further the £115k will be sourced from a mixture of i) the requested carry forward of unspent budget of £7k and ii) 2023/24 HRA revenue budget for new build feasibility studies.
- 3.4 Given the current financial position of the Council it is unlikely that the HRA new build feasibility budget will be spent on new acquisitions and feasibility this financial year, particularly whilst the HRA business plan is being refreshed and due to come forward to Cabinet this autumn. There is also a carry forward of £77k from financial year 22/23 being considered at this meeting (Cabinet 12th July 2023) for this HRA revenue budget.

4 NEXT STEPS

- 4.1 A report to Cabinet is due to be submitted outlining development delivery options in more detail following planning submission in Autumn 2023.
- 4.2 The current project timeline is outlined below.

Event	Target Date
Brownfield Land Remediation Fund outcome	July 2023
Planning Submission	August 2023
Options report to Cabinet	September/October 2023
Resolution to Grant Planning	October 2023
Market assessment & Engagement – Next Steps	Oct 2023 to Jan 2024
Development partner appointed	Spring 2024

5 RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

Perceived risk	Seriousness	Likelihood	Preventative action
Reports for the planning submission are not submitted, therefore the planning application is likely to be rejected by the LPA or heavily conditioned.	High	Medium	Negotiating with suppliers to get best value. Seeking funding from the Council and Homes England to ensure funds are available to commission the reports.

<p>Scheme is financially and commercially unviable. The Council does not attract a development partner, and the site is unable to be brought forward.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Officers are undertaking soft market testing to determine the appetite for the project in the marketplace.</p> <p>Budget is being requested to ensure more work can be done through design development supported by the viability and sensitivity analysis to produce a commercially viable scheme.</p>
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6 LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

6.1 Legal Officer's Comments (NM):

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

6.2 Finance Officer's Comments (JS):

Finance Officers were engaged on the financial implications arising out of this report as part of its drafting and these implications are predominantly expounded in the main body of this report. It should, however, be noted that the additional funding will be sourced from within revenue underspend in the HRA (MB07). Whilst Cabinet have previously agreed expenditure will be split between the General Fund and HRA (70:30 respectively), the additional budget recommended as part of this report will be sourced solely from the HRA; this impacts the previous expenditure split arrangements. As such, for any future receipts for the Ship Street scheme, the first £115k should be utilised to redress the balance between the General Fund and HRA, with any remaining surplus then divided according to the relevant shares.

6.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE):

There are no equalities implications arising directly from this report.

6.4 Environmental Implications (OF):

There are no climate implications arising from this report.

7 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
 Telephone: 01303 853 684

Email: Andy.Blaszkowicz@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Samuel Aligbe Chief Officer Corporate Estates and Development

Telephone: 01303 853 000

Email: Samuel.Aligbe@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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

None

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This report will be made public
on 4 July 2023

Report Number **C/23/18**

To: Cabinet
Date: 12 July 2023
Status: Non - Key Decision
Chief Executive: Dr Susan Priest, Chief Executive.
Cabinet Member: Jim Martin - Leader of the Council

**SUBJECT: OTTERPOOL PARK LLP – AMENDMENT OF MEMBERS’
AGREEMENT REGARDING APPOINTMENTS TO THE
OTTERPOOL PARK LLP BOARD**

SUMMARY: This report makes recommendations regarding the board of Otterpool Park LLP and sets out proposed changes to increase the size of the board and to review the skills mix to reflect good governance principles and to support the delivery of this significant long-term place-shaping project.

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out below on the basis that:

1. OP LLP will continue to deliver the Council’s objectives for the Otterpool Park garden town.
2. Three years following set up, the proposed changes to the composition of the board reflect good governance principles.
3. OP LLP’s activities need to be progressed and it is important that the board is robust and reflects the current demands and ambitions of the council.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/23/18.
2. To agree that the Members’ Agreement of Otterpool Park LLP be amended to enable the Council to appoint up to nine (9) nominees / directors to the Otterpool Park LLP board at any one time.
3. To note that the Members’ Agreement already allows for the nominee company to appoint one director, and this remains unchanged.
4. To agree that the Members’ Agreement be amended so that the Leader is able to appoint and remove the chairman of the board.
5. To agree that the Leader, in consultation with the two councillors appointed to the board, be authorised to make appointments to the vacant positions of the board.
6. To note that the Council’s representative at the Members’ Meeting remains as the Leader of the Council and the Nominee Company’s representative remains the Director of Place.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council's aspirations for the Otterpool Park garden town are familiar to members.
- 1.2 The Council's attention is now focussed on the next delivery phase of the project which will involve financing, further planning work, numerous legal agreements, procurement, infrastructure delivery, negotiations with housebuilders, and the management of a wide range of stakeholders etc., etc.
- 1.3 As a result of this significant project reaching a major milestone - the award of outlining planning permission, it is appropriate in good governance terms to undertake a review of the skills, capacity and expertise at the most senior level to ensure that the board is fit for purpose for the coming phase and the council is well served and satisfied that it has access to the most appropriate senior resource base.
- 1.4 This report therefore recommends that modest changes are made to increase the overall size of the board of Otterpool Park LLP to bring it in line with best practice of up to 10 Director in total, and to consider all appointments in a refresh of the skills mix to ensure that the council's LLP is well placed to deliver the next phase of this significant project. It also recommends that the chairman of the board should be appointed by the Leader rather than the board itself.
- 1.5 The increase in the number of directors and the change to the appointment of chairman of the directors will necessitate a change to the Members' Agreement (the equivalent of a memorandum and articles of association).

2. MEMBERS' AGREEMENT

- 2.1 Agreement, at present, at paragraph 8.2.1 of the Members' Agreement provides:

"The Council shall be entitled to elect and appoint six (6) Council Nominees to the Board. The Nominee Company shall be entitled to appoint one Nominee Company Nominee to the Board."

