



## AGENDA

### COUNCIL MEETING

Date: Wednesday, 7 October 2020

Time: 7.00pm

Venue: Virtual meeting via Skype\*

Quorum = 16

#### RECORDING NOTICE

Please note: this meeting may be recorded and may be published on the Council's website.

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

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

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

#### INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

\*Members of the press and public can listen to this meeting live. Details of how to join the meeting will be added the website after 4pm on Tuesday 6 October 2020.

#### Privacy Statement

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1. Apologies for Absence

2. Minutes

To approve the [Minutes](#) of the Meeting held on 17 June 2020 (Minute Nos. 697 - 713) as a correct record.

3. Declarations of Interest

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

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

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

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

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

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

4. Mayor's Announcements

5. Motion - Planning Reform

This Council considers the Government's White Paper on Planning Reform to be counterproductive to good placemaking and anti-democratic.

This Council notes that whilst the wording claims the new proposals will improve delivery of affordable housing and environmental benefits, we believe the impact of the proposals will have a negative affect.

Instead, this Council calls on the Government to give more powers to Local Authorities to set rigorous standards and have the powers to actively enforce them.

We call for the following powers to be given to Local Authorities:

- 1) Abolish the methods used by Developers to Landbank land by giving Local Authorities the ability to rescind Planning Permissions where development has stalled without adequate grounds
- 2) Abolish VAT on the restoration and conversion of buildings.
- 3) Remove Government Targets for housing delivery and allow Local Authorities to deliver Local Plans and Housing Targets based on identified local need without the requirement of a Government Inspector Approval.

This Council calls on the Government to reconsider its current White Paper.

Proposed Mike Baldock

Seconded Richard Palmer

#### 6. Motion - Dementia Friendly

This Council notes that:

- Dementia is one of the biggest health issues facing the UK
- In the UK, 850,000 people are estimated to be living with dementia
- This condition will affect one in three people over the age of 65, that figure is predicted to rise by two thirds by 2030
- Dementia is an umbrella term for a set of symptoms that might be exhibited by people living with one of any number of diseases of the brain; it is not a natural part of aging
- Dementia is not just about losing your memory; it can also affect thinking, communication, inhibitions, and everyday tasks
- With the right care, support and understanding from those around them that it is possible for someone to live well with dementia and to continue to contribute to community life.

This Council commends the work that has been done so far in our Borough by for example but not limited to:

- Age UK Faversham and Sittingbourne
- Alzheimer's Society Kent & Medway
- Argo Life & Legacy Ltd
- BlueBird Care
- Dementia Inspired Ltd.
- Helpd Ltd
- Isle of Sheppey dementia friendly community forum
- Kent County Council

- Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS)
- No Place Like Home
- Pulse Cafe
- Sittingbourne Dementia Friendly Community Forum
- The Forum Shopping Centre
- Oasis Academy

This Council realises that as a public service there is more that it could be doing to support our community living with Dementia and the Council commits to:

- All new Council staff appointed to customer-facing roles and all future members of this council participate in Dementia Friends training as part of their induction.
- Existing staff in customer-facing roles participate in Dementia Friends training within twelve months.
- All current members and the Council's Strategic Management Team to participate in Dementia Friends training within 12 months.
- Environmental checks are carried out in Swale House to ensure that the building is Dementia friendly.
- Carry out a review of Council employment practices to ensure that best practice is being followed in offering staff living with dementia, or caring for a family member living with dementia, appropriate ongoing support and flexible working arrangements.
- To write to Secondary schools in Swale to urge them to include information about living with dementia in the local Personal Social and Health Education curriculum delivered to pupils to help develop their understanding of dementia.
- To work closely with existing DAA members to create supportive working relationships.
- To become a signatory of the National Dementia Declaration
- To commit to not using disempowering language in communications and press releases for example: "victim", "suffering from dementia"
- An annual progress report to be brought to Council to coincide with Dementia Awareness Week in May of each year.

Proposed by: Councillor Hannah Perkin

Seconded by: Councillor Derek Carnell

## 7. Questions submitted by the Public

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

8. Questions submitted by Members

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

9. Leader's Statement

10. Appointment of Chief Executive - to follow

11. Corporate Plan 2020-2023 and Covid-19 Recovery Plan 7 - 46

12. Economic Recovery - Extension of Parking Concession 47 - 50

13. Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan 51 - 106

14. Changes in Portfolio Responsibilities in Cabinet Roles - to follow

15. Changes to the Constitution - to follow

16. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 107 -  
122

17. Policy Development and Review Annual Report 123 -  
138

18. Recommendations for Approval

Council is asked to note the recommendations from the following meetings:

Minutes from the General Purposes Committee held on 1 October 2020  
(to follow)

Minutes from the Appointments Sub-Committee held on 5 October 2020  
(to follow)

## Issued on Tuesday, 29 September 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 Council, please visit [www.swale.gov.uk](http://www.swale.gov.uk)

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

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<b>Council</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	7 October 2020
<b>Report Title</b>	<b>Corporate plan 2020-2023 and Covid-19 recovery plan</b>
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Roger Truelove – Council Leader
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins – Director of Regeneration
<b>Head of Service</b>	David Clifford – Head of Policy, Communications and Customer Services
<b>Lead Officer</b>	
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	<p>Council is recommended to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Adopt</b> the corporate plan 2020-2023 at Appendix I.</li> <li>2. <b>Note</b> the updated Covid-19 recovery plan at Appendix III.</li> </ol>

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report recommends the final corporate plan 2020-2023 to council for adoption. The plan was endorsed by cabinet back in March, but its final adoption has been delayed by Covid. The plan has been updated slightly to highlight the connections between it and the Covid-19 recovery plan.
- 1.2 Informed by the objectives in the new corporate plan, the Covid-19 recovery plan provides more detail on how the council is working to minimise the adverse consequences of the pandemic on the borough. Following the all-member ‘forum’ meeting back in the summer, this report asks council to note an updated version of the recovery plan originally agreed by cabinet in July.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 The council’s corporate plan establishes the political and managerial priorities on which the organisation will focus over a medium-term period. Without attempting to cover in any detail all of the objectives to be pursued by every department, it sets the tone for future resource allocation, establishing which activities and objectives are priorities and, by implication, which are not.
- 2.2 In an era of constrained and diminishing resources, the plan endeavours to ensure that those resources are marshalled as coherently as possible so that issues which are truly priorities for residents and their representatives on the council are not crowded out by apparently more urgent but ultimately less important pieces of work.

- 2.3 The plan is a key component in the council's constitutional policy framework, within which the cabinet must exercise its executive decision-making authority. The plan also represents the strategic end of the 'golden thread' which runs down through departments' operational service plans to individual officers' annual performance appraisals, so in an ideal world it will square the circle of establishing clear priorities while also providing a 'hook' for all teams to link their work to the overall ambitions of the council.
- 2.4 It is worth emphasising that the corporate plan is primarily an internal document. Clearly its single most significant influence will be the political ambitions of the administration, and to some extent it can be seen as the managerial response to those ambitions, but it does also need to factor in the type of general contextual analysis that all organisations, including those less overtly political than a local authority, need to conduct from time to time.
- 2.5 Inclusion within the council's overarching policy framework carries with it in law some constraints which do not apply to policy documents lower down the chain, and these constraints are reflected in the council's constitution. As with the budgetary framework, adoption of the corporate plan is a matter reserved to full council, with cabinet's role being to develop the plan and propose it to council.
- 2.6 The draft plan has been the subject of a public consultation exercise, the results of which are outlined in section 5 below.
- 2.7 Moving out of the original 'emergency response' phase of the pandemic, the council recognised the likely need to realign priorities and services to help the borough to recover economically and socially from the crisis. The recovery plan is a much more fluid document than the corporate plan, setting out specific actions the council will take in the short, medium and longer terms, but recognising that there is likely to be an element of iteration between these as the situation changes.
- 2.8 The recovery plan was first taken to cabinet in July, and was then discussed at an all-member 'forum' meeting later in the same month. The version at Appendix III has been updated in response to members' comments at that meeting, and to reflect the progress which has been made since the summer. It is presented here to council for information.

### **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 Council is now **recommended** to adopt the final version of the corporate plan at Appendix I, and to note the latest version of the recovery plan at Appendix III.

### **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 Although there is a legal requirement for councils to have a definite policy framework, there is no specific requirement for a corporate plan, and a genuine option would therefore be to dispense with the document altogether.



4.2 However, a medium-term strategic plan of some kind is a near-universal feature of English councils, with the development process being used to explore, refine and achieve consensus on the meaning of political ambitions, and the final document acting as a guide to both members and officers as to the key areas on which progress must be made over the lifetime of an administration. The absence of a plan is likely to result in a lack of clarity among officers about the organisation’s priorities and less coherent decision-making by members, and is therefore not recommended.

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

5.1 A public consultation was conducted on the draft version of the corporate plan between mid-January and early March. This was predominantly by means of an online survey, but key stakeholders were written to individually, including all of Swale’s parish councils. The consultation was advertised on social media and through channels such as the business bulletin, as well as internally through staff communications.

5.2 The consultation generated 15 responses, of which two were from residents, two from parish councils and six from Swale employees. The majority of responses included only general indications of support or the opposite, with relatively few specific suggestions for changes. A couple of the latter have been taken up, resulting in minor amendments to the text at appendix I. Unsystematically classifying responses as supportive, unsupportive or neutral, seven can be read as supportive (including both of the parish council responses), one as unsupportive and seven as neutral.

### Policy Development and Review Committee

5.3 The policy development and review committee has considered the corporate plan twice during its development, initially feeding in its thoughts on an early draft of the priorities and objectives, and then reviewing the consultation draft of the plan during the spring. The committee showed itself to be generally supportive of the plan and its priorities, and one suggestion for an amendment to the text was taken up in the final draft at Appendix I (this relates to objective 2.5).

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The corporate plan at Appendix I will replace the existing plan upon adoption by council.
Financial, Resource and Property	The corporate plan to some extent represents the narrative complement to the medium-term financial plan (MTFP), in that it sets out in broad terms what the council aims to achieve given the resources established by the MTFP. Conversely, it is anticipated that the activities required by the plan will generally be funded

	within the resourcing framework established in the MTFP.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The legal status of the corporate plan as a component of the statutory policy framework has been discussed in the body of the report. This derives from the Local Government Act 2000 and regulations subsequently made under it. The relevant constitutional provisions are contained in section 4.3 of the constitution.
Crime and Disorder	The draft plan at Appendix I includes some specific points of relevance to crime and disorder, particularly under Priority 3.
Environment and Climate/Ecological Emergency	The draft plan at Appendix I includes some specific points of relevance to the environment and to the climate and ecological emergencies, particularly under Priority 2.
Health and Wellbeing	The draft plan at Appendix I includes some specific points of relevance to health and wellbeing, particularly under Priority 3.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	Swale's approach to risk management is dependent on an articulation of objectives the achievement of which is endangered by a given set of risks. The corporate plan is therefore an essential component of the risk management framework.
Equality and Diversity	The public sector equality duty requires decision-makers to have due regard to the need to eliminate unlawful discrimination and advance equality of opportunity right throughout the decision-making process. A final equality impact assessment for the corporate plan is attached at appendix II. The corporate plan is in general at too high a level of abstraction for the aims of the equality duty to be relevant in any concrete way, although they are likely to be much more relevant to many of the pieces of work which will flow from the plan, which will all need to be subject to individual impact assessments. The impact of the corporate plan itself on the aims of the equality duty, without reference to these more detailed pieces of work, is considered to be low, and nothing involving unlawful discrimination or requiring the mitigation of adverse impacts has been identified.
Privacy and Data Protection	No specific implications have been 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: Final corporate plan 2020-2023
- Appendix II: Corporate plan equality impact assessment
- Appendix III: Covid-19 recovery plan

## 8 Background Papers

8.1 There are no background papers.

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**Swale Borough Council**

# **Working together for a better borough**

**Corporate Plan 2020-2023**

# Summary of priorities and objectives

## **Priority 1:**

### **Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all**

- 1.1 Use the local plan review to ensure that future housing delivery is more closely aligned to the borough's ability and capacity to provide for genuine sustainable housing needs, in terms of location, type and tenure, and that the impact of housing growth is offset through improved physical, environmental, social and health infrastructure.
- 1.2 Work with registered providers, developers and community-led housing groups to pursue all viable opportunities for increasing the supply of affordable and social housing across the borough, and ensure that standards in the private rented sector are robustly enforced.
- 1.3 Encourage the development and innovation of high-quality sustainable housing on brownfield land in urban centres, with an appropriate range of tenure options, improving the appearance, biodiversity, and economic and environmental sustainability of our towns.
- 1.4 Develop a new economic improvement strategy to diversify the borough's economy, expand the range of employment opportunities, and boost wages so that payment of the UK living wage becomes the norm.
- 1.5 Support residents and businesses to improve the borough's vocational skill levels, and vigorously pursue all opportunities to enhance the provision and accessibility of further and higher education for Swale residents at all stages of their careers.
- 1.6 Implement the visitor economy framework to increase investment, address new visitor demands and grow the value of the sector to the Swale economy.

## **Priority 2:**

### **Investing in our environment and responding positively to global challenges**

- 2.1 Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2030, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough.
- 2.2 Encourage active travel and reduced car use, including through the permeability of new developments, and work with partners to address air quality issues.
- 2.3 Establish a special projects fund to provide much-needed investment in the borough's public realm and open spaces.
- 2.4 Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.

- 2.5 Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus, and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible.

### **Priority 3:**

#### **Tackling deprivation and creating equal opportunities for everyone**

- 3.1 Undertake targeted interventions to identify our most disadvantaged families and communities, improve our understanding of the issues they face, and develop new ways of working to reduce social exclusion and enhance opportunities and quality of life.
- 3.2 Reduce health inequality by developing more productive relationships with local health partners and making health and wellbeing a central consideration in all relevant council decision-making, recognising especially the link between housing and health.
- 3.3 Develop a communitarian approach to partnership working based on shared objectives with like-minded agencies in the voluntary and community sectors.
- 3.4 Ensure that the council plays a proactive role in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, including through the modernisation of CCTV provision.
- 3.5 Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural and other leisure activities appropriate and accessible to each age group.

### **Priority 4:**

#### **Renewing local democracy and making the council fit for the future**

- 4.1 Review the council's constitution to diffuse decision-making power more widely among elected members and improve the transparency, responsiveness and public accountability of that decision-making.
- 4.2 Ensure that all elected members are appropriately supported to lead and improve the council's engagement with its disparate geographic and demographic communities, and encourage especially the participation of underrepresented groups in the democratic process.
- 4.3 Develop a cross-departmental corporate ethos focused on the priorities in this plan, and embed the Swale Manager programme to ensure a consistent understanding of the council's expectations of all managers.
- 4.4 Continue to reduce dependence on government-controlled funding sources and support staff to find innovative ways to ensure other objectives can be met in the context of diminished resources.

# Foreword

Welcome to Swale Borough Council's corporate plan for the period 2020 to 2023. The plan sets out our four overarching priorities and the 20 more specific objectives towards which we want to work.

The May 2019 election was a watershed for Swale, ending the Conservatives' longstanding majority and providing the five groups which now make up the coalition administration with a clear mandate for change. The corporate plan recognises the extent of the changes which are necessary to make real improvements in the lives of Swale's residents, and demonstrates the breadth of ambition the council now has to see those changes through.

The priorities and objectives set out in this plan were largely established prior to the Covid-19 pandemic. The pandemic has already had a devastating effect on people's lives, whether on their health, their livelihoods, or their ability to keep a roof over their heads. It is still unclear when the crisis will be over, but as it goes on it becomes increasingly unlikely that there will be a rapid, V-shaped economic recovery.

We believe the priorities in this plan – on homes, on jobs, on health, on social inclusion, on the environment and on our partnerships with the voluntary sector – are exactly the ones the council most needs to focus on if its efforts to help the recovery in the borough are to be effective at minimising the longer-term human cost of the crisis.

We are publishing in tandem with this plan a more specific recovery plan, which shows how the priorities and objectives in this plan have been adapted to deal with the consequences of the pandemic, setting out in more detail than would be appropriate for the corporate plan the actions we are taking both immediately and in the longer term.

The Covid-19 crisis has exacerbated many of the longstanding social ills in our country and our borough. But it has also cast a helpful light onto them, throwing them into sharper relief than had previously been the case. Through this plan and our recovery plan, Swale Borough Council is demonstrating how it will rise to the challenge of tackling them.

**Cllr Roger Truelove**  
Council Leader

**Emma Wiggins**  
Director of Regeneration



# Introduction

The corporate plan is the overarching statement of the council's strategic priorities for the period April 2020 to March 2023. It consists of 20 medium-term objectives grouped into four broad priorities. Between them, these objectives articulate both local political aspirations for the borough and community of Swale and the council's response to anticipated changes to the policy and fiscal context in which it operates.

The document's primary purpose is to ensure that the organisation's resources are coherently allocated in support of agreed priorities. The objectives established here will therefore be a significant factor in determining the focus of the council's activities over the next few years, but the plan sets out a broad direction of travel rather than a detailed list of actions, and its emphasis is on areas of change and development rather than continuity.

Swale is one of 12 districts (boroughs and cities) which make up the county of Kent. Located on the county's northern coast, the borough sits between Medway, Maidstone and Canterbury, around 60km from central London in one direction and 40km from the Channel tunnel in the other. The borough covers an area of 360km<sup>2</sup>, roughly one-tenth of Kent, and is home to just under 150,000 people, also approximately one-tenth of the county figure.

For such a relatively small area, the borough is a remarkably diverse place, including the historic market town of Faversham, the traditional seaside resort of Sheerness and the more industrial market town of Sittingbourne, which in recent years has been the focus of major council-led redevelopment. These urban centres are connected both physically and culturally by the borough's extensive and important rural areas, accounting for around a quarter of the population, which take in a number of protected wildlife habitats and part of the Kent Downs area of outstanding natural beauty.

Swale's demographic make-up is no less diverse than its geography, including a mix of affluent and less affluent communities, but in general the area is less well-off than is typical for the south-east, and there are some concentrated pockets of severe socioeconomic disadvantage to be found in locations across the borough. While the causes of this are deep-rooted and complex, the outcome is that a proportion of our residents suffer from entrenched inequality and a lack of opportunities which the council needs to do what it can to address.

The indices of multiple deprivation are calculated by government based on a range of measures of poverty and associated disadvantage, and were last published in 2019. Compared to the previous time the figures were calculated in 2015, Swale's overall position on the indices deteriorated relative to other places, with the borough now the

69th most disadvantaged of 317 shire districts in England, and the second most disadvantaged in Kent.

Over recent decades, Swale has seen a successful diversification of its economy, which now has key strengths in manufacturing and distribution, as well as high-skilled activities including cutting-edge technology and life sciences. However, it remains the case that much of the borough's employment, including employment created in the last few years, is at the lower end of the skills spectrum.

The borough council is made up of 47 elected members representing 24 wards and employing around 280 full-time equivalent staff. The all-out election held in May 2019 resulted in the loss by the Conservative group of its longstanding majority and the formation of a five-group coalition administration including the Labour, Swale Independents Alliance, Liberal Democrat, Green and Independent groups. The coalition benefits from a clearly articulated shared programme for its term of office, which forms the basis of the objectives outlined in this plan.

The financial crash of 2008 and the period of austerity which followed it have wrought huge changes to the landscape of local government and the services it provides over the last decade. Swale has not been immune to this, but its successes in expanding the business-rate base enabled it to benefit disproportionately from the move away from formula-based revenue support grant towards local retention of business-rate growth.

With the future parameters of the local government funding regime still very unclear, it is difficult to forecast the extent of likely gaps in the council's revenue budget over the next few years. What is much less uncertain is that financial sustainability will remain a key concern for the organisation over the next few years, with financial constraints representing a significant brake on what the council is able to achieve.

The first three priorities in this plan set out the objectives for the borough and its residents towards which we want to work notwithstanding these constraints, but we must recognise that the constraints are real and will have an impact. The final priority is in part about finding ways to obviate or minimise this impact.

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

There is widespread recognition of the fact that the UK's housing market is fundamentally broken, with the dream of home ownership – or even of a tenancy which is secure, decent and affordable – an unattainable one for growing numbers of people. The effects of this crisis are to be felt in the lived experience of families across Swale, whether the high cost of rent is impeding their ability to save for a deposit, or whether they are facing homelessness as a result of a no-fault eviction from a shorthold tenancy.

