

## AGENDA

### POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 30 November 2022

Time: 7.00 pm

Venue: The Sapling Room, The Appleyard, Avenue of Remembrance, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 4DE\*

Membership:

Councillors Mike Baldock (Chair), Monique Bonney (Vice-Chair), Lloyd Bowen, Derek Carnell, Mike Dendor, Tim Gibson, Mike Henderson, Alan Horton, Julian Saunders, David Simmons, Bill Tatton, Roger Truelove, Tim Valentine, Mike Whiting and Corrie Woodford.

Quorum = 5

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Pages

#### Information about this meeting

\*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 by 29 November 2022.

#### Recording and Privacy Notice

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#### 1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

Visitors and members of the public who are unfamiliar with the building

and procedures are advised:

- (a) No fire drill is planned during the meeting. If the alarm sounds please leave the building quickly without collecting any of your possessions, using the doors signed as fire escapes, and assemble outside where directed.
- (b) Await instructions before re-entering the building.
- (c) Anyone who requires assistance in evacuating the building should make officers aware of any special needs so that suitable arrangements may be made in the event of an emergency.

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Declarations of Interest

Councillors should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their families or friends.

The Chair will ask Members if they have any disclosable pecuniary interests (DPIs) or disclosable non-pecuniary interests (DNPis) to declare in respect of items on the agenda. Members with a DPI in an item must leave the room for that item and may not participate in the debate or vote.

Aside from disclosable interests, where a fair-minded and informed observer would think there was a real possibility that a Member might be biased or predetermined on an item, the Member should declare this and leave the room while that item is considered.

Members who are in any doubt about interests, bias or predetermination should contact the monitoring officer for advice prior to the meeting.

4. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the meeting held on 19 October 2022 (Minute Nos. 395 – 402) as a correct record.

**Part A reports for Recommendation to Council**

- |    |  |         |
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| 5. | Constitution amend: Petitions scheme                                   | 5 - 20  |
| 6. | Draft Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan including fees and charges | 21 - 88 |

**Part B Reports for Decision by the Policy and Resources Committee**

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| 7. | Performance Monitoring & Priority Projects Report - 2022/23 half year    | 89 - 94  |
| 8. | Boughton & Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan - Examiner's report and next steps | 95 - 224 |
| 9. | Forward Decisions Plan   | 225 -    |

**Issued on: Tuesday, 22 November 2022**

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 committees, please visit [www.swale.gov.uk](http://www.swale.gov.uk)

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

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<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	30 November 2022
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Constitution amend: Petitions scheme</b>
<b>EMT Lead</b>	David Clifford
<b>Head of Service</b>	Head of Policy, Governance and Customer Services – Monitoring Officer
<b>Lead Officer</b>	
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	Policy and Resources committee is asked to:  1. <b>Agree</b> the revised petitions scheme at Appendix II and <b>recommend to council</b> its incorporation into the constitution.

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report introduces an updated version of the constitutional petitions scheme and sets out the constitution working group’s reasons for preferring it to the current version. The report asks to Policy and Resources committee to recommend the updated version to council for adoption.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 Council voted unanimously in October last year to move to a committee system of governance from the 2022/23 municipal year. At the same meeting, council requested the cross-party working group which had been established to consider this governance change to continue its work in overseeing the detail of the new constitution. Following some recent changes in membership, the working group now comprises Cllrs Baldock (chair), Bonney, Darby, Harrison, Henderson, Ingleton, Simmons and Valentine.
- 2.2 Since the adoption of the new constitution in April and its coming into effect in May, the working group has continued to meet, with a view both to monitoring the working of the new constitution in practice, recommending improvements where necessary, and to working through the ‘issues log’ of areas of the old constitution which the group previously agreed could benefit from review but which were not essential to implementing the move to the committee system. Most of the items on the issues log have now been resolved, with only the petitions scheme outstanding.
- 2.3 The current petitions scheme, set out in Appendix I, was adopted at a time when councils had a legal obligation to operate such a scheme, and it tries to take account of all the different sorts of petitions which the council may by law be required to deal with. There is no longer a requirement on councils to operate a

general petitions scheme at all, but it is probably good practice in a council which wants to listen to the views of residents to retain one.

- 2.4 There are still statutory provisions on certain types of petition, but because the law on how these should be handled is very specific, it is unnecessary and arguably unhelpful to have these included in a general scheme. The proposed scheme at Appendix II explicitly excludes these types of petition.
- 2.5 The council does not receive a high number of petitions, but nor are they so rare that there is no need for a clear scheme to establish how they will be handled when they are received. In recent years, an average of approximately three petitions have been received each year, and it is more common than not that petition organisers want to take advantage of the council's e-petitions portal.

### **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 In addition to the overcomplication caused by the inclusion of multiple petition types, the current scheme is not especially helpful in establishing the length of time e-petitions can be open to collect signatures or in setting a minimum number of signatures necessary to have the petition discussed at a meeting. The proposed scheme at Appendix II attempts to rectify both of these points, stating that e-petitions will normally remain open for signatures for ten weeks (or less in the event that the subject matter is urgent), and detailing the threshold number of signatures required for a petition to be formally considered.
- 3.2 The constitution working group reviewed these thresholds in some detail, and concluded that any petition gathering less than 200 signatures should receive a response from the relevant director, a petition with between 200 and 1,499 signatures should be formally considered at a meeting of the relevant service committee, and any petition gathering at least 1,500 signatures should be debated at a meeting of the full council.
- 3.3 Under the cabinet system it was sometimes the case that a cabinet member would determine the council's response to a petition. The working group considered whether there should be a similar provision in the new scheme, enabling committee chairs to determine whether a petition with between 200 and 1,499 signatures should be accepted as an item on the committee agenda. The group's ultimate view was that this did not sit well with the absence of individual member decision-making in the committee system, and could result in committee chairs being placed in a difficult position.
- 3.4 The working group also gave detailed consideration to the need for agenda items resulting from petitions, whether at committee meetings or council meetings, to be supported by an officer report setting out the implications of the decision requested by the petition. The group concluded that petitions for consideration at meetings should generally be accompanied by an officer report but without the report proposing a definite response to the petition. The scheme at Appendix II has therefore been written in such a way that the response can come from

members, using motions and amendments to test views and arrive at an agreed position.

- 3.5 The Policy and Resources committee is now **recommended** to agree the revised petitions scheme at Appendix II and recommend it to council for adoption.

## 4 Alternative Options Considered and Rejected

- 4.1 As set out in Section 2, there is no longer a statutory requirement on councils to operate any general petitions scheme. A legitimate option would therefore be to remove the scheme in its entirety from the constitution. This option was rejected as being incompatible with the council's desire to listen to the views of residents and others who may be affected by its decision-making, and potentially in conflict with the corporate priority of renewing local democracy and making the council fit for the future.
- 4.2 A further legitimate option would be to maintain the current version of the scheme, set out in Appendix I. As explained in Section 2 above, this is now a very old document which tries to accommodate a range of petition types which do not need to be accommodated by a general scheme. This has the effect of overcomplicating the scheme, making it difficult for both petition organisers and officers to interpret. This option has therefore also been rejected.

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The cross-party constitution working group has given detailed consideration to the proposed scheme set out at Appendix II. Specific points discussed and agreed by the group are highlighted in Section 3 above. Consultation has also taken place with the Democratic Services team, who are responsible for administering the petitions scheme in the first instance, and who believe the proposed scheme would be simpler and more efficient to manage than the current one.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Adoption of an updated and simplified petitions scheme would support the fourth corporate priority of renewing local democracy and making the council fit for the future.
Financial, Resource and Property	No direct implications identified at this stage. The ability for all petitions being debated by members to be accompanied by an officer report means that members would be fully apprised of the financial implications of any decision resulting from a petition.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	As set out in the body of the report, there is no longer any statutory obligation on councils to maintain general petition schemes.

Crime and Disorder	No direct implications identified at this stage. The ability for all petitions being debated by members to be accompanied by an officer report means that members would be fully apprised of the relevant implications of any decision resulting from a petition.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	
Health and Wellbeing	
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	
Risk Management and Health and Safety	
Equality and Diversity	
Privacy and Data Protection	

## **7 Appendices**

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

- Appendix I: Current petitions scheme
- Appendix II: Proposed petitions scheme

## **8 Background Papers**

8.1 There are no background papers.



## CURRENT PETITIONS SCHEME

1. We particularly welcome petitions as one way in which you can let us know your concerns. In this Scheme we set out how the authority will respond to petitions which you send us, how we will acknowledge them, and what we intend to do with the petition.

### **What is a petition?**

2. We treat as a petition any communication which is signed by or sent to us on behalf of a number of people. For practical purposes, we normally set a requirement for at least 10 signatories or petitioners before we treat it as a petition.

### **Who can petition?**

3. Whilst we like to hear from people who live, work or study in Swale, this is not a requirement, and we would take equally seriously a petition from, for example, 10 visitors to the District on the subject of facilities at one of our visitor attractions or leisure facilities.

### **What should a petition contain?**

4. A petition must include the following.

- (i) A clear statement of your concerns and what you want the authority to do. This must relate to something which is our responsibility, or over which we have some direct influence. Where a petition relates to a matter which is the responsibility of another public authority, we will ask the petition organiser whether s/he would like us to redirect the petition to that other authority. We work with a large number of local partners and, where possible, we will work with them to respond to the petition. Where a petition relates to a matter over which the authority has no responsibility or influence, we will return the petition to the petition organiser with an explanation for that decision.
- (ii) The name and contact details of the 'petition-organiser' or someone we can address any correspondence to about the petition. Contact details may be either a postal address or an email address.
- (iii) The names of at least 10 petitioners (which can include the petition organiser). Where the petition is in paper form, this can include an actual signature from each petitioner, but this is not essential. Where the petition is in electronic form, a list of the names of the petitioners will suffice. You may include the addresses of petitioners, which can be useful to the authority (for example, in assessing the degree of local support or opposition to a planning application), but this is not essential. With an e-petition the petition organiser will need to decide how long you would like the petition to be open for signatures. Most petitions are expected to last for six months, but a shorter or longer timeframe can be chosen, up to a maximum of 12 months. Action on an e-petition will only start when it has closed for signature.

(iv) If you want your petition to be debated at a meeting of the Council (a Petition for Debate), or to trigger a public meeting of an at which a specific officer will be required to report (a Petition to hold an Officer to Account), your petition will need to contain a higher number of signatories or petitioners (see below), and be received in good time to be included on the agenda for any given such meeting.

5. If you are submitting the petition in response to our consultation on a specific matter, please identify the matter which it relates to, so that we can ensure that your petition is considered along with original matter.

### **Who should you send a petition to?**

6. Where you submit a petition in response to consultation by the authority, please address it to the return address set out in the consultation invitation. This will ensure that it is reported at the same time as the matter to which it relates is considered.

7. We have appointed a Petitions Officer who is responsible for receiving, managing and reporting all other petitions sent to the authority. For such petitions, please address them to:

The Petitions Officer, Swale Borough Council, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, ME10 3HT, or to [petitions@swale.gov.uk](mailto:petitions@swale.gov.uk).

8. The Petitions Officer will ensure that your petition is acknowledged to the petition organiser and entered on the authority's petitions website ([Swale Petitions website](#)), and that the website is regularly up-dated with information on the progress of your petition. The Petitions Officer can also provide you with advice about how to petition the authority or the progress of your petition, at either of the above addresses or by telephone at 01795 417268.

### **Types of Petition**

9. There are five different types of petition, as set out below. How we deal with a petition depends on which type you submit.

<b>Type of petition</b>	<b>Description and arrangements</b>
<b>Consultation Petitions</b>	<p>These are petitions in response to an invitation from the authority for representations on a particular proposal or application, for example on planning or licensing applications or proposals for parking restrictions or speed limits.</p> <p>Consultation petitions which are received by the response date in the consultation invitation will be reported to a public meeting of the person or body which will be taking the decision on the application or proposal.</p>

<p><b>Statutory Petitions</b></p>	<p>Particular Acts of Parliament require the Council to consider petitions, for example a petition for a review of Parish Councils (community governance reviews), or a petition for a directly-elected Mayor (Mayoral referendums).</p> <p>Where a petition is submitted under such a specific statute, we will report it to the next available meeting of the Council in accordance with the statutory requirements.</p>
<p><b>Petitions for Debate</b></p>	<p>If you want your petition to be reported to and debated at a meeting of the Council, it must contain at least 1,500 signatories or petitioners.</p> <p>Where a petition relates to a local issue, that is to say, it affects no more than two electoral wards within the authority's area, and it received 200 or more signatories or petitioners, then it will be referred to the relevant Committee.</p>
<p><b>Petitions to Hold an Officer to Account</b></p>	<p>If you want your petition to be considered at a meeting where an officer, identified either by name or by post title, will be required to answer questions on the conduct of a particular matter, your petition should contain at least 500 signatories or petitioners (this is reduced to 200 signatories or petitioners where the petition relates to a local issue, affecting no more than two electoral wards within the authority's area).</p> <p>The authority has determined that such petitions must relate to the Chief Executive, a Director, or a Head of Service of the authority, and must be matters for which they may be held responsible.</p> <p>Please note that, where the petition raises issues of competence or misconduct, the petition will be referred to the Chief Executive (or to the Monitoring Officer in respect of the Chief Executive) and will be considered under the authority's Disciplinary Procedures and any relevant legislation, and not under this Petitions Procedure.</p>
<p><b>Ordinary Petitions</b></p>	<p>These are petitions which do not come within any of the previous specific types.</p> <p>Please note that petitions which raise issues of possible councillor misconduct will be taken as complaints arising under the Local Government Act 2000 and so will be reported to the Standards Referrals Sub-Committee, rather than considered under this Petitions Procedure.</p>

10. Determining which category of petition a petition that is received falls into, and the validity of the petition, will be a matter for the Petitions Officer, whose decision will be final.

## **The Petitions Website**

11. The authority maintains a petitions website at:  
<http://www.swale.gov.uk/epetitions/Browse.aspx>

12. When a petition is received, within five working days the Petitions Officer will open a new public file within the website and will put in that file the subject matter of the petition, its date of receipt and the number of signatories or petitioners. The petition organiser's name and contact details will only be included on the website if they so request. Please note the exceptions in paragraphs 42 to 45, which provide details of petitions which will not be reported.

13. As soon as it is decided who the petition will be considered by within the authority, and when that consideration will occur, this information will be entered on the website at the same time as it is sent to the petition organiser. Once the petition has been considered, the authority's decision will be notified to the petition organiser and put on the website within five working days of that consideration.

14. Petitions are presented on the petition's website in the order in which they are received, but the website can be searched for keywords to identify all petitions relating to a particular topic. All petitions are kept on the website for two years from the date of being posted.

## **The role of Ward Councillors**

15. When a petition is received which relates to a local matter (particularly affecting specific electoral wards), the Petition Officer will send a copy of the petition to each relevant Ward Councillor at the same time as acknowledging receipt of the petition to the petition organiser.

16. When the petition is reported to the person or body within the authority who can take a decision on the matter to which it relates, the relevant Ward Councillor will be invited to attend and to address the decision taker for no more than three minutes (or three minutes each), immediately after the petition organiser.

## **What happens when a petition is received?**

17. Whenever a petition is received, the Petitions Officer will acknowledge receipt to the petition organiser within five working days of receipt.

18. In some cases, the Petitions Officer may be able to resolve the petitioners' request directly, by asking the relevant Committee Chair or officer to take appropriate action. For example, where the petition relates to fly-tipping and the authority can arrange for it to be cleared up directly. Where this is done, the Petitions Officer will ask the petition organiser whether s/he considers that the matter is resolved.

19. Unless the matter has been resolved to the satisfaction of the petition organiser, the Petitions Officer will, within five working days of receipt of the petition, provide a

substantive response to the petition organiser setting out who the petition will be reported to for consideration, when and where that will take place, and inviting the petition organiser to attend that meeting and to address the meeting for up to three minutes on the issue covered by the petition. The invitation to the petition organiser to address the meeting is in addition to any other public speaking rights at that meeting.

20. Whilst we are committed to dealing with petitions promptly, a petition will normally need to be received before the final agenda for that meeting has been determined if it is to be reported to that meeting. This usually means at least 10 working days before a relevant meeting. Where it is necessary to undertake a significant amount of work to collect information and advice to enable the matter to be properly considered, it may be necessary for the Petitions Officer to decide that the petition will be held over until the following meeting of the relevant body. It is therefore suggested that, wherever possible, early contact should be made with the Petitions Officer to ensure that petitions can be reported to the earliest appropriate meeting. The Council has an agreed timetable of meetings and this is available on the council's website.

21. At the same time as responding to the petition organiser, the Petitions Officer will notify party group Leaders and all Ward Councillors of receipt of the petition.

22. Within five working days of receipt of a petition, the Petitions Officer will open a new public file for the petition on the authority's petitions website, setting out the subject matter of the petition, the date of receipt and the number of petitioners. The petition organiser's name and contact details will only be included on the website if they so request.

23. At each stage of the consideration of the petition, the Petitions Officer will ensure that the petitions website is updated within five working days of any decision, to ensure that petitioners can track progress of their petition.

24. The process after this stage differs for the various types of petitions. These processes are set out below.

### **What happens to a Consultation Petition?**

25. Consultations Petitions are submitted in response to an invitation from the Council for representations on a particular proposal or application, such as a planning or licensing application.

26. The petition will be reported to the person or body who will take the decision on the proposal or application at the meeting when they are due to take the decision on that application or proposal. The Council's Constitution defines who will take different types of decision, as set out in the Scheme of Delegations and the terms of Reference of Committees and Sub-Committees. Planning applications are determined by the Planning Committee, subject to any delegations to the Head of Planning Services who is enabled to take

decisions, particularly where there are no objections. In such cases, where a petition supports the planning application, it may be determined by the Head of Planning Services and so not reported at the Planning Committee.

27. Where the petition relates to a matter which is within the delegated power of an officer, unless it is in support of the recommended decision, s/he will not exercise those delegated powers but will automatically refer the matter up to the relevant Committee or Council.

### **What happens to a Statutory Petition?**

28. Particular Acts of Parliament require the Council to consider petitions, for example a petition for a review of Parish Councils, or a petition for a directly-elected Mayor. Where a petition is submitted under such a specific statute, we will report it to the next available meeting of the Council in accordance with the statutory requirements.

### **What happens to Petitions for Debate?**

29. Petitions for Debate that reach the required threshold of signatures will be reported to the next convenient meeting of Council. Petitions will not be considered at the Annual Meeting of Council, the budget setting meeting of Council or at Extraordinary Meetings of Council, which are not convened to consider the subject matter of the petition.

30. The petition organiser will be invited to address the meeting for up to three minutes on the subject of the petition. They are entitled to send a substitute if they are unable to attend or otherwise unable to address the meeting.

### **What happens to a Petition to Hold an Officer to Account?**

31. Petitions to hold an officer to account that are a matter for the Council and which have reached the required threshold of signatures, will be reported to the next convenient meeting of the relevant Committee.

32. In advance of the Committee meeting, the petition organiser will be invited to submit a list of questions which s/he would like put to the officer at the meeting. These questions will be provided to the Chair of the Committee, who will decide whether they are appropriate, and to the officer concerned, in advance of the meeting.

33. At the meeting, the Chair will invite the petition organiser (or a substitute of their choosing) to address the Committee for a maximum of three minutes on the issue, and the relevant officer will then be required to report to the Committee in relation to the conduct of the subject matter of the petition. Members of the Committee may question the officer, and the Chair may invite the petition organiser to suggest questions for him/her to put to the officer.

## **What happens to an Ordinary Petition?**

34. The Petitions Officer will arrange for each Ordinary petition to be reported to the next convenient meeting of the Council or of a Committee or Sub-Committee of Council which has the power to take a decision on the matter.

35. At the meeting, when the matter to which the petition relates is considered:

(i) petitions which do not relate to an ordinary item of business will be considered before the normal business of the meeting, and will be considered in the order in which they were received, unless the Chair at the meeting determines otherwise. A maximum of 30 minutes will be allowed at each meeting for considering such petitions, and any petitions not reached in the time allowed will be referred to the relevant Committee Chair for consideration or deferred until the next meeting;

(ii) any petitions relevant to particular items of business, such as petitions relating to planning applications, will be taken together with that item of business, in the normal order of business;

(iii) the Chair of the meeting may invite a relevant officer to set out the background to the issue before inviting the petition organiser to address him/her for up to three minutes. The Chair may then ask questions of the petition organiser, and will then invite any relevant Ward Councillors present to address him/her on the matter for up to three minutes (each);

(iv) the Chair will then invite a relevant officer(s) to advise him/her/the meeting, after which the matter will be open for debate among members of the decision-making body.

36. At each stage, the Petitions Officer will enter the relevant information on the website at the same time as it is sent to the petition organiser. As with other petitions, the petition and what happens to it will remain on the Council's website for two years from the date of posting.

### **The role of the Petition Organiser**

37. The petition organiser will receive acknowledgement of receipt of the petition within two working days of its receipt by the authority.

38. Where the petition is not accepted for consideration, the petition organiser will be advised by the Petitions Officer of the rejection and the grounds for such rejection.

39. Where the petition is accepted for consideration, the petition organiser will be advised by the Petitions Officer within five working days of receipt by the authority as to whom the petition will be considered by, and the date, time and place of the meeting at which it will be considered, and will be invited to address the meeting for up to three minutes. The meeting may then ask the petition organiser questions on the subject matter of the petition.

40. The petition organiser may nominate another person to address the meeting and to answer any questions on the matter.

41. The petition organiser will be regularly informed by the Petitions Officer of any decisions in respect of the petition, and will be formally notified of the outcome of the petition's consideration within five working days of such decision.

### **Petitions which will not be reported**

42. As well as petitions where the threshold number of signatures has not been reached, or that do not relate to something which is the responsibility of the authority or over which the authority has some influence, the following petitions will also not be reported.

43. **Duplicate Petitions:** where more than one petition is received in time for a particular meeting, each supporting the same outcome on one matter, each petition organiser will be treated as an independent petition organiser, but only the petition organiser of the first petition to be received will be invited to address the relevant meeting.

44. **Repeat Petitions:** a petition will not normally be considered where they are received within six months of another petition being considered by the authority on the same matter.

45. **Rejected Petitions:** petitions will not be reported if, in the opinion of the Petitions Officer, they are rude, offensive, vexatious, defamatory, scurrilous or time-wasting.



## **Appendix II**

# **PROPOSED PETITIONS SCHEME**

### **Introduction**

The council welcomes petitions. We recognise that petitions are one way in which people can let us know their concerns.

Anyone who lives, works or studies in Swale may organise or sign a petition. This includes people under the age of 18.

You can either organise the petition yourself and submit a paper list of signatures to the council, or you can request the council to set up an e-petition, which collects signatures online.

All e-petitions normally remain open for new signatures for ten weeks from the go-live date, although this can be reduced in the event that the subject matter of the petition is urgent.

Before you submit your petition, please read our guidance in the next sections.

### **What should I include in my petition?**

You must include a clear, concise statement covering the subject of the petition and what you want the council to do. The statement must relate to the functions, powers or duties of the council. Any action you request will only be considered if it would be lawful for the council to undertake.

The petition must also include the:

- name, address, telephone number and email address of the petition organiser; and
- name, address and signature of any person supporting the petition (these are collected automatically in the case of e-petitions).

We will not publish the petition organiser's or any signatories' contact details on the council's website but we will publish the petition.

It is important that you follow this guidance. The council may choose to take no action on a petition if important details are missing. In this case, we will write to you to explain the reasons and give you the opportunity to amend the petition.

### **What types of petitions are excluded?**

We will not take action on any petition or requested e-petition that is:

- vexatious;
- abusive;

- otherwise inappropriate; or
- does not relate directly to the council's functions, responsibility or powers.

The proper officer will decide if a petition fits these categories. If we reject your petition for any of the above reasons, we will notify you in our acknowledgement letter.

This scheme does not apply to:

- petitions relating to a planning or licensing application, which will be referred to the relevant decision making body;
- statutory petitions (for example requesting a referendum on having a directly elected mayor), which will be dealt with in accordance with the relevant statutory scheme;
- petitions submitted as part of a consultation process being carried out by the council, in which case the petition will be considered by the relevant decision making body as part of the consultation; or
- petitions relating to matters where other review or appeal procedures exist, e.g. a review of council tax banding.

This scheme does not apply to petitions on the same or similar topic as ones addressed by the council in the last six months. In this case we will acknowledge receipt of your petition and include details of our response to similar petitions.

Where we are still considering a petition on the same or similar topic, we will amalgamate the petitions.

We will send details of excluded petitions that directly affect wards to the councillors representing those wards.

### **What the council will do with your petition**

We will write to you to acknowledge your petition within 10 working days of receiving it. We will let you know what we plan to do with the petition and when you can expect to hear from us again. If the petition needs further investigation, we will tell you the steps we plan to take.

Your petition will be published on our website, except in cases where this would be inappropriate.

Where the subject matter of the petition affects particular wards, the councillors representing those wards will be notified.

The way in which your petition is considered by the council will depend on the number of signatories to the petition, as follows:

- Fewer than 200 signatories: Response from the relevant director.
- Between 200 and 1,499 signatories: Referred to a meeting of the most relevant service committee.

- More than 1,500 signatories: Referred to a meeting of the full council.

Our response to the petition will depend on what the petition asks and how many people have signed it. It may include one or more of the following:

- taking the action requested in the petition;
- considering the matter at a meeting of the council or a committee;
- holding a public meeting;
- holding a meeting with petitioners or the petition organiser;
- writing to the petition organiser setting out the council's views about the request in the petition;
- considering the matter as part of a consultation process; or
- taking no further action on the matter.

### **Considering a petition at a meeting**

Where the petition is referred to the full council or to a service committee, the petition organiser (or any person authorised by them) will, if they so wish, be given a period not exceeding three minutes to present the petition at the meeting. The petition will then be discussed by councillors.

We will contact the petition organiser before the meeting to establish whether they wish to present the petition at the meeting in the manner described above.

In addition to these steps, the council will consider all the specific actions it can potentially take on the issues highlighted in a petition.

If a petition falling within the scheme contains 1,500 signatures or more, it will automatically be referred to the full council for debate. The council will endeavour to consider the petition at its next meeting, although on some occasions this may not be possible, and consideration will then take place at the next available meeting.

When a petition is to be considered by a committee or the full council, it will generally be accompanied by an officer report setting out any financial and non-financial implications arising from decisions which could be taken in the light of it. This report will not recommend a particular course of action.

Councillors will decide how to respond to the petition at the meeting. They may decide to support the action the petition requests, or not. A motion suggesting a formal response to the petition shall be proposed and seconded at the meeting and dealt with under the normal rules of debate, except that notice of motions and amendments will not be required. Any such motion must respond explicitly to the request in the petition i.e. that part of the petition which asks the council to take some form of action.

Alternatively, councillors may refer the matter to a different committee or an officer for further consideration. The petition organiser will receive written confirmation of this decision.

## **How to submit a petition**

### E-petitions

[Submission details to be inserted]

### Paper petitions

[Submission details to be inserted]

<b>Policy and Resources Committee</b>	
<b>Meeting date</b>	30 November 2022
<b>Report Title</b>	Budget 2023/24 and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) Forecasts
<b>EMT Lead</b>	Lisa Fillery, Director of Resources
<b>Head of Service</b>	Duncan Ellis, Head of Finance and Procurement (Interim)
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Duncan Ellis, Head of Finance and Procurement (Interim)
<b>Classification</b>	Open
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>The Policy and Resources Committee is asked to;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Note the draft 2023/24 revenue and capital budget forecasts;</li> <li>2. Note the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) projections;</li> <li>3. Note the proposals for the fees and charges increases; and</li> <li>4. Approve the proposed budget consultation.</li> </ol>

## Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/24 to 2026/27

Swale Borough Council

## Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

This report sets out the draft 2023/24 revenue and capital budgets and the draft Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS). The MTFS is a strategic document, supporting delivery of the Corporate Plan outcomes and helping to ensure a focus on the Council's medium term budget position. It establishes how the Council's priorities will be achieved by setting out the framework within which resources are available over the medium term and the financial challenges facing the Council in terms of funding gaps. The context within which these budget forecasts is being made is as complex as it has ever been with continuing pressure around the Net Zero agenda, the war in Ukraine impacting on inflationary pressures which are feeding into a cost-of-living crisis, political turmoil nationally and an uncertain future for local government funding off the back of covid recovery and Brexit, all of which make forecasting challenging.

The updated high level funding forecasts in this strategy build on previous figures from the 2022/23 budget setting exercise, which were forecasting future year deficits in the region of £3m in 2024/25. The updated budget gap now differs from this peaking at £4.1m in 2024/25, in the main this is due to significant economic inflationary pressures, delays to funding reviews and some key service pressures, all of which are impacting on the medium term projections (Appendix 1).

<b>Updated funding forecasts</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Base budget & reserve contributions	22,000	23,601	24,926	24,763	24,947
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	(119)	(120)	0	0	0
Business Rates	(9,072)	(10,122)	(10,736)	(10,897)	(11,060)
Lower Tier Services Grant	(192)	(195)	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus (assuming not just legacy payments)	(1,407)	(1,139)	0	0	0
Services Grant	(296)	(296)	0	0	0
Council Tax	(9,263)	(9,684)	(10,077)	(10,481)	(10,896)
<b>(Surplus)/deficit</b>	<b>1,651</b>	<b>2,045</b>	<b>4,113</b>	<b>3,385</b>	<b>2,991</b>

A detailed budget review has taken place over previous months to identify efficiencies and additional income to help support frontline services and to balance the Council's financial position. For next year this totals around £2.8m (Appendix 2) and is supported by various increases to fees and charges (Appendix 4). However, based on current forecasts this still leaves a deficit of £2.0m which will need to be supported from reserves. Based on the projections above and the spending estimates and use of reserves in the current year the reserves are forecast to be fully depleted by 2025/26.

The capital spending projections for future years (Appendix 3) are included and assume borrowing of nearly £30m for Rainbow homes and purchase of the waste fleet. However, with the recent instability of the financial markets and increases to borrowing costs it will be necessary to fundamentally review schemes with borrowing requirements to ensure they remain affordable and still deliver the anticipated benefits. In summary the key messages are as follows;

- Estimated budget gap of £2.0m for 2023/24 even with current savings and fee increases
- We can deliver our statutory services with current income levels but nothing more
- To fund non-statutory services we need to find more income/savings/reserves
- Our reserves will help set a balanced budget for the next 2 years but not after 2024/25
- Funding from reserves is not a sustainable way to manage our budget
- We need to identify more efficiencies and income to make the budget sustainable
- The current projections are based on a number of assumptions which can and do change

# 1. Proposals

- 1.1 Given the timing of this report this is an interim step in the development of fully balanced budget proposals. The updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is attached at Appendix 1. It currently shows a gap of £2.0m which needs to be addressed to balance the 2023/24 budget. To close this gap, it is currently proposed to use £2.0m from reserves.
- 1.2 The savings and efficiencies totalling £2.8m that the Council has identified to help support the 2023/24 budget can be found within Appendix 2. The draft capital budget is included within Appendix 3 while the fees and charges proposals for next year are covered by Appendix 4. Appendix 5 includes a risk assessment for next year's budget.
- 1.3 The MTFS and budget forecasts include the latest information as announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Autumn Statement on 17 November 2022. It should however be noted that some of the assumptions that have currently been made will not be confirmed until the Provisional Settlement is announced, the date of which is currently anticipated to be around the 21 December 2022.

# 2. Alternative Options

- 2.1 Do nothing – This is not recommended as the Council is legally required to set a balanced budget. A further budget report will be submitted to Cabinet and Council in February 2023.

# 3. Consultation undertaken or proposed

- 3.1 Formal consultation with the business community will be undertaken. The Budget proposals contained in this report will be made available for comment on the Council's website from 1 December to 3 January.

# 4. Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The budget proposals support the achievement of the Council's corporate priorities.
Financial, Resource and Property	The report sets out the Council's resourcing position.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The Council is required to set a Council tax and a balanced budget.
Crime and Disorder	Any potential implications will be addressed by service managers in their budget proposals.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The proposals support the Climate Change and Ecological motion previously agreed.
Health and Wellbeing	Any potential implications will be addressed by service managers in their budget proposals.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	Any potential implications will be addressed by service managers in their budget proposals.

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Any potential implications will be addressed by service managers in their budget proposals.
Equality and Diversity	Any potential implications will be addressed by service managers in their budget proposals.
Privacy and Data Protection	Any potential implications will be addressed by service managers in their budget proposals.

## **5. Appendices**

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

- Appendix 1: Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) – General Fund Summary Forecasts
- Appendix 2: Savings Summary
- Appendix 3: Capital Programme
- Appendix 4: Fees and Charges
- Appendix 5: Risk Assessment

## **6. Background papers**

6.1 None.



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5. Local Pressures
6. Inflation
7. Funding changes
8. Income
9. Links to other strategies
10. Looking forward
11. Closing the budget gap
12. Risk assessment
13. Conclusions

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- Chart 1: Staff Survey Question 1 (Ranking Options)
- Chart 2: Staff Survey Question 2 (Who Will Get a Pay Increase?)
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- Appendix 2: Savings Summary
- Appendix 3: Capital Programme
- Appendix 4: Fees and Charges
- Appendix 5: Risk Assessment

# 1. Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

*The document that guides the Council's strategic financial planning and forecasting*

1.1 Swale Borough Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is a strategic document that supports the delivery of the Corporate Plan outcomes and helps ensure a focus on the Council's medium term budget position. The MTFS establishes how the Council's priorities will be achieved by setting out the framework within which resources are available over the medium term and the financial challenges facing the Council in terms of future funding gaps. It is the method by which the Council plans translates its long-term goals into action by considering;

- Where the Council is now
- Where the Council wants to be
- What the Council's plans are to get there

1.2 The MTFS helps to ensure that the Council is 'doing the right thing' while taking account of internal strengths/weaknesses and external threats/opportunities. It also provides a link between the Council's long-term service objectives and its financial capacity, which effectively asks the question 'can the strategic objectives be achieved within the available financial envelope?' The aim should be to provide a framework to support and inform the medium term planning considerations and the budget setting process. Essentially the MTFS should include consideration of a broad range of factors that influence the Council's long-term financial success.

## **The MTFS Aims to:**

- Provide a high-level assessment of the resources available to support the Corporate Plan outcomes, outlining the high-level funding projections for the following four financial years (beyond the current year);
- Explore the financial context in which the Council operates, considering a number of local and national factors. These will include known spending pressures and commitments, along with forecast future funding reductions and the impact of the national economic outlook;
- Explore the demands on the capital programme both in terms of ambition and resources along with the impact on the revenue account and reserve levels held by the Council;
- Highlight how the Strategy links in with and supports other Council strategies and policies;
- Assess the risks on which the Plan is based;
- Provide preparatory work for the following year's budget;
- Address the sustainability of the Council's financial position.

1.3 The MTFS is fundamentally linked to the Corporate Plan, a summary of which can be found on the Council's website [here](#).

1.4 The Council is currently projecting a deficit position from 2023/24 onwards. Forecasting the deficit allows the Council time to plan mitigating actions more effectively, meaning we are more likely to be successful, enabling us to reduce the reliance on reserves to plug any budget gaps which is not a sustainable position. This strategy will explore some of the Council's plans for addressing this deficit and consider some of the assumptions included. The future year projections can be found within Appendix 1.

## 2. Corporate Plan 2020 - 2023

*'Working together for a better borough'*

- 2.1 In May 2019 a new Coalition Council was elected adopting a new Corporate Plan which set out the intent and ambition of the authority for the period 2020 – 2023. The Plan details the Council's vision for the next four years, providing the framework and context for the Council's service provision, project interventions and resource allocation (financial and staffing) for the period through to 2023. It reflects the essential needs and aspirations of our customers and communities and how we feel the Council can best use its resources to deliver services and outcomes that make a positive difference for everyone who lives in, works in or visits the borough of Swale.
- 2.2 However, despite the borough having a number of very positive attributes we also have some big challenges: – responding to environmental change, increasing affordable housing supply, supporting economic growth and decent jobs, tackling deprivation and ensuring the council is fit to deliver the best possible services within current budget constraints.
- 2.3 The Corporate Plan identifies four key priorities, each of which contain a number of objectives and actions to respond to the challenges our district faces in the years to come;
- Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all
  - Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges
  - Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone
  - Renewing local democracy and making the council fit for the future
- 2.4 Planning is challenging, especially given the broad range of services we provide, and the competing demands for increasingly scarce resources. All our services are committed to making improvements and finding savings, so that the Council remains efficient, effective and meets the day to day needs of the communities we serve. The purpose of the Corporate Plan is to focus on those priorities where we need to give specific attention. It will help us target better our dwindling capital and revenue resources and help direct and focus any bids for external grant support. The Plan also provides a framework against which we can assess our progress to support the needs of our customers and communities.
- 2.5 Underpinning the Corporate Plan is the day-to-day business that departments undertake, and which will be reflected in departmental Service Plans. All Service Plans are linked to the Corporate Plan. These plans also include the performance measures by which the delivery of wider improvement activity can be managed. The priorities within the Corporate Plan were developed by talking with, and listening to the community, Elected Members, staff and other key stakeholders all of whom have helped to shape the content of the Plan.

### **Investment in Priority Areas**

- 2.6 Whilst the overall level of the Council's resources is reducing it is important that a clear focus is maintained on matching funding to priorities. This will remain a key focus over the coming years to ensure the aspirations contained within the Corporate Plan are realised.

## **Our Purpose**

- 2.7 To develop a long-term plan, every organisation needs to set an aspiration of where the organisation is aiming to be in the future. This enables everyone to be united in a shared direction and purpose. The Council's aspiration is as follows:

### ***Swale Borough Council – working together for a better borough***

Our purpose is supported by our corporate priority themes which are as follows;

**Priority 1:** Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all

**Priority 2:** Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges

**Priority 3:** Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone

**Priority 4:** Renewing local democracy and making the council fit for the future

## **Our leadership qualities**

In order to deliver our priorities and objectives the Council needs strong, positive leadership and this is embodied within our leadership qualities as follows;

- Leadership at all levels
- Performance
- Ambition
- Customer Care
- Teamwork

## **Our Values**

Our values represent the beliefs and expected behaviour of everyone working for Swale. Our values, which aim to support quality services, we;

- **Fairness** - being objective to balance the needs of all those in our community
- **Integrity** - being open, honest and taking responsibility
- **Respect** - embracing and valuing the diversity of others
- **Service** - delivering high quality, cost effective public service
- **Trust** - delivering on our promises to each other, customers and our partners

## **'One Team' Team Approach**

In order to deliver high quality services, we need to have excellent teams to deliver them. We recognise that our staff are our most important resource at the heart of the services we provide. We are committed to investing in staff and their development so that we have well trained and supported employees, providing professional services and who are happy and motivated in their work. The One Team approach also includes Members to ensure we work closely together to deliver our priority outcomes and that their training needs are also met as part of their ongoing development.

### 3. Context

*Demographic and landscape issues that set the scene for the budget and financial strategy*

- 3.1 For such a relatively small area, the borough is a remarkably diverse place, including the historic market town of Faversham, the traditional seaside resort of Sheerness and the more industrial market town of Sittingbourne, which in recent years has been the focus of major council-led redevelopment. These urban centres are connected both physically and culturally by the borough's extensive and important rural areas, accounting for around a quarter of the population, which take in several protected wildlife habitats and part of the Kent Downs area of outstanding natural beauty.
- 3.2 Swale's demographic make-up is no less diverse than its geography, including a mix of affluent and less affluent communities, but in general the area is less well-off than is typical for the south-east, and there are some concentrated pockets of severe socioeconomic disadvantage to be found in locations across the borough. While the causes of this are deep-rooted and complex, the outcome is that a proportion of our residents suffer from entrenched inequality and a lack of opportunities which the council needs to do what it can to address.
- 3.3 The indices of multiple deprivation are calculated by government based on a range of measures of poverty and associated disadvantage and were last published in 2019. Compared to the previous time the figures were calculated in 2015, Swale's overall position on the indices deteriorated relative to other places, with the borough now the 69th most disadvantaged of 317 shire districts in England, and the second most disadvantaged in Kent.
- 3.4 Over recent decades, Swale has seen a successful diversification of its economy, which now has key strengths in manufacturing and distribution, as well as high-skilled activities including cutting-edge technology and life sciences. However, it remains the case that much of the borough's employment, including employment created in the last few years, is at the lower end of the skills spectrum

### 4. Global and National Pressures

*Some financial pressures are driven nationally and indeed globally and are beyond the control of the Council. Some of these which impact Swale are shown below*

#### **Global issues**

- 4.1 The Net Zero agenda represents a significant global issue, not just a national or local one and at the present time some of the emerging green technologies, which are undoubtedly the way to go for the future, can be significantly more expensive to deliver at the current time. The war in Ukraine is impacting significantly on energy prices which is in turn feeding into the huge increases in inflation which we have experienced.

#### **Political**

- 4.2 Following Liz Truss' resignation Rishi Sunak was announced as the new Prime Minister in October 2022. During a period of instability and change, resources are redirected to other areas, particularly within the civil service and other priorities are reduced. There has been little progress with the Fair Funding Review and business rates retention so we have no more clarity in terms of local government funding than we did 4 or 5 years

ago. The result of these changes will undoubtedly impact on Government spending priorities for future years but until these new policies are developed this is still an unknown.

### **Central Government Funding**

- 4.3 We were hoping this year for a multi-year settlement but this is unlikely to happen following the announcements made as part of the Autumn Statement on 17 November. It is expected that the Government will now stick to the spending commitments contained with the Spending Review 2021 which means no new funding for inflationary pressures in local government in this year, or in the next two years which effectively means a very severe real-term cut in funding for Swale. While the government has signalled there will be no Fair Funding review implementation in this Spending Review period, this was under the previous Prime Minister, and this has not been formally confirmed. A business rates reset can technically be implemented without a Fair Funding review and the government's position on any possible future reset remains unclear. Two rollover settlements in 2023-24 and 2024-25 now seem more likely than ever, with the funding reforms taking place in 2025-26 or later.

### **Inflation**

- 4.4 CPI rose by 9.0% in the 12 months to April 2022, the highest 12-month rate since the statistics started back in 1997, with CPI at 11.1% in October and the equivalent RPI rate at 14.2%. This puts pressure on the Council's finances and erodes spending power with several of the Council's largest contracts increasing in line with indices that are often index linked to inflation, so we are effectively having to pay more money just to stand still.

### **Covid-19 Recovery**

- 4.5 We are still recovering both nationally and globally from the impacts of Covid and the country is working out what it's 'new normal' is. The recovery does however offer opportunities as well as local government has demonstrated how well we are able to continue to operate services and indeed in a number of examples improve them during Lockdown. New Ways of Working can provide further opportunities in terms of efficiencies and working differently in the future, with more flexibility around remote and home working and less reliance on office space, travelling to meetings etc which also supports the Council's Net Zero ambitions.

## **5. Local Pressures**

*These arise from local circumstances and demand for services. The financial effects of these must be dealt with by the Council, as there is often no external funding*

### **Local Economic changes**

- 5.1 Swale derives significant sums of income from fees and charges for services such as car parking and planning. These will be affected by factors outside the Council's control, such as consumer confidence, the general health of the economy and the cost-of-living crisis.

### **Waste Management**

- 5.2 Waste management currently represents a significant pressure. A contract extension has been agreed due to the lead in times for the new waste vehicles which will take the

current contract through to the end of March 2024. The estimated additional cost of this due to the impact of inflation and the extension itself is in the region of £1.8m.

- 5.3 As Members will be aware the current outsourced contract is in the process of being re-procured, with Environment Committee scheduled to make the award decision in December 2022. Again, this represents a significant cost pressure as market conditions have changed substantially since the contract was last let and coupled with the current inflationary pressures the additional cost anticipated in 2024/25 is around £1.7m including the annual costs of the new vehicle fleet. The capital programme has been updated to include a provision to acquire the fleet during 2023/24.

#### **Temporary accommodation**

- 5.4 The council has a duty to provide emergency/temporary accommodation (TA) for homeless households whilst assessing their case and/or ahead of securing more permanent accommodation. A range of accommodation is currently used to cover this duty: three units owned by Swale, some units owned by housing associations, nightly let self-contained and shared accommodation and rooms in hotels/bed and breakfast accommodation.
- 5.5 Whilst some of the costs of this accommodation are covered by housing benefit this is only payable up to 90% of the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) which is the amount set by government that can be covered by housing benefit. The difference between the actual cost and housing benefit levels is borne by the council. This has been increasing over recent years, with last year's deficit being £0.352m and current forecasts for the end of this financial year at c£1m. Whilst officers are working hard to try and reduce the requirement for temporary accommodation, we are at the present time still anticipating budget pressures of £1m in future years as a result of this demand led pressure.
- 5.6 As well as the costs to Swale, demand for TA in Kent is exceptionally high and often there are limited options, placements regularly occur outside the Borough. Many of the current TA options are not ideal for what are vulnerable households, accommodation that is not self-contained, not within Borough and is used for increasingly lengthy periods (we currently have 54 households that have been in TA for over 2 years).

#### **Local Council Tax Support Schemes (LCTS)**

- 5.7 The LCTS scheme was implemented in April 2013 as a replacement to Council Tax Benefit. This change was part of wider welfare reforms to reduce expenditure, giving responsibility of the replacement scheme to Local Councils. LCTS schemes should encourage people into work and be based on the ability to pay. Previously the Council Tax Benefit scheme was 100% funded through subsidy paid to the Council from the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP).
- 5.8 From April 2013 each billing authority was given the discretion to set their own scheme, although at the outset the government did stipulate that the scheme would not change the 100% maximum support for low-income pensioners i.e. they would receive the same level of support as they did under the system of Council Tax Benefit. Funding for LCTS is no longer received as a separate subsidy grant but is now within the overall Local Government Funding system as non ring-fenced funding within the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and baseline funding level. The local scheme (for Swale) has changed several times since the introduction of LCTS in 2013/14. The local scheme means that those of working age previously entitled to 100% maximum council tax benefit are required to pay a minimum of 20% of their council tax liability.
- 5.9 However, with the changes made as a result of the rollout of Universal Credit there were

implications for the cost of LCTS schemes and a review was undertaken to ensure the scheme remained affordable. As a result of this work the Council is currently consulting on a revised scheme which, if approved, is due to be implemented from April 2023. The proposed changes to the schemes are anticipated to be broadly cost neutral so no additional allowance has been made within the budget forecasts at the current time.

### **Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board Precept**

- 5.10 At the present time the levy for 2023/24 has been increased by 3.4% to £0.937m, there is however a risk that there will be a higher inflationary factor added by the Board and the Council has no control over the setting of this levy. The Chief Executive is however currently in discussions with various parties regarding this substantial contribution.

### **Workforce**

- 5.11 We recognise that our staff are our most important resource at the heart of the services we provide. We currently have around 260 full time equivalent posts and 300 actual members of staff. Our pay bill is our most significant area of direct spend and stands at £14.4m including pension contributions of £2.9m as per the 2023/24 budget. The pension fund is administered by Kent County Council (KCC), employee contribution rates are set by Government and range from 5.5% to 12.5%. The fund actuary Barnett Waddingham sets the employer contribution rate, currently 18.5%, plus an annual fixed sum.
- 5.12 The Fund is valued once every three years and the valuation as at 31 March 2019 disclosed a net deficit of £15.5m on Swale's share of the fund, a reduction of £4.6m from the 2016 valuation deficit of £20.1m due largely to increases in annual investment returns. The last actuarial valuation took place on 31 March 2022 and the change in contribution rates because of that valuation will take effect from 1 April 2023. The Council has now received these results, the contribution rate will be increasing from 18.5% to 20.5% but the back funding element is decreasing for next year, the combined impact of which is an additional cost pressure of around £100k.
- 5.13 On Friday 28 October, staff on Swale payroll were sent a survey to ask their views on different ideas relating to staff pay and potential savings. The survey was linked to work accounts so people could only respond once, but no names were recorded to make sure people could respond honestly without risk to anonymity. The survey closed at 5pm on Wednesday, 9 November, with 164 responses submitted out of a total of 296 staff on the payroll (55.4%).
- 5.14 The two main questions asked were:
1. Please rank the below options in order with your preferred option at the top and least preferred at the bottom. (Options displayed randomly for each user)
    - No annual pay increase for 2023/24, reducing the working week to 34 hours with no reduction in pay (equivalent to an 8% pay increase per hour), closing the office at 13:30 on Friday and making the closure between Christmas and New Year permanent.
    - 2% pay increase for 2023/24, then permanent 4 day working week from 2024/25, with pay then being reviewed annually as normal.
    - 2% pay increase with the £275,000 cost needing to be found from other savings
    - 4% pay increase with the £550,000 cost needing to be found from other savings



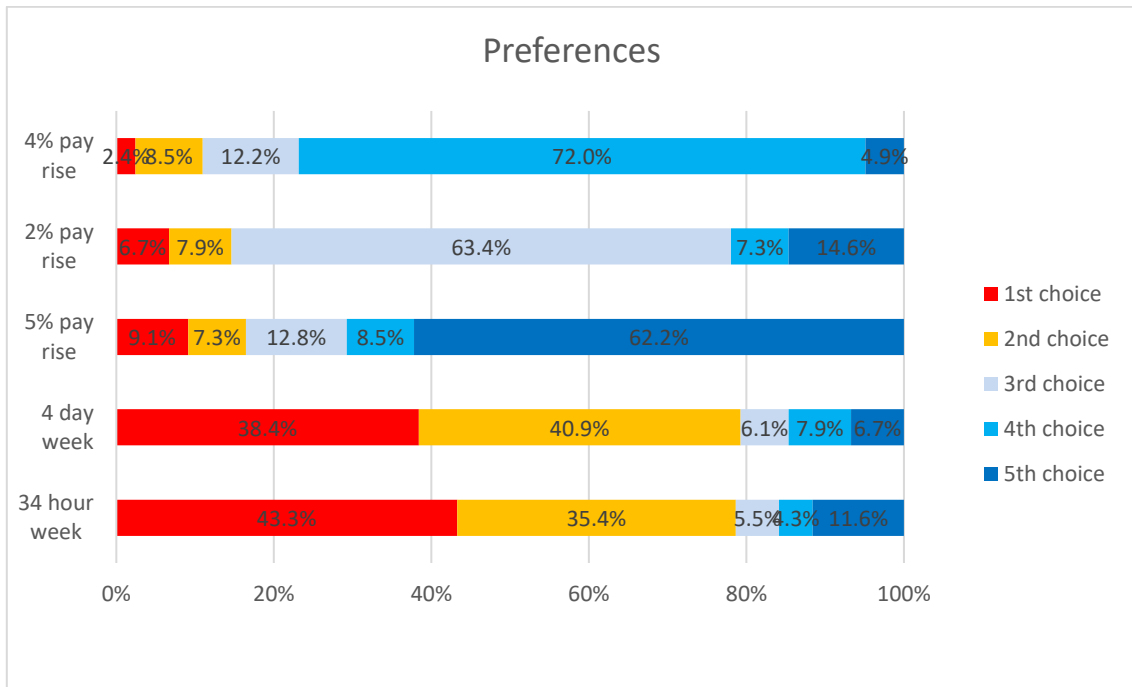
- 5% pay increase with the £675,000 cost needing to be found from other savings

2. Which of the following options for pay increases would you be in favour of?

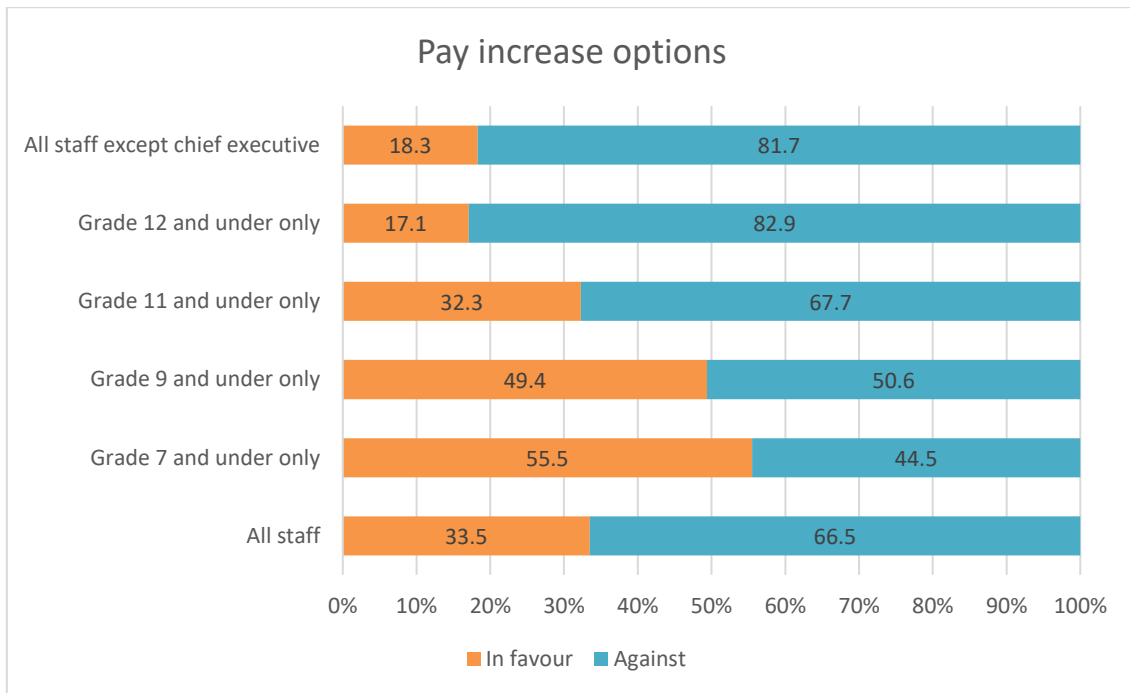
- All staff
- Grade 7 and under only
- Grade 9 and under only
- Grade 11 and under only – wouldn't apply to heads of service, directors or chief executive
- Grade 12 and under only – wouldn't apply to directors or chief executive
- All staff except chief executive

5.15 The results were as follows;

**Chart 1 – Staff survey question 1 (Ranking options)**



**Chart 2 – Staff survey question 2 (Who gets a pay increase?)**



5.16 As can be seen from the ranking of options (question 1) the 34-hour week with no pay award was the most popular first choice (43.3%). At the current time therefore, the draft budget does not assume any inflationary pay award, the only increases currently forecast are due to the Real Living Wage which is now £10.90 per hour (outside of London) and any annual increments. It should be noted that this does not constitute the final pay agreement for next year and that the normal negotiations will need to be held with the Union prior to any formal final pay proposal coming through separately to Full Council.