- 2.2 For the reasons set out below it is suggested that the Members' Agreement be amended so as to enable the Council to appoint up to nine (9) Nominees (or directors) to the board. The Nominee Company (that is to say Otterpool Park Development Company Ltd, the other owner of the LLP and which is itself wholly owned by the Council) would continue to appoint one director / nominee.
- 2.3 Paragraph 8.2.6 of the agreement concerns the appointment of the chairman of the board:-

"Unless otherwise determined by the Board, the Board shall have a Chairman and such position shall be occupied either by a Council Nominee or an independent chairman appointed pursuant to this Clause 0. The first Chairman shall be appointed at the first meeting of the Board. The Chairman

shall not have a second or casting vote. The Parties hereby agree that an independent Chairman may be appointed by way of a unanimous decision of the Board and, in the event that an independent Chairman is appointed, the provisions of this Clause 0 shall cease to apply for such time as an independent Chairman is so appointed save that it is acknowledged that the independent Chairman shall not be entitled to vote.”

- 2.2 It is considered that the Council, via the Leader, should be able to appoint (and be able to remove from that office) the chairman of the board.
- 2.3 It is recommended therefore that the Members’ Agreement be amended to enable the Council to appoint up to 9 Nominees / directors and to appoint and remove the chairman of the board. The nominee company (Otterpool Park Development Company) will continue to appoint one Nominee/director to the board.
- 2.4 It should be noted that the director Otterpool Park Development Company Ltd will also need to pass a resolution approving the proposals.

3. DIRECTOR APPOINTMENTS

- 3.1 The original appointments to the board of the Delivery Vehicle (as set out in report C/20/02 – see appendix 2) were as follows:
- Two officer appointments*;
 - Two Council members i.e. Councillor representatives; and
 - Three independent non – executive directors.

*It should be noted that at the time of the original resolution two of the appointees were employees of the Council. Neither are employed by the Council now, but two employees of the OP LLP are currently acting as directors.

- 3.2 By increasing the size of the Board from a maximum of 7 up to a maximum of 10 positions, a wider scope of expertise and senior-level capacity could be made available.
- 3.3 All appointments will be considered on their relative merits for what the individuals specifically bring to the board in their role as a director and the personal contribution they can make in furthering the objectives of the project. The precise configuration should be determined through the process and considering what the project needs at any particular time.
- 3.4 Consideration should also be given to the overall skills mix that exists and any gaps that might be apparent across the cohort of directors. Expertise such as finance and corporate governance, large-scale planning, commercial considerations, development, infrastructure procurement and delivery, construction, education and community engagement would all be appropriate. Moreover, the depth, scale and relevance of the expertise is also important to consider ensuring a high level of credibility exists within the development industry to support the council in delivering their aspirations.

- 3.5 As this project is fundamental to the district it is recommended that the Leader appoints the positions on the board, including the chairman. As stated above, previously the chairman was selected by the board from the cohort of appointed Directors.
- 3.6 While employing an independent recruiter could ensure that the market is fully tested, it carries a cost burden estimated to be in the order of £20K. There is no certainty that the best candidates would be found via this route and as the council has an appropriately qualified and experienced Chief HR Officer, the use of professional networks via industry and member contacts is an appropriate way to progress while being mindful of value for money considerations; the council was well served using this approach in 2020.
- 3.7 The overall specification for the Directors remains unchanged and is attached as appendix 1. The existing payment levels remain unchanged with: (a) the equivalent to a SRA for a cabinet member made available for the councillors appointed; and (b) £10,000 pa for each independent director. Councillors on the board must elect whether to receive their SRA from the Council or the remuneration from the LLP. However, with an overall increase in the number of Board Directors that may be appointed under these proposals, a modest increase in overall cost may be incurred but this will be offset by the increased depth and breadth of skills and expertise available at board level.

4. MEMBERS' MEETINGS

- 4.1 The Members' Agreement provides for a meeting of the members (or Owners) of the LLP.
- 4.2 The Council's representative at these meetings is the Leader of the Council and the Nominee Company's representative be the Director of Place. This is to continue though consideration will be given to widening the participation in meetings to other councillors as deemed necessary and as appropriate.

5. NEXT STEPS

- 5.1 Subject to cabinet agreement, the recruitment process will commence as soon as practicable. The Leader will appoint in consultation with the two council members appointed to the Board. The Chief Executive, MD of the LLP and HR colleagues will support all necessary actions. Updates will be given by the Leader via his regular reports to full council so that all members are aware of the progress being made.

6. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

6.1. Legal Officer's Comments (NE)

Browne Jacobson originally provided legal advice to the Council on the corporate structure and governance arrangements for the Delivery Vehicle

and will continue to be involved / advise the Council accordingly as and when required. Local Partnerships have not yet concluded their governance review but early reflections have been made and their recommendations captured in this report.

6.2 Finance Officer's Comments (LM S151)

The financial impact of appointing the additional Directors as detailed within the report at paragraph 3.7 is minimal and can be met from the approved project budgets. The additional appointment will ensure that the Otterpool Board has the necessary skills and strategic resources to successfully deliver the next stages of the project.

6.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (AS)

There are no direct diversities and equalities implications arising out of this report but as the recruitment process gets underway and appointments are made, the Chief HR Officer will ensure that all diversity and equality implications are considered.

7. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

Amandeep Khroud – Assistant Director Governance and Law
Telephone – 01303 853253
Email: Amandeep.khroud@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

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

Appendices to this report

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Specification
Appendix 2: Report C/20/02

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Appendix 1

Non-Executive Director - Person Specification & Process

The intention is to progress recruitment of directors to the LLP as soon as practicable. An advert will be prepared and made available via appropriate channels. The Leader will be supported to shortlist and interview appropriate candidates, drawing on appropriate available resources.