The government recognises that there is a problem, but its only strategy for solving it is as ineffectual as it is unimaginative and one-dimensional. Simply obliging local councils to grant ever higher numbers of planning consents with insufficient mechanisms to ensure that the housing which is built is what local people actually need and can afford, or that it comes with adequate GPs, school places and transport links, has engendered general public hostility to development and created another unwelcome fissure in our already polarised society.

While the council is bound to follow the law in planning for housing growth, we need to do everything we can within this system to ensure that what is built reflects the needs and preferences of local people and that the adverse effects of development on communities is offset by properly funded infrastructure.

Clearly, the optimal solutions to the crisis cannot only be about building homes for sale, even if there is a need to maximise the proportion of these which cater to genuine community needs and which are sold at 'affordable' prices. We will therefore seek innovative partnership arrangements with housing associations and others to enable us to invest in social housing available for rent as well as shared and affordable ownership. The council will also use the full extent of its legal powers to advance the legitimate expectations of the borough's private-sector tenants in terms of the decency, safety and sustainability of their homes and the security of their tenancies.

Swale has seen some genuine successes in expanding and diversifying its economy in recent years, but there is still a long way to go before the borough is able to offer residents the range and quality of local employment opportunities which are available in a more typical south-eastern district.

The council will adopt a new economic improvement strategy to encourage particularly higher-skilled jobs into the borough, and to promote the economic benefits of a more widespread adoption of a living wage for workers no matter what their skill level. We

will also work with businesses to implement the recently agreed visitor economy framework, increasing the value of the sector to Swale's economy and helping small business owners to innovate and grow their businesses.

In the 2019 indices of multiple deprivation, Swale is ranked the 28th most disadvantaged of England's 317 shire districts on the domain covering education and skills, making it the worst performer in Kent on this measure. The issue of skills and education is a complex one in which the council plays only an indirect role, but the problem is so significant for the borough that it demands our focus. This cannot be solely about addressing the unfairness of the lack of further education provision for Swale's young people, although that is certainly vital, but must also address the need to give people at all stages of their careers opportunities to upskill and retrain.

Much of the council's Covid-19 recovery plan is focused on housing and jobs. The detailed actions it sets out range from the immediate and urgent, such as supporting otherwise viable businesses to stay afloat and working with landlords and tenants to prevent homelessness, to longer-term actions on the economy, skills, and affordable housing.

The six objectives towards which we want to work during the period to 2023 under this priority are:

- 1.1 Use the local plan review to ensure that future housing delivery is more closely aligned to the borough's ability and capacity to provide for genuine sustainable housing needs, in terms of location, type and tenure, and that the impact of housing growth is offset through improved physical, environmental, social and health infrastructure.
- 1.2 Work with registered providers, developers and community-led housing groups to pursue all viable opportunities for increasing the supply of affordable and social housing across the borough, and ensure that standards in the private rented sector are robustly enforced.
- 1.3 Encourage the development and innovation of high-quality sustainable housing on brownfield land in urban centres, with an appropriate range of tenure options, improving the appearance, biodiversity, and economic and environmental sustainability of our towns.
- 1.4 Develop a new economic improvement strategy to diversify the borough's economy, expand the range of employment opportunities, and boost wages so that payment of the UK living wage becomes the norm.
- 1.5 Support residents and businesses to improve the borough's vocational skill levels, and vigorously pursue all opportunities to enhance the provision and

accessibility of further and higher education for Swale residents at all stages of their careers.

- 1.6 Implement the visitor economy framework to increase investment, address new visitor demands and grow the value of the sector to the Swale economy.

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

The rate at which humans have been burning fossil fuels since the industrial revolution has already caused irreversible climate change, with global temperatures having increased by one degree Celsius from the preindustrial period. Given the damage which has already occurred, it is inevitable that temperatures will continue to increase, causing floods and extreme weather events, and the race is now on to reduce emissions enough to keep the rise below two degrees. A further consequence of our collective attitude to earth's delicate ecosystems in the last two hundred years is an unprecedented rate of species extinctions, with up to a million species now threatened with extinction within decades.

Together these global problems represent a grave threat to the wellbeing of humanity, and demand urgent and radical action not only from national governments but from local ones as well. Swale has recognised this urgency, declaring a climate and ecological emergency in June 2019 which established the goals of net-zero carbon emissions from our own operations by 2025 and in the borough as a whole by 2030.

While the global situation requires concerted local action over the medium term, there are plenty of local environmental issues which also need to be addressed. Poor air quality – largely a further consequence of burning fossil fuels – is associated with a number of serious health impacts, including cancer and heart disease, and more vulnerable people are typically worse affected than others, including children, older people, those with pre-existing conditions and those living in poorer areas. Swale will work with KCC and other partners to ensure that action plans to improve air quality are developed and implemented wherever they are needed.

For several years the council has consistently underspent on its revenue budget, with the difference between budgeted and actual expenditure being added to reserves, which have almost doubled since 2010. While it would generally not be prudent to use these reserves to mitigate what is likely to be a very tough position in the revenue budget over the life of this plan, there is no reason not to use a proportion of them to support one-off capital investments. Recognising that this is money which belongs to the people of Swale, we will use some of it to begin to rectify many years of underinvestment in the sort of small-scale shared community assets which can go a long way towards making somewhere a good place to live.

Keeping the borough's streets clean and minimising the amount of household waste sent to landfill are two of the council's most elementary and most visible functions. The current waste and cleansing contract has been economically advantageous for Swale,

but the ageing waste collection fleet has recently combined with other issues to render the contract increasingly unreliable. With the waste contract accounting for so high a proportion of both our carbon emissions and our revenue expenditure, the council will need over the life of this plan to give careful consideration to the specification it requires for the service when the current contract expires in 2023.

The council's Covid-19 recovery plan includes the climate and ecological emergency as a priority area. Many of the actions to be taken are covered in the climate and ecological emergency action plan, but the recovery plan also includes actions on greener travel, Swale House, park improvements, and fuel and water efficiency.

The five objectives towards which we want to work during the period to 2023 under this priority are:

- 2.1 Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2030, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough.
- 2.2 Encourage active travel and reduced car use, including through the permeability of new developments, and work with partners to address air quality issues.
- 2.3 Establish a special projects fund to provide much-needed investment in the borough's public realm and open spaces.
- 2.4 Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.
- 2.5 Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus, and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible.

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

Poverty is a significant issue for many of Swale's residents and communities, detracting from people's quality of life and holding them back from achieving their potential both for themselves and for their community. In the 2019 indices of multiple deprivation, Swale is ranked the 74th most disadvantaged of England's 317 shire districts on the income domain, making the borough more relatively disadvantaged on this measure than was the case in 2015. Across the whole range of indicators on which the indices are based, almost one-fifth of Swale's statistical neighbourhoods are among the ten percent most disadvantaged in the country, including no fewer than half of the 26 neighbourhoods on Sheppey.

The increasing extremity of both wealth and poverty is clearly a national (and indeed international) issue which would require concerted government action to address comprehensively, but councils can still work with other local agencies to make a real difference. Swale will take a collaborative approach to understanding how disadvantage affects individual families and communities and what the council and our partners in other local agencies can most effectively do to help. Our aim is to cultivate a borough in which residents and communities work together to address the issues that hold them back, and where the council plays an active role in supporting and facilitating a vibrant and engaged voluntary and community sector.

One of the most significant areas in which poverty and associated disadvantage blight people's lives is health and wellbeing, with average life expectancy in Swale's most deprived neighbourhoods being up to eight years lower than in the least deprived. As with disadvantage in general, health – and in particular the promotion of good health rather than the treatment of poor health – is central to the objectives of multiple agencies, but arguably few more so than district councils. While working to strengthen links with local bodies in the health and related sectors, Swale will also ensure that the health implications of the services it offers and the way it offers them are given more prominence when decisions about those services are being made.

The council's Covid-19 recovery plan includes a priority area on communities and social inclusion. This covers actions on community engagement, disadvantage, foodbanks, and volunteers and the voluntary sector more generally. The council also intends to develop a separate health and wellbeing recovery plan.

The five objectives towards which we want to work during the period to 2023 under this priority are:



- 3.1 Undertake targeted interventions to identify our most disadvantaged families and communities, improve our understanding of the issues they face, and develop new ways of working to reduce social exclusion and enhance opportunities and quality of life.
- 3.2 Reduce health inequality by developing more productive relationships with local health partners and making health and wellbeing a central consideration in all relevant council decision-making, recognising especially the link between housing and health.
- 3.3 Develop a communitarian approach to partnership working based on shared objectives with like-minded agencies in the voluntary and community sectors.
- 3.4 Ensure that the council plays a proactive role in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, including through the modernisation of CCTV provision.
- 3.5 Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural, leisure and development activities appropriate and accessible to each age group.

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

The last of the priorities in this plan is focused on the council as an organisation, but it is not intended to be inward-looking. The principal purpose of a district council is to further the interests and wellbeing of its local area, and this priority is about the internal changes we need to make in order to sustain and improve our ability to do this effectively.

The economic and political events of the last ten years have combined with new ways for people to exchange news and opinions to create a polarisation of political views and a pervasive lack of trust in public institutions and public servants at all levels. While scepticism and criticism are vital components of a democracy, a widespread lack of belief that political action can or should result in real improvements in people's lives is as unhealthy as it is erroneous.

While this is a national malaise, its effects within Swale have arguably been heightened by the council's constitutional arrangements, which concentrate decision-making power in the hands of a small number of councillors and leave other democratically-elected representatives largely disenfranchised. Going forwards, the council will identify and trial ways to reverse this trend and to help all councillors fulfil their mission of giving voice to their constituents' views and helping those constituents to engage with the decisions which will affect their lives.

Another way in which the events of the last decade have affected communities is austerity, which has resulted in significant year-on-year reductions in government funding to councils since 2010. According to the Local Government Association, over the last eight years councils will have lost 60p out of every £1 the government used to provide in core funding to pay for local services.

Swale has not been immune from these measures, but has been able to use government schemes such as the new homes bonus and – especially – the local retention of business-rate growth to cushion the effects of the loss of core funding. Overall Swale's revenue budget has fallen by almost a fifth since 2010. Looking ahead, the future framework for funding local authorities remains extremely unclear, but whatever formula is eventually adopted in Westminster it is unlikely that Swale will be able to weather the storm as well as it has done in the recent past.

By this stage there is a vast amount of national evidence about the efficacy of councils' efforts both to supplement their income through greater commercialisation and to minimise the impact of funding reductions by increasing efficiency. Swale has already

acquired a good deal of experience in both of these endeavours, but will need to continue to learn lessons from other councils about what can be made to work and what cannot in terms of generating and saving money as government funding continues to diminish.

The overall goal must be to deliver on the objectives of this corporate plan as successfully as possible notwithstanding the straitened financial circumstances, and for this we will be dependent on a motivated and engaged workforce who understand what the council wants to achieve and are empowered to find innovative ways of achieving it at ever lower cost. A core role of the management team will therefore be to create the conditions for every team and every employee to thrive and do their best for the borough and the community we serve.

The council's Covid-19 recovery plan includes democratic renewal as a priority. This references in particular the establishment of area committees and cabinet advisory committees as mechanisms for diffusing power and influence more widely among councillors and the communities they represent, but also considers how the council's working practices will need to adapt as working from home increasingly becomes the new normal.

The four objectives towards which we want to work during the period to 2023 under this priority are:

- 4.1 Review the council's constitution to diffuse decision-making power more widely among elected members and improve the transparency, responsiveness and public accountability of that decision-making.
- 4.2 Ensure that all elected members are appropriately supported to lead and improve the council's engagement with its disparate geographic and demographic communities, and encourage especially the participation of underrepresented groups in the democratic process.
- 4.3 Develop a cross-departmental corporate ethos focused on the priorities in this plan, and embed the Swale Manager programme to ensure a consistent understanding of the council's expectations of all managers.
- 4.4 Continue to reduce dependence on government-controlled funding sources and support staff to find innovative ways to ensure other objectives can be met in the context of diminished resources.

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An Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) 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

An EIA 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
- Ethnicity
- Religion or belief
- Gender
- 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 Commission](#) (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 <https://www.ons.gov.uk/>
- Swale in 2016 <https://archive.swale.gov.uk/assets/About-us/Summary-of-Key-Data-for-Swale.pdf>
- Kent County Council Facts and Figures about Kent <http://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/information-and-data/Facts-and-figures-about-Kent>
- Health and Social Care data [http://www.kpho.org.uk/search?mode=results&queries\\_exclude\\_query=no&queries\\_excludefromse\\_arch\\_query=yes&queries\\_keyword\\_query=Swale](http://www.kpho.org.uk/search?mode=results&queries_exclude_query=no&queries_excludefromse_arch_query=yes&queries_keyword_query=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.

<b>Lead officer:</b>	David Clifford – Head of Policy, Communications and Customer Services
<b>Decision maker:</b>	Council
<b>People involved:</b>	David Clifford – Head of Policy, Communications and Customer Services Sarah Porter – Interim Policy Manager
<b>Decision:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Policy, project, service, contract</li> <li>• Review, change, new, stop</li> </ul>	This is a high-level strategic plan which is being redrafted following the formation of a new political administration.
<b>Date of decision:</b> The date when the final decision is made. The EIA must be complete before this point and inform the final decision.	Council: October 2020
<b>Summary of the decision:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Aims and objectives</li> <li>• Key actions</li> <li>• Expected outcomes</li> <li>• Who will be affected and how?</li> <li>• How many people will be affected?</li> </ul>	<p>The main purpose of the corporate plan is to set the council’s strategic direction over the medium term. It is intended to influence and guide future detailed decision-making about resource allocation and activities, rather than to set out the detail of that decision-making in advance. It is therefore very difficult to foresee equality-related issues at this stage, and separate EIAs will need to be conducted on individual decisions as they arise.</p> <p>Insofar as it provides guidance for the allocation of council resources over the medium term, the corporate plan potentially has an impact on everyone living in, working in or visiting the borough. However, the plan is a strategic document which sets out broad areas of focus rather than proposing concrete pieces of work which could have a definite and measurable equality impact.</p> <p>The plan proposes four overarching priorities for the council to focus on over the period 2020-2023. Beneath each of these priorities sit a number of high-level objectives, as follows:</p> <p><b><i>Priority 1: Building the right homes in the right places and supporting quality jobs for all</i></b></p> <p>1.1 Use the local plan review to ensure that future housing delivery is more closely aligned to the borough’s ability and capacity to provide for genuine sustainable housing needs, in terms of location, type and tenure, and that the impact of housing growth is offset through improved physical, environmental, social and health infrastructure.</p> <p>1.2 Work with registered providers, developers and community-led housing groups to pursue all viable opportunities for increasing the supply of affordable and social housing across the borough, and ensure that standards in the private rented sector are robustly enforced.</p> <p>1.3 Encourage the development and innovation of high-quality sustainable housing on brownfield land in urban centres, with an appropriate range of tenure options, improving the appearance,</p>

biodiversity, and economic and environmental sustainability of our towns.

- 1.4 Develop a new economic improvement strategy to diversify the borough's economy, expand the range of employment opportunities, and boost wages so that payment of the UK living wage becomes the norm.
- 1.5 Support residents and businesses to improve the borough's vocational skill levels, and vigorously pursue all opportunities to enhance the provision and accessibility of further and higher education for Swale residents at all stages of their careers.
- 1.6 Implement the visitor economy framework to increase investment, address new visitor demands and grow the value of the sector to the Swale economy.

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

- 2.1 Develop a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies, aiming for carbon neutrality in the council's own operations by 2025 and in the whole borough by 2030, and pursue all opportunities to enhance biodiversity across the borough.
- 2.2 Encourage active travel and reduced car use, including through the permeability of new developments, and work with partners to address air quality issues.
- 2.3 Establish a special projects fund to provide much-needed investment in the borough's public realm and open spaces.
- 2.4 Recognise and support our local heritage to give people pride in the place they live and boost the local tourism industry.
- 2.5 Work towards a cleaner borough where recycling remains a focus, and ensure that the council acts as an exemplar environmental steward, making space for nature wherever possible.

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

- 3.1 Undertake targeted interventions to identify our most disadvantaged families and communities, improve our understanding of the issues they face, and develop new ways of working to reduce social exclusion and enhance opportunities and quality of life.
- 3.2 Reduce health inequality by developing more productive relationships with local health partners and making health and wellbeing a central consideration in all relevant council decision-making, recognising especially the link between housing and health.
- 3.3 Develop a communitarian approach to partnership working based on shared objectives with like-minded agencies in the voluntary and



	<p>community sectors.</p> <p>3.4 Ensure that the council plays a proactive role in reducing crime and antisocial behaviour, including through the modernisation of CCTV provision.</p> <p>3.5 Promote wellbeing and enjoyment of life by signposting and encouraging a wide range of sporting, cultural and other leisure activities appropriate and accessible to each age group.</p> <p><b>Priority 4: Renewing local democracy and making the council fit for the future</b></p> <p>4.1 Review the council’s constitution to diffuse decision-making power more widely among elected members and improve the transparency, responsiveness and public accountability of that decision-making.</p> <p>4.2 Ensure that all elected members are appropriately supported to lead and improve the council’s engagement with its disparate geographic and demographic communities, and encourage especially the participation of underrepresented groups in the democratic process.</p> <p>4.3 Develop a cross-departmental corporate ethos focused on the priorities in this plan, and embed the Swale Manager programme to ensure a consistent understanding of the council’s expectations of all managers.</p> <p>4.4 Continue to reduce dependence on government-controlled funding sources and support staff to find innovative ways to ensure other objectives can be met in the context of diminished resources.</p>
<p><b>Information and research:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline the information and research that has informed the decision.</li> <li>• Include sources and key findings.</li> <li>• Include information on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics.</li> </ul>	<p>The text of the plan contains some contextual demographic information about the borough and its residents. However, the plan is (intentionally) at too abstract a level to have a definite impact on people with particular protected characteristics. More detailed pieces of work which will sit under the objectives in the plan will need to be subject to impact assessments in their own right in due course.</p>
<p><b>Consultation:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has there been specific consultation on this decision?</li> <li>• What were the</li> </ul>	<p>Significant internal consultation has taken place during the development of the plan, and public consultation has taken place on the final draft. The public consultation resulted in 15 responses, none of which raised any equality-related issues.</p>

<p>results of the consultation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the consultation analysis reveal any difference in views across the protected characteristics?</li> <li>• Can any conclusions be drawn from the analysis on how the decision will affect people with different protected characteristics?</li> </ul>	
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<p><b>Is the decision relevant to the aims of the equality duty?</b>  Guidance on the aims can be found in the EHRC’s PSED Technical Guidance - <a href="https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-technical-guidance">https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-technical-guidance</a></p>	
<b>Aim</b>	<b>Yes/No</b>
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	Yes

<p><b>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.</b>  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.</p>		
<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Relevance to decision</b> High/Medium/Low/None	<b>Impact of decision</b> Positive/Negative/Neutral
Age	Medium at this stage	Positive at this stage (particularly young people)
Disability	Medium at this stage	Positive at this stage (particularly regarding the high proportion of people with long-term conditions living in deprived areas)
Gender reassignment	Low at this stage	Neutral at this stage
Marriage and civil partnership	Low at this stage	Neutral at this stage
Pregnancy and maternity	Low at this stage	Neutral at this stage
Ethnicity	Low at this stage	Neutral at this stage
Religion or belief	Low at this stage	Neutral at this stage
Gender	Low at this stage	Neutral at this stage
Sexual orientation	Low at this stage	Neutral at this stage
Other socially excluded groups <sup>1</sup>	High at this stage	Positive at this stage (particularly regarding people living in poverty or in deprived or isolated communities)

<p><b>Conclusion:</b></p> <p>Consider knowledge regarding this clause for the wider of issues equality duty to be relevant in any concrete geographicaly isolated from services.</p>	<p>The corporate plan is in general at too high a level of abstraction for the aims of the equality duty to be relevant in any concrete</p>
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<p>from start to finish.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be no unlawful discrimination arising from the decision (see <a href="#">PSED Technical Guidance</a>).</li> </ul> <p>Advise on the overall equality implications that should be taken into account in the final decision, considering relevance and impact.</p>	<p>way, although they are likely to be much more relevant to many of the pieces of work which will flow from it. The impact of the plan itself on the aims of the equality duty, without reference to these more detailed pieces of work, is considered to be low, and nothing requiring the mitigation of adverse impacts has been identified. It is believed that the plan involves no unlawful discrimination.</p>
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### Timing

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

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

<https://www.equalityhumanrights.com/en/advice-and-guidance/equality-act-technical-guidance>

**Please send the EIA in draft to Bob Pullen in the Policy and Performance Team**

**([bobpullen@swale.gov.uk](mailto:bobpullen@swale.gov.uk) – 01795 417187) who will refer it on to the EIA Group who will peer review it and let you have any comments or suggested changes.**

**This Equality Impact Assessment should form an appendix to any SMT or committee (e.g. Cabinet or Council) report relating to the decision and a summary should be included in the 'Equality and Diversity' section of the standard committee report template under 'Section 6 – Implications'.**

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## **Appendix III: Draft Recovery Plan - September 2020**

### **Introduction**

The government's overarching approach to recovery is published in a 50-page recovery strategy (our Plan to Rebuild: The UK Government's COVID-19 recovery strategy). With this in mind, the council turned its attention from emergency response to the 'recovery phase' back in June 2020.