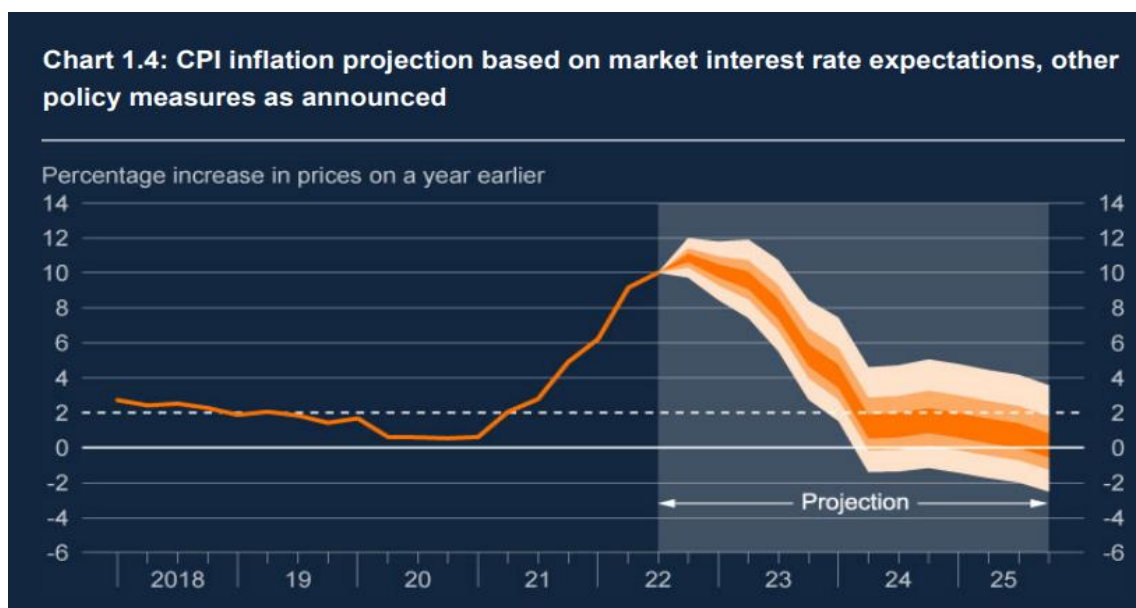
## 6. Inflation

*Inflation is the rate prices for goods and services that the Council buys are expected to rise.*

6.1 Inflation is significantly eroding the Council’s spending power, the Retail Price Index (RPI) was at 14.2% at the end of October. The Bank of England’s Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) met on 2 November and increased the bank base rate by a further 0.75% to 3% to help control inflation. CPI inflation is projected to fall sharply to around 5% by the end of next year, as fading external factors outweigh domestic pressures. Inflation is projected to fall to 1.4% in two years’ time, below the 2% target, and to 0.0% in three years’ time, as energy prices make a negative contribution and as domestic pressures weaken further.

6.2 The Council assumes in this financial strategy that inflation will broadly follow the pattern in the graph below as outlined by the Bank of England with general price increases being assumed at around 10% for 2023/24 but reducing significantly thereafter in line with these projections. There are also some areas and contracts, such as the waste contract, which use different indices to calculate annual increases, and these are taken account of where appropriate.

### Chart 3 – MPC Forecasts November 2022



- 6.3 *Staff Pay* – as discussed above the current forecasts do not assume an annual pay award next year but do include turnover savings (for staff leaving and temporarily vacant posts etc) of 2%. The Council is not part of a National Joint Council (NJC) national pay agreement, so any increases are set and agreed locally in negotiation with the Union. As a guide a 1% increase equates to approximately £135,000 annually. Therefore, should a pay award be agreed there will be an additional cost to be factored in.
- 6.4 *Income (fees and charges)* – In recent years’ budgets for fees and charges have included a 2% increase unless there have been specific reasons for higher or lower increases or alternatively the Council is not able to influence them. Due to the current budgetary and inflationary pressures being experienced fees and charges for 2023/24 are being recommended for an increase in the region of 10%. As part of the Council’s financial planning processes, and to address the pressures on future year’s budgets, the finance team will be working with service managers next year in the run up to the 2024/25 budget setting process to undertake a more fundamental review of fees and charges. This will involve more detailed work to ensure that we fully understand our cost base so that we can ensure our charges are covering this as a minimum.

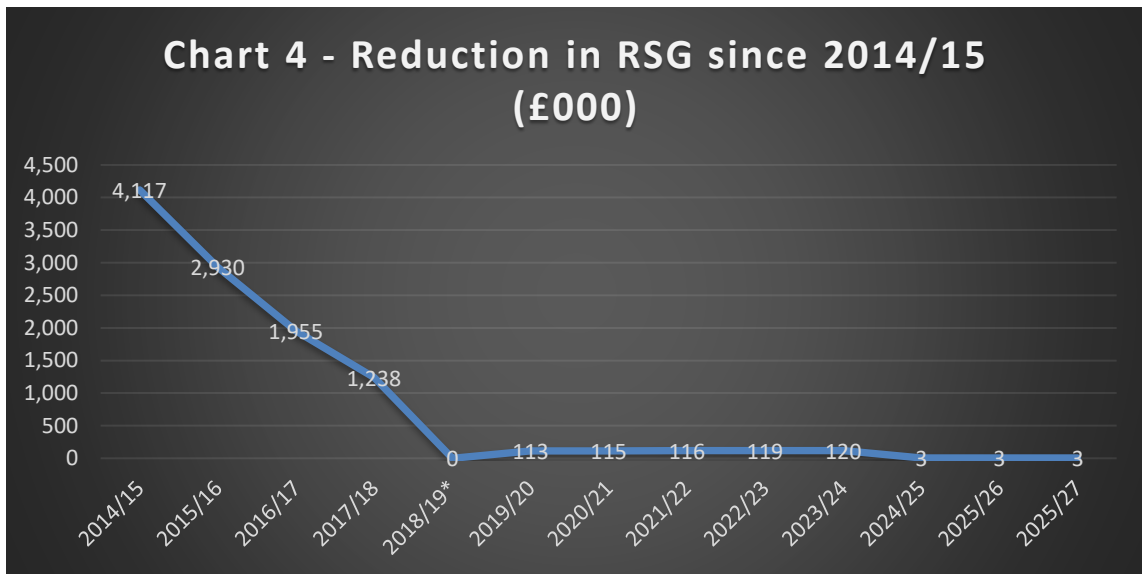
## 7. Funding changes

*Local Government is currently going through a significant period of change in terms of the way it is funded and the way the funding elements are to be calculated for the future*

### Local Government Funding Settlement Funding – last year’s forecasts

- 7.1 The settlement is issued by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) and for Swale comprises several elements including Revenue Support Grant (RSG), New Homes Bonus (NHB), Baseline Funding Level (via the Business Rates Retention Scheme) and Council Tax (through the setting of referendum principles) but has more recently also included the Lower Tier Grant and Services Grant. The Settlement confirmed some additional one-off grant funding for 2022/23 and a further year’s allocation of New Homes Bonus. Unfortunately, the settlement was once again for one year only, despite some indications that there would be a return to multiyear

settlement. RSG is an un ring-fenced grant which can be spent on services at Swale's discretion. This has reduced drastically over past years and 2019-20 was expected to be the last year of receipt of this grant. The allocation for 2022/23 was just £0.1m compared to £4.1m back in 2014/15 representing a reduction of 98%.



- 7.2 The Lower Tier Services Grant continued from 2021/22 and is a district level grant based on an assessment of relative need. The Services Grant was supposed to be a one-off grant proposed in the 2022/23 finance settlement to provide funding to all tiers of local government in recognition of the vital services provided. For Swale these represented just under £0.2m and £0.3m respectively.

### Settlement Funding – Spending Round 2022

- 7.3 On 17 November 2022, the Chancellor delivered [his Autumn Statement](#), alongside the Office for Budget Responsibility's (OBR's) new set of [Economic and Fiscal Outlook forecasts](#). The Autumn Statement responds to the OBR forecasts and sets out the medium term path for public finances. A number of announcements were made in relation to taxation plans and social care funding but the key issues for Swale and district authorities in general are as follows;

#### *Business Rates*

- 7.3.1 A package of reliefs and support to help businesses was announced and is worth £14bn over two years. The 2023 Revaluation will go ahead as planned, and the measures are designed to help offset the impact of the revaluation as well as other financial pressures on businesses as follows;

- **Transitional relief scheme** (government funded) for 2023 Revaluation (£1.2bn in 2023/24). This has no effect on billing authorities (like Swale), it simply makes the transitional support scheme more generous
- **75% relief for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) sectors** in 2023/24 (£2.3bn in 2023/24). Local authorities will be compensated in the usual way through section 31 grants.
- **3-year support for small businesses** (scheme for properties losing Small Business Rates Relief or Rural Rates Relief) equating to £190m per year for 3 years. Again, local authorities will be fully compensated.

- 7.3.2 From a local authority perspective, the decision to freeze the multiplier in

2023/24 is the most important one. Normally, the multiplier is uprated every year in line with the September CPI but with a 10.1% increase in the CPI in September 2022 this will be expensive and is anticipated to cost £1.8bn in 2023-24. This is now the third year in a row that the multiplier has been frozen.

- 7.3.3 For local government, the key financial concern about the multiplier is whether local authorities will be compensated for the lost income. Business rates income, baselines (including Baseline Funding Level), and tariffs and top-ups are usually uprated in line with the multiplier. When the multiplier is capped or frozen, the Government pays compensation to local authorities via a section 31 grant. This has now become a very important part of funding to local authorities and is included within Core Spending Power (CSP). It is also the only element of CSP that is formally linked to inflation.
- 7.3.4 Thankfully, the Chancellor has announced the cost of the freeze will be fully funded: Para 5.25: ... “English Local Authorities will be fully compensated for the loss of income as a result of these business rates measures and will receive new burdens funding for administrative and IT costs.”
- 7.3.5 What isn't clear however, is whether compensation will be payable at CPI or RPI. A proposal to change from compensating based on RPI was announced in the 2017 Budget and we had been expecting the change to happen from at least 2021, so the switch could well happen now and it would save the Treasury around £0.3bn. In terms of our budget assumptions we are anticipating that this change will happen but it does mean that we are able to build in an additional net £1m into our business rates income forecasts which is obviously significant.

#### *District Council Band D Increases*

- 7.4 The Chancellor is using council tax increases to help manage the funding gap within local government. At the present time non-metropolitan districts (like Swale) can raise local council tax by 2% or £5 (whichever is greater) on a band D property, without the need for a referendum. However, the following has now been proposed;
- **Core Band D threshold will increase from 1.99% to 2.99%.** This applies to all classes of authority (we are assuming for 2023/24 only)
  - Although it has not yet been announced at the present time we are assuming that the £5 threshold will also still apply
- 7.5 Prior to these announcements the forecasts assumed a council tax increase of £4.95 for modelling purposes and coupled with growth forecasts in the tax base resulted in income projections of around £9.648m for 2023/24, which is growth of £385k based on the 2022/23 position. These changes would however now mean that Swale could potentially increase council tax by 2.99% as opposed to £4.95 which equates to £5.67 and would generate an additional £36k per annum in the base budget. This charge would still only equate to an increase of just under 11p a week for Swale's element of the council tax. As this new flexibility has been included by the Chancellor to help manage the funding gap it is strongly recommended that Members consider the additional increase and at present the forecasts include this additional income. It should be noted that, while this information would be used at this point for modelling purposes now, the council tax will not actually be agreed and set until the Full Council budget setting meeting in February 2023.
- 7.6 While the statement has been made regarding the additional 1% increase nothing has yet been announced in relation to the £5 cash limit. There has been speculation that the £5 cash limit could now increase to perhaps £10 but this has not yet been confirmed

and it is unlikely that we will hear anything further on this until the Provisional Statement is announced towards the end of December.

7.7 If the £5 cap was also increased, the following additional income could be generated;

<b>Band D increase</b>	<b>£ increase</b>	<b>Council Tax estimate</b>	<b>Increased estimate</b>
2.62%	£4.95	£245,884	
2.99%	£5.68	£282,042	£36,158
3.96%	£7.50	£372,552	£90,510
5.28%	£10.00	£496,736	£124,184

7.8 Just for information a £10 increase would equate to 19p a week or 2.7p a day and it is recommended that the Council consult on potentially higher increases (up to £10) in case this turns out to be an option.

7.9 Due to the global and political turmoil experienced this year the anticipated Spending Review has yet again been delayed and two further 1-year roll over settlements are now anticipated, although it should be noted that the Government could propose a 2-year settlement. There were no announcements regarding the future of the New Homes Bonus, Services or Lower Tier Services Grants. The provisional settlement is currently expected to be published by 21 December. Until the Settlement figures are finally confirmed the figures are still provisional and subject to change, but this is the best information we have at the present time. Projections are still therefore based on estimates which have not yet been finalised and could potentially be impacted significantly by changes in Government spending plans and fiscal policy.

## 8. Income

*The Council derives a limited and reducing amount of funding from Central Government, the main sources of income are locally raised taxes, fees and charges and specific grants. This section focuses on how the Council is funded and how this will continue to change over the coming years*

### **Business Rates Retention**

8.1 Since the 2013/14 financial year, local government has been able to retain 50% of the growth in the local business rates income to support services. As part of a manifesto commitment, the Government pledged to allow Councils more control locally over their finances, and as part of this began to plan for an eventual system of 100% local retention of business rates growth. In exchange for this, Councils would have to forgo certain grants received from Central Government. Following the snap General Election in 2017 and a period of uncertainty around the new Business Rates Retention Scheme, MHCLG (as was) had previously confirmed a local 75% share from April 2020, however these potential changes continue to slip, and we are still no closer to having a revised scheme.

8.2 The income from the current system is shared based on 50% being returned to Central Government, 40% being retained by Swale with 10% going to the County. However, while technically Swale's share is projected to be around £23.4m (£24.0m 2021/22), after the tariff and levy payments are made the net income to Swale reduces to around £9.1m for 2022/23 (£8.6m 2021/22) and just under £10.1m for 2023/24. This is based on the assumptions contained with the Chancellors Autumn Statement.

8.3 We still do not know the timing of the business rates reset, and while we anticipate this

will have a negative impact for Swale, we would expect some form of transitional grant relief which again at the current stage is unknown, so this issue continues to be monitored until we have greater clarity.

### **Kent Business Rates Pooling Arrangements**

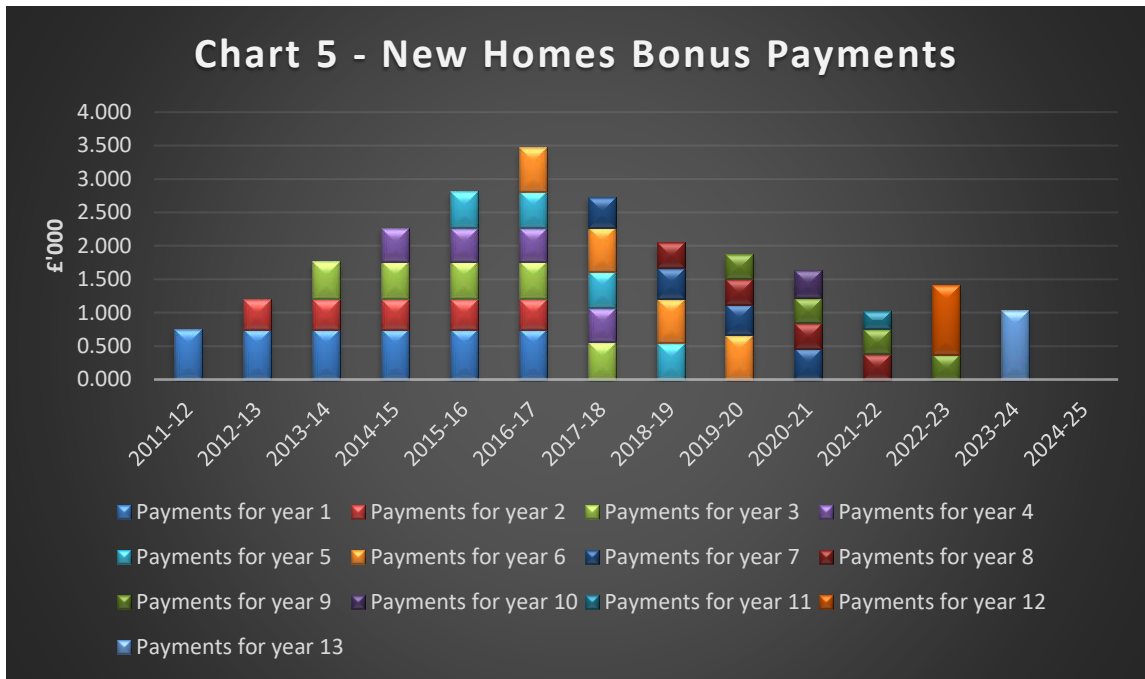
- 8.4 Local authorities can enter arrangements with other Councils to pool their business rates. Legislation allows councils to voluntarily enter a business rates retention pool. Councils within a pool are treated as a single entity with tariffs and top ups netted off and a single levy rate applied. In two tier areas this creates the potential for the levy paid by Borough Councils being reduced thus retaining more resources in the local area. Swale has been a member of the Kent Business Rates Pool since 2015/16, the pool must reapply to DLHUC each year for the arrangements to continue. There is still be an option for the pool not to proceed up to 28 days after the Local Government Finance Settlement is received. At the Performance and Resources Committee meeting held on 28 September it was agreed to re-enter the pool for the 2023/24 financial year.

### **Revaluation Proposals**

- 8.5 Business rates revaluations update rateable values, and therefore rates bills to reflect changes in the rental market. This helps ensure that shifts in economic activity which have driven changes in market values are fairly reflected in business rates liabilities. The final report of the government's Review of Business Rates announced that the frequency of revaluations would be increased to 3 yearly starting from the next revaluation in 2023. The next revaluation of properties for business rates will, therefore, take effect from 1 April 2023 based on the rental market at 1 April 2021. The move to 3 yearly revaluations will make the system fairer and more responsive for all ratepayers, meaning bills will more closely reflect current rental values. Some stakeholders in the Business Rates Review also suggested that more frequent revaluations could reduce the need for and scope of future transitional arrangements.
- 8.6 DLUHC's consultation on the proposed revaluation changes was completed in September 2022, new RV's will be introduced from 1 April 2023 and updates to local lists have now been made, replacing the previous lists from September 2017. Support for businesses and the freezing of the multiplier as announced as part of the Chancellors Autumn Statement are discussed above.

### **New Homes Bonus (NHB)**

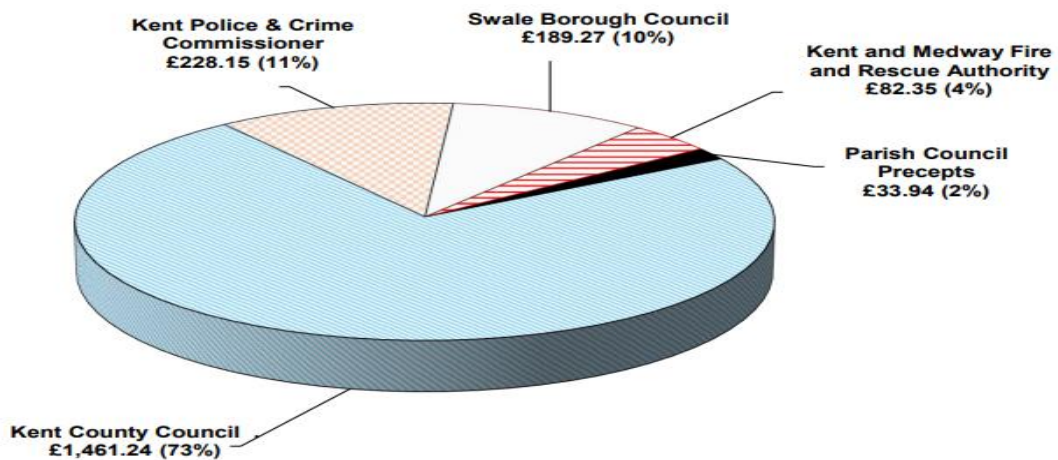
- 8.7 The New Homes Bonus was introduced in 2011/12 to incentivise and reward Councils and Communities that build new homes in their area. The bonus was originally paid as an un-ringfenced grant for six years and was paid based on the net additional homes plus an additional supplement of £350 per affordable dwelling. The payment is then split between local authority tiers: 80% to lower tier (Swale) and 20% to upper tier (KCC).
- 8.8 Since its initial introduction the payment mechanism has undergone two fundamental changes which have significantly impacted on the income received by Swale. The first was the transition from payments rolled up over a 6-year period up to 2016/17 (for which the Council received £12.3m) to 5 years in 2017/18 to the new 'floor' of 4 years from 2018/19 onwards. The second was in 2017/18 when a national baseline of 0.4% (based on borough property numbers) was introduced which attracted no bonus funding. The chart below shows the current projections, but these won't be confirmed until the Settlement announcements at the end of the year. Due to the current funding pressures whilst there is the potential to receive income for 2024/25 we have not at the current time included this within our forecasts.



### Council Tax

- 8.9 Swale is the billing authority for the borough, this means that Swale send out the Council Tax bills to residents and collect the Council Tax, but most of this is then distributed to the County Council and Kent Police Authority with a further element then going to town and parishes councils. The relative splits are shown within the chart below.
- 8.10 The charge on a Band D property which is retained by Swale is currently £189.27 (£184.23 2021/22) based on a tax base of 48,939.46 (48,040.12 2021/22). Any increases on this amount are restricted by a cap put in place by the Government, but as discussed above this has now increased from 2% or £5 to 3% or £5, whichever is the greater, without undertaking a referendum on the proposals. This generates an extra £421k (including tax base growth) over the 2022/23 income levels.

**Allocation of Council Tax:**



- 8.11 Within the MTFs, it is assumed that Swale will increase its precept by 2.99% next year (assumes additional flexibility in place for 1 year only) and annually from 2024/25 by £4.95, to partly offset the reduction in grant funding from Central Government. This table



highlights the impact of the assumed increases within the charts below.

**Table 1 – Projected council tax income growth**

<b>Council Tax</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
Council taxbase (for council tax setting purposes)	49,673.55	50,418.65	51,174.93	51,942.55
Band D (standard) (£)	£194.94	£199.89	£204.84	£209.79
Band D (adult social care precept) (£)	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
TOTAL Band D (incl ASC precept, excl local precepts)	£194.94	£199.89	£204.84	£209.79
<b>Council Tax (standard)</b>	<b>£9.684m</b>	<b>£10.077m</b>	<b>£10.481m</b>	<b>£10.896m</b>

### **Fees and charges**

- 8.12 The Council has limited means to charge for some of the services it provides. Some of these charges are set by central government, but the Council has discretion over the levels of others. Of the c£7.0m gross income forecast for 2023/24, the most significant areas include waste and recycling (£1.1m) which includes things such as garden bins and bulky waste collection, car parking income (£2.5m) and planning and building control income (£1.6m). It should however be noted that there are also significant costs associated with generating some of this income, such as the car park maintenance and enforcement, the waste contract etc.
- 8.13 As part of the Council’s drive to close the budget gap we will be undertaking a fundamental review of the fees and charges structure within our control as part of the 2024/25 budget setting process. This is to ensure that we are at least covering our costs in all areas while looking to develop and increase income streams wherever possible to help make the budget position more sustainable in the medium to long term and to protect frontline services.

## **9. Links to other strategies**

The MTFS is fundamentally linked to and underpins several the Council’s key strategy and policy documents

- 9.1 The most significant linkage with the MTFS is with the Council’s Corporate Plan and this is discussed in detail above. There are however several other strategies and policies supported by the MTFS.

### **Capital Strategy**

- 9.2 The Capital Strategy sets out the Council’s approach and process to the deployment of capital resources in meeting the Council’s overall aims and objectives. It also provides a strategic framework for the effective management and monitoring of the capital programme, within which the Council will work in formulating the strategies for individual services. It is a primary document for all capital decision making, together with the Corporate Plan and other strategies.
- 9.3 The Strategy is reviewed on an annual basis to reflect the changing needs and priorities of the Council including residents, businesses and places. The aim of the Strategy is to provide a framework within which the Council’s capital investment plans will be prioritised and delivered. The Strategy is the foundation of proper long-term planning of

capital investment and how it is to be delivered.

- 9.4 The Strategy's principal objective is to deliver an affordable programme that is consistent with the Council's priorities and objectives. This Strategy is intended to be used by all stakeholders to show how the Council prioritises and makes decisions on capital investment and how this investment supports the Council's priorities and ambitions.
- 9.5 The capital programme approved by Full Council in February 2022 included £27.0m investment in 2022/23 with £2.1m in 2023/24 and 2024/25. This is funded through a mixture of capital receipts and reserves (£0.1m) internal/external borrowing (£24.9m) and s106 contributions and other grants (£2.1m). The existing programme has been reprofiled in line with forecast spend, with a significant amount of the planned investment now expected to be spent in future years.
- 9.6 The capital programme for 2023/24 has been updated to include the provision to acquire the waste and street cleansing fleet vehicles in line with the re-procurement of the current contract. As referenced above the revenue implication of acquiring the fleet is included within the MTFs assumptions for 2024/25.

The key principles of the Strategy are;

- Investing in sustainable, affordable and social housing to increase overall supply,
- Using the ability to borrow at low rates of interest for the benefit of the physical and social infrastructure of the borough and for broader social value, and
- Ensuring that the costs of borrowing are manageable long term within the Revenue budget.

### **Treasury Management Strategy Statement 2022/23**

- 9.7 The Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement is intrinsically linked with the Capital Strategy and the capital programme, the latest report can be accessed on the Council's website [here \(item 14 pg 167\)](#). The strategy manages the Council's investments, cash flows, banking, money market and capital market transactions.
- 9.8 The treasury management budget supports the funding of the Council's capital plans. These capital plans provide a guide to the borrowing need, essentially the longer-term cash flow planning, to ensure that the Council can meet its capital spending obligations and understands the revenue implications of all capital decisions.
- 9.9 This management of longer-term cash may involve arranging long or short-term loans, or using longer-term cash flow surpluses. When it is prudent and economic, any debt previously incurred may be restructured to meet the Council's risk or cost objectives.
- 9.10 The Council receives and approves three main reports each year;
- Before the start of the financial year, the updated Treasury Management Strategy Statement which includes the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy statement; how investments and borrowings are to be organised (including prudential indicators); and an Investment Strategy;
  - A mid-year treasury management assurance report to update Council with the progress of the capital position; adherence to the treasury management strategy and whether any policies require revision and;
  - At the end of the financial year, a treasury management outturn report to provide details of actual indicators compared to the estimates within the strategy.

## Property Asset Strategy

- 9.11 The Property Asset Strategy is set within the wider context on the Council's strategic priorities and seeks to align and review the asset base with the Council's corporate goals and objectives. The full Strategy was approved by Full Council in March 2018 and can be accessed on the Council's website [here](#).
- 9.12 The Strategy provides the framework that will guide the Council's future strategic property decisions and ensure there is a consistent way of managing the Council's land and assets. The Strategy is likely to make recommendations regarding the rationalisation of the property portfolio, and to secure additional investment income from the let estate and property investments, and future budgets will reflect this. It is anticipated that the Strategy will be updated during 2023.

## Commissioning and Procurement Policy

- 9.13 The Commissioning and Procurement Policy establishes the Council's strategic approach to procurement and can be accessed [here](#). The Policy should be read in conjunction with the Finance Code of Practice, Contract Procedure Rules and Scheme of Delegation within the Council's Constitution [here](#). It emphasises the increasing importance of using procurement to support wider social, economic and environmental objectives, in ways that offer real long term benefit.
- 9.14 The Council recognises the importance of a strong and vibrant local economy and the role it can play in stimulating local markets. The website has been developed to provide potential suppliers with a host of information in relation to the Council's procurement processes, which includes a portal advertising all current tender opportunities. To deliver an agile service the Council uses an electronic tendering system.
- 9.15 The strategy provides a corporate focus for procurement, embracing the Council's commitment to strategic procurement and its alignment with corporate objectives and values. The document is not intended to be a "user manual", although the principles contained within the strategy should be applied to all facets of procurement activity. Additional detail regarding the Council's procurement processes can be found within the Contract Procedure Rules and there are user guides available on the intranet.
- 9.16 Social value is the positive impact an organisation has further to the activities it carries out. These can be economic, social and environmental impacts. The Council recognises that Social Value can significantly help it in meeting its priorities and aspirations for the borough by supporting good jobs, better incomes and wellbeing, increased skill levels, higher value economy and higher productivity levels. The Commissioning and Procurement Policy is one of the underpinning strategies that supports the Council's priorities.

## 10. Looking forward

*In the context of these pressures and reduced funding, the Council has produced a forecast for spend for Capital and Revenue purposes and anticipated use of Reserves*

- 10.1 The resources position has been updated with the best information currently available against the previous budget forecasts below. The business rates and Fair Funding reviews have been further delayed and a one-year settlement is anticipated and although this has had a positive impact on the financial position for 2023/24 the Council is experiencing significant spending pressures which have more than offset this.

**Table 2 – Deficit forecasts as per the 2022/23 budget**

<b>Funding forecasts as at Feb 2022</b>	<b>2022/23</b> £'000	<b>2023/24</b> £'000	<b>2024/25</b> £'000
Base budget & reserve contributions	<b>22,000</b>	<b>22,947</b>	<b>23,921</b>
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	(119)	(119)	(2)
Business Rates	(9,072)	(9,322)	(9,576)
Local Council Tax Scheme Grant	0	0	0
Lower Tier Services Grant	(192)	0	0
Covid grant allocation	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus (assuming not just legacy payments)	(1,407)	(983)	(983)
Services Grant	(296)	0	0
Council Tax	(9,263)	(9,648)	(10,042)
<b>Projected use of reserves/savings</b>	<b>1,651</b>	<b>2,875</b>	<b>3,318</b>

- 10.2 Following the Autumn Statement, the table below has been updated to show the revised funding position, with the future year's deficit peaking at £4.1m in 2024/25.

**Table 3 – Updated deficit forecasts based on updated Settlement assumptions**

<b>Updated funding forecasts</b>	<b>2022/23</b> £'000	<b>2023/24</b> £'000	<b>2024/25</b> £'000	<b>2025/26</b> £'000	<b>2026/27</b> £'000
Base budget & reserve contributions	22,000	23,601	24,926	24,763	24,947
Revenue Support Grant (RSG)	(119)	(120)	0	0	0
Business Rates	(9,072)	(10,122)	(10,736)	(10,897)	(11,060)
Lower Tier Services Grant	(192)	(195)	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus (assuming not just legacy payments)	(1,407)	(1,139)	0	0	0
Services Grant	(296)	(296)	0	0	0
Council Tax	(9,263)	(9,684)	(10,077)	(10,481)	(10,896)
<b>(Surplus)/deficit</b>	<b>1,651</b>	<b>2,045</b>	<b>4,113</b>	<b>3,385</b>	<b>2,991</b>

- 10.3 The additional cost pressures of c£3.5m in 2023/24 relate mainly to the waste contract extension (£1.7m), additional cost of temporary accommodation and supporting homeless applications (£1.0m) and other additional inflationary pressures that are being experienced. This is partly offset through grant projections for New Homes Bonus which are now anticipated to be slightly higher than originally forecast and the continuation of the Lower Tier and Services grants (£0.5m). The savings breakdown (£2.8m) can be found within Appendix 2.
- 10.4 For 2024/25 the additional £3.7m pressures in the main come from the new waste contract including the fleet purchase (£1.7m), anticipated loss of central government funding (£1.6m) and continuing inflationary pressures. The additional income relates mainly to business rates growth and again the savings breakdown can be found within Appendix 2.

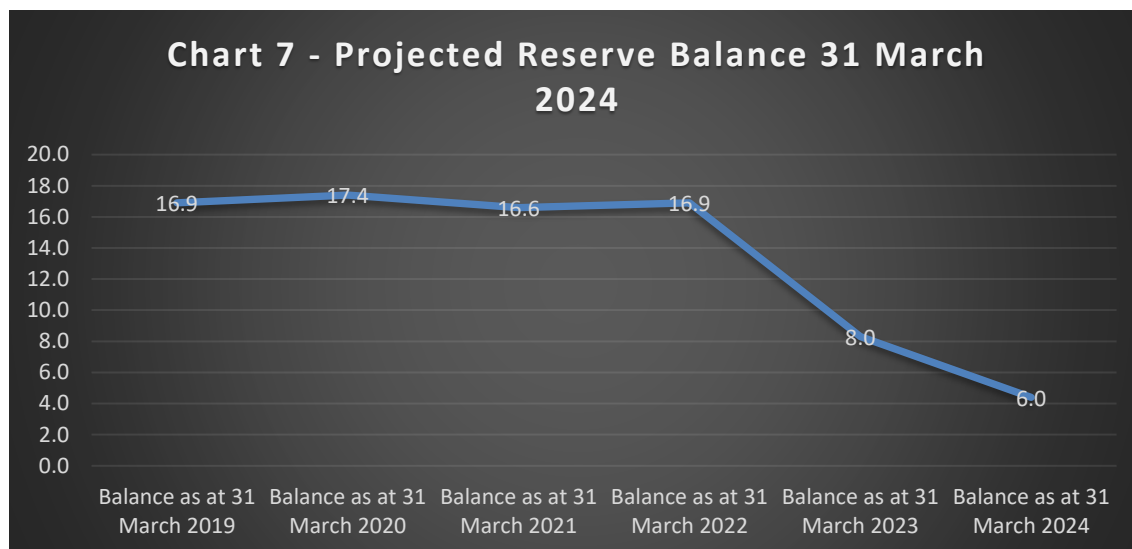
- 10.5 It should be noted that the grant projections for 2023/24 are still subject to final agreement in January so there is still an element of risk around these, but it is the best information currently available.
- 10.6 This year officers have undertaken high level analysis of the cost of the statutory and non-statutory functions which the Council undertakes. Statutory functions include things such as waste collection and the payment of benefits, non-statutory areas include things such as the provision of public conveniences and leisure facilities. Very roughly the statutory and income generating services cost around £21m and the Council's grants and income (from business rates, council tax etc) is around the same level. The non-statutory non-fee earning areas then account for around a further £5m which puts significant pressure on the affordability of the Council's medium term financial position. The savings exercise that has been undertaken has however taken account of savings potential and efficiencies across the Council's entire budget.

### **Reserves**

- 10.7 The Council holds several 'useable' reserves both for revenue and capital purposes which fall within one of the following categories:
- General Reserve
  - Earmarked Reserves
  - Ringfenced Reserves
  - Capital Receipts Reserve
- 10.8 The *General Reserve* is held for two main purposes:
- to provide a working balance to help cushion the impact of uneven cashflows and avoid temporary borrowing and;
  - a contingency to help cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies.
- 10.9 As part of setting the budget each year the adequacy of all reserves is assessed along with the optimum level of General Reserve that we should hold. The optimum level of the General Reserve considers a risk assessment of the budget and the context within which it has been prepared.
- 10.10 *Earmarked Reserves* provide a means of building up funds to meet known or predicted liabilities and are typically used to set aside sums for major schemes, such as capital developments or asset purchases, or to fund restructuring. A number of contingency reserves are also held by the Council to reduce the impact on Council Tax payers of future uncertain events such as business rate appeals or claw back of benefit subsidy.
- 10.11 *Ringfenced Reserves* are reserves where funding is allocated for a specific or technical accounting purpose and can only be spent in line with the purpose of that funding and cannot be used to support wider council expenditure unlike our earmarked reserves.
- 10.12 All reserves, general and earmarked, will be reviewed over the coming months as part of setting the budget for 2023/24, with a view that where commitments have not been identified and funds or reserve balances are no longer required these are re-allocated to specific reserves to support the overall budget position.
- 10.13 Use of reserves to balance a budget provides only a short-term solution as the funds can only be used once. They can however be used to smooth the impact of funding gaps over the short to medium term and to allow for planning and implementing projects and work streams that will deliver a longer-term financial benefit through reduced costs and/or

additional income.

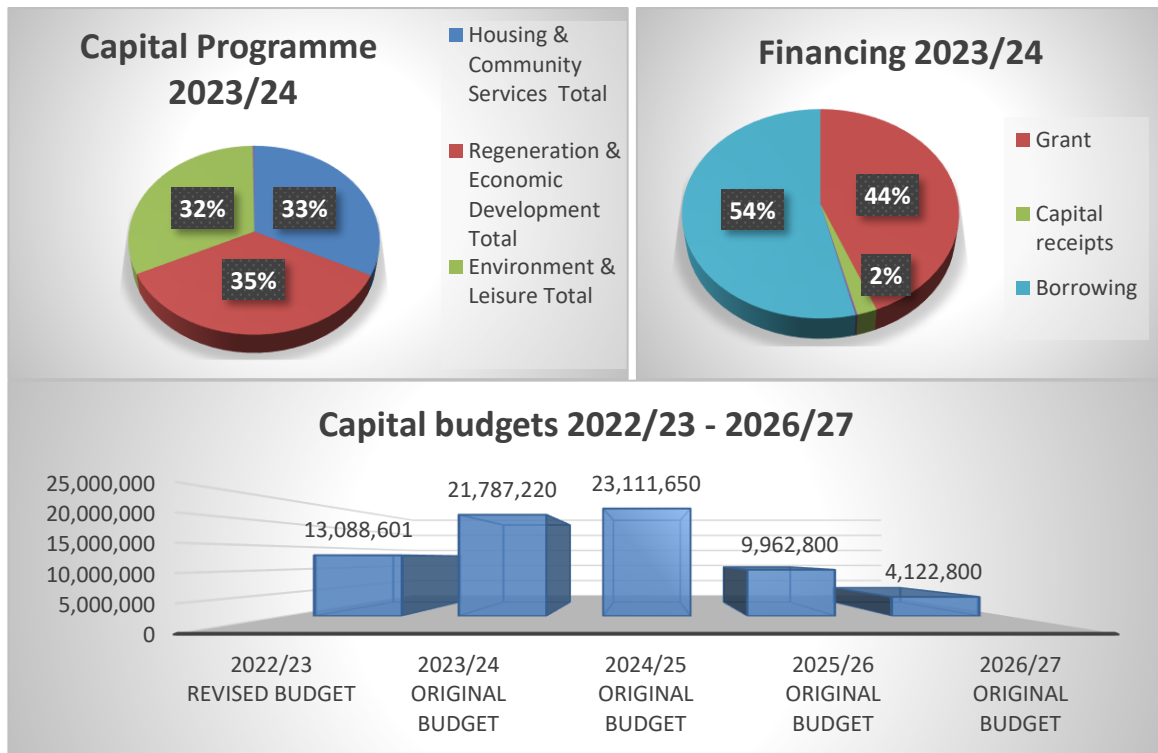
- 10.14 The available earmarked reserves balance as at 1 April 2022 stood at £16.9m, the budgeted use of reserves for the 2022/23 financial year is £8.9m which leaves a forecast balance as at 1 April 2023 of £8.0m which includes a £1.1m transfer from the General Reserve. Based on the current medium term budget projections the Council will not have sufficient reserves to help address the budget gap after 2024/25.



## Capital

- 10.15 The capital programme (Appendix 5) shows what the Council intends to spend on purchasing new assets and improving its existing ones over the next four years. As capital expenditure is incurred, a source of finance must be identified through capital receipts, grants and other revenue resources or alternatively through borrowing.
- 10.16 Any expenditure that is financed through borrowing increases the Council's 'Capital Financing Requirement' (CFR). Each year a revenue charge called the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) is made to reflect the funding of the CFR by the taxpayer, it is required to be set aside to cover the repayment of debt caused by the need to borrow for capital purposes. As the need to borrow increases, the CFR and MRP also increase. If the Council has sufficient cash resources to meet the expenditure, it will not be necessary to borrow externally, and cash balances can be used to cover the expenditure. This is referred to as 'internal borrowing' and attracts an MRP charge in the same way that external borrowing does.
- 10.17 New projects, which are included in the programme in the future, will need to be financed by MRP if no capital resources such as capital grants or capital receipts from future asset sales are available. Alternatively existing revenue reserves could be used to finance these projects through a revenue contribution to capital (RCCO) which would avoid the need to make an MRP charge.
- 10.18 Future external borrowing is assumed to finance a portion of the waste vehicle fleet purchase and also the funding for the Rainbow Homes housing provision. The cost of borrowing has fluctuated significantly over recent months from around 2% back in June for 8-year annuity loans from the Public Works Loans Board (PWLB) to over 5% in September but these have settled more recently and are now just over 4%. What this does mean however is that any business cases which include borrowing will need to be fundamentally reviewed before any borrowing takes place to ensure the schemes remain affordable and still deliver the anticipated benefits. This includes schemes that

have previously been assessed as affordable based on earlier costs of borrowing. Next year's budget is shown below (£21.8m) along with the forecasts to 2026/27 (Chart 8).



## 11. Closing the Budget gap

*The Council's strategy for reducing the budget gap covers several work streams as outlined below.*

- 11.1 Due to the budget pressures being experienced for not only the 2023/24 financial year but also the years following, the Council has had to fundamentally review what services it provides and how they are provided to try and identify savings to help achieve a balanced sustainable budget in future years. The main workstream areas are summarised below.

### Efficiency Review

- 11.2 As part of the production of these forecasts a detailed budget review has taken place over the summer and autumn to identify efficiencies and additional income to help support frontline services and to balance the Council's financial position. For next year these total around £2.8m (Appendix 2), however based on current forecasts this still leaves a deficit of £2.0m which will need to be supported from reserves. An Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA) has been undertaken on the proposals where relevant and the council will be consulting the draft budget proposals until January 2023.
- 11.3 The efficiencies and savings identified have come from a number of areas and include the following;
- Various operational savings – travel, subsistence, conferences etc
  - Contract savings from retendered contracts
  - Additional income from increased annual demand – car parks, planning etc
  - Increased fees and charges

- Savings and a freeze in Members allowances
- Charging for Members parking
- Reductions in some 3<sup>rd</sup> party grants
- Staff restructure savings across service areas
- Investment income
- Shared services
- Digital transformation – ebilling etc

### **Fees & Charges Review**

- 11.4 A full review of the existing fees and charges was carried out as part of the budget build process for 2023/24. As detailed above this strategy is recommending an increase of 10% for most charges which is in line with the inflationary increase in costs that the council is experiencing.
- 11.5 There is an assumption that the increase in planning fees included in the government's planning reform proposals in May 2022 will be implemented in 2023/24. The proposals will be subject to government consultation and are intended to increase major and minor application fees by 35% and 25 % respectively.
- 11.6 Proposed changes to car parking fees include extending the charging period in our car parks (proposed to operate between 6am and 12 midnight), and a 10p increase in the hourly rates.
- 11.7 Proposals for higher increases to some fees and charges have been included where the underlying cost to the council has significantly increased; where previous charges have been below the statutory maximum charge and where market conditions indicate a higher charge. The proposed fees and charges for 2023/24 can be found within Appendix 4.

### **Financial sustainability**

- 11.8 Financial sustainability and reducing reliance on central government grants is one of the four key themes within the Corporate Plan (Priority 4) and is fundamental to this strategy and setting balanced budgets in future years. One of the initiatives will include a review of the way we currently budget for fees and charges structures to ensure we are fully covering our costs. The aspiration is to have a balanced medium term budget which does not rely on reserves to balance the position.

### **Our investment approach**

- 11.9 There is an ever increasing need for Councils to take a more commercial and business-like approach to all elements of their business. A more commercial approach will directly support the Council's objective of becoming financially sustainable for the future. Part of the strategy development process will involve the identification and prioritisation of a number of internal and external projects which will consider income generation, efficiency and doing things differently. The focus will be on making every pound count for our residents, improving efficiency, investment and increasing social value.
- 11.10 The Local Government Association (LGA) are encouraging Councils to move towards a more commercial culture as a way of developing sustainable self-funding streams that reflect Council's individual priorities and place shaping aspirations. Consequently, the Council needs to think about how it can maximise revenue and efficiencies moving forwards. Swale can already evidence its commercial approach through the delivery of the Bourne Place development and will continue to develop these opportunities.

### **Property Investment and New Ways of Working**

- 11.11 Opportunities for investment in property, whether direct or indirect, continue to be



considered to achieve either a direct income stream from the asset or improved returns on investment. A programme of asset valuations and condition surveys are currently underway. This will help us better understand the challenges faced in terms of maintaining and improving our asset base over the medium to long term to ensure that it remains fit for purpose, delivering income for the Council where appropriate.

- 11.12 Opportunities for the most efficient utilisation of the Council's assets and maximising returns where appropriate are vital. Indirect property investments via treasury instruments, such as the purchase of pooled property funds, can potentially provide a return in terms of a regular income and growth in the value of the investment. Under the Treasury Management Strategy the Council has made the LAMIT Pooled Property Fund, which invests exclusively in various property assets with the aim of achieving a regular income and growth in the value of the investment.
- 11.13 The Council can choose to use its capital resources to finance a programme of asset investment which aims to deliver long-term revenue streams for the Council and work on an ongoing basis is required to identify the most appropriate projects. This strategy of direct property investment can ensure a secondary benefit to the district as it is possible to generate an economic growth benefit when the investment is located within the borough. This is, however, more resource intensive to manage than externalising these investments.
- 11.14 The Council continues to progress its New Ways of Working strategy off the back of the Covid pandemic which again will bring opportunities in the future for new operating models and how the Council conducts its business in the future. With more staff working from home there will also be potential opportunities to rationalize office space and potentially share space with other partner organisations and indeed the private sector. There may also maybe opportunities to work with other partners under the government's [One Public Estate](#) agenda.

### **Digital Transformation**

- 11.15 The Council needs to consider how digital transformation can support the business in the future and deliver more for our residents, identifying changes to service delivery from the implementation of new technology and changes to business processes. It is anticipated that the overall programme will be delivered over a number of years and as projects are rolled out there will be changes to working practices which will help to deliver efficiencies.
- 11.16 The key to this work in the future should really focus on 'putting our customers at the heart of everything we do'. This will undoubtedly lead to efficiencies and potential cashable savings but the direction of travel should be to improve our services for our customers first and foremost because that's the right thing to do. It will also mean that staff can spend longer prioritising 'added value activities' rather than getting bogged down with inefficient paper-based processes.

### **Shared Services, collaboration and selling services**

- 11.17 Creating efficiencies through shared services continues to be a priority for central government. Identifying such opportunities must therefore continue at a local level, ensuring that realistic and deliverable benefits can be achieved. Again this is an which Swale is already heavily involved in, including activities like the joint waste procurement but could involve a range of other joint procurement opportunities.
- 11.18 Identifying opportunities to work alongside other public sector partners and organisations to deliver services, such as through our successful Mid Kent Services

shared service arrangements, will continue to form an important part of our efficiency strategy. Opportunities for further sharing arrangements continue to be explored and include potential arrangements for the Revenues and Benefits teams.

### **Growing Business Rates and NHB**

- 11.19 Under the previous allocation method of New Homes Bonus (NHB) there was a direct financial benefit to the Council from growth in homes through the NHB funding and through increasing the council tax base and additional income generated from council tax. Whilst new housing growth has had an impact on the demand for local services, there will still be a net gain in terms of overall income for delivery while the NHB remains. We do however know that the NHB system is due to be replaced although at the present time it is not clear what with or when it will be introduced so the life of any ongoing funding from NHB remains unclear.
- 11.20 For similar reasons growing the business rates base will have a direct impact on the level of business rates income retained locally. Equally, maintaining existing business rates remains a priority in that decline in business rates will reduce the amount of income retained. However as with the NHB the reform and any localisation of business rates continues to be delayed along with the Fair Funding review.

### **Council Tax**

- 11.21 The increased flexibilities around council tax discounts and increases following the removal of the tax freeze grant in 2016/17 provides a further potential income stream. Further review of the current level of discounts can also provide additional income, recommendations on the level of council tax discounts will be reported for approval as part of the budget reports for 2023/24. The draft budget proposes that the discount that is currently awarded for uninhabitable properties is removed with effect from 1 April 2023.

### **New opportunities**

- 11.22 Given the current uncertainties around Covid recovery, the cost-of-living crisis, global events and the economy in general following the political upheaval, Local Government funding and funding mechanisms are overdue for review and the outcome from this remains a significant risk for the Council's medium term financial assumptions. It will be essential to identify new opportunities to either increase income, increase efficiency through the redesign of services, explore new partnership models for service delivery etc and this will be one of the main challenges over the medium term.
- 11.23 While the Council's reserves do provide some level of comfort over the short term and could be used to address budget deficits this is not a sustainable financial strategy for the medium to long term as mentioned earlier within the report the reserves are forecast to be fully depleted by 2025/26 so this would not even be an option.

### **Lobbying and consultation**

- 11.24 The Council will continue to lobby central government in terms of increased funding allocations and continued relaxation/increased flexibility in terms of the council tax referendum principles which will be one of the things required if income raising and decision making is ever to be truly local. We will also continue to respond to all relevant consultations, in particular in relation to the business rates and Fair Funding reviews.
- 11.25 Members will need to support the efficiency agenda in future years and support officers to deliver a balanced budget position over the medium term as use of one-off reserves to balance the budget deficit is not sustainable.

## 12. Conclusions

*How will this help shape our future budget and financial projections?*

- 12.1 While the Council's reserves do provide some level of comfort over the short term and could be used to address budget deficits this is not a sustainable financial strategy for the medium to long term, and as mentioned earlier within the report the reserves will be fully depleted in 2025/26 if ongoing savings are not found for the base budget.
- 12.2 Previous budget forecasts made back in February 2022 were made at a time of significant uncertainty in terms of future Government finances due to the Fair Funding and Business Rates Review. This uncertainty was further heightened by the ongoing recovery from Covid which added an additional level of complexity in terms of future forecasts and potential impacts on the economy, inflation, suppliers, contracts, Brexit implications etc.
- 12.3 The updated high level funding forecasts within the strategy build on previous figures from the 2022/23 Budget setting exercise in February which were made within this context, at which time we were forecasting future year deficits which were increasing year on year to around £3.3m by 2024/25.
- 12.4 The updated forecasts now differ significantly from this, in the main this is due to the significant spending pressures which the Council is experiencing in relation to the waste contract and homelessness, inflationary pressures and increasing uncertainty around future funding levels.
- 12.5 The MTFs and budget forecasts include the latest information as announced by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in his Autumn Statement on 17 November 2022. It should however be noted that some of the assumptions that have currently been made will not be confirmed until the Provisional Settlement is announced, the date of which is currently anticipated to be around the 21 December 2022.
- 12.6 The funding estimates for next year in terms of the New Homes Bonus and the Lower Tier and Services grants are far from certain and this represents a potential income risk of around £0.5m if the latter two grants were removed. We will not have any further clarity on these until the Provisional Settlement is announced around 21 December 2022.
- 12.7 As part of the production of these forecasts a detailed budget review has taken place over previous months to identify efficiencies and additional income to help support frontline services and to balance the Council's financial position. For next year these total around £2.8m (Appendix 2), and are supported by a number of increases to fees and charges (Appendix 4), however based on current forecasts this still leaves a deficit of £2.0m which will need to be supported from reserves.
- 12.8 The Council is still projecting a deficit position from 2023/24 onwards but due to the funding changes, forecasting the future years deficits does however allow the Council time to plan mitigating actions more effectively, meaning we are more likely to be successful.
- 12.9 A comprehensive financial risk assessment is undertaken for the revenue and capital budget setting process to ensure that all risks and uncertainties affecting the Council's financial position are identified as far as is reasonably practical. These are reviewed each year as part of the refresh of the MTFs and future year's budget forecasts and are included within Appendix 5.
- 12.10 At the current time the key messages are as follows;
- Estimated budget gap of £2.0m for 2023/24 even with current savings and fee increases
  - We can deliver our statutory services with current income levels but nothing more
  - To fund non-statutory services we need to find more income/savings/reserves
  - Our reserves will help set a balanced budget for the next 2 years but not after 2024/25
  - Funding from reserves is not a sustainable way to manage our budget

- We need to identify more efficiencies and income to make the budget sustainable
- The current projections are based on a number of assumptions which can and do change

12.11 In conclusion, it is still not clear how the various reviews and the ongoing economic pressures will impact on local government funding but officers will continue working on the forecasts between now and the point at which the council tax is set in February 2023, by which time the Settlement figures will have been finalised.