The following list captures the skills and expertise thought appropriate:

- **Interest** - demonstrable interest in delivering a sustainable, world class garden community;
- **Relevant board level experience** - significant experience of working at board level or equivalent in a company, limited liability partnership, public or charitable organisation;
- **Relevant sector experience** - Can demonstrate significant depth of experience of one or more areas of the following:
 - Large scale planning, design and delivery of award-winning mixed use development;
 - Financial and corporate governance experience in a related sector;
 - Infrastructure and delivery of services related to large scale communities;
 - Successful commercial operations;
 - Development industry experience;
 - Construction sector experience;
 - Facilitating and delivering new education facilities / provision;
 - Community development; and
 - Any other areas of expertise deemed appropriate and relevant.
- **Independence of mind** - the behaviours and ability to challenge and ask the right questions to further the work of the LLP;
- **Credibility** – the ability to represent the LLP and the project at public events and meetings with the local authority, with government departments and with the development and financial sectors.

It should be noted that a person cannot be appointed if he / she:

- Has been a member or employee of the Council at any time during the last 5 years;
- Is a relative or close friend of a member or officer of the Council;
- Is engaged in any party political activity;
- Has any criminal convictions or be an un-discharged bankrupt; or
- Has any significant business dealings with the Council.

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This report will be made public
on 18 May 2020



Report Number **C/20/02**

To: Cabinet
Date: 27 May 2020
Status: Non - Key Decision
Head of Paid Service: Dr Susan Priest, Chief Executive.
Cabinet Member: Councillor David Monk, Leader of the Council

SUBJECT: OTTERPOOL PARK LLP – STRUCTURING & INITIAL ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY: This report makes recommendations regarding the corporate structuring and initial activities of Otterpool Park LLP (the “Delivery Vehicle”), the Council’s delivery vehicle in relation to the development of the Otterpool Park garden town (the “Project”).

REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS:

Cabinet is asked to agree the recommendations set out below on the basis that:

1. The Delivery Vehicle will deliver the Council’s objectives for the Otterpool Park garden town.
2. Appointments need to be made to the boards of both the Delivery Vehicle and Otterpool Park Development Company Ltd (the “Nominee Company”), the private limited company (itself wholly-owned by the Council) which is the other corporate member of the Delivery Vehicle alongside the Council.
3. The Delivery Vehicle’s initial activities need to be progressed in a timely way to prepare for the forthcoming Local Plan Examination in Public.
4. The Delivery Vehicles’ initial working capital requirements need to be approved.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

1. To receive and note report C/20/02.
2. To approve the Members’ Agreement for the Delivery Vehicle, including the delegations matrix (the “Delegations Matrix”) in schedule 3 of the agreement (the “Members’ Agreement”) set out in Appendix 2, with the Assistant Director of Governance & Law being authorised to make any minor drafting adjustments in finalising the document.
3. That the Council’s representative at the Members’ Meetings be the Leader of the Council and the Nominee Company’s representative be the Director of Place.
4. To continue the appointments to the board of the Delivery Vehicle of John Bunnett, Director of Development, and Andy Jarrett, Chief

- Strategic Development Officer, for another six months, subject to re-appointment on the appointment of the full board.
5. That the full board consist of additionally two Councillors appointed by the Leader of the Council as soon as practicable, the remuneration for these appointments being the equivalent to, and being treated as a Cabinet Member Special Responsibility Allowance, and three independent non – executive directors, again appointed as soon as practicable within the next six months.
 6. That the specification for the independent non – executive directors set out in appendix 3 be approved and that the remuneration be set at £10,000 pa.
 7. To approve an appointment of the Director of Place as the replacement sole director to the board of the Nominee Company.
 8. To approve the entering into of service level agreements(s) between the Council and the Delivery Vehicle for the provision of services (including staff) by the Council to the Delivery Vehicle to support the Delivery Vehicle’s initial activities described in this report.
 9. To approve the Delivery Vehicle becoming the applicant for the outline planning application for Otterpool Park (reference Y19/0257/FH) and any subsequent planning application for the Project (the “Planning Application”).
 10. To approve the provision by the Council of initial capital of £1.25m to the Delivery Vehicle to support the Delivery Vehicle’s initial activities.
 11. To approve the entering into of a loan facility between the Council and the Delivery Vehicle or the provision of Members’ Equity, or a combination of these two methods of finance, for the provision by the Council of initial capital of £1.25m to the Delivery Vehicle to support the Delivery Vehicle’s initial activities.
 12. That the Council will provide any reasonable and necessary undertakings in order to enable the Delivery Vehicle to demonstrate to third parties an ability to meet contractual obligations properly entered into relation to its initial activities.
 13. That the Delivery Vehicle’s business plan (the “Business Plan”) is presented to Cabinet for approval in due course, and in accordance with the process set out in its Members’ Agreement, prior to any further recommendations being put to Cabinet regarding the subsequent funding requirements of the Delivery Vehicle beyond its initial activities.
 14. That the Delivery Vehicle be properly licensed in due course to use the intellectual property that the Council has registered in relation to Otterpool Park.

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council's aspirations for the Otterpool Park garden town are familiar to members. The development of the garden town was originally intended to be delivered via a joint venture with Cozumel Estates Ltd ("Cozumel"), the owner of the former Folkestone Racecourse site and other relevant land interests. That proposal was supported by a Collaboration Agreement entered into between the Council and Cozumel. The Council has now acquired Cozumel's land interests and the Collaboration Agreement has been terminated.
- 1.2 The Council's attention is now focussed on the delivery of the Project. The present position is as follows:
 - The Council controls approximately 90% of the planning application site with a further 10% (approximately) owned by Homes England, the government agency. Therefore, purely in respect of land ownership and control, there is very little to impede Project delivery.
 - It is anticipated that the examination in public of the local plan, which includes the residential allocation for Otterpool Park, will be heard in May / June 2020.
 - The Planning Application has been made and is likely to be determined later this year.
- 1.3 The Chief Executive used her power to take urgent decisions in January 2020 to:
 - a) Incorporate the Delivery Vehicle and the Nominee Company (and approve the entering into of necessary ancillary documents), as part of an interim corporate structure, for the purposes of the letting and management of residential properties forming part of the Cozumel land interests acquired by the Council (the "Residential Properties") to avoid the creation of secure tenancies.
 - b) To appoint John Bunnett (Director of Development) as sole director of the Nominee Company.
 - c) To appoint Andy Jarrett (Chief Strategic Development Officer) and John Bunnett (Director of Development) as board nominees of the Delivery Vehicle.
 - d) Authorise the Council to grant a lease of the Residential Properties to the Delivery Vehicle.
- 1.4 This report makes recommendations to ensure that the Delivery Vehicle is able to deliver the Project, meeting the Council's objectives for the Otterpool Park garden town, and is not confined to the narrow scope of activity under the interim corporate structure authorised under urgent decisions taken by the Chief Executive (as described above).
- 1.5 It is suggested that the Delivery Vehicle is a limited liability partnership. Although Oportunitas is a limited company the concept of working through a wholly owned corporate vehicle is familiar to members and the Council.

