



AGENDA

CABINET MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 28 October 2020

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: Virtual Meeting via Skype*

Membership:

Councillors Mike Baldock (Vice-Chairman), Monique Bonney, Angela Harrison, Ben J Martin, Richard Palmer, Roger Truelove (Chairman) and Tim Valentine.

Quorum = 3

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Pages

Information for the Public

*Members of the press and public can listen to this meeting live. Details of how to join the meeting will be added to the website after 4pm on 27 October 2020.

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1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes

To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 September 2020 (Minute Nos. 121 -131) as a correct record.

3. 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 Chairman 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 meeting 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.

Part A Reports for recommendation to Council

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Part B Reports for Decision by Cabinet

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| 10. | Local Housing Company | 211 -
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| 11. | Exclusion of Press and Public | |

To decide whether to pass the resolution set out below in respect of the following items:

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act:

3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

- | | | |
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Issued on Friday, 16 October 2020

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact DEMOCRATIC SERVICES on 01795 417330**. To find out more about the work of the Cabinet, please visit www.swale.gov.uk

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

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Agenda Item 4

Cabinet	Agenda Item:
Meeting Date	28 October 2020
Report Title	Review of Fees & Charges 2021/22
Cabinet Member	Cllr Roger Truelove, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
SMT Lead	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer
Head of Service	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer
Lead Officer	Caroline Frampton, Principal Accountant and Lyn Stringer, Insurance Officer
Key Decision	Yes
Classification	Open
Forward Plan	Reference number:
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To approve the proposed fees and charges 2021/22 as set out in this report.2. Regarding Pest Control that delegated authority be given to the Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure Services in consultation with the Chief Financial Officer and the Cabinet Member for Environment to amend the fees and charges and/or the wording to the Pest Control charges based on the outcomes from industry research and expressions of interest over the coming months, and to implement the revised charges to reflect any new pest control contract start dates (which may be before or after the 1 April 2021). If a suitable contract is not deemed viable, these fees and charges will be removed.

1. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report invites Cabinet to consider the proposals for the level of fees and charges to be levied for the next financial year 2021/22. Charges will take effect from 1 April 2021.
- 1.2 All the charges included in this report under the Council's control will take effect from 1 April 2021.

- 1.3 Appendix I details proposals on a service-by-service basis for the level of fees to be charged in 2021/22 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 2020/21 budget for fees and charges for services.
- 1.4 We 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 2020/21 the fees and charges budget covered by this report where the Council sets the level of fees or charges was £3,879k (see Appendix III). As previously reported to Cabinet, fees and charges income, particularly from car parking, will be heavily impacted in this financial year by the consequences of covid 19. The return to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) forecasts a reduction of £1.2 million this year in fees and charges income.
- 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 2021/22 and Appendix II those that are set by Government.
- 3.2 Heads of Service were advised that any indexation be based on the Consumer Price Index (June 0.6%) be used and rounded to the nearest 10 pence.

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 have considered the proposals on 18 November 2020 before submission to Council on 6 January 2021.

6. Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The income from fees and charges is a key component of the Council's budget and is key to supporting the Corporate Plan objectives.
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.
Environment and Sustainability	None identified.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified.
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.
Privacy and Data Collection	None identified

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 2021/22 set by the Council
 - Appendix II: Fees and charges set nationally by Government
 - Appendix III: Summary of fee income for 2020/21 budget

8. Background Papers

None.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Housing Services (C Hudson)							
Home Inspection for Immigration Application Fee							
Requests received to inspect and provide report on suitability of proposed home in connection with immigration applications	120.00	24.00	144.00	123.00	24.60	147.60	The charges reflect officer time and the increase reflects officer hourly rate rounded up. This is a discretionary service that we offer in line with most other authorities, there is little demand for the service but it is competitively priced to provide a service for residents who may wish to get independent confirmation of their property's fitness for the immigration authorities.
Staying Put Handyperson Rates							
Hourly rate for a handyperson	13.50	2.70	16.20	13.50	2.70	16.20	Need to maintain current fee as costs were agreed in the contract with Kent County Council (KCC) supporting people.
Subsidised hourly rate for a handyperson – client in receipt of benefits	5.00	1.00	6.00	5.00	1.00	6.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Private disabled works (household not eligible for Disabled Facilities Grant)	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	Maintain the current fee.
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) fee (statutory % charge)	12.5%			12.5%			Maintain the current fee which is a good rate and is the same as other agencies in Kent or higher. The client is free to choose other agencies if they wish so this keeps us competitive.
Alleygate Key							
Fee	17.92	3.58	21.50	17.92	3.58	21.50	No price increase.
Town Centre Licence							
Licence for large events of 10,000 people or more	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00	No price increase.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Planning (J Freeman)							
Pre-Application Planning Advice							
Meetings							
Very large major	2,500.00	500.00	3,000.00	2,750.00	550.00	3,300.00	10% increase – to recognise cost of providing service.
Major	1,666.66	333.34	2,000.00	1,833.33	366.67	2,200.00	As above.
Minor	416.67	83.33	500.00	458.33	91.67	550.00	As above.
Other (excluding householders and listed buildings)	125.00	25.00	150.00	137.50	27.50	165.00	As above.
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	833.33	166.67	1,000.00	916.67	183.33	1,100.00	10% increase – to recognise cost of providing service.
Major	416.67	83.33	500.00	458.34	91.67	550.00	As above.
Minor	208.33	41.67	250.00	229.16	45.83	275.00	As above.
Other (excluding householders and listed buildings)	62.50	12.50	75.00	68.75	13.75	82.50	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Householder	41.67	8.33	50.00	45.84	9.17	55.00	As above.
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							
Standard fee	500.00	0.00	500.00	550.00	0.00	550.00	10% increase – to recognise cost of providing service.
Planning Portal							
The Planning Portal will be charging a £20 (£16.67 + VAT) service charge payable by applicants on any planning application that attracts a fee. Applications that do not attract a fee will not incur this service charge.							
Planning Photocopying Charges							
	Charges per page			Charges per page			
A4 Black/white	0.17	0.03	0.20	0.17	0.03	0.20	
A3 Black/white	0.25	0.05	0.30	0.25	0.05	0.30	

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
A2 Or larger	3.33	0.67	4.00	3.33	0.67	4.00	
A4 Colour	1.67	0.33	2.00	1.67	0.33	2.00	
A3 Colour	2.50	0.50	3.00	2.50	0.50	3.00	
Local Land Charges							
Official Searches							
LLC1 only	40.00	0.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	No increase proposed.
LLC1 only - additional parcel	11.00	0.00	11.00	11.00	0.00	11.00	As above.
Con 29	100.00	20.00	120.00	100.00	20.00	120.00	As above.
Con 29 - additional parcel	17.50	3.50	21.00	17.50	3.50	21.00	As above.
Standard search (LLC1 & Con29)	140.00	20.00*	160.00	140.00	20.00*	160.00	As above.
Standard search (LLC1 & Con29) - additional parcel	28.50	3.50*	32.00	28.50	3.50*	32.00	As above.
Part II enquiry - Con29 questions 4-21	12.50	2.50	15.00	12.50	2.50	15.00	As above.
Part II enquiry - Con29 question 22	25.00	5.00	30.00	25.00	5.00	30.00	As above.
Additional questions	19.00	3.80	22.80	19.00	3.80	22.80	As above.
*VAT applicable only to the Con29 part of the charge.							
Personal Searches							
Enhanced Personal Search	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
1.1 (a-l) (Planning)	6.00	1.20	7.20	6.00	1.20	7.20	As above.
1.1 (J, K, L) (Building Regulations)	6.00	1.20	7.20	6.00	1.20	7.20	As above.
2.1 (b-d)	5.00	1.00	6.00	5.00	1.00	6.00	As above.
3.1 Land for public purpose	3.00	0.60	3.60	3.00	0.60	3.60	As above.
3.3 Drainage matters	3.00	0.60	3.60	3.00	0.60	3.60	As above.
3.5 Railway schemes	3.00	0.60	3.60	3.00	0.60	3.60	As above.
3.7 Outstanding Notices	10.00	2.00	12.00	10.00	2.00	12.00	As above.
3.8 Building Regulations Contravention	3.00	0.60	3.60	3.00	0.60	3.60	As above.
3.9 Enforcement	6.00	1.20	7.20	6.00	1.20	7.20	As above.
3.10 CILs	4.00	0.80	4.80	4.00	0.80	4.80	As above.
3.12 Compulsory purchase	3.00	0.60	3.60	3.00	0.60	3.60	As above.
3.13b Contaminated land	3.00	0.60	3.60	3.00	0.60	3.60	As above.
3.13c Contaminated land	3.00	0.60	3.60	3.00	0.60	3.60	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Commissioning, Environment and Leisure							
(M Cassell)							
Car Parks and Season Tickets							
All Swale Borough Council car parks are free to use between 6pm and 8am Monday to Sunday							
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)							
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	No change proposed.
Up to 1 hour	0.83	0.17	1.00	0.83	0.17	1.00	As above.
Up to 2 hours	1.67	0.33	2.00	1.67	0.33	2.00	As above.
Up to 4 hours	3.33	0.67	4.00	3.33	0.67	4.00	As above.
Season per quarter (for business only Central car park, Faversham/ Forum, Sittingbourne)	195.83	39.17	235.00	195.83	39.17	235.00	As above.
Electric vehicle parking/charging tariff per hour	0.83	0.17	1.00	0.83	0.17	1.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Bourne Place Multi-Storey Car Park							
The charge is for ALL parking bays including disabled and parent/child bays Patrons of Light Cinema will have free parking all day on Sundays							
Charges apply from date of opening							
Up to 30 minutes	0.42	0.08	0.50	0.42	0.08	0.50	No increase proposed.
Up to 1 hour	0.83	0.17	1.00	0.83	0.17	1.00	As above.
Up to 2 hours	1.67	0.33	2.00	1.67	0.33	2.00	As above.
Up to 3 hours	2.50	0.50	3.00	2.50	0.50	3.00	As above.
Up to 4 hours	3.33	0.67	4.00	3.33	0.67	4.00	As above.
Up to 5 hours	4.17	0.83	5.00	4.17	0.83	5.00	As above.
Up to a maximum of 6 hours	5.00	1.00	6.00	5.00	1.00	6.00	As above.
Over 6 hours (within 24 hour period)	5.83	1.17	7.00	5.83	1.17	7.00	As above.
Lost ticket	N/A	N/A	N/A	5.83	1.17	7.00	Charge already in place mid-year but formalising in fees and charges.
Season ticket per quarter (subject to a maximum capacity)	N/A	N/A	N/A	195.83	39.17	235.00	New addition – limited number will be issued to maintain capacity for Bourne Place leisure facilities.
Travelodge							
(Preferential rate for hotel guests (for 24 hours))	2.50	0.50	3.00	2.50	0.50	3.00	Contracted to stay the same.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
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	No change proposed.
Up to 1 hour	0.83	0.17	1.00	0.83	0.17	1.00	As above.
Up to 2 hours	1.67	0.33	2.00	1.67	0.33	2.00	As above.
Up to 4 hours	3.33	0.67	4.00	3.33	0.67	4.00	As above.
Over 4 hours	4.17	0.83	5.00	4.17	0.83	5.00	As above.
Season per month (long stay car park)	73.33	14.67	88.00	73.33	14.67	88.00	As above.
Season per quarter (long stay car park)	195.83	39.17	235.00	195.83	39.17	235.00	As above.
Long Stay Covering							
Sittingbourne: Cockleshell Walk							
Up to 30 minutes	0.42	0.08	0.50	0.42	0.08	0.50	No change proposed.
Up to 1 hour	0.83	0.17	1.00	0.83	0.17	1.00	No change proposed.
Up to 2 hours	1.67	0.33	2.00	1.67	0.33	2.00	As above.
Up to 4 hours	2.50	0.50	3.00	2.50	0.50	3.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Over 4 hours	3.33	0.67	4.00	3.33	0.67	4.00	As above.
Season per month (long stay car park)	73.33	14.67	88.00	73.33	14.67	88.00	As above.
Season per quarter (long stay car park)	195.83	39.17	235.00	195.83	39.17	235.00	As above.
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	No change proposed.
All day	2.83	0.57	3.40	2.83	0.57	3.40	As above.
Motorcycles	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	As above.
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	No change proposed.
Replacement for lost, stolen or destroyed season tickets	8.34	1.67	10.00	8.34	1.67	10.00	As above.
All pay and display car parks – closure of parking bays through events or other activities	Price on application dependent on car park location, type of event (commercial – enthusiast – voluntary/ community) and local impact		Price on application dependent on car park location, type of event (commercial – enthusiast – voluntary/community) and local impact				

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
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	17.08	3.42	20.50	17.08	3.42	20.50	No change proposed.
Sheerness: Delamark Road car park (residents only)							
Per quarter	12.92	2.58	15.50	12.92	2.58	15.50	No change proposed.
Residents' Parking Permits (on street)							
Per annum	45.00	0.00	45.00	45.00	0.00	45.00	No change proposed.
Visitors permit book (10 days)	11.00	0.00	11.00	11.00	0.00	11.00	As above.
Visitors parking permits (per day)	1.10	0.00	1.10	1.10	0.00	1.10	As above.
Hourly scratchcards (per hour)	1.10	0.00	1.10	1.10	0.00	1.10	As above.
Hourly scratchcards (per book of 10 hours)	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	No change proposed.
Business per annum	45.00	0.00	45.00	45.00	0.00	45.00	As above.
Nativity Close (exemption permit concession admin fee)	30.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Residents/Business/Exemption permit concessions. Replacement permit for lost, stolen or destroyed permits	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.
<i>Dispensation / Waivers</i>							
Maximum 1 day	11.00	0.00	11.00	11.00	0.00	11.00	No change proposed.
Maximum 1 week	33.00	0.00	33.00	33.00	0.00	33.00	As above.
Maximum 3 months	55.00	0.00	55.00	55.00	0.00	55.00	As above.
Suspension admin fee	70.00	0.00	70.00	70.00	0.00	70.00	As above.
Sports Facilities							
<i>With changing facilities and showers</i>							
- Senior	62.58	12.52	75.10	63.00	12.60	75.60	Indexation applied. Comparable with Medway and Maidstone.
- Under 18s	20.92	4.18	25.10	21.00	4.20	25.20	Indexation applied.
- Under 16s & mini soccer	15.67	3.13	18.80	15.75	3.15	18.90	As above.
<i>With changing facilities only</i>							
- Senior	52.17	10.43	62.60	52.50	10.50	63.00	As above.
- Under 18s	17.42	3.48	20.90	17.50	3.50	21.00	As above.
- Under 16s & mini soccer	14.75	2.95	17.70	14.80	2.96	17.80	Indexation applied. Rounded up.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
With no facilities							
- Senior	35.67	7.13	42.80	35.90	7.18	43.10	Indexation applied. Rounded up.
- Under 18s	15.58	3.12	18.70	15.67	3.13	18.80	Indexation applied. Rounded down.
- Under 16s & mini soccer	9.58	1.92	11.50	9.60	1.92	11.50	Indexation applied. Rounded down resulting in no change.
Block bookings of 10 or more series of lets is VAT exempt. Varies based on prices above minus VAT.							
Allotments							
Plots of 10 rods & pro rata	43.80	0.00	43.80	44.10	0.00	44.10	Indexation applied.
Plots of 10 rods & pro rata (OAPs/Disabled)	21.90	0.00	21.90	22.10	0.00	22.10	As above.
King George's Pavilion							
Main hall/tea room (hourly rate) (minimum hire 1 hour)							
Mon-Sun (9am-midnight)	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.10	0.00	10.10	As above.
Playgroups (per morning)	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.20	0.00	25.20	As above.
Tea room – for children's parties only (per hour) minimum 1 hour hire							
	8.00	0.00	8.00	8.10	0.00	8.10	As above.
Caretaking services – set up and clear away: standard tables and/or chairs	6.00	0.00	6.00	6.10	0.00	6.10	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Refundable deposits	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	No increase.
Bank Holidays, New Year's Eve	Double the standard rate			Double the standard rate			
Cemeteries Burial Fees							
<i>Exclusive Right of Burial, Interment, Memorial & Re-inscription Permits</i>							
1 st Burial Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	1,933.00	0.00	1,933.00	1,944.60	0.00	1,944.60	Indexation applied.
1 st Burial Sheppey	1,773.00	0.00	1,773.00	1,783.60	0.00	1,783.60	As above.
1 st Burial if no use of previously purchased grave Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	963.00	0.00	963.00	968.80	0.00	968.80	As above.
1 st Burial if no use of previously purchased grave Sheppey	796.00	0.00	796.00	800.80	0.00	800.80	As above.
2 nd Burial Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	796.00	0.00	796.00	800.80	0.00	800.80	As above.
2 nd Burial Sheppey	658.00	0.00	658.00	662.00	0.00	662.00	As above.
3 rd Burial Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	658.00	0.00	658.00	662.00	0.00	662.00	As above.
<i>Cremated Remains</i> <i>(includes Exclusive Rights to Burial, Interment, Memorial & Re-inscription Permit)</i>							
1 st Burial	594.00	0.00	594.00	612.70	0.00	612.70	Fee adjustment plus inflation.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
1 st Burial (where no use has been made of previously purchased grave)	216.00	0.00	216.00	222.30	0.00	222.30	Fee adjustment plus inflation.
2 nd Burial	216.00	0.00	216.00	222.30	0.00	222.30	As above.
3 rd Burial	216.00	0.00	216.00	222.30	0.00	222.30	As above.
4 th Burial	216.00	0.00	216.00	222.30	0.00	222.30	As above.
Burial of loose ashes	100.00	0.00	100.00	103.60	0.00	103.60	As above.
Child Burial							
Under 18 years of age	0.00	0.00	0.00	Covered by Children's Funeral Fund for England. Subject to criteria.			Not strictly a new charge, it is a change in the way we claim back costs from Central Government.
Ancillary Services							
Issue of letter of confirmation where deed is lost	62.00	0.00	62.00	62.40	0.00	62.40	Indexation applied.
Use of chapel in Sittingbourne	87.00	0.00	87.00	87.50	0.00	87.50	As above.
Use of chapel in Faversham	118.00	0.00	118.00	118.70	0.00	118.70	As above.
Planted grave (per annum)	118.00	0.00	118.00	118.70	0.00	118.70	As above.
Turfed grave	At cost			At cost			
Transfer of deed ownership	62.00	0.00	62.00	62.40	0.00	62.40	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Record search & certificate (each grave)	31.00	0.00	31.00	31.20	0.00	31.20	As above.
Extra cost of large coffin or casket (measuring 30 inches or more)	160.00	0.00	160.00	161.00	0.00	161.00	As above.
Exhumation of coffin	1,600.00	0.00	1,600.00	1,609.60	0.00	1,609.60	As above.
Exhumation of cremated remains	297.00	0.00	297.00	298.80	0.00	298.80	As above.
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)							
Memorial Bench (Seafronts & Green Space, Excludes Cemeteries)							
Memorial bench with basic installation	652.17	130.43	782.60	656.10	131.22	787.30	Indexation applied. Rounded down.
Memorial bench with concrete installation	826.08	165.22	991.30	831.00	166.20	997.20	Indexation applied.
Travelling Fairs							
Pitch premium for days open to the public only (per day)	900.00	0.00	900.00	905.50	0.00	905.50	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
<i>Use of Council Land – Travelling Fairs</i>							
On site fee payable whether or not open to the public (including arrival and departure days)	57.30	0.00	57.30	57.90	0.00	57.90	As above.
Refundable deposit	600.00	0.00	600.00	600.00	0.00	600.00	No uplift.
<i>Use of Council Land – Travelling Shows</i>							
On site fee for days open to the public	200.00	0.00	200.00	201.20	0.00	201.20	Indexation applied.
On site fee payable when not open to the public (including arrival and departure days)	57.30	0.00	57.30	57.90	0.00	57.90	As above.
Refundable deposit	600.00	0.00	600.00	600.00	0.00	600.00	No uplift.
<i>Use of Council Land – Events</i>							
On site fee for small commercial events – day usage of open space	200.00	0.00	200.00	201.20	0.00	201.20	Indexation applied.
On site fee for large commercial events – day usage of open space	Price on Application			Price on Application			
On site fee for enthusiast event – day usage of open space	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.60	0.00	100.60	50% of commercial fee above.
On site fee for community/voluntary event – day usage of open space	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Refundable deposit	N/A	N/A	N/A	200.00	0.00	200.00	
Beach Hut Charges							
Locations now at Minster Leas and Leysdown							
Ground rental – beach hut owned	402.50	0.00	402.50	404.90	0.00	404.90	Indexation applied.
Annual rental	1,075.00	215.00	1,290.00	1,081.50	216.30	1,297.80	As above.
Refundable keys deposit	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	No increase.
Transfer of an owned beach hut licence	A fee of three times the ground rent or 10% of the sale value whichever is greatest		A fee of three times the ground rent or 10% of the sale value whichever is greatest				
Purchase of beach hut	Market price		Market price		A recent valuation was £12,000 for a Beach Hut.		
Access Over Open Space Licence							
Used for residential properties requiring access over our land to undertake works/deliveries etc.							
Standard fee	65.00	0.00	65.00	65.40	0.00	65.40	Indexation applied.
Traffic Regulation Order Applications							
<i>On application (yellow lines and changes to existing orders)</i>							
Small (1-30 consultations)	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,006.00	0.00	1,006.00	Indexation applied.
Medium (31-50 consultations)	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1,207.20	0.00	1,207.20	As above.
Large (50+ consultations)	1,500.00	0.00	1,500.00	1,509.00	0.00	1,509.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
<i>On application (loading bays, single bays)</i>							
Small (1-30 consultations)	500.00	0.00	500.00	503.00	0.00	503.00	As above.
Medium (31-50 consultations)	750.00	0.00	750.00	754.50	0.00	754.50	As above.
Large (50+ consultations)	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,006.00	0.00	1,006.00	As above.
<i>No objections received (yellow lines and changes to existing orders)</i>							
All size consultations	500.00	0.00	500.00	503.00	0.00	503.00	As above.
<i>No objections received (loading bays, single bays)</i>							
All size consultations	250.00	0.00	250.00	251.50	0.00	251.50	As above.
<i>Objections received (Joint Transportation Board report)</i>							
All size consultations	250.00	0.00	250.00	251.50	0.00	251.50	As above.
<i>Progress/implement scheme (yellow lines and changes to existing orders)</i>							
Small (1-30 consultations)	500.00	0.00	500.00	503.00	0.00	503.00	As above.
Medium (31-50 consultations)	600.00	0.00	600.00	603.60	0.00	603.60	As above.
Large (50+ consultations)	700.00	0.00	700.00	704.20	0.00	704.20	As above.
<i>Progress/implement scheme (loading bays, single bays)</i>							
Small (1-30 consultations)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.60	0.00	100.60	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Medium (31-50 consultations)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.60	0.00	100.60	As above.
Large (50+ consultations)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.60	0.00	100.60	As above.
Inclusion of new or amended waiting restrictions into Traffic Regulation Order	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,006.00	0.00	1,006.00	As above.
White Bar Markings							
Installation of new white bar marking across vehicle crossing	125.00	25.00	150.00	125.00	25.00	150.00	No change. Charging for these from August 2020.
Re-painting existing white bar marking across vehicle crossing	104.17	20.83	125.00	104.17	20.83	125.00	As above.
Street Naming & Numbering							
Changing or requesting new property	64.80	0.00	64.80	65.20	0.00	65.20	Indexation applied.
New street name	108.00	0.00	108.00	108.60	0.00	108.60	As above.
New street developments (4 or more properties/units) per property/unit with minimum charge of £180	44.20	0.00	44.20	44.50	0.00	44.50	As above.
Provision of historical information relating to street naming & numbering	27.60	0.00	27.60	27.80	0.00	27.80	As above.
Changing street name	664.50	0.00	664.50	668.50	0.00	668.50	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Harbour Mooring Fees							
Faversham Town Quay per night	7.50	1.50	9.00	7.58	1.52	9.10	Indexation applied plus round up to nearest 10p.
Garden Waste Subscription (brown bins – domestic)							
Fortnightly collection of garden waste (excluding Christmas where service is suspended for 2 weeks). Fee includes hire of bin. Price is per annum	37.00	0.00	37.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	Bring fee closer in line with partners and neighbouring authorities. This is one of the lowest prices in Kent.
Bulky Waste Collections							
Charge covers up to 4 bulky items. If fridge/fridge-freezer, charge covers only one item, but any size	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.20	0.00	25.20	Inflation increase only.
Wheeled Bins							
Wheeled bins 140 litre	39.60	0.00	39.60	39.80	0.00	39.80	Inflation increase only.
Wheeled bins 180 litre	44.80	0.00	44.80	45.10	0.00	45.10	As above.
Wheeled bins 240 litre	44.80	0.00	44.80	45.10	0.00	45.10	As above.
Wheeled bins 1,100 litre	435.00	0.00	435.00	437.60	0.00	437.60	As above.
Lid in lid 140 litre food waste bin	78.20	0.00	78.20	78.70	0.00	78.70	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Food waste container 23 litre	10.40	0.00	10.40	10.50	0.00	10.50	As above.
Kitchen caddy 5 litre	5.20	0.00	5.20	5.20	0.00	5.20	Inflation increase resulted in no change.
Note: Wheeled bins are non-vatable when supplied directly to a householder for domestic/household waste collection.							
Additional Litter Bins (each)							
Wybone 145 litre galvanised (fee does not include emptying the bin)	260.83	52.17	313.00	262.42	52.48	314.90	Inflation increase. Rounded up.
Bin Store Clearance							
Per occasion	125.00	0.00	125.00	125.80	0.00	125.80	As above.
Wheeled Bins for Community Events							
Provision of wheeled bins for events (cost per occasion) – delivery/ collection charge	82.50	16.50	99.00	83.00	16.60	99.60	As above.
Wheeled bin hire (cost per bin)	10.42	2.08	12.50	10.50	2.10	12.60	As above.
Servicing of bins during event	Price on application			Price on application			
Radar Key for Disabled Toilets							
Fee	3.00	0.00	3.00	3.00	0.00	3.00	Inflation increase resulted in no change.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Environmental – Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)							
Fly tipping	400.00 ¹	0.00	400.00 ¹	400.00¹	0.00	400.00¹	Already set at maximum permitted.
Householders duty of care – lack of care in disposal of waste	400.00 ¹	0.00	400.00 ¹	400.00¹	0.00	400.00¹	As above.
Refuse left out inappropriately	80.00	0.00	80.00	80.00	0.00	80.00	As above.
Littering and graffiti	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	As above.
Fly posting	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	As above.
Waste carrier offences	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	As above.
Failure to comply with a Community Protection Notice	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Breach of any Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
¹Reduced to £300.00 if paid in full within 10 days							
All of these Environmental FPN's are at the maximum allowed by the Government banding							

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Animal Welfare Licensing							
The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations 2018 came into force on 1 October 2018. Charges have been calculated using the Local Government Association guidance document on locally set licence fees ('Open for Business').							
<i>Part A</i> - Covers the application and authorisation process.							
<i>Part B</i> - Is the cost for administering and enforcing the legislative framework.							
Boarding in Kennels for Dogs, Boarding for Cats, Day Care for Dogs, Home Boarding for Dogs, Breeding Dogs and Selling Animals as Pets							
(This fee applies to both arranging the provision of accommodation for other people's dogs and/or host families where dogs are boarded within the Borough.)							
<i>Part A</i>	211.00 ¹	0.00	211.00 ¹	212.30¹	0.00	212.30¹	Inflation increase only.
<i>Part B</i>	169.00	0.00	169.00	170.00	0.00	170.00	As above.
1 Star and 2 Star establishments - 1 year licence							
3 Star and 4 Star establishments - 2 year licence	282.00	0.00	282.00	283.70	0.00	283.70	As above.
5 Star establishments - 3 year licence	395.00	0.00	395.00	397.40	0.00	397.40	As above.
Hiring of Horses							
<i>Part A</i>	211.00 ¹	0.00	211.00 ¹	212.30¹	0.00	212.30¹	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Part B	169.00 ³	0.00	169.00 ³	170.00³	0.00	170.00³	As above.
1 Star and 2 Star establishments - 1 year licence							
3 Star and 4 Star establishments - 2 year licence	282.00 ²	0.00	282.00 ²	283.70²	0.00	283.70²	As above.
5 Star establishments - 3 year licence	395.00 ²	0.00	395.00 ²	397.40²	0.00	397.40²	As above.
Keeping or Training Animals for Exhibition							
Part A	211.00 ¹	0.00	211.00 ¹	212.30¹	0.00	212.30¹	As above.
For a 3 year licence							
Part B	395.00 ³	0.00	395.00 ³	397.40³	0.00	397.40³	As above.
For a 3 year licence							
Dangerous Wild Animal Licence							
Part A	211.00 ¹	0.00	211.00 ¹	212.30¹	0.00	212.30¹	As above.
For a 2 year licence							
Part B	282.00 ³	0.00	282.00 ³	283.70³	0.00	283.70³	As above.
For a 2 year licence							

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Zoo Licence (Please discuss your application with the Animal Control Officer prior to applying for a licence.)							
Part A For a 4 year licence	950.00 ²	0.00	950.00 ²	955.70²	0.00	955.70²	As above.
Part B For a 4 year licence	525.00 ³	0.00	525.00 ³	528.60³	0.00	528.60³	As above.
¹ Plus vet fees based upon an hourly rate (including travel time) ² Plus vet fees for an initial inspection based upon an hourly rate (including travel time) ³ Plus annual vet fees based upon an hourly rate (including travel time)							
Other Charges							
Licence renewals	Charged at the same rate as new applications			Charged at the same rate as new applications			
Request for re-inspection (for all licences) (plus vet fees if applicable)	90.00	0.00	90.00	90.50	0.00	90.50	As above.
Requests for Variations							
Administration amendment only	34.00	0.00	34.00	34.20	0.00	34.20	As above.
Inspector visit (if required) (additional to administration charge)	56.00	0.00	56.00	56.30	0.00	56.30	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Vet fees	Will be recharged based upon an hourly rate plus travel time			Will be recharged based upon an hourly rate plus travel time			
Stray Dog Collection							
Fee for collecting/returning stray dogs	30.00	0.00	30.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	The kennel used to house stray dogs is now based outside of the borough. The £5.00 increase reflects increased officer time.
Out of hours fee for collecting/returning stray dogs	40.00	0.00	40.00	45.00	0.00	45.00	As above.
Transport fee for returning dog to owner	25.00	0.00	25.00	30.00	0.00	30.00	As above.
Pest Control							
Rats (per visit) with a minimum of 2 visits required	24.17	4.83	29.00	25.00	5.00	30.00	These charges include inflation rounded up to the nearest pound to make them consistent with Maidstone BC fees and charges as we will be tendering in partnership for a new pest control contractor from January 2021.
Mice (per visit) with a minimum of 2 visits required	24.17	4.83	29.00	25.00	5.00	30.00	As above.
Wasps per nest	48.75	9.75	58.50	50.00	10.00	60.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Wasps per additional nest	8.33	1.67	10.00	9.17	1.83	11.00	As above.
Fleas and other household pests (up to 6 rooms)	58.33	11.67	70.00	59.17	11.83	71.00	As above.
Each additional room (up to 4)	8.33	1.67	10.00	9.17	1.83	11.00	As above.
Cockroaches in domestic premises (up to 6 rooms)	58.33	11.67	70.00	59.17	11.83	71.00	As above.
Each additional room (up to 4)	8.33	1.67	10.00	9.17	1.83	11.00	As above.
Ants, insects etc.	25.00	5.00	30.00	25.83	5.17	31.00	As above.
Bed bugs (up to 4 bedroom house). Anything larger will require a survey	233.33	46.67	280.00	238.33	47.67	286.00	As above.
Hourly charge for treatments carried out on industrial and commercial properties (hourly rate)	To be quoted by contractors on a job by job basis so as to remain competitive		To be quoted by contractors on a job by job basis so as to remain competitive				As above.
For treatments outside of normal office hours (hourly rate)	As above		As above				As above.
Woodworm, birds, death watch beetle, foxes, moles & squirrels	Price on application (surveys required)		Price on application (surveys required)				As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Environmental Health (T Beattie)							
Food Export Certificate							
For businesses already in receipt of Export Health Certificate (EHC) issued by Swale BC	120.00	0.00	120.00	121.00	0.00	121.00	Approximately 0.8% increase to reflect static fee for previous 2 years
For new businesses applying for export certificates	250.00	0.00	250.00	251.00	0.00	251.00	As above.
Admin charge for changes to certificate	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.50	0.00	25.50	Slight increase to reflect static fee for previous 2 years.
EHC for transit through non-EU countries to destination country	30.00	0.00	30.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	No transit certificates have been issued. Other similar councils charge significantly more.
Voluntary Surrender of Food							
Charge for food unfit for human consumption or unsuitable for sale	204.00	0.00	204.00	205.00	0.00	205.00	Document used by some companies to reclaim loss of food from insurance company or third party government exporters.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Level 2 Award Training in Food Safety in Catering							
Fee charged to food handlers for training in food hygiene	65.00	0.00	65.00	65.00	0.00	65.00	Minimal uptake of the course due to alternative cheaper on-line course availability plus impact of Covid 19. Maintain at current level to review uptake over further 12 month period.
Food Hygiene Rating Scheme							
Fee to food businesses for re-inspection and re-scoring	163.00	0.00	163.00	164.00	0.00	164.00	Rescore requests between 10 -15 per year.
Food Business Advice							
Fee to food businesses for pre-opening advice	N/A	N/A	N/A	45.84	9.16	55.00	Hourly rate for non-mandatory direct approach by a food business for advice on; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Plans and layout of the food business. (including approved premises) setting up a new food business (pre start up advice) kitchen design advice or expanding an existing business.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Registration Fee under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act							
(Relates to establishments offering cosmetic piercing, electrolysis, tattooing or acupuncture)							
Standard fee	319.00	0.00	319.00	320.00	0.00	320.00	Approximately 15 – 20 applications received per year.
Supplementary treatment registration fee (for additional beauty treatment registration inspection either at or after initial registration)	54.00	0.00	54.00	54.50	0.00	54.50	Fewer than 5 per year.
Tattoo and Beauty Treatment Events (falling within the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act)	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	No increase due to impact of coronavirus on large gatherings potentially limiting this event for the foreseeable future. Currently no events planned in Swale district.
Tattoo and Beauty Treatment Event charge for Artists (new artist registrations)	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Requests for Environmental Information (e.g. Contaminated land)							
Charge per hour	N/A	N/A	N/A	45.84	9.16	55.00	New direct approach from consultant to review and approve either scope of works or completed report prior to submission. Written response and advice provided and site visits.
Requests for Enhanced Environmental Information for Contaminated Land and Professional Opinion							
Charge per hour	N/A	N/A	N/A	45.84	9.16	55.00	New charge to provide additional research into planning history to identify any contaminated land reports that may be connected to the site. Professional opinion on likelihood of site being subject to further investigation under P2A of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 based on information available to the council at the time of the request.
Charges for photocopying apply at 10p per page plus postage							

