



AGENDA

CABINET MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 12 February 2020

Time: 7.00pm

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

Membership:

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

Quorum = 3

RECORDING NOTICE

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Pages

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1. Emergency Evacuation Procedure

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

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

The Chairman will inform the meeting that:

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

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

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

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

2. Apologies for Absence

3. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the Meeting held on 18 December 2019 (Minute Nos. 398 - 406) as a correct record.

4. Declarations of Interest

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

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

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

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

(c) Where it is possible that a fair-minded and informed observer, having considered the facts would conclude that there was a real possibility that the Member might be predetermined or biased the Member should declare their predetermination or bias and then leave the room while that item is considered.

Advice to Members: If any Councillor has any doubt about the existence or nature of any DPI or DNPI which he/she may have in any

item on this agenda, he/she should seek advice from the Monitoring Officer, the Head of Legal or from other Solicitors in Legal Services as early as possible, and in advance of the Meeting.

Part A Reports for recommendation to Council

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| 5. | Medium Term Financial Plan and 2020/21 Budget | 5 - 42 |
| 6. | Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Investment Strategy 2020/21 | 43 - 58 |
| 7. | Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21 | 59 - 94 |

Part B Reports for Decision by Cabinet

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| 8. | Staying Put Contractor Framework Procurement | 95 - 100 |
| 9. | Fuel and Water Poverty Outreach Worker - Award of Tender | 101 - 104 |
| 10. | Environmental Health Enforcement Policy 2020 | 105 - 120 |
| 11. | Constitutional Review: Area Committees | 121 - 176 |
| 12. | South Thames Gateway Building Control Business Plan 2020 to 2023 | 177 - 182 |
| 13. | Recommendations from the Swale Joint Transportation Board meeting held on 13 January 2020 | 183 - 184 |
| 14. | Recommendations from the Local Plan Panel meeting held on Thursday 30 January 2020 - to-follow | |

Part B Reports for Cabinet to decide

15. Exclusion of Press and Public

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

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

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

- | | | |
|-----|---|--------------|
| 16. | Exempt Appendices - South Thames Gateway Building Control Business Plan 2020 - 2023 | 185 - 222 |
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Issued on Monday, 3 February 2020

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

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

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Cabinet Meeting | |
| Meeting Date | 12 February 2020 |
| Report Title | 2020/21 Revenue Budget/ Medium Term Financial Plan and Capital Strategy |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr Roger Truelove, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance |
| SMT Lead | Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer |
| Head of Service | Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer |
| Lead Officer | Phil Wilson, Financial Services Manager |
| Key Decision | Yes |
| Classification | Open |
| Recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the 2020/21 Revenue Budget proposals. 2. To approve the proposed Council Tax Band D increase for 2020/21 to £179.37. 3. To note the Medium Term Financial Plan. 4. To approve the Capital Strategy. 5. To approve the Capital Programme proposals. 6. To note the additional amount of Council Tax for Parish Precepts. 7. To consider the recommendation of Scrutiny Committee. 8. To approve the Minimum Revenue Provision Statement as set out in Appendix VIII |

1. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report sets out the Council's Revenue and Capital budget proposals for 2020/21, the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and the Capital Strategy.
- 1.2 Cabinet received a budget report on 18 December prior to the Provisional Local Authority Grant Settlement announced on 20 December. This report reflects the implications of the settlement.
- 1.3 At its meeting on 22 January 2020, Scrutiny Committee recommended "that the Cabinet considers providing increased staff resource for the climate and environment emergency when it considers the budget".
- 1.4 This report, if agreed by Cabinet, will then go forward to Council on 26 February.

2. Background

Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2020/21

- 2.1 As we have previously reported, the whole system of local government finance was due to change from 1 April 2020. This was put back because of the impact of Brexit on the legislative process last year. At the time of the December budget report we were anticipating a one year settlement and this is what was announced on 20 December.
- 2.2 The main issues to highlight from the settlement are:
- The Council can increase Council Tax by up to £5 per annum,
 - Revenue Support Grant as forecast at £115k (with no element for Parish or Town Councils), and
 - New Homes Bonus £28k higher than forecast.
- 2.3 There is no clarity whatsoever about the funding regime which will apply from 1 April 2021. The Medium Term Financial Plan therefore assumes that major funding streams from 1 April 2021 continue as they are now. We have no other basis of forecasting at this point. At a Kent Finance Officers' meeting on 16 January 2020, the Local Government Association Finance Lead suggested that there would be a housing incentivisation grant to replace the New Homes Bonus. We will use the quarterly Finance reports to update as we get more information about Government intentions. There is a high probability that we will have very little hard information before the next Settlement in December 2020.

Flexible homelessness support grant and homelessness reduction grant

- 2.4 A major theme of the December 2019 budget report was the cost pressure from homelessness and rough sleeping. In the budget presented we were assuming that the Council funded additional base budget of £468k and that Specific Government Grants increased by £100k. Early in the new year the grant allocations were announced, and the grants have increased by £174k over this year. This frees up £74k of the base funding increase.

Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board Precept

- 2.5 The Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board (LMIDB) have increased their precept by 3.6%, 1.6% above the assumption that we had made. This gives an additional £14k cost pressure.

Capital Strategy

- 2.6 The 2019/20 financial year was the first where there was a requirement for councils to set out a Capital Strategy. The Capital Strategy gives a high-level overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services. The proposed Treasury Management Strategy is reported separately to this meeting. The proposed Capital Programme and its funding are detailed in Appendix VI to this report.
- 2.7 Councils are required to balance their revenue budget annually and cannot borrow to achieve a balanced position. However, they have very far reaching powers to borrow to fund capital expenditure. This has historically been funded from borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board, which is part of the Debt Management Office which is part of the Treasury. Borrowing can be for up to 50 years at rates which are below commercial rates.
- 2.8 Council borrowing has traditionally been to fund long term assets such as roads and schools. The cuts to Council funding since 2010 have led to councils increasing their borrowing for capital for two main purposes for:
- Regeneration or social benefits. This could be funding leisure or industrial assets, or housing related, and
 - Generating new revenue streams to address revenue funding reductions. Government has generally looked unfavourably on Council borrowing solely to buy commercial property assets, often outside their geographical area.
- To reinforce just how unhappy Government is with borrowing to buy commercial assets the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) has recently published a guidance document on Prudential Property Investment.
- 2.9 The International Financial Reporting Standard 16 will come into effect for 2020/21, which will change the accounting treatment of leases. This may result in the Council having to recognise assets on its balance sheet which are currently being leased. Preparation work on the implementation of this accounting standard has begun and will be reported on in the 2020/21 annual accounts.
- 2.10 This Council has historically been debt free and had a very limited Capital Programme, restricted largely to the use of Disabled Facilities Grants for home improvements with these grants being provided 100% by Government.

- 2.11 In March 2016, Council agreed to a borrowing facility of up to £30 million subject to individual business case and in November and December 2016 Cabinet agreed a business case for borrowing up to £28 million for Sittingbourne Town Centre (STC) regeneration. This facility was extended to £60 million in February 2017 with any additional borrowing being subject to business cases to Cabinet. The only business cases which have been agreed are for STC and the Leisure Centre refurbishment. At time of this report, the Council has five loans for periods of between 12 to 18 months from other councils which total £25 million. The details of any project funded from borrowing will be provided in future Cabinet reports.
- 2.12 The borrowing decisions set out above are historic. In future rather than announcing a borrowing facility with no linkage to a particular project the specific project agreed by Cabinet will have a borrowing limit associated with it. This limit can be varied by Cabinet. In the December 2019 budget report Cabinet agreed that an additional £10 million could be borrowed to fund housing projects.
- 2.13 This administration takes the view that the Capital Strategy should reflect the following principles:
- 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.
- 2.14 The Council has not made and will not make any direct commercial investments outside of the Borough. Capital funds will be used for the benefit of local residents.
- 2.15 In January it was announced that the Development Agreement with Spirit of Sittingbourne had been terminated. One of the implications of this is that the Council regains control of the Swale House site. It has long been acknowledged that the current Swale House (a 1980's build) is not fit for purpose. The Cabinet Member for Economy and Property will bring forward a report to the March Cabinet setting out the options for a refurbishment which will create a carbon neutral building with much lower running costs, a modern fit for purpose work space which will allow for significantly more space to be let out on a commercial basis. The business case is being prepared.

- 2.16 Debt is only a temporary source of finance, since loans must be repaid, and this is therefore replaced over time by other financing, usually from revenue which is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP). MRP is a charge to the revenue budget which then accrues on the Balance Sheet; it is not an external payment. Alternatively, proceeds from selling capital assets (known as capital receipts) may be used to replace debt finance.
- 2.17 All organisations need to manage their cash flow. For most councils their cash flow level is much larger than their reserves as they take in funds through sources such as Business Rates and Council Tax which they hold before making payments to other bodies such as Kent County Council (KCC). The Council's daily cash balances are typically £31 million. With short-term deposit rates continuing to be very low, where a Council is investing in a capital project it can fund this capital investment from cash flow and this is known as internal borrowing. Internal borrowing defers the financial commitment to external borrowing. MRP still has to be made. The Council to date has been using internal borrowing to fund expenditure on STC, the Multi-Storey Car Park, the purchase of land adjoining Swale House and the Leisure Centre refurbishment. The Chief Financial Officer closely monitors cash flow to ensure that there is no adverse impact.
- 2.18 For any significant investment the Council will supplement the expertise of Members and Officers with appropriate external specialist expertise to ensure that proposals are fully tested and risks considered.
- 2.19 The Chief Financial Officer believes that the Capital Strategy and Capital Programme proposed are sustainable.

CIPFA Financial Management Code

- 2.20 After 10 years of severe funding reductions it is noteworthy that to date only one local authority, Northamptonshire County Council, has failed financially. But clearly Government are concerned that other councils will fail. It is against this backdrop that CIPFA have issued this new code in October 2019. The Code is designed to support good practice in financial management and to assist councils in demonstrating their financial sustainability. It intended to have the same force as the Prudential Code, it is advisory not statutory, but Councils will have to show how they comply. Compliance is the responsibility of members, the Chief Financial Officer and the senior leadership team.
- 2.21 The guidance suggests that 2020/21 should be a shadow year and full compliance will be from 1 April 2021.
- 2.22 The Chief Financial Officer's view is that the Council performs well against the 17 financial management standards. A report will be brought to Cabinet late in 2020.

3. Proposals

Medium Term Financial Plan

3.1 The updated Medium Term Financial Plan is attached in Appendix I.

Balanced Budget Proposals

3.2 The 18 December Cabinet report showed a gap in the revenue budget of £375,000 which the additional Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board pressure increases to £389,000.

3.3 The Balanced Budget proposals are set out below:

| Budget Heading | Saving £ | Description |
|--|---------------------|---|
| Staff Salaries | 200,000 | Full and part year effect savings from Planning, Economy and Community Services, Leisure, Policy and Resources. |
| Delete Planning Admin pressure | 22,000 | Pressure and budget clarified. |
| Additional licensing income | 20,000 | Pressure and budget clarified. |
| Additional homelessness grant | 74,000 | Additional grant income over that forecast releases £74,000 of the base budget increase |
| Mid Kent Services (MKS) | 56,000 | The MKS Director has proposed the deletion of a long term vacant post in IT and a number of small efficiency savings. |
| Additional New Homes Bonus | 28,000 | As reported above. |
| Additional income from the Council Tax Base. | 4,000 | Small change in the Council Tax Base from earlier report. |
| | | |
| Total | 404,000 | |

3.4 Detailed revenue budget proposals are attached in Appendix II.

Council Tax

3.5 The budget proposals assume an increase of £4.95 in the Band D Council Tax to £179.37.

3.6 The Collection Fund and Council Tax are set out in Appendix III.

3.7 The Council Tax base was set at 48,072.67 by the Chief Financial Officer.

3.8 The calculation of the Budget Requirement and Council Tax Requirement is shown in Appendix IV.

3.9 Parish precepts are shown in Appendix V.

Capital Programme

3.10 The Capital Budget is attached in Appendix VI.

Reserves

3.11 The key principles for the management of Reserves moving forward are:

(1) Maintain a prudent level of reserves to allow the Council to deal with unexpected one-off events;

(2) Funding the Council's strategic priorities; and,

(3) Fund one-off items of expenditure to support service delivery.

3.12 When the Council is considering its budget requirement, it is the Chief Financial Officer's duty under S25 of the Local Government Act 2003 to report on the adequacy of reserves. These have been reviewed in line with guidance from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy.

3.13 The Council seeks to maintain a minimum of £1.5m as its General Fund balance and there is no reason to change this - the balance at 1 April 2019 was £4.358 million. The Council holds earmarked reserves for specific purposes. The remaining unallocated funds form the General Reserve. The Chief Financial Officer's view is that the level of reserves and balances held by the Council are at a reasonable level. Reserves and balances are set out in Appendix VII.

3.14 The Council's Section 151 Officer (Chief Financial Officer), in accordance with the Local Government Act 2003, has hereby confirmed his opinion that the 2020/21 budget is robust, and the reserves are reasonable given the risks faced by the Council.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 Do nothing - this is not recommended as the Council is legally required to set a balanced budget.

4.2 The December report upon which this report builds has been considered by Scrutiny Committee and any of their recommendations will be brought to this meeting of Cabinet.

5. Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The budget proposals were reported to Cabinet on 18 December 2019 and were examined by Scrutiny Committee on 22 January.
- 5.2 Consultation with the business community has taken place.

6. Implications

| Issue | Implications |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Corporate Plan | The budget proposals for 2020/21 support the emerging Corporate Plan objectives. |
| Financial, Resource and Property | The report sets out the approach to the 2020/21 budget and the medium term financial plan. |
| Legal, Statutory and Procurement | The report reflects the legal requirement for the Council to set a balanced budget. |
| Crime and Disorder | Any potential impact has been assessed by service managers. |
| Environmental Sustainability | Any potential impact has been assessed by service managers. |
| Health and Wellbeing | No issues identified. |
| Risk Management and Health and Safety | The financial risks are reflected in the Council's Risk Register. |
| Equality and Diversity | Any potential impact has been assessed by service managers. |
| Privacy and Data Protection | No issues identified. |

7. Appendices

- 7.1 The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
- Appendix I: Medium Term Financial Plan
 - Appendix II: Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals
 - Appendix III: Collection Fund and Council Tax Base
 - Appendix IV: Budget Requirement and Council Tax Requirement
 - Appendix V: Parish Precepts
 - Appendix VI: Capital Programme and Funding
 - Appendix VII: Reserves
 - Appendix VIII Minimum Revenue Provision Statement

8. Background Papers

[Cabinet budget report 18 December 2019](#)

Medium Term Financial Plan

| | 2019/20 | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 |
|---|------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Base Budget | 18,613 | 18,664 | 18,534 | 18,564 |
| Growth items | 0 | 1,237 | 1,307 | 1,387 |
| Unavoidable cost pressures | 0 | 2,694 | 2,593 | 2,681 |
| Loss of income | 0 | 391 | 391 | 391 |
| Additional income | 0 | (1,992) | (2,201) | (2,405) |
| Committed price increases | 0 | 273 | 481 | 686 |
| Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board | 817 | 847 | 878 | 910 |
| <u>Salary Related:</u> | | | | |
| Pay Award (2%) | 0 | 257 | 520 | 787 |
| Other Pay Increases | 0 | 78 | 125 | 150 |
| Contribution to/(from) reserves | (740) | (613) | (483) | (513) |
| Revenue Support Grant | (113) | (115) | 0 | 0 |
| Business Rates | (7,768) | (8,750) | (8,845) | (9,010) |
| <i>This does not reflect the changes from Fair Funding Review, Baseline Reset and New Approach to Business Rates which are due to be implemented in 2021/22</i> | | | | |
| Contribution from Business Rates Reserves | (250) | (250) | 0 | 0 |
| Levy account surplus | (65) | (173) | | |
| Council Tax | (8,258) | (8,623) | (8,994) | (9,374) |
| New Homes Bonus | (1,875) | (1,633) | (752) | (371) |
| Savings Required | 361 | 2,292 | 3,554 | 3,883 |
| Service savings | 0 | (2,307) | (2,261) | (2,205) |
| Requirement for balanced position | 0 | 0 | (1,293) | (1,678) |
| Committed savings | 0 | (2,307) | (3,554) | (3,883) |
| Contribution from/ (to) from General Fund | 361 | (15) | 0 | 0 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|---------|-----------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | ADAMS | Swale House | Fees and Services | 271 | 0 | Growth items | Cost of security service | 30,000 | 30,000 | 30,000 |
| 2 | ADAMS | Central House | Electricity | 6,260 | 6,260 | Service savings | Management to be transferred to Swale Community Leisure | -6,260 | -6,260 | -6,260 |
| 3 | ADAMS | Central House | Service Charge | -9,443 | -6,300 | Loss of income | Management to be transferred to Swale Community Leisure | 6,300 | 6,300 | 6,300 |
| 4 | ADAMS | Central House | Recharge of Utility costs | -10,941 | -9,200 | Loss of income | Management to be transferred to Swale Community Leisure | 9,200 | 9,200 | 9,200 |
| Page 15 | ADAMS | Miscellaneous General Fund Properties | Rents - Properties | -361,213 | -360,500 | Loss of income | No income from Fountain Street properties | 10,500 | 10,500 | 10,500 |
| | ADAMS | Sub Total | | | | | | 49,740 | 49,740 | 49,740 |
| 7 | BEATTIE | Environmental Health Administration | MKS Charges Environmental Services | 38,812 | 43,860 | Service savings | Reduction in shared service recharge. | -3,290 | -2,480 | -1,650 |
| 8 | BEATTIE | Food & Safety | MKS Charges Environmental Services | 247,001 | 283,900 | Service savings | Reduction in shared service recharge. | -25,710 | -20,550 | -15,280 |
| 9 | BEATTIE | Environmental Protection | MKS Charges Environmental Services | 179,448 | 181,170 | Growth items | Shared service recharge not including Air Quality Officer | 6,430 | 10,180 | 14,010 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

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|---------|-----------------|---|------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 10 | BEATTIE | Environmental Protection | MKS Charges Environmental Services | 0 | 50,000 | Growth items | Air Quality Project Officer added to 2019/20 Budget for 2 years only funded from reserves. | -11,000 | -50,000 | -50,000 |
| 11 | BEATTIE | Contributions from funds | Expenditure funded from reserves | 0 | -50,000 | Growth items | Air Quality Project Officer added to 2019/20 Budget for 2 years only funded from reserves. | 11,000 | 50,000 | 50,000 |
| 12 | BEATTIE | Shellfish Classification | Sampling / Monitoring | 17,375 | 25,000 | Service savings | Savings in cost of contract | -6,250 | -6,000 | -5,500 |
| Page 16 | BEATTIE | Pollution Prevention Control | Environmental Protection Act Fees | -17,209 | -30,500 | Loss of income | To reflect actual reduction in income | 12,500 | 12,500 | 12,500 |
| 14 | BEATTIE | Kent & Medway Air Quality Data Management Network | Private Contractors | 17,479 | 0 | Growth items | The Kent & Medway Contract ends 20-21. | 17,480 | 0 | 0 |
| 15 | BEATTIE | Kent & Medway Air Quality Data Management Network | Fees and charges | -18,741 | 0 | Additional income | Offset of growth item above. | -17,480 | 0 | 0 |
| 16 | BEATTIE | Sub Total | | | | | | -16,320 | -6,350 | 4,080 |
| 17 | CLIFFORD | Democratic Services | Salaries | 216,490 | 186,690 | Growth items | Additional resource for providing Election and Democratic Service | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| 18 | CLIFFORD | General Democratic Costs | Members Travel | 0 | 6,990 | Service savings | Budget not required due to mileage rate being set at 45p | -6,990 | -6,990 | -6,990 |
| 19 | CLIFFORD | General Democratic Costs | MKS Accounts | 0 | 38,720 | Service savings | Savings to fund Information Governance Assistant | -25,000 | -25,000 | -25,000 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

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|---------|-----------------|--|---|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 20 | CLIFFORD | General Democratic Costs | MKS Accounts | 0 | See no. 19 | Service savings | Deletion of MKS support officer post | -13,720 | -13,720 | -13,720 |
| 21 | CLIFFORD | General Democratic Costs | MKS Director | 39,809 | 36,840 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Council's share of costs | 5,190 | 6,030 | 6,890 |
| 22 | CLIFFORD | Contributions from funds | Expenditure funded from reserves | 0 | -120,000 | Growth items | Removal of 19/20 Budget to fund 19/20 elections from reserves | 120,000 | 120,000 | 120,000 |
| 23 | CLIFFORD | Borough & Parish Elections | Elections | 0 | 120,000 | Growth items | Removal of 19/20 Budget to fund 19/20 elections from reserves | -120,000 | -120,000 | -120,000 |
| Page 17 | CLIFFORD | Borough & Parish Elections | Contribution from Other Local Authorities | -1,820 | -15,000 | Loss of income | Budget originally to cover parish and town elections in May 2019. Council will only recharge parish councils if there are by-elections | 15,000 | 15,000 | 15,000 |
| 25 | CLIFFORD | Electoral Registration | Postage | 21,204 | 31,100 | Service savings | Canvass reform result in reduced postage | -5,100 | -5,100 | -5,100 |
| 26 | CLIFFORD | Sub Total | | | | | | -20,620 | -19,780 | -18,920 |
| 27 | CASSELL | Environment Wardens | Hire & Leases | 15,549 | 15,750 | Growth items | Hire 6 electric vehicles (or hybrid if suitable electric vehicles are not available). | 26,250 | 26,250 | 26,250 |
| 28 | CASSELL | Head of Commissioning, Environment & Leisure | Staffing | 0 | 0 | Service savings | Restructure savings | -60,000 | -60,000 | -60,000 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

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|-----|-----------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 29 | CASELL | Environment and Leisure Finance Lease | Contracts | 223,980 | 223,980 | Service savings | Repayments for Finance Lease now completed - full savings on interest and principal for this finance lease is shown under Finance 117 & 118 | -223,980 | -223,980 | -223,980 |
| 30 | CASELL | Environment and Leisure Finance Lease | Contracts | -223,980 | -223,980 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Repayments for Finance Lease now completed - full savings on interest and principal for this finance lease is shown under Finance 117 & 118 | 223,980 | 223,980 | 223,980 |
| 31 | CASELL | Client & Amenity Services Staff | Salaries | 0 | 0 | Growth items | Recruitment of full time Project Support Surveyor. Currently funded via a performance fund which is due expire in Jan 2020. Therefore, a Special Projects Fund has been approved. | 45,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 32 | CASELL | Contributions from Funds | Expenditure funded from reserves | 0 | 0 | Growth items | Recruitment of full time Project Support Surveyor. Currently funded via a performance fund which is due expire in January 2020. Therefore, a Special Projects Fund has been approved. | -45,000 | 0 | 0 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|-----|-----------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 33 | CASELL | Car Park Staff | MKS Charges for Car Parking | 111,604 | 102,990 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Increase for cost of service from Maidstone Council | 11,010 | 13,010 | 15,010 |
| 34 | CASELL | Car Park Staff | Staff Costs Recovery - MKS | -20,576 | -18,170 | Additional income | Income from recovery staff costs for car park staff | -350 | -700 | -1,060 |
| 35 | CASELL | Swale Car Parks | Fees and charges | 0 | 0 | Growth items | To reinstate free car parking at the Swallow Leisure Centre and Beachfields. | 90,000 | 90,000 | 90,000 |
| 36 | CASELL | Disabled Parking Bays | Private Contractors | 8,510 | 3,560 | Growth items | Previously funded from reserves. To be made a permanent increase. | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| 37 | CASELL | Seafront | Grants & Contributions | -2,887 | -29,000 | Loss of income | One-off grant not continued into future years | 29,000 | 29,000 | 29,000 |
| 38 | CASELL | Seafront | Equipment | 809 | 29,800 | Service savings | One-off grant not continued into future years. | -29,000 | -29,000 | -29,000 |
| 39 | CASELL | Public Conveniences | Water | 40,010 | 36,140 | Growth items | Addition of four public conveniences | 11,120 | 11,120 | 11,120 |
| 40 | CASELL | Public Conveniences | Private Contractors | 216,641 | 224,610 | Growth items | New toilets at Minster Leas beach huts and Milton Creek Country Park and potential re- opening of Milton High Street. Addition of The Retreat Kiosk for 7 months | 26,110 | 33,630 | 41,380 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|-----|-----------------|---------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 41 | CASELL | Recycling Campaign | Garden Waste Scheme - Brown Bins | -505,375 | -520,000 | Additional income | Predicted growth in Garden Waste subscriptions | -10,000 | -10,000 | -10,000 |
| 42 | CASELL | Special Collections | Fees & Charges | -29,744 | -25,000 | Service savings | Rezone A249 laybys to zone 1 | -9,450 | -10,480 | -11,550 |
| 43 | CASELL | Wheeled Bins | Equipment | 214,345 | 137,000 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Wheeled bins continue to need replacing due to coming to end of life - using existing reserve for 20-21 and 21-22, additional required for 22-23. Reserve £181k at 1/4/2019 & reserve increased by £35k pa. | 0 | 0 | 63,000 |
| | CASELL | Sub Total | | | | | | 89,690 | 97,830 | 169,150 |
| 45 | CLARKE | Internal Audit | MKS Charges for Audit Services | 189,735 | 180,080 | Service savings | Audit team restructure in April. | -2,440 | -2,440 | -2,440 |
| 46 | CLARKE | Internal Audit | MKS Charges for Audit Services | 0 | 0 | Service savings | Removal of budget contingency for specialist audit services | -9,000 | -9,000 | -9,000 |
| 47 | CLARKE | Sub Total | | | | | | -11,440 | -11,440 | -11,440 |
| 48 | CLIFFORD | Head of Policy | Staffing | 0 | 0 | Service savings | Restructure savings | -20,000 | -30,000 | -30,000 |
| 49 | CLIFFORD | Sheerness Gateway | Fees and Services | 0 | 6,330 | Service savings | Budget no longer required as fees and services included in Contracts | -6,330 | -6,330 | -6,330 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|-----|-----------------|----------------------------------|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 50 | CLIFFORD | Customer Service Centre Staff | Computer Equipment & Materials | 0 | 0 | Growth items | For the annual cost of My Council services (MCS) platform. This will form part of the MKS ICT IT equipment budget but is shown here under the service responsible for the software | 38,440 | 38,440 | 38,440 |
| 51 | CLIFFORD | Data Protection Resource | Salaries | 50,681 | 61,970 | Service savings | Information Governance (IG) officer post for two years fixed term ending at end of May 2020 | -4,410 | -61,970 | -61,970 |
| 52 | CLIFFORD | Contributions from funds | Expenditure funded from reserves | 0 | 0 | Service savings | IG officer post funded for nine months from reserves (Performance Fund) | -43,170 | 0 | 0 |
| 53 | CLIFFORD | Data Protection Resource | Salaries | 0 | 0 | Growth items | IG Assistant post permanent and funded from savings shown against Democratic Services and Chief Executive 19 & 91 | 37,690 | 38,450 | 39,210 |
| 54 | CLIFFORD | Data Protection Resource | Salaries | 0 | 0 | Growth items | IG Support Officer post as permanent in Council's staffing establishment | 28,360 | 30,090 | 31,920 |
| 55 | CLIFFORD | Communication Services | Signage | 0 | 6,010 | Service savings | Reduction in cost of signage for Communication Services | -6,010 | -6,010 | -6,010 |
| 56 | CLIFFORD | Sub Total | | | | | | 24,570 | 2,670 | 5,260 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|---------|-----------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 57 | HUDSON | Closed Circuit Television - (CCTV) | CCTV Line Rental | 26,209 | 41,900 | Service savings | New contract detailed in December Cabinet report. | -14,900 | -14,900 | -14,900 |
| 58 | HUDSON | Closed Circuit Television - (CCTV) | CCTV Monitoring Service | 230,467 | 227,000 | Service savings | New contract detailed in December Cabinet report. | -50,000 | -50,000 | -50,000 |
| 59 | HUDSON | Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services | Staffing | 0 | 0 | Service savings | Restructure savings | -30,000 | -40,000 | -40,000 |
| Page 22 | HUDSON | Members Localism Grants | Grants & Subscriptions | 111,342 | 59,000 | Growth items | Additional budget has been funded from the Regeneration Fund since 2012/13. As the Regeneration Fund is no longer available, this increase of £53,800 to provide each Councillor with £2,400. | 53,800 | 53,800 | 53,800 |
| 61 | HUDSON | Contributions from Funds | Expenditure funded from reserves | 0 | 0 | Growth items | Members Localism Grants to be funded from the Special Projects Fund | -53,800 | -53,800 | -53,800 |
| 62 | HUDSON | Culture Grants | Grants & Subscriptions | 37,651 | 0 | Growth items | Culture Grants originally funded from Localism Fund. | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| 63 | HUDSON | Contributions from Funds | Expenditure funded from reserves | 0 | 0 | Growth items | Culture Grants to be funded from the Communities Fund if required for 2020/21 | -10,000 | 0 | 0 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|-----|-----------------|--------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 64 | HUDSON | Remembrance and Commemoration | Grants & Subscriptions | 14,353 | 25,000 | Service savings | WW1 scheme has ended - budget no longer required. | -25,000 | -25,000 | -25,000 |
| 65 | HUDSON | Sports Development | Fees and Services | 8,819 | 15,860 | Service savings | Allocated overspend for grants for potential overspend but no longer required | -7,860 | -7,860 | -7,860 |
| 66 | HUDSON | Housing Private Sector | Rechargeable Environ Works | 7,011 | 5,000 | Growth items | Increase in enforcement activity will result in potentially more works in default but this is recoverable and can be placed as a charge on a property. | 5,000 | 5,000 | 5,000 |
| 67 | HUDSON | Housing Private Sector | Recharge Works Environmental Services | -7,011 | -5,000 | Additional income | Increase in enforcement activity will result in potentially more works in default but this is recoverable and can be placed as a charge on a property. | -5,000 | -5,000 | -5,000 |
| 68 | HUDSON | Housing Strategy & Development | Grant of Community Housing Fund monies | 33,000 | 0 | Growth items | Remaining community housing fund grant to be provided to Action for Communities in Rural Kent (ACRK) | 93,740 | 93,740 | 93,740 |
| 69 | HUDSON | Housing Strategy & Development | MHCLG Community Housing Grant | -33,000 | 0 | Additional income | Remaining community housing fund grant to be paid as per current agreement to ACRK to continue project. | -93,740 | -93,740 | -93,740 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|---------|-----------------|--|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 70 | HUDSON | Public Health | Salaries | 0 | 0 | Growth items | Public Health post | 40,990 | 41,810 | 42,650 |
| 71 | HUDSON | Temporary Accommodation (Homelessness) | Salaries | 0 | 100,000 | Growth items | Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy approved in 2019/20 Budget to fund the fixed term posts as funding as a one-off but spread over a two-year period. | -100,000 | -100,000 | -100,000 |
| Page 24 | HUDSON | Contributions from Funds | Salaries | 0 | -100,000 | Growth items | Housing, Homelessness and Rough Sleepers Strategy approved in 2019/20 Budget to fund the fixed term posts as funding as a one-off but spread over a two-year period was funded from reserves | 100,000 | 100,000 | 100,000 |
| 73 | HUDSON | Temporary Accommodation (Homelessness) | Homeless Balance of Additional Budget | 0 | 39,460 | Service savings | This Budget only available for 2019/20 | -39,460 | 0 | 0 |
| 74 | HUDSON | Temporary Accommodation (Homelessness) | Salaries | 0 | 0 | Growth items | Housing Review staffing costs permanent increase to the establishment | 65,000 | 66,300 | 67,630 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|-----|-----------------|--|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 75 | HUDSON | Temporary Accommodation (Homelessness) | NL (Nightly Lets) - Homelessness Landlord Payments | 1,006,378 | 0 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Expected expenditure based on monthly monitoring | 1,700,000 | 1,700,000 | 1,700,000 |
| 76 | HUDSON | Temporary Accommodation (Homelessness) | B & B - Homelessness Landlord Payments | 190,719 | 1,201,800 | Service savings | Reduction in Bed and Breakfast costs for homelessness | -961,800 | -961,800 | -961,800 |
| 77 | HUDSON | Temporary Accommodation (Homelessness) | Housing Benefit received | -502,177 | -377,910 | Additional income | Additional benefit income due to increase in homelessness costs. | -350,000 | -350,000 | -350,000 |
| 78 | HUDSON | Temporary Accommodation (Homelessness) | Government grants | 0 | 0 | Additional income | Additional specific Government grant for homelessness. | -174,000 | -174,000 | -174,000 |
| 79 | HUDSON | Temporary Accommodation (Homelessness) | Optivo - Homelessness Landlord Payments | 156,863 | 0 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Expected expenditure based on monthly monitoring. | 180,000 | 180,000 | 180,000 |
| 80 | HUDSON | Housing - Housing Options Team | Rent Deposit Scheme Debt Recovery | 6,000 | 0 | Growth items | Finance charge for Rent Deposit Scheme Debt Recovery (See 109). | 6,000 | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| 81 | HUDSON | Sub Total | | | | | | 338,970 | 380,550 | 382,720 |
| 82 | FREEMAN | Head of Development Services | Staffing | 0 | 0 | Service savings | Restructure savings | -60,000 | -60,000 | -60,000 |
| 83 | FREEMAN | Local land charges | MKS charges for land charges | 65,555 | 79,060 | Service savings | MKS recharges | -4,000 | -2,500 | -970 |
| 84 | FREEMAN | Development Management | Planning - Advertisements | 2,209 | 8,000 | Service savings | Reduction in cost of planning advertisements | -5,000 | -5,000 | -5,000 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|---------|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|---|--|---|---|
| 85 | FREEMAN | Sub Total | | | | | | -69,000 | -67,500 | -65,970 |
| 86 | NAREBOR | Legal (Clientside Costs) | Legal Fees - Planning/S106 | -78,805 | -72,600 | Loss of income | S106 income has been weaker this year and this is expected to continue. The wider uncertainty in the property market makes a conservative income estimate based on current income for future MKLS income the most realistic approach. | 40,600 | 40,600 | 40,600 |
| Page 26 | NAREBOR | Legal (Clientside Costs) | Various | 0 | 0 | Service savings | The s106 income supports the base budget, if income reduces then costs will have to be reduced. | -40,600 | -40,600 | -40,600 |
| | 88 | NAREBOR | MKLS - Legal Services | Salaries | 918,257 | 1,153,580 | Growth items | The Legal staffing budget will be increased to complete funding for a full time corporate governance lawyer. | 6,000 | 6,000 |
| 89 | NAREBOR | MKLS - Legal Services | MKLS running costs | -1,223,768 | -1,107,120 | Service savings | Contributions from partner authorities to the increase for corporate governance lawyer | -4,400 | -4,400 | -4,400 |
| 90 | NAREBOR | Sub Total | | | | | | 1,600 | 1,600 | 1,600 |
| 91 | RADFORD | Corporate Costs | Salaries | 0 | 243,520 | Service savings | Savings to meet cost of Information Governance assistant | -11,000 | -11,000 | -11,000 |
| 92 | RADFORD | Sub Total | | | | | | -11,000 | -11,000 | -11,000 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|-----|-----------------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 93 | SANDHER | Human Resources | Salaries | | | Growth items | To implement the Real Living Wage for SBC staff | 68,000 | 68,000 | 68,000 |
| 94 | SANDHER | Human Resources | MKS charges for HR service | 222,080 | 262,080 | Unavoidable cost pressures | MKS recharges | 0 | 5,240 | 10,590 |
| 95 | SANDHER | Human Resources | MKS charges for HR service | 0 | 0 | Service savings | Reduction in contingency held for iTrent consultancy | -4,000 | -4,000 | -4,000 |
| 96 | SANDHER | Human Resources | Fees and Services | 11,476 | 0 | Growth items | To fund bHeard survey | 12,000 | 0 | 12,000 |
| 97 | SANDHER | Contributions from Funds | Expenditure funded from reserves | 0 | 0 | Growth items | bHeard survey to be funded from reserves | -12,000 | 0 | -12,000 |
| | SANDHER | Sub Total | | | | | | 64,000 | 69,240 | 74,590 |
| 99 | VICKERS | Licences (Legal) | Licence Fees (Gambling) | -21,548 | -41,280 | Loss of income | To align the budget with the forecast income | 20,280 | 20,280 | 20,280 |
| 100 | VICKERS | Licences (Legal) | Licence Fees | -121,982 | -100,000 | Service savings | To align the budget with the forecast income | -20,280 | -20,280 | -20,280 |
| 101 | VICKERS | Chief Finance Officer | Salaries | 0 | 49,930 | Growth items | Increase in hours for Chief Financial Officer | 21,840 | 23,280 | 24,740 |
| 102 | VICKERS | Various | Various | 0 | 0 | Growth items | Increase in hours for Chief Financial Officer to be spread across other teams within Resources Directorate | -21,840 | -23,280 | -24,740 |
| 103 | VICKERS | Chief Finance Officer | Salaries | 0 | 0 | Growth items | Restructure savings | -30,000 | -40,000 | -40,000 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|-----|-----------------|---|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 104 | VICKERS | Benefit and Council Tax Support Administration | Benefit Subsidy | -451,413 | -432,110 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Reduction in benefit administration grant from government. | 52,280 | 71,280 | 89,320 |
| 105 | VICKERS | Contributions from Funds | Expenditure funded from reserves | 0 | 0 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Reduction in benefit administration grant from government to be funded from Revenues and Benefits Reserve | -52,280 | -71,280 | -89,320 |
| 106 | VICKERS | Benefit and Council Tax Support Administration | Council Tax Support Grant | -174,170 | -162,780 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Reduction in council tax support grant from government. | 8,140 | 15,870 | 23,220 |
| 107 | VICKERS | MKS Enforcement Service Council Tax | MKS Debt Recovery Service Income | -133,147 | -125,000 | Additional income | Additional income from this shared service for Council Tax debt recovery | -34,000 | 0 | 0 |
| 108 | VICKERS | Non Specific Grants | Surplus/Deficit Council Tax Income | -178,000 | -25,340 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Forecast of the Council's share of surplus on Collection Fund | 0 | 25,340 | 25,340 |
| 109 | VICKERS | Exchequer & Banking | Recovery - Rent Deposit Scheme Debt Work | -6,000 | 0 | Additional income | Income from Housing for debtors' work | -6,000 | -6,000 | -6,000 |
| 110 | VICKERS | Interest Payable | Interest Payable on external loans | 16,862 | 0 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Cost of interest on existing external loans | 188,260 | 19,010 | 0 |
| 111 | VICKERS | Interest on balances | External interest | -292,326 | -110,480 | Additional income | Interest from investments | -98,290 | 0 | 0 |
| 112 | VICKERS | Adjustments between accounting/funding basis | Salaries | 0 | -52,710 | Growth items | 18/19 staff savings not identified out of total £250k required savings in previous budgets | 52,710 | 52,710 | 52,710 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|-----|-----------------|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 113 | VICKERS | Adjustments between accounting/funding basis | Pension Enhancements | 229,669 | 240,000 | Service savings | Reduction in pension enhancement costs for retired staff | -11,000 | -12,000 | -13,000 |
| 114 | VICKERS | All staff costs | Superannuation Future Funding | 1,152,270 | 1,258,350 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Pension increase from triennial revaluation for Future Funding | 202,595 | 231,814 | 261,617 |
| 115 | VICKERS | Adjustments between accounting & funding basis | Superannuation Back Funding | 1,414,000 | 1,448,430 | Service savings | Pension reduction from triennial revaluation for Back Funding | -248,430 | -208,430 | -158,430 |
| 116 | VICKERS | Contributions from Funds | Expenditure funded from reserves | 0 | -74,050 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Use of 2018/19 underspend to support 2019/20 Budget removed | 74,050 | 74,050 | 74,050 |
| 117 | VICKERS | Interest Payable | Interest Payable | 40,639 | 18,740 | Service savings | End of Finance lease interest element. | -18,740 | -18,740 | -18,740 |
| 118 | VICKERS | Adjustments between accounting & funding basis | Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) | 183,000 | 140,000 | Service savings | End of Finance lease principal element. | -140,000 | -140,000 | -140,000 |
| 119 | VICKERS | Adjustments between accounting & funding basis | Minimum Revenue Provision | 254,753 | 451,000 | Growth items | Minimum Revenue Provision for capital items funded from internal borrowing | 302,835 | 369,000 | 427,000 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|-----|-----------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| 120 | VICKERS | STC Princes Street Retail Park | Fees and Services | 22,322 | 10,000 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Property Management fee and unrecoverable service charges for the STC Retail Park | 13,600 | 13,600 | 13,600 |
| 121 | VICKERS | STC Princes Street Retail Park | Rents | -438,610 | 0 | Additional income | Rental income from STC Retail Park | -495,000 | -495,000 | -495,000 |
| 122 | VICKERS | STC Princes Street Retail Park | Rents | 0 | -240,000 | Loss of income | Removal of previous budget for rental income from STC Retail Park | 240,000 | 240,000 | 240,000 |
| 123 | VICKERS | STC Bourne Place | Rents | 0 | 0 | Additional income | STC Bourne Place rental income for cinema, hotel and restaurants. | -584,290 | -937,700 | -1,137,690 |
| 124 | VICKERS | STC Bourne Place | Fees & charges | 0 | 0 | Growth items | Operational costs | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 |
| 125 | VICKERS | STC Multi-storey Car Park | Fees & charges | 0 | 0 | Growth items | Costs of managing the Multi-Storey Car Park | 183,610 | 187,280 | 191,020 |
| 126 | VICKERS | STC Multi-storey Car Park | Fees & charges | 0 | 0 | Additional income | Multi Storey Car Park - increased income | -100,000 | -100,000 | -100,000 |
| 127 | VICKERS | STC Multi-storey Car Park | Rates | 0 | 0 | Growth items | New Multi Storey Car park - business rates | 86,000 | 87,720 | 89,470 |
| 128 | VICKERS | Sub Total | | | | | | -403,950 | -631,476 | -700,833 |
| 129 | WOODWARD | ICT Development, Network & Support | MKS Charges for ICT | 381,190 | 418,800 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Increase in shared services recharge as agreed at Shared Services Board | 49,200 | 49,200 | 49,200 |
| 130 | WOODWARD | ICT Development, Network & Support | MKS Charges for ICT | 0 | 0 | Service savings | Review of software licences and restructure savings | -30,000 | -30,000 | -30,000 |