- 1.6 A draft of this report was considered by the Otterpool Park Working Group on 23 April 2020. The recommendations in the draft were unanimously approved by the working group. It should be noted that some of the recommendations in this report have updated the recommendations in the draft.

2. RATIONALE

- 2.1 Cabinet considered on 31 January 2018 report C/17/76. This is attached at Appendix 1. Cabinet resolved:

- “1. That report C/17/76 be received and noted.*
- 2. That the definition of commercial return set out in paragraph 2.3 be approved.*
- 3. That the corporate joint venture option be agreed in principle as the vehicle for delivering the Otterpool Park garden town, with a further report to be submitted to Cabinet on the joint venture and potential for a development company.*
- 4. That the Head of Strategic Development Projects be authorised to seek financial, commercial and legal advice on the formation and operation of a joint venture company for Otterpool Park and investigation into a council controlled development company, and a sum of up to £350,000 to be included in the capital programme for this item of expenditure to be approved by Council.*
- 5. That the existing Collaboration Agreement be extended to March 2019.*
- 6. That the Head of Strategic Development Projects be authorised, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to continue to liaise with the Homes England (HE formerly known as Homes and Communities Agency) regarding its role in Otterpool Park, with any updates requiring a decision on this matter brought back to Cabinet in due course (the confidential annex to this report refers).*
- 7. That the council agrees in principle to using its compulsory purchase powers if necessary to assemble land.”*

- 2.2 Although that report was prepared and the decision was made in contemplation of Project delivery via a joint venture between the Council and Cozumel, much of the analysis of potential advantages and disadvantages contained within it remain relevant to the proposal contained in this report contemplating Council-led Project delivery via the Delivery Vehicle.

- 2.3 It is however worth recapping on the reasons for using a delivery vehicle amongst which are:-

- decision making is more agile than the local authority decision making process, especially important in a commercial environment;
- the vehicle will have one purpose: management time and other resources will be devoted to this. The local authority has other responsibilities which could divert attention;

- it will be able to identify efficiencies outside the local government framework;
- the private sector are used to dealing with local authority owned vehicles and are thus familiar with their workings;
- the delivery vehicle will not be a "contracting authority" for the purpose of the European Procurement Regulations and will therefore be able to pursue a more flexible procurement policy whilst still obtaining value for money. In particular this could mean engaging more local firms to the benefit of the local economy which is particularly important now; and
- the delivery vehicle offers the benefit of limited liability.

The limited liability partnership structure is flexible and crucially enables other partners to be easily brought on board. These additional partners will bring money and expertise to the project. This is particularly important when considering the ability to share risk and in a long-term project covering some 30-40 years such as Otterpool Park.

- 2.4 Whilst not a JV at the moment councillors should appreciate that it is likely to become a JV during the life of the project. The Council needs to establish a vehicle at the outset that can meet the needs of delivering an exemplary project.
- 2.5. The role of the Delivery Vehicle in Project delivery is currently envisaged as that of a master developer. Under this model the Delivery Vehicle would assume responsibility for leading and coordinating all aspects of Project delivery throughout the development cycle. There is a growing recognition that the master developer role can be an effective way of delivering new housing at scale. As master developer, the Delivery Vehicle could act as a steward of design quality, control delivery and create a positive legacy for the local community.
- 2.6 The Delivery Vehicle's activities to address the Council's objectives for the Otterpool Park garden town would include:
- a) Being the applicant for the Planning Application and, where appropriate, subsequent planning applications relating to Project delivery. Cabinet are asked to specifically approve the former.
 - b) Potentially acting as the manager of community infrastructure created as part of the Project.
 - c) Leading and coordinating development activity at the Project site, potentially via subsidiary vehicles.
 - d) Where appropriate, facilitating partnership development arrangements to bring forward housing and employment opportunities at the Project site, including joint ventures with other organisations.
 - e) Where appropriate, holding and managing residential, commercial, agricultural and/or industrial land and buildings at the Project site in advance of, during and following Project delivery (as applicable).
 - f) Leading and coordinating the delivery of such infrastructure works as are necessary as part of Project delivery.

- g) Commissioning any necessary professional services relating to either the Council's objectives for the Otterpool Park garden town and/or the business objectives of the Delivery Vehicle.
 - h) Carrying out such trading activities as will be identified in the Delivery Vehicle's Business Plan (which will be subject to periodic update/review/approval).
- 2.7 The initial activities of the Delivery Vehicle will be described in its Business Plan for Cabinet approval (see section 5 below).
- 2.8 There is an imperative for establishing the Delivery Vehicle so that it can now act as the Master Developer of Otterpool Park rather than wait for the business plan, referred to in section 5, to be finalised. The imperative is the need for evidence to be given to the inspectors at the Examination in Public ("EIP") into the Local Plan that demonstrates that the Project can deliver the housing numbers envisaged in the plan.
- 2.9 The EIP has now started with questions posed by the inspectors. One set of questions is concerned with deliverability. The inspectors will not recommend the approval of a plan that they are not convinced is realistic so they will look not only to see that the Council is aiming to deliver the appropriate number of dwellings but that there is a method of actually delivering them.
- 2.10 The Council has gone a long way to demonstrate this. It now, with the recent acquisition of the Cozumel land, owns or has the ability to own the majority of the land for the new settlement. It has decided to commit substantial sums and resources to developing the town. It does however need to have a vehicle to deliver the project and to show the inspectors that one exists.
- 2.11 It is considered that the Delivery Vehicle needs to be separately represented at the EIP to give confidence to the inspectors that the allocations will be delivered. It should be recalled that the ability of the Council to deliver the requisite number of houses rests on Otterpool Park coming forward. If this allocation is not approved the Council is highly likely to be faced with piecemeal applications on smaller sites across the whole district which, in the absence of an adopted Local Plan, could be difficult to resist.
- 2.12 In addition, work on engaging with consultants needs to be undertaken as well as continuing discussions with potential developers to progress the Project.