App 1 - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) – General Fund Summary Forecasts  
App 2 - Savings Summary  
App 3 - Capital programme  
App 4 – Fees and charges  
App 5 - Risk Assessment

<b>Appendix 1 - Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) – General Fund Summary Forecasts</b>					
<b>Service</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2023/24</b>	<b>2024/25</b>	<b>2025/26</b>	<b>2026/27</b>
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Chief Executive	579	479	479	479	479
Director of Neighbourhoods & Regeneration	198	170	170	170	170
Environment & Leisure	6,513	8,402	10,045	9,825	9,825
Planning	765	495	296	296	296
Housing & Community Services	3,557	3,965	3,724	3,524	3,324
Regeneration & Economic Development	(561)	(595)	(801)	(837)	(888)
Policy, Governance & Customer Services	2,352	2,297	2,297	2,297	2,297
Finance & Procurement	931	917	923	923	923
Corporate Overheads/Capital Financing	3,057	3,146	3,330	3,323	3,317
Revenues & Benefits	343	290	96	96	96
Environmental Health	528	528	528	528	528
MKS Legal	550	550	550	550	550
MKS Audit	189	171	171	171	171
MKS Human Resources	477	477	477	477	477
MKS Information Technology	1,377	1,255	1,255	1,255	1,355
Collection Fund Surplus/Deficit	0	0	0	0	0
Additional fees and charges	0	(154)	(154)	(154)	(154)
Pay and inflation	0	226	526	826	1,126
Grants paid	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Sub Total Base Budget</b>	<b>20,855</b>	<b>22,619</b>	<b>23,912</b>	<b>23,749</b>	<b>23,892</b>
Drainage Board	906	937	969	969	969
Historic contribution to reserves	93	45	45	45	86
Contribution from reserve	146	0	0	0	0
<b>Cummulative Savings required</b>	<b>(1,651)</b>	<b>(2,045)</b>	<b>(4,113)</b>	<b>(3,385)</b>	<b>(2,991)</b>
<b>Grants</b>		0	0	0	0
Revenue Support Grant	(119)	(120)	0	0	0
Business Rates - Gross	(9,163)	(10,122)	(10,736)	(10,897)	(11,060)
Less NNDR share of homelessness funding	91	0	0	0	0
Lower Tier Services Grant	(192)	(195)	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus (assuming not just legacy payments)	(1,407)	(1,139)	0	0	0
Services Grant	(296)	(296)	0	0	0
<b>Council Tax requirement</b>	<b>9,263</b>	<b>9,684</b>	<b>10,077</b>	<b>10,481</b>	<b>10,896</b>
Tax Base	48,939.46	49,673.55	50,418.65	51,174.93	51,942.55
Council Tax £	189.27	194.94	199.89	204.84	209.79
Council Tax increase %	2.69%	2.996%	2.54%	2.48%	2.42%
Council Tax increase £	4.95	5.67	4.95	4.95	4.95
Tax Base increase %	1.87%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%	1.50%
Annual savings required	(1,651)	(394)	(2,068)	728	394

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Service	Savings proposals				
	23/24	24/25	25/26	26/27	Total
<b>Saving Classification</b>					
All services - Operational	(94)	0	0	0	(94)
Corporate Overhead -Contract	(22)	0	0	0	(22)
Environment & Leisure -Additional income	(370)	0	0	0	(370)
Environment & Leisure - contract	(109)	(520)	(145)	0	(774)
Environment & Leisure - Operational	(13)	0	0	0	(13)
Environment & Leisure - restructure	(51)	0	0	0	(51)
Fees & charges	(581)	(303)	(75)	0	(969)
Finance - restructure	(20)	0	0	0	(20)
Grant reduction	(227)	(20)	0	0	(294)
Grants received	(103)	0	0	0	(103)
Housing & Community - Operational	(328)	(200)	(200)	(200)	(928)
Housing & Community - restructure	(122)	(41)	0	0	(178)
Investment income	(60)	0	0	0	(60)
Member allowances - saving from committee structure and proposed freeze	(60)	0	0	0	(60)
Member parking fee	(2)	0	0	0	(2)
Planning - restructure	(31)	0	0	0	(31)
Policy, Governance & Customer services -Operational	(20)	0	0	0	(20)
Regen & Ec Dev - Additional income	(18)	(17)	0	0	(35)
Regen & Ec dev - operational	(62)	0	0	0	(62)
Regen & Ec dev - restructure	(192)	0	0	0	(192)
Revenues & Benefits - electronic billing	(10)	0	0	0	(10)
Senior Management restructure	(100)	0	0	0	(100)
Shared Service - Operational	(40)	0	0	0	(40)
Shared services	0	(150)	0	0	(150)
Suspend contribution to reserves	(178)	0	0	140	(38)
<b>Gross saving total</b>	<b>(2,812)</b>	<b>(1,251)</b>	<b>(420)</b>	<b>(60)</b>	<b>(4,616)</b>

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<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Scheme total current estimate</b>	<b>Prior Year Spend</b>	<b>2022/23 Revised Budget</b>	<b>2023/24 Original Budget</b>	<b>2024/25 Original Budget</b>	<b>2025/26 Original Budget</b>	<b>2026/27 Original Budget</b>
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
CCTV .	60	0	0	0	0	0	60
Disabled Facilities Grant Mandatory & Discretionary .	Annual programme	0	5,720	2,063	2,063	2,063	2,063
Local Housing Company .	23,250	90	360	5,000	8,000	7,800	2,000
Dolphin Barge Museum & Skatepark .	104	52	52	0	0	0	0
Forstal Community Association	45	0	45	0	0	0	0
<b>Housing &amp; Community Services Total</b>	<b>23,459</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>6,177</b>	<b>7,063</b>	<b>10,063</b>	<b>9,863</b>	<b>4,123</b>
Sittingbourne Town Centre .	39,858	39,216	641	0	0	0	0
Faversham Creek Basin Regeneration Project (Swing Bridge) .	200	0	0	200	0	0	0
High Streets .	624	376	248	0	0	0	0
St Micheal's Church Boundary Wall .	120	0	120	0	0	0	0
Coronation Clock Tower Sheerness .	247	103	144	0	0	0	0
Master's House .	1,603	284	1,319	0	0	0	0
Swale House Refurbishment .	2,100	145	1,955	0	0	0	0
Rural England Prosperity Projects .	503	0	0	126	377	0	0
UKSPF .	200	0	14	37	149	0	0
Levelling Up Scheme .	20,509	0	638	7,349	12,523	0	0
Central House Lift Refurbishment	20	0	20	0	0	0	0
<b>Regeneration &amp; Economic Development Total</b>	<b>65,984</b>	<b>40,126</b>	<b>5,099</b>	<b>7,711</b>	<b>13,049</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
Waste & Street Cleansing Vehicle Fleet .	6,700	0	0	6,700	0	0	0
Barton's Point - replacement bridge .	237	198	39	0	0	0	0
Beach Huts .	143	0	0	143	0	0	0
Coach Parking .	35	0	35	0	0	0	0
Gunpowder Works Oare Faversham .	30	0	30	0	0	0	0
Sheerness Public Toilets .	120	0	120	0	0	0	0
Barton's point drainage project .	70	0	70	0	0	0	0
Leisure Centres .	294	0	293.85	0	0	0	0
Lynsted Churchyard Walls .	120	0	0	120	0	0	0
Milton Creek Access Road .	75	0	74.74	0	0	0	0
Open Spaces Play Equipment .	456	0	456	0	0	0	0

<b>Scheme</b>	<b>Scheme total current estimate</b>	<b>Prior Year Spend</b>	<b>2022/23 Revised Budget</b>	<b>2023/24 Original Budget</b>	<b>2024/25 Original Budget</b>	<b>2025/26 Original Budget</b>	<b>2026/27 Original Budget</b>
Play Improvements .	200	0	200	0	0	0	0
The Forum public toilets .	50	8	42	0	0	0	0
Barton's point shower & toilets .	184	4	179.989	0	0	0	0
Changing Places .	154	0	53.75	0	0	100	0
<b>Environment &amp; Leisure Total</b>	<b>8,867</b>	<b>210</b>	<b>1,594</b>	<b>6,963</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>0</b>
ICT Replacement .	Annual programme	0	219	0	0	0	0
Council Chamber IT Equipment .	50	0	0	50	0	0	0
<b>Resources Total</b>	<b>879</b>	<b>610</b>	<b>219</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>99,189</b>	<b>41,088</b>	<b>13,089</b>	<b>21,787</b>	<b>23,112</b>	<b>9,963</b>	<b>4,123</b>
<b>Funding</b>							
s106	606	0	606	0	0	0	0
Grant	20,857	0	6,425	9,574	14,602	2,163	2,063
Capital receipts	735	198	74	463	0	0	0
Reserves	5,040	1,528	2,894	50	509	0	60
Borrowing	71,951	39,362	3,090	11,700	8,000	7,800	2,000
	<b>99,189</b>	<b>41,088</b>	<b>13,089</b>	<b>21,787</b>	<b>23,112</b>	<b>9,963</b>	<b>4,123</b>

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Housing Services (C Hudson)</b>								
<b>Home Inspection for Immigration Application Fee</b>								
Requests received to inspect and provide report on suitability of proposed home in connection with immigration applications	126.10	25.20	151.30	139.00	27.80	166.80	The charges reflect officer and the inflationary increase. 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.	10.24%
<b>Staying Put Handyperson Rates</b>								
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 contract with Kent County Council (KCC) supporting people	0.00%
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	0.00%
Private disabled works (household not eligible for Disabled Facilities Grant)	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	No price increase. The Council does not undertake much private work due to time available. Rate remains the same to offer vulnerable clients an affordable service.	0.00%
Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG) fee (statutory % charge)	12.50%		12.50%			The rate is charged as part of the Disabled Facility Grant where Staying Put act in their capacity as the home improvement agency for the client. The rate is the same as other agencies in Kent, the client is free to choose other agencies if they wish; this keeps us competitive and funds the service.		
<b>Alleygate Key</b>								
Fee	17.92	3.58	21.50	18.33	3.67	22.00	Slight price increase as key price increase. Reimbursement of costs rounded to nearest £	2.31%
<b>Town Centre Licence</b>								
Licence for large events of 10,000 people or more	500.00	0.00	500.00	550.00	0.00	550.00	Inflationary increase	10.00%
<b>Planning (F Churchill)</b>								
<b>Planning Performance Agreements (PPA)</b> Central government encourages the use of planning performance agreements (PPA's) for large or complex planning proposals. These are voluntary agreements between us and the applicants which helps to: •bring together the developer, the Local Planning Authority and key stakeholders to work in partnership throughout the planning process •ensure complex proposals progress through the process to mutually-agreed timescales •ensure appropriate resources and expertise are provided to advise on complex proposals •provide greater opportunity for dialogue through the planning process and help deliver high-quality development								New charge
The cost of the PPA will be calculated based on the complexity and size of the scheme using the relevant officer day rates. Please contact the Planning Department to discuss your requirements and obtain an estimate.								

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Pre Application Advice - Meetings</b>								
Very large major	2916.67	583.33	3,500.00	<b>3250.00</b>	<b>650.00</b>	<b>3,900.00</b>	Increased charge	11.43%
Major	2083.33	416.67	2,500.00	<b>2300.00</b>	<b>460.00</b>	<b>2,760.00</b>	Increased charge	10.40%
Minor	458.33	91.67	550.00	<b>505.00</b>	<b>101.00</b>	<b>606.00</b>	Increased charge	10.18%
Other (excluding householders and listed buildings)	137.50	27.50	165.00	<b>152.00</b>	<b>30.40</b>	<b>182.40</b>	Increased charge	10.55%
Charities, voluntary groups and parish councils	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	No change	0.00%
Works/repairs to listed buildings	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	No change	0.00%
<b>Pre Application Advice - Letters</b>								
Very large major	916.67	183.33	1,100.00	<b>1010.00</b>	<b>202.00</b>	<b>1,212.00</b>	Increased charge	10.18%
Major	458.33	91.67	550.00	<b>505.00</b>	<b>101.00</b>	<b>606.00</b>	Increased charge	10.18%
Minor	229.17	45.83	275.00	<b>253.00</b>	<b>50.60</b>	<b>303.60</b>	Increased charge	10.40%
Other (excluding householders and listed buildings)	68.75	13.75	82.50	<b>76.00</b>	<b>15.20</b>	<b>91.20</b>	Increased charge	10.55%
Householder	45.83	9.17	55.00	<b>51.00</b>	<b>10.20</b>	<b>61.20</b>	Increased charge	11.27%
Charities, voluntary groups and parish councils	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	No change	0.00%
Works/repairs to listed buildings	0.00	0.00	0.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	No change	0.00%
Very large major: over 200 dwellings or 4 hectares. Commercial over 10,000m <sup>2</sup> or 2 hectares								
Major: 10-199 dwellings or less than 4 hectares. Commercial 1,000m <sup>2</sup> - 9,999m <sup>2</sup> or less than 2 hectares								
Minor: 1-9 dwellings or less than 0.5 hectares. Commercial less than 1,000m <sup>2</sup> or 1 hectare								
<b>Complaints made under the High Hedges Legislation</b>								
Standard fee	565.00	0.00	565.00	<b>565.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>565.00</b>	No change	0.00%
<b>Planning Portal</b>								
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.								
<b>Planning Photocopying Charges</b>								
	Charges per page			Charges per page				
A4 Black/white	0.17	0.03	0.20	<b>0.20</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>0.24</b>	Increased charge	20.00%
A3 Black/white	0.25	0.05	0.30	<b>0.30</b>	<b>0.06</b>	<b>0.36</b>	Increased charge	20.00%
A2 Or larger	3.33	0.67	4.00	<b>4.00</b>	<b>0.80</b>	<b>4.80</b>	Increased charge	20.00%
A4 Colour	1.67	0.33	2.00	<b>2.00</b>	<b>0.40</b>	<b>2.40</b>	Increased charge	20.00%
A3 Colour	2.50	0.50	3.00	<b>3.00</b>	<b>0.60</b>	<b>3.60</b>	Increased charge	20.00%
<b>Local Land Charges</b>								
<b>Official Searches</b>								

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
LLC1 only	42.00	0.00	42.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	Reduced charge	-64.29%
LLC1 only - additional parcel	12.00	0.00	12.00	4.80	0.00	4.80	Reduced charge	-60.00%
Con 29	102.50	20.50	123.00	136.67	27.33	164.00	Increased charge	33.34%
Con 29 - additional parcel	17.50	3.50	21.00	20.00	4.00	24.00	Increased charge	14.29%
Standard search (LLC1 & Con29)	144.50	20.50*	165.00	151.67	27.33*	179.00	Increased charge	8.48%
Standard search (LLC1 & Con29) - additional parcel	29.50	3.50*	33.00	24.80	4.00*	28.80	Reduced charge	-12.73%
Part II enquiry - Con29 questions 4-21	13.00	2.60	15.60	13.50	2.70	16.20	Increased charge	3.85%
Part II enquiry - Con29 question 22	25.00	5.00	30.00	25.00	5.00	30.00	No change	0.00%
Additional questions	19.50	3.90	23.40	19.00	3.80	22.80	Reduced charge	-2.56%
*VAT applicable only to the Con29 part of the charge.								
<b>Personal Searches</b>								
Enhanced Personal Search	15.00	0.00	15.00	0.00	0.00	0.00		-100.00%
1.1 (a-l) (Planning)	6.50	1.30	7.80	7.00	1.40	8.40	Increased charge	7.69%
1.1 (J, K, L) (Building Regulations)	6.50	1.30	7.80	7.00	1.40	8.40	Increased charge	7.69%
2.1 (b-d)	5.25	1.05	6.30	3.50	0.70	4.20	Reduced charge	-33.33%
3.1 Land for public purpose	3.25	0.65	3.90	3.50	0.70	4.20	Increased charge	7.69%
3.3 Drainage matters	3.25	0.65	3.90	3.50	0.70	4.20	Increased charge	7.69%
3.5 Railway schemes	3.25	0.65	3.90	3.50	0.70	4.20	Increased charge	7.69%
<del>3.7</del> Outstanding Notices	10.00	2.00	12.00	10.00	2.00	12.00	No change	0.00%
<del>3.8</del> Building Regulations Contravention	3.25	0.65	3.90	3.50	0.70	4.20	Increased charge	7.69%
<del>3.9</del> Enforcement	6.50	1.30	7.80	7.00	1.40	8.40	Increased charge	7.69%
<del>3.10</del> CILs	4.50	0.90	5.40	4.75	0.95	5.70	Increased charge	5.56%
<del>3.12</del> Compulsory purchase	3.25	0.65	3.90	3.50	0.70	4.20	Increased charge	7.69%
<del>3.13b</del> Contaminated land	3.25	0.65	3.90	3.50	0.70	4.20	Increased charge	7.69%
3.13c Contaminated land	3.25	0.65	3.90	3.50	0.70	4.20	Increased charge	7.69%
<b>Environment and Leisure</b>								
<b>(M Cassell)</b>								
<b>Car Parks and Season Tickets</b>								
All Swale Borough Council car parks are free to use between midnight and 6am Monday to Sunday								
<b>Short Stay Covering</b>								
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	0.50	0.10	0.60	0.54	0.11	0.65	Increased charge	8.00%
Up to 1 hour	1.00	0.20	1.20	1.08	0.22	1.30	Increased charge	8.00%
Up to 2 hours	2.00	0.40	2.40	2.17	0.43	2.60	Increased charge	8.50%
Up to 4 hours	4.00	0.80	4.80	4.33	0.87	5.20	Increased charge	8.25%
Season per quarter (for business only Central car park, Faversham/ Forum, Sittingbourne)	200.83	40.17	241.00	220.00	44.00	264.00	Increased charge	9.55%
Electric vehicle parking/charging per kilowatt hour (kWh)	0.21	0.04	0.25	variable	variable	variable	Increased charge to 15p above the energy supplier rate per kWh (reviewed and adjusted monthly)	

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Sittingbourne: East Street car park, Albany Service Road car park								
Maximum stay 1 hour (cashless transactions only)	1.00	0.20	1.20	1.08	0.22	1.30	Increased charge	8.00%
<b>Bourne Place Multi-Storey Car Park</b>								
The charge is for ALL parking bays including disabled and parent/child bays between the hours of 6am and midnight.								
Patrons of Light Cinema will have free parking all day on Sundays and after 6pm Mon-Sat. Ticket must be validated at the Light before payment at car park machine								
Up to 30 minutes	0.50	0.10	0.60	0.54	0.11	0.65	Increased charge	8.00%
Up to 1 hour	1.00	0.20	1.20	1.08	0.22	1.30	Increased charge	8.00%
Up to 2 hours	2.00	0.40	2.40	2.17	0.43	2.60	Increased charge	8.50%
Up to 3 hours	3.00	0.60	3.60	3.25	0.65	3.90	Increased charge	8.33%
Up to 4 hours	4.00	0.80	4.80	4.33	0.87	5.20	Increased charge	8.25%
Up to 5 hours	5.00	1.00	6.00	5.42	1.08	6.50	Increased charge	8.40%
Up to a maximum of 6 hours	6.00	1.20	7.20	6.50	1.30	7.80	Increased charge	8.33%
Over 6 hours (within 24 hour period)	7.00	1.40	8.40	7.58	1.52	9.10	Increased charge	8.29%
Lost ticket	7.00	1.40	8.40	7.58	1.52	9.10	Increased charge	8.29%
Season ticket per quarter (subject to a maximum capacity)	200.83	40.17	241.00	220.00	44.00	264.00	Increased charge	9.55%
<b>Travelodge</b> Preferential rate for hotel guests (for 24 hours))	2.50	0.50	3.00	2.50	0.50	3.00	No change	0.00%
<b>Long Stay Covering</b>								
Paversham: Partridge Lane, Queens Hall								
Sittingbourne: Spring Street, Bell Road, Cockleshell Walk								
Sheerness: Albion Place, Beach Street, Bridge Road, Cross Street, Trinity Road								
Up to 30 minutes	0.50	0.10	0.60	0.54	0.11	0.65	Increased charge	8.00%
Up to 1 hour	1.00	0.20	1.20	1.08	0.22	1.30	Increased charge	8.00%
Up to 2 hours	2.00	0.40	2.40	2.17	0.43	2.60	Increased charge	8.50%
Up to 4 hours	4.00	0.80	4.80	4.33	0.87	5.20	Increased charge	8.25%
Over 4 hours	5.00	1.00	6.00	5.50	1.10	6.60	Increased charge	10.00%
Season per month (long stay car park)	75.00	15.00	90.00	82.50	16.50	99.00	Increased charge	10.00%
Season per quarter (long stay car park)	200.83	40.17	241.00	220.00	44.00	264.00	Increased charge	9.55%
Leysdown: Promenade (seasonal) (all day between 1 March and 31 October)								
Up to 1 hour	1.00	0.20	1.20	1.08	0.22	1.30	Increased charge	8.00%
Up to 2 hours	2.00	0.40	2.40	2.17	0.43	2.60	Increased charge	8.50%
Up to 4 hours	4.00	0.80	4.80	4.33	0.87	5.20	Increased charge	8.25%
All day	5.00	1.00	6.00	5.50	1.10	6.60	Increased charge	10.00%
Motorcycles	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	No change	0.00%
Season tickets (to be used at any long stay car park throughout the Borough - excluding Bourne Place)								
Season per quarter	213.33	42.67	256.00	234.17	46.83	281.00	Increased charge	9.77%
Replacement for lost, stolen or destroyed season tickets	8.33	1.67	10.00	9.17	1.83	11.00	Increased charge	10.08%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
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				
<b>Residents Only Parking Permits (off street) (5pm-9am evenings, weekends and bank holidays)</b>								
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	18.75	3.75	22.50	Increased charge	9.78%
Sheerness: Delamark Road car park (residents only)								
Per quarter	12.92	2.58	15.50	14.17	2.83	17.00	Increased charge	9.67%
<b>Residents' Parking Permits (on street)</b>								
Per annum	45.00	0.00	45.00	45.00	0.00	45.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Visitors permit book (10 days) - for resident permit holders only	11.00	0.00	11.00	11.00	0.00	11.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Visitors parking permits (per day) - for resident permit holders only	1.10	0.00	1.10	1.10	0.00	1.10	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Hourly scratchcards (per hour) - for all others	1.10	0.00	1.10	1.10	0.00	1.10	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Hourly scratchcards (per book of 10 hours) - for all others	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Business per annum	45.00	0.00	45.00	45.00	0.00	45.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Nativity Close (exemption permit concession admin fee)	30.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
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	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
<b>Dispensation / Waivers</b>								
Maximum 1 day	12.00	0.00	12.00	12.00	0.00	12.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Maximum 1 week	36.00	0.00	36.00	36.00	0.00	36.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Maximum 2 weeks	45.00	0.00	45.00	45.00	0.00	45.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Maximum 1 month	60.00	0.00	60.00	60.00	0.00	60.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Over 1 month (to a maximum of 3 months) - per month (or part month)	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
Suspension admin fee	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Income controlled under Section 55 RTRA 1984 change proposed	No 0.00%
<b>Sports Facilities</b>								
<b>With changing facilities and showers</b>								
- Senior	64.58	12.92	77.50	71.50	14.30	85.80	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.72%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
- Under 18s	21.50	4.30	25.80	23.70	4.74	28.44	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.23%
- Under 16s & mini soccer	16.17	3.23	19.40	17.80	3.56	21.36	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.08%
<b>With changing facilities only</b>								
- Senior	53.75	10.75	64.50	59.20	11.84	71.04	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.14%
- Under 18s	17.92	3.58	21.50	19.80	3.96	23.76	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.49%
- Under 16s & mini soccer	15.08	3.02	18.10	16.70	3.34	20.04	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.74%
<b>With no facilities</b>								
- Senior	36.75	7.35	44.10	40.50	8.10	48.60	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.20%
- Under 18s	16.00	3.20	19.20	17.70	3.54	21.24	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.63%
- Under 16s & mini soccer	9.83	1.97	11.80	10.90	2.18	13.08	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.89%
If your booking meets all of the rules below, you can choose to save money								
<b>VAT exemption rules</b>								
The booking consists of 10 or more dates. Each booking is for the same sport. Each booking is in the same place. This condition is still met where a different pitch, court or lane is used (or a different number of pitches, courts or lanes), as long as these are at the same location. The gap between each session is at least 1 day but not more than 14 days (for a gap to be at least 1 day, 24 hours must elapse between the start of each booking). The length of the bookings may be different on different dates. There is no exception for gaps greater than 14 days if the facility is closed for any reason (such as the Christmas period). The booking is to be paid for as a whole and there is written evidence to the fact. This must include evidence that payment is to be made in full whether or not the right to use the facility for any specific booking is actually exercised. Provision for a refund given by the provider in the event of the unforeseen non-availability of their facility would not affect this condition.  The facilities are booked out to a school, club, association or an organisation representing affiliated clubs or constituent associations, such as a local league.  The person to whom the facilities are booked has exclusive use of them during the bookings.  If you want your booking to be VAT exempt, you must make sure that it meets all of the rules above. Because the rules are given to us by the government, we cannot change them.  All bookings must be paid for in full before the start of the booking. You cannot change VAT exempt bookings once they have been paid for, so you must make sure the dates and times are right for you.								
<b>Allotments</b>								
Plots of 10 rods & pro rata	45.20	0.00	45.20	65.00	0.00	65.00	Medway £63.25, Maidstone £75.00, Canterbury £86.00	43.81%
Plots of 10 rods & pro rata (OAPs/Disabled)	22.60	0.00	22.60	32.50	0.00	32.50	Pro rated from Full price at 50%	43.81%
<b>King George's Pavilion</b>								
Main hall/tea room (hourly rate) (minimum hire 1 hour)								
Mon-Sun (9am-midnight)	10.30	0.00	10.30	11.40	0.00	11.40	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.68%
Playgroups (per morning)	25.80	0.00	25.80	28.50	0.00	28.50	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.47%
Tea room – for children's parties only (per hour) minimum 1 hour hire	8.30	0.00	8.30	9.20	0.00	9.20	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.84%



	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Caretaking services – set up and clear away: standard tables and/or chairs	6.20	0.00	6.20	<b>6.90</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>6.90</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	11.29%
Refundable deposits	150.00	0.00	150.00	<b>165.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>165.00</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
Bank Holidays, New Year's Eve	Double the standard rate		Double the standard rate					
<b>Cemeteries Burial Fees</b>								
<i>Includes Exclusive Right of Burial for 50 years, Interment, Memorial &amp; Re-inscription Permits</i>								
1 <sup>st</sup> Burial Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	1982.00	0.00	1,982.00	2500.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>2,500.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	26.14%
1 <sup>st</sup> Burial Sheppey and Iwade	1817.00	0.00	1,817.00	2290.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>2,290.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken.	26.03%
1 <sup>st</sup> Burial if no use of previously purchased grave Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	982.00	0.00	982.00	1240.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,240.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	26.27%
1 <sup>st</sup> Burial if no use of previously purchased grave Sheppey	816.00	0.00	816.00	1000.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,000.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	22.55%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Burial Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	816.00	0.00	816.00	1000.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,000.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	22.55%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Burial Sheppey and Iwade	675.00	0.00	675.00	825.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>825.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	22.22%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Burial Sittingbourne, Faversham & Murston	675.00	0.00	675.00	825.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>825.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	22.22%
Extended right of burial extension – 10 years	200.00	0.00	200.00	250.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>250.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	25.00%
Extended right of burial extension – 20 years	400.00	0.00	400.00	500.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>500.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	25.00%
Extended right of burial extension – 30 years	600.00	0.00	600.00	750.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>750.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	25.00%
Extended right of burial extension – 40 years	800.00	0.00	800.00	1000.00	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,000.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	25.00%
<b>Cremated Remains (all sites)</b>								
<i>Includes Exclusive Rights to Burial for 50 years, Interment, Memorial &amp; Re-inscription Permit</i>								
1 <sup>st</sup> Burial	608.80	0.00	608.80	<b>669.70</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>669.70</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.00%
1 <sup>st</sup> Burial (where no use has been made of previously purchased grave)	221.40	0.00	221.40	<b>245.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>245.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.66%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Burial	221.40	0.00	221.40	<b>245.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>245.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.66%
3 <sup>rd</sup> Burial	221.40	0.00	221.40	<b>245.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>245.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.66%
4 <sup>th</sup> Burial	221.40	0.00	221.40	<b>245.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>245.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.66%
Burial of loose ashes	102.50	0.00	102.50	<b>125.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>125.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	21.95%
Extended right of burial extension – 10 years	77.50	0.00	77.50	<b>86.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>86.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.97%
Extended right of burial extension – 20 years	155.00	0.00	155.00	<b>170.50</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>170.50</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.00%
Extended right of burial extension – 30 years	232.40	0.00	232.40	<b>256.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>256.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.15%
Extended right of burial extension – 40 years	309.90	0.00	309.90	<b>340.90</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>340.90</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.00%
<b>Child Burial</b>								
Under 18 years of age	Covered by Children's Funeral Fund for England. Subject to criteria.		Covered by Children's Funeral Fund for England. Subject to criteria.					
<b>Ancillary Services</b>								
Issue of letter of confirmation where deed is lost	63.60	0.00	63.60	<b>70.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>70.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.06%
Use of chapel in Sittingbourne	89.10	0.00	89.10	<b>98.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>98.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	9.99%
Use of chapel in Faversham	120.90	0.00	120.90	<b>133.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>133.00</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.01%
Turfed grave	At cost		At cost					
Transfer of deed ownership	63.50	0.00	63.50	<b>69.80</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>69.80</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	9.92%
Record search & certificate (each grave)	31.70	0.00	31.70	<b>34.90</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>34.90</b>	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.09%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Extra cost of large coffin or casket (measuring 30 inches or more)	164.00	0.00	164.00	180.40	0.00	180.40	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.00%
Exhumation of coffin	1640.00	0.00	1,640.00	2500.00	0.00	2,500.00	Review of local LA prices undertaken	52.44%
Exhumation of cremated remains	304.40	0.00	304.40	335.00	0.00	335.00	Review of local LA prices undertaken	10.05%
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)								
<b>Memorial Bench (Seafronts &amp; Green Space, Excludes Cemeteries)</b>								
Memorial bench with basic installation	675.00	135.00	810.00	900.00	180.00	1,080.00	Proposed increase	33.33%
Memorial bench with concrete installation	854.17	170.83	1,025.00	1130.00	226.00	1,356.00	Proposed increase	32.29%
<b>Travelling Fairs</b>								
Pitch premium for days open to the public only (per day)	930.00	0.00	930.00	1023.00	0.00	1,023.00	Added inflation and rounded up/down.	10.00%
Pitch premium for days open to the public only (per day) Local Operator	310.00	0.00	310.00	341.00	0.00	341.00	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
<b>Use of Council Land – Travelling Fairs</b>								
On site fee payable whether or not open to the public (including arrival and departure days)	60.00	0.00	60.00	66.00	0.00	66.00	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
On site fee payable whether or not open to the public (including arrival and departure days) Local Operator	20.00	0.00	20.00	22.00	0.00	22.00	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
Refundable deposit	615.00	0.00	615.00	676.50	0.00	676.50	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
<b>Use of Council Land – Travelling Shows</b>								
On site fee for days open to the public	206.20	0.00	206.20	226.90	0.00	226.90	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.04%
On site fee payable when not open to the public (including arrival and departure days)	59.30	0.00	59.30	65.30	0.00	65.30	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.12%
Refundable deposit	615.00	0.00	615.00	676.50	0.00	676.50	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
<b>Use of Council Land – Events</b>								
On site fee for small commercial events – day usage of open space	210.00	0.00	210.00	231.00	0.00	231.00	Added inflation and rounded up/down.	10.00%
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	105.00	0.00	105.00	115.50	0.00	115.50	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
On site fee for community/voluntary event – day usage of open space	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	Added inflation and rounded up/down	
Refundable deposit	205.00	0.00	205.00	225.50	0.00	225.50	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
<b>Beach Hut Charges</b>								
Locations now at Minster Leas and Leysdown								
Ground rental – beach hut owned	415.00	0.00	415.00	498.00	0.00	498.00	Increased charge	20.00%
Annual rental	1108.50	221.70	1,330.20	1219.30	243.86	1,463.16	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
Weekly rental	80.00	16.00	96.00	88.00	17.60	105.60	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
Refundable keys deposit	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	No need to increase	0.00%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
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			Currently circa 13k	
<b>Access Over Open Space Licence</b>								
Used for residential properties requiring access over our land to undertake works/deliveries etc.								
Standard fee	67.00	0.00	67.00	<b>73.70</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>73.70</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
<b>Traffic Regulation Order Applications</b>								
<b>On application (yellow lines and changes to existing orders)</b>								
Small (1-30 consultations)	1100.00	0.00	1,100.00	<b>1210.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,210.00</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
Medium (31-50 consultations)	1300.00	0.00	1,300.00	<b>1430.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,430.00</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
Large (50+ consultations)	1600.00	0.00	1,600.00	<b>1760.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,760.00</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
<b>On application (loading bays, single bays)</b>								
Small (1-30 consultations)	520.00	0.00	520.00	<b>575.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>575.00</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.58%
Medium (31-50 consultations)	780.00	0.00	780.00	<b>860.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>860.00</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.26%
Large (50+ consultations)	1040.00	0.00	1,040.00	<b>1150.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,150.00</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.58%
<b>No objections received (yellow lines and changes to existing orders)</b>								
All size consultations	520.00	0.00	520.00	<b>575.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>575.00</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.58%
<b>No objections received (loading bays, single bays)</b>								
All size consultations	260.00	0.00	260.00	<b>286.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>286.00</b>	Added inflation and Increased	10.00%
<b>Objections received (Joint Transportation Board report)</b>								
All size consultations	260.00	0.00	260.00	<b>286.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>286.00</b>	Added inflation and Increased	10.00%
<b>Progress/implement scheme (yellow lines and changes to existing orders)</b>								
Small (1-30 consultations)	520.00	0.00	520.00	<b>575.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>575.00</b>	Added inflation and Increased	10.58%
Medium (31-50 consultations)	620.00	0.00	620.00	<b>685.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>685.00</b>	Added inflation and Increased	10.48%
Large (50+ consultations)	730.00	0.00	730.00	<b>810.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>810.00</b>	Added inflation and Increased	10.96%
<b>Progress/implement scheme (loading bays, single bays)</b>								
Small (1-30 consultations)	110.00	0.00	110.00	<b>122.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>122.00</b>	Added inflation and Increased	10.91%
Medium (31-50 consultations)	110.00	0.00	110.00	<b>122.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>122.00</b>	Added inflation and Increased	10.91%
Large (50+ consultations)	110.00	0.00	110.00	<b>122.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>122.00</b>	Added inflation and Increased	10.91%
Inclusion of new or amended waiting restrictions into Traffic Regulation Order	1100.00	0.00	1,100.00	<b>1210.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>1,210.00</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
<b>White Bar Markings</b>								
Installation of new white bar marking across vehicle crossing	128.17	25.63	153.80	<b>141.00</b>	<b>28.20</b>	<b>169.20</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.01%
Re-painting existing white bar marking across vehicle crossing	106.75	21.35	128.10	<b>118.00</b>	<b>23.60</b>	<b>141.60</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.54%
<b>Installation of Advisory Bays on Private Lane (e.g. Disabled Bay in Housing Association Car Park)</b>								
Installation of Advisory Parking Bay on Private Land	100.00	0.00	100.00	<b>110.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>110.00</b>	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Street Naming &amp; Numbering</b>								
Changing or requesting new property	75.00	0.00	75.00	82.50	0.00	82.50	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
New street name	150.00	0.00	150.00	165.00	0.00	165.00	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
New street developments (4 or more properties/units) per property/unit with minimum charge of £180	50.00	0.00	50.00	55.00	0.00	55.00	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
Provision of historical information relating to street naming & numbering	30.00	0.00	30.00	33.00	0.00	33.00	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
Changing street name	700.00	0.00	700.00	770.00	0.00	770.00	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.00%
<b>Harbour Mooring Fees</b>								
Faversham Town Quay per night	7.75	1.55	9.30	8.60	1.72	10.32	Added inflation and rounded up/down	10.97%
<b>Garden Waste Subscription (brown bins – domestic)</b>								
Fortnightly collection of garden waste (excluding Christmas where service is suspended for 2 weeks). Fee includes hire of bin. Price is per annum	45.00	0.00	45.00	55.00	0.00	55.00	Proposed increase.	22.22%
<b>Bulky Waste Collections</b>								
Charge covers up to 4 bulky items. If white goods, charge covers only one item.	26.00	0.00	26.00	30.00	0.00	30.00	Higher inflation added due to waste contract indexation and amendment to simplify criteria including TV's and microwaves no longer being a separate chargeable item and now included in the four items. Ashford BC proposing similar amendments.	15.38%
<b>Wheeled Bins</b>								
Wheeled bins 140 litre	41.10	0.00	41.10	45.50	0.00	45.50	These are the prices for bins for new developments. These bins are provided and paid by the developer prior to new residents moving in.	10.71%
Wheeled bins 180 litre	46.60	0.00	46.60	51.50	0.00	51.50	As above	10.52%
Wheeled bins 240 litre	46.60	0.00	46.60	51.50	0.00	51.50	As above	10.52%
Wheeled bins 1,100 litre	451.80	0.00	451.80	497.00	0.00	497.00	As above	10.00%
Food waste container 23 litre	10.80	0.00	10.80	11.90	0.00	11.90	As above	10.19%
Kitchen caddy 5 litre	5.40	0.00	5.40	5.95	0.00	5.95	As above	10.19%
Replacement domestic 180 litre or 240 litre refuse or recycling bin if damaged, lost or stolen (unless damaged during emptying by contractor). This fee includes delivery of new bin and removal/ disposal of old bin.	30.00	0.00	30.00	30.00	0.00	30.00	The nominal charge has been effective at reducing demand for replacment bins. Therefore it is recommended to keep this at £30 for 2023/24	0.00%
Note: Wheeled bins are non-vatable when supplied directly to a householder for								
<b>Additional Litter Bins (each)</b>								
145 litre galvanised (fee does not include emptying the bin)	375.00	75.00	450.00	495.00	99.00	594.00	Increased charge	32.00%
<b>Bin Store Clearance</b>								
Per occasion	129.90	0.00	129.90	175.00	0.00	175.00	These businesses are able to select which contractor they choose to use. The uplift reflects the updated contractor costs and council administration duties.	34.72%
<b>Wheeled Bins for Community Events</b>								

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Provision of wheeled bins for events (cost per occasion) – delivery/ collection charge	85.67	17.13	102.80	113.50	0.00	113.50	Increased charge	10.41%
Wheeled bin hire (cost per bin)	10.83	2.17	13.00	14.30	0.00	14.30	Increased charge	10.00%
Servicing of bins during event	Price on application		Price on application					
<b>Radar Key for Disabled Toilets</b>								
Fee	3.00	0.00	3.00	3.00	0.00	3.00	Very few sold.	0.00%
<b>Environmental – Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN)</b>								
Fly tipping*	400.00	0.00	400.00	400.00	0.00	400.00	Already set at maximum permitted.	0.00%
Householders duty of care – lack of care in disposal of waste*	400.00	0.00	400.00	400.00	0.00	400.00	Already set at maximum permitted.	0.00%
Refuse left out inappropriately	80.00	0.00	80.00	80.00	0.00	80.00	Already set at maximum permitted.	0.00%
Littering and graffiti	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	Already set at maximum permitted.	0.00%
Fly posting	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	Already set at maximum permitted.	0.00%
Waste carrier offences	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	Already set at maximum permitted.	0.00%
Failure to comply with a Community Protection Notice	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Already set at maximum permitted.	0.00%
Breach of any Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Already set at maximum permitted.	0.00%
*Reduced 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								
<b>Animal Welfare Licensing</b>								
The Animal Welfare (Licensing of Activities Involving Animals) (England) Regulations								
Part A - Covers the application and authorisation process.								
Part B - Is the cost for administering and enforcing the legislative framework.								
<b>Boarding in Kennels for Dogs, Boarding for Cats, Day Care for Dogs, Home Breeding Dogs and Selling Animals as Pets</b>								
(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.)								
Part A <sup>1</sup>	217.60	0.00	217.60	239.40	0.00	239.40	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.02%
Part B								
1 Star and 2 Star establishments - 1 year licence	174.30	0.00	174.30	192.00	0.00	192.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.15%
3 Star and 4 Star establishments - 2 year licence	290.80	0.00	290.80	320.00	0.00	320.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.04%
5 Star establishments - 3 year licence	407.30	0.00	407.30	449.00	0.00	449.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.24%
<b>Hiring of Horses</b>								
Part A <sup>1</sup>	217.60	0.00	217.60	239.40	0.00	239.40	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.02%
Part B								
1 Star and 2 Star establishments - 1 year licence <sup>3</sup>	174.30	0.00	174.30	192.00	0.00	192.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.15%
3 Star and 4 Star establishments - 2 year licence <sup>2</sup>	290.80	0.00	290.80	320.00	0.00	320.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.04%
5 Star establishments - 3 year licence <sup>2</sup>	407.30	0.00	407.30	449.00	0.00	449.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.24%
<b>Keeping or Training Animals for Exhibition</b>								
Part A								

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
For a 3 year licence <sup>1</sup>	217.60	0.00	217.60	240.00	0.00	240.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.29%
<b>Part B</b>								
For a 3 year licence <sup>3</sup>	407.30	0.00	407.30	449.00	0.00	449.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.24%
<b>Dangerous Wild Animal Licence</b>								
<b>Part A</b>								
For a 2 year licence <sup>1</sup>	217.60	0.00	217.60	239.50	0.00	239.50	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.06%
<b>Part B</b>								
For a 2 year licence <sup>3</sup>	290.80	0.00	290.80	320.00	0.00	320.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.04%
<b>Zoo Licence</b>								
(Please discuss your application with the Animal Control Officer prior to applying for a licence.)								
<b>Part A</b>								
For a 4 year licence <sup>2</sup>	979.60	0.00	979.60	1078.00	0.00	1,078.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.04%
<b>Part B</b>								
For a 4 year licence <sup>3</sup>	541.80	0.00	541.80	596.00	0.00	596.00	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.00%
<sup>1</sup> Plus vet fees based upon an hourly rate (including travel time)								
<sup>2</sup> Plus vet fees for an initial inspection based upon an hourly rate (including travel time)								
<sup>3</sup> Plus annual vet fees based upon an hourly rate (including travel time)								
<b>Other Charges</b>								
Licence renewals	charged as new applications			charged as new applications				
Request for re-inspection (for all licences) (plus vet fees if applicable)	92.80	0.00	92.80	102.10	0.00	102.10	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.02%
<b>Requests for Variations</b>								
Administration amendment only	35.10	0.00	35.10	38.70	0.00	38.70	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.26%
Inspector visit (if required) (additional to administration charge)	57.70	0.00	57.70	63.50	0.00	63.50	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.05%
Vet fees	hourly rate plus travel time			hourly rate plus travel time				
<b>Stray Dog Collection</b>								
Statutory charge as per legislation	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	This fee is dictated by legislation.	0.00%
Additional fee for collecting/returning stray dogs	35.90	0.00	35.90	39.50	0.00	39.50	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.03%
Out of hours additional fee for collecting/ returning stray dogs	46.10	0.00	46.10	50.80	0.00	50.80	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.20%
Transport fee for returning dog to owner after a kennel stay	30.80	0.00	30.80	33.90	0.00	33.90	Increased charge, rounded up to the next 10p	10.06%
<b>Pest Control</b>								
Rats (per visit) with a minimum of 2 visits required	25.58	5.12	30.70	28.00	5.60	33.60	These figures are set at a competitive rate and need to remain consistent with MBC as we share a contractor.	9.45%
Mice (per visit) with a minimum of 2 visits required	25.58	5.12	30.70	28.00	5.60	33.60	As above	9.45%
Wasps per nest	52.17	10.43	62.60	57.17	11.43	68.60	As above	9.59%
Wasps per additional nest	9.42	1.88	11.30	10.33	2.07	12.40	As above	9.70%
Fleas and other household pests (up to 6 rooms)	60.58	12.12	72.70	66.33	13.27	79.60	As above	9.49%
Each additional room (up to 4)	9.42	1.88	11.30	10.33	2.07	12.40	As above	9.70%
Cockroaches in domestic premises (up to 6 rooms)	60.58	12.12	72.70	66.33	13.27	79.60	As above	9.49%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Each additional room (up to 4)	9.42	1.88	11.30	10.33	2.07	12.40	As above	9.70%
Ants, insects etc.	26.50	5.30	31.80	29.00	5.80	34.80	As above	9.43%
Bed bugs (up to 4 bedroom house). Anything larger will require a survey	244.50	48.90	293.40	267.50	53.50	321.00	As above	9.41%
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				
For treatments outside of normal office hours (hourly rate)	As above			As above				
Woodworm, birds, death watch beetle, foxes, moles & squirrels	Price on application (surveys required)			Price on application (surveys required)				
<b>Environmental Health (T Beattie)</b>								
<b>Food Export Certificate</b>								
For businesses already in receipt of Export Health Certificate (EHC) issued by Swale BC	124.00	0.00	124.00	137.00	0.00	137.00	Service currently suspended.	10.48%
For new businesses applying for export Certificates	257.00	0.00	257.00	284.00	0.00	284.00	as above	10.51%
Admin charge for changes to certificate	26.00	0.00	26.00	27.00	0.00	27.00	as above	3.85%
Sampling associated with Export Health Certificates (per hour)	55.00	11.00	66.00	65.83	13.17	79.00	Revision of hourly rate costs	19.69%
EHIC for transit to destination country	36.00	0.00	36.00	39.60	0.00	39.60	Service currently suspended.	10.00%
<b>Voluntary Surrender of Food</b>								
Charge for food unfit for human consumption or unsuitable for sale	210.00	0.00	210.00	231.00	0.00	231.00	Minimal requests. None issued in 2021/22 or to date in 22/23.	10.00%
<b>Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH) Level 2 Award Training in Food Safety in Catering</b>								
Fee charged to food handlers for training in food hygiene	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	
<b>Food Hygiene Rating Scheme</b>								
Fee to food businesses for re-inspection and re-scoring	168.00	0.00	168.00	185.00	0.00	185.00	Increased charge	10.12%
<b>Food Business Advice</b>								
Food hygiene advice (per hour)	55.00	11.00	66.00	65.83	13.17	79.00	Revision of hourly rate costs	19.69%
<b>Registration Fee under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provision) Act</b>								
(Relates to establishments offering cosmetic piercing, electrolysis, tattooing or acupuncture)								
Standard fee	328.00	0.00	328.00	338.00	0.00	338.00	Reduced increase due to process changes and reduction on administration time.	3.05%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Supplementary treatment registration fee (for additional beauty treatment registration inspection either at or after initial registration)	56.00	0.00	56.00	61.70	0.00	61.70	Increased charge	10.18%
Tattoo and Beauty Treatment Events (falling within the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act)	205.00	0.00	205.00	226.00	0.00	226.00	Increased charge	10.24%
Tattoo and Beauty Treatment Event charge for Artists (new artist registrations)	25.00	0.00	25.00	27.50	0.00	27.50	Increased charge	10.00%
<b>Requests for Environmental Information (e.g. Contaminated land)</b>								
Charge per hour	20.83	4.17	25.00	23.00	4.60	27.60	fee increase as none for service over last 7 years	10.42%
<b>Requests for Enhanced Environmental Information for Contaminated Land and Professional Opinion</b>								
Charge per hour	55.00	11.00	66.00	65.83	13.17	79.00	Revision of hourly rate costs	19.69%
Charges for photocopying apply at 10p per page plus postage								
<b>Pre-Application Consultation for Environmental Health Advice for Acoustics, Air Quality, Contaminated Land Assessments</b>								
Charge per hour	55.00	11.00	66.00	65.83	13.17	79.00	as above	19.69%
<b>Private Water Supplies Regulations 2016 &amp; 2018 Amendments</b>								
Risk assessment (hourly rate)	55.00	11.00	66.00	65.83	13.17	79.00	as above	19.69%
Sampling (hourly rate)	55.00	11.00	66.00	65.83	13.17	79.00	as above	19.69%
Investigation (hourly rate)	55.00	11.00	66.00	65.83	13.17	79.00	as above	19.69%
Derogation request	55.00	11.00	66.00	65.83	13.17	79.00	As above	19.69%
Analysis – Group A	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		
Analysis – Group B	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		
Analysis – audit monitoring	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a		
<b>Housing &amp; Community Services</b>								
<b>(S Curtis)</b>								
<b>Taxi Licensing</b>								
Vehicle licence for 1 year	290.00	0.00	290.00	290.00	0.00	290.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Private Hire operator licence valid for 5 years	430.00	0.00	430.00	430.00	0.00	430.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Licence and plate for temporary hire vehicle	40.00	0.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Knowledge test – initial	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Knowledge test – re-sit	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
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	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Upgrade Private Hire Drivers Badge to a Dual Badge	35.00	0.00	35.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Dual / Private Hire Drivers Badge for 3 years	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%



	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Non-refundable plate fee (plate number only issued once)	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Replacement plate	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Change of address	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Change of ownership licensed vehicle	35.00	0.00	35.00	35.00	0.00	35.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Dual / Private Hire Drivers badge replacement	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Replacement paper licence certificate	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
Change of vehicle on an existing plate	80.00	0.00	80.00	80.00	0.00	80.00	No increase recommended this year due to other policy changes that will impact upon taxi drivers.	0.00%
<b>Street Trading Licensing</b>								
Annual consents (not events)	130.00	0.00	130.00	143.00	0.00	143.00	10% inflationary increase applied	10.00%
6 month consents (not events)	65.00	0.00	65.00	71.50	0.00	71.50	10% inflationary increase applied	10.00%
One off consent	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	To be decided at Licensing Committee of 15th February 2023	0.00%
Assistants Badge	15.00	0.00	15.00	16.50	0.00	16.50	10% inflationary increase applied	10.00%
<b>Gambling Licensing</b>								
<b>New Applications/Applications for Provisional Statement</b>								
Small casino	8000.00	0.00	8,000.00	8000.00	0.00	8,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £8,000.	0.00%
Large casino	10000.00	0.00	10,000.00	10000.00	0.00	10,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £10,000.	0.00%
Bingo club	2449.00	0.00	2,449.00	3500.00	0.00	3,500.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £3,500.	42.92%
Betting premises	3000.00	0.00	3,000.00	3000.00	0.00	3,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £3,000.	0.00%
Tracks	2500.00	0.00	2,500.00	2500.00	0.00	2,500.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £2,500.	0.00%
Family entertainment centres	1913.00	0.00	1,913.00	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £2,000.	4.55%
Adult gaming centre	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £2,000	0.00%
Temporary use notice	263.00	0.00	263.00	500.00	0.00	500.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £500.	90.11%
<b>Licence Applications (Provisional Statement Holders)</b>								
Small casino	3000.00	0.00	3,000.00	3000.00	0.00	3,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £3,000.	0.00%
Large casino	5000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5000.00	0.00	5,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £5,000.	0.00%
Bingo club	1010.60	0.00	1,010.60	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £1,200.	18.74%
Betting premises	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200.	0.00%
Tracks	950.00	0.00	950.00	950.00	0.00	950.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £950.	0.00%
Family entertainment centre	840.40	0.00	840.40	950.00	0.00	950.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £950.	13.04%
Adult gaming centre	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200.	0.00%
<b>Annual Fee</b>								
Small casino	5000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5000.00	0.00	5,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £5,000.	0.00%
Large casino	10000.00	0.00	10,000.00	10000.00	0.00	10,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £10,000.	0.00%
Bingo club	758.00	0.00	758.00	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £1,000.	31.93%
Betting premises	600.00	0.00	600.00	600.00	0.00	600.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £600.	0.00%
Tracks	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,000.	0.00%
Family entertainment centres	660.00	0.00	660.00	750.00	0.00	750.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £750.	13.64%
Adult gaming centre	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,000.	0.00%
<b>Application to Vary</b>								
Small casino	4000.00	0.00	4,000.00	4000.00	0.00	4,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £4,000.	0.00%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Large casino	5000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5000.00	0.00	5,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £5,000.	0.00%
Bingo club	1670.00	0.00	1,670.00	1750.00	0.00	1,750.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £1,750.	4.79%
Betting premises	1500.00	0.00	1,500.00	1500.00	0.00	1,500.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,500.	0.00%
Tracks	1250.00	0.00	1,250.00	1250.00	0.00	1,250.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,250.	0.00%
Family entertainment centres	866.00	0.00	866.00	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £1,000.	15.47%
Adult gaming centre	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,000.	0.00%
Copy licence	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £25.	0.00%
Notification of change	36.00	0.00	36.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £50.	38.89%
<b>Application to Transfer a Licence</b>								
Small casino	1800.00	0.00	1,800.00	1800.00	0.00	1,800.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,800.	0.00%
Large casino	2150.00	0.00	2,150.00	2150.00	0.00	2,150.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £2,150.	0.00%
Bingo club	1010.60	0.00	1,010.60	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £1,200.	18.74%
Betting premises	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200.	0.00%
Tracks	950.00	0.00	950.00	950.00	0.00	950.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £950.	0.00%
Family entertainment centres	928.00	0.00	928.00	950.00	0.00	950.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £950.	2.37%
Adult gaming centre	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200.	0.00%
<b>Application for Re-instatement</b>								
Small casino	1800.00	0.00	1,800.00	1800.00	0.00	1,800.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,800.	0.00%
Large casino	2150.00	0.00	2,150.00	2150.00	0.00	2,150.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £2,150.	0.00%
Bingo club	1010.60	0.00	1,010.60	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £1,200.	18.74%
Betting premises	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200.	0.00%
Tracks	950.00	0.00	950.00	950.00	0.00	950.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £950.	0.00%
Family entertainment centres	928.00	0.00	928.00	950.00	0.00	950.00	Increased to Statutory Maximum £950.	2.37%
Adult gaming centre	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	1200.00	0.00	1,200.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum £1,200.	0.00%
<b>Sex Establishment Licensing (sex shop, sex cinema and sex encounter venue)</b>								
Application fee and 1 <sup>st</sup> licence	4522.00	0.00	4,522.00	4974.00	0.00	4,974.00	10% inflationary increase applied.	10.00%
Annual licence renewal	701.20	0.00	701.20	772.00	0.00	772.00	As above. Rounded up	10.10%
Application to vary	809.40	0.00	809.40	891.00	0.00	891.00	As above. Rounded down	10.08%
Transfer of licence	31.00	0.00	31.00	34.10	0.00	34.10	As above. Rounded up	10.00%
Duplicate licence	15.50	0.00	15.50	17.10	0.00	17.10	As above. Rounded down	10.32%
<b>Scrap Metal Dealers Licensing</b>								
Site licence	484.60	0.00	484.60	535.00	0.00	535.00	10% inflationary increase applied. Rounded down	10.40%
Site licence renewal	464.00	0.00	464.00	511.00	0.00	511.00	As above. Rounded down	10.13%
Collections licence, grant or renewal	226.80	0.00	226.80	250.00	0.00	250.00	As above. Rounded up	10.23%
Variation – collector to site	77.40	0.00	77.40	86.00	0.00	86.00	As above. Rounded up	11.11%
Variation – site to collector	56.70	0.00	56.70	63.00	0.00	63.00	As above. Rounded up	11.11%
Variation (minor administration, such as change of address)	36.10	0.00	36.10	40.00	0.00	40.00	As above. Rounded up	10.80%
Change of site manager	108.20	0.00	108.20	120.00	0.00	120.00	As above. Rounded up	10.91%
<b>Pleasure Boat Licence</b>								
Licence	149.60	0.00	149.60	165.00	0.00	165.00	10% inflationary increase applied. Rounded up	10.29%
<b>Pavement Licence</b>								
Application Fee	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Discretionary to a Statutory Maximum of £100.	0.00%
<b>CCTV Services (S Curtis)</b>								
<b>Swale Radio Link Annual Charge</b>								
Charities	N/A	N/A	N/A	150.00	30.00	180.00	Scheme only introduced in August 22	

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Independent Businesses	N/A	N/A	N/A	200.00	40.00	240.00	Scheme only introduced in August 22	
Large Organisation	N/A	N/A	N/A	350.00	70.00	420.00	Scheme only introduced in August 22	
<b>Third Party Service Charges</b>								
Insurance Company Footage Review	N/A	N/A	N/A	70.00	14.00	84.00	New charges agreed to be introduced by Communities Committee on 07/09/22	
CCTV Services which may include design, installation, monitoring, maintenance, upgrades and decommissioning	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	Charges to be determined by Head Housing/Communities and Director of Resources based upon service requested by third party	
<b>Legal</b>								
<b>(C. Valmond)</b>								
<b>Legal Charges for Third Parties</b>								
Hourly rate (no VAT)	225.00	0.00	225.00	225.00	0.00	225.00	No change	0.00%
Hourly rate (when VAT applicable)	225.00	45.00	270.00	225.00	45.00	270.00	No change	0.00%
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								
<b>Property</b>								
<b>J. Johnson</b>								
<b>Room Hire of Swale House</b>								
<b>Non-Commercial</b>								
Council chamber (half day)	75.00	15.00	90.00	82.50	16.50	99.00	Nearest whole or half-pound amount to CPI increase applied.	10.00%
Council chamber (full day)	125.00	25.00	150.00	137.50	27.50	165.00	Process as above	10.00%
Committee room (half day)	50.00	10.00	60.00	55.00	11.00	66.00	Process as above	10.00%
Committee room (full day)	75.00	15.00	90.00	82.50	16.50	99.00	Process as above	10.00%
Assembly room (half day)	37.50	7.50	45.00	41.25	8.25	49.50	Process as above	10.00%
Assembly room (full day)	62.50	12.50	75.00	68.80	13.76	82.56	Process as above	10.08%
<b>Commercial</b>								
Council chamber (half day)	150.00	30.00	180.00	165.00	33.00	198.00	Process as above	10.00%
Council chamber (full day)	250.00	50.00	300.00	275.00	55.00	330.00	Process as above	10.00%
Committee room (half day)	100.00	20.00	120.00	110.00	22.00	132.00	Process as above	10.00%
Committee room (full day)	150.00	30.00	180.00	165.00	33.00	198.00	Process as above	10.00%
Assembly room (half day)	75.00	15.00	90.00	82.50	16.50	99.00	Process as above	10.00%
Assembly room (full day)	125.00	25.00	150.00	137.50	27.50	165.00	Process as above	10.00%
<b>Landlord's Consent Fee</b>								
Assignments, subletting, charging *	300.00	60.00	360.00	400.00	80.00	480.00	To make the fee more representative of actual cost	33.33%
Alterations *	300.00	60.00	360.00	400.00	80.00	480.00	To make the fee more representative of actual cost	33.33%
Commercial wayleaves / easements*	N/A	N/A	N/A	875.00	175.00	1,050.00	New charge to reflect resources required.	N/A
* VAT is only applicable if the rent is subject to VAT.								