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Pre-Application Consultation for Environmental Health Advice for Acoustics, Air Quality, Contaminated Land Assessments							
Charge per hour	N/A	N/A	N/A	45.84	9.16	55.00	New direct approach from consultant to review and approve either scope of works or completed report prior to submission. Written response and advice provided and site visits.
Private Water Supplies Regulations 2016 & 2018 Amendments							
Risk assessment (hourly rate)	500.00	0.00	500.00	45.84	9.16	55.00	The charge setting arrangement has transferred to district authority from central government; the £500 was a maximum charge which now does not apply. The proposal is to cover costs based on an hourly officer charge.
Sampling (hourly rate)	100.00	0.00	100.00	45.84	9.16	55.00	Hourly officer charge.
Investigation (hourly rate)	100.00	0.00	100.00	45.84	9.16	55.00	Hourly officer charge.
Derogation request	100.00	0.00	100.00	45.84	9.16	55.00	Hourly officer charge.
Analysis – Group A – Laboratory charge passed directly to owner/ occupier/person requesting sample	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Laboratory charge passed directly to owner/occupier/person requesting sample.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Analysis – Group B – Laboratory charge passed directly to owner/ occupier/person requesting sample	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Analysis – audit monitoring	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Resources							
(D Fackrell)							
Taxi Licensing							
Vehicle licence for 1 year	290.00	0.00	290.00	290.00	0.00	290.00	This fee rate came into effect in June 2017 following an extensive review. It is therefore not felt to be necessary to increase these charges for 2021/22.
Private Hire operator licence valid for 5 years	430.00	0.00	430.00	430.00	0.00	430.00	As above.
Licence and plate for temporary hire vehicle	40.00	0.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	As above.
Knowledge test – initial	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	As above.
Knowledge test – re-sit	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	As above.
Dual / Private Hire Drivers Badge for 1 year (for medical or over 70 years of age)	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	As above.
Upgrade Private Hire Drivers Badge to a Dual Badge	35.00	0.00	35.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	As above.
Dual / Private Hire Drivers Badge for 3 years	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	As above.
Non-refundable plate fee (plate number only issued once)	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Replacement plate	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	As above.
Change of address	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.
Change of ownership licensed vehicle	35.00	0.00	35.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	As above.
Dual / Private Hire Drivers badge replacement	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.
Replacement paper licence certificate	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.
Change of vehicle on an existing plate	80.00	0.00	80.00	80.00	0.00	80.00	As above.
Street Trading Licensing							
Annual consents (not events)	110.00	0.00	110.00	110.00	0.00	110.00	The Street Trading Policy is currently being reviewed and the cost of producing these consents will be investigated as part of that review.
6 month consents (not events)	55.00	0.00	55.00	55.00	0.00	55.00	As above.
One off consent	35.00	0.00	35.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	As above.
Event Consents							
1-19 stalls	75.00	0.00	75.00	75.00	0.00	75.00	As above.
20-49 stalls	145.00	0.00	145.00	145.00	0.00	145.00	As above.
50+ stalls	220.00	0.00	220.00	220.00	0.00	220.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Gambling Licensing							
<i>New Applications/Applications for Provisional Statement</i>							
Small casino	8,000.00	0.00	8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00	8,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £8,000.
Large casino	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £10,000.
Bingo club	2,375.00	0.00	2,375.00	2,389.00	0.00	2,389.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £3,500. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Betting premises	2,365.00	0.00	2,365.00	2,379.00	0.00	2,379.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £3,000. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Tracks	1,855.00	0.00	1,855.00	1,866.00	0.00	1,866.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £2500. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Family entertainment centres	1,855.00	0.00	1,855.00	1,866.00	0.00	1,866.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £2,000. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Adult gaming centre	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £2,000.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Temporary use notice	255.00	0.00	255.00	256.50	0.00	256.50	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £500. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
<i>Licence Applications (Provisional Statement Holders)</i>							
Small casino	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	0.00	3,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £3,000.
Large casino	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £5,000.
Bingo club	980.00	0.00	980.00	985.90	0.00	985.90	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Betting premises	980.00	0.00	980.00	985.90	0.00	985.90	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Tracks	950.00	0.00	950.00	950.00	0.00	950.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £950.
Family entertainment centre	815.00	0.00	815.00	819.90	0.00	819.90	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £950. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Adult gaming centre	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Annual Fee							
Small casino	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £5,000.
Large casino	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00	10,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £10,000.
Bingo club	735.00	0.00	735.00	739.40	0.00	739.40	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,000. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Betting premises	485.00	0.00	485.00	487.90	0.00	487.90	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £600. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Tracks	735.00	0.00	735.00	739.40	0.00	739.40	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,000. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Family entertainment centres	640.00	0.00	640.00	643.80	0.00	643.80	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £750. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Adult gaming centre	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,000.
Application to Vary							
Small casino	4,000.00	0.00	4,000.00	4,000.00	0.00	4,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £4,000.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Large casino	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00	0.00	5,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £5,000.
Bingo club	1,620.00	0.00	1,620.00	1,629.70	0.00	1,629.70	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,750. 0.6% inflationary increase applied,
Betting premises	1,365.00	0.00	1,365.00	1,373.20	0.00	1,373.20	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,500. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Tracks	1,240.00	0.00	1,240.00	1,247.40	0.00	1,247.40	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,250. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Family entertainment centres	840.00	0.00	840.00	845.00	0.00	845.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,000. 1.9% inflationary increase applied.
Adult gaming centre	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,000.
Copy licence	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £25.
Notification of change	35.00	0.00	35.00	35.20	0.00	35.20	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £50. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
<i>Application to Transfer a Licence</i>							
Small casino	1,800.00	0.00	1,800.00	1,800.00	0.00	1,800.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,800.
Large casino	2,150.00	0.00	2,150.00	2,150.00	0.00	2,150.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £2,150.
Bingo club	980.00	0.00	980.00	985.90	0.00	985.90	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Betting premises	980.00	0.00	980.00	985.90	0.00	985.90	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Tracks	900.00	0.00	900.00	905.40	0.00	905.40	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £950. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Family entertainment centres	900.00	0.00	900.00	905.40	0.00	905.40	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £950. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Adult gaming centre	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200.
<i>Application for Re-instatement</i>							
Small casino	1,800.00	0.00	1,800.00	1,800.00	0.00	1,800.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,800.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Large casino	2,150.00	0.00	2,150.00	2,150.00	0.00	2,150.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £2,150.
Bingo club	980.00	0.00	980.00	985.90	0.00	985.90	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Betting premises	980.00	0.00	980.00	985.90	0.00	985.90	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Tracks	900.00	0.00	900.00	905.40	0.00	905.40	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £950. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Family entertainment centres	900.00	0.00	900.00	905.40	0.00	905.40	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £950. 0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Adult gaming centre	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1,200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200.
Sex Establishment Licensing (sex shop, sex cinema and sex encounter venue)							
Application fee and 1 st licence	4,385.00	0.00	4,385.00	4,411.30	0.00	4,411.30	0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Annual licence renewal	680.00	0.00	680.00	684.10	0.00	684.10	As above.
Application to vary	785.00	0.00	785.00	789.70	0.00	789.70	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Transfer of licence	30.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00	Applying the 0.6% inflationary increase meant this fee would rise to £30.20. This is an occasional charge so is better to be kept at £30.00.
Duplicate licence	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	Applying the 0.6% inflationary increase meant this fee would rise to £15.10. This is an occasional charge so is better to be kept at £15.00.
Scrap Metal Dealers Licensing							
Site licence	470.00	0.00	470.00	472.80	0.00	472.80	0.6% inflationary increase applied.
Site licence renewal	450.00	0.00	450.00	452.70	0.00	452.70	As above.
Collections licence, grant or renewal	220.00	0.00	220.00	221.30	0.00	221.30	As above.
Variation – collector to site	75.00	0.00	75.00	75.50	0.00	75.50	As above.
Variation – site to collector	55.00	0.00	55.00	55.30	0.00	55.30	As above.
Variation (minor administration, such as change of address)	35.00	0.00	35.00	35.20	0.00	35.20	As above.
Change of site manager	105.00	0.00	105.00	105.60	0.00	105.60	As above.
Pleasure Boat Licence							
Licence	145.00	0.00	145.00	145.90	0.00	145.90	0.6% inflationary increase applied.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Pavement Licence							
Application Fee	0.00	0.00	0.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Licence came into effect in July 2020 under the Business & Planning Act 2020. Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum of £100.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			2020/21
	VAT 20%	Total Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Legal							
(P Narebor)							
Legal Charges for Third Parties							
Hourly rate (no VAT)	221.00	0.00	221.00	225.00	0.00	225.00	This represents a 1.8 % or £4 increase. The reason for this rise is to ensure we are recouping the cost of the statutory services we provide which is the basis for our hourly charge rate. 90% of our costs are represented by salary which saw a 2% rise in April.
Hourly rate (when VAT applicable)	221.00	44.20	265.20	225.00	45.00	270.00	As above.
Note: VAT may be chargeable depending on the nature of the transaction. VAT is not payable in relation to most income (as most income is S106 related, which derives from a statutory function) but VAT is payable in certain circumstances, e.g. charging for provision of extra copies of documents.							No increase in total income is expected as S.106 agreements are expected to be down based on the fall in planning applications.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Property							
(A Adams)							
Room Hire of Swale House							
<i>Non-Commercial</i>							
Council chamber (half day)	75.00	15.00	90.00	75.00	15.00	90.00	Review of charges not necessary as current hirers are all exempt.
Council chamber (full day)	125.00	25.00	150.00	125.00	25.00	150.00	As above.
Committee room (half day)	50.00	10.00	60.00	50.00	10.00	60.00	As above.
Committee room (full day)	75.00	15.00	90.00	75.00	15.00	90.00	As above.
Assembly room (half day)	37.50	7.50	45.00	37.50	7.50	45.00	As above.
Assembly room (full day)	62.50	12.50	75.00	62.50	12.50	75.00	As above.
<i>Commercial</i>							
Council chamber (half day)	150.00	30.00	180.00	150.00	30.00	180.00	As above.
Council chamber (full day)	250.00	50.00	300.00	250.00	50.00	300.00	As above.
Committee room (half day)	100.00	20.00	120.00	100.00	20.00	120.00	As above.
Committee room (full day)	150.00	30.00	180.00	150.00	30.00	180.00	As above.
Assembly room (half day)	75.00	15.00	90.00	75.00	15.00	90.00	As above.
Assembly room (full day)	125.00	25.00	150.00	125.00	25.00	150.00	As above.

Proposed fees and charges for 2021/22 set by the Council

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Charity groups or meetings where Swale residents will benefit	No cost			No cost			
Guildhall (minimum 1 session hire)							
Main hall (minimum 1 session)							
Session (am/pm)	40.00	0.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	As above.
Refundable deposits	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	As above.
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	As above.
Landlord's Consent Fee							
Assignments, subletting, charging	300.00	60.00*	360.00	300.00	60.00*	360.00	Fees are maintained at the appropriate level.
Alterations	300.00	60.00*	360.00	300.00	60.00*	360.00	As above.
* VAT is only applicable if the rent is subject to VAT.							

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Housing Services (C Hudson)							
Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing							
<i>New Application</i>							
Non-accredited landlord	694.60	0.00	694.60	708.50	0.00	708.50	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in processing applications, costs reflect officer time.
Accredited landlord	569.20	0.00	569.20	580.60	0.00	580.60	As above.
<i>Renewal of Application</i>							
Non-accredited landlord	524.30	0.00	524.30	534.80	0.00	534.80	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in processing applications, costs reflect officer time.
Accredited landlord	461.00	0.00	461.00	470.20	0.00	470.20	As above.
Mobile Home Site Licence Fee							
<i>New Mobile Home Site Licence Application Fee</i>							
1-5 mobile homes on site	150.00	0.00	150.00	153.00	0.00	153.00	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in managing and processing licence applications; reviewed time involved and adjusted hourly costs accordingly.
6-24 mobile homes on site	206.00	0.00	206.00	210.00	0.00	210.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
25-99 mobile homes on site	262.00	0.00	262.00	267.00	0.00	267.00	As above.
100+ mobile homes on site	301.00	0.00	301.00	307.00	0.00	307.00	As above. No sites of this size exist at present.
Annual Mobile Home Site Inspection Fee							
Relevant sites occupied solely by owners and family members	No charge			No charge			These sites once set up cause no additional work to the Council.
1-5 mobile homes on site	No charge			No charge			As above.
6-24 mobile homes on site	168.30	0.00	168.30	172.00	0.00	172.00	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in inspecting site any excess would need to be then taken into account in the following year and fees would need to be reduced accordingly.
25-99 mobile homes on site	202.00	0.00	202.00	206.00	0.00	206.00	Increase due to correction of hours to inspect site, as statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in inspecting site, any excess would need to be taken into account in the following year and fees would need to be reduced accordingly.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
100+ mobile homes on site	243.80	0.00	243.80	248.70	0.00	248.70	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in inspecting site any excess would need to be taken into account in the following year and fees would need to be reduced accordingly. No sites of this size exist within Swale at present.
Fee to Transfer or Amend Mobile Home Site Licence							
Transfer or amend mobile home site licence	109.10	0.00	109.10	111.30	0.00	111.30	Statute allows for recovery of costs involved - hourly rate adjusted to reflect increase in salaries.
Fee for the Deposit of Mobile Home Site Rules							
Deposit of mobile home site rules	149.90	0.00	149.90	152.90	0.00	152.90	Statute allows for recovery of costs involved - hourly rate adjusted to reflect increase in salaries.
Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations 2015							
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	Maximum fine set by statute intermediate levels set by Cabinet.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
The Redress Scheme for Lettings Agency Work & Management Work Order 2014							
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	Maximum fine set by statute intermediate levels set by Cabinet.
Non-Compliance with Minimum Energy Standards in Private Rented Properties							
Breaching the ban on letting a property with an F or G rating for less than 3 months (Statutory maximum £2,000)							
First offence £1,000 (or £750 if paid within 21 days)	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	New charge.
All other offences £2,000 (or £1,500 if paid within 21 days)	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	As above.
Breaching the ban on letting a property with an F or G rating for more than three months (Statutory maximum £4,000)							
First offence £2,000 (or £1,500 if paid within 21 days)	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	As above.
All other offences £4,000 (or £3,000 if paid within 21 days)	N/A	N/A	N/A	4,000.00	0.00	4,000.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Registering false or misleading information on the Private Rented Sector Exemptions Register (Statutory maximum £1,000)							
First offence £500 (or £375 if paid within 21 days)	N/A	N/A	N/A	500.00	0.00	500.00	As above.
All other offences £2,000 (or £1,500 if paid within 21 days)	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	As above.
Failing to provide information to the council demanded by a Compliance Notice (Statutory maximum £2,000)							
First offence £1,000 (or £750 if paid within 21 days)	N/A	N/A	N/A	1,000.00	0.00	1,000.00	As above.
All other offences £2,000 (or £1,500 if paid within 21 days)	N/A	N/A	N/A	2,000.00	0.00	2,000.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Planning (J Freeman)							
Planning Fees	The full details of current Planning fees can be found on https://ecab.planningportal.co.uk/uploads/english_application_fees.pdf						

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Commissioning & Customer Contact (M Cassell)							
Civil Parking Enforcement - Penalty Charge Notices (rate depends on offence)							
<i>Lower Penalty System</i>							
Up to 14 Days	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Statutory charge.
14 days to 56 days	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	As above.
57 days to 70 days	75.00	0.00	75.00	75.00	0.00	75.00	As above.
After 70 days	82.00	0.00	82.00	82.00	0.00	82.00	As above.
<i>Higher Penalty System</i>							
Up to 14 days	35.00	0.00	35.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	As above.
14 days to 56 days	70.00	0.00	70.00	70.00	0.00	70.00	As above.
57 days to 70 days	105.00	0.00	105.00	105.00	0.00	105.00	As above.
After 70 days	112.00	0.00	112.00	112.00	0.00	112.00	As above.
Environmental Fixed Penalty Notices							
Anti Idling (failure to turn off engine once requested to do so)	20.00 ¹	0.00	20.00 ¹	20.00¹	0.00	20.00¹	As above.
Abandoning a vehicle	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	As above.
Smoking in a smoke free premises or vehicle	50.00 ²	0.00	50.00 ²	50.00²	0.00	50.00²	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Failure to display no smoking signs in smoke free premises or vehicle	200.00 ³	0.00	200.00 ³	200.00³	0.00	200.00³	As above.
Smoking in an enclosed vehicle carrying a person under 18	50.00 ²	0.00	50.00 ²	50.00²	0.00	50.00²	As above.
¹ Increases to £40 if not paid within 28 days ² Reduced to £30.00 if paid within 15 days ³ Reduced to £150.00 if paid within 15 days							
Stray Dog Collection							
Statutory Charge	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Resources							
(D Fackrell)							
Liquor Licensing							
<i>Main Application Fees for Premises and Personal Liquor Licensing</i>							
Rateable Value B and A	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.
Rateable Value B and B	190.00	0.00	190.00	190.00	0.00	190.00	As above.
Rateable Value B and C	315.00	0.00	315.00	315.00	0.00	315.00	As above.
Rateable Value B and D	450.00	0.00	450.00	450.00	0.00	450.00	As above.
Rateable Value B and E	635.00	0.00	635.00	635.00	0.00	635.00	As above.
<i>Main Annual Charge for Premises and Personal Liquor Licensing</i>							
Rateable Value B and A	70.00	0.00	70.00	70.00	0.00	70.00	As above.
Rateable Value B and B	180.00	0.00	180.00	180.00	0.00	180.00	As above.
Rateable Value B and C	295.00	0.00	295.00	295.00	0.00	295.00	As above.
Rateable Value B and D	320.00	0.00	320.00	320.00	0.00	320.00	As above.
Rateable Value B and E	350.00	0.00	350.00	350.00	0.00	350.00	As above.
Personal licence for alcohol	37.00	0.00	37.00	37.00	0.00	37.00	As above.
Personal licence change	10.50	0.00	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50	As above.
Premises licence change	23.00	0.00	23.00	23.00	0.00	23.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Transfers	23.00	0.00	23.00	23.00	0.00	23.00	As above.
Temporary events	21.00	0.00	21.00	21.00	0.00	21.00	As above.
Register of interests	21.00	0.00	21.00	21.00	0.00	21.00	As above.
Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit							
Grant	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	As above.
Existing operator grant	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Variation	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Transfer	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	As above.
Annual fee	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	As above.
Change of name	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	As above.
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	As above.
Licenses Premises Automatic Notification Process							
On notification	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	As above.
Club Gaming Permits							
Grant	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	As above.
Grant (Club Premises Certificate holder)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Existing Operator Grant	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Variation	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Renewal fee	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	As above.
Renewal (Club Premises Certificate Holder)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Annual Fee	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	As above.
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	As above.
Club Machine Permits							
Grant	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	As above.
Grant (Club Premises Certificate holder)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Existing Operator Grant	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Variation	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Renewal fee	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	As above.
Renewal (Club Premises Certificate Holder)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Annual Fee	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	As above.
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	As above.
Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permits							
Application fee	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Renewal fee	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	As above.
Transitional application fee	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Change of name	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	As above.
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	As above.
Prize Gaming Permits							
Grant	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	As above.
Renewal	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	As above.
Existing Operator Grant	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.
Change of name	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	As above.
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	As above.
Annual Fee	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	As above.
Small Lottery Registration							
Grant	40.00	0.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	As above.
Annual Fee	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Electoral Services							
(D Clifford)							
Purchase of Electoral Register							
<i>Full Register and the Notices of Alteration</i>							
Hard copies (standard charge) plus charge (a) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	Statutory charges.
(a) charge for each 1,000 entries	5.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00	As above.
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (b) below	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	As above.
(b) charge for each 1,000 entries	1.50	0.00	1.50	1.50	0.00	1.50	As above.
<i>List of Overseas Electors</i>							
Hard copies (standard charge) plus charge (c) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.
(c) charge per 100 entries	5.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00	As above.
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (d) below	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	As above.
(d) charge per 100 entries	1.50	0.00	1.50	1.50	0.00	1.50	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
<i>Edited Register</i>							
<i>(Available for purchase by anyone)</i>							
Hard copies (standard charge) plus charge (e) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.
(e) charge per 1,000 entries	5.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00	As above.
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (f) below	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	As above.
(f) charge per 1,000 entries	1.50	0.00	1.50	1.50	0.00	1.50	As above.
<i>Marked Polling Station and Absent Voter Registers</i>							
Hard copies (standard charge) plus charge (g) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.
(g) charge per 1,000 entries	2.00	0.00	2.00	2.00	0.00	2.00	As above.
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (h) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.
(h) charge per 1,000 entries	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Environmental Health (T Beattie)							
Public Health Control of Diseases Act 1984							
Various Fixed Penalty Notices issues under the Coronavirus legislation							Due to the pandemic and changing situation, control measures issued by Government include a number of FPNs district authorities can issue. Fees scale are subject to variation and their purpose is to act as a deterrent to the spread of Coronavirus.
Pollution Prevention Control							
A2 Process Application Fees							
A2 New application	3,363.00	0.00	3,363.00	3,363.00	0.00	3,363.00	No increase. Set by Government.
Additional fee for operating without a permit (A2 and Standard Part B)	1,188.00	0.00	1,188.00	1,188.00	0.00	1,188.00	As above.
A2 Process Subsistence Fees							
A2 Low	1,447.00	0.00	1,447.00	1,447.00	0.00	1,447.00	As above.
A2 Medium	1,610.00	0.00	1,610.00	1,610.00	0.00	1,610.00	As above.
A2 High	1,747.00	0.00	1,747.00	1,747.00	0.00	1,747.00	As above.
A2 Low (E-PRTR)	1,551.00	0.00	1,551.00	1,551.00	0.00	1,551.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
A2 Medium (E-PRTR)	1,715.00	0.00	1,715.00	1,715.00	0.00	1,715.00	As above.
A3 High (E-PRTR)	2,438.00	0.00	2,438.00	2,438.00	0.00	2,438.00	As above.
Part B Process Application Fees							
Part B (Standard Process)	1,650.00	0.00	1,650.00	1,650.00	0.00	1,650.00	As above.
Part B Standard Process Subsistence Fees							
Part B Subsistence low	772.00	0.00	772.00	772.00	0.00	772.00	As above.
Part B Subsistence medium	1,161.00	0.00	1,161.00	1,161.00	0.00	1,161.00	As above.
Part B Subsistence high	1,747.00	0.00	1,747.00	1,747.00	0.00	1,747.00	As above.
Part B Reduced Fee Application Fees (including car re-sprayers)							
Reduced fee application fee	362.00	0.00	362.00	362.00	0.00	362.00	As above.
Part B Reduced Fee Subsistence Fees (including car re-sprayers)							
Reduced fee subsistence low	228.00	0.00	228.00	228.00	0.00	228.00	As above.
Reduced fee subsistence medium	365.00	0.00	365.00	365.00	0.00	365.00	As above.
Reduced fee subsistence high	548.00	0.00	548.00	548.00	0.00	548.00	As above.
Petrol Vapour Recovery I and Dry Cleaners Application Fees							
PVR I & DC New Application	155.00	0.00	155.00	155.00	0.00	155.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
Petrol Vapour Recovery I and Dry Cleaners Subsistence Fees							
PVR I and DC subsistence fees low	79.00	0.00	79.00	79.00	0.00	79.00	As above.
PVR I and DC subsistence fees medium	158.00	0.00	158.00	158.00	0.00	158.00	As above.
PVR I and DC subsistence fees high	237.00	0.00	237.00	237.00	0.00	237.00	As above.
Petrol Vapour Recovery I & II Combined Application Fees							
PVR I & II Application Fees	257.00	0.00	257.00	257.00	0.00	257.00	As above.
Petrol Vapour Recovery I & II Combined Subsistence Fees							
PVR I & II Subsistence low	113.00	0.00	113.00	113.00	0.00	113.00	As above.
PVR I & II Subsistence medium	226.00	0.00	226.00	226.00	0.00	226.00	As above.
PVR I & II Subsistence high	341.00	0.00	341.00	341.00	0.00	341.00	As above.
Part B Mobile Concrete Crusher Plant – Application Fee per Number of Permits							
1 – 2	1,650.00	0.00	1,650.00	1,650.00	0.00	1,650.00	As above.
3 – 7	985.00	0.00	985.00	985.00	0.00	985.00	As above.
8 or more	498.00	0.00	498.00	498.00	0.00	498.00	As above.
Part B Mobile Concrete Crusher Plant – Subsistence Fee per Number of Permits							
1 – 2 Low	626.00	0.00	626.00	626.00	0.00	626.00	As above.

Fees and charges for 2021/22 set nationally by the Government

	2020/21			2021/22			Comment
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	
	£	£	£	£	£	£	
1 – 2 Medium	1,034.00	0.00	1,034.00	1,034.00	0.00	1,034.00	As above.
1 – 2 High	1,551.00	0.00	1,551.00	1,551.00	0.00	1,551.00	As above.
3 – 7 Low	385.00	0.00	385.00	385.00	0.00	385.00	As above.
3 – 7 Medium	617.00	0.00	617.00	617.00	0.00	617.00	As above.
3 – 7 High	924.00	0.00	924.00	924.00	0.00	924.00	As above.
8 or over Low	198.00	0.00	198.00	198.00	0.00	198.00	As above.
8 or over Medium	316.00	0.00	316.00	316.00	0.00	316.00	As above.
8 or over High	473.00	0.00	473.00	473.00	0.00	473.00	As above.
Late Payment of Subsistence Fee							
All Permits	N/A	N/A	N/A	52.00	0.00	52.00	Applied following 8 week payment window.
Operating without a Permit Fee							
Reduced Fee Activities				71.00	0.0	71.00	Fee applied in addition to permit fee should officers become aware of business operating without permit. The purpose is to ensure consistency of application across businesses within sectors.
Standard Part B and A2				1,188.00	0.0	1,188.00	As above.

List of income from fees and charges for 2020/21 budgets

Charges set by the Council		
Service	Charge	2020/21 Budget £'000
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Car parks and season tickets	2,064
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Multi-storey car park	100
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Garden waste collections (brown bins)	530
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Residents parking permits (including voucher parking for visitors parking in residential bays)	121
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Cemeteries burial fees	120
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Bulky waste collections	97
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Residential wheeled bins	21
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Street naming and numbering	36
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Beach hut charges	33
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Memorial bench	1
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Travelling fetes & fairs and access over open space licence	14
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Sports facilities	8
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Allotments	1
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Radar keys for disabled toilets	-
Resources	Taxi (Hackney Carriage) licensing	65
Resources	Gambling licensing	21
Resources	Legal services charges, including S106 application fees	51
Resources	Hire of meeting rooms at Swale House	-
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Fixed penalty notices – environmental response	122

List of income from fees and charges for 2020/21 budgets

Charges set by the Council		
Service	Charge	2020/21 Budget £'000
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	King George's Pavilion	14
Policy, Communications and Customer Services	Advertising fees for Inside Swale	6
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Annual animal licences	14
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Stray dog collection	8
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Pest control treatments	5
Commissioning, Environment & Leisure	Alleygate key	-
Housing, Economy & Community Services	Guildhall	-
Housing, Economy & Community Services	Town Centre Licence	-
Housing, Economy & Community Services	Staying put handyperson charges	-
Housing, Economy & Community Services	Home inspection for immigration application fee	-
Mid-Kent Environmental Health Service	CIEH Level 2 Award Training in Food Safety in Catering	-
Mid-Kent Environmental Health Service	Registration fee under the Local Government (Misc Provisions) Act	5
Mid-Kent Environmental Health Service	Request for environmental information	1
Mid-Kent Environmental Health Service	Food export certificate	-
Planning	Local land charges	236
Planning	Pre-application planning advice fees	120
Planning	S106 Monitoring fees	65
Planning	Photocopying charges	-
Total fees & charges set by the Council & agreed as part of this report		3,879

List of income from fees and charges for 2020/21 budgets

Charges set by Government		
Service	Charge	2020/21 Budget £'000
Commissioning, Environment and Leisure	Civil Parking Enforcement - Penalty Charge Notices	523
Resources	Licences (premises and liquor, street trading, sex establishments and scrap metal)	120
Electoral Services	Purchase of electoral register	2
Housing, Economy & Community Services	Houses in multiple occupation	1
Housing, Economy & Community Services	Mobile home site licence fee	-
Housing, Economy & Community Services	Smoke or CO Alarm Regulations Redress Scheme for Lettings Agency Work & Management Work Order 2014	-
Planning	Planning fees – www.swale.gov.uk/types-of-application-and-fees/	1,168
Total fees and charges set by Government		1,814
Grand Total for all Fees and Charges		5,693

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Cabinet	Agenda Item:
Meeting Date	30 October 2020
Report Title	Council Tax Support Scheme 2021/22
Cabinet Member	Cllr Roger Truelove, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance
SMT Lead	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer
Head of Service	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer
Lead Officer	Zoe Kent, Revenues and Benefits Manager
Recommendations	1. That the Council Tax Support scheme for 2021/22 is kept the same as 2020/21 and the Council Tax Support continues as a maximum reduction of 80%.

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 to consider the percentage reduction that should be set for the 2021/22 scheme.

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:
 - 1) The duty to create a local scheme for working age applicants was placed with billing authorities;
 - 2) 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
 - 3) 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, this is the percentage set by many of the district councils in Kent. Although there is a common approach across Kent, local schemes at district level have been tailored to local needs, so in some 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 to assist with the costs of the 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 2019/20, 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 9,482 as at 1 February 2020, compared with 13,381 as at 1 April 2013. This was 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 had reduced since its inception. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic we have seen a rise in CTS claims the caseload as at 1 September 2020 was 10,063 an increase of 6%.
- 2.10 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. In the last financial year the Council received RSG of £115,000 compared with £5.5m in 2013/14. The amount of RSG received by the Council is now nil, although costs have reduced due to a lower claimant base than in 2013, the outcome is that a greater share of the cost burden is falling on the billing

authorities and the other major precepting bodies.

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
2018/19	£ 8,854,129
2019/20	£ 8,602,987
2020/21	£ 9,680,057

- 2.11 In 2019/20 it was agreed that the scheme for 2020/21 would provide more support for those claimants living on a low income. The amount of support was increased from 75% to 80% and incomes such as Child Benefit and Child Maintenance which had previously been taken into account were disregarded. The non-dependant deductions were also reduced from a maximum of £15 to £10.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 In April 2020 the minimum amount working age claimants pay towards their Council Tax was reduced to 20%. This change was brought in because it was felt that many claimants were struggling to pay their Council Tax instalments. As state benefits had not increased for a number of years it was getting harder for claimants to meet the increased Council Tax amounts.