Detailed Revenue Budget Proposals

| No. | Head of Service | Description | Type of Spend/ Income | Previous Year Actual 2018/19 £ | Original Budget 2019/20 £ | MTFP Category | Explanation of Budget Change | 2020-21 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2021-22 increase over and above 19/20 £ | 2022-23 increase over and above 19/20 £ |
|-----|----------------------------------|------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 131 | WOODWARD | GIS | MKS Charges for ICT | 72,064 | 67,630 | Unavoidable cost pressures | Increase in shared services recharge as agreed at Shared Services Board | 5,370 | 5,370 | 5,370 |
| 132 | WOODWARD | Sub Total | | | | | | 24,570 | 24,570 | 24,570 |
| 133 | Committed Price Increases | | | | | | | 272,920 | 480,610 | 685,900 |
| 134 | Minor Items | | | | | | | -38,210 | -49,220 | -53,620 |
| 135 | Grand Total | | | | | | | 295,520 | 310,044 | 535,827 |

Collection Fund and Council Tax Base

Tax Base

The tax base for 2020/21 is 48,072.67.

Collection Fund

As the Billing Authority, Swale Borough Council had to make an estimate of the surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund for Council Tax and Business Rates in January 2020, notifying Kent County Council, the Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent and the Kent & Medway Towns Fire & Rescue Authority of their proportions. The declared surplus of £401,620 is shared as follows:

| | £'000 |
|---|--------------|
| Central Government | 355 |
| Kent County Council | (597) |
| The Police and Crime Commissioner for Kent | (3) |
| Kent & Medway Towns Fire & Rescue Authority | (5) |
| Swale Borough Council | (152) |
| Total | (402) |

These amounts are not added to precepts or budgets but must be taken into account by each Authority when setting their basic Council Tax.

Other Preceptors

Kent County Council, the Kent & Medway Fire Authority and the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner will set their own precepting for all valuation bands. These tax levels will form part of the overall Council Tax to be set by full Council on 26 February 2020.

Parish Council Precepts

Parish Council precept demands have been submitted during January 2020 as and when the Parish Councils met to set their precepts. These will be expressed as an additional precept.

Budget Requirement and Council Tax Requirement

| | 2020/21 £'000 |
|---|------------------|
| 2020/21 Swale Operating Expenditure Budget Before Savings and Growth Items | 19,338 |
| Growth items | 1,237 |
| Unavoidable cost pressures | 2,694 |
| Loss of income | 391 |
| Additional income | (1,992) |
| Committed price increases | 273 |
| Pay increases | 78 |
| Pay award | 257 |
| Contribution to/ (from) reserves | (848) |
| Service savings | (2,307) |
| Sub total | 19,121 |
| New Homes Bonus | (1,633) |
| Swale Budget Requirement (to be agreed) | 17,488 |
| Revenue Support Grant | (115) |
| Business Rates | (8,750) |
| Council Tax Requirement (to be agreed) | 8,623 |
| Council Tax Income (assuming £179.37 for Band D) | (8,623) |

Parish Precepts

| Parish / Town Council | Additional Council Tax for Band D 2019/20 £ | Tax Base 2020/21 | Parish Precept (rounded) 2020/21 £ | Additional Council Tax for Band D 2020/21 £ | Additional Council Tax for Band D 2020/21 % Change |
|-----------------------------------|--|------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|
| Bapchild | 26.40 | 460.15 | 12,489.00 | 27.14 | 2.80% |
| Bobbing | 19.95 | 1,004.80 | 20,046.00 | 19.95 | 0% |
| Borden | 54.42 | 1,085.28 | 59,542.00 | 54.86 | 0.81% |
| Boughton-under-Blean | 81.65 | 699.83 | 59,897.00 | 85.59 | 4.83% |
| Bredgar | 35.70 | 286.02 | 10,273.00 | 35.92 | 0.62% |
| Doddington | 38.04 | 228.60 | 8,732.00 | 38.20 | 0.42% |
| Dunkirk | 24.26 | 518.27 | 14,907.00 | 28.76 | 18.55% |
| Eastchurch | 41.93 | 827.07 | 39,125.00 | 47.31 | 12.83% |
| Eastling | 35.00 | 150.27 | 5,259.00 | 35.00 | 0% |
| Faversham Town Council | 57.99 | 6,363.72 | 496,710.00 | 78.05 | 34.59% |
| Graveney & Goodnestone | 59.33 | 189.28 | 11,230.00 | 59.33 | 0% |
| Hartlip | 22.08 | 369.11 | 8,000.00 | 21.67 | -1.86% |
| Hernhill | 34.76 | 288.91 | 10,500.00 | 36.34 | 4.55% |
| Iwade | 35.43 | 1,452.95 | 51,478.00 | 35.43 | 0% |
| Leysdown | 21.04 | 1,150.39 | 35,890.00 | 31.20 | 48.29% |
| Lower Halstow | 81.87 | 460.80 | 37,740.00 | 81.90 | 0.04% |
| Luddenham | 0 | 43.81 | 0 | 0 | 0% |
| Lynsted | 35.70 | 473.79 | 17,049.00 | 35.98 | 0.78% |
| Milstead | 63.83 | 88.73 | 5,500.00 | 61.99 | -2.88% |
| Minster | 27.61 | 5,642.03 | 197,471.00 | 35.00 | 26.77% |
| Newington | 52.69 | 939.69 | 51,542.00 | 54.85 | 4.10% |
| Newnham | 34.29 | 159.34 | 5,464.00 | 34.29 | 0% |
| Norton & Buckland | 34.24 | 187.57 | 6,696.00 | 35.70 | 4.26% |
| Oare | 51.32 | 173.40 | 9,000.00 | 51.90 | 1.13% |
| Ospringe | 26.42 | 284.62 | 7,500.00 | 26.35 | -0.26% |
| Queenborough Town Council | 75.65 | 901.75 | 68,500.00 | 75.96 | 0.41% |
| Rodmersham | 42.96 | 246.97 | 10,500.00 | 42.52 | -1.02% |
| Selling | 54.80 | 369.87 | 13,000.00 | 35.15 | -35.86% |
| Sheerness Town Council | 50.00 | 2,831.98 | 139,962.00 | 49.42 | -1.16% |
| Sheldwich, Leaveland & Badlesmere | 24.39 | 346.34 | 8,600.00 | 24.83 | 1.80% |
| Stalisfield | 29.13 | 100.53 | 2,929.00 | 29.14 | 0.03% |
| Teynham | 54.78 | 907.45 | 49,480.00 | 54.53 | -0.46% |
| Throwley | 21.49 | 140.89 | 3,408.00 | 24.19 | 12.56% |
| Tonge | 5.58 | 439.07 | 2,200.00 | 5.01 | -10.22% |
| Tunstall | 28.70 | 707.92 | 22,021.00 | 31.11 | 8.40% |
| Upchurch | 50.00 | 1,025.96 | 55,915.00 | 54.50 | 9.00% |
| Warden | 29.65 | 508.30 | 15,000.00 | 29.51 | -0.47% |
| TOTAL | | | 1,573,555.00 | | |

Capital Programme and Funding

| | Funding SBC/ Partner- ship | 2019/20 Original Budget | 2019/20 Revised Budget | 2020/21 Original Budget | 2021/22 Original Budget | Budget Later Years |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| <u>Housing, Economy & Community Services - C. Hudson</u> | | | | | | |
| CCTV – Reserves | SBC | 15,000 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| CCTV Monitoring Control Centre – Reserves | SBC | 0 | 250,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The Mill Project, Sittingbourne Skate Park – S106 | P | 0 | 1,350 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The Mill Project, Sittingbourne Skate Park – Capital Grant | P | 15,000 | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The Mill Project, Sittingbourne Skate Park – Capital Receipts | SBC | 150,000 | 200,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Faversham Creek Basin Regeneration Project (Swing Bridge) – Capital Receipts | SBC | 200,000 | 200,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sittingbourne Town Centre – Internal/External Borrowing | SBC | 14,212,758 | 15,250,640 | 44,250 | 0 | 0 |
| Disabled Facilities Grant – External Grant | P | 2,062,800 | 3,676,730 | 2,062,800 | 2,062,800 | 2,062,800 |
| Total Housing, Economy & Community Services | | 16,655,558 | 19,623,720 | 2,107,050 | 2,062,800 | 2,062,800 |
| <u>Commissioning, Environment & Leisure - M. Cassell</u> | | | | | | |
| Barton's Point Coastal Park - replacement bridge - Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 120,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Car Park Improvements/Enhancements – Beach Street | SBC | 0 | 21,570 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Faversham Recreation Ground Improvements – External Grants | P | 1,103,000 | 1,103,000 | 104,080 | 104,080 | 156,210 |
| Faversham Recreation Ground Improvements – Reserves | SBC | 0 | 50,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Faversham Recreation Ground Improvements – S106 | P | 225,920 | 225,920 | 21,320 | 21,320 | 21,320 |
| Gunpowder Works Oare Faversham – S106 | P | 0 | 9,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Leisure Centres – Internal /External Borrowing | SBC | 0 | 1,079,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Milton Creek Access Road – Reserves | SBC | 40,000 | 40,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Modular Toilet Kiosks – Reserves | SBC | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| New Play Area – Iwade Schemes – S106 | P | 45,000 | 45,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Hugh Price Close Play Area Improvements – External Grants | P | 0 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Open Spaces Play Equipment – S106 | P | 226,000 | 226,000 | 130,000 | 100,000 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Reserves | SBC | 150,000 | 0 | 150,000 | 100,000 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Rectory Road Playing Field - Reserves | SBC | 0 | 51,510 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Balas Drive – External Grant | P | 0 | 1,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Balas Drive – Reserves | SBC | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Capital Programme and Funding

| | Funding SBC/ Partner- ship | 2019/20 Original Budget | 2019/20 Revised Budget | 2020/21 Original Budget | 2021/22 Original Budget | Budget Later Years |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Play Improvements – Diligent Drive – Reserves | SBC | 0 | 18,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Minster Leas – Reserves | SBC | 0 | 22,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Minster Leas – External Grant | P | 0 | 9,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Milton Creek County Park – Reserves | SBC | 0 | 27,200 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Shellness Road – Reserves | SBC | 0 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Shellness Road – External Grant | P | 0 | 15,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Shellness Road – S106 Grant | P | 0 | 11,750 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Play Improvements – Rectory Play Area (Fitness) – S106 Grant | P | 0 | 20,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Toilets - Forum Sittingbourne - Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 50,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Toilets - Central Car Park Faversham - Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 40,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Toilets - Milton Creek Country Park – Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 150,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Toilets - Barton Point – Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 100,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Toilets - Spinney Leysdown - Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 40,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Toilets - Minster Leas – Reserves | SBC | 0 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Toilets - Minster Leas - Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 80,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Resurfacing Promenade, The Leas – External Grant | P | 84,970 | 84,970 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Wheeled Bins - Reserves | SBC | 0 | 94,000 | 157,000 | 35,000 | 63,000 |
| Beach Huts - Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 0 | 60,000 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Commissioning, Environment & Leisure | | 1,904,890 | 3,833,920 | 622,400 | 360,400 | 240,530 |
| Environmental Health - T. Beattie | | | | | | |
| Replacement of Air Pollution Monitoring Station – Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 49,050 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Environmental Health | | 0 | 49,050 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Property - A. Adams | | | | | | |
| Folder Inserter Machine – Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 20,110 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Property | | 0 | 20,110 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Capital Programme and Funding

| | Funding SBC/ Partner- ship | 2019/20 Original Budget | 2019/20 Revised Budget | 2020/21 Original Budget | 2021/22 Original Budget | Budget Later Years |
|---|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------|
| | | £ | £ | £ | £ | £ |
| Finance - N. Vickers | | | | | | |
| Finance System Upgrade – Reserves | SBC | 0 | 5,210 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Finance | | 0 | 5,210 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| ICT - C. Woodward | | | | | | |
| ICT Infrastructure & Equipment Replacement - Reserves | SBC | 91,200 | 92,500 | 76,200 | 274,000 | 0 |
| Total ICT | | 91,200 | 92,500 | 76,200 | 274,000 | 0 |
| Planning – J. Freeman | | | | | | |
| Land Charges Shared Service – Online Submission Module – Capital Receipts | SBC | 0 | 0 | 6,400 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Planning | | 0 | 0 | 6,400 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Capital Programme Funded by SBC | SBC | 14,888,958 | 18,150,790 | 493,850 | 409,000 | 63,000 |
| Total Capital Programme Funded by Partners | P | 3,762,690 | 5,473,720 | 2,318,200 | 2,288,200 | 2,240,330 |
| Total Capital Programme | | 18,651,648 | 23,624,510 | 2,812,050 | 2,697,200 | 2,303,330 |

Capital Programme and Funding

| Funding Analysis | | 2019/20 Original Budget £ | 2019/20 Revised Budget £ | 2020/21 Original Budget £ | 2021/22 Original Budget £ | Budget Later Years £ |
|---|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Total Capital Expenditure | | 18,651,648 | 23,624,510 | 2,812,050 | 2,697,200 | 2,303,330 |
| Partnership Funding | | 3,762,690 | 5,473,720 | 2,318,200 | 2,288,200 | 2,240,330 |
| Revenue Contributions | | | | | | |
| (a) Repairs & Renewals Reserves | | | | | | |
| - CCTV | | 15,000 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - CCTV Monitoring Control Centre | | 0 | 0 | 50,500 | 50,500 | 50,500 |
| - Wheeled bins | | 0 | 94,000 | 157,000 | 35,000 | 63,000 |
| Sub Total | | 15,000 | 124,000 | 207,500 | 85,500 | 113,500 |
| (b) General Reserve | | | | | | |
| - Play Improvements | | 150,000 | 0 | 150,000 | 100,000 | 0 |
| - Play Improvements (roll forward) | | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Play Improvements - Faversham Recreation Ground | | 0 | 50,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Play Improvements - Balas Drive | | 0 | 10,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Play Improvements - Diligent Drive | | 0 | 18,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Play Improvements - Minster Leas | | 0 | 22,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Play Improvements - Shellness Road | | 0 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Play Improvements - Milton Creek Country Park | | 0 | 27,200 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Milton Creek Access Road | | 40,000 | 40,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Play Improvements - Rectory Road Playing Field | | 0 | 40,300 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Public toilets - Minster Leas | | 30,000 | 30,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Adelante Upgrade | | 0 | 5,210 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - ICT Infrastructure & Equipment Replacement | | 91,200 | 92,500 | 76,200 | 274,000 | 0 |
| Sub Total | | 311,200 | 365,210 | 226,200 | 374,000 | 0 |
| (c) Special Projects Fund | | | | | | |
| - Play Improvements - Rectory Road Playing Field | | 0 | 11,210 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sub Total | | 0 | 11,210 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

Capital Programme and Funding

| Funding Analysis | | 2019/20 Original Budget £ | 2019/20 Revised Budget £ | 2020/21 Original Budget £ | 2021/22 Original Budget £ | Budget Later Years £ |
|---|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (d) Civil Parking Enforcement Reserve | | | | | | |
| - Play Improvements - Rectory Road Playing Field | | 0 | 21,570 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sub Total | | 0 | 21,570 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Revenue Contributions | | 326,200 | 521,990 | 433,700 | 459,500 | 113,500 |
| Capital Receipts | | | | | | |
| - Beach Huts | | 0 | 0 | 60,000 | 0 | 0 |
| - Bartons Point Coastal Park - Replacement Bridge | | 0 | 120,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Faversham Creek Basin Regeneration Project (swing bridge) | | 200,000 | 200,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Folder Inserter Machine | | 0 | 20,110 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Land Charges Shared Service | | 0 | 0 | 6,400 | 0 | 0 |
| - Replacement of Air Quality Stations | | 0 | 49,050 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - The Mill Project, Sittingbourne Skate Park | | 150,000 | 200,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Public toilets - Forum Sittingbourne | | 0 | 100,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Public toilets - Barton Point | | 0 | 50,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Public toilets - Central Car Park Faversham | | 0 | 40,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Public toilets - Milton Creek Country Park | | 0 | 150,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Public toilets - Spinney Leysdown | | 0 | 40,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| - Public toilets - Minster Leas | | 0 | 80,000 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total Capital Receipts | | 350,000 | 1,049,160 | 66,400 | 0 | 0 |
| Internal / External Borrowing | | 14,212,758 | 16,329,640 | 44,250 | 0 | 0 |
| Total SBC Funding | | 14,888,958 | 17,900,790 | 544,350 | 459,500 | 113,500 |
| Funding Less Capital Spend (CCTV Centre funded from revenue savings) | | 0 | -250,000 | 50,500 | 50,500 | 50,500 |

Reserves

| | Balance as at 31/03/19 | Movements in Year | Balance as at 31/03/20 | Movements in Year | Balance as at 31/03/21 |
|---|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Special Projects | 0 | (420) | (420) | 420 | 0 |
| Communities | (122) | (292) | (414) | 214 | (200) |
| Performance | (494) | 257 | (237) | 225 | (12) |
| Pension & Redundancy | (86) | 0 | (86) | 0 | (86) |
| Regeneration | (437) | 437 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Local Loans Fund | (175) | 0 | (175) | 0 | (175) |
| General Reserve | (2,186) | 1,466 | (720) | 716 | (4) |
| Business Rates Volatility | (4,935) | 1,300 | (3,635) | 1,155 | (2,480) |
| Kent Pool Economic Development Reserve | (2,065) | 250 | (1,815) | 1,815 | 0 |
| Housing & Commercial Growth Business Rates | (846) | (860) | (1,706) | 846 | (860) |
| Other Earmarked Reserves | (6,485) | (534) | (7,019) | 126 | (6,893) |
| Sub Total Earmarked Reserves | (17,831) | 1,604 | (16,227) | 5,517 | (10,710) |
| | | | | | |
| Capital Receipts Reserve | (517) | 445 | (72) | 66 | (6) |
| Capital Grants Unapplied Account | (329) | 0 | (329) | 0 | (329) |
| General Fund | (4,358) | 1,133 | (3,225) | (40) | (3,265) |
| | | | | | |
| Total Reserves | (23,035) | 3,182 | (19,853) | 5,543 | (14,310) |

Note: This shows the Budget position, but all in-year changes will be reflected in closedown and in the Council's financial accounts.

Minimum Revenue Provision Statement

Where the Council finances capital expenditure by debt, it must put aside resources to repay that debt in later years. The amount charged to the revenue budget for the repayment of debt is known as Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP), although there has been no statutory minimum since 2008. The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to have regard to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's Guidance on Minimum Revenue Provision (the MHCLG Guidance) most recently issued in 2018.

The broad aim of the MHCLG Guidance is to ensure that capital expenditure is financed over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits, or, in the case of borrowing supported by Government Revenue Support Grant, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of that grant.

The MHCLG Guidance requires the Council to approve an Annual MRP Statement each year and recommends a number of options for calculating a prudent amount of MRP. The following statement incorporates options recommended in the Guidance as well as locally determined prudent methods.

For 2020/21 it is recommended that:

- for supported expenditure, and for all capital expenditure incurred prior to 1 April 2008, MRP will, under delegated authority, be calculated under the Annuity Method over 50 years;
- MRP for all self-financed capital expenditure incurred after 1 April 2008 will, under delegated authority, be calculated under the Asset Life (Equal Instalment) Method;
- MRP in respect of leases and Public Finance Initiative (PFI) schemes brought on Balance Sheet under the International Financial Reporting Standards based Accounting Code of Practice will match the principal repayment for the associated deferred liability, to ensure that the impact on the revenue account is neutral; and
- where loans are made to other bodies for their capital expenditure, no MRP will be charged but the Council would apply the capital receipt arising from the principal repayments to reduce the CFR instead.

For 2019/20 to 2021/22 it is recommended that MRP charges can be varied between years from those calculated on the above bases, providing they equal the total due within the three year period in order to provide some flexibility between years with a minimum charge of £591,000 in each year.

Capital expenditure incurred during 2020/21 will not be subject to a MRP charge until 2021/22. MRP on property is not required until the asset is operational.

The budget implications of MRP are detailed elsewhere in this report and the estimated Capital Financing Requirement is detailed in the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2020/21.

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| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Cabinet | |
| Meeting Date | 12 February 2020 |
| Report Title | Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21 |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr. Roger Truelove, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance |
| SMT Lead | Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer |
| Head of Service | Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer |
| Lead Officer | Phil Wilson, Financial Services Manager and Olga Cole, Management Accountant |
| Key Decision | Yes |
| Classification | Open |
| Recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To approve the Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21 and the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators. 2. To approve the Treasury Management Policy in Appendix II. |

1. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy’s Code of Practice for Treasury Management in Public Services and the Prudential Code require the Council to approve a Treasury Strategy and Prudential Indicators before the start of each financial year.
- 1.2 The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) has defined Treasury Management as: “The management of the organisation’s investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks”.
- 1.3 This report sets out and seeks approval of the proposed Treasury Management Strategy, the Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators for 2020/21 and the Treasury Management Policy.
- 1.4 This report fulfils the Council’s legal obligation under the Local Government Act 2003 to have regard to both the CIPFA Code and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) Guidance. Should the assumptions upon which this report is based change significantly, then a revised Treasury Strategy will be submitted for approval.

2. Background

Interest Rate Forecast and Market Outlook

- 2.1 The low risk nature of the Council's treasury activities means that there is a degree of insulation from wider economic developments. We remain in a low interest rate and low inflation environment. Arlingclose, the Council's treasury advisers, forecast the Bank Rate to remain at 0.75% for the foreseeable future but there remain substantial risks to this forecast, dependent on Brexit/trade deal outcomes as well as the evolution of the global economy. Arlingclose also expects gilt yields to remain at low levels for the foreseeable future and judges the risks to be weighted to the downside. Other commentators, such as Capital Economics, believe there is a much higher chance of an early reduction to 0.5%. Arlingclose's forecast is set out below:

| Bank Rate | Mar-20 | Jun-20 | Sep-20 | Dec-20 | Mar-21 | Jun-21 | Sep-21 | Dec-21 | Mar-21 | Jun-22 | Sep-22 | Dec-22 | Mar-23 |
|---------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % | % |
| Upside Risk | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 | 0.25 |
| Arlingclose | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 |
| Downside Risk | 0.50 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 | 0.75 |

Borrowing Strategy

- 2.2 The Council's chief objective, when borrowing money, is to strike an appropriately low risk balance between securing low interest costs and achieving certainty of those costs over the period for which funds are required. With short-term interest rates currently lower than long-term rates, it is likely to be more cost effective in the short-term to either use internal resources, or to borrow short-term loans instead of borrowing at fixed rates for long periods. By doing so, the Council is able to reduce net borrowing costs (despite foregone investment income) and reduce overall treasury risk. The benefits of internal/short-term borrowing will be monitored regularly. Arlingclose will assist the Council with this 'cost of carry' and breakeven analysis. The advice from Arlingclose is to continue to borrow short term from other local authorities.
- 2.3 In March 2016, Council agreed to a borrowing facility of up to £30 million subject to individual business case and in November and December 2016 Cabinet agreed a business case for borrowing up to £28 million for Sittingbourne Town Centre (STC) regeneration. This facility was extended to £60 million in February 2017 with any additional borrowing being subject to business cases to Cabinet. The only business cases which have been agreed are for STC and the Leisure Centre refurbishment. At the time of this report, the Council has five loans for periods of between 12 to 18 months from other councils which total £25 million. The details of any project funded from borrowing will be provided in future Cabinet reports.
- 2.4 The borrowing decisions set out above are historic. In future, rather than announcing a borrowing facility with no linkage to a particular project, the specific project agreed by Cabinet will have a borrowing limit associated with it. This limit can be varied by Cabinet. In the December 2019 budget report Cabinet agreed that an additional £10 million could be borrowed to fund housing projects.

2.5 The approved sources of long-term and short-term borrowing are:

- Public Works Loan Board (PWLB) and any successor body;
- Any institution approved for investments;
- UK Local Authorities;
- Any other bank or building society authorised to operate in the UK;
- UK public and private sector pension funds (except the Kent Pension Fund); and,
- Capital market bond investors.

2.6 On 9 October 2019, the PWLB, without any consultation, raised the cost of certainty rate borrowing by 1% to 1.8% above UK gilt yields as HM Treasury was concerned about the overall level of local authority debt. PWLB borrowing remains available but the margin of 180bp above gilt yields appears relatively expensive. Market alternatives are currently available and new products will be developed.

2.7 The Council has the following loans outstanding:

| Lender | Amount (£ million) | Borrowing rate | Date of loan | Duration |
|------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Wycombe District Council | 5 | 1.21 % | 20/02/2019 | 18 months |
| London Borough of Camden | 5 | 0.95 % | 05/08/2019 | 12 months |
| London Borough of Islington | 5 | 1.10 % | 30/08/2019 | 18 months |
| Greater London Authority | 5 | 1.00 % | 16/12/2019 | 12 months |
| Brighton & Hove City Council | 5 | 1.25 % | 20/01/2020 | 18 months |
| Total | 25 | | | |

Investment Strategy

2.8 The Council holds significant invested funds, representing income received in advance of expenditure plus balances and reserves held. In the past 12 months, the Council's investment balance has averaged £31m compared with £28m in the previous financial year.

2.9 In considering investing in assets, the Council proposes three overriding principles to be applied:

- 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.

- 2.10 The CIPFA Code requires the Council to invest its funds prudently, and to have regard to the security and liquidity of its investments before seeking the highest rate of return, or yield. The Council’s objective when investing money is to strike an appropriate balance between risk and return, minimising the risk of incurring losses from defaults and the risk of receiving unsuitably low investment income.
- 2.11 Given the increasing risk and very low returns from short-term unsecured bank investments, the Council largely uses Money Market Funds for short-term investments. The only long-term investment remains the £3 million in the Church, Charities and Local Authorities (CCLA) Property Fund.
- 2.12 The Council could make use of the following asset classes for both Treasury and Non Treasury investments:

| | |
|--------------------------|--|
| Government | Loans, bonds and bills issued or guaranteed by national governments, regional and local authorities and multilateral development banks. These investments are not subject to bail-in, and there is generally a lower risk of insolvency, although they are not zero risk. Investments with the UK Central Government may be made in unlimited amounts for up to 50 years. |
| Banks Unsecured | Accounts, deposits, certificates of deposit and senior unsecured bonds with banks and building societies, other than multilateral development banks. These investments are subject to the risk of credit loss via a bail-in should the regulator determine that the bank is failing or likely to fail. |
| Banks Secured | Covered bonds, reverse repurchase agreements and other collateralised arrangements with banks and building societies. These investments are secured on the bank’s assets, which limits the potential losses in the unlikely event of insolvency, and means that they are exempt from bail-in. Where there is no investment specific credit rating, but the collateral upon which the investment is secured has a credit rating, the higher of the collateral credit rating and the counterparty credit rating will be used to determine cash and time limits. The combined secured and unsecured investments in any one bank will not exceed the cash limit for secured investments. |
| Corporates | Loans, bonds and commercial paper issued by organisations other than banks and registered providers. These investments are not subject to bail-in, but are exposed to the risk of the company going insolvent. Loans to unrated companies will only be made either following an external credit assessment or to a maximum of £1 million per company as part of a diversified pool in order to spread the risk widely. |
| Non Treasury Investments | The Council is a significant owner of assets in the borough and will, where there are opportunities, invest either to generate an income stream or for a capital gain. |

| | |
|---------------------------|--|
| Registered Providers | Loans and bonds issued by, guaranteed by or secured on the assets of registered providers of social housing and registered social landlords, formerly known as housing associations. These bodies are regulated by the Regulator of Social Housing. As providers of public services, they retain the likelihood of receiving government support if needed. |
| Pooled Funds | <p>Shares or units in diversified investment vehicles consisting of any of the above investment types, plus equity shares and property. These funds have the advantage of providing wide diversification of investment risks, coupled with the services of a professional fund manager in return for a fee. Short-term Money Market Funds that offer same-day liquidity and very low or no volatility will be used as an alternative to instant access bank accounts, while pooled funds whose value changes with market prices and/or have a notice period will be used for longer investment periods.</p> <p>Bond, equity and property funds offer enhanced returns over the longer term, but are more volatile in the short term. These allow the Council to diversify into asset classes other than cash without the need to own and manage the underlying investments. Because these funds have no defined maturity date, but are available for withdrawal after a notice period, their performance and continued suitability in meeting the Council's investment objectives will be monitored regularly.</p> |
| Operational Bank Accounts | The Council may incur operational exposures, for example through current accounts, collection accounts and merchant acquiring services, to any UK bank with credit ratings no lower than BBB- and with assets greater than £25 billion. These are not classed as investments, but are still subject to the risk of a bank bail-in. The Bank of England has stated that in the event of failure, banks with assets greater than £25 billion are more likely to be bailed-in than made insolvent, increasing the chance of the Council maintaining operational continuity. |

2.13 The strategy for the coming year will not change significantly. The Council will retain the CCLA fund and keep the remaining monies primarily in Money Market Funds. The Chief Financial Officer does not believe that investing in equity or bond funds is advisable at the current time, given equity market valuations and the impact on bond investments. This will be reviewed as market conditions develop.

