

AGENDA

COUNCIL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 22 November 2017

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT

RECORDING NOTICE

Please note: this meeting may be recorded.

At the start of the meeting the Mayor will confirm if all or part of the meeting is being audio recorded. The whole of the meeting will be recorded, except where there are confidential or exempt items.

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Therefore by entering the Chamber and speaking at Committee you are consenting to being recorded and to the possible use of those sound records for training purposes.

If you have any queries regarding this please contact Democratic Services.

Quorum = 16

Pages

1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

The Mayor will advise the meeting of the evacuation procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. This is particularly important for visitors and members of the public who will be unfamiliar with the building and procedures.

The Mayor will inform the meeting whether there is a planned evacuation drill due to take place, what the alarm sounds like (i.e. ringing bells), where the closest emergency exit route is, and where the second closest emergency exit route is, in the event that the closest exit or route is blocked.

The Mayor will inform the meeting that:

(a) in the event of the alarm sounding, everybody must leave the building via the nearest safe available exit and gather at the Assembly points at the far side of the Car Park. Nobody must leave the assembly point until everybody can be accounted for and nobody must return to the building until the Mayor has informed them that it is safe to do so; and

(b) the lifts must not be used in the event of an evacuation.

Any officers present at the meeting will aid with the evacuation.

It is important that the Mayor is informed of any person attending who is disabled or unable to use the stairs, so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.

2. Prayers
3. Apologies for Absence
4. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 18 October 2017 (Minute Nos. 284 - 294) as a correct record subject to the following amendment to Minute No. 290, Question Two:

To replace the wording: "Councillor Roger Truelove asked if the Cabinet Member was aware that the financial predicament of the NHS Hospital Trust was also caused by the Virgin Healthcare Group going over budget, and that with the break-even position predicted how could there be no impact on patients during the winter?" with the following wording: "Councillor Roger Truelove asked if the Cabinet Member was aware that the financial difficulties faced by the Swale CCG had been made worse due to increased commissioning to the Medway NHS Trust, and the fact that Virgin Healthcare Group had gone over budget?"

5. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves or their spouse, civil partner or person with whom they are living with as a spouse or civil partner. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

The Mayor will ask Members if they have any interests to declare in respect of items on this agenda, under the following headings:

(a) Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) under the Localism Act 2011. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DPI, the Member must leave the meeting and not take part in the discussion or vote. This applies even if there is provision for public speaking.

(b) Disclosable Non Pecuniary (DNPI) under the Code of Conduct adopted by the Council in May 2012. The nature as well as the existence of any such interest must be declared. After declaring a DNPI interest, the Member may stay, speak and vote on the matter.

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the

Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the room while that item is considered.

Advice to Members: If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

6. Mayor's Announcements

7. Motions submitted in accordance with Procedure Rule 15

The following Motions have been received:

(a) "This Council agrees to ban the use and release of sky lanterns and balloons from land owned or managed by Swale Borough Council and at all events organised, supported, funded by (fully or partially) and/or licensed by this authority. This is in the interest of public safety, protection of agricultural land and property, prevention of harm to wildlife, livestock and other animals and protection of the environment."

Proposed by Cllr Cameron Beart and seconded by Cllr Lloyd Bowen.

(b) "This Council resolves in the next financial year to test the view that a periodic amnesty on town parking charges will help regenerate smaller and medium sized retail businesses in our high streets and adjacent commercial streets in Faversham, Sheerness and Sittingbourne."

Proposed by Cllr Harrison and Cllr Ghlin Whelan.

8. Questions submitted by the Public

To consider any questions submitted by the public. (The deadline for questions is 4.30 pm the Friday before the meeting – please contact Democratic Services by e-mailing democraticservices@swale.gov.uk or call 01795 417330).

9. Questions submitted by Members

To consider any questions submitted by Members. (The deadline for questions is 4.30 pm the Wednesday before the meeting – please contact Democratic Services by e-mailing democraticservices@swale.gov.uk or call 01795 417330).

10. Leader's Statement

Members may ask questions on the Leader's Statement. (To follow).

11. Review of Fees and Charges

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12. Council Tax Support Scheme 2018/19

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| 13. | Policy Development and Review Committee Annual Report | 69 - 80 |
| 14. | Scrutiny Update | 81 - 86 |

In accordance with Procedure Rule 3, the Review Co-ordinator will be invited to summarise the findings of the Scrutiny Committee's report on their review of Housing Services. The Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing will be invited to give the Cabinet's response. The action plan, which sets out the recommendations of the Committee and the Cabinet's response, is attached.

15. Recommendations for Consideration

Council is asked to note the recommendations from the Cabinet Meeting held on 8 November 2017, which have been considered as separate items on this agenda.

Issued on Monday, 13 November 2017

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**Chief Executive, Swale Borough Council,
Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT**

Council Meeting		Agenda Item:
Meeting Date	22 November 2017	
Report Title	Review of Fees & Charges 2018/19	
Cabinet Member	Cllr Duncan Dewar-Whalley, Cabinet Member for Finance & Performance	
SMT Lead	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer	
Head of Service	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer	
Lead Officer	Caroline Frampton, Principal Accountant	
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. That delegated authority be given to the Head of Economy & Community Services in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and the Cabinet Member for Safer Families and Communities to increase the 2018/19 charge for Environmental Fixed Penalty Notices for littering and graffiti so that they will continue to be set to the maximum limit set by the Government should this change during 2018/19. 2. That the local land charges fees are implemented 1 December 2017. 3. To approve the proposed fees and charges 2018/19 as set out in this report. 	

1. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report invites Council to consider the proposals for the level of fees and charges to be levied for the next financial year 2018/19. The report was agreed by Cabinet on 8 November 2017 and considered by Scrutiny on 15 November 2017. Any proposals from Scrutiny will be tabled. Charges will take effect from 1 April 2018, with the exception of those for Local Land Charges, which will take effect from 1 December 2017 in order to assist consistency of charges across the shared services authorities.
- 1.2 Appendix I details proposals on a service-by-service basis for the level of fees to be charged in 2018/19 on those services where this Council sets the charges. Appendix II sets out the fees and charges which are set nationally by Government. Appendix III details the income from fees and charges for services in 2016/17, and the budget for 2017/18.
- 1.3 We do need to ensure that for discretionary services, where there is a choice over whether the local resident does choose to buy the service, they pay a level which covers costs and is reasonable in comparison to neighbouring councils.

2. Background

- 2.1 In 2017/18 the fees and charges budget covered by this report where the Council sets the level of fees or charges was £2.9 million (see Appendix III).
- 2.2 Managers and all service areas were asked to review the current schedule of fees and charges for the forthcoming financial year.
- 2.3 Authorities have a statutory duty to ensure fees are set in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003. This allows local authorities to charge for discretionary services. Discretionary services are those services that a council has the power to, but is not obliged to, provide. A pre-condition to charging is the person has to agree to the provision of the service, and they are prepared to pay for it. Some charges depend on relevant consultation being carried out by the service concerned.

3. Proposals

- 3.1 Appendix I details the proposed fees and charges to be set by the Council for 2018/19; and Appendix II those that are set by Government or another external body.
- 3.2 Table 1 below lists those charges set by the Council where an increase is not recommended at this time, and any increase in income shown here is due to volume not price increase. Table 2 lists those charges set by the Council where an increase is recommended. Table 3 lists those charges where some changes are proposed, with the majority of charges not changing. Table 4 lists proposed new charges for 2018/19.

Table 1: Fees & Charges where an increase is not being recommended for 2018/19

Fee or Charge	Comments
Licensing – Gambling /Liquor/ Scrap Metal/ Sex Establishment/ Street Trading	Fees are not changing. A review will be undertaken in time for 2019/20.
Radar Key for Disabled Toilets	The fee covers cost of purchase.
Travelling Fairs & Fetes	Prices held to remain competitive in supply of land. This is a commercially competitive market. We need to ensure prices are attractive enough to encourage continued return of fairs as this provides good income for subsidising other maintenance on open spaces.
Access over Open Space Licence	Fee kept the same as covers administration process.

Fee or Charge	Comments
Traffic Regulation Order Applications	A new charge in 2017/18 so keeping the same to establish a market for use of this service. In line with other authorities and Kent County Council's (KCC) charges.
CIEH Level 2 Award Training in Food Safety in Catering	There is no increase in the fee to reflect the competitive training market in the region and the competition from cheaper on line courses.
Requests for Environmental Information (e.g. planning, contaminated land)	The hourly charge is based on advice from the Information Commissioner.
Annual Animal Licensing (plus cost of vet inspection)	The price of these licences has been determined as requested in Local Government Association (LGA) guidance on 'locally set licence fees'. Benchmarking exercises suggest that Swale is "mid table" when compared to other local authorities (LAs).
Stray Dog Collection	The charges are not changing. The collection charge is set in legislation and the administration charges ensure reasonable payment rates without the need for additional administration.
Pest Control	The recently agreed pest control contract is based on the 2017/18 fees. An increase in costs will not result in an increase in income to the Council.
King George's Pavilion	Comparable price with other hirers.
Guildhall	Comparable price with other hirers.
Town Centre Licence	New fee with limited take-up due to conditions imposed within licence.
Advertising Fees for Inside Swale	Need to keep competitive with other local advertisers.
Room Hire of Swale House	The charges are recommended to remain the same, reflecting the market and demand.
Staying Put Handyperson Rates	The charges are contractual as set by KCC who fund the service and not at the Council's discretion.
Staying Put Private Disabled Works	The charges are contractual as set by KCC who fund the service and not at the Council's discretion.
Staying Put Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) Fees	Fees charged as a percentage of total project cost to manage disabled works. Currently 12.50% (maximum set by the Department of Housing).
Complaints Made under the High Hedges Legislation	Minimal use – maximum two per year. This represents costs of handling such a complaint.

Fee or Charge	Comments
Planning Photocopying Charges	This is a limited revenue source. The charges reflect the cost of providing the service.
Parking Penalty Charge Notices	The fee/charge is not changing – statutory charge.
Purchase of Electoral Register	The fee/charge is not changing – statutory charge.
Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations 2015	Maximum fine set by statute.
The Redress Scheme for Lettings Agency Work & Management Work Order 2014	Maximum fine set by statute.

3.3 The following is a list of charges where an increase is recommended.

Table 2: Fees & Charges where an increase is being recommended for 2018/19

Fee or Charge	Comments
Street Naming & Numbering	Inflationary increase of 3% added and rounded where necessary.
Taxi Licensing	The fees and charges recommendations were presented to the General Licensing Committee as the final stage of the consultation process. Through reviewing the comments received during the consultation process, some of the charges have been modified. The charges were approved by the Committee and were effective from 18 September 2017.
Outdoor Fitness Licence Fees	Inflationary increase added and rounded where necessary. New fee for 1-4 people introduced. Companies with lower participant numbers (or 121s) would proportionally pay more, but this gives the incentive to the company to maximise attendances to get the best value.
Garden Waste Collections (brown bins – domestic)	Increased charge in line with our Mid Kent Waste Partners - Ashford and Maidstone.
Bulky Waste Collection	Inflationary increase added and rounded where necessary.

Fee or Charge	Comments
Wheeled Bins	<p>There has been a significant increase in the purchase price of the lid in lid 140 litre food waste bin and the increased charge reflects this.</p> <p>The charge for food waste container (23 litre) is increasing to Ashford Borough Council's proposed charge. The charge for kitchen caddy (5 litre) is increasing to bring in line with Mid Kent Waste Partners.</p>
Sports Facilities	<p>Charges relating to seniors. Inflationary increase added and rounded where necessary.</p> <p>Junior charges. Above inflation increase as these stayed stationary over a number of years. SBC currently subsidises the provision of sports pitches by approximately £80,000 a year. Junior football has overtaken adult football in usage terms so we have seen a large drop in income.</p>
Allotments	Inflationary increase added and rounded where necessary.
Cemeteries Burial Fees	<p>Major review undertaken last year so just inflationary rates of increase this year, with the exception of two charges.</p> <p>"1st burial if no use of previously purchased grave Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston". This fee is not used very often but was not increased last year so that meant the figure was higher than that of the 2nd burial. Correction made this year by using the rate of difference between 2nd and 3rd burials.</p> <p>"1st burial if no use of previously purchased grave Sheppey". This fee is not used very often but was not increased last year so that meant the figure was higher than that of the 2nd burial. Correction made this year to mirror the 2nd burial at Sittingbourne and Faversham.</p>
Seafront Memorial Bench	Inflationary increase added and rounded where necessary.
Beach Hut Charges	Inflationary increase added and rounded where necessary, with the exception of purchase of beach hut, which has a market sales price.
Food Export Certificate	There is a 3% inflationary increase for businesses in Swale.
Registration Fee under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act	Increase of 3% to keep charge in line across the Mid Kent Environmental Health Service for this service.

Fee or Charge	Comments
Environmental – Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)	<p>Majority of charges are not changing because they are set in legislation.</p> <p>The charge for refuse left out inappropriately is being reduced as the Deregulation Act 2015 reduces the previous level of FPN (£100) to a scale of between £60 and £80.</p> <p>The dog fouling charge is increasing. In October 2017 all previous Dog Control Orders are to be replaced by Public Space Protection Orders.</p> <p>The Government currently sets the maximum limit for fixed penalties for littering and graffiti and is currently reviewing them. Therefore, in the event of a change in these limits, the report requests that delegated authority be given in order to increase the proposed 2018/19 charges for these penalties so they will continue to be set at the maximum limit set by the Government.</p>
Alleygate Key	Slight increase due to rise in price of key from manufacturer.
Legal Charges for Third Parties (Section 106 contracts)	The fee is proposed to increase to the nearest £ in line with inflation. On the relatively few occasions when we have had to engage a private planning solicitor to draft Section 106 agreements on our behalf their standard charging rate has been on a par or in excess of the proposed hourly rate, thus we are aware that we are charging developers an appropriate market rate.
Home Inspection for Immigration Application Fee	This charge is in line with other Kent authorities.
Pre-Application Planning Advice	A full review of the pre-application service including associated charges has recently been undertaken, with a view to increasing charges, particularly significant major planning applications more in line with those being set by other Local Planning Authorities in Kent.
Local Land Charges	Local Land Charges fees have been reviewed as they have remained static (except for VAT changes) since the formation of the Mid Kent Planning Support service in June 2014. The fees have been aligned across the three Boroughs using the guidance on property search fees, and legal advice on Environmental Information Regulations fees. This will lead to improved efficiency of service, clarity for customers and reflects the high quality service Mid Kent Local Land Charges customers receive.

Fee or Charge	Comments
Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in managing and processing licence applications. Increased hourly rate cost.
Mobile Home Site Licence Fee	Statute allows only for recovery of costs involved in inspecting site/processing applications. Any excess would need to be taken into account in the following year and fees would need to be reduced accordingly. Small sites (1-5 mobile homes and sites solely occupied by owners and family members) are not inspected as no benefit gained by inspecting sites of this size as they pose no risk and are generally all family owned and would take away resources from other areas.

3.4 The following is a list of charges where some changes to fees are proposed or recommended with the majority of charges not changing.

Table 3: Fees & Charges where some changes are proposed to charges for 2018/19, with the majority of charges not changing

Fee or Charge	Comments
Parking Permits	On street parking permits for businesses is to increase to bring the charge in line with residents parking permit charges.

3.5 The following is a list of charges where a new charge is proposed.

Table 4: Fees & Charges where a new charge is proposed for 2018/19

Fee or Charge	Comments
Car Parks & Season Tickets	Car park pay and display charges and season tickets have undergone major reviews over the last two years. The majority of charges are not changing, with the exception of the following. As part of the Sittingbourne Regeneration, there will be two new charges; one for the new cinema and one for the hotel.
Car Parks – Loss of Parking Bays	A new charge has been introduced to all pay and display car parks to recover any income lost as a result of an event or other activity resulting in the loss of pay and display parking bays.
Car Parks Dispensation/Waivers	Bay suspensions are used to manage on-street parking demand. Although managed by our agent a fee has been applied to cover administration costs.