- 3.2 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 rose as claimants have adjusted to budgeting for this amount. However as the amount of Council Tax charged as increased each year the percentage collected as dropped. With the restrictions that have been brought in with the Covid-19 pandemic the current year's collections is down by 2.5% compared with 2019/20.

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%	86.10%
2018/19	25%	85.50%
2019/20	25%	84.50%
2020/21	20%	44.60%

**2020/21 figure as at 21.09.2020*

- 3.3 Given the objectives of the review set out at 2.12, it is important that we seek to not increase the overall costs of the scheme significantly 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 for the scheme for 2020/21.
- 3.4 It is likely if the amount to be paid by working age claimants was increased, collection would continue to fall increasing the cost of recovery.
- 3.5 The conclusion is that the most practical option would be for the CTS for 2021/22 to be kept the same as for 2020/21 and to continue as a reduction of 20%.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Changes could be made to the CTS scheme for 2021/22 either increasing or reducing the amount payable by working age claimants. Increasing the amount is not recommended because this is likely to affect the collection rate, this would then increase the cost of recovery for the Council Tax section. Reducing the amount payable would affect the budgets of the council and the major precepting authorities so could therefore have an affect on the services currently provided.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Consultation has been carried out with the major preceptors. As it is recommended that there will be no change to the scheme a public consultation has not taken place. Appendix I shows the results from the consultation carried out in 2019 prior to the implementation of the 2020/21 scheme.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>The objectives and priorities in the corporate plan.</p> <p>Performance is measured through BV9 Percentage of Council Tax collected in year.</p>
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>The costs of awards made under the CTS scheme impact on the declared tax base, and thereby the council tax yield.</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 mention 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 Moselely) 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> <p>As no changes to the scheme are recommended a public consultation has not taken place.</p>
Crime and Disorder	<p>Not directly applicable</p>
Sustainability	<p>Not directly applicable</p>
Health and Wellbeing	<p>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.</p> <p>The Revenues and Benefits team works with other sections of the authority, CA, financial charities and the major housing providers in the area to ensure those residents who are struggling with debt or other problems are signed posted to the correct advice and agencies.</p>
Risk Management and Health and Safety	<p>Not directly applicable</p>
Equality and Diversity	<p>A full Community Impact Assessment has been carried out.</p>
Privacy and Data Protection	<p>All requirements have been adhered to.</p>

7 Appendices

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

- Appendix I: CIA CTS Scheme 2020/21

8 Background Documents

Council Tax Support Report 2020/21 Scheme Full Council 26.02.2020

<https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s14053/Full%20Council%20Council%20Tax%20Support%20Report%2026.02.2020.pdf>

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 11 March 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 – 26 February 2020</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 2018</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>5,532 working age claimants will be affected by the changes to the scheme (9% of all Council Tax account holders).</i></p>
Information and research: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline the information and research that has informed 	<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>the decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include sources and key findings. • Include information on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics. 	<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.</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"> 1. <i>Reducing the maximum level of support for working age applicants from 15 per cent to 20 per cent.</i> 2. <i>Removing the Family Premium for all new working age applicants</i> 3. <i>Reducing backdating to one month</i> 4. <i>Using a set income for self-employed earners after 18 months self-employment.</i> 5. <i>Reducing the period for which a person can be absent from Great Britain and still receive Council Tax Reduction to four weeks.</i> 6. <i>To introduce a standard level of non dependant deduction of £15 for all working-age claimants who have non-dependants resident with them who work 16 hours or more per week.</i> <p><i>In April 2018 further changes were made to the scheme including:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The need to change the scheme to align with Universal Credit as the caseload changed to more claimants receiving Universal</i>
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Credit to top up their earnings.

- *To again address potential shortfalls in funding due to the continued reduction in Central Government grants.*

The changes brought in were

1. *Reducing the maximum level of support for working age applicants from 20 per cent to 25 per cent.*
2. *Reducing the capital limit from the existing £16,000 to £10,000.*
3. *Restricting the level of the maximum level of Council Tax Support payable to the equivalent of a Band D charge*
4. *Applying a fixed income period to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes*
5. *To disregard Bereavement Support payments inline with the Housing Benefit regulations*

In April 2019 no major changes were made to the scheme.

The Proposed Scheme for 2020/21

An annual review is being undertaken as to the effectiveness of the current Council Tax Support scheme; and a public consultation has been carried out 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 will seek 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 Reduction 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, subject to the referendum limits?*
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 2020. The proposed options will be put out to consultation, will be as follows:

- a. *Should a reduction be made to the minimum payment reducing it from 25% to 20%?*
- b. *Should a reduction be made to the standard level of non dependant deduction reducing it from £15 to £10 for all claimants who have a non dependant living with them who works more than 16 hours per week?*
- c. *Should Child Maintenance paid to a claimant or partner be disregarded in the calculation of Council Tax Support?*
- d. *Should Child Benefit paid to a claimant or partner be disregarded*

in the calculation of Council Tax Support?

- e. *Should a fixed income period be put in place for all working age claims where the claimant or partner are either working or in receipt of Universal Credit?*
- f. *Should a tolerance be applied to Universal Credit claims so information received from the DWP can be automated?*

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 the 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 23%. 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 63%. 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

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.

Under the scheme, claimants will potentially be able to receive additional support up to the full level of their Council Tax.

Method of Consultation

The Council has used the following methods to obtain the view of taxpayers.

Stakeholders Methodology

1. Existing claimants (both working age and pensionable age web based questionnaire)

Hard copy documents to be provided as necessary

2. Council taxpayers and service users generally

Web based questionnaire

Hard copy documents to be provided as necessary

3. Interested organisations and groups.

Web based questionnaire

4. Organisations with significant interest to be notified directly

Hard copy documents to be provided as necessary

General Awareness

Provision of information and awareness raising of changes and proposals

News releases

Face-to-face communication at customer service points

Information in libraries/surgeries and other public venues

The Council's website and social media

Analysis and Assessment

A full analysis and assessment will be provided

Consultation:

- Has there been specific consultation on this decision?
- What were the results of the

Yes

The results of the consultation can be found in Appendix I: CTS

<p>consultation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 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><i>scheme review of the consultation</i></p> <p><i>Options 1, 4 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 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>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> <p><i>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.</i></p>
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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
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<p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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). <p>Advise on the overall equality implications that should be taken into account in the final decision, considering relevance and impact.</p>	<p>Summarise this conclusion in the body of your report</p> <p>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.</p> <p>We also asked for comments on each option. Although the results show those with a disability were more likely to respond negatively to the scheme in their comments about the options, more than half of disabled responders agreed yes to most options.</p> <p>As in previous year's 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 scheme 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 and as the scheme is being made more generous this should mitigate the annual increase to Council Tax for 2020/21. 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.

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

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	12/2019	Zoe Kent	Nick Vickers	Cllr Roger Truelove
Financial hardship for CTRS working age claimants	Further consultation work to be carried out in Quarter 3 2019/20	02/2020	Zoe Kent	Nick Vickers	Cllr Roger Truelove
Drop in collection rate for Council Tax	The collection of Council Tax to be monitored throughout the financial year 2019/20	02/2020	Zoe Kent	Nick Vickers	Cllr Roger Truelove
Financial hardship for residents with an empty property	Advice on alternative help to be sent out with Council Tax bills and adjustment notices	02/2020	Zoe Kent	Nick Vickers	Cllr Roger Truelove

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

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Cabinet	
Meeting Date	28 October 2020
Report Title	Contract review of the procurement of agency staff services via Matrix
Cabinet Member	Cabinet Member for Finance and Performance
SMT Lead	Emma Wiggins
Head of Service	Bal Sandher, Head of HR Shared Service
Lead Officer	Debbie Fallis, HR Manager
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To extend the Matrix contract by 1 year in December 2020 on the existing framework arrangements. 2. To re-tender the service in 2021 to allow the necessary time to undertake the tendering and implementation process for the Managed Service Provider contract.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1 This report considers the contractual procurement options for the Managed Service Provider contract of agency workers with Matrix to enable SMT to decide on the most appropriate way forward for the sourcing of agency staff to Swale Borough Council.

2 Background

2.1 In accordance with the principles of good governance and procurement standards, in December 2017 Swale Borough Council entered a 3-year contract with Matrix for the supply of agency staff.

2.2 The contract commenced on 04 December 2017 and ends on 04 December 2020.

2.3 Strategic Management Team (SMT) requested that a review of this contract be completed and presented in January 2020. The review was conducted over the period November 2018 to December 2019 and is detailed below.

2.4 Financial Overview

Total Client Net Spend	£434,882
Total Number of Timesheets	606

Total Number of Hours	14,242
Savings	£25,221

2.5 Job Category

Job Category	Total Hours	Client Net Spend
Finance	276	£3,746
Parks	521	£6,981
Marketing	716	£15,625
IT	1,807	£35,934
Admin	3,552	£45,802
Housing & Planning	1,520	£47,889
Legal	5,851	£280,284

2.6 In January 2020 further information was requested by SMT on managers feedback of the service provided by the supplier Matrix. As the legal team had the highest proportion of spend with Matrix, it was requested that they provide some specific feedback on the service

3 Research

3.1 Thirty managers from a number of different departments i.e. Facilities, Planning, Housing, Customer Service, Leisure who have used Matrix over the last 2 years were sent an email in April and May requesting that they complete a survey to gather feedback on the service. Twelve managers completed the survey (40% response rate).

3.2 The Legal team has the highest spend for agency staff and feedback on the service was requested from the Head of Legal. Overall, the response from legal was very positive. Please see Appendix 1 for the full response.

3.3 A summary from managers on their experience of using Matrix is detailed below. Please see Appendix 2 for the full response.

3.3.1 System – Ease of use

- 4 rated the system as being not easy to use
- 8 rated the system as being easy to use
- Matrix have offered to carry out a training session with users which would hopefully help managers navigate the system.

3.3.2 Acceptable CV's

- 4 felt CV's submitted were not acceptable

- 8 felt CV's submitted were acceptable

3.3.3 Number of CV's

- 5 were not happy with the number of CV's submitted
- 7 were happy with the number of CV's submitted

Managers stated restricted market (planning) and relevance to role as reasons for not being happy.

3.3.4 Interview arrangements

- 5 felt arrangements did not go well
- 7 felt arrangements went well

3.3.5 Suitable candidate

- 2 were not able to find a suitable candidate
- 7 were able to find a suitable candidate

3.3.6 Budget

- 3 vacancies were not in line with budget
- 7 were in line with budget

A manager commented that there appears to be a premium for planning roles at whatever level.

3.3.7 Timesheets

- 2 were not happy with the timesheet process
- 9 were happy

3.4 Overall, more managers gave positive responses than negative responses which indicates the service provided through Matrix meets the expectations of managers.

3.5 Legal provided generally positive feedback on the service providing a score of 8/10 or above for most service areas.

4 Options

- 4.1 Extend the Matrix contract by 1 year from December 2020 to December 2021.

5 Proposal

- 5.1 Given the current Covid environment, reduced recruitment activity and the appointment of a new Chief Executive the proposal is to extend the contract with Matrix by 1 year and re-tender in summer 2021.
- 5.2 Active supplier management will continue during 2021 and managers will be invited to attend a webinar led by Matrix on 'using the system,' and 'how to ensure successful recruitment'.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Ensuring that a contractor meets a good quality standard and provides good value for money contributes towards all the corporate priorities as it ensures that the staff resources of the Councils assets are optimised.
Financial, Resource and Property	Anticipated annual spend of the contract is £435,000.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>Any new contract would be a standard Council contract and undertaken using the Councils Terms and Conditions.</p> <p>There is a requirement under the Agency Workers Regulations 2011 to ensure that agency workers that have a minimum 12 weeks service are given the same basic employment conditions as permanent staff.</p> <p>The annual spend is over the EU threshold and so would need to be managed as the supply of staff is a 'category' e.g. each appointment is not deemed as a separate contract.</p>
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Sustainability	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and	Not using a neutral vendor for the supply of temporary staff could have a significant impact on the control and governance of the

Safety	<p>process for resourcing agency staff.</p> <p>There could be a risk of not being able to accurately report on agency spend as this will no longer be reported centrally through one system, the risk of inadequate checks being carried out before being appointed to jobs and breaching the Agency Workers Regulations by not applying the correct terms and conditions after a 12 week period.</p> <p>Providing responses to FOI Requests.</p>
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

Appendix 1

Feedback from Legal

1. Using the Matrix system - 7/10

Generally positive, the timesheet approval system is accessible, relatively user friendly and has good record keeping functions. The creating of an order for a new candidate can be a little cumbersome with system failures have required information to be supplied multiple times.

2. Quality of CV's - 8/10

We have usually been able to find an appropriate field of candidates from among the CVs submitted. A supporting feature of this is I usually spend time briefing recruitment agencies on what we are looking for in the candidate.

3. Number of CV's - 8/10

We have usually had a good field of candidates giving us options as to the level of experience and cost.

4. Interview arrangements - 10/10

Yes, we have always been able to hold interviews successfully both physically and virtually.

5. Find a suitable candidate - 8/10

Yes, we have so far always been able to fill roles with a suitable candidate from the field provided.

6. Rate in line with your budget - 8/10

Locums in the legal profession are by their nature more expensive than permanent staff which is reflected in our policy of only using locums where we have been unable to appoint to the position permanently. The candidates supplied by Matrix offer a range of prices broadly in line with the market rate.

7. Timesheet process - 6/10

Timesheet processing is generally easy and user friendly, I recently had an issue over rate being altered without proper consultation which has raised a concern for me which I'm getting answers to at the moment.

8. Overall service from Matrix - 8/10

The service support when assistance is required or there are issues is helpful and effective.

9. Other comments

Matrix charge us a £2 per hour fixed rate given that the payroll services are provided by some recruitment agencies at no additional cost there is an option from a service delivery perspective to move to briefing the key recruitment agencies individually but I appreciate this may have other implications such as reducing the field of candidates/breaching procurement rules/less openness.

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Cabinet Meeting	
Meeting Date	28 th October 2020
Report Title	Adoption of Housing Allocations Policy 2020
Cabinet Member	Cllr Ben Martin, Cabinet Member for Housing
SMT Lead	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services
Lead Officer	Roxanne Sheppard / Zoe Callaway
Key Decision	Yes/No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. To adopt the Housing Allocations Policy 2020.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Cabinet with a summary of the review of the Housing Allocations Policy and the responses from the 8-week consultation period.

2 Background

- 2.1 In Swale the demand for social housing is considerably greater than the number of homes available and this is only likely to increase due to the economic and social impact of the coronavirus pandemic. The Policy sets out how social housing within the borough is allocated and aims to:

- Provide a fair and transparent system to prioritise the allocation of social homes in Swale;
- Help households in most housing need to access affordable homes;
- Make efficient use of social homes available in the borough; and
- Promote choice and the development of sustainable mixed communities.

- 2.2 Swale Borough Council does not currently own or manage any affordable rental homes but does work in close partnership with all housing associations that are integral to the delivery of this policy. All available housing association homes in Swale are advertised through Kent Home Choice.

- 2.3 The allocations policy cannot cover every eventuality and in cases where there are unique needs the Housing Options Manager has discretionary power to award priority, approve additional priority or agree to offers outside of choice based lettings. The current policy was adopted in 2013 and needs to be updated to reflect updates to legislation, statutory guidance and local need.

2.4 To provide context to the discussion key information from 2018/19 financial year on applications and allocations is provided below, there were 1,427 applicants in housing need on the housing register at 1st April 2019, of which

- Band A 195;
- Band B 217;
- Band C 994; and
- Band D 21

2.5 For 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 we received 1,637 applications to the housing register. Of these:

- 788 qualified and had a housing need so were included;
- 494 either did not qualify or did not have a housing need; and
- 355 did not supply the information requested to be able to assess so were removed.

2.6 The table below summarises the properties let through the housing register during 2018/19 in relation to banding, bedroom need and location.

Table 1 – Summary of Lets 2018/19

	1 bed			2 bed			3 bed			4 bed			
	Sitt	Sheer	Fav	Sitt	Sheer	Fav	Sitt	Sheer	Fav	Sitt	Sheer	Fav	
Band A	31	14	7	12	12	4	11	6	3	1	0	0	101
Band B	25	11	8	36	12	12	18	15	4	2	0	1	144
Band C	28	15	10	11	5	1	7	1	4	2	0	1	85
Band D	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	84	40	25	59	29	17	36	22	11	5	0	2	
		149			105			69			7		330

2.7 A review has been carried out at officer level, taking into consideration legal requirements and case law precedents that will inform the new policy. In addition to these amendments there are a range of discretionary criteria which are proposed will be set as the local policy. The current principles of the qualification criteria to join Swale's Housing Register are:

- Residence;
- affordability;
- fraud; and
- rent arrears.

2.8 A public consultation was held during August and September 2020 and 93 responses were received. A summary of the consultation responses is shown in Appendix I, overall, the consensus was supportive for most of the proposed changes. Reducing the residency criteria from 4 to 2 years was the main area where it didn't receive support from the majority of the consultation response with 47.3% in support of reducing the residency in the borough. Currently the 4 in 5-year residency criteria does not align with national

guidance and does not recognise the true need in the borough. It is therefore recommended that reducing the residency criteria to 2 in 5 years should be within the new adopted policy.

2.8 The table below provides a summary of the review and proposed changes on qualification criteria within the Policy.

Table 2 – Review of qualification criteria

Category	Criteria	Change
Fraud	Applicants who have been cautioned or convicted of housing or welfare benefits related fraud where that conviction is unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Any person may re-apply once this conviction is spent.	No change implemented
Rent arrears	Applicants who owe arrears of rent or other accommodation charges to the Council, or any social or private landlord, in respect of the current tenancy or former accommodation, unless an appropriate agreement has been reached and sustained for a reasonable period. In assessing the application for registration, the Council will take into account the size of the debt, the means to pay and the degree of need.	No change implemented
Affordability	Applicants that have gross income or assets above a certain level will not qualify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> The gross income level is likely to be set at more than £35,000 per annum per household. <input type="checkbox"/> The asset level is set at more than £50,000. 	Change implemented Propose a taper based on bedroom need e.g. 1 bedroom need £30,000, 2 bedroom need £40,000, 3 bedroom need £50,000, 4 bedroom need plus £60,000 <i>These figures are approximates using market rents being 25% gross income</i>
Residence	Households who have not lived within the Swale boundaries for 4 out of the last 5 years prior to the application being made.	Change implemented Proposal to reduce to 2 years residence in-line with recommended guidance.

	Residency in Swale must be by the applicant's own choice.	
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2.9 There are circumstances when there are exemptions to the residency requirements and instances in extending the local connection definition, these have been reviewed in the table below.

Table 3 – Residency and Local Connection Criteria

Category	Criteria	Change
Armed forces	We already have this exemption	No change recommended, legal requirement
Homeless accepted full duty	Applicants who are owed a homeless duty by Swale Borough Council to enable the authority to discharge its duty to rehouse them.	Change implemented. Adopt as case law requirement
Right to move	Certain social housing tenants who need to move from another local authority district in England to Swale to avoid hardship who work in Swale or have a genuine offer of work in Swale. An assessment of work and hardship will be made in line with the statutory guidance.	Change implemented Adopt as statutory guidance requirement
Refuge accommodation	Applicants who have fled from another local authority due to domestic abuse and are currently placed in refuge in Swale.	Change implemented Adopt as statutory guidance requirement
Employment in Swale	Applicants who are in permanent employment in Swale. Employment is defined as paid employment for 16 hours or more per week for a period of [6 months/1 year]. The actual place of work must be within the Borough not just the head or regional office.	Change implemented. Adopt as it promotes economic activity in the Borough
Family support	You need to move to the borough to give or receive essential support from a close family member and it can be demonstrated that there is a genuine need to give or receive	Change not implemented. Do not adopt. This is currently dealt with through exemptional circumstances and given the level of need already in the Borough would increase the

	support.	burden.
Rural Housing Exemption Sites	A small number of properties in rural areas have a specified local connection criteria due to planning conditions. These properties will be advertised through Kent Homechoice and the advert will state what local connection is required. Applicants who meet the local connection will be considered for the rural site only.	Change implemented Adopt in order to allow developments on rural exemption sites To also include Community Land Trusts

2.10 In addition to reviewing the criteria for qualifying for the Housing Register, the banding criteria has also formed part of the review. The table below summarises the areas where changes are recommended.

Table 4 – Banding review

Criteria	Banding	Proposal
Homeless households owed a full homeless duty by Swale Borough Council	Currently Band C	Change Implemented. Increase to Band B to reduce pressures on temporary accommodation
Applicants who require substantial adaptations through a Disabled Facilities Grant	Not currently a banding reason	Change Implemented Included in Band B - Would promote use of disabled facilities grant to adapt suitable social housing creating suitable homes for the future
Disabled children who have been awarded an additional bedroom but that bedroom is not available in the current property	Not currently a banding reason	Change implemented Included in Band B - This would reflect the additional needs of a disabled child and the minor overcrowding
Meets requirement for Rural exemption site but may not meet other qualification or housing need	Not currently a banding reason	Change implemented New Band E introduced for this group who would only be considered for rural exception sites

3 Proposals

3.1 To adopt the Housing Allocations Policy 2020.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 That the policy is not adopted and updated, this is not recommended as the current policy is outdated and needs to take into consideration reviewed legislation, guidance and respond to the current needs of residents.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Policy has been reviewed by PDRC and an 8-week consultation was carried out. Registered providers were sent the consultation directly as a statutory consultee.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Having a suitable and robust Housing Allocations Policy in the borough supports priorities within the corporate plan.
Financial, Resource and Property	None identified at this stage.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Statutory guidance and case law has been considered as part of the review process.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Sustainability	None identified at this stage.
Health and Wellbeing	Banding criteria relating to health is discussed in the main body of the report.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage.
Equality and Diversity	A Community Impact Assessment has been prepared and throughout the policy equality and diversity of applicants is considered.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

- 7.1 Appendix I – Consultation Response Summary
Appendix II - Housing Allocations Policy 2020

8 Background Papers

None

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Swale Borough Council Allocations Policy Consultation

Swale Borough Council has completed the consultation around the changes we are proposing to make to our Allocations Policy.

The consultation took place over 8 weeks from 6 August until 2 October 2020.

The online survey had 93 responses and 46 comments. Responses overall were positive and in favour of the changes to qualification criteria and banding reasons.

Responses

Answer Choices	Responses	
A member of the public	89.25%	83
A statutory agency	0.00%	0
A registered provider (housing association)	3.23%	3
A Councillor (of Local Authority or Parish)	2.15%	2
A voluntary or charitable organisation	3.23%	3
Other	2.15%	2

Questions relating to changes in Qualification

Question 2 – Residency requirement length reduction

	Responses	
Agreed	47.31%	44
Disagreed	52.69%	49

This question resulted in a split with overall in favour of keeping 4 years.

Question 3 – Increase of income threshold to reflect current market rents

	Responses	
Agreed	76.09%	70
Disagreed	23.91%	22

This proposal was supported by the majority of respondents.

Question 4 – Proposed taper amounts

	Responses	
Agreed	76.09%	70
Disagreed	23.91%	22

This proposal was supported by the majority of respondents.

Question 5 – To take account of employment in the Borough where residence is not meet

	Responses	
Agreed	56.99%	53
Disagreed	43.01%	40

This question resulted in a split with overall in favour of accepting employment.

Questions relating to changes in Banding

Question 6 – Increase banding for households who are Swale Full Duty homeless cases

	Responses	
Agreed	79.57%	74
Disagreed	20.43%	19

This proposal was supported by the majority of respondents.

Question 7 – Increase banding for households who require works through Disabled Facilities Grant

	Responses	
Agreed	94.62%	88
Disagreed	5.38%	5

This proposal was strongly supported by the majority of respondents.

Question 8 – Increase banding for disabled children who require their own bedroom

	Responses	
Agreed	90.32%	84
Disagreed	9.68%	9

This proposal was strongly supported by the majority of respondents.

Question 9 – Rural housing band

	Responses	
Agreed	68.82%	64
Disagreed	31.18%	29

This proposal was supported by the majority of respondents.

Question 10 – Comments

Respondent Comment	Response
Allocation of an extra bedroom for families where one or more of the adult applicants have children from a previous relationship that require a room for visitation or over night stays.	Bedroom calculation is already set out in policy. The policy does not include provision for an extra bedroom and this is not being considered as has not been consulted on.
We think the rural exception special priority banding should also apply to homes developed by Community Land Trust s.	Wording will be revised to include Community Land Trust's who will be registered and need to advertise their properties.
Residency in the Swale district should be increased to a minimum of 5 years to be considered for council housing.	Comment disagreeing with residency proposal.
Only to say as a former Swale support worker I'm glad to see these proposed changes as they will be much more helpful.	Comment supporting.
If possible couldn't the council have all new housing in Swale being built have a percentage of these houses for social housing as part of the permission of the new builds (ie for every 100 new homes built 10 have to be for social housing)	This is dealt with through the Council's Local Plan and cannot be considered within the Allocation's Policy.
Review long term tenants to see if they can and want to be downsized.	Policy awards Band A for existing social tenants in Swale who are under occupying.
Less waiting time for someone in band c minor overcrowding with opposite sex children sharing into their teenage years and want their own rooms for privacy especially girls of puberty age	The banding policy has to prioritise those in greatest need and we cannot allocate to lower bands due to waiting time.
Include mental disability in band A not just physical ones	All medical bands already include both physical and mental health.
My concern is that priority lies with single mothers without employment but not for medical reasons. The majority of couples who find themselves in this position are hard working and take our mortgages and exist as best they can. Single mothers without work, but have no medical reason, should not be allowed to be placed into brand new accommodation on social housing policies in new build estates.	There is no priority for single parents. Households with children are assessed the same whether single or a couple.
Consider Borden for housing and stop flooding Sheppey with over allocation and total lack of improvements in infrastructure and services.	This cannot be considered in the Allocation's Policy.
If someone has been on the register for three years, to move up a band or be offered to join other council areas nearby	The banding policy has to prioritise those in greatest need. We are not proposing to increase band based on waiting time and this is not being considered as has not been consulted on.
I would like to see more accommodation for homeless people ie a shelter	This is dealt with through the Council's Homeless Strategy and cannot be considered within the Allocation's Policy.
For those that have been on the register for a long period of time to be moved up or have some type of priority where bidding is concerned. It's just ridiculous for a family to be bidding for 3 years in band c and not getting anywhere.	The banding policy has to prioritise those in greatest need. We are not proposing to increase band based on waiting time and this is not being considered as has not been consulted on.
Applicants with unsafe home due to not having provision for adaptations to be band A	Households requiring a fully wheelchair adapted property are Band A.
I am shocked at the enormous gap between number of housing applications and housing units available to let between 2018/19. In Faversham alone, I am concerned at the recent figure of over 200 people 'sofasurfing', and therefore the number of vulnerable people living without secure shelter and protection. I am further concerned at recent planning applications for luxury development housing (e.g. in Conyer) which, in the context of present affordable housing needs, is beyond comprehension.	Comment regarding lack of affordable housing.
Just to reinforce support for Band E rural exception site	Comment supporting

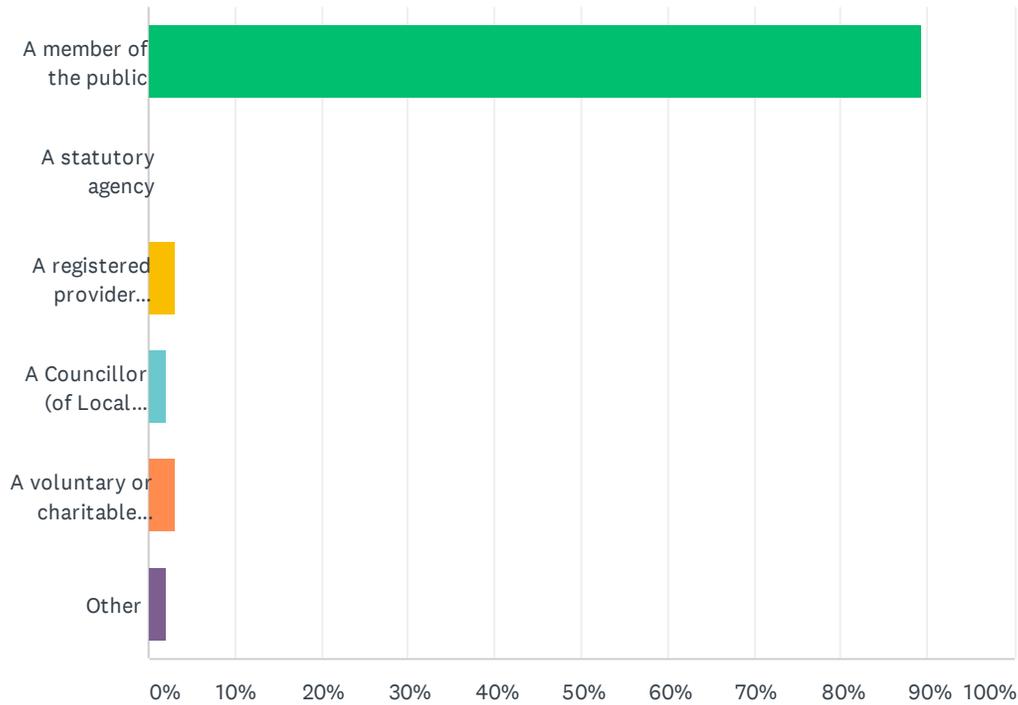
properties. This will ensure homes developed on these sites are available to applicants with a local connection, fulfilling the purpose of the schemes in Swale's rural areas.	
I agree that people on band c because they have children who cannot share a bedroom due to medical reasons should be moved to band b	Comment supporting
I agree that should change banding for households with children with disabilities needing an extra bedroom	Comment supporting
Number of people in relation to bedroom size should be taken into account no matter sex of children. A more thorough assessment rather than a general banding. Maybe a home visit to make assessment.	Bedroom need and overcrowding calculation already set out in Allocation's Policy. We cannot consider changing as this has not been consulted on.
Make it easier for someone who needs a house to get one, or lower the rent prices so people can afford, also if you was to buy a house you have to get into debt before purchase House because of the deposit you need	This would be for National Government to set primary legislation.
On a personal matter, my Granddaughter is aged 25 and has lived in Sittingbourne since birth. She is single and has a 7 year old son, and is expecting a baby in October 2020. At present, as she has been told she cannot be placed on the waiting list for a "council house", she is living in one room in her Mother's house. Additionally, she has an acrimonious relationship with her Mother's live in partner, and is desperate for a home of her own. She is also in full employment, currently in Maidstone. Is there any way the proposals can be amended to give people like her consideration?	An applicant must have a housing need defined in the Allocation's Policy. An applicant living in a family home who had their own bedroom would not be overcrowded but would be considered if they had another housing need.
Changing the length of residency would be of particular help to Supported Living as many who come to us with a high level need work hard to reduce this level of need and would not clarify for exceptional circumstances if they came from out of area.	Comment supporting
Full housing benefit should only be paid for a limited time to those able to work, to give them incentive to get a job. Those in social housing need to be monitored and moved on if causing disruption and not allowed further housing if they do not respect the house and area.	Assistance with housing costs is determined by national policy. The registered providers are responsible for managing their tenants.
Look after your residents of swale already before people from outside of swale	Comment disagreeing with residency proposal.
Island housing for island people-and agreements with any other housing associations or councils should NOT be allowed	Comment regarding housing development.
The wording under Part 3, refusals, could be misinterpreted. It states that "Applicants with a full accepted homeless duty by Swale Borough Council will be entitled to refuse one suitable offer of accommodation..." which could be taken to mean they are able to refuse one offer but then still receive another, where as I assume you intend for that 1 offer to be a final offer.	Agree this will be reworded.
You lot have no idea about people if you think that it is ok to do what you propose. There is already 1000,a waiting for housing and by doing what you proposed you will double the amount of people waiting for housing. With no housing for them to go into . What you need to do first is build more social housing. Get the waiting list down. Instead of keep on let's developments being build with so called affordable housing for people to buy. No one is gonna be buying in next few years. Loads of people have or will lose there jobs because of Covid. What is needed is some common sense here about what is going to happen. Look forward look ahead but don't bring in these new changes when social housing can't cope already with how many people need it. Just common sense really.	The proposed Allocation's Policy is to reflect the housing need of households already living in the Borough. Trying to artificially reduce the number of households waiting does not resolve the problem or demonstrate need when new housing is proposed.
This new policy is much fairer and will ensure homes go to	Comment supporting

those most in need rather than those who have been in Swale longest	
How is it that Swale [affordable housing] is advertised in the known London SE postal boroughs Plumstead on through to Walworth with no paid employment within Swale. Resulting on a burden on council tax, housing benefit & other central government qualifying payments?	Only applicants on Swale's housing register can apply for affordable rented housing in Swale. Properties are advertised online so although someone who did a search could see the properties they could not be considered for them.
I am a band c have been for three years I need more space I have a child with autism and adhd and three other children why are people getting b band for having same amount of children with same as me two kids with special needs and yet I am on a c band and waiting time just the same as them and why is it I am minor over crowed but yet sharing a bedroom with one of my daughters	Comment about individual application.
The impact that family may have on residents already living in the immediate neighbourhood. As I have been subjected to a hideous situation for more than 8 years due to social housing neighbours, and have had little support from local council or housing agencies to fix problems that social housing occupants have caused. Also, can you change the criteria that social housing occupants must adhere to, once in their new allocated home, so that repeats of our current situation so not occur again.	Comment about tenant conduct once housed which will be dealt with by the registered provider.
Will allowing those wishing to move on from supported accommodation to be in Band B mean that some will use that route to gain access to social housing?	Move on from supported accommodation is an existing band reason and no change has been proposed in the revised policy.
I believe housing should go to local people first then who have a family connections and then who is employed in swale and who live out side	Comment regarding residence.
I would propose those who are awarded band A already living in social housing should be re homed by their housing association In my opinion a landlord should have a duty of care in that respect to already existing tenants.	Properties are advertised so that a under occupying tenant can choice from any landlord. The property they vacate will then become available for another nomination.
I propose that families that need more bedrooms due to overcrowding because of children be in band B.	Households lacking two or more bedrooms are Band B.
Those that have 2 children or more in a one bedroom property should be allocated to band B as it can cause families stress like me self who lives in a upstairs 1 bedroom flat currently with 4 people in a one bedroom, 2 adults and 2 children.	The overcrowding calculation is defined in the Allocation's Policy. Lacking one bedroom will be minor overcrowding.
Why not give me an emergency band A of 2 years a property rather than band b and band c clients?	Some applicant's in Band A are waiting for fully adapted properties. If a property they have bid for cannot be adapted to meet their needs they will be bypassed property will be offered to the next applicant on the shortlist.
Should not consider people who have not lived in swale area for short time otherwise they can move here to jump the queue	Comment disagreeing with residency proposal.
Since in Swale the demand for social housing is considerably greater than the number of homes available, I'm not sure what the objective is in increasing the number of people on the waiting list when there isn't enough housing for those already on it.	The proposed Allocation's Policy is to reflect the housing need of households already living in the Borough. Trying to artificially reduce the number of households waiting does not resolve the problem or demonstrate need when new housing is proposed.
Taking into consideration a band b for medical conditions not qualifying in band A.	We are not proposing to include a new medical band reason. This is not being considered as has not been consulted on.
Current residents who have medical need should not be penalised for earning above the set income thresholds. Many will not be in a position to buy or privately rent but will want to maintain their independence by working for as long as possible	We are proposing to increase the income taper.