2.14 As at 30 September 2019, Commercial Property values had fallen over the quarter, continuing the decline which began in the final months of 2018. The prime cause of the decline was continued weakness in the retail sectors. There was better news elsewhere in the sector, in offices and particularly industrial assets which, by the end of the quarter, had risen for 36 months in succession, but these improvements were not enough to fully offset weakness elsewhere. Transaction volumes remained at low levels and the reduced flow of market data increased the subjectivity of sector valuations, a development which increased volatility at the single asset pricing level. CCLA have a limited retail exposure and the total fund value has increased to £1.173bn.

- 2.15 Currently the Council makes no direct investments in equities or corporate bonds. If this changed in the year the Chief Financial Officer will ensure that investments are consistent with the Council's health and climate change objectives.
- 2.16 Credit ratings are obtained and monitored by the Council's treasury advisers, who will notify changes in ratings as they occur. Where an entity has its credit rating downgraded, so that it fails to meet the approved investment criteria then:
- no new investments will be made;
 - any existing investments that can be recalled or sold at no cost will be; and,
 - full consideration will be given to the recall or sale of all other existing investments with the affected counterparty.
- 2.17 Where a credit rating agency announces that a credit rating is on review for possible downgrade (also known as "rating watch negative" or "credit watch negative") so that it may fall below the approved rating criteria, then only investments that can be withdrawn on the next working day will be made with that organisation until the outcome of the review is announced. This policy will not apply to negative outlooks, which indicate a long term direction of travel, rather than an imminent change of rating.
- 2.18 The Council understands that credit ratings are good, but not perfect, predictors of investment default. Full regard will, therefore, be given to other available information on the credit quality of the organisations in which it invests, including credit default swap prices, financial statements, information on potential government support and reports in the quality financial press. No investments will be made with an organisation if there are substantive doubts about its credit quality, even though it may meet the credit rating criteria.
- 2.19 When deteriorating financial market conditions affect the creditworthiness of all organisations, as happened in 2008 and 2011, this is not generally reflected in credit ratings, but can be seen in other market measures. In these circumstances, the Council will restrict its investments to those organisations of higher credit quality and reduce the maximum duration of its investments to maintain the required level of security. The extent of these restrictions will be in line with prevailing financial market conditions. If these restrictions mean that insufficient commercial organisations of high credit quality are available to invest the Council's cash balances, then the surplus will be deposited with the UK Government, via the Debt Management Office or invested in government treasury bills. This will cause a reduction in the level of investment income earned, but will protect the principal sum invested.

2.20 The Council currently has the following Investments:

| Counterparty | Long-Term Rating | Balance Invested at 22 January 2020 £'000 |
|--|-------------------------|--|
| Debt Management Office (Bank of England) | AA | 9,345 |
| Invesco Money Market Fund | AAmmf | 3,000 |
| Deutsche Money Market Fund | AAmmf | 3,000 |
| Goldman Sachs Money Market Fund | AAmmf | 3,000 |
| Aberdeen Money Market Fund | AAmmf | 3,000 |
| Black Rock Money Market Fund | AAmmf | 3,000 |
| JP Morgan Money Market Fund | AAmmf | 2,850 |
| Amundi Money Market Fund | AAmmf | 3,000 |
| Morgan Stanley Money Market Fund | AAmmf | 3,000 |
| SSGA Money Market Fund | AAmmf | 3,000 |
| CCLA Property Fund | | 3,000 |
| Total Investments | | 39,195 |

2.21 The ratings above are from Fitch credit rating agency. A description of the grading is provided below:

- AA Investments are judged to be of a high quality and are subject to very low credit risk.
- AAmmf Funds have very strong ability to meet the dual objectives of providing liquidity and preserving capital.

2.22 The definition of investments in CIPFA's revised Treasury Management Code now covers all the financial assets of the Council, as well as other non-financial assets which the Council holds primarily for financial return. This is replicated in the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government's (MHCLG's) Investment Guidance, in which the definition of investments is further broadened to also include all such assets held partially for financial return.

2.23 The Council has not made, and will not make, any direct commercial investments outside of the Borough. Capital funds will be used for the benefit of local residents.

2.24 At 31 March 2019 the Council held £3 million of longstanding investments in 14 directly owned properties. These investments generated £0.2 million of investment income for the Council in 2018/19 after taking account of direct costs, representing a rate of return of 5% and this level of income is forecast for 2019/20 and 2020/21. No significant change in this investment is anticipated in 2019/20 or 2020/21.

2.25 Although not strictly counted as investments, since no money has exchanged hands yet, loan commitments carry similar risks to the Council and are included here for completeness.

2.26 The loans made by the Council are shown below:

| | 31 March 2019 |
|---|----------------------|
| | £'000 |
| Housing repair loans | 2,124 |
| Employee car loans | 128 |
| Opportunities for Sittingbourne Limited | 118 |
| Other long term debtors | 125 |
| Other short term debtors | 1,175 |
| Total | 3,670 |

2.27 The main risk when making service loans is that the borrower will be unable to repay the principal lent and/or the interest due. In order to limit this risk, a loss allowance is calculated for each debt reflecting the statistical likelihood that the debtor will be unable to meet their contractual commitments to the Council, which for 2018/19 was £0.2 million. The loss allowance has been calculated by reference to the Council's historic experience of default. In addition, to mitigate risk, all debts have to be managed in accordance with the Council's Financial Regulations.

2.28 The most significant loans shown are the Housing Repair Loans which are loans for private sector housing home adaptations – landlords and owner-occupiers can apply for a loan for adaptations that will enable them to stay in their own homes. The risk relating to these loans is low as they are a charge of the property and are repayable when a property is sold.

2.29 An analysis of short term debtors is reported to Cabinet as part of the quarterly Financial Management Report.

Treasury Management Policy

2.30 To reflect some amendments required by the most recently published Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code, an updated Treasury Management Policy Statement is attached in Appendix I.

3. Proposal

3.1 The Council may invest its surplus funds with any of the counterparty types in the table below, subject to the cash limits (per counterparty) and the time limits shown.

| Counterparty | Cash Limits |
|---|--------------------|
| Debt Management Office (Debt Management Account Deposit Facility) and Treasury Bills | Unlimited |
| Local Authorities | £3m |
| Major UK banks / building societies. (Barclays, HSBC, Lloyds Banking Group, RBS Group, Santander UK, Nationwide, Standard Chartered) unsecured deposits | £3m |
| Svenska Handelsbanken unsecured deposits | £3m |
| Leeds Building Society unsecured deposits | £1.5m |

| Counterparty | Cash Limits |
|--|--|
| Close Brothers unsecured deposits | £1.5m |
| Money Market Funds | £3m each |
| Pooled Funds e.g. Absolute return, Equity income, Corporate Bond Funds | £3m each |
| CCLA Property Fund | £3m |
| Supranational Bonds | £3m in aggregate |
| Corporate Bonds | £3m in aggregate |
| Non treasury investments | To be agreed on a case by case basis |
| Covered Bonds | £3m in aggregate with £1m limit per bank |

- 3.2 Currently the maximum duration for unsecured term deposits is 13 months. The Chief Financial Officer in consultation with the Leader may consider longer duration depending on market conditions. For bonds, the maximum duration will be five years including, where applicable, the 5-year benchmark government bond, which may at the point of issue, have a maturity a few months in excess of five years.
- 3.3 The Council may also purchase property for investment purposes and may also make loans and investments for service purposes, for example in shared ownership housing, as loans to local businesses and landlords, or as equity investments and loans to the Council's owned companies.
- 3.4 The Council does not directly invest in financial derivatives although these may be present in pooled funds and will be managed in line with the overall treasury strategy.
- 3.5 The Council adopted the International Financial Reporting Standard 9 (IFRS 9) from 1 April 2018. A key issue is the treatment of gains and losses on the fair value of the Council's £3 million investment in the CCLA Property Fund. Previously, losses and gains were only realised when the assets were disposed of. Under IFRS 9, gains and losses will be reported every year in the accounts so that if there is a loss then it would become a 'real' cost to the Council's reserves and/or Council taxpayers. However, the MHCLG has introduced a 'statutory override', currently until March 2023, whereby the Council's accounts would meet IFRS 9 requirements, but any financial impact would be reversed out so it would not be a 'real' charge to the Council.

Treasury Adviser

- 3.6 The Council has appointed Arlingclose Limited as its treasury management adviser and receives specific advice on investment, debt and capital finance issues. Officers meet with Arlingclose on a quarterly basis, receive information daily and attend relevant training courses.

3.7 The day to day treasury management activity is undertaken on the Council's behalf by Kent County Council's Treasury & Investments team to the criteria set out in this report. This has been particularly beneficial in using their relationships to obtain the low cost loans from other Councils.

4. Alternative Options

4.1 The Strategy is intended to give flexibility with regard to borrowing and investment options.

4.2 The CIPFA Code does not prescribe any particular treasury management strategy for local authorities to adopt. The Chief Financial Officer, having consulted the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, believes that the above Strategy represents an appropriate balance between risk management and cost effectiveness. Some alternative strategies, with their financial and risk management implications, are listed below.

| Alternative | Impact on income and expenditure | Impact on risk management |
|---|--|---|
| Invest in a narrower range of counterparties and/or for shorter times | Interest income will be lower | Lower chance of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be greater |
| Invest in a wider range of counterparties and/or for longer times | Interest income will be higher | Increased risk of losses from credit related defaults, but any such losses may be smaller |
| Borrow additional sums at long-term fixed interest rates | Debt interest costs will rise; this is unlikely to be offset by higher investment income | Higher investment balance leading to a higher impact in the event of a default; however long-term interest costs may be more certain |
| Borrow short-term or variable loans instead of long-term fixed rates | Debt interest costs will initially be lower | Increases in debt interest costs will be broadly offset by rising investment income in the medium term, but long-term costs may be less certain |

5. Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 Consultation has been taken with Arlingclose.

6. Implications

| Issue | Implications |
|----------------|---|
| Corporate Plan | Good management of the Council's cash balances assists the overall financial position of the Council and this helps to meet the emerging Corporate Plan objectives. |

| Issue | Implications |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Financial, Resource and Property | The budget for net investment income in 2020/21 is £20,510. |
| Legal, Statutory and Procurement | Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and CIPFA requirements complied with. |
| Crime and Disorder | Not applicable |
| Environmental Sustainability | Not applicable |
| Health and Wellbeing | Not applicable |
| Risk Management and Health and Safety | Risk is controlled through adherence to specific guidance included in CIPFA's Treasury Management Code of Practice and Cross-Sectoral Guidance Notes. The principle of security of funds over-rides investment performance considerations. |
| Equality and Diversity | Not applicable |
| Privacy and Data Protection | Not applicable |

7. Appendices

7.1 The following appendices are published with this report and form part of the report.

- Appendix I Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators
- Appendix II Treasury Management Policy Statement

8. Background Papers

None

Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators

Background

There is a requirement under the Local Government Act 2003 for local authorities to have regard to CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance in Local Authorities (the "CIPFA Prudential Code") when setting and reviewing their Prudential Indicators. The objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure, within a clear framework, that the capital investment plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable, and that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice. To demonstrate that the Council has fulfilled these objectives, the Prudential Code sets out the following indicators that must be set and monitored each year.

Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement (CFR)

This is a key indicator of prudence. Statutory guidance states that external debt should not exceed the capital financing requirement in the previous year plus the estimates of any increase in the CFR at the end of the current year and the next two years. The table below demonstrates that the Council is complying with this aspect of the Prudential Code.

| Gross Debt and the Capital Financing Requirement | 2019/20 Revised | 2020/21 Estimate | 2021/22 Estimate | 2022/23 Estimate |
|---|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Capital Financing Requirements | 42,475 | 43,736 | 42,859 | 41,981 |
| Gross External Debt | (25,000) | (5,000) | 0 | 0 |
| Net Investments | 17,475 | 38,736 | 42,859 | 41,981 |

Estimates of Capital Expenditure

This indicator is set to ensure that the level of proposed capital expenditure remains within sustainable limits and, in particular, to consider the impact on Council Tax. (See Capital Programme in 2020/21 Budget Report to Cabinet 12 February 2020.)

| Capital Expenditure and Financing | 2019/20 Revised | 2020/21 Estimate | 2021/22 Estimate | 2022/23 Estimate |
|--|------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Total Expenditure | 23,625 | 2,812 | 2,697 | 2,303 |
| Revenue contributions | 522 | 434 | 460 | 113 |
| Capital receipts | 1,049 | 66 | 0 | 0 |
| Grants | 5,474 | 2,318 | 2,288 | 2,240 |
| Internal/ External borrowing | 16,330 | 44 | 0 | 0 |
| Funded from revenue savings | 250 | (50) | (51) | (50) |
| Total Financing | 23,625 | 2,812 | 2,697 | 2,303 |

Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

This is an indicator of affordability, highlighting the revenue implications of existing and proposed capital expenditure by identifying the proportion of the revenue budget required to meet financing costs, net of investment income.

| Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream | 2019/20 Estimate | 2020/21 Estimate | 2021/22 Estimate | 2022/23 Estimate |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | % | % | % | % |
| General Fund Total | 2.80 | 4.41 | 4.23 | 4.13 |

Authorised Limit for External Debt

The Authorised Limit sets the maximum level of external borrowing on a gross basis (i.e., not net of investments) for the Council. It is measured on a daily basis against all external borrowing items on the Balance Sheet (i.e., long and short-term borrowing, overdrawn bank balances and long-term liabilities). This Prudential Indicator separately identifies borrowing from other long-term liabilities such as finance leases. It is consistent with the Council's existing commitments, its proposals for capital expenditure and financing, and its approved treasury management policy statement and practices.

The Authorised Limit has been set on the estimate of the most likely, prudent but not worst case scenario with sufficient headroom over and above this to allow for unusual cash movements.

The Authorised Limit is the statutory limit determined under Section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003 (referred to in the legislation as the Affordable Limit).

| Authorised Limit for External Debt | 2019/20 Estimate | 2020/21 Estimate | 2021/22 Estimate | 2022/23 Estimate |
|---|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 | £'000 |
| Borrowing | 60,000 | 55,000 | 55,000 | 55,000 |
| Other long-term liabilities | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 |
| Total | 62,000 | 57,000 | 57,000 | 57,000 |

Operational Boundary for External Debt

The operational boundary is based on the Council's estimate of most likely (i.e. prudent but not worst case) scenario for external debt. It links directly to the Council's estimates of capital expenditure, the capital financing requirement and cash flow requirements, and is a key management tool for in-year monitoring. Other long-term liabilities comprise finance lease and other liabilities that are not borrowing but form part of the Council's debt.

Prudential and Treasury Management Indicators

| Operational Boundary | 2019/20 Revised £'000 | 2020/21 Estimate £'000 | 2021/22 Estimate £'000 | 2022/23 Estimate £'000 |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Borrowing | 55,000 | 45,000 | 45,000 | 45,000 |
| Other long-term liabilities | 500 | 500 | 500 | 500 |
| Total Operational Boundary | 55,500 | 45,500 | 45,500 | 45,500 |

Interest Rate Risk

The Council regularly reviews its interest rate exposures with its Treasury adviser Arlingclose and this is reflected in the monitoring of the budget. It is the aim of the Council to minimise interest paid on borrowing and maximise the interest earned on investments, but in the case of investments, protection of the capital sum must take precedence over the rate of return. As reported in the 2019/20 Half Year Treasury Report the Council had achieved a return of 1.09% on its investments and therefore an estimate of the impact of a 0.5% change in this return would be worth £145,000.

Maturity Structure of Borrowing

This indicator is set to control the Council's exposure to refinancing risk. The upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of fixed rate borrowing will be:

| Maturity Structure of Borrowing | Lower Limit for 2020/21 % | Upper Limit for 2020/21 % |
|--|--|--|
| Under 12 months | 0 | 100 |
| 12 months and within 24 months | 0 | 100 |
| 24 months and within 5 years | 0 | 100 |
| 5 years and within 10 years | 0 | 100 |
| 10 years and above | 0 | 100 |

Principal Sums Invested for Periods Longer than a Year

The purpose of this indicator is to control the Council's exposure to the risk of incurring losses by seeking early repayment of its investments. The limits on the long-term principal sum invested to final maturities beyond the period end will be:

| | 2019/20 Revised £'000 | 2020/21 Estimate £'000 | 2021/22 Estimate £'000 | 2022/23 Estimate £'000 |
|--|--------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Limit on principal invested longer than 1 year | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 | 10,000 |

Treasury Management Policy

Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The Council adopts the key recommendations of CIPFA's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the Code), as described in Section 5 of the Code.
- 1.2 Accordingly, the Council will create and maintain, as the cornerstones for effective treasury management:-
 - A treasury management policy statement, stating the policies, objectives and approach to risk management of its treasury management activities
 - Suitable treasury management practices (TMPs), setting out the manner in which the Council will seek to achieve those policies and objectives, and prescribing how it will manage and control those activities.
- 1.3 The Council (i.e. full Council) will receive reports on its treasury management policies, practices and activities including, as a minimum, an annual strategy and plan in advance of the year, a mid-year review and an annual report after its close, in the form prescribed in its TMPs.
- 1.4 The Council delegates responsibility for the implementation and monitoring of its treasury management policies and practices to Cabinet and for the execution and administration of treasury management decisions to the Chief Financial Officer, who will act in accordance with the Council's policy statement and TMPs and CIPFA's Standard of Professional Practice on Treasury Management.
- 1.5 The Council nominates Audit Committee to be responsible for ensuring effective scrutiny of the treasury management strategy and policies.

Policies and Objectives of Treasury Management Activities

- 1.6 The Council defines its treasury management activities as:

"The management of the Council's investments and cash flows, its banking, money market and capital market transactions; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of optimum performance consistent with those risks."
- 1.7 This Council regards the successful identification, monitoring and control of risk to be the prime criteria by which the effectiveness of its treasury management activities will be measured. Accordingly, the analysis and reporting of treasury management activities will focus on their risk implications for the organisation, and any financial instruments entered into to manage these risks.
- 1.8 This Council acknowledges that effective treasury management will provide support towards the achievement of its business and service objectives. It is therefore committed to the principles of achieving value for money in treasury management, and to employing suitable performance measurement techniques, within the context of effective risk management."
- 1.9 The Council's borrowing will be affordable, sustainable and prudent and consideration will be given to the management of interest rate risk and refinancing risk. The source from which the borrowing is taken and the type of borrowing should allow the Council transparency and control over its debt.

Treasury Management Policy

- 1.10 The Council's primary objective in relation to its treasury investments remains the security of capital. The liquidity or accessibility of the Council's investments followed by the yield earned on investments remain important but are secondary considerations.

| | | |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Cabinet | | Agenda Item: 7 |
| Meeting Date | 12 February 2020 | |
| Report Title | Council Tax Support Scheme 2020/21 | |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr Roger Truelove, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance | |
| SMT Lead | Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer | |
| Head of Service | Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer | |
| Lead Officer | Zoe Kent, Revenues and Benefits Manager | |
| Recommendations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To note the outcome of the public consultation having taken consideration of the potential impact of the proposed changes on working age claimants with the protected characteristics of disability, age and sex under the Equalities Act 2010. 2. To approve options 1- 6 as changes to the current scheme, as set out in detail in table 3, paragraph 3.6 | |

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

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

2 Background

- 2.1 Prior to the introduction of the scheme in April 2013 the Kent authorities worked together to design a CTS scheme. A common approach was adopted across Kent, with the new scheme broadly replicating the former CTB scheme, but with a basic reduction in entitlement for working age claimants.
- 2.2 As part of its introduction, central government set out a number of key elements:
 - 1) The duty to create a local scheme for working age applicants was placed with billing authorities;

- 2) Government funding was reduced initially by the equivalent of 10% from the levels paid through benefit subsidy to authorities under the previous CTB scheme; and
 - 3) Persons of pension age, although allowed to apply for CTS, would be dealt with under regulations prescribed by central government, and not the authorities' local scheme.
- 2.3 In Swale, under the current scheme working age claimants must pay at least 25% of their Council Tax liability, along with Folkestone & Hythe District Council this is the highest of the district councils. Although there is a common approach across Kent, local schemes at district level have been tailored to local needs, so in other parts of Kent the percentage varies.
- 2.4 The Kent districts have been able to use the changes to the empty property discounts to vary the amount working age claimants pay towards their liability. Since its introduction in April 2013, our own local scheme has been reviewed annually; however; the core elements remain as were originally agreed.
- 2.5 Under the Kent-wide agreement the major precepting authorities agreed to collectively pay to each district council an administration fee to assist with the costs of the delivery of the scheme.
- 2.6 It has been recognised by the Kent Finance Officers Group that the contributions that the major precepting authorities make towards the administration of the scheme are essential. It was therefore agreed to base the allocation of the administration fee on the size of the caseload. Swale has been allocated £141,600 administration fee for 2019/20, the second highest award in Kent.
- 2.7 When the new scheme started in April 2013, it resulted in approximately 5,000 households within the Borough paying some council tax for the first time. In addition, approximately 2,500 other households who received partial assistance saw increases in their bills.
- 2.8 Collection of the council tax balances in these cases has been challenging. However, with focus on these accounts and some changes to recovery processes, the scheme has been successful. The administrative fee paid by the major preceptors has been essential in assisting with the cost of the recovery of these debts.
- 2.9 The overall level of applicants, both working age and pension age, has fallen since the introduction of CTS to 9,812 as at 1 April 2019, compared with 13,381 as at 1 April 2013. This is mainly due to a reduction in unemployment, the rise of the pension age and changes brought into the scheme from April 2017. As a result, the total cost of the scheme has reduced since its inception.
- 2.10 However, the initial '90%' funding that the government passed on to authorities through Revenue Support Grant to support the costs of local schemes has

effectively been cut as part of the wider reductions in local government financial settlements. In the current financial year the Council will receive RSG of £115,000 compared with £5.5m in 2013/14 and will be nil in the future therefore, although costs have reduced due to a lower claimant base, the outcome is that a greater share of the cost burden is falling on the billing authorities and the other major precepting bodies. This outcome has been one of the main catalysts for a Kent wide review being undertaken.

Table 1: CTS expenditure by year

| Year | Expenditure |
|-------------|--------------------|
| 2013/14 | £10,712,895 |
| 2014/15 | £ 9,940,783 |
| 2015/16 | £ 9,801,120 |
| 2016/17 | £ 9,723,402 |
| 2017/18 | £ 8,950,857 |
| 2018/19 | £ 8,854,129 |
| 2019/20 | £ 8,602,987 |

- 2.11 It was agreed by the Kent Finance Officer’s Group to appoint a consultant to carry out the review. The consultant assisted in the evaluation of alternative scheme models. The review considered whether Kent authorities should move to a banded scheme where claimants are placed into an income band based on their family size and the level of their income.
- 2.12 As in 206/17 when the last Kent wide review was carried out, the objectives that have been agreed are to:
- (i) have regard to the reductions in government grant and the financial pressures we face;
 - (ii) make the scheme less costly (if possible), and more efficient in terms of its operation; and
 - (iii) have regard to the impact such changes may have on vulnerable residents, and target support to those most in need.

3 Proposal

- 3.1 Consideration has been given to a range of options for potential change, having regard to the objectives set out in paragraph 2.12 and the suitability for Swale.
- 3.2 The conclusion is that the most practical option would be to maintain a scheme similar to our current scheme. The reasoning behind this is:
- (i) it is known to our claimants;
 - (ii) it largely mirrors the housing benefit system
 - (iii) our software systems are adapted for this type of scheme and would, therefore, require little additional cost to update;

- (iv) our staff are familiar with the administration of this type of scheme; and
- (v) as it is also aligned to housing benefit, we can continue to take advantage of economies of scale.

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

Table 2: Percentage collected by year

| Year | Minimum % paid by working age claimants | Percentage collected |
|---------|---|----------------------|
| 2013/14 | 8.5% | 87.59% |
| 2014/15 | 15% | 81.80% |
| 2015/16 | 15% | 85.30% |
| 2016/17 | 15% | 85.80% |
| 2017/18 | 20% | 86.10% |
| 2018/19 | 25% | 85.00% |
| 2019/20 | 25% | 73.00% |

**2019/20 figure as at 01.01.2020*

- 3.4 Given the objectives of the review set out at 2.12, it is important that we seek to not increase the overall costs of the scheme significantly whilst maintaining fairness and the feasibility of the scheme. Therefore, it is considered that a locally determined selection of the options set out in Appendix I should be included for the scheme for 2020/21.
- 3.5 The Council went out to consultation on these options for a 4 week period ending on 18 November 2019 via a direct email to approximately 5,000 households. The results of the consultation are contained in Appendix I.
- 3.6 Given the financial challenge facing the Council, it is recommended that the Council implements, the changes set out within the consultation, subject to the amendments set out in Table 3.

Table 3: Council Tax Support Options

| Option | Recommendation |
|--------|----------------|
|--------|----------------|

| | | |
|--|-----------|---|
| Option 1 – Increase the maximum amount of support from 75% to 80%. | Implement | Consultation findings support the change to increase the amount of support to 80%. |
| Option 2 - Reducing the standard level of non-dependant deduction from £15 to £10 for non-dependants who work more than 16 hours per week | Implement | Consultation findings do not support reducing the standard level of non-dependant deduction. However, the current deduction of £15 is higher than any other Kent district. Claimants are struggling to meet this amount on top of the current minimum payment of 25%. This is therefore in many cases causing hardship. |
| Option 3 – Disregarding child maintenance paid to a claimant or partner in the calculation of CTS. | Implement | A higher percentage of responders said no to this question however in the comments responders have commented that maintenance is not always a regular income and is paid to support the child. |
| Option 4 – Disregarding child benefit paid to a claimant or partner in the calculation of CTS. | Implement | Consultation findings support bringing in this change. |
| Option 5 - Applying a fixed income period to working age claims for CTS to avoid multiple changes. | Implement | Consultation findings support bringing in this change for all working age claims. This change will ensure that those claimants who are working will have fewer changes to the amount of Council Tax they have to pay during the year. |
| Option 6 – Applying a tolerance to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes. | Implement | Consultation findings support this change. As with option 5 this will reduce the amount of times Council Tax is amended during the year. This will help claimants to budget during the year. |

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The current scheme which was brought in on 1 April 2019 could be left in place with no amendments from 1 April 2020. However given the positive response to the consultation exercise and the reduction in the collection rate since 2018/19 many claimants are struggling on low incomes to pay their Council Tax. This then has a knock on affect to other services.
- 4.2 As part of the consultation, as well as consulting on various options related to the design of the scheme, case law has clarified that we are also required to consider alternative funding options as opposed to simply changing the current scheme to reduce costs.
- 4.3 Therefore, within the consultation the following questions were posed. Should Council Tax be increased for all Council Tax payers to fund the CTS scheme? Should Council reserves be used to fund the scheme? Should there be cuts to Council services to fund the scheme?
- 4.4 All options in 4.3 were rejected by the majority of responders – see Appendix I for the detail. As the Council’s funding from the Government for the provision of all services is likely to be reduced in the future, and as the impact of choosing any of the alternative funding options would affect all residents in the Borough, it is not considered that any of the options in 4.3 should be taken forward for funding the CTS scheme.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 Prior to the implementation of any changes to a CTS scheme, authorities are required to consult with the public. There have been a number of challenges to CTS consultations, and it should be noted that a judgement handed down by the Supreme Court has defined what is meant by ‘good consultation’.
- 5.2 The guiding principles which have been established through case law for fair consultation are as follows:
- (i) the consultation must be carried out at a stage when proposals are still at a formative stage;
 - (ii) sufficient information on the reasons for the decision must be provided to permit the consultees to carry out intelligent consideration of the issues to respond;
 - (iii) adequate time must be given for consideration and responses to be made;
- and

- (iv) the results of the consultation must be properly taken into account in finalising any decision.
- 5.3 There is also a duty to consult with the major precepting authorities who are statutory consultees. All major precepting authorities were consulted during the consultation period.
- 5.4 Following the report to Cabinet on 25 September 2019 a public consultation was undertaken between 18 October 2019 and 18 November 2019. The consultation was open to all Swale residents aged 18 or over, i.e. people who pay Council Tax or receive CTS. The consultation was carried out online, with a direct email to approximately 5,000 households, and was promoted on the Council's website, through social media, and in the local media. Paper copies were available on request.
- 5.5 The legal implications in the report set out the importance of following the rules around consultation in the Supreme Court ruling in the Haringey case. In reaching a decision in this matter, all members must have regard to all supporting papers, and in particular the Community Impact Assessment and having taken these into account when reaching their individual voting decision on the scheme. Failure to do so could open the Council to challenge.

6 Implications

| Issue | Implications |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Corporate Plan | The objectives and priorities in the emerging corporate plan. Performance is measured through BV9 Percentage of Council Tax collected in year. |
| Financial, Resource and Property | There were some limited costs associated with the consultation process, but this is a statutory requirement. The costs of awards made under the CTS scheme impact on the declared tax base, and thereby the council tax yield. Any increase to council tax income is shared through the Collection Fund with major preceptors. |
| Legal and Statutory | The Council has a statutory duty to consult on a proposed scheme under the Local Government Finance Act 2012 and Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 (as amended).As mention in paragraph 5.1, case |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| | <p>law has determined the guiding principles for fair consultation, which we followed.</p> <p>Regard needs to be made to the rules around consultation laid out through the Supreme Court ruling in the case of R (on the application of Moseley) v London Borough of Haringey (2014), and in particular, the need to set out alternative choices within the consultation. Referred to in paragraph 5.2.</p> |
| Crime and Disorder | Not directly applicable |
| Sustainability | Not directly applicable |
| Health and Wellbeing | <p>Residents who have difficulty in paying their Council Tax can put in a claim for a Section 13A discretionary award. Those whose health appears to be affected will be signposted to appropriate advice.</p> <p>The Revenues and Benefits team works with other sections of the authority, CA, financial charities and the major housing providers in the area to ensure those residents who are struggling with debt or other problems are signed posted to the correct advice and agencies.</p> |
| Risk Management and Health and Safety | Not directly applicable |
| Equality and Diversity | A full Community Impact Assessment has been carried out. |
| Privacy and Data Protection | All requirements have been adhered to. |

7 Appendices

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

- Appendix I: CTS Scheme review of options
- Appendix II: CIA CTS Scheme 2019/20

8 Background Documents

Council Tax Support Report 2019/20 Scheme Full Council 14.11.2018

<https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=128&MId=2018&Ver=4>

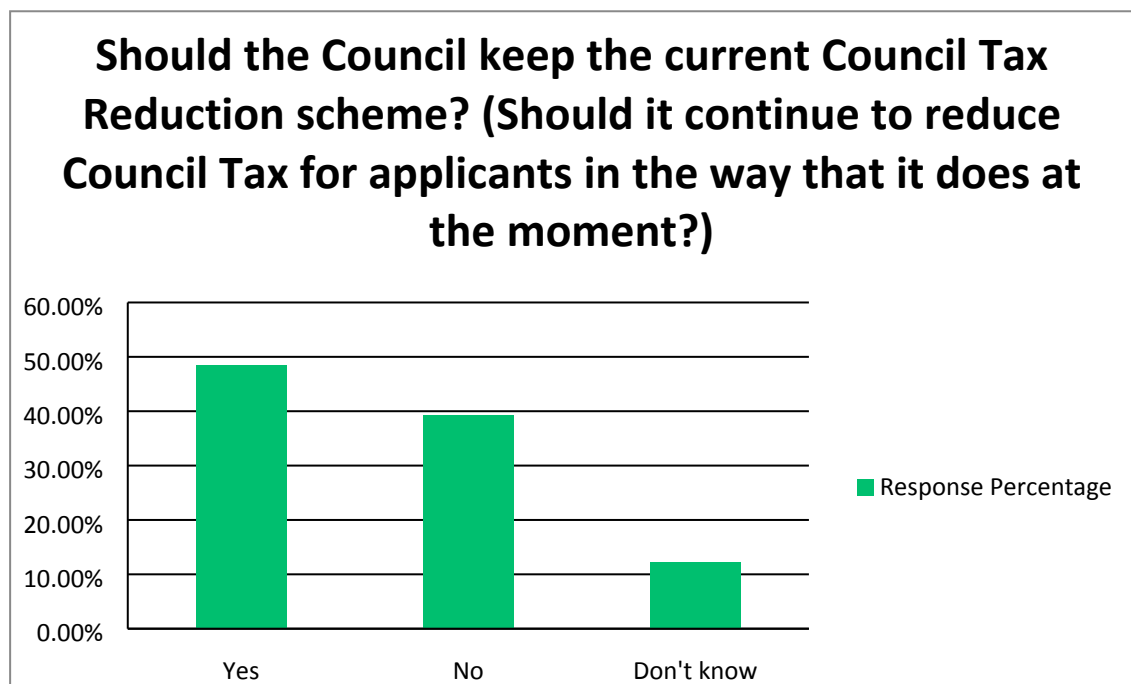
Council Tax Support Scheme Options

A consultation was carried out for 4 weeks ending on 18 November 2019, 134 people responded to the consultation with many commenting on the proposals. Responders were asked to comment on six options to change the scheme. They were also asked whether the Council should use alternative means such as increasing Council Tax or reducing services to cover the cost of the scheme.