Fee or Charge	Comments
Disabled Parking Bay Application	Other local authorities are starting to levy charges for this function. The Government legislation allows a charge up to £250. Thanet District Council charge £250 and Dartford Borough Council charge £250 but only if a full traffic order is required. We receive approximately 50 applications a year. The process is quite involved. This will cover the cost of officer time but not the cost of physically marking out the bay.
Additional Litter and Dog Bins	Costs based on current purchase price from Procurement Framework. Only includes standard supply. If modifications requested then these will be charged extra.
Wheeled Bins for Community Events	<p>Delivery/Collection charge for additional wheeled bins for events – This covers the costs of our cleansing contractor delivering the bin ahead of the event and then collecting afterwards.</p> <p>Wheelie bin hire for events - This is a per bin hire charge and includes the emptying and cleaning after the event. This needs to be considered with the delivery/collection charge above.</p>
Bin Store Clearance	Generally used where a bin collection has been refused on grounds of contamination. They can choose to clear area themselves or pay us to do so.
Harbour Mooring Fees	Capturing a pre-existing charge that has not been published in this report. Minimal income, just formalising the ability to charge.
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme (fee to food businesses)	<p>The Food Standards Agency (FSA) has agreed that local authorities can introduce cost recovery for requests from food businesses to carry out revisits for Food Hygiene Rating Scheme rescores, under the Localism Act 2011. There are clear guidelines for its implementation and the charge only applies to revisits where no statutory enforcement is being considered and therefore does not impact on our duty to protect public health.</p> <p>In line with other local authorities in Kent we are proposing to charge £160 per Food Hygiene Rating Scheme re-inspection.</p>
Private Water Supplies and Distribution	This fee already exists, but has not been included in previous reports. Charges have increased by 3% in line with the three authorities in the partnership.

3.6 Below is a list of fees and charges set by the Government. Where relevant, charges have been amended to reflect the current policy/advice.

- Planning fees;

- Penalty charge notices for car parking/environmental response;
- Statutory collection charge for stray dogs;
- Liquor and gambling licences;
- Environmental Protection Act fees; and
- Electoral Services (including the purchase of the electoral register or edited register).

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1 The alternative would be to propose a general flat rate increase or no increases in fees or charges. These alternatives are not recommended as they would fail to take into account statutory requirements, individual circumstances, or the increased cost of delivering services.

5. Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Any necessary consultation will be undertaken by the managers of the relevant service area.
- 5.2 There will be specific consultation required on changes to hackney carriages charges.
- 5.3 Scrutiny Committee will be considering the proposals on 15 November before submission to Council on 22 November 2017.

6. Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The income from fees and charges is a key component of the Council's budget and supports the achievement of corporate priorities, including "A council to be proud of".
Financial, Resource and Property	Work will continue on the detailed impact of the proposals. In proposing the new charges, consideration has been given to the likely impact on income levels given the anticipated response of service users to increases in charges.
Legal and Statutory	All proposals for charges reflect the relevant legislation.
Crime and Disorder	None identified.
Sustainability	None identified.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified.

Issue	Implications
Equality and Diversity	Where there are underlying policy issues to any proposed changes in charges, these will be supported by a service equality impact assessment, and any necessary mitigations undertaken.

7. Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council;
- Appendix II: Fees and charges set nationally by Government; and
- Appendix III: Summary of fee income for 2017/18 budget.

8. Background Papers

8.1 None.

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Car Parks and Season Tickets						
Change						
Short Stay Covering:						
Faversham: Central car park (season tickets for business only), Institute Road car park (no season tickets)						
Sittingbourne: Albany Road, Central Avenue, Crown Quay Lane, The Forum, The Swallows, Swale House (weekends only), The Forum (business only), Station Street (up to 2 hours only). Multi-Storey Car Park (when available, no season tickets).						
Sheerness (no season tickets): Rose Street (including land adjacent to Wood Street), Trinity Place, Beachfields						
Up to 30 minutes	0.42	0.08	0.50	0.42	0.08	0.50
Up to 1 hour	0.83	0.17	1.00	0.83	0.17	1.00
Up to 2 hours	1.67	0.33	2.00	1.67	0.33	2.00
Up to 4 hours	3.33	0.67	4.00	3.33	0.67	4.00
Season per quarter (for business only Central car park, Faversham/ Forum, Sittingbourne)	195.83	39.17	235.00	195.83	39.17	235.00
Sittingbourne Multi-Storey Car Park - Concessions						
Travelodge – preferential rate for hotel guests (for 24 hours)	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.50	0.50	3.00
Light Cinema – free parking to cinema customers after 6pm each day and all day on Sundays	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Long Stay Covering:						
Faversham: Partridge Lane, Queens Hall						
Sittingbourne: Spring Street, St Michael’s Road, Bell Road						
Sheerness: Albion Place, Beach Street, Bridge Road, Cross Street, Trinity Road						
Up to 30 minutes	0.42	0.08	0.50	0.42	0.08	0.50
Up to 1 hour	0.83	0.17	1.00	0.83	0.17	1.00
Up to 2 hours	1.67	0.33	2.00	1.67	0.33	2.00
Up to 4 hours	3.33	0.67	4.00	3.33	0.67	4.00
Over 4 hours	4.17	0.83	5.00	4.17	0.83	5.00
Season per month (long stay car park)	73.33	14.67	88.00	73.33	14.67	88.00
Season per quarter (long stay car park)	195.83	39.17	235.00	195.83	39.17	235.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Long Stay Covering:						
Sittingbourne: Cockleshell Walk						
Up to 30 minutes	0.42	0.08	0.50	0.42	0.08	0.50
Up to 1 hour	0.83	0.17	1.00	0.83	0.17	1.00
Up to 2 hours	1.66	0.34	2.00	1.67	0.33	2.00
Up to 4 hours	2.50	0.50	3.00	2.50	0.50	3.00
Over 4 hours	3.33	0.67	4.00	3.33	0.67	4.00
Season per month (long stay car park)	73.33	14.67	88.00	73.33	14.67	88.00
Season per quarter (long stay car park)	195.83	39.17	235.00	195.83	39.17	235.00
Leysdown: Promenade (seasonal) (all day between 1 March and 31 October)						
Up to 4 hours	1.75	0.35	2.10	1.75	0.35	2.10
All day	2.83	0.57	3.40	2.83	0.57	3.40
Motorcycles	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Season tickets (to be used at any long stay car park throughout the Borough)						
Season per quarter	208.33	41.67	250.00	208.33	41.67	250.00
All pay and display car parks – loss of parking bays through events or other activities	N/A	N/A	N/A	Price on application. Average cost per bay per day for each bay lost		
Residents Only Parking Permits (off street) (5pm-9am evenings, weekends and bank holidays)						
Faversham: Central car park (residents of Cross Lane and Bank Street), Queens Hall (residents of Victoria Place and Dorset Place)						
Sheerness: Albion Place (residents of Harris Road, Portland Terrace and Albion Place), Cross Street (Sheerness town centre residents), Trinity Road (residents of Trinity Road only)						
Per quarter	16.67	3.33	20.00	16.67	3.33	20.00
Sheerness: Delamark Road car park (residents only)						
Per quarter	12.50	2.50	15.00	12.50	2.50	15.00
Residents' Parking Permits (on street)				One Charge		
Per annum	45.00	0.00	45.00	45.00	0.00	45.00
Visitors permit book (10 days)	11.00	0.00	11.00	11.00	0.00	11.00
Visitors parking permits (per day)	1.10	0.00	1.10	1.10	0.00	1.10

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Hourly scratchcards (per hour)	1.10	0.00	1.10	1.10	0.00	1.10
Hourly scratchcards (per book of 10 hours)	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00
Business per annum	40.00	0.00	40.00	45.00	0.00	45.00
Dispensation Waivers / Suspensions						New
Maximum 1 day	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.00	0.00	11.00
Maximum 1 week	N/A	N/A	N/A	33.00	0.00	33.00
Maximum 3 months	N/A	N/A	N/A	55.00	0.00	55.00
Administration fee	N/A	N/A	N/A	70.00	0.00	70.00
Street Naming & Numbering						Change
Changing or requesting new property	63.00	0.00	63.00	64.80	0.00	64.80
New street name	105.00	0.00	105.00	108.00	0.00	108.00
New street developments (4 or more properties/units) per property/unit with minimum charge of £180	42.00	0.00	42.00	43.20	0.00	43.20
Provision of historical information relating to street naming & numbering	26.25	0.00	26.25	27.00	0.00	27.00
Changing street name	630.00	0.00	630.00	648.90	0.00	648.90
Taxi Licensing						Change
Vehicle licence for 1 year	290.00	0.00	290.00	290.00	0.00	290.00
Private Hire operator licence valid for 5 years	430.00	0.00	430.00	430.00	0.00	430.00
Six monthly check for when vehicle is between 5 and 10 years old	60.00	0.00	60.00	60.00	0.00	60.00
Licence and plate for temporary hire vehicle	40.00	0.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00
Knowledge test – initial	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00
Knowledge test – re-sit	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00
Dual Badge for 1 year (for medical or over 70 years of age)	N/A	N/A	N/A	50.00	0.00	50.00
Dual Badge for 3 years	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00
Non-refundable plate fee (plate number only issued once)	100.00	0.00	100.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
Replacement plate	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Change of address	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00
Change of ownership licensed vehicle	35.00	0.00	35.00	35.00	0.00	35.00
Disclosure Barring Service (DBS) search fee (every 3 years or £13.00 per year if signed up to the DBS online service)	44.00	0.00	44.00	44.00	0.00	44.00
Dual driver badge replacement	9.50	0.00	9.50	10.00	0.00	10.00
Replacement paper licence certificate	10.50	0.00	10.50	10.00	0.00	10.00
Change from Private Hire to Hackney Carriage	90.00	0.00	90.00	80.00	0.00	80.00
Change from Hackney Carriage to Private Hire	70.00	0.00	70.00	80.00	0.00	80.00
Failure to attend the vehicle test (10 minutes prior to the test start time)	27.40	0.00	27.40	27.40	0.00	27.40
Outdoor Fitness Licence Fees (per annum) Change						
Once a week (1-4 people)	N/A	N/A	N/A	80.00	0.00	80.00
Once a week (5-15 people)	150.00	0.00	150.00	155.00	0.00	155.00
2-4 times a week (5-15 people)	300.00	0.00	300.00	310.00	0.00	310.00
5+ times a week (5-15 people)	500.00	0.00	500.00	515.00	0.00	515.00
Once a week (16-35)	350.00	0.00	350.00	360.00	0.00	360.00
2-4 times a week (16-35 people)	600.00	0.00	600.00	620.00	0.00	620.00
5+ times a week (16-35 people)	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,030.00	0.00	1,030.00
Garden Waste Subscription (brown bins – domestic) Change						
Fortnightly collection of garden waste including hire of bin Per annum – 26 collections	35.00	0.00	35.00	37.00	0.00	37.00
Bulky Waste Collections Change						
Charge covers up to 4 bulky items. If fridge/fridge-freezer charge covers only one item, but any size	23.00	0.00	23.00	25.00	0.00	25.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Wheeled Bins				Change		
Wheeled bins 140 litre	38.00	0.00	38.00	38.00	0.00	38.00
Wheeled bins 180 litre	43.00	0.00	43.00	43.00	0.00	43.00
Wheeled bins 240 litre	43.00	0.00	43.00	43.00	0.00	43.00
Wheeled bins 1,100 litre	435.00	0.00	435.00	435.00	0.00	435.00
Lid in lid 140 litre food waste bin	38.00	0.00	38.00	75.00	0.00	75.00
Food waste container 23 litre	5.00	0.00	5.00	10.00	0.00	10.00
Kitchen caddy 5 litre	1.00	0.00	1.00	5.00	0.00	5.00
Additional Litter Bins				New Charge		
Wybone 145 litre galvanised - each	N/A	N/A	N/A	250.00	50.00	300.00
Ashmount - each	N/A	N/A	N/A	205.00	41.00	246.00
Admiral - each	N/A	N/A	N/A	213.00	42.60	255.60
Broxap Turvy - each	N/A	N/A	N/A	208.00	41.60	249.60
Admiral bin liner - each	N/A	N/A	N/A	34.00	6.80	40.80
Additional dog bin (56 litre) - each	N/A	N/A	N/A	199.00	39.80	238.80
Additional dog bin (60 litre) - each	N/A	N/A	N/A	247.00	49.40	296.40
Additional dog bin (heavy duty) - each	N/A	N/A	N/A	638.00	127.60	765.60
Bin store clearance – per occasion	N/A	N/A	N/A	100.00	20.00	120.00
Wheeled Bins for Community Events						
Provision of wheeled bins for events (cost per occasion) – delivery/collection charge	N/A	N/A	N/A	79.00	15.80	94.80
Wheeled bin hire (cost per bin)	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.00	2.00	12.00
Servicing of bins during event	N/A	N/A	N/A	Price on application		
Radar Key for Disabled Toilets				No Change		
Fee	3.00	0.00	3.00	3.00	0.00	3.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Sports Facilities Change						
<i>With changing facilities and showers</i>						
- Senior	58.33	11.67	70.00	60.00	12.00	72.00
- Under 18s	16.67	3.33	20.00	20.00	4.00	24.00
- Under 16s & mini soccer	12.50	2.50	15.00	15.00	3.00	18.00
<i>With changing facilities only</i>						
- Senior	48.33	9.67	58.00	50.00	10.00	60.00
- Under 18s	14.17	2.83	17.00	16.67	3.33	20.00
- Under 16s & mini soccer	11.67	2.33	14.00	14.17	2.83	17.00
<i>With no facilities</i>						
- Senior	28.75	5.75	34.50	34.17	6.83	41.00
- Under 18s	12.50	2.50	15.00	15.00	3.00	18.00
- Under 16s & mini soccer	7.92	1.58	9.50	9.17	1.83	11.00
Block bookings of 10 or more series of lets is VAT exempt						
Allotments Change						
Plots of 10 rods & pro rata	40.00	0.00	40.00	42.00	0.00	42.00
Plots of 10 rods & pro rata (OAPs/Disabled)	20.00	0.00	20.00	21.00	0.00	21.00
Cemeteries Burial Fees Change						
<i>Exclusive Right of Burial, Interment, Memorial & Re-inscription Permits</i>						
1 st Burial Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	1,834.00	0.00	1,834.00	1,887.00	0.00	1,887.00
1 st Burial Sheppey	1,681.00	0.00	1,681.00	1,730.00	0.00	1,730.00
1 st Burial if no use of previously purchased grave Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	730.00	0.00	730.00	940.00	0.00	940.00
1 st Burial if no use of previously purchased grave Sheppey	600.00	0.00	600.00	777.00	0.00	777.00
2 nd Burial Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	755.00	0.00	755.00	777.00	0.00	777.00
2 nd Burial Sheppey	624.00	0.00	624.00	642.00	0.00	642.00
3 rd Burial Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	624.00	0.00	624.00	642.00	0.00	642.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Cremated Remains						
<i>(includes Exclusive Rights to Burial, Interment, Memorial & Re-inscription Permit)</i>						
1 st Burial	577.00	0.00	577.00	594.00	0.00	594.00
1 st Burial (where no use has been made of previously purchased grave)	210.00	0.00	210.00	216.00	0.00	216.00
2 nd Burial	210.00	0.00	210.00	216.00	0.00	216.00
3 rd Burial	210.00	0.00	210.00	216.00	0.00	216.00
4 th Burial	210.00	0.00	210.00	216.00	0.00	216.00
Burial of loose ashes	95.00	0.00	95.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Child Coffin Burial						
Under 12 years of age in child's plot (resident of Swale)	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Under 12 years of age in adult's plot (resident of Swale)	210.00	0.00	210.00	216.00	0.00	216.00
Under 12 years of age in child's plot (non-resident of Swale)	140.00	0.00	140.00	144.00	0.00	144.00
Under 12 years of age in adult's plot (non-resident of Swale)	340.00	0.00	340.00	350.00	0.00	350.00
Ancillary Services						
Issue of letter of confirmation where deed is lost	55.00	0.00	55.00	60.00	0.00	60.00
Use of chapel in Sittingbourne	80.00	0.00	80.00	85.00	0.00	85.00
Use of chapel in Faversham	110.00	0.00	110.00	115.00	0.00	115.00
Planted grave (per annum)	110.00	0.00	110.00	115.00	0.00	115.00
Turfed grave	At cost			At cost		
Transfer of deed ownership	55.00	0.00	55.00	60.00	0.00	60.00
Record search & certificate (each grave)	30.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00
Extra cost of large coffin or casket (measuring 30 inches or more)	150.00	0.00	150.00	155.00	0.00	155.00
Exhumation of coffin	1,400.00	0.00	1,400.00	1,440.00	0.00	1,440.00
Exhumation of cremated remains	280.00	0.00	280.00	290.00	0.00	290.00
Other services (vatable)	At cost			At cost		
Non-residents of Swale (not living in Swale at time of death or have not been a resident of Swale for at least 15 consecutive years) required to pay double the costs set out above (except child burials)						