#### FEES AND CHARGES SET NATIONALLY BY THE GOVERNMENT

##### Housing (C. Hudson)

##### Houses in Multiple Occupation Licensing

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b><i>New Application</i></b>								
Non-accredited landlord	724.30	0.00	724.30	<b>792.40</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>792.40</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in processing applications; costs reflect officer time and relevant oncosts	9.40%
Accredited landlord	602.00	0.00	602.00	<b>673.50</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>673.50</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in processing applications; costs reflect officer time and relevant oncosts and 15 % off for being accredited	11.88%
<b><i>Renewal of Application</i></b>								

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Non-accredited landlord	567.70	0.00	567.70	<b>621.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>621.00</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in processing applications; costs reflect officer time and relevant oncosts	9.39%
Accredited landlord	482.50	0.00	482.50	<b>528.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>528.00</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in processing applications; costs reflect officer time and relevant oncosts and 15 % off for being accredited	9.43%
<b>Mobile Home Site Licence Fee</b>								
<b>New Mobile Home Site Licence Application Fee</b>								
1-5 mobile homes on site	156.80	0.00	156.80	<b>171.60</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>171.60</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in managing and processing licence applications;	9.44%
6-24 mobile homes on site	215.20	0.00	215.20	<b>235.50</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>235.50</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in managing and processing licence applications;	9.43%
25-99 mobile homes on site	273.70	0.00	273.70	<b>299.50</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>299.50</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in managing and processing licence applications;	9.43%
100+ mobile homes on site	314.70	0.00	314.70	<b>344.30</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>344.30</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in managing and processing licence applications;	9.41%
<b>Annual Mobile Home Site Inspection Fee</b>								
Relevant sites occupied solely by owners and family members	No charge		<b>No charge</b>		These sites once set up cause no additional work to the council			
1-5 mobile homes on site	No charge		<b>No charge</b>		These sites once set up cause no additional work to the council			
6-24 mobile homes on site	176.30	0.00	176.30	<b>192.90</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>192.90</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in inspecting site and recovery of relevant administration costs, any excess charges would need to be taken into account in the following year and fees would need to be reduced or increased accordingly.	<b>9.42%</b>
25-99 mobile homes on site	211.20	0.00	211.20	<b>231.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>231.00</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in inspecting site and recovery of relevant administration costs, any excess charges would need to be taken into account in the following year and fees would need to be reduced or increased accordingly.	<b>9.38%</b>
100+ mobile homes on site	254.90	0.00	254.90	<b>278.90</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>278.90</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in inspecting site and recovery of relevant administration costs, any excess charges would need to be taken into account in the following year and fees would need to be reduced or increased accordingly.	9.42%
<b>Fee to Transfer or Amend Mobile Home Site Licence</b>								
Transfer or amend mobile home site licence	132.60	0.00	132.60	<b>145.10</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>145.10</b>	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in inspecting site and recovery of relevant administration costs, any excess charges would need to be taken into account in the following year and fees would need to be reduced or increased accordingly.	9.43%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Fee for the Deposit of Mobile Home Site Rules</b>								
Deposit of mobile home site rules	186.90	0.00	186.90	204.50	0.00	204.50	Statute only allows for recovery of costs involved in inspecting site and recovery of relevant administration costs, any excess charges would need to be taken into account in the following year and fees would need to be reduced or increased accordingly.	9.42%
<b>Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Regulations 2015</b>								
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	5000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5000.00	0.00	5,000.00	maximum fine set by statute	0.00%
<b>The Redress Scheme for Lettings Agency Work &amp; Management Work Order 2014</b>								
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	5000.00	0.00	5,000.00	5000.00	0.00	5,000.00	maximum fine set by statute	0.00%
<b>Non-Compliance with Minimum Energy Standards in Private Rented Properties</b>								
<b>Breaching the ban on letting a property with an F or G rating for less than 3 months</b>								
<b>(Statutory Maximum £2,000)</b>								
First offence £1,000 (or £750 if paid within 21 days)	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	maximum fine set by statute	0.00%
All other offences £2,000 (or £1,500 if paid within 21 days)	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	maximum fine set by statute	0.00%
<b>Breaching the ban on letting a property with an F or G rating for more than three months</b>								
<b>(Statutory Maximum £4,000)</b>								
First offence £2,000 (or £1,500 if paid within 21 days)	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	maximum fine set by statute	0.00%
All other offences £4,000 (or £3,000 if paid within 21 days)	4000.00	0.00	4,000.00	4000.00	0.00	4,000.00	maximum fine set by statute	0.00%
<b>Registering false or misleading information on the Private Rented Sector Exemptions Register</b>								

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>(Statutory Maximum £1,000)</b>								
First offence £500 (or £375 if paid within 21 days)	500.00	0.00	500.00	500.00	0.00	500.00	maximum fine set by statute	0.00%
All other offences £2,000 (or £1,500 if paid within 21 days)	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	maximum fine set by statute	0.00%
<b>Failing to provide information to the council demanded by a Compliance Notice</b>								
<b>(Statutory Maximum £2,000)</b>								
First offence £1,000 (or £750 if paid within 21 days)	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	1000.00	0.00	1,000.00	maximum fine set by statute	0.00%
All other offences £2,000 (or £1,500 if paid within 21 days)	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	2000.00	0.00	2,000.00	maximum fine set by statute	0.00%
Planning (Flo Churchill)								
Planning Fees	<a href="https://ecab.planningportal.co.uk/uploads/english_application_fees.pdf">The full details of current Planning fees can be found on https://ecab.planningportal.co.uk/uploads/english_application_fees.pdf</a>							
Environmental Health								
(T Beattie)								
<b>Public Health Control of Diseases Act 1984</b>								
Various Fixed Penalty Notices (FPN's) issues under the Coronavirus legislation								
<b>Pollution Prevention Control (PPC)</b>								
<b>A2 Process Application Fees</b>								
A2 New application	3363.00	0.00	3,363.00	3363.00	0.00	3,363.00	Statutory charges	0.00%
Additional fee for operating without a permit (A2 and Standard Part B)	1188.00	0.00	1,188.00	1188.00	0.00	1,188.00	As above	0.00%
<b>A2 Process Subsistence Fees</b>								
A2 Low	1447.00	0.00	1,447.00	1447.00	0.00	1,447.00	As above	0.00%
A2 Medium	1610.00	0.00	1,610.00	1610.00	0.00	1,610.00	As above	0.00%
A2 High	1747.00	0.00	1,747.00	1747.00	0.00	1,747.00	As above	0.00%
A2 Low (E-PRTR)	1551.00	0.00	1,551.00	1551.00	0.00	1,551.00	As above	0.00%
A2 Medium (E-PRTR)	1715.00	0.00	1,715.00	1715.00	0.00	1,715.00	As above	0.00%
A3 High (E-PRTR)	2438.00	0.00	2,438.00	2438.00	0.00	2,438.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Part B Process Application Fees</b>								
Part B (Standard Process)	1650.00	0.00	1,650.00	1650.00	0.00	1,650.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Part B Standard Process Subsistence Fees</b>								
Part B Subsistence low	772.00	0.00	772.00	772.00	0.00	772.00	As above	0.00%
Part B Subsistence medium	1161.00	0.00	1,161.00	1161.00	0.00	1,161.00	As above	0.00%
Part B Subsistence high	1747.00	0.00	1,747.00	1747.00	0.00	1,747.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Part B Reduced Fee Application Fees (including car re-sprayers)</b>								
Reduced fee application fee	362.00	0.00	362.00	362.00	0.00	362.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Part B Reduced Fee Subsistence Fees (including car re-sprayers)</b>								
Reduced fee subsistence low	228.00	0.00	228.00	228.00	0.00	228.00	As above	0.00%
Reduced fee subsistence medium	365.00	0.00	365.00	365.00	0.00	365.00	As above	0.00%
Reduced fee subsistence high	548.00	0.00	548.00	548.00	0.00	548.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Petrol Vapour Recovery I and Dry Cleaners Application Fees</b>								
PVR I & DC New Application	155.00	0.00	155.00	155.00	0.00	155.00	As above	0.00%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Petrol Vapour Recovery I and Dry Cleaners Subsistence Fees</b>								
PVR I and DC subsistence fees low	79.00	0.00	79.00	79.00	0.00	79.00	As above	0.00%
PVR I and DC subsistence fees medium	158.00	0.00	158.00	158.00	0.00	158.00	As above	0.00%
PVR I and DC subsistence fees high	237.00	0.00	237.00	237.00	0.00	237.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Petrol Vapour Recovery I &amp; II Combined Application Fees</b>								
PVR I & II Application Fees	257.00	0.00	257.00	257.00	0.00	257.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Petrol Vapour Recovery I &amp; II Combined Subsistence Fees</b>								
PVR I & II Subsistence low	113.00	0.00	113.00	113.00	0.00	113.00	As above	0.00%
PVR I & II Subsistence medium	226.00	0.00	226.00	226.00	0.00	226.00	As above	0.00%
PVR I & II Subsistence high	341.00	0.00	341.00	341.00	0.00	341.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Part B Mobile Concrete Crusher Plant – Application Fee per Number of Permits</b>								
1 – 2	1650.00	0.00	1,650.00	1650.00	0.00	1,650.00	As above	0.00%
3 – 7	985.00	0.00	985.00	985.00	0.00	985.00	As above	0.00%
8 or more	498.00	0.00	498.00	498.00	0.00	498.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Part B Mobile Concrete Crusher Plant – Subsistence Fee per Number of Permits</b>								
1 – 2 Low	626.00	0.00	626.00	626.00	0.00	626.00	As above	0.00%
1 – 2 Medium	1034.00	0.00	1,034.00	1034.00	0.00	1,034.00	As above	0.00%
1 – 2 High	1551.00	0.00	1,551.00	1551.00	0.00	1,551.00	As above	0.00%
3 – 7 Low	385.00	0.00	385.00	385.00	0.00	385.00	As above	0.00%
3 – 7 Medium	617.00	0.00	617.00	617.00	0.00	617.00	As above	0.00%
3 – 7 High	924.00	0.00	924.00	924.00	0.00	924.00	As above	0.00%
8 or over Low	198.00	0.00	198.00	198.00	0.00	198.00	As above	0.00%
8 or over Medium	316.00	0.00	316.00	316.00	0.00	316.00	As above	0.00%
8 or over High	473.00	0.00	473.00	473.00	0.00	473.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Late Payment of Subsistence Fee</b>								
All Permits	52.00	0.00	52.00	52.00	0.00	52.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Operating without a Permit Fee</b>								
Reduced Fee Activities	71.00	0.00	71.00	71.00	0.00	71.00	As above	0.00%
Standard Part B and A2	1188.00	0.00	1,188.00	1188.00	0.00	1,188.00	As above	0.00%
<b>Electoral Services (D Clifford)</b>								
<b>Purchase of Electoral Register</b>								
<b>Full Register and the Notices of Alteration</b>								
Hard copies (standard charge) plus charge (a) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	Statutory charges.	0.00%
(a) charge for each 1,000 entries	5.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00	As above.	0.00%
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (b) below	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	As above.	0.00%
(b) charge for each 1,000 entries	1.50	0.00	1.50	1.50	0.00	1.50	As above.	0.00%
<b>List of Overseas Electors</b>								
Hard copies (standard charge) plus charge (c) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.	0.00%
(c) charge per 100 entries	5.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00	As above.	0.00%
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (d) below	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	As above.	0.00%
(d) charge per 100 entries	1.50	0.00	1.50	1.50	0.00	1.50	As above.	0.00%



	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Open (Edited) Register</b>								
<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.	0.00%
(e) charge per 1,000 entries	5.00	0.00	5.00	5.00	0.00	5.00	As above.	0.00%
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (f) below	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	As above.	0.00%
(f) charge per 1,000 entries	1.50	0.00	1.50	1.50	0.00	1.50	As above.	0.00%
<b>Marked Polling Station and Absent Voter Registers</b>								
Hard copies (standard charge) plus charge (g) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.	0.00%
(g) charge per 1,000 entries	2.00	0.00	2.00	2.00	0.00	2.00	As above.	0.00%
Data format (standard charge) plus charge (h) below	10.00	0.00	10.00	10.00	0.00	10.00	As above.	0.00%
(h) charge per 1,000 entries	1.00	0.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	1.00	As above.	0.00%
<b>Housing and Community Services</b>								
<b>Curtis</b>								
<b>Liquor Licensing</b>								
<b>Main Application Fees for Premises and Personal Liquor Licensing</b>								
Rateable Value B and A	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Rateable Value B and B	190.00	0.00	190.00	190.00	0.00	190.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Rateable Value B and C	315.00	0.00	315.00	315.00	0.00	315.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Rateable Value B and D	450.00	0.00	450.00	450.00	0.00	450.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Rateable Value B and E	635.00	0.00	635.00	635.00	0.00	635.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
<b>Main Annual Charge for Premises and Personal Liquor Licensing</b>								
Rateable Value B and A	70.00	0.00	70.00	70.00	0.00	70.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Rateable Value B and B	180.00	0.00	180.00	180.00	0.00	180.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Rateable Value B and C	295.00	0.00	295.00	295.00	0.00	295.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Rateable Value B and D	320.00	0.00	320.00	320.00	0.00	320.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Rateable Value B and E	350.00	0.00	350.00	350.00	0.00	350.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Personal licence for alcohol	37.00	0.00	37.00	37.00	0.00	37.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Personal licence change	10.50	0.00	10.50	10.50	0.00	10.50	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Premises licence change	23.00	0.00	23.00	23.00	0.00	23.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Transfers	23.00	0.00	23.00	23.00	0.00	23.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Temporary events	21.00	0.00	21.00	21.00	0.00	21.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Register of interests	21.00	0.00	21.00	21.00	0.00	21.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
<b>Licensed Premises Gaming Machine Permit</b>								
Grant	150.00	0.00	150.00	150.00	0.00	150.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Existing operator grant	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Variation	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Transfer	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Annual fee	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
Change of name	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
<b>Licenses Premises Automatic Notification Process</b>								
On notification	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
<b>Club Gaming Permits</b>								
Grant	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Grant (Club Premises Certificate holder)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Existing Operator Grant	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Variation	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Renewal fee	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Renewal (Club Premises Certificate Holder)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Annual Fee	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
<b>Club Machine Permits</b>								
Grant	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Grant (Club Premises Certificate holder)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Existing Operator Grant	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Variation	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Renewal fee	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Renewal (Club Premises Certificate Holder)	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Annual Fee	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
<b>Family Entertainment Centre Gaming Machine Permits</b>								
Application fee	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Renewal fee	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Transitional application fee	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Change of name	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
<b>Prize Gaming Permits</b>								
Grant	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Renewal	300.00	0.00	300.00	300.00	0.00	300.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Existing Operator Grant	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Change of name	25.00	0.00	25.00	25.00	0.00	25.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Copy of permit	15.00	0.00	15.00	15.00	0.00	15.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Annual Fee	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
<b>Small Lottery Registration</b>								
Grant	40.00	0.00	40.00	40.00	0.00	40.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
Annual Fee	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	Statutory fee set by Central Government.	0.00%
<b>Environment &amp; Leisure (M Cassell)</b>								
<b>Civil Parking Enforcement - Penalty Charge Notices (rate depends on offence)</b>								
<b>Lower Penalty System</b>								
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.	

	2022/23			2023/24			Comment 2023/24	Increase
	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge	Charge	VAT 20%	Total Charge		
	£	£	£	£	£	£		
<b>Higher Penalty System</b>								
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.	
<b>Environmental Fixed Penalty Notices</b>								
Anti Idling (failure to turn off engine once requested to do so)	20.00	0.00	20.00	20.00	0.00	20.00	As above.	
Abandoning a vehicle	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	As above.	
Repairing vehicles on a road (or) exposing vehicles for sale on a road	100.00	0.00	100.00	100.00	0.00	100.00	As above.	
Smoking in a smoke free premises or vehicle	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Statutory charge.	
Failure to display no smoking signs in smoke free premises or vehicle	200.00	0.00	200.00	200.00	0.00	200.00	Statutory charge.	
Smoking in an enclosed vehicle carrying a person under 18	50.00	0.00	50.00	50.00	0.00	50.00	Statutory charge.	
<sup>1</sup> Increases to £40 if not paid within 28 days								
<sup>2</sup> Reduced to £30.00 if paid within 15 days								
<sup>3</sup> Reduced to £150.00 if paid within 15 days								

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# 1. Risk Assessment

*The Council takes a measured risk-based approach to the budget setting process*

- 1.1 A comprehensive financial risk assessment is undertaken for the revenue and capital budget setting process to ensure that all risks and uncertainties affecting the Council's financial position are identified as far as is reasonably practical. These are reviewed each year as part of the refresh of the MTFs and future year's budget forecasts. The key strategic financial risks to be considered in developing the MTFs are included within the table below.
- 1.2 Medium term financial planning, set against a backdrop of severe reductions in Government funding, the ongoing recovery from Covid and unprecedented economic challenges, both nationally and globally, carries with it a significant element of risk. Many factors may impact on the figures presented here and themes have been highlighted where appropriate. Most significant are the spending pressures (waste/homelessness), the hyperinflation the country is currently experiencing, uncertainty regarding the ongoing recovery from the Covid pandemic and the future funding position for local government following ongoing delays with things such as the Fair Funding Review. All of these issues are placing further pressure on the council to deliver balanced budgets, without impacting on frontline services.
- 1.3 Brexit continues to impact, we have seen issues with some areas of the Council's business with things like the new waste fleet expected to take a year to deliver and increasing costs in terms of areas such as labour supply for certain areas, particularly in respect of the Council's capital programme.
- 1.4 A recession would present further risk, in particular significant areas of income such as lettings income, planning fees and car park income that are linked directly to economic demand.
- 1.5 Beyond this, further policy announcements from the Government under the leadership of the new Prime Minister and Cabinet will undoubtedly affect our finances in the coming years, but hopefully this will also bring some certainty in terms of medium term announcements from the Spending Review for local government finances as a whole.
- 1.6 Despite these risks, we will continue to plan effectively to strengthen our culture of strong financial management so that the Council can continue to meet its Corporate Plan priorities and provide the best possible services to the borough.

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b>	<b>Impact</b>	<b>Risk Management</b>
Future available resources less than assumed.	Possible	High	Annual review of reserves and reserves policy to identify future resources. Assumptions on funding for 2023/24 and beyond are based on best estimates at this time following the Autumn Statement. A prudent approach has been adopted based on previous years' experience as well as using regional network contacts to inform modelling.

Efficiency programme not delivered	Possible	High	The MTFS is currently forecasting significant budget gaps, peaking at £4.1m in 2024/25. Use of one-off reserves to help plug these gaps is not sustainable.
Covid-19 recovery continues you to adversely impact on the Council's budgets.	Possible	High	The MTFS seeks to address any known budget impacts as they are currently estimated. Ongoing budget monitoring of the position will help identify any issues.
Overreliance on reserve contributions supporting base budget deficits which is not a sustainable position.	Likely	High	Early preparation of 2023/24 MTFS to address the ongoing budget gap and deliver a sustainable base budget position.
Volatility of business rates funding given uncertainty around impact of appeals.	Likely	High	Volatility of funding stream outside of council control but impact mitigated by establishment of specific earmarked reserve and financial monitoring framework. Modelling of potential impacts is used to inform internal financial planning.
Pay Awards, fee increases and price inflation higher than assumed.	Possible	Medium	Impact of potential increases mitigated by central contingency budget for pay, price increases and fees. Where pay awards have been agreed these will be factored into the future estimates.
Future spending plans underestimated.	Possible	Medium	Service planning process identifies future budget pressures and these will inform the indicative budget forecasts. An effective budget monitoring framework is in place to identify in year and potential future cost pressures.
Anticipated savings/ efficiencies not achieved.	Possible	High	Regular monitoring and reporting takes place but the size of the funding cuts increase the likelihood of this risk. Non-achievement of savings would require compensating reductions in planned spending within services.
Revenue implications of capital programmes not fully anticipated.	Unlikely	Low	Capital bid approval framework identifies revenue implications and links to Council priorities. Full analysis of revenue implications assessed and considered in scenario planning.

Income targets not achieved.	Possible	Medium	Current economic climate likely to impact. Regular monitoring and reporting takes place. Full review of fees and charges scheduled for 2024/25 along with an annual review process.
Budget monitoring not effective.	Unlikely	High	Regular monitoring and reporting in line with corporate framework. Action plans developed to address problem areas. Track record of delivering budget.
Exit strategies for external funding ceasing/tapering not met.	Possible	Medium	Regular monitoring and reporting, medium-term planning, review of fixed term funding and posts completed.
Loss of principal deposit.	Unlikely	Medium	Limited by the controls in the Treasury Management Strategy which balance security of deposit over returns. Impact limited due to the strategy of a diverse portfolio with top rated institutions.
Interest rates lower than expected.	Unlikely	Low	Regular review, monitoring and reporting on interest rates. Prudent assumptions on likely interest rates for 2023/24 will be incorporated into the budget.
Collection rates for retained business rates and council tax lower than anticipated.	Possible	High	Impact mitigated by the review of bad debt provisions and availability of reserves. Monitoring of Collection Fund is formally incorporated into the revenue monitoring process.
Financial budget impacts of UK's vote to leave the European Union (Brexit).	Likely	Medium/High	Continue to work collaboratively with treasury advisors and central government departments to assess potential budget impacts.
All MTFS risks not adequately identified.	Unlikely	Low	Council's Risk Management Framework ensures all operational and strategic risks are identified as part of the annual service planning process.

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<b>Policy and Resources Committee Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	30 November 2022
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Performance Monitoring – 2022/23 half-year</b>
<b>EMT Lead</b>	David Clifford, Head of Policy, Governance and Customer Services
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Tony Potter, Information and Business Improvement Manager
<b>Recommendations</b>	That Members <i>note</i> the Corporate Performance Management Report at Appendix I and the progress of Priority Projects at Appendix II (see §3)

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report presents the quarterly performance management report for the second quarter of 2022/2023 (July – Sept 2022) and the latest progress update to Priority Projects, attached as Appendix I & II

## 2 Background

- 2.1 Following discussions with both Informal Administration and the Policy and Resource committee, it has been agreed that performance reports will be presented at the mid-year point (end of Quarter 2) and year-end (end of Quarter 4).
- 2.2 Appendix I details the performance report summarising performance for the first six months of the current financial year.
- 2.3 Appendix II reports on the current progress of priority projects previously allocated to officers to undertake alongside their normal service responsibilities.
- 2.4 Dependant on the resource availability, most projects have now been started and many are complete, as detailed at the end of the list.

## 3 Proposal

- 3.1 Members are asked to *note* the Corporate Performance Management Headlines Report for 2022/2023 as attached at Appendix I
- 3.2 Members are asked to *note* the progress of Priority Projects as attached at Appendix II

## **4 Appendices**

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

- Appendix I: Corporate Performance Management Report: September 2022 and Quarter 2 / Year-to-date 2022-23
- Appendix II: Member Priority Projects update, as at 31 October 2022

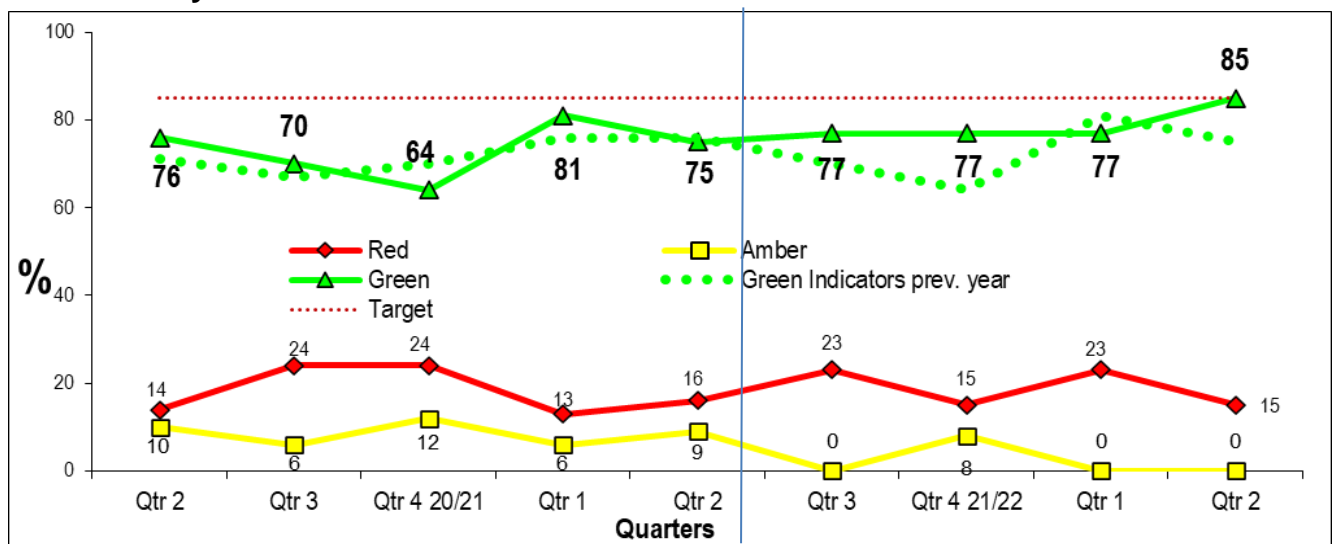
Action: Note only

**1. Year to date performance summary:**

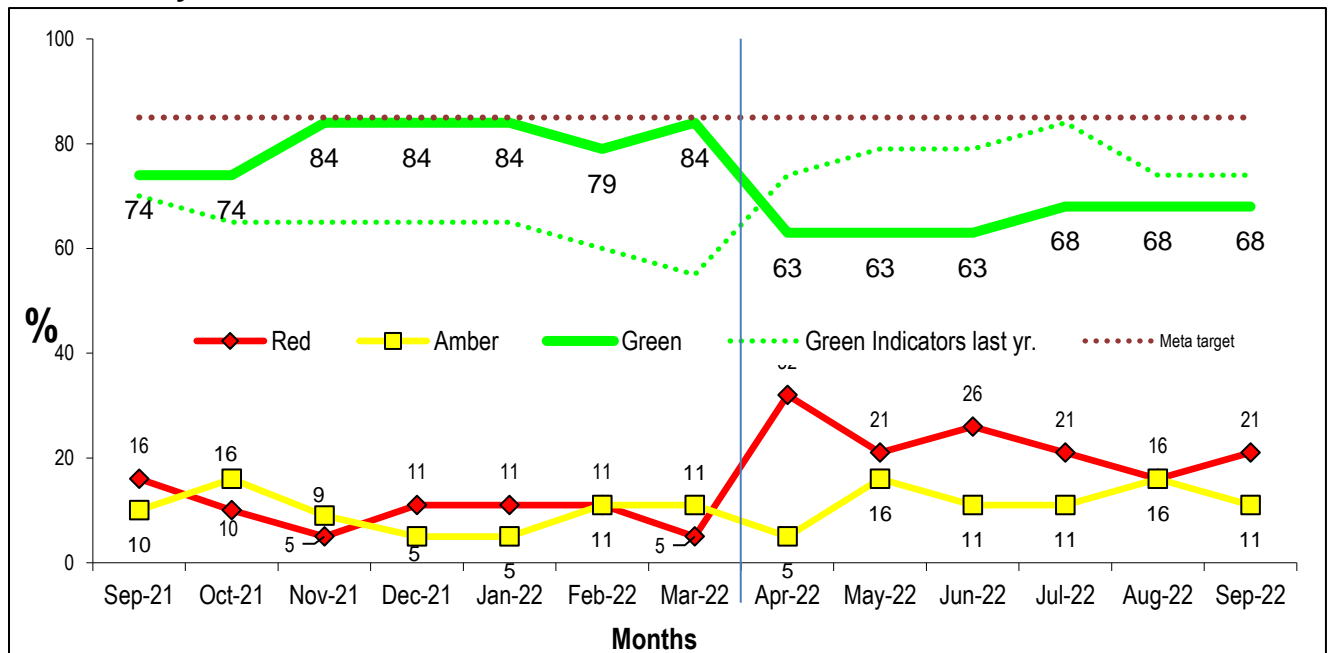
Combined result of 19 monthly and 13 quarterly indicators

Performance Status	No. indicators	Percentage
Red	6	19%
Amber	2	6%
Green	24	75%













**a. Quarterly indicators**









**b. Monthly indicators**



## 2. Red Indicators this period

This month / qtr	Last month / qtr	Ref	Description	YTD	2022-23 target
		BV8	Percentage of invoices paid on time	91%	97%
Severe Staff Shortages within the Exchequer Team caused a drop in performance for Q1. Performance has been back on track in Q2. If performance continues on track, the year-end total will be 95%					
		LI/LS/LCC 01	Percentage of all Local Land Searches completed in 5 working days	24.9%	95%
The Land Charges Team had been severely depleted since December and this has been exacerbated by recruitment issues. Whilst it had not been possible to hit the 5-day target, the team have been achieving a 10-day target. Performance is back on track for the first time this year. If the target is now achieved every month the year-end total will be 61%.					
		LI/HS/01	Number of long-term empty homes brought back into use	0	40 ytd
The post of Empty Property Officer is still vacant and the re-evaluation of the posts grade is currently in discussion. As soon as this is resolved we will advertise the vacancy again. Any complaints relating to empty properties are being dealt with as they arise, by our enforcement officers as part of their normal role.					
		BV109a	Processing of planning apps: Major applications determined within 13 weeks	84%	89%
This indicator's performance is severely impacted due to the small numbers of Major applications, with extensions of time not usually accepted when permission is going to be declined. Four applications out of 25 did not achieve the target. If the target is achieved for the rest of the year, then the year end result will be 85%					
		LI/IC/CSC /004	Percentage of calls to Customer Contact Centre answered in 20secs	62.8%	75%
The target of answering 75% of calls in 20 secs has remained challenging all year and not quite reached in September (68%) The latest contributing factors including firewall issues impacting the telephony platform, the impact of training a new starter & responding to service disruptions. If performance achieves target each month for the rest of the year, then the year-end total will be 68%.					
		LI/IA/005	Audit recommendations implemented	79.5%	95%
A number of lower impact internal audit recommendations have been deferred due to other higher priority tasks. The recommendations are being reviewed corporately to bring performance on track.					

## 3. Amber Indicators this period

YTD Status	This month	Last month	Ref	Description	YTD	2022/23 target	Variance
			BV78b	Speed of processing – changes of circumstances for HB/CTB claims	9.3 days	9 days	3.5% of target
			LI/CC/01	Number of missed bins per annum	1190 bins	1155 ytd	3.0% of target

#### 4. Year to Date overview of KPI performance

N.B. Where the monthly result differs to the cumulative year-to-date result, the monthly performance is indicated by either \*R (Red) , \*A (Amber) or \*G (Green)

Monthly Performance Indicators CUMMULATIVE YEAR TO DATE RESULT		22/23 Target	Apr 22	May 22	Jun 22	July 22	Aug 22	Sep 22	Oct 21	Nov 21	Dec 21	Jan 21	Feb 21	Mar 21	2021/22 Outcome
BV8	Percentage of invoices paid on time (within 30 days)	97%				*G	*G	*G						*R	97%
BV9	Percentage of Council Tax collected	94%													95.8%
BV10	Percentage of Non-domestic Rates collected	90%													93.6%
BV12b	Short-term working days lost due to sickness absence	3.2 days													2.27
BV78a	Speed of processing – new Housing /Council Tax Benefit claims	20 days			*R		*G								13.1
BV78b	Speed of processing - changes of circumstances for HB/CTB claims	9days				*R	*R	*R							6.4
BV109a	Processing of planning apps: Major Applications (within 13 weeks)	89%		*G		*G	*R							*A	96.2%
BV109b	Processing of planning apps: Minor Applications (within 8 weeks)	82%													92.6%
BV109c	Processing of planning apps: Other Applications (within 8 weeks)	91%													99.0%
BV218a	Abandoned vehicles - % investigated within 4 working days	98%						*R	*G		*G	*R	*R	*A	95.4%
LI/DC/DCE/004	Percentage of delegated decisions (Officers)	86.5%													92.8%
LI/DC/DCE/007	Planning Enforcement - Informing complainant within 21 days	95%										*G	*G	*G	67.15%
LI/IC/CSC/002	Percentage of abandoned calls	8.5%		*R	*R										3.6%
LI/IC/CSC/004	Percentage of calls to Customer Contact Centre answer. in 20secs	75%					*A		*G					*A	76.3%
LI/LS/LCC01	Percentage of all Local Land Searches completed in 5 working days	95%						*G	*G			*G	*A	*G	90.9%
LI/CC/01	Number of missed bins per annum	2301		*G		*G	*G	*G	*G						2019
LI/PC/02	Proportion of Major Planning Applications overturned at appeal	10%		*G											1.9%
LI/91	Residual household waste per household	528kgs				*A									491 kgs
LI/92	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and comp	42%					*A	*R		*A	*R	*R	*R		42.5%
<b>MONTHLY INDICATOR RESULTS (x 19)</b>			<b>YEAR TO DATE Monthly Total</b>			12G	12G	12G	13G	13G	13G	14G	16G	16G	
			1A	3A	2A	2A	3A	2A	3A	2A	3A	2A	2A	2A	
			6R	4R	5R	4R	3R	4R	2R	1R	2R	2R	2R	1R	

Quarterly Performance Indicators CUMMULATIVE YEAR TO DATE RESULT		22/23 Target	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	2021/22 Outcome			
LI/ICT/0006	Website availability	99%					99.9%			
BV79b(j)	Percentage of Recoverable Overpayments Recovered (HB) that are recovered during period	80%					90.5%			
LI/CSC/003	Complaints responded to within 10 working days	90%					93.2%			
LI/HS/01	Number of long-term empty homes brought back into use	65					59			
NI188	Planning to Adapt to Climate Change	3					3			
NI195i	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: Litter % at Grade B standard	95%					96.7%			
NI195ii	Improved street and environmental cleanliness: Detritus % at Grade B standard	93%					94.7%			
LI/EH/001	Percentage of Planning consultations responded to in 21 days	90%					*G 86.74%			
LI/EH/002	Food Hygiene – The percentage of food inspections completed that were due.	90%					*G *G 74.1%			
LI/IA/004	Audit recommendations implemented	95%					100%			
LI/CEL/002	Percentage of beach huts occupied	75%					99%			
LI/CEL/003	Percentage of disabled parking bay applications processed within 3 months	95%					100%			
LI/PAR/001	Civil enforcement officer accuracy rate	98%					99.6%			
<b>QUARTERLY INDICATORS (x13)</b>			<b>YEAR TO DATE Quarterly Total</b>			10G	11G	10G	10G	
			0A	0A	0A	0A	1A			
			3R	2R	3R	2R	2R			

<b>COMBINED INDICATOR RESULTS (x32) (Monthly + Quarterly KPIs)</b>		<b>YEAR TO DATE (Monthly + Quarterly Totals)</b>		22G	24G			
		2A	2A					
		8R	6R					

Monthly MPIs – Monitored Performance Indicators (no targets / performance not managed)		21/22 Mth Ave	Q1			Q2			O-N-D / Q3			J-F-M / Q4			22/23 Mth Ave
NI 156	Number of households living in temporary accommodation	312	349	356	367	388	392	394	324	323	323	327	339	335	365
BV12a	Long-term working days lost due to sickness absence	0.44	0.52	1.11	1.74	2.22	2.72	3.54	2.81	3.27	3.68	4.03	4.69	5.28	0.55
LI/CC/MON16	% of fly-tipping incidents attended to within 3 working days	98%	78.9	100	98.2	86.1	98.5	52	100	98	100	99	98	99	91
LI/EC/MON10	Swale Means Business – Website analytics	249	211	242	142	173	210	204	243	272	179	293	147	157	192
LI/EC/MON11	No. of Visitor Economy Businesses supported by ECS	16	7	4	1	5	2	2	4	28	7	26	26	9	4
LI/EC/MON28	Swale VCS – Number of enquiries received	19	1	15	6	20	27	22	12	46	18	32	29	24	10
LI/EC/MON2	No. of enquiries to the business support service	128	10	28	17	14	13	4	45	92	49	129	115	10	17
LI/HO/MON9	Rough Sleepers in Accommodation	40	46	45	45	44	41	43	31	40	45	47	43	46	45
LI/DC/DCE/006	Refused Planning Applications	14.5%	14.7	22.1	21.2	15.4	18.2	19.8	13.2	11.7	16.5	11.7	15.1	22.2	18

Quarterly MPIs – Monitored Performance Indicators (no targets / performance not managed)		21/22 Qtr. Ave.	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	22/23 Qtr. Ave.
NI155	Number of affordable homes delivered (total year to date)	52	22	71	145	208	
LI/CSC/006	Proportion of complaints escalating from Stage 1 (Service Unit) to Stage 2 (Chief Executive)	7.5%	4%	2%	11%	8%	
CSP/0001	All crime per 1000 population	98.5	103.9	102	98.1	103.9	
HO/MON7	Percentage of households who secured accommodation for 6+ months when prev. duty ended	61%	70%	59%	63%	66%	
HO/MON8	Percentage of households who secured accommodation at the end of relief duty	31%	23%	23%	33%	33%	
EC/MON33	Safeguarding training (% of training modules completed)	54.7%	58.1%	71.1%	51.6%	54.4%	
CEL/001	No. of visits to Council owned or supported leisure centres	96,910	168,999	165,031	89,892	127,535	
CSC/001	% of contacts transacted digitally compared to other methods of contact to Customer Services	53%	52%	51%	59%	46%	

<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	30 November 2022
<b>Report Title</b>	Boughton & Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan: Examiners report and next steps
<b>EMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration & Neighbourhoods
<b>Head of Service</b>	Flo Churchill, Interim Head of Planning
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Jill Peet, Planning Policy Manager
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Agree to accept the modifications to the Boughton &amp; Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan as set out in the Examiner’s Report (Appendix I);</li> <li>2. Agree that the Neighbourhood Plan meets the basic conditions and complies with the provision made by or under Sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Act 2004;</li> <li>3. Agree to publicise the decision to accept the Examiner’s recommendations; and</li> <li>4. Approve the organisation of a local referendum to cover the areas of Boughton and Dunkirk parishes.</li> </ol>

## **1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to endorse and accept the recommended modifications to the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan contained in the Examiner’s Report. The Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan (BDNP) was subject to an independent examination and the Borough Council has now received the Examiner’s report that concludes the BDNP meets the basic conditions test subject to the amendments set out in that same report.
  
- 1.2 The Borough Council’s role now is to ensure that the process and procedures have been followed and that the Neighbourhood Plan is in general conformity with the adopted Local Plan. The Borough Council is also responsible for undertaking the next steps which is to publicise the decision to accept the Examiner’s recommendations and progress with the organisation of a local referendum. Subject to the results of the referendum, a report will be brought to Members in due course seeking to have the Neighbourhood Plan adopted or ‘made’.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 The parish councils of Boughton and Dunkirk decided to work together and prepare a neighbourhood plan because of the close relationship between the two

villages and the wider parish areas. They formed a neighbourhood planning body (the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Planning Group) which included some parish councillors and resident volunteers. The designation of the neighbourhood plan area was confirmed in February 2014. Since this time, the Group have gathered the necessary evidence and undertaken consultation on the issues the neighbourhood plan should address and then on the content of the plan itself at Regulation 14 in March to May 2021.

- 2.2 The Group then submitted their final plan to the council in May 2022 and the consultation ran in June and July 2022 under Regulation 16 of the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations.
- 2.3 The Council, in consultation with the Neighbourhood Planning Group, appointed Derek Stebbing as the independent examiner. Mr Stebbing is a planning consultant and retired planning inspector and member of the Royal Town Planning Institute. The examiner concluded that the examination could be dealt with via written representations and that a public hearing was not required.
- 2.4 Swale Borough Council received the examiners report on 21 October 2022. The report concluded that with some modifications, the Plan should proceed to referendum.
- 2.5 The examiner is responsible for deciding whether the plan complies with the provisions set out in the Act with regards to whether the correct process has been followed (Sections 38A and 38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004); and to make any recommendations as to whether the Plan should be submitted to referendum.
- 2.6 The examiner concluded “It is clear that the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan is the product of much hard work undertaken since 2013 by the Parish Councils, its Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the many individuals and stakeholders who have contributed to the preparation and development of the Plan. In my assessment, the Plan reflects the land use aspirations and objectives of the Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk communities for the future planning of their Parishes up to 2031. The output is a Plan which should help guide the area’s development over that period, making a positive contribution to informing decision-making on planning applications by Swale Borough Council”.
- 2.7 There are 22 amendments proposed in the examiners report contained in appendix i. The view of the Neighbourhood Planning Group and the officers is that the amendments are reasonable.
- 2.8 Should the recommendations of this report be agreed, the next step is to progress with the referendum. The Counting Officer (Returning Officer) of Swale BC is responsible for making the arrangements for the referendum to take place. The referendum will be for residents only, and the Examiner confirmed that the area to be covered by the referendum will be the parishes of Boughton and Dunkirk only.



2.9 If more than half of the votes are in favour of the Neighbourhood Plan, Swale BC must bring the neighbourhood plan into force as soon as reasonably practical. Due to legislative requirements, the referendum could go ahead in late February 2023 at the earliest. If the referendum results are favourable, Members would then be asked to adopt the neighbourhood plan and it would become part of the overall development plan for the area. There is no minimum requirement for turnout

### **3 Proposals**

3.1 The proposals are for Members to agree the amendments in the Examiners report contained in appendix i. Members are also asked to agree that the Neighbourhood Plan (with the amendments) meets the basic conditions and complies with the provision made by the legislation; that the decision to accept the Examiner’s recommendations should be publicised and approve the organisation of a local referendum to cover the areas of Boughton and Dunkirk parishes.

### **4 Alternative Options**

4.1 Members could decide to reject the proposed amendments in the Examiners report but then the document would not comply with the regulatory requirements and could not progress to next stages. This is not a realistic option.

### **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

5.1 Whilst the examiners report is not subject to consultation, being a formal technical assessment of the neighbourhood plan, the plan itself has been consulted on at the various stages of preparation. Furthermore, the referendum provides an opportunity for the residents of Boughton and Dunkirk parishes to vote on whether or not they wish the neighbourhood plan to be a key document that will help shape future development in their area.

### **6 Implications**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>
Corporate Plan	The neighbourhood plan contributes to delivering Objectives 1, 2 and 3 of the Corporate Plan.
Financial, Resource and Property	The Council will be able to apply for grant funding to cover the costs of running the referendum.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The Council is satisfied that the plan has been prepared in accordance with the requisite legal and statutory processes. There are no implications for the Council regarding procurement.

Crime and Disorder	None identified at this stage
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The plan contains a suite of relevant policies to specifically protect and enhance the environment and respond to the climate and ecological emergency.
Health and Wellbeing	The plan contains a suite of relevant policies to meet the health and wellbeing needs of the community.
Safeguarding of Children, Young People and Vulnerable Adults	The plan has been prepared with appropriate consideration to the needs of children, young people and vulnerable adults. There are policies contained within the plan to support their needs being met.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	N/A
Equality and Diversity	The plan has been supported by an Equalities Impact Assessment as part of the preparation process.
Privacy and Data Protection	The consultation has been undertaken in line with privacy and data protection requirements

## 7 Appendices

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

- Appendix i: Examiners Report of the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan (
- Appendix ii: Submission version of the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan (May 2022)

## 8 Background Papers

None.



**Intelligent Plans**  
and examinations

# **Report on Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan to 2031**

**An Examination undertaken for Swale Borough Council with the support  
of Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk Parish Councils on the draft Plan  
submitted in May 2022**

Independent Examiner: Derek Stebbing BA (Hons) DipEP MRTPI

Date of Report: 21 October 2022

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## **Main Findings - Executive Summary**

From my examination of the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan (the Plan/BDNP) and its supporting documentation including the representations made, I have concluded that subject to the modifications set out in this report, the Plan meets the Basic Conditions.

I have also concluded that:

- the Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body – the Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk Parish Councils (the Parish Councils);
- the Plan has been prepared for an area properly designated – the Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Area, as identified on the map at page 7 of the Plan;
- the Plan specifies the period to which it is to take effect – from 2022 to 2031; and,
- the policies relate to the development and use of land for a designated neighbourhood plan area.

I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum on the basis that it has met all the relevant legal requirements.

I have considered whether the referendum area should extend beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates and have concluded that it should not.

## **1. Introduction and Background**

### **Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan to 2031**

- 1.1 The Parishes of Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk in the Borough of Swale in Kent are situated between the town of Faversham and the city of Canterbury, and on the edge of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. More generally known just as Boughton, Boughton-under-Blean is the smaller of the two Parishes by geographical size but has a larger population of 1,917 (2011 Census).
- 1.2 The Parish of Dunkirk lies to the east of Boughton-under-Blean and has a population of 1,187 (2011 Census). The village of Dunkirk was once part of the ancient forest of Blean, and the development of the village and the creation of the Parish occurred during the late 1830s, with the building of All Saints Church which was consecrated in 1841, and then the opening of Dunkirk School in 1846. Blean Woods, which forms the eastern boundary of the Parish, is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and is part of the former ancient forest of Blean.
- 1.3 The small hamlet of South Street within Boughton-under-Blean Parish lies to the south of both villages and contains the Grade I listed Parish church

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of St. Peter and St. Paul. The Parish also contains many other listed buildings which reflect a wide range of architectural styles since the medieval period. The Grade II listed radar mast in Dunkirk Parish, which was part of the Chain Home radar network during the Second World War, dominates the skyline in that area.