This paper gives an overview of the responses.

| Option | % agreeing with the option |
|--|----------------------------|
| Should the Council keep the current Council Tax Support scheme? (Should it continue to reduce Council Tax for applicants in the way and to the extent that it does at the moment?) | 48% |
| Option 1 – Should we increase the maximum level of support for working age applicants to 80% | 50% |
| Option 2 - Should we reduce the standard level of non dependant deduction from £15 to £10 for all claimants who have a non dependant living with them who works more than 16 hours per week? | 32% |
| Option 3 – Should we disregard Child Maintenance paid to a claimant or partner in the calculation of Council Tax Support? | 43% |
| Option 4 – Should we disregard Child Benefit paid to a claimant or partner in the calculation of Council Tax Support? | 53% |
| Option 5 –Should we apply a fixed income period to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes? | 46% |
| Option 6 – Should we apply a tolerance to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes? | 61% |
| Do you think we should choose any of the following options rather than the proposed changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme? Please select one answer for each source of funding. | |
| Increase the level of Council Tax | 19% |
| Find savings from cutting other Council Services | 28% |
| Use the Council's reserves | 56% |
| If the Council were to choose these other options to make savings, what would be your order of preference? | |
| Increase the level of Council Tax – Most Preferred | 18% |
| Least Preferred | 70% |
| Reduce funding available for other Council Services – Most Preferred | 26% |
| Least Preferred | 47% |
| Use the Council's reserves – Most Preferred | 51% |
| Least Preferred | 18% |

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



| Gender | Yes | No | Don't know |
|--------|-----|----|------------|
| Male | 21 | 17 | 6 |
| Female | 34 | 31 | 10 |

| Age | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-------|-----|----|------------|
| 18-24 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| 25-34 | 10 | 9 | 2 |
| 35-44 | 15 | 15 | 4 |
| 45-54 | 8 | 11 | 2 |
| 55-64 | 14 | 5 | 3 |
| 65-74 | 9 | 3 | 2 |
| 75-84 | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| 85+ | 0 | 0 | 1 |

| Disability | Yes | No | Don't know |
|--------------|-----|----|------------|
| Disabled | 19 | 13 | 6 |
| Not Disabled | 32 | 31 | 8 |

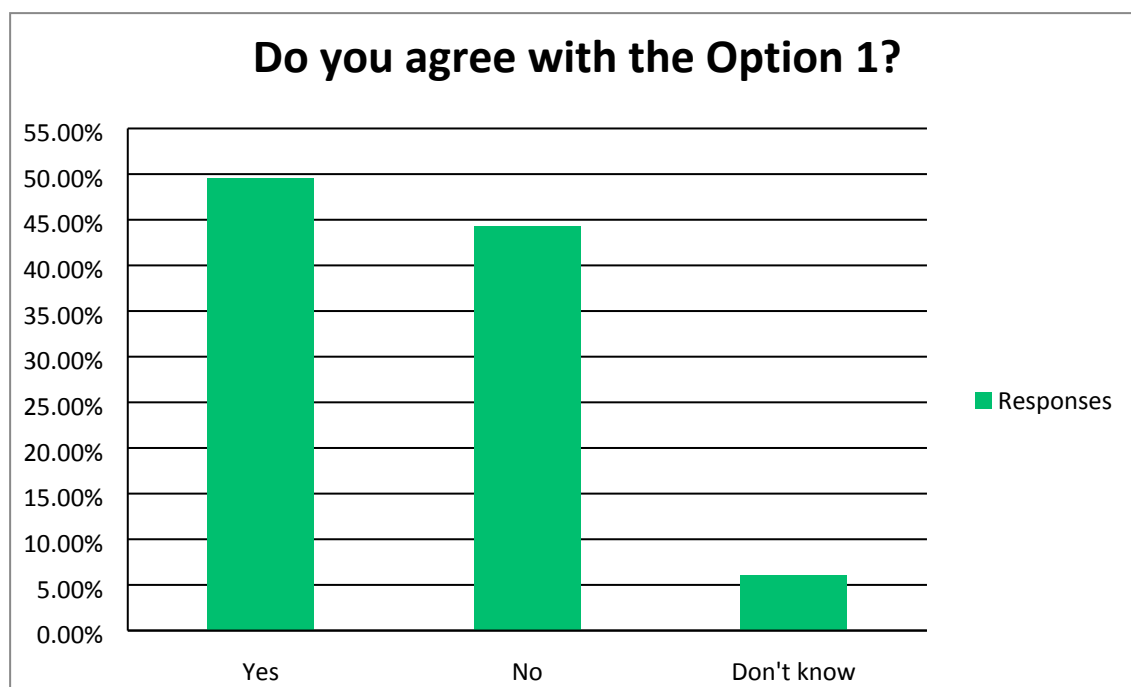
| Ethnicity | Yes | No | Don't know |
|---------------|-----|----|------------|
| White British | 52 | 41 | 15 |
| Asian | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| CTS | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-----------------------|-----|----|------------|
| In receipt of CTS | 34 | 14 | 6 |
| Not in receipt of CTS | 25 | 35 | 9 |

48 % of responders felt the scheme should continue to reduce Council Tax for applicants in the way that it does at the moment. We asked those who answered yes did they agree we should increase the maximum level of support further from 75% to 80%. 50% were in favour of increasing the maximum level of support. Of those responders who agreed that support should be increased further, 88% agreed it should be increased to 80%.

Comments were equally split between those who felt the Council should be helping those on a low income, especially as Council Tax can be a large proportion of their income. Others felt that people should be encouraged to work and providing too much help isn't fair for those who do work.

Option 1 – Should we increase the maximum level of support for working age applicants to 80%?



| Gender | Yes | No | Don't know |
|--------|-----|----|------------|
| Male | 20 | 25 | 0 |
| Female | 42 | 26 | 8 |

| Age | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-------|-----|----|------------|
| 18-24 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 25-34 | 11 | 9 | 1 |
| 35-44 | 14 | 17 | 3 |
| 45-54 | 9 | 12 | 0 |
| 55-64 | 15 | 7 | 2 |
| 65-74 | 10 | 5 | 0 |
| 75-84 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 85+ | 0 | 1 | 0 |

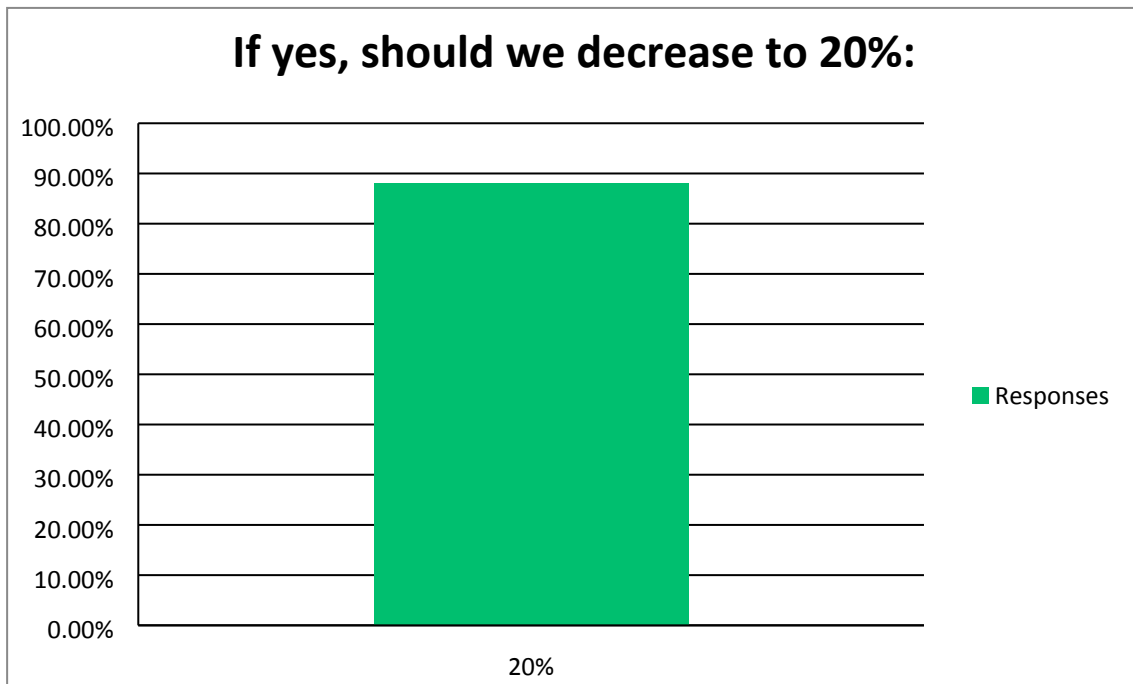
| Disability | Yes | No | Don't know |
|--------------|-----|----|------------|
| Disabled | 28 | 10 | 1 |
| Not Disabled | 29 | 39 | 4 |

| Ethnicity | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-----------|-----|----|------------|
| | | | |

| | | | |
|---------------|----|----|---|
| White British | 57 | 45 | 7 |
| Asian | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| CTS | Yes | No | Don't know |
| In receipt of CTS | 38 | 9 | 6 |
| Not in receipt of CTS | 24 | 46 | 1 |

If you answered yes, should we decrease the percentage to 20%?



| | |
|---------------|----|
| Gender | |
| Male | 20 |
| Female | 36 |

| | |
|------------|----|
| Age | |
| 18-24 | 1 |
| 25-34 | 10 |
| 35-44 | 13 |
| 45-54 | 9 |
| 55-64 | 12 |
| 65-74 | 9 |
| 75-84 | 2 |
| 85+ | 0 |

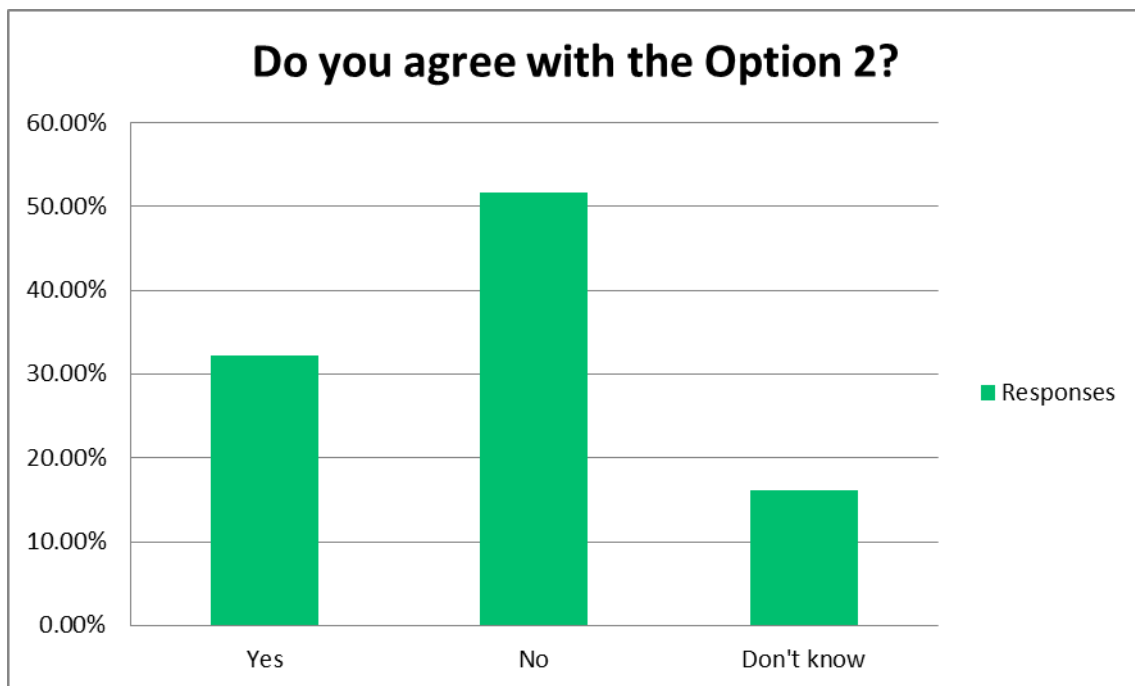
| | |
|-------------------|----|
| Disability | |
| Disabled | 26 |
| Not Disabled | 26 |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Ethnicity | |
|------------------|--|

| | |
|---------------|----|
| White British | 52 |
| Asian | 1 |
| Black | 0 |
| Mixed | 0 |
| Other | 0 |

| | |
|-----------------------|----|
| CTS | |
| In receipt of CTS | 32 |
| Not in receipt of CTS | 24 |

Option 2 - To reduce the standard level of non dependant deduction from £15 to £10 for all claimants who have a non dependant living with them who works more than 16 hours per week?



| Gender | Yes | No | Don't know |
|--------|-----|----|------------|
| Male | 16 | 25 | 2 |
| Female | 23 | 34 | 16 |

| Age | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-------|-----|----|------------|
| 18-24 | 0 | 1 | 2 |
| 25-34 | 5 | 12 | 4 |
| 35-44 | 12 | 15 | 5 |
| 45-54 | 9 | 11 | 1 |
| 55-64 | 5 | 11 | 6 |
| 65-74 | 5 | 7 | 1 |
| 75-84 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| 85+ | 0 | 1 | 0 |

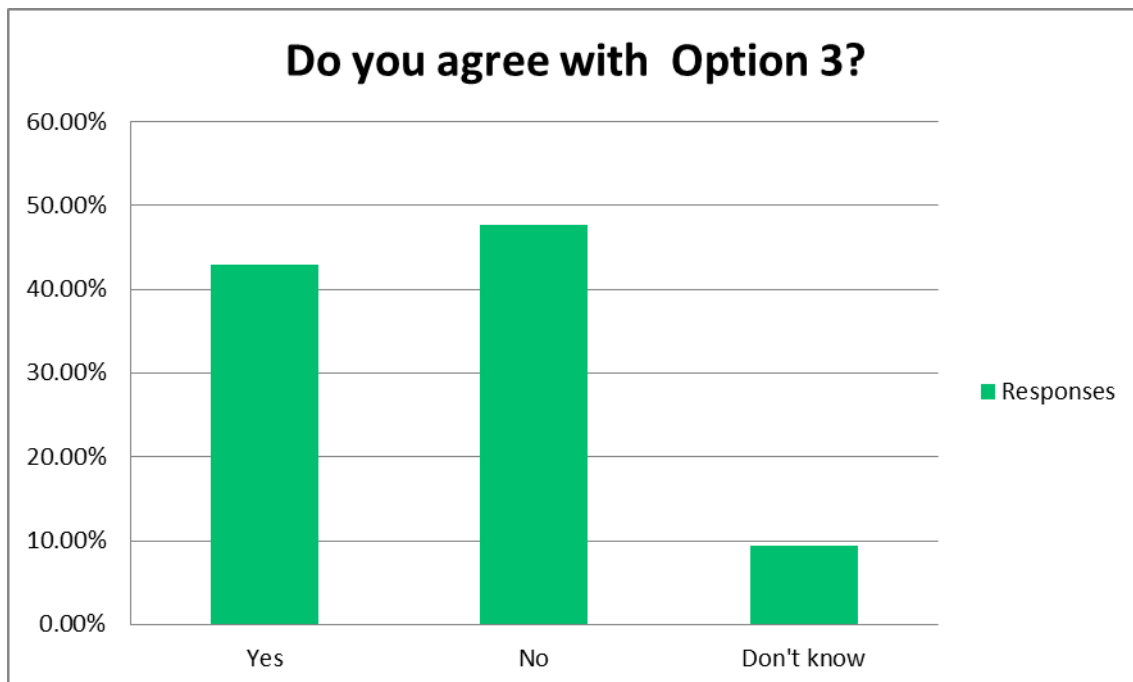
| Disability | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Disabled | 12 | 19 | 6 |
| Not Disabled | 22 | 37 | 10 |

| Ethnicity | Yes | No | Don't know |
|------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| White British | 34 | 53 | 18 |
| Asian | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| CTS | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| In receipt of CTS | 19 | 19 | 10 |
| Not in receipt of CTS | 17 | 44 | 7 |

Overall, a greater proportion of responders (52%), were not in favour of reducing the non-dependant deduction to £10 per week for working age applicants. The comments on this option were split between those who felt non-dependants are often paid a low wage so cannot afford £15 per week, to those who felt that if there are non-dependants working in a household they should be paying the higher amount as a contribution.

Option 3 - To disregard Child Maintenance paid to a claimant or partner in the calculation of Council Tax Support?



| Gender | Yes | No | Don't know |
|---------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Male | 12 | 32 | 2 |
| Female | 40 | 23 | 10 |

| Age | Yes | No | Don't know |
|------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 18-24 | 2 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | |
|-------|----|----|---|
| 25-34 | 8 | 9 | 4 |
| 35-44 | 14 | 18 | 1 |
| 45-54 | 10 | 11 | 0 |
| 55-64 | 7 | 10 | 5 |
| 65-74 | 8 | 6 | 2 |
| 75-84 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| 85+ | 0 | 1 | 0 |

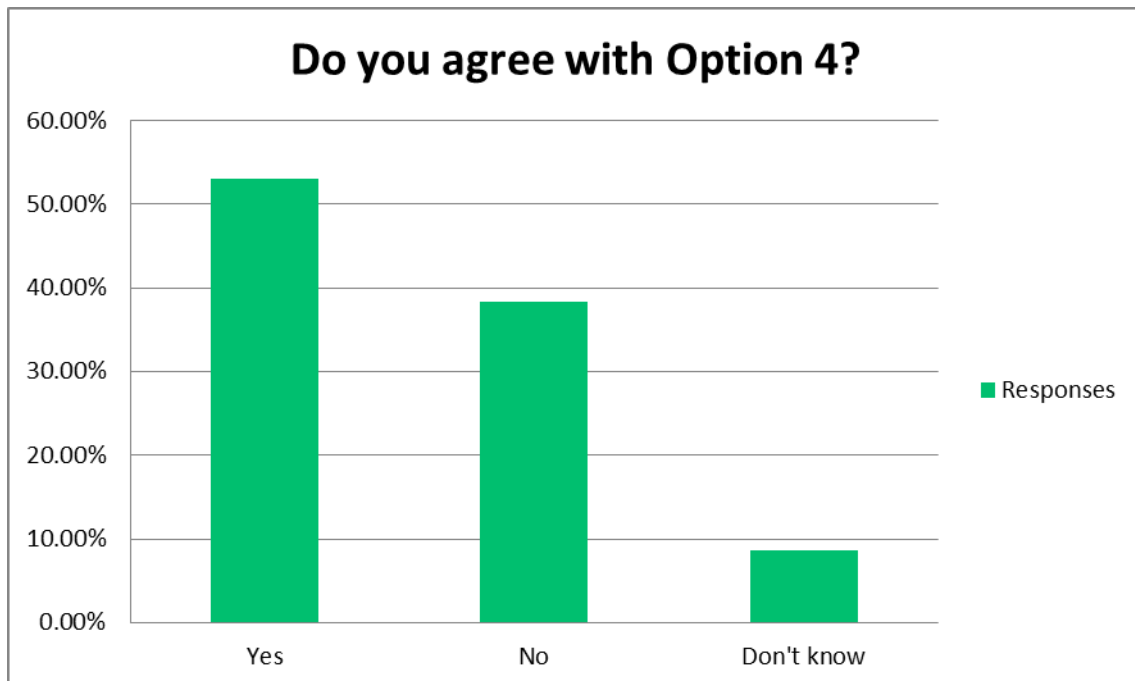
| Disability | Yes | No | Don't know |
|--------------|-----|----|------------|
| Disabled | 17 | 19 | 5 |
| Not Disabled | 32 | 34 | 5 |

| Ethnicity | Yes | No | Don't know |
|---------------|-----|----|------------|
| White British | 48 | 48 | 11 |
| Asian | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| CTS | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-----------------------|-----|----|------------|
| In receipt of CTS | 23 | 20 | 9 |
| Not in receipt of CTS | 29 | 40 | 1 |

Although less than half of responders agreed with this option, those who commented mainly felt that maintenance should be used towards the costs of raising a child. Comments were also received that it is often not a reliable source of income.

Option 4 – To disregard Child Benefit paid to a claimant or partner in the calculation of Council Tax Support



| Gender | Yes | No | Don't know |
|---------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Male | 16 | 28 | 2 |
| Female | 46 | 18 | 9 |

| Age | Yes | No | Don't know |
|------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 18-24 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| 25-34 | 13 | 6 | 2 |
| 35-44 | 20 | 12 | 1 |
| 45-54 | 7 | 12 | 1 |
| 55-64 | 10 | 8 | 4 |
| 65-74 | 9 | 5 | 2 |
| 75-84 | 3 | 1 | 0 |
| 85+ | 0 | 1 | 0 |

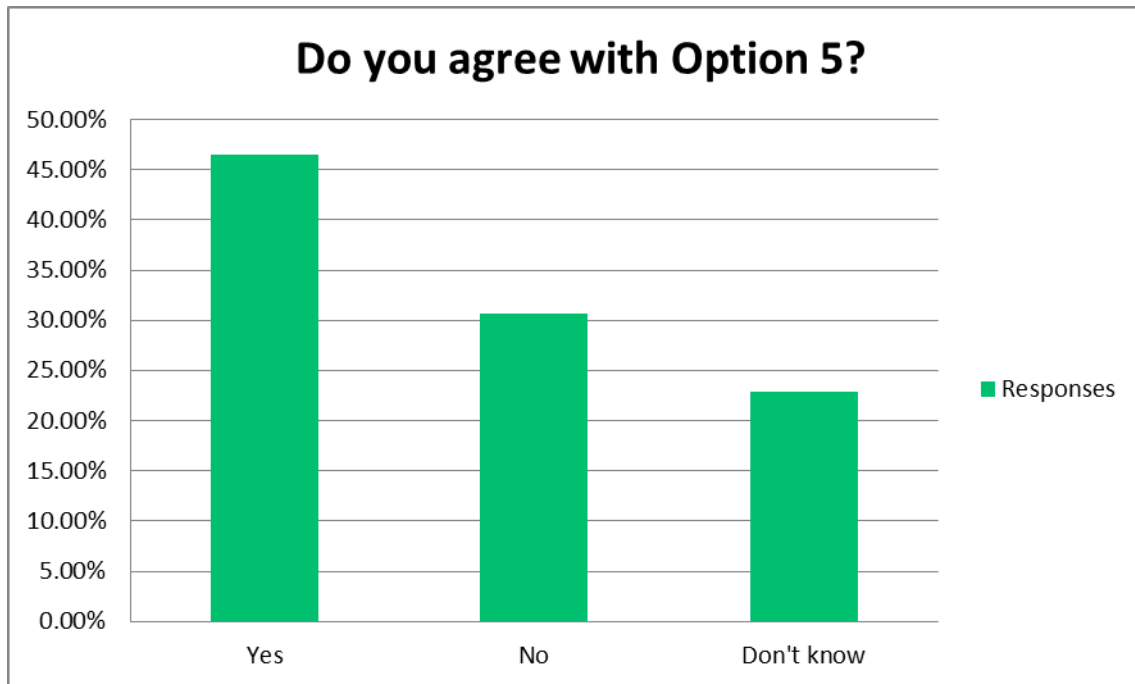
| Disability | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Disabled | 20 | 15 | 3 |
| Not Disabled | 37 | 28 | 6 |

| Ethnicity | Yes | No | Don't know |
|------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| White British | 26 | 39 | 10 |
| Asian | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| CTS | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| In receipt of CTS | 26 | 18 | 9 |
| Not in receipt of CTS | 40 | 28 | 1 |

The majority of responders agreed with this option. Those who commented felt it would simplify the system. It would also help claimants with budgeting.

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



| Gender | Yes | No | Don't know |
|---------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Male | 23 | 17 | 6 |
| Female | 32 | 20 | 21 |

| Age | Yes | No | Don't know |
|------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| 18-24 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 25-34 | 9 | 6 | 6 |
| 35-44 | 18 | 9 | 6 |
| 45-54 | 8 | 9 | 4 |
| 55-64 | 10 | 6 | 5 |
| 65-74 | 8 | 3 | 5 |
| 75-84 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| 85+ | 0 | 0 | 1 |

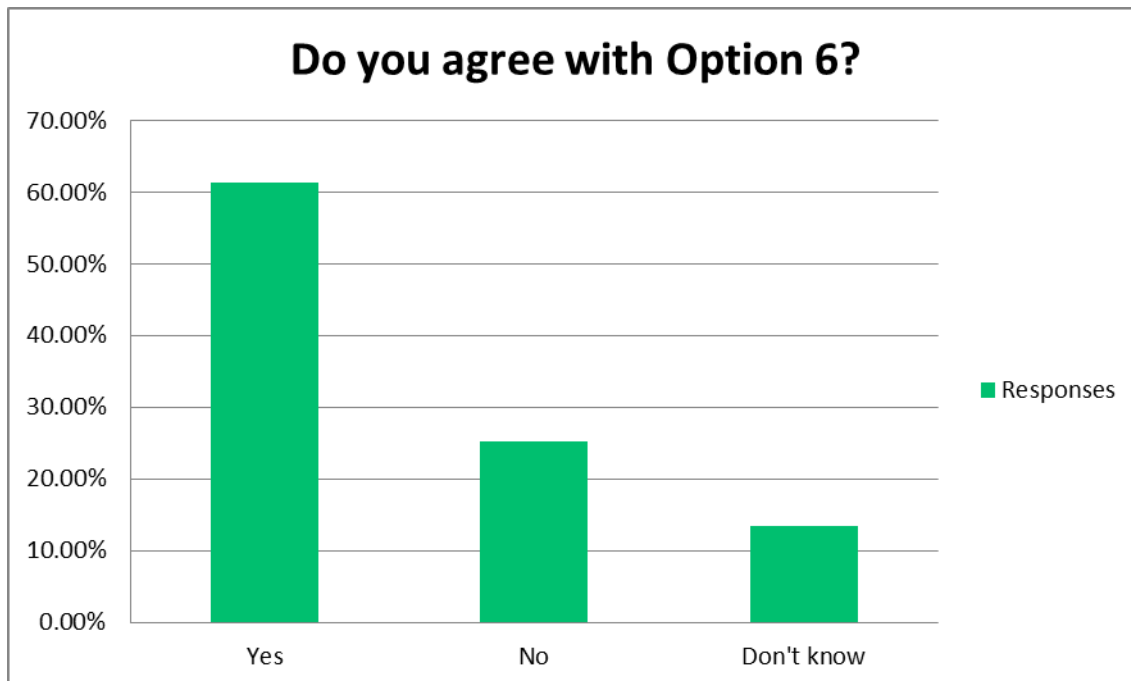
| Disability | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Disabled | 20 | 10 | 8 |
| Not Disabled | 31 | 25 | 16 |

| Ethnicity | Yes | No | Don't know |
|------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| White British | 47 | 34 | 26 |
| Asian | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| CTS | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| In receipt of CTS | 23 | 12 | 17 |
| Not in receipt of CTS | 35 | 26 | 9 |

Those who commented on this option felt that it would be good for those on zero hours contracts and felt it was difficult to budget when the amount of Council Tax payable changed each month. Some responders felt this change would make payments more manageable.

Option 6- To apply a tolerance to Universal Credit claims for Council Tax Support to avoid multiple changes?



| Gender | Yes | No | Don't know |
|--------|-----|----|------------|
| Male | 32 | 12 | 2 |
| Female | 41 | 17 | 15 |

| Age | Yes | No | Don't know |
|-------|-----|----|------------|
| 18-24 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 25-34 | 12 | 7 | 2 |
| 35-44 | 18 | 8 | 7 |
| 45-54 | 12 | 7 | 1 |
| 55-64 | 15 | 2 | 4 |
| 65-74 | 11 | 4 | 1 |
| 75-84 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| 85+ | 0 | 1 | 0 |

| Disability | Yes | No | Don't know |
|--------------|-----|----|------------|
| Disabled | 28 | 4 | 6 |
| Not Disabled | 39 | 24 | 9 |

| Ethnicity | Yes | No | Don't know |
|---------------|-----|----|------------|
| White British | 64 | 27 | 16 |
| Asian | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Black | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed | 0 | 0 | 0 |

| | | | |
|-----------------------|------------|-----------|-------------------|
| Other | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| CTS | Yes | No | Don't know |
| In receipt of CTS | 29 | 11 | 12 |
| Not in receipt of CTS | 47 | 20 | 3 |

Option 6 received the highest number of positive responses. Most responders who commented felt this made the scheme fairer for those in receipt of Universal Credit and a sensible way of saving on administration costs.

Survey Demographics and Applied Weighting

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

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

Those with a disability are correctly represented.

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

| | Survey | | Population | |
|--|--------|-------|------------|-----|
| | Count | % | Count | % |
| Gender (Over 18s Mid-year Population Estimates) | | | | |
| Men | 46 | 37.4% | 56,261 | 49% |
| Women | 77 | 62.6% | 58,927 | 51% |
| Age (Over 18s Mid-year Population Estimates) | | | | |
| 18 to 24 years | 3 | 2% | 11,413 | 10% |
| 25 to 34 years | 21 | 17% | 18,158 | 16% |
| 35 to 44 years | 33 | 27% | 17,656 | 15% |
| 45 to 54 years | 21 | 17% | 21,144 | 18% |
| 55 to 64 years | 24 | 19% | 18,443 | 16% |
| 65 to 74 years | 17 | 14% | 16,347 | 14% |
| 75 years and over | 5 | 4% | 12,027 | 11% |
| Ethnicity (2011 Census 18 years and over) | | | | |
| White groups | 112 | 97% | 101,848 | 97% |
| BME | 4 | 3% | 3,027 | 3% |
| Disability (2011 Census all people) | | | | |
| Disability | 40 | 35% | 25,322 | 19% |
| No Disability | 73 | 65% | 110,513 | 81% |

| Age Male | Population | | Survey | |
|-------------------|------------|----|--------|-----|
| | Count | % | Count | % |
| 18 to 24 years | 6,039 | 5% | 2 | 1% |
| 25 to 34 years | 9,001 | 8% | 27 | 8% |
| 35 to 44 years | 8,421 | 7% | 27 | 8% |
| 45 to 54 years | 10,388 | 9% | 40 | 12% |
| 55 to 64 years | 9,252 | 8% | 41 | 12% |
| 65 to 74 years | 7,927 | 7% | 21 | 6% |
| 75 years and over | 5,233 | 5% | 7 | 2% |
| Age Female | | | | |
| 18 to 24 years | 5,374 | 5% | 2 | 1% |
| 25 to 34 years | 9,157 | 8% | 32 | 10% |
| 35 to 44 years | 9,235 | 8% | 47 | 14% |
| 45 to 64 years | 10,756 | 9% | 39 | 12% |
| 55 to 64 years | 9,191 | 8% | 31 | 9% |
| 65 to 74 years | 8,420 | 7% | 17 | 5% |
| 75 years and over | 6,794 | 6% | 0 | 0% |

Calculated using the ONS Mid-year population estimates

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

Responses to the consultation questions

Have your say on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme

| I have read the background information about the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. This question must be answered before you can continue. | | |
|---|---------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
| Yes | 98.51% | 132 |
| No | 1.49% | 2 |
| Answered | | 134 |
| Skipped | | 0 |

| Should the Council keep the current Council Tax Reduction scheme? (Should it continue to reduce Council Tax for applicants in the way that it does at the moment?) | | |
|---|---------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
| Yes | 48.46% | 63 |
| No | 39.23% | 51 |
| Don't know | 12.31% | 16 |
| Answered | | 130 |
| Skipped | | 4 |

| Do you agree with the Option 1? | | |
|--|---------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
| Yes | 49.62% | 65 |
| No | 44.27% | 58 |
| Don't know | 6.11% | 8 |
| Answered | | 131 |
| Skipped | | 3 |

| If yes, should we decrease to 20%? | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| Answer Choices | Responses | |
| 20% | 88.06% | 59 |
| Answered | | 59 |
| Skipped | | 67 |

| Do you agree with the Option 2? | | |
|--|----------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Responses Percentage | Response Count |
| Yes | 32.26% | 40 |
| No | 51.61% | 64 |
| Don't know | 16.13% | 20 |
| Answered | | 124 |
| Skipped | | 10 |

| Do you agree with Option 3? | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
| Yes | 42.97% | 55 |
| No | 47.66% | 61 |
| Don't know | 9.38% | 12 |
| Answered | | 128 |
| Skipped | | 6 |

| Do you agree with Option 4? | | |
|------------------------------------|--|--|
|------------------------------------|--|--|

| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 53.13% | 68 |
| No | 38.28% | 49 |
| Don't know | 8.59% | 11 |
| Answered | | 128 |
| Skipped | | 6 |

| Do you agree with Option 5? | | |
|------------------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
| Yes | 46.46% | 59 |
| No | 30.71% | 39 |
| Don't know | 22.83% | 29 |
| Answered | | 127 |
| Skipped | | 7 |

| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Yes | 61.42% | 78 |
| No | 25.20% | 32 |
| Don't know | 13.39% | 17 |
| Answered | | 127 |
| Skipped | | 7 |

| Do you think we should choose any of the following options to fund the changes to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme? Please select one answer for each source of funding. | | | | |
|---|------------|----|------------|-------|
| | Yes | No | Don't Know | Total |
| Increase the level of Council Tax | 24 | 88 | 16 | 128 |
| Reduce funding available for other Council Services | 36 | 73 | 18 | 127 |
| Use the Council's savings | 74 | 38 | 19 | 131 |
| Answered | 132 | | | |
| Skipped | 2 | | | |

| If the Council were to choose these other options to make savings, what would be your order of preference? | | | | |
|---|------------|----|------------|-------|
| | Yes | No | Don't Know | Total |
| Increase the level of Council Tax | 24 | 16 | 91 | 131 |
| Reduce funding available for other Council Services | 34 | 36 | 61 | 131 |
| Use the Council's savings | 68 | 41 | 24 | 133 |
| Answered | 133 | | | |
| Skipped | 1 | | | |

| Are you, or someone in your household, getting a Council Tax Reduction at this time? | | |
|---|---------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
| Yes | 42.11% | 56 |
| No | 53.38% | 71 |
| Don't know/unsure | 4.51% | 6 |
| Answered | | 133 |
| Skipped | | 1 |

| What is your sex? | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
| Female | 57.89% | 77 |
| Male | 34.59% | 46 |
| Prefer not to say | 7.52% | 10 |
| Answered | | 133 |
| Skipped | | 1 |

| What is your age? | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
| 18-24 | 2.26% | 3 |
| 25-34 | 15.79% | 21 |
| 35-44 | 25.56% | 34 |
| 45-54 | 15.79% | 21 |
| 55-64 | 18.05% | 24 |
| 65-74 | 12.78% | 17 |
| 75-84 | 3.01% | 4 |
| 85+ | 0.75% | 1 |
| Prefer not to say | 6.02% | 8 |
| Answered | | 133 |
| Skipped | | 1 |

| Disability: Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? | | |
|---|---------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
| Yes | 30.30% | 40 |
| No | 55.30% | 73 |
| Don't know/unsure | 2.27% | 3 |
| Prefer not to say | 12.12% | 16 |
| Answered | | 132 |

| | |
|----------------|----------|
| Skipped | 2 |
|----------------|----------|

| Ethnic Origin: What is your ethnic group? | | |
|--|---------------------|----------------|
| Answer Choices | Response Percentage | Response Count |
| White British | 84.85% | 112 |
| Mixed/Multiple ethnic groups | 0.00% | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British | 2.27% | 3 |
| Black/African/Caribbean/Black British | 0.00% | 0 |
| Other ethnic group | 0.76% | 1 |
| Prefer not to say | 9.85% | 13 |
| Other (please specify) | | 5 |
| Answered | | 132 |
| Skipped | | 2 |

Community Impact Assessment

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

When to assess

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

Public sector equality duty

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

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

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

Protected characteristics

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

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

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

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

Due regard

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

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

Collecting and using equality information

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

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

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

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

Case law principles

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

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

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

| | |
|---|--|
| Lead officer: | <i>Zoe Kent</i> |
| Decision maker: | <i>Council</i> |
| People involved: | <i>Zoe Kent</i> |
| Decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy, project, service, contract • Review, change, new, stop | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This is a localised scheme that the Borough is required to put in place to give financial help towards Council Tax to those residents on a low income.</i> • <i>We are required to review this scheme before 11 March of the financial year.</i> |
| Date of decision: The date when the final decision is made. The CIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision. | <i>Full Council – 26 February 2020</i> |
| Summary of the decision: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aims and objectives • Key actions • Expected outcomes • Who will be affected and how? • How many people will be affected? | <p><i>What are the aims and objectives?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. To provide help towards Council Tax as a localised Council Tax Support scheme to those on a low income in the Borough</i> <i>2. To provide pensioners with the support as per The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) Regulations 2012 as amended by The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2018</i> <i>3. To provide working age claimants support taking into consideration the reduction in financial support provided within the Revenue Support Grant towards the Council Support Scheme.</i> <i>4. Support vulnerable people</i> <i>5. Support claimants back into work</i> <p><i>What are the key actions?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Providing a scheme that supports those claimants on a low income</i> • <i>Putting into place a scheme that does not mean a financial burden to the authority which could lead to putting other services provided by the Borough at risk.</i> • <i>Continuing to design and deliver services to meet the needs of vulnerable customers</i> • <i>Consider user feedback, engagement and consultation when designing the scheme</i> <p><i>What are the expected outcomes?</i></p> <p><i>To put in place a scheme that balances the needs of vulnerable claimants against the budget requirements of the Borough.</i></p> <p><i>Who will be affected?</i></p> <p><i>Those working-age residents who are on a low income who claim help towards their Council Tax. This covers all areas of the Borough but particularly those who live in deprived areas.</i></p> <p><i>How many people will be affected?</i></p> <p><i>5,532 working age claimants will be affected by the changes to the scheme (9% of all Council Tax account holders).</i></p> |

Information and research:

- Outline the information and research that has informed the decision.
- Include sources and key findings.
- Include information on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics.