The concept of recovery may be understood differently by different people and that is understandable. This is not a normal recovery due to the scale of the Covid-19 impact. Normally we would return over time to business as usual, but in this situation, this will not happen and so we are in uncharted waters. This recovery is unique.

Recovery may require some form of realignment of services and processes of the council, with short, medium and long-term choices to make. To help the council be clearer in its approach, a plan was developed in June which is evolving over time.

The draft Recovery Plan was agreed by Cabinet on the 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 and then discussed in a member forum 22<sup>nd</sup> July. Feedback from these sessions has been taken into account in this update of the plan. This version has also been updated to take account of progress and changes since June 2020.

What is clear is that we still face huge challenges both nationally and locally, and the need to be flexible and agile is still of upmost importance. Working together with our partners is crucial as is timely messaging and support to our residents when needed.

### **What is the Recovery Plan?**

It is an attempt to address the different phases of recovery as we move through them. we are working to immediate (June – Sept), medium term (October - March 2021) and longer term (March 2021 +).

The plan sets out what the council intends to do throughout the process of recovery, accepting that there will be different responses depending on local, specific circumstances. We are seeing that recovery is not lineal. We may have to return to emergency response depending on if another spike hits and we enter into what is now termed a local lockdown, as is being seen in the north of England. It also needs to be sustainable for the longer term. Whilst since June further information and guidance has emerged, this is a moving feast and we still await national responses and interventions that we will respond to, the most recent being local lockdowns to prevent a second wave.

So in that context, a plan was prepared as robustly as possible, balancing the need to sustain core services, to continue with the Administration's programme of change and to meet the pressures of what will be a changed social and economic environment.

Coronavirus has amplified some of the issues the borough faces – struggling high streets, health inequalities - but it has also shown the strengths that it has – community spirit, quality open spaces. The Recovery Plan aims to address the underlying issues but also build on the strengths.

### **Why do we need a Recovery Plan?**

To help focus and prioritise the council's approach and ensure that is a safe, sustainable, managed recovery. Also, as a statement to the borough and wider partners, of its commitment and the role it has to play.

We have been initiating our recovery not only within the national framework, but also at a county level. In accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the County Council, along with District councils, have a statutory responsibility regarding recovery, with the county taking the lead as it effects more than one district. However, the council, working within this broader context, continues to develop its own response for its own activity, but also more broadly in relation to Swale's communities and economy.

The framework will be used to assess both the impact and opportunities as a result of the pandemic, particularly in regard to changing trends and behaviours, social and environmental evolution, but also economic, social, environmental and health impacts.

### **What are the priorities for the Recovery Plan?**

The Administration made clear its priorities last May. These are now articulated through its emerging Corporate Plan. The pandemic has magnified these priorities and enhanced their relevance and importance for the borough and so the Recovery Plan focuses itself around these in terms of action related to recovery. These priorities for recovery are set out below with high level actions as they evolve in Table One.

**Economic Improvement:** Support our local economy so that it can survive and be strong, resilient, dynamic, and adaptable to change. Encourage a local economy that fosters good, clean, sustainable growth. Play our part in helping meet some of the immediate challenges the boroughs' economy now faces but also take advantage of the untapped potential, for longer-term benefit.

**Affordable Housing:** Provide sustainable housing for local people by pursuing all viable opportunities for increasing the supply of affordable and social housing across the borough. Work in partnership to respond to those in need of housing, anticipating demand as we move out of lockdown.

**Climate and Environmental Emergency:** Seize the opportunities arising from the pandemic to a renewed commitment to investing in our environment and addressing climate change. Explore new approaches as a result of behavioural change and its impact on the environment. Ensure ecological issues are not squeezed out.

**Communities and Social Inclusion:** Enable our communities to be resilient and cohesive. Capitalise on the community spirit engendered through the pandemic and our changed relationship with the voluntary and community sector as a result – supporting it to bring about social change and quality of life. Focus on the vulnerable groups hardest hit by the pandemic, and address health and wellbeing implications arising from it. Recognise the impact COVID has had on social isolation and respond accordingly.

**Renewing Local Democracy and making the council fit for the future:** Improve the council’s engagement with communities and stakeholders across the borough to get buy in for a collective recovery. Be innovative in our ideas on how we do things as an organisation given the cultural, behavioural and environmental changes the pandemic presents.

#### **Overarching/ Cross Cutting Themes**

In addition to the priorities above, there are some overarching/ cross cutting themes that run throughout the approach to recovery:

**Working in collaboration:** The council is committed to working in collaboration with a wide range of partners to facilitate and enable recovery. The changed social and economic circumstances have provided an opportunity look again at the role public sector organisations, like the council, plays. There is no single agency responsible for ‘delivering’ recovery - we will need to work together. Success will depend on coordination across a range of partners and a communitarian approach to partnership working based on shared objectives, across the public, private and community sectors in Swale.

**Communications and messaging:** It is important that we communicate effectively and timely and get our messaging right so people know what the council is doing and how it is able to support them. Making the most of our assets and using the attributes of each area of Swale to promote places and the borough as a whole as a great place to visit and invest will be key to recovery. Recognising and promoting positive outcomes including reduced traffic and pollution, better work/life balance, community spirit.

**The Local Plan Review:** This major project pulls all other strands together. Driving good, sustainable growth through the Local Plan Review will address all the priorities – economic improvement, affordable housing and good design and standards, community infrastructure, climate change agenda and so on.

**How will we deliver?**

In terms of delivery structure and governance, Cabinet subgroups for priority areas have been established, that meet monthly. We also fed into the Kent wide recovery structure until it was stepped down in August 2020. This structure will be stepped up again should the need arise should Kent experience local lockdowns.

The council will need to be mindful that recovery, as with response, has a huge potential impact on the Council's finances. Delivery will need to be within the financial parameters of the Medium-Term Financial Plan and ensure the ongoing financial viability of the council. There has been government and other external funding provided to the council up to this point, and this may or may not continue.

Actions have already been undertaken to prepare a detailed estimate of the projected revenue budget impact so far of the pandemic. A base position has been established which will be subject to regular review through the recovery phases, and impacts are based on a variety of assumptions, some for a limited period and others assuming an ongoing impact through the year.

**What is our exit strategy out of recovery?**

It is still hard to know when recovery will end. What is known is that any withdrawal of support or focus will need to be managed sensitively and at the right time, working locally and collaboratively.



**Table One: Actions for focus**

Priority	Areas of Focus – Short term June – Sept 20	Areas of Focus – Medium Term Oct 20 – March 2021	Areas of Focus – Long Term March 2021 +
<b>Economic Improvement</b>	Deliver the various business grant schemes	Review our response to Business support (sector specific eg SME, Tourism as well as business start-ups?)	Investigate the evolution of a 'one business account' approach within the Council
	Link into any emerging regional/ national schemes – Kickstart launches September 2020	Link into any emerging regional/ national schemes – Kickstart implementation begins November 2020	Link into any emerging regional/ national schemes that support Council ambitions.
	Develop EIP short term actions	Endorsement and adoption of the Economic Improvement Plan (EIP)  Implement the EIP actions Commence work on wider set of the EIP actions  Deliver EIP short term actions	Review the EIP actions
	Develop VEF quick wins	Endorsement of the Visitor Economy Framework (VEF)  Implement the VEF actions  Deliver VEF quick wins	Review the VEF actions
	Deliver the Opening up the High	Continue to review the Opening	Develop high street place

	Streets Project across Sittingbourne, Sheerness, Faversham	<p>up the High Streets Project across Sittingbourne, Sheerness, Faversham</p> <p>Develop the wider Sittingbourne High Street Project, reflected in the Sittingbourne High Street SPD/ Vision</p> <p>Deliver initial public realm improvements in Sheerness and enhance capacity for future delivery</p> <p>Determine the future approach to the High Streets for the longer-term</p>	<p>making and strategic visioning</p> <p>Develop and deliver public realm improvements through Capital Projects team</p>
	Continue to explore FE opportunities and opportunities for retraining	Participate in discussions with key stakeholders to seek a consensus for improving future provision.	Participate in discussions with key stakeholders to seek a consensus for improving future provision.
			Look at the opportunity for business start-ups/ incubator space/ commuter provision
<b>Affordable Housing</b>	Assess the impact on demand for housing service as a result of changes to Government support	Work in partnership to secure TA and affordable accommodation once Section 21 notices reintroduced	Insist on affordable housing as part of the planning process
	Deliver landlord tenancy sustainment work and prevention work	Review landlord tenancy sustainment work and prevention work	Adapt where necessary landlord tenancy sustainment work and prevention work

	Deliver rough sleeping and hidden homeless project	Deliver Next Steps Accommodation Programme	Review rough sleeping and hidden homeless projects
	Explore feasibility of establishing a Housing Company	Set up Housing Company  Progress the development of the Mormon site and Fountain Street Assess options for Cockleshell walk	Progress the development of the Mormon site and Fountain Street Assess options for Cockleshell walk
<b>Climate and environmental emergency</b>	Deliver the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan	Deliver the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan	Deliver the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan
	Developing plans for Swale House refurbishment	Determining what is feasible for Swale House refurbishment	Refurbishment started
	Clean Air Zone	Consultants commissioned to develop a proposal	Implementation subject to KCC
	Green staff travel plan	How to reduce business mileage and commuting mileage	Actions implemented after staff and trade union consultation
	Work with Children and Families Ltd to recruit a Fuel and Water project worker	Implement work programme for the Fuel and Water project worker to help residents who may be struggling financially and are in fuel poverty.	Review work programme for the Fuel and Water project worker to help residents who may be struggling financially and are in fuel poverty.
	Park Improvement projects to encourage greater activity and access to green space and the health and wellbeing outcomes that brings	Park Improvement projects to encourage greater activity and access to green space and the health and wellbeing outcomes that brings	Park Improvement projects to encourage greater activity and access to green space and the health and wellbeing outcomes that brings
	Active Travel Project tranche 1	Active Travel project tranche 2	

		Agree the Transport Strategy through the Local Plan	
<b>Communities and Social Inclusion</b>	Develop a health and wellbeing recovery plan	Develop and implement a health and wellbeing recovery plan	Review health and wellbeing recovery plan
	Deliver community support hub	Review support and reinstate community support hub in event of a local lockdown	
		Undertake targeted interventions (door knocking) with our most disadvantaged families and communities	Work in partnership to tackle mental health and improve the scope of such services
		Preparation for holding small community engagement events in local areas as per govt guidance	Run small community engagement events in local areas as per govt guidance
	Work with Swale foodbanks to ensure a coordinated effort of support	Work with Swale foodbanks to ensure a coordinated effort of support	Work with Swale foodbanks to ensure a coordinated effort of support
	Grant support and work with Swale CVS, CAB, to support communities	Grant support and work with Swale CVS, CAB, to support communities	
	Run the member community grant scheme	Run the member community grant scheme	
	Developing an ongoing volunteer scheme building on those who helped with community hub	Developing an ongoing volunteer scheme building on those who helped with community hub Implement the scheme	Implement the scheme

	Deliver work programme of the Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Officer and the Health and Wellbeing Officer	Deliver work programme of the Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Officer and the Health and Wellbeing Officer	Review work programme of the Community Engagement and Social Inclusion Officer and the Health and Wellbeing Officer
	Develop an approach to the Emergency Assistance programme and allocate funding	Monitor the emergency assistance programme	
		Ensure compliance with Track and Trace app launched 24 <sup>th</sup> September	
	Contribute to the development of the Kent Local Lockdown Plan	Support the Public Health Local Lockdown Plan and utilise the £50k grant	
<b>Renewing local democracy and making the council fit for the future</b>	Introduce Area Committees	Evolution of Area Committees	Area Committees established and sustained
	Planning the introduction of Cabinet Committees	Cabinet Committees introduced	Cabinet Committees functioning
	Redesign and risk assess Swale House to comply with Govt guidance for safely getting people back to the office. Determine process of getting staff back in phases	Continue phased return of staff Review introduction of opening reception and getting other services back	Embed homeworking/ flexible working within the culture of the Council in the longer term.
	Explore the use of technology and digital for home working and holding virtual meetings		

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<b>Council Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	7 October 2020
<b>Report Title</b>	Economic Recovery – Extension of Parking Concession
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Roger Truelove, Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance Cllr Monique Bonney, Cabinet Member for Economy and Property
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Emma Wiggins, Director of Regeneration
<b>Head of Service</b>	Martyn Cassell, Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Martyn Cassell, Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	1. To agree a further car parking concession as part of the Council’s response to Covid 19, specifically a free additional 30 minutes on all parking tickets purchased from 1 October 2020 to 10 January 2021.

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 At the Cabinet meeting on 8 July, a report was received on the Council’s overall approach to recovery. Full Council agreed a recommendation on 15 July 2020 to implement a short term car parking concession. This report sets out plans to extend the concession for a further short period to continue with support for the High streets.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 The Recovery Plan identified three time periods; immediate (June-September), medium term (October-March 2021) and longer term (March 2021 and beyond). This proposal relates to a medium action.
- 2.2 At the meeting of Council on 15<sup>th</sup> July 2020, it was proposed and agreed that between 18 July and 30 September 2020, all car park tickets purchased in Council run car parks would have an additional free 30 minutes added to it manually by enforcement officers.
- 2.3 As this is done manually, there is no formal data to suggest how many residents are taking up the offer, however anecdotal feedback from enforcement officers is that people are using the 30 min grace period.

- 2.4 The administration has continued to monitor the return of residents to town centres. With social distancing still in place there are more queues and it does take longer for individuals to undertake their business and car parking charges can be a disincentive in this environment. It would also be good to encourage individuals to linger longer and in-particular make use of food & beverage outlets which are so important in our town centres. There is no doubt that for many residents there is a confidence issue for residents to get back out using the town centre.
- 2.3 Car parking charges are a major source of income for the Council with budgeted income of £1.9m in 2020/21. Our financial model assumed no car parking income in April – June and a 50% reduction in July. Actual income for the first quarter has been 8% in April, 14% in May and 28% in June. This made a combined total of 17%.
- 2.4 There has been a continual increase in transactions during quarter two (July, August, September) with August achieving around 70% of estimated transactions. It is now clear that with changing societal behaviours, office workers are continuing to work from home and thus commuter car parking income remains low.
- 2.5 At the LGA conference at the beginning of July the Secretary of State announced that there would be support for Councils which have lost fees and charges type income. The first tranche of this will be calculated for the April-July period based upon actuals compared with budgeted income. This will continue through the year and there will be a reconciliation at year end. The Chief Financial Officer has to make the first submission to MHCLG on 30 September. Any loss of income resulting from the actions of the Council cannot be included in the claim so that applies to the impact of the recommendation in this report.
- 2.6 Members debated the scale of any car parking concession at the July meeting. There needs to be a balance between maintaining this income stream for the Council, whilst recognising the benefits for recovery.
- 2.7 Formal changes to tariffs (e.g. the first 30 minutes free) will require amending the Off-Street Parking orders which take time to implement and also require complicated changes to machines and software. Therefore, the only viable solution is for Enforcement officers to manually add 30 minutes to each ticket expiry observed.
- 2.8 Given the timing of this October Council meeting, a bridging decision has been required to cover the period between 1 October and 11 October. In the event that the proposal to extend until 10<sup>th</sup> January is not supported, the notional cost of this bridging arrangement for the period 1 to 11 October would be accommodated within the agreed budgetary framework managed by the Executive.



### 3 Proposals

- 3.1 It is proposed to extend the parking concession from 1 October 2020 until 10 January 2021, whereby all car park tickets purchased will have an additional free 30 minutes added to it if required.

### 4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 Not to give a concession - the concession does not have to be granted.

### 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 No formal consultation has been undertaken although feedback to the Council's 'Back to business' email address is monitored and discussed by Members of the administration.

### 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	Proposals will support the objectives in the emerging corporate plan.
Financial, Resource and Property	<p>There will be a financial impact of the proposals.</p> <p>The impact of the first concession is hard to calculate. We estimated that it would be in the region of £96,000 for pay and display income based on comparisons to last year's transaction numbers and approximately £13,000 for Penalty Charge Notices not issued. As stated in the main report, usage levels are lower than last year and this assumed everybody utilises the additional time. PCN levels have not been affected as predicted during the concession period.</p> <p>Looking at figures in July and August whilst the concession was in operation (September figures not available at time of finalising report), we saw 70,385 and 86,715 transactions which, if everybody used the additional 30 minutes, would have a value of £78,536. Similar usage figures in September would therefore likely exceed the predicted £96,000.</p> <p>Taking an average of above (78,550 transactions), the predicted cost of extending the concession for Oct-Dec would be in the region of £118,000.</p> <p>The loss of income will increase the size of the total deficit as reported to Cabinet on 23 September.</p>

Legal, Statutory and Procurement	Legal, statutory and procurement requirements will be met. The continuation of enforcement enables us to meet our responsibilities under section 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004.
Crime and Disorder	No direct implications.
Environment and Sustainability	In the long term, the administration does not want to encourage residents to use their car and wants to see greater access through walking, cycling and use of public transport. Granting this concession is a short term action generated by the impact of Covid 19 to support the high streets.
Health and Wellbeing	No direct implications.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	No direct implications.
Equality and Diversity	Given social distancing requirements it is harder for residents with physical disabilities to move around the high streets. This action will take make it slightly easier for everyone to move around and will provide extended times for those with mobility issues to move between the car parks and high streets.
Privacy and Data Protection	No direct implications.

## 7 Appendices

None

## 8 Background Papers

The Cabinet Delegated Decision on the Extension of the Parking Concession is available here:

<https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=157&MId=2402&Ver=4>

<b>Council Meeting</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	7 October 2020
<b>Report Title</b>	Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Cllr Tim Valentine, Cabinet Member for Environment
<b>SMT Lead</b>	Nick Vickers, Chief Financial Officer
<b>Head of Service</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Janet Hill, Climate Change Officer
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	1. That Council notes the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 In June 2019 the council declared a climate change and ecological emergency and committed to producing an action plan to make our own operation carbon neutral by 2025 and the borough by 2030.
- 1.2 In April 2020 Cabinet adopted the Action Plan
- 1.3 This report provides an update on the Council’s response to the declaration of a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency, the action plan sets out the activities required to adapt and mitigate against climate change. Appended to this report is the action plan.
- 1.4 Council is asked to note the Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan.

## 2 Background

- 2.1 At the Council meeting on 26 June Council declared a Climate Change and Ecological Emergency. This declaration included commitments to:
  - Draw up an action plan with improvement in energy efficiency and making space for nature as key priorities in all strategies and plans.
  - Provide leadership by taking all measures within our control to make Swale Borough Council’s own operations carbon neutral by 2025, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3)
  - Engage with businesses, organisations and residents to facilitate the action required to make the Borough of Swale carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3).
  - Undertake actions including, but not be limited to, spatial and transport planning to make fewer journeys necessary, improvement to the energy

efficiency of new and existing housing and buildings, improved public transport especially in rural areas; encouraging active transport, developing the infrastructure for EVs; deploying renewable energy at every opportunity, while continuing to safeguard our wild places, ancient woodlands and hedgerows.

- Call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible.

2.2 Given these ambitious targets a key part of the agreed motion was to “report the actions the Council will take to address this emergency to Full Council”. These actions were taken to Cabinet in April to be agreed in order to continue with the momentum and progress actions.