- 1.4 Boughton is one of the larger villages within Swale Borough, and prior to the opening of the A2 Boughton by-pass in 1976, the village was on the main road between London and Canterbury. This was part of the Roman road known as Watling Street running from London to Dover. The construction of the M2 motorway and the A2 Boughton by-pass reduced the volumes of traffic within the village, but local congestion still occurs particularly along the historic main road (The Street) through the centre of the village. Many of the village's shops and community facilities are located along this road. The Boughton & Dunkirk Methodist Primary School serves both Parishes and is also located centrally within the village. Children of secondary school age travel outside the Parishes, with the nearest secondary school being at Faversham. The Parishes are served by a regular bus service between Faversham and Canterbury but are not served by a railway station, with the nearest stations being at Faversham and Selling.
- 1.5 Boughton has two public open spaces on the edge of the village, and there are areas of woodland with public access, particularly in Dunkirk Parish. A number of walks and trails through the Parishes are promoted as 'Walks for Heritage and Health', including a woodland walk through Bossenden Wood, the site of the Battle of Bossenden Wood in 1838 which was the last armed uprising on English soil.
- 1.6 The introduction to the Plan states that it has been prepared in the text of two particular uncertainties. Firstly, the nature of the works to be undertaken at Junction 7 of the M2 motorway, known as Brenley Corner and secondly, the proposals for a major new residential and commercial development on a site beside the A2 at Faversham, which includes land within Boughton-under-Blean Parish. The Plan seeks to address the implications arising from these proposals as they affect the Plan area.

### The Independent Examiner

- 1.7 As the Plan has now reached the examination stage, I have been appointed as the examiner of the Plan by Swale Borough Council (SBC), with the agreement of the Parish Councils.
- 1.8 I am a chartered town planner, with over 45 years of experience in planning. I have worked in both the public and private sectors and have experience of examining both local plans and neighbourhood plans. I have also served on a Government working group considering measures to improve the local plan system and undertaken peer reviews on behalf of the Planning Advisory Service. I therefore have the appropriate qualifications and experience to carry out this independent examination.

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1.9 I am independent of the Qualifying Body and SBC and do not have an interest in any of the land that may be affected by the Plan.

### The Scope of the Examination

1.10 As the independent examiner, I am required to produce this report and recommend either:

(a) that the neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum without changes; or

(b) that modifications are made and that the modified neighbourhood plan is submitted to a referendum; or

(c) that the neighbourhood plan does not proceed to a referendum on the basis that it does not meet the necessary legal requirements.

1.11 The scope of the examination is set out in Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)('the 1990 Act'). The examiner must consider:

- Whether the plan meets the Basic Conditions.
- Whether the plan complies with provisions under s.38A and s.38B of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 (as amended) ('the 2004 Act'). These are:
  - it has been prepared and submitted for examination by a qualifying body, for an area that has been properly designated by the local planning authority;
  - it sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land;
  - it specifies the period during which it has effect;
  - it does not include provisions and policies for 'excluded development'; and
  - it is the only neighbourhood plan for the area and does not relate to land outside the designated neighbourhood area.
- Whether the referendum boundary should be extended beyond the designated area, should the plan proceed to referendum.
- Such matters as prescribed in the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012 (as amended)('the 2012 Regulations').



1.12 I have considered only matters that fall within Paragraph 8(1) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act, with one exception. That is the requirement that the Plan is compatible with the Human Rights Convention.

### The Basic Conditions

1.13 The 'Basic Conditions' are set out in Paragraph 8(2) of Schedule 4B to the 1990 Act. In order to meet the Basic Conditions, the neighbourhood plan must:

- have regard to national policies and advice contained in guidance issued by the Secretary of State;
- contribute to the achievement of sustainable development;
- be in general conformity with the strategic policies of the development plan for the area;
- be compatible with and not breach European Union (EU) obligations (under retained EU law)<sup>1</sup>; and
- meet prescribed conditions and comply with prescribed matters.

1.14 Regulation 32 of the 2012 Regulations prescribes a further Basic Condition for a neighbourhood plan. This requires that the making of the Neighbourhood Plan does not breach the requirements of Chapter 8 of Part 6 of the Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations 2017 ('the Habitats Regulations').<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Approach to the Examination

### Planning Policy Context

2.1 The Development Plan for this part of Swale Borough Council, not including documents relating to excluded minerals and waste development, consists of the adopted Swale Borough Local Plan – 'Bearing Fruits 2031' (SBLP) prepared by SBC and adopted on 26 July 2017. The SBLP covers the period from 2014 to 2031 and contains a suite of strategic and core planning policies for the Borough, together with development management policies and site allocations. The SBLP sets out the scale of housing and employment development required within the Borough and seeks to provide 13,192 new dwellings and 130,000 square metres of new employment floorspace over the Plan period. Within the

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<sup>1</sup> The existing body of environmental regulation is retained in UK law.

<sup>2</sup> This revised Basic Condition came into force on 28 December 2018 through the Conservation of Habitats and Species and Planning (Various Amendments) (England and Wales) Regulations 2018.

settlement hierarchy (known as settlement tiers) of the SBLP, Boughton is categorised as a Rural Local Service Centre which is the fourth tier, and Dunkirk is categorised as an Other Village with Built-up Area Boundary, which is the fifth tier. Policy ST3 of the SBLP defines the built-up area boundaries for Boughton and Dunkirk and these are shown on the SBLP Policies Map and at Map 1 on page 7 in the draft Plan.

- 2.2 The adopted SBLP will be replaced in due course by the emerging Local Plan Review (LPR) currently being prepared by SBC. This is likely to cover the period up to 2040, and a Regulation 18 consultation on an Issues and Preferred Options document was undertaken from 29 October to 29 November 2021. Prior to this, a Regulation 19 Pre-Submission Plan had been published for consultation in February 2021 but, following that consultation, the Council resolved (in September 2021) to revert to publishing a Regulation 18 consultation document, before again proceeding to the Regulation 19 stage. The Council's latest Local Development Scheme was published in July 2022 but is now out of date. On 19 October 2022, the Policy & Resources Committee unanimously agreed that Regulation 19 consultation should be postponed until the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill (LURB) gains Royal Assent. However, the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)<sup>3</sup> advises that although a draft neighbourhood plan is not tested against the policies in an emerging local plan, the reasoning and evidence informing the local plan process is likely to be relevant to the consideration of the Basic Conditions against which a neighbourhood plan is tested. I am satisfied that the relationship between the policies in the submitted draft Plan, the SBLP and the emerging LPR have been given proper consideration by both the Qualifying Body and the Borough Council.
- 2.3 The Basic Conditions Statement (Document Ref. BD15) provides an overview assessment at pages 2-4 of the compliance of the Plan with the legal requirements. A more detailed assessment is provided at pages 4-12 of how the policies proposed in the Plan have regard to national policy and are in general conformity with the relevant strategic policies in the adopted Development Plan, which is the SBLP.
- 2.4 The planning policy for England is set out principally in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The PPG offers guidance on how this policy should be implemented. A revised NPPF was published on 20 July 2021. All references in this report are to the 2021 NPPF and its accompanying PPG.

### Submitted Documents

- 2.5 I have considered all policy, guidance and other reference documents I consider relevant to the examination, including those submitted which comprise:

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<sup>3</sup> PPG Reference ID: 41-009-20190509.

- the draft Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan: Providing a Sustainable Future for Both Parishes to 2031 (Submission version, undated);
- the Basic Conditions Statement (undated);
- the Consultation Statement (undated);
- the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment Screening Report (September 2021); and
- all the representations that have been made in accordance with the Regulation 16 consultation.<sup>4</sup>

The submission Plan and its accompanying documents are also supported by a series of Background Documents (Refs. BD1-BD17) which were prepared during the course of the Plan's preparation.<sup>5</sup> Where appropriate, I refer in this report to these Background Documents by their reference number, e.g. BD5. I have also taken into account a Statement of Common Ground dated 16 May 2022 between the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan Team, both Parish Councils and SBC.

## Examiner Questions

2.6 Following my appointment as the independent examiner and my initial review of the draft Plan, its supporting documents and representations made at the Regulation 16 stage, I wrote to SBC and the Parish Councils on 23 August 2022 seeking further clarification and information on eight matters contained in the submission Plan, as follows:

- First, with regard to the Plan Period, I noted that, as drafted, neither the Plan nor the Basic Conditions Statement state the commencement date for the Plan period to be covered by the Plan. From my interpretation of the material in the Plan, and particularly as it takes account of the NPPF 2021 and Land Registry data from early-2022, I considered that the commencement date of the Plan period is 2022. The Plan period will need to be identified on the front cover of the Plan and in the Plan's introductory section. I therefore sought confirmation from the Qualifying Body that the commencement date for the Plan is 2022.
- Second, with regard to the LPR, I sought confirmation from SBC as to whether or not the commentary at paragraphs 5.4.2 and 5.5.1 (and Maps III and IV) in the draft Plan regarding proposed developments within the Plan area that are being considered as part of the LPR is accurate and up to date. Furthermore, I sought confirmation that the statement at paragraph 5.5.1 that "*There are currently proposals for 24,000 new houses **in our area***" (my emphasis) refers to either the whole of the Borough Council area or possibly a wider area than that. I was also unclear whether this refers to existing commitments (up to

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<sup>4</sup> View at: <https://swale.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/local-plans/neighbourhood-planning/boughton-under-blean-and-dunkirk/regulation-16-consultation>

<sup>5</sup> View at: [Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan | May 2022 submitted Background Documents](#)

2031) or for proposals that will extend beyond 2031, or for both. Finally, I also requested that SBC provide me with the latest available timetable (of key milestones) for the preparation and examination of the LPR (the current position is now set out in paragraph 2.2 above).

- Third, with regard to Policy H7, I noted that I had some concerns about the content and proposed implementation of this draft Policy. Objective 3 (at paragraph 5.13.5 in the Plan) states that the implementation of the Policy will be secured by Section 106 agreements, although this is not made clear in the Policy itself. Clause ii) of the draft Policy requires a justification on health grounds, but there is no explanation or definition as to how this will be considered and assessed. I considered that such health grounds are not an appropriate matter for inclusion in a Section 106 agreement of this nature. Clause iii) of the Policy infers some degree of vetting by the Parish Councils of the merit and need of potential purchasers and occupants of new dwellings, which I presently interpret as meaning the establishment of “*a proven local connection*”. I considered that, as drafted and notwithstanding the content of background document BD5, this Policy exceeds the normal tests for providing new homes to meet local needs, by introducing criteria that could potentially be in conflict with both national policies and the strategic policies of SBC. I therefore invited both the Qualifying Body and SBC to provide me with their comments on how this Policy should be redrafted to align with other draft Policies in the Plan, notably Policies H1, H3 and H4, and/or whether the Policy is indeed necessary at all bearing in mind the content of Policies H1, H3 and H4.
- Fourth, with regard to Policies T1, T2, T3, T6, T7, T8 and T10, I considered that, as drafted, these are not land-use planning policies, but are instead statements of intent regarding existing or possible future highways conditions, or to promote improvements etc. which are the responsibility of the Highways Authorities (rather than the Local Planning Authority). However, I also considered that the Plan could address some of these issues in the form of land-use planning policies by including policies which seek to promote sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport) in the Plan area, such as the establishment of “Walking for Health” routes, related to an objective that seeks to achieve sustainable development within the Plan area. Where appropriate, it may be possible to secure some of the desired improvements by planning obligations linked to planning permissions.

Alternatively, I suggested the content of Policies T1, T2, T3, T6, T7, T8 and T10 can remain in the Plan, not as policies but as supporting statements to the presently drafted objectives. I therefore invited the Qualifying Body to provide me with a note on how they wish me to proceed with regard to this matter. If appropriate, I noted that revised text for draft policies could be provided (utilising the existing text as far as is practicable) that addresses the land-use planning aspects of

the issues covered, including, if necessary, an objective that seeks to promote sustainable modes of transport, which I could consider as potential modifications to the Plan. However, I further noted that I cannot recommend wholly new, unrelated policies so this approach must be subject to some constraint.

- Fifth, with regard to Policy BE2, I noted that, as this Policy is presently drafted, I am unclear what constitutes in land use planning terms “*the treasured character of the Neighbourhood Plan environment*” as it may affect proposals for commercial development. I further noted that the Policy will be very difficult to implement in the absence of a clearer understanding, both within the Policy and within its supporting material, of the factors that should be taken into consideration by future users of the Plan and those considering new commercial developments, to ensure that they can comply with this Policy. I therefore invited the Qualifying Body to provide me with a clarificatory note indicating the sort of land-use planning criteria that might reflect the treasured character of the Plan area and which would impact specifically upon the consideration of proposals for commercial development, which I could then consider as possible development and design criteria for inclusion in the Policy to meet the Basic Conditions. I noted that this may need to include cross-references to policies in Section 10 of the Plan.
- Sixth, with regard to Policies EP1, EP2, EP3 and EP4, I noted that as presently drafted, each of these Policies is technically a statement rather than a valid land-use planning policy. Furthermore, Policy EP2 covers, in part, highways matters, e.g. traffic flow. I further noted that, in my assessment, the main issue being addressed by this section of the Plan is to ensure that the facilities at the Boughton and Dunkirk Primary School, either at its existing site or at an alternative site, are able to meet the needs of the children of existing and new residents. I considered that draft Policies which seek to address that issue, and linked to material presently within Policies EP1, EP2 and EP3, should be drafted, and linked if appropriate to planning contributions to be secured by Section 106 agreements attached to planning permissions for new developments in the Plan area. I therefore invited the Qualifying Body to provide me with a note, to set out the text of revised policies (utilising the existing text as far as is practicable) that seek to address/focus on the land-use planning aspects of the issues covered in this section of the Plan, that I could consider as potential modifications to the Plan. Again, as noted at my fourth question above, I noted that I cannot recommend wholly new, unrelated policies so the scope of the proposed approach is constrained.
- Seventh, with regard to Policy E8, I noted that this Policy stipulates that a minimum 20% net gain in biodiversity (BNG) for developments against baseline conditions is required. This exceeds the minimum level of at least 10% set out in national policy. I therefore sought confirmation from SBC that they are content for a minimum level of at

least 20% BNG to be required for developments within the Plan area, in the context of policies for the Borough as a whole.

- Finally, with regard to Map X (Landscape Character Areas) in the draft Plan, I observed that this map is crucial to the interpretation of Policies in Section 10 of the Plan. However, as presently produced it is difficult to interpret, being of a very small-scale. I therefore requested that the Qualifying Body or SBC provide me with a larger-scale map, potentially at A4 size, and if necessary, with further inset maps, that could be inserted into the Plan, as a potential modification.

2.7 In response to my letter of 23 August 2022, the Parish Councils and SBC provided me with responses to the questions listed above on 8 and 9 September 2022 respectively.<sup>6</sup> I have taken full account of the additional information contained in these responses as part of my assessment of the draft Plan, alongside the documents listed at paragraph 2.5 above. I have also taken account of a letter dated 23 September 2022 from Carter Jonas, on behalf of Shaptor Capital, specifically concerning my seventh question above.

#### Site Visit

2.8 I made an unaccompanied site visit to the Neighbourhood Plan Area on 10 September 2022 to familiarise myself with it and visit all relevant sites and areas referenced in the Plan, evidential documents and those referenced in representations to the Plan.

#### Written Representations with or without Public Hearing

2.9 This examination has been dealt with by written representations. I considered hearing sessions to be unnecessary as the consultation responses clearly articulated the objections and comments regarding the Plan and presented arguments for and against the Plan's suitability to proceed to a referendum. I am satisfied that the material supplied is sufficiently comprehensive for me to be able to deal with the matters raised under the written representations procedure, and that there was not a requirement to convene a public hearing as part of this examination. In all cases, the information provided has enabled me to reach a conclusion on the matters concerned.

#### Modifications

2.10 Where necessary, I have recommended modifications to the Plan (**PMs**) in this report in order that it meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. For ease of reference, I have listed these modifications in full in the Appendix.

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<sup>6</sup> View at: <https://swale.gov.uk/planning-and-regeneration/local-plans/neighbourhood-planning/boughton-under-blean-and-dunkirk/examination>

### 3. Procedural Compliance and Human Rights

#### Qualifying Body and Neighbourhood Plan Area

- 3.1 The Plan has been prepared and submitted for examination by the Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk Parish Councils. The two Parish Council areas were designated by SBC as a neighbourhood planning area on 20 February 2014.
- 3.2 The designated Neighbourhood Area comprises the whole of the Parishes of Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk. The designated area is shown on the map at page 7 in the submission Plan. The Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan is the only neighbourhood plan in the designated area.
- 3.3 Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk Parish Councils are jointly the Qualifying Body for the preparation of the Plan. The preparation of the Plan has been led by a Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group which was established in 2013, comprising Councillors from each of the Parish Councils and local residents from each community.

#### Plan Period

- 3.4 The draft Plan does not specify the full period to which it is to take effect. However, in response to my first question (see paragraph 2.6 above), the Qualifying Body has confirmed that the Plan period is 2022 to 2031. This Plan period encompasses the remaining part of the plan period for the adopted SBLP (up to 2031). SBC is now undertaking a review of the Local Plan to cover the period beyond 2031 up to 2038. The period for this Plan needs to be clearly stated on the front cover of the document and within the Plan itself, and I therefore recommend modification **PM1** to address this requirement. I also make a recommendation (see paragraph 4.85 below and proposed modification **PM22**) with regard to the future review of the Plan to take account of the LPR now being undertaken by SBC.

#### Neighbourhood Plan Preparation and Consultation

- 3.5 The Consultation Statement and its Appendices (Document Ref. BD17) sets out a comprehensive record of the Plan's preparation and its associated engagement and consultation activity between mid-2013 and Autumn 2021. The Consultation Statement refers to a number of other background documents which provide additional information regarding the community engagement and evidence base work that was undertaken during the initial stages of the Plan's preparation. Of particular importance concerning community engagement are also Background Documents 1 (Neighbourhood plan questionnaire and results), 2 (Workshops and Community Engagement) and 3 (Community Engagement and School Documentation) (Refs. BD1-BD3), which I have considered.

- 3.6 The decision to undertake the preparation of the Neighbourhood Plan was taken in June 2013, following three public meetings held in May 2013 in both Parishes and the distribution of an initial questionnaire to 1,200 households in the Parishes, accompanied by extensive local publicity. An initial workshop for Steering Group members was held in June 2013 and a number of Working Groups were set up with the aim of consulting with the community and collating data on various key aspects which were considered to be important, e.g. Transport and Access, Environment, Social and Community, Economy.
- 3.7 The preparation of the Plan and the associated community engagement and consultation has involved five main stages, as follows:
- Stage 1: Initial work and consultation (Summer/Autumn 2013).
  - Stage 2: Workshops, 'Community Surgeries', Public Exhibitions, evidence base work, data collection and consultation (throughout 2014 and 2015).
  - Stage 3: Additional survey work, preparation of Background Documents and preparation of the draft Plan for pre-submission consultation (2016-2020).
  - Stage 4: Pre-submission consultation on the draft Neighbourhood Plan (Regulation 14) (March-May 2021).
  - Stage 5: Submission to SBC, Regulation 16 consultation and examination (Spring 2022 to Autumn 2022).
- 3.8 Stage 1 comprised the initial workshops and public meeting held in May and June 2013, the questionnaire survey of all households in the two Parishes, the analysis of the results to that survey and the initial work of the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and its themed working groups.
- 3.9 Work during Stage 2, extending between late-2013 and 2015, focused on undertaking specific surveys on housing needs (as reference in Background Document BD6), local businesses (as referenced in Background Document BD7) and parking needs for residents living at The Street (as referenced in Background Document BD4). These surveys informed the development of the Plan's vision, objectives, priorities and housing strategy.
- 3.10 Stage 3 of the Plan's preparation extended from 2016 through to 2020 and involved the preparation of further evidence base material including a number of Background Documents, covering topics including Rural Landscape Area Assessments; Open Spaces and Community Wellbeing; the Parish Councils' 'Call for Sites' in 2016 and subsequent assessments of the 23 sites submitted; an assessment of sites within the two Parishes that were submitted to SBC's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) process in 2020; and Traffic and Transport. The preparation of this evidence base material informed the drafting of the Plan and its Policies. I have considered all of the various Background Documents (Refs. BD1-BD17) and am satisfied that they provide a comprehensive evidence base for the draft Plan and that, where relevant, are appropriately referenced within the Plan itself.

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- 3.11 The principal consultation event during Stage 4 was the publication of the Regulation 14 draft Plan for public consultation between 15 March and 14 May 2021. As the consultation took place during the coronavirus lockdown period, it was not possible to hold any public events. However, a leaflet was distributed to each household and business in the two Parishes. There was further local publicity within the Plan area and on local media. A total of 36 consultation responses were received, equating to a 3% response rate. Whilst low, this response rate is viewed by the Qualifying Body as an indication that the draft Plan was not considered to be controversial within the communities. Additionally, statutory consultees and SBC were notified individually of the consultation, as set out at pages 2 and 3 of the Consultation Statement. A total of eleven responses were received to this statutory consultation, including three responses from developers or their consultants. The Consultation Statement contains a comprehensive record (at Appendices 1-7) of the Regulation 14 consultation, the responses received, and the amendments made to the draft Plan following those responses.
- 3.12 Stage 5 of the Plan's preparation was the formal submission of the draft Plan by the Parish Councils to SBC on 18 May 2022 for examination under Regulation 15. Regulation 16 consultation was then held for a period of six weeks from 13 June to 25 July 2022.
- 3.13 I consider that the Consultation Statement and its accompanying background documents BD1-BD3 provide a full record of the consultation and engagement work that was undertaken during the preparation of the Plan. This includes the actions that were taken to amend or modify the draft Plan following consultation responses received at the Regulation 14 consultation stage in Spring 2021.
- 3.14 I have taken account of the 31 responses received at the Regulation 16 consultation stage and I am satisfied that a transparent, fair and inclusive consultation process has been followed for the Plan that has had regard to advice in the PPG on plan preparation and engagement and is procedurally compliant in accordance with the legal requirements.

#### Development and Use of Land

- 3.15 The Plan, as proposed to be modified, sets out policies in relation to the development and use of land in accordance with s.38A of the 2004 Act. I have found that a significant number of the draft Plan's policies do not relate to the development of use of land and I have recommended modifications throughout my report to make these either legally compliant or to delete the policies.

## Excluded Development

3.16 From my review of the documents before me, the draft Plan does not include policies or proposals that relate to any of the categories of excluded development.<sup>7</sup>

## Human Rights

3.17 Neither SBC nor any other party has raised any issues concerning a breach of, or incompatibility with Convention rights (within the meaning of the Human Rights Act 1998). From my assessment of the Plan, its accompanying supporting documents and the consultation responses made to the Plan at the Regulations 14 and 16 stages, I am satisfied that the Plan has had regard to the fundamental rights and freedoms guaranteed under the European Convention on Human Rights and complies with the Human Rights Act 1998. In this respect, I have taken particular account of the Equality Impact Assessment contained in the Basic Conditions Statement. I consider that none of the objectives and policies in the Plan will have a negative impact on groups with protected characteristics. Many will have a positive impact.

## 4. Compliance with the Basic Conditions

### EU Obligations

4.1 SBC issued a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening Report in accordance with the Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004 ('the SEA Regulations') in September 2021. This Screening Report is submitted alongside the draft Plan and concluded (at paragraph 8.2) that, the assessment finds that, given the amount of development proposed, no likely effects will occur as a result of the BDNP and it is recommended that a full SEA does not need to be undertaken for the BDNP. The draft Screening Report was the subject of consultation with the Environment Agency, Natural England and Historic England during August/September 2021. A response was received only from Natural England, and the Council remained satisfied that environmental effects raised by Natural England would be mitigated satisfactorily as part of the planning process and that a full SEA would not be required for the BDNP. Both Historic England and the Environment Agency were given a further opportunity to respond, but again no responses were received from those bodies.

4.2 I have considered the SEA methodology set out in the Screening Report (at Section 6) and process by which the Plan was duly screened to determine whether the Plan is likely to have significant environmental effects, bearing in mind also that the policies in the adopted SBLP were subject to sustainability appraisal at the relevant stages. Overall, I am

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<sup>7</sup> The meaning of 'excluded development' is set out in s.61K of the 1990 Act.

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satisfied that a proportionate approach has been taken and that the Plan was screened to take full account of any potential effects upon interests of environmental, landscape, historic and heritage importance.

- 4.3 The Plan was also screened by SBC in September 2021 in order to establish whether the Plan required Habitats Regulations Assessment (HRA), noting that both the SBLP and (withdrawn) February 2021 Regulation 19 Pre-Submission LPR were subject to HRA. There are two sites of European importance within 5 kilometres of the Plan area boundary, those being the Blean Complex Special Area of Conservation (SAC) site, which lies partly within the Church Woods SSSI and adjoins the Ellenden Woods SSSI, and the Swale Special Protection Area (SPA/Ramsar site). The HRA Screening Assessment, which is contained within the Screening Report at Section 7, states (at paragraph 7.15) that the draft Plan will have likely significant effects on the Swale SPA in respect of the potential for additional recreational disturbance arising from new residential development in the Plan area. The assessment goes on to state that such disturbance can be mitigated by a financial contribution linked to planning permissions for new residential development in the Plan area in accordance with the existing Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS), which is in place to address this specific issue. Natural England, Historic England and the Environment Agency were consulted on the HRA Screening Assessment, and I note from Natural England's response (dated 8 September 2021) that the SAMMS approach is considered to be a sound solution to mitigate against potential recreational disturbance on the SPA. On this basis, the Council considers that the Plan will not adversely affect the integrity of any European site and that a full HRA Appropriate Assessment of the Neighbourhood Plan is not required (notwithstanding the consideration of the 'People Over Wind'<sup>8</sup> judgment as outlined in paragraph 2.7 of the Screening Report).
- 4.4 Given SBC already has well established measures in place to manage potential recreational disturbance impacts through an agreed strategic solution; the relatively recent and comprehensive HRA work in relation to the SBLP and withdrawn Regulation 19 Pre-Submission LPR; and Natural England's comments on this matter, I am on balance inclined to agree this is a proportionate and reasonable approach in these specific circumstances. Accordingly, I am satisfied that the Plan is compatible with EU obligations under retained EU law.

## Main Assessment

- 4.5 The NPPF states (at paragraph 29) that "*Neighbourhood planning gives communities the power to develop a shared vision for their area. Neighbourhood plans can shape, direct and help to deliver sustainable development, by influencing local planning decisions as part of the statutory development plan*" and also that "*Neighbourhood plans should*

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<sup>8</sup> *Case C-323/17 People Over Wind & Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta ('People over Wind')*

*not promote less development than set out in the strategic policies for the area, or undermine those strategic policies".* The NPPF (at paragraph 11) also sets out the presumption in favour of sustainable development. It goes on to state (at paragraph 13) that neighbourhood plans should support the delivery of strategic policies contained in local plans; and should shape and direct development that is outside of these strategic policies.

- 4.6 Having considered above whether the Plan complies with various legal and procedural requirements, it is now necessary to deal with the question of whether it complies with the remaining Basic Conditions (see paragraph 1.13 of this report), particularly the regard it pays to national policy and guidance, the contribution it makes to sustainable development and whether it is in general conformity with strategic development plan policies.
- 4.7 I test the Plan against the Basic Conditions by considering specific issues of compliance of the Plan's 55 policies, which address the following themes: Housing; Traffic and Transport; Business and Employment; Community Wellbeing and Health; Educational Provision; and Environment, Landscape Character and Design.
- 4.8 As part of that assessment, I consider whether the policies in the Plan are sufficiently clear and unambiguous, having regard to advice in the PPG. A policy should be drafted with sufficient clarity that a decision maker can apply it consistently and with confidence when determining planning applications. It should be concise, precise and supported by appropriate evidence.<sup>9</sup> I recommend some modifications as a result.

## Overview

- 4.9 The Plan is addressing the period from 2022 to 2031. It seeks to provide a clear planning framework for Boughton and Dunkirk, which delivers sustainable forms of development and achieves the goals identified through community engagement during the Plan's preparation. Sections 5-10 of the Plan contains specific policies in respect of each of the themes listed above.
- 4.10 Section 1 of the Plan sets out the aim, vision statement and key objectives for the Plan. The aim of the Plan, produced in consultation with both communities, is to guide and manage the challenges of future development within the Parishes. The vision statement is as follows: *"That in 2031, Boughton and Dunkirk will be safe communities, where those who work or grow up here can afford to live, where families can raise children, where the elderly can remain in the small rural communities of which they have long been part, and where every person has access to necessary education, health and leisure facilities".* There

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<sup>9</sup> PPG Reference ID: 41-041-20140306.

are six key objectives, covering each of the themes listed in paragraph 4.7 above.

- 4.11 Section 2 of the Plan is entitled 'About Us' and contains a brief history and description of each of the settlements of Boughton, Dunkirk and South Street, including details of some of the more important buildings within the two Parishes.
- 4.12 Section 3, entitled 'Neighbourhood Plan Development', provides a description of how the Plan has been prepared since 2013, and a summary of the five stages of community engagement and consultation listed at paragraph 3.7 above. It includes a map (Map I) of the designated area (on page 7). It also briefly describes the relevant strategic and national planning context for the Plan area, being the adopted SBLP and the NPPF.
- 4.13 Section 4, entitled 'Planning Policy Context' contains an analysis of the key planning policy parameters affecting both Parishes, including data on residential accommodation, employment and travel. It sets out the relevant extract from the adopted SBLP that addresses Boughton and Dunkirk and Boughton's status as a Rural Local Service Centre, together with the relevant Local Plan policy extracts affecting Dunkirk and its status as a Village with a Built-up Boundary.
- 4.14 The Basic Conditions Statement (at Section 1) describes how the Plan, and its objectives and policies, has regard to national policies contained in the NPPF and contributes to the achievement of sustainable development. Section 2 of the Basic Conditions Statement sets out how the Plan's policies are in general conformity with the strategic policies (Policies ST1-ST4 and Policies CP1-CP8) in the adopted SBLP.
- 4.15 As noted at paragraph 2.6 above, upon my initial assessment of the Plan and with regard to the emerging LPR, I sought confirmation from SBC as to whether or not the commentary at paragraphs 5.4.2 and 5.5.1 (and Maps III and IV) in the draft Plan regarding proposed developments within the Plan area, that are being considered as part of the LPR, is accurate and up to date. Furthermore, I sought confirmation that the statement at paragraph 5.5.1 that "*There are currently proposals for 24,000 new houses **in our area***" (my emphasis) refers to either the whole of the Borough Council area or possibly a wider area than that. I was also unclear whether this refers to existing commitments (up to 2031) or for proposals that will extend beyond 2031, or for both. Finally, I also requested that SBC provide me with the latest available timetable (of key milestones) for the preparation and examination of the LPR.
- 4.16 In response to these matters, SBC confirmed that the commentary at paragraph 5.4.2 remains accurate and up to date, but that paragraph 5.5.1 should be amended to more clearly set out the quantum of development for the Borough over the Neighbourhood Plan period. The Qualifying Body duly suggested draft replacement text for paragraph

5.5.1, which I consider to be appropriate, subject to some very minor amendments, and I therefore recommend modification **PM2** accordingly.

4.17 Overall, subject to the further modifications I recommend to specific policies below, I am satisfied that individually and collectively the Plan's policies will contribute to the achievement of sustainable patterns of development. There are also a number of other detailed matters which require amendment to ensure that the policies have the necessary regard to national policy and are in general conformity with the strategic policies of SBC. Accordingly, I recommend modifications in this report in order to address those matters.

### Specific Issues of Compliance

4.18 I turn now to consider each of the proposed policies which are contained in Section 5 of the Plan, and I take into account, where appropriate, the representations that have been made concerning the policies.

### Housing

4.19 Section 5 of the Plan addresses the theme of Housing in the Plan area and contains ten policies (Policies H1-H10). The draft policies are linked to four objectives, which are:

- 1. To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a quality home whilst ensuring minimal impact on the traffic-sensitive areas exposed by the questionnaire.*
- 2. To ensure that new development is of high-quality design, built to high sustainability standards (i.e. energy efficient and with vehicle electrical charging points), reinforces local distinctiveness, and minimises impact on the landscape. New and improved utility infrastructure including wastewater and water supply, will be encouraged and supported in order to meet the identified needs of the community subject to other policies in the plan.*
- 3. Preferential access to new homes will be given to people with a proven local connection. Where a local need has been established, this will apply to those sites already allocated in the Swale Local Plan and to those allocated by this Plan; they must be placed in sustainable locations and support the environmental aims of the NP. This will be achieved with Section 106 agreements, monitored by Swale Borough Council.*
- 4. Traffic issues and parking are of the highest concern. Development will be expected to fully address the impacts on traffic and parking issues in the area.*

4.20 Policies H1-H4 address Objective 1. Policy 1 states that in order to provide new housing to meet local needs, including a range of affordable housing for Boughton and Dunkirk, housing sites must be in sustainable locations and minimise additional traffic particularly on Boughton Hill or through The Street. To ensure that future housing meets the needs of the

whole community including the disabled and the elderly, all dwellings will be required to be Building Regulations Part M compliant.

- 4.21 Policy H2 proposes the allocation of land at the rear of 89 The Street in Boughton (Colonels Lane), which adjoins (to the east) two sites allocated in the SBLP for residential development, for the development of up to 12 dwellings. The site is defined on Map V.
- 4.22 Policy H3 seeks to provide a mix of housing types including smaller homes for elderly villagers wishing to downsize and for young singles, couples or families needing their first home. The Policy also states that a site with five more houses must provide 40% affordable homes.
- 4.23 Policy H4 is a First Homes policy and states that First Homes will be available to people with a local connection only. If a property remains unsold after a six-month period, it should be extended for a further three months to include those with a local connection to an adjoining Parish area. If it continues to remain unsold, it will then be eligible for open market sale.
- 4.24 Policies H5 and H6 address Objective 2. Policy H5 is in three parts (H5a, H5b and H5c). Part a) states that new developments will be of good design and locally distinctive style, respecting the Kent Design Guide principles and include green spaces and play areas. Part b) states that new developments will be sympathetic to the street scene and their settings as set out in the agreed design code. Part c) states that new developments will be carbon neutral and contribute to energy reduction.
- 4.25 Policy H6 is in two parts (H6a and H6b). Part a) states that all areas identified in the Plan for new developments, including those already in the Local Plan, should be the subject of agreed design codes or briefs prepared by the applicant and/or developer in consultation with the public to ensure new developments will be of good quality and locally distinctive style. Part b) states that the new site at Colonels Lane falls within the SAMMS area and new residential development will be required to make a contribution towards mitigation measures in respect of the designated SPAs.
- 4.26 Policy H7 addresses Objective 3. It states that new developments will require that purchasers and occupiers of homes within the areas identified for new development, should be individuals or families with a proven local connection, people whose health dictates a move within the Parishes or people who have satisfied either Parish Council of their merit and need, to be applied in accordance with the standards set out in BD5.
- 4.27 Policies H8-H10 address Objective 4. Policy H8 states that all development will have sufficient off-road parking to ensure that no on-street parking is attributable to the development (except during construction).

- 4.28 Policy H9 states that there will be at least one parking space per bedroom, and will include garages, car ports and off-road parking in accordance with the Parking Standards set out in BD4.
- 4.29 Policy H10 states that development proposals that involve the conversion of existing garage space to living accommodation will only be supported in principle if adequate off-street parking is available to support the completed development.
- 4.30 I have given very careful consideration to each of these policies, and have also considered the representations, a number of which are extensive, concerning various policies in this section of the Plan. My assessment of each of the policies is set out in paragraphs 4.31-4.39 below. I have also taken into consideration the relevant Background Documents concerning this section of the Plan, the most important of which are BD5, BD6, BD13 and BD14.
- 4.31 As drafted, Policy H1 is a broad policy which seeks to provide support for the development of new housing to meet local needs at sustainable locations within the Plan area, subject to such housing being compliant with Part M of the Building Regulations. I consider that the Policy should provide greater clarity on the development strategy of the Plan as it relates to new residential development within the Plan area, for the benefit of Plan users. Therefore, I consider that some amendments to the text of the Policy are necessary, and these are set out at recommended modification **PM3**.
- 4.32 Policy H2 proposes the allocation of land at the rear of 89 The Street, Boughton for the development of up to 12 new dwellings. This proposal is the subject of a number of representations, for example including the fact that it will require vehicular access to be secured from land to the east in Colonels Lane, although that land is already allocated for residential development in the SBLP. Other representations state that the allocation of this single site in the Plan is insufficient to address the identified housing need in the Plan area. I consider the various additional sites put forward for potential residential development as part of certain representations in more detail at paragraphs 4.40-4.41 below.
- 4.33 From everything that I have read, and seen during my site visit, I am satisfied that the allocation of the land covered by Policy H2 for the development of up to 12 new dwellings is justified, and can be achieved during the Plan period in accordance with other policies in this Plan and the adopted SBLP. However, as drafted, the Policy does lack sufficient detail to enable users of the Plan to consider the planning context for the future development of the site. Accordingly, I recommend modification **PM4** to address this deficiency.
- 4.34 Policy H3 is a housing mix policy, but also includes a requirement for developments of five or more dwellings to include 40% affordable homes. I have considered those representations objecting to the level of the



affordable housing requirement. Policy DM8 of the adopted SBLP seeks 40% affordable housing provision in the Plan area “*for development proposals of eleven or more dwellings, and where a need to provide affordable housing has been determined as appropriate (including within a rural area as determined by a Parish Housing Needs Assessment) ...*”. In the case of this Plan, BD6 (Housing Needs Survey) clearly demonstrates a significant local need for additional affordable housing (of all tenures) within the Plan area. However, such a need is not unusual for many parts of the country. In my assessment, it is not sufficient justification to depart from the Borough Council’s threshold of eleven or more dwellings to a lower threshold of five or more dwellings. Policy DM8 covers all parts of Swale Borough, and the lower threshold in this Plan area could threaten the viability of relatively small-scale residential developments, including the proposal contained at Policy H2. Accordingly, I consider that some amendments to the Policy text are required, and these are addressed by recommended modification **PM5**.

- 4.35 Policy H4 is a First Homes policy, reflecting the Government’s policy initiative that was introduced in 2021. The Policy text requires some amendments to more closely align with the national policy requirements, whilst retaining reference to local eligibility criteria. These amendments are addressed by recommended modification **PM6**.
- 4.36 Policy H5, as drafted, is in three parts and could be interpreted by some users of the Plan as being three separate and unrelated policies. In my assessment, all three parts of the Policy are related to the good design of new residential developments, and I therefore consider that this Policy should be consolidated into a single set of design and planning requirements that are applicable to all residential development proposals, for better clarification to users of the Plan. Recommended modification **PM7** addresses the proposed amendments to the text of the Policy.
- 4.37 Policy H6, as drafted, is in two parts and I again consider that both parts of the Policy are applicable to all residential development proposals within the Plan area. I therefore recommend some amendments in order to consolidate the Policy’s requirements as a single policy, and these are addressed by recommended modification **PM8**.
- 4.38 Policy H7 has been drafted to reflect the objective to give preferential access to new homes to people with a proven local connection. However, as drafted, the Policy would apply to any new home within the Plan area that is offered for sale on the housing market. Furthermore, it includes a health criterion and an indication that prospective purchasers of new homes will need to satisfy the Parish Councils ‘*of their merit and need*’. Whilst such eligibility criteria may be relevant to the allocation of Affordable Housing units (including First Homes), there is no national or strategic planning policy guidance that would support such criteria being applied to the sale of market housing to prospective purchasers by private developers, unless it is on a purely voluntary basis. Equally, there is no justification for such purchasers to be, in some way, vetted by the

Parish Councils and this could be interpreted as being potentially discriminatory. This Policy and its accompanying objective therefore require significant amendment, if the Plan is to meet the Basic Conditions. In my assessment, the principles underlying this Policy can only apply, to some extent, to the allocation of new Affordable Housing units that are built within the Plan area, and my recommended modification **PM9** reflects that assessment, in order that the Policy and the Plan itself meets the Basic Conditions.

- 4.39 Policies H8-H10 are all addressing the provision of adequate off-road parking for new residential developments and, as drafted, there is some duplication between elements of the three policies. In my assessment, the requirements of the three policies can be satisfactorily consolidated into a single policy which will meet the aims of Objective 4. On that basis, I therefore recommend modification **PM10** which addresses a single new Policy to be numbered H8 and the deletion of Policies H9 and H10.
- 4.40 Representors to the Plan have proposed either the formal allocation or identification of other sites within the Plan area for residential development. These sites comprise Land North of The Street, Boughton (with capacity for c. 75 dwellings – Redrow Homes); Land at Forester’s Lodge Farm which extends to the north and south of the A2 road south of Dunkirk village (to be known as ‘Winterbourne Fields’ with capacity for c. 1,400 dwellings and other types of development – Shaptor Capital); Land to the rear of the White Horse public house and the Queens Head public house, The Street, Boughton (with a combined capacity for c. 5 dwellings – Shepherd Neame Ltd.); and that part of the proposed South East Faversham development which falls within Boughton-under-Blean Parish (with a potential capacity for the whole development site of c. 2,500 dwellings - Duchy of Cornwall). With the exception of the two sites controlled by Shepherd Neame Ltd., I consider that the sites being promoted by Redrow Homes, Shaptor Capital and the Duchy of Cornwall are of a size and scale that should, quite properly, be considered as part of the emerging LPR process. Although the previous (February 2021) Regulation 19 Pre-Submission consultation on the LPR included the South East Faversham site as a proposed strategic allocation for development to the east of Faversham, and it is identified in the more recent Regulation 18 consultation document as a preferred option, it is the case that it does not form part of the approved Development Plan, against which this Plan must be tested and examined. Similarly, neither of the sites being promoted by Redrow Homes and Shaptor Capital form part of the approved Development Plan, and it is a matter for SBC whether the sites will form part of its forthcoming Regulation 19 Pre-Submission consultation on the LPR to be followed by formal submission to the Secretary of State and examination. This will not occur until February/March 2023, as indicated in SBC’s Local Development Scheme (dated July 2022). In the event that the LPR contains strategic proposals for further residential development in the Plan area up to 2031, it will be for the Parish Councils to consider whether the Plan should be reviewed, and I refer to that point at paragraph 4.85 of this report.

- 4.41 In the case of the two sites controlled by Shepherd Neame Ltd., I consider that proposals for the small-scale residential developments envisaged could be brought forward through the normal development management process and be tested against the policies in both this Plan and the adopted SBLP. In that respect, I note that both sites fall outside, but directly adjoin, the designated Boughton Street Conservation Area.
- 4.42 With recommended modifications PM3-PM10, I consider that the Plan's section on Housing and its accompanying policies (to be numbered Policies H1-H8) is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the SBLP, has regard to national guidance, would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and so would meet the Basic Conditions.

### Traffic and Transport

- 4.43 Section 6 of the Plan addresses the theme of traffic and transport in the Plan area and contains eleven policies (Policies T1-T11). The draft policies address four objectives, which are:
1. *High priority in the policies and implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan must be given to dealing with the transport and environmental changes to the A2/M2 corridor and to development at Faversham and Canterbury*
  2. *All development will be expected to include proposals to mitigate congestion problems in the area, and the intrusive effects of traffic. The villages of Boughton and Dunkirk, and the surrounding countryside, are to be protected from the impacts of threatened increase in traffic. The NP requires all developments to provide off-road parking in accordance with the Parking Standards set out in BD4.*
  3. *Development proposals will require measures to allow safe walking, cycling and use of public transport.*
  4. *Any development must not add to parking problems in the area, and existing parking issues need to be addressed and should include measures to ensure adequate parking provision is included to serve the needs of the development*
- 4.44 Policies T1-T3 are linked to Objective 1. Policy T1 states that the Parish Councils will continue to seek improvements to traffic flow along the A2 and at the Brenley Corner junction, while restricting access to some roads in Boughton by HGVs and other through traffic. Policy T2 states that measures to improve the junction at Brenley Corner should recognise and respect its rural setting. Policy T3 states that the Parish Councils will play an active role in the preparation and implementation of a design and development brief for the Duchy Land in respect of traffic and pedestrian routes.
- 4.45 Policies T4 and T5 are linked to Objective 2. Policy T4 states that, to reduce the adverse effects of traffic on the villages, all developments and surrounding villages will be limited by the capacity and nature of the road network necessary to accommodate them. Policy T5 states that further

development in the countryside is resisted beyond that which is allowed by the NPPF and SBLP Policy ST3, in order to avoid any increased negative impact on the current road system and the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network.

- 4.46 Policies T6-T8 are linked to Objective 3. Policy T6 states that the Parish Councils will work with the Highway Authority and the bus companies to improve facilities and information at the bus stops. Policy T7 states that the Parish Councils will work with Kent County Council to improve cycle and pedestrian routes. Policy T8 states that the Parish Councils will work with the Highway Authority and landowners to promote the "Walking for Health" routes shown on Maps VI and VII.
- 4.47 Policies T9-T11 are linked to Objective 4. Policy T9 states that future residential and non-residential buildings shall have sufficient dedicated on-site parking spaces in accordance with the Parking Standards contained in BD4. Policy T10 states that all proposals for new lorry parking in the Brenley Lane/Homestall Lane area will be resisted. Policy T11 states that proposals for a surfaced and managed car parking area, for example at Brenley Lane, will be supported to promote car sharing.
- 4.48 Upon my initial assessment of the Plan, I was concerned that a number of the draft policies under this theme are not land-use planning policies, but are instead statements of intent to address highways-related issues, such as traffic flow on the road network. This led to my fourth question as set out at paragraph 2.6 above, in which I noted that Policies T1, T2, T3, T6, T7, T8 and T10, as drafted, are not land-use planning policies, but are instead statements of intent regarding existing or possible future highways conditions, or to promote improvements etc. which are the responsibility of the Highways Authorities (rather than the Local Planning Authority). However, I also considered that the Plan could address some of these issues in the form of land-use planning policies by including policies which seek to promote sustainable modes of transport (walking, cycling and public transport) in the Plan area, such as the establishment of "Walking for Health" routes, related to an objective that seeks to achieve sustainable development within the Plan area. Where appropriate, it may be possible to secure some of the desired improvements by planning obligations linked to planning permissions. Alternatively, I noted that the content of Policies T1, T2, T3, T6, T7, T8 and T10 can remain in the Plan, not as policies but as supporting statements to the presently drafted objectives. I therefore invited the Qualifying Body to provide me with a note on how they wished me to proceed with regard to this matter.
- 4.49 The Qualifying Body responded by suggesting revisions to both the objectives and the draft policies under this theme. I have given very careful consideration to the suggested draft revisions. In my assessment they do address my principal concerns and, subject to some further minor amendments, I recommend those revisions to the text of the objectives and policies in Section 6.6 as part of consolidated modification **PM11**. I

do not recommend any modifications to the text of Policies T4, T5, T9 and T11, but they will be re-numbered as Policies T1, T2 T3 and T4 respectively.

- 4.50 With recommended modification PM11, I consider that the Plan's section on Traffic and Transport and its accompanying policies (to be numbered Policies T1-T4) is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the SBLP, has regard to national guidance, would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and so would meet the Basic Conditions.

### Business and Employment

- 4.51 Section 7 of the Plan addresses the theme of business and employment in the Plan area and contains three policies (Policies BE1-BE3). The draft policies address three objectives, which are:

1. *To ensure the continuing vibrancy of the villages, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maintain and encourage proportionate expansion of local enterprises and retail outlets to encourage community use as well as to provide opportunity for employment and training for local people. This includes prioritising development on brownfield sites.*
2. *To support sustainable and economic growth which respects the character of the area, reflecting the results of our community consultation.*
3. *To maintain the essentially rural nature and character of the two parishes, any commercial development should be measured, proportionate in size and type, and sustainable in the context of traffic and other infrastructural consideration.*

- 4.52 Policy BE1 is linked to Objective 1 and states that proposals for the expansion of present enterprises either on existing sites or alternative sites must reflect the overall development strategy of the Plan, including the redevelopment of brownfield sites. Such expansion must provide opportunities for increased local employment and training.

- 4.53 Policy BE2 is linked to objective 2 and states that proposals for commercial development must be in keeping with the treasured character of the Neighbourhood Plan environment.

- 4.54 Policy BE3, linked to objective 3, states that any new or expanded commercial enterprise is required to provide its own dedicated parking and include a Goods Movement Plan to minimise the use of HGVs in the delivery and movement of goods.

- 4.55 In my assessment, the text of Policy BE1 requires some amendment, as it presently only refers to existing enterprises within the Plan area and fails to encourage and promote the development of new businesses, in all employment sectors. This has insufficient regard to national policy and

guidance, and I therefore recommend modification **PM12** in order to address that matter.

- 4.56 With regard to Policy BE2, as part of my initial assessment of the Plan, I noted that, as this Policy is presently drafted, I was unclear what constitutes in land use planning terms “*the treasured character of the Neighbourhood Plan environment*” as that may affect proposals for commercial development. I further noted that the Policy will be very difficult to implement in the absence of a clearer understanding, both within the Policy and within its supporting material, of the factors that should be taken into consideration by future users of the Plan and those considering new commercial developments, to ensure that they can comply with the Policy. As my fifth question (see paragraph 2.6 above), I invited the Qualifying Body to provide me with a clarificatory note indicating the sort of land-use planning criteria that might reflect the treasured character of the Plan area and which would impact specifically upon the consideration of proposals for commercial development, which I could consider as possible development and design criteria for inclusion in the Policy to meet the Basic Conditions. I also noted that this may need to include cross-references to policies in Section 10 of the Plan. The Qualifying Body responded to me on this matter by suggesting some amendments to both the text of the Policy and to its relevant objective. I have given careful consideration to those suggested amendments, but I do not consider they provide sufficient clarity for users of the Plan in order to be able to assess the full implications of the Policy. I therefore recommend some further amendments to the Policy text, but not to the objective, in order to secure the necessary clarity for users of the Plan, and this is addressed by recommended modification **PM13**.
- 4.57 I have also given careful consideration to the text of Policy BE3, as it includes a requirement for a Goods Movement Plan to be submitted for any new or expanded commercial enterprise. This will be an excessive and unnecessary requirement for some proposed developments, such as relatively minor extensions to business premises, and the Policy text therefore needs to be qualified to indicate that a Goods Movement Plan may be required for certain proposals. Recommended modification **PM14** addresses this point.
- 4.58 With recommended modifications PM12-PM14, I consider that the Plan’s section on Business and Employment and its accompanying policies (Policies BE1-BE3) is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the SBLP, has regard to national guidance, would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and so would meet the Basic Conditions.

### [Community Wellbeing and Health](#)

- 4.59 Section 8 addresses the theme of community wellbeing and health in the Plan area and contains four policies (Policies CWB1-CWB4). The draft policies address two objectives, which are:

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1. *To enhance the use of all present recreational spaces and facilities, and to promote the health of the whole community by encouraging physical exercise.*
  2. *To broaden recreational opportunities and highlight the benefits of the outdoor environment for community members of all ages, not least for young adults, as well as for visitors to the parishes.*
- 4.60 Policies CWB1-CWB3 are linked to Objective 1. Policy CWB1 states that the promotion and use of the green environment through new and existing designated trails which link throughout the Parishes will be supported. Policy CWB2 states that the provision of suitable recreational facilities upon new or existing sites will be supported. Policy CWB3 states that development proposals will be supported that will enhance the network of public bridleways and footpaths throughout the Parishes.
- 4.61 Policy CWB4 is linked to Objective 2, and states that development proposals will be supported that will enhance sports facilities within Boughton and Dunkirk villages.
- 4.62 I consider that Policies CWB1, CWB3 and CWB 4 are appropriately drafted to reflect their respective policy objectives.
- 4.63 Policy CWB2 does not fully reflect its policy objective, in that it does not make reference to recreational open spaces, and I therefore recommend some amendments to the text of the Policy to rectify that matter. This is addressed by recommended modification **PM15**.
- 4.64 With recommended modification PM15, I consider that the Plan's section on Community Wellbeing and Health and its accompanying policies (Policies CWB1-CWB4) is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the SBLP, has regard to national guidance, would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and so would meet the Basic Conditions.