Since 1st April 2013, the Council has maintained a local Council Tax Support scheme. This replaced the national Council Tax Benefit scheme, which ended on 31 March 2013.

Council Tax Support helps provide support to council taxpayers who have a low income. It supports the taxpayers by providing a reduction in the actual amount in Council Tax payable.

The Council has the ability to determine the level of support given to working age applicants only. The scheme for pension age applicants is determined by Central Government, and therefore the ability of the Council to vary that part of the scheme is limited and can only enhance the national scheme in any event.

When Council Tax Support was first introduced, Central Government provided a specified level of grant, which was approximately 10% lower than the amounts previously given (pre 1 April 2013). This has now been replaced by a general duty to provide a scheme and funding is not separately identified within the grants given to the Council.

After the original consultation, the Council decided to introduce a Council Tax Support scheme that differed from the original Council Tax Benefit in that, instead of granting a maximum level of support of 100%, it would limit the maximum support to 91.5% in 2013/14 (due to an extra grant being received from DCLG), decreased to 85% from 2014/15.

Changes since 2013

Since the introduction of Council Tax Support the overall scheme adopted by the Council has remained broadly the same, with only applicable amounts and non-dependant charges being updated, as well as minor changes being made to mirror changes to the Housing Benefit scheme. Central Government has also continued to update changes to applicable amounts for pension age applicants, again to mirror the changes in Housing Benefit.

From April 2017 changes were made to the scheme including:

- *the more accurate targeting of support to those working age applicants who most need it;*
- *the need to change the scheme, not only to align with proposed changes to Housing Benefit, but also to align the scheme with the approach taken by the Department for Work and Pensions in the creation, introduction and roll out of Universal Credit; and*
- *to address potential shortfalls in funding due to the continued reduction in Central Government grants.*

The changes brought in were:

1. *Reducing the maximum level of support for working age applicants from 15 per cent to 20 per cent.*
2. *Removing the Family Premium for all new working age applicants*
3. *Reducing backdating to one month*
4. *Using a set income for self-employed earners after 18 months self-employment.*
5. *Reducing the period for which a person can be absent from Great Britain and still receive Council Tax Reduction to four weeks.*

6. *To introduce a standard level of non dependant deduction of £15 for all working-age claimants who have non-dependants resident with them who work 16 hours or more per week.*

In April 2018 further changes were made to the scheme including:

- *The need to change the scheme to align with Universal Credit as the caseload changed to more claimants receiving Universal Credit to top up their earnings.*
- *To again address potential shortfalls in funding due to the continued reduction in Central Government grants.*

The changes brought in were

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

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

The Proposed Scheme for 2020/21

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

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

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

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

The Council proposes to maintain a similar methodology as in the past. Any changes, if adopted, will be effective from 1st April 2020. The proposed options will be put out to consultation, will be as follows:

- a. *Should a reduction be made to the minimum payment reducing it from 25% to 20%?*
- b. *Should a reduction be made to the standard level of non dependant deduction reducing it from £15 to £10 for all claimants who have a non dependant living with them who works more than 16 hours per week?*
- c. *Should Child Maintenance paid to a claimant or partner be disregarded in the calculation of Council Tax Support?*
- d. *Should Child Benefit paid to a claimant or partner be disregarded in the calculation of Council Tax Support?*
- e. *Should a fixed income period be put in place for all working age claims where the claimant or partner are either working or in receipt of Universal Credit?*
- f. *Should a tolerance be applied to Universal Credit claims so information received from the DWP can be automated?*

Scope of the Community Impact Assessment

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

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

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

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

Disability

Working age people with disabilities continue to make up a high proportion of the caseload at 23%. Working age people with disabilities receive more per week than working age people without disabilities on average, due to the design of the scheme that ignores certain disability benefits and awards higher applicable amounts.

Age

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

Carers

There is a slightly higher proportion of claimants with a carer in the household, than the population generally overall (13%). Working age claimants with a carer in the household receive more per week, on average, than working age claimants without a carer in the

household. The main reason for this is the treatment of both disability and care within the existing scheme.

Gender

Females continue to make up a high proportion of the caseload at 63%. Although, there is a difference between the average amounts females and males receive per week, this is due to factors relating to circumstances which directly affect the calculation of council tax reduction, and is not linked to a claimant's sex directly.

Ethnicity

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

Other protected characteristics

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

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

Actions to mitigate any identified impacts

The Council has an Exceptional Hardship Scheme; the design of this allows any claimant to apply for additional support. It examines their overall circumstances, examining both income and expenditure with a view to determining whether exceptional hardship exists.

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

Method of Consultation

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

Stakeholders Methodology

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

Hard copy documents to be provided as necessary

2. Council taxpayers and service users generally

Web based questionnaire

Hard copy documents to be provided as necessary

3. Interested organisations and groups.

Web based questionnaire

4. Organisations with significant interest to be notified directly

Hard copy documents to be provided as necessary

General Awareness

Provision of information and awareness raising of changes and proposals

News releases

Face-to-face communication at customer service points

| | |
|---|--|
| | <p><i>Information in libraries/surgeries and other public venues</i></p> <p><i>The Council's website and social media</i></p> <p>Analysis and Assessment</p> <p><i>A full analysis and assessment will be provided</i></p> |
| <p>Consultation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Has there been specific consultation on this decision? ▪ What were the results of the consultation? ▪ Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics? ▪ Can any conclusions be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics? | <p>Yes</p> <p><i>The results of the consultation can be found in Appendix I: CTS scheme review of the consultation</i></p> <p><i>Options 1, 4 and 6 received a higher amount of responses in favour of accepting the changes across the protected characteristics. In the case of option 1 disabled responders had a higher positive response to this option which asked whether the scheme should remain the same with the same level of support. This was also the case with the responses from those in receipt of CTS.</i></p> <p><i>Those with a protected characteristic often receive a premium giving them extra help, e.g. a carer or disability premium, giving them higher levels of help towards their Council Tax payments.</i></p> <p><i>Claimants with children will have less income for their living expenses and for caring for their children if they have to pay more towards their Council Tax.</i></p> |

| | |
|--|---------------|
| Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty? | |
| Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC's PSED Technical Guidance . | |
| Aim | Yes/No |
| 1) Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation | Yes |
| 2) Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it | Yes |
| 3) Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it | No |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| Assess the relevance of the decision to people with different protected characteristics and assess the impact of the decision on people with different protected characteristics. | | |
| When assessing relevance and impact, make it clear who the assessment applies to within the protected characteristic category. For example, a decision may have high relevance for young people but low relevance for older people; it may have a positive impact on women but a neutral impact on men. | | |
| Characteristic | Relevance to decision High/Medium/Low/None | Impact of decision Positive/Negative/Neutral |
| Age | Medium | Negative |
| Disability | Medium | Negative |
| Gender reassignment | None | Neutral |

| | | |
|---|------|----------|
| Marriage and civil partnership | None | Neutral |
| Pregnancy and maternity | Low | Negative |
| Race | None | Neutral |
| Religion or belief | None | Neutral |
| Sex | None | Neutral |
| Sexual orientation | None | Neutral |
| Other socially excluded groups ¹ | Low | Negative |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>Conclusion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider how due regard has been had to the equality duty, from start to finish. There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see PSED Technical Guidance). <p>Advise on the overall equality implications that should be taken into account in the final decision, considering relevance and impact.</p> | <p>Summarise this conclusion in the body of your report</p> <p>We have considered how all groups with protected characteristics will be affected by the scheme. As part of our consultation we asked responders their gender, age ethnicity, whether they considered themselves disabled and whether they claimed CTS. A breakdown of how they responded to the options is available in Appendix I: CTS Scheme review of the consultation.</p> <p>We also asked for comments on each option. Although the results show those with a disability were more likely to respond negatively to the scheme in their comments about the options, more than half of disabled responders agreed yes to most options.</p> <p>As in previous year's schemes, those with a protected characteristic such as the disabled or those with children, receive a higher income (due to extra benefits being awarded to cover these costs) than a single claimant or couple especially those who are under 25. To mitigate these issues the Council provides a Section 13A discretionary hardship scheme.</p> <p>The evidence from the database of current claimants suggests that there could be some limited potential for the scheme to impact more adversely on people with particular protected characteristics (primarily women and people with a disability than on people without those characteristics, and thus not to contribute to the advancement of equality of opportunity for people with and without protected characteristics. However, the adverse impact on individuals is relatively small and as the scheme is being made more generous this should mitigate the annual increase to Council Tax for 2020/21. This position is clearly supported by a majority of consultation responses, including those from current council tax support recipients.</p> |
|---|--|

Timing

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

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

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

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

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

Action Plan

| Issue | Action | Due date | Lead Officer | Manager | Cabinet Member |
|--|---|----------|--------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Views needed on the proposed scheme from claimants, residents and stakeholders | Consultation to be carried out | 12/2019 | Zoe Kent | Nick Vickers | Cllr Roger Truelove |
| Financial hardship for CTRS working age claimants | Further consultation work to be carried out in Quarter 3 2019/20 | 02/2020 | Zoe Kent | Nick Vickers | Cllr Roger Truelove |
| Drop in collection rate for Council Tax | The collection of Council Tax to be monitored throughout the financial year 2019/20 | 02/2020 | Zoe Kent | Nick Vickers | Cllr Roger Truelove |
| Financial hardship for residents with an empty property | Advice on alternative help to be sent out with Council Tax bills and adjustment notices | 02/2020 | Zoe Kent | Nick Vickers | Cllr Roger Truelove |
| | | | | | |

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

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| | | |
|------------------------|---|-----------------------|
| Cabinet Meeting | | Agenda Item: 8 |
| Meeting Date | 12 February 2020 | |
| Report Title | Procurement of Staying Put Framework | |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr. Ben Martin, Cabinet Member for Housing | |
| SMT Lead | Emma Wiggins, Director Regeneration | |
| Head of Service | Charlotte Hudson Head of Housing, Economy and Community Services. | |
| Lead Officer | Susan Hughes | |
| Key Decision | Yes | |
| Classification | Open | |
| Recommendations | 1. That the Cabinet approves to enter into a new contractor framework for Staying Put starting April 2020 for an initial period of 2 years. | |

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The current framework contract expires on 30 September 2020. The Staying put team carried out a one stage tender process based on the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) which was evaluated on 40% price and 60% quality.
- 1.2 This report summarises the procurement process and its results and seeks Cabinet approval of the recommended contractors.

2 Background

- 2.1 Staying Put is the Council's in-house Home Improvement Agency, which provides adaptations and repairs within the homes of elderly and vulnerable residents across the Borough. The service manages a Contractor Framework for the delivery of works funded primarily through Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs). The current Framework started in October 2015 and consists of only 7 contractors as some have left or been taken off the list due to quality of works.
- 2.2 The Framework operates as a preferred suppliers list for physical works carried out in people's private homes. Works undertaken through the Framework are DFG adaptations to properties, such as the installation of flush-floor showers, work to prevent falls, such as the installation of grab rails, work to enable people to be discharged from hospital; such as moving bedrooms downstairs; and other minor works and adaptations to a property, such as installing wheelchair ramps or clearing

rooms where hoarding has been taking place to allow a person to live safely. The Council have undertaken a procurement exercise for a new framework agreement as the existing one is working well but needs renewing due to the contract expiring in September 2020, but we have also lost some contractors from the existing framework so need to procure

- 2.3 Funding for works under the Contractor Framework is secured through Swale's Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). DFG's can be used for home adaptations, home repair works and for work associated with hospital discharges and falls prevention namely works that fall within the Housing Assistance Policy.
- 2.4 The opportunity for contractors to tender was advertised in accordance with current contract standing orders, with interested parties asked to complete an Invitation to Tender. 20 contractors' submitted tenders and scores were allocated by a panel made up of Staying Put Manager and Senior Grant Officer according to the criteria explained in the tender document and officers also inspected examples of their work to check on quality prior to confirming approval.
- 2.5 18 of the 20 contractors met the minimum requirements. Therefore, it is proposed to enter into a contract with these 18 contractors that Staying Put will use for work that is undertaken through their service. Some works may be small like galvanised rails and some larger like flush floor showers and extensions. 9 of the companies are local to Swale with 7 of them being contractors we have used before. All 9 local builders are in the top 10. We will use the top scoring 10 contractors to start with and if any contractor is taken off or decides to stop working with us, we will then use the next contractor from the waiting list.
- 2.6 The following is the list of builders that have met the criteria and are placed on the framework in order of scoring :-

| Placing on list | Propose to use from April 2020 | | Waiting list |
|-----------------|------------------------------------|----|--|
| 1 | JD Systems | 12 | Trinity Construction |
| 2 | Hubbard and Houghton | 13 | Advance Building and Maintenance Services |
| 3 | Daytrad | 14 | DBM Properties Limited |
| 4 | Coldwell Construction | 15 | MCL Mechanical Houlding Limited |
| 5 | Gregory Kent Limited | 16 | Tailored Maintenance and Home Improvements |
| 6 | Acorn Maintenance Services Limited | 17 | Metro Rod |

| | | | |
|----|------------------------------|----|-----------------------|
| | | | |
| 7 | Astral Limited | 18 | Perfect Homes Limited |
| 8 | South East Builders | | |
| 9 | Willow Tree Homes Solutions | | |
| 10 | Evolve Mas UK Limited | | |
| 11 | Wynsdale (for clearing only) | | |

3 Proposals

3.1 Cabinet is requested to approve the proposal to enter into a contract with 18 contactors as part of the framework for 2 years with an option to extend for a further 2 years.

4 Alternative Options

4.1 If a new Framework Agreement is not put in place, works would need to be procured using the Council's Standing Orders approach to procurement, i.e. quotes would need to be sought for each work undertaken, which would be time-consuming and potentially more costly. Each year, around 300 jobs are put through the Framework Agreement; seeking quotes for each of these would be a time-consuming process, which could potentially incur delays for the customer.

4.2 In addition, rates for individual types of works are fixed under the Framework Agreement, meaning that the Council knows the costs of works for the lifetime of Agreement and that they are competitive, providing better value for money for the customer and taxpayers. If the Council were to seek quotes for each item of individual work, there would be less control over costs.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 Customer satisfaction surveys are carried out following works being undertaken. Customer feedback from previous clients was used to inform the specification used during the procurement exercise.

6 Implications

| Issue | Implications |
|-------|--------------|
|-------|--------------|

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Corporate Plan | Appointing contractors that meet a good quality standard and provide good value for money is supporting the priorities within the emerging corporate plan. |
| Financial, Resource and Property | <p>Works undertaken as part of the Contractor Framework Agreement are provided under the Disabled Facilities Grant (DFG). This has been growing over the years due an increased Grant budget.</p> <p>Anticipated annual spend on the framework contract will be £1,000,000 per year. The total contract value for the first two years is therefore, estimated as £2,000,000</p> |
| Legal, Statutory and Procurement | <p>The nature of the works carried out under this agreement fall under the activities listed in Schedule 2 of the Public Contracts Regulations 2006, constituting Works within the meaning of the 2006 Regulations.</p> <p>The total value of contract works over a 2-year period has been estimated at £2,000,000.</p> <p>In consideration to the Public services Act 2012 a percentage of the scoring was contributed to social value. This encouraged contractors to use local employees and some gave examples of things they have done to support the local community with a few saying they support work experience places.</p> |
| Crime and Disorder | None identified at this stage |
| Environment and Sustainability | None identified at this stage |
| Health and Wellbeing | The works carried out under the Framework will have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of elderly and disabled residents across Swale. Works undertaken will provide adaptations and home improvements that will make residents' homes safer and help them to live in their own homes for longer rather than either staying in hospital or moving into residential care. |
| Risk Management and Health and Safety | The management of financial and operational risks, including health and safety, were considered as part of the Council's agreed procurement processes. Successful organisations will be required to ensure that they comply with minimum health and safety standards and adhere to the Council's Health and Safety policy. Responsibility for health and safety of contractors will remain with the contractor organisation. |

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| <p>Equality and Diversity</p> | <p>The new Framework will actively support elderly and disabled residents within Swale, by helping them to live in their own homes for longer.</p> <p>As part of the procurement exercise, bidders were asked to confirm their commitment to comply with the Equalities Act 2010 around discrimination. They were also checked to ensure that they have not been found guilty of any unlawful discrimination or been subject to a formal investigation by the CEHR within the proceeding 3 years.</p> <p>These proposals do not envisage any change in the level of service provision to residents with particular protected characteristics (age, disability) and therefore does not require a formal impact assessment.</p> |
| <p>Privacy and Data Protection</p> | <p>Information from customers is held on the Foundations database. All personal information held as part of the DFG application process or Staying Put casework is protected from unauthorised access or disclosure as per council policy.</p> |

7 Appendices

none

8 Background Documents

none

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| Cabinet Meeting | | Agenda Item: 9 |
|------------------------|--|-----------------------|
| Meeting Date | 12 February 2020 | |
| Report Title | Procurement of Fuel and Water Poverty Outreach Service | |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr Tim Valentine, Cabinet Member for the Environment | |
| SMT Lead | David Clifford, Head of Policy, Communications and Customer Services | |
| Head of Service | | |
| Lead Officer | Janet Hill, Climate Change Officer | |
| Key Decision | Yes | |
| Classification | Open | |
| Recommendations | 1. That the Cabinet approves the appointment of Children and Families as the Fuel and Water Poverty Outreach Service provider from 02 March 2020 for an initial period of 2 years and 1 month with a possible extension of one year. | |

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 As part of the climate and ecological emergency declared by the Council in June 2019, and with fuel and water poverty at current levels in the borough, members decided to provide a dedicated advice service to vulnerable householders and to fund it through the Special Projects Fund.
- 1.2 The Policy team carried out a one stage tender process based on the most economically advantageous tender (MEAT) which was evaluated on 40% price and 60% quality. This report summarises the procurement process and its results and seeks Cabinet approval of the recommended contractor.

2 Background

- 2.1 Swale has one of the highest rates of fuel poverty in Kent. Up to 20% of households in some wards are living in fuel poverty and on average 10% of households across the borough live in fuel poverty. A household is said to be in fuel poverty if they have required fuel costs that are above average (the national median level) and were they to spend that amount they would be left with a residual income below the official poverty line.
- 2.2 No national water poverty statistics are collated but levels of water poverty are thought to be comparable with fuel poverty according to Ofwat the water regulator. Local water companies consider a household to be in water poverty if they spend more than 3% of their disposable income on water and sewerage bills.

- 2.3 In addition to the money saving benefits to householders, there will be energy and water savings and carbon emission reductions, which will help the council to achieve one of its Climate Change ambitions around reducing carbon emissions across the borough.
- 2.4 It is estimated that 1,200 households will be assisted over the initial two years of this contract. The provider will monitor savings for householders and reductions in emissions and report back to the Council. Performance will be reported in the annual Climate and Ecological Emergency report.
- 2.5 Although this is being brought forward by the Cabinet Member for the Environment, under the Climate and Ecological Emergency declared by the council, it will also have beneficial impacts on the portfolios of the Cabinet Members for Housing, Community and Health and Wellbeing.
- 2.6 An invitation to tender for a borough wide advice service was advertised in October and November 2019.
- 2.7 Three responses were received, and scores were allocated according to the criteria explained in the tender document. The tender evaluation panel consisted of the Commissioning Officer, Interim Policy Manager and the Climate Change Officer

3 Proposals

- 3.1 Cabinet is requested to approve the proposal to enter into a contract with Children and Families for two years and one month with the option to extend the contract for a further one year subject to satisfactory performance.
- 3.2 Children and Families is a locally based organisation with over 70 directly employed staff. They deliver the Children’s Centre service for KCC - an annual contract of circa £200k. They manage local food banks and run the Fare Share Kent warehouse and service. Although their tender price was slightly higher than the lowest price, they scored highly in the quality evaluation due to the evidence they supplied of their track record, local knowledge and networks, policies and procedures and approach to social value and therefore submitted the most economically advantageous tender.

3.3

| Bid | Price | Price Score | Quality Score | Total Score |
|-----------------------|------------|-------------|---------------|-------------|
| Children and Families | £99,120.00 | 39.55 | 48.33 | 87.88 |
| Bid B | £99,976.00 | 39.21 | 36.00 | 75.21 |
| Bid C | £98,000.00 | 40.00 | 39.33 | 79.33 |

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 With all add on costs and an electric vehicle rental we had preliminarily suggested a cost of £48k pa to deliver this in house, however we believe that an organisation with established skills and knowledge has the expertise and networks in place to start delivery of the service more quickly and efficiently than if we were to do so in house.
- 4.2 We could choose not to deliver this service; however, we have committed to helping our most vulnerable residents as part of the Climate and Ecological Emergency declaration.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 There has been internal consultation with relevant Cabinet Members and Officers.

6 Implications

| Issue | Implications |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Corporate Plan | Appointing a contractor that meets a good quality standard and provides good value for money will further several corporate objectives in the emerging corporate plan. |
| Financial, Resource and Property | Anticipated annual spend on the Fuel and Water Poverty Outreach Service contract is £49,560. The total contract value for the two years is therefore £99,120 with a possible third year at £49,560. The contract is funded from the Special Projects Fund. |
| Legal, Statutory and Procurement | The contract will be the standard Council contract and undertaken using the Council's current Terms and Conditions. |
| Crime and Disorder | None identified at this time |
| Environment and Sustainability | Advice delivered under this service will help residents to reduce their carbon emissions and water use making a contribution to our zero net carbon target. |
| Health and Wellbeing | Lifting people out of fuel and water poverty has proven health benefits including reduced respiratory illness, reduced cardiovascular conditions, and improved mental health. |
| Risk Management and Health and Safety | None identified at this time |

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>Equality and Diversity</p> | <p>The preferred bidder has demonstrated their approach to equality and diversity throughout their bid document, both internally in terms of supporting staff and externally by engaging with the community in an inclusive way.</p> <p>Although none of the protected characteristics in equalities legislation include poverty there are undoubtedly some correlation with some protected groups and poverty, specifically older people, disabled people and those protected due to pregnancy and maternity. These groups are all more likely to be fuel poor than others. Therefore there is the strong likelihood that this service will benefit people with these protected characteristics.</p> |
| <p>Transparency and Data Protection</p> | <p>The preferred bidder has demonstrated their approach to transparency and data protection.</p> |

7 Appendices

7.1 n/a

8 Background Documents

n/a.

| | |
|------------------------|--|
| Cabinet | |
| Meeting Date | 12 February 2020 |
| Report Title | Environmental Health Enforcement Policy 2020 |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr Tim Valentine, Cabinet Member for Environment |
| SMT Lead | Nick Vickers, Chief Finance Officer |
| Head of Service | Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager |
| Lead Officer | Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager |
| Key Decision | Yes |
| Classification | Open |
| Recommendations | 1. To approve the adoption of the draft Environmental Health Enforcement Policy 2020 |

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report updates and revises the existing enforcement policies for the Mid Kent Environmental Health Service 2015. The revision incorporates new legislation relevant to environmental health and changes, as a result of taking enforcement action, to clarify the context of actions we can take.
- 1.2 The 2020 enforcement policy provides a framework for our enforcement decisions to be consistent, transparent and proportionate. It allows businesses, organisations and the community to be aware of the basis on which enforcement action is taken. The service seeks to protect the health and wellbeing of individuals from harm whether it is from food, noise, pollution or poor health and safety practices and to protect the environment.

2 Background

- 2.1 The current Environmental Health Enforcement Policy 2015 covers the aspects of the work of the Mid Kent Environmental Health Service. However it is good practice to carry out regular reviews to ensure that it meets the needs of legislation and in the light of enforcement experience. We also review our policies to ensure that any changes made in national guidance since the last policy review are included within the revision. Until the new policy is approved, enforcement decisions made will be under the existing policy.
- 2.2 Solicitors from the Contentious Team, Mid Kent Legal Services have been consulted and worked with the author to ensure that it receives their support.

- 2.3 The enforcement policy provides managers and officers with guidance and a framework for the enforcement process. It does not determine the outcome of individual cases. The policy also provides businesses and individuals with clear indications on how they will be treated. It should provide them with the confidence that enforcement action is consistent and proportionate to any non-compliance.
- 2.4 In terms of decision making within individual service areas, officers are authorised according to their competency and role, these are reviewed annually. This together with a clear decision making process helps to embed consistent standards in the service. As a general principle, officers follow a stepped approach to enforcement, but where there are serious or flagrant breaches of legislation, or there is imminent risk to health or welfare of people, immediate enforcement action may be considered.
- 2.5 The policy also identifies that sometimes the local authority has no power to act when complaints are made. For example when we are not the regulator or where the problem and its solution sit outside any statutory powers, for example civil or common law.

3 Proposals

- 3.1 The adoption of the revised Environmental Health Enforcement Policy 2020 will ensure that the service has a robust and up-to-date version that reflects the latest national guidance and incorporates legislation enacted since the current version was approved.
- 3.2 The revised policy is more comprehensive, covering additional legislation environmental health can implement such as aspects of the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014. It also reflects processes introduced in the Co-ordination of Regulatory Enforcement Regulations 2017.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Cabinet can choose not to approve the 2020 policy however the current policy will not include the legislation mentioned in paragraph 3.2 and this will weaken the policy should officers be faced with a challenge to any enforcement actions.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 No consultation process is considered necessary for the revision of the enforcement policy. National guidance and best practice were considered and used in its drafting.

6 Implications

| Issue | Implications |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| Corporate Plan | The Environmental Health Enforcement Policy 2020 supports the Corporate Plan by providing businesses with transparent and consistent approach to regulation and protecting public health of communities. |
| Financial, Resource and Property | There are no financial implications associated with the adoption of the policy |
| Legal, Statutory and Procurement | <p>The recommendations provide a comprehensive and consistent single enforcement policy across the Environmental Health Service.</p> <p>The legal implications are set out in the body of the report, see in particular 4.1 and 4.2 of the draft policy. The draft policy has been prepared in accordance with legislation and relevant statutory guidance.</p> |
| Crime and Disorder | The proposal will provide officers with a sound basis for dealing with non-compliance with regulations it enforces through the Mid Kent Environmental Health Service. |
| Environment and Sustainability | The policy will assist with environmental enforcement. |
| Health and Wellbeing | No health inequality implications were identified through the implementation of the proposed revision of enforcement policy. |
| Risk Management and Health and Safety | The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommend have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. |
| Equality and Diversity | Consideration of the protected characteristics has been made in the Enforcement Policy and as a consequence due regard to equality and diversity should be made when undertaking enforcement action. |
| Privacy and Data Protection | The proposal takes into account the needs of Data Protection legislation. No privacy impact assessment has been undertaken. |

7 Appendices

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

- Appendix I: Environmental Health Enforcement Policy 2020

8 Background Papers

None

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH ENFORCEMENT POLICY 2020

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1. The Council has a responsibility to enforce specific legislation identified within the Council's Constitution. We also have a responsibility to ensure that we enforce these regulations following the statutory principles of good regulation. Each case is unique and will be considered on its own merits but this document has been prepared to set out our approach, the general principles to be applied and the factors to be taken into consideration when determining the enforcement actions to apply or recommend.
- 1.2. Our primary function is to achieve regulatory compliance in order to protect the public, legitimate business, the environment, consumers and workers.

2. AIMS OF POLICY

- 2.1. To ensure that enforcement decisions are consistent, transparent and proportionate and that people, businesses, organisations and the community are aware of the basis on which enforcement action is taken.
- 2.2. To provide a clear framework for officers undertaking regulatory enforcement work clearly setting out the factors to consider to achieve the principles of good enforcement identified in the policy.

3. SHARED ROLE/PARTNERSHIP

- 3.1 Regulatory enforcement can in many situations overlap with enforcement responsibilities of external agencies or other services within the council. Officers shall consider this wider context of enforcement if there is a shared or complementary role with internal and external partners. The main organisations and services are listed below (this is not an exhaustive list):

Internal partners:

- Waste Services
- Environmental Response
- Licensing
- Development Control & Planning Enforcement
- Housing

External partners:

- Trading Standards
- Kent Police
- Social and Mental Health Services
- Housing Associations
- Voluntary sector organisations
- Environment Agency
- Kent Fire and Rescue

4. GOVERNANCE AND ETHICS

4.1. Equality and Diversity

We will take into account the legal and procedural implications of The Human Rights Act 1998 and European Convention on Human Rights.

We will also have regard to our responsibilities as described in the Swale Borough Council Corporate Equalities Scheme 2016. We recognise there is diversity within the community. Care will be taken to ensure enforcement actions are clearly understood by all. For example, we may arrange for an interpreter or make reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities, where appropriate.

Many of the activities which we seek to control happen out of office hours. Within our resource and if considered necessary we will arrange for enforcement to take place out of usual office hours. This will include monitoring enquiries, etc.

4.2. **Legislative and Regulatory Reform**

This policy has been prepared with regard to the current principal legislation and statutory guidance including:

The Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008

Enterprise Act 2016

Co-ordination of Regulatory Enforcement Regulations 2017

Legislative and Regulatory Reform Act 2006

Legislative and Regulatory Reform (Regulatory Functions) Order 2007 as amended in 2009 2010 and 2014

Regulators Code April 2014

Regard is also given to

The Code for Crown Prosecutors

We are committed to delivering our regulatory activities in a manner that is risk-based, proportionate and consistent and we aim to be transparent and accountable about our regulatory approach and activities, in accordance with the statutory principles of good regulation.

4.2.1 When we take enforcement action we aim to:

- change behaviour
- change attitudes in society to offences which may not be serious in themselves, but which are widespread
- eliminate any financial gain or benefit from non-compliance
- be responsive and consider what is appropriate for the particular offender and regulatory issue, which can include punishment and the public stigma that should be associated with a criminal conviction
- be proportionate to the nature of the offence and the harm caused
- restore the harm caused by regulatory non-compliance, where appropriate
- deter future non-compliance

- 4.2.2 When considering formal enforcement action, we will, where reasonably practicable, discuss the circumstances with those suspected of a breach of regulation and take any information gained into account when deciding on the appropriate enforcement approach. However in some situations, for example, where immediate action is required to prevent or respond matters of imminent risk to public health or where such an approach will defeat the purpose of the proposed enforcement measure we may not be able to do so.
- 4.2.3 Where businesses are in a Primary Authority Partnership under The Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act we will, where required, comply with the agreed provisions for enforcement and notify the business's Primary Authority of the enforcement action we propose to take. We may under that Act also refer the matter to Office for Product Safety and Standards if appropriate.

5 METHODS OF ENFORCEMENT

There are a wide range of actions available to the authority and we may respond with one or more of them as is proportionate. There are some cases where we may take enforcement action after compliance has been achieved if it is in the public interest to do so:-

Informal Action

- a) No Action
- b) Informal Action - Advice and Guidance

Formal Action

- c) Formal Written Warning
- d) Statutory Notices, Community Protection Notices,
- e) Fixed Penalty Notices
- f) Prosecution
- g) Simple Caution
- h) Seizure and Detention
- i) Works in default
- j) Forfeiture Proceedings
- k) Refusal/Suspension/Revocation of a licence
- l) Injunctive Actions and other Civil Sanctions

We believe in firm but fair enforcement and will follow enforcement proportionate to the offence. Where there is a serious or flagrant breach of legislation, or there is an imminent risk to the health or welfare of people, immediate enforcement action may be considered.

5.1 **No Action**

In some circumstances reports are made to the council which fall outside any legislation that they have a responsibility to enforce in which case the complainant will be informed that the council or other agency has no statutory role. Where legislation does apply the only circumstance where no action should be taken is when the breach was a result of a genuine mistake where, once identified, immediate action was taken to comply.

5.2 Informal Action – Advice and Guidance

The term informal action means offering advice and guidance to persons, businesses or organisations, this can be verbally or in writing. If it is included in forms or letters it will be clearly identified as such. Situations which may be dealt with through informal action are generally but not exclusively:

- The act or omission is **not serious enough** to warrant formal action or,
- From the past history it can be reasonably expected that informal action will achieve compliance or,
- Where we seek to educate and inform of ‘good practice’

5.3 Formal Action

As an authority we can take action through more formal means to achieve compliance or protect the public, this includes the following options.