<p>You should consider people that have extensive health problems that need to move closer to family for help</p>	<p>We are not proposing to include family connection at this time. This is not being considered as has not been consulted on.</p>
<p>Would like to see the evidence and data for the proposed changes. Re homeless families with primary school children should be housed so the children can be within the town or village of their existing school</p>	<p>The review has been based on updated legislation and Government guidance. Households are able to bid through Choice Based Lettings so can choice to bid in a specific area rather than the whole Borough if they want.</p>
<p>Please think more of people that need the housing in the local area, I know of people that have been waiting for years on the council list and not been able to get anywhere even with children with disabilities. Please keep the 5 years in local area.</p>	<p>Comment disagreeing with residency proposal.</p>
<p>I am on the housing list and have a band C. I have mental health issues and an 8 year old son. I have a neighbour who is smoking weed regularly (we live in a small block of flats). This smell makes my health worse and gives me severe headaches. His landlord is aware and I have involved the police now. I have told housing this and still I can't get any further help to move even though this is effecting my health and my son. I was told I will have to wait at least 4 years before I have a chance of getting a property. I have tried to move privately but because I am on benefits due to my health no other landlord will help me despite the fact I can get a reference from my current landlord and have never been late on paying my rent. Some help for people in my situation would be a great idea.</p>	<p>Comment about individual application.</p>
<p>I think that more people should be considered for housing so many people who are on a low income and cannot afford private rent are not even looked into as this has been the way for many years also many people from outside our area are considered which is wrong. I'm sure nothing will be done to help people who really need housing and not ones that cheat the system which also seems to be the case.</p>	<p>Our Allocation's Policy has a residency requirement already.</p>
<p>10 responses were No to whether there where any comments or suggestions and 34 skipped the question.</p>	

Q1 I am responding as

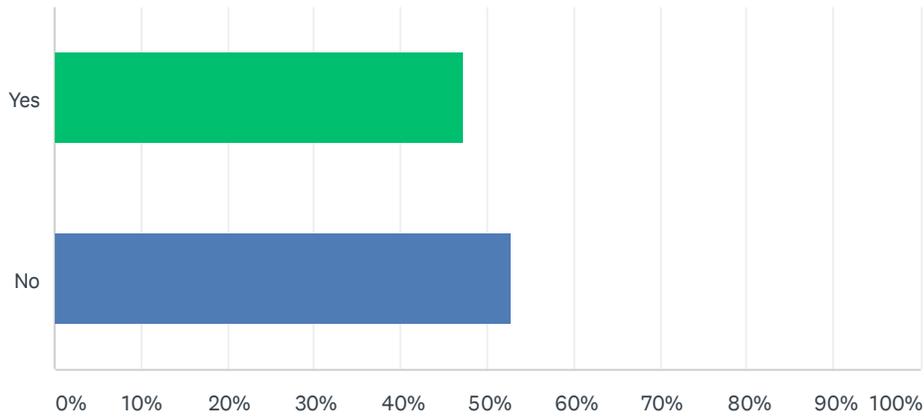
Answered: 93 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A member of the public	89.25%	83
A statutory agency	0.00%	0
A registered provider (housing association)	3.23%	3
A Councillor (of Local Authority or Parish)	2.15%	2
A voluntary or charitable organisation	3.23%	3
Other	2.15%	2
TOTAL		93

Q2 We propose to reduce the length of residence requirement from 4 out of the last 5 years to 2 years residence in Swale. Do you agree with this proposal?

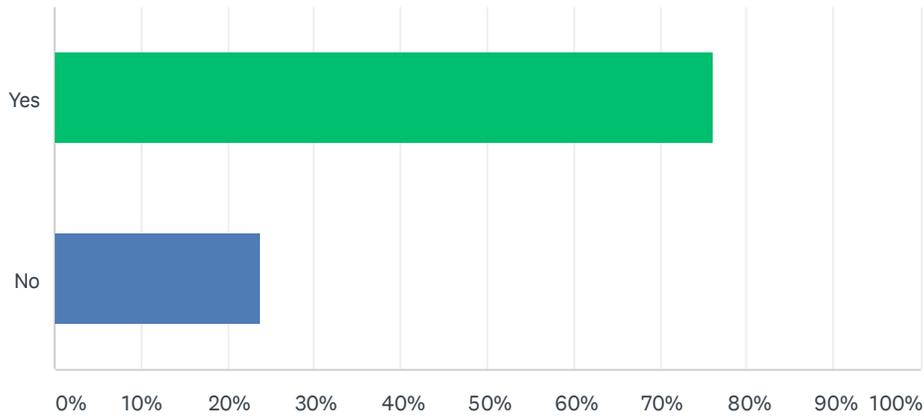
Answered: 93 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	47.31%	44
No	52.69%	49
TOTAL		93

Q3 We propose to change the income threshold from the current limit of £35,000 for all households to a taper based on bedroom need. Do you agree with this proposal?

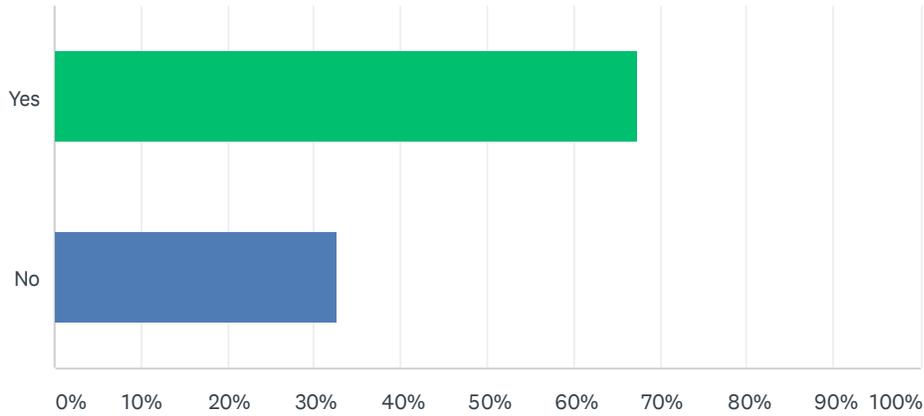
Answered: 92 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	76.09%	70
No	23.91%	22
TOTAL		92

Q4 If the change to an income taper is agreed the following thresholds are proposed:1 bedroom need £30,0002 bedroom need £40,0003 bedroom need £50,0004 bedroom need and above £60,000Do you agree with these thresholds?

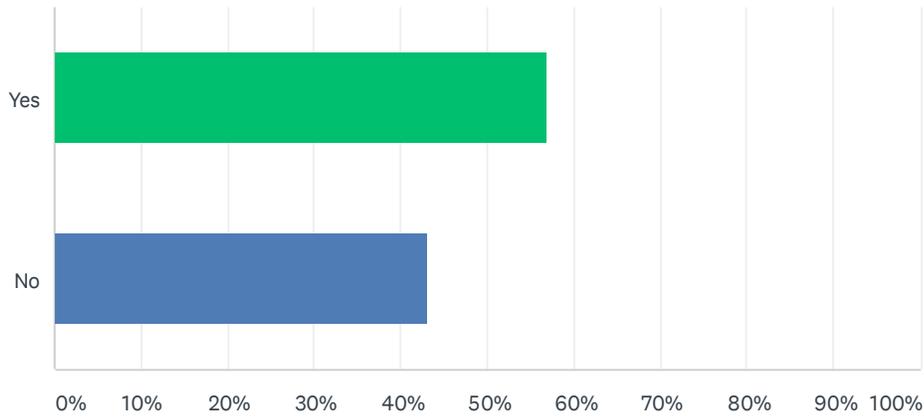
Answered: 92 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	67.39%	62
No	32.61%	30
TOTAL		92

Q5 We propose to allow households who do not meet the residence requirement to qualify if they are employed in Swale. Do you agree with this proposal?

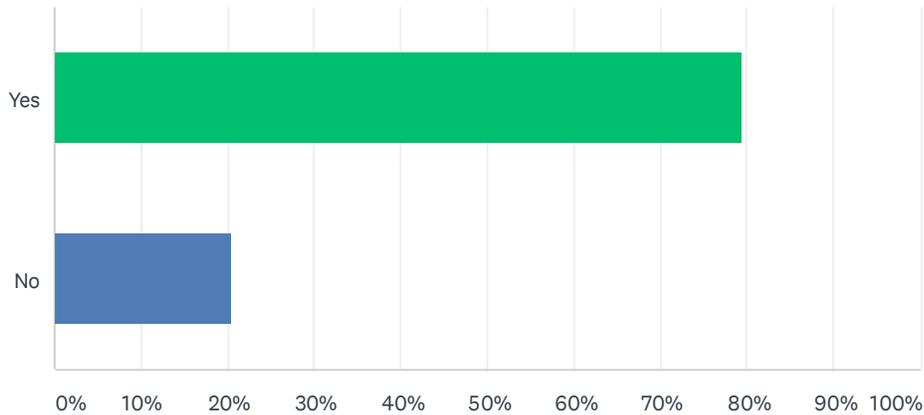
Answered: 93 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	56.99%	53
No	43.01%	40
TOTAL		93

Q6 We propose to increase the banding of homeless households living in temporary accommodation and owed a full housing duty by Swale Borough Council from Band C to Band B. Do you agree with this proposal?

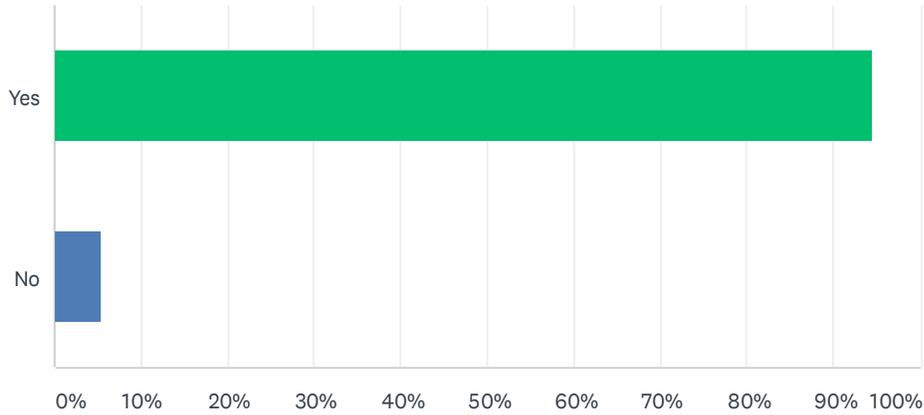
Answered: 93 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	79.57%	74
No	20.43%	19
TOTAL		93

Q7 We propose to create a new Band B reason for households who require substantial works through a Disabled Facilities Grant that cannot be carried out in their current home. Do you agree with this proposal?

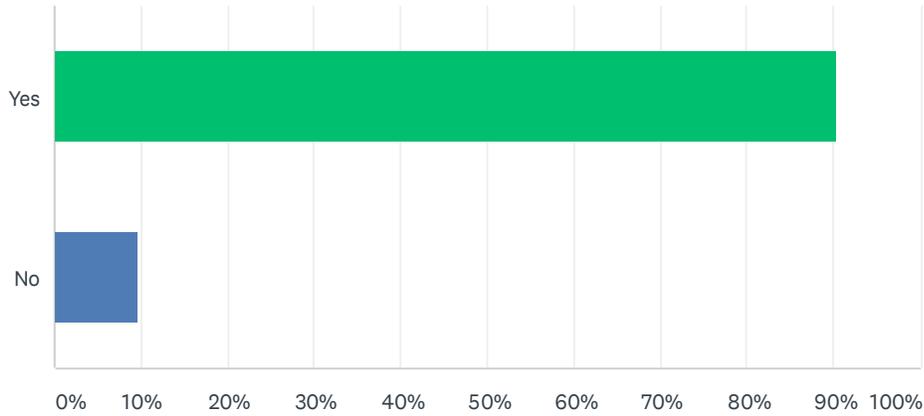
Answered: 93 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	94.62%	88
No	5.38%	5
TOTAL		93

Q8 We propose to create a new Band B reason for households with children who require their own bedroom on medical grounds but the current household does not have a bedroom available. Do you agree with this proposal?

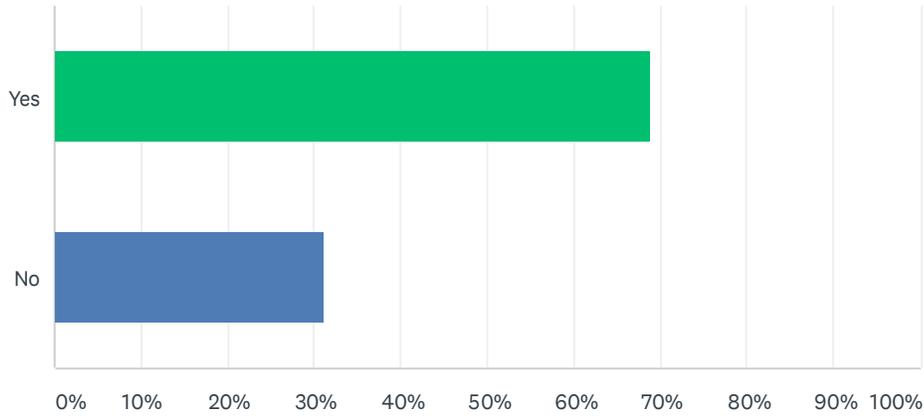
Answered: 93 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	90.32%	84
No	9.68%	9
TOTAL		93

Q9 We propose to create a new Band E for households who do not meet the qualification and/or housing need of the Allocations Policy but do meet the requirements for a property on a rural exception site. Do you agree with this proposal?

Answered: 93 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	68.82%	64
No	31.18%	29
TOTAL		93

Q10 Do you have any other comments or suggestions which you would like us to consider?

Answered: 59 Skipped: 34



Swale Housing Allocations Policy 2020

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PART 1: BACKGROUND

In Swale the demand for social housing is considerably greater than the number of homes available. This Allocations Policy sets out how social housing within the borough is allocated.

SBC's Allocations Policy defines:

- who can apply to Swale's housing register
- the criteria used to determine priority for allocating social homes
- the service standards an applicant can expect
- the legal framework within which Housing Allocations sits

This Allocations Policy aims to:

- Provide a fair and transparent system to prioritise the allocation of social homes in Swale
- Help households in most housing need to access affordable homes
- Make efficient use of social homes available in the borough
- Promote choice and the development of sustainable mixed communities

Swale Borough Council does not own or manage any affordable or social homes but does work in close partnership with all housing associations (also known as registered social landlords or private registered providers) that are integral to the delivery of this policy.

The allocations policy cannot cover every eventuality and in cases where there are unique needs the Housing Options Manager has discretionary power to award priority, approve additional priority or agree to offers outside of choice based lettings.

PART 2: LEGAL CONTEXT

2.1 Legal Framework

Swale Borough Council's Allocations Policy is positioned within a legal framework.

The 1996 Housing Act (as amended) requires local authorities to make all allocations and nominations in accordance with a published Allocations Policy. A summary of the policy and general principles is available at Swale Borough Council offices, and is available on the Council's website www.swale.gov.uk.

The 1996 Act also requires local authorities to state what its policy is on offering applicants a choice of housing accommodation, or offering them the opportunity to express preference about the housing accommodation to be allocated to them. Further information on choice is given at Part 3.

In developing this policy the Council has fully considered all relevant legislation, statutory instruments and codes of guidance including:

- The Housing Act 1996 as amended
- Homelessness Act 2002
- Localism Act 2011
- Allocation of Accommodation Code of Guidance 2012

- Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Armed Forces) (England) Regulations 2012
- Providing Social Housing for Local People: Statutory Guidance on Social Housing Allocations 2013
- Allocation of Housing (Qualification Criteria for Right to Move) (England) Regulations 2015
- Homelessness Reduction Act 2017
- Improving Access to Social Housing for Victims of Domestic Abuse in Refuges or Other Types of Temporary Accommodation 2018

The policy is also framed to ensure that it is compatible with the Council's equality duties including the 2010 Equality Act and has been subject to a full published equalities impact assessment.

2.2 Reasonable Preference

Swale Borough Council is required by law to determine the priority that a housing applicant should be awarded. This is particularly important when, as is the case in Swale, the demand for social housing is far greater than the availability of homes.

The law requires that Reasonable Preference for housing must be given to those in the following categories set out in the Housing Act 1996 s166A (as amended) the statutory Reasonable Preference categories cover:

- All homeless people as defined in Part VII of the Housing Act 1996, as amended.
- People who are owed a duty under the Housing Act 1996 Act as amended, or the Housing Act 1985.
- People occupying unsanitary, overcrowded or otherwise unsatisfactory housing;
- People who need to move on medical or welfare grounds (including grounds relating to a disability);
- People who need to move to a particular locality within the district to avoid hardship to themselves or others.

2.3 Housing Allocation

The allocation of housing by a local housing authority is defined in s.159 of the 1996 Housing Act as:

- Selecting a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of housing accommodation held by them (i.e. by that housing authority)
- Nominating a person to be a secure or introductory tenant of housing accommodation held by another person (i.e. another housing authority)
- Nominating a person to be an assured tenant of housing accommodation held by a registered social landlord / Housing Association

The following are not “allocations” under this policy:

- An offer of accommodation to an existing social housing tenant (transfer applicant) with no reasonable preference. Under the Localism Act 2011 such cases are no longer subject to the Allocation rules set by section 166 of the Housing act 1996 Part 6.
- Succession to a tenancy on a tenant's death pursuant to s89 Housing Act 1985, or

- Assignment of a tenancy by way of mutual exchange, or
- Assignment of a tenancy to a person qualified to succeed to the tenancy on the tenants death, or
- Transfer of the tenancy by a court order under family law provisions or under the Civil Partnership Act 2004, or
- An introductory tenancy becoming a secure tenancy
- Social Landlord initiated transfers (e.g. decant to alternative accommodation to allow for major works).
- Re-housing due to being displaced from previous accommodation by the Council or being re-housed by the Council pursuant to the Land Compensation Act 1973.
- Provision of non secure temporary accommodation in discharge of any homelessness duty or power.
- Lettings which Housing Associations make outside of nominations agreements.
- Allocations where there may be public protection risks.

PART 3: CHOICE AND CONSTRAINTS

Applicants who are eligible to join the housing register can express a preference over the area and type of accommodation in which they would like to live.

Social and affordable rented housing within the borough is let through Kent Home Choice (Choice Based Lettings) scheme <http://www.kenthomechoice.org.uk/choice/>. When properties are advertised on the Kent Home Choice website applicants are able to express an interest (bid) for the appropriate size of home but with type and location of their choosing. These expressions of interest are then shortlisted and the property offered to the household on the shortlist with the highest position in the highest band unless the property is extra care, subject to a Local Lettings Plan or identified by the housing association as requiring a sensitive let. The more type and area choices an applicant makes the greater the chance the applicant will be successfully housed.

If an applicant moves up a band the priority date changes to the date that we are notified of the new circumstances, not the date the applicant originally applied to the Housing Register.

Housing associations participating in Choice Based Lettings may have their own policies which prevent a property being offered to an applicant.

The table below shows how many homes become available to let in each part of the borough during 2018/19

	1 bed			2 bed			3 bed			4 bed			
	Sitt	Sheer	Fav	Sitt	Sheer	Fav	Sitt	Sheer	Fav	Sitt	Sheer	Fav	
Band A	31	14	7	12	12	4	11	6	3	1	0	0	101
Band B	25	11	8	36	12	12	18	15	4	2	0	1	144
Band C	28	15	10	11	5	1	7	1	4	2	0	1	85
Band D	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	84	40	25	59	29	17	36	22	11	5	0	2	
	149			105			69			7			330

As at the 1 April 2019 there were 1427 applicants in housing need on the housing register.

Band A	195
Band B	217
Band C	994
Band D	21

For 1 April 2018 to 31 March 2019 we received 1637 applications to the housing register. Of these 788 qualified and had a housing need so were included.

Accommodation Types:

In order to make the best use of the available housing stock, it is essential to let vacancies to those who need that size and type of property. Examples include 3 bedroom homes with a dining room being let to a household requiring 4 bedrooms, older persons housing being let to those age 50+ and properties that have been built or adapted for a person with a physical or sensory disability. There are a variety of different types of accommodation as detailed in the table below:

Accommodation Type	Description
General Needs Housing	Flats, houses and other accommodation with no onsite support.
Older Persons Designated Housing (Sheltered Housing)	<p>These are homes designed especially for older people. They offer independent living with security and peace of mind.</p> <p>To be eligible for this type of housing applicants must normally meet the age criteria and any other eligibility criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Suitable for the scheme and confirm they do not have support needs that cannot be met or would be detrimental to the Scheme or other tenants <p>These properties will be labelled on choice based lettings so that only applicants who meet the required criteria may bid.</p>
Extra Care	<p>The purpose Extra Care Housing is to provide older people with their own home and tenancy within a support and care environment ensuring that appropriate personal and housing support are available as required. All applicants will be registered and assessed for re-housing in line with Swale Borough Council's Allocations Policy and be eligible to access social Housing.</p> <p>To be eligible for this type of housing applicants must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Over 55 years of age ➤ Prepared to agree to the scheme requirements and consider use of the care provider to meet any care needs ➤ Have an up to date social care assessment outlining housing and social care needs and a medical/social history <p>Priority is not decided by the housing register banding alone. An assessment will be made for each vacancy and the property will be let after taking into account both housing and social care need.</p>

Refusals:

Non-homeless applicants will be entitled to refuse three suitable offers of accommodation before being removed from the register. Applicants will be able to re-apply in 12 months.

Applicants with a full accepted homeless duty by Swale Borough Council will be entitled to one suitable offer of accommodation which will be treated as a final offer to end the Council's homelessness duty. The offer of accommodation could be a property the applicant has bid on through Kent Homechoice, or a property bid on by a Housing Options Officer on behalf of the applicant or a direct offer made to end the Council's homelessness duty. The final offer will be confirmed in writing stating that the Council's duty to the applicant under part VII of the 1996 Housing Act (as amended) will be ended.

Every homeless applicant has the right to request a review of suitability of the accommodation offered in discharge of the Council's Part VII duty.

In all cases offers will be seen as suitable if they reasonably meet the housing and medical needs of the household. Factors taken into account include property size, location and affordability. In considering suitability the Council will give regard to the overall supply and availability of accommodation and the demands placed on it by all priority groups.

PART 4: ELIGIBILITY

This section sets out who is eligible to apply for Social Housing within Swale. You can usually apply for a social home if you are living and settled in the UK and you are:

- a British citizen, or
- a citizen of another country with the right to stay in the UK with no restrictions.

The following persons are not eligible to apply:

- People who are “*subject to immigration control*” (unless they fall within a class prescribed by regulations as eligible).
- People who are not subject to immigration control, but are nevertheless prescribed by regulation as being “*persons from abroad*” (this may include British citizens).
- Any other person as prescribed by the Secretary of State in future regulations.

Housing Associations work in partnership with the local authority and have fully consulted policies on how they will let their homes.

4.1 Qualification

Section 160ZA Housing Act 1996 (as amended) gives power to Local Authorities to define classes of applicants that will be considered as qualifying persons. Qualification must be met at both point of application and point of offer.

Applicants will not normally qualify for inclusion on the Council's Housing Register if they fall into one of the following criteria:

Criteria	Detail
Residency	Households who have not lived within the Swale boundaries for a continuous period of 2 years immediately prior to the application being made. Residency in Swale must be by the applicant's own choice and maintained throughout the application.
Affordability	Applicants that have gross income or assets above a certain level will not qualify: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The gross income level is:

	<p>1 bedroom need £30,000, 2 bedroom need £40,000, 3 bedroom need £50,000, 4 bedroom need or more £60,000 per annum per household.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The asset level is set at more than £50,000. <p>When looking at gross income everything will be taken into account including earnings, overtime payments, benefits, child maintenance and any other relevant income.</p> <p>The gross income level and the asset level will be based on average private rents or the level of deposit required to buy an average priced property in the area and will be reviewed.</p>
Fraud	<p>Applicants who have been cautioned or convicted of housing or welfare benefits related fraud where that conviction is unspent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974. Any person may re-apply once this conviction is spent.</p>
Rent arrears	<p>Applicants who owe arrears of rent or other accommodation charges to the Council, or any social or private landlord, in respect of the current tenancy or former accommodation, unless an appropriate agreement has been reached and sustained for a reasonable period. In assessing the application for registration, the Council will take into account the size of the debt, the means to pay and the degree of need.</p>

Households who do not qualify for inclusion on the Housing Register will be given advice and information about other housing options that may be available to them.

Where circumstances are exceptional the discretion of the Housing Options Manager will be applied.

The following applicants will be exempt from the residency criteria:

4.1.1 Armed Forces Personnel

The following members of the armed forces will not be required to meet any requirement for residency (excluding those that have been dishonourably discharged):

- members of the Armed Forces and former Service personnel, where the application is made within five years of discharge
- bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner
- serving or former members of the Reserve Forces who need to move because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability sustained as a result of their service
- divorced or separated spouses or civil partners of Service personnel who are required to move out of accommodation by the Ministry of Defence

4.1.2 Homeless Duty

Applicants who are owed a main homeless duty by Swale Borough Council to enable the authority to discharge its duty to rehouse them.

4.1.3 Right To Move

Certain social housing tenants who need to move from another local authority district in England to Swale to avoid hardship who work in Swale or have a genuine offer of work in Swale. An assessment of work and hardship will be made in line with the statutory guidance.

4.1.4 Refuge Accommodation

Applicants who have fled from another local authority due to domestic abuse and are currently placed in refuge in Swale.

4.1.5 Employment in Swale

Applicants who are in permanent employment in Swale. Employment is defined as paid employment for 16 hours or more per week for a period of at least 6 months. The actual place of work must be within the Borough not just the head or regional office.

4.1.6 Rural Housing (exception sites)

A small number of properties in rural areas have a specified local connection criteria due to planning conditions. These properties will be advertised through Kent Homechoice and the advert will state what local connection is required. Applicants who meet the local connection will be considered for the rural site only.

4.2 Who can be included on the application?

We will assess the size of property you require based on who is included on your application. You can include only members of your immediate family who normally live with you (or who would live with you if it were possible for them to do so) or other people who have an extenuating need to live with you. Immediate family means:

- You (the main applicant)
- Your spouse or partner. By 'partner' we mean someone you live with as your partner or who you would live with as a partner if they were able to do so. This includes mixed-gender and same-sex couples and whether or not you are married or in a civil partnership
- Your children or your partner's children, if they are aged under 21 and live with you all the time, or for four or more nights every week and you are in receipt of child benefit and if applicable child tax credits.
- Adult children or other relatives who are currently living with you if it is reasonable to be considered as one household and a permanent arrangement

The following household applicants cannot be included in an application:

- Friends, lodgers, sub-tenants and any other adults not listed above wishing to be included in order to share accommodation with the applicant
- Anyone who has moved into the current property without good reason and caused the household to be overcrowded
- Anyone who does not intend to move to any accommodation offered to the applicant(s) or does not intend to live with them permanently

4.3 Family members who are not currently living with you

We will not include family members currently living abroad on your application and therefore they cannot be re-housed with you until such a time that they return to the UK and the Council is satisfied that they are eligible.

In cases where two parents or guardians have joint access to children, bedroom eligibility will be awarded to the main care provider. You will need to demonstrate

- you are the main care provider (children live with you for more than half the week - four nights or more) and you are in receipt of child benefit and if applicable child tax credits
- that the arrangement is 'permanent'

We will take into consideration both parents' housing arrangements to ensure that one property has adequate accommodation for the children. A Court Order allowing access or confirming residence does not mean that the council must consider that the child is part of the applicant's household. This does not prohibit the other parent from maintaining their usual and agreed access to the children, but we will not be able to offer an additional bed space in both homes for the child.

4.4 Deliberately worsening housing circumstances

If the Council considers that an applicant has acted unreasonably to make their housing circumstances deliberately worse than their previous accommodation without good reason or with the aim of qualifying for a higher banding, no additional priority will be awarded. This applies where an applicant or member of their household has committed anti-social behaviour that would render them unsuitable for re-housing. Cases will be reviewed once the applicant can demonstrate that this behaviour has been addressed. Where applicable applicants will retain the banding and priority they held before worsening their circumstances.

PART 5: THE PRIORITY BANDING SYSTEM

Applications will be assessed and placed in one of five bands if eligible, qualify and have a housing need:

- A: Urgent Housing Need
- B: Serious Housing Need
- C: Reasonable Preference
- D: General Housing Need
- E: Rural Housing

The full banding table is included as Appendix A.

PART 6: REASONABLE PREFERENCE AND PRIORITY

The law requires that Swale Borough Council give Reasonable Preference for housing to those set out in the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) as follows:

Reasonable Preference category s166A(3)(a)

Applicants who are homeless within the meaning of Part VII Housing Act 1996.

This group comprises those cases that have been determined to be homeless and not in priority need. It also includes cases that have been found by Swale or another local authority to be intentionally homeless.

Reasonable Preference category s166A(3)(b)

Applicants who are owed a duty by any housing authority under section 190(2), 193(2) or 195(2)

People who fall into this category are homeless households as follows:

- People who the Council has accepted that it owes the applicant a prevention duty under section 195 as being threatened with homelessness in the next 56 days, or having been served a valid Section 21 notice, and the Council is taking steps to try and prevent that homelessness from occurring.
- People who the Council has accepted that it owes the applicant a relief duty under section 189B and the Council is taking steps to relieve that homelessness.
- People who have been accepted as being owed the full homeless duty under section 193(2) i.e. those who are deemed homeless, in priority need and unintentionally homeless.
- People owed a section 190(2) duty that have been assessed as being in priority need but are intentionally homeless and have been provided with accommodation for a period of time to enable them to secure their own accommodation.

Every homeless applicant has the right to request a review of suitability of the accommodation offered in discharge of the Council’s Part VII duty.

Reasonable Preference category s166A(3)(c)

People occupying unsanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.