### **3 Proposals**

3.1 Following the declaration, an internal steering group was formed in order to determine and monitor the progress of work. This group have identified a number of areas of work. The action plan has captured these areas and grouped them into the following workstreams:

- Council Estate
- Buildings and property
- Transport and air quality
- Resource consumption and waste
- Ecology and biodiversity
- Energy generation and storage
- Resilience, adaptation and offsetting

3.2 Each workstream area has been split into areas that we, as a council, can have a direct impact on, for example on our own estate or fleet and those where we need to work with partners in order to deliver the actions, such as Kent Highways, schools and local community groups.

3.3 The action plan, by necessity focuses on the actions to be carried out, rather than the outcomes. The workstreams identified above include all of the desired outcomes that were set out in the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Declaration. For example, air quality will be improved by the actions that come under the transport category.

3.4 In order to make sure we covered all possible areas of work we asked a consultant to come forward with a range of proposals for actions. This set of actions went to Policy Development and Review Committee (PDRC) on 4 March 2020. Following the feedback from PDRC the set of actions was rationalised and the scope and context within which the action plan sits was refined.

3.5 The action plan was shared with the Climate Change and Ecological Emergency working group for their input and feedback. This action plan can be found at

## Appendix I.

- 3.6 The action plan will be an evolving document and will be updated regularly in order to consider new technology, information and targets. As further iterations are developed residents and businesses will be engaged in order to refine and inform the actions to be included.

### **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 We could do nothing but this would negate clear intentions and objectives in both the climate change and ecological emergency declaration as well as the council's emerging Corporate Plan. Doing nothing would lead to maintaining existing emissions in both the council's own operations and the borough which would have a negative impact on climate change.

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

- 5.1 The action plan was developed with a number of services and teams across the council. It is envisaged that the initial action plan be reviewed on a regular basis and this review include input from residents and businesses.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The action plan supports the priority in the emerging corporate plan around developing a coherent strategy to address the climate and ecological emergencies.
Financial, Resource and Property	Some of the actions will become projects and will necessarily have financial, resource or property implications. These will be considered on a case by case basis before each project commences.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	None identified at this time
Crime and Disorder	None identified at this time
Environment and Sustainability	In addressing the Council Climate and Ecological Emergency, the actions proposed in this report are intended to deliver a carbon neutral Council and wider area.
Health and Wellbeing	Climate change will result in heatwaves, extreme weather events, floods, disease and increased cancer risk. The measures to reduce it will limit the dangers and those activities can also have direct positive health effects (e.g. increased fitness from cycling and better air quality from reducing car journeys)
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified at this time
Equality and Diversity	There are no negative impacts identified on the protected characteristics groups of the Equalities Act 2010 from the recommendations in this report. However, an Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken, as necessary, for individual projects in the Action Plan before commencement to ensure this
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified at this time

## 7 Appendices

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

- Appendix I: Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan

## 8 Background Papers

8.1 [Minutes from Council meeting 24 June 2019](#)



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# Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan

22 April 2020



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## Foreword

*“It may sound frightening, but the scientific evidence is that, if we have not taken dramatic action within the next decade, we could face irreversible damage to the natural world and the collapse of our societies.”*

Sir David Attenborough, *Climate Change: The Facts*. BBC TV transmitted 18/04/2019.



Councillor Tim Valentine, Cabinet Member for Environment at Swale Borough Council

Following the local elections in May 2019, a new coalition of Labour, Swale Independent Alliance, Liberal Democrat, Green and Independent councillors took office. One of the first actions of the new administration was to declare a climate and ecological emergency. The declaration sets very ambitious targets, in line with the science described by Sir David Attenborough. The target is to make the council's operations carbon neutral in five years' time and the borough carbon neutral by 2030. In adopting these ambitious targets Swale Borough Council aims to lead the local transition to a low carbon economy. The declaration requires the council to draw up this action plan. It is very apposite that this plan was presented to Cabinet for adoption on Earth Day 2020, an international day of climate action.

Research by leading climate scientists at the Tyndall Centre has found that for Swale to make its fair contribution towards the Paris Climate Change Agreement, it should emit no more than 7.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide before 2100. At 2017 emission levels, Swale would use this entire budget within seven years. The recommended pathway requires: a 13% cut in carbon dioxide emissions each year from 2020; 80% reduction in annual emissions by 2030 and 95% reduction by 2042. Historically, the reduction in annual carbon emissions has been just over 3%. The recommended pathway would leave 20% of emissions to be offset to meet our target of carbon neutrality by 2030.

At its heart, the action plan has ten high-priority key actions. These actions are specific and deliverable, although some set very challenging targets. The council will show what can be done, and support organisations, businesses and local residents on their pathway to low carbon living. Many actions can only be taken in partnership with others, including central government, Kent County Council, business and community groups. To succeed changes in government policy are required.

This action plan does not set out a full list of actions that will deliver a carbon neutral borough in 2030. It is not possible to know exactly all of the actions necessary at the start or how they may be implemented. The action plan is a living document that will be updated and modified as progress is made, and the national policy framework changes. In keeping with the declaration, progress will be reported to council every year.

We are at the beginning of a long, but very exciting, journey that will bring many benefits; cleaner air, lower fuel bills, healthier lifestyles, more enjoyment and engagement with our environment, better mental health and a vibrant, more locally based economy. Swale Borough Council will lead on this journey, but we cannot reach the destination alone. We need everyone to travel along with us, share ideas and to support each other.

# Introduction

## **The need for change**

Greenhouse gases are present in the atmosphere, without which our planet would be too cold to support life. However, since the industrial revolution, human activities have significantly increased the amount of these gases, and particularly carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), that are present in the atmosphere.

Over the past 50 years, the average global temperature has increased at the fastest rate in recorded history and the trend is accelerating. According to the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the 20 warmest years on record have been in the past 22 years, with the top four in the past four years. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) special report on Global Warming of 1.5°C reported that the past five years, 2014-2018, was 1.04°C above the pre-industrial baseline.

The scale of the challenge that climate change presents is unprecedented in human history. The warming climate due to anthropogenic emissions (emissions originating from human activity), coupled with rapid biodiversity and ecosystem loss, is combining to create an event that threatens or severely impacts all life on our planet.

The climate crisis is not something that any of us are insulated from, and the impact of climate change is already being felt across the globe. While major national and intercontinental organisations can plan for how we meet this challenge head on, action is incumbent on us all, across multiple systems, communities, organisations and individuals.

## **The opportunity for Swale**

As a council, Swale Borough Council recognises that with the scale, complexity and pervasive nature of the challenge, identifying which actions to take can be difficult, but we also recognise that the need for action is urgent, and that we must respond immediately to the climate and ecological emergency. This was recognised on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2019 when Swale Borough Council unanimously declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency (See Appendix I).

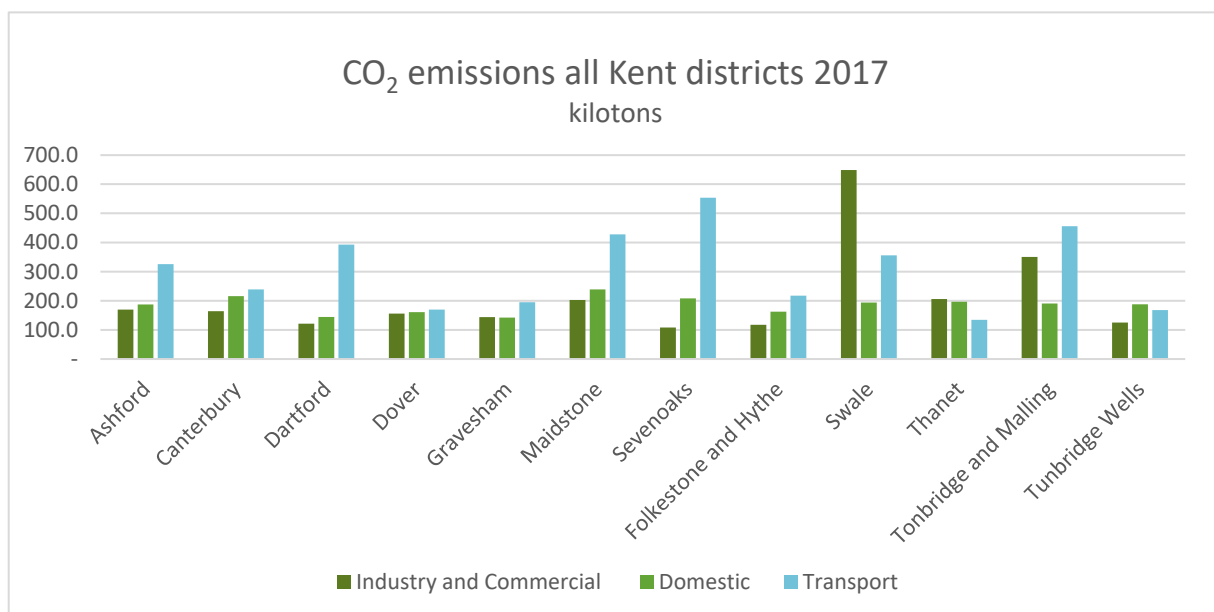
The declaration includes the commitment to

- take all measures within our control to make Swale Borough Council's own operations carbon neutral by 2025
- engage with businesses, organisations and residents to facilitate the action required to make the Borough of Swale carbon neutral by 2030.
- make space for nature as a key priority, and safeguard our wild places,
- ancient woodlands and hedgerows

The scope of these commitments includes both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3 carbon). The above commitments are Swale's 'overarching objectives' under which sits this action plan

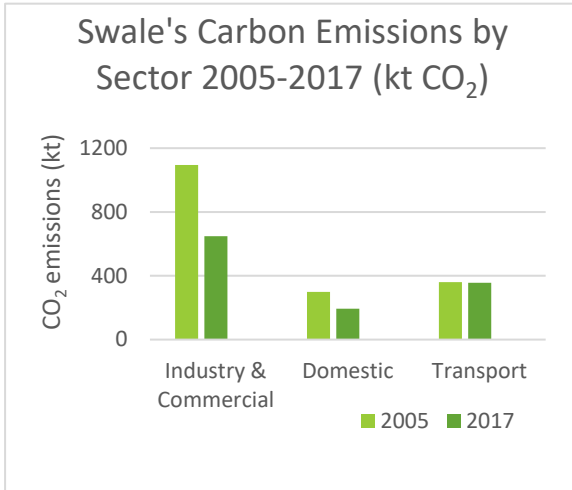
Researchers at the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research have developed a tool which local authorities can use to determine reductions. Inputting our details gives an annual reduction across the borough of between 13 - 25% reduction per year in order to achieve our targets.

Latest figures on CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are released annually by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS). The latest figures, released in July 2019, give us the data up until the end of 2017. Due to the nature of businesses in Swale, the district has always had high energy consumption and emissions compared with other Kent districts.



Source: BEIS

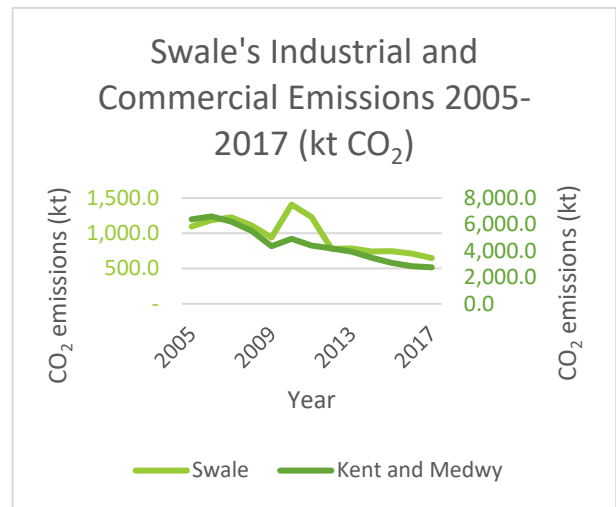
In order to establish the activities required to achieve our targets we need to understand the existing situation in both the council and the borough as a whole.



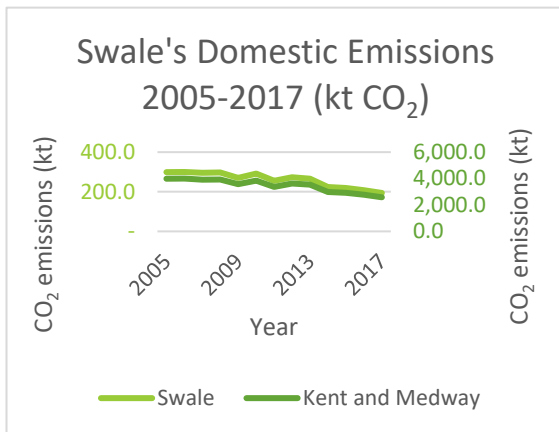
Source: BEIS

If we look at levels of emissions over the last 12 years, we can see an overall decrease across the borough, with the exception being in the Transport sector, which has hardly changed during the same period. In Swale 29% of emissions come from domestic properties, 32% from transport, and 39% are industrial and commercial emissions.

At both borough and county level there has been a decrease in emissions from industry. Within Swale's industrial and commercial sector there has been a 41% decrease in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions between 2005-2017 with a steep fall to between 2010-2012, which has continued to decline overall. The 2017 total of 648.4kt CO<sub>2</sub> comprises 55% of the districts total CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.



Source: BEIS. LH scale refers to Swale; RH scale refers to Kent & Medway.



Source: BEIS. LH scale refers to Swale; RH scale refers to Kent & Medway.

Consumption of electricity in Swale was 691GWh in 2017, of which domestic consumption was 235GWh, and non-domestic consumption was 456GWh. The typical (median) household electricity consumption in Swale was 3,909kWh.

The total gas consumption (domestic and non-domestic) in Swale in 2017 was 1,124GWh. of which domestic consumption was 666GWh, and non-domestic consumption was 458GWh. The typical (median) household gas consumption in Swale was 12,052kWh.

Despite an overall downward trend in emissions they are not falling quickly enough to achieve our borough wide target of net zero carbon by 2030.

For the council to become carbon neutral by 2025 and the borough to become carbon neutral by 2030 is a considerably ambitious target. Success will require the



council to work in partnership with a wide range of partners and all the residents of the borough. This creates great opportunities and potential to realise significant economic, social and environmental benefits, including new businesses, jobs and improved quality of life for local residents.

The Tyndall Centre presents climate change targets for Swale that are derived from the commitments enshrined in the Paris Agreement, informed by the latest science on climate change and defined in terms of science-based carbon setting.<sup>1</sup>

The carbon budget is based on translating the “well below 2°C and pursuing 1.5°C” global temperature target and equity principles in the United Nations Paris Agreement to a national UK carbon budget. The UK budget is then split between sub-national areas. Aviation and shipping emissions remain within the national UK carbon budget and are not scaled down to sub-national budgets. Land Use, Land Use Change and Forestry (LULUCF) and non-CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are considered separately to the energy CO<sub>2</sub> budget.

For Swale to make its ‘fair’ contribution towards the Paris Climate Change Agreement, it should stay within a maximum cumulative carbon dioxide emission budget of 7.7 million tonnes (MtCO<sub>2</sub>) for the period of 2020 to 2100. **At 2017 CO<sub>2</sub> emission levels, Swale would use this entire budget within 7 years from 2020.**

The recommended pathway to stay with the carbon budget requires:

- 13% cut in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions each year from 2020
- 81.1% reduction in annual emissions by 2030
- 95 % reduction to be near zero by 2042

This recommended pathway would leave 19.9% (227kt CO<sub>2</sub>e) plus emissions from non-CO<sub>2</sub> sources of greenhouse gases to be offset to meet our target of carbon neutrality by 2030.

A report from the Carbon Trust, commissioned by Swale Borough Council, recommends a similar pathway to cutting carbon emissions from our own estate. If we implemented all of the actions recommended by the Carbon Trust, 1,481 tCO<sub>2</sub>e must be offset to meet our target of the council operations being carbon neutral by 2025. This could be achieved by planting 148,100 trees or approximately 60 acres of woodland.

Both the UK Government and the Committee on Climate Change consider that this shift to a very low carbon energy future represents the best course for the UK’s economic development.

It cannot be stated strongly enough that to meet the ambition of the motion by 2030 will be incredibly challenging. It is an ambition the Council is prepared to pursue in good faith and in endeavouring to achieve the goal will take us further than backing off from the challenge. The evidence available shows that the scale of change is

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<sup>1</sup> <https://carbonbudget.manchester.ac.uk/reports/E07000113/>

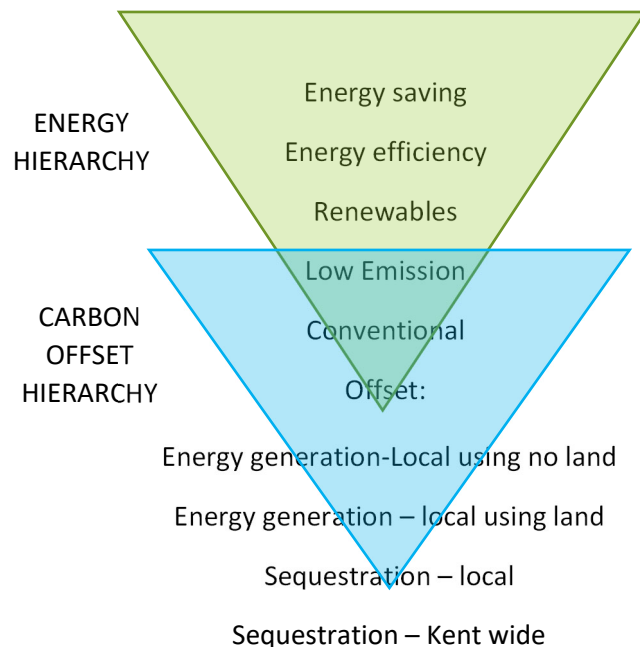
unprecedented. Global and national system change will be needed to support local action.

This is a challenge where the totality of the solutions needed is not clear and the approach that we take will be emergent. The council cannot provide all of the solutions, as combating climate change needs system-wide change that involves communities, business, individuals and stakeholders across all sectors of the economy. Swale Borough Council's direct control over the emissions from across Swale is minimal, at around 1%. There is recognition of the important role the council must play to stimulate and support climate action from others.

Given the scale of the challenge to achieve a net zero carbon goal it is likely that some future measures will entail radical steps that will require far reaching policy and societal changes. They will also rely on the measures taken at a national and international level to achieve an overall carbon reduction target. As was recognised in the declaration, the council cannot do this alone.

The scope of the Swale Borough Council zero net carbon commitment is all greenhouse gases determined as carbon dioxide equivalents (CO<sub>2</sub>e). For ease throughout this report we refer to CO<sub>2</sub>e as '**Carbon**'.

**Zero net carbon** (also referred to as carbon neutral) means that the activity balances its energy use with its renewable energy generation, or carbon sequestration, and emits no 'net' carbon. This may be through 100% reduction of carbon using efficiencies and renewable technologies at the location, or could be using a **carbon offset**, which absorbs carbon or generates electricity without carbon emissions to achieve zero 'net' carbon emissions.



As well as reducing our carbon emissions to stop contributing to climate change, we also need to consider how we will ensure Swale is resilient and adapts to the climate change that is predicted to occur based on previous carbon emissions.

This plan is not intended to provide a step-by-step response to how the key changes or outcomes set out in the declaration are to be achieved, but its purpose is to describe the initial pathways and process that will be engaged in order to achieve the outcomes.

This is a living plan, will evolve as needed and progress will be reported on an annual basis.