### Educational Provision

- 4.65 Section 9 addresses the educational provision in the Plan area and contains four policies (Policies EP1-EP4). The draft policies address three objectives, which are:
1. *To ensure that any proposed new developments within or close to the boundaries of the two parishes must respect the constraints on the present primary school facilities.*
  2. *To promote an ethos of Education for All by encouraging the use of local facilities to offer opportunities for study, personal development and expansion of vocational skills.*
  3. *To meet the needs of a world ever more reliant upon 'new technology', the Plan will focus on providing or encouraging opportunities for training in Information Technology (IT) for all members of the community by adapting or improving current facilities.*

- 4.66 Policies EP1-EP3 are linked to Objective 1. Policy EP1 seeks to ensure that any future residential development takes account of the likely impact upon school provision, and that housing will make a contribution through a Section 106 agreement. Policy EP2 seeks to improve parking provision and traffic flow at the beginning and end of the school day, as well as ensuring safe crossing places in The Street, and to also support the provision of a shuttle bus within the two Parishes to serve the school to reduce the number of private vehicles travelling to and from the school. Policy EP3 states that consideration could be given to the possible re-siting of the present school should adjacent land become available, in consultation with Kent County Council, and that any such project should balance the needs of future expansion with the ethos and character of a rural school.
- 4.67 Policy EP4 is linked to Objectives 2 and 3, and states that proposals for the enhancement of facilities for continuing study will be supported, including the development of vocational and information technology skills and the improvement of broadband access and speed.
- 4.68 Upon my initial assessment of the Plan, I considered that, as presently drafted, each of Policies EP1-EP4 is technically a statement rather than a valid land-use planning policy. Furthermore, Policy EP2 covers, in part, highways matters, e.g. traffic flow. I further considered that the main issue being addressed by this section of the Plan is to ensure that the facilities at the Boughton and Dunkirk Primary School, either at its existing site or at an alternative site, are able to meet the needs of the children of existing and new residents. I considered that draft policies which seek to address that issue, and linked to material presently within Policies EP1, EP2 and EP3, should be drafted, and linked if appropriate to planning contributions to be secured by Section 106 agreements attached to planning permissions for new developments in the Plan area. As my sixth question (see paragraph 2.6 above), I therefore invited the Qualifying Body to provide me with a note to set out the text of revised policies (utilising the existing text as far as is practicable) that seeks to address/focus on the land-use planning aspects of the issues covered in this section of the Plan, that I could consider as potential modifications to the Plan. Again, as with my fourth question, I noted that I cannot recommend wholly new, unrelated policies so the scope of the proposed approach is constrained.
- 4.69 The Qualifying Body responded by suggesting revisions to both the objectives and the draft policies under this theme. I have given careful consideration to the suggested draft revisions. In my assessment they do address my principal concerns and I recommend those revisions, without further amendment, to the text of the objectives and policies in Section 9 of the Plan as part of consolidated modification **PM16**. I do not recommend any modifications to the text of Policy EP4 but it should be re-numbered as Policy EP2.
- 4.70 With recommended modification PM16, I consider that the Plan's section on Educational Provision and its accompanying policies (to be numbered



Policies EP1 and EP2) is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the SBLP, has regard to national guidance, would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and so would meet the Basic Conditions.

### Environment, Landscape Character and Design

4.71 Section 10 addresses the theme of Environment, Landscape Character and Design in the Plan area and contains ten policies (Policies E1-E10), together with thirteen area-specific policies (Policies AS1-AS13). The draft policies address four objectives, whilst the Area-specific policies each address an objective for the area concerned. The objectives relating to Policies E1-E10 are as follows:

1. *To safeguard and enhance the distinctive identity and rural character of both Boughton and Dunkirk parishes and to maintain their separate identities and physical separation from the nearby communities of Faversham and Canterbury. To protect from development the countryside gaps between them, the open landscape between the A2 and the Boughton Street Conservation Area, and other heritage assets, and the significant views to and from The Blean and to the coast.*
2. *To continue to protect and enhance the Blean Woods area that surrounds Dunkirk, the fruit belt areas north and south of Boughton, as well as the settings of the Conservation Areas of the parishes. To give special protection to sites in or near to designated landscape areas, as included in the Swale Local Plan, and to designated wildlife sites, and to encourage their enhancement and proper management.*
3. *To minimise the environmental impact of new development, including surface water drainage, water supply and quality; to ensure that all new development is sympathetic to its setting and that it enhances the high-quality landscape and improves local biodiversity; to ensure that any development is compatible with its built and natural context and to locate new development within easy walking distance of existing village facilities. It will encourage access to bus stops, thus minimising traffic congestion, the related emissions and pedestrian safety concerns.*
4. *All proposals for development must contain sufficient detail to demonstrate that the proposal is of high-quality design appropriate to its surroundings, with suitable layout and access arrangements. Proposals for development within or visible from the Conservation Areas must have regard to the principles set out in the Boughton Conservation Area Appraisals (BD8) and Landscape Character Areas (BD10). The traditional pattern of growth which characterises the parishes of Boughton and Dunkirk is one of small scale and gradual change. This must be reflected in the scale of any development permitted in the Neighbourhood Plan area during the plan period. Any external lighting proposed must not cause visual intrusion or light pollution.*

4.72 Policies E1-E3 are linked to Objective 1. Policy E1 states that proposals for development which respect and enhance the tranquillity, local landscape,

character, environmental quality and amenity value of Boughton and Dunkirk Parishes will be supported in principle. Policy E2 states that proposals for developments which actively seek opportunities for landscape, heritage, recreational and ecological gain will similarly be supported in principle, as will the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and the management of the countryside. Policy E3 states that green spaces within the Parishes will continue to be protected from development.

- 4.73 Policies E4 and E5 are linked to Objective 2. Policy E4 states that any development that conflicts with the protection of the natural landscape and sensitive sites and wildlife in 'The Blean' and the surrounding fruit belt will not be supported. Policy E5 states that all proposals for new or extended development having a landscape impact must demonstrate that they have had regard to and reflect the Landscape Character Area in which the application site falls.
- 4.74 Policies E6-E8 are linked to Objective 3. Policy E6 states that proposals which harm the tranquillity, character or amenity value of the landscape and village environment, including an increase in in the generation of traffic, will not be supported. Policy E7 states that development within the village envelope will be supported in principle providing it promotes the re-use, recovery and restoration of previously developed sites. Policy E8 states that a minimum 20% net gain in biodiversity for developments against baseline conditions is required.
- 4.75 Policies E9 and E10 are linked to Objective 4. Policy E9 states that variety in density, layout, building orientation and sizes will be sought to reflect the local context, and that building styles and materials must also respect and positively contribute to local distinctiveness. Policy E10 states that schemes must produce a cohesive and high-quality design approach for car parking, charging points, boundary treatments, bin stores, utility storage boxes, lighting and street furniture, and that all landscaping and boundary planting should be of native species.
- 4.76 I consider that Policies E1-E5 are appropriately drafted and fully reflect their policy objectives. As drafted, Policy E6 simply presents the opposite position to Policy E1, i.e. proposals which harm, as opposed to respect and enhance, the tranquillity, character or amenity of the landscape and village environment will not be supported. In my assessment, it is not necessary to state an opposite position in the form of a separate policy, as it is an implicit outcome of the application of Policy E1 that proposals which do not respect and enhance the tranquillity, local landscape, etc. of the two Parishes will not be supported. Furthermore, as drafted, Policy E6 does not adequately reflect Objective 3 in this section of the Plan. I consider that Policy E6 should be redrafted to more closely reflect its policy objective, and I therefore recommend modification **PM17** accordingly.

- 4.77 Policy E7 reflects its policy objective and also national policy by seeking to promote the development of previously developed land within the built-up areas.
- 4.78 With regard to Policy E8, I noted as part of my initial assessment of the Plan that this Policy stipulates that a minimum 20% BNG for developments against baseline conditions is required. This exceeds the minimum level of at least 10% set out in national policy. I sought confirmation from SBC in my eighth question whether they are content for a minimum level of at least 20% BNG to be required for developments within the Plan area, in the context of policies for the Borough as a whole. SBC responded to me on 9 September 2022 by stating that *"The Council's own direction of travel is to support a minimum 20% net gain in biodiversity (BNG) in the emerging Local Plan Review. Therefore, the Council can confirm that it is content for a minimum level of at least 20% to be required for development in the Plan area, in the context of policies for the Borough as a whole"*. Whilst I acknowledge the Council's position on this matter, I do note that it is a 'direction of travel' in the emerging LPR, and not yet the subject of an adopted Local Plan policy that has been tested at examination (and justified by proportionate evidence). Furthermore, it exceeds current national policy. I have also taken into account the representations that have been submitted regarding this Policy, including the letter from Carter Jonas dated 23 September 2022 in response to my question. As a result of my assessment, I recommend an amendment to Policy E8 in order to reflect national policy, and this is addressed by recommended modification **PM18**.
- 4.79 I consider that Policies E9 and E10 are appropriately drafted to reflect their policy objective.
- 4.80 Sections 10.5-10.13 of the Plan contain the policies (Policies AS1-AS13) relating to specific areas within the Plan area, which are referenced on Map X at page 38 in the Plan. Each of the policies provide more detailed guidance, additional to other policies in the Plan, for the areas concerned. As part of my initial assessment of the Plan, I noted that Map X (Landscape Character Areas) is crucial to the interpretation of policies in Section 10 of the Plan. However, as presently produced it is difficult to interpret, being of a very small-scale. I therefore requested, as part of my questions (see paragraph 2.6 above) that the Qualifying Body or SBC provide me with a larger-scale map, potentially at A4 size, and if necessary, with further inset maps, that could be inserted into the Plan, as a potential modification. As part of its response to my questions, the Qualifying Body supplied me with a full set of higher definition maps for Maps I-XII in the Plan, at A4 size. It is the Qualifying Body's intention to reproduce all of these maps at high-resolution A3 size at page 70 onwards in the Plan, with a suitable cross-reference to them at the appropriate points in the Plan. I agree with this approach, and recommended modification **PM19** addresses the matter.
- 4.81 Policies AS1-AS13 and their respective objectives are as follows:

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#### Policy AS1 – Boughton Fruit Belt North

Objective – To conserve the area and its characteristic agricultural activity, retaining its open nature and emphasising its role in the countryside gap that exists between Faversham and the villages including key views.

#### Policy AS2 – Boughton Street Conservation Area

Objective – To preserve and enhance the area’s special interest and its setting, including the open and wooded landscape between the rear of properties and the A2.

#### Policy AS3 – 1960s/70s/80s Boughton and Dunkirk

Objective – To protect and enhance incidental open spaces.

#### Policy AS4 – “Top of the Hill” Dunkirk

Objective – To conserve the relationship of “top of the hill Dunkirk” with the wider Blean Woods (SSSI).

#### Policy AS5 – Blean Woods West

Objective – To conserve the distinct and tranquil landscape character of the ancient and semi-ancient woodland.

#### Policies AS6, AS7 and AS8 – Boughton A2 Fringe

Objectives – To restrict development south of the built-up area to the two areas on Colonels Lane already allocated for residential use and an additional area immediately to the west, detailed in Policy AS7, and to consider development on the area of relatively level land next to the larger site, and adjoining the built-up area.

#### Policy AS9 – South Street and Boughton Church Conservation Areas

Objective – To ensure both Conservation Areas are protected and enhanced. The management and safeguarding of the churchyard, the memorial garden and burial ground is of key importance to the heritage assets and biodiversity.

#### Policies AS10 and AS11 – Boughton North Fringe

Objective – To maintain the rural character of the Bull Lane area and improve the Village Hall and school surroundings.

## Policies AS12 and AS13 – Boughton Fruit Belt South

Objective – To maintain the open character of the area and in particular its role of the countryside gap between Faversham and the villages.

- 4.82 The specific areas covered by Policies AS1-AS13 are defined on Map X, and I visited all of the areas during the course of my site visit. I have also given careful consideration to the text of each of the policies, as drafted. I consider that Policies AS1-AS6 and Policies AS9-AS13 are all appropriately drafted to reflect their specific objectives, as listed above, and I do not recommend any modifications to those policies. However, with regard to Policies AS7 and AS8, I consider that Policy AS7 requires a suitable cross-reference to other relevant material elsewhere in the Plan, particularly to Map V, and that Policy AS8 requires amendment to reflect the fact that the draft Plan does not seek to propose the formal designation of any Local Green Spaces. Both of these matters are addressed by recommended modification **PM20**.
- 4.83 Additionally, I also consider that this part of Section 10 requires further explanatory text in its introduction to indicate, for the benefit of future users of the Plan, that the area-specific Policies AS1-AS13 should be considered alongside other relevant policies in the Plan and the adopted SBLP that may cover the areas concerned. I therefore recommend modification **PM21** to address this point.
- 4.84 With recommended modifications PM17-PM21, I consider that the Plan's section on Environment, Landscape and Design and its accompanying policies (Policies E1-E10 and Policies AS1-AS13) is in general conformity with the strategic policies of the SBLP, has regard to national guidance, would contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and so would meet the Basic Conditions.

### Other Matters

- 4.85 There is the likelihood that there will be a need for formal review of the Plan during the Plan period, particularly following the adoption of the emerging LPR and any relevant changes in national policy. The Plan does not at present include a section on implementation and monitoring and the need for review. I consider this to be an omission, and I recommend that a new paragraph be added to Section 3 to state that the Plan will be subject to review at regular intervals up to 2031 to ensure that its policies remain suitably aligned to national and local policy, are responsive to climate and other environmental changes and are meeting the overall strategic vision for the future of the two Parishes. I therefore recommend modification **PM22** to address that matter.
- 4.86 As an advisory comment, when the Plan is being redrafted to take account of the recommended modifications in this report, it should be re-checked for any typographical errors and any other consequential changes, etc. that may be necessary. These can be undertaken as minor,

non-material changes.<sup>10</sup>

## Concluding Remarks

4.87 I conclude that, with the recommended modifications to the Plan as summarised above and set out in full in the accompanying Appendix, the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan meets the Basic Conditions for neighbourhood plans.

## 5. Conclusions

### Summary

5.1 The Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan has been duly prepared in compliance with the procedural requirements. My examination has investigated whether the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements for neighbourhood plans. I have had regard to all the responses made following consultation on the Plan, and the supporting documents submitted with the Plan together with the Parish Councils' and SBC's responses to my questions.

5.2 I have made recommendations to modify certain policies and other matters to ensure that the Plan meets the Basic Conditions and other legal requirements. I recommend that the Plan, once modified, proceeds to referendum.

### The Referendum and its Area

5.3 I have considered whether or not the referendum area should be extended beyond the designated area to which the Plan relates. I conclude that the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan, as modified, has no policy or proposal which I consider to be significant enough to have an impact beyond the designated Neighbourhood Plan boundary, requiring the referendum to extend to areas beyond that boundary. Therefore, I recommend that the boundary for the purposes of any future referendum on the Plan should be the boundary of the designated Neighbourhood Plan Area.

### Overview

5.4 It is clear that the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan is the product of much hard work undertaken since 2013 by the Parish Councils, its Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group and the many individuals and stakeholders who have contributed to the preparation and development of the Plan. In my assessment, the Plan reflects the land use aspirations and objectives of the Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk communities for

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<sup>10</sup> PPG Reference ID: 41-106-20190509.

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the future planning of their Parishes up to 2031. The output is a Plan which should help guide the area's development over that period, making a positive contribution to informing decision-making on planning applications by Swale Borough Council.

*Derek Stebbing*

Examiner

## Appendix: Modifications

Proposed modification number (PM)	Page no./ other reference	Modification
PM1	Front Cover and Page 1	<p><u>Plan period 2022-2031</u></p> <p>Add <b>"2022-2031"</b> to the Front Cover.</p> <p>Add new paragraph 1.1.1 to Page 1, to read as follows:</p> <p><b>"1.1.1 The Plan covers the period from 2022 to 2031."</b></p>
PM2	Page 17	<p><u>Paragraph 5.5.1</u></p> <p>Delete existing text in full and replace with:</p> <p><b>"The adopted Local Plan 'Bearing Fruits 2031' (adopted July 2017) allocates enough land to deliver 14,124 dwellings. From 2022, the housing requirement increases from 776 per annum to 1,078 per annum. This means that the Borough Council is expected to allocate sites over the period covered by the current Local Plan and the Local Plan Review (2022-2038) for over 26,650 dwellings in the Borough. None of this is included in this Neighbourhood Plan. If approved, the anticipated increase in population would only exacerbate strains on our public services such as education and health provision and would increase the risk that Boughton and Dunkirk will become a suburb of Faversham."</b></p>
PM3	Page 21	<p><u>Policy H1</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>"The provision of new housing within the Plan area, particularly to meet local needs and including the provision of affordable housing, will be supported, where such proposals comply with all other relevant policies in this Plan and those in the adopted Swale Borough Local Plan.</b></p> <p><b>Proposals for new residential development</b></p>



		<p><b>will need to demonstrate that all aspects of the development comply with the objective of securing sustainable patterns of development within the Plan area, particularly in respect of seeking to minimise environmental impacts, such as traffic generation. All new dwellings should be designed and built to comply with Part M of the Building Regulations (see BD5)."</b></p>
PM4	Page 21	<p><u>Policy H2</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>"Land to the rear of 89 The Street, Boughton, as shown on Map V, is allocated for the development of up to 12 new dwellings. Proposals for the development of the site will be required to:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. include the appropriate proportion of Affordable Housing</b></li> <li><b>2. secure satisfactory vehicular and pedestrian access, including access for emergency and refuse collection vehicles, from land to the east of the site which is also allocated for residential development in the adopted Swale Borough Local Plan</b></li> <li><b>3. maintain the existing Public Right of Way along the south-eastern boundary of the site</b></li> <li><b>4. provide suitable access within the site to serve existing wastewater infrastructure in the area</b></li> <li><b>5. secure appropriate utility infrastructure connections in conjunction with the development of land to the east of the site</b></li> <li><b>6. be implemented in accordance with a Development Brief to be agreed with the Borough Council and the Parish Council, following public consultation."</b></li> </ol>
PM5	Page 21	<p><u>Policy H3</u></p> <p>Amend Policy text to read as follows:</p>

		<p><b>“Proposals for new residential development in the Plan area should include a mix of housing types, including smaller homes for people seeking their first home or for older people seeking to downsize from larger properties. Developments of 11 or more new dwellings must provide 40% affordable housing, in accordance with the Borough Council’s policies and Housing Strategy.”</b></p>
PM6	Page 21	<p><u>Policy H4</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>“At least 25% of all Affordable Housing units secured through developer contributions in the Plan area shall be offered for discounted sale as First Homes for a period of at least six months, in accordance with the national and local eligibility criteria. See BD5 for full details.”</b></p>
PM7	Page 22	<p><u>Policies H5a, H5b and H5c</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>“Proposals for new residential development in the Plan area will be supported where they:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. demonstrate that they are of good design and locally distinctive style, respecting the principles of the current Kent Design Guide, and including suitable green spaces and children’s play areas. (See also Policies E1, E2 and E3); and</b></li> <li><b>2. demonstrate that they will be sympathetic to the street scene and their settings as set out in an agreed Design Code for the development and/or for the wider area; and</b></li> <li><b>3. include building design features to seek to achieve carbon neutrality and reductions in energy usage.</b></li> </ol>

		All references in the Plan should now refer to this Policy as Policy H5.
PM8	Page 22	<p><u>Policies H6a and H6b</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>“The sites within the Plan area allocated for new residential development, including the three sites allocated in the adopted Swale Borough Local Plan and the site included at Policy H2 in this Plan, shall:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>1. be developed in accordance with an agreed Development Brief and/or a Design Code to be prepared by the applicant or developer, that is subject to local public consultation prior to agreement by the Parish Council and the Borough Council;</b></li> <li><b>2. be required to make the appropriate contribution towards the mitigation of recreational pressures on the designated Special Protection Areas (SPAs) in accordance with the Borough Council’s adopted Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategy (SAMMS).</b></li> </ol> <p>All references in the Plan should now refer to this Policy as Policy H6.</p>
PM9	Page 22	<p><u>Objective 3 and Policy H7</u></p> <p><u>Objective 3</u></p> <p>Insert the word <b>“affordable”</b> between the words “new” and “homes” in the first line of text.</p> <p>Insert the words <b>“for affordable housing”</b> between the words “need” and “has” in the second line of text.</p> <p><u>Policy H7</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>“Within new residential developments approved within the Plan area, preferential access to Affordable Homes</b></p>

		<b>provided as part of those developments, should be given to people with a proven local connection and subject to meeting the eligibility criteria of the Borough Council’s Housing Allocation Policy.”</b>
PM10	Page 23	<p><u>Policies H8, H9 and H10</u></p> <p><u>Policy H8</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text, and replace with:</p> <p><b>“Proposals for new residential development in the Plan area shall ensure that adequate on-site car parking provision is made in accordance with the Borough Council’s approved Parking Standards SPD (adopted June 2020).</b></p> <p><b>Development proposals which involve the loss or conversion of existing on-site car parking spaces, for example the conversion of a garage to living accommodation, will only be supported where adequate on-site parking provision, in accordance with the Parking Standards, remains available to support the completed development.”</b></p> <p><u>Policy H9</u></p> <p>Delete this Policy.</p> <p><u>Policy H10</u></p> <p>Delete this Policy.</p> <p>Delete all references to Policies H9 and H10 within the Plan, for example on the Contents Page, and on Pages 56 and 62.</p>
PM11	Pages 25-27	<p><u>Section 6.6 – Traffic and Transport</u></p> <p>Paragraph 6.6.1 – add the following additional text to Objective 1:</p> <p><b>“Boughton and Dunkirk Parish Councils will continue their pressure on Swale Borough Council, Kent County Council, National Highways and their Borough Councillors, County Councillors and MP to improve the traffic flow along the A2 and the junction at Brenley Corner, while</b></p>

		<p><b>restricting access to some of our lanes and Boughton Street by HGVs and other through traffic. The Parish Councils will play an active role in the preparation and implementation of a design and development brief for the Duchy Land in respect of traffic and pedestrian routes.”</b></p> <p>Delete Policies T1, T2 and T3 in full.</p> <p>Re-number paragraph 6.6.3 as <b>6.6.2</b></p> <p>Re-number paragraph 6.6.4 as <b>6.6.3</b> and re-title as <b>“Policies from Objectives 1 and 2”</b></p> <p>Re-number Policies T4 and T5 as <b>T1</b> and <b>T2</b> respectively.</p> <p>Re-number paragraph 6.6.5 as <b>6.6.4</b> and add the following additional text to Objective 3:</p> <p><b>“The Neighbourhood Plan team and the Parish Councils will work with the Highway Authority and the bus companies to improve facilities and information at the bus stops.”</b></p> <p>Add new paragraphs 6.6.5 and 6.6.6 to read as follows:</p> <p><b>“6.6.5 Objective 4 The Neighbourhood Plan team and the Parish Councils will work with:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>i. Kent County Council as the Highway Authority to improve cycle and pedestrian routes</b></li> <li><b>ii. The Highway Authority and landowners to promote the “Walking for Health” routes identified (see Maps VI, VII page 31, and BD11)</b></li> </ul> <p><b>6.6.6 Objective 5 Any development must not add to parking problems in the area and should include measures to ensure adequate parking provision is included to serve the needs of the development.”</b></p> <p>Delete Policies T6, T7 and T8 in full.</p>
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		<p>Re-number existing paragraph 6.6.6. as <b>6.6.7</b> and re-title as <b>"Policies from Objectives 3, 4 and 5"</b>.</p> <p>Delete existing paragraphs 6.6.7 and 6.6.8 in full.</p> <p>Delete Policy T10 in full.</p> <p>Re-number Policies T9 and T11 as <b>T3</b> and <b>T4</b> respectively.</p> <p>Delete all references to Policies T5, T6, T7, T8, T9, T10 and T11 within the Plan, for example on the Contents Page and on pages 56, 57, 63 and 64.</p>
PM12	Page 29	<p><u>Policy BE1</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>"Proposals for new or expanded businesses (falling with Use Class E), either on existing or other sites will be supported, where they reflect the overall development strategy of this Plan and conform with the relevant policies concerning location, building design and environmental impacts. In particular, support will be given for proposals for the redevelopment of previously developed sites and also for those that provide opportunities for local employment and training."</b></p>
PM13	Page 29	<p><u>Objective 2 and Policy BE2</u></p> <p>Paragraph 7.5.3 – amend the text to Objective 2, as follows:</p> <p><b>"To support sustainable and economic growth which respects the character of the area and conserves its heritage while understanding the important elements of the local landscape. See Section 2, About Us.</b></p> <p><b>See also BD10 and Policies from Section 10: E1, E3 (10.4.2); E9 (10.4.8); AS12, AS13 (10.13.2)."</b></p>

		<p><u>Policy BE2</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>“Proposals for new commercial development within the Plan area must be in keeping with the important landscape and heritage character of the area and take account of the relevant policies in Section 10 of this Plan.”</b></p>
PM14	Page 29	<p><u>Policy BE3</u></p> <p>Delete Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>“Proposals for new or expanded commercial development in the Plan area should include adequate on-site vehicle parking spaces in accordance with the adopted Parking Standards and, where necessary, submit a Goods Movement Plan to minimise the use of HGVs. (See also BD4, Parking Standards).”</b></p>
PM15	Page 32	<p><u>Policy CWB2</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>“The provision of new and/or enhanced recreational open spaces and facilities at suitable and accessible sites within the Plan area, will be supported.”</b></p>
PM16	Pages 33 and 34	<p><u>Section 9.0 – Educational Provision</u></p> <p>Paragraph 9.3.1 – add the following additional text to Objective 1:</p> <p><b>“To improve parking provision and traffic flow at the beginning and end of the school day, as well as ensuring safe crossing places in The Street, following expressions of concern by pupils and parents. To support the suggestion produced by the questionnaire of a shuttle bus within the two Parishes in order to reduce the journeys of private vehicles travelling to and from the school.”</b></p> <p>Delete Policies EP1, EP2 and EP3 in full.</p>

		<p>Amend paragraph to read <b>“Policy from Objective 1”</b>.</p> <p>Insert new Policy EP1, to read as follows:</p> <p><b>“EP1 Development proposals must make the appropriate educational provision including safe walking routes to and from the school. This is to ensure traffic problems are not exacerbated and air quality standards are not compromised.”</b></p> <p>Paragraph 9.3.2 – add the following additional text to Objective 2:</p> <p><b>“To meet the needs of a world ever more reliant on ‘new technology’, the Plan will focus on providing or encouraging opportunities for training in Information Technology (IT) for all members of the community by adapting or improving current facilities.”</b></p> <p>Re-number Policy EP4 as <b>EP2</b>.</p> <p>Delete all references to Policies EP3 and EP4 within the Plan, for example on the Contents Page and Pages 57, 58 and 65, or re-number as required.</p>
PM17	Page 37	<p><u>Policy E6</u></p> <p>Delete existing Policy text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>“Development proposals within the Plan area which minimise the adverse environmental impacts of new development, for example in respect of surface water drainage, ecology and biodiversity, air quality and water quality, and which promote sustainable forms of development will be supported in principle.”</b></p>
PM18	Page 38	<p><u>Policy E8</u></p> <p>Delete existing text in full, and replace with:</p> <p><b>“A minimum level of at least 10% Biodiversity Net Gain is required for proposed new developments in the Plan</b></p>



		<b>area against baseline conditions for the development sites concerned.”</b>
PM19	Contents Page Maps I-XII Page 70 et seq	Add new footnote to Contents Page – Maps to read as follows:  <b>“A full set of the Maps at A3 size is contained in the Plan, following page 70.”</b>  Add new footnote beneath each Map in the Plan (at pages 7, 11, 17, 20, 31, 36, 37, 38, 39 and 42), to read as follows:  <b>“This map is also printed at A3 size in the compendium of Maps that follow page 70.”</b>
PM20	Page 41	<u>Policy AS7</u>  Delete existing text in full, and replace with:  <b>“Residential development is proposed on the area west of the two sites already allocated in the adopted Swale Borough Local Plan, as shown on Map V on page 20 and defined at Policy H2 on page 21, provided that a development brief taking account of the policies in this Plan and the views of the local community is prepared by the developer and approved by the Borough Council. The development brief should address the matters set out at paragraph 5.12.2 on page 20.”</b>  <u>Policy AS8</u>  Replace the words <b>“Local Green Space”</b> with <b>“green space”</b> .
PM21	Page 39`	<u>Paragraph 10.5</u>  Delete existing text in full, and replace with:  <b>“The policies that follow provide detailed guidance for the specific areas defined on Map X on page 38. These policies should be considered alongside all other relevant policies and guidance in this Plan and the adopted Swale Borough Local Plan that may also apply to proposals affecting these areas.”</b>
PM22	Page 10	<u>Section 3 – Neighbourhood Plan Development</u>

		<p>Add new paragraph <b>3.10</b> with the title <b>“Future Review”</b> to read as follows:</p> <p><b>“3.10 The Plan will be monitored and reviewed at regular intervals during the period up to 2031 to ensure that it continues to be consistent with national policy and the strategic policies of the Swale Borough Local Plan. If necessary, the Plan will be formally reviewed and subject to statutory consultation and examination in accordance with the legislative requirements.”</b></p>
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# **BOUGHTON AND DUNKIRK NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**



**PROVIDING A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE  
FOR BOTH PARISHES TO 2031**



## Introduction

The task of a Neighbourhood Plan is to set out the development principles and allocation of sites for future building and land use in its area, reflecting the Government's determination to ensure that local communities are closely involved in the decisions that affect them. What this Neighbourhood Plan aims to achieve is delivery of development, balanced with protecting and enhancing particular character and unique assets.

This Neighbourhood Plan is submitted by the parish councils of Boughton under Blean and Dunkirk, in Kent, both being qualifying bodies as defined by the Localism Act 2011. The parishes were designated as a Neighbourhood Area under the Neighbourhood Planning Regulations 2012, Part 2, and Section 6 by Swale Borough Council on 19th September 2013 (see page 50).

The Plan has been developed to establish a vision for the two villages, and to help deliver the local communities' aspirations and needs for the life of the plan, up to 2031. The Plan intends to deliver sustainable forms of development and seeks to achieve the goals identified through engagement with the local community it serves; these goals reflect their needs, views and priorities, and a general planning framework and a resolve to protect the rural environment.

Key Objectives are set out with the Plan's Aim and Vision Statement and expanded in each section. The objectives are driven by the results of community public consultations and questionnaires, and statutory public consultation. All the policies have been devised from the objectives in each section and apply to the entire designated area; specific area policies also apply to certain sites.

The Plan will influence and reinforce Swale planning policies, making them more relevant and acceptable to Boughton and Dunkirk. It will also contain planning policies just for Boughton and Dunkirk and will allocate sites for particular uses such as recreation, employment or housing. If approved by a referendum, the Plan will be a statutory document which, once adopted, forms part of the Local Development Plan and will be used by Swale Borough Council to determine planning applications along with the Council's Local Plan.

The Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan has been prepared and delivered in the context of two particular uncertainties:

1. The nature of the work necessary to alleviate the traffic pressure at Junction 7 of the M2, at Brenley Corner, which lies within the parish of Boughton, will affect the development plans in this area, decisions that will not be taken nor even aired until 2028.
2. The proposal for 2,500 houses and industrial development by the Duchy of Cornwall on a site beside the A2 at Faversham; 35% of the land in this proposed development lies outside the Faversham boundaries (26% in Boughton parish; 9% in Selling parish). In particular, this intrusion into Boughton parish, if adopted in the Swale Local Plan, may well distort any housing figures and traffic flow forecasts in this Neighbourhood Plan. In addition, it would threaten the 'green' rural gap between the town of Faversham and the villages of Boughton, Selling, Sheldwich, Hernhill, Dunkirk and potentially Graveney. The NP team will work with Swale Borough Council to agree a locally important countryside gap through the local plan process.

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A complete set of enhanced, high-resolution maps contained in the Plan can be found in Plan Background Documents: B&DNP Maps

## Section 1.0 Aim, Vision Statement and Key Objectives

**1.1 The Aim of the Plan, produced in consultation with both communities, is to guide and manage the challenges of future development within the parishes.**

### **1.2 Vision Statement**

**That in 2031, Boughton and Dunkirk will be safe communities, where those who work or grow up here can afford to live, where families can raise children, where the elderly can remain in the small rural communities of which they have long been part, and where every person has access to necessary education, health and leisure facilities.**

### **1.3 Key Objectives**

**1.3.1 Housing** – To preserve the villages’ architectural and historic heritage by protecting it from inappropriate development while providing a limited amount of sustainable housing to meet local needs, including affordable housing, sympathetic to the look and feel of the villages.

**1.3.2 Traffic and Transport** – To ensure any new developments will be limited by the capacity and nature of the road network to accommodate them, to restrict high volumes of vehicular through-traffic in order to reduce the adverse effects of traffic on our villages.

**1.3.3 Business and Employment** – To encourage the prospects for local businesses and employment in order to promote local economic growth and vitality.

**1.3.4 Community Wellbeing and Health** – To ensure maintenance of existing all footpaths and bridleways, and to encourage further provision of sports facilities to support healthy lifestyles and encourage exercise.

**1.3.5 Educational Provision** – To ensure that any future residential development takes full account of the impact upon school provision to ensure access to education, and to enhance local facilities for continuing study by all members of the community.

**1.3.6 Environment, Landscape Character, and Design** – To ensure the local landscape, character, design and environmental qualities of Boughton and Dunkirk parishes are protected from any inappropriate and unsustainable development; the villages of Boughton and Dunkirk to retain their sense of place within the surrounding countryside in order to maintain our identity as a community, separate from Faversham, Whitstable and Canterbury, with distinct rural green open spaces between the settlements.

## Section 2.0 About Us

### 2.1 Context



2.1.1 The villages of Boughton under Blean and Dunkirk lie on the edge of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty as part of the Kent Downs. They are situated in the heart of the fertile hop-growing and fruit-growing area of North East Kent between the North Downs and the coast. It is vital that this history and character is preserved for future generations.

*Hop fields in Boughton*

### 2.2 History of Boughton under Blean

2.2.1 Known locally as Boughton, Boughton under Blean is entered in the Domesday Book as 'Boltone'. Boughton Street is part of the old Roman road of Watling Street which runs from London to Dover. The road was used by the pilgrims made famous by Geoffrey Chaucer and is mentioned in the Canterbury Tales:

*'At Boghton under Blee us gan atake, a man, that clothed was in clothes blake, and undernethe he wered a white surplis'.*

2.2.2 Tens of thousands of pilgrims journeyed through Boughton and Dunkirk to visit Thomas Becket's shrine at Canterbury as well as sailors travelling from port to port, calling at the Dolphin Inn (now a private residence) built around 1766.



*Dolphin Inn*



*White Horse Inn*



*Wesleyan Chapel*

2.2.3 A few steps on, they came upon the thriving 15<sup>th</sup> century White Horse Inn, once a coaching inn, and the Wesleyan Chapel, built in 1844 of Gothic design, which has now been converted into apartments. At this end of Boughton there was also a medieval chapel, the Holy Trinity, the stones from which were later used to mend the road and build some houses. Further along is the

Queens Head public house built in 1590, and St. Barnabas Church, built in 1895/6, now a parish centre. The site was donated by a resident and at least half the fixtures and fittings provided by public subscription. On the cenotaph outside are forty names from the First World War and eleven from the Second. Many of the surnames are still found throughout both parishes today.



*Queens Head Public House*



*St. Barnabas Church and War Memorial*

## **2.3 South Street Hamlet**

2.3.1 Off Boughton Street lie ancient footpaths which branch off through hop fields and orchards, some leading to South Street, a hamlet which is to the south of both Boughton and Dunkirk, and is part of Boughton parish.

2.3.2 South Street is home to some of the most beautiful houses in the area and the parish church of St. Peter and St. Paul which was built in the 13th century and serves both parishes. The church is a Grade 1 listed building of local flint and was certainly a landmark for Chaucer's pilgrims travelling on their way from London to Canterbury.



*Church of St. Peter and St. Paul*



*Key Cottage*



*King's Arms (now a private residence)*



*The Lichen*

## 2.4 History of Dunkirk

2.4.1 Dunkirk was little more than a wasteland and was in fact once notoriously the wildest spot in Kent. Self-styled Sir William Courtenay chose the area of Bossenden Wood as the scene for his rebellion in May 1838, probably because it was so close to Canterbury. A road had been cut through the woods of Blean (Saxon word 'Blea' for 'rough ground') from Harbledown to Boughton. There was no church nor school; it was simply a small group of farms and woodmen's huts.

2.4.2 Once the Courtenay uprising in 1838 was put down, steps were quickly taken to reclaim the wasteland and create a parish. Dunkirk, *Ville de Dunkirk* until it became a parish, grew into a strong sister parish to Boughton and there is little doubt the name derived from Dunkerque in France, with a spot in the village being known as Petit France.



*All Saints / Christ Church*



*Dunkirk School*

2.4.3 The building of All Saints / Christ Church commenced, and it was consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury in June 1841. Dunkirk School opened in 1846 and served the community for 162 years until it was amalgamated in 2008 with Boughton School on the Boughton site, where school buildings had been opened in 1905. Dunkirk's church was also closed. It was deconsecrated in 1984 and converted into a private dwelling.



2.4.4 Further on towards Canterbury lies the Red Lion Inn, the former stable of which was the last resting place of Sir William Courtenay in 1838, before his burial.

*Red Lion Inn, a drawing from 1838.*



2.4.5 Dunkirk village is characterised by the imposing radar mast (Grade II listed) which looks over both villages, a reminder of the importance of the village to Britain’s air defences in World War II and the Cold War. Surrounding the mast is a large open area on which stand a number of World War II structures including an observation post. The area was subsequently designated a Scheduled Monument site for the arms, etc. that would have been dropped/buried; it is possible there are also some unknown buried bodies. The area was strafed and bombed a number of times. The lower, longer building behind it is thought to be an ammunitions store, much of it underground.



*WWII Radar Mast*



*WWII Observation Post and Ammunitions Store*



2.4.6 Blean Woods (*left and right*) is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), one of the largest remaining areas of ancient woodland in the United Kingdom and designated as high landscape value. Blean Woods forms the Eastern boundary of the parish.





*Bofors Tower, Dunkirk before restoration (left), and now (right), a private dwelling*

2.4.7 In Clay Pits Woods within 'The Blean' stands a Bofors Tower now converted to a private dwelling. Originally built in early 1940 of concrete and brick construction, the tower was designed to raise a 40mm Bofors gun and its operational equipment above surrounding obstacles in order to achieve an all-round field of fire in defending the airfield from low flying enemy aircraft.

## **2.5 Historic parishes**

2.5.1 The historic parishes of Boughton and Dunkirk are set among some of the richest land in Kent. Boughton alone has more listed buildings than any other parish in the Faversham area. It boasts a wide variety of architecture ranging from medieval timbered and Georgian buildings, which remain largely unchanged, to contemporary bungalows (see also BD16). The lives of both villages are inextricably linked; one side of some roads lies in Boughton and the other in Dunkirk. The two communities enjoy and share each other's history, amenities, events and friendships.

See BD16 for a full list of Heritage Assets for both parishes.

## Section 3.0 Neighbourhood Plan Development

### 3.1 Neighbourhood Designation Area request

3.1.1 Following discussions about neighbourhood plans at both Boughton and Dunkirk Parish Councils, it was decided that a joint Neighbourhood Plan should be explored and, if viable, researched and proposed to both communities in a referendum.

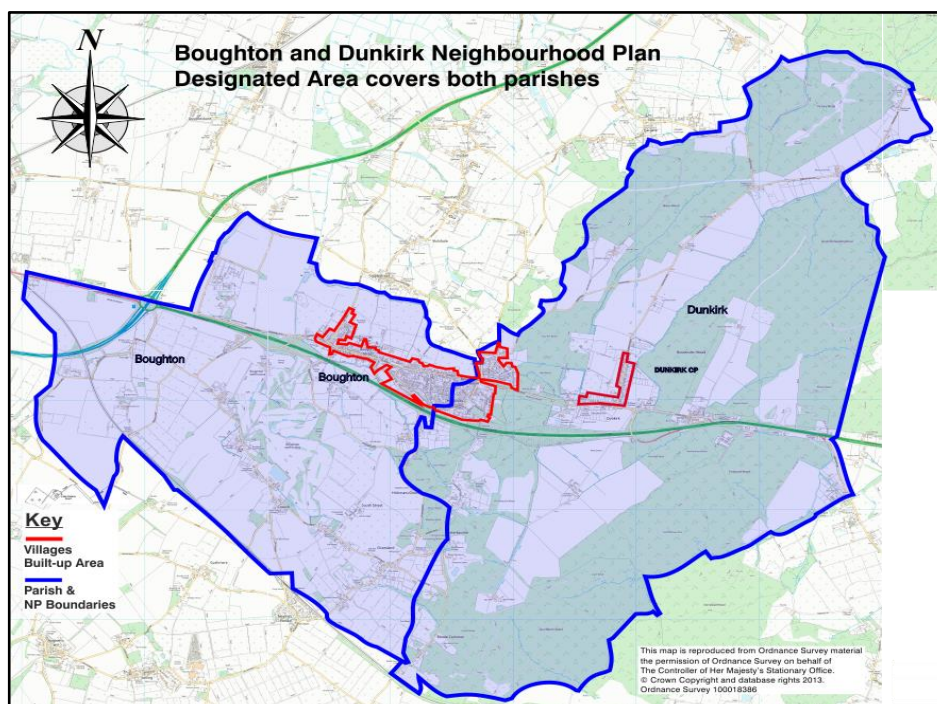
3.1.2 Boughton-Under-Blean and Dunkirk Parish Councils requested in May 2013 that the two communities form a Neighbourhood Plan. In order formally to make this request they wrote to Swale Borough Council outlining the area that they wish the Council to designate, i.e., the area which they would like the plan to cover. The area they sought to have designated is consistent with the long-established Parish boundaries of the two villages. See page 7, Map I.

### 3.2 Public consultation

3.2.1 Members of the Local Development Framework Panel agreed at the June 2013 LDF Panel meeting that a public consultation should take place. The consultation, which lasted for a period of six weeks from 5th July 2013 to 16th August 2013, outlined the reasons why the Parish Councils considered the area suitable to be designated as a neighbourhood area and showed a map of the area. The consultation was published on both Councils' websites and the Neighbourhood Plan website and site notices were placed at both Boughton under Blean and Dunkirk Parish halls and at other locations within the two villages. No comments were received.

### 3.3 Local Development Framework Panel

3.3.1 Officers considered the area proposed to be appropriate and recommended that the designation request be agreed. Members of the Swale LDF Panel agreed to the designation at their meeting of 19th September 2013 (see page 43).



Map I. Designated Area for Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan

### **3.4 Bearing Fruits 2031**

3.4.1 The Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan will run concurrently with the adopted Swale Borough Local Plan “Bearing Fruits 2031”. This new type of planning document is to be prepared by local communities under the Localism Act 2011. It is part of the legal planning framework and must be used by Swale Borough Council, as part of the Local Plan, when it determines planning applications in Boughton and Dunkirk. The key is that the Neighbourhood Plan will help determine the future development and design of our village communities until 2031.

### **3.5 National Planning Policy Framework 2021**

3.5.1 Following on from The Localism Act, the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF Rev 2021, paragraph 2), explains the mechanisms for determining planning applications.

*Planning law requires that applications for planning permission be determined in accordance with the development plan, unless material considerations indicate otherwise. The National Planning Policy Framework must be taken into account in preparing the development plan, and is a material consideration in planning decisions. Planning policies and decisions must also reflect relevant international obligations and statutory requirements.*

NPPF 2021, page 5 sets out the objectives of sustainable development:

*7. The purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development. At a very high level, the objective of sustainable development can be summarised as meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs...*

*8. Achieving sustainable development means that the planning system has three overarching objectives, which are interdependent and need to be pursued in mutually supportive ways (so that opportunities can be taken to secure net gains across each of the different objectives):*

*a) an economic objective – to help build a strong, responsive and competitive economy, by ensuring that sufficient land of the right types is available in the right places and at the right time to support growth, innovation and improved productivity; and by identifying and coordinating the provision of infrastructure;*

*b) a social objective – to support strong, vibrant and healthy communities, by ensuring that a sufficient number and range of homes can be provided to meet the needs of present and future generations; and by fostering well-designed, beautiful and safe places, with accessible services and open spaces that reflect current and future needs and support communities’ health, social and cultural wellbeing; and*

*c) an environmental objective – to protect and enhance our natural, built and historic environment; including making effective use of land, improving biodiversity, using natural resources prudently, minimising waste and pollution, and mitigating and adapting to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy.*

Although this Neighbourhood Plan was drafted before publication of NPPF 2021, our proposed policies have been reviewed in order to take these principles fully into account.

### **3.6 Ensuring Local Involvement**

3.6.1 Both Parish Councils discussed the merits of neighbourhood planning and agreed that a joint plan would be preferable for our communities in that they share many facilities. Discussions took place concerning funding because with a joint plan only a single grant would be received. Whilst it would have been useful to have double the grant, both Councils felt that the cohesion of the plan was more important as it would then provide for our joint needs. The team was grateful to receive some funding from our ward councillors. There has also been local fundraising to raise awareness.

3.6.2 The team has endeavoured to engage with as many groups and sections of our communities as possible as can be seen in document BD2 (Workshops and Community Engagement). This provides particulars and some details of the Questionnaire Survey (BD1), Housing evaluation and assessment of housing stock (BD5) Housing Need Survey (BD6), Character Area Assessments (BD8, BD9, BD10), Parking Surveys (BD4), Business Surveys (BD7) and other Community Engagement including timetabled interaction with years 4, 5 and 6 at the Boughton and Dunkirk primary school (BD3). The team were pleased with how engaged and involved our young people were; they were very perceptive and gave the team options and ideas, some of which have been incorporated into the Plan.

### **3.7 Source of the Plan's Vision and Objectives**

3.7.1 In 2013/14 the B&DNP team consulted the local community to ask what issues they were most concerned about, and what issues they would like the neighbourhood plan to address. Full consultation details are in Questionnaire and Results (BD1 and Plan BDs Additional Evidence).

3.7.2 A total of 21% of households responded. In summary, question 20 asked "What two issues should we concentrate on?" and the highest number of responses named were:

- Parking in the Street (40)
- Repair potholes/improve road maintenance (24)
- Reduce congestion/improve traffic flow in The Street (22)
- Cleaner pavements/reduce litter and dog fouling (17)
- Stop over-development of new housing (12)
- Provide more affordable housing (10)

In response to question 19, "What have we missed?" the highest number of responses mentioned improving traffic flow (13) and maintaining the village atmosphere by preventing over-development (9).

### **3.8 Community consultations**

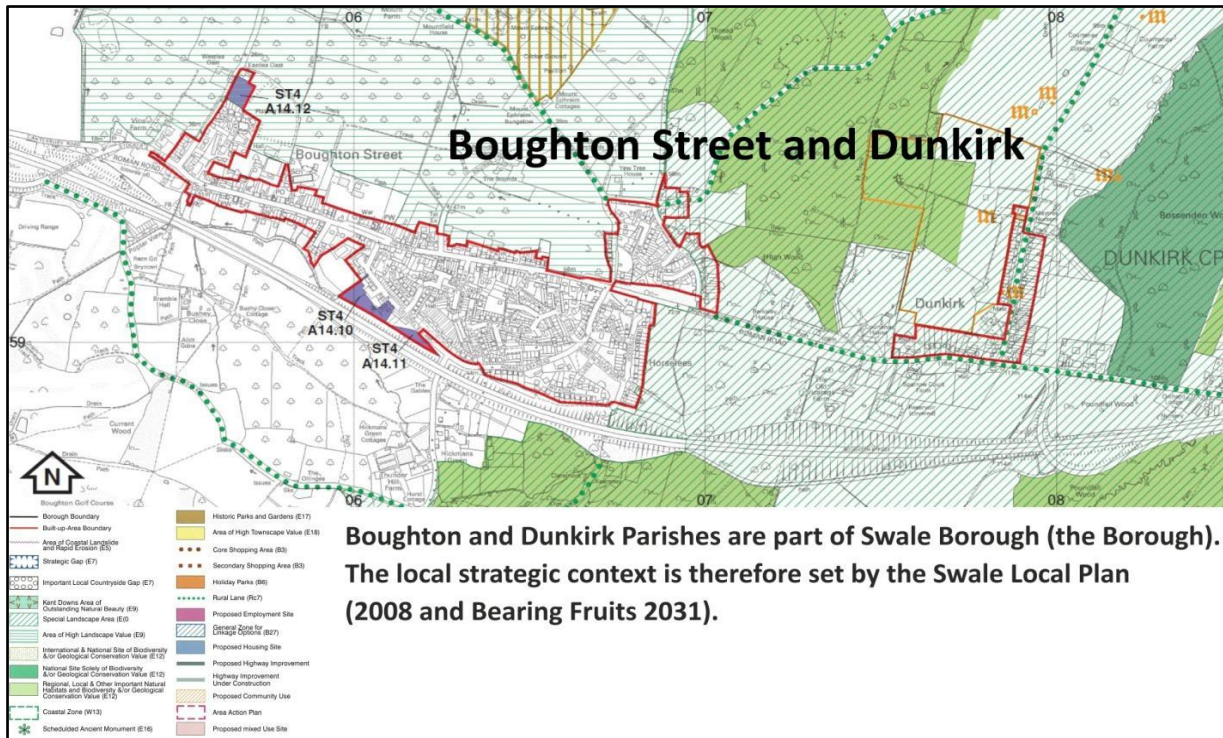
3.8.1 Subsequently, the team undertook an extensive series of 29 community consultation events, as described in BD2 and BD3. Housing needs were then examined specifically through a Housing Needs Survey (BD6), carried out a targeted Business Survey (BD7), and surveyed Parking Needs for those living in The Street (BD4). These surveys informed the development of specific objectives and policies.

3.8.2 The initial consultations undertaken showed that although many residents feel privileged to live in as strong a community as Boughton and Dunkirk, they are generally concerned about the twin threats of inappropriate over-development and heavy traffic, which threaten the village atmosphere they hope to preserve. This finding led the team to propose the Aim, Vision Statement and the Key Objectives set out in Section 1, which were later endorsed by 90% of the respondents to the Regulation 14 community consultation in 2021.

### **3.9 Statutory Consultations and Plan Evolution**

3.9.1 The evolution of the Plan into the current document has been an arduous process which has lasted eight years, with the last two years being significantly affected by the covid pandemic. The plan was discussed, researched and drafted with limited support from the local authority, and there were long delays whilst awaiting expert advice. Consultation with statutory organisations resulted in extensive redrafting. Following the amendments, the Plan was then examined independently and further revisions made. The B&DNP Team consider that the current document satisfies all regulatory requirements whilst remaining true to the objectives of our communities; it sets out a schedule of how the NP supports European, national, regional and local policies on planning and the environment (BD15 Basic Conditions Statement). For full community and statutory consultation details, see Consultation Statement (BD17, and Plan BDs Additional Evidence) which includes the Strategic Environmental Assessment and Natural England response (BD12).

## Section 4.0 Planning Policy Context



Map II. Local Strategic Context (village envelopes outlined in red)

### 4.1 Our Villages in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century

4.1.1 Today, Boughton and Dunkirk are home to around 3000 people, including about 600 aged under 16. The local population is slightly older than the national average, with 18% of the population aged 65 or more, compared to 16.5% in England and Wales. There is a very low percentage of ethnic minority residents (1% compared to 14% nationally). There are fewer single-person households (25 % vs 30%) and a higher percentage of owner-occupied homes than nationally (73% vs 67%). The source for the data is the ONS 2011 Census.

### 4.2 Accommodation

4.2.1 The breakdown of accommodation types is shown below. The neighbourhood plan area has a higher percentage of households living in family homes, and very few in flats, compared to the national average.

Accommodation by Household: B&DNP vs National

DWELLING TYPE	B&DNP%	National%
Detached house	31.8	21.7
Semi-detached house	39.5	30.6
Terraced house	22.4	24.9
Flat	4.9	22.4
Caravan	1.4	0.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

### 4.3 Work

4.3.1 About 70% of the population aged 16-74 is economically active, in line with the national average. However, of those who are economically inactive, a higher percentage are retired (17% vs 14%), which reflects the age breakdown of the local area.

### 4.4 Travel

4.4.1 Over 90% of households own at least one car, compared to only 76% nationally. Car usage is an important part of daily life, as shown by the fact that 51% of the population aged 16 – 74 travels to work by private car or motorcycle.

Travel to work: B&DNP vs National

TRAVEL TYPE	B&DNP%	National%
Work from home	5.4	4
By public transport	5.8	11
By car / motorcycle	50.6	45
Walk / cycle	3.9	10
Economically inactive	29.9	30
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>100</b>

4.4.2 Despite the fact that the main Faversham to Canterbury bus service runs directly through both parishes, and there is a regular rail service from Faversham or Selling to London, fewer than 6% of residents travel to work via public transport. The villages are not as well served by public transport as other villages of similar size on or close to the A2. There is no railway station within the village confines nor within suitable walking or cycling distance. The nearest station is at Selling, approximately 3 km south of Boughton but this can only be accessed by narrow busy rural lanes or footpaths.

### 4.5 Boughton parish planning context

4.5.1 Boughton is one of the larger villages in Swale. It is set around the old Roman road of Watling Street which runs west-east through the village, rising to and through the outer canopy of Blean Woods which looks over the eastern part of the village. The setting of the village adds significantly to its character. The oldest part of the village spreads out along the line of the old A2. It contains a wide variety of historic buildings. This variety of building styles, together with raised grassed banks and properties set back above the level of the road provide a strong character to this linear street. From the 1950s onwards, the village saw substantial expansion, particularly in the 1970s when suburban style estates were built, particularly in its eastern and southern parts.