Overcrowding

Those overcrowded by one bedroom or more will be granted reasonable preference. However in accordance with section 4.4 the Council has the right to consider that any applicant who has deliberately worsened their housing circumstances with the aim of qualifying for a higher band will not be awarded additional priority, may be given a reduced priority or withdrawn from the register.

For the purposes of Swale’s allocations policy, to minimise overcrowding and to ensure affordability, bedrooms will be allocated according to who lives with you and the relationship between household members.

Dependent upon different factors within the household such as age, sex and disability each member of your household will be assessed as needing the following number of bedrooms:

Household Members	Number of bedrooms needed			
	1	2	3	4
A single person aged 16 yrs and over	✓			

A couple wishing to live together	✓			
A couple or single parent/carer with one child		✓		
A couple or single parent/carer with 2 children under 10 regardless of sex		✓		
A couple or single parent/carer with 2 children of the same sex aged between 10 and 16 yrs		✓		
A couple or single parent/carer with 2 children of the different sex aged between 10 and 16 yrs			✓	
A couple or single parent/carer with two children of opposite sex one of whom is over ten			✓	
A couple or single parent/carer with three children			✓	
A couple or single parent/carer with four children (all of the same sex or two of each sex)			✓	
A couple or single parent/carer with two children one under the age of 16 and the other over the age of 16			✓	
A couple or single parent/carer with four children (three of one sex and one of the opposite sex over 10 yrs)				✓
A couple or single parent/carer with more than four children				✓
A couple or single parent/carer with three children and one dependent adult				✓
In the event that a 5 bedroom property is advertised applicants who need that size property will be assessed in accordance with this table and the bedroom standard will also be considered if necessary.				

Households will also be assessed as needing one bedroom for each of the following if they are assessed as being included as part of the household:

- A tenant requiring a non-resident overnight carer – It must be demonstrated that it is essential that applicants require both day and night care. This will be assessed by the council based on a care needs assessment provided by adult social services.
- Disabled child who cannot share a bedroom with their sibling due to their disability – to award this we will require confirmation of the need for an additional bedroom from a medical professional and proof of Disability Living Allowance with care awarded at middle or high rate.
- An adult child who is serving away with the armed forces
- A room for a foster child or children – only one room will be awarded
- Pregnancy will be included in the room calculation from 22 weeks gestation although will not be included in any overcrowding calculation until born.

Please Note: Due to the scarcity of larger homes, families requiring four bedrooms or more may be allowed to consider three bedroom properties which have additional living space downstairs which could be used as a bedroom. This will be at the discretion of the Housing Association who own and manage the property.

Reasonable preference category s166A(3)(d)

People who need to move on Medical, Disability and Welfare grounds.

These cases are assessed by the Council and can take account of information provided in a Kent Agency Assessment form submitted by any statutory agency such as a Health or Social Services Professional.

Medical or Disability Reasonable Preference cases

An applicant's circumstances will normally only be referred for a medical assessment if an applicant has indicated that there is a serious medical or disability problem that is made substantially worse by their current housing. This priority will be awarded where an applicant's housing is unsuitable and the conditions directly impact and worsen the ill-health or disability, but they are not housebound or their life is not at risk due to their current housing.

Welfare Reasonable Preference cases

The criteria to be considered relates to the extent that the welfare of an applicant, or an immediate member of the applicant's family, will significantly improve by a move to alternative accommodation. The assessment is not based on the seriousness of an applicant's circumstances, but is solely based on the impact of their current housing on that condition and whether this would improve significantly through a move to alternative housing.

Move on from care or supported accommodation

Applicants leaving care must be a former "Relevant Child" as defined by the Children Leaving Care Act 2000. Priority for move on only applies to applicants that are vulnerable and whose established and additional needs would be best met by the provision of long term settled housing and who:

- Are ready to move on from social services or supported accommodation and into independent settled housing and is genuinely prepared for a move to independent living.
- Have the life skills to manage a tenancy including managing a rent account.
- Are in need of either a long term or medium term tenancy support.
- Has a support package in place.

All other cases will be expected to be assisted by Social Services or the supported housing provider to move on to private rented accommodation.

If awarded the move on preference can be removed if the applicant is no longer conducting the tenancy in a manner required to approve move on.

Reasonable preference category s166A(3)(e)

People who need to move to a particular locality within the local authority's district, where failure to meet that need would cause hardship to themselves or to others will be granted priority depending on the severity of the impact of their housing on their condition.

PART 7: ADDITIONAL PRIORITY

7.1 How is additional priority applied

Greater priority can be awarded by giving “additional preference” to applicants who meet one of the ‘reasonable preference’ categories and who also have exceptional or urgent housing needs.

Very urgent medical reasons

An applicant who has an urgent need to move due to medical reasons or a disability that is made worse by their current housing situation.

Armed forces Personnel

The Allocation Policy will award additional preference to those who are in urgent housing need and who meet the following criteria (excluding those that have been dishonourably discharged):

- Is a person serving in the regular forces who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person’s service,
- A person who formerly served in the regular forces,
- A spouse or civil partner who is no longer entitled to or will soon have to leave accommodation provided by the MOD after the death of their spouse/civil partner whose served in the Armed Forces and whose death was due to service,
- Is a person serving or formerly serving in the reserve forces who is suffering from a serious injury, illness or disability which is attributable (wholly or partly) to the person’s service.

Management Moves

A household with an immediate need to move, for example, because of fear of violence where a move within the borough is supported. Due to the exceptional circumstances of these cases the following applies:

- Only one suitable offer will be made
- The offer will be on a ‘like-for-like’ basis taking account of the number of bedrooms required and the property type
- Area restrictions apply and factors regarding personal safety relevant to the transfer will be taken into account

PART 8: RENEWING AND REVIEWS

Renewing of Applications

It is the intention of the Council to renew all applications annually, or earlier as and when required. Failure to respond to a request to renew your application will result in the application being removed. If good reason can be shown why there was a failure to respond to the review then the application may be reinstated.

Change of Circumstances

All applicants are required to notify the council immediately of any change to their circumstances which may affect their priority for housing. Applicants who have had a change of circumstances and have not informed the Council, but it comes to the Council’s attention, may have their application status changed to ‘application is pending’ whilst an investigation

takes place in order to determine eligibility. Applicants should notify the Council of any change in their circumstances in writing by post or e mail. This will include for example:

- A change of address, for themselves or any other person on their application.
- Any additions to the family or any other person they would wish to join the application (Please note it is for the council to decide whether they will allow a person/s to join the application).
- Any member of the family or any other person on the application who has left the accommodation.
- Any change in income, assets or savings.

Reviews

Reviews in respect of any aspect of the housing application may be made within 21 days of the notification of the decision. Reviews can be submitted for the following reasons;

- If an applicant is not a qualifying person
- If an applicant is not eligible
- The band that an applicant has been placed into
- The decision to remove an applicant from the housing register
- Any other decision made about your application

Supporting information and documentation submitted after the period of 21 days will not be considered as part of the application unless it contains information that warrants a reassessment.

The review will be carried out by a different officer to the original decision maker. The reviewing officer will carry out the review within 56 days of receipt. The decision may be to uphold the original decision or alternatively to make a new decision instead. If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of the review decision then they may seek a Judicial Review.

PART 9: HOW TO MAKE A COMPLAINT

An applicant who is not satisfied with the service that they receive may register a complaint with the Council's Complaint procedure. All complaints will be acknowledged and investigated. A complaint is regarding the way a decision is reached, it will not change the outcome of the decision.

A complaint can be made in person, by telephone, by post or by online form. The complaint will be answered within 10 working days, or an explanation given if it will take longer.

The applicant can ask someone else such as Citizen's Advice Bureau to make a complaint on their behalf. For those whose first language is not English, assistance can be obtained from the Council. Contact:

**Housing Services
Swale House
East Street
Sittingbourne
Kent
ME10 3HT**

housingregister@swale.gov.uk

If the applicant remains dissatisfied following the outcome of their complaint they may also make a complaint to the Local Government Ombudsman.

The Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman investigates complaints of injustice and unfairness resulting from maladministration by local authorities. They can be asked to investigate complaints about most council matters, including housing.

The Ombudsman normally asks that in the first instance the Council is given an opportunity to deal with a complaint. However the applicant making the complaint remains dissatisfied with the action that the Council has taken, they can contact the Ombudsman:

Local Government & Social Care Ombudsman

Tel: 0300 061 0614

Web: <http://www.lgo.org.uk/>

The Housing Ombudsman Service is available to anyone wishing to make a complaint against a registered social landlord/housing association (rather than the Council):

Housing Ombudsman Service

Tel: 0300 111 3000

Web: <http://www.housing-ombudsman.org.uk/>

PART 10: OTHER LEGAL DUTIES AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Equality and Diversity

Our aim is to implement and maintain services which ensure that no potential or current applicant is treated less favourably due to a protected characteristic, nor is disadvantaged by the application of a rule, condition, or requirement, which has a discriminatory effect which cannot be justified by law. Allocations will only be made to those persons who are eligible.

The policy fully complies with the Equality Act 2010 and is subject to periodic equality impact assessments.

The allocations policy and any changes to it will be reviewed annually to ensure it does not operate in ways that discriminate against or disadvantage any particular group.

Confidentiality

The fact that a person is an applicant on the Allocation Policy will not be disclosed (without their consent) to any other member of the public.

Data protection and information sharing

All information held is subject to the Data Protection Act 2018. The Council will seek the informed consent of applicants joining the Housing Register to share personal information about the applicant, and any member of their household.

Information sharing without consent

Information may be shared about the individual and their history irrespective of whether their consent has been obtained in exceptional circumstances which will include:

- In accordance with the provisions of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 115).
- For the purposes of the prevention or detection of crime and fraud.
- Where there is a serious threat to the other party's staff or contractors.
- Where information is relevant to the management or support duties of the proposed landlord or support organisation to ensure the health and safety of the applicant, a member of his or her household, or a member of staff.

False statements or withheld information

It is a criminal offence for applicants and/or anyone providing information to knowingly or recklessly make false statements or knowingly withhold reasonably requested information relevant to their application (s171 Housing Act 1996). This includes but is not limited to information requested on the housing registration form, in response to correspondence at the renewal of the application, or relating to any other review of the application. An offence is also committed if a third party provides false information whether or not on the instigation of the applicant. This would apply at any stage of the application process.

Where there is suspicion or an allegation that a person has either provided false information or has withheld information, the application will be given the status 'application is pending' during the investigation and will be excluded from being considered for offers until an outcome is reached.

If the outcome of any investigation is that they did not provide false information or there was no withholding of information or such was not found to be withheld knowingly, then the application will be reinstated from the date of registration meaning the relevant applicant should not suffer prejudice. However, where the investigation shows that false information was provided on the application form, or was deliberately withheld, this may render the applicant ineligible.

Ground 5 in Schedule 2 to the Housing Act 1985 (as amended by the 1996 Act, s.146) enables the landlord to seek possession of a property where it has been granted as a result of a false statement by either the tenant or a person acting at the tenants instigation. Where this is the case the Council will pursue recovery of possession vigorously.

If the Council determines that an applicant directly, or through a person acting on his or her behalf, has given false information or withheld any required information it may result in an applicant being removed and rendered Ineligible.

Lettings to Staff

This policy is designed to ensure Swale Borough Council is transparent and equitable when letting homes to Housing Association Board Members, Swale Borough Council staff, council members and their relatives.

Staff, Housing Association Board Members, Council Members and their relatives are treated as any other applicant and must be seen to not be gaining any advantage or disadvantage or any preferential treatment in the course of their application.

Therefore, the following procedure must be undertaken to ensure that any letting can be subject to a high level of scrutiny.

- The applicant who is applying for housing or their relative must have no direct input into any decisions regarding their re-housing. This includes not inputting the

original application onto the Register system or adding any priority at any time onto the application.

- Staff members must also not have any involvement in the inputting of the application or awarding of priority for any relative.
- Applications should be clearly marked on the housing management system that the application is that of a staff member, Board Member, Council Members, or relative.
- When such an applicant has bid for a property and is showing at the top of the list, or a direct offer is to be made, a 'record of interest' note must be completed and signed off before any offer of a property is made. The details of the offer must be scrutinised and detailed on the form and signed off by the appropriate Swale Borough Council Head of Housing the same is the case of Council Members or their relatives being offered accommodation
- Attached to the form must be copies of the computer screens of all the appropriate information from the housing management system including the Choice Based Lettings advert and dates it was advertised, the shortlist from which the applicant is being offered from, together with the policy evidence for any applicants above them being not made the offer.

Amendments to the Policy

The policy will be monitored. For minor changes to the policy decisions will be delegated to the member responsible for the housing portfolio. For minor changes to procedure decisions will be delegated to the Head of Service responsible for Housing.

Appendix A

Banding Table

Band A: Urgent Housing Need plus additional priority	Summary of Criteria includes
Urgent medical need or disability where the current housing is having a significant adverse effect on the applicant's condition. Medical includes both physical and mental health.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where an applicant's condition is expected to be terminal within a period of twelve months and rehousing is required to provide a basis for the provision of suitable care. • The condition is life threatening and the applicant's existing accommodation is a major contributory factor. • The applicant's health is so severely affected by the accommodation that it is likely to become life threatening. • The current housing is having a significant adverse effect on the applicant's condition such as someone who needs a dialysis unit which cannot be provided in the current home, and the home cannot be adapted to accommodate this. • Applicants who need to move to suitable wheelchair adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability to themselves or a household member.
Exceptional welfare circumstances with a need for an urgent move.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants who cannot be released from hospital until alternative accommodation is secured because their current accommodation cannot be adapted to meet their needs. • Applicants who need to move due to domestic abuse, extreme violence or extreme harassment. Extreme violence or harassment will be verified by the Police and/or other agencies as necessary. This may include where a move is necessary to protect a witness to criminal acts. It will also include assessment of certain MAPPAs, MARAC and Victim Support cases. • Housing Association tenants who have to vacate their property in order for major works to be carried out. In these circumstances and where possible transfers will be to properties of the same size or smaller if they are under-occupying, but locations or areas are likely to change.
Under-occupation	Social housing tenants living in Swale who are under-occupying by 1 bedroom or more and who are willing to downsize to a property that meets their need
In urgent housing need and meeting one or more of the armed forces criteria.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicants who need to move to suitable wheelchair adapted accommodation because of a serious injury, medical condition or disability which he or she, or a member of their household, has sustained as a result of service in the Armed Forces. • Bereaved spouses and civil partners of members of the Armed Forces leaving Services Family Accommodation following the death of their spouse or partner who was serving in the regular forces and whose death was attributable (wholly or partly) to that service
Band B: Serious need to move with a Reasonable Preference	Summary of Criteria
Major Overcrowding.	A household who are statutory overcrowded and need at least two more bedrooms as assessed under the bedroom standard
Ready to move on from accredited supported housing schemes within Swale which have been agreed by Swale Borough Council	Applicants who have completed a planned support and resettlement package verified by the support worker and Swale Borough Council; is ready to move into independent settled housing and in addition has been assessed as being in need of a long term or medium term tenancy with support.

Ready to move on from Care.	Young people over eighteen years old leaving care who have been looked after by Kent County Council, who have a care package in place and are ready for an independent tenancy as verified by the Resettlement Service and in addition has been assessed as being in need of a long term or medium term tenancy with support.
Private sector properties unsanitary or unfit. Those living in unsanitary conditions where the conditions pose an ongoing and serious threat to health.	Private sector tenants and residents of dwellings that the Council's Private Sector Housing Team has determined that the property poses a category 1 hazard under the Health and Safety fitness rating and the Council are satisfied that the problem cannot be resolved by the landlord within 6 months and as a result continuing to occupy the accommodation will pose a considerable risk to the applicant's health. This includes a property that has severe damp, major structural defects including subsidence, flooding, collapse of roof, or have living conditions which are a statutory nuisance, <u>and</u> there is no prospect of the problems being remedied within a 6 month time period. Please note that this preference will not be awarded if the applicant is not cooperating with the Private Sector Team to allow the works to go ahead. A private sector property either owned or rented where a statutory notice has been issued by the environmental health department that an unfit property is to be demolished under the Housing Act 2004.
Applicants living in unsatisfactory housing lacking basic facilities.	Applicants living in accommodation without access at all or any one of the following facilities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a bathroom or kitchen • an inside WC • hot or cold water supplies, electricity, gas or adequate heating An applicant who occupies a private property which is in disrepair or is unfit for occupation and is subject to a Prohibition Order and recovery of the premises is required in order to comply with the Order as defined by Section 33 of the Housing Act 2004.
Homeless Households owed a full homeless duty by Swale Borough Council under section 193(2)	Applicants who are owed a full homeless duty by Swale Borough Council.
Applicants requiring any adapted property	Applicants who have been assessed by Occupational Therapist and require substantial adaptations through a Disabled Facilities Grant which cannot be carried at their current property.
Disabled children who have been awarded an additional bedroom	Applicants where a child has a medical condition that means an additional bedroom has been awarded but the bedroom is not available in the current property.
Band C: Reasonable Preference	Summary of Criteria
Applicants living in unsatisfactory or insanitary housing conditions.	Applicants who only have access to shared facilities in shared accommodation such as a shared living room, bathroom(s) and/or kitchen(s). This preference does not apply to those sharing with family members. Applicants living in accommodation with very poor internal or external arrangements which have been verified by a member of the Private Sector Housing Team.
Minor Overcrowding.	A household who are overcrowded and need at least one more bedroom as assessed under the bedroom standard.
People who need to move to a	Applicants who need to move due to special reasons and

particular locality in the district of the authority where failure to meet that need would cause hardship.	because a failure to move to a certain area would cause hardship to themselves or others.
People who need to move due to medical, welfare, mental health or disability factors	<p>Where an applicant's housing is unsuitable for medical reasons or due to their disability, but who are not housebound or whose life is not at risk due to their current housing, but whose health problem or disability is affected by their current accommodation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe mental health problems affected by current accommodation. • Applicants with moderate to severe medical conditions which significantly affects mobility (e.g. spine, legs) living upstairs. • Conditions requiring on going medical treatment, being very severely exacerbated by living conditions • Conditions causing a reduction in mobility (e.g. breathlessness, dizziness) when combined with stairs or poor location.
Band D: General Housing Need	Summary of Criteria
Intentionally homeless households owed a duty under section 190(2) of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).	Applicants who are intentionally homeless, where that decision has been made by Swale Borough Council or another local authority under Part VII of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended).
Households who have deliberately worsened their housing circumstances.	Where it has been assessed that an applicant has deliberately worsened their housing circumstances.
Households who are homeless within the meaning of Part 7 of the Housing Act 1996 (as amended) and who are owed a homelessness duty by another local authority.	Applicants who are owed a homelessness duty by another local authority. As these applicants are owed the reasonable preference under section 193(2) by the other local authority they will not be awarded any other preference under our allocations scheme.
Homeless Households owed a homeless duty by Swale Borough Council but are not in priority need.	Applicants who do not have a priority need for accommodation and do not meet another banding preference.
Applicants who fulfil the Armed Forces Regulations 2012 but are not in urgent need of housing.	Applicants who need to move but where bands A, B or C do not apply
Applicants owed a duty under the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017	Applicants who have an accepted Prevention or Relief duty.
Band E: Rural Housing	Summary of Criteria
Rural exception sites	Applicants who meet the requirements of the criteria and definition of a local parish connection for rural exception site properties or a Community Land Trust but who do not meet either the qualification criteria and/or do not have a housing need defined in Bands A to D.

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Cabinet Meeting	
Meeting Date	Wednesday 28 October 2020
Report Title	Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan
Cabinet Member	Cllr Monique Bonney, Cabinet Member for Economy and Property
SMT Lead	Emma Wiggins, Director Regeneration
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services
Lead Officer	Lyn Newton, Economy and Community Services Manager
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan consultation feedback 2. To endorse the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the July Cabinet, Members were asked to note the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan and proposed consultation ahead of Cabinet endorsement in early autumn 2020.
- 1.2 Results are appended for information and Members are now asked to endorse the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan and priorities. The Visitor Economy Framework 2018-2023 was adopted by the Council in 2017 and a budget of up to £250,000 was allocated from the shared business rate pool of which £100,000 has been spent.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan has been developed through both an evidence base of research and surveys alongside internal and external workshops and this established an initial action plan for wider 'sense checking'. In addition, a significant amount of work was undertaken through an internal informal working group ahead of the consultation to ensure Council priorities are reflected. The consultation was undertaken at a time when the visitor economy began to emerge from the pandemic into what the government is describing as a ten-year road to recovery.
- 2.2 Monitoring government announcements through Visit England and Visit Kent will remain a priority ensuring that Swale is well placed to take advantage of any emerging recovery initiatives and funding opportunities. For the Visitor Economy

Framework Action Plan to be a success it is essential that there is shared ownership across different stakeholder groups as well as Council service units.

3 Proposals

- 2.1 Following the period of consultation and the continuous work of the internal informal working group work, Members are advised that there is broad support for partnership working along with the unchanged priorities appended in respect of delivering the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan. Partnership working has the potential to increase capacity for project delivery too given the breadth of the plan, resources and aspirations in what is a tight timeframe. Partner engagement and promotion of partnership working needs to be better promoted and there is opportunity to use those sector partners to build and promote case studies and to share best practice as part of the Council's 'good news'.
- 2.2 With the tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors currently struggling there is need to move quickly to deliver priority actions which will strengthen and develop the sector in a post pandemic era. Working with strategic partners such as Visit Kent, South East Museums Development Network and other Districts will add-value in terms of access to funding, marketing and promotion, business and skills training and joint working. Members are asked to note the feedback following consultation and to endorse the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan and the priorities as appended.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 To ensure a collaborative response to both sector recovery and to build partnership that the proposal as outlined is the preferred option to build sector confidence and longer-term economic stability and growth. To do nothing would not be a sensible approach in the current environment where the visitor economy (tourism, leisure and hospitality) has been severely impacted with a loss of trading and income opportunities.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan has been developed through both an evidence base of research and surveys, internal and external workshops which have identified and prioritised actions. The internal informal working group has also used its meetings to re-prioritise actions based on Council priorities ahead of wider consultation over the summer period. The consultation has been widely promoted through both the Council's and Visit Swale's social media platforms which has resulted in a greater number of interactions/impressions/'likes'; the E-bulletins promoted by Visit Swale, Active Swale and Swale Means Business; a two-page media feature in mid-July, BBC Radio and BBC South East.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	<p>Priority 1 Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all 1.6 Implement the Visitor Economy Framework to increase investment, address new visitor demands and grow the value of the sector to the Swale economy</p> <p>Priority 2 Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges 2.3 Establish a special projects fund to provide much needed investment in the Brough's public realm and open spaces 2.4 Recognise and support the local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry</p> <p>Priority 3 Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone 3.5 Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural and other leisure activities appropriate and accessible to each age group</p>
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>For the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan to be a success it is essential that there is shared ownership across different stakeholder groups as well as Council service units.</p> <p>When the Framework was agreed in 2017 a budget of up to £250,000 was allocated from special projects fund for delivery of actions to 2023. A number of key projects have already been delivered against an earlier action plan but £150,000 is still to be allocated. It is envisaged that whilst some activities will be delivered by the Council some monies will be used as partnership leverage and match-funding to ensure value for money</p>
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	<p>Work within the visitor economy sector is non-statutory. Individual actions and projects would be costed and are subject to normal procurement rules</p>
Crime and Disorder	<p>At this stage there are no known crime and disorder implications</p>
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	<p>The walking and cycling initiatives are likely to positively impact on air quality and reduce car emissions. Work to enhance open spaces should contribute to biodiversity net gains in addition to longer term improving air quality</p>
Health and Wellbeing	<p>Some project initiatives such as walking and cycling and other leisure activity will positively improve the individual's health and</p>

	wellbeing as well as access to improved lifestyle choices through exercise, healthy eating and access to outdoor destinations (both free and paid for)
Risk Management and Health and Safety	At this stage there are no known risks, but individual projects and activities would be reviewed on a project by project basis
Equality and Diversity	At this stage there are no known negative impacts that might promote unlawful discrimination or advance inequality
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no identified implications

7 Appendices

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

- Appendix I: [Swale Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan]
- Appendix II [Prioritised Actions]
- Appendix III [Consultation Feedback]

8 Background Papers

None

Swale Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan

For this action plan to be a success it is essential that there is shared ownership across different stakeholder groups and council departments. It is therefore vital to establish a clear working structure right from the start; identifying resources, delivery responsibility and agreeing key milestones.

The following action plan has been developed based on a range of **primary and secondary research** as well as **consultations with cross-council departments and wider stakeholders** from across the borough. The plan builds on the first stage of work already carried out to deliver on the Visitor Economy Framework, taking into consideration the unique identity of individual areas but also the shared assets and challenges of the borough and wider destination. This work is also designed to support wider placemaking objectives and we recommend that you use the extensive research to update the existing resources and inform future strategies.

Placemaking

Creating a strong framework which will support growth of the Visitor Economy in Swale has benefits beyond providing experiences for tourists, improving the attractiveness of the place not just to visitors but also residents, investors and incoming skilled workers. The Visitor Economy Framework should sit at the heart of a wider placemaking strategy, incorporating stakeholders from wider sectors, supporting inward investment and skills development.

Investment in visitor infrastructure provides resources that help to build strong communities, improving civic pride and supporting social inclusion. Furthermore, the Visitor Economy Framework can support the transformation of public spaces, enhancing community assets and providing a new focus for problem areas. Developing the visitor offer has also been proven to be a catalyst for the transformation of the high street and creating vibrant places by helping to capitalise on the growing trend for experiences and improving the dining and evening economy offer. Delivering the actions within this document, which supports the work already carried out by the Visit Swale team, will have a wider impact on how people perceive Swale.

The internal workshop helped us to ensure that the action plan reflects current local authority priorities such as the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency with a focus on sustainable tourism and aligns with interrelated strategies such as the Heritage and Cycling & walking Strategies.

A significant amount of both primary and secondary research has been carried out to ensure that the framework responds to the needs of visitors and changing visitor trends. While consultation with departments across Swale Borough Council means that the actions will support wider council strategies and objectives.

The action plan has been structured into six workstreams which address the destination challenges defined by the research, while also aligning with wider council priorities.

1. Branding & identity
2. Business support and partnerships
3. Product quality and development
4. Transport & public realm
5. Community engagement
6. Tactical marketing

The workstreams have emerged from the following six overarching destination challenges that were identified as part of the research and further tested in the workshops. For more details about each challenge, please consult Appendix 1.

1. Shift visitors' perceptions of the area and increase awareness of the product offering.
2. Give visitors a reason to stay longer and spend more.
3. Respond to visitor engagement with online and social content.
4. Give visitors a reason to visit outside of the summer season.
5. Develop the visitor experience by creating packages and experiences.
6. Persuade visitors to travel beyond London.

Visitor Economy Framework

The table below provides an overview of the workstreams and the headline actions. This must be read in conjunction with the specific deliverables which have been informed by research and are detailed across the following pages.

Overarching Destination Challenges					
Placemaking					
Workstream 1	Workstream 2	Workstream 3	Workstream 4	Workstream 5	Workstream 6
Branding & identity	Business support & partnerships	Product quality & development	Transport & public Realm	Community engagement	Tactical marketing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Review and embed destination identity for towns ➤ Improve destination video and photography ➤ Develop destination brand and increase awareness ➤ Improve engagement on social media channels ➤ Develop destination content bank ➤ Refresh on-brand visitor materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Respond to changing visitor needs ➤ Develop business training programme ➤ Increase cross-promotion between businesses ➤ Increase cross-sector collaboration ➤ Increase regional collaboration 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Grow experiential product ➤ Develop water activities ➤ Improve quality of accommodation ➤ Develop out of season events ➤ Showcase local food, drink & produce better ➤ Develop walking and cycling offer ➤ Develop sustainable tourism offer ➤ Improve coastline, sea front and estuary offer 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Improve cycling infrastructure ➤ Improve disability access ➤ Improve visitor facilities and signage ➤ Improve landscaping and green spaces ➤ Develop integrated transport and smart ticketing solutions ➤ Improve coach parking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Uncover and tell real stories ➤ Curate special offers for residents ➤ Integrated communication strategy for residents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Define and segment comms channels by key target markets ➤ Develop campaigns with regional partners ➤ Develop out of season campaigns ➤ Local campaign ➤ Develop overnight-stays campaign ➤ Partner with relevant influencers
Measuring Results					
Resource					

Measurement and reporting

These actions have been developed to be specific, measurable and achievable with realistic timelines. The suggested timescales we have used are:

- Short term – up to 1 year
- Medium term – 2-3 year
- Long term – up 5 years

Establishing clear metrics by which to measure growth in the visitor economy is vital. Swale Borough Council currently commissions the Cambridge Model Economic Impact Study every two years. Continuing to commission the Economic Impact Study, will provide a comparable set of data on changes in visitor economy.

In addition, this District level data can be aligned to other performance indicators such as digital reach, engagement and subscribers, additional spend from marketing campaign evaluation. Other indicators of success could include growth in engaged partners for Visit Swale and initiatives outlines below including online platforms selling experiences and Gourmet Garden Trails, event footfall counters, day visitor dwell time based on car park ticketing and increased use of coach parking facilities. Destination visitor research should be carried out a minimum of every five years, particularly if regeneration and destination development work has taken place as this will provide a measurement of changing perceptions.

Resource and funding

The following Action Plan is based on a partnership delivery structure. As many of the actions align with wider council priorities and initiatives, any resource or funding required from within the council may be allocated according to the priority function.

Responsibilities for actions also sits with the private sector, with some actions delivered by businesses within the Swale district as well as partner organisations across the county. This is why it's essential that businesses and organisations involved in the development and listed as delivery partners are actively engaged and take shared ownership of the plan. By exploring partnership working opportunities for delivery of large-scale projects, there can be the added benefits of economies of scale, shared expertise and leveraging additional funding streams.

Individual businesses have had some success in accessing funding through schemes such as LEADER and LOCASE. Work should be done to identify new funding streams and promoting them to the right businesses to maximise the benefit for the area.