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Seafront Memorial Bench Change						
Memorial bench with basic installation	605.00	121.00	726.00	625.00	125.00	750.00
Memorial bench with concrete installation	770.00	154.00	924.00	791.67	158.33	950.00
Travelling Fairs and Fetes No Change						
Pitch premium for days open to the public only (per day)	800.00	0.00	800.00	800.00	0.00	800.00
Use of Council Land – Travelling Fairs						
On site fee payable whether or not open to the public (including arrival and departure days)	56.00	0.00	56.00	56.00	0.00	56.00
Refundable deposit	600.00	0.00	600.00	600.00	0.00	600.00
Use of Council Land – Fetes						
Fetes	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
Refundable deposit	62.00	0.00	62.00	62.00	0.00	62.00
Beach Hut Charges Change						
Locations now at Minster Leas and Leysdown						
Ground rental	375.00	0.00	375.00	385.00	0.00	385.00
Licence fee	1,000.00	200.00	1,200.00	1,029.17	205.83	1,235.00
Purchase of beach hut	8,333.33	1,666.67	10,000.00	Market price		
Access Over Open Space Licence No Change						
Used for residential properties requiring access over our land to undertake works/deliveries etc.						
Standard fee	65.00	0.00	65.00	65.00	0.00	65.00
Traffic Regulation Order Applications No Change						
On application (yellow lines and changes to existing orders)						
Small (1-30 consultations)	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
Medium (31-50 consultations)	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00
Large (50+ consultations)	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00
On application (loading bays, single bays)						
Small (1-30 consultations)	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00
Medium (31-50 consultations)	750.00	0.00	750.00	750.00	0.00	750.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Large (50+ consultations)	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00
No objections received (yellow lines and changes to existing orders)						
Small (1-30 consultations)	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00
Medium (31-50 consultations)	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00
Large (50+ consultations)	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00
No objections received (loading bays, single bays)						
Small (1-30 consultations)	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Medium (31-50 consultations)	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Large (50+ consultations)	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Objections received (JTB report)						
Small (1-30 consultations)	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Medium (31-50 consultations)	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Large (50+ consultations)	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Progress/implement scheme (yellow lines and changes to existing orders)						
Small (1-30 consultations)	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00
Medium (31-50 consultations)	600.00	0.00	600.00	600.00	0.00	600.00
Large (50+ consultations)	700.00	0.00	700.00	700.00	0.00	700.00
Progress/implement scheme (loading bays, single bays)						
Small (1-30 consultations)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Medium (31-50 consultations)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Large (50+ consultations)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Disabled Parking Bay Application						
	New Charge					
Per bay	N/A	N/A	N/A	50.00	0.00	50.00
Harbour Mooring Fees						
	New Charge					
Faversham Town Quay per night	7.50	1.50	9.00	7.50	1.50	9.00
Street Trading Licensing						
	No Change					
Annual consents (not events)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
6 month consents (not events)	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
One off consent	30.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Event Consents						
1-19 stalls	65.00	0.00	65.00	65.00	0.00	65.00
20-49 stalls	130.00	0.00	130.00	130.00	0.00	130.00
50+ stalls	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00
Gambling Licensing						
No Change						
New Applications/Applications for Provisional Statement						
Bingo club	2,268.00	0.00	2,268.00	2,268.00	0.00	2,268.00
Betting premises	2,268.00	0.00	2,268.00	2,268.00	0.00	2,268.00
Tracks	1,775.00	0.00	1,775.00	1,775.00	0.00	1,775.00
Family entertainment centres	1,775.00	0.00	1,775.00	1,775.00	0.00	1,775.00
Adult gaming centre	1,775.00	0.00	1,775.00	1,775.00	0.00	1,775.00
Licence Applications (Provisional Statement Holders)						
Bingo club	935.00	0.00	935.00	935.00	0.00	935.00
Betting premises	935.00	0.00	935.00	935.00	0.00	935.00
Tracks	935.00	0.00	935.00	935.00	0.00	935.00
Family entertainment centre	772.00	0.00	772.00	772.00	0.00	772.00
Adult gaming centre	935.00	0.00	935.00	935.00	0.00	935.00
Annual Fee						
Bingo club	703.00	0.00	703.00	703.00	0.00	703.00
Betting premises	450.00	0.00	450.00	450.00	0.00	450.00
Tracks	703.00	0.00	703.00	703.00	0.00	703.00
Family entertainment centres	610.00	0.00	610.00	610.00	0.00	610.00
Adult gaming centre	703.00	0.00	703.00	703.00	0.00	703.00
Application to Vary						
Bingo club	1,550.00	0.00	1,550.00	1,550.00	0.00	1,550.00
Betting premises	1,308.00	0.00	1,308.00	1,308.00	0.00	1,308.00
Tracks	1,186.00	0.00	1,186.00	1,186.00	0.00	1,186.00
Family entertainment centres	800.00	0.00	800.00	800.00	0.00	800.00
Adult gaming centre	800.00	0.00	800.00	800.00	0.00	800.00
Application to transfer	860.00	0.00	860.00	860.00	0.00	860.00
Application for re-instatement	860.00	0.00	860.00	860.00	0.00	860.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Copy licence	26.50	0.00	26.50	26.50	0.00	26.50
Notification of change	26.50	0.00	26.50	26.50	0.00	26.50
Permit Fees (FEC gaming machine and prize gaming)						
Application fee	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00
Renewal fee	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00
Transitional application fee	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Change of name	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00
Sex Establishment Licensing (sex shop, sex cinema and sex encounter venue) No Change						
Application fee and 1 st licence	4,200.00	0.00	4,200.00	4,200.00	0.00	4,200.00
Annual licence renewal	650.00	0.00	650.00	650.00	0.00	650.00
Application to vary	750.00	0.00	750.00	750.00	0.00	750.00
Transfer of licence	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00
Duplicate licence	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00
Scrap Metal Dealers Licensing No Change						
Site licence	450.00	0.00	450.00	450.00	0.00	450.00
Site licence renewal	425.00	0.00	425.00	425.00	0.00	425.00
Collections licence, grant or renewal	210.00	0.00	210.00	210.00	0.00	210.00
Variation – collector to site	70.00	0.00	70.00	70.00	0.00	70.00
Variation – site to collector	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
Variation (minor administration, such as change of address)	30.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00
Change of site manager	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Food Export Certificate Change						
For businesses in Swale	82.00	0.00	82.00	84.50	0.00	84.50
Food in transit	30.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00
CIEH Level 2 Award Training in Food Safety in Catering No Change						
Fee charged to food handlers for training in food hygiene	65.00	0.00	65.00	52.00	13.00	65.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Registration Fee under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act Change						
(Relates to establishments offering cosmetic piercing, electrolysis, tattooing or acupuncture)						
Standard fee	294.00	0.00	294.00	303.00	0.00	303.00
Supplementary treatment registration fee (for additional beauty treatment registration inspection either at or after initial registration)	50.00	0.00	50.00	51.50	0.00	51.50
Requests for Environmental Information (e.g. contaminated land) No Change						
Charge per hour	25.00	0.00	25.00	20.00	5.00	25.00
Charges for photocopying apply at 10p per page plus postage						
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme New Change						
Fee to food businesses for re-visit and re-scoring	N/A	N/A	N/A	160.00	0.00	160.00
Private Water Supplies and Distribution New						
Risk assessment	N/A	N/A	N/A	500.00	0.00	500.00
Sampling	N/A	N/A	N/A	100.00	0.00	100.00
Investigation	N/A	N/A	N/A	100.00	0.00	100.00
Authorisation	N/A	N/A	N/A	100.00	0.00	100.00
Analysis – under Regulation 10	N/A	N/A	N/A	25.00	0.00	25.00
Analysis – check monitoring comm. Supplies	N/A	N/A	N/A	100.00	0.00	100.00
Analysis – audit monitoring	N/A	N/A	N/A	500.00	0.00	500.00
Environmental - Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN) Change						
Fly tipping	400.00*	0.00	400.00*	400.00*	0.00	400.00*
Abandoning a vehicle	120.00	0.00	120.00	120.00	0.00	120.00
Smoking in an enclosed vehicle carrying a juvenile	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
Refuse left out inappropriately	100.00	0.00	100.00	80.00	0.00	80.00
Littering and graffiti	80.00	0.00	80.00	80.00	0.00	80.00
Dog fouling and other dog control orders	80.00	0.00	80.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Fly posting	80.00	0.00	80.00	80.00	0.00	80.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Waste carrier offences	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00
Smoking in a smoke free premises or vehicle	50.00**	0.00	50.00**	50.00**	0.00	50.00**
Failure to display no smoking signs in smoke free premises or vehicle	200.00#	0.00	200.00#	200.00#	0.00	200.00#
Failure to comply with a Community Protection Notice	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Breach of any Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
*Reduced to £300 if paid in full within 7 days						
**Reduced to £30.00 if paid within 15 days						
#Reduced to £150.00 if paid within 15 days						
Annual Animal Licensing (plus cost of vet inspection)				No Change		
All animal boarding establishment licences and pet shop licences shall relate to the calendar year in which it is granted (or to the following year). These licences will expire at the end of the calendar year for which they were issued. Vet fees will also be applicable for licences.						
Dangerous wild animals	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Breeding of dogs	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Animal boarding establishments	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Riding establishments	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Pet shops	250.00	0.00	250.00	250.00	0.00	250.00
Zoo licence	950.00	0.00	950.00	950.00	0.00	950.00
Performing animal registration	135.00 (one-off cost)	0.00	135.00 (one-off cost)	135.00 (one-off cost)	0.00	135.00 (one-off cost)
Stray Dog Collection				No Change		
Statutory collection charge	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00
Administration fee for collection/returned stray dogs	30.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00
Out of hours administration fee or collection/returned stray dogs	40.00	0.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00
Transport fee for returning dog to owner	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00
Pest Control				No Change		
Rats (per visit) with a minimum of 2 visits required	24.17	4.83	29.00	24.17	4.83	29.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Rats (per visit) with a minimum of 2 visits required – clients on benefits	24.17	4.83	29.00	24.17	4.83	29.00
Mice (per visit) with a minimum of 2 visits required	24.17	4.83	29.00	24.17	4.83	29.00
Mice (per visit) with a minimum of 2 visits required – clients on benefits	24.17	4.83	29.00	24.17	4.83	29.00
Wasps per nest	48.75	9.75	58.50	48.75	9.75	58.50
Wasps per additional nest	8.33	1.67	10.00	8.33	1.67	10.00
Fleas and other household pests (up to 6 rooms)	58.33	11.67	70.00	58.33	11.67	70.00
Each additional room (up to 4)	8.33	1.67	10.00	8.33	1.67	10.00
Cockroaches in domestic premises (up to 6 rooms)	58.33	11.67	70.00	58.33	11.67	70.00
Each additional room (up to 4)	8.33	1.67	10.00	8.33	1.67	10.00
Ants, insects etc.	25.00	5.00	30.00	25.00	5.00	30.00
Ants, insects etc. – clients on benefits	25.00	5.00	30.00	25.00	5.00	30.00
Bed bugs (up to 4 bedroom house). Anything larger will require a survey	233.33	46.67	280.00	233.33	46.67	280.00
Hourly charge for treatments carried out on industrial and commercial properties (hourly rate)	To be quoted by contractors (Goodwin Pest Management) on a job by job basis so as to remain competitive			To be quoted by contractors (Goodwin Pest Management) on a job by job basis so as to remain competitive		
For treatments outside of normal office hours (hourly rate)	As above			As above		
Woodworm, birds, deathwatch beetle, foxes, moles & squirrels	Price on application (surveys required)			Price on application (surveys required)		
King George’s Pavilion (minimum 1 hour hire) No Change						
Main hall/tea room (hourly rates) (minimum hire 1 hour)						
Main hall/tea room (hourly rates)						
Mon-Fri (9am-5pm)	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00
Mon-Fri (5pm-12am)	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00
Sat (9am-5pm) minimum 4 hours	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00
Sat (5pm-12am) minimum 4 hours	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Playgroups (per morning)	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00
Tea room – for children’s parties only (per hour) minimum 1 hour hire	8.00	0.00	8.00	8.00	0.00	8.00
Caretaking services – set up and clear away: standard tables and/or chairs	6.00	0.00	6.00	6.00	0.00	6.00
Refundable deposits	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00
Bank Holidays, New Year’s Eve	2 times the Saturday rate			2 times the Saturday rate		
Guildhall (minimum 1 session hire) No Change						
Main hall (minimum 1 session)						
Session (am/pm)	40.00	0.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00
Refundable deposits	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
Bank Holidays, New Year’s Eve	40.00 per session	0.00	40.00 per session	40.00 per session	0.00	40.00 per session
Alleygate Key Change						
Fee	15.86	3.17	19.03	17.92	3.58	21.50
Town Centre Licence No Change						
Licence for large events of 10,000 people or more	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00
Advertising Fees for Inside Swale (residents magazine) No Change						
Discounts are applied for multiple advertisers: 2 issues 5% 3 issues 7.5% 4 issues 10%						
Outside back cover	650.00	130.00	780.00	650.00	130.00	780.00
Internal full page	495.00	99.00	594.00	495.00	99.00	594.00
Half internal page (portrait or landscape)	275.00	55.00	330.00	275.00	55.00	330.00
Quarter internal page	150.00	30.00	180.00	150.00	30.00	180.00
Double internal page	895.00	179.00	1,074.00	895.00	179.00	1,074.00

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Room Hire of Swale House				No Change		
Non-Commercial						
Council chamber (half day)	75.00	15.00	90.00	75.00	15.00	90.00
Council chamber (full day)	125.00	25.00	150.00	125.00	25.00	150.00
Committee room (half day)	50.00	10.00	60.00	50.00	10.00	60.00
Committee room (full day)	75.00	15.00	90.00	75.00	15.00	90.00
Assembly room (half day)	37.50	7.50	45.00	37.50	7.50	45.00
Assembly room (full day)	62.50	12.50	75.00	62.50	12.50	75.00
Commercial						
Council chamber (half day)	150.00	30.00	180.00	150.00	30.00	180.00
Council chamber (full day)	250.00	50.00	300.00	250.00	50.00	300.00
Committee room (half day)	100.00	20.00	120.00	100.00	20.00	120.00
Committee room (full day)	150.00	30.00	180.00	150.00	30.00	180.00
Assembly room (half day)	75.00	15.00	90.00	75.00	15.00	90.00
Assembly room (full day)	125.00	25.00	150.00	125.00	25.00	150.00
Charity groups or meetings where Swale residents will benefit	No cost			No cost		
Legal Charges for Third Parties						
Hourly rate	210.00	0.00	210.00	216.00	0.00	216.00
Note: VAT may be chargeable depending on the lease						
Home Inspection for Immigration Application Fee						
Requests received to inspect and provide report on suitability of proposed home in connection with immigration applications	95.00	19.00	114.00	105.00	21.00	126.00
Staying Put Handyperson Rates						
Hourly rate for a handyperson	13.50	2.70	16.20	13.50	2.70	16.20
Subsidised hourly rate for a handyperson – client in receipt of benefits	5.00	1.00	6.00	5.00	1.00	6.00
Private disabled works (household not eligible for DFG)	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) fee (statutory % charge)	12.5%			12.5%		

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Pre-Application Planning Advice						
Change						
Meetings						
Very large major	833.33	166.67	1,000.00	1,666.66	333.34	2,000
Major	416.67	83.33	500.00	833.33	166.67	1,000
Minor	208.33	41.67	250.00	416.67	83.33	500.00
Other (excluding householders and listed buildings)	83.33	16.67	100.00	125.00	25.00	150.00
Charities, voluntary groups and parish councils	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Works/repairs to listed buildings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Letters						
Very large major	416.67	83.33	500.00	833.33	166.67	1,000
Major	208.33	41.67	250.00	416.67	83.33	500.00
Minor	104.17	20.83	125.00	208.33	41.67	250.00
Other (excluding householders and listed buildings)	41.67	8.33	50.00	62.50	12.50	75.00
Householder	20.83	4.17	25.00	41.67	8.33	50.00
Charities, voluntary groups and parish councils	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Works/repairs to listed buildings	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Very large major: over 200 dwellings or 4 hectares. Commercial over 10,000m ² or 2 hectares						
Major: 10-199 dwellings or less than 4 hectares. Commercial 1,000m ² - 9,999m ² or less than 2 hectares						
Minor: 1-9 dwellings or less than 0.5 hectares. Commercial less than 1,000m ² or 1 hectare						
Complaints made under the High Hedges Legislation						
No Change						
Standard fee	450.00	0.00	450.00	450.00	0.00	450.00
Planning Photocopying Charges						
No Change						
	Charges per page			Charges per page		
A4 Black/white	0.08	0.02	0.10	0.08	0.02	0.10
A3 Black/white	0.16	0.04	0.20	0.16	0.04	0.20
A2 Or larger	2.50	0.50	3.00	2.50	0.50	3.00
A4 Colour	0.62	0.13	0.75	0.62	0.13	0.75

Proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 set by the Council

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
A3 Colour	1.25	0.25	1.50	1.25	0.25	1.50
Local Land Charges						
				Change		
Official Searches						
LLC1 only	36.30	0.00	36.30	35.00	0.00	35.00
LLC1 only - additional parcel	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.00	0.00	10.00
Con 29	79.20	0.00	79.20	95.00	19.00	114.00
Con 29 - additional parcel	N/A	N/A	N/A	15.00	3.00	18.00
Standard search (LLC1 & Con29)	115.50	0.00	115.50	130.00	19.00*	149.00
Standard search (LLC1 & Con29) – additional parcel	36.30	0.00	36.30	25.00	3.00*	28.00
Part II enquiry - Con29 questions 4-21	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.00	2.00	12.00
Part II enquiry - Con29 question 22	N/A	N/A	N/A	24.00	4.80	28.80
Additional questions	N/A	N/A	N/A	18.33	3.67	22.00
*VAT applicable only to the Con29 part of the charge.						
Personal Searches						
1.1 (a-l) (Planning)	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.00	1.00	6.00
1.1 (J, K, L) (B. Regs)	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.00	1.00	6.00
2.1 (b-d)	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.00	1.00	6.00
3.1 Land for public purpose	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.50	0.50	3.00
3.3 Drainage matters	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.50	0.50	3.00
3.5 Railway schemes	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.50	0.50	3.00
3.7 Outstanding Notices	N/A	N/A	N/A	10.00	2.00	12.00
3.8 B. Regs Contravention	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.50	0.50	3.00
3.9 Enforcement	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.00	1.00	6.00
3.10 CILs	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.50	0.50	3.00
3.12 Compulsory purchase	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.50	0.50	3.00
3.13b Contaminated land	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.50	0.50	3.00
3.13c Contaminated land	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.50	0.50	3.00

Fees and charges set nationally by Government

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Car Parks Fixed Penalty Notices (rate depends on offence)				No Change		
Lower Penalty System						
Up to 14 Days	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00
14 days to 56 days	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00
57 days to 70 days	75.00	0.00	75.00	75.00	0.00	75.00
After 70 days	82.00	0.00	82.00	82.00	0.00	82.00
Higher Penalty System						
Up to 14 days	35.00	0.00	35.00	35.00	0.00	35.00
14 days to 56 days	70.00	0.00	70.00	70.00	0.00	70.00
57 days to 70 days	105.00	0.00	105.00	105.00	0.00	105.00
After 70 days	112.00	0.00	112.00	112.00	0.00	112.00
Dispensation/Waivers						
				New charge		
Maximum 1 day	N/A	N/A	N/A	11.00	0.00	11.00
Maximum 1 week	N/A	N/A	N/A	33.00	0.00	33.00
Maximum 3 months	N/A	N/A	N/A	55.00	0.00	55.00
Admin fee	N/A	N/A	N/A	70.00	0.00	70.00
Liquor Licensing						
				No Change		
Main Application Fees for Premises and Personal Liquor Licensing						
Rateable Value B and A	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00
Rateable Value B and B	190.00	0.00	190.00	190.00	0.00	190.00
Rateable Value B and C	315.00	0.00	315.00	315.00	0.00	315.00
Rateable Value B and D	450.00	0.00	450.00	450.00	0.00	450.00
Rateable Value B and E	635.00	0.00	635.00	635.00	0.00	635.00
Main Annual Charge for Premises and Personal Liquor Licensing						
Rateable Value B and A	70.00	0.00	70.00	70.00	0.00	70.00
Rateable Value B and B	180.00	0.00	180.00	180.00	0.00	180.00
Rateable Value B and C	295.00	0.00	295.00	295.00	0.00	295.00
Rateable Value B and D	320.00	0.00	320.00	320.00	0.00	320.00
Rateable Value B and E	350.00	0.00	350.00	350.00	0.00	350.00
Personal licence for alcohol	37.00	0.00	37.00	37.00	0.00	37.00

Fees and charges set nationally by Government

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Personal licence change	10.50	0.00	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50
Premises licence change	23.00	0.00	23.00	23.00	0.00	23.00
Transfers	23.00	0.00	23.00	23.00	0.00	23.00
Temporary events	21.00	0.00	21.00	21.00	0.00	21.00
Register of interests	21.00	0.00	21.00	21.00	0.00	21.00
Purchase of Electoral Register						
No Change						
Full Register and the Notices of Alteration						
Hard copies (standard charge) plus charge (a) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00
(a) charge for each 1,000 entries	5.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (b) below	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00
(b) charge for each 1,000 entries	1.50	0.00	1.50	1.50	0.00	1.50
List of Overseas Electors						
Hard copies (standard charge) plus charge (c) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00
(c) charge per 100 entries	5.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (d) below	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00
(d) charge per 100 entries	1.50	0.00	1.50	1.50	0.00	1.50
Edited Register						
(Available for purchase by anyone)						
Hard copies (standard charge) plus charge (e) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00
(e) charge per 1,000 entries	5.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (f) below	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00
(f) charge per 1,000 entries	1.50	0.00	1.50	1.50	0.00	1.50
Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing						
Change						
New Application						
Non-accredited landlord	632.00	0.00	632.00	638.00	0.00	638.00

Fees and charges set nationally by Government

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
Accredited landlord	518.00	0.00	518.00	523.00	0.00	523.00
<i>Renewal of Application</i>						
Non-accredited landlord	477.00	0.00	477.00	482.00	0.00	482.00
Accredited landlord	363.00	0.00	363.00	367.00	0.00	367.00

Mobile Home Site Licence Fee					Change	
New Mobile Home Site Licence Application Fee						
1-5 mobile homes on site	142.00	0.00	142.00	144.00	0.00	144.00
6-24 mobile homes on site	196.00	0.00	196.00	198.00	0.00	198.00
25-99 mobile homes on site	248.00	0.00	248.00	289.00	0.00	289.00
100+ mobile homes on site	285.00	0.00	285.00	289.00	0.00	289.00
Annual Mobile Home Site Inspection Fee						
Relevant sites occupied solely by owners and family members	No charge			No charge		
1-5 mobile homes on site	No charge			No charge		
6-24 mobile homes on site	160.00	0.00	160.00	162.00	0.00	162.00
25-99 mobile homes on site	196.00	0.00	196.00	143.00	0.00	143.00
100+ mobile homes on site	231.00	0.00	231.00	234.00	0.00	234.00
Fee to Transfer or Amend Mobile Home Site Licence						
Transfer or amend mobile home site licence	89.00	0.00	89.00	105.00	0.00	105.00
Fee for the Deposit of Mobile Home Site Rules						
Deposit of mobile home site rules	132.00	0.00	132.00	143.00	0.00	143.00
Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations 2015				No Change		
Fine level progresses to maximum fine permitted (1st offence £1,500, 2nd £2,500, 3rd £5,000)						
Penalty charge for non-compliance of Smoke or CO Alarm Regulations	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00

Fees and charges set nationally by Government

	2017/18			2018/19		
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£
The Redress Scheme for Lettings Agency Work & Management Work Order 2014				No Change		
Fine level progresses to maximum fine permitted (1st offence £2,500, 2nd £5,000)						
Penalty charge for non-compliance of Redress Scheme for Letting Agents Order	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00

Planning Fees

Planning fees are currently set by the Government, although this is currently being reviewed. The full details of current Planning fees can be found on www.swale.gov.uk/types-of-application-and-fees/

List of income from fees and charges for 2017/18 budgets

Charges set by the Council		
Service	Charge	2017/18 Budget £
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Car parks and season tickets	1,674,900
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Garden waste collections (brown bins)	367,500
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Residents parking permits (including voucher parking for visitors parking in residential bays)	97,000
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Cemeteries burial fees	114,960
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Bulky waste collections	57,000
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Residential wheeled bins	20,500
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Street naming and numbering	15,000
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Beach hut charges	0
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Seafront memorial bench	1,000
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Travelling fetes & fairs and access over open space licence	11,780
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Sports facilities	11,500
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Allotments	1,000
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Radar keys for disabled toilets	210
Corporate Services	Taxi (Hackney Carriage) licensing	64,300
Corporate Services	Legal services charges, including S106 application fees	28,660
Corporate Services	Hire of meeting rooms at Swale House	100
Economic & Cultural Services	Fixed penalty notices – environmental response	3,000
Economic & Cultural Services	King George's Pavilion	13,980
Economic & Cultural Services	Advertising fees for Inside Swale	5,000
Economic & Cultural Services	Annual animal licences	10,500
Economic & Cultural Services	Stray dog collection	9,000
Economic & Cultural Services	Pest control treatments	2,000
Economic & Cultural Services	Alleygate key	50
Economic & Cultural Services	Guildhall	600
Economic & Cultural Services	Town Centre Licence	0
Housing	Stayput handyperson charges	2,200
Housing	Home inspection for immigration application fee	100

List of income from fees and charges for 2017/18 budgets

Charges set by the Council		
Service	Charge	2017/18 Budget £
Mid-Kent Environmental Health Service	CIEH Level 2 Award Training in Food Safety in Catering	500
Mid-Kent Environmental Health Service	Registration fee under the Local Government (Misc Provisions) Act	1,500
Mid-Kent Environmental Health Service	Request for environmental information	1,000
Mid-Kent Environmental Health Service	Food export certificate	100
Planning	Local land charges	210,000
Planning	Pre-application planning advice fees	60,000
Planning	S106 Monitoring fees	65,000
Planning	Photocopying charges	2,000
Total fees and charges agreed as part of this report		2,851,940

Charges set by Government or an External Body		
Service	Charge	2017/18 Budget £
Commissioning & Customer Contact	Fixed penalty notices – parking	474,890
Corporate Services	Licences (premises and liquor, street trading, sex establishments and scrap metal)	99,500
Corporate Services	Purchase of electoral register	1,500
Housing	Houses in multiple occupation	500
Housing	Mobile home site licence fee	0
Housing	Smoke or CO Alarm Regulations Redress Scheme for Lettings Agency Work & Management Work Order 2014	0
Planning	Planning fees – www.swale.gov.uk/types-of-application-and-fees/	668,800
Total fees and charges set nationally and by external bodies		1,245,190

Full Council 22 November 2017		Agenda Item:
Meeting Date	22 November 2017	
Report Title	Council Tax Support Scheme 2018/19	
Cabinet Member	Cllr Duncan Dewar-Whalley, Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance	
SMT Lead	Emma Wiggins	
Head of Service	Amber Christou	
Lead Officer	Zoe Kent	
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the outcome of the public consultation having taken consideration of the potential impact of the proposed changes on working age claimants with the protected characteristics of disability, age and sex under the Equalities Act 2010. 2. To recommend changes to the current scheme as listed in paragraph 3.6 	

Members will be aware of the sensitive nature of the Scheme in relation to its impact on those receiving support of this type. The legal implications in the report set out the importance of following the rules around consultation in the Supreme Court ruling in the Haringey case. In reaching a decision in this matter, all members must have had regard to all supporting papers, and in particular the Community Impact Assessment, and have taken these into account when reaching their individual voting decision on the scheme. Failure to do so could open the Council to challenge, and members will no doubt bear this in mind when exercising their vote.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Council Tax Support Scheme (CTS) was introduced by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) in April 2013 as a replacement for Council Tax Benefit (CTB) administered on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP). Each year the local Scheme must be approved by Full Council by 31 January.
- 1.2 The purpose of this report is, having noted the outcome of the public consultation and having considered the potential impact of the proposed changes on working age claimants taking into account the protected characteristics of disability, age and sex, under the Equalities Act 2010, to recommend changes to the current CTS scheme listed in paragraph 3.7.

2 Background

- 2.1 Prior to the introduction of the scheme in April 2013 the Kent authorities worked together to design a CTS scheme. A common approach was adopted across Kent, with the new scheme broadly replicating the former CTB scheme, but with a basic reduction in entitlement for working age claimants.
- 2.2 As part of its introduction, central government set out a number of key elements:
- the duty to create a local scheme for working age applicants was placed with billing authorities;
 - government funding was reduced initially by the equivalent of 10% from the levels paid through benefit subsidy to authorities under the previous CTB scheme; and
 - persons of pension age, although allowed to apply for CTS, would be dealt with under regulations prescribed by central government, and not the authorities' local scheme.
- 2.3 In Swale, under the current scheme working age claimants must pay at least 20% of their Council Tax liability. Although there is a common approach across Kent, local schemes at district level have been tailored to local needs, so in other parts of Kent the percentage varies.
- 2.4 The Kent districts have been able to use the changes to the empty property discounts to vary the amount working age claimants pay towards their liability. Since its introduction in April 2013, our own local scheme has been reviewed annually; however, the core elements remain as were originally agreed.
- 2.5 Under the Kent-wide agreement the major precepting authorities agreed to collectively pay to each district council an administration fee of £125,000 each year, for three years, to assist with the costs of delivery of the scheme.
- 2.6 It has been recognised by the Kent Finance Officers Group that the contributions that the major precepting authorities make towards the administration of the scheme are essential. It was therefore agreed to base the allocation of the administration fee on the size of the caseload. Swale has been allocated £141,600 administration fee for 2017/18, the second highest award in Kent.
- 2.7 When the new scheme started in April 2013, it resulted in approximately 5,000 households within the Borough paying some council tax for the first time. In addition, approximately 2,500 other households who received partial assistance saw increases in their bills.
- 2.8 Collection of the council tax balances in these cases has been challenging. However, with focus on these accounts and some changes to recovery processes, the scheme has been successful. The administrative fee paid by the

major preceptors has been essential in assisting with the cost of the recovery of these debts.

- 2.9 The overall level of applicants, both working age and pension age, has fallen since the introduction of CTS to 9,948 as at 1 April 2017, compared with 13,381 as at 1 April 2013. This is mainly due to a reduction in unemployment, the rise of the pension age and changes brought into the scheme from April 2017. As a result, the total cost of the scheme has reduced since its inception.
- 2.10 However, the initial '90%' funding that the government passed on to authorities through Revenue Support Grant to support the costs of local schemes has effectively been cut as part of the wider reductions in local government financial settlements. Therefore, although costs have reduced due to a lower claimant base, the outcome is that a greater share of the cost burden is falling on the billing authorities and the other major precepting bodies. This outcome has been one of the main catalysts for undertaking the review.

Table 1: CTS expenditure by year

Year	Expenditure
2013/14	£10,712,895
2014/15	£ 9,940,783
2015/16	£ 9,801,120
2016/17	£ 9,723,402
2017/18	£ 8,950,857

- 2.11 To support the review a consultant who has previously advised all Kent districts on their CTS schemes has been appointed. The consultant has been assisting in the evaluation of alternative scheme models and the public consultation process.
- 2.12 As in 2017/18 the objectives that have been agreed are to:
- (i) have regard to the reductions in government grant and the financial pressures we face;
 - (ii) make the scheme less costly (if possible), and more efficient in terms of its operation; and
 - (iii) have regard to the impact such changes may have on vulnerable residents, and target support to those most in need.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 Consideration has been given to a range of options for potential change, having regard to the objectives set out in paragraph 2.12 and the suitability for Swale.
- 3.2 The conclusion is that the most practical option would be to maintain a scheme similar to our current scheme. The reasoning behind this is:

- (i) it is known to our claimants;
- (ii) it largely mirrors the housing benefit system
- (iii) our software systems are adapted for this type of scheme and would, therefore, require little additional cost to update;
- (iv) our staff are familiar with the administration of this type of scheme; and
- (v) as it is also aligned to housing benefit, we can continue to take advantage of economies of scale.