4.5.2 In 1976, the main road, Boughton Street, was part of the A2 London to Dover. The building of the M2, and the A2 Boughton bypass has reduced some of the heavy traffic to Dover and to London through the villages, although the consequence of ongoing severe traffic problems at Brenley Corner and the resulting volume of traffic through the villages continue to plague the safety of our community and visitors. Traffic on the bypass produces an ever-present vehicle noise, particularly in southern parts of the village. Even within the village itself, local and through traffic detracts from the historic character of the street, a situation exacerbated by local parking on the narrow main road. This situation can only worsen as large-scale housing developments threaten the integrity of this village community.



4.5.3 As well as Blean Woods, to the north-east of the village the lower pastures, stream and remnant orchards which separate the bypass from the village as it rises up to the Roman road, also add character, whilst to the north of the village the farmsteads, some of which are still served from the main street, provide a rural feel only a few metres away from the centre of the community.

4.5.4 Boughton has a range of facilities primarily located along the main street including a village shop, post office and shop, two public houses, two restaurants, two hairdressers, two hotels, two garages, two churches, an artists' studio and a multi-amenity village hall. The small family GP practice closed after many years in September 2016, due to the doctors' retirement.

4.5.5 St. Barnabas Church is now a well-used parish centre though still consecrated and licensed for baptisms, weddings and funerals. Through recent investment of £70,000, it has excellent access for the disabled. The parish of Boughton, with its youth and ex-service organisations, holds a Remembrance Service around the cenotaph every year. The churches are an important part of village life, and actively involved in the community.



*St Barnabas Church and War Memorial*

4.5.6 Both the parishes' village halls were built following funding by public donations and fund-raising. The large village hall in Boughton was built in 1976 and is used extensively by local organisations and hired out for both private and public functions as well as housing the local public library. It sits in six acres of parkland, which in recent years had play equipment for all ages installed after the successful fund-raising of over £100,00 by a local community group. In 2021, an outdoor family gym was added to the amenities.



*Boughton Village Hall and Play Area*



*Boughton and Dunkirk  
Methodist Primary  
School*

4.5.7 Boughton and Dunkirk Methodist Primary School is positioned centrally but set back from the main road. Local congestion occurs at school peak times and the school continues to grow and flourish; in recent years it has been extended, with improved dedicated teaching spaces and upgraded technology. It plays a vital and integral role in the life of both communities with several generations of families attending the school over the years. It is necessary to travel outside the village for secondary education, with the nearest schools in Faversham, between 5 and 6 km away.

4.5.8 Boughton has two open public spaces on the edge of the village. There are several wooded areas with public footpath access, while to the north adjoining the parish is Mount Ephraim stately home with its public gardens and tourist facilities.

4.5.9 Between them, Boughton and Dunkirk have a variety of sports clubs, including football, bowls, cricket, and an 18-hole 'Pay and Play' golf course. There are many other clubs and organisations catering for special interest groups in the communities. There are three thriving independent Play Groups as well as a popular Parent and Toddler Group. A Community Magazine produced over the past 35 years carries Church news as well as news from both parishes, their local organisations and clubs. It is funded by advertising, delivered by volunteers and has a circulation of around 500.

4.5.10 The adopted Swale Borough Local Plan *Bearing Fruits 2031* categorises Boughton as a Rural Local Service Centre and the planning context of the village thus:

***'There are some minor opportunities for development, but its setting and the valued habitats and landscapes around the village constrain its major expansion. Given its population, local services are not as extensive as other centres and could be enhanced.***

***Although not a service centre, the future and health of nearby Dunkirk is closely linked with that of its larger neighbour, and both will be considered through a Neighbourhood Plan.'***

*Bearing Fruits 2031 the Swale Local Plan, paragraph 4.3.20*

#### **4.6 Dunkirk parish planning context**

4.6.1 Dunkirk is a much smaller settlement than Boughton and is based round the junction of the former A2 and Courtenay Road, some 1.8 km from the centre of its larger neighbour. It stands at the highest point of Boughton Hill surrounded by cultivated land and Blean Woods.

4.6.2 Many birds on the UK Red List (Birds of Conservation Concern 4) such as the *lesser spotted woodpecker* and *nightingale* make their home here. The parish of Dunkirk, which extends to the north east and south west of the village itself, is strongly rural and wooded in character.

4.6.3 Dunkirk's population centres are split between the top of Dunkirk Hill, where its oldest public buildings such as the former parish church and school are clustered beside the old A2, and the bottom of the hill, where there has been modern development on the border with Boughton. Aside from these, most of the development in the village is post-war ribbon development along Courtenay Road.

4.6.4 Dunkirk contains very limited facilities having lost its church, and the school having been amalgamated with the primary school 2.2 km away in Boughton. The village does however have some small industrial units and employment facilities. There has been a valued addition of a



village hall. Dunkirk Village Hall, now a centre for community life, was built in 2012 following a major fund-raising project to replace the small, pre-fabricated structure which had stood for many years.

*Dunkirk Village Hall (with Bees Knees Play Group)*

4.6.5 The adopted Swale Borough Local Plan *Bearing Fruits 2031* categorises Dunkirk as a village with a built-up boundary:

***'...which will provide development on minor infill and redevelopment sites within the built-up area boundaries where compatible with the settlement's character, amenity, heritage or biodiversity value.'***

*Bearing Fruits 2031 the Swale Local Plan, Policy ST3, 4.*

***'At locations in the open countryside, outside the built-up area boundaries shown on the Proposals Map, development will not be permitted, unless supported by national planning policy and able to demonstrate that it would contribute to protecting and, where appropriate, enhancing the intrinsic value, landscape setting, tranquillity and beauty of the countryside, its buildings and the vitality of rural communities.'***

*Bearing Fruits 2031 the Swale Local Plan, Policy ST3, 5.*

## Section 5.0 Housing

### 5.1 Context

5.1.1 These are villages in which historic Tudor buildings sit alongside post-war and more recent housing. These are mostly privately owned or rented, with a limited number of social housing units. Affordability is a major issue, particularly for younger residents; there is a lack of suitable accommodation to meet the varying needs of our communities. The Neighbourhood Plan is a development-led plan that will seek to improve and enhance both parishes. It is important that any future development reflects the expressed wishes and aspirations of parishioners whilst ensuring a vibrant, robust community from now until 2031 and beyond.

5.1.2 All the sections of the NP interlock into a single context and the plan must be read as a whole but one of the most important relationships is between the Housing Needs and the Traffic and Transport sections. It will become evident that these two sections are interdependent. Government housing targets for Swale Borough Council will increase from 2022 by 34% to 1,048 dwellings per annum. This Neighbourhood Plan is produced in the context of Swale (SBC) striving to achieve these targets and is required to provide additional dwellings through this process.

### 5.2 Questionnaire and Housing Needs survey

5.2.1 The questionnaire results (BD1) and the housing needs surveys (BD6) are important background documents along with housing issues (BD5), KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletins: Affordable Housing 2019-2020, Housing Stock 2019, Property prices and sales in Kent 2020, Earnings in Kent 2019, Disability in Kent 2020.

### 5.3 Issues arising from Questionnaire, Housing Needs Survey and Reg. 14 consultation

5.3.1 Affordability is the main problem for people in the parishes, as prices have risen by more than salaries. The ratio median of salary to afford the median home increased from 6.96 x salary to 8.96 x salary in 2020. Changes in the housing market have shown an increase in property prices far ahead of salary increases. This makes the opportunities for family members wishing to leave home and set up on their own or in a new family unit even more difficult. Local prices are at a higher level than many other parts of the Borough. During 2020 the average sold price of a property was £336,000. This includes a one-bedroom flat at £102,500 and a two-bedroom terraced house below £200,000, which lowers the average. From the calculations in BD6, it is clear that this would put property ownership completely out of reach for many local families. During November / December 2020, only three advertised three-bedroom rented properties were available in Boughton with an average monthly rental of £1,150. In nearby Hernhill and Faversham only three flats, with either one or two bedrooms were available between £650 and £995 per month.

5.3.2 The situation in 2022 has changed since our original research in 2015. Analysis of Land Registry data, March 2020 to January 2022 shows an increase in average sale prices of 17% in Swale, therefore property is even less affordable in the two parishes. The need for truly affordable homes is still our main priority and underscores our only suggested allocation for new homes.

5.3.3 The results of the questionnaire showed that some parishioners would like to move into smaller homes. It established a need for a small development, low rise and low density, and it was important that the properties would be available to local people or people with a local connection (see BD5).

5.3.4 It is crucial that ANY development within the parishes should not add unduly to the traffic problems that blight Boughton Street and other parts of the villages (see Traffic and Transport section, and BD4). Research shows a major problem to be traffic flow, particularly through The Street in Boughton, and any development must not be allowed to make this worse.

5.3.5 The water supply and sewage facilities in both parishes are already under strain. The NP recommends the need for mandatory housing standards for water and energy use. This would support water and energy efficiency for new buildings and promote the collaboration between the parishes of Boughton under Blean and Dunkirk, Swale Borough Council and developers.

#### **5.4 Local Plan Review new development concerns**

5.4.1 The relationship with developers, particularly on any larger sites being planned, is crucial. The NP sets out what priorities new development should seek to deliver through Section 106 agreements which must be monitored rigorously by Swale Borough Council. The government's New Homes bonus, awarded as an incentive for new housing development, should be shared equitably with both parishes. This bonus has never been distributed since its inception.

5.4.2 Some proposed developments in SBC's emerging Local Plan Review straddle parish council boundaries. For instance, the proposed Duchy development on London Road in Faversham is 26% in Boughton and 9% in Selling (see Maps III and IV below). The impact on these communities must be taken into account, and views reflected through public consultation.



*Map III. Duchy Land.*



*Map IV. Duchy Land by Parish: Faversham 65%; Boughton 26%; Selling 9%.*

#### **5.5 Impact of housing demands on our parishes**

5.5.1 The potential impact of housing demands is daunting. There are currently proposals for developments totalling 24,000 new houses in our area. One of the biggest planned developments as Faversham expands is proposed by the Duchy of Cornwall for 2,550 new homes. Along with other proposals around Faversham, this site was not identified in Swale's approved development plan but will come up for consideration in the Local Plan Review that started in Spring 2021 and so it is not included in this Neighbourhood Plan. If approved, the anticipated increase in population

would only exacerbate strains on our public services such as education and health provision, and would increase the risk that Boughton and Dunkirk will simply become a suburb of Faversham.

5.5.2 The NP will aim to protect the rural gap of Grade 1 Agricultural Land separating these settlements and resist any attempt to encroach on existing parish boundaries but this issue will be dealt with through the Local Plan Review.

## **5.6 Liaison and consultation**

5.6.1 There is an urgent need for all stakeholders and decision-makers to:

- i liaise strategically over the important decisions facing them.
- ii give priority to recognising the impact of these decisions on small communities such as Boughton and Dunkirk. It is vital that the residents of Boughton and Dunkirk should be consulted over all matters which affect their everyday lives, and that their voices be heard.

## **5.7 Allocation**

5.7.1 It was established that a modest development of 10 to 12 properties as proposed in Policy H2 would be sufficient to address the need of the villages, provided there were sufficient safeguards over how these and the existing allocations were to be reserved for local need. As a bonus, these would provide additional houses to the Swale five-year supply.

### **5.7.2 Allocation process**

The Swale Local Plan 'Bearing Fruits 2031' assessed potential for housing development and allocated three sites within the Neighbourhood Plan area. These are already allocated meaning that planning permission will readily be considered. They are all in Boughton.

### **5.7.3 Bearing Fruits site allocation**

1. Bull Lane – approximately 0.5ha in size and allocated to deliver a minimum of 16 dwellings.
2. Land off Colonels Lane – approximately 0.8ha in size and allocated to deliver a minimum of 15 dwellings.
3. Land South of Colonels Lane – approximately 0.3ha in size and allocated to deliver a minimum of 6 dwellings.

These three sites were previously allocated by Swale Borough Council and the NP may only add to them. **Indeed, one could say that these properties alone would satisfy the housing demand of the area covered by the Neighbourhood Plan.**

## **5.8 Meeting local housing needs**

5.8.1 In order to meet local needs, the Neighbourhood Plan aims to ensure that these sites, as well as an additional area in Colonels Lane, are designed for and marketed to our parishioners. Dunkirk has gained consent for a S106 planning condition that ensures properties are offered to local people first and the Neighbourhood Plan wishes to ensure this continues. Another issue from the Housing Needs Survey was a need for 11 social rented or shared-ownership properties. This cannot be addressed through the NP as this could add 'hope value' to any land considered, making it too expensive for these properties. The land would need to be purchased at agricultural prices.

## 5.9 English Rural Housing

5.9.1 The NP team have met English Rural Housing and both Parish Councils will try to address this need outside of the Plan. This decision was taken after discussions with SBC and has the backing of both Parish Councils.

## 5.10 Site allocation by the Neighbourhood Plan

5.10.1 Since May 2016, the Neighbourhood Plan Team has been working on the understanding from Swale Borough Council that no further sites will be allocated by Swale Borough Council within the Boughton and Dunkirk area, and any further allocation will be determined by the Neighbourhood Plan. This is exclusive of any allocations through the Local Plan process.

**Consequently, it is understood that the Neighbourhood Plan would be the only plan to allocate land within its designated area.** This was a very positive confirmation. The Neighbourhood Plan Team had already started to assess the parishes for land for further development, but it was at a very early stage and would have had little weight in any planning decision.

**5.10.2 It is necessary to point out that this responsibility is relevant to the 26% of the land within the Boughton Parish boundary that is embraced in the Duchy proposal to build 2,550 houses, plus 20,000 square metres of business, commercial and retail space on London Road in Faversham. The impact on the villages would be huge.**

## 5.11 Call for sites

5.11.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Team carried out a call for sites (BD13) and 23 sites were submitted, which did not include the Duchy land. These were assessed with a process similar to that used by Swale Borough Council, to ensure they would be compliant with National Policies, The Swale Bearing Fruits 2031 (emerging at that time) and saved policies in Swale's local plan 2008, carried forward to Bearing Fruits 2031, and followed locality guidelines.

5.11.2 These were assessed thoroughly (BD14) in three ways:

1. By the Neighbourhood Plan team using protocols developed by Planning Aid England.
2. By a consultant (Town Planner Catherine Hughes) who worked with the team.
3. Finally, a shortlist\* was reviewed by Swale spatial planners, planning officers and conservation officer, under the SHLAA constraints.

\*These were the sites that had some merit, along with those that might be considered contentious, so that every site would be exposed to rigorous scrutiny. Some had already been assessed and rejected by Swale Borough Council.

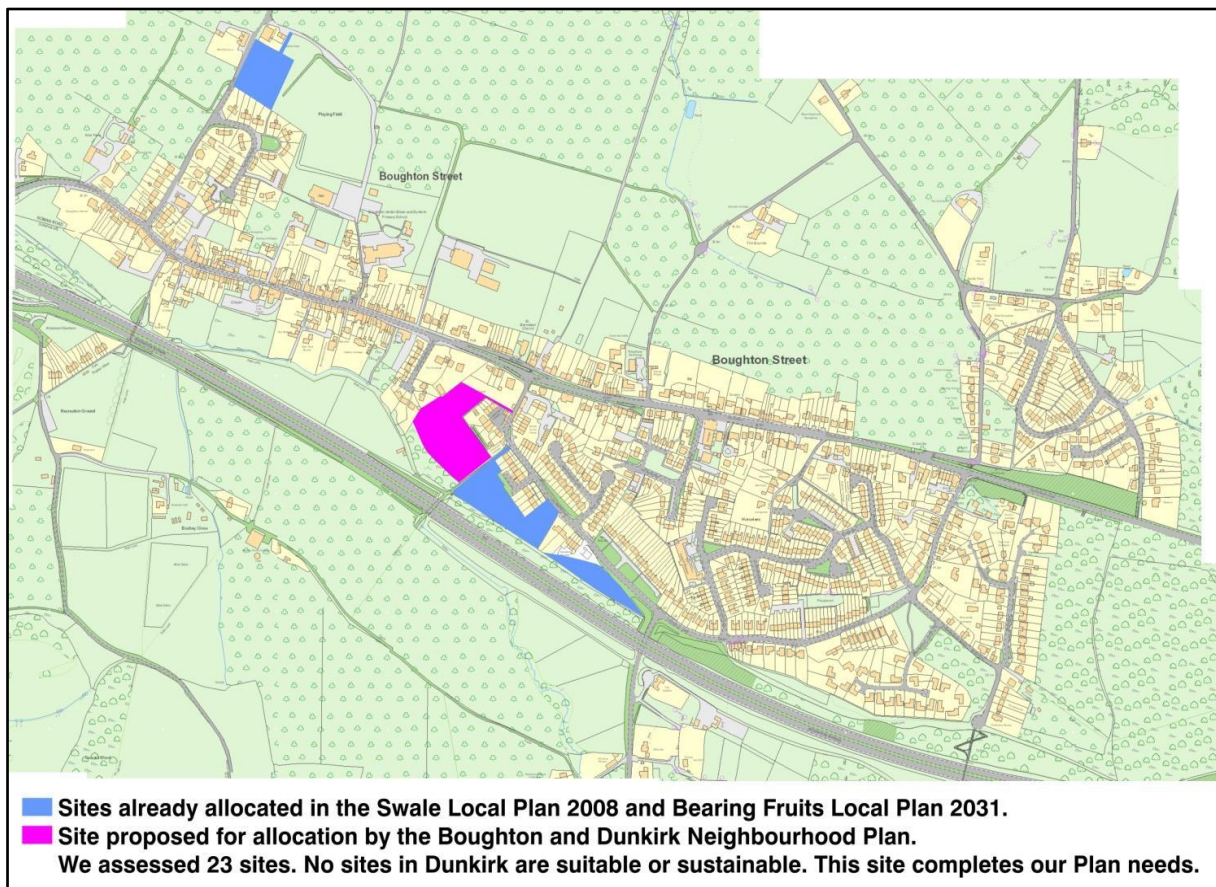
## 5.12 Plan site selection

5.12.1 The chosen site (land at rear of 89 The Street, sites 22 and 23 in BD13) has a number of constraints that can be mitigated by combining the site with the adjacent Local Plan allocations in Colonels Lane. Along with a suitable S106 condition, more homes would be available to people within our community.

5.12.2 A development brief / design code for the combined sites to include the local plan allocations will be required to address:

- i access to Colonels Lane via the adjacent site, allocated in the Swale Local Plan, with appropriate legal undertakings.
- ii safe pedestrian and cycling access and traffic management measures to cross a public footpath.
- iii noise screening, given the proximity to the A2.
- iv proximity to the Conservation Area.

These points will be further scrutinised with any planning application; the site is close to all facilities and is considered sustainable, suitable, available, achievable and deliverable.



Map V. Neighbourhood Plan site selection

**5.12.3 This will be the only site the Neighbourhood Plan Team are prepared to recommend to the community in the referendum. This site (see Map V above) met all selection criteria and is therefore suitable for allocation.**

See also BD14 Site Assessments and Allocations.



## 5.13 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

5.13.1 Objective 1. To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a quality home whilst ensuring minimal impact on the traffic-sensitive areas exposed by the questionnaire.

5.13.2 Policies from Objective 1

- H1** To provide new housing to meet local needs, including a range of affordable housing for Boughton and Dunkirk. The housing sites must be in sustainable locations and minimise additional traffic particularly on Boughton Hill or through The Street. To ensure that future housing meets the needs of the whole community including the disabled and the elderly, all dwellings will be required to be Buildings Regulations Part M compliant (see BD5).
- H2** To assist in addressing the Borough's need for new housing:
  - i** the site at Colonels Lane is allocated for up to 12 houses.
  - ii** Colonels Lane site allocation has a public right of way along its south-eastern boundary.
  - iii** layout at this site must ensure future access to existing wastewater infrastructure for maintenance and upsizing purposes.
- H3** To provide a mix of housing types including smaller homes for elderly villagers wishing to downsize and for young singles, couples or families needing their first home. A site with 5 houses or more must provide 40% affordable homes.
- H4** First Homes will be available to people with a local connection only. Should the homes in question remain unsold after a six-month period of active marketing in the local area, it should be extended to include those with a local connection to an adjoining parish area for a further three months before being eligible for the open market. See BD5 for full details.

5.13.3 Objective 2. To ensure that new development is of high-quality design, built to high sustainability standards (i.e., energy efficient and with vehicle electrical charging points), reinforces local distinctiveness, and minimises impact on the landscape. New and improved utility infrastructure including wastewater and water supply, will be encouraged and supported in order to meet the identified needs of the community subject to other policies in the plan.

#### 5.13.4 Policies from Objective 2

- H5 H5a** New developments will be of good design and locally distinctive style, respecting the current Kent Design Guide principles, and include green spaces and play areas. (See E3 and other Environment, Landscape Character and Design policies which follow).
- H5b** New developments will be sympathetic to the street scene and their settings as set out in the agreed design code.
- H5c** New developments will be carbon neutral and contribute to energy reduction.
- H6 H6a** All the areas identified in this Neighbourhood Plan for new developments, including those already in the Local Plan, should be the subject of agreed design codes or briefs prepared by the applicant and/or developer in consultation with the public to ensure new developments will be of good quality and locally distinctive style.
- H6b** The new site at Colonels Lane falls within the Strategic Access Management and Monitoring (SAMM) area, where any new residential site allocation within this SAMM area requires a contribution towards measures to mitigate potential recreational pressure on these coastal Special Protection Areas. The tariff is set by Bird Wise North Kent: <http://northkent.birdwise.org.uk>

5.13.5 Objective 3. Preferential access to new homes will be given to people with a proven local connection. Where a local need has been established, this will apply to those sites already allocated in the Swale Local Plan and to those allocated by this Plan; they must be placed in sustainable locations and support the environmental aims of the NP. This will be achieved with Section 106 agreements, monitored by Swale Borough Council.

#### 5.13.6 Policy from Objective 3

- H7** New developments will require that purchasers and occupiers of homes within the areas identified for new development, should be:
- i** Individuals or families with a proven local connection.
  - ii** People whose health dictates a move within the parishes.
  - iii** People who have satisfied either parish council of their merit and need. In accordance with the standards set out in BD5, this will apply for an initial sales period, after which properties may be offered on the open market. When they are re-sold within an agreed time-span a proven local connection will again apply.

5.13.7 Objective 4. Traffic issues and parking are of the highest concern. Development will be expected to fully address the impacts on traffic and parking issues in the area.

5.13.8 Policies from Objective 4

**H8 All development will have sufficient off-road parking to ensure that no on-street parking is attributable to the development (except during construction).**

**H9 There will be at least one parking space per bedroom. These include garages, car ports and off-road parking in accordance with the Parking Standards set out in BD4.**

**H10 Development proposals that involve the conversion of existing garage space to living accommodation will only be supported in principle if adequate off-street parking is available to support the completed development.**

## Section 6.0 Traffic and Transport

### 6.1 Context

6.1.1 Boughton and Dunkirk, twin villages on the ancient road from London to Canterbury taken by Chaucer's Pilgrims, are under siege. Road traffic is the bugbear in many ways. The M2/A2 corridor, running through the Neighbourhood Plan area, is also part of the "Trans European Transport Network" and the Brenley Corner junction is one of UK's biggest accident black spots.

6.1.2 As with educational provision, many of the decisions that apply to/govern our recommendations will be taken at Borough Council, County Council or national level. Our representations, the voices of the communities need to be taken into account when decisions are made.

### 6.2 Brenley Corner Junction

6.2.1 Brenley Corner junction is the only roundabout between Dover and the outskirts of London with traffic, particularly foreign traffic, sometimes unprepared for it. Accidents occur regularly. When this happens, the impact on the village is profound, as vehicles, including heavy lorries, attempt to get around the accident by using country lanes and Boughton Street. The danger to other local road users – cyclists, horse-riders, pedestrians – is obvious and worrying. The quality of the air that people in our communities breathe is also affected.

6.2.2 This major junction, the responsibility of National Highways, is severely in need of improvement, especially if it is to take an extra load of traffic from more development at Faversham and Canterbury and from a new Thames Crossing. This improvement needs to be sensitively handled, respecting its rural setting in what will become a precious green gap between Faversham and Boughton.

6.2.3 Some commuters who car share or board coaches, park in Brenley Lane and Homestall Lane; this has never been properly controlled, to the detriment of the environment, but this could be affected by future highway improvements at Brenley Corner.

### 6.3 Increase in traffic flow

6.3.1 The problem will be exacerbated by future major housing developments planned for Faversham and Canterbury which will further increase traffic flow along the bypass/A2/A299 roads.

6.3.2 There is also a proposal to build up 2,550 new homes on Duchy of Cornwall land between Brenley Corner and along the A2 to Tinbridge Oast, which lies in Boughton. The draft plan for this development shows no fewer than five new junctions onto the existing A2 roadway. Any suggestion of major development between Faversham and Boughton beside the A2 must be seen in the context of the February 2022 Strategic Transport Modelling Evidence report. This states 'it is highly unlikely that any highway schemes can fix all the congested points on the network', which will constrain development until at least 2038.

6.3.3 Canterbury City Council also plans to approve the building of 16,000 homes in Canterbury, Whitstable and Herne Bay by 2031.

#### **6.4 Congestion and parking**

6.4.1 Congestion in Boughton Street is already an ever-present problem. Parking is in some stretches restricted by double yellow lines but this road, the old A2 between London and Dover, is frequently blocked, a situation exacerbated by the necessary, welcome and regular journeys by double decker buses. The congestion has often reached crisis point. This, as the Neighbourhood Plan indicates, is a necessary constraint on further housing development in the two villages, including affordable housing. Some efforts have been made to reduce the effects of large vehicles entering the village, through a 7.5 tonne weight restriction on The Street, but the basic problem persists.

6.4.2 More cars mean more parking, particularly in residential areas where existing housing has access to no, or just one, off-road parking space. Many of the houses within the conservation area have no garage or parking spaces. The western part of The Street, which is most affected by congestion, was surveyed again in 2017 to see if residents would use off street parking if it was available. The responses indicated that it would be acceptable but used only if there were a number of such sites relatively close to the respondents' homes. This is not viable as there are no sites with suitable and safe access on to The Street. The obvious solution is a major extension of the existing yellow lines but this is not acceptable without providing adequate alternative parking spaces for residents.

See BD4 Additional Evidence for Parking Questionnaire and Results.

#### **6.5 A2 Lorry parking**

6.5.1 Overnight lorry parking is a major problem along the A2 and in surrounding roads, especially at Gate Services and at Nash Court. Neither the solution to Operation Stack nor the problems associated with Brexit and overnight lorry parking have been resolved. The dangerous situation at Gate Services, where Heavy Goods Vehicles were parking on the footway, forced pedestrians into the roadway and damaged the path. Years of pressure from Parish and County councillors, with the local MP, achieved action from National Highways, but the situation is not yet fully resolved. The lorry parking problem also occurs along the old A2 near Nash Court.

#### **6.6 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

6.6.1 Objective 1. High priority in the policies and implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan must be given to dealing with the transport and environmental implications of changes to the A2/M2 corridor and to development at Faversham and Canterbury.

#### 6.6.2 Policies from Objective 1

- T1 Boughton and Dunkirk Parish Councils will continue their pressure on Swale, KCC, National Highways, and their Borough Councillors, County Councillors and MP to improve the traffic flow along the A2 and the junction at Brenley Corner, while restricting access to some of our lanes and Boughton Street by HGVs and other through traffic.**
- T2 Measures to improve the junction at Brenley Corner recognise and respect its rural setting.**
- T3 Boughton and Dunkirk Parish Councils will play an active role in the preparation and implementation of a design and development brief for the Duchy Land in respect of traffic and pedestrian routes.**

6.6.3 Objective 2. All development will be expected to include proposals to mitigate congestion problems in the area, and the intrusive effects of traffic. The villages of Boughton and Dunkirk, and the surrounding countryside, are to be protected from the impacts of threatened increase in traffic. The NP requires all developments to provide off-road parking in accordance with the Parking Standards set out in BD4.

#### 6.6.4 Policies from Objective 2

- T4 To reduce the adverse effects of traffic on our villages, all developments will be limited by the capacity and nature of the road network necessary to accommodate them, and where possible should include off-road access via public rights of way.**
- T5 Further development in the countryside and surrounding villages is resisted beyond that which is allowed by the NPPF 2021 and LP Policy ST3, Bearing Fruits 2031, in order to avoid any increased negative impact on the current road system traffic, the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network and the local environment.**

6.6.5 Objective 3. Development proposals will require measures to allow safe walking, cycling and use of public transport.

#### 6.6.6 Policies from Objective 3

- T6 The Neighbourhood Plan team and the Parish Councils will work with the Highway Authority and the bus companies to improve facilities and information at the bus stops.**

- T7** The Neighbourhood Plan team and the Parish Councils will work with Kent County Council as the Highway Authority to improve cycle and pedestrian routes.
- T8** The Neighbourhood Plan team and the Parish Councils will work with the Highway Authority and landowners to promote the “Walking for Health” routes identified (see Maps VI, VII page 31, and BD11).

6.6.7 Objective 4. Any development must not add to parking problems in the area, and existing parking issues need to be addressed and should include measures to ensure adequate parking provision is included to serve the needs of the development.

6.6.8 Policies from Objective 4

- T9** Future residential and non-residential buildings shall have sufficient dedicated on-site parking spaces to avoid the need for parking on adjacent roads in accordance with the Parking Standards set out in BD4.
- T10** All proposals for new lorry parking in or near the Brenley Lane / Homestall Lane area will be resisted.
- T11** Development proposals for creation of a properly surfaced and managed car parking area, for example at Brenley Lane, will be supported, in principle, to promote car sharing.

## **Section 7.0 Business and Employment**

### **7.1 Context**

7.1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan area has incomplete broadband coverage, with access one-third slower than the national average. The proportion of companies which export is in line with the national average (11%.) Eleven companies (15.5%) have expansion plans, some with additional property requirements, and eighteen have additional staff requirements.

There is no Business Forum or support group for local businesses to network, discuss promotion or recruitment opportunities or to make representations, either nationally or locally. Local business attitudes, however, are mainly positive. The potential for further growth exists, at least in the medium term.

### **7.2 Consultation**

7.2.1 Local businesses were consulted regarding their requirements as part of the Neighbourhood Plan survey of community opinion. Eleven local companies said they were considering changing premises to expand and allow for growth. These opinions were expressed pre-Brexit and a further survey may be needed in order to gauge/check business confidence (see also BD7). The Neighbourhood Plan should remain flexible to accommodate expansion by small businesses, while at the same time, protecting the local environment.

### **7.3 Farming**

7.3.1 There are five major farming/agricultural businesses in the curtilage of the Neighbourhood Plan. Each is thriving, and the sympathetic development of agricultural buildings has been necessary for the growth of these businesses.

### **7.4 Suggestions for improvements**

7.4.1 Suggestions for improvements/criticisms by businesses covered ten different areas of which six most frequently mentioned were the need for:

1. Faster, improved broadband service
2. Reduced parking in The Street and increased off-street parking allocation (11)
3. Improved road upkeep and/or maintenance (6)
4. Additional housing and commercial land allocations (6)
5. A Business Networking forum (5)
6. Promotion of Local Businesses

### **7.5 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

7.5.1 Objective 1. To ensure the continuing vibrancy of the villages, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maintain and encourage proportionate expansion of local enterprises and retail outlets to encourage community use as well as to provide opportunity for employment and training for local people. This includes prioritising development on brownfield sites.



7.5.2. Policy from Objective 1

**BE1 Proposals for the expansion of present enterprises either on existing sites or alternative sites must reflect the overall Neighbourhood Plan development strategy, including the redevelopment on brownfield sites. Such expansion must provide opportunities for increased local employment and training.**

7.5.3 Objective 2. To support sustainable and economic growth which respects the character of the area, reflecting the results of our community consultation.

7.5.4 Policy from Objective 2

**BE2 Proposals for commercial development must be in keeping with the treasured character of the Neighbourhood Plan environment.**

7.5.5 Objective 3. To maintain the essentially rural nature and character of the two parishes, any commercial development should be measured, proportionate in size and type, and sustainable in the context of traffic and other infrastructural consideration.

7.5.6 Policy from Objective 3

**BE3 Any new or expanded commercial enterprise is required to provide its own dedicated parking and include a Goods Movement Plan to minimise the use of HGVs in the delivery and movement of goods (see also BD4, Parking Standards).**

## Section 8.0 Community Wellbeing and Health

### 8.1 Context

8.1.1 The community benefits from four designated recreation areas within two parishes, set within rural surroundings of picturesque fields, woodlands and orchards. These spaces provide play facilities for younger children as well as areas for football and bowls. There is also an 18-hole golf course with hotel facilities.

8.1.2 In recent years a community group, supported by the Parish Council, has enhanced the main recreation ground in Boughton by providing play facilities for the youngest children as well as adventure equipment for older children. An outdoor family gym was added in 2021.

8.1.3 With the closure of the Boughton GP surgery in 2016, our community now has no local primary medical, dental or social care facilities. Residents must travel to Faversham, Whitstable or further afield to meet their care needs. Whilst resolving this issue is not within the remit of a Neighbourhood Plan, our proposed housing policies have been designed with this constraint in mind (see BD11).

### 8.2 Questionnaire response

8.2.1 The main sources of evidence are the results of the Questionnaire and comments at subsequent meetings. These identified a strong concern for retention and promotion of the rural environment of the two villages (see also BD11). The Neighbourhood Plan has taken account of the need for additional facilities, particularly for younger adults, as indicated in responses to the initial Questionnaire.


8.2.2 To meet the points identified by respondents, the Neighbourhood Plan contains a broad aim to extend sport and recreational opportunities for all members of the community by making best use of green spaces, village hall facilities and the Parochial Church Council-owned St. Barnabas Parish Centre. Responses to a Call for Sites also include suggestions suitable for recreational development.

### 8.3 Walks, trails, bridleways and footpaths

8.3.1 Maps VI and VII on page 31 identify footpath trails and bridleways across the two parishes, and specially designed walks entitled 'Walks for Heritage and Health' (see also BD11). The Neighbourhood Plan encompasses an area of landscape and historic interest. Situated close to the protected woodland of the Forest of Blean and surrounded by an iconic countryside of orchards and hop-gardens, it is the epitome of Kent 'The Garden of England'.

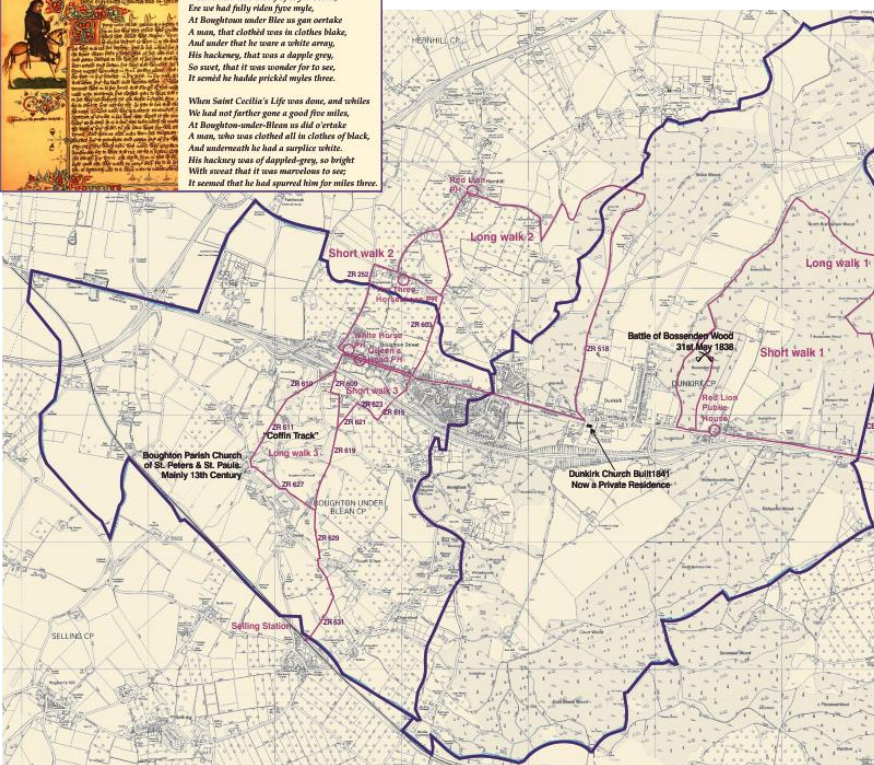
8.3.2 Local residents value this landscape for its intrinsic beauty, its historic importance and its recreational amenity value. It also acts as an important countryside buffer between the villages and the larger nearby towns of Faversham and Canterbury.

# Walks and trails for Heritage and Health.



When eadod was the lif of argut Ceclie,  
Ece we had fully riden fere wyle,  
At Boughton under Bleu us gan certake  
A man, that clothed was in clothes blake,  
And under that he wore a white awing,  
His hackney, that was a dapple grey,  
So swet, that it was wonder for to see,  
It semed he hadde prickid miles three.

When Saint Cecilia's Life was done, and whiles  
We had not further gone a good fere miles,  
At Boughton-under-Bleu us did o'ertake  
A man, who was clothed all in clothes of black,  
And underneath he had a surplice white.  
His hackney was of dappled-grey, so bright  
With swet that it was marvellous to see,  
It seemed that he had spurred him for miles three.



**When eadod was the lif of argut Ceclie...**

**When Saint Cecilia's Life was done, and whiles...**

**On the same day an inquest at the White Horse, Boughton, (ancient coaching inn noted in Canterbury Tales) returned verdicts of 'justifiable homicide' on the deaths of Courtenay and his followers: 'Sir William' and 7 others are buried in Herhill Church - but under his real name of John Tom. Two other rebels buried in Boughton Churchyard.**

**All routes listed clockwise.**

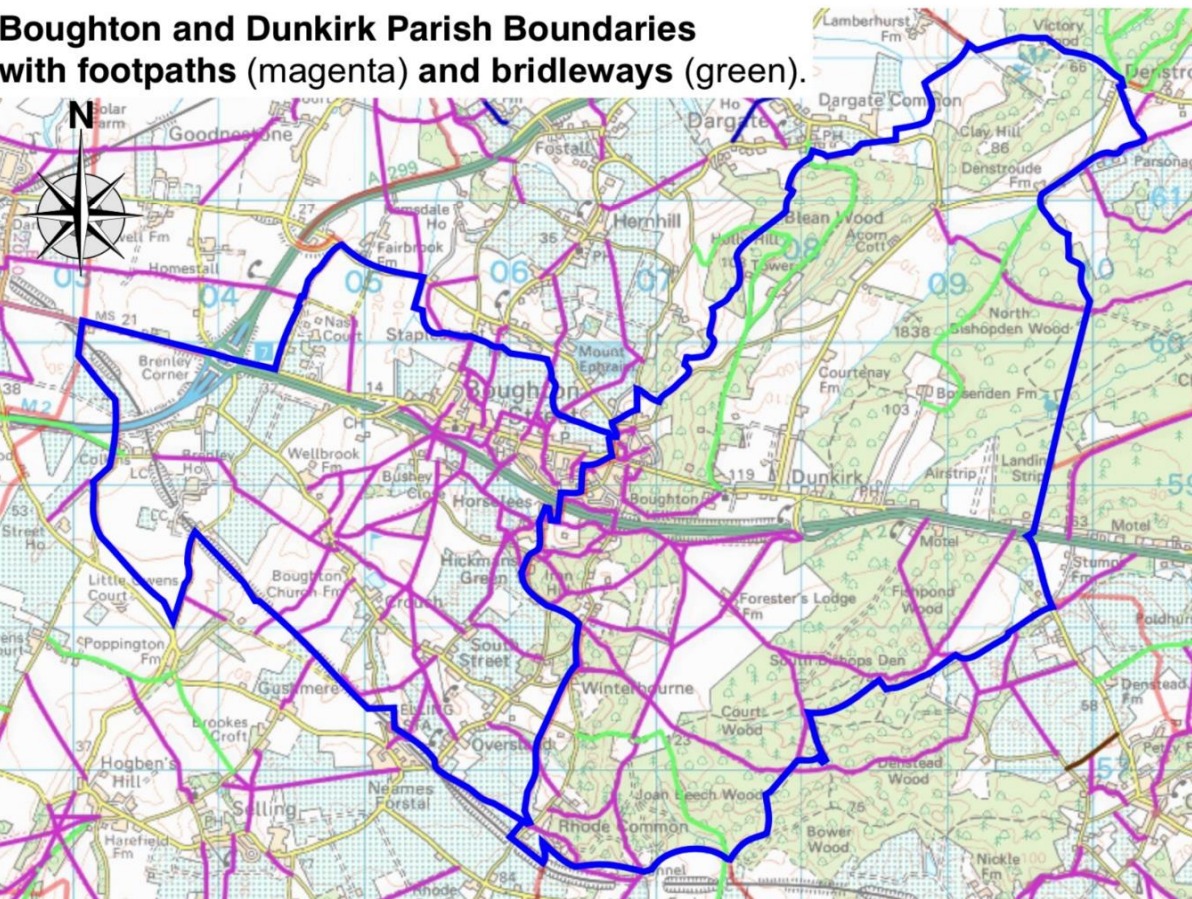
**1. Woodlands Walks.**  
Short walk 1 (1.8 km) - woodland loop  
Red Lion PH (18th Century). West along London Road  
Turn into Bossenden Wood  
Site of Battle of Bossenden Wood (marked X)  
Return down left-hand path back to London Road  
Return to Red Lion PH.  
Or Long Walk 1 (Approx. 6.5km).  
Continue through Bossenden Wood to North Bishopden Wood  
Turn East (right) towards Bleau Wood  
Back South through Ancient Woodlands  
At the A2 turn West back towards the Red Lion PH

**2. Boughton-Herrhill-Dunkirk Circuit.**  
Short Walk 2 (Approx. 2.8km).  
White Horse PH (15th Century) Boughton Street or Queen's Head PH Boughton Street (18th Century)  
Travel West and turn North into Bull Lane  
On reaching Staplestreet Road turn East  
Just before The Three Horseshoe PH (17th Century)  
Turn North on the road to Slabshole, Right to Mount Ephraim  
Along path and through orchards back to The Street.  
Alternatively straight on, through orchards back to The Street.  
Or Long Walk 2 (Approx. 7.5km).  
From Slabshole, continue to Herhill  
Red Lion PH (14th Century).  
Herhill Church \*\*\* business  
Road and woods through to Dunkirk  
Right, along Roman Road back to  
The Street, Boughton-under-dissan

**3. Boughton - Boughton or onward to Selling Station.**  
Short Walk 3 (Approx. 3.8km).  
White Horse Queens Head  
Boughton Street (East)  
Colons Lane path under A2  
South across Golf Course  
At Briddled Lane Turn North  
Pass Bramble Hall (Grade II listed)  
over A2 and back to The Street.  
Long Walk 3 (Approx. 3.9km).  
Continue South and then  
West to Parish Church  
(Or straight on to Selling Station see 3A)  
From Church, North along  
The Coffin Walk, over A2 and  
back to Boughton Street.  
From White Horse to Selling Station (Approx. 2.5km)

Map VI. Walks and Trails for Heritage and Health

## Boughton and Dunkirk Parish Boundaries with footpaths (magenta) and bridleways (green).



The map displays the parish boundaries of Boughton and Dunkirk in blue. A dense network of magenta lines represents footpaths, and green lines represent bridleways. The map includes a compass rose in the top left corner and various place names such as Boughton, Dunkirk, Selling, and surrounding areas like Goodnestone, Dargate, and Clav Hill.

Map VII. Boughton and Dunkirk boundaries with footpaths and bridleways

## **8.4 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES**

8.4.1 Objective 1. To enhance the use of all present recreational spaces and facilities, and to promote the health of the whole community by encouraging physical exercise.

8.4.2 Policies from Objective 1

- CWB1 The promotion and use of the green environment through new and existing designated trails which link throughout the parishes will be supported.**
- CWB2 The provision of suitable recreational facilities upon new or existing sites will be supported.**
- CWB3 Development proposals will be supported that will enhance the network of public bridleways and footpaths throughout the parishes.**

8.4.3 Objective 2. To broaden recreational opportunities and highlight the benefits of the outdoor environment for community members of all ages, not least for young adults, as well as for visitors to the parishes.

8.4.4 Policy from Objective 2

- CWB4 Development proposals will be supported that will enhance sports facilities within Boughton and Dunkirk villages.**

## Section 9.0 Educational Provision

### 9.1 Context

9.1.1 With the closure of the primary school in Dunkirk, pupils from both parishes within the Neighbourhood Plan area now attend the combined Boughton and Dunkirk Primary School in Boughton. Pupils continue to attend secondary schools in Faversham or Canterbury, either by bus or car.

9.1.2 With the primary school now close to capacity, a new housing development at Love Lane/Whitstable Road in Faversham as well as other proposed developments close to (and within) the boundary of the parish of Boughton-under-Blean may well have an impact upon school numbers. However, assurances have been given, following discussion with senior officers in East Kent Area Education Department, that pressure will be exerted upon developers to include the construction of a new primary education facilities in Faversham to meet the needs of these new residents.

### 9.2 Meeting the needs of our communities

9.2.1 The objectives of the Neighbourhood Plan relate both to ensuring adequate educational provision for all our primary school pupils and, where possible, to alleviating present and future pressures on parking and traffic flow linked to transportation of pupils to and from school.

9.2.2 At the same time, the Neighbourhood Plan supports local opportunities for continuing education and training for the wider community. Consequently, there is an obvious need for improved and consistent broadband throughout the NP area. Much of this section will depend on education and planning decisions, at District and County Council level, but the wishes of the community are summarised at the time of the writing of this Plan.

### 9.3 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

9.3.1 Objective 1. To ensure that any proposed new developments within or close to the boundaries of the two parishes must respect the constraints on the present primary school facilities.

9.3.2 Policies from Objective 1

**EP1 To ensure that any future residential development will take full account of the likely impact upon school provision. Housing will need to make a contribution via Section 106 agreement.**

- EP2 To improve parking provision and traffic flow at the beginning and end of the school day, as well as ensuring safe crossing places in The Street, following expressions of concern by pupils and parents. To support the suggestion produced by the questionnaire of a shuttle bus within the two parishes in order to reduce the journeys of private vehicles travelling to and from the school.**
- EP3 To consider the possible extension or re-siting of the present school, should adjacent land become available. This will require further consultation with Kent Education Authority. Any such project would seek to balance the needs of future expansion with the ethos and character of a rural school.**

9.3.3 Objective 2. To promote an ethos of Education for All by encouraging the use of local facilities to offer opportunities for study, personal development and expansion of vocational skills.

9.3.4 Objective 3. To meet the needs of a world ever more reliant upon 'new technology', the Plan will focus on providing or encouraging opportunities for training in Information Technology (IT) for all members of the community by adapting or improving current facilities.

9.3.5 Policy from Objectives 2 and 3

- EP4 To support proposals to enhance local facilities for continuing study, including the development of vocational and information technology skills, for all members of the community and to improve broadband access and speed.**

## Section 10.0 Environment, Landscape Character and Design

### 10.1 Context

10.1.1 The Neighbourhood Plan Area includes the historic villages of Boughton and Dunkirk, together with surrounding hamlets around Boughton Church and at South Street. They are all set within two areas of significantly valuable farming and natural landscape – parts of the North Kent Horticultural Belt, with its predominance of orchards and hop gardens, and the Forest of Blean, which includes both areas of woodland and fields formerly part of the forest. “The Blean” is an internationally designated Special Area of Conservation due to its ancient oak and *hornbeam* woodland and because it supports a good population of the rare *heath fritillary* butterfly. The villages have seen gradual growth over the years, with a mix of housing developments, and a sprinkling of commercial and community facilities.

### 10.2 Conservation and Landscape Character

10.2.1 The Swale Local Plan includes policies for the protection of significant landscape and habitat areas and the historic environment of this Neighbourhood Plan Area. The Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan confirms the evidence base for these policies through the Landscape Character Analysis (BD9) and the Boughton Street, Boughton Church and South Street Conservation Area Appraisals, adopted in 2019 (BD8). These documents identify the special qualities of each area, and suggest development and design guidelines; these are reflected in the site-specific policies on page 39, paragraph 10.5. In particular, they emphasise the need to protect from development the fruit belt areas north and south of Boughton, as well as the Blean Woods area that surrounds Dunkirk, and the character and setting of the three Conservation Areas and the landscape buffers between Faversham and Boughton, and between the village and the A2.

10.2.2 In the Swale Landscape Character Assessment (BD10), 42 landscape character areas were identified, described, and their key characteristics noted. An analysis was undertaken to identify the condition and sensitivity of the landscape to change. Methodology guidelines for each area were proposed. It was noted that changes in the natural landscape are often gradual, relating closely to changes in geology and soil type. It is therefore common to find some characteristics of one area overlapping into another.

10.2.3 Not all areas within a landscape character area exhibit all the characteristics of that area and it is usual to have some pockets with very few distinctive features. Often this is due to changes in land use that have resulted in the loss of landscape features, or the addition of features not typically associated with that area. The proximity of the built environment often affects the condition of the landscape, particularly on the boundaries where pressures are greatest.

10.2.4 Within the NP area ten different landscape areas have been identified (see para 10.5); each one is mapped, photographed and described in detail in terms of the landscape, views and built environment. Development / design guidelines are given for each separate area which are now reflected in the area-specific policies in paragraph 10.5. (Map X, page 38).

### 10.3 Maintaining Community Identity

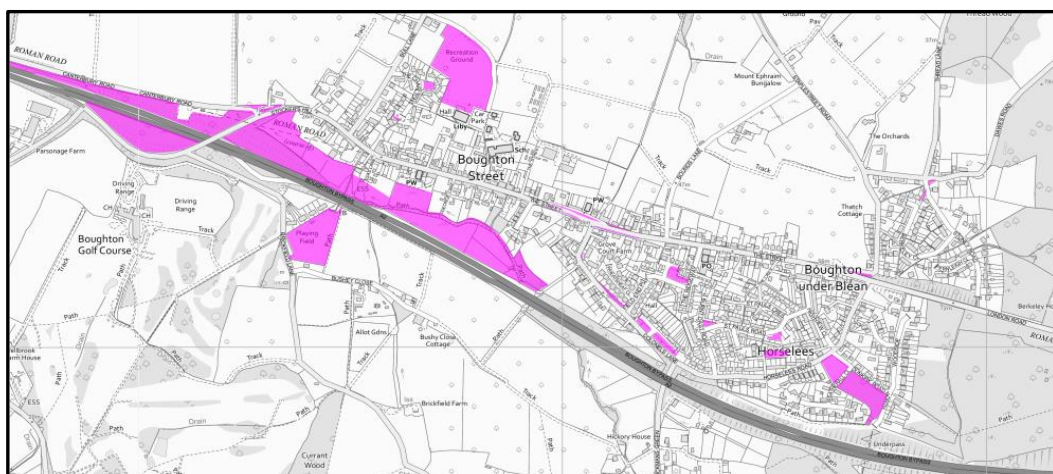
10.3.1 One of the most important principles of our Neighbourhood Plan is to maintain our identity as a community separate from Faversham, Canterbury and Whitstable with green space between us. This means that, in order to safeguard and enhance the local environment, as a matter of principle any new development should take place on sites within or, if required to meet recognised community needs, adjacent to the built-up boundaries of Boughton and Dunkirk, relating well to the existing settlements, respecting the character of the surrounding countryside and of the Conservation Areas.

### 10.4 OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

10.4.1 Objective 1. To safeguard and enhance the distinctive identity and rural character of both Boughton and Dunkirk parishes and to maintain their separate identities and physical separation from the nearby communities of Faversham and Canterbury. To protect from development the countryside gaps between them, the open landscape between the A2 and the Boughton Street Conservation Area, and other heritage assets, and the significant views to and from The Blean and to the coast (see BDs 8, 9 and page 42, Map XI).

#### 10.4.2 Policies from Objective 1

- E1 Proposals for developments which respect and enhance the tranquillity, local landscape, character, environmental quality and amenity value of Boughton and Dunkirk parishes will be supported in principle.**
- E2 Proposals for developments which actively seek opportunities for landscape, heritage, recreational and ecological gain will be supported in principle, as will the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and the management of the countryside.**
- E3 Green spaces within the parishes will continue to be protected from development (see page 36, Map VIII, page 37 Map IX, and page 42, Map XI, and BD11).**



Map VIII. Boughton parish green spaces





*Map IX. Dunkirk parish green spaces*

10.4.3 Objective 2. To continue to protect and enhance the Blean Woods area that surrounds Dunkirk, the fruit belt areas north and south of Boughton, as well as the settings of the Conservation Areas of the parishes. To give special protection to sites in or near to designated landscape areas, as included in the Swale Local Plan, and to designated wildlife sites, and to encourage their enhancement and proper management.