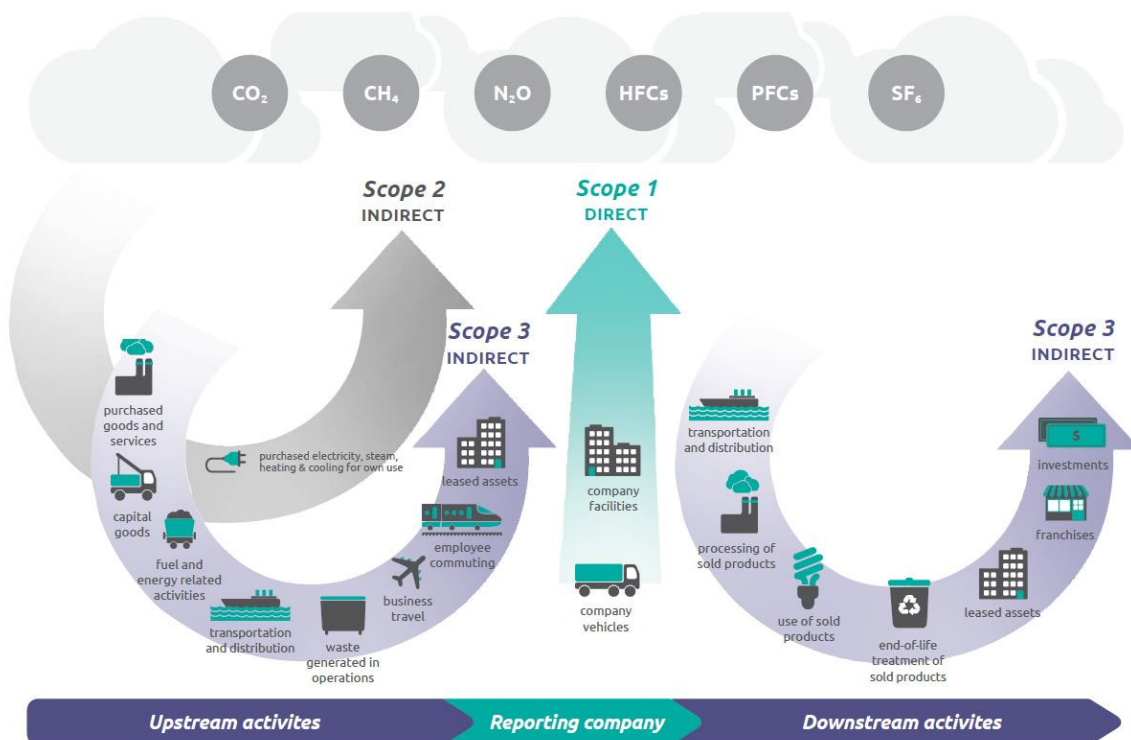


# Scope

The scope of the Swale Borough Council Climate and Ecological Emergency Action Plan incorporates all greenhouse gases (GHGs) and uses carbon dioxide equivalents (CO<sub>2</sub>e) as the unit of measure. For ease throughout this report we use the term 'carbon'.

The globally accepted carbon accounting standard known as the World Resources Institute (WRI) Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Protocol defines direct and indirect organisational emissions as follows:

- Direct GHG emissions are emissions from sources that are owned or controlled by the reporting entity.
- Indirect GHG emissions are emissions that are a consequence of the activities of the reporting entity but occur at sources owned or controlled by another entity.



Overview of the World Resources Institutes GHG Protocol accounting methodology.

The GHG Protocol further categorises these direct and indirect organisational emissions into three broad scopes:

- Scope 1: All direct GHG emissions.
- Scope 2: Indirect GHG emissions from consumption of purchased electricity, heat or steam.

- Scope 3: Other indirect emissions, such as the extraction and production of purchased materials and fuels, transport-related activities in vehicles not owned or controlled by the reporting entity, electricity-related activities (e.g. transmission and distribution losses) not covered in Scope 2, outsourced activities, waste disposal, etc.

Scope 1, 2, and 3 carbon emissions are included within the scope of our commitment, which means all carbon emissions resulting from activities undertaken in the borough, including the emissions from the supply chain in procurement, use, and eventual disposal.

Much of the resulting carbon emissions are outside the direct control of the council and it is vital that the council works with others to tackle the climate emergency.

## Leadership

Climate emergency action is urgent and Swale Borough Council recognises the importance of leadership, to rapidly build and maintain momentum and therefore has determined to establish itself as a beacon of best practice and learning, to stimulate and support borough-wide action. A three-point framework has been developed to help prioritise actions:

1. **Lead:** Get SBC operations improved (as set out in a separate action plan commissioned from the Carbon Trust) and engage with local businesses and organisations and residents who are already taking positive action on carbon.
2. **Show:** Use Swale House refurbishment and retrofit as a beacon of best practice for zero carbon, demonstrate and communicate positive actions of local businesses and others.
3. **Support:** Provide guidance, support and signposting to local residents and businesses including technical, and commercial 'How to Guides', use the new ultra-low carbon Swale House as a local green business incubator and use the building to help build zero carbon skills and capacity in the borough.

## Communication and Collaboration

In order to deliver services to residents and local businesses Swale Borough Council works in partnership with other councils, organisations, businesses. We work closely with Kent County Council who provide many services in the Swale area (e.g. highways, social care, education, libraries). The council works with housing associations who provide affordable housing. Swale Borough Council contracts private businesses to provide services. The council collaborates with other borough councils to provide shared services (e.g. building control, legal services,

environmental health, IT support, Kent Resource Partnership, Mid Kent waste and recycling contract).

The following partnerships carry out work that is relevant to the climate and ecological emergency:

- Kent Climate Change Network (A network including Kent County Council all of the 12 district councils in Kent, Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and the NHS.);
- Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership;
- Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB);
- Swale Green Grid (a forum including the National Farmers Union, Medway Swale Estuary Partnership, Natural England, Environment Agency, Making a Buzz for the Coast, Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, Kent Wildlife Trust), Faversham Town Council, Sheerness Town Council, and the Quality Bus Partnership)

Collaborative working means that there are strategies, management plans and contracts with partner councils and organisations that are relevant to targets for the climate and ecological emergency. (e.g. Kent Environment Strategy, Kent Energy and Low Emissions Strategy). Some partners have set a target for their carbon reduction plan. For example, Kent County Council aim to be carbon neutral by 2050. A list of relevant strategies and management plans can be found at Appendix III.

We recognise that the council is part of society at large and we need to communicate, engage, and collaborate with local stakeholders in order to share, learn and implement improvements efficiently together. To effectively tackle the climate and ecological emergency Swale Borough Council must engage and consult town and parish councils, business groups, community groups, and engage directly with residents and with the council's own employees. It is important to develop mutually supportive networks to ensure that the climate and ecological emergency is tackled as effectively and efficiently as possible, for example, through our Green Grid partners, or the Swale Youth Forum.

## Structure of the Action Plan

In the diagram labelled 'overall structure and carbon reduction focus areas', the broad structure of the action plan is illustrated. Enabling tools, which provide the means to communicate and implement the planned actions, are listed. Also a number of focus areas for carbon reduction are identified. Finally, a hierarchy for the preferred options for offsetting carbon emissions that cannot be further reduced is illustrated.

Actions to develop enabling tools and ten high priority key actions are set out in subsequent tables. Finally, an action plan for each focus area is set out in section on each focus area.

## Key to Tables

Each action in the plans for each focus area is assigned to a department at Swale Borough Council to lead. The following abbreviations are used:

CEL Commissioning, Environment & Leisure

ECS Economy and Cultural Services

EH Environmental Health

EP Emergency Planning

HR Human Resources

Other departments are named in full

Each action is assigned a timescale: short, medium or long. The definition of each is as follows:

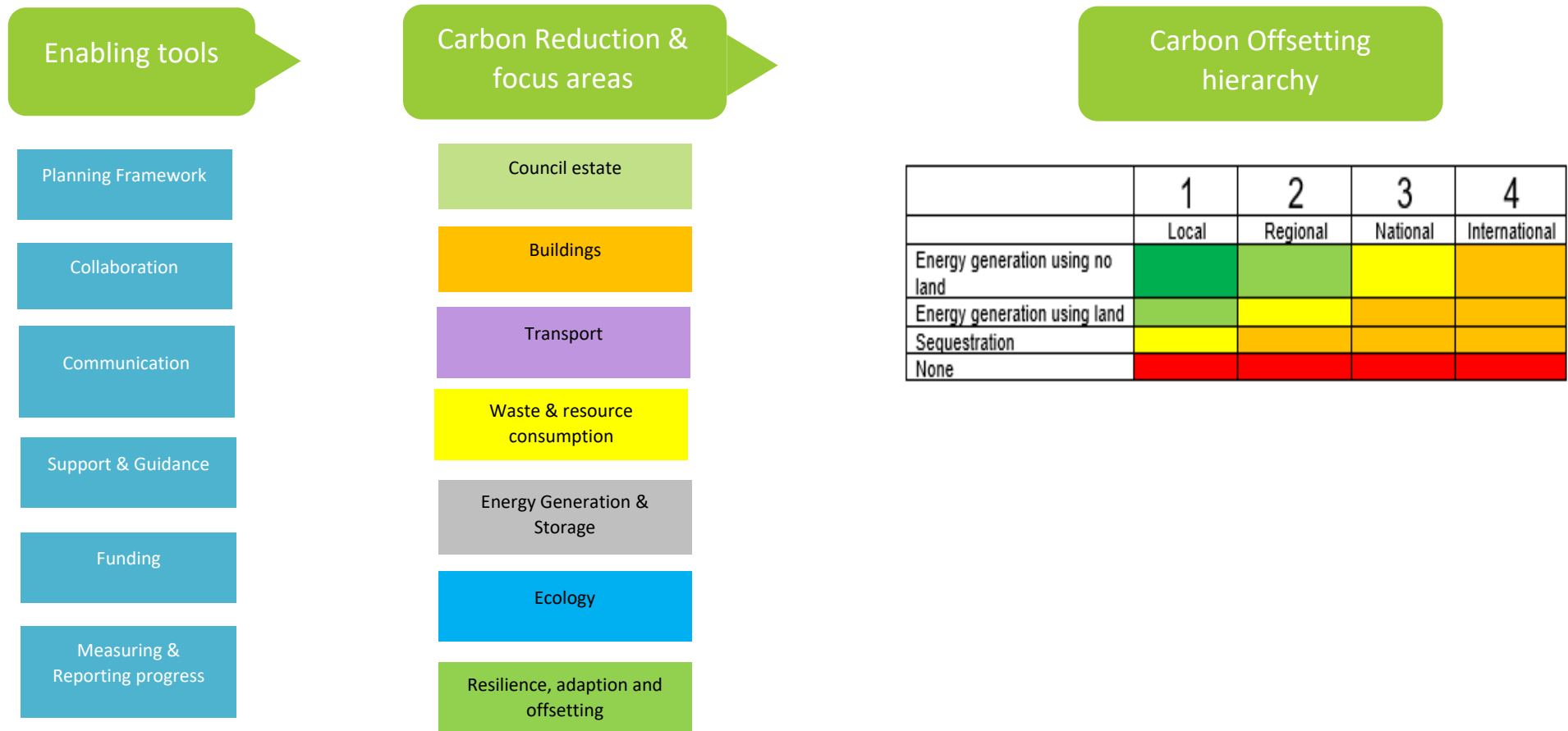
Short: completed by the end of 2023

Medium: completed between the end of 2023 and the end of 2027

Long: completed by the end of 2030.

# Overall Structure and Carbon Reduction Focus Areas

Swale Borough Council’s approach to tackling the climate and ecological emergency is to focus on the tools within its control and specific actions that it can take in partnership with others, to focus on specific areas of carbon reduction. Residual carbon emissions will be a secondary focus with a preference for offsetting within the boundary of the borough. Offsetting these residual carbon emissions, is important to achieve borough-wide net zero carbon by 2030, but will not actively be promoted over tackling and reducing carbon emissions at source.



## Enabling Tools – cross cutting themes and actions

Swale Borough Council recognises that there are cross-cutting actions that are needed to underpin the actions that are specifically targeted at the particular causes of carbon emissions. These are outlined below and build on the council’s three-point framework of Lead, Show, Support.

Dept.	Action	Timescale
Actions Swale Borough Council can take:		
1	Policy and HR Rolling out a climate change learning and development programme for staff to improve understanding of carbon and the wider environmental context. The skills programme will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Base level training for all employees</li> <li>• Encouraging personal responsibility and roll out of a Green Champions Network.</li> <li>• More targeted/ intensive training for organisational decision-makers to enable them to adequately assess carbon impacts in their decisions</li> </ul>	Short
2	Policy Sharing our knowledge – we will provide capacity to share our learning and approaches with others, such as town and parish councils and community groups.	Short
3	Policy Promotion of low carbon food through council facilities and communication. Promotion of vegan and vegetarian diets using seasonal, local sources to support local food networks.	Short
4	Policy Identify and align to national days of action to reinforce the message of collective action.	Short
5	Cabinet A special projects fund has been set up to fund projects including those to tackle the emergency.	Short

# Ten High Priority Key Actions

The actions specified below are key actions, across the focus areas, which Swale Borough Council can take now. They have been selected because they are within our control and/or area of responsibility and are necessary early actions to making deep reductions in carbon emissions. Communications and engagement need to be run alongside these actions.

	Topic	Dept.	Action	Target date	Annual carbon reduction (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Progress
1	Council	Property	Retro-fit Swale House to cut carbon emissions (e.g. extra insulation, triple glazing, heat pump, solar PV).	2025	186	Carbon Trust report March 2020
2	Council	CEL	Replace SBC fleet vehicles with electric vehicles.	2025	26	6-8 vehicles – 2020
3	Council	CEL	Revise procurement strategy to embed the climate and ecological emergency into all procurement decisions.	2023	780	Not yet started
4	Buildings	Planning	Prior to the adoption of the new Local Plan, use a planning condition based on a 50% improvement over current building regulations, ratcheting to 75% and 100% improvement by 2025 and 2028 respectively, as the basis for negotiation with developers through pre-application and planning application negotiations.	2020-2030	400 - 1,000+t extra reduction p.a.	Proposed condition to be used in the interim in advance of progress on the Local plan review as the basis for negotiation with developers through pre-application and planning application negotiations.
5	Council	Property	Eliminate single-use plastic from council operations wherever possible.	2021	-	Some eliminated at Swale House
6	Ecology & biodiversity	CEL	Tree planting on council land (target; 148,100 trees or 60 acres of woodland) to offset 20% of council emissions.	2025	1,481t offset (25t to date)	2,500 trees planted in country parks 2019/20
7	Transport	CEL	Install EV charging points across the borough.	2025	to be monitored	8 planned for council carparks in 2020.

<b>8</b>	Transport	ECS	Improve facilities and incentives for walking and cycling.	2030	Large	Local plan transport strategy under review
<b>9</b>	Buildings	Policy	Bulk buying scheme for solar PV installations paid-for by residents (in partnership with KCC).	2020-21	100	In progress
<b>10</b>	Buildings	Policy	Fuel and water poverty outreach service to reduce fuel and water bills for vulnerable residents.	2020-23	to be monitored	in progress



# Council Operations

The council's own estate and operations are the only area where Swale Borough Council has direct control to reduce carbon emissions. This includes the council's buildings, parks and green spaces, and all the services that the council provides directly or procures. The majority of the council's carbon footprint comes from procured services. The council can only influence this carbon footprint through a revised procurement policy. A difficult funding situation for local government makes it challenging to impose extra costs on suppliers. However, as contracts come up for renewal and further technology becomes more mainstream there is an opportunity to secure services that have a lower carbon footprint.

The direct emissions from Swale Borough Council's own offices at Swale House are significant and produce 13% of the council's own emissions (336 tCO<sub>2</sub>e). Swale Borough Council's own fleet transport emissions are 40 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>e (<1.5% of the council's total carbon emissions). The furthest a fleet vehicle drives in a year is 17,000 miles, assuming operation 200 days of the year, yields a typical daily mileage of 85 miles. This is well within the range of a typical electric vehicle.



## Current activities, actions and programmes

The council has contracted the Carbon Trust to understand the carbon footprint of its operations and advise on the retro-fit of Swale House to reduce carbon emissions from the building

The council has recently agreed to contract a fuel and water poverty outreach service to help vulnerable residents reduce the utility bills and energy consumption.

The council is promoting a Kent wide bulk purchase solar scheme for householders and businesses.

## Objectives

Minimise carbon emissions from the Council's own estate and operations.

Reduce fuel poverty in Swale.

Encourage the take up of solar photovoltaic technology.

### Opportunities and benefits

The council will use its experience of carbon reduction to become a beacon of good practice, show business and community organisations what can be achieved and support other organisations to make similar changes. Actions taken to improve the efficiency of buildings, and to replace the SBC fleet of vehicles with EVs, will reduce fuel bills for the council. Early adoption of EVs will provide leadership in the council's work to improve air quality in the borough.

### Council operations action plan (High priority key actions in bold.)

Dept.	Action	Target date	Annual carbon reduction (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Progress	
<b>1</b>	Property	Retro-fit Swale House to cut carbon emissions (e.g. extra insulation, triple glazing, heat pump, solar PV).	2025	186	Carbon Trust report March 2020
<b>2</b>	CEL	Replace SBC fleet vehicles with electric vehicles.	2025	26	6-8 vehicles – 2020
<b>3</b>	CEL	Revise procurement strategy to embed the climate and ecological emergency into all procurement decisions.	2023	780	Not yet started
<b>4</b>	Property	Eliminate single-use plastic from council operations wherever possible	2021		Some eliminated at Swale House
<b>5</b>	HR	Carry out regular staff commuting survey and encourage commuting by walking, cycling or public transport.	2025	20	First survey complete
<b>6</b>	HR	Encourage use of IT to reduce business travel to meetings.	2025	15	Use of IT for virtual meetings established.
<b>7</b>	HR	Review HR strategy to remove incentives to use a car for business travel.	2025	15	
<b>8</b>	HR	Introduce a cycle to work scheme that includes e-bikes.	2021	2	

<b>9</b>	Property	New waste contract for Swale House to reduce waste & increase recycling.	2020	6	Out to tender
<b>10</b>	Property	Provide facilities to encourage cycling to work (e.g. secure cycle storage, shower)	2020	1	Shower refurbishment complete. 6 extra secure spaces for bike storage
<b>11</b>	Cabinet/IT	Develop working practices to use IT to reduce use of paper.	2025	5	
<b>12</b>	Property and CEL	Ensure LED lighting is fitted across the council estate, including parks and open spaces.	2023	19	Most of Swale House has LEDs. No budget for rest of estate but payback is short.

# Buildings and Energy Efficiency

Improving the energy efficiency of the homes in Swale poses a major challenge. Only 39% of Swale's homes are well insulated (Energy Efficiency band C or above.) Swale needs to ensure all homes are properly insulated by 2030, which requires upgrading the insulation of 3,604 homes per year. A change in government policy and financial support for a mass programme of retrofitting existing homes is required to achieve this goal. Poorly insulated homes cost more to run, and contribute to fuel poverty. A retro-fit programme would help to eliminate fuel poverty.

Swale's homes also need to switch from gas central heating, which is a major source of greenhouse gases, to highly efficient low-carbon heating (such as heat pumps). The government provides grants for installing low carbon heating, through the Renewable Heat Incentive. The UK needs to fit around one million low carbon heating systems per year. A fair share for Swale would be to fit 2,181 low carbon heating systems every year. To date there are only 128 government funded low carbon heating systems in the Swale area.

As soon as possible, all new buildings in Swale should be built and tested to a zero carbon specification. This can be achieved through the development of the emerging local plan. Unfortunately, this plan is unlikely to be adopted before 2023. In the meantime, the planning system should be used to drive up the energy efficiency of new domestic and non-domestic buildings as much as possible, in line with the existing local plan.

## Current activities, actions and programmes

The council has recently agreed to contract a fuel and water poverty outreach service to help vulnerable residents reduce the utility bills and energy consumption.

Another example of positive engagement and outcomes is at Perry Court, Faversham where the SBC Planning Committee has successfully requested more renewable energy and energy-efficiency measures to be included in new developments. This includes solar PV and the use of air-source heat pumps to heat a care home, hotel and supermarket.

## Objectives

Encourage installation of improved insulation and eco-heating in Swale's homes.

All new buildings in Swale are to achieve at least a 50% improvement based on the current building regulations, and this will increase to 75% improvement by 2025 and a 100% improvement by 2028 in order that all new buildings are zero net carbon by 2030.

## Opportunities and benefits

Actions taken to improve the efficiency of buildings will reduce fuel bills for residents and businesses. The council will work with developers and other businesses to support them in the journey to achieving zero net carbon in new developments. Warmer homes will increase health and well-being of vulnerable residents.

Buildings and energy efficiency action plan. (High priority key actions in bold.)