- 3.3 Collection of Council Tax from working age claimants since the commencement of the scheme is shown in table 2 below. Prior to the first year of the scheme Swale accepted a grant from DCLG which limited the amount claimants had to pay to a minimum of 8.5%, leading to a highest collection rate for 2013/14. There was a dip in collection in 2014/15 when the amount to be paid doubled. Collection since then has risen as claimants have adjusted to budgeting for this amount. It is likely that if the amounts that working age claimants have to pay continues to rise, collection rates will start to fall.

Table 2: Percentage collected by year

Year	Minimum % paid by working age claimants	Percentage collected
2013/14	8.5%	87.59%
2014/15	15%	81.80%
2015/16	15%	85.30%
2016/17	15%	85.80%
2017/18	20%	52.5% *

**2017/18 figure as at 09.10.2017*

- 3.4 Given the objectives of the review set out at 2.12, it is important that we seek to reduce the overall costs of the scheme whilst maintaining fairness and the feasibility of the scheme. Therefore, it is considered that a locally determined selection of the options set out in Appendix I should be included as part of the consultation on Swale's scheme for 2018/19.
- 3.5 The Council went out to consultation on these options for a 6 week period ending on 28 August 2017 via a direct email to approximately 13,000 households. The results of the consultation are contained in Appendix I.
- 3.6 Given the financial challenge facing the Council, it is recommended that the Council implements, the changes set out within the consultation, subject to the amendments set out in Table 3. To give working age claimants some stability it is recommended that the scheme is not changed in 2019/20.

Table 3: Council Tax Support Options

Option	Recommendation	
Option 1 - Reducing the maximum level of support for working age applicants from 80 per cent to 77.5 or 75 per cent.	Implement at 75%	Consultation findings support change to reducing the maximum level of support for working age applicants to 75 per cent.
Option 2 - Reducing the capital limit from the existing £16,000 to £10,000 or £6,000	Implement limiting to £10,000.	Consultation findings support change to reduce the capital limit to £10,000.
Option 3 - Restricting the level of the maximum level of Council Tax Support payable to the equivalent of a Band D charge	Implement	Consultation findings support change to restrict the maximum level of Council Tax Support payable to the equivalent of a Band D charge.
Option 4 - Applying a fixed income period to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes	Implement	Consultation findings support bringing in this change for Universal Credit claims. This option limits the number of adjustments to a claimant's Council Tax account during the year. If this option was not implemented there could be 12 Universal Credit monthly changes on an account during a year, meaning if payments were not made, recovery action could not be taken during the financial year.
Option 5 - Applying a tolerance to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes	Not recommended	Consultation findings give the least support to this change. Option 4 received more support compared with this option. In order that Universal Credit claims do not have to be reviewed every month either option 4 or 5 could be implemented. Option 5 is a more radical change to the scheme only used by a few Councils at present. This option may be recommended again in the future when we have a larger Universal Credit caseload.

Option 6 – To disregard Bereavement Support payments inline with the Housing Benefit regulations	Implement	Consultation findings support change. Change brings CTS in line with wider welfare system.
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4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The current scheme which was brought in on 1 April 2017 could be left in place with no amendments from 1 April 2018. However given the positive response to the consultation exercise and as the Council's funding will continue to reduce, there is a risk in taking this option that there would be a cost to both Swale and the major preceptors. This would then have a knock on affect to other services.
- 4.2 As part of the consultation, as well as consulting on various options related to the design of the scheme, case law has clarified that we are also required to consider alternative funding options as opposed to simply changing the current scheme to reduce costs.
- 4.3 Therefore, within the consultation the following questions were posed. Should Council Tax be increased for all Council Tax payers to fund the CTS scheme? Should Council reserves be used to fund the scheme? Should there be cuts to Council services to fund the scheme?
- 4.4 All options in 4.3 were rejected by the majority of responders – see Appendix I for the detail. As the Council's funding from the Government for the provision of all services is likely to be reduced in the future, and as the impact of choosing any of the alternative funding options would affect all residents in the Borough, it is not considered that any of the options in 4.3 should be taken forward for funding the CTS scheme.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Prior to the implementation of any changes to a CTS scheme, authorities are required to consult with the public. There have been a number of challenges to CTS consultations, and it should be noted that a judgement handed down by the Supreme Court has defined what is meant by 'good consultation'.
- 5.2 The guiding principles which have been established through case law for fair consultation are as follows:
 - (i) the consultation must be carried out at a stage when proposals are still at a formative stage;

- (ii) sufficient information on the reasons for the decision must be provided to permit the consultees to carry out intelligent consideration of the issues to respond;
 - (iii) adequate time must be given for consideration and responses to be made; and
 - (iv) the results of the consultation must be properly taken into account in finalising any decision.
- 5.3 There is also a duty to consult with the major precepting authorities who are statutory consultees. All major precepting authorities were consulted during the consultation period.
- 5.4 Following the report to Cabinet on 12 July 2017 a public consultation was undertaken between 17 July 2017 and 28 August 2017. The consultation was open to all Swale residents aged 18 or over, i.e. people who pay Council Tax or receive CTS. The consultation was carried out online, with a direct email to approximately 13,000 households, and was promoted on the Council's website, through social media, and in the local media. Paper copies were available on request.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>Running an effective and efficient CTS Scheme contributes to the Council priority of being 'A Council to be proud of'. It also contributes to the priority of 'A Community to be proud of', as it supports the most vulnerable whilst creating incentives to work for those who are able to.</p> <p>The changes introduced through the Welfare Reform agenda and Local Council Tax Support Scheme are aimed at providing greater work incentives, which have the potential to positively impact on the economic prosperity of those returning to employment, as well as the wider community. Data shows that the number of working age claimants has reduced, which results at least in part from movement of benefits claimants into work.</p> <p>Performance is measured through BV9 Percentage of Council Tax collected in year.</p>
Financial, Resource and	It is anticipated that there will be some limited costs associated with the consultation process, but this is a statutory requirement.

Property	<p>The costs of awards made under the CTS scheme impact on the declared tax base, and thereby the council tax yield. If the cost of awards were to be reduced, this would mean that the Council's tax base would increase, and overall council tax income could increase.</p> <p>Any increase to council tax income is shared through the Collection Fund with major preceptors.</p>
Legal and Statutory	<p>The Council has a statutory duty to consult on a proposed scheme under the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended). As mentioned in paragraph 5.1, case law has determined the guiding principles for fair consultation, which we followed.</p> <p>Regard needs to be made to the rules around consultation laid out through the Supreme Court ruling in the case of R (on the application of Moseley) v London Borough of Haringey (2014), and in particular, the need to set out alternative choices within the consultation. Referred to in paragraph 5.2.</p>
Crime and Disorder	No implications.
Sustainability	No implications.
Health and Wellbeing	Residents who have difficulty in paying their Council Tax can put in a claim for a Section 13A discretionary award. Those whose health appears to be affected will be signposted to appropriate advice.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	If consultation is not carried out appropriately, there is a risk of challenge once a decision is taken.
Equality and Diversity	A full Community Impact Assessment has been carried out.

7 Appendices

7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: CTS Scheme review of options
- Appendix II: CIA CTS Scheme 2018/19

8 Background Documents

Council Tax Support Report 2017/18 Scheme Full Council 23.11.2016

<http://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s6520/Council%20-%20Council%20Tax%20Support%20Report%2023.11.2016%20FINAL.pdf>

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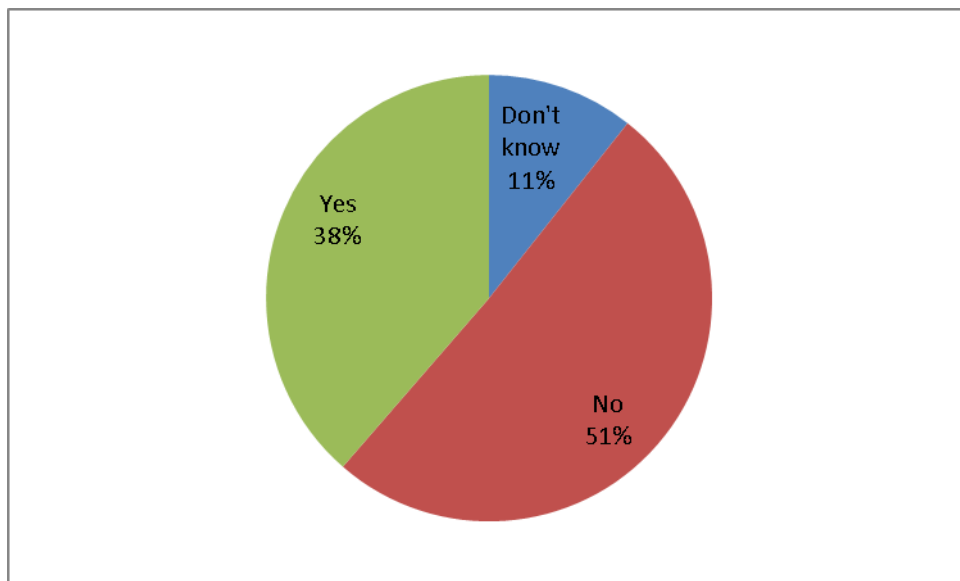
Council Tax Support Scheme Options

A consultation was carried out for 6 weeks ending on 28 August 2017, 346 people responded to the consultation with many commenting on the proposals. Responders were asked to comment on six options to change the scheme. They were also asked whether the Council should use alternative means such as increasing Council Tax or reducing services to cover the cost of the scheme.

This paper gives an overview of the responses.

Option	% agreeing with the option
Option 1 - Should the Council keep the current Council Tax Support scheme? (Should it continue to reduce Council Tax for applicants in the way and to the extent that it does at the moment?)	38%
Option 1 – Should we reduce the maximum level of support for working age applicants from 20% to 22.5% or 25%	53%
Option 2 - Should we reduce the capital limit from the existing £16,000 to £10,000 or £6,000?	57%
Option 3 – Should we restrict the level of the maximum level of Council Tax Support payable to the equivalent of a Band D charge?	48%
Option 4 – Should we apply a fixed income period to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes?	46%
Option 5 – Should we apply a tolerance to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes?	41%
Option 6 – Should we disregard Bereavement Support payments inline with the Housing Benefit regulations?	65%
Do you think we should choose any of the following options rather than the proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme? Please select one answer for each source of funding.	
Increase the level of Council Tax	15%
Find savings from cutting other Council Services	26%
Use the Council's reserves	31%
If the Council were to choose these other options to make savings, what would be your order of preference?	
Increase the level of Council Tax – Most Preferred	18%
Least Preferred	70%
Reduce funding available for other Council Services – Most Preferred	23%
Least Preferred	54%
Use the Council's reserves – Most Preferred	49%
Least Preferred	27%

**Option 1 - Should the Council keep the current Council Tax Support scheme?
(Should it continue to reduce Council Tax for applicants in the way and to the extent that it does at the moment?)**



Gender	Yes	No	Don't know
Male	56	95	14
Female	72	77	20

Age	Yes	No	Don't know
18-24	3	1	0
25-34	21	31	7
35-44	26	39	9
45-54	30	36	13
55-64	31	40	2
65-74	16	19	3
75-84	1	5	0
85+	0	1	0

Disability	Yes	No	Don't know
Disabled	37	21	7
Not Disabled	93	147	26

Ethnicity	Yes	No	Don't know
White British	122	151	30
Asian	1	1	0
Black	0	2	1
Mixed	2	1	0
Other	1	4	1

CTS	Yes	No	Don't know
In receipt of CTS	63	26	13
Not in receipt of CTS	66	148	22

The majority of responders were against option 1, to continue to reduce Council Tax for applicants in the way and to the extent that it does at the moment. We asked responders did

they agree we should reduce the maximum level of support further from 80% to 77.5% or 75%.

53% were in favour of reducing the maximum level of support further. Of those responders who agreed that support should be reduced further 69% felt it should be reduced to 75% compared with 31%, favouring the higher level of support at 77.5%.

The majority of responders felt the CTS scheme should be changed. There was a feeling that the burden of Government cuts should be shared and everyone should pay something if they are using services.

There were also comments stating that the council needed to help those in genuine need, the most vulnerable, the disabled, the elderly or those who lose their job or fall ill. Some felt that raising the contribution would lead to more poverty, arrears and stress, however this did not appear to be the majority view.

Gender	77.50%	75%
Male	19	76
Female	29	51

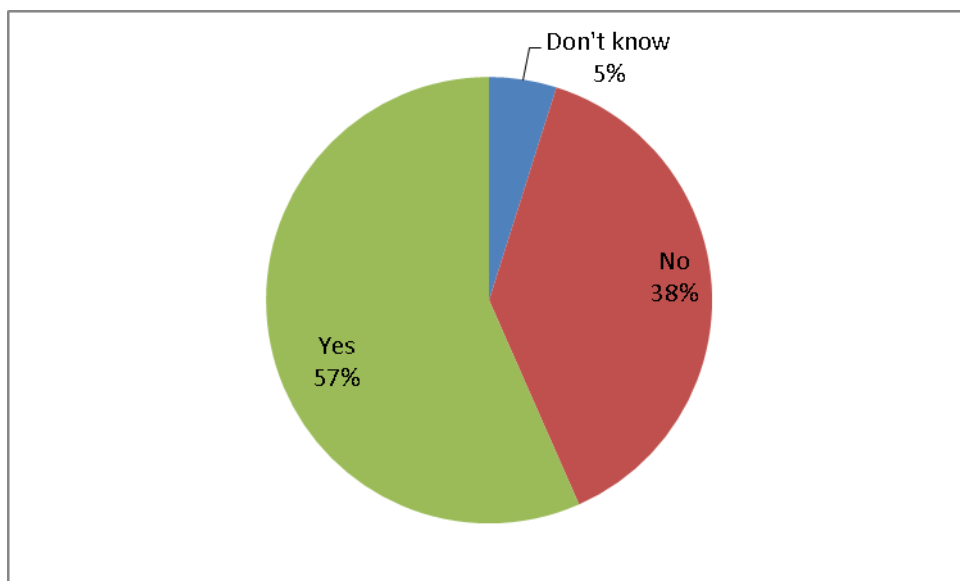
Age	77.50%	75%
18-24	0	1
25-34	4	32
35-44	13	28
45-54	11	22
55-64	11	28
65-74	9	10
75-84	1	3
85+	0	1

Disability	77.50%	75%
Disabled	10	12
Not Disabled	37	113

Ethnicity	77.50%	75%
White British	45	112
Asian	0	2
Black	1	1
Mixed	0	1
Other	0	4

CTS	77.50%	75%
In receipt of CTS	17	12
Not in receipt of CTS	32	114

Option 2 - To reduce the capital limit from the existing £16,000 to £10,000 or £6,000



Gender	Yes	No	Don't know
Male	89	73	4
Female	103	55	11

Age	Yes	No	Don't know
18-24	2	2	0
25-34	36	20	3
35-44	50	20	4
45-54	47	30	3
55-64	35	35	3
65-74	17	19	2
75-84	2	4	0
85+	1	0	0

Disability	Yes	No	Don't know
Disabled	43	18	4
Not Disabled	147	109	11

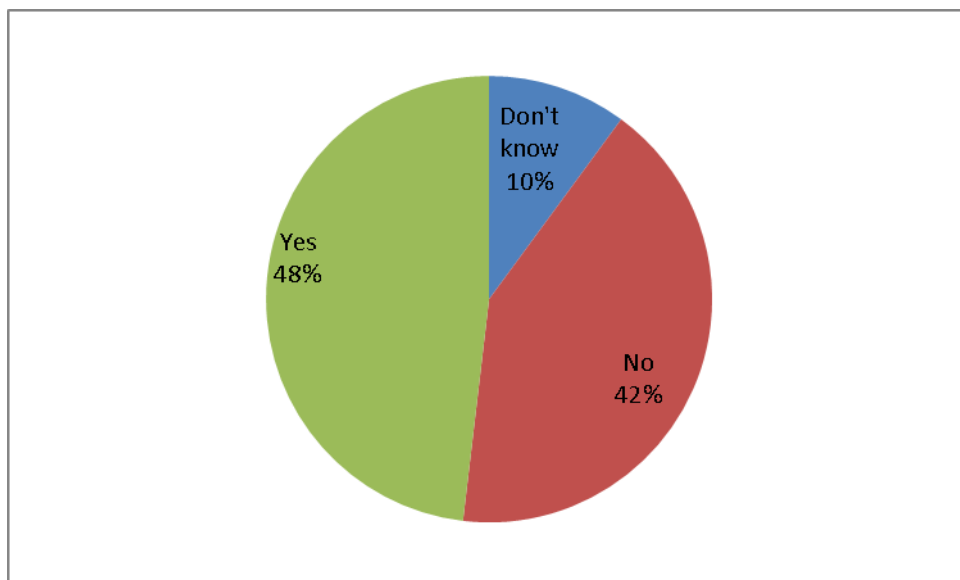
Ethnicity	Yes	No	Don't know
White British	172	118	14
Asian	1	1	0
Black	2	1	0
Mixed	2	1	0
Other	4	1	1

CTS	Yes	No	Don't know
In receipt of CTS	54	39	9
Not in receipt of CTS	139	92	6

Overall, a greater proportion of responders (57%), were in favour of reducing the capital limit for all new working age applicants. The comments on this option were split between those who felt it was unfair that customers could receive help when they had savings compared with those who felt we would be removing the incentive to save.