Workstream 1: Branding & Identity

Deliverable	Destination Challenges	Delivery Timescale	Delivery partners	Location
1. Review and embed destination identity for towns 1.1. Refresh destination stories based on new visitor insights 1.2. Disseminate visitor research town dashboards 1.3. Create pen portraits of product audit for each destination 1.4. Create pen portraits of key audience of each destination 1.5. Identify destination brand ambassador(s) for each town 1.6. Dedicated presence for each town on Visit Swale website with clear user journey and avoiding duplication	1,3	Short term	Swale Borough Council - Visit Swale, Town Councils, Visit Kent	Faversham, Isle of Sheppey, Sittingbourne
2. Improve destination video & photography 2.1. Refresh and build-upon existing image library and conduct gap analysis 2.2. Following gap analysis, commission new destination imagery and video content by audience and theme to build on existing image library	1,3	Short / Medium term	Swale Borough Council - Visit Swale, Businesses, Colleges, Photography Clubs	Swale
3. Develop destination branding and increase awareness 3.1. Assess if a full destination branding exercise is required to support visitor economy as well as wider placemaking 3.2. Create destination brand guidelines document 3.3. Develop a destination PR strategy	1,3	Short /Medium term	Swale Borough Council - Visit Swale, Communications, Economic Development	Swale
4. Improve engagement on social media channels 4.1. Create social media guidelines, including key messages, hashtags and tone of voice for each channel 4.2. Map audience and best team within Swale Borough Council to deliver each channel	1,3	Short term	Swale Borough Council - Visit Swale, Communications	Swale

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 4.3. Launch Visit Swale Instagram account for visitor focused messages 4.4. Launch Swale Borough Council LinkedIn business account for business engagement messages 4.5. Once in place, add Instagram feed to Visit Swale website 4.6. Create 3 or 4 locations for Instagram suitable photography within public realm 4.7. Work with local social media influencers, photographers and bloggers 4.8. Set up a working group with key partner businesses and organisations to support key social media content themes including shared hashtags e.g. gardens, food, history etc. 4.9. Incorporate user generated content onto channels 4.10. Create agreed plan for sharing content on Visit Swale channels from town-led organisation channels e.g. Visit Faversham 4.11. Create opportunities for user engagement such as voting/polls 				
<p>5. Develop destination content bank</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 5.1. Continue to develop Visit Swale content authors group 5.2. Create quarterly content plan with seasonal, local and national themes 5.3. Set up streamlined process for businesses to submit content 5.4. Set up content bank with generic sample copy 	1,3	Ongoing	Swale Borough Council - Visit Swale, Communications, Businesses	Swale
<p>6. Refresh on-brand visitor materials</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6.1. Maintain regular updates to the Swale Visitor Map 6.2. Explore opportunities for commercial funding of the Swale Visitor Map 6.3. Map current distribution channels for the Swale Visitor Map 	1	Short term	Swale Borough Council – Visit Swale	

Workstream 2: Business support & partnerships

Deliverable	Destination Challenges	Delivery Timescale	Delivery partners	Location
1. Respond to changing visitor needs 1.1. Review of business opening times and recommendations based on visitor behaviour and footfall 1.2. Businesses to build partnerships with accommodation providers, with a focus on holiday park owners to encourage wider dispersal of visitors and increase spend 1.3. Improve visitor welcome from businesses with specific destination welcome training.	2,4	Medium term	Businesses, Visit Swale	Swale
2. Develop business training programme 2.1. Digital Experience Platform Training i.e. Airbnb Experiences / TripAdvisor 2.2. Welcome Walkers Training 2.3. Content Curation for Social Media training 2.4. SEO & Google Maps Training 2.5. Accessibility training 2.6. Destination welcome training 2.7. Online Profile and Reviews training 2.8. Self-catering quality development training	4,6	Short term	Visit Swale	Swale
3. Increase cross-promotion between businesses 3.1. Businesses to utilise Visit Swale fam trips 3.2. Annual networking and leaflet swap event 3.3. Update and raise awareness of the business toolkit to include imagery, copy, Swale Visitor Map pdf and links that businesses can use to promote other local businesses and events on their own channels 3.4. Raise awareness of business toolkit and wider Swale Borough Council B2B support tools 3.5. Encourage attractions to include links to nearby accommodation on their websites.	1,2,5	Short / Medium term	Businesses, Visit Swale, Historic Swale, Produced in Kent, Explore Kent, Wheels of Time	Swale

- 3.6. Encourage accommodation providers to list nearby attractions on their websites.
- 3.7. Increase engagement with and between tourism businesses through communications on LinkedIn

4. Increase cross-sector collaboration

- 4.1. Build relationships with local producers and create local supplier list for businesses
- 4.2. Develop links with local artist networks such as artists' open houses and connect with other businesses/projects
- 4.3. Encourage businesses to get involved with the 'Great for Art' Homes pilot as part of England's Creative Coast
- 4.4. Encourage businesses to get involved with England's Coastal Path project
- 4.5. Work with retail and market traders to engage with events, incorporate more local products and experiences
- 4.6. Create best practice case studies of cross-sector partnerships for each sector

2,5

Medium term

Businesses, Produced in Kent, East Kent Artists' Open Houses, Market Traders, Visit Kent, Natural England – England's Coastal Path, Artists, Residents

Swale

5. Increase regional collaboration

- 5.1. Set up a collaboration network with neighbouring destinations
- 5.2. Develop regional and thematic itineraries with partners
- 5.3. Participate in partnership working groups to benefit from the Dickens 150 anniversary and highlight Dickens connections across Swale
- 5.4. Ensure that Visit Swale messaging aligns with the "Visitor First" regional approach
- 5.5. Build stronger relationships with transport providers to ensure Swale destinations are profiled on their channels
- 5.6. Support a county-wide bid in for tourism zone status to address barriers to growth

1,2,5,6

Medium term

Visit Swale, Visit Kent, Medway Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Visit Canterbury, Quality Bus Partnership, Joint Transportation Board, Kent Highways

Swale

Workstream 3: Product quality & development

Deliverable	Destination Challenges	Delivery Timescale	Delivery partners	Location
1. Grow experiential product 1.1. Businesses and organisations to identify opportunities for delivering visitor experiences, including fossil hunting, scorpion hunting, sea glass craft, archaeological dig experiences, beach and forest schools 1.2. Develop suitable booking processes for experiences 1.3. Case studies with businesses already delivering experiences through digital experiences platforms	1,2,5,6	Medium term	Businesses, Visit Swale, Visit Kent, Historic Swale, Residents	Swale
2. Develop water activities 2.1. Work with Yacht Club, Sailing Club, Barge Museum and Rowing Club to develop visitor offer 2.2. Identify a provider to hire SUPs, Sea Kayaks, Wind surfing and Kite boarding 2.3. Raise awareness of wild and outdoor swimming offer including blue flag beaches and Faversham lido with outdoor swimming groups and triathlons 2.4. Work with boat tour providers to further develop tours to Maunsell Sea Forts from Queenborough, seal watching as well as photography and art tours 2.5. Explore the possibility of reopening ferry link from mainland to the Isle of Harty 2.6. Install mooring posts at Milton Creek	4,5,6	Long term	Swale Borough Council, Businesses, Visit Swale	Swale
3. Improve quality of accommodation 3.1. Work with landowners / tenants to support diversification into high quality visitor accommodation 3.2. Encourage more high-quality glamping and sustainable accommodation products 3.3. Actively encourage development of a high quality / boutique hotel through the local plan and identifying suitable sites	2,5	Long term	Swale Borough Council - Planning, Visit Swale, Locate in Kent, Visit Kent	Swale

<p>3.4. Work with Visit Kent and Locate in Kent to target suitable hotel developers working within the local plan</p> <p>3.5. Deliver training to support all accommodation providers to improve the standard of quality with a focus on self-catering businesses</p>				
<p>4. Develop out of season events</p> <p>4.1. Create Swale event calendar as a planning resource for businesses</p> <p>4.2. Identify gaps in the calendar for new out of season events</p> <p>4.3. Identify themes and audiences for new events based on destination identity</p> <p>4.4. Ensure that event seed funding to support organisations looking to set up a new event or expand an existing one is part of any future community grant scheme</p>	<p>1,4,6</p>	<p>Medium / Long term</p>	<p>Businesses, Visit Swale, Swale Borough Council</p>	<p>Swale</p>
<p>5. Showcase local food, drink and produce better</p> <p>5.1. Hospitality businesses to develop local produce menus</p> <p>5.2. Create field to fork narrative for each local producer with food miles information</p> <p>5.3. Develop more food and drink experiences</p> <p>5.4. Increase number of businesses involved in Gourmet Garden Trails and Kent Food Trails</p>	<p>1,2,6</p>	<p>Short / Medium term</p>	<p>Businesses, Produced in Kent, Visit Kent, Visit Swale</p>	<p>Swale</p>
<p>6. Develop walking & cycling offer</p> <p>6.1. Promote the three walking and cycling ‘Wildlife and Heritage Trails’ linking Coast to Downs in Swale, developed through the Interreg Experience project</p> <p>6.2. Develop product around England’s Coastal Path</p> <p>6.3. Develop baggage transfer connections</p> <p>6.4. Businesses to review the suitability of their offer/product for the walking and cycling market</p> <p>6.5. Increase number of water bottle refill locations on refill.org</p> <p>6.6. Secure a bike hire provider to deliver bike hire app</p>	<p>2,5,6</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>Businesses, Kent Downs AONB, Sustrans, Explore Kent, CyclingUK, Local Rambler Associations, Natural England – England’s Coastal Path, Visit Swale</p>	<p>Swale</p>

<p>6.7. Commission cycling and walking maps for Sittingbourne</p> <p>6.8. Promote walking and cycling routes through national networks accessed by local rambler associations</p>				
<p>7. Develop sustainable tourism offer</p> <p>7.1. Curate content around eco-accommodation, low impact experiences and locally sourced produce</p> <p>7.2. Create a sustainable tourism toolkit to support businesses to be more environmentally friendly and showcase their credentials better</p> <p>7.3. Work with environmental and conservation organisations to develop new volunteering experiences</p> <p>7.4. Encourage more electric vehicle charging points at tourism businesses and identify potential funding sources.</p>	<p>4,5,6</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>Visit Swale, Businesses, Visit Kent, Kent Downs AONB, Kent Wildlife Trust, Kent County Council</p>	<p>Swale</p>
<p>8. Improve coastline, sea front and estuary offer</p> <p>8.1. Work with local artists and community to continue development of the art offering on the sea wall</p> <p>8.2. Encourage quality hospitality providers and concessions in sea front areas through planning policy</p> <p>8.3. Review planning and licencing policies to ensure support for the development of quality hospitality providers with economic benefit for the local area</p> <p>8.4. Install beach huts with online booking</p>	<p>1,2,5,6</p>	<p>Medium / Long term</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council - Planning, Economic Development, Businesses, Town and Parish Councils, Natural England – England’s Coastal Path, Visit Swale</p>	<p>Swale</p>

Workstream 4: Transport & Public Realm

Deliverable	Destination Challenges	Delivery Timescale	Delivery partners	Location
<p>1. Improve cycling infrastructure</p> <p>1.1. Provide feedback to Sustrans on technical Town Audits (Sheerness and Faversham) and agree priorities for delivery</p> <p>1.2. Await outcome of bid for funding to create Sittingbourne walking and cycling map with Explore Kent</p> <p>1.3. More facilities at accommodation such as cycle storage, drying rooms and water refills</p> <p>1.4. Through Interreg Experience, develop three enhanced “green routes” for walking and cycling ‘Wildlife and Heritage Trails’ linking Coast to Downs in Swale</p>	1,4,5,6	Medium / Long term	Swale Borough Council, Kent Downs AONB, Explore Kent, Kent Count Council, Town and Parish Councils, Visit Swale	Swale
<p>2. Improve disabled access</p> <p>2.1. Develop accessible seafront walk</p> <p>2.2. Have key venues, including historical attractions, audited by Access-able</p> <p>2.3. Deliver audits of public seating and map gaps in provision</p> <p>2.4. Deliver audits of accessible toilets and changing spaces and map gaps in provision</p> <p>2.5. Improve public transport accessibility</p>	2,4	Long term	Swale Borough Council, Town Councils, Visit Swale, Historic Swale, Businesses, Tenants, Southeastern, Arriva, Stagecoach	Swale
<p>3. Improve visitor facilities and signage</p> <p>3.1. Deliver audit of public toilet facilities (location, opening times, standard of facilities, accessibility, user costs etc) in key attraction/event areas including the seafront</p> <p>3.2. Establish a Community Toilet Scheme and promote the Use Our Loos app to support additional provision</p> <p>3.3. Deliver audit of retail in each town and map gaps in provision of outlets of visitor interest.</p> <p>3.4. Wayfinding audit of signage and identify any gaps</p>	1,2	Medium term	Swale Borough Council, Town and Parish Councils, Visit Swale, Kent Highways, Businesses	Swale

<p>4. Improve landscaping & green spaces</p> <p>4.1. Increase tree planting in public areas</p> <p>4.2. Create 3 or 4 locations for Instagram suitable photography within public realm</p> <p>4.3. Conduct audit of picnic and seating areas in visitor locations including town centres and identify gaps in provision or quality</p> <p>4.4. Encourage businesses/retailers to install/improve their own floral/garden displays where appropriate. Focus on key event themes e.g. Hop Festival, Hanami etc</p> <p>4.5. Include “How to guides” on green space development on the Visit Swale business toolkit</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council, Town and Parish Councils, Businesses, Swale in Bloom, Visit Swale</p>	<p>Swale</p>
<p>5. Integrated transport & smart ticketing solutions</p> <p>5.1. Map visitor transport routes including provider, length of time and cost.</p> <p>5.2. Continue to raise awareness of the Kent Connected app to visitors</p> <p>5.3. Promote plus bus ticket options where last mile is a challenge</p> <p>5.4. Work with Arriva on review of Isle of Sheppey</p> <p>5.5. Work with Arriva and Southeastern on joint ticketing</p> <p>5.6. Explore opportunity for reopening the ferry link from Harty to Faversham</p> <p>5.7. Continue work with boat provider to deliver water ferry/taxi service from Queenborough to Medway and Southend</p> <p>5.8. Scope infrastructure requirements for continuing long-term ferry link with Southend</p> <p>5.9. Set up network of businesses to develop packages and experiences around the Queenborough ferry service</p>	<p>2,6</p>	<p>Medium / Long term</p>	<p>Arriva, Stagecoach, Southeastern, Swale Borough Council, Kent Connected, Kent Highways, Queenborough Harbour Trust, Businesses, Visit Swale</p>	<p>Swale</p>

<p>6. Improve coach parking</p> <p>6.1. Option review of potential coach parking sites across public car parks including capacity, facilities, cost and opening times</p> <p>6.2. Review opportunity for businesses that could provide coach parking space and facilities</p> <p>6.3. Once secured, ensure all suitable coach parks are updated on Visit Kent trade hub</p>	<p>2,4</p>	<p>Medium term</p>	<p>Swale Borough Council, Town Councils, Visit Swale, Visit Kent, Kent Highways, Businesses</p>	<p>Swale</p>
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Workstream 5: Community engagement

Deliverable	Destination Challenges	Delivery Timescale	Delivery partners	Location
1. Uncover and tell real stories 1.1. Develop “People Like Me” campaign featuring content from local residents 1.2. Encourage residents to share their favourite places/hidden gems via social media and groups	1,2,3,6	Medium term	Visit Swale, Local residents, Communications	Swale
2. Curate special offers for residents 2.1. Encourage business and local resident engagement with Kent Big Weekend and Heritage Open days 2.2. Develop town apps for businesses to offer residents incentives and offers	1,3,4	Short / medium term	Businesses, Visit Swale, Town Council, Visit Faversham, Faversham Traders Association	Swale
3. Integrated communication strategy for residents 3.1. Review all resident and business communication channels managed by the council 3.2. Map opportunities for sharing relevant tourism messages on wider Swale Borough Council communication channels	1,3,4	Short term	Swale Borough Council - Visit Swale, Communications	Swale

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Workstream 6: Tactical marketing

Deliverable	Destination Challenges	Delivery Timescale	Delivery partners	Location
1. Define and segment comms channels by key target markets 1.1. Map all Swale Borough Council comms channels and partner channels by audience 1.2. Use the product audit to align against target audience 1.3. Create an audience and style guide for each channel 1.4. Ensure alignment with PR strategy	3	Short term	Visit Swale, Swale Borough Council, Visit Kent, Communications team	Swale
2. Develop campaigns with regional partners 2.1. Maritime links 2.2. Heritage links 2.3. Food & drink links 2.4. Film locations 2.5. Suitable businesses to participate in Discover England Fund campaign, Gourmet Garden Trails 2.6. Suitable businesses to participate in Discover England Fund campaign, England's Creative Coast	1,2,3,4,5,6	Short / Medium term	Businesses, Visit Swale, Visit Kent, other councils	Swale
3. Develop out of season campaigns 3.1. Build on “dog friendly” website feature content and develop campaign 3.2. Build on “Back to nature - nearest faraway place” website feature content and develop campaign 3.3. Build on “Hidden gems” website feature content and develop campaign 3.4. Build on “Food & Drink” website feature content and develop campaign	1,2,3,4,6	Medium term	Visit Swale, Visit Kent, Visit Faversham, Businesses	Swale
4. Local campaign 4.1. Deliver local campaign on suitable residents’ channels using “people like me” content and recommendations e.g. residents’ groups, newsletters	1,2,3,4	Medium term	Visit Swale, Swale Borough Council Comms, Visit Kent	Swale

4.2. Encourage residents to participate in Kent Big Weekend and Heritage Open Days				
5. Develop overnight-stays campaign 5.1. Develop digital marketing campaign including competition in partnership with attractions and accommodation providers. 5.2. Feature good quality and “quirky” accommodation on social media channels 5.3. Include accommodation suggestions in all inspirational content featured on Visit Swale website 5.4. Incorporate into wider PR strategy	2,4,6	Medium term	Visit Swale, businesses, Visit Kent	Swale
6. Partner with relevant influencers 6.1. Identify suitable influencers based on audience 6.2. Confirm partnerships to support out of season campaign themes 6.3. Continue to utilise TravMedia network 6.4. Incorporate into wider PR strategy	1,3,4,6	Medium term	Visit Swale, Visit Faversham, Visit Kent, Communications	Swale

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Appendix II

Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan (prioritisation of actions)

ONGOING ACTIVITY

Develop destination content bank

- 5.1. Continue to develop Visit Swale content authors group
- 5.2. Create quarterly content plan with seasonal, local and national themes
- 5.3. Set up streamlined process for businesses to submit content
- 5.4. Set up content bank with generic sample copy

Improve cycling infrastructure

- 1.1. Provide feedback to Sustrans on technical Town Audits (Sheerness and Faversham) and agree priorities for delivery
- 1.2. Await outcome of bid for funding to create Sittingbourne walking and cycling map with Explore Kent
- 1.3. More facilities at accommodation such as cycle storage, drying rooms and water refills
- 1.4. Through Interreg Experience, develop three enhanced "green routes" for walking and cycling 'Wildlife and Heritage Trails' linking Coast to Downs in Swale

Develop walking & cycling offer

- 6.1. Promote the three walking and cycling 'Wildlife and Heritage Trails' linking Coast to Downs in Swale, developed through the Interreg Experience project
- 6.2. Develop product around England's Coastal Path
- 6.3. Develop baggage transfer connections
- 6.4. Businesses to review the suitability of their offer/product for the walking and cycling market
- 6.5. Increase number of water bottle refill locations on refill.org
- 6.6. Secure a bike hire provider to deliver bike hire app

SHORT TERM ACTIONS

1. Review and embed destination identity for towns

- 1.1. Refresh destination stories based on new visitor insights
- 1.2. Disseminate visitor research town dashboards
- 1.3. Create pen portraits of product audit for each destination
- 1.4. Create pen portraits of key audience of each destination
- 1.5. Identify destination brand ambassador(s) for each town
- 1.6. Dedicated presence for each town on Visit Swale website with clear user journey and avoiding duplication

4. Improve engagement on social media channels

- 4.1. Create social media guidelines, including key messages, hashtags and tone of voice for each channel
- 4.2. Map audience and best team within Swale Borough Council to deliver each channel
- 4.3. Launch Visit Swale Instagram account for visitor focused messages
- 4.4. Launch Swale Borough Council LinkedIn business account for business engagement messages
- 4.5. Once in place, add Instagram feed to Visit Swale website
- 4.6. Create 3 or 4 locations for Instagram suitable photography within public realm
- 4.7. Work with local social media influencers, photographers and bloggers
- 4.8. Set up a working group with key partner businesses and organisations to support key social media content themes including shared hashtags e.g. gardens, food, history etc.
- 4.9. Incorporate user generated content onto channels

- 4.10. Create agreed plan for sharing content on Visit Swale channels from town-led organisation channels e.g. Visit Faversham
- 4.11. Create opportunities for user engagement such as voting/polls

6. Refresh on-brand visitor materials

- 6.1. Maintain regular updates to the Swale Visitor Map
- 6.2. Explore opportunities for commercial funding of the Swale Visitor Map
- 6.3. Map current distribution channels for the Swale Visitor Map

2. Develop business training programme

- 2.1. Digital Experience Platform Training i.e. Airbnb Experiences / TripAdvisor
- 2.2. Welcome Walkers Training
- 2.3. Content Curation for Social Media training
- 2.4. SEO & Google Maps Training
- 2.5. Accessibility training
- 2.6. Destination welcome training
- 2.7. Online Profile and Reviews training
- 2.8. Self-catering quality development training

SHORT-MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS

2. Improve destination video & photography

- 2.1. Refresh and build-upon existing image library and conduct gap analysis
- 2.2. Following gap analysis, commission new destination imagery and video content by audience and theme to build on existing image library

- 3. Develop destination branding and increase awareness**
- 3.1. Assess if a full destination branding exercise is required to support visitor economy as well as wider placemaking
- 3.2. Create destination brand guidelines document
- 3.3. Develop a destination PR strategy

Increase cross-promotion between businesses

- 3.1. Businesses to utilise Visit Swale fam trips
- 3.2. Annual networking and leaflet swap event
- 3.3. Update and raise awareness of the business toolkit to include imagery, copy, Swale Visitor Map pdf and links that businesses can use to promote other local businesses and events on their own channels
- 3.4. Raise awareness of business toolkit and wider Swale Borough Council B2B support tools
- 3.5. Encourage attractions to include links to nearby accommodation on their websites.

Showcase local food, drink and produce better

- 5.1. Hospitality businesses to develop local produce menus
- 5.2. Create field to fork narrative for each local producer with food miles information
- 5.3. Develop more food and drink experiences
- 5.4. Increase number of businesses involved in Gourmet Garden Trails and Kent Food Trails

Develop out of season campaigns

- 3.1. Build on “dog friendly” website feature content and develop campaign
- 3.2. Build on “Back to nature - nearest faraway place” website feature content and develop campaign
- 3.3. Build on “Hidden gems” website feature content and develop campaign
- 3.4. Build on “Food & Drink” website feature content and develop campaign

Local campaign

- 4.1. Deliver local campaign on suitable residents' channels using "people like me" content and recommendations e.g. residents' groups, newsletters
- 4.2. Encourage residents to participate in Kent Big Weekend and Heritage Open Days

MEDIUM TERM

Respond to changing visitor needs

- 1.1. Review of business opening times and recommendations based on visitor behaviour and footfall
- 1.2. Businesses to build partnerships with accommodation providers, with a focus on holiday park owners to encourage wider dispersal of visitors and increase spend
- 1.3. Improve visitor welcome from businesses with specific destination welcome training.

Increase cross-sector collaboration

- 4.1. Build relationships with local producers and create local supplier list for businesses
- 4.2. Develop links with local artist networks such as artists' open houses and connect with other businesses/projects
- 4.3. Encourage businesses to get involved with the 'Great for Art' Homes pilot as part of England's Creative Coast
- 4.4. Encourage businesses to get involved with England's Coastal Path project
- 4.5. Work with retail and market traders to engage with events, incorporate more local products and experiences
- 4.6. Create best practice case studies of cross-sector partnerships for each sector

Increase regional collaboration

- 5.1. Set up a collaboration network with neighbouring destinations
- 5.2. Develop regional and thematic itineraries with partners
- 5.3. Participate in partnership working groups to benefit from the Dickens 150 anniversary and highlight Dickens connections across Swale
- 5.4. Ensure that Visit Swale messaging aligns with the "Visitor First" regional approach
- 5.5. Build stronger relationships with transport providers to ensure Swale destinations are profiled on their channels
- 5.6. Support a county-wide bid in for tourism zone status to address barriers to growth

Grow experiential product

- 1.1. Businesses and organisations to identify opportunities for delivering visitor experiences, including fossil hunting, scorpion hunting, sea glass craft, archaeological dig experiences, beach and forest schools
- 1.2. Develop suitable booking processes for experiences
- 1.3. Case studies with businesses already delivering experiences through digital experiences platforms

Develop sustainable tourism offer

- 7.1. Curate content around eco-accommodation, low impact experiences and locally sourced produce
- 7.2. Create a sustainable tourism toolkit to support businesses to be more environmentally friendly and showcase their credentials better
- 7.3. Work with environmental and conservation organisations to develop new volunteering experiences
- 7.4. Encourage more electric vehicle charging points at tourism businesses and identify potential funding sources.

Improve visitor facilities and signage

- 3.1. Deliver audit of public toilet facilities (location, opening times, standard of facilities, accessibility, user costs etc) in key attraction/event areas including the seafront

- 3.2. Establish a Community Toilet Scheme and promote the Use Our Loos app to support additional provision
- 3.3. Deliver audit of retail in each town and map gaps in provision of outlets of visitor interest.
- 3.4. Wayfinding audit of signage and identify any gaps

Improve landscaping & green spaces

- 4.1. Increase tree planting in public areas
- 4.2. Create 3 or 4 locations for Instagram suitable photography within public realm
- 4.3. Conduct audit of picnic and seating areas in visitor locations including town centres and identify gaps in provision or quality
- 4.4. Encourage businesses/retailers to install/improve their own floral/garden displays where appropriate. Focus on key event themes e.g. Hop Festival, Hanami etc
- 4.5. Include "How to guides" on green space development on the Visit Swale business toolkit

Improve coach parking

- 6.1. Option review of potential coach parking sites across public car parks including capacity, facilities, cost and opening times
- 6.2. Review opportunity for businesses that could provide coach parking space and facilities
- 6.3. Once secured, ensure all suitable coach parks are updated on Visit Kent trade hub

Uncover and tell real stories

- 1.1. Develop "People Like Me" campaign featuring content from local residents
- 1.2. Encourage residents to share their favourite places/hidden gems via social media and groups

Develop overnight-stays campaign

- 5.1. Develop digital marketing campaign including competition in partnership with attractions and accommodation providers.
- 5.2. Feature good quality and "quirky" accommodation on social media channels
- 5.3. Include accommodation suggestions in all inspirational content featured on Visit Swale website
- 5.4. Incorporate into wider PR strategy

Partner with relevant influencers

- 6.1. Identify suitable influencers based on audience
- 6.2. Confirm partnerships to support out of season campaign themes
- 6.3. Continue to utilise TravMedia network
- 6.4. Incorporate into wider PR strategy

MEDIUM - LONG TERM ACTIONS

Develop out of season events

- 4.1. Create Swale event calendar as a planning resource for businesses
- 4.2. Identify gaps in the calendar for new out of season events
- 4.3. Identify themes and audiences for new events based on destination identity
- 4.4. Ensure that event seed funding to support organisations looking to set up a new event or expand an existing one is part of any future community grant scheme

Improve coastline, sea front and estuary

- 8.1. Work with local artists and community to continue development of the art offering on the sea wall
- 8.2. Encourage quality hospitality providers and concessions in sea front areas through planning policy

- 8.3. Review planning and licencing policies to ensure support for the development of quality hospitality providers with economic benefit for the local area
- 8.4. Install beach huts with online booking

Integrated transport & smart ticketing solutions

- 5.1. Map visitor transport routes including provider, length of time and cost.
- 5.2. Continue to raise awareness of the Kent Connected app to visitors
- 5.3. Promote plus bus ticket options where last mile is a challenge
- 5.4. Work with Arriva on review of Isle of Sheppey
- 5.5. Work with Arriva and Southeastern on joint ticketing
- 5.6. Explore opportunity for reopening the ferry link from Harty to Faversham
- 5.7. Continue work with boat provider to deliver water ferry/taxi service from Queenborough to Medway and Southend
- 5.8. Scope infrastructure requirements for continuing long-term ferry link with Southend
- 5.9. Set up network of businesses to develop packages and experiences around the Queenborough ferry service

LONG TERM

Develop water activities

- 2.1. Work with Yacht Club, Sailing Club, Barge Museum and Rowing Club to develop visitor offer
- 2.2. Identify a provider to hire SUPs, Sea Kayaks, Wind surfing and Kite boarding
- 2.3. Raise awareness of wild and outdoor swimming offer including blue flag beaches and Faversham lido with outdoor swimming groups and triathlons
- 2.4. Work with boat tour providers to further develop tours to Maunsell Sea Forts from Queenborough, seal watching as well as photography and art tours
- 2.5. Explore the possibility of reopening ferry link from mainland to the Isle of Harty
- 2.6. Install mooring posts at Milton Creek

Improve quality of accommodation

- 3.1. Work with landowners / tenants to support diversification into high quality visitor accommodation
- 3.2. Encourage more high-quality glamping and sustainable accommodation products
- 3.3. Actively encourage development of a high quality / boutique hotel through the local plan and identifying suitable sites
- 3.4. Work with Visit Kent and Locate in Kent to target suitable hotel developers working within the local plan
- 3.5. Deliver training to support all accommodation providers to improve the standard of quality with a focus on self-catering businesses

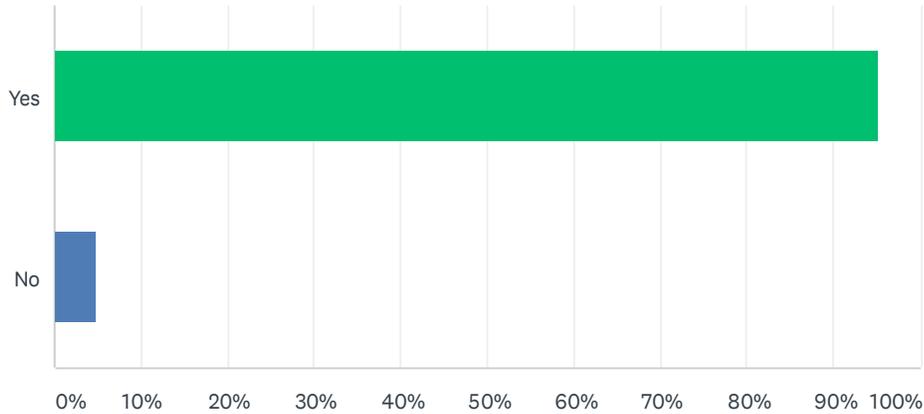
Improve disabled access

- 2.1. Develop accessible seafront walk
- 2.2. Have key venues, including historical attractions, audited by Access-able
- 2.3. Deliver audits of public seating and map gaps in provision
- 2.4. Deliver audits of accessible toilets and changing spaces and map gaps in provision
- 2.5. Improve public transport accessibility

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Q1 In your opinion, do you think the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan provides a basis for partnership working in Swale?

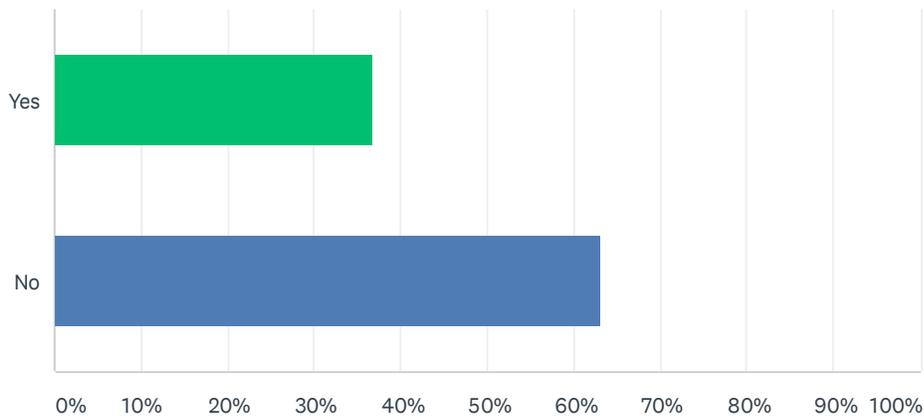
Answered: 21 Skipped: 0



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	95.24%	20
No	4.76%	1
TOTAL		21

Q2 Would you like to give a bit more detail to your answer?

Answered: 19 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	36.84%	7
No	63.16%	12
TOTAL		19

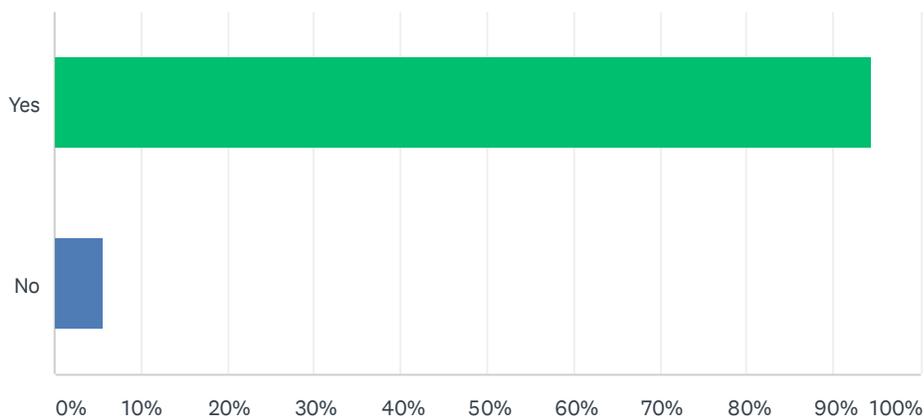
Q3 Please provide a bit more detail to your answer here

Answered: 6 Skipped: 15

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	the action plan has a defined structure and outlines the various stakeholders actions and time scales	9/3/2020 8:39 PM
2	1. The framework doesn't reference which groups it is already working with locally so its not clear who is already signed up to these ideas. I would expect the groups involved to be referenced in the consultation. 2. The metrics claim to be measurable but they aren't, some say implement but with no specific deadline. Others say improve but no current baseline or target to improve by so how will we know if we are achieving them? 3. There is a really good list of ideas but the list needs to be prioritised as it seems to large to be achievable without significant additional resource. 4. There is an expectation that local businesses will invest in the area but it isn't clear how the council will support or incentivise this. 5. There is no reference to supporting local annual events, there are lots of annual events each weekend that could attract visitors eg pirates weekend, carnival, classic car show, beer and cider festivals etc	8/31/2020 7:21 AM
3	A little alarmed that the aviation heritage of the Island is given so little prominence	7/29/2020 6:26 PM
4	Leysdown town arcade area need a bit of TLC. With so many visitors and tourists during the summer months the town is in need of a decent restaurant/cafe. There is one decent fish and chip shop, Chinese and an Indian but it would be lovely if there was a nice seafood restaurant along the seafront as this is where all the tourists visit. The council are missing out on a big opportunity	7/29/2020 3:14 PM
5	The plan as framed is extremely comprehensive	7/23/2020 12:55 PM
6	The plan and framework along with the timescales appear to have been well researched and the plan appears to have a reasonable set of goals that are achievable, but as with all of these initiatives funding will be a key part to its success	7/15/2020 12:41 PM

Q4 In your opinion, does the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan support the growth of the tourism, leisure and hospitality sectors in Swale?