Dept	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Progress	
<b>Actions Swale Borough Council can take:</b>					
1	Planning	Prior to the adoption of the new Local Plan, use a planning condition based on a 50% improvement over current building regulations, ratcheting to 75% and 100% improvement by 2025 and 2028 respectively, as the basis for negotiation with developers through pre-application and planning application negotiations.	2020-2030	400 - 1,000+ tCO <sub>2</sub> extra reduction p.a.	Proposed condition to be used in the interim in advance of progress on the Local plan review as the basis for negotiation with developers through pre-application and planning application negotiations.
2	Policy	<b>Bulk buying scheme for solar PV installations paid-for by residents (in partnership with KCC).</b>	2020-21	100	In progress
3	Policy	<b>Fuel and water poverty outreach service to reduce fuel and water bills for vulnerable residents.</b>	2020-23	to be monitored	In progress
4	Planning	Use the local plan review to investigate the potential to introduce minimum requirements for on-site renewables on new developments.	Short	Large	Local Plan Review underway
5	Planning	Review Local Plan and incorporate recommended actions on spatial land use strategy and integrated transport strategy, including focusing development in Swale's conurbations to utilise existing vacant sites and under-utilised sites within the settlement confines.	Short	Medium	Local plan review underway
6	Planning	Encourage high-quality, medium-high density dwellings near to transport nodes. Development could be supplemented by restricted parking, and EV pool-cars.	Short	Large	Local plan review underway

7	Policy	Signpost householders and businesses to grant schemes for insulation and energy improvements, such as the Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI), Warm Homes and advice services such as the Energy Saving Trust.	Short	Medium	
8	Policy	Encourage Town and Parish Councils to fit LED lighting and other low energy technology by providing information on cost savings and carbon reduction.	Short	Small	
9	Planning	Consider development of a financial viability toolkit to ensure that the cost of low and zero-carbon methods is accurately assessed (e.g. building materials, design and orientation, natural ventilation, landscaping, renewable generation and off-setting). Toolkit to be used by development management for pre-application advice.	Short	Large	Early discussion with Kent colleagues
10	Planning	Develop, initially through a Supplementary Planning Document and subsequently the Local Plan Review Policy, the potential to move rapidly towards zero-carbon development in Swale including using tools such as the Home Quality Mark and BREEAM.	Short	Large	Commenced
11	Planning	Provide pre-application advice on energy efficiency and carbon standards and statements for future developments	Short	Large	
12	Planning	Investigate the potential to set up an offset fund (106 Agreements) or allowable mechanism for developers to pay into if a certain energy efficiency of buildings is not able to be met in the development and use this money for carbon saving projects	Short	Large	Part of the viability study for the Local Plan Review
13	Planning	Investigate options for monitoring and testing conditions compliance on significant major planning applications (250 dwellings +), including those related to climate change (e.g. the performance gap between buildings designed energy use and actual energy use), with a view to securing S.106 obligations from developers to contribute towards the cost of such compliance monitoring	Short	Large	To be progressed through the drafting of the Sustainable Design and Construction SPD currently underway
14	Housing	Enforce private rented and non-domestic Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards regulations	Medium	Medium	Resource implications

# Transport and Air Quality



In Swale CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the transport sector have risen by 6% since 2014. Between 2005-2014 transport emissions had fallen by 7%. Between 2016 and 2017 Swale has seen a 0.21% increase in transport CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

Currently only 24% of commuter journeys are made by public transport, walking or cycling – this needs to increase to at least 40% by 2030.

Much more is possible. Research shows that 22% of commuter journeys in Swale could be by bike (assuming good cycling infrastructure, such as segregated cycleways and the uptake

of e-bikes), better walking routes can encourage more journeys on foot and improve health, and six in ten drivers would shift to public transport if its quality improved

According to research published in April 2019, the Swale area has 10 electric vehicle charging points (EV chargers). This puts Swale at mid-range across Kent. The Committee on Climate Change, which advises the government, says there should be one EV charger for every thousand cars by 2030. This suggests that in Swale there should be at least 75 EV chargers, although this target seems unambitious.

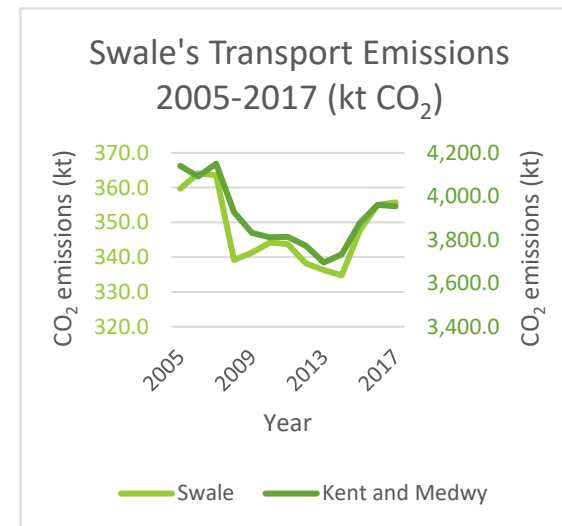
## Current activities, actions and programmes

Swale Borough Council's 2018 Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP), was approved by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in September 2019 and identifies key measures to improve air quality within all five of its declared Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

The SBC Planning Committee recently secured 2 x 50Kw rapid chargers, and a number of fast chargers, for the development of a care home, hotel and supermarket at Perry Court, Faversham.

## Objectives

We are seeking to make sustainable transport more attractive than any alternative, based on speed, cost, convenience and safety. The council, working with KCC, is seeking to develop an integrated transport strategy, favouring public transport and active travel. This could include improving urban design and the connectivity between existing and new residential developments and town



Source: BEIS LH scale refers to Swale; RH scale refers to Kent & Medway.



centres for cyclists and pedestrians, improving the quality of the public realm and raising design and landscaping standards, improving public transport and increasing its uptake, the provision of bikeshare schemes (including e-bikes), and 20mph speed limits across built up areas.

## Opportunities and benefits

- Improved air quality
- Reduction in carbon emissions
- More active local population
- Healthier local population
- Improved road and pedestrian safety

Transport and air quality action plan. (High priority key actions in bold.)

Dept	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon Reduction (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Progress	
<b>Actions Swale Borough Council can take</b>					
<b>1</b>	<b>CEL</b>	<b>Install EV charging points across the borough.</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>to be monitored</b>	<b>8 planned for council carparks in 2020</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>ECS</b>	<b>Improve facilities and incentives for walking and cycling.</b>	<b>2030</b>	<b>Long</b>	<b>Local Plan Transport Strategy under review</b>
<b>3</b>	Planning	Review Local Plan and incorporate recommended actions on spatial land use strategy and integrated transport strategy, including favouring public transport and active transport. Use Local Plan Review to reduce the need to travel (e.g. for work).	Short	Medium	Commenced
<b>4</b>	ECS	Promote work-place car chargers (Government funding available).	Medium	Medium	
<b>5</b>	Planning	Through the Local Plan Review, require that 10% of parking spaces in new developments are provided with Electric Vehicle	Short	Medium	Implemented in parking SPD

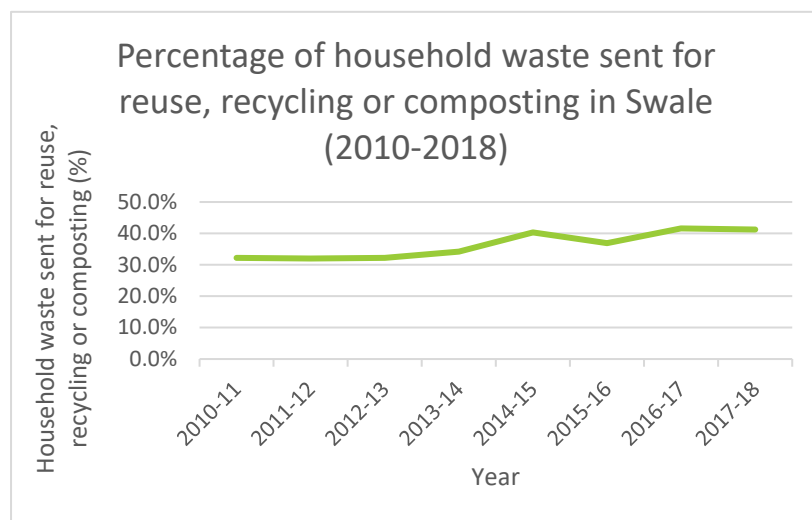


		charge points (best technology available at the time of planning approval) which may be phased with 5% initial provision and the remainder at an agreed trigger level			
6	Planning	<p>Use the Local Plan Review to require that where a development is for more than 50 residential units measures such as the following be provided-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel plan including mechanisms for discouraging high emission vehicle use and encouraging the uptake of low emission fuels and technologies</li> <li>• A welcome pack available to all new residents online and as a booklet, containing information and incentives to encourage the use of sustainable transport modes from new occupiers.</li> <li>• EV car club provision within development or support given to local car club/EV car clubs.</li> <li>• Designation of parking spaces for low emission vehicles</li> <li>• Improved cycle paths to link cycle network.</li> <li>• Adequate provision of secure cycle storage.</li> <li>• Using green infrastructure to absorb pollutants.</li> </ul>	Short	Medium	Already required in development management decisions
7	Planning / EH	Incorporate a policy on air quality in the local plan review (and initially via an environmental SPD).	Short	Small	Commenced
8	Planning / EH	Work with KCC to develop the Swale Local Transport Strategy (to run in parallel to the Local Plan Review) and the promotion and facilitation of a major shift in priorities to public transport and active travel.	Short	Medium	Commenced
9	EH / CEL	Establish an anti-idling campaign, initially around school sites from which it can be expanded.	Short	Small	Approved by Cabinet
<b>Actions we can take in partnership with others.</b>					
10	Policy	Develop EV charging strategy including publicly accessible fast and rapid chargers, in council and private car parks (e.g. hotels, shopping centres), and working with KCC for on-street charging.	Short	Medium	
11	ECS	Promote business fleet decarbonisation, including the potential cost and reputational benefits.	Medium	Small	
12	EH	Engage with public transport providers to improve the quality, quantity and affordability of public transport, so that more people commute by public transport, and reduce carbon emissions from buses.	Medium	Medium	

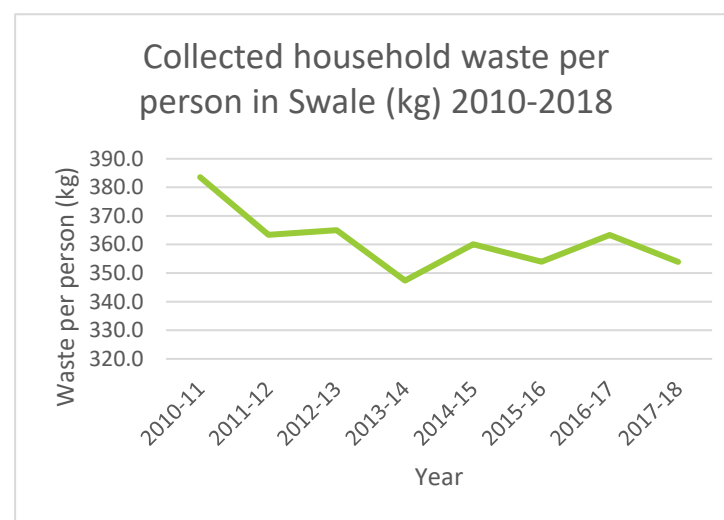
13	EH/ Planning	Work with KCC to implement 20mph limit across built up areas of borough as a cost effective and swift way to improve air quality, reduce health inequalities, lower carbon footprint and encourage active travel (following the implementation of a comprehensive 20mph zone in Faversham).	Medium	Small	20mph zone in Faversham under development by FTC & KCC
14	EH	Undertake a feasibility study on implementing a Clean Air Zone along the length of the A2 from Brenley Corner to the western boundary with Medway.	Short	Small	Contract issued
15	EH	ECO Stars fleet recognition scheme - business case is for engaging and inviting new operators with key information on benefits to business, fuel savings and environment. At present Swale has 22 operators signed up.	Short	Small	Commenced
16	EH	Apply to Defra's Air Quality Grant Scheme for an electric bus (joint bid with Arriva our main local bus company).	Short	Small	Awaiting outcome
17	EH	Encourage local school and business travel plans to reduce car journeys.	Short	Small	SBC encourages schools to adopt Kent Smarter Travel Plans (KCC)
18	EH	Establish a tree planting strategy for schools (links with biodiversity)	Short	Small	Commenced

# Resource Consumption and Waste

The amount of household waste collected has fallen over the last ten years, and while recycling rates have risen, they are lower than our partners in the Mid-Kent Partnership. In 2018-19 42.7% of household waste was reused, recycled, or composted. The remainder is incinerated to generate electricity. Household waste and recycling collections are subject to a long-term contract in partnership with two other councils (10 years ending in 2023). This means we cannot easily make changes to the way we collect materials. An opportunity arises with a new contract due to come into force in late 2023. Waste and recycling will be affected by new legislation and government policy which will affect the waste collection methods.



Source: DEFRA



Source: DEFRA

## Current activities, actions and programmes

Baselines of performance have commenced. Initial progress is being made, for example as part of the council’s commitment to eliminate single use plastic, by substituting plastic envelopes with compostable envelopes.

## Objectives

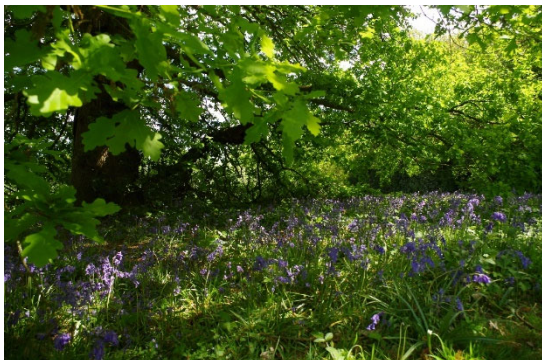
Reduce the amount of waste. Maximize the proportion that is recycled or composted. Process all waste and recycling as locally as possible (ideally in Kent). Aim for zero waste exported, and zero to landfill.

Resource consumption and waste action plan.

	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO2e)	Progress
1	Provide guidance on waste minimisation and resource consumption via a Sustainable Design & Construction SPD.	Short	Medium	
2	Decrease the amount of household waste collected by promoting each separate method of recycling	Short	Medium	Ongoing
3	Increase amount of garden and food waste collected for compost.	Short	Medium	
4	Encourage residents to recycle small electricals, textiles and batteries.	Short	Medium	Ongoing
5	Signpost residents to recycling facilities for products that cannot be recycled in the kerbside collections.	Short	Small	
6	Reduce contamination of recycling that leads to rejected loads.	Short	Medium	
7	Encourage litter picks and measures to reduce the amount of plastic litter in the sea	Short	-	3 plastic recycling bins on Sheppey beaches. Community litter picks supported.
<b>Actions we can take in partnership with others.</b>				
8	Work with KCC to stop export abroad of recyclables	Medium	-	Currently 18.7% (10,000t) of all waste & recycling from Swale is exported
9	influence KCC to maintain or improve the low levels of waste that go to landfill.	Medium	Small	Currently 0.3% which is one of the best rates in the county

<b>10</b>	Promote reduced use of single-use plastic (e.g. in partnership with Plastic-Free Faversham and Plastic-Free Sheerness).	Short	Small	Ongoing
<b>11</b>	Work with Kent Resource Partnership on county-wide education/communication schemes	short	medium	On-going
<b>12</b>	Promote improved recycling of commercial waste with businesses across the Borough	Long	Large	

# Ecology and Biodiversity



Biodiversity net gain is now a requirement within the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). New developments will need to demonstrate how this has been achieved.

Existing policies on landscape and biodiversity in the Local Plan are robust, nevertheless these will be reviewed in light of updated policy, guidance and best practice. A recent review of AONBs suggests they are well situated to be the focus for nature recovery and climate change mitigation and form the backbone of the Nature Recovery Networks. With part of the North Downs AONB within Swale, we are well placed to advance this agenda with the AONB.

The development of the Kent Nature Partnership (KNP) Biodiversity Strategy 2019-2044 is nearing completion. The aim of the strategy is to deliver the restoration and creation of habitats that are thriving ensuring Kent's terrestrial, freshwater, intertidal and marine environments regain and retain good health. Key themes are terrestrial habitats; marine habitats; freshwater and intertidal ecosystems and connecting people with the natural environment

According to the Government's National Forest Inventory (NFI) 8% of the Swale area is woodland. Trees play an important role in removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it as carbon. They also provide a home for nature, mitigate air pollution and reduce flood risk.

## Current activities, actions and programmes

There are many existing networks working on the ecological and biodiversity projects within Swale. These groups, such as the Green Grid Network are highly active and engaged in Kent-wide initiatives.

## Objectives

To improve development outcomes which support and improve people and places, access and recreation, connectivity and green spaces and the natural and built environment. Some reports recommend Swale should more than double our tree cover by 2030.<sup>2</sup>



<sup>2</sup> <https://takeclimateaction.uk/climate-action/methodology-local-authority-data-project>



## Opportunities and benefits

Ecology, biodiversity and green space are vital to both mitigating climate change and to helping us to adapt to the inevitable climate change due to historic carbon emissions. We rely on these assets for our quality of life, and provision of food and water. Protecting and enhancing these assets is vital. Green spaces and planting in urban areas promote good physical and mental health.

Ecology and biodiversity action plan. (High Priority key actions in bold.)

Dept.	Action	Timescale	Annual Carbon Reduction (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Progress	
<b>Actions Swale Borough Council can take:</b>					
1	<b>CEL</b>	<b>Tree planting on council land (target; 148,100 trees or 60 acres of woodland) to offset 20% of council emissions.</b>	<b>2025</b>	<b>1,481t offset (25t to date)</b>	<b>2,500 trees planted in country parks 2019/20</b>
2	Planning	To use planning policy (local plan and a supplementary planning document) to improve development outcomes which support access and recreation, green spaces, biodiversity and climate change adaptation and mitigation.	Short	Medium	Ongoing
3	CEL	Establish a baseline of trees and woodland on council land and develop a funded action plan to increase tree cover in Swale and promote the benefits of sequestration.	Short	Medium	
4	Planning	Ensure the installation and maintenance of landscaping in new developments to contribute to biodiversity net gain via suitable conditions or Section 106 agreements.	Short	Medium	Ongoing
5	CEL	Minimise use of fertilizers, pesticides and weed killers.	Short	Small	
6	CEL	Promote use of locally produced compost derived from garden and food waste collections	Short	Small	
<b>Actions we can take in partnership with others</b>					
7	CEL	Encourage coppicing of council woodland to promote biodiversity and use of local woodland products in Swale's country parks.	Short	Small	

8	CEL/ECS/EH	Engage business and community groups to support tree planting and conservation work in Swale's efforts to achieve action 1	Short	Large	Ongoing
9	CEL	Promote forest and beach schools	Short	Small	
10	CEL	Support Swale in Bloom working with schools, community groups, voluntary groups and Town and Parish Councils to enhance local habitats and wildlife corridors improving biodiversity conditions across Swale	Short	Small	Ongoing



# Energy Generation and Storage



The renewable energy generated by the London Array comes ashore in the borough of Swale. It generates over 2,000,000MWh of electricity per year. Unfortunately, renewable generation that is connected to the grid cannot be counted to offset the borough's carbon footprint because it is already accounted for as part of decarbonising the grid. Therefore, the carbon reduction is distributed across the nation. Renewable generation that is consumed locally (e.g. from solar panels on the roof) does help to reduce our carbon footprint through reduced electricity consumption.

At the end of 2017 there were 1,628 installation sites in Swale producing renewable electricity. 99.3% of these installations were photovoltaic – the majority being domestic roof top installations. In terms of renewable energy generated across the borough (and excluding the London Array),

photovoltaics produced around 27%, onshore wind produced 11%, sewage gas and landfill gas produced around 1% each. By far the largest producer was plant biomass, which produced 61% from the plant located on the Isle of Sheppey.

As of September 2019, logged on the public database (BEIS Regional Renewable Statistics) there are the general facility details for 12 operating renewable energy sites – seven are solar PV sites, four are onshore wind and one is a dedicated biomass site. Swale also has two domestic wind installations.

## Current activities, actions and programmes

Swale Borough Council is participating in the Solar Together bulk-buying scheme for householders and businesses who wish to purchase solar PV panels. (See key actions above.) SBC is considering including microgeneration in the refit of Swale House (see Council estate above).

## Objectives

Swale Borough Council seeks to encourage developments which utilise renewable and low carbon energy sources, and as stated in the Local Plan 2017, give priority to development on previously developed land or buildings and proposals which incorporate renewable, decentralised and low carbon energy as integral to new commercial or residential schemes.