A higher proportion of responders felt the limit should be reduced to £10,000.

Option 3 - To restrict the level of the maximum level of Council Tax Support payable to the equivalent of a Band D charge



Gender	Yes	No	Don't know
Male	81	69	16
Female	78	73	17

Age	Yes	No	Don't know
18-24	2	2	0
25-34	27	21	11
35-44	33	31	9
45-54	36	39	5
55-64	38	33	2
65-74	18	15	5
75-84	4	2	0
85+	1	0	0

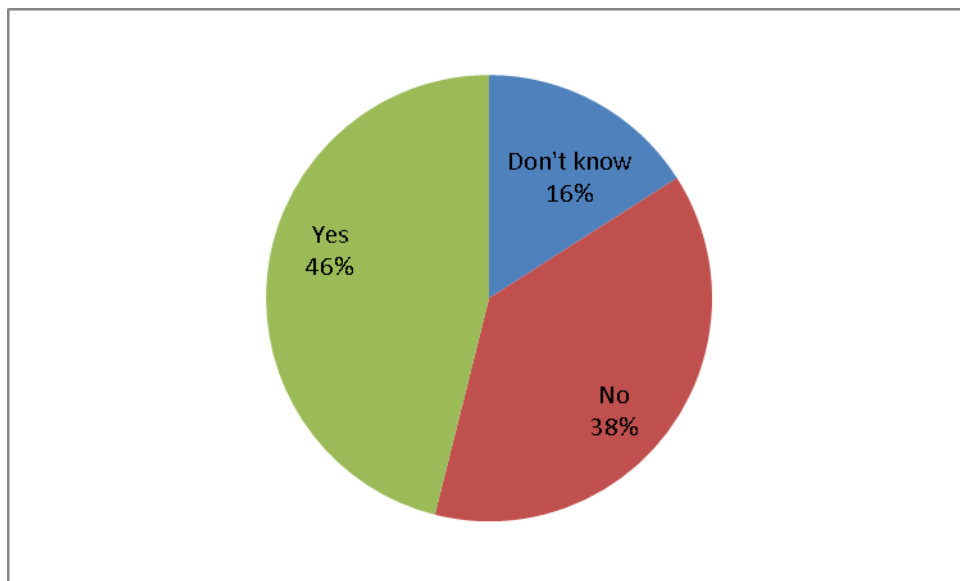
Disability	Yes	No	Don't know
Disabled	22	32	11
Not Disabled	135	109	22

Ethnicity	Yes	No	Don't know
White British	145	129	29
Asian	1	0	1
Black	2	1	0
Mixed	1	2	0
Other	3	1	2

CTS	Yes	No	Don't know
In receipt of CTS	38	47	16
Not in receipt of CTS	125	95	17

Those who commented on this option mainly felt it was reasonable to restrict the maximum level of CTS to Band D. However a number of responders felt that residents living in larger properties could also fall on hard times and due to schooling/family commitments could not move,

Option 4 – To apply a fixed income period to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes



Gender	Yes	No	Don't know
Male	71	66	27
Female	80	62	26

Age	Yes	No	Don't know
18-24	2	2	0
25-34	25	22	11
35-44	39	22	12
45-54	29	36	14
55-64	31	33	9
65-74	21	12	5
75-84	3	2	1
85+	1	0	0

Disability	Yes	No	Don't know
Disabled	21	25	16
Not Disabled	129	102	36

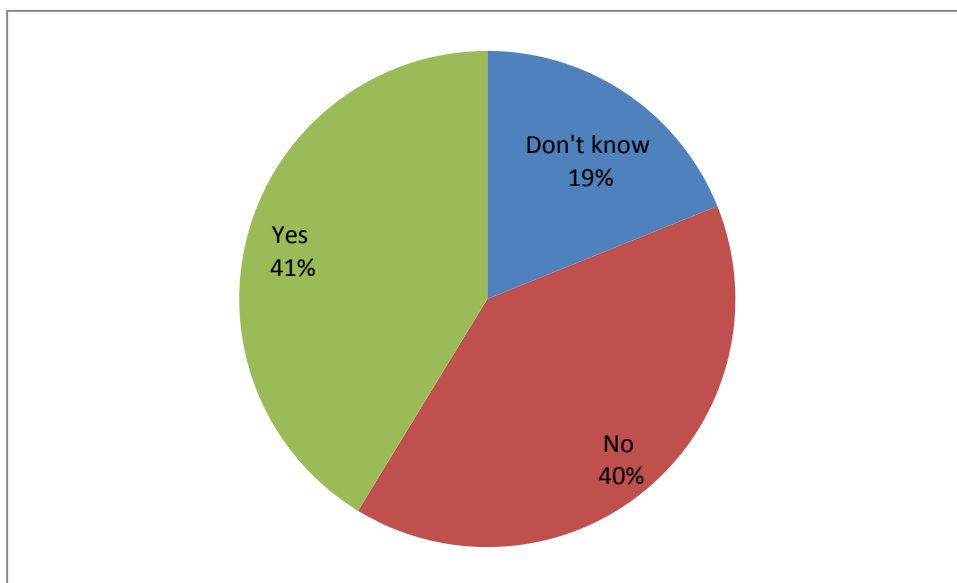
Ethnicity	Yes	No	Don't know
White British	136	120	45
Asian	1	0	1
Black	2	1	0
Mixed	1	1	1
Other	4	0	2

CTS	Yes	No	Don't know
In receipt of CTS	28	49	24
Not in receipt of CTS	130	78	28

The majority of responders who commented felt this was a sensible way of saving on administration costs. They also felt it would be easier to understand and simplify the system. It would help claimants with budgeting.

Some felt that savings may be limited, it could be too costly to administer and unfair on families.

Option 5 - Should we apply a tolerance to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes?



Gender	Yes	No	Don't know
Male	65	69	30
Female	70	65	32

Age	Yes	No	Don't know
18-24	1	2	1
25-34	23	22	13
35-44	34	25	15
45-54	27	37	15
55-64	30	31	11

65-74	14	16	7
75-84	4	2	0
85+	1	0	0

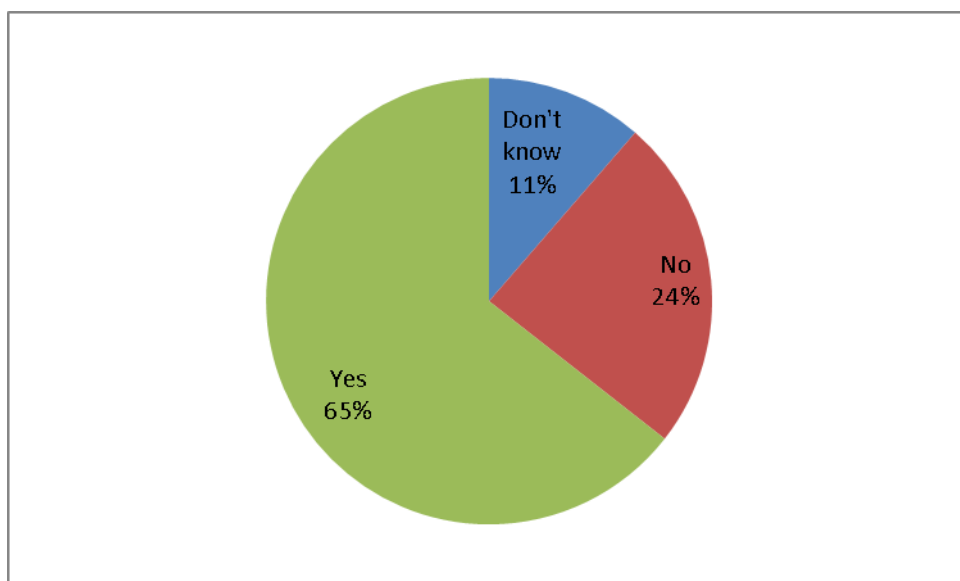
Disability	Yes	No	Don't know
Disabled	19	27	18
Not Disabled	116	134	41

Ethnicity	Yes	No	Don't know
White British	122	123	55
Asian	1	0	1
Black	2	1	0
Mixed	2	1	0
Other	3	0	3

CTS	Yes	No	Don't know
In receipt of CTS	29	42	31
Not in receipt of CTS	111	93	30

This appeared to be the least favourable option. Although some responders felt it would reduce administration and simplify the system others felt it could leave some claimants struggling.

Option 6- To disregard Bereavement Support payments inline with the Housing Benefit regulations



Gender	Yes	No	Don't know
Male	99	48	17
Female	116	33	18

Age	Yes	No	Don't know
18-24	1	2	1
25-34	34	18	7

35-44	57	13	3
45-54	45	24	10
55-64	49	14	9
65-74	25	10	2
75-84	3	1	2
85+	1	0	0

Disability	Yes	No	Don't know
Disabled	36	18	11
Not Disabled	174	64	25

Ethnicity	Yes	No	Don't know
White British	199	71	30
Asian	1	1	0
Black	1	2	0
Mixed	1	1	1
Other	4	0	2

CTS	Yes	No	Don't know
In receipt of CTS	59	27	15
Not in receipt of CTS	159	55	20

Option 6 received the highest number of positive responses. Most responders who commented felt this payment helped those who had been bereaved in a time of need so should be disregarded. Especially if there were no drawbacks and it would bring the scheme in line with Housing Benefit. A small number felt that all income should be taken into account.

Survey Demographics and Applied Weighting

	Survey		Population	
	Count	%	Count	%
Gender (Over 18s Mid-year Population Estimates)				
Men	166	49.5%	54,976	49%
Women	169	50.5%	57,510	51%
Age (Over 18s Mid-year Population Estimates)				
18 to 24 years	4	1%	11,582	10%
25 to 34 years	59	18%	17,457	16%
35 to 44 years	74	22%	17,347	15%
45 to 54 years	80	24%	21,156	19%
55 to 64 years	73	21%	17,443	16%
65 to 74 years	38	11%	16,107	14%
75 years and over	7	2%	11,421	10%
Ethnicity (2011 Census 18 years and over)				
White groups	304	95%	101,848	97%
BME	14	5%	3,027	3%
Disability (2011 Census all people)				
Disability	65	20%	25,322	19%
No Disability	267	80%	110,513	81%

The table to the left shows the profile of the survey respondents in relation to the population of Swale.

This table tells us that men and women are correctly represented. It also shows that people aged 25 years and under and those aged 75 and over are under-represented.

Those with a disability are correctly represented.

The results in this report have not been weighted by age, sex or disability because we do not consider the variances to be significant.

Age Male	Population		Survey	
	Count	%	Count	%
18 to 24 years	6,098	5%	2	1%
25 to 34 years	8,516	8%	27	8%
35 to 44 years	8,430	7%	27	8%
45 to 54 years	10,417	9%	40	12%
55 to 64 years	8,735	8%	41	12%
65 to 74 years	7,864	7%	21	6%
75 years and over	4,916	4%	7	2%
Age Female				
18 to 24 years	5,430	5%	2	1%
25 to 34 years	8,941	8%	32	10%
35 to 44 years	8,944	8%	47	14%
45 to 64 years	10,739	10%	39	12%
55 to 64 years	8,708	8%	31	9%
65 to 74 years	8,243	7%	17	5%
75 years and over	6,505	6%	0	0%

Calculated using the ONS Mid-year population estimates

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates>

Responses to the consultation questions

Have your say on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

I have read the background information about the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. This question must be answered before you can continue.		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	98.57%	344
No	1.43%	5
Answered question		349
Skipped question		0

Should the Council keep the current Council Tax Reduction scheme? (Should it continue to reduce Council Tax for applicants in the way and to the extent that it does at the moment?)		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	38.51%	134
No	50.57%	176
Don't know	10.92%	38
Answered question		348
Skipped question		1

Do you agree with the Option 1?		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	52.75%	182
No	42.32%	146
Don't know	4.93%	17
Answered question		345
Skipped question		4

If yes, should we increase to:		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
22.5%	31.05%	59
25%	68.95%	131
Answered question		190
Skipped question		159

Do you agree with the Option 2?		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	56.61%	197
No	38.51%	134
Don't know	4.89%	17
Answered question		348
Skipped question		1

Do you agree with Option 3?		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	48.13%	167
No	41.79%	145
Don't know	10.09%	35
Answered question		347
Skipped question		2

Do you agree with Option 4?		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	46.09%	159
No	37.97%	131
Don't know	15.94%	55
Answered question		345
Skipped question		4

Do you agree with Option 5?		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	41.28%	142
No	39.83%	137
Don't know	18.90%	65
Answered question		344
Skipped question		5

Do you agree with Option 6?		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	64.43%	221
No	24.20%	83
Don't know	11.37%	39
Answered question		343
Skipped question		6

Do you think we should choose any of the following options rather than the proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme? Please select one answer for each source of funding.					
Answer Options	Yes	No	Don't know	Total	
Increase the level of Council Tax	58	263	14	335	
Find savings from cutting other Council Services	91	217	20	328	
Use the Council's savings	127	169	36	332	
Answered question					343
Skipped question					6

If the Council were to choose these other options to make savings, what would be your order of preference? In each case, please choose your preferred option by selecting from "I would prefer this", "I don't have a preference" or "I would not prefer this"

Answer Options	I would prefer this	I don't have a preference	I would not prefer this	Total
Increase the level of Council Tax	60	38	237	335
Reduce funding available for other Council Services	77	77	178	332
Use the Council's savings	164	79	92	335
Answered question	Answered question			343
Skipped question	Skipped question			6

Are you, or someone in your household, getting a Council Tax Reduction at this time?

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	29.57%	102
No	68.70%	237
Don't know/unsure	1.74%	6
Answered question	345	
Skipped question	4	

What is your sex?

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Female	48.70%	169
Male	47.84%	166
Prefer not to say	3.46%	12
Answered question	347	
Skipped question	2	

What is your age?

Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
18-24	1.16%	4
25-34	17.05%	59
35-44	21.39%	74
45-54	23.12%	80
55-64	21.10%	73
65-74	10.98%	38
75-84	1.73%	6
85+	0.29%	1
Prefer not to say	3.18%	11
Answered question	346	
Skipped question	3	

Disability: Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
Yes	18.73%	65
No	76.95%	267
Don't know/unsure	0.29%	1
Prefer not to say	4.03%	14
Answered question		347
Skipped question		2

Ethnic Origin: What is your ethnic group?		
Answer Options	Response Percentage	Response Count
White British	89.68%	304
Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups	0.88%	3
Asian or Asian British	0.59%	2
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	0.88%	3
Other ethnic group	1.77%	6
Prefer not to say	6.19%	21
Answered question		339
Skipped question		10

Community Impact Assessment

A Community Impact Assessment (CIA) is a document that summarises how the council has had due regard to the public sector equality duty (Equality Act 2010) in decision-making.

When to assess

A CIA should be carried out when you are changing, removing or introducing a new service, policy or function. The assessment should be proportionate; a major financial decision will need to be assessed more closely than a minor policy change.

Public sector equality duty

The Equality Act 2010 places a duty on the council, when exercising public functions, to have due regard to the need to:

- 1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation;
- 2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
- 3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

These are known as the three aims of the general equality duty.

Protected characteristics

The Equality Act 2010 sets out nine protected characteristics that apply to the equality duty:

- Age
- Disability
- Gender reassignment
- Marriage and civil partnership*
- Pregnancy and maternity
- Race
- Religion or belief
- Sex
- Sexual orientation

*For marriage and civil partnership, only the first aim of the duty applies in relation to employment.

We also ask you to consider other socially excluded groups, which could include people who are geographically isolated from services, with low literacy skills or living in poverty or low incomes; this may impact on aspirations, health or other areas of their life which are not protected by the Equality Act, but should be considered when delivering services.

Due regard

To 'have due regard' means that in making decisions and in its other day-to-day activities the council must consciously consider the need to do the things set out in the general equality duty: eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.