5.3.1 Formal Written Warning

A formal written warning is used where the act or omission is **serious enough** to warrant formal written warning and must contain the following:

- All the information necessary to understand what is required and why it is necessary,
- The legislation contravened and measures which enable compliance to be achieved,
- Clearly differentiate between legal requirements and recommendations of good practice, and
- A reasonable date for compliance

Where the recipient of the letter disagrees with any requirement and there is a “right of appeal”, where identified in legislation, this should be made to the relevant Team Leader/Manager.

5.3.2 Statutory Notices

Notices may be served in circumstances where there is a **serious contravention, imminent risk to safety or health, or continuing non-compliance**. Notices include, but are not limited to:

Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices (food) or **Prohibition Notices** (health and safety) which require contravening activities to cease immediately, and may close all or part of a premise.

Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices (food) must be confirmed by a Magistrates Court within 3 days of service.

Hygiene Improvement Notices (food) or **Improvement Notices** (health and safety) may be served to correct specific contraventions of the legislation, and specify a compliance

date. In both cases, the Notice must state what provision is being contravened, and what is necessary in order to comply with it.

Environmental Protection Act notices may be served for contraventions of appropriate legislation e.g. for the existence of a statutory nuisance. Notices shall be served to require persons, businesses or organisations to cease contravening activities, or improve conditions to comply with legislation within a reasonable time.

The Environmental Permitting (England and Wales) Regulations 2016 Notices can be served under this legislation for failure to comply with conditions contained in an Environmental Permit. Enforcement Notices can include steps to remedy any issues and bring a Permitted business back into compliance. Where, in the opinion of the Council, there is a risk of serious pollution, a Suspension Notice can be served which requires the business to cease operating until the remedial steps have been taken.

Community Protection Notices (CPNs) may be issued under the Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 will always be preceded by a community protection warning. The scope of use for CPNs is extremely broad, for example:

- Anti-social behaviour
- Litter and refuse accumulations
- Dog control including repeat strays
- Noise including barking dogs
- Bonfires and other nuisances
- Public Health issues including vermin

Where the legislation contains an appeal process no further action will be taken until the appeal period is completed. Officers will revisit to confirm the notice has been complied with. Failure to comply with a Notice is an offence in itself and may result in prosecution.

5.3.3 Prosecution

The authority to prosecute will be given in accordance with the council's constitution. The decision to prosecute will be made by the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services having regard to the authorisation from the relevant authorising officer and the Full Code Test as set out in the code for Crown Prosecutors which has two stages which must be satisfied:

1. The Evidential Stage – is there sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction against the offender
2. The 'Public Interest' Stage – is it in the public interest for the case to be brought to court?

This can be found at:

http://www.cps.gov.uk/publications/code_for_crown_prosecutors

- 5.3.3.1** The decision to recommend the institution of proceedings will in general be in respect of those persons or organisations that:

- visually or materially damage the environment;
- blatantly disregard the law;
- fail to achieve basic legal standards, (often following previous contact with the Services); or
- who put the public at risk

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5.3.3.2 The investigating officer, when deciding on the appropriateness for legal proceedings (prosecution) shall also take the following criteria into account:

- **Community Benefit**

Legal proceedings may be taken on the first occasion of certain events because of the seriousness of the case and/or Community benefit from a prosecution and its likely deterrent effect.

- **Blatant Breach of Law**

Where there is a breach of law is such that public health, safety or well being, animal health or welfare or the local environment is or has been put at risk, it would be appropriate to take legal proceedings.

- **Failure to comply with a Statutory Notice**

Legal proceedings, seizure of equipment or works in default will usually be appropriate, in cases of failure to comply with improvement or prohibition notices or other notices requiring or prohibiting action.

- **Failure to comply with Lawful Requirements**

If a person or business fails to comply with lawful requirements, having been advised on previous occasions, legal proceedings will usually be taken.

- **History of Non-compliance**

If there is a history of non-compliance with legislation by a person or business then legal proceedings will usually be taken.

- **Obstruction**

Legal proceedings will be taken in cases of deliberate obstruction of an officer.

5.3.4 Simple Cautions

The decision to offer a simple caution will be made by the Head of Service having received a recommendation from their Service Manager in consultation with the Head of Legal Services.

5.3.4.1 We may use a simple caution as a proportionate alternative to prosecution and in accordance with Ministry of Justice guidance 'Simple Cautions for Adult Offenders' (dated 13.4.15).

5.3.4.2 A simple caution will only be considered:

- Where we are satisfied that there is sufficient evidence to provide a realistic prospect of conviction against the offender,

- The offender admits the offence,
- The offender consents to being cautioned, and
- It is in the public interest to offer a simple caution in respect of the offence rather than to prosecute

5.3.4.3 Where a simple caution is offered and declined we are likely to consider prosecution.

5.3.5 Seizure and Detention

Certain legislation enables authorised officers to seize goods or equipment. This includes unsafe food or dangerous pieces of work equipment, noise generating equipment or vehicles associated with certain waste crime etc. Receipts will be issued to the person from whom the goods are seized. Where the law requires, seized goods will be taken before a Magistrate e.g. unfit food.

5.3.6 Works in Default

Under certain legislation a council can undertake work in default and recover the cost from the occupier or owner. This may be appropriate for example, when:

- It is necessary to carry out work in the public interest and/or the costs are not prohibitive,
- There is a failure to carry out work covered by a statutory notice,
- Immediate action is required, or
- It is unlikely that work will be carried out unless done in default

5.3.7 Forfeiture Proceedings

In certain situations it may be appropriate for the Council to seek forfeiture of property to address a contravention. This would only occur where the legislation gives the Council the power to do so and would be through an application to the Court.

5.3.8 Refusal / Suspension / Revocation of Licence / Approval / Authorisation

Licences, Approvals and Authorisations are issued under specific legislation and will only be refused, suspended or revoked following appropriate procedures and consideration of all relevant evidence.

Certain food business manufacturing or handling high risk food products require approval to allow their foods to be sold. For the approval to be refused, suspended or revoked, one or more of the following criteria must be met:

- Failure to comply with legal requirements
- Have ignored written warnings or statutory notices
- Are producing unsafe food products likely to harm human health
- Obstructed an officer undertaking their duties

5.3.9 Injunctions and Civil Sanctions

An injunction can be used to deal with a wide range of behaviours, many of which can cause serious harm to victims and communities. If an person 'engaged or threatens to engage in anti-social behaviour' an application may be considered. This could include but is not limited to irresponsible dog ownership or noisy/abusive behaviour towards neighbours.

Many of the civil sanctions available to the authority are already identified in sections 5.3 other appropriate options may be considered such as restoration or stop notices.

5.3.10 **Other Enforcement Action**

The diverse and evolving nature of the legislation used across the service means that other enforcement tools can be appropriate, but it is not practical to list them all here. Where other enforcement action is used its use will be proportionate and only by officers that are trained and authorised in writing to do so in accordance to section 6 below.

6 AUTHORISATION

- 6.1 Officers carrying out enforcement work will be suitably trained, experienced and authorised to do so in writing.
- 6.2 Officers authorised to sign and serve various documents will have the level of competence and ability required. Officers authorised will carry identification and will have evidence of their authorisation.

7 DECIDING ON ENFORCEMENT ACTION TO BE TAKEN

- 7.1 For breaches resulting in 'no action', 'advice and guidance' and 'formal written warning' the case officer will decide upon the appropriate course of action.
- 7.2 The case officer's decision will be based upon professional judgement, legal guidelines, statutory codes of practice, guidance. Advice and confirmation can be obtained from colleagues and the Team Leader.
- 7.3 For breaches resulting in enforcement methods not listed at 7.1 the case officer will consult with the Team Leader to decide the appropriate course of action. This will include service of Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices (food), Prohibition Notices (health and safety), refusal / suspension / revocation of licences / approvals / authorisations and Remedial Action Notices (RAN). Where the Team Leader is unavailable, the Environmental Health Manager or other senior manager will be consulted.
- 7.4 In the case of service of Hygiene Emergency Prohibition Notices (food) and Prohibition Notice (health and safety), agreement of the Food and Safety Team Leader, the Environmental Health Manager or other senior manager may not be possible where there is an imminent and serious risk to safety or health. Officers will inform them as soon as practicable.
- 7.5 In exceptional circumstances where officers, on consideration of the evidence and the risk to health or the environment, may depart from the policy.

- 7.6 In the case of a work related death, the case officer must inform and liaise with Kent Police in accordance with the protocol 'Work Related Deaths: A protocol for liaison'. This may result in a joint investigation. Where Kent Police/Crown Prosecution Service decides not to pursue a manslaughter case, consideration will be given to a health and safety prosecution, in-line with this policy.

8 APPLICATION OF THIS POLICY

- 8.1 The principles contained within the enforcement policy shall be applied to the enforcement of legislation within the remit of the Mid Kent Environmental Health Service.
- 8.2 The preparation of this policy and any supplementary supporting documents will involve, where appropriate, consultation of affected parties.

9 APPROVAL

- 9.1 The Environmental Health Enforcement Policy will be approved by Cabinet.

10 ACCESS TO THE POLICY

- 10.1 The policy is available on the Swale Borough Council website and at the Swale Borough Council offices. The case officer will be able to provide a copy of this policy given suitable notice. On request and where practicable this policy may be made available on tape, in Braille, large type, or in a language other than English.

11 REVIEW OF POLICY

- 11.1 The Policy will be kept under review to take account of changes in legislation and amendments found necessary as a result of internal monitoring.

12 COMPLAINTS

- 12.1 If a person feels we have not followed the enforcement policy or has a complaint about the application of the policy complaints may be made through the Corporate Complaints process accessed from the website swale.gov.uk.

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| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Cabinet Meeting | |
| Meeting Date | 12 February 2020 |
| Report Title | Constitution review: Area Committees |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr Baldock, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning |
| SMT Lead | David Clifford, Head of Policy, Communications and Customer Services |
| Head of Service | |
| Lead Officer | Sarah Porter, Interim Policy Manager |
| Key Decision | Yes |
| Classification | Open |
| Recommendations | <p>Cabinet is recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Note the recommendations from PDRC. 2. Agree the proposals for moving forward with area committees as laid out in this report. 3. Recommend to Council that Special Responsibility Allowances for the chairmen of the new committees are funded by freezing the inflationary uplift on all Member allowances for 2020/21. |

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 Following the May elections a new coalition Cabinet formed and outlined their objectives for the next four year administration. One of these objectives was around a constitutional review – diffusing power among members and improving public engagement in decision making.

2 Background

- 2.1 In order to consider how to meet this administration priority, Cabinet made a number of suggestions to the Policy Development and Review Committee (PDRC) in July 2019. At this meeting it was agreed that PDRC would set up a working group to look at the possibility of setting up area committees.
- 2.2 Following extensive engagement both internally and externally, including with parish and town councils, the working group presented its findings to the PDRC meeting on 20 November 2019. At this meeting the PDRC discussed the findings and finalised their recommendations to Cabinet; this report can be found at Appendix I.

3 Proposals

3.1 The PDRC working group and the results of the public consultation both showed a clear majority in favour of introducing area committees, albeit that the latter was established as a 'call for ideas' rather than as an opinion poll. As a result the report from PDRC recommends that Cabinet agree to set up area committees.

Number of committees

3.2 The number of area committees was discussed at length at PDRC, with most of the discussion being around the potential inequity of the Sittingbourne area committee being too dominant in the three committee scenario that had been the working group's preferred option. There was a lot of discussion around which wards would sit under a 'Faversham' or 'Sittingbourne' area committee and clear indications from ward members about which area their ward should sit in.

3.3 The results of the public survey indicated that the preferred suggestion, from over half of the responses, was for four area committees. There were also questions over the rural and urban committees, with residents from some wards feeling more inclined to be classified as urban or rural and an acceptance that depending on where in a ward you lived you may feel like you were more urban or rural.

3.4 Considering the feedback from the PDRC meeting as well as the results of the resident survey it is recommended that the urban and rural names are dropped.

3.5 With this in mind the recommendation is that four area committees covering the following areas will be more equitable as well as being more in line with public aspirations:

- Eastern (Abbey; Boughton and Courtenay; East Downs; Priory; St Ann's; Teynham and Lynsted; and Watling)
- Sheppey (Minster Cliffs; Queenborough and Halfway; Sheerness; Sheppey Central; and Sheppey East)
- Sittingbourne (Chalkwell; Homewood; Kemsley; Milton Regis; Murston; and; Roman)
- Western (Bobbing; Iwade and Lower Halstow, Hartlip, Upchurch and Newington, Borden and Grove Park, Woodstock, West Downs; and The Meads)

Membership

3.6 It is clear from legislation that any properly constituted decision-making committees of the council can only be made up of Swale borough councillors. Membership of each committee will therefore consist of those ward councillors with wards in the areas covered and they will be the only members with voting rights.

3.7 Additional people invited to attend as non-voting members will include MPs, County Councillors and Parish or Town Councils within that area. Local delivery

partners, for example Kent Police or Optivo, would be invited to attend whenever there is an agenda item that is of relevance, but would not be standing members of the committee. Local delivery partners could be co-opted onto any working group that the committee decides to establish.

- 3.8 The chairman and vice-chairman of the committee would be elected annually by the voting members of the committee and at the first meeting of the municipal year. It is suggested that the chair and vice chair be from different political groups as long as this is workable. It would also be expected for the chair and vice-chair to undertake chairing meetings training.

Meetings

- 3.9 It is recommended that there are four meetings a year. Both the PDRC working group suggested this frequency and the public survey responses indicated that over half of all respondents would be willing to attend an area committee meeting four times a year.
- 3.10 In order to enable enough time for public participation there was also a recommendation that came out of the PDRC report that suggests that committee meetings should be structured to allow that the first 30 minutes be set aside for public time, so that members of the public can speak to the committee. These 30 minutes would be bound by the standard rules for public participation at council meetings, but that the chairman would have discretion around whether to extend this time.

Terms of reference

- 3.11 It was agreed that all area committees should operate under the same terms of reference with the same delegated funds or powers. However, it was also established that, due to the differing needs of each area, they should all be able to develop their own agendas and programme of work. The terms of reference below assumes that some funding would be made available to the area committees. The suggestion was that this could come out of the special project fund that has been established.
- 3.12 The PDRC report suggested some draft terms of reference, these would need to be discussed, refined and agreed in draft by Cabinet before going to General Purposes Committee.
- To develop a work programme to enhance core services within the area.
 - To take spending decisions in relation to funding allocated to the committee.
 - To provide area intelligence to the Cabinet and heads of services and to assist with policy development on relevant matters.
 - To make recommendations to Cabinet on issues in the committee's area and to respond to any other specific matter referred to it by Cabinet, the council or

a senior council officer.

- 3.13 In order to support the committees' work it is recommended that each Member is allocated £4,000 of special project funding. This would equate to £188,000 of the special project fund per annum. This funding would only be allocated by the councillor with the agreement of the relevant area committee.

Review

- 3.14 It is recommended that the area committees be reviewed after a full year of meetings and will include a cost benefits analysis, which will include consideration of the level of public engagement and the work that the committee has undertaken. This review will also include the number of meetings held per year.

Resource implications

- 3.15 It is suggested that the Chairman should be paid a Special Responsibility Allowance (SRA) at 1/10th of the Leader. The Independent Members' Allowances Panel is due to sit in early March and that panel would make any recommendations on the SRA for this position based on the terms of reference as agreed by a General Purposes Committee which will have to meet after Cabinet has made a formal decision to make suggested changes to the constitution.
- 3.16 If the independent members' allowances panel suggests a 1/10th SRA, this would equate to approximately £7,722 across the four committees (based on the 2019/20 allowances). Funding for the Special Responsibility Allowance could be created by not paying the 2% inflationary uplift across the full range of member allowances for 2020/21. Cabinet is therefore recommended to recommend to Council, taking account of any views of the Independent Members' Allowances Panel, that Members' allowances are frozen at current levels for the next year.
- 3.17 Additional resources would also need to be considered in terms of administering and supporting the committees. The working group report suggested estimated costs in their report and these have been slightly amended these to reflect the change to four area committees

| Item | Cost (£) |
|--|-----------------|
| Venue hire - @ £100 x 4 meetings per year x 4 area committees | £1,600 |
| Estimated staff costs for administration and agenda setting support £288 a day x 4 meetings x 4 committees | £4,608 |
| Total | £6,208 |

This will be funded from within the existing base budget

- 3.18 The above staff costs only allow one democratic services officer and one policy level officer support for one day per meeting per area committee. It is difficult to estimate the full cost implications until the committees are set up and running.

Some area committees may be member led and sufficiently supported with this resource, others may require more officer support.

- 3.19 As suggested earlier in the report another, more costly, resource implication will be that of senior officer time. Consideration could be given to enabling more efficient use of senior officer time, such as daytime briefings in order to reduce the impact of this. At this point it is more difficult to estimate the amount of senior officer time that will be required, it could double the above amount.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Consideration could be given to not setting up area committees.
- 4.2 As a result of the rule whereby Members may not claim more than a single Special Responsibility Allowance, there is in effect a structural underspend built into the budget for Member allowances, which will remain in place as long as some Members continue to fulfil multiple SRA-attracting roles. The scale of this underspend is such that it could be used to fund SRAs for the four area committee chairmen without the need either to increase the overall budget or freeze Member allowances across the piece. (Recommendation 3 and paragraph 3.16 refer.)

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 A public survey was undertaken between 6 September and 1 November, in total we received 307 responses. The responses were discussed at the PDRC working group meetings and helped to inform both their report to PDRC and the final report from PDRC to Cabinet. The responses form part of Appendix I.
- 5.2 PDRC working group developed proposals and PDRC considered these at their meeting on 20 November, these have informed many of the recommendations contained within this report.

6 Implications

| Issue | Implications |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Corporate Plan | Introducing area committees will support the current objective 3.5 Continue to ensure that Swale’s internal governance and decision making are second to none |
| Financial, Resource and Property | Implementing area committees will have financial implications. These are estimated under the resources section above. Any resource and funding will need to be considered as an additional cost for the 2020/2021 financial year and would also have to be considered in the revenue budget for 2021/2022 onwards. |
| Legal, Statutory | Implementation of area committees will require a change to the |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| and Procurement | constitution and agreement by council |
| Crime and Disorder | None identified at this stage |
| Environment and Sustainability | None identified at this stage |
| Health and Wellbeing | None identified at this stage |
| Risk Management and Health and Safety | None identified at this stage |
| Equality and Diversity | None identified at this stage |
| Privacy and Data Protection | None identified at this stage |

7 Appendices

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

- Appendix I: PDRC report to Cabinet on Area Committees

8 Background Papers

- [Area Committees report, PDRC, 17 July 2019](#)

AS AMENDED BY POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND REVIEW COMMITTEE ON 20 NOVEMBER 2019

| | | |
|--|---|-----------------------|
| Policy Development and Review Committee | | Agenda Item: 5 |
| Meeting Date | 20 November 2019 | |
| Report Title | Draft report to Cabinet on Constitutional Review - Area Committees | |
| Lead Members | Councillor Alastair Gould, Chairman – Policy Development Review Committee Councillor Ben A Martin, Chairman – Area Committee Working Group | |
| SMT Lead | David Clifford, Policy, Communications and Customer Services Manager | |
| Head of Service | | |
| Lead Officers | Sarah Porter, Interim Policy Manager Bob Pullen, Policy and Performance Officer | |
| Key Decision | No | |
| Classification | Open | |
| Forward Plan | Reference number: | |
| Recommendations | 1. That the Policy Development and Review Committee consider and approve this report on area committees for submission to Cabinet | |

1. Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

1.1. The Policy Development and Review Committee established a working group to take forward consideration of whether the Council should introduce area committees as part of the constitutional review. This report invites the Committee to consider the findings of the working group and to approve this report and recommendations for submission to Cabinet.

2. Background

2.1. Following the May 2019 elections, a new coalition Cabinet formed and outlined their objectives for the next four year administration. One of these objectives was around a constitutional review – diffusing power among members and improving public engagement in decision-making. One of the areas that has been considered to date includes setting up area committees.

- 2.2. Cabinet asked the Committee to investigate the reasons Swale might want to introduce area committees, what their purpose would be and what areas they would cover. The Committee resolved to establish a working group, consisting of Committee members and co-optees, to consider these further.
- 2.3. The working group was comprised of the following members:
- Councillor Ben Martin (Chairman);
Councillor Mike Dendor;
Councillor Alastair Gould;
Councillor Ken Ingleton; and
Councillor Julian Saunders.
- 2.4. The group met three times on 3 September, 8 October and 5 November. This report and the recommendations it contains are the conclusion of the group's work.

3. Proposals

Provisions for area committees

- 3.1. Legislation governing the establishment of area committees stipulate several requirements as follows. Areas committees:
- must be comprised of only ward members who are elected to wards either partially or fully within the area covered by the committee;
 - can only discharge functions delegated to them by the council; and
 - do not need to be politically balanced.
- 3.2. However, councils have considerable discretion beyond these statutory requirements on what area committees can do.
- 3.3. Area committees can operate in councils which have adopted an executive form of governance (such as Leader and Cabinet) or under the committee system.

Survey results

- 3.4. The results of a public survey conducted during September and October 2019 are at Appendix I. The survey results cannot be taken to be statistically robust and they were not designed to be a full blown public consultation. Nevertheless, it did provide the group with some useful feedback on how residents feel about the possible introduction of area committees and the responses have shaped the approach the group have taken to arrive at their findings and recommendations.

Should the council introduce area committees?

- 3.5. Area committees can help to diffuse power more widely among members and improving public engagement in decision making. They can bring an opportunity for local residents to observe and participate in the council's decision-making arrangements.
- 3.6. The flipside of this is that area committees can be very resource intensive. They require agenda, reports and minutes to be prepared, venues to be hired (assuming they will be held in local communities), the presence of Cabinet Members and senior officers and they would have to be supported in their work, possibly by a secretariat.
- 3.7. The council has a constrained revenue budget position and is highly dependent upon funding streams whose future is unclear. Any constitutional changes which resulted in higher direct staff costs and/or increased demands on senior management resources would need to be offset by ceasing other activities.
- 3.8. A detailed cost benefit analysis is beyond the scope of the working group but we would recommend that one is undertaken by Cabinet before deciding whether to push ahead with establishing area committees. Nevertheless, an indication of the types of costs which could be involved are at Appendix II. These are purely an illustration and more detailed work would need to be undertaken to establish the true costs involved.
- 3.9. The setting of member of allowances is a matter for the Member Remuneration Panel and the working group recommends that Cabinet invite the Panel to consider whether area committee chairmen should be eligible to receive a Special Responsibility Allowance and if so what the level of this should be. For illustrative purposes, this is shown as 10% of the Leader's allowance in keeping with the amounts afforded to the chairman of the Audit and Licensing Committees.
- 3.10. The working group thought that the primary advantage of establishing area committees, in addition to diffusing power among members and improving public engagement in decision making, was to better contribute to place-shaping and targeting resource allocation with the benefit of local knowledge. It should also raise the profile of the Borough Council among local people in terms of which services it provides and who the local councillors are. It should also demonstrate, particularly in Faversham and on Sheppey, that the Council is not specifically 'Sittingbourne-centric'.
- 3.11. The working group thought that the effectiveness of the area committees should be reviewed after a year.

Recommendation:

- a) The working group recommends to Cabinet that:

- a detailed cost benefit analysis is undertaken before a decision to establish area committees is taken;
- the resources necessary to support area committees are clearly identified;
- the Member Remuneration Panel is invited to consider the appropriateness of a Special Responsibility Allowance for area committee chairmen;
- provided the costs and resources needed to set up and support area committees is not prohibitive, that area committees are established; and
- that the effectiveness of the area committees be reviewed after a year.

Delegated powers

- 3.12. The working group took the view that area committees should have identical terms of reference with no variation of delegated powers or functions. That said, it should be for each committee to decide the extent to which they exercise those powers or functions.
- 3.13. Area committees should have a role in place-shaping as well as having delegated authority to allocate funds to local projects e.g. from the Special Projects Fund and possibly some other Council funding streams e.g. heritage and sports development.
- 3.14. The committees could also serve as a mechanism for consultations on major developments or to propose improvements for the local area (e.g. local skills provision).
- 3.15. It was envisaged that committees would grow organically, starting with a relatively simple agenda.
- 3.16. The committees could provide a useful opportunity for the Borough Council to engage with parish and town councils.
- 3.17. The delegated powers referred to above are not currently available and the Council's Constitution would need to be amended, through the General Purposes Committee and Council, in order to establish area committees and provide them with the necessary delegations.

Recommendation:

- b) The working group recommends to Cabinet that the area committees are allocated the delegations at Appendix II as part of their terms of reference.

Membership

- 3.18. With the aim of diffusing power among members of the Council, the primary members of the committees would be Swale Borough councillors representing the wards covered by the committees.
- 3.19. The working group concluded that only Swale Borough councillors should have voting rights. This was in keeping with the provision in the Section 13 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 which states that a member of a committee appointed under Section 102(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 who is not a member of the authority shall be treated as a non-voting member of that committee unless it is an advisory committee appointed under Section 102(4).
- 3.20. In the survey one of the questions asked was 'Who should be invited to attend?'. The results are fully laid out in Appendix I and they indicated that there was broadly support for parish and town councils as well as local service delivery partners. Respondents also suggested including a variety of local groups and representatives including:
- members of the public;
 - local community and voluntary groups;
 - resident groups; and
 - organisations and groups with specific expertise, the Environment Agency, housing associations and food bank organisers were all suggested.

There was a broad consensus that these experts should be invited on an ad hoc basis for relevant meetings.

- 3.21. The group suggested that Kent County Council members for the six Swale Divisions should be invited to attend the committees as non-voting members. This would give them similar rights as visiting members of Swale committees – i.e. the right to speak, but not to vote. Local delivery partners (e.g. Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue, Optivo, Swale Community and Voluntary Services etc.) would be invited to attend committees where there were specific items of interest to them on the agenda. Invitations to attend the committees should also be extended to the two Members of Parliament who represented parts of Swale as appropriate (i.e. the MP for Sittingbourne and Sheppey for the Sittingbourne and Sheppey area committees, and the MP for Faversham and Mid Kent for the Faversham area committee).

Recommendation:

- c) The working group recommends to Cabinet that:

- all Swale Borough Council members for the wards covered by an area committee are automatically members of that committee;
- chairman and vice-chairman are elected annually by the ward members of the committees;
- Kent County Council members for Swale Divisions are invited to attend area committees with rights to speak, but not vote;
- Local delivery partners are invited to attend area committees whenever there is an agenda item of interest to them – they shall not be ordinary members of the committees; and
- The two Members of Parliament who represent parts of Swale should be invited to attend the committees as appropriate.

Parish and town councils

- 3.22. Area committees provide a very good opportunity for the Council to engage with Swale’s parish and town councils. Parish and town councils are the most local form of democratically elected representatives in the community and there was currently no mechanism for them to engage collectively with the Council.
- 3.23. One of the suggested areas to be delegated to area committees is to provide ‘area intelligence’ to Cabinet and heads of service. Parish and town councils could provide a useful means of contributing towards this intelligence with their local knowledge and expertise.
- 3.24. The working group thought that parish and town councils could play an important role in area committees. However, as illustrated in Appendix IV, there are far too many parish and town councils for it to be practical to accommodate them all as committee members, but they should be notified of meetings and invited to send a representative and contribute to the discussions.

- Recommendation:**
- d) The working group recommends to Cabinet that:
- Parish and town councils be invited to send a representative to attend each area committee meeting.

Role of the public

- 3.25. A main purpose of introducing area committees is to improve public engagement with decision-making. Therefore, the standard provisions on public participation

which apply to e.g. the Planning Committee would not suffice.

3.26. Question five of the survey asked ‘What role would the public have?’ Responses to this question made a range of suggestions including:

- full voting rights for residents;
- keeping the same restrictions on public speaking as are currently in place;
- giving residents time and opportunity to raise local issues;
- for residents to be more “hands on”; and
- none

3.27. Area committees would be properly constituted committees in their own right with delegated powers to take certain decisions, including on resource allocations. As a result, they would need to publish agendas, reports and minutes and the meetings would be held in public.

3.28. The working group considered that while the business of each meeting would naturally be led by the Borough councillors, there should be ample opportunity for the public attending to contribute to the meetings and have their voices heard. This could be achieved in a number of ways including:

- application of the standard rules for public participation, with additional discretion given to the committee chairmen to extend those rules as they saw fit; and
- the scheduling of a timed ‘public forum’ session at each meeting with priority to speak given over to those members of the public who have indicated in advance of the meeting that they want to raise an issue or ask a question.

Recommendation:

e) The working group recommends to Cabinet that:

- the standard rules for public participation at Council committees is applied, but with more discretion for committee chairman to extend those rules; and
- a timed ‘public forum’ session at each area committee meeting is scheduled with associated provisions for public participation.

Number and timing of meetings

3.29. The public survey invited respondents to indicate whether they preferred the timing of meetings to be held bi-monthly, quarterly or six-monthly. 52% of the people that answered this question indicated that they would be willing to attend the meeting on a quarterly basis, with 11.79% indicating they would prefer it to

be held twice a year and 17.47% preferring six meetings a year. The remaining 22.71% of people indicated an 'other' choice, most of these were from people who had previously indicated they were not happy with the idea of area committees. Some of the responses indicated they would be happy with a less formal approach to arranging meetings.

- 3.30. The working group thought that the committees should meet four times a year, but that it should be for each chairman/committee to determine the precise programming of meetings during the year. Therefore, the committees could meet on a quarterly basis, or more or less frequently if they so wished. This would support the aim that the committees should be able to determine their own methods of working as far as possible.

Recommendation:

f) The working group recommends to Cabinet that the committees should meet four times per year, but that the timings of meetings is left to each committee to determine.

Areas covered

- 3.31. The working group considered how many area committees there should be and what geographical areas they should cover.
- 3.32. One option would be to establish three committees covering the towns of Faversham and Sittingbourne and the rural areas surrounding them and one for the Isle of Sheppey.
- 3.33. Another option would be to establish four committees, one for Faversham and the rural areas surrounding it and another for the Isle of Sheppey, and then two separate committees for Sittingbourne, one covering the urban wards and the other the rural wards.
- 3.34. The public survey asked 'How many committees should there be and which areas should they cover?'. 276 of respondents answered this question and 54.35% of them indicated that they preferred the four committee area approach, with a Sittingbourne rural and urban committee
- 3.35. An option which the group considered, but discounted, was a single area committee encompassing all of the rural wards in Swale. It was considered that all rural areas had a close affinity with their local town and this was more important in terms of the area committee's terms of reference and purpose rather than the common interests all rural areas shared and the challenges they all faced across Swale. In addition, the rural wards are spread widely throughout the Borough – there are no single concentrations of 'urban' and 'rural' in Swale.
- 3.36. The working group favoured the three-committee model for the following reasons:

- easily understood by the public;
 - less resources needed to administer; and
 - encompasses the three most identifiable areas of Swale.
- 3.37. It was considered that creating four area committees, with two committees covering Sittingbourne urban and Sittingbourne rural, would be artificial. Some parts of some wards (e.g. Woodstock ward, and the parish of Tunstall within it) already covered both urban and rural areas. Furthermore, the area committees provided an opportunity to bring together the urban and rural parts of the area and artificially splitting them out would go against the grain of this.
- 3.38. The question has arisen of whether Teynham and Lynsted ward should be part of the Faversham or Sittingbourne area committee. As part of the analysis done on the survey results the working group also looked at how respondents who had indicated that they were from this ward area responded to the question. Overall there was a view from Teynham residents that they should be part of a separate rural committee area. However given the consideration of the above it was considered that additional specifically rural area committees would only increase the split between rural and urban and lead to less cohesive decision making.
- 3.39. Although the ward is clearly part of the Sittingbourne and Sheppey Parliamentary constituency for electoral purposes , the Working Group recommend that the ward is included as part of the Faversham area committee in keeping with previous arrangements that existed for engagement forums.

Recommendation:

g) The working group therefore recommends to Cabinet that three area committees are established covering the following areas:

- Faversham (Abbey; Boughton and Courtenay; East Downs; Priory; St Ann's; Teynham and Lynsted; and Watling);
- Isle of Sheppey (Minster Cliffs; Queenborough and Halfway; Sheerness; Sheppey Central; and Sheppey East);
- Sittingbourne (Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow; Borden and Grove Park; Chalkwell; Hartlip, Newington and Upchurch; Homewood; Kemsley; Milton Regis; Murston; Roman; The Meads; West Downs; and Woodstock).

h) That Teynham and Lynsted forms part of the Faversham area .

4. Alternative Options

- 4.1. It was noted that ward members were already able to collaborate across ward boundaries to pool their member grants and that area committees might have a

similar role if they were afforded delegated powers to take decisions on grant funding.

- 4.2. An alternative to delegating power to area committees around grant funding would be to increase the allowance given to individual members to give out under the member grants scheme.

5. Consultation undertaken or proposed

- 5.1. The working group has not undertaken any formal consultation process. However, officers have sought public views on the introduction of area committees through a survey which has been publicised through a council press release, on social media channels and through an article in Inside Swale magazine which is delivered to every household in the Borough. The results of the survey are included in this report.
- 5.2. The working group has also updated the Policy Development and Review Committee at several stages during its review and discussed preliminary recommendations.

6. Implications

- 6.1. Implications of introducing area committees will be a matter for Cabinet to consider.

7. Appendices

- 7.1. The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:
 - Appendix I: Results of the public survey
 - Appendix II: Suggested terms of reference
 - Appendix III: Possible costs of establishing area committees

8. Background Papers

- 8.1 [Constitution Review – area committees report, Policy Development and Review Committee, 17 July 2019.](#)

Appendix I

RESULTS OF THE PUBLIC SURVEY

Area Committees - Survey results November 2019

The Area Committees survey was open between 10 September and 1 November 2019.

During this time 308 responses were received. We had two written responses and the remaining were completed using an online survey tool.

Question 1: Do you think we should have area committees and what difference do you think they could make to you and your area?

This was an open ended question, with a free text box. Responses were grouped into a number of categories depending on what the respondent had written.

299 people responded to this question and 9 people skipped it

Table 1

| General tone of response | Responses | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------|-----|
| No | 21.40% | 64 |
| Not sure | 2.01% | 6 |
| Unclear (about what the person feels) | 3.01% | 9 |
| Yes | 60.87% | 182 |
| Yes, if | 12.71% | 38 |

There was a clear response in favour of Area Committees, with 60.87% stating a clear 'yes' and a further 12.71% stating more of a 'yes, if' preference. Table 2 shows all of the responses that were tagged under the 'yes, if' category so that these can be considered.