## Opportunities and benefits

Renewable energy generation within the borough is a key component of how Swale will achieve zero net carbon emissions by 2030. The Smart (electricity) Export Guarantee came into force in January 2020 enabling domestic and small-scale renewable energy generators to be paid for energy fed into the grid. This includes the following technology types up to a capacity of 5MW, or up to 50kW for Micro-CHP: Solar photovoltaic (solar PV), Wind, Micro combined heat and power (CHP), Hydro, Anaerobic digestion (AD). The Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) is a government scheme that aims to encourage the uptake of renewable heat technologies amongst householders, communities and businesses through financial incentives. Between April 2014 and April 2019, 128 domestic installations have been accredited in Swale – 11% of Kent and Medway’s total.

## Energy generation and storage action plan.

Dept.	Action	Timescale	Annual carbon reduction (tCO <sub>2</sub> e)	Progress
<b>Actions Swale Borough Council can take</b>				
1	Property	Perform a viability survey at all existing council owned sites to potentially accommodate solar PV.	Medium	Small
<b>Actions we can take in partnership with others</b>				
2	Policy	Signpost residents and businesses through communicating benefits, understanding financial and business cases for installing energy storage with grid balancing capability.	Long	Medium
3	Planning	Investigate the possibility of increasing thermal storage (e.g. hot water and ground inter-seasonal storage) for greater maximisation of local energy generation.'	Medium	Medium
4	Policy	Investigate a pilot programme to use new technology such as virtual private wire technology to balance between energy generation, storage and use within the borough as part of achieving net zero carbon.	Medium	Medium
5	Policy	Develop Swale as an innovation area promoting new low-carbon technology, linked to incubator units for low-carbon start-ups in a retrofitted Swale House.	Medium	Medium
6	Policy/ Finance	Encourage and support community energy projects. Consider community energy as a financial investment.	Medium	Small

# Resilience, Adaptation and Offsetting

The effects of the changing climate are already impacting on Swale and adaption measures are being implemented. Many of these are considered in the existing Local Plan (2017) and will be further considered in the going review.

The UK Climate Impacts Programme (UKCIP) 2018 projections for Swale state that we are likely to have:

- Hotter summers with an increase in average summer temperature of 2-3°C by 2040 and 5-6°C by 2080.
- Warmer winters with an increase in average winter temperature of 1-2°C by 2040 and 3-4°C by 2080.
- Drier summers with a reduction in average precipitation of 20-30% by 2040 and 30-50% by 2080.
- Wetter winters with an increase in average precipitation of 10-20% by 2040 and 20-30% by 2080.
- Sea level is projected to rise by up to 0.3m by 2040 and 0.8m by 2080.

These in turn present a number of risks, including:

- Risks to health, wellbeing, productivity and infrastructure from high temperatures.
- Flooding and coastal change risks to communities, businesses and infrastructure.
- Risk of storm events / intense rainfall impacting productivity and transport infrastructure.
- Risks of shortages in the public water supply and for agriculture, energy generation and industry.
- Overheating, flooding, drought and coastal change risks for natural capital.
- Soil erosion and slope destabilisation as a result of flooding and drought, impacting infrastructure, natural environment and productivity.
- Risk of new and emerging pests and diseases and invasive non-native species affecting people and biodiversity, and likely to affect Kent (first in the UK) in the future.

Researchers have identified over 10,000 neighbourhoods across the UK where people are particularly vulnerable to flooding due to their location and factors such as income. Swale has 52 of these neighbourhoods with high social flood risk for surface flooding, taking account a range of vulnerability factors.<sup>3</sup> The local authority needs to target these areas for support in order to help people living there prepare for extreme weather and respond and recover when it occurs.

## Current activities, actions and programmes



Planning for adaptation is already taking place in the borough. This could be extended by encouraging local communities to discuss local impacts and adaptation measures. The most effective way of doing this requires further consideration. One option may be to organise a workshop for local community groups, and Parish and Town Councils, focusing on local resilience building. Thought will need to be given to how this sort of initiative links with actions to mobilise stakeholders to engage with carbon reduction measures.

### Objectives

Ensure that the borough is robustly prepared for a changing climate and that robust adaptation measures are implemented to ensure resilience for all.

## Opportunity and benefits

Adapting to the changing climate is a dynamic policy area for government. Plans and strategies to deal with the changing climate are in development by several government agencies and are brought together in *The National Adaptation Programme* and the *Third Strategy for Climate Adaptation Reporting: Making the country resilient to a changing climate* (Defra July 2018).

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.projectenportfolio.nl/images/d/d2/Community\\_analysis\\_Kent.pdf](https://www.projectenportfolio.nl/images/d/d2/Community_analysis_Kent.pdf)

Resilience, adaptation and offsetting action plan. (See also tree planting actions under Ecology & Biodiversity.)

Dept.	Action	Timescale	Annual Carbon Reduction (tCO2e)	Progress	
<b>Actions Swale Borough Council can take</b>					
1	Planning	Incorporate a policy on climate change adaptation in the local plan review	Short	-	Commenced
2	Planning	Investigate the feasibility of determining an indicative price for offsetting carbon and establishing a carbon offsetting fund. (the majority of Local Planning Authorities are currently using a price of £60 per tonne).	Short	Large	
3	EP	Regularly update the Emergency Plan for the borough in partnership with the County Council	Short	-	
4	Planning	Ensure the Local Plan reflects the level of current and future flood risk, and development in flood risk areas is avoided.	Short	-	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment 2019 complete. Sequential test underway
5	Planning	Ensure the Local Plan provides for linking habitat restoration and creation to improve access, flood protection and water quality.	Short	-	Ongoing
6	Planning	Ensure the installation and maintenance of green infrastructure via the Local Plan and suitable conditions or Section 106 agreements in subsequent developments.	Short	Medium	Ongoing
<b>Actions we can take in partnership with others:</b>					
7	CEL Planning	Work with the Environment Agency, KCC and the Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board to manage flood risk and coastal erosion across Swale.	Medium	-	Ongoing
8	ECS	Work to restore natural processes within river systems to enhance water storage capacity and improve water quality.	Medium	-	
9	Planning/ ECS	Develop and start to implement a Nature Recovery Network, linking habitat restoration and creation to improved access, flood protection and water quality	Medium	Small	Commenced
10	Planning/ CEL	Work with Lower Medway Internal Drainage Board to minimize the long-term risk of flooding	Short	-	

<b>11</b>	EP	Make sure everyone is able to access the information they need to assess any risk to their lives, livelihoods, health and prosperity posed by flooding and coastal erosion;	Medium	-	
<b>12</b>	EP	Bring the public, private and third sectors together to work with communities and individuals to reduce the risk of harm – particularly those in vulnerable areas.	Medium	-	

# Appendix I- Swale Borough Council's Declaration of Climate and Ecological Emergency

A Climate and Ecological Emergency was unanimously declared by Swale Borough Council on 26 June 2019 which committed:

1. To declare a 'Climate and Ecological Emergency'.
2. To draw up an action plan with improvement in energy efficiency and making space for nature as key priorities in all strategies and plans.
3. Pursue the Swale Strategic Air Quality Action Plan 2018-22 and to actively lobby all responsible authorities to improve air quality within Swale.
4. To provide leadership by taking all measures within our control to make Swale Borough Council's own operations carbon neutral by 2025, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3).
5. To engage with businesses, organisations and residents to facilitate the action required to make the Borough of Swale carbon neutral by 2030, taking into account both production and consumption emissions (scope 1, 2 and 3).
6. To undertake actions including, but not be limited to, spatial and transport planning to make fewer journeys necessary, improvement to the energy efficiency of new and existing housing and buildings, improved public transport especially in rural areas; encouraging active transport, developing the infrastructure for EVs; deploying renewable energy at every opportunity, while continuing to safeguard our wild places, ancient woodlands and hedgerows
7. To call on Westminster to provide the powers and resources to make the 2030 target possible.
8. To call upon the MPs for Sittingbourne & Sheppey and for Faversham & Mid Kent to support this motion.
9. To work with other governments (both within the UK and internationally) to determine and implement best practice methods to limit global warming to less than 1.5°C.
10. To work with partners across the Borough to deliver these new goals through all relevant strategies and plans.
11. To become a 'Plastic-Free Council' by eliminating single-use plastics from the Council's operations, whenever possible, by 2021.
12. To request the Cabinet, working through the Policy Development and Review Committee, to report the actions the Council will take to address this emergency to Full Council by the end of the 2019/20 municipal year.
13. In meeting this pledge, the Council will take steps to avoid any adverse impacts on our most vulnerable residents.
14. This Council pledges to produce in January of each year, between now and 2030,

an annual report detailing the council's progress against Swale's carbon neutral action plan, enabling members, residents and other stakeholders to hold the council to account for the delivery of this pledge.



## Appendix II - Adopted Local Plan and Local Plan review

The 2017 adopted Local Plan, Bearing Fruits 2031's no. 1 Core Objective is to 'Adapt to climate change with innovation, reduced use of resources, managed risk to our communities and opportunities for biodiversity to thrive' (p.20). Furthermore, policy ST1, Delivering sustainable development in Swale, sets out that 'to deliver sustainable development in Swale, all development proposals will, as appropriate .... Meet the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change through a) the promotion of sustainable design and construction, the expansion of renewable energy, the efficient use of natural resources and the management of emissions b) the management and expansion of green infrastructure and c) applying planning policies to manage flood risk and coastal change. A range of other policies across the plan also seek to mitigation and adapt to the challenges of climate change.

The 2019 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) defines the purpose of the planning system as to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development with three overarching objectives – economic, social and environmental. The environmental objective includes mitigation and adaptation to climate change, including moving to a low carbon economy. As such climate change is an important element running through the adopted local plan and through national planning policy.

The Local Plan is currently being reviewed and the Local Plan Review is due to be adopted in April 2023. In order to reflect the increased importance of climate change in the public, governments and Swale Borough Council's priorities (i.e. as reflected in the declaration of a Climate and Ecological Emergency) its importance will need to be elevated in the Local Plan Review. As such Climate Change and the Ecological Emergency will be a golden thread running through the Local Plan Review.

The key action is for Swale Borough Council to review and update all adopted Local Plan policies, with particular reference to:

- a) ST 1 – Delivering sustainable development
- b) ST 3 – The Swale settlement strategy (Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment and Settlement Hierarchy study already underway)
- c) CP 2 – Promoting sustainable transport (see reference below to Swale Local Transport Strategy and major shift to promotion of public transport and active travel)
- d) CP 4 - Requiring good design (update likely to include reference to Building for Life standard and best urban design requirements – with cross referencing to policy DM 19)
- e) CP 7 – Conserving and enhancing the natural environment – providing for green infrastructure (update likely to include specification of new blue and green infrastructure to improve habitat connectivity objectives and the Nature Recovery Network)
- f) DM 6 – Managing transport demand and impact (see CP 2)

- g) DM 7 – Vehicle parking (SPD on vehicle parking in preparation)
- h) DM 19 – Sustainable design and construction (update likely to include specification of Home Quality Mark and BREEAM standards. Furthermore, a Supplementary Planning Document on Sustainable design and construction is likely to be prepared alongside the Local Plan Review)
- i) DM 20 – Renewable and low carbon energy (update likely to include renewable energy requirement for development (including retrofitting) and specific energy standards for new buildings)
- j) DM 21 – Water, flooding and drainage (Strategic Flood Risk Assessment near complete and Planning Policy team will continue to work with KCC on best practice sustainable drainage)
- k) DM 28 – Biodiversity and geological (update will include requirement for measurable biodiversity net gain)
- l) DM29 – Woodlands, trees and hedges (Supplementary Planning Document on Woodlands, trees and hedges to be prepared alongside Local Plan Review)
- m) DM 31 – Agricultural land

# Appendix III Strategies relevant to our Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan

## **Swale Borough Council Strategies and plans**

Bearing Fruits 2031 – Local Plan adopted July 2017

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/local-plan-for-swale>

Green Grid Strategy - June 2016

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/Green-Grid-Strategy/>

Biodiversity Action Plan – June 2016

<https://swale.gov.uk/biodiversity-action-plan/>

Cycling and Walking Guidance Statement 2018-2022

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/cycling-and-walking-pathways/>

Air Quality Action Plan

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/air-quality/>

Air Quality Planning Guidance

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/local-planning-guidance/>

Parking SPD

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/local-planning-guidance/>

Tree Maintenance Policy 2019-2023 (internal document)

## **Kent County Council Strategies**

Kent Environment Strategy – March 2016

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/environment-waste-and-planning-policies/environmental-policies/kent-environment-strategy>

Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy – not yet adopted

<https://kccconsultations.inconsult.uk/consult.ti/energyandlowemissionconsultation/consultationHome>

Kent Active Travel Strategy

<https://www.kent.gov.uk/about-the-council/strategies-and-policies/transport-and-highways-policies/active-travel-strategy>

### **Kent Nature Partnership**

Kent Biodiversity Action Plan

<http://www.kentnature.org.uk/kent-biodiversity-strategy2.html>

### **Kent Downs AONB**

Kent Downs AONB Management Plan

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/local-planning-guidance/>

new version under consultation

### **Kent Energy Efficiency Partnership**

Fuel Poverty Strategy – April 2016

<https://www.swale.gov.uk/fuel-poverty>

## Appendix IV - Glossary

Abatement	Refers to reducing the degree or intensity of greenhouse-gas emissions.
Adaptation	Adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities
Afforestation	Planting of new forests on lands that historically have not contained forests.
Anaerobic digestion (AD)	AD is a sequence of processes by which microorganisms break down biodegradable material in the absence of oxygen. The process is used for industrial or domestic purposes to manage waste or to produce fuels
Anthropogenic greenhouse emissions	Greenhouse-gas emissions resulting from human activities.
BAU	Business as Usual. Future emissions trend if the current state of affairs continue as they are today
BEIS	UK government department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy
Biodiversity	The variety of plant and animal life in the world or in a particular habitat, a high level of which is usually considered to be important and desirable.
CO <sub>2</sub>	Carbon dioxide, which is the most significant long-lived greenhouse gas in Earth's atmosphere. Since the industrial revolution anthropogenic emissions – primarily from use of fossil fuels and deforestation– have rapidly increased from pre-industrial levels of 280ppm to a concentration of about 410ppm by volume. Carbon dioxide also causes ocean acidification because it dissolves in water to form carbonic acid.
CO <sub>2</sub> e	Carbon dioxide equivalent. measures for estimating how much global warming a given type and amount of greenhouse gas may cause, using the functionally equivalent amount or concentration of carbon dioxide as the reference. For the purposes of this report we refer to carbon dioxide equivalent simply as 'carbon'.
Carbon Budget	The maximum amount of carbon dioxide that can be emitted to be in line with keeping temperatures well below 2°C and pursue a 1.5°C limit to rising temperatures

Carbon neutrality	Achieving net zero carbon emissions by balancing a measured amount of carbon released with an equivalent amount sequestered or offset
Carbon sequestration	The process of removing carbon from the atmosphere and depositing it in a reservoir
Climate	Climate is typically defined as the average weather (or more rigorously a statistical description of the average in terms of the mean and variability) over a period of time, usually 30 years. These quantities are most often surface variables such as temperature, precipitation, and wind. This is different to weather, which is now. Climate in a wider sense is the state, including a statistical description, of the climate system.
Climate change	The long-term change of climate, typically measured over decades or longer.
Climate extreme (extreme weather or climate event)	A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g. by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forces, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use
Climate Change	A change in the state of the climate that can be identified (e.g., by using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. Climate change may be due to natural internal processes or external forcing, or to persistent anthropogenic changes in the composition of the atmosphere or in land use.
Climate change risk	Additional risk to investments (such as buildings and infrastructure) and actions from potential climate change impacts.
Committee on Climate Change	The Committee on Climate Change is an independent body established under the Climate Change Act (2008) that advises the UK Government on setting and meeting carbon budgets and on preparing for the impacts of climate change.

Climate scenario	A plausible and often simplified representation of the future climate, based on an internally consistent set of climatological relationships that has been constructed for explicit use in investigating the potential consequences of anthropogenic climate change, often serving as input to impact models. Climate projections often serve as the raw material for constructing climate scenarios, but climate scenarios usually require additional information such as about the observed current climate.
Ecosystem	Community of living organisms and the natural environment
Emissions scenario	A plausible representation of the future development of emissions of substances that are potentially radiatively active (e.g., greenhouse gases, aerosols), based on a coherent and internally consistent set of assumptions about driving forces (such as technological change, demographic and Socio economic development) and their key relationships. Concentration scenarios, derived from emissions scenarios, are used as input to a climate model to compute climate projections.
Flood	The overflowing of the normal confines of a stream or other body of water, or the accumulation of water over areas that are not normally submerged. Floods include river (fluvial) floods, flash floods, urban floods, pluvial floods, sewer floods, coastal floods, and glacial lake outburst floods.
Global Warming	Increase in temperature of the Earth's atmosphere over long timescales, caused by increased levels of greenhouse gasses
Greenhouse gasses (GHGs)	The atmospheric gases responsible for causing global warming and climate change. The major GHGs are carbon dioxide (CO <sub>2</sub> ), methane (CH <sub>4</sub> ) and nitrous oxide (N <sub>2</sub> O). Less prevalent --but very powerful -- greenhouse gases are hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs), perfluorocarbons (PFCs) and sulphur hexafluoride (SF <sub>6</sub> ).

IPCC	The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. The IPCC is the United Nations body for assessing the science related to climate change. The objective of the IPCC is to provide governments at all levels with scientific information that they can use to develop climate policies
Mitigation	In the context of climate change, a human intervention to reduce the sources or enhance the sinks of greenhouse gases. Examples include using fossil fuels more efficiently for industrial processes or electricity generation, switching to solar energy or wind power, improving the insulation of buildings, and expanding forests and other "sinks" to remove greater amounts of carbon dioxide from the atmosphere
Protocol	An international agreement linked to an existing convention, but as a separate and additional agreement, which must be signed and ratified by the Parties to the convention concerned. Protocols typically strengthen a convention by adding new, more detailed commitments.
Resilience	The ability of a social or natural system to absorb disturbances while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, the capacity of self-organisation and the capacity to adapt to stress and change.
Scope 1 (carbon emissions)	Greenhouse gas emissions from using owned or controlled sources (mainly energy related)
Scope 2 (carbon emissions)	Greenhouse gas emissions occurring as a consequence of the use of grid-supplied electricity, heat, steam and/or cooling
Scope 3 (carbon emissions)	All other greenhouse gas emissions that occur as a result of activities taking place within wider operations, supply chains, investments etc
Sink	Any process, activity or mechanism which removes a greenhouse gas, an aerosol or a precursor of a greenhouse gas from the atmosphere. Forests and other vegetation are considered sinks because they remove carbon dioxide through photosynthesis.



Vulnerability	The degree to which a system is susceptible to, or unable to cope with, adverse effects of climate change, including climate variability and extremes. Vulnerability is a function of the character, magnitude, and rate of climate variation to which a system is exposed, its sensitivity, and its adaptive capacity.
WMO	World Meteorological Organization. The WMO is a specialised agency of the United Nations (UN) with 193 Member States and Territories. It is the UN's authoritative voice on the state and behaviour of the Earth's atmosphere, its interaction with the land and oceans, the weather and climate it produces and the resulting distribution of water resources.

## Contacting Swale Borough Council

The Customer Service Centre deals with all enquiries across the Council; it should be your first stop when contacting us.

Call 01795 417850.

Copies of this report are available on the council website

<b>Council</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	7 October 2020
<b>Report Title</b>	Overview and scrutiny annual report 2019/20
<b>Lead Member</b>	Cllr Lloyd Bowen, Chairman, Scrutiny Committee
<b>SMT Lead</b>	David Clifford, Head of Policy, Communications and Customer Services
<b>Head of Service</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Bob Pullen, Policy and Performance Officer
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	1. That Council considers the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20

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

- 1.1 The report at Appendix I provides details of the work of the Scrutiny Committee during 2019/20.

## **2 Background**

- 2.1 It is common practice among local authorities for the work of the overview and scrutiny committees to be reported and considered each year by the authority, usually in the form of an annual report. In any case, the Scrutiny Committee's terms of reference require it to report annually to Council on its work, and make any recommendations for amended working practices if appropriate.

## **3 Proposals**

- 3.1 The Scrutiny Committee made some good progress last year, as noted in the report. Recommendations previously accepted by Cabinet have been or are in the process of being implemented.
- 3.2 The annual report also serves as a useful summary of the Committee's work, which can be shared with residents via publication on the Council's website, and other social media and press releases.

## **4 Alternative Options**

- 4.1 This is largely a report for information, and so no alternative options are proposed.