How much regard is 'due' will depend on the circumstances and in particular on the relevance of the aims in the general equality duty to the decision or function in question. The greater the relevance and potential impact, the higher the regard required by the duty. The three aims of the duty may be more relevant to some functions than others; or they may be more relevant to some protected characteristics than others.

Collecting and using equality information

The Equalities and Human Rights Commissions (EHRC) states that 'Having due regard to the aims of the general equality duty requires public authorities to have an adequate evidence base for their decision making'. We need to make sure that we understand the potential impact of decisions on people with different protected characteristics. This will help us to reduce or remove unhelpful impacts. We need to consider this information before and as decisions are being made.

There are a number of publications and websites that may be useful in understanding the profile of users of a service, or those who may be affected.

- The Office for National Statistics Neighbourhoods website <http://www.neighbourhood.statistics.gov.uk>
- Swale in 2011 http://issuu.com/swale-council/docs/key_data_for_swale
- Kent County Council Research and Intelligence Unit http://www.kent.gov.uk/your_council/kent_facts_and_figures.aspx
- Health and Social Care maps <http://www.kmpho.nhs.uk/health-and-social-care-maps/swale/>

At this stage you may find that you need further information and will need to undertake engagement or consultation. Identify the gaps in your knowledge and take steps to fill these.

Case law principles

A number of principles have been established by the courts in relation to the equality duty and due regard:

- Decision-makers in public authorities must be aware of their duty to have 'due regard' to the equality duty
- Due regard is fulfilled before and at the time a particular policy is under consideration as well as at the time a decision is taken. Due regard involves a conscious approach and state of mind.
- A public authority cannot satisfy the duty by justifying a decision after it has been taken.
- The duty must be exercised in substance, with rigour and with an open mind in such a way that it influences the final decision.
- The duty is a non-delegable one. The duty will always remain the responsibility of the public authority.
- The duty is a continuing one.
- It is good practice for those exercising public functions to keep an accurate record showing that they have actually considered the general duty and pondered relevant questions. Proper record keeping encourages transparency and will discipline those carrying out the relevant function to undertake the duty conscientiously.
- The general equality duty is not a duty to achieve a result, it is a duty to have due regard to the need achieve the aims of the duty.
- A public authority will need to consider whether it has sufficient information to assess the effects of the policy, or the way a function is being carried out, on the aims set out in the general equality duty.
- A public authority cannot avoid complying with the duty by claiming that it does not have enough resources to do so.

Examples of case law can be found here [EHRC relevant case law](#). They include examples of why assessing the impact **before** the decision is made is so important and case law around the need to have due regard to the duty

Lead officer:	<i>Zoe Kent</i>
Decision maker:	<i>Council</i>
People involved:	<i>Zoe Kent</i>
Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, project, service, contract • Review, change, new, stop 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This is a localised scheme that the Borough is required to put in place to give financial help towards Council Tax to those residents on a low income.</i> • <i>We are required to review this scheme before 31 January of the financial year.</i>
Date of decision: The date when the final decision is made. The CIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	<i>Full Council – 22 November 2017</i>
Summary of the decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes • Who will be affected and how? • How many people will be affected? 	<p><i>What are the aims and objectives?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To provide help towards Council Tax as a localised Council Tax Support scheme to those on a low income in the Borough</i> <i>2. To provide pensioners with the support as per The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended by The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2016</i> <i>3. To provide working age claimants support taking into consideration the reduction in financial support provided within the Revenue Support Grant towards the Council Support Scheme.</i> <i>4. Support vulnerable people</i> <i>5. Support claimants back into work</i> <p><i>What are the key actions?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Providing a scheme that supports those claimants on a low income</i> • <i>Putting into place a scheme that does not mean a financial burden to the authority which could lead to putting other services provided by the Borough at risk.</i> • <i>Continuing to design and deliver services to meet the needs of vulnerable customers</i> • <i>Consider user feedback, engagement and consultation when designing the scheme</i> <p><i>What are the expected outcomes?</i></p> <p><i>To put in place a scheme that balances the needs of vulnerable claimants against the budget requirements of the Borough.</i></p> <p><i>Who will be affected?</i></p> <p><i>Those working-age residents who are on a low income who claim help towards their Council Tax. This covers all areas of the Borough but particularly those who live in deprived areas.</i></p> <p><i>How many people will be affected?</i></p> <p><i>6,230 working age claimants will be affected by the changes to the scheme (10% of all Council Tax account holders).</i></p>

<p>Information and research:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the information and research that has informed the decision. • Include sources and key findings. • Include information on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics. 	<p><i>Since 1st April 2013, the Council has maintained a local Council Tax Support scheme. This replaced the national Council Tax Benefit scheme, which ended on 31 March 2013.</i></p> <p><i>Council Tax Support helps provide support to council taxpayers who have a low income. It supports the taxpayers by providing a reduction in the actual amount in Council Tax payable.</i></p> <p><i>The Council has the ability to determine the level of support given to working age applicants only. The scheme for pension age applicants is determined by Central Government, and therefore the ability of the Council to vary that part of the scheme is limited and can only enhance the national scheme in any event.</i></p> <p><i>When Council Tax Support was first introduced, Central Government provided a specified level of grant, which was approximately 10% lower than the amounts previously given (pre 1 April 2013). This has now been replaced by a general duty to provide a scheme and funding is not separately identified within the grants given to the Council.</i></p> <p><i>After the original consultation, the Council decided to introduce a Council Tax Support scheme that differed from the original Council Tax Benefit in that, instead of granting a maximum level of support of 100%, it would limit the maximum support to 91.5% in 2013/14 (due to an extra grant being received from DCLG), decreased to 85% from 2014/15 and 80% in 2017/18.</i></p> <p>Changes since 2013</p> <p><i>Since the introduction of Council Tax Support the overall scheme adopted by the Council has remained broadly the same, with only applicable amounts and non-dependant charges being uprated, as well as minor changes being made to mirror changes to the Housing Benefit scheme. Central Government has also continued to uprate changes to applicable amounts for pension age applicants, again to mirror the changes in Housing Benefit.</i></p> <p><i>From April 2017 changes were made to the scheme including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>the more accurate targeting of support to those working age applicants who most need it;</i> • <i>the need to change the scheme, not only to align with proposed changes to Housing Benefit, but also to align the scheme with the approach taken by the Department for Work and Pensions in the creation, introduction and roll out of Universal Credit; and</i> • <i>to address potential shortfalls in funding due to the continued reduction in Central Government grants.</i> <p><i>The changes brought in were:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Reducing the maximum level of support for working age applicants from 15 per cent to 20 per cent.</i> <i>2. Removing the Family Premium for all new working age applicants</i> <i>3. Reducing backdating to one month</i> <i>4. Using a set income for self-employed earners after 18 months self-employment.</i> <i>5. Reducing the period for which a person can be absent from Great Britain and still receive Council Tax Reduction to four weeks.</i> <i>6. To introduce a standard level of non dependant deduction of £15 for all working-age claimants who have non-dependants</i>
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resident with them who work 16 hours or more per week.

The Proposed Scheme for 2018/19

An annual review will be undertaken as to the effectiveness of the current Council Tax Support scheme; and a public consultation will be undertaken to gather views as to whether the current scheme should be changed. The review will ensure changes to the working age scheme meet the following:

- to increase the more accurate targeting of support to those working age applicants who most need it;*
- to continue to align the scheme with proposed changes to Housing Benefit and Universal Credit; and*
- to address potential shortfalls in funding due to the continued reduction in Central Government grants.*

The Council sought feedback through the consultation as to whether further increases in council tax, cuts to services, and use of limited savings should be considered as an alternative to changing the Council Tax Support Scheme. Changes such as those in points 1 to 3 below may affect all residents in the Borough and across Kent.

- 1. Should Council Tax be increased for all Council Taxpayers?*
- 2. Should Council reserves be used to fund the scheme?*
- 3. Should there be further cuts to Council services?*

The Council proposes to maintain a similar methodology as in the past. Any changes, if adopted, will be effective from 1st April 2018. The proposed options were put out to consultation, as follows:

- a. Should an increase be made in the minimum payment of Council Tax made by recipients of Council Tax Support? Views have obtained as to whether the current minimum payment of 20% should be increased to 22.5% or 25%?*
- b. Should the capital limit be reduced from the existing £16,000 to £6,000 or £10,000?*
- c. Should the maximum level of Council Tax Reduction payable be restricted to the equivalent of a Band D charge?*
- d. Should a mechanism be put in place to limit the impact of changes to Universal Credit awards?*
- e. Should we apply a tolerance to Universal Credit claims to avoid multiple changes?*
- f. Should we disregard Bereavement Support payments inline with the Housing Benefit regulations?*

Scope of the Community Impact Assessment

The following identifies the potential impact on claimants and particularly groups of claimants.

It should be noted that Pensioners will continue to be protected under the rules prescribed by Central Government. These broadly replicate council tax benefit scheme, which existed prior to 1 April 2013.

Central Government has not been prescriptive in how it does this, but points to the Council's existing responsibilities including the Child Poverty Act 2010, the Disabled Person Act 1986, and the Housing Act 1996, as well as the public sector equality duty in section 149 of the Equality Act 2010.

The Council has given consideration to the effects of the options on working age claimants, in particular, vulnerable groups.

Disability

Working age people with disabilities continue to make up a high proportion of the caseload at 25%. Working age people with disabilities receive more per week than working age people without disabilities on average, due to the design of the scheme that ignores certain disability benefits and awards higher applicable amounts.

Age

The age groups of person receiving CTS broadly reflect the overall population, the main difference being those between the ages of 18-24. This difference is probably caused by the lower applicable amounts for single claimants in this group reducing the amount of people who are entitled to CTS. Those aged 54-64 currently receive the highest weekly amount, on average. Those aged 18-24 currently receive the lowest weekly amount, on average.

Carers

There is a slightly higher proportion of claimants with a carer in the household, than the population generally overall (13%). Working age claimants with a carer in the household receive more per week, on average, than working age claimants without a carer in the household. The main reason for this is the treatment of both disability and care within the existing scheme.

Gender

Females continue to make up a high proportion of the caseload at 68%. Although, there is a difference between the average amounts females and males receive per week, this is due to factors relating to circumstances which directly affect the calculation of council tax reduction, and is not linked to a claimant's sex directly.

Ethnicity

This information is not collected from all claimants as it is not relevant to the calculation of council tax reduction.

Other protected characteristics

We do not collect information about the following characteristics from claimants as it is not relevant to the calculation of council tax reductions:

- *Religion or belief*
- *Sexual orientation*
- *Gender reassignment*
- *Marital or civil partnership status*
- *Pregnancy or maternity*

Actions to mitigate any identified impacts

	<p><i>The Council has an Exceptional Hardship Scheme; the design of this allows any claimant to apply for additional support. It examines their overall circumstances, examining both income and expenditure with a view to determining whether exceptional hardship exists.</i></p> <p><i>Under the scheme, claimants will potentially be able to receive additional support up to the full level of their Council Tax.</i></p> <p>Method of Consultation</p> <p><i>The Council has used the following methods to obtain the view of taxpayers.</i></p> <p>Stakeholders Methodology</p> <p>1. <i>Existing claimants (both working age and pensionable age Web based questionnaire</i></p> <p><i>Hard copy documents to be provided as necessary</i></p> <p>2. <i>Council taxpayers and service users generally</i></p> <p><i>Web based questionnaire</i></p> <p><i>Hard copy documents to be provided as necessary</i></p> <p>3. <i>Interested organisations and groups.</i></p> <p><i>Web based questionnaire</i></p> <p>4. <i>Organisations with significant interest to be notified directly</i></p> <p><i>Hard copy documents to be provided as necessary</i></p> <p>General Awareness</p> <p><i>Provision of information and awareness raising of changes and proposals</i></p> <p><i>News releases</i></p> <p><i>Face-to-face communication at customer service points</i></p> <p><i>Information in libraries/surgeries and other public venues</i></p> <p><i>The Council's Website and Social Media</i></p> <p>Analysis and Assessment</p> <p><i>A full analysis and assessment will be provided</i></p>
<p>Consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has there been specific consultation on this decision? ▪ What were the results of the consultation? ▪ Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics? ▪ Can any conclusions be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics? 	<p>Yes</p> <p><i>Results of the consultation can be found in Appendix I: CTS Scheme review of the consultation.</i></p> <p><i>Options 2 and 6 received a higher amount of responses in favour of accepting the changes across the protected characteristics. In the case of option 1 disabled responders had a higher positive response to the this option which asked whether the scheme should remain the same with the same level of support. This was also the case with the responses from those in receipt of CTS.</i></p> <p><i>A higher proportion of disabled responders and those in receipt of CTS did not agree with options 3,4 and 5.</i></p> <p><i>Those with a protected characteristic often receive a premium giving them extra help, e.g. a carer or disability premium, giving them higher levels of help towards their Council Tax payments.</i></p>

Claimants with children will have less income for their living expenses and for caring for their children if they have to pay more towards their Council Tax.

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

Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's [PSED Technical Guidance](#).

Aim	Yes/No
1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation	Yes
2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	Yes
3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it	No

Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics.

When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men.

Characteristic	Relevance to decision High/Medium/Low/None	Impact of decision Positive/Negative/Neutral
Age	Medium	Negative
Disability	Medium	Negative
Gender reassignment	None	Neutral
Marriage and civil partnership	None	Neutral
Pregnancy and maternity	Low	Negative
Race	None	Neutral
Religion or belief	None	Neutral
Sex	None	Neutral
Sexual orientation	None	Neutral
Other socially excluded groups ¹	Low	Negative

Conclusion:

- Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish.
- There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see [PSED Technical Guidance](#)).

Advise on the overall equality

Summarise this conclusion in the body of your report

We have considered how all groups with protected characteristics will be affected by the scheme. As part of our consultation we asked responders their gender, age ethnicity, whether they considered themselves disabled and whether they claimed CTS. A breakdown of how they responded to the options is available in Appendix I: CTS Scheme review of the consultation.

We also asked for comments on each option. Although the results show those with a disability and in receipt of CTS were more likely to respond negatively to the scheme in their comments about the options,

¹ Other socially excluded groups could include those with literacy issues, people living in poverty or on low incomes or people who are geographically isolated from services.

<p>implications that should be taken into account in the final decision, considering relevance and impact.</p>	<p>more than a third of disabled responders and CTS claimants agreed yes to every option.</p> <p>As in previous years schemes, those with a protected characteristic such as the disabled or those with children, receive a higher income (due to extra benefits being awarded to cover these costs) than a single claimant or couple especially those who are under 25. To mitigate these issues the Council provides a Section 13A discretionary hardship scheme.</p> <p>The evidence from the database of current claimants suggests that there could be some limited potential for the decision to impact more adversely on people with particular protected characteristics (primarily women and people with a disability than on people without those characteristics, and thus not to contribute to the advancement of equality of opportunity for people with and without protected characteristics. However, the adverse impact on individuals is relatively small, while the financial situation the council faces – and the associated implications for essential public services – suggest that this is the least intolerable option. This position is clearly supported by a majority of consultation responses, including those from current council tax support recipients.</p>
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Timing

- Having 'due regard' is a state of mind. It should be considered at the inception of any decision.
- Due regard should be considered throughout the development of the decision. Notes should be taken on how due regard to the equality duty has been considered through research, meetings, project teams, committees and consultations.
- The completion of the CIA is a way of effectively summarising the due regard shown to the equality duty throughout the development of the decision. The completed CIA must inform the final decision-making process. The decision-maker must be aware of the duty and the completed CIA.

Full technical guidance on the public sector equality duty can be found at:

http://www.equalityhumanrights.com/uploaded_files/PSD/technical_guidance_on_the_public_sector_equality_duty_england.pdf

This Community Impact Assessment should be attached to any committee or SMT report relating to the decision. This CIA should be sent to the Website Officer (Lindsay Oldfield) once completed, so that it can be published on the website.

Action Plan

Issue	Action	Due date	Lead Officer	Manager	Cabinet Member
Views needed on the proposed scheme from claimants, residents and stakeholders	Consultation to be carried out - completed	09/2017	Zoe Kent	Amber Christou	Cllr Duncan Dewar-Whalley
Financial hardship for CTRS working age claimants	Further consultation work to be carried out in Quarter 2 2017/18 – completed	10/2017	Zoe Kent	Amber Christou	Cllr Duncan Dewar-Whalley
Drop in collection rate for Council Tax	The collection of Council Tax to be monitored throughout the financial year 2017/18	10/2017	Zoe Kent	Amber Christou	Cllr Duncan Dewar-Whalley
Financial hardship for residents with an empty property	Advice on alternative help to be sent out with Council Tax bills and adjustment notices	02/2018	Zoe Kent	Amber Christou	Cllr Duncan Dewar-Whalley

Actions in this action plan will be reported to the CIA group once a quarter, so updates will be required quarterly.