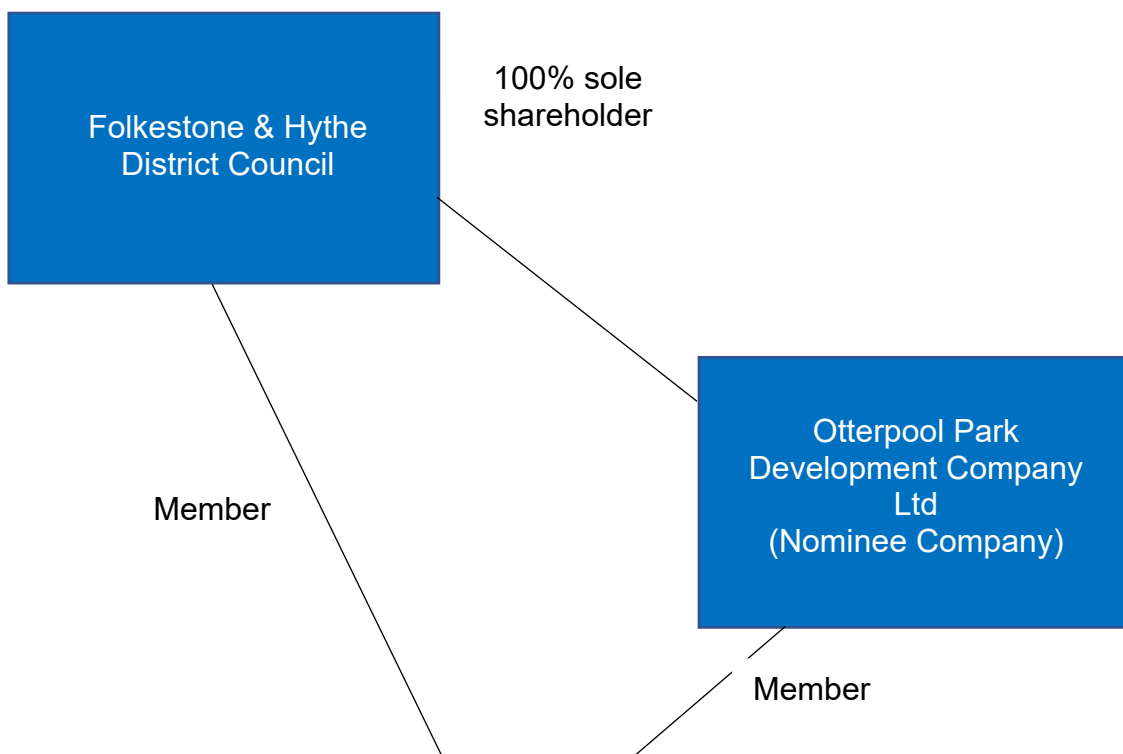
3. GOVERNANCE – THE DELIVERY VEHICLE AND NOMINEE COMPANY

Nature of a Limited Liability Partnership

- 3.1 A limited liability partnership ("LLP") is a form of corporate vehicle established by two or more persons under the section 2(1) of the Limited Liability Partnership Act 2000, where the members of the LLP intend to go

into business “with a view to profit”. LLPs have legal personality, have a board and are registered with Companies House. A LLP therefore is able to enter into contracts, purchase land, establish subsidiary vehicles and trade, in the case of the Delivery Vehicle, in accordance with its approved Business Plan - see below.

- 3.2 A LLP is tax transparent, meaning that its distributable profits are taxed in the hands of its members (i.e. owners), not the LLP. Other taxes, such as VAT and SDLT are payable in the usual way. This ‘tax transparency’ benefits the Council as owner, since it does not pay corporation tax.
- 3.3 A LLP is not required to have articles of association. The Delivery Vehicle will be governed by a Members’ Agreement, its governing instrument to regulate relationships between the members and the Delivery Vehicle, signed by the members (, i.e. the two owners being the Council and the Nominee Company) and the Delivery Vehicle itself – being the equivalent to the articles of a private limited company. One of the recommendations of this report is that the Members’ Agreement set out in Appendix 2 be approved.
- 3.4 A LLP does not issue shares. Appointment of new members (i.e. additional owners) would require the agreement of the existing members.
- 3.5 As per paragraph 3.1 above, a LLP needs a minimum of two members (i.e. owners). It was therefore necessary (as described in paragraph 1.3 above) to also incorporate the Nominee Company to act as a second member of the Delivery Vehicle alongside the Council. A diagram showing the corporate structure is set out below. It should also be noted that the Council is the sole shareholder of the Nominee Company. The Nominee Company’s primary function is to be the second member of the Delivery Vehicle. It would not play an active role in Project delivery.