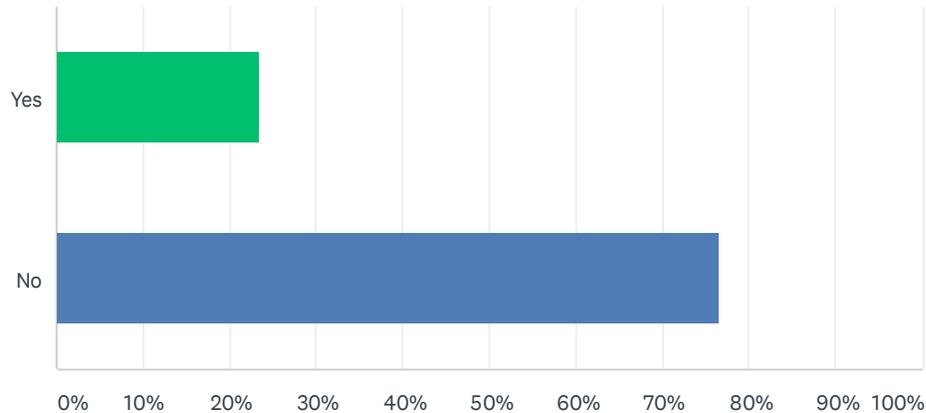
Answered: 18 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	94.44% 17
No	5.56% 1
TOTAL	18

Q5 Would you like to give a bit more detail to your answer?

Answered: 17 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	23.53% 4
No	76.47% 13
TOTAL	17

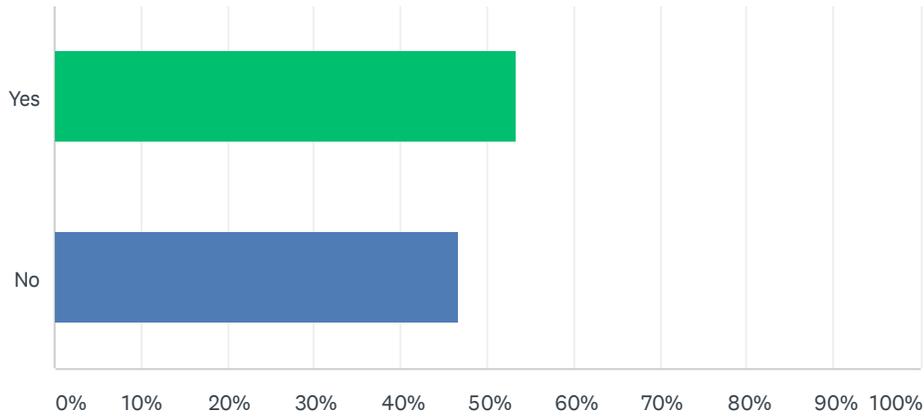
Q6 Please provide a bit more detail to your answer below

Answered: 4 Skipped: 17

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	any joint venture between the local business and the council can only be good for the borough providing that there is funding and you are not relying on the local businesses to cover all the costs especially in a post covid world	9/3/2020 8:42 PM
2	I have said the plan supports growth because it wouldn't be negative to growth but I think it needs to be more specific on how it will support growth. Ie what financial support? How and who can access the training available?	8/31/2020 7:24 AM
3	Plans for updating photos/ videos of Swale, involvement of residence in production of social media information, more events out of season and use of our sea and waterways are particularly constructive	7/29/2020 4:22 PM
4	As with each section the key to this plan is that it has created a clear framework for a multitude of stakeholders to work with to achieve a collective goal, this is always the battle and i feel it is exactly the role of the public sector to support and facilitate the private sector to push forward collectively...it has some clear and ambitious goals with pathways to achieving them..	7/19/2020 10:16 AM

Q7 In your opinion, does the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan take account of current challenges?

Answered: 15 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	53.33% 8
No	46.67% 7
TOTAL	15

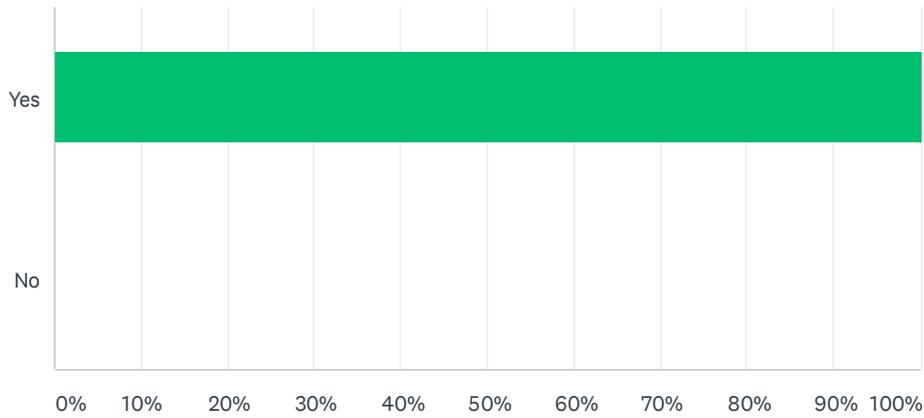
Q8 What else could be included to address those challenges and how do you see this being resourced?

Answered: 6 Skipped: 15

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The country has changed over the last 6 months with the onset of covid 19. money will be tight for both the council and local businesses in the coming years. Businesses and the council will need to priorities their needs and where to spend their money. it is undoubtable that you need to invest and spend money to make money but in the coming months there will be many demands on both parties that may lead to conflicting demands on the councils and local businesses cash.	9/3/2020 8:49 PM
2	the plan doesn't expand on what the current challenges are so difficult to suggest how they are addressed. It refers to appendix 1 but there isn't an appendix 1. Has Swale looked at local Neighbour Whitstable and consider why is this a popular tourist destination and Swale isn't? Compare Sheppey beach to Whitstable and its actually a bigger beach, same distance from London and yet doesn't attract the same visitor numbers? Why is this and can we replicate anything in Swale?	8/31/2020 7:32 AM
3	At present there was no information on how the strategy will work with COVID-19 tourism guidelines	7/29/2020 4:23 PM
4	Future funding could be a big issue for the plan	7/23/2020 12:56 PM
5	i think it is comprehensive and deals with many of the pre Covid issues but we will need to look firmly at how covid has and will impact on the sector moving forward...the objectives remain the same but understanding how we achieve them might need further consideration and flexibility	7/19/2020 10:18 AM
6	Speak to local businesses, for example our largest issue as a business is actually the state of the local council car park being inadequate	7/16/2020 6:43 PM

Q9 In your opinion, are the priorities relevant?

Answered: 14 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	100.00% 14
No	0.00% 0
TOTAL	14

Q10 As you answered no to the last question, please provide a bit more detail

Answered: 0 Skipped: 21

#	RESPONSES	DATE
	There are no responses.	

Q11 In your opinion, are there any potential unintended negative consequences to individuals or groups with protected characteristics from implementing the Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan?

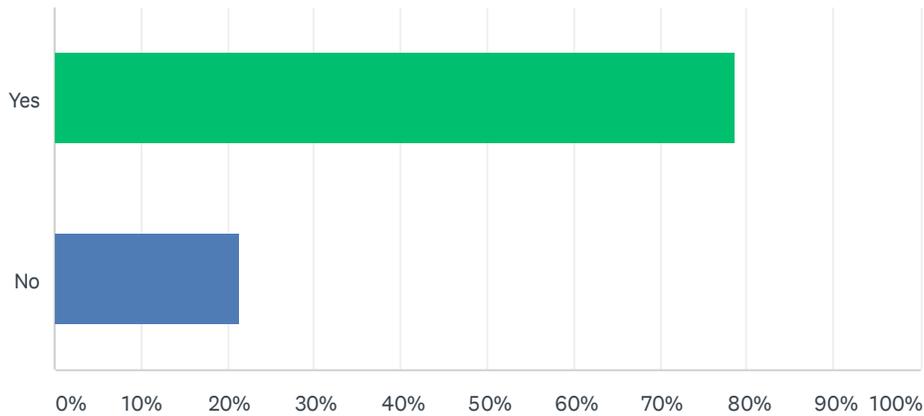
Answered: 0 Skipped: 21

⚠ No matching responses.

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	0.00% 0
No	0.00% 0
TOTAL	0

Q12 Would you be interested in participating in a board or forum to help drive the priorities forward and to monitor progress?

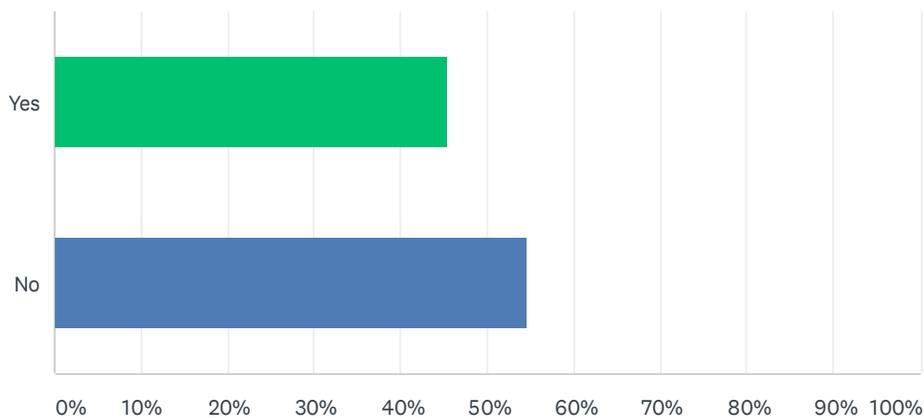
Answered: 14 Skipped: 7



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	78.57% 11
No	21.43% 3
TOTAL	14

Q13 Before you go, are there any general comments you'd like to make?

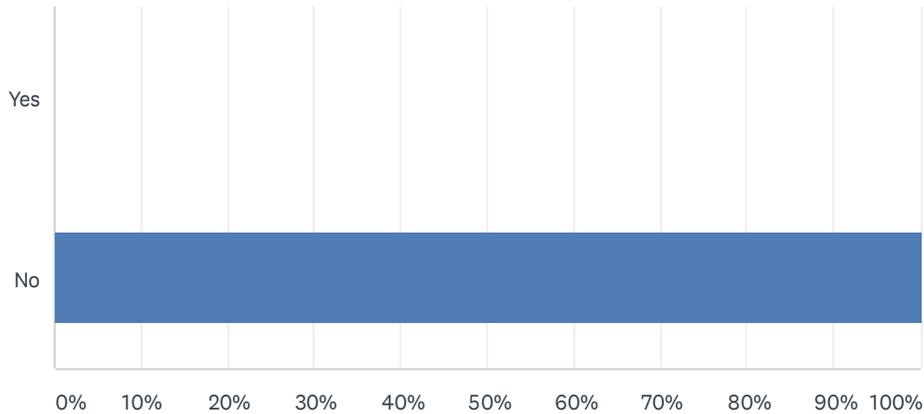
Answered: 11 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	45.45% 5
No	54.55% 6
TOTAL	11

Q14 Before you go, are there any general comments you'd like to make?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 18



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Yes	0.00% 0
No	100.00% 3
TOTAL	3

Q15 Please provide your comments below

Answered: 5 Skipped: 16

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Brown tourist signs? Overall I think it is great we have this framework but it needs some refinement to be delivered.	8/31/2020 7:36 AM
2	Local community involvement needs to be at the heart of the whole process with local people best placed to provide constructive input on ideas as well as provide many more based on their local knowledge of what people might want/need and the wasted or under-utilised existing infrastructure such as overgrown footpaths which could easily become cycling routes.	7/30/2020 2:42 PM
3	The potential of Eastchurch Aviation Museum could be regarded as one of the biggest tourist attractions if it can secure the 1912 hangars, described by English Heritage as "the most important aviation architecture left in Europe".	7/29/2020 6:30 PM
4	Knowing how tight budgets are and pressure on the time, i would like to give credit to the team for what has been achieved, particularly when having to deal with apathy from key beneficiaries! Furthermore, what is really exciting is seeing how different agencies and key stakeholders are now being pulled together and working collectively, it feels really positive and that we can achieve great things for the county...thank you to all involved.	7/19/2020 10:22 AM
5	In one of the questions it has asked about the challenges faced, I believe that in normal circumstances the plan is feasible and achievable, however with the recent Covid 19 lockdown and the way this has affected visitor numbers I believe that there is extra work that needs to be done to recover the local economy as fast as possible, this plan goes a long way in trying to help but maybe some parts need to be looked at and completed in a shorter timescale.	7/15/2020 12:46 PM

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Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan - Comments	Visitor Economy Framework Action Plan - Feedback
Individual response - would like to play a lead role in a visitor economy board for Visit Swale; Isle of Sheppey business	Acknowledged and advised will revert following consultation period to engage in setting up industry board
Individual response - are there plans to have tourism signing for the Isle of Sheppey?	Advised there are plans and this is being developed through the Community Forum (Oasis Academy lead organisation); funding has been identified and matter is being pursued through KCC/Highways Authority and Highways England. Provided details of Community Forum
The Medway Swale Boating Association (MSBA) is building on work of Faversham and Oare Creeks Heritage Harbours and broadening remit. An additional focus on heritage aspects (eg Boat Store) as part of the visitor response. Key contacts for conservation (Officer) and heritage lead (Member) requested	Details provided on Officer and Member key point of contacts to establish contact and engage in future meetings with Peel Ports (Dominik Zalewski – Senior Manger Marine Operations, London and Medway Zoom meeting planned for 10.8.2020 to start dialogue around local interests but MSBA did not engage with Officers; followed up and no response to date
A new website for promoting local businesses (using video uploads) established seeking access to promote commercial opportunities businesses	Acknowledged; currently being considered for integration into Healthy and Active web pages (part of Visit Swale)
<p>The growing popularity of The Leas in Minster presents on-street car parking pressures; need to identify measures to support popularity of destination with increased scope for visitor car parking. The large ground area from Barton's Point to The White House is unused and therefore, should be made into a nice car park for visitors, then as the road is extremely busy, pedestrian crossings should be provided, especially as a large number of the visitors are families with small children</p> <p>An idea would also be to include a toilet, shower block and a refreshment kiosk, on the upper block which could be a Bistro Restaurant</p> <p>If you made the area into a car park, it would solve the issue of travellers pitching up and leaving their rubbish</p>	<p>Council is in the process of installing a height and gate restriction on both grassed areas. There are currently no plans to introduce fees.</p> <p>With regard to the wider suggestion this can be picked up as part of concession review.</p>
Individual response: would like to support development and delivery of visitor economy in Swale	Acknowledged and requested further information including skills and details of whether there was a particular geographic area of interest or borough wide

<p>Faversham Society Response to Consultation on Swale Visitor Economy Action Plan.</p> <p>We are pleased to see the development of this Action Plan and the emphasis on placemaking. Sense of Place is important to residents and visitors alike. The Faversham Society's purpose is focused on maintaining, conserving and developing our town's sense of place. The Faversham Society seeks to <i>Cherish the Past, Adorn the Present, Create for the Future</i></p> <p>Recent work with young people for the Neighbourhood Plan has revealed considerable interest in Faversham's heritage and conserving and developing it for the future. Placemaking is increasingly at the heart of tourism and visitor economy development. Swale is defined by the waterway after which our borough is named. The Swale and the creeks and watercourses which feed the creeks bring the four parts of the district together. The Watling Street also provides a strong historical linkage but excludes Sheppey and most of the AONB. To develop Swale's identity for residents, visitors and potential visitors we need to promote some common themes.</p> <p>As the programme for the postponed "Our Shared Heritage" conference shows, Swale is rich in archaeology, railway heritage, defence, barges and trade, bricks, paper making, gunpowder, brewing and agriculture. It has downs, marshland, chalk streams, coast, mudflats, beaches, woodland, some of it ancient, nature reserves, SSSIs and an AONB. Experiential themes could be developed, drawn-out and marketed through "green route" heritage trails. In our view more could be made of Swale's natural heritage and this would help spread the benefits of the visitor economy to villages and rural areas. We are discussing the development of "green route" walking and cycling trails linking</p>	<p>Awaiting response</p> <p>Acknowledged</p> <p>Council has a good working relationship with Faversham Society and maintains regular contact through Historic Swale and Tourist Information Centre operation as well as a range of projects already in train such as Interreg Experience project with Visit Kent and Kent Downs AONB which has a focus on walking and cycling but also making links with the tourism product too i.e. food and drink sector, accommodation, visitor attractions and in longer term (post Covid-19 era, events)</p> <p>Council has made the introduction to Will Palin and the Sheerness Dockyard Church project as there could potentially be collaborative working and a shared interest in the connecting theme of 'estuary' and 'maritime'.</p>
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Faversham and Sittingbourne to the AONB to benefit both residents and visitors.

To use Faversham as an example, we receive large numbers of visitors for the swimming pools and significant numbers for our heritage and heritage events. The biggest economic benefit to the town probably comes from our regular markets, the Best of Faversham and the Antiques Markets which attract regular visits by people from across Kent and some from London. The District would benefit by encouraging more residents to visit other parts of Swale. National research and our experience in Faversham is that VICs are used by tourists, day visitors and residents and in our view the Action Plan should encourage more visiting within Swale.

While each of the four areas would benefit from distinctive marketing ensuring that the different experiences within Swale are clearly communicated to potential visitors, it is also important to generate both repeat day visits and overnight tourism through cross-promotion and marketing using themes which bring together different attractions and areas. Walking, cycling, bird watching and landscapes are obvious “products” which have not yet been promoted to their full potential and which would bring together different parts of Swale; it is the very variety of the local landscape which makes walking and birdwatching such assets.

Destination identities need to be developed with respect for the communities which host day visitors and tourists.

Residents have created the sense of place over many generations – the destinations belong to those who live here, and the way the places are marketed needs to reflect each community’s sense of place and identity. The Society was disappointed not to be mentioned in the Action Plans and similarly surprised that Historic Swale and the many other heritage groups are not mentioned. The heritage offer, which is a significant part of the visitor economy and motivator for visits is almost entirely run by volunteers, and most heritage

The more recent High Street recovery project has also acknowledged the part that street markets play in engaging residents and visitors alike as an integral part of economic performance of town centre locations.

Social media and increasing numbers of interactions via Facebook in particular are promoting more internal visitor exchanges. Can Identify targeted media campaigns to support further enhancement. Blogs are supporting improved destination performance and are being further enhanced with guest writers too focussing on specific themes such as landscape, birdwatching and photography

Agree – local residents have a role to play in acting as ambassadors and can create unique Shared Stories and contribute to Blogs as Guest Writers

attractions struggle to fund development and marketing. The current fashion for public-private funding of marketing initiatives generally precludes participation by voluntary sector organisations.

We had brought together all the heritage attractions in Faversham and were beginning to work together; this has been frustrated by the pandemic but will be an active area once face-to-face meetings are possible again. This group includes the Faversham Society Archaeological Research Group which has an annual excavation and the Kent Police Museum due to open this year. The Heritage Map was designed to bring together all the visitable heritage. We were grateful for SBC support of the printing of our Heritage Map this year – it also has a web presence

<https://favershamsociety.org/faversham-heritage-map/>

The Open Houses programme which we ran for 50 years ended in 2019 – insurers are no longer willing to insure the risks associated with opening private properties. We had plans for two Festival weekends in July each year. It seems unlikely that we shall be able to plan these to take place before July 2022. Support for relaunching Festival events from SBC departments will be important in relaunching events which are important both for residents and visitors. The Swale Migration Stories project will create an additional attraction and is engaging young people in a heritage initiative.

There are three major development projects in Faversham which arise from the Heritage Strategy which will assist with the development of visitor economy.

The Council works with many individual businesses from all sectors and would not wish to single out individual organisations

The Council looks to Faversham to replicate the good practice of partnership working and is using the Visit Faversham model to develop similar working practices on Sheppey initially

The Council acknowledges that events are a critical part of the success of Faversham's visitor economy and will look to work with partners when government guidance permits us to do so

The Council was pleased to work with Sheppey Matters on the Sheppey Migration

1) **Maritime Heritage Quarter:** capitalising on TS Hazard and Town Quay this would create a new destination attraction and assist in realising the regeneration objectives for the creek basin following the installation of a moveable bridge and the aspirations of the Faversham and Oare Heritage Harbour Group. There is also scope for an element of visitor economy development on Swan Quay if the owner can be tempted to engage with the Maritime Heritage Quarter. TS Hazard could serve as the northern gateway to the Cinque Ports and provide natural heritage interpretation for area and the Westbrook (chalk stream), through Stonebridge Pond, the creek and out to the marsh. The water course from the source of the Westbrook to the Swale would provide an excellent educational resource for schools as well as adding to the visitor attractions in the area.

2) **The railway engine- and carriage sheds and turntable.** This area is in the Heritage Strategy as a priority and we are keen to assist SBC and Network Rail in developing this additional heritage area as part of the visitor economy. The current area manager and the station manager at Faversham are both keen to see this development.

3) We are supporting the efforts of Faversham Town Council to secure funding for the Charters and the **Doddington Library** has been moved to the Town Hall – there is an opportunity to display some of the rare books from the Doddington Library alongside the Charters

Specific Comments on the Work Streams

1. Branding and Identity

a. Destination towns and AONB

b. Develop the identity of Swale as an area rich in natural and built heritage and with festivals which celebrate living cultural

Stories and to play an important role with regard to the successful outcome of the Heritage Lottery Application. Moving forward, the Council's Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Officer will work to add-value to the project

Have shared with Conservation Officer and meeting is being scheduled to include new assistant to see how we can take matters forward

heritage

c. The Faversham and District Camera Club has been very helpful to the Society and a number of its members have a keen interest in heritage. We have a photographic archive at the Society which could be trawled for images for promotion.

2. Business Support and Partnerships

a. There is scope for collaboration with Canterbury and Rochester to promote the Watling Street and pilgrimage route. We could collaborate with Waltham Abbey and Cumbria to promote gunpowder. The development of a Maritime Heritage Quarter would enable us to cross-promote with the National Maritime Museum, Chatham Historic Dockyard, Upnor Castle, Sheerness and the Cinque Ports. Once the Railway Heritage in Faversham is under development we shall be able to market it throughout the region and alongside the Sittingbourne & Kemsley Light Railway and the Bredgar & Wormshill Light Railway.

b. Faversham businesses close down at around 15:30 on most days; this is unhelpful to the visitor economy.

c. The annual Heritage Fair started by the Faversham Society and now run by Historic Swale supports the visitor economy.

d. The Faversham Museums Together group has begun to function as a partnership – stifled by Covid-19 but the heritage map is well received and with FTC support has been placed in a display case in the car park.

e. Southeastern are a particularly powerful potential partner in the development of the Swale visitor economy.

3. Product Quality & Development

a. We fully support the emphasis on experiential product but would like to ensure that this includes amongst other things strolling in quiet countryside, nostalgia, art and photography. Brass rubbing and Heritage Trails could be added here.

b. Heritage on the creeks and the Swale should also be seen as “water activities”.

c. Additional moorings in Faversham Creek would be advantageous

d. Support for the relaunching of festival in late 2021 and 2022 will be necessary if they are not to be victims of the pandemic, a loss to residents and the visitor economy.

4. Transport & Public Realm

a. We actively promote the full visitor offer in Swale from the Faversham VIC and are grateful for the financial support from Swale for this. We are keen to work with SBC to enhance the offer.

b. Signage is an issue in Faversham – visitors often struggle to find their way to the Creek, the Physic Garden and St Mary of Charity, all of which are significant attractions.

c. We keenly support sustainable tourism but doubt the need to develop a new toolkit – it would be more cost-effective to promote existing guidance.

d. We would welcome the opportunity to work with Swale to develop new volunteering experiences and recruit to them

e. There is scope to encourage day visitors to arrive by rail and a review of parking to encourage visitors to extend their stay would assist the development of the visitor economy.

f. There is a shortage of public seating in Faversham

g. Both the new Travelodge in Sittingbourne and the Premier Inn in Faversham are easily accessible from the railway stations and could be marketed for car-less

Londoners and others. They are potentially prime partners for visitor economy development and they have national distribution channels.

h. We should encourage a riverboat service from London

<p>along the Swale.</p> <p>5. Community Engagement</p> <p>a. Our Walking with History tours are very popular. We would encourage the development of a cadre of local guides, being guided by a genuinely local person enhances the visitor experience.</p> <p>b. Residents could be encouraged to visit other parts of the District</p> <p>c. It would be wise in “selling” expenditure on the visitor economy to residents to emphasise the providing of improved leisure and recreational activities for visitors and residents alike</p> <p>6. Tactical Marketing</p> <p>a. We strongly support marketing efforts with partners beyond Swale and cross-promotion</p>	
<p>a) Response from: The Historical Research Group of Sittingbourne (HRGS). We are a non-profit making organisation, set up in 2004, by a group of local volunteer historians. We run group research projects and support members with their individual research interests. We have run the exhibition and research rooms in the Forum, Sittingbourne, called The Heritage Hub since January 2015 and have attracted over 30,000 visitors. As we have a public visitor attraction, that is usually open 5 days a week (Tuesdays to Saturdays 10am to 4pm), covid and volunteers permitting, HRGs is willing to be an outlet for leaflets and marketing publicity materials.</p> <p>b) HRGS are pleased to see the development of this Swale Borough Council (SBC) Action Plan and the emphasis on placemaking, as we see a Sense of Place as an important aspect to residents and visitors alike. HRGS has an obvious history bias and believe that identity should be at</p>	<p>Acknowledged</p>

the heart of the development of a tourism and visitor economy strategy. We would like to highlight that the local heritage offering which is a significant part of the visitor economy and motivator for visits is almost entirely run by volunteers. Most heritage attractions struggle to fund development and marketing. When consultants are brought in, they have previously alienated the voluntary sector organisations. Offering a small heritage retainer as an incentive for voluntary heritage groups to provide content would seem reasonable.

- c) This report will address the documents action plan as far as it pertains to Sittingbourne, utilising the same headings. HRGS would welcome the opportunity to be listed as a 'delivery partner' in the Action Plan, in the following sections:

1: Branding and Identity

As part of building an identity for Sittingbourne, it would be advantageous to build a new Sittingbourne Museum and Heritage Centre, which could also include a tourist information site.

1.1 Refresh destination stories based on new visitor insights and 1.6 for information on the Heritage Hub; give input into 1.3.1 Assess if a full destination branding exercise is required to support visitor economy as well as wider placemaking;

In this section we would promote Donald Dean VC stone, Brickmaking
Papermaking & the Lloyds Mill

The Avenue of Remembrance

We would look to see if we could find volunteers to support 1.4.8 to help set up a working group with key partner businesses and organisations to support key social media content themes including shared hashtags e.g. gardens, food, history.

We would look to see if we could find volunteers to support 1.5.1 to develop Visit Swale content authors group.

1.5 - Develop destination content bank

Areas for consideration for Sittingbourne are:

- 1) Opening of The Dolphin Barge Museum and accessibility to the wharf and the barge Raybel
- 2) Investing in and promoting the architecture of the Milton Regis High Street
- 3) Refurbishment of Periwinkle Mill
- 4) Refurbishment of the Avenue of Remembrance
- 5) Promotion of the heritage of The Rose and other 'Inns' along Sittingbourne High Street
- 6) A rekindling of the twinning with Ypres in Belgium

2: Business Support and Partnerships

HRGS would welcome the opportunity to receive the various training packages listed in this section.

2.1.3 - We believe we would have volunteers who would support your action of receiving specific destination welcome training.

2.2.1 – HRGS volunteers are currently learning and creating a Trip Advisor page, and would welcome training

on this subject.

2.2.2 – ‘Walk and Talks’ are extremely popular, and HRGS would encourage the development of a cadre of local ‘qualified’ guides, locally recruited, to enhance the visitor experience.

2.3.2 HRGS belongs to Historic Swale and Wheels of Time, and regularly swaps leaflets with members of these groups.

2.3.5 As a heritage attraction, HRGS would have reservations in including links to nearby accommodation on our website, as this could suggest we are ‘recommending’ them.

2.5 Increase regional collaboration – HRGS would suggest closer links with Southeastern and the Kent Community Rail Partnerships who are a particularly powerful potential partners in the development of the Swale visitor economy.

3: Product quality and development

3.1.1 Whilst HRGS would be willing to consider our existing talks and events for a tourist diary. It is a fine balance from offering what we provide as a commercial venture. For many of our volunteers, this is their retirement hobby, and not offered on a commercial basis. Because we are a not for profit group, we need to be wary of making commercial advisements and commitments. We would also need to consider what implications it might have on our existing insurance policies.

3.6.1 Develop walking & cycling offer - Perhaps the revitalisation and updating of the 'Swale Heritage Trail' which was published in 1995 (by SBC & KCC), could be developed as a "green route" walking and cycling trails linking Faversham and Sittingbourne to the AONB to benefit both residents and visitors. HRGS already has an online self-guided walk around Rose Hill available on our website: <https://hrgs.co.uk/rose-hill-trail/>. HRGS are looking at the updating of their 'Cat Trail' – Historic Town Walk around Sittingbourne and also plan to develop a walk that takes in the Avenue of Remembrance.

4: Transport & Public Realm

4.2.2 The Heritage Hub would be willing to have an audit completed by access-able.

5: Community Engagement

5.1.1 – HRGS could provide "People Like Me" stories from our list of Famous local People (workloads permitting).

5.1.2 – "Encourage residents to share their favourite places/hidden gems via social media and groups" HRGS already promotes this via our website and facebook - 'Out and About': <https://hrgs.co.uk/out-and-about/>

5.2.1 Kent Big Weekend and Heritage Open days - HRGS would like to participate in this, but have insufficient volunteers to accommodate this amongst all the other things we offer.

5.2.2 Develop town apps for businesses to offer residents incentives and offers – we would like to know more about

<p>this.</p> <p>6: Tactical Marketing</p> <p>6.2 Develop campaigns with regional partners (Heritage links) – HRGS would like to know more about this.</p> <p>6.2.4 – Film locations - have you considered making contact with TV film production companies to offer places around Swale for filming. Port Issac in Cornwall for example has a mass of tourist and benefits from the Doc Martin series.</p> <p>6.5.3 - Have you considered? – champing: https://champing.co.uk/ This is the unique concept of camping overnight in historic churches, brought to the world by The Churches Conservation Trust, the national charity protecting historic churches at risk</p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Historic Swale Response to Consultation on Swale Visitor Economy Action Plan (consultation closing date 4.9.2020)</p> <p>1. Response from: Richard Emmett, Chair of Historic Swale CIO. Historic Swale is an umbrella charity which supports member attractions and organisations in the 3 areas (Faversham, Sittingbourne, and Sheppey) which make up the Swale district to collectively showcase the diverse and fascinating heritage which the Borough offers.</p> <p>2. Historic Swale welcomes the Action Plan and hopes to participate in whatever areas it can. What has to be remembered is that for the majority of our heritage sites,</p>	<p>Acknowledged</p>

we are run by volunteers, who already have their own interests and responsibilities. Wherever possible we hope to work in partnership with Swale Borough Council.

3. It is noted that Historic Swale is listed as a delivery partner in the plan, I will bring the points raised to our members at the next Historic Swale members meeting, planned for October 2020. In particular, section 2.3 the annual leaflet swap (which some members already do via Wheels of Time), and linking attractions on websites; regarding 3.1 and offering 'experiences', Historic Swale members are probably well placed to offer such events, however, for many this is their retirement hobby, and not offered on a commercial basis; 4.2 – we will ask our members to provide information on disabled access.
4. Under point 2.4 and 2.5, Historic Swale was set up for cross promotional networking, however, since the removal of administration support, previously provided by Swale Borough Council, this conduit has been struggling to fulfil this external networking function. If council support could be reinstated, this would enable data collection and cross border networking.
5. The Swale Migration Stories project which is being championed by Historic Swale will create an additional attraction and is engaging young people in a heritage initiative. Historic Swale would welcome the opportunity to add this to the heritage offering.

Cabinet Meeting	
Meeting Date	28 th October 2020
Report Title	Economic Improvement Plan 2020-23
Cabinet Member	Cllr Monique Bonney, Cabinet Member for Economy and Property
SMT Lead	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Economy, Communities and Housing
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Economy, Communities and Housing
Lead Officer	Kieren Mansfield, Economy and Community Services Manger
Key Decision	No
Classification	Open
Recommendations	1. That Cabinet approve and adopt the Economic Improvement Plan 2020-2023

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The report presents the post-consultation draft of Economic Improvement Plan 2020-23. The document sets out the priorities for the Council and the headline actions it intends to take in respect of the future development of the local economy.