10.4.4 Policies from Objective 2

- E4 Any development that conflicts with the protection of the natural landscape and sensitive sites and wildlife in ‘The Blean’ and the surrounding fruit belt will not be supported.**
- E5 All proposals for new or extended development having a landscape impact must demonstrate that they have had regard to and reflect the Landscape Character Area in which the application site falls and must follow the policy guidelines of the Local Plan as well as the policies in this Plan.**

10.4.5 Objective 3. To minimise the environmental impact of new development, including surface water drainage, water supply and quality; to ensure that all development is sympathetic to its setting and that it enhances the high-quality landscape and improves local biodiversity; to ensure that any development is compatible with its built and natural context and to locate new development within easy walking distance of existing village facilities. It will encourage access to bus stops, thus minimising traffic congestion, the related emissions and pedestrian safety concerns.

10.4.6 Policies from Objective 3

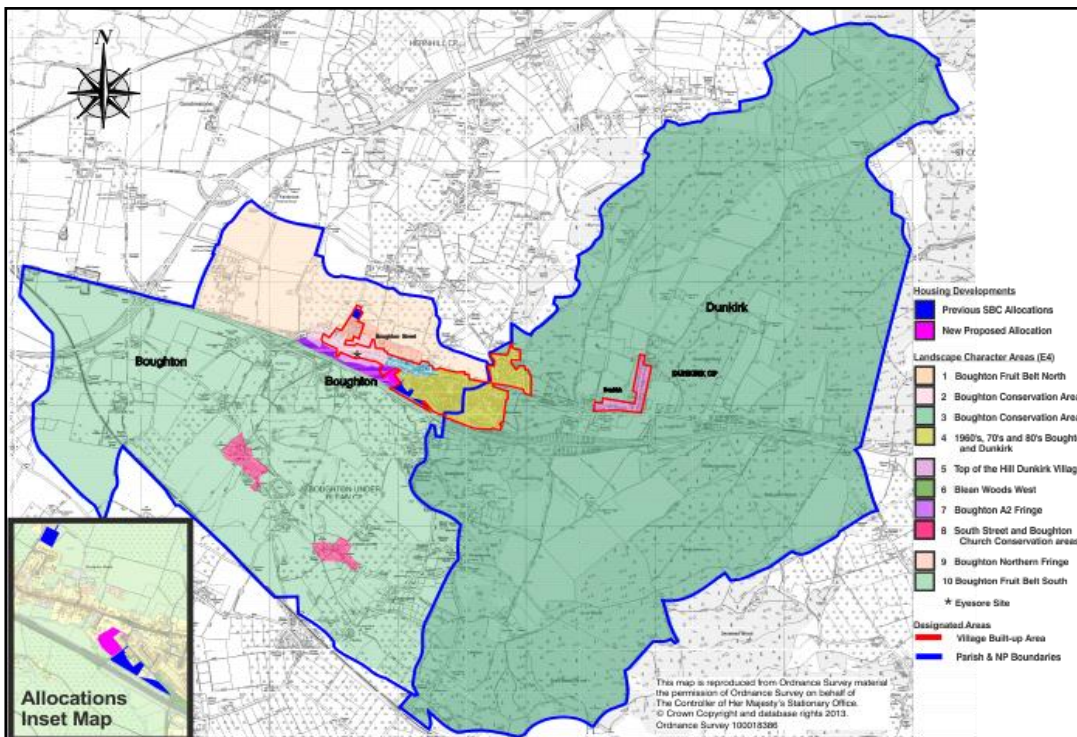
- E6 Proposals which harm the tranquillity, character or amenity value of the landscape and village environment, including an increase in the generation of traffic, will not be supported.**

- E7 Development within the village envelope will be supported in principle providing it promotes the re-use, recovery and restoration of previously developed sites.**
- E8 A minimum 20% net-gain in biodiversity for developments against baseline conditions is required.**

10.4.7 Objective 4. All proposals for development must contain sufficient detail to demonstrate that the proposal is of high-quality design appropriate to its surroundings, with suitable layout and access arrangements. Proposals for development within or visible from the Conservation Areas must have regard to the principles set out in the Boughton Conservation Area Appraisals (BD8) and Landscape Character Areas (BD10). The traditional pattern of growth which characterises the parishes of Boughton and Dunkirk is one of small scale and gradual change. This must be reflected in the scale of any development permitted in the Neighbourhood Plan area during the plan period. Any external lighting proposed must not cause visual intrusion or light pollution.

10.4.8 Policies from Objective 4

- E9 Variety in density, layout, building orientation and sizes will be sought to reflect the local context. Building styles and materials must also respect and positively contribute to local distinctiveness.**
- E10 Schemes must produce a cohesive and high-quality design approach for car parking, charging points, boundary treatments, bin stores, utility storage boxes, lighting and street furniture. All landscaping and boundary planting should be of native species.**



*Map X.  
Landscape  
Character  
Areas*

## 10.5 LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS AND AREA-SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

The policies that follow provide detailed guidance for the proposals in Map X, page 38.

### 10.5.1 Area 1 - BOUGHTON FRUIT BELT NORTH

10.5.2 Objective 1. To conserve the area and its characteristic agricultural activity, retaining its open nature and emphasising its role in the countryside gap that exists between Faversham and the villages including key views.

10.5.3 Policy from Objective 1

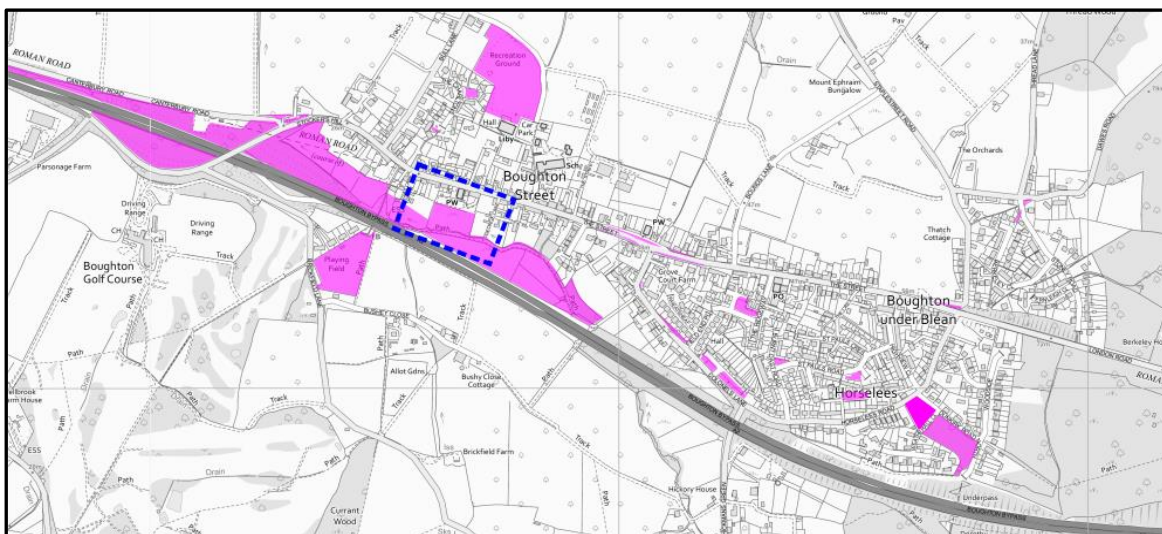
**AS1 To support landscaping around the A2 to reduce the impact of the road and associated development. All landscaping and boundary planting should be of native species.**

### 10.6. Areas 2 and 3 - BOUGHTON STREET CONSERVATION AREA

10.6.1 Objective 2. To preserve and enhance the area's special interest and its setting, including the open and wooded landscape between the rear of properties and the A2.

10.6.2 Policy from Objective 2

**AS2 To support the improvement of the old Garden Hotel, in a manner which secures the viable future of the listed building and is sympathetic to the objectives of this Plan, including protection of the lower area of this site as part of a wider designation as a local green space in accordance with policy AS6. See Map XI below.**



Map XI. Boughton parish green spaces showing the Garden Hotel (within blue dotted line)

## **10.7 Area 4 - 1960s / 70s / 80s BOUGHTON AND DUNKIRK**

10.7.1 Objective 3. To protect and enhance incidental open spaces.

10.7.2 Policy from Objective 3

**AS3 Development proposals that would compromise the character or access to open spaces in Area 4 will not be supported.**

## **10.8 Area 5 - "TOP OF THE HILL" DUNKIRK**

10.8.1 Objective 4. To conserve the relationship of "top the hill Dunkirk" with the wider Blean Woods (SSSI).

10.8.2 Policy from Objective 4

**AS4 Development will be permitted where it is limited in scale, in accordance with the Swale Local Plan, to "minor infill and redevelopment sites within the built-up area.**

## **10.9 Area 6 - BLEAN WOODS WEST**

10.9.1 Objective 5. To conserve the distinct and tranquil landscape character of the ancient and semi-ancient woodland.

10.9.2 Policy from Objective 5

**AS5 Development proposals must conserve and enhance Area 6, including ditches, streams and ponds, scrub, dry and wet heath, together with its setting of wood pasture, open slopes (including views) and the rural character of the area's network of narrow winding lanes, enclosed by mature hedgerows.**

## **10.10 Area 7 - BOUGHTON A2 FRINGE**

10.10.1 Objective 6. To restrict development south of the built-up area to the two areas on Colonels Lane already allocated for residential use and an additional area immediately to the west, detailed in Policy AS7.

10.10.2 Policy from Objective 6

**AS6 Any further development to the two areas immediately alongside the A2 in Area 7 other than already allocated will not be supported.**

10.10.3 Objective 7. To consider development on the area of relatively level land next to the larger site, and adjoining the built-up area.

10.10.4 Policies from Objective 7

**AS7 Residential development is proposed on the area west of the two sites already allocated in Swale's Local Plan, provided that a development brief prepared by the developer in accordance with this NP and agreed by the local community, for the areas combined could deal adequately with access and noise issues.**

**AS8 The remainder of Area 7 is to be protected as an area of Local Green Space, the public footpath enhanced, and maintenance improved through S106 contributions.**

### **10.11 Area 8 - SOUTH STREET AND BOUGHTON CHURCH CONSERVATION AREAS**

10.11.1 Objective 8. To ensure both Conservation Areas are protected and enhanced. The management and safeguarding of the churchyard, the memorial garden and burial ground is of key importance to the heritage assets and biodiversity.

10.11.2 Policy from Objective 8

**AS9 Any proposals that impact the conservation areas in area 8 must be in accordance with the Conservation Area Appraisals (BD8).**

### **10.12 Area 9 - BOUGHTON NORTH FRINGE**

10.12.1 Objective 9. To maintain the rural character of the Bull Lane area and improve the Village Hall and school surroundings.

10.12.2 Policies from Objective 9

**AS10 To ensure the control of the allocated development of the Bull Lane site by a Development Brief that maintains the rural character of Bull Lane, and creates an attractive frontage to the adjoining playing fields through an integrated landscape strategy, (see 'Bearing Fruits 2031', paragraph 6.5.11).**

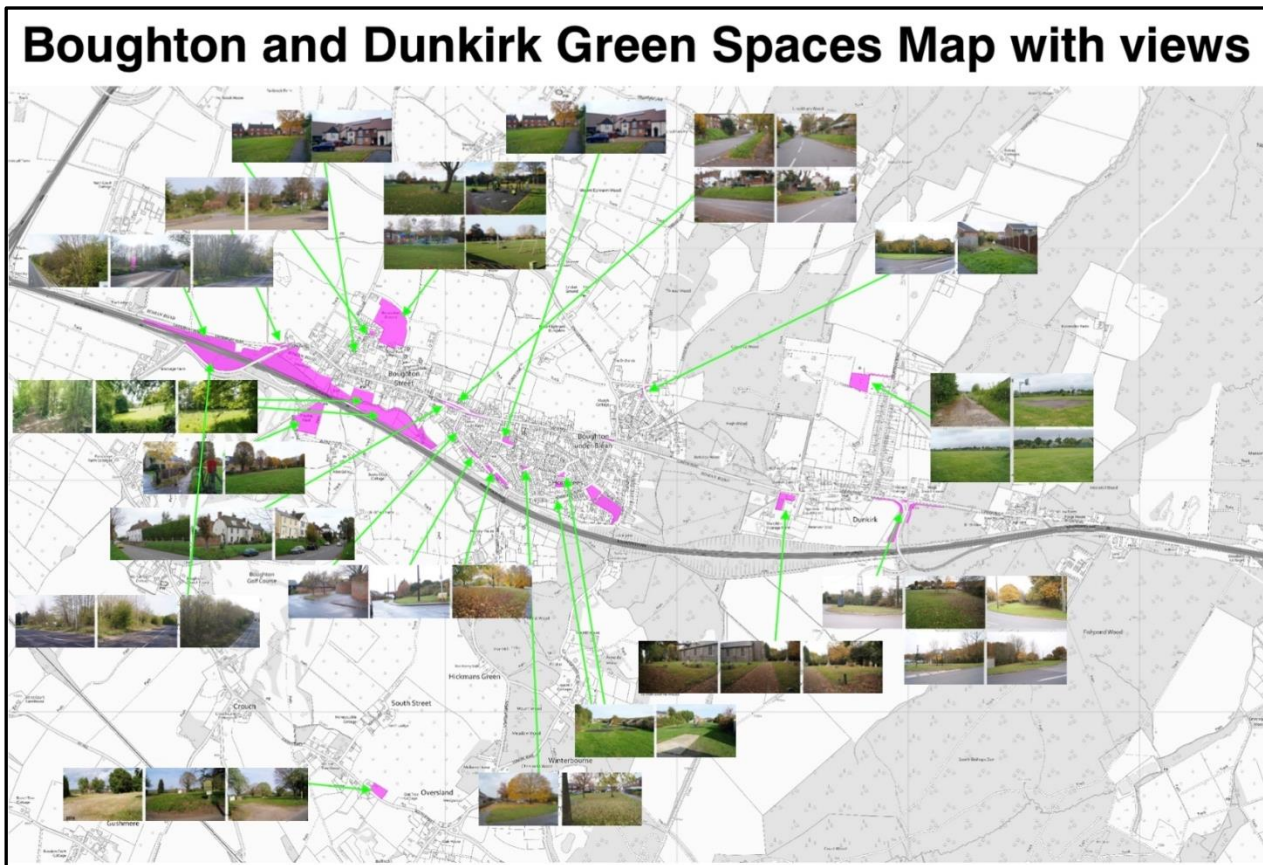
**AS11 To support improvement of the Village Hall and surroundings to enhance the community facilities and green open space.**

### **10.13 Area 10 - BOUGHTON FRUIT BELT SOUTH**

10.13.1 Objective 10. To maintain the open character of the area and in particular its role as part of the countryside gap between Faversham and the villages.

10.13.2 Policies from Objective 10

- AS12** Proposals will be supported for an improved layout for Brenley Corner where they are developed to respect and respond to its countryside setting, incorporating a landscape strategy that minimises the impact of the development on the surrounding areas.
- AS13** Development proposals will be supported which contribute to protecting and where possible, enhancing the intrinsic value, tranquillity and beauty of the countryside, its buildings and the vitality of rural communities.



Map XII. Boughton and Dunkirk Green Spaces map with views

# Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan

## DESIGNATION OF NEIGHBOURHOOD AREA

Local Development Framework Panel  
Thursday, 19th September, 2013

### Local Development Framework Panel

MINUTES of the Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne on Thursday 19 September 2013 from 7:00 pm to 8.20 pm.

**Present:** Councillor Gerry Lewin (Chairman), Councillor Bryan Mulhern (Vice-Chairman), Councillors Andy Booth, Derek Conway, Mike Haywood, Prescott, Adam Tolhurst, Roger Truelove and John Wright.

**Officers Present:** Alan Best, James Freeman and Kellie Mackenzie.

**Also In Attendance:** Councillor David Simmons (Cabinet Member for Environment and Rural Affairs).

273	<p><b>Minutes</b></p> <p>The Minutes of the Meeting held on 27 June 2013 (Minutes Nos. 106 - 111) were taken as read, approved and signed by the Chairman as a correct record subject to an amendment to Minute No. 107 to reflect that Councillor Bryan Mulhern was elected as Vice-Chairman.</p>
274	<p><b>Declarations Of Interest</b></p> <p>No interests were declared.</p>
	<p><b>Part A Minutes For Recommendation To Cabinet</b></p>
275	<p><b>Draft Kent Downs Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty Management Plan 2015-2020</b></p> <p>The Chairman welcomed Councillor David Simmons, Cabinet Member for Environmental and Rural Affairs to the meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Simmons thanked the Principal Planner for the report which set out minor observations, as set out in Table One of the report, on the management plan for the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) which was currently out for consultation.</p> <p>Councillor Simmons spoke about the importance of the document and the need to enhance and strengthen controls to protect AONBs and the countryside for their own sake. Councillor Simmons explained that he would have liked the document to have explored amendments to boundaries, but hopefully this was something for the future.</p> <p>Councillor Simmons also considered that on page three of the report paragraph 2.6 the wording 'decline in woodland management' should be replaced with 'changes in woodland management'.</p> <p>In response to queries from Members, the Principal Planner stated that with regard to Policy VC7 and to green accreditation, there was currently no mechanism to require landowners to support the scheme. He felt that some strengthening of the statement may give added encouragement. Some Members felt that this was best left to businesses to decide whether to join such a scheme. The Principal Planner explained that with regard to the 'byways Open to all traffic' statement in Section 3.10.4, the review would include those areas where it was already legal for off-road vehicles to access.</p> <p>The Chairman thanked the Officer and Cabinet Member for their work on the document.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDED:</b> (1) That, subject to the amendments suggested by the Panel, the minor observations set out in Table One be provided to the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) unit for consideration in preparing the final draft adoption version of the management plan.</p>
276	<p><b>Boughton-under-blean &amp; Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan - Designation Of Neighbourhood Area</b></p> <p>The Chairman introduced the report which informed Members of the outcome of a recent public consultation outlining a request by Boughton-under-Blean and Dunkirk Parish Councils to have an area designated as a neighbourhood area for the purposes of developing a Neighbourhood Plan.</p> <p><b>RECOMMENDED:</b> (1) That the Boughton-Under-Blean and Dunkirk neighbourhood area be designated for the purposes of a Neighbourhood Plan following a six-week public consultation.</p>

# **Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan**

## **Glossary**

### **Affordable housing**

Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market.

### **AONB – Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty**

Land protected by the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000. It protects the land to conserve and enhance its natural beauty.

### **BD – Background Documents**

Working documents which, together with Plan Additional Evidence, provide further information about how the plan was researched and developed.

### **B&DNP – Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan**

### **Bearing Fruits 2031 – also known as the Local Plan and Local Development Plan**

The Swale Borough Council Local Plan identifies where development will take place and how the natural environment and built heritage of the borough will be protected and enhanced.

Comprises one or more documents prepared in accordance with legal requirements, independently examined and adopted in 2017 by the Council. It is also used by the Council to help determine planning applications.

### **Biodiversity value**

The variety and variability among living organisms and the ecological complexes in which they occur.

### **Conservation Area Appraisal**

Defines the special interest of the conservation area that merits its designation and describes and evaluates the contribution made by the different features of its character and appearance.

### **Disability in Kent**

Outlines the data sets that Kent County Council uses to estimate the number of people with a disability or disabling condition.

### **Earnings in Kent**

Average weekly earnings data for the districts in Kent.

### **Economically active**

Those people in employment plus those who are unemployed (includes students)

### **Economically inactive**

Those people (aged 16-64) not involved in the labour market, neither working or actively seeking employment.



**English Rural Housing**

Non-profit organisation working with rural communities to build and manage affordable homes.

**Goods Movement Plan**

Evaluates existing conditions and key trends, issues and opportunities. Recommends projects, programs and policies to improve the efficiency of goods movement while reducing impacts on communities.

**Grade II listed**

A building or structure of special architectural or historic interest considered to be of national importance and therefore worth protecting.

**Housing stock in Kent**

The total number of houses and apartments in an area.

**KCC – Kent County Council****Land registry data**

House price information consisting of more than 24m definitive records dating back to 1995.

**Landscape Character Assessment**

The process of identifying and describing variation in character of the landscape. It identifies and explains the unique combination of elements and features that make landscapes distinctive by mapping and describing character types and areas.

**Light pollution**

Excessive or poor use of artificial outdoor light at night which disrupts the natural patterns of wildlife, contributes to the increase in carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, disrupts human sleep and obscures stars in the night sky.

**LDF – Local Development Framework**

A collection of planning documents that deliver the spatial planning strategy and policies for the local area.

**LPR – Local Plan Review**

Local Plan is reviewed every 5 years and will set out the planning framework for the borough for the period to 2038 and will cover issues such as: housing provision, the economy, retail and town centres; infrastructure provision and the environment. It will also set out policies by which planning applications will be determined, in addition to allocation land for housing.

**Localism Act 2011**

An Act of Parliament that changes the powers of local government in England. The aim of the act is to facilitate the devolution of decision-making powers from central government to individuals and communities.

**Locality**

National network charged with supporting the delivery of Neighbourhood Plans.

**NP – Neighbourhood Plan (also known as Neighbourhood Development Plan)**

A made plan gives communities direct power to develop a shared vision for their neighbourhood and shape the development and growth of their local area.

**NPPF – National Planning Policy Framework**

Sets out government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied.

**Native species**

A species that originated and developed in its surrounding habitat and has adapted to living in that particular environment.

**ONS – Office for National Statistics**

Produces statistics which are relied on by central and local government, businesses and individuals to make decisions and plan for the future. The data used by this document is from the 2011 Census.

**Parking Standards**

Considers parking for all types of vehicles and seeks to balance the need to provide an appropriate parking provision for new developments.

**PAE – Planning Aid England**

Provides planning advice and support to help individuals and communities engage with the planning system and get involved in planning their local area.

**Property prices and sales in Kent**

Presents the annual house prices and sales for local authorities in Kent as published by the Land Registry.

**PRoW – Public Rights of Way**

Rights across land exercisable by the public, and which allow them to pass along them, at any time they choose. Some rights of way also allow travel by other means, e.g. by horse, bicycle or car.

**Reg 14 – Regulation 14 Consultation**

Details of the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan, details of where and when the proposals for a neighbourhood development plan may be inspected, details of how to make representations and the date by which those representations must be received.

**Rural Local Service Centre**

Growth points or settlements with relatively high intensity of functional magnitude and distinctiveness; serves its surrounding territory in terms of cultural, commercial, administrative and other requirements.

**SAMM area – Strategic Access Management and Monitoring area**

Working with Natural England, strategies are created for protected sites, these are known as SAMMS – Strategic Access Management and Monitoring Strategies.

## **SBC – Swale Borough Council**

### **S106 – Section 106 agreement**

Planning obligations under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, are a mechanism which makes a development proposal acceptable in planning terms that would not otherwise be acceptable. They are focused on site specific mitigation of the impact of development on the community and infrastructure.

### **SHLAA – Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment**

A technical exercise to determine the quantity and suitability of land potentially available for housing development.

### **SSSI – Site of Special Scientific Interest**

A formal conservation designation. Usually, it describes an area that is of particular interest to science due to the rare species of fauna or flora it contains, or even important geological or physiological features that may lie in its boundaries.

### **Special Area of Conservation**

Protects one or more special habitats and/or species, terrestrial or marine, listed in the Habitats Directive.

### **Sustainable development**

Development that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

### **Thames Crossing**

A proposed road crossing of the Thames estuary close to the Dartford Crossing that links the counties of Kent and Essex and its proposed approaches.

### **Trans European Transport Network**

A planned network of roads, railways, airports and water infrastructure in the European Union.

### **UK Red List**

A globally recognised way of identifying the threat of extinction to species using the internationally accepted Red List guidelines developed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, based on scientific information and ongoing research.

# Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan

## EVIDENCE BASE

Reference	Content
<b>Section 1</b>	<b>Aim, Vision Statement and Key Objectives</b>
BD1 + Additional Evidence	Questionnaire and results: The questionnaire was delivered to all 1200 households and BD1 summarises the results for each of the 20 questions. There was a 21% response rate.
BD2	Workshops and community engagement: Overview of 2 workshops, 7 public meetings/surgeries, 25 community group visits, and four surveys undertaken during the period 2013-2015, in order to ensure residents' views were fully taken into account, and as many volunteers as possible were given an opportunity to participate.
BD3	School documentation and engagement with young people: Summarises the lessons delivered at the local primary school in 2015, and views collected from schoolchildren about amenities in their community.
BD17 Appendix 3	Community consultation responses and B&DNP Team decisions.
<b>Section 2</b>	<b>About Us</b>
	'Canterbury Tales' by Geoffrey Chaucer
	'Battle in Bossenden Wood' by P. G. Rogers
	'The Courtenay Affair, 1838', A Nutshell Guide by Wendy Safe
	Local history researched by the NP Team
	Photos researched and supplied by the NP Team and members of the local community
BD16	Our Community: History and development of Boughton under Blean and Dunkirk Heritage Asset list for both parishes
<b>Section 3</b>	<b>Neighbourhood Plan Development</b>
BD1 + Additional Evidence	Questionnaire and results: The questionnaire was delivered to all 1200 households and BD1 summarises the results for each of the 20 questions. There was a 21% response rate.

BD2	Workshops and community engagement: Overview of 2 workshops, 7 public meetings/surgeries, 25 community group visits, and four surveys undertaken during the period 2013-2015, in order to ensure residents' views were fully taken into account, and as many volunteers as possible were given an opportunity to participate.
BD3	School documentation and engagement with young people: Summarises the lessons delivered at the local primary school in 2015, and views collected from schoolchildren about amenities in their community.
BD17 Appendix 3 + Additional Evidence	Community consultation responses and B&DNP Team decisions.
BD12	Strategic Environment Assessment with Natural England's response
BD17 Appendix 5	Statutory consultation responses and B&DNP Team decisions.
BD17 Appendix 7	Swale Borough Council Consultation response and B&DNP Team decisions.
	National Policy Planning Framework 2021: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2</a>
<b>Section 4</b>	<b>Planning Policy Context</b>
	KCC Labour Force Bulletin 2020.
	ONS 2011 Census – Accommodation figures.
	ONS 2011 Census – Travel figures.
	ONS 2011 Census – Public transport figures.
<b>Section 5</b>	<b>Housing</b>
BD1 + Additional Evidence	Questionnaire and results: The questionnaire was delivered to all 1200 households and BD1 summarises the results for each of the 20 questions. There was a 21% response rate.
BD4 + Additional Evidence	Traffic and Transport: Describes the road and footpath network and current public transport services, and discusses problems with traffic levels, car and lorry parking, lighting, and signage. NP photographs 2015. NP Parking Standards

BD5	Housing: Extracts the housing issues raised through community engagement, particularly the implications for provision of new privately-owned affordable homes. Includes details on First Homes.
BD6	Local Needs Housing Survey (inc. survey work and work on current housing in the Parishes):  Sets out results of October 2014 survey of existing housing stock as reported by 353 residents, and housing needs for 29 households seeking new housing at that time. Also shows costs of houses sold, for sale or for rent in 2020.
BD7 + Additional Evidence	Business and Employment: Shows results of a Business Monitor survey of 170 local companies carried out in 2015, with a response rate of 40%, including suggestions for improvements.
BD11	Open Spaces and Community Wellbeing: Reviews the large number of diverse green spaces within the NP area which are available for the public to use and enjoy. Includes Health and Welfare report.
BD12	Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report from Natural England, May2021.
BD13	Call for sites - Consultation with landowners: Shows correspondence with landowners who responded to the call for sites.
BD14 + Additional Evidence	Site assessments and allocations: Sets out individual site assessments for 23 potential new housing sites. Includes a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment.
	ACRK Boughton and Dunkirk Housing Needs Survey report.
	KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin: Affordable Housing 2019-2020.
	KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin: Housing Stock 2019.
	KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin: Property prices and sales in Kent: 2020.
	KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin: Earnings in Kent 2019.
	KCC Strategic Commissioning Statistical Bulletin: Disability in Kent 2020.
	Strategic Housing Market Assessment Part 1: Objectively Assessed Housing Need Final Report Peter Brett Associates September 2015.

	Future Housing Need in Swale: Peter Brett (now part of Stantec) February 2019
	Swale LPR Housing Trajectory 2022-2038
	Bearing Fruits 2031: The Swale Borough Local Plan.
	Swale Technical Paper No. 4. Influences on development strategy December 2014.
	Homes England 'Building for a Healthy Life' July 2020.
	HM Government Building Regulations 2010 'M: Access to and use of buildings, Volume 1: Dwellings'.
	Office for National Statistics March 2020: House price to workplace-based earnings ratio.
	Land Registry data, 2022
<b>Section 6</b>	<b>Traffic and Transport</b>
BD1 + Additional Evidence	Questionnaire and results: The questionnaire was delivered to all 1200 households and BD1 summarises the results for each of the 20 questions. There was a 21% response rate.
BD4 + Additional Evidence	Traffic and Transport: Describes the road and footpath network and current public transport services, and discusses problems with traffic levels, car and lorry parking, lighting, and signage. NP photographs 2015. NP Parking Standards
	Strategic Transport Modelling Evidence report, February 2022.
	KCC Local Transport Plan 4-Delivering Growth Without Gridlock 2016-31.
	Swale BC 'Looking Ahead' Consultation April 2018.
	Swale BC 'Freight Management' Consultation Draft 2016.
BD6	Local Needs Housing Survey, responses to Q7 and Q8 on travel.
	UK Government Bus Services Bill 2016.
	KCC The Big Conversation Rural bus consultation 2018.
	Appendix 4 SBC Parking Standards.

	UK Government Traffic Management Act 2004.
	KCC Freight Action Plan for Kent 2012-16.
	National Policy Planning Framework 2021: <a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2">https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2</a>
<b>Section 7</b>	<b>Business and Employment</b>
BD7 + Additional Evidence	<p>A Business Survey was carried out in the two villages.</p> <p>Like much of the UK, Boughton and Dunkirk thrive, in the main, on small business. Companies were invited to submit their views either on-line, via a website or on paper. Seventy-one companies responded (44%), well above the average business survey response rates (10-15%).</p> <p>The Neighbourhood Plan area has fewer companies than the average for communities of this size across the south east of England. Largely, they involve part-time working and the self-employed.</p>
<b>Section 8</b>	<b>Community Wellbeing and Health</b>
BD1 + Additional Evidence	<p>Questionnaire and results:</p> <p>The questionnaire was delivered to all 1200 households and BD1 summarises the results for each of the 20 questions. There was a 21% response rate.</p> <p>The main sources of evidence are the results of the NP Questionnaire and comments at subsequent meetings. These identified a fundamental wish to preserve and extend green spaces, paths and bridleways and to provide additional sports opportunities (see Q2, Q10 and Q14)</p>
BD11	<p>Open Spaces and Community Wellbeing:</p> <p>Reviews the large number of diverse green spaces within the NP area which are available for the public to use and enjoy.</p> <p>Includes Health and Welfare report.</p>
<b>Section 9</b>	<b>Educational Provision</b>
	Meeting with East Kent Education Officers in July 2015. Officers are well aware of the increasing pressure on school places at both primary and secondary level within the immediate area, particularly with the present and planned new residential developments in Faversham, close to the Boughton Parish boundary.
BD1 + Additional Evidence	<p>Questionnaire and results:</p> <p>The questionnaire was delivered to all 1200 households and BD1 summarises the results for each of the 20 questions.</p> <p>There was a 21% response rate. Responses in particular to Q9 and Q17.</p>



BD3	Visits to school and lesson plans for pupils in Years 4 and 5. Pupils' responses identify concerns and wishes for a child-friendly community.
BD4 + Additional Evidence	NP Parking Survey results and photographs 2015. Responses to Parking Survey from residents in The Street, Boughton. The particular pressures of parking needed close to the school and sited in the centre of Boughton village.  Results of the Traffic Flow Survey have shown a marked increase in traffic at the start and end of the school day both between Boughton and Dunkirk as well as in the main street of Boughton and in surrounding side roads.
<b>Section 10</b>	<b>Environment, Landscape Character and Design</b>
BD8	Conservation Area Assessments: Includes published Consultation Drafts of Character Appraisal and Management Strategies for 3 Conservation Areas within the NP area: Boughton Street CA (2015), Boughton Church CA (2016) and South Street CA (2016.)
BD9	Rural Landscape Area Assessments: Summarises the Swale Borough Council Landscape Character Assessments of the 3 rural landscape types within the NP area: Faversham and Ospringe Fruit Belt, Hernhill and Boughton Fruit Belt, and Blean Woods West. Guidelines for each area are proposed, which are taken into account in the NP.
BD10	Landscape Character Assessments: Details the 10 different landscape areas identified within the NP area; each one is mapped, photographed and described in detail in terms of the landscape, views and built environment. Development/design guidelines are given for each separate area.
BD11	Open Spaces and Community Wellbeing: Reviews the large number of diverse green spaces within the NP area which are available for the public to use and enjoy. Includes Health and Welfare report.
BD12	Strategic Environmental Assessment and Habitats Regulations Assessment screening report from Natural England. May 2021.
BD15	Basic Conditions Statement: 1. A schedule of how the NP supports European, national, regional and local policies on planning and the environment. 2. Statement of Common Ground. 3. Equality Assessment Impact form.
BD17 + Additional	Consultation Statement: The process of consultation on the Neighbourhood Plan

Evidence	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Community leaflet delivered to all households and businesses in Boughton and Dunkirk.</li><li>2. Community consultation online response form.</li><li>3. Summary of Community consultation responses with B&amp;DNP comments (see also Plan Additional Evidence, BD17, B&amp;DNP website for full consultation details).</li><li>4. Statutory Consultation letter</li><li>5. Statutory Consultation responses with B&amp;DNP comments</li><li>6. SEA Consultation Report and Comments from Natural England</li><li>7. Reg 14 Responses from Swale Borough Council, with B&amp;DNP comments</li></ol>
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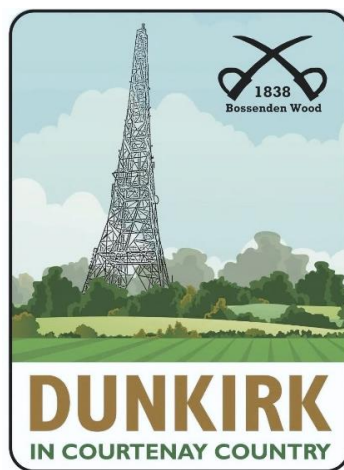
# Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan

## Acknowledgements

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The Plan has been produced by the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan Team, a working group set up in 2013, and comprising Jeff Tutt from Dunkirk Parish Council, Terry Fitchett from Boughton Parish Council, and residents from both communities, including Deborah Evans, Frances Holliday, Julian Owen, Peter Williams and the late John Peto.

The team would like to thank all who have supported the production of this important document, the community volunteers who gave of their time and the many residents and business owners who participated in the response to surveys and questionnaires.



Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan made: \_\_\_\_\_ (date)

Digital copies of the Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan and all supporting documents can be viewed on the website: [www.boughtonanddunkirkneighbourhoodplan.org.uk](http://www.boughtonanddunkirkneighbourhoodplan.org.uk)

# Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan

## IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND REVIEW

Policy	Policy Objective	Indicators
<b>HOUSING</b>		
H1 H2 H3 H4	To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a quality home whilst ensuring minimal impact on the traffic-sensitive areas exposed by the questionnaire.	
H5 H6	To ensure that new development is of high-quality design, built to high sustainability standards (i.e. energy efficiency and vehicle electrical charging points), reinforces local distinctiveness, and minimises impact on the landscape. New and improved utility infrastructure Including wastewater and water supply, will be encouraged and supported in order to meet the identified needs of the community subject to other policies in the plan.	
H7	Preferential access to new homes will be given to people with a proven local connection. Where a local need has been established, this will apply to those sites already allocated in the Swale Local Plan and to those allocated by this Plan; they must be placed in sustainable locations and support the environmental aims of the NP. This will be achieved with Section 106 agreements, monitored by Swale Borough Council.	
H8 H9 H10	Traffic issues and parking are of the highest concern. Development will be expected to fully address the impacts on traffic and parking issues in the area.	
<b>TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORT</b>		
T1 T2 T3	High priority in the policies and implementation of the Neighbourhood Plan must be given to dealing with the transport and environmental implications of changes to the A2/M2 corridor and to development at Faversham and Canterbury.	
T4 T5	All development will be expected to include proposals to mitigate congestion problems in the area, and the intrusive effects of traffic. The villages of Boughton and Dunkirk, and the surrounding countryside, are to be protected from the impacts of threatened increase in traffic. The NP requires	

	all developments to provide off-road parking in accordance with the Parking Standards set out in BD4.	
<b>T6 T7 T8</b>	Development proposals will require measures to allow safe walking, cycling and use of public transport.	
<b>T9 T10 T11</b>	Any development must not add to parking problems in the area, and existing parking issues need to be addressed and should include measures to ensure adequate parking provision is included to serve the needs of the development.	
<b>BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT</b>		
<b>BE1</b>	To ensure the continuing vibrancy of the villages, the Neighbourhood Plan seeks to maintain and encourage proportionate expansion of local enterprises and retail outlets to encourage community use as well as to provide opportunity for employment and training for local people. This includes prioritising development on brownfield sites.	
<b>BE2</b>	To support sustainable and economic growth which respects the character of the area, reflecting the results of our community consultation.	
<b>BE3</b>	To maintain the essentially rural nature and character of the two parishes, any commercial development should be measured, proportionate in size and type, and sustainable in the context of traffic and other infrastructural consideration.	
<b>COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND HEALTH</b>		
<b>CWB1 CWB2 CWB3</b>	To enhance the use of all present recreational spaces and facilities, and to promote the health of the whole community by encouraging physical exercise.	
<b>CWB4</b>	To broaden recreational opportunities and highlight the benefits of the outdoor environment for community members of all ages, not least for young adults, as well as for visitors to the parishes.	
<b>EDUCATIONAL PROVISION</b>		
<b>EP1 EP2 EP3</b>	To ensure that any proposed new developments within or close to the boundaries of the two parishes must respect the constraints on the present primary school facilities.	

<b>EP4</b>	To promote an ethos of Education for All by encouraging the use of local facilities to offer opportunities for study, personal development and expansion of vocational skills.	
<b>EP4</b>	To meet the needs of a world ever more reliant upon 'new technology', the Plan will focus on providing or encouraging opportunities for training in Information Technology (IT) for all members of the community by adapting or improving current facilities.	
<b>ENVIRONMENT, LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND DESIGN</b>		
<b>E1 E2 E3</b>	To safeguard and enhance the distinctive identity and rural character of both Boughton and Dunkirk parishes and to maintain their separate identities and physical separation from the nearby communities of Faversham and Canterbury. To protect from development the countryside gaps between them, the open landscape between the A2 and the Boughton Street Conservation Area, and other heritage assets, and the significant views to and from The Blean and to the coast.	
<b>E4 E5</b>	To continue to protect and enhance the Blean Woods area that surrounds Dunkirk, the fruit belt areas north and south of Boughton, as well as the settings of the Conservation Areas of the parishes. To give special protection to sites in or near to designated landscape areas, as included in the Swale Local Plan, and to designated wildlife sites, and to encourage their enhancement and proper management.	
<b>E6 E7 E8</b>	To minimise the environmental impact of new development, including surface water drainage and the water supply and quality; to ensure that all development is sympathetic to its setting and that it enhances the high-quality landscape and improves local biodiversity; to ensure that any development is compatible with its built and natural context and to locate new development within easy walking distance of existing village facilities. It will encourage access to bus stops, thus minimising traffic congestion, the related emissions and pedestrian safety concerns.	
<b>E9 E10</b>	All proposals for development must contain sufficient detail to demonstrate that the proposal is of high-quality design appropriate to its surroundings, with suitable layout and access arrangements. Proposals for development	

	<p>within or visible from the Conservation Areas must have regard to the principles set out in the Boughton Conservation Area Appraisals (BD8) and Landscape Character Areas (BD10). The traditional pattern of growth which characterises the parishes of Boughton and Dunkirk is one of small scale and gradual change. This must be reflected in the scale of any development permitted in the Neighbourhood Plan area during the plan period. Any external lighting proposed must not cause visual intrusion or light pollution.</p>	
<b>LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREA-SPECIFIC</b>		
<b>AS1</b>	To conserve the area and its characteristic agricultural activity, retaining its open nature and emphasising its role in the countryside gap that exists between Faversham and the villages, including key views.	
<b>AS2</b>	To preserve and enhance the area's special interest and its setting, including the open and wooded landscape between the rear of properties and the A2.	
<b>AS3</b>	To protect and enhance incidental open spaces.	
<b>AS4</b>	To conserve the relationship of the village with the wider Blean Woods (SSSI).	
<b>AS5</b>	To conserve the distinct and tranquil landscape character of the ancient and semi-ancient woodland.	
<b>AS6</b>	To restrict development south of the built-up area to the two areas on Colonels Lane already allocated for residential use and an additional area immediately to the west, detailed in Policy AS7.	
<b>AS7</b> <b>AS8</b>	To consider development on the area of relatively level land next to the larger site, and adjoining the built-up area.	
<b>AS9</b>	To ensure both Conservation Areas are protected and enhanced. The management and safeguarding of the churchyard, the memorial garden and burial ground is of key importance to the heritage assets and biodiversity.	
<b>AS10</b> <b>AS11</b>	To maintain the rural character of the Bull Lane area and improve the Village Hall and school surroundings.	

<b>AS12</b> <b>AS13</b>	To maintain the open character of the area and in particular its role as part of the countryside gap between Faversham and the villages.	
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# Boughton and Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan

## MONITORING FORM

Policy	Usage	Issues addressed	Issues addressed unsatisfactorily	Comments
<b>HOUSING</b>				
<b>H1</b>	To provide new housing to meet local needs, including a range of affordable housing for Boughton and Dunkirk. The housing sites must be in sustainable locations and minimise additional traffic particularly on Boughton Hill or through The Street. To ensure that future housing meets the needs of the whole community including the disabled and the elderly, all dwellings will be required to be Buildings Regulations Part M compliant (see BD5).			
<b>H2</b>	To assist in addressing the Borough's need for new housing.			
<b>H3</b>	To provide a mix of housing types including smaller homes for elderly villagers wishing to downsize and for young singles, couples or families needing their first home. A site with 5 houses or more must provide 40% affordable homes.			
<b>H4</b>	First Homes will be available to people with a local connection only. Should the homes in question remain unsold after a six-month period of active marketing in the local area, it should be extended to include those with a local connection to an adjoining parish area for a further three months before being eligible for the open market. See BD5 for full details.			
<b>H5</b>	New developments of good design and locally distinctive style, respecting the current Kent Design Guide principles, and include green spaces and play areas.			

<b>H6</b>	All the areas identified in this Neighbourhood Plan for new developments, including those already in the Local Plan, should be the subject of agreed design codes or briefs prepared by the applicant and/or developer in consultation with the public to ensure new developments will be of good quality and locally distinctive style.				
<b>H7</b>	Areas identified for new development are required to be for individuals or families: i) with a proven local connection ii) whose health dictates a move within the parishes iii) who have satisfied either parish council of their merit and need. In accordance with the standards set out in BD5, this will apply for an initial sales period, after which properties may be offered on the open market. When they are re-sold within an agreed time-span a proven local connection will again apply.				
<b>H8</b>	All development will have sufficient off-road parking to ensure that no on-street parking is attributable to the development.				
<b>H9</b>	There will be at least one parking space per bedroom. These include garages, car ports and off-road parking in accordance with the Parking Standards set out in BD4.				
<b>H10</b>	Development proposals that involve the conversion of existing garage space to living accommodation will only be supported in principle if adequate off-street parking is available to support the completed development.				
<b>TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION</b>					
<b>T1</b>	Boughton and Dunkirk Parish Councils continue their pressure on Swale, KCC, National Highways, and their Borough Councillors, County Councillors and MP to improve the traffic flow along the A2 and the junction at Brenley Corner, while restricting access to some of our				

	lanes and Boughton Street by HGVs and other through traffic.				
<b>T2</b>	Measures to improve the junction at Brenley Corner recognise and respect its rural setting.				
<b>T3</b>	Boughton and Dunkirk Parish Councils play an active role in the preparation and implementation of a design and development brief for the Duchy Land in respect of traffic and pedestrian routes.				
<b>T4</b>	The adverse effects of traffic on our villages are reduced, all developments limited by the capacity and nature of the road network necessary to accommodate them, and include off-road access via public rights of way.				
<b>T5</b>	Further development in the countryside and surrounding villages is resisted beyond that which is allowed by the NPPF 2021 and LP Policy ST3, Bearing Fruits 2031, in order to avoid any increased negative impact on the current road system traffic, the Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network and the local environment.				
<b>T6</b>	The Neighbourhood Plan team and the Parish Councils to work with the Highway Authority and the bus companies to improve facilities and information at the bus stops.				
<b>T7</b>	The Neighbourhood Plan team and the Parish Councils to work with Kent County Council as the Highway Authority to improve cycle and pedestrian routes.				
<b>T8</b>	The Neighbourhood Plan team and the Parish Councils to work with the Highway Authority and landowners to promote the “Walking for Health” identified routes.				
<b>T9</b>	Future residential and non-residential buildings shall have sufficient dedicated on-site parking spaces to avoid the need for parking on				

	adjacent roads in accordance with the Parking Standards set out in BD4.				
<b>T10</b>	Proposals resisted for new lorry parking in or near the Brenley Lane / Homestall Lane.				
<b>T11</b>	Support in principle, development proposals for creation of a properly surfaced and managed car parking area.				
<b>BUSINESS AND EMPLOYMENT</b>					
<b>BE1</b>	Proposals for the expansion of present enterprises either on existing sites or alternative sites reflect the overall Neighbourhood Plan development strategy, including the redevelopment on brownfield sites.				
<b>BE2</b>	Proposals for commercial development to be in keeping with the treasured character of the Neighbourhood Plan environment.				
<b>BE3</b>	Any new or expanded commercial enterprise is required to provide its own dedicated parking and include a Goods Movement Plan to minimise the use of HGVs in the delivery and movement of goods (see also BD4 Parking Standards).				
<b>COMMUNITY WELLBEING AND HEALTH</b>					
<b>CWB1</b>	The promotion and use of the green environment through new and existing designated trails which link throughout the parishes.				
<b>CWB2</b>	The provision of suitable recreational facilities upon new or existing sites.				
<b>CWB3</b>	Enhanced sports facilities within Boughton and Dunkirk villages.				
<b>EDUCATIONAL PROVISION</b>					
<b>EP1</b>	Future residential development to take full account of the likely impact upon school provision.				
<b>EP2</b>	To improve parking provision and traffic flow at the beginning and end of				

	the school day, as well as ensuring safe crossing places in The Street.				
<b>EP3</b>	To consider the possible extension or re-siting of the present school, should adjacent land become available.				
<b>ENVIRONMENT, LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AND DESIGN</b>					
<b>E1</b>	Proposals for developments which respect and enhance the tranquillity, local landscape, character, environmental quality and amenity value of Boughton and Dunkirk parishes will be supported in principle.				
<b>E2</b>	Proposals for developments which actively seek opportunities for landscape, heritage, recreational and ecological gain will be supported in principle, as will the protection and enhancement of heritage assets and the management of the countryside.				
<b>E3</b>	Green spaces within the parishes will continue to be protected from development.				
<b>E4</b>	Any development that conflicts with the protection of the natural landscape and sensitive sites, wildlife in 'The Blean' and the surrounding fruit belt will not be supported.				
<b>E5</b>	All proposals for new or extended development having a landscape impact must demonstrate that they have had regard to and reflected the Landscape Character Area in which the application site falls and follow the policy guidelines of the Local Plan as well as the policies in the Plan.				
<b>E6</b>	Proposals which harm the tranquillity, character or amenity value of the landscape and village environment, including an increase in the generation of traffic, will not be supported.				
<b>E7</b>	Development within the village envelope will be supported in principle providing it promotes the re-				

	use, recovery and restoration of previously developed sites.				
<b>E8</b>	A minimum 20% net-gain in biodiversity for developments against baseline conditions is required.				
<b>E9</b>	Variety in density, layout, building orientation and sizes will be sought to reflect the local context. Building styles and materials must also respect and positively contribute to local distinctiveness.				
<b>E10</b>	Schemes must produce a cohesive and high-quality design approach for car parking, charging points, boundary treatments, bin stores, utility storage boxes, lighting and street furniture. All landscaping and boundary planting should be of native species.				
<b>LANDSCAPE CHARACTER AREAS SITE-SPECIFIC</b>					
<b>AS1</b>	To support landscaping around the A2 to reduce the impact of the road and associated development. All landscaping and boundary planting should be of native species.				
<b>AS2</b>	To support the improvement of the old Garden Hotel, in a manner which secures the viable future of the listed building and is sympathetic to the objectives of this Plan, including protection of the lower area of this site as part of a wider designation as a local green space in accordance with policy AS6.				
<b>AS3</b>	Development proposals that would compromise the character or access to open spaces in Area 4 will not be supported.				
<b>AS4</b>	Development will be limited, in accordance with the Swale Local Plan, to “minor infill and redevelopment sites within the built-up area”.				
<b>AS5</b>	Development proposals must conserve and enhance Area 6, including ditches, streams and ponds, scrub, dry and wet heath together				

	with its setting of wood pasture, open slopes (including views) and the rural character of the area's network of narrow winding lanes, enclosed by mature hedgerows.				
<b>AS6</b>	Any further development to the two areas immediately alongside the A2 in Area 7 other than already allocated will not be supported.				
<b>AS7</b>	Residential development is proposed on the area west of the two sites already allocated in Swale's Local Plan, provided that a development brief prepared by the developer in accordance with this NP and agreed by the local community, for the areas combined could deal adequately with access and noise issues.				
<b>AS8</b>	The remainder of Area 7 is to be protected as an area of Local Green Space, the public footpath enhanced, and maintenance improved through S106 contributions.				
<b>AS9</b>	Any proposals that impact the conservation areas in area 8 must be in accordance with the Conservation Area Appraisals (BD8).				
<b>AS10</b>	To ensure the control of the allocated development of the Bull Lane site by a Development Brief that maintains the rural character of Bull Lane, and creates an attractive frontage to the adjoining playing fields through an integrated landscape strategy, (see 'Bearing Fruits 2031', paragraph 6.5.11).				
<b>AS11</b>	To support improvement of the Village Hall and surroundings to enhance the community facilities and green open space.				
<b>AS12</b>	Proposals will be supported for an improved layout for Brenley Corner where they are developed to respect and respond to its countryside setting, incorporating a landscape strategy that minimises the impact of the				

	development on the surrounding areas.				
<b>AS13</b>	Development proposals will be supported which contribute to protecting and where possible, enhancing the intrinsic value, tranquillity and beauty of the countryside, its buildings and the vitality of rural communities.				



## Policy and Resources Committee Forward Decisions Plan – November 2022 meeting

<b>Report title, background information and recommendation(s)</b>	<b>Date of meeting</b>	<b>Open or exempt?</b>	<b>Lead Officer and report author</b>
Performance Monitoring & Priority Projects Report – 2022/23 half-year	30/11/22	Open	Head of Service: David Clifford  Report Author: Tony Potter
Draft Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan including fees and charges	November/ December 22	Open	Head of Service: Lisa Fillery  Report author: Lisa Fillery
Constitution amend: Petitions scheme	30/11/22	Open	Head of Service: David Clifford  Report Author: David Clifford
Boughton & Dunkirk Neighbourhood Plan – Examiner’s report and next steps	30/11/22	Open	Head of Service: Flo Churchill  Report Author: Jill Peet
Q2 Budget Monitoring	14/12/22	Open	Head of Service: Lisa Fillery  Report author: Head of Finance and Procurement
Council Tax Support Scheme	14/12/22	Open	Head of Service: Lisa Fillery  Report author: Zoe Kent

Treasury Management Strategy 2022/23	February 23	Open	Head of Service: Lisa Fillery  Report author: Head of Finance and Procurement
Final Budget and Medium-Term Financial Plan including fees and charges	February 23	Open	Head of Service: Lisa Fillery  Report author: Lisa Fillery
Council Tax Support Scheme	February 23	Open	Head of Service: Lisa Fillery  Report author: Zoe Kent
Risk Update report	22/03/23	Open	Head of Service: Alison Blake  Report author: Alison Blake
Q3 Budget Monitoring	22/03/23	Open	Head of Service: Lisa Fillery  Report author: Head of Finance and Procurement
Performance Monitoring & Priority Projects Report – 2022/23 year-end	24/05/23	Open	Head of Service: David Clifford  Report author: Tony Potter
2022/23 Outturn report	July 23	Open	Head of Service: Lisa Fillery  Report author: Lisa Fillery