The Members' Agreement and the Delegations Matrix

- 3.6 The Delivery Vehicle's Members' Agreement will govern, amongst other things, the roles and powers of nominees to its board and its decision-making processes. The proposed Members' Agreement is set out in Appendix 2 for approval. This report separately describes the ownership of the Delivery Vehicle (i.e. the Council and the Nominee Company), who the nominees to the board of the Delivery Vehicle will be, and how those nominees will be appointed and removed if necessary.
- 3.7 The Members' Agreement provides the limits and qualifications on what the Delivery Vehicle is able to do in terms of governance and decision-making by being subject to the Delegations Matrix (set out in schedule 3 of the agreement). The Delegations Matrix describes the detailed day-to-day control mechanisms that the Council (as member) will have over the activities of the Delivery Vehicle and the Nominee Company. By preparing and approving the forms of the Members' Agreement and the Delegations Matrix now, the nominees to the board of the Delivery Vehicle will be in no doubt about what the Council (as member) expects of the Delivery Vehicle and the limits in which the Delivery Vehicle can operate.
- 3.8 Specifically, the Delegations Matrix describes, amongst other things, the matters which the Council (as member) in all circumstances has the final decision on (i.e. the equivalent of shareholder reserved matters in the articles of a private limited company), as well as rules regarding procurement and financial controls.
- 3.9 Fundamentally, one of the primary purposes of the Members' Agreement and the Delegations Matrix is to provide a framework for what the Delivery Vehicle can do as part of its day-to-day activities, and to introduce suitable control measures for the Council (as member) so that the Council is satisfied that the Delivery Vehicle is not exposing the Council to undue risk via those day-to-day activities, or acting beyond agreed activities.
- 3.10 The Members' Agreement provides for quarterly meetings of the members (i.e. the owners) of the Delivery Vehicle. This provides the opportunity for the owners of the Delivery Vehicle to ensure that satisfactory progress is being made towards attainment of the objectives in the business plan. Whilst at the moment the owners of the Delivery Vehicle are the Council and the Nominee Company (itself owned by the Council) third parties may, in future, also own the Delivery Vehicle jointly with the Council. The meeting will therefore be a meeting of the owners rather than a formal meeting of council. The meetings will be formally minuted and these will be made publically available.

- 3.11 It is suggested that the Council be represented at the meeting by the Leader of the Council and the Nominee Company by the Director of Place. Appropriate officers, including the statutory officers, would also attend. At the meetings progress against the business plan would be discussed, the management accounts reviewed together with any other relevant other business regarding the Delivery Vehicle's activities. Initially all the directors of the Delivery Vehicle would be invited. Once the full board is established the chairman of the board, a councillor director, an officer director and an independent director would be invited and expected to attend.
- 3.12 It should be noted that, while the Members' Agreement provides for the board of the Delivery Vehicle to meet at least quarterly, expectations are that it will meet more regularly, perhaps monthly, while the Delivery Vehicle is in its early set up phase.

Appointments to the board of the Delivery Vehicle

- 3.13 It is suggested that the board of the Delivery Vehicle initially consists of two officers for a period of up to six months with that time being used to appoint as soon as practicable two council members (i.e. Councillor representatives) and three independent non – executive directors with specific skills and expertise needed for the project. It is suggested therefore, to maintain momentum in the project, that the appointment of the existing officers be continued for six months with their appointments being re – confirmed on the appointments to the full board.
- 3.14 The ability of the Council to make payments to councillor / directors of wholly owned companies / limited liability partnerships is subject to differing opinions. It is suggested that any payment should not be more than the special responsibility allowance of a cabinet member. Accordingly, it is recommended that the remuneration be set at this level. It is also recommended that the payment be treated as if it were a SRA so that a councillor would not be able to receive the remuneration as a director and an SRA, the member would have to elect which to receive. The Leader of the Council is able to appoint the councillor directors.
- 3.15 The specification for the independent non – executive directors is attached in appendix 3 for approval. A payment of £10,000 pa for each non – executive independent director would be appropriate, and a term of four years is suggested, which is considered in line with practice elsewhere. The appointment would be by the Leader of the Council, in consultation with such other directors of the delivery vehicle as he sees appropriate. The recruitment process will commence as soon as practicable after a decision on this matter has been made.
- 3.16 The full board of the DV will be responsible for approving the business plan for onwards submission to the Council which will be considered by OSC and Cabinet through the remainder of 2020.

Delivery Vehicle staffing and resources

- 3.17 A service level agreement between the Council and the Delivery Vehicle for the provision of services (including staff) by the Council to the Delivery Vehicle to support the Delivery Vehicle's initial activities will be prepared. As the Delivery Vehicle will not initially employ staff, it will need to buy resources and other services it requires from the private sector and/or the Council. If services are purchased by the Delivery Vehicle from the Council via a service level agreement, this will be on the basis of full cost recovery at market rates so as to comply with the European State Aid rules. A service level agreement will enable the Delivery Vehicle to request the services of any officers or area of the Council and the Council will charge the Delivery Vehicle for the services or officer time that it uses. The Delivery Vehicle may also procure services/resources externally in line with legislation and existing Council frameworks. The Delivery Vehicle will not be bound by the full financial regulations of the Council, although the Delegations Matrix will ensure that appropriate financial controls are in place.
- 3.18 Five members of Council staff will support the Delivery Vehicle full time – those being the Director of Development, the Chief Strategic Development Officer, the Otterpool Park Project Manager – Masterplanning and Design, the Strategic Development Project Manager and the Corporate Projects Officer (Otterpool). Annual costs to the council of these staff are in the order of £444,000 which is a cost the council will seek to capitalise. Those individuals existing line management responsibilities (if any) will be reallocated. Over time those individuals will be located at Otterpool Park (it is envisaged that the Delivery Vehicle will lease premises from the Council in due course). However, all the officers involved will continue to be employees of the Council and they will be available to assist in other Council projects if and as necessary. Other Council officers with the necessary skills and expertise to deliver the activities of the Business Plan, i.e. with finance and legal specialisms, will work for the Delivery Vehicle as and when required in accordance with the service level agreement.

The Nominee Company

- 3.19 As stated above, the Nominee Company has been incorporated to act as the second member (owner) of the Delivery Vehicle alongside the Council. Notwithstanding the fact that the Nominee Company will not play an active role in Project delivery, a sole director still needs to be appointed to the board of directors of the Nominee Company. It is suggested that Ewan Green, Director of Place, is appointed.
- 3.20 As part of the urgent decisions described in paragraph 1.3 above, the Chief Executive appointed the Director of Development as the sole director of the Nominee Company as part of an interim corporate structure.
- 3.21 Given the Director of Development's envisaged active role in supporting the activities of the Delivery Vehicle, it is considered sensible that he resign from his role under the interim corporate structure as the sole director of the Nominee Company and that a replacement sole director be appointed.