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council currently has an Economic Regeneration Framework 2018-21, adopted in July 2018. Produced under the previous Conservative administration, this document set out four priority areas, under which there are a number of 'areas of focus', providing some further detail under each priority.
- 2.2 Whilst the four 'headline' priorities in the Economic Regeneration Framework remain relevant to the Borough, the detail beneath this does not align with the new coalition administration's priorities and approach and a new document is required to reflect this. This is acknowledged in the Draft Economic Improvement Plan as a change in emphasis, with *"more focus on indigenous growth, focused around start-up and small and medium enterprises (SME's); an intent to 'up the ante' in supporting and developing the visitor economy and makes clear our wish to pursue economic improvement, but not at any cost."*
- 2.3 The Economic Improvement Plan was drafted prior to the COVID-19 crisis but has now been amended to reflect current circumstances. This includes the identification of short-term (with a year) actions which are focused on immediate

recovery, with more medium-term actions identified as work towards the administrations established ambitions.

- 2.4 Beneath this Economic Improvement Plan a draft action plan has been produced. Whilst not intended as part of the policy document, the action plan seeks to identify activity, those involved and the resource available. It is intended by as a 'live' document which would change over time, depending on changing context, circumstances and resources.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The Economic Improvement Plan sets out the coalition administration's priorities for the local economy and it is proposed that it is adopted, to replace the existing Economic Regeneration Framework.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Do not adopt the Economic Improvement Plan. This is not proposed as the document, alongside the Visitor Economy Action Plan, is an important element of how the administration can articulate its priorities and ambitions for the local economy and informs the work of the relevant teams within the Council.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Economic Improvement Plan was consulted upon over a period of 8 weeks, ending the 10th September 2020. The document was sent to local businesses and other organisations via the Council's e-bulletin, to other named contacts including relevant partner organisations and was publicised via social media and both the Councils main website and through Swale Means Business. This generated 45 responses, which indicated a high level of support for the headline priorities, with comments provided by those who responded under each. The draft document was also discussed at the Policy Development and Review Committee on the 9th September 2020. The document has been amended, having considered the comments received.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Economic Improvement Plan aligns with the Corporate Plan
Financial, Resource and Property	Delivery of the Economic Improvement will need to make use of the Council's existing available resources and compliment this through strong partnership working, and the pursuit of external funding and investment. The creation of new commercial floor space, supported through the Council's economic improvement activity, contributes significantly to the Councils budget through retained Non-Domestic Rates. Actions taken, particularly related to infrastructure, will also have wider implications for future housing

	delivery and the consequent impacts on future Council tax receipts.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Economic improvement is not a statutory function of the local authority but activity within the plan relates closely to a number of areas where the Council has statutory duties, in particular the Local Plan.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The Economic Improvement Plan reflects the local economy, its impacts on the environment and its contribution to the climate emergency. Actions have been aligned with the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.
Health and Wellbeing	Improving and enabling access to employment, skills and other opportunities will make a significant contribution to the overall well-being of residents of the Borough.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this stage. It should be noted that delivery against the Economic Regeneration Framework is, in part, dependent upon the working relationship with government and other partners and the funding decisions that are made by the private sector and at a county, regional and national level. This of itself places important elements of delivery beyond the Council's immediate control, mitigated by our ability to make a strong case to decision makers. Where direct Council investment is made and /or external funding is secured (for which the Council is the accountable body) appropriate controls will need to be in place to manage any financial and other risks.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage

7 Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- Appendix I: Economic Improvement Plan 2020-23

8 Background Papers

- 8.1 Report to Cabinet, 18th July 2018, Swale Economic Regeneration Framework.
- 8.2 Report to the Policy Development and Review Committee, 9th September 2020, Swale Draft Economic Improvement Plan 2020-23

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Appendix I

Swale's Economic Improvement Plan 2020-2023

Even prior to the economic challenges created by the COVID-19 crisis, the performance of Swale's economy presented a mixed picture. Overall recent years have seen growth, reflected in the scale of activity and the number of jobs available across the Borough. This is to be welcomed, but the Council also recognises that there remain long-standing issues, with the COVID-19 crisis both compounding these and presenting new challenges.

This Economic Improvement Plan takes the opportunity to review our priorities for economic improvement in the Borough. There will need to be a focus on playing our part in helping meet some of the immediate challenges the Boroughs economy now faces, from the impacts of both the COVID-19 crisis and the imminent departure of the UK from the European Union. Nonetheless, we are also determined to take advantage of untapped potential, for longer-term benefit. Despite the challenges we face, we believe it remains the case that there is an opportunity to contribute to strengthening our economy for the future, deliver improved quality and choice in local employment opportunities and enhance quality of life for residents.

This document sets out our priorities under four headings; raising Swale's profile; securing investment and infrastructure; supporting local business and improving skills. These will be familiar themes to those conversant with the Boroughs efforts to improve the local economy to date. However, this plan presents a clear change of emphasis that reflects not only the Council's new ethos but, we believe, also repositions local economic priorities in a manner well suited to addressing some of the new, immediate challenges. There is more focus on indigenous growth, focused around start-up and small and medium enterprises (SME's); an intent to 'up the ante' in supporting and developing the visitor economy and makes clear our wish to pursue economic improvement, but not at any cost. There will be more effort to improve the quality of the investment and the jobs available locally and the need to promote a more sustainable approach, reflecting the Council's declaration of a climate and ecological emergency and the associated action plan ([www. www.swale.gov.uk/cee-update/](http://www.swale.gov.uk/cee-update/)).

The Economic Improvement Plan has a relatively short time horizon, although we acknowledge that delivering economic change requires a long-term perspective. However, the economic circumstances we now face are so uncertain, and there will be a need to regularly review how we are responding to the prevailing circumstances and how these are impacting upon longer-term prospects. We will continue to monitor what could be a rapidly changing economic context over the period of the plan and adapt the approach accordingly. The individual actions identified are split between those which will be our focus in the short-term, and those which contribute to longer-term ambitions of the Council for local economic improvement.

Key local issues

The full impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on both the national and local economies is not yet clear, but it will undoubtedly be severe. Beyond the forced closures and loss of business and income for so many, new ways of having to work and do business will become part of a 'new normal'. Unemployment has risen sharply, and many local businesses and residents face a more uncertain future. This uncertainty is compounded by Brexit, which will not only have long-term economic impacts across the country, but also potentially geographically specific, local impacts on Kent.

Whilst the Council will play its part in responding to immediate challenges, it will not lose sight of longstanding issues that need to be tackled, some made worse by the crisis and all now set against a changing context.

The Borough has been successful in attracting and retaining investment, particularly from the industrial sectors. Combined with environmental and infrastructure constraints this has meant there is a tightening supply of available employment land and premises. There is a need to make sure that a future supply of employment land is secured through the Local Plan, and that appropriate proposals are assisted through the planning system to deliver business space that meets local needs and supports growth. There is also a wish to make sure that we are making the most of a broader spectrum of job creating opportunities, which operate not only in traditional business settings, but also can operate from a wider range of settings, including under-used buildings, shared space or the home.

It also remains the case that there is a gap between the employment available in the Borough and the jobs that are needed. Despite local employment growth, Swale has a low ratio between jobs and working age population, something common to many parts of Kent. Average workplace earnings are also well behind both County and regional averages, although average residents earnings are broadly in line with the norm. This reflects the need for both more and better paid jobs in the Borough and the current gap is helping drive the volume of out-commuting that occurs. It is unclear as to how the COVID-19 may affect the labour market locally, including resident's future choices in terms of commuting, but this re-enforces the need to extend choice of opportunity to work more locally.

With significant concentrations of manufacturing and transport and distribution, there is a need to further diversify, to create a more resilient local economy, in which average workplace wages can be pushed higher. There are a number of sectors in which average wage levels are higher, but which are either currently under-represented in Swale or are in evidence through a proliferation of micro-businesses, providing more limited employment. As an example, the creative industries represent only 7% of all businesses, the lowest concentration in Kent. Another is the professional, scientific and technical sectors, where despite representing around 14% of all local businesses, only provides 6.1% of employment, with little growth in recent years. The Council needs to understand the barriers and what could be done to support growth in such sectors, which will require more engagement with these, and other business sectors locally.

Economic inactivity and in particular skill levels within the working age population have remained a persistent problem for Swale, impacting not only on individuals opportunities but also the ability of employers to meet their workforce requirements locally. Long-term health conditions play a significant role in the higher inactivity levels found locally, demonstrating the importance of meeting the wider infrastructure needs of the Borough. The skills gap is both a consequence and driver for the lower paid employment found locally and to meet the challenge a change in access to skills provision and employment that provides more opportunity are both required.

Due to the nature of businesses in Swale, the district has always had high energy consumption and emissions compared with other Kent districts. The 2017 total of 648.4kt CO₂ comprises 55% of the districts total CO₂ emissions, although within the commercial sector there has been a 41% decrease in CO₂ emissions between 2005-2017. There are also significant air quality issues, particularly focused around parts of the local road network, with population and economic growth both contributing to this.

To effectively tackle these issues, the Borough Council must engage with businesses and develop mutually supportive networks that support efforts that help tackle environmental impact, recognising that this can contribute to improved productivity. There will also remain a need for appropriate investments in the local infrastructure that will support tackling these challenges.

Raising Swale's profile

Promoting Swale's assets is critical to delivering our priorities. A wider appreciation of the Borough's strategic location between London and Europe, its many natural and built assets and creating positive perceptions will significantly enhance our ability to attract interest, build value in the local property market, generate and retain investment and expand the visitor economy. We will build on the existing Swale Means Business and Visit Swale brands that have been developed in recent years and develop the associated on-line presence to showcase major assets such as Eurolink and the Port of Sheerness; the visitor offer; the areas fantastic natural environment and the many advantages of living in Swale.

However, with our desire to support locally driven employment growth we will also use these platforms to reach out to the local small businesses, to understand how we can better work with and for them and to make more of the local success stories which can help inspire local people to bring forward their ideas and to develop their businesses. We will promote the business support that is available to residents and local companies alike, both through the workshops and one-to-ones that the Council provides, but also more specialised advice provided by others.

The Council's new ethos and approach to delivering economic improvement and change is something which needs to be clearly articulated across a wide range of partner organisations, funders and the business community. The Council is developing a range of plans and strategies, that sit beneath the Corporate plan and we need to make sure that we develop a narrative for our economic ambitions that is consistent, understood by funders and those we hope to work with and encourages them to play their part in securing the positive changes we hope to achieve, in both the short and longer-term.

Our priorities

In the short-term we will:-

- Put forward the Borough's case for support, as it is made available through Government, the Local Enterprise Partnership and other agencies, to aid the economic recovery of the Borough.
- Refresh and enhance the Swale Means Business Swale web presence, using social and other media to communicate with residents and the local business community, increasing our reach and making clear the availability and scope of business support.
- Inspire local businesses through local 'success stories' that promote creativity, innovation and the use of technology, to help rebuild business success in the "new normal".

In addition we will:-

- Develop and present a clear narrative for the Borough's longer-term ambitions so that it is understood and reflected through the work of key bodies including Locate in Kent, Visit Kent, the Thames Estuary Commission and the South East LEP.
- Use the attributes and opportunities in each area of Swale, and the Borough as a whole, to promote each as a great place to visit and in which to invest.

- Work with partners to develop and promote shared stories about Swale, to demonstrate the benefits of the Borough in which to invest and do business.

Securing investment and infrastructure

Properly funded and planned infrastructure, delivered at the right time is vital - not only to redress the adverse effects of development on our local communities, but also to unlock economic potential in the Borough. A broad and long-sighted view of the infrastructure that is needed is required, taking account of not only immediate issues (such as lorry and coach parking and congestion) but also future challenges and opportunities.

Recent years have seen a particular focus on delivering highway improvements to facilitate housing and help drive economic growth. Whilst road network issues need to be addressed, particularly where there are issues of road safety and air quality, we must also acknowledge the climate emergency, with the Council's goal for the Borough to be net-zero carbon emissions by 2030. Consequently, we will place more focus on infrastructure that supports this. Through the planning process, initiatives such as the emerging walking and cycling strategy and by lobbying government and business we wish to encourage modal shift for both people and freight. We will also support initiatives to help meet emerging sustainable infrastructure needs, such as electric vehicle charging points. Improved broadband services across the Borough are also an essential asset for the future, making on-line working credible in urban and rural communities alike, and reducing the need to travel.

Aside from helping address climate change, embracing this approach will also create new opportunities. Improved broadband connectivity will help stimulate economic activity in rural areas. Walking and cycling routes and good public transport links will support the visitor economy and also make it easier for residents to access employment and learning. And delivering against broader infrastructure needs, including education and health care will also support the economy by removing barriers to work and developing the pool of local labour available to business.

Our town centres are also an important area needing investment, to help them change, adapt and improve in the face of considerable challenge. The Council's attention has been largely focused on delivery of the major regeneration project in Sittingbourne Town Centre and it is our intention that we now move forward by looking at the wider opportunities that exist. Improving peoples experience and the way in which they relate to and use the town centres will be vital to bringing life back to them. We aim to improve the public realm and look after our heritage through a mix of investment and enforcement. Retail, leisure and other services will all continue to play a vital role, but we also need to diversify and give people a wider set of reasons to come into our town centres. This might include housing, co-working and small studio space for homeworkers and small businesses and encouraging new residential communities into town centres where it makes sense to do so.

Funding will be the key challenge. The Council will invest in its own assets to improve and create opportunity. It will also seek possibilities to address existing deficits as well as to improve and create opportunity from investment and development with partner organisations including Government.

Our priorities

In the short-term we will:-

- Work with partners and invest in improving the appearance, functionality and economic and environmental sustainability of our town centres, that can help meet the immediate challenges created by COVID-19 and encourage confidence amongst local residents and visitors
- Work with partners to introduce measures that encourage more walking and cycling to secure modal shift as well as develop the borough's visitor economy

In addition we will:-

- Offset housing growth and promote sustainable, local economic improvement through balanced improvements to physical, environmental, social and health infrastructure.
- Push for a range of measures that contribute to ease of movement and improved traffic management across the Borough, including appropriate improvements to the road network; alternative modes of freight transport; public transport provision; lorry and coach parking and measures that encourage walking and cycling.
- Where we can, promote the delivery of broadband and mobile services, that support the changing needs of both the urban and rural economies and residents working patterns.
- Develop and deliver clear strategies for our town centres, investing in improving their appearance and working with partners to diversify their offer to enhance the important role as centres for economic, cultural and community activity.
- Implement the visitor economy framework to increase investment, address new visitor demands and grow the value of the sector to the Swale economy.

Supporting local business

This plan reflects our aspirations to create a positive commercial environment aimed at supporting local businesses, as well as attracting new investment. We believe that it is primarily through new businesses and growing existing small and medium enterprises (SME's) that sustainable and more diverse employment growth can be achieved, less vulnerable to the uncertainty ahead and remote decisions, driven by macro-economic influences.

Swale Borough Council wants to provide proactive support and guidance to local small businesses to help them achieve and sustain their ambitions and deliver the economic benefits to the borough. It has worked hard to establish a business facing brand through Swale Means Business and delivers a free business support service to all existing and start-up businesses across Swale. We will continue to promote the business support programme to maximise awareness and take-up of the service, but also increase our efforts around sector specific targeting that supports the Councils wider priorities, such as the visitor economy sector and the voluntary and community services sector.

We also wish to make best use of all the avenues through which businesses engage with the Council, to offer the most appropriate support and guidance. The Council engages with

business on many fronts, on issues as diverse as environmental health, climate change, business rates and planning and we need to continue to build a collaborative approach that makes sure that help is provided where it is needed, with Economy & Community Services playing a co-ordinating role.

Utilising and growing our business existing business networks we will seek to understand the changing issues impacting on local employers and seek to help address them. We will also strive to encourage employers to become more involved with the community and assist us in achieving our ambitions through their own investment, aiding our lobbying efforts and by providing their workforce with a living wage.

Although the Borough has delivered substantial growth in commercial floorspace there is an increasingly tight supply of land and premises, limiting the options available to what is a hugely diverse and potentially changing market. With our focus on start-up and SME businesses we particularly wish to see new facilities which meet their needs and encourage engagement and collaboration, including studio and co-working space. There is also a need for grow-on space and more up to date stock and through the Local Plan review we will need to identify sufficient employment land to meet identified need over the coming years.

It is also important that the Council considers how it can use its own assets and investment to support our economic ambitions. This is an area which needs exploring to understand where such opportunities are, how they fit against our broader priorities and where it makes financial sense for the Council to pursue them.

Our priorities

In the short term we will:-

- Optimise access to government financial support to businesses through direct delivery and signposting
- Deliver our support service for start-ups and SME's and signpost to that available through others, improving awareness and providing access best suited to the prevailing public health advice and the demand from residents
- Engage with local business and gather intelligence to understand the immediate and potential ongoing impacts on the local economy to try and understand the threats and opportunities that may lie ahead and inform how we support local business.

In addition we will:-

- Engage with start-ups and established businesses more widely and continue to develop our support service for both, across sectors including those which support the visitor economy and promote creativity and innovation in the Borough.
- Provide networking and learning opportunities that help businesses take forward ideas, trade with the Council, its partners and each other, develop their workforce, improve productivity, and grow sustainably.
- Investigate the evolution of a 'one business account' approach within the Council, reviewing how the key business support service functions interact and share information, that then helps us better support local businesses and aids their understanding how to be compliant in relation to their business activity

- Improve the supply and diversity of space that supports micro and start-up businesses, including co-working space
- Support a pipeline of available commercial sites and premises across Swale, to serve local businesses expansion needs as well as new investment.
- Support creative and innovation led businesses to tap into centres of excellence and knowledge, including Higher Education, to support innovation and growth.

Improving Skills

It is important that local people are given the opportunity to benefit from economic growth, whether that is locally, or further afield. There are often a range of factors that mean for many individuals and families there are significant barriers to this - transport issues, a lack of confidence and skills and health issues are all factors holding local residents back.

In the 2019 indices of multiple deprivation, identifies skills as a particular challenge and an area in which the Borough is ranked in the worst 10% nationally. This impacts not only on access to employment opportunities for local people but also the type of job-led investment that the Borough can attract.

The issue of skills and education is a complex one in which the council's role is indirect, as the communities' champion, lobbying for change, and providing a conduit through which the work of others can be influenced and enabled. Our focus is not just on addressing the limited further education provision for Swale's young people but also the wish to see local people, at all stages of their careers, provided opportunities to upskill and retrain.

As well as focusing on those agencies involved in funding and providing opportunities to learn, we need existing local employers to take more of a role, both directly as employers but also through engaging within the wider community, to help inform provision and give young people insight into potential careers.

Our priorities

In the short term we will:-

- Help provide local, labour market intelligence to partners and local schools, to help inform provision for young people and adults.
- Keep tabs on how the crisis is impacting upon need locally and use that information to lobby providers and funders to respond to local challenges
- With partners, take steps to help the most disadvantaged families and communities to embrace opportunities from economic growth, job creation and skills provision.

In addition we will:-

- Pursue all opportunities to progress our long-term ambition to enhance the provision of further and higher education accessible to Swale residents
- Encourage employers to become more engaged with developing young people, working with local schools and providing progression opportunities through work placements and apprenticeships

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Cabinet Meeting	
Meeting Date	28 th October 2020
Report Title	Establishment of Local Housing Company (LHC)
Cabinet Member	Cllr Ben Martin, Cabinet Member for Housing
SMT Lead	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services
Head of Service	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services
Lead Officer	Charlotte Hudson, Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services
Key Decision	Yes
Classification	Open / Restricted Appendix.
Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To create a Local Housing Company called Swale Rainbow Homes Ltd. 2. To appoint Cllr. Ben J Martin, Cllr Monique Bonney, Emma Wiggins and Charlotte Hudson as directors of the LHC. 3. To appoint David Clifford as Company Secretary for the LHC. 4. To appoint the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing, Deputy Cabinet Member for Health, Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer to the shareholder panel. 5. To adopt the business plan shown in Appendix I. 6. To transfer the Council owned land old bus depot (East Street), Fountain Street and Cockleshell Walk Carpark to the LHC in exchange for an equity share in the LHC. 7. To loan the LHC up to £23 million to fund the Capital development. 8. To delegate to the Chief Financial Officer in conjunction with The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance authority to allocate working capital to LHC from the North Kent Shared Business Rates.

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides Cabinet with an update on the feasibility work undertaken to create a LHC and proposes the establishment of a Local Housing Company (LHC) to deliver against the affordable housing priority. It sets out the legal and financial considerations and seeks approval of the inaugural business plan.

2 Background

- 2.1 In March 2020 Cabinet was provided with a range of options regarding increasing the supply of affordable housing in the borough, it was agreed to carry out further feasibility on the creation of a LHC.
- 2.2 Savills have been appointed to develop a business plan for the LHC and to form a base model to ensure that the proposals were financially viable and met the delivery objectives. In addition, Trowers and Hamlin LLP have been appointed to provide legal advice to the Council on its powers to establish, fund and transfer land to the LHC, as well as technical advice on state aid and procurement.

Structure to Deliver Housing.

- 2.3 In order to determine if the LHC route was the best option available to the Council, our powers to deliver housing were reviewed. The Council is a "local housing authority" for the purpose of the Housing Act 1985 (the **1985 Act**) and Section 9 of the 1985 Act empowers local housing authorities to provide housing accommodation by acquiring land on which to build, building housing or acquiring houses. It is arguable that this is the most "natural" housing power available to the Council for the provision of general needs social rented accommodation. Any properties acquired / built using the Section 9 power must be accounted for in a council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA) in accordance with Section 74 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 (the **1989 Act**).
- 2.4 The Council no longer operates a HRA as a result of completing a stock transfer a number of years ago. Current government guidance states that up to 199 social dwellings may be held in the General Fund under a Direction from the Secretary of State. Once the 200 threshold is reached, a local authority *must* hold them in a (re-opened) HRA.
- 2.5 The Council must therefore have sound reasons for not using Section 9 and developing and retaining affordable rental accommodation in a LHC. (This issue does not arise with market products, as Section 9 is not the "natural" power for delivery of that tenure.
- 2.6 To establish the LHC the Council can rely upon Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 (the **2011 Act**) which contains the "general power of competence". The general power of competence permits a local authority to do anything an individual may do, subject to a number of limitations. A local authority may exercise the general power for its own purpose, for a commercial purpose and/or for the benefit of others.
- 2.7 If a Council uses the general power of competence for a commercial purpose, it must do so through a company (section 4 of the 2011 Act). However, there is nothing which precludes a local authority from using a company even when it is not acting for a commercial purpose.

- 2.8 Section 2 of the 2011 Act limits the exercise of the general power of competence where it "overlaps" with a power which predates it. This includes a council's power to trade under Section 95 of the Local Government Act 2003 (the **2003 Act**). It would be prudent therefore for the Council to comply with the requirements and limitations to which Section 95 is subject. These are set out in Regulation 2 of the Local Government (Best Value Authorities) (Power to Trade) (England) Order 2009 (the **2009 Order**) which requires a business case to be prepared and approved by a council before a company starts trading. The 2009 Order also provides that local authorities must recover the costs of accommodation, goods, services, staff or any other thing that it supplies to a company which facilitate its power to trade.
- 2.9 Having considered the option of delivering from the general fund/HRA or the formation of the LHC, a LHC is preferred for the following reasons:
- 2.9.1 while affordable rent / low cost home ownership products are favoured, the LHC may be delivering multi-tenure sites to address site viability issues. It makes commercial sense (and will result in efficiency savings) to keep all units at a site under single ownership.
- 2.9.2 rent flexibility following the application of the Regulator of Social Housing's Rent Standard to council properties (which came into effect on 1 April 2020). This would not apply to properties held by the LHC and so the LHC would have more flexibility than the Council through any re-opened HRA to charge rent at different levels for different tenants, relating to income or some other criteria, such as for key workers. It also allows for the switching of tenure from market to affordable and vice versa which is problematic under the Rent Standard.
- 2.9.3 if the properties developed in the LHC were allocated to those who would not normally qualify for general needs housing or nomination to a Housing Association, this would help the Council to distinguish between what it might ordinarily have provided as a housing authority and what the LHC will provide.
- 2.9.4 it is likely that tenants of the LHC would be granted assured tenancies under the Housing Act 1988 and it has been recommended that the LHC lets properties on assured short-hold tenancies (**AST**). A key feature of an AST is that the landlord has the right to regain possession of the property at the end of the fixed term as long as the landlord gives two months' notice (although this may be changed by the Rented Homes Bill). In this situation the LHC would have the ability to change the tenure of the properties it holds should the market require different types of stock. This gives the LHC the ability to react to the market.
- 2.9.5 Using the LHC gives the Council a means of exit, should this be required. The Council would be able to sell the company / its shareholding in the company and sell-on the housing portfolio by way of a share sale. This gives the Council a flexibility in the marketplace which it would not have if it held the properties directly.

Creation of LHC

- 2.10 Part V of the Local Government Act 1989 together with the Local Authorities (Companies) Order 1990 (the **Companies Order**) imposes a number of statutory requirements on companies which are controlled or influenced by local authorities. On the basis that the LHC will be wholly owned by the Council and its directors will also be appointed by the authority then the LHC will (under this legislation) be classified as a non-arm's length controlled company.
- 2.11 Directors appointed to the company will need to act in the best interests of the company. The company records and information are available to the Council to provide overview and scrutiny and regular reporting will be required. To do this effectively a shareholder panel will also be created to ensure regular oversight.

Business Plan / Model

- 2.12 Savills were commissioned to develop the business plan and associated modelling. The overarching aim of the model has been to maximise the delivery of affordable properties whilst also making a return for the Council. For this reason, the baseline outline business case is based on 100% affordable rented properties. The definition of affordable being the lower of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA), or 80% of market rent (this ensures that tenants would be eligible for full benefit cover for their rents, if needed).
- 2.13 The model also provides an alternative appraisal for the introduction of mixed-tenure with 25% of the sites providing properties at market rent level.
- 2.14 The detailed business plan is shown in Appendix I as a restricted document due to the commercial nature of the information. However, the key principles have been outlined in this section of the report. It should be noted that modelling took place for social rents and had to be discounted as they were not financially viable.
- 2.15 The principal aims of the Council in undertaking the LHC is to:
- Increase the supply of affordable housing;
 - ensure that the solution is financially viable and doesn't place a financial burden on the Council;
 - ensure the properties are energy efficient as possible within the financial constraints;
 - ensure densities are appropriate for the location and management of any scheme;
 - control and influence around what is delivered;
 - quality and design standards; and
 - acts as exemplar landlord in the rented sector.
- 2.16 The model has been run on three sites in Sittingbourne already in council ownership which have been identified for development, which is estimated to

provide 139 properties. The property mix will be 1- and 2-bedroom flats and maisonettes. The need for 1- and 2-bedroom properties currently makes up 68% of the housing register.

- 2.17 The model has been developed based upon appropriate build costs, provides allowances to enable energy efficiency standards as well as factoring in whole lifecycle costs of developing, managing, and maintaining the properties. Overall development costs are between £20 million and £23 million. The latter includes provision for energy efficiency.
- 2.18 The LHC will be able to finance the build of these properties through loans borrowed from the Council and an injection of working capital; this is discussed in detail in the finance section.
- 2.19 The model makes allowances for development management, landlord management and maintenance and operational costs, cashflow forecast have been modelled on these assumptions. The LHC would, initially, need to appoint a managing agent to carry out both management and maintenance of the housing stock.
- 2.20 The initial appraisal based upon a 100% loan financing and land transferred to the LHC in exchange for equity shares in the company, demonstrates an overall financially viable position as measured by debt payback. The loans taken out by the company are able to be repaid within a 50-year period after the final phase of development.
- 2.21 The Council will also benefit from owning shares in a company where the asset value should increase over the coming years and with the likely requirement that 10% of the modelled properties must be let at affordable levels in perpetuity (Local Plan requirement), provides the opportunity to sell or rent the remainder at market levels, depending on need, demand and financial considerations.
- 2.22 The ability to own a company that can provide an annual income stream, repay loans over a reasonable payback period from assets that increase in value means the route of a LHC represents a genuine opportunity to deliver value in housing supply and financial value to the Council.

Transfer of Land

- 2.23 The following sites have been identified to transfer to the LHC to deliver the first scheme of housing, in return for an equity share in the company.
- Old Bus Depot (East Street);
 - Cockleshell Walk Carpark; and
 - Fountain Street.
- 2.24 The market value of these sites based upon independent valuations equates to £1.925m.

- 2.25 Approval is requested to transfer the sites to the LHC in return for an equity share of £1.925m
- 2.26 Any future pipeline sites will be reviewed by the Council based on its Property Asset Strategy and viability consideration and brought forward at a future date for Cabinet to consider.

Chief Financial Officer Assessment

- 2.27 This report has been written by the Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services but it has a significant financial element to it. In fact after the Sittingbourne Town Centre project it is the most significant capital investment this Council has made. This commentary reflects the Chief Financial Officer's comments. It should also be emphasized that the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and the Chief Financial Officer have been closely involved in the development of the business case.
- 2.28 Professional advice- the model has been developed by a financial expert at Savills and the legal advice has been obtained from Trowers and Hamlin LLP who were recommended by others who have been through this process. The advice has been of high quality and assumptions behind the model have been robustly challenged.
- 2.29 Borrowing- the company will be funded through two main means. Working capital will come from the North Kent Shared Business Rates funding of £1.7m. The investment in the build will be funded from borrowing. The business case assumes that this will be long term Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) funding. In the current financial environment local authorities, can borrow much more cheaply from other local authorities. The last borrowing the Council undertook was at a rate of 0.27% compared with PWLB maturity rates currently at 2.6%. So the company will have an agreed schedule of funding drawdowns but the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and the Chief Financial Officer will decide the source of funding.
- 2.30 Minimum Revenue Provision- when borrowing is undertaken to fund capital expenditure on the completion of the asset Minimum Revenue Provision has to start to be made. This is basically making a charge to the revenue budget, the revenue is then accumulated in the balance sheet to repay the debt at the end of the agreed period. Savills, Trowers and Hamlin LLP and Arlingclose (the Council's treasury advisers) have confirmed that the repayment of debt through annual contributions from the company is acceptable and the Council's Minimum Revenue Provision Policy already allows for this. It is important to remember that the Council has the security over the assets as the owner of the company.
- 2.31 Value of the land- no cash changes hands and from the Council's perspective it no longer holds the land asset as land- rather the value of the land is reflected in the (enhanced) value of the new share capital in the company. The Council has funded the purchase of the land through internal borrowing.

- 2.32 Governance- neither the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance or the Chief Financial Officer will be directors of the company, but they will attend all board meetings and receive all company papers. The Shareholder Panel is explained in this report. The company directors legally have to act in the best interests of the company. Whether it is through non-Council directors nominated to the board or professional advisers it will be essential that the company board has the appropriate skills to oversee the developments and the ongoing property management. There will need to be formal reporting to the shareholder and independent scrutiny of the activities of the company.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 To create a Local Housing Company called Swale Rainbow Homes Ltd.
- 3.2 To appoint Cllr. Ben J Martin, Cllr Monique Bonney, Emma Wiggins and Charlotte Hudson as directors of the LHC.
- 3.3 To appoint David Clifford as Company Secretary for the LHC.
- 3.4 To appoint the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing, Deputy Cabinet Member for Health, Chief Executive and Chief Financial Officer to the shareholder panel.
- 3.5 To adopt the business plan shown in Appendix I.
- 3.6 To transfer the Council owned land old bus depot (East Street), Fountain Street and Cockleshell Walk Carpark to the LHC in exchange for an equity share in the LHC.
- 3.7 To loan the LHC up to £23 million to fund the Capital development.
- 3.8 To delegate to the Chief Financial Officer in conjunction with The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance authority to allocate working capital to LHC from the North Kent Shared Business Rates.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Alternative delivery options were explored in the Cabinet report in March 2020. The legal delivery mechanism options are explored in the main body of the report.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Research has been undertaken in relation to LHC and with other authorities who have an active LHC and advice taken from Savills and Trowers and Hamlin LLP.

6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The increase of affordable housing in the borough supports priorities within the Local Plan.
Financial, Resource and Property	The financial implications are set out in the main body of the report.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Legal advice has been received from Trowers and Hamlin LLP in relation to the creation of a LHC and the main legal considerations are set out in the main body of the report. Localism Act General Power of Competence provides the legislative framework for the Council to create a LHA as set out in the main body of the report.
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage.
Environment and Sustainability	Modelling has taken into consideration energy efficiency requirements.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified at this stage.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	The business plan includes a risk plan for the LHC and initial development programme.
Equality and Diversity	None identified at this stage.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this stage.

7 Appendices

7.1 Appendix I - Business Plan

8 Background Papers

Cabinet Report March 2020 on Affordable Housing -
<http://10.201.65.162/documents/s14201/Cabinet%20180320%20-%20Affordable%20Housing.pdf>

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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