Council		Agenda Item:
Meeting Date	22 November 2017	
Report Title	Policy Development and Review Committee – Annual Report 2016/17	
Cabinet Member	Councillor Lloyd Bowen, Chairman, Policy Development and Review Committee	
SMT Lead	Mark Radford, Chief Executive	
Head of Service	David Clifford, Policy and Performance Manager	
Lead Officer	Bob Pullen, Policy and Performance Officer	
Key Decision	No	
Classification	Open	
Forward Plan	Reference number:	
Recommendations	1. That Council considers the Policy Development and Review Committee's Annual Report for 2016/17.	

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides details of the work of the Policy Development and Review Committee's during 2016/17.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Policy Development and Review Committee's terms of reference require it to report annually to Council on its work, and to make recommendations for amended working methods if appropriate.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Policy Development and Review Committee is required by its terms of reference to also report on its work and the report at Appendix I fulfils that requirement.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 None.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Policy Development and Review Committee considered a draft of the annual report at its meeting on 25 October 2017, and resolved that it should be presented to Council for their consideration.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Committee reviews policies, strategies and plans across a wide number of issues across all corporate priorities, and more generally helps to improve and enhance decision-making in the Council, and so supports the Corporate priority of being 'A Council to be Proud of'.
Financial, Resource and Property	None identified.
Legal and Statutory	None identified at this stage. The Committee has not been established as a requirement of legislation, but it does conform to the Council's Constitution.
Crime and Disorder	The Committee periodically reviews matters related to Community Safety.
Sustainability	The Committee has previously been actively involved in reviewing the Council's response to the Kent Environment Strategy.
Health and Wellbeing	The Committee are expected to review policies, plans and strategies that encompass health and wellbeing.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	The Committee has been actively involved in reviewing the development of the Council's new Corporate Equality Strategy.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- Appendix I: Policy Development and Review Committee Annual Report 2016/17.

8 Background Papers

- 8.1 None.

Policy Development and Review Committee Annual Report 2016/17

Swale Borough Council

Policy Development and Review Committee Annual Report 2016/17

1. The Committee was established three years ago and held its inaugural meeting on 28 May 2014.

2. The report covering the Committee's programme of work for the year sought to summarise its purpose as follows:

"to assist the Cabinet in developing or reviewing either new or existing policies, strategies or plans. Its workload is expected to be driven by the natural cycle of considering existing policies, strategies or plans of the council as they come up for review or providing advice to Cabinet on proposals for new council policy referred by Cabinet, Council or the Scrutiny Committee".

3. The table at Appendix I summarises attendance at all of the Policy Development and Review Committee meetings during 2016/17. Membership during 2016/17 was as follows:

- Councillor Lloyd Bowen (Chairman)
- Councillor Andy Booth (Vice-Chairman)
- Councillor Sarah Aldridge
- Councillor Mike Baldock
- Councillor Monique Bonney
- Councillor Katy Coleman
- Councillor Nicholas Hampshire
- Councillor Angela Harrison
- Councillor James Hunt
- Councillor George Samuel
- Councillor Ben Stokes.

4. A schedule of meetings and the policies, plans and strategies considered by the Committee during 2016/17 is at Appendix [I]. This also provides a summary of what the Committee considered.

5. From the outset, as agendas were compiled, and policies, plans and strategies were identified for the Committee's consideration, the relevant Cabinet Member and Lead Officer(s) were invited to attend the meetings. This worked well and the minutes show that, except for one or two occasions when they were unavailable, Cabinet Members attended all meetings to which they had been invited.

6. One aspect which did come to light during 2015/16, and continued throughout 2016/17, was that while the relevant Heads of Service were attending the meetings, they were being accompanied by relatively junior members of staff and that these staff were being given the opportunity to present reports. This continued to have several benefits:

- it enabled staff who can often bring a local rather than a corporate view of how a policy might work in practice to meet and discuss emerging policy with members other than the Cabinet;
- it provided staff with an opportunity to develop their presentation skills;
- non-executive members actually got to hear from officers who had led on the development of policies; and
- this all took place in a forum which was less adversarial than overview and scrutiny can sometimes be.

7. A trawl of the Cabinet and Council agendas for the year shows that all major policies, plans, and strategies had been considered by the Committee prior to their approval. The exceptions were the Local Plan which is in any case the preserve of the Local Development Framework Panel. This reinforces the need to maintain a robust register of policies and to liaise with Heads of Services regularly to ensure that the information held on the Policy Register is up to date.

Appendix [I]

Policy Development and Review Committee membership and attendance – 2016/17

Name	Role	1 Jun	28 Sep	26 Oct	17 Jan	21 Feb
Committee members						
Cllr Lloyd Bowen	Chairman	√	X	√	√	√
Cllr Andy Booth	Vice-Chairman	√	√	X	√	X
Cllr Sarah Aldridge	Committee member	√	√	√	√	√
Cllr Mike Baldock	Committee member	√	√	√	√	X
Cllr Monique Bonney	Committee member	X	√	X	X	√
Cllr Katy Coleman	Committee member	√	X	√	X	√
Cllr Nicholas Hampshire	Committee member	√	X	√	X	X
Cllr Angela Harrison	Committee member	√	√	X	X	X
Cllr James Hunt	Committee member	√	√	√	√	√
Cllr George Samuel	Committee member	√	√	√	X	√
Cllr Ben Stokes	Committee member	√	√	√	√	√
Visiting members and *substitutes						
Cllr Cameron Beart	Member		*√	*√	*√	*√
Cllr Duncan Dewar-Whalley	Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance			√		√
Cllr Paul Fleming	Member		*√			
Cllr Sue Gent	Member		*√			
Cllr Mike Henderson	Member	*√				
Cllr Alan Horton	Cabinet Member for Safer Families and Communities			√	√	
Cllr Nigel Kay	Member					*√
Cllr David Simmons	Cabinet Member for Environment and Rural Affairs		√			
SBC Officers						
Anne Adams	Head of Property Services					√
Brooke Buttfeld	Project Officer, Economy and Community Services				√	
Amber Christou	Head of Resident Services			√		
Steph Curtis	Interim Economy and Community Services Manager				√	
Philippa Davies	Democratic Services Officer		√			√

Name	Role	1 Jun	28 Sep	26 Oct	17 Jan	21 Feb
Zoe Kent	Revenues and Benefits Manager			√		
Kellie MacKenzie	Democratic Services Officer			√	√	
Jo Millard	Senior Democratic Services Officer	√				
Lyn Newton	Economy and Community Services Manager		√			
Bob Pullen	Policy and Performance Officer	√	√	√	√	√

Policies considered by the Policy Development and Review Committee during 2016/17

Date considered	Policy title	Summary of Committee considerations
28 September 2016	Swale Green Grid Partnership	<p>The Committee was asked to provide feedback and input into the draft Swale Green Grid Strategy and Biodiversity Action Plan. The strategies had previously been used as part of the evidence base for the Council's Local Plan and continued to support planning and external funding applications made by local organisations.</p> <p>The Green Grid Strategy provides a vision for planning, designing and managing green spaces as an interconnected network rather than isolated sites. The Biodiversity Action Plan provides a framework for protecting and enhancing valued landscapes, geology and soils and coordinated working to secure coherent ecological networks and a reversal in declines in the quality and diversity of the environment and provides a platform for partner agencies, communities and individuals to work together to conserve the Borough's wildlife.</p> <p>The Committee considered the draft Strategy and Action Plan and explored such issues as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ greater synergy with the Council's Local Plan; ▪ connectivity opportunities of green spaces within Swale; ▪ highlighting the importance of tourism; ▪ loss of land due to sea erosion and the effect on wildlife; ▪ encouragement of traditional farming traditions – e.g. traditional orchards, perhaps run by local community groups; ▪ extension of wildflower grassland across wider areas; ▪ encouraging parish councils to develop parish environment plans; ▪ encouraging farmers and landowners to promote educational visits by

Date considered	Policy title	Summary of Committee considerations
		<p>schools; and</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ further detail needed on the network of ponds and their natural water courses.
26 October 2016	Council Tax support scheme	<p>The Council Tax support scheme was introduced by the government in April 2013 as a replacement for Council Tax Benefit administered on behalf of the Department for Work and Pensions.</p> <p>The Council is required to approve a scheme each year and the Committee was asked to consider the results of the consultation on the 2017/18 scheme. In particular, the Committee was asked to consider the potential impact of the proposed changes on working age claimants taking into account the protected characteristics of disability, age and gender, under the Equality Act 2010.</p> <p>The Committee considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ alternatives to increasing the amount of Council Tax people needed to pay; ▪ the effect of reducing the maximum level of support for working age applicants, particularly those on low incomes; ▪ whether the Family Premium for all new working age applicants should be removed; ▪ reducing backdating of Council Tax applications to one month; ▪ using a set income for self-employed earners after one year's self-employment; ▪ reducing the period for which a person can be absent from the country and still receive Council Tax Reduction to four weeks; ▪ introducing a standard level of non-dependent deduction of £15 for all claimants who have non-dependents resident with them; ▪ whether to take any child maintenance or child benefit paid to a claimant or

Date considered	Policy title	Summary of Committee considerations
		<p>partner into account in full in the calculation of Council Tax Reduction;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ whether to remove the second adult reduction from the scheme; ▪ whether to remove the work related activity component in the calculation of Council Tax Reduction; and ▪ whether to limit the number of dependent children within the calculation for Council Tax to a maximum of two.
17 January 2017	Community Safety Partnership Strategic Assessment	<p>The Swale Community Safety Partnership annually refreshes its Partnership Plan, which is a rolling three year document highlighting how the Partnership plans to tackle community safety issues that matter to the community. The Plan had been issued for consultation and the Committee's comments fed into this consultation.</p> <p>The Committee made a number of comments and suggestions around:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ violence against women and girls; ▪ crime; ▪ anti-social behaviour; and ▪ supporting vulnerable people.
21 February 2017	Property Strategy	<p>The Committee considered an updated version of the Council's Property Asset Strategy 2017-2020.</p> <p>After consideration of the revised Property Asset Strategy, the Committee recommended:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ that the strategy included the integration of new acquisitions and disposals and that this should be reflected in the property strategy for town centre regeneration, and broadened to include town centres for any other sizeable acquisitions; and ▪ that when the review of the Community Asset Transfer Policy was made

Date considered	Policy title	Summary of Committee considerations
		<p>later that year, that the following should be considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ discourage transfers to Community Interest Companies; ○ encourage transfers to registered charities that give the members of the public who are beneficiaries the opportunity to become members of the organisation and to control it; ○ highlight in the policy the role of the Council to assist organisations to be ready to have assets transferred to them by providing training; and ○ encourage a revised procedure for Asset Transfers, that are being funded by a Section 106 Agreement, to ensure that whenever possible the Section 106 monies facilitate additional grants being obtained.

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Council Meeting		Agenda Item:
Meeting Date	22 November 2017	
Report Title	Scrutiny Review of Housing Services	
Cabinet Member	Cllr Andrew Bowles, Leader of the Council	
SMT Lead	Mark Radford, Chief Executive	
Head of Service	N/A	
Lead Officer	N/A	
Key Decision	No	
Classification	Open	
Forward Plan	Reference number:	
Recommendations	1. Council is asked to note the recommendations made by Scrutiny Committee on their review of Housing Services and Cabinet's response to them.	

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is for Council to note the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee in their report on Housing Services, and Cabinet's response to those recommendations.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group (TFG) to review a number of aspects of the Council's Housing Options function including temporary accommodation, pressures on housing services, and the role of housing associations.
- 2.2 The review was conducted principally through a number of meetings between the TFG and people from the local housing sector, including officers at Swale Borough Council and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing. Members of the TFG also took the opportunity of visiting several other local authorities in Kent and speaking to officers and members there.
- 2.3 The final report of the review was agreed by the Scrutiny Committee on 5 July 2017 and it was submitted to Cabinet on 6 September 2017. Cabinet agreed its response to the report's recommendations at its meeting on 4 October 2017.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Committee's recommendations and Cabinet's response to them are set out in Appendix I.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 None.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Scrutiny Committee's Task and Finish Group consulted widely with people and organisations from the local housing sector in Swale, and further afield, before reaching their findings. The responses were considered through Cabinet and officer discussions.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The subject matter supports Priority Theme One: A Borough to be proud of, and Priority Theme Two: A Community to be proud of.
Financial, Resource and Property	The report makes a number of recommendations which had ramifications for Council resources.
Legal and Statutory	The Council is under a duty to provide housing support to families and vulnerable people.
Crime and Disorder	None.
Sustainability	None.
Health and Wellbeing	None.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None.
Equality and Diversity	None.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- Appendix I: Scrutiny Committee's recommendations on Housing Services, together with Cabinet's response.

8 Background Papers

The Scrutiny Committee's report was submitted to Cabinet on 6 September 2017:

<http://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s8196/Cabinet%20-%20SC%20Housing%20Services%20cover%20report.pdf>

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Cabinet Response to the Scrutiny Committee Recommendations

Agenda Item 8

Housing Services Review July 2017

Cabinet Member: Cllr Ken Pugh, Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing

Lead Officer: Amber Christou, Head of Resident Services

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Scrutiny Recommendations	Cabinet Response
A) Cabinet should consider what more the council can do to help housing associations to provide more affordable and social housing in Swale	Agreed. The council works in close partnership with these key organisations, meeting regularly, and supporting funding bids for their homes with the Homes and Communities Agency National Affordable Housing Programme. As the scrutiny committee review report confirms, the operating landscape of social housing providers is changing, and it has become more challenging for them to provide the level of affordable rented housing that is needed within the borough. Housing association Boards are now taking difficult decision to focus more greatly on shared ownership housing, than rented housing, due to viability of house building schemes and the requirement of the lenders. This does not accord with Swale local plan requirements, or the needs of local residents and this will be fully considered within the development of the upcoming housing and homelessness strategy for Swale.
B) Cabinet should consider ways to provide housing associations a closer role in planning application for housing development, e.g. by routinely consulting them.	Agreed. Housing associations partners are engaged in the development of the local plan, and consulted in all relevant planning policies as well as discussions on a site by site basis, as housing developments come forward. We will continue to seek additional ways to provide a closer role where possible and appropriate.
C). Cabinet considers whether it should make further capital investments into selective housing stock.	The Council has agreed an investment strategy for the Council that has two criteria; financial return and strategic impact particularly from a regeneration perspective. Further investment in housing stock does not meet those objectives and there are more cost effective ways of securing alternative

	accommodation that buying stock eg the Council's arrangement for use a number of Optivo properties. The main focus of the Housing Options team remains on preventing homelessness and thereby reducing the need for use of temporary accommodation.
D). Cabinet considers whether the council is doing enough to alleviate social housing pressures, and whether Swale should follow the lead of other councils and adopt a less risk averse approach to property acquisition.	Each Council is in a different financial position; for example some councils take no New Homes Bonus (NHB) into the base budget, which allows them to either buy properties direct or use the NHB to fund debt costs. This Council does take New Homes Bonus into the base and without that would have to find £2.7m of savings to fund this loss of funding annually. There is no scope within either the revenue or capital budget for further acquisition of properties.
E). That the housing team, supported by the Cabinet member for Housing and Wellbeing, bid for capital funding should any empty properties become available that Owners agree to let the council use.	Agreed. The Council supports owners and landlords to secure cost-effective loans to renovate properties to bring back to use with some success. If and when such properties become available, the council will take a proactive approach, including where possible bidding for funds to make best use of the property to meet local needs.
F. Cabinet should consider whether the residency criteria (i.e. living in Swale for four years out of five) in Swale's housing allocations policy is a help or a hindrance towards helping those in housing need, and if the latter, whether the policy should be reviewed	Agreed. With the soon to be implemented Homelessness Reduction Act, and recent case law affecting Reasonable Preference requirements the allocations policy does require a full review, and this will begin by December 2017.
G) That cabinet can be encouraged to write to the Secretary of State for communities and local government drawing attention to the severe pressure Swale was facing in housing homeless families	Agreed.