Cabinet is asked to approve the appointment of a replacement sole director to the board of directors of the Nominee Company as per para 3.19 above.

- 3.22 As part of the urgent decisions described in paragraph 1.3 above, the Chief Executive approved the adoption of Model Articles (subject to minor amendments relevant to the Project) by the Nominee Company as part of an interim corporate structure. There is no need to make any amendments to these.

4. INITIAL ACTIVITIES AND WORKING CAPITAL

- 4.1 Described in the next section is the envisaged process for the Delivery Vehicle's business planning. It is intended that the Business Plan will be placed before Overview & Scrutiny and Cabinet after having been approved by the full board of the Delivery Vehicle in the autumn. However, there is a range of initial activities that need to be undertaken by the Delivery Vehicle now and before that approval of the Business Plan. There is a restriction in the Members' Agreement on the Delivery Vehicle operating beyond the scope of these initial activities until the Business Plan is approved by Cabinet.

Initial Activities

- 4.2 Over the next twelve months the following initial activities need to be undertaken by the Delivery Vehicle. A draft skeleton business plan has been drawn up which sets out the range of activities necessary in the first 12 months (see appendix 4). It must be emphasised that this is a draft and that further work will need to be done on it before it can be approved by the full board of the LLP before submission to council.

Capital

- 4.3 Accordingly, initial working capital will need to be made available to the Delivery Vehicle by way of either a loan facility or Members' Equity or more likely a combination of both. This loan facility and Members' Equity will need to be State Aid compliant. Subject to Cabinet's approval the capital will be provided on terms to be determined by the Council's Chief Finance Officer.
- 4.4 The estimate amount of working capital required by the Delivery Vehicle for the first twelve months of operations is £1.25m which will fund in part the activities shown in the draft skeleton business plan at appendix 4, excluding the internal staffing costs shown in para 3.18 above.

5. BUSINESS PLANNING

Business Planning

- 5.1 As provided for in the Members' Agreement, and as noted above, the Delivery Vehicle's Business Plan will need to be approved by Cabinet before it can operate beyond the initial activities described above. An indicative range of business activities is described at paragraph 2.5 of this report.
- 5.2 In drawing up the Business Plan, robust financial modelling will be undertaken using external financial advice.
- 5.3 The strategic financial objectives of the Council and the definition of commercial return for the purpose of the Project have been agreed by cabinet – see report C/17/79 which was considered by Cabinet on 31 January 2018 (minute 80) and these will be reflected in the Business Plan that will be considered by Cabinet, subject to Cabinet approving the other recommendations in this report. The Delivery Vehicle's Board will need to meet to agree the Business Plan prior to its submission to Cabinet for approval.
- 5.4 In order for the Delivery Vehicle to be considered as a going concern and to be able to operate and pay suppliers, it needs to ensure that it can demonstrate solvency. The Delivery Vehicle business model is likely to have substantial front loading of expenditure in the period when the Delivery Vehicle is undertaking the initial activities to deliver the Project. In order for the Delivery Vehicle to be able to demonstrate an ability to meet contractual commitments the Council may need to provide a formal commitment to fund LLP each year, by way of a working capital facility, including for the initial activities.
- 5.5 It is not the purpose of this report to go through the detail of the Business Plan but that will include more detailed references to:
- the project viability of both the Delivery Vehicle and its individual activities;
 - taxation, including VAT;
 - the potential future financial returns to the Council; and
 - the indirect financial benefits to the Council.
- 5.6 It is envisaged that the Business Plan will be prepared and approved for a five-year period, but subject to annual reviews. The Cabinet will be responsible for approving the business plan. If approval of the business plan entails a departure from the Council's budget then that aspect would have to be approved by full Council.
- 5.7 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will have an important role to play in commenting on and scrutinising the five year business plan and the annual reviews prior to consideration by cabinet. The intention is to have an early discussion with members of OSC about the business plan, potentially in July 2020.

Impact on the Council

- 5.8 The Cabinet will, of course, have to consider the impact on the Council from the operation of the Delivery Vehicle. It will have to be satisfied that any borrowing can be paid within the requirements of CIPFA's prudential code. Essentially, this means that the Business Plan provides sufficient income to repay the borrowing costs both interest and principal, including Minimum Revenue Provision obligations which ensure that the principal element will be repaid.

State Aid

- 5.9 State aid requirements are such that the interest charged by the Council on any loan facility with the Delivery Vehicle must be at a commercial rate, which is one that is available in the market place and not subject to subsidy. Therefore, from a state aid perspective, the rate that the Council borrows at is not relevant to the rate charged under a loan facility with the Delivery Vehicle. The financing arrangements for any working capital loan facility from the Council to the Delivery Vehicle, including for the initial activities, will be structured to comply with these requirements.

6. INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

There is an Otterpool Park image consisting of logo, slogan and name in a particular typeface developed for the Council by Pillory Barn. The copyright in these is the Council's. The Delivery Vehicle will be properly licensed in due course to use this intellectual property.