Table 2

| |
|---|
| In principle the idea of engaging local people in decision making is good. However setting these up for the sake of it or to pay homage to the principle will not work. Needs to be a good enough priority which the public want and which they feel will be worth investing their time. If it is another level of bureaucracy it won't work. |
| At the moment Sheerness is in a very bad way and I believe that needs to be the main focus. Therefore, I feel there should be one committee. |
| I think area committees will be good provided they have budgets and are accountable and most importantly are given guidelines or templates to work with. A lot of people who do voluntary committee work do not have business backgrounds and therefore can find it difficult to be fully effective |
| The idea is good in principle, could make a difference in identifying local issues easier, but need to be convinced of their influence in practice |
| Yes you need to stop cars being parked on the A2 so people can walk into Sittingbourne without having to walk in the road because cars are parked on the pavement |

| |
|---|
| Probably to reflect local opinion. However my 2 Councillors (Mike and Nicholas) do an admirable job. |
| Probably, as their opinion would hopefully reflect the local community. However, our 2 Councillors (Mike and Nicholas) already do that admirable |
| It's a positive idea, however they need to be listened too and given some authority to make positive change. |
| The boundary between Teynham and Lynsted parish councils lies along the centre of London Road also known as Greenstreet. There is little or no co-operation between the two groups although Lynsted has tried to build bridges to no avail. An overall area committee would hopefully be beneficial and overcome this parochial impasse. |
| Yes. Provided: a) they remain adequately attended and b) decisions/proposals arising therefrom are acted upon or a) will result anyway |
| Better relationships |
| I would like Teynham to remain independent of the larger boroughs of Sittingbourne and Faversham |
| Yes a rural or village specific one that deals with rural and village issues! |
| Yes as long as they are local people in them. They could make a big difference if they are run correctly |
| The principle has potential but previous democratic instruments like the Parish Design Statements were simply removed from Planning processes when it suited SBC to silent local democratic instruments. So it will be important that these Committees have freedom to engage on all policy issues without 'gagging' by Officials. They should be independent of local Parish Councils but they should NOT replace them. These new Committees, drawn across parish boundaries, can help inform and reinforce opinions that cut across PC areas of competence. In short, these Committees would add value if they can cover all policy issues and comment on them directly to SBC Councillors free from Parish Council boundaries but informing PC processes. I fear that the Committees will be seen as threats by PCs and may choose to ignore issues over which they don't have sole responsibility - I have seen this regularly along Greenstreet. |
| Yes - a rural committee covering villages between Sittingbourne & Faversham as our needs are different to those of the towns |
| Yes to committee as long as areas are individual ie I live in Teynham which is rural and not part of sittingbourne or Faversham and has its own specific needs. It could make a positive difference to address these needs. |
| Yes, I believe that we should. Our rural villages have a unique identity and unique needs - but we are usually just lumped in with Faversham or Sittingbourne, which are very different. It will give residents more of a feeling of input and interest in their local communities and help support local projects that benefit a wide range of activities and services. |
| The principal of area committees is a good idea as they will have an understanding of requirements for their area however I suspect more than three will be required. |
| Yes. If the membership of the committees includes members of the public, it will be a drastic shift in what residents are actually concerned about. People currently feel disenfranchised with local decision making, with Councillors that don't appear to |

| |
|---|
| <p>represent them, rather pushing their own agendas. Some areas have fantastic councillors that are pro-active at consulting residents, others (such as Murston) don't hear from them from one election to the next. Engagement of the local population should be at the core of decision making.</p> |
| <p>Rural & urban areas should have different types of committees.</p> |
| <p>Yes but they need to be representative of all</p> |
| <p>Yes - depending on their remit. I would like a local body that could reflect the views of local people but I am concerned that they do not simply replicate those of Parish councils (which I feel are narrow in their outlook and lack professional respect).</p> |
| <p>Sounds a good idea, local focus and input to shape the varied communities needs</p> |
| <p>Only if clear articulated binding parameters are in place regarding a clear transparent process that moderates can abide to. At this point and time reasonable devolved and prices agreements have been hijacked by both the hard left and right and the liberal entitled establishment at the cost of true democracy. Without assurance that party politics do not influence this agenda, it is difficult to endorse.</p> |
| <p>I think they would be a good idea but it would need to be clear what powers they have and what decisions they could inform and engage with. It's important for local residents to be able to have a say about the community and area they live in to improve public health, wellbeing, economy and more.</p> |
| <p>In principle I can see some benefits- working in smaller units alongside my town council in Faversham for example could be helpful. Although I'm never in favour of committees for committees' sake. They would need to have a very clear remit and the interaction between town/parish councils, these local area committees and Swale council would have to be crystal clear.</p> |
| <p>Some reservations care must be taken to ensure they are inclusive of area demographic. In an ideal world would be a very positive step towards better social cohesion in areas and a sense of community.</p> |
| <p>I think they would be a very good thing but people would need to be clear about why they are attending them so that aims of the group and seeing a result early on is essential</p> |
| <p>Potentially more even spread of resources instead of Faversham and Sittingbourne getting all the money and Sheppey getting nothing</p> |
| <p>Sheppey needs to have an independent voice as the island is constantly ignored in favour of Sittingbourne.</p> |
| <p>Yes, if more things are happening at a local level and being decided by the people in that area they are more likely to work and have an effect on how people feel about where they live.</p> |
| <p>Perhaps, if they are non-political, and made up of general public. There needs to be more accountability for the way public money is spent. A difference can only be made when those making important decisions are doing so for the majority. I personally think that many politicians are self-serving.</p> |
| <p>Could work but have a more even balance of the public, otherwise it's won't work if you put upper class people who most likely don't even live on the area,</p> |
| <p>With a mixture of members - councillors and members of the public, they could help local communities feel that they have a stake in the decision making</p> |

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| processes of the council. I do support the idea, and hope that the proposition to involve those other than councillors is a genuine one. |
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| Yes. Mote in depth local consultation. |
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| Think maybe if was area committee .certain areas of Swale would not get everything and others nothing |
|---|

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| Only if they are well attended by the public. |
|---|

Question 2: What do you think area committees should do?

This was a multiple choice question and people could choose as few or as many as they liked.

Table 3

| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|---|------------------|------------|
| area based meetings where Councillors take decisions on local matters | 54.23% | 154 |
| make decisions on what projects get funding from the special projects fund | 53.87% | 153 |
| consultative (for example actively responding to consultations as part of a deliberative process) | 29.93% | 85 |
| engagement (for example listening to presentations and giving feedback) | 36.62% | 104 |
| a combination of engagement and consultative | 62.32% | 177 |
| Other (please specify) | | 89 |
| | Answered | 284 |
| | Skipped | 24 |

In the 'other' category people were given a free text box to make their suggestions. These are copied verbatim in the table below

Table 4

| |
|--|
| None - we already have parish councils and they are full of people with axes to grind who spend our money on what they want. |
| In view of the response to question 1 this is not relevant. |
| Not required at all |
| I'd like to see the main focus on poor areas, areas of deprivation and run down. For example, Sheerness. |
| Just listening and giving feedback does not really engage - there needs to be a closed loop.system - local council management and operations seem to be open ended with little evidence of setting objectives, working to achieve them and closing them out. |
| non party political and local resident based on an unbiased basis. |
| Must include environmental concerns and any decisions on housing and relevant infrastructure |
| Meet with people in their area, and take on board some of their concerns. |
| If they go ahead, then consultative only. However, I did put that I do not agree with them, so should have been able to skip to the finish, not go through another 7 questions. |
| Response carried from the first response. |
| Not just parish councils as they do not represent the views if all residents just the inner group of people are allowed views |
| Councillors need to listen to us and not do what they think is best |
| Include our local public transport agencies to take part |
| Nothing |

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| Include local people in all relevant discussions and listen to what they say. |
| AC members should be as involved as possible in matters that impact the people and areas covered by each AC |
| None |
| what for. this is just a further waste of our council tax |
| Nothing. They should not exist, and it is disappointing this question assumes their existence. |
| Small Planning matters. I.E. 5 or fewer homes, extensions, lofts etc. |
| Galvanisation of local input. Assessment of real need in comunity and community empowerment to fix itself. |
| Parishes already make decisions and SBC takes decisions. It's not clear to me where these would be positioned in relation to those. It's seems to be a duplication. Where would Tunstall sit as we are a mix of rural and urban as a Parish. |
| Don't think it should be just councillors should also be ordinary people also |
| I don't understand the first point. What local matters would they have powers to decide? Eg, memorial benches? Streetlights? New play equipment? |
| Hold national MPs responsible for the terrible job they do at representing us. |
| Listen to local requirements |
| Not required |
| None |
| Nothing |
| Should be involved in everything |
| Nothing. Don't need them. |
| This appears to be an expensive exercise in trying to get the public involved, but offers nothing new |
| I understand the importance of the role of Councillors in this process, and the Committees would have to ignore their egos and understand that they have a role to inform Councillors - drawn from local rural wards (if these Committees are allowed to encompass more than one Ward). That responsibility requires a mutual trust, so Councillors should be responsive to Committee statements, analysis, and opinions and be ready to face cross-examination if their Rural Committees' views are ignored without cause. I can see that Committees will need careful chairing (perhaps not Councillors) to build the role and mutual trust. |
| Not exist |
| Localism needs to be make more public and accessible utilising all public platforms. |
| Any committee simply made up of councillors should already be happening.. that is what we elect them for. Residents NEED to be a part of the committees and hold equal weight (maybe 2 residents = 1 councillor) |
| None |
| None ...weshouldnt have them |
| I think this list is things they could do, I am not convinced any are things they should do. It seems to me this only works if the public turn up, I expect a flash in the pan and then dwindling numbers, what is in it for the attendees, sure councillors get to claim more expenses and we pay for extra officer time, but what does it give us? |
| Brainstorming and reviewing. |

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| All committees should be apolitical |
| act as intermediaries between professionals, businesses etc and the local residents. To understand both view points on sensitive matters and to offer a balanced view. This is what Parish councils should be doing but fail to. |
| I do not think we should have the committees at all, all of the above examples are currently available through other structures |
| Not needed. Already have councillors to take our views forward |
| All of the above can be done by parish councils. Why not make those areas in Swale that are parished into community councils instead. |
| Asking local residents what they think are the highest priorities and letting them choose how the funding is spent. |
| Isn't this what Town and Parish councils do |
| Meet regularly and offer open to public sessions |
| None of the above. We already vote for and pay for a Town Council and this would duplicate that. |
| The options above are limited and restrictive. |
| These areas can be covered by Sheerness and Swale Council |
| I disagree with creating area committees - this question has no options which address this decision, a very manipulative measure. If they were to be created, and no doubt without any democratic vote allowed to the enfranchised populous, I have ticked the preferred option. |
| Including the people in decision making |
| No |
| I don't believe it's a good idea to let them Do anything! |
| Just another way of passing blame and decisions to other people yet swale BC gets all the money to do as they wish |
| This is the work of a Parish Council |
| channel for serious ideas |
| local residents where people can be invited to be heard and as a consultation panel to gather local residents views and feedback to the council on what matters the most and what changes or improvements the residents would like to see in their local area |
| I do not think Area Committees should be able to be involved in funding. This could lead to disparities in areas, be open for criticism etc |
| Dont agree with having committees at all, and they would encourage selfishness and division |
| Must consult 'real' people. Those elected don't. |
| Triage what is needed and then sack any freeloaders that politic. |
| Respond sensitively and positively to local representations and concerns, being driven by local needs and not by wider area pressures. |
| Listen to the concerns of the public about own local ares |
| Purely advisory status |
| Local voting on local matters (referendums even) on major matters |

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| Please make them people led - are the councillors parish/town or Borough ? Presentations? Make them Not to boring. Decisions must be made public so the public feel included and engaged. |
| Public transport issues |
| None of the above |
| Not applicable - don't have them |
| Councillors are bias to one party or another so any committee needs to be able to control the waste of tax payers money at present controlled by individual councillors who refer to it as "My Money" |
| We already have Parish Councils to take decisions on local matters. |
| Eventually making decisions on special funding - weighing up decision making processes clearly for public to see |
| The importance of any interaction is that it is meaningful to both parties. |
| None of the above. Waste of time. Consultations are just lip service exercises. Decisions will already have been taken. |
| too much money has been spent on "consultations" and consultants, high time there was some actual improvements to Sheppey island facilities and infrastructure |
| Also be allowed to present ideas of their own or ideas of fellow local members of the public. |
| Such matters should be delegated to existing parish councils. |
| It should be a mix of all. Members of the public need to be listened to, there is much disenchantment with the political system in this country. Attempts should be made to listen and act on what the general public have to say. |
| Why go back in time |
| I do not think we need another level of decision makers |
| None |
| None of the above as do not agree with a committee style council |
| Local complaints |
| Area committees over the years have been a waste of time. |
| although prefer not to have them. |
| Do not need |
| None of the above. |

Question 3: Who should be invited to attend?

The following text was included with this question in order to manage expectations
Note: Area committees are likely to be fully constituted committees with published agendas, reports and minutes, and with meetings held in public and minuted to record decisions and actions, therefore only borough Councillors could vote on decisions. Other members would be unable to vote in decisions, but would be able to contribute their opinions and views

This was a multiple choice question and people were given the opportunity to choose as many as they wanted

Table 5

| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|---|------------------|------------|
| Swale borough Councillors | 65.07% | 190 |
| local Kent county council Councillors | 35.96% | 105 |
| representatives from local parish and town councils | 72.26% | 211 |
| local service delivery partners (such as Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue, Optivo, Swale Community and Voluntary Services etc) | 67.12% | 196 |
| Other (please specify) | 47.60% | 139 |
| | Answered | 292 |
| | Skipped | 16 |

The 'other' category included a free text box and responses have been copied verbatim into table 6 below

Table 6

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| to include Community Warden, Coastguards, Environment Agency |
| Members of the public not on parish council |
| I don't think committees work well if they are too big. I don't know how many SBC councillors will already be on this committee. I think there needs to be some representation of KCC and local parishes but not too many. Local service delivery partners could attend the meeting as required. |
| You might as well invite Mickey Mouse, the Queen of Sheba and Vlad the Impaler. |
| In view of the answer to question 1 this question is not relevant |
| Nobody |
| Public |
| Local, non-associated members (residents/ general public) or possible elected local representatives (residents) |
| Those attending should be required to report on objectives and deliverables and be made accountable for delivering them |
| residents directly affected by decision making i.e. public being given time to voice concerns rather than 1 representative only and 3 minutes on major planning developments e.g. major Attwood 700 Outline application where over 250 objectors had 1 representative and only 3 minutes. Other parties directly effected had to fight for |

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| a forum for their legitimate and legal based opinion to be put before the planning councillors. |
| Health welfare and social care services |
| Members of the public not necessarily connected to an existing organisation |
| I do not agree with them, but if they are brought in, they should be consultative, with the Borough Councillors and members of the public. |
| Representatives from the local residents. In the same way parents will sit on a board of governors in a school or an executive committee in scouting. They are there to ensure the people who live in the area are remembered. The number could be limited to 3 or 4. |
| School representatives |
| Resident groups |
| Occasionally and when needed...particular experts ie concerning wildlife/environmental concerns. |
| Not sure |
| I do not think that the area committees would serve any purpose which cannot be done by groups which exist already. |
| Voluntary groups. |
| Numbers should be small and meetings as informal as possible - so although membership types should not be restrictive (so good enthusiasts should not be excluded) numbers should be kept low to avoid Meetingitus. There is arguably unsatisfactory history here. |
| Again - public transport operatives need to take part and invited as the local bus service is worse than dire |
| Local community groups |
| Local community groups |
| Representatives from local community groups |
| Resident's Representation where Public Consultation has taken place |
| Local people living in the affected area |
| Nobody |
| Members of the public if they have shown interest in the subject matter eg if they have started a petition locally. Which members of the public are invited would have to change each time |
| Resident groups |
| Community groups/clubs |
| Education providers - a complete cross section of the community |
| A resident representative |
| Anyone who wants to attend. Should be inclusive. |
| Residents |
| dont waste your time |
| Again this question assumes their existence. |
| Resident groups in non parished areas. |
| People who are effected by desicions |
| Any resident |

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| If a decision is to be made around parks then the Swale youth forum or youth organisations should be involved. If there is a decision on housing all social housing/homeless service providers should have an invite. Let's get the right people to the meetings |
| For our village representatives from the school would be a good idea too. |
| Residents who are affected by specific projects or issues. |
| Local residents |
| Members of the public |
| Local residents |
| Local residents |
| Community representatives, local businesses, charities, schools |
| Not required |
| None |
| Other representatives of communities from local organisations |
| NO |
| Nobody as they are not needed. |
| Independent Volunteers |
| Everyone - have open meetings - I personally loved the local engagement meeting as a member of the public you could meet and ask questions about what effected you. |
| Local residents |
| If the happen then public. |
| Dont do this |
| . |
| Local delivery partners - only invite if a particular issue is being discussed. |
| None. Not giving parish councillors a vote isn't right. This is wasting taxpayer money. I don't understand how this will work. You will have a lot more work on your hands |
| Ordinary residents. |
| All meetings should be live streamed and public comments allowed and admistrated as such. Be the transparent example. |
| RESIDENTS! |
| Input should be sought from everyone that is able to benefit local decision making. |
| general public |
| No one - they are not needed |
| We shouldn't have them |
| Why would these agencies attend, the proposal seems to suggest they are simply consultees, a position they already have but rarely use |
| No one, what is the point, the case is not made |
| Local people who feel interested in the area. |
| Locally nominated persons |
| Residents |
| established local business leaders and people invested in the area |
| No one |
| Not needed. Have enough bureaucracy |
| All of the above are invited to parish meetings |

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| Local residents, even though they cannot vote. |
| Leave it to local councils |
| Members of the public! KCC councillors and local service delivery partners should be allowed to attend in an advisory capacity when necessary. Otherwise, we're just creating another level of bureaucracy with the same heads in attendance! |
| The relevant agencies and charities that need to support decisions being made and part of the wider community, on the ground working directly with the community. Maybe offer a couple of independent public seats who are not directly involved with the council. Most certainly at least one Food Bank organiser to provide input from this perspective. |
| No one |
| The General Public |
| Members of the public, Teachers, Swale Citizens Advice, NHS Local Primary Care Networks, Youth Workers. |
| Anyone from the local population who wishes to attend and who lives in the respective area, is of voting age, has a clean criminal record, who is unaffiliated to any political party and has never stood for any local authority seat or parish council seat in the past. Where more than 5 people apply a vote in the respective 'local' area should be held and the most successful 5 appointed for one year. |
| Local residents who actually live in the areas |
| Members that include local residents |
| Local Faversham councillors only. With contributions only from others such as Swale borough councillors, kent police, kent fire, Swale community and voluntary services. |
| Why is this question mandatory when I don't agree with the idea of area committees in the first place? |
| No One |
| Anyone who wants to. |
| Members of the community especially those who volunteer on community projects, these people are often those who are already involved in the area more so than elected officials |
| Residents |
| No barring should be in place but attendees from other bodies should be invited as appropriate. |
| If they are formed then Local Clerks should be invited |
| Faversham Society |
| Local housing associations should also be invited to attend, as they may be able to offer advice, support, resources or maybe even wish to take on some matters themselves. |
| This is sounding to be yet another bureaucratic committee. Members of the public should be able to vote as they are providing the funds through taxation. |
| people who live in the area |
| past parish and town councillors councillors |
| local residents and key business owners |
| Local businesses who may help with future funding in way of sponsorship/partnerships. |

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| Local volunteers |
| local residents and members of local voluntary organisations e.g. churches, youth groups, community organisations |
| The community. We could do it via a WhatsApp group |
| Everyone should be involved as too many decisions are made without proper input from residents and other parties. |
| Individuals who demonstrate they will be negatively impacted by proposed projects. |
| Build in time to listen to others |
| It appeared originally that this was a way of permitting the electorate to have an educated say on what goes on in our area - from the options above it appears to be another level of elected members all mingled together; these people already gave a weekly/monthly say in what happens in our area. The electorate just has to listen, accept and moan. |
| Local committees must be able to be involved in the voting process or it is not valued by the people and dont bother with it! |
| Local people or local businesses |
| Also members of the public who care but are not part of a group - independent thinkers can have some interesting alternative ideas |
| Local special interest and pressure groups (for specific issues) |
| n/a |
| Not applicable - don't have them |
| only borough Councillors could vote on decisions there for question 2 is irrelevant as would be any committee, just another way to claim expenses. |
| If only Borough Councillors can vote there is no point any one sitting on these unnecessary committees |
| Anyone who the committee considers desirable in the matter(s) under discussion |
| Local people. Bus companies |
| If they are implemented then all stakeholders need to be invited to ensure decisions can be made |
| Members of the public |
| Public |
| All depending on the nature/agenda of the meeting. |
| Members of Parliament |
| residents |
| Town Team, other local action groups ie "Plastic Free Sheerness" |
| Selected members of the public |
| Delegate to Parish Councils |
| Don't agree |
| Members of the public, for a specified term, to avoid them becoming dominated by individuals |
| Qqqq |
| A combination of Swale councillors and residents of that area. I feel that the full council itself should approve or not the recommendations of the area committees, not |

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| have spending decions etc made by people who could be marching to the beat of another band. |
| Not needed. Use parish councils with public participation |
| If you're talking about transparency then surely anyone needing it wanting to attend these meeting should be entitled to go |
| Residents as well |
| Should not happen |
| Unnecessary |
| service delivery partners ? has this got a cost ? more expenses ? |
| Non governmental NGOs who operate on swale |
| None of the above. |
| None |

Question 4: How many committees should there be and which areas should they cover?

(a link to a ward map was provided)

Table 7

| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|--|-----------------|------------|
| Three covering:- Faversham (Abbey; Boughton and Courtenay; East Downs; Priory; St Ann’s; Teynham and Lynsted; and Watling)- Sittingbourne (Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow; Borden and Grove Park; Chalkwell; Hartlip, Newington and Upchurch; Homewood; Kemsley; Milton Regis; Murston; Roman; The Meads; West Downs; and Woodstock)- Sheppey (Minster Cliffs; Queenborough and Halfway; Sheerness; Sheppey Central; and Sheppey East) | 18.48% | 51 |
| Four covering - Faversham (as above)- Sittingbourne urban (Chalkwell; Homewood; Kemsley; Milton Regis; Murston; Roman; The Meads; and Woodstock)- Sittingbourne rural (Bobbing, Iwade and lower Halstow; Borden and Grove Park; Hartlip, Newington and Upchurch; West Downs) - Sheppey (as above) | 54.35% | 145 |
| Other (please specify) | 27.27% | 75 |
| | Answered | 276 |
| | Skipped | 32 |

Again the ‘other’ category included a free text box and responses have been copied verbatim into the table below

Table 8

| |
|---|
| None. They will be a total waste of time and OUR money. |
| None |
| There needs to be some ‘competition’ between them when reporting back on progress and deliverable. |
| I do not agree with them, but if they are brought in, as another administrative tier which will come out of my council tax, then there should be no more than 3. |
| Anything that includes Milstead as that seems to have been forgotten! |
| None |
| As above 4 but include bredgar tunstall rodmersham |
| None |
| I think this is a waste of time and money but if you’re not going to listen then at least make it relevent to local people, therefore the smaller coverage the better |
| There should be none and it is disappointing that “none” is not given as a choice. |
| If it’s more than three it would be unfair advantage as normal to sittingbourne |
| five covering Faversham Town, Abbey, Priory St Ann;s Watling Faversham Rural Boughton and Courtney, East Downs, Teynham & Lynsted |

| |
|--|
| Sittingbourne Urban (as above) Sittingbourne Rural (As Above) Sheppey (As Above) |
| Why is Sheppey east always last as if secondary |
| None |
| None |
| None as not needed |
| Rural committee |
| Maybe the Teynham area could sit on 2 committees |
| Teynham conyer lynsted and other rural villages should have thei own group as the issues that face rural communities are different to tjose that face towns. |
| Teynham should have its own rural committee |
| Teynham is rural so why not include it as rural. |
| In addition to the four: I would like to see a rural committee which included Lynsted and Teynham, Newnham, Doddington, Rodmersham, Milstead. |
| Five. If you get sufficient responses from rural wards, perhaps there should be a 'cross boundary' and independent "Rural Voice Committee"? I suspect that would be like herding cats and pretty impossible to chair. I can also see hostility from Parish Councils. Perhaps, if SBC resists a truly "Rural Voice" each of the dominant parties (Sittingbourne and Faversham) should be prepared to set up local sub-groups with responsibility for researching/engaging with the 'mother ships'. Without a "Rural VOice Committee" we will be no better off than we are today - the urban voices always trump the rural voice - and you have to ask yourselves, "why would rural communities engage with a process that fails to represent their voices/opinions. Without "Rural VOice Committee", rural voices will continue to be fractured. |
| An additional area to cover rural areas east of sittingbourne and on the north downs |
| I think there should be five. Faversham, Sittingbourne urban, Sittingbourne rural, sheppy and teynham, lynsyed and norton. Teynham lnted and noton section can include all out lying villages who do not usually get a voice on matters. Especially things like planning |
| Why is Teynham connected to Faversham? Teynham is a very fast expanding village and feel we should stand alone. We do not get the funding that either Faversham or Sittingbourne receive currently. So being attached to either would mean our services wouldn't taken into consideration. |
| Teynham has its own specific needs being more rural than Faversham and should be its own area |
| Can Teynham, Lynsted, Norton, Doddington, Newnham, Oare not have their own area? Similar to the beneficent structure |
| Five Faversham urban Faversham rural including teynham and Lynsted |

| |
|---|
| <p>Sittingbourne urban Sittingbourne rural Sheppey</p> |
| . |
| The Meads to come in with Sittingbourne Rural |
| 0 this won't work. It's evident from the previous administration. Your wasting taxpayer money. |
| The committees should reflect areas of common interest in the matters likely to be considered. Urban and rural areas often have little in common and it may be better to have a separate committee for the rural areas around Faversham. |
| If you look at the make of houses paying council tax. The grps should be decided on income generation. To bigger grps will lead to a dilution of local talent. |
| None These questions are very biased and assume everyone thinks it a good idea. Poor survey |
| None ...make the current structures work ! |
| I do not believe the case is made for any, but if it is to give us a local say then more rather than less would seem the obvious conclusion, but the cost rises and there is no evidence it will have an impact |
| One covering Teynham lynsted and local hamlets |
| Teynham & Lynsted should NOT be part of faversham . Would be better suited as Sittingbourne rural. |
| I do not agree with the concept at all, but if they are created I think Four is better than Three but don't see any rationale for placing Teynham and Lynsted into Faversham, except the cynical one that it is fiddling with the supposed non political balance of the committee. WE are part of the circle of 'rural' that surrounds Sittingbourne, not a satellite of Faversham |
| . |
| More committees! More meetings the majority of the electorate of Swale will not attend. How long will the idea last this time? There is a reason these were scrapped before |
| None |
| If I had to choose one of these options I'd choose the four. However, the area committees idea opens up the possibility of a genuine democratic process. Yes, the Parish Councils are very local but in practice few members of the public get actively involved. We need more area committees where more ordinary people can get involved, would want to do so and have real power to change things. |
| None |
| I live on The Meads but fall under the political boundary of Bobbing. I receive no benefit whatsoever from Bobbing PC except a paltry little notice board at the Meads shops. The boundary of the Meads is wrong. How would you justify my having to be 'Sittingbourne Rural'? Ridiculous to have four. Three committees would be the only way to divide this authority area, as flawed, divisive, ill- considered and partisan as it could not help to be. |

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|--|
| None |
| None. There's no reason for them. |
| Faversham, Sittingbourne, Sheppey and AONB |
| - Faversham (as above) - Sittingbourne urban (Chalkwell; Homewood; Kemsley; Milton Regis; Murston; Roman; The Meads) - Sittingbourne rural (Bobbing, Iwade and lower Halstow; Borden and Grove Park; Hartlip, Newington and Upchurch; West Downs, Woodstock) - Sheppey (as above) |
| If it is allocation of this £1 million budget, then it should be one committee covering all of Swale with fair representation from Faversham, Sittingbourne and Sheppey to prevent any bias. There is no reason why one member from each of the 3 areas couldn't co-ordinate ideas and provide a short list ahead of the meetings, but beyond that it would mean too much bureaucracy, which the public are tired of. Too costly and talk doesn't get things done! |
| Each ward should have their own committee |
| Four, but Sittingbourne Rural to become Swale Rural, comprising what you have in Sittingbourne Rural plus Boughton & Courtenay, East Downs, Teynham & Lynsted |
| Faversham. Sittingbourne is a lost cause. |
| All depends on what the committees are expected to do. Separating out by area divides. Why not by topic? Planning, grants, finance etc - these committees then advise the SBC who can accept or reject. |
| I would say 5, two on sheppey as its a big area to cover for one committee. |
| Teynham etc ward is very big - maybe a Faversham rural |
| None |
| Not applicable - don't have them |
| NONE |
| The whole of the Borough under auspices of Councillors. |
| Urban, Rural and Coastal. |
| None a waste of time and money |
| Qqq |
| Sheppey only |
| Don't agree there is a need |
| NO COMMITTEES |
| There shouldn't be any. |
| Again, the whole of Swale as do not agree with comitee style led council. |
| Where is Tonge on this list? |
| None |
| As a resident of Teynham (a rural area) why are we not in the rural option for the 4 option? |
| None |
| None. |
| No |

Given the question that the working group had around where Teynham and Lynsted should go, we have also analysed specifically results from anyone who identified as coming from that area. In total 26 people stated that they lived in Teynham and Lynsted ward area

Table 9

| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|--|-----------|----|
| Three covering:- Faversham (Abbey; Boughton and Courtenay; East Downs; Priory; St Ann's; Teynham and Lynsted; and Watling)- Sittingbourne (Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow; Borden and Grove Park; Chalkwell; Hartlip, Newington and Upchurch; Homewood; Kemsley; Milton Regis; Murston; Roman; The Meads; West Downs; and Woodstock)- Sheppey (Minster Cliffs; Queenborough and Halfway; Sheerness; Sheppey Central; and Sheppey East) | 7.5% | 2 |
| Four covering - Faversham (as above)- Sittingbourne urban (Chalkwell; Homewood; Kemsley; Milton Regis; Murston; Roman; The Meads; and Woodstock)- Sittingbourne rural (Bobbing, Iwade and lower Halstow; Borden and Grove Park; Hartlip, Newington and Upchurch; West Downs) - Sheppey (as above) | 35% | 9 |
| Other (please specify) | 50% | 13 |
| No response | 7.5% | 2 |

All of the 'other' responses are highlighted in yellow in the table 8 above. Where it is obvious that the respondee is a resident of Teynham (although they have not stated this in question 8) these responses are highlighted in green.

Question 5: What role would the public have?

Again this was a question where you could choose more than one answer. There was also an 'other' category where the respondent could write some text to explain what they would like to see.

Table 10

| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|---|------------------|------------|
| Speaking about an item | 71.85% | 194 |
| Nominating particular project for funding | 64.44% | 174 |
| Advocating for a particular project for funding | 61.85% | 167 |
| Other (please specify) | 30.37% | 82 |
| | Answered | 270 |
| | Skipped | 38 |

Table 11 is all of the text copied verbatim from all 'other' responses

Table 11

| |
|---|
| Without public involvement this exercise is meaningless. |
| Being dictated to by people who are more interested in civering the area with houses for outsiders and wastingour money on the "regeneration" of Sittingboiurne High Street, together with the associated stupidity of changing road layouts and re-routing the A2 through Sittingbourne Station forecourt and between huge new buildings that overpower the area. |
| In view of the answer to question 1 this is not really relevant. |
| All the above presently available by other routes, why duplicate? |
| Seeing the evidence of the committees' work |
| If they go ahead, then I believe they should be consultative, so the public's role should be in speaking and asking questions about the relevant consultations. |
| The same as they do for other elected bodies now |
| Be able to obtain the views of all the local people and services that would be affected |
| Highlighting issues |
| The public should also have the option to speak for longer than 3 minutes (Parish council rule) if the matter is complex, also to question and receive an answer within a reasonable time frame. If the question is answered at the meeting and the response is not to the questioner's satisfaction then further questions should be allowed. Questions asked by the public at Council meetings sometimes received blindingly obvious or irrelevant answers. |
| As consultants to advise on projects during planning and implementation. |
| Having ability to vote o.n decisions |
| None |
| Do you really think they will turn up? |

| |
|--|
| It should ask "could" not "would". The assumption again is that the decision to create these committees has already been taken and this consultation is a merely box-ticking. Shameful. |
| Positions of responsibility with involvement of working parties |
| Open and transparency |
| We should have over all say what the decision should be as all trust has gone in governing bodies |
| Not required |
| None |
| I think they should have a vote on a particular matter, where they have a proven track record of knowledge and campaigning. Often these community members are more knowledgeable than the politicians and less likely yto be voting for short term political gain. |
| Nothing |
| everyone should involved in everything |
| W |
| They won't turn up after the first two meetings, when they find out it does nothing of value to them |
| Initiate policy statements where a particular "Rural Voice" emerges from (e.g. central government or public debate) with some confidence that the Councillors must respond? |
| Should be time limited |
| Complaining about the useless use of taxpayer money to pay for this project. |
| Participation by ordinary residents should give a better knowledge of the 'grass roots' situation in the area. |
| As much as possible. You also need to think about layout. Do not hold a top table layout you will alienate people immediately. If your goal is empowerment do not allow a table to divide yourselves before u even start. |
| Residents should be given not only a voice but a say. Councillors alone are not always reliable as representative of the local residents. Legally they don't even need to reside in the area they are representing, this is ridiculous, if you want real input from the committees, you need real residents speaking on behalf of residents. |
| None - they will say no to everything that has an immediate personal impact on them. Needs to be a wider decision by local authority |
| Don't do it |
| They can have whatever role you allow them, the question is what would they like? I think they would like to have a say, but how does this provide a say above and beyond their current ward representation and a say in what? |
| Observational and reflective. |
| Places & voting rights on various commitees |
| None whatsoever |
| . |

| |
|--|
| The public can speak a parish council meetings. Do you really believe they are more likely to come to this and speak? The public should have a full role whatever the mechanism. |
| Committees duplicating work of local councils |
| Decision-makers. The public have had enough of traditional politics (particularly at a Parliament level). They want something different; they want 'People Power'; this could be a chance to give them it. The local people should be able to mandate their representatives who should enact their wishes. No more party-politicking; genuine direct democracy; that simple. |
| Being involved hands on |
| None. |
| The ability to voice their opinions |
| These questions are too vague and similar. What about the role being more strategic, I.e how will significant town plan or approved development become part of the community and the need to phase in infrastructure supporting significant development a role for this new framework? |
| Whatever the public wish to raise. If by creating these committees you do not trust the local councillors to adequately represent their electoral populous then you should give full audience to the local voting population. |
| There should be members of the public on the committee's who have a say AND a vote |
| Representative membership on the committee's |
| Not sure why funding keeps being brought up, but the public should contribute to the committee whether that be orally or written, with no prerequisite on funding. In many cases I see these committees being set up to resolve local issues that in many cases do not require funding and require input from the community. |
| None |
| W |
| Committee members |
| And Voting. It is our money the council are spending! |
| Full participation including voting rights |
| Giving information about the area they live in and it's issues, problems and needs feedback on local issues and the opportunity in coming up with solutions and support for the council. Its imporant that local people can identify and feedback on issues and important matters for their area. |
| The 'public' must have a say in everything! |
| Help triage problems. Be involved at every level |
| Public should have a say in how council use resources and send money |
| Opposing funding of a particular project |
| Relating personal feelings about their own areas |
| Advisory |
| Voting on major decisions especially housing, roads, and contracts that dont work (think KCC grass cutting corners) |
| Input, some local people have better ideas or alternative ideas |
| I believe the public are the key and need to be more included |

| |
|---|
| Not applicable - don't have them |
| It would serve no purpose as already stated in question 3, only borough Councillors could vote on decisions. They should already be holding surgeries to meet the people they represent |
| None |
| Bringing to attention generally the state of matters prevailing in their wards whether matters of commission or omission which have effect on their quality of life or which which are in contravention of prescribed rules or procedures |
| Engaging local community schools churches, businesses and setting up voluntary groups to ensure area is pleasant to live in and offers social engagement opportunities |
| All, depending on the agenda/purpose of the meeting |
| Should be put to a referendum first. Councillors fought against Sheerness body so why the change? |
| Join a Parish Council |
| Don't agree |
| Involved on the same level as other committee members, with voting rights on allocation of funds |
| Voting on a recommendation to be sent to full council for approval |
| Via full council, joint transportation board etc or via their locally elected member |
| Under this coalition council, the public wouldn't be given a role. |
| Local complaint page ? |
| It won't make a difference. Never has done |
| None. Again, unqualified people making decisions. |
| No |

Question 6: How often would you be willing to attend an area committee?

Table 12

| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Quarterly (4 times a year) | 52.84% | 121 |
| Six monthly (2 times a year) | 11.79% | 27 |
| Bi-monthly (6 times a year) | 17.47% | 40 |
| Other (please specify) | | 52 |
| | Answered | 229 |
| | Skipped | 79 |

Table 13

| |
|--|
| Never. Better things to do with my time. |
| In view of the answer to question1 this question is not really relevant. |
| None |
| And as necessary to see that progress is being made with the activities |
| Any more than twice a year - depending on the consultations - would just attract the same old people from organisations and groups with a vested interest. |
| When possible |
| I wouldnt |
| I myself am unlikely to be available or indeed appropriate to attend. |
| In addition to bi-monthly the need could arise for extraordinary meetings to be arranged in the event of unexpected developments |
| Never |
| I give them two meetings maximum |
| Never. These would be expensive to run, an enormous drain on already stretched council workers. |
| Monthly |
| 0 |
| Never |
| Never |
| Don't need them |
| Formal meetings (quarterly or bi-monthly) must also have ability to 'convene virtually' through email exchanges initiated by the Chair and Secretary - 'virtual Committee' Meetings to be able to react to issues that have short 'lead in' times. |
| This is a waste of money. |
| Plus any meeting called due to special circumstances. |
| Even monthly if the need arises |
| None |
| None |
| I see no point in attending, the case is not made |
| Dont do it |

| |
|--|
| . |
| Depends how effectual the meetings are. If the majority of money is already spent; the meetings are pointless |
| Never |
| They should be able to be called for important reasons between these times. |
| Never. |
| Committee specific attendances, which may mean resolving the committee objective within weeks/months. Anything that goes into years needs a serious review of its objectives. |
| Never |
| More times than any representative from Tonge Parish Council intends to, for the sole purpose of pushing back on any schemes they have an interest in. You see what a shambles it would quickly become? Just like Westminster! |
| Monthly |
| It should be driven by when there is budget to allocate. It is pointless listening to a problems / wish list from the public if there are not resources available to address the issues raised. |
| Every month |
| Meetings are full of overplayed paper pushers that like the sound of their voice. These 'meetings' should be digital and everyone has a say |
| 3 meeting a year - meet up every 4 months , |
| n/a |
| Not applicable - don't have them |
| Never |
| Weekly |
| I wouldn't. |
| I wouldn't |
| Never - area committees not needed |
| I could manage monthly. |
| None- as do not agree |
| None. There shouldn't be one |
| When needed |
| Should not happen |
| None. |
| No |

Question 7: Any other, comments, thoughts or suggestions?

This was a totally open ended question with a free text box. We had 134 responses to this question and they are shown verbatim below. 173 people didn't answer this question.

| |
|--|
| <p>Although I am not a member of Facebook, there are some local forums with some great ideas debated by people who'd never approach official channels to get their ideas pushed forward. These are small things like siting of bins, benches etc, ideas for 'empty' spaces, childrens groups that may like some one off funding etc. It would be great if these groups were browsed by 'people with power', to get these ideas directed to where they may be acted upon. Maybe these Area Committees could have their own Facebook page.</p> |
| <p>There needs to be a clear need for these area committees defined and desired and indeed in some instances led by the public otherwise this will peter out like neighbourhood watch has done.</p> |
| <p>Stop buiding more and more houses for people who don't live in the area and who are making already overstretched resources and infrastructure likely to collapse completely.</p> |
| <p>None</p> |
| <p>Just making more trains for the gravy.... Where does the money for this come from? Surely preserving and indeed improving services is a better use of resources.</p> |
| <p>Having gone through the survey, I 'now' realise it wasn't just about one area. I did find the survey quite confusing and did not feel clear on what I was answering.</p> |
| <p>In theory this is a great idea. Where it will fail is if decisions are made alongside political party lines rather than what the local residents wish. Also, there should be clarity on share of the funds for each committee/ area or which ever way the funds are made available - ensuring that the funds are shared fairly, not based on total population in the committee's area (voters)</p> |
| <p>It should be clear what funds are available, what they can be used for, how they are allocated, how they are being used, what the deliverables are and how they are being met. It should show how effective funds are and the return-in whatever form is applicable- that is benefiting the community.</p> |
| <p>I am concerned at misrepresentation of opinions as "law" or "facts" reported in minutes and published in local press. Also the lack of respect evident in some public comments on local matters. Inflammatory comments by the public should be discouraged as this "muddies" the actual mater being discussed and deliberated upon and can lead to effectually "public bullying" (lynch mob mentality) rather than reasoned debate. Passionate views are one thing but when this spills over into public abuse and inflammatory and incorrect "facts" on SBC web sites needs monitoring and respect reminders being also published to (oft repeat) offenders.</p> |
| <p>The environmental and infrastructure</p> |
| <p>This committee is really needed for Swale to get input from the general public</p> |
| <p>Any public involvement including parish councils would be advantageous</p> |
| <p>Whilst difficult, it is important to include people who have an interest in the community but not necessarily party politics or attached to an existing organisation which could lead to a conflict of interest</p> |

| |
|--|
| If you really want to engage with the public go out to where they live - set up a stall by the local shops, or on the village green |
| None |
| This will work if the people who live in the area are included on the committee. |
| Just to include small businesses and residents of each village |
| It's great to hear that the current council want to get the public involved. The former council couldn't care less about what public thought and went ahead and did what benefited themselves (housing developments which are unsuitable for the area). Great job guys! Keep it up ☐ |
| Vary location of meeting and publish agenda publically in advance to allow public involvement. Possibly...if a particularly major funding is being considered....set that meeting in an accessible place for those who may be affected. |
| Fear that the usual "mouth pieces" get on these committees. Residents would be resentful! |
| I cannot see that hey would serve any useful purpose, they would have a cost to administer and the means of making such decisions already exists through using local representatives. |
| My family no longer goes into Sittingbourne town as we do not feel safe. |
| None |
| Involve local community groups and volunteers |
| I admire the aspiration but (perhaps through ignorance) am not persuaded that there should be another layer of consultation. It might be better to have 4 (or 3) Area-based readily accessible web noticeboards of suggestions, one list being from local councillors in the 4 Areas and another from the public. There could be brief comment areas. This could broaden areas of thinking and facilitate solutions by Councillors, if they chose to address issues. But of course there could be downsides too. |
| personal attendance, if unable, could also include correspondence via e-mail |
| Very pleased to see the public are now being more widely consulted rather than having unpopular decisions thrust upon them. Thank you |
| Make sure local people know about these initiatives - I hadn't seen this survey personally, it was shared by a Faversham Facebook group I belong to. Using social media and opt-in email Comms would be useful as this is how a large number of people communicate these days. |
| It's no wonder people don't fill these questionnaires in, answers and decisions have already been made! |
| We should prioritise reducing pollution and conserving nature and green spaces urgently |
| N/A |
| . |
| Excellent idea, as long as the committees really do stay local and are not hi-jacked by politics, parties and government officials. |
| The people should have as much input that affects that community |
| No |
| No |

| |
|--|
| I think this could help in bringing a bit of pride to the area, which is what I think Swale lacks. Plus consulting with local communities is key to so many other funding streams that if you are doing it already it will unlock so much more funding (providing there are the officers to bid for the funding or community groups who could bid on the council's behalf) |
| If people are good enough to collect council tax from, then they should be good enough to vote how it's spent too. It's one thing to vote for councillors to manage the affairs of the council but they shouldn't be responsible for all decisions on their own |
| Feel it essential there is an accessible way for the "ordinary" person to be heard at these committees |
| Political apathy will take over and sadly they won't work. Good idea but democracy will win. |
| None |
| The role of the Area Committees must be clearly designed to enhance decision making for Swale without undermining the Parish Councils and local independence. |
| Having area Facebook pages would be good for councilors to stay in contact with local issues. MPs too would be the hope.. But ours doesn't really like listening to the local people ☐ |
| do something more practical and as local as possible, why would someone in Iwade, go to a meeting in Sittingbourne to discuss something in Murston? |
| Area committees are a waste of time, will achieve nothing without power and money, will achieve divisions if they are allocated power and money (does Sheppey get more to spend than Faversham?) , and they will be expensive to staff. |
| No |
| I would want there to be real extra added value. We already have Parish Councils and can attend Borough meetings. There is also KALC. If this is just a funding mechanism then paper applications and a board would be more efficient use of resources. If it's a forum for discussion make sure it doesn't duplicate existing mechanisms. |
| Open and honest |
| no |
| . |
| It's a great idea to get residents to participate in local issues |
| Make these councillors past & present accountable for the waist of public funds |
| If merged with Faversham Engagement Forum this would be a great way to ensure public engagement (The forum does include the parishes of Boughton Dunkirk Graveney & Selling) |
| No |
| It's a waste of money |
| Waste of time |
| Stupid idea. We have parish and town councils for some of this and also this is what I think our elected councillors should be doing anyway. |
| No |

| |
|--|
| Teynham and Lynsted have felt ignored and neglected by Borough and County particularly in relation to transport and roads which are greatly affected by planning issues. |
| Change venues so all areas get to visit each others areas |
| No |
| Rural areas shouldn't be lumped in with towns the issues they face are different! |
| Online portal for residents to give direct feedback on issues- will give residents an opportunity to offer solutions/ suggestions/vent etc with a 'what you said' 'what we did'. This will make people feel their opinions are heard but also addressed or not and if not why not. |
| Teynham needs to fall under the Faversham area as its more appropriate |
| Save public money or better still pass it to pc's to use for their area. Area committees are not needed. |
| Some idea of how this is different may help, but as it is it seems like a poorly thought through quango, designed to give the appearance of public involvement, the same public who don't turn out to elect representatives in the first place |
| If you don't want mass abandonment by rural residents, you really need quickly to establish actions based on their interests (as appropriate of course). In our community, we have seen two significant projects fail because of lack of communication and accountability of Officials and Councillors - the downgrading of the Parish/Village Design Statement (Please reinstate them into local planning instruments!); and the "Greening Greenstreet" project (Championed by the late John Disney) simply allowed to withered and died by both Parish COuncils involved. This failure of responsibility or ownership by PCs makes the strongest argument for the creation of a "Rural Voice Committee". |
| Keep up the good work |
| This is an excellent idea which would gain far more support if it were more widely publicised. I have only seen the consultation on Facebook, which is not used by all. However this moves forward, it is imperative that it is inclusive... particularly in the engagement of young people. |
| No |
| Make sure that this consultation is valid. Ask for names or addresses because somebody could do many supporting or many against. You didn't think this out. Wouldn't be surprised if you tamed this consultation. |
| Basically a very good idea provided that don't involve too many restrictions on the way members can participate. |
| RESIDENTS RESIDENTS RESIDENTS These committees are pointless if not including residents. If it's another councillor only function then there is no point, I expect councillors to already be meeting and discussing their local areas, progressing issue and affecting change. If they are not, they are not doing what they were elected for. |
| Poor survey - assumes everyone will think it's a good idea. Appalling idea |
| Area committees are a way of local people engaging with their elected representatives. Other authorities can also attend to update residents and councillors on local issues |
| - |

| |
|--|
| Why do it ? |
| Council engaging with the community is always good practice as involve the citizens and their contribution to the area development |
| Seperate rural from urban areas please, the demands & differences are akin to chalk & cheese |
| These committees should offer a very different offer to the current Parish councils to avoid duplication. Furthermore they should draw upon a more professional base for credibility and effectiveness. |
| Residents with professional backgrounds should be identified to give their expertise on given areas |
| Why not give the funds, or a significant portion of them to local ward councillors, there is no reason why they couldn't cooperate across ward boundaries if there was reason to do so |
| . |
| Use the elected bodies that already exist. Why make more meetings that even fewer people will attend or the 'same faces'. |
| N/A |
| In Faversham and surrounding villages local councils are performing |
| As I have indicated already, this is a golden opportunity. However talk is not good enough. Will politicians do what they should be doing, that is: hand power to the people and be the representatives they should be? Or is this another paper exercise designed to make more people in suits look good?to make |
| This is adding another layer of beurecracy which will cost taxpayers more mine. The old area committees were very poorly attended and added no value. They should definitely not be allowed to allocate Mon. |
| This committee will not meet regularly enough to decide planning issues. It would be a good idea if the committee created working groups to liaise with developers and forthcoming sites for consideration. |
| No expenses to be paid to any local authority or parish councillor or other committee member. Local authority or parish councillors to declare at the meeting if they are or intend to claim expenses 're their attendance at the meeting. Basic subsidence only to be provided at each meeting - tea, coffee & biscuits. All meetings to be held at locations within the respective area and no location to hold a meeting twice running. All meetings to be open to the public. No agendas, meetings or minutes to be restricted or closed to public or press access or attendance. |
| Local residents (at least 2) should be included on the committee's to show the council's willingness to include residents in decisions being made about the areas in which they live |
| Only choose committees with very specific objectives,always use a rotating chair(becomes to political otherwise). Make sure the committees are not trying to solve global issues,stick to local ones. Any committee that cannot resolve objective of the committee locally(can use third parties,police,fire brigade,local communities) then the committee should be disbanded. |
| Scrap this waste of tax payers money |

| |
|--|
| <p>You know as well as I do that these committees will be headed by the friends and family of parish councillors, so would be of no benefit to anyone but themselves.</p> |
| <p>It's vital that the public and community leaders more than elected members have a greater voice at these meetings.</p> |
| <p>Elected members already have a number of meetings and roles where they hold the sway of power and influence</p> |
| <p>Only local residents can truly know the needs of their local community. It makes sense for them to have resources to enable them to meet those needs</p> |
| <p>How will the committees interact with the Local Councils</p> |
| <p>Very good idea</p> |
| <p>Not at this time.</p> |
| <p>none</p> |
| <p>Definitely no fiscal powers or responsibilities, that is for Councillors who are elected .</p> |
| <p>Ensure meetings are well publicised and varied locations</p> |
| <p>no</p> |
| <p>No</p> |
| <p>Not at this time.</p> |
| <p>Communication from the Council to the public is fundamental. Whilst social media is the 'go to' method, we also have a large age group who prefer the local newspaper and hard copy correspondence. The SBC has failed in the past to ensure its entire electorate is fully informed (which, when part of a consultation process, left it wide open for criticism that it did not want public participation). "Inside Swale" mag is helpful if you want to know about bins and recycling, but less gloss and more editorial would make it far better. THE SBC website is just dire compared with other Councils. It lacks design and isn't user friendly.</p> |
| <p>Don't hire private firms like kingdom that line their own pockets by pouncing on unsuspecting public. The fact that they're here at all makes me think the whole process is currupt</p> |
| <p>Make sure their is time for people to have a say</p> |
| <p>It is truly visionary that the council is even considering it, well done. You MUST allow locals to vote on major stuff, especially roads, planning and similar projects.</p> |
| <p>Members of Newnham Parish Council question the need for what appears to be a fourth tier of local democracy and bureaucracy in decision making, with its inherent financial repercussions. We agree with the ethos of devolving power making and decisions to local areas. However, Parish Councillors are also elected members, who are closest to the community and would be better placed to help decide what is needed in their areas. Parish Council meetings already provide an opportunity to the local community to observe and take part in decision-making. It appears as though you are trying to re-invent the wheel.</p> |
| <p>The idea is a waste of tax payers money</p> |
| <p>Our councillors are already busy people with so many meetings to attend they really do not need any more</p> |
| <p>Vary careful consideration would need to be given to membership and a realistic, formal written constitution.</p> |

| |
|--|
| I think care needs to be taken that the local community is genuinely involved and listened to in these meetings and that the complications of decision making processes are clearly laid out |
| These should have a say on housing, infrastructure, local needs etc |
| Love the idea of involving communities in decisions making and being consulted. The challenge will be in attracting participation, more so possibly in some areas than others, and maintaining attendance. Strong community champions may be required. |
| First ask electorate if they want it. Do not take response to this on line survey as a guide to the whole borough wanting this. |
| Nil |
| Great idea, when can we start |
| If area committees are set up, I would be interested in being a member of the public for the Sheppey area. Could you please let me know what I would need to do to participate? Thank you. |
| This could be a good thing. But please make sure that money is not squandered on setting this up if it isn't going to work. I think everyone has a part to play in making this country a better place for everyone. |
| Why are you trying to add another layer of bureaucracy and cost to the taxpayers |
| Why not leave it as it is |
| Would like to see non associated members of the public at the forefront of this type of committee otherwise it will be a case of toooooo many chiefs etc |
| Work on current parish councils instead . They can engage their parishes, allocate funds etc |
| I think I have already said what i need to |
| Just think it should be a mix of Councillors and residents |
| More consultation opportunities the better. |
| Why change what already works well for residents and increase costs to the tax payers of Swale |
| Keep the current system and don't time warp back to the 1970s!!! |
| Get the local schools involved |
| Please no |
| Waste of time. Has this new council not good enough things to do other than pass things to the public. Do your job and make decisions. |
| Be rid of this ludicrous, ancient idea. |
| great idea |

Question 8 What ward do you live in?

167 people answered this question, 11 of those who answered were not clear with their responses or used the free text box to say they didn't want to say where they were from.

| Answer Choices | Responses | |
|----------------------------------|------------------|------------|
| Abbey | 1.20% | 2 |
| Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow | 5.39% | 9 |
| Borden and Grove Park | 20.96 | 35 |
| Boughton and Courtenay | 2.40% | 4 |
| Chalkwell | 1.80% | 3 |
| East Downs | 3.59% | 6 |
| Hartlip, Newlington and Upchurch | 4.19% | 7 |
| Homewood | 7.19% | 12 |
| Kemsley | 2.40% | 4 |
| Milton Regis | 1.80% | 3 |
| Minster Cliffs | 1.20% | 2 |
| Murston | 1.80% | 3 |
| Priory | 0.60% | 1 |
| Queenborough and Halfway | 1.80% | 3 |
| Roman | 1.80% | 3 |
| Sheerness | 2.99% | 5 |
| Sheppey Central | 1.80% | 3 |
| Sheppey East | 1.20% | 2 |
| St Ann's | 2.40% | 4 |
| Teynham and Lynstead | 15.57% | 26 |
| The Meads | 0.60% | 1 |
| Watling | 4.19% | 7 |
| West Downs | 4.19% | 7 |
| Woodstock | 2.40% | 4 |
| Unclear | 6.59% | 11 |
| | Answered | 167 |
| | Skipped | 140 |

Appendix II

AREA COMMITTEES – SUGGESTED DELEGATIONS IN THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

- To take executive function decisions in relation to any works or services to be provided in its Area out of its funding
- To decide its own annual work programme and Area Action Plan and the spending of its funds within these terms of reference
- To make comments on strategic development matters affecting either its own area or the Borough as a whole;
- To make representations in the form of reports, 'action requests' or recommendations to the Cabinet or the Council as the case may be on council services, except for development management and licensing, relating to its Area:

- To provide 'area intelligence' to the Cabinet and relevant heads of services
- To assist with policy development on matters pertinent to its area, including the power to make recommendations to the Cabinet or Council on policy changes.
- To develop an Area Action Plan to deliver locally determined priorities
- To respond to any other specific matter referred to it by the Cabinet, the council or a senior council officer.

Appendix III

POSSIBLE COSTS OF ESTABLISHING AREA COMMITTEES

Assuming there would be three area committees meeting four times a year, estimated costs of establishing area committees would be along the lines of the following illustration.

Note there are no senior and other officer costs included over and above those for Democratic Services and a secretariat-type support.

The table is offered purely as an illustration of the types of costs involved. A More detailed analysis would be required to establish the true costs involved.

| Item | Cost (£) |
|---|------------------|
| Venue hire - @ £150 x 4 meetings per year x 3 area committees | 1,800.00 |
| * Basic staff costs - @ £96.20 per day x 4 meetings per year plus preparatory and follow-up work x 3 committees | 1,154.40 |
| ** Advanced staff costs - @ 155.40 per day x 4 meetings per year plus preparatory and follow-up work x 3 committees | 1,864.80 |
| *** Chairman's Special Responsibility Allowance @ 1930.98 x 3 chairmen | 5,792.94 |
| Total | 10,612.14 |

* This essentially is the support provided by Democratic Services to prepare and publish agendas and reports and take minutes of meetings, book venues and invite speakers etc. and any general follow-up work

** This is a very rudimentary estimate of the type of higher-level officer support needed to provide a secretariat-type function to the committees – work planning; action-chasing; research; report writing etc.

*** Based on Special Responsibility Allowance for Licensing and Audit Committee Chairmen (i.e. 10% of the Leader's entitlement) – n.b. No current provision in Members Scheme of Allowances to pay a Special Responsibility Allowance for area committee chairmen.

Parish and Town Councils in each area (by Parliamentary constituency)

| Constituency | Borough Wards (no. of members) | Parishes (no. of members) |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|
| Faversham and Mid Kent | Abbey (2) | Faversham Town Council (14) – Abbey Ward |
| | Boughton and Courtenay (2) | Boughton-under-Blean Parish Council (11) |
| | | Dunkirk Parish Council (7) |
| | | Graveney with Goodnestone Parish Council (7) |
| | | Hernhill Parish Council (7) |
| | | Selling Parish Council (7) |
| | | Sheldwich, Badlesmere and Leaveland Parish Council (9) – Shelwich Ward |
| | East Downs (1) | Doddington Parish Council (7) |
| | | Eastling Parish Council (5) |
| | | Newnham Parish Council (7) |
| | | Ospringe Parish Council (9) |
| | | Sheldwich, Badlesmere and Leaveland Parish Council (9) – Badlesmere Ward |

| Constituency | Borough Wards (no. of members) | Parishes (no. of members) |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| | | Sheldwich, Badlesmere and Leaveland Parish Council (9) – Leaveland Ward |
| | | Stalisfield Parish Council (5) |
| | | Throwley Parish Council (7) |
| | Priory (1) | Faversham Town Council (14) – Priory Ward |
| | St Ann’s (2) | Faversham Town Council (14) – St Ann’s Ward |
| | Watling (2) | Faversham Town Council (14) – Watling Ward |
| Sittingbourne and Sheppey | Bobbing, Iwade and Lower Halstow (2) | Bobbing Parish Council (9) – Bobbing Ward |
| | | Iwade Parish Council (11) |
| | | Lower Halstow Parish Council (7) |
| | Borden and Grove Park (2) | Bobbing Parish Council (9) – Grove Park Ward |
| | | Borden Parish Council (13) |
| | Chalkwell (1) | - |
| | Harlip, Newington and Upchurch (2) | Hartlip Parish Council (7) |
| | | Newington Parish Council (11) |
| | | Upchurch Parish Council (9) |

| Constituency | Borough Wards (no. of members) | Parishes (no. of members) | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|---|---|
| | | | |
| | Homewood (2) | - | |
| | Kemsley (2) | - | |
| | Milton Regis (2) | - | |
| | Murston (2) | - | |
| | Roman (2) | - | |
| | Teynham and Lynsted (2) | | Lynsted with Kingsdown Parish Council (9) |
| | | | Norton, Buckland and Stone Parish Council (5) |
| | | | Oare Parish Council (7) |
| | | | Teynham Parish Council (11) |
| | | Tonge Parish Council (5) | |
| | The Meads (1) | Bobbing Parish Council (9) - The Meads Ward | |
| | West Downs (1) | Bapchild Parish Council (7) | |
| | | Bredgar Parish Council (7) | |
| | | Milstead Parish Council (5) | |
| | | Rodmersham Parish Council (7) | |

| Constituency | Borough Wards (no. of members) | Parishes (no. of members) | |
|--------------|--------------------------------|---|--|
| | | Tunstall Parish Council (7) – Tunstall Rural Ward | |
| | Woodstock (2) | Tunstall Parish Council (7) – Tunstall Urban Ward | |
| | | | |
| | Minster Cliffs (3) | Minster-on-Sea Parish Council (11) – Minster North Ward | |
| | Queenborough and Halfway (3) | Queenborough Town Council (11) | |
| | Sheerness (3) | Sheerness Town Council (9) | |
| | Sheppey Central (3) | Minister-on-Sea Parish Council (11) – Minister South Ward | |
| | Sheppey East (2) | | Eastchurch Parish Council (7) |
| | | | Leysdown Parish Council (7) |
| | | | Minister-on-Sea Parish Council (11) – Minister East Ward |
| | | Warden Parish Council (7) | |

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| | |
|------------------------|------------------------|
| Cabinet Meeting | Agenda Item: 12 |
|------------------------|------------------------|

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Meeting Date | 12 February 2020 |
| Report Title | STG Building Control Partnership Business Plan 2020 to 2023 |
| Cabinet Member | Cllr Mike Baldock, Cabinet Member for Planning |
| SMT Lead | Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration |
| Head of Service | James Freeman, Head of Planning |
| Lead Officer | James Freeman, Head of Planning |
| Recommendations | The Draft South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership Business and Delivery Plans for 2020 to 2023 be agreed. |

1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to consider and make any comments on the draft STG shared Building Control Partnership (STG) Business and Delivery Plans 2020 to 2023 and to refer the comments to the Joint Committee.

2 Background

- 2.1 STG Building Control Partnership (involving Medway, Canterbury, Gravesham and Swale) went live in October 2007 with Canterbury joining in April 2018. Under the terms of the Memorandum Agreement between the four partner authorities, a three year rolling business plan needs to be agreed.
- 2.2 Each partner authority must advise the Secretary to the Joint Committee whether it approves or rejects the revised draft business plan by no later than 10 days before the Annual Meeting of the Joint Committee in June each year
- 2.3 Whilst much of the Building Control Partnership operation is subject to competition from Approved Inspectors, the service retains statutory responsibilities regarding public protection e.g. dangerous structures, demolitions, unauthorised works and maintaining registers etc.
- 2.4 Over the past few years, the service has had to compete with 'Approved Inspectors' within an increasingly competitive and shrinking market, which has put pressure on income generation within the service and correspondingly has put pressure on the resourcing of the service itself. The ability to adapt to this new competitive environment has been a major benefit of a combined authority shared service and has facilitated significant improvements on embracing digital

transformation, including the freedoms and accessibility that remote and agile working operations deliver, improving the customer experience and introducing efficiencies and savings to service delivery.

- 2.7 During this difficult period, whilst there has been some impact on service performance, the management team has ensured that communication with customers has been paramount to service delivery with no noticeable increase in customer dissatisfaction being recorded.

3. Proposal

- 3.1 The plan includes actions to maintain progress towards;
- Continue to meet customer needs and expectations;
 - Maximisation of technology to reduce costs and continue to improve the way the service operates;
 - Valuing and supporting the development of staff
- 3.2 Over the past years, the contributions from each partner has seen year on year savings and in recent years that has been secured via the use of a small reserve fund. However, given the pressures being experienced by the service, there are limited opportunities for further reductions without impacting significantly on service delivery and performance. Accordingly, it is proposed that whilst there is a very minor reduction in contribution in 20/21, it is forecast that each authority would be looking for a small additional contribution of £2,600 over the following two years. This position will be kept under review through the roll forward of the Business Plan. Details of the financial plan 2020-23 are included in Appendix I.
- 3.3 The Cabinet needs to advise the secretary to the Joint Committee whether it approves without amendment or approves with further proposed modifications to the Business plan to be agreed with partner authorities or rejects the revised draft business plan.

4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 The Council could consider removing itself from the partnership. However, whilst the Council is facing significant pressures on its revenue budget over the next few years, the success of the building control partnership has been recognised in that the efficiencies secured since its inception would have significantly exceeded any potential savings as a single authority service given the economies of scale a shared partnership presented. This has been borne out through separate reviews undertaken at the respective partner authorities, particularly in Canterbury City Council's recent decision to join the service. Therefore, it is not recommended at this stage that the authority should consider removing itself from the partnership although, as contained in the Business Plan, there are proposals to review how

consultancy services can be promoted to increase potential income and how best to make use of the existing staff abilities and experience to achieve efficiencies.

5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Business Plan has been considered and agreed by the Joint Authorities Committee overseeing the operation of the Building Control partnership. This has involved Councillor Tim Gibson as the authority's representative on the Joint Committee.

6 Implications

| Issue | Implications | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------|---------|--------|--|---------|--------|--------------|---------|--------|----------------|---------|--------|--------------|
| Corporate Plan | The Partnership has built resilience into the service that supports the Council's aim to provide well run customer focussed services. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Financial, Resource and Property | <p>Appendix I sets out the details of the financial plan accompanying the Business Plan.</p> <p>It is proposed to increase the total partner contribution over the three year plan by £2,214 (3.5%).</p> <p>The contributions for Swale BC are as follows:</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Year</th> <th>Contribution (£'s)</th> <th>Change from previous year (£'s)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>2019/20</td> <td>63,440</td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td>2020/21</td> <td>63,042</td> <td>-398 (-0.6%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2021/22</td> <td>65,029</td> <td>+1,987 (+3.1%)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>2022/23</td> <td>65,654</td> <td>+625 (+1.0%)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>At Swale, the medium term financial plan will accommodate the proposed contributions as stated above.</p> | Year | Contribution (£'s) | Change from previous year (£'s) | 2019/20 | 63,440 | | 2020/21 | 63,042 | -398 (-0.6%) | 2021/22 | 65,029 | +1,987 (+3.1%) | 2022/23 | 65,654 | +625 (+1.0%) |
| Year | Contribution (£'s) | Change from previous year (£'s) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2019/20 | 63,440 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2020/21 | 63,042 | -398 (-0.6%) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2021/22 | 65,029 | +1,987 (+3.1%) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 2022/23 | 65,654 | +625 (+1.0%) | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Legal and Statutory | The Partnership and Joint Committee operate under a memorandum of agreement signed by each of the partner authorities. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Crime and Disorder | Effective control and enforcement of building standards and dealing with dangerous structures is consistent with an increased perception of security and wellbeing. | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Risk Management and Health and Safety | This is detailed in Section Three of the Service Delivery Documentation, focussing on the highly competitive market the partnership operates within as well as a lack of investment in staff | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|
| | development and IT solutions. |
| Health and Well Being | None identified at this stage. |
| Equality and Diversity | None identified at this stage. |
| Sustainability | None identified at this stage. |

7 Appendices

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

- Appendix I: South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership – Business Plan 2020 – 23
- Appendix II: South Thames Gateway Building Control Partnership – Service delivery Plan 2020-23

8 Background Papers

None.

Three year Budget Build and Contribution Calculation for 2020/21 to 2022/2023

| | <u>2020/21</u> <u>Budget</u> | <u>2021/22</u> <u>Budget</u> | <u>2022/23</u> <u>Budget</u> |
|--|---|---|---|
| Staffing | 1,607,066 | 1,638,738 | 1,655,648 |
| Premises | 57,145 | 58,288 | 59,453 |
| Transport | 78,352 | 78,516 | 78,682 |
| Supplies and Services | 161,787 | 189,336 | 189,533 |
| Support Services | 44,998 | 45,898 | 46,816 |
| Total Cost: | <u>1,949,348</u> | <u>2,010,777</u> | <u>2,030,132</u> |
| Contributions | (300,200) | (309,660) | (312,640) |
| Income | <u>(1,649,148)</u> | <u>(1,701,117)</u> | <u>(1,717,492)</u> |
| Total Income | <u>(1,949,348)</u> | <u>(2,010,777)</u> | <u>(2,030,132)</u> |
| Chargeable 84.6% | (1,649,148) | (1,701,117) | (1,717,492) |
| Non-Chargeable 15.4% | <u>(300,200)</u> | <u>(309,660)</u> | <u>(312,640)</u> |
| | <u>(1,949,348)</u> | <u>(2,010,777)</u> | <u>(2,030,132)</u> |
| Authority and Agreed Percentage | <u>2020/21</u> <u>Budget</u> | <u>2021/22</u> <u>Budget</u> | <u>2022/23</u> <u>Budget</u> |
| Canterbury - 23% | (69,046) | (71,222) | (71,907) |
| Gravesham - 15% | (45,030) | (46,449) | (46,896) |
| Swale - 21% | (63,042) | (65,029) | (65,654) |
| Medway - 41% | <u>(123,082)</u> | <u>(126,961)</u> | <u>(128,182)</u> |
| | <u>(300,200)</u> | <u>(309,660)</u> | <u>(312,640)</u> |

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Recommendations for approval

Swale Joint Transportation Board – 13 January 2020

Minute No. 437 – Formal Objections to TRO Swale Amendment 7 – Proposed Double Yellow Lines, Cormorant Road, Iwade

(1) That Members note the formal objections received to the advertised Traffic Regulation Order and that the proposed double yellow lines in Cormorant Road, Iwade be progressed and the Seafront and Engineering Manager consult with Councillor Mike Baldock and Kent County Councillor Mike Whiting to consider whether all three roads at this junction be installed with double yellow lines.

Minute No. 438 – Informal Consultation Results – Proposed Waiting Restrictions at The Street, Oare

(1) That Members note the results of the recent informal consultation and officers proceed with the Traffic Regulation Order to install the double yellow lines.

Minute No. 439 – Proposed Loading Ban – The Mall/Nelson Street, Faversham – Update

(1) That Members note the contents of the report and officers proceed with the installation of the loading ban at a revised length of 10 metres on the north side of the Nelson Street junction in The Mall, with loading permitted between 10am-11am and 4pm-5pm.

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