7. NEXT STEPS & TIMESCALE FOR DELIVERY

- 7.1 Subject to Cabinet views, the next steps are:

- Members' Agreement is entered into.
- Necessary resignations/appointments for the boards of the Delivery Vehicle and Nominee Company are arranged.
- Loan facility, if appropriate, for the Delivery Vehicle's working capital requirements is prepared and entered into.
- Funding to support the Delivery Vehicle's working capital requirements is drawn down.
- Service level agreements (as necessary) prepared and entered into.
- Delivery Vehicle becomes the applicant for the purposes of the Planning Application.
- The Delivery Vehicle board meets to prepare and sign off the Business Plan for submission to Cabinet for approval.
- The Business Plan is subject to discussion with members and Cabinet formally considers the Business Plan within the next six months.
- Delivery Vehicle is granted a licence to utilise the intellectual property described in paragraph 6.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES

- 8.1 A detailed risk register will be prepared and risks will be managed on an on-going basis and reported to the board of the Delivery Vehicle, to Corporate Leadership Team of the Council, and to Cabinet.
- 8.2 A summary of the 10 highest perceived risks using a combination of probability/likelihood of occurrence and severity of impact on the Council is included below:

Perceived Risk	Likelihood	Seriousness	Preventative Action
LEGAL - The balance between Council control and the Delivery Vehicle's ability to deliver against Business Plan results in the Council ceding too much control.	Low / Medium	High	Detailed definitions and restrictions / material matters on issues where Cabinet / Council approval has to be sought are contained within the Delegations Matrix and limit the powers / authority of the Delivery Vehicle's Board and therefore mitigate against this risk.
FINANCIAL - Breach of EU state aid rules – Council receives a challenge from the private sector.	Low / Medium	High	Legal advice has been commissioned from Browne Jacobson LLP.
FINANCIAL - Adverse impact on General Fund and taxpayer.	Low	High	Impact on the General Fund is a key consideration in the work of officers on the most appropriate model for the Council to finance the Delivery Vehicle as member. This would be controlled via the requirement for annual review of the Business Plan and the funding process.
FINANCIAL - The balance between the financial imperative to keep operational costs to a minimum whilst adequately resourcing the LLP is not managed effectively.	Low	Medium	LLP resourcing has been carefully considered and costs associated with the resourcing have been included in the financial model for the Company.

FINANCIAL – Delivery Vehicle defaults on its financial obligations to the Council.	Low	High	The Council will see and approve the Business Plan and review on an annual basis.
FINANCIAL – The Delivery Vehicle makes losses which fall back to the Council.	Low	High	The Cabinet will review the Business Plan annually and will take early action if failure of the Delivery Vehicle was thought likely.
OPERATIONAL - Conflict of interest over workload priorities of Council and the Delivery Vehicle.	Low	Medium	The Council will retain control over the staffing of the Delivery Vehicle. Council resources will be invoiced to the Delivery Vehicle.
OPERATIONAL - Lack of capacity to manage the Delivery Vehicle's workload.	Low	Medium	Staff resources will be carefully managed and staffing needs will be regularly reviewed, with flexibility retained to provide necessary capacity as required.
OTHER - Conflict of interest for elected members acting as board representatives of the Delivery Vehicle or the Nominee Company.	Low	Medium	Elected members will be subject to the Council's Code of Conduct. Significant interests and Disclosable Pecuniary Interests to be declared at Council meetings where matters involving the Delivery Vehicle are to be discussed. Dispensation could be received through an application to the Audit and Governance Committee to participate in debates but not vote on Council decisions relating to the Delivery Vehicle if the elected members and Monitoring Officer felt that it was necessary.
OTHER - The Council reputation and public perception suffering in	Low	High	Risk assessment regularly reviewed. Communications plan will be developed and maintained to ensure that the Delivery

the event of the Delivery Vehicle's failure.			Vehicle contributes towards a positive view of the Council's services.
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9. LEGAL/FINANCIAL AND OTHER CONTROLS/POLICY MATTERS

9.1 Legal Officer's Comments (NE)

The statutory powers to undertake the proposals set out in the report are provided by section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (the general power of competence) and section 111 of the Local Government Act, 1972. A local authority may exercise the general power for its own purpose, for a commercial purpose and/or for the benefit of others.

Section 4 of the Localism Act 2011 requires that where a local authority exercises/uses the general power for a commercial purpose it must do this through a company.

The Council's insurance and indemnity arrangements will need to be extended to cover any actions or inaction of Member and Officer representatives of the LLP pursuant to section 39 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, section 265 of the Public Health Act 1875, section 101 of the Local Government Act 2000 and the Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004.

Browne Jacobson provided legal advice to the Council on the corporate structure and governance arrangements for the Delivery Vehicle and will continue to be involved / advise the Council accordingly as and when required.

9.2 Finance Officer's Comments (CS S151)

This report provides outline information regarding the structure, function and initial activities of the Otterpool Park LLP. The paper and appended Members Agreement & Delegations Matrix provide further detail as to the financial governance framework for the LLP. Broadly the details of the proposed Members Agreement and Delegations Matrix are felt to be appropriate but the recommendations provide scope for the Director of Corporate Services to ensure any changes required to these can be made before they are adopted. The detailed financial consideration of the LLP will be more fully considered in the paper outlining the Business Plan for the LLP. This will consider the coming 5 year period. This paper should consider all financial aspects including funding, cash flow, repayment of debt and taxation advice.

Following detailed financial modelling it was established that the scheme is profitable, and has the means to make significant returns to its owners. Members have previously earmarked reserves for the purposes of

delivering Otterpool Park and following the financial modelling, recently agreed a further capital budget of £100 million towards its delivery.

The LLP seeks an initial investment of £1.25m to cover the coming 12 month period. This funding could be made by means of a loan (which would need to consider the implication of State Aid), or could potentially be made by member's equity or a combination of both. Officers are working with advisors to confirm the most appropriate funding mechanism.

9.3 Diversities and Equalities Implications (GE)

There are no diversities and equalities implications arising out of this report.

10. CONTACT OFFICERS AND BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

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

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Telephone: 01303 853263
Email: john.bunnett@folkestone-hythe.gov.uk

Andy Jarrett, Chief Strategic Development Officer 01303 853 429
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The following background documents have been relied upon in the preparation of this report:

Appendices to this report

Appendices:

- Appendix 1: [Report C/17/76 – Cabinet 31 January 2018](#)
- Appendix 2: [Members' Agreement including Delegations Matrix](#)
- Appendix 3: [Non – executive independent director specification](#)
- Appendix 4: [Draft skeleton business plan](#)

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