## **5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed**

5.1 The Scrutiny Committee has considered the annual report at its meeting of 12 August, and resolved that it should be presented to Council for their consideration.

## 6 Implications

Issue	Implications
Corporate Plan	The Committee scrutinises a wide number of issues across all of the corporate priorities, and more generally helps to improve and enhance decision-making in the Council, and so supports the Corporate priority of being 'delivering the Council of tomorrow'.
Financial, Resource and Property	The Scrutiny Committee's explicit remit is scrutiny of the preparation of the Council's annual budget, and to review and scrutinise the Council's performance in relation to budgetary management.
Legal, Statutory and Procurement	The Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Localism Act 2011) requires all local authorities to establish one or more overview and scrutiny committees.
Crime and Disorder	The Scrutiny Committee has an explicit remit to consider crime and disorder matters under provisions in Section 19 of the Police and Justice Act 2006.
Environment and Sustainability	The Committee have received reports on the Council's progress on climate change in the past.
Health and Wellbeing	None identified.
Risk Management and Health and Safety	None identified.
Equality and Diversity	None identified.
Privacy and Data Protection	None identified.

## 7 Appendices

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

- Appendix I: Overview and scrutiny annual report 2019/20.

## 8 Background Papers

8.1 None.

***Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20***

**Swale Borough Council**

## Foreword

Welcome to the overview and scrutiny report for 2019/20. The aim of this report is to reflect on the work that has been done in Swale this year.

The Committee had several sessions to consider progress of the Sittingbourne Town Centre regeneration, as well as considering the Cabinet's draft budget for 2020/21, fees and charges, and financial and performance monitoring reports.

2020/21 continues to present a particularly challenging financial climate for the Council and the Committee has to continually adapt and respond to meet the many challenges ahead. We need to give a particular focus to resources and continually challenge whether the services the Council provide are being delivered in the most cost effective and efficient ways. Furthermore, we have the added pressure of recovering from the COVID-19 pandemic and the Committee will play its role in ensuring the Council responding to these challenges through proportionate and targeted scrutiny.

The overview and scrutiny function at Swale should not be excluded from this continuous drive for efficiency and effectiveness and we will review, during the course of the year, how we can improve. The constitutional reform review proposed by the new administration could have major implications for the overview and scrutiny function.

Overview and scrutiny will need to be at the very centre of the difficult decisions the Council will need to take during 2020/21 and we stand ready to play our part in these considerations in order to ensure that decisions are taken in a transparent and evidence-based way.

The Committee will continue to ensure that the Council's decision-making processes are appropriately scrutinised in a systematic, transparent and fair manner.

If you would like to contribute to the scrutiny process, or have ideas for areas which you think would benefit from scrutiny, we would welcome your suggestions. Please let us have your views by email [democraticservices@swale.gov.uk](mailto:democraticservices@swale.gov.uk) or telephone on 01795 417 330.

Councillor Lloyd Bowen  
Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee 2019/20

# 1 What is overview and scrutiny?

## Introduction

- 1.1 Overview and scrutiny is a function of all English local authorities with an executive form of governance. This includes those, such as Swale, where a leader and cabinet take day-to-day decisions, and only decisions which affect the overall budget or policy framework are taken by the whole council.
- 1.2 Overview and scrutiny's main role is to hold the leader and cabinet to account on behalf of the whole council. This includes monitoring how well the council manages its resources and runs its services, as well as scrutinising the cabinet's formal decisions before they are put into operation.
- 1.3 Overview and scrutiny committees also have powers to examine other public services not provided by the council, including some health and policing matters.

## Overview and scrutiny at Swale

- 1.4 Swale Borough Council has a single Scrutiny Committee which exercises all of the formal powers available to it under the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended).
- 1.5 The Scrutiny Committee comprises 13 councillors who are not members of the Cabinet. Whereas Cabinet members are usually drawn exclusively from the political group with a majority of seats on the Council, the Scrutiny Committee is made up of councillors from all groups and seats on the Committee are allocated in accordance with the political balance considerations across the Council as a whole. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman are appointed at Annual Council at the start of each new Municipal Year. The Policy and Performance Officer provides supports the work of the Committee.
- 1.6 The role of the Scrutiny Committee includes:
  - reviewing or scrutinising decisions made, performance of, the Cabinet and Committees and Council Officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
  - reviewing or scrutinising the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
  - requiring members of the Cabinet and/or Committees and Chief Officers to attend before it to answer questions about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects; and

- reviewing and scrutinising the performance of other public bodies in the area.
- 1.7 The Scrutiny Committee also has special responsibility for scrutinising the Cabinet's annual budget proposals as part of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules.
- 1.8 The Scrutiny Committee is not a decision-making body as such. Instead it makes recommendations to Cabinet, who can either accept or reject them. In either case, Cabinet always responds 'on the record' to recommendations, stating why they have or have not been accepted. The Committee can also make recommendations to other organisations beyond the Council, but their legal powers here are weaker.
- 1.9 The Committee has a power to 'call-in' a Cabinet decision which has been taken but not yet implemented. Once the Committee has 'called-in' a Cabinet decision, it will consider the decision and decide whether to refer it back to Cabinet for reconsideration.
- 1.10 The Scrutiny Committee reviews a wide range of topics as well as regularly scrutinising financial and performance monitoring information.
- 1.11 Swale has also established a Policy Development and Review Committee which reviews any new or revised council policies and advises the relevant Cabinet member accordingly. This Committee does not have any formal overview and scrutiny powers, but it does have the power to make recommendations to the person or body that referred an item to it. A separate annual report for the Policy Development and Review Committee is prepared each year.

## **Principles**

- 1.12 The key local principles forming the foundation of the overview and scrutiny function at Swale Borough Council are as follows:
- the focus for scrutiny must be based upon the achievement of outcomes rather than upon process and procedures in order to develop a function that can make a real difference to the Council and the borough;
  - that overview and scrutiny be positive, objective and constructive, seeking to add value to any service that it considers. Scrutiny should acknowledge good practice where found and recommend improvements where necessary; and
  - it is essential that the Council has an active and challenging scrutiny function that reflects corporate priorities regarding the provision of services.
- 1.13 Overview and scrutiny plays an important role in the overall governance of the Council.



## 2 Scrutiny Committee

- 2.1 The Scrutiny Committee is responsible for focussing on scrutiny and holding to account of corporate issues such as the budget, service performance and delivery of planned actions. Its full Terms of Reference during 2019/20 were as follows:

**Preamble:** the Scrutiny Committee satisfies the requirement under legislation (S.9F of the Local Government Act 2000 as inserted by the Localism Act 2011) to include provision for the appointment of one or more committees. The Scrutiny Committee plays a particular role in scrutinising the Executive's annual budget proposals as part of the Budget and Policy Framework Procedure Rules (Part 4.3 of the Constitution refers).

**General role:** Within the terms of reference, the Committee will:

- (i) review or scrutinise decisions made, and performance of, the Cabinet and Committees and Council Officers both in relation to individual decisions and over time;
- (ii) review or scrutinise the performance of the Council in relation to its policy objectives, performance targets and/or particular service areas;
- (iii) require Members of the Cabinet and/or Committees and Chief Officers to attend before it to answer questions about their decisions and performance, whether generally in comparison with service plans and targets over a period of time, or in relation to particular decisions, initiatives or projects;
- (iv) make recommendations to the Cabinet or appropriate Committee or Council arising from the outcome of the scrutiny process – it is expected that reviews of policy arising out of the work of the committee would be referred to the Policy Development and Review Committee;
- (v) review and scrutinise the performance of other public bodies in the area and invite reports from them by requesting them to address the Scrutiny Committee and local people about their activities and performance;
- (vi) make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive with respect to any functions which are not the responsibility of the executive;
- (vii) make reports or recommendations to the authority or the executive on matters which affect the authority's area or the inhabitants of the area;
- (viii) exercise the right to call-in, for reconsideration, decisions made but not yet implemented by the executive;
- (ix) consider Councillor Call for Action requests in accordance with the Councillor Call for Action Protocol contained in Part 5 of this Constitution; and
- (x) in accordance with Section 19 of The Police and Justice Act 2006, to act as the Council's "Crime and Disorder Committee" in terms of reviewing and

scrutinising decisions made, or other actions taken, in connection with the responsible authorities discharge of their Crime and Disorder functions.

The Scrutiny Committee shall exercise overall responsibility for any finances made available to them.

Annual Report – the Scrutiny Committee must report annually to the full council on its work and make recommendations for amended working methods if appropriate.

### Membership

2.2 The following Councillors served on the Scrutiny Committee during 2019/20:

Councillor Lloyd Bowen	Chairman
Councillor Mike Dendor	Vice Chairman
Councillor Richard Darby	
Councillor Steve Davey	
Councillor Tim Gibson	
Councillor Alastair Gould	
Councillor James Hall	
Councillor Carole Jackson	
Councillor Elliott Jayes	
Councillor Denise Knights	
Councillor Lee McCall	
Councillor Pete Neal	
Councillor Ken Pugh	

## 3 Scrutiny work programme

3.1 The Scrutiny Committee’s work programme includes the oversight of many areas of Council business such as the budget, service performance and delivery of planned actions as well as a number of dedicated reviews. Key areas of work for 2019/20 are summarised below.

Work programme 2019/20			
Title	Frequency	Focus of discussion	Status
Performance and financial monitoring	Ongoing - reviewed periodically throughout the year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicators not achieving target</li> <li>significant budget variances</li> </ul>	Complete
Council budget	Annual review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Cabinet’s annual budget proposals are scrutinised before these are ratified by the Council</li> </ul>	Complete
Fees and charges	Annual review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Committee considered Cabinet’s proposals for fees and charges on 6 November</li> </ul>	Complete

		2019	
<b>Scrutiny reviews</b>			
<b>Review</b>	<b>Date review template agreed</b>	<b>Report/recommendations submitted to Cabinet</b>	<b>Status</b>
Sittingbourne Town Centre regeneration scheme	Not applicable	Regular updates provided by Cabinet Member for Economy and Property and Regeneration Director	Ongoing
Regeneration activity	22/03/18	The purpose of this review was to look at the non-Sittingbourne Town Centre aspects of regeneration activity which was taking place in Swale, either led by the Council or by other organisations. Activity paused as a result of snap General Election and COVID-19 pandemic	Paused
Infrastructure provision in Swale	Not applicable	Following an initial session in 2018/19, five utility companies were lined up to attend a Committee meeting in March 2020 when the COVID-19 pandemic broke.	Paused
Call-in	Not applicable	Consideration of Cabinet's decision not to proceed with Phase 2 of the Development Agreement between the Council and the Spirit of Sittingbourne.	Complete

## Performance and financial monitoring

- 3.2 The Committee receives reports on performance and financial monitoring at many of its meetings.
- 3.3 The Committee regularly considered those indicators where performance was not achieving targets and discussed with Heads of Service their plans for turning performance around on these indicators. The Committee plays a significant role in the Council's performance management arrangements in that indicators which consistently fall into the 'red' category are escalated up to the Scrutiny Committee for further investigation.
- 3.4 The Committee received regular financial monitoring reports that presented Members with the opportunity to highlight significant budget variances and ask questions of officers and Cabinet members about their plans to address this.

## Council budget

- 3.5 One of the Committee's key responsibilities is to scrutinise the Cabinet's annual budget proposals before these are ratified by the Council, which took place at a specially convened meeting on 22 January 2020. The Committee Chairman opened the meeting up so that any Council Member could attend and make representations. The Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance, along with other Cabinet Members, Deputy Cabinet Members and Senior Officers were present to respond to Members' questions. The Committee scrutinised the Cabinet's budget proposals line by line.
- 3.6 Cabinet noted the Committee's comments at their meeting of 12 February 2020.
- 3.7 The reports the Scrutiny Committee considered on the Council's draft budget are available here:
- <https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=139&MId=2204&Ver=4>
- 3.8 The Committee's consideration of the draft budget is available here:
- <https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/g2204/Printed%20minutes%2022nd-Jan-2020%2019.00%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=1>

## **Fees and charges**

- 3.9 The Committee considered the Council's annual review of fees and charges separately from the Budget this year. A record of the Committee's discussions with the Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Chief Financial Officer is available here:
- <https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/g2202/Printed%20minutes%2006th-Nov-2019%2019.00%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=1>

## **Sittingbourne Town Centre regeneration scheme**

- 3.10 The Committee received updates throughout the year from the Cabinet Member for Economy and Property and Regeneration Director on the Sittingbourne Town Centre regeneration scheme.

## **Regeneration review**

- 3.15 During the previous Municipal Year, the Committee had begun a review looking at the non-Sittingbourne Town Centre activity occurring in the Borough. The Committee had established a Task and Finish Group to undertake the review and it has met several times to scope the information it required and met with lead officers to gain an initial understanding of the issues. Impetus for the review waned during the year and the Committee again resolved to pause any further work on the review and enable the new Committee in 2019/20 to decide whether or not to pursue it. The new Committee decided to continue with the review and established a new Task and Review Committee. It met several times, both by itself and with lead

officers. However, the snap General Election and then the outbreak of the COVID-19 epidemic put paid to any further meaningful progress on the review.

## **Infrastructure provision in Swale**

3.16 As Swale is an area which is seeing a rapid growth in its population, and with the new housing developments appearing in many parts of the Borough, the Committee decided to embark on a review of infrastructure in Swale. The Committee had previously invited a number of utility companies to attend an initial session in February 2019, but unfortunately, only one company was able to attend – SGN – who provide and maintain the gas infrastructure network in Swale. A further session was arranged for 25 March 2020 at which five utility companies had agreed to attend. Unfortunately this coincided with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and the cancellation of all Council meetings.

## **Call-in**

3.17 A call-in was held on 6 November 2019 to consider Cabinet’s decision to give delegated authority to the Director of Regeneration and Chief Financial Officer to determine a way forward on the Development Agreement between the Council and the Spirit of Sittingbourne in respect of the Sittingbourne Town Centre regeneration.

3.18 The Committee decide not to refer the decision back to Cabinet for reconsideration and as record of the consideration is given here:  
<https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/documents/g2202/Printed%20minutes%2006th-Nov-2019%2019.00%20Scrutiny%20Committee.pdf?T=1>

## **4 Contact details**

4.1 Scrutiny Committee meetings take place throughout the year and members of the public are welcome to attend. Dates, agendas, reports and minutes for these meetings can be found on the Council’s website:  
<http://www2.swale.gov.uk/dso/>. Alternatively, you can telephone Democratic Services on 01795 417 330.

4.2 The Scrutiny Team provides independent and professional support and advice to the Members of Scrutiny Committee.

4.3 You can contact the Scrutiny Team using one of the following methods:-

In writing to:

Policy and Performance Team  
Swale Borough Council  
Room 318  
Swale House  
East Street  
Sittingbourne

Kent  
ME10 3HT

By e-mail/telephone:

**Bob Pullen – Policy and Performance Officer**

[BobPullen@swale.gov.uk](mailto:BobPullen@swale.gov.uk)

01795 417 187

**Democratic Services**

[Democraticservices@swale.gov.uk](mailto:Democraticservices@swale.gov.uk)

01795 417 330

4.3 A full list of Committee meeting dates, times, venues and agendas is available on Swale Borough Council's website:

<https://services.swale.gov.uk/meetings/uuCoverPage.aspx?bcr=1>

## Scrutiny Committee membership and attendance - 2019/20

Name	Role	5 Jun	3 Jul	4 Sep	2 Oct	6 Nov	15 Jan	22 Jan	27 Feb
<b>Committee members</b>									
Cllr Lloyd Bowen	Chairman	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cllr Mike Dendor	Vice-Chairman	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cllr Richard Darby	Committee Member	√	X	√	X	√	√	√	√
Cllr Steve Davey	Committee Member	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cllr Tim Gibson	Committee Member	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cllr Alastair Gould	Committee member	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cllr James Hall	Committee Member	X	√	√	√	√	√	√	X
Cllr Carole Jackson	Committee Member	X	X	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cllr Elliott Jayes	Committee Member	X	√	√	√	√	√	X	X
Cllr Denise Knights	Committee Member	√	√	√	√	√	√	X	√
<del>Cllr Lee McCall</del>	Committee Member	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
<del>Cllr Pete Neal</del>	Committee Member	√	√	√	X	X	√	X	X
<del>Cllr Ken Pugh</del>	Committee Member	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
<b>Visiting members and *substitutes</b>									
<del>Cllr Mike Baldock</del>	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning	√						√	
Cllr Cameron Beart	Member	√	√	√	√	√		√	
Cllr Monique Bonney	Cabinet Member for Economy and Property	√	√	√		√	√	√	√
Cllr Derek Carnell	Deputy Cabinet Member for Finance							√	
Cllr Roger Clark	Member	√			√		√		
Cllr Mark Ellen	Member	*√	*√						
Cllr Simon Fowle	Member	√	√		*√	√		√	
Cllr Angela Harrison	Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing							√	
Cllr Alan Horton	Member	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Cllr James Hunt	Member	√			√	√		√	
Cllr Ken Ingleton	Member						√	√	
Cllr Peter Marchington	Member	√				*√			

Name	Role	5 Jun	3 Jul	4 Sep	2 Oct	6 Nov	15 Jan	22 Jan	27 Feb
Cllr Ben A Martin	Member	√							
Cllr Ben J Martin	Cabinet Member for Housing							√	√
Cllr Richard Palmer	Cabinet Member for Community			√		√	√	√	
Cllr Hannah Parkin	Deputy Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing							*√	√
Cllr Ken Rowles	Member	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	
Cllr Julian Saunders	Deputy Cabinet Member for Community								
Cllr David Simmons	Member	√						*√	*√
Cllr Paul Stephen	Member	*√				√			
Cllr Sarah Stephen	Deputy Cabinet Member for Economy and Property	√		√		√	√	√	√
Cllr Bill Tatton	Member	*√					√		
Cllr Roger Truelove	Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance					√	√	√	√
Cllr Ghlin Whelan	Deputy Cabinet Member for Housing	√	√			√		√	√
<b>Swale Borough Council officers</b>									
Alister Andrews	Environmental Services Manager								√
Katherine Bescoby	Democratic and Electoral Services Manager			√					
Martyn Cassell	Head of Commissioning, Environment and Leisure					√		√	
David Clifford	Head of Policy, Communications and Customer Services							√	
Philippa Davies	Democratic Services Officer								√
James Freeman	Head of Planning Services							√	
Charlotte Hudson	Head of Economy and Community Services	√		√				√	√
Kieren Mansfield	Economy and Community Services Manager						√		
Jo Millard	Senior Democratic Services Officer	√	√		√	√	√	√	
Lyn Newton	Economy and Community Services Manager								
Tony Potter	Business Improvement Officer				√		√		√
Bob Pullen	Policy and Performance Officer	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√



Name	Role	5 Jun	3 Jul	4 Sep	2 Oct	6 Nov	15 Jan	22 Jan	27 Feb
Dean Radmore	STC Regeneration Scheme Manager	√		√					√
Nick Vickers	Chief Financial Officer		√			√		√	
Emma Wiggins	Director of Regeneration					√			
Phil Wilson	Financial Services Manager							√	

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<b>Council</b>	
<b>Meeting Date</b>	7 October 2020
<b>Report Title</b>	Policy Development and Review Committee – Annual Report 2019/20
<b>Lead Member</b>	Councillor Alastair Gould, Chairman, Policy Development and Review Committee
<b>SMT Lead</b>	David Clifford, Policy, Communications and Customer Services Manager
<b>Head of Service</b>	
<b>Lead Officer</b>	Bob Pullen, Policy and Performance Officer
<b>Key Decision</b>	No
<b>Classification</b>	<b>Open</b>
<b>Forward Plan</b>	<b>Reference number:</b>
<b>Recommendations</b>	1. That Council considers the Policy Development and Review Committee’s Annual Report for 2019/20

## 1 Purpose of Report and Executive Summary

- 1.1 This report provides details of the work of the Policy Development and Review Committee’s during 2019/20.

## 2 Background

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

## 3 Proposals

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

## 4 Alternative Options

- 4.1 None.

## 5 Consultation Undertaken or Proposed

- 5.1 The Policy Development and Review Committee considered a draft of the annual report at its meeting on 9 September 2020, and resolved that it should be presented to Council for their consideration.

## 6 Implications

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

## 7 Appendices

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

- Appendix I: Policy Development and Review Committee Annual Report 2019/20.

## **8 Background Papers**

8.1 None.

**Policy Development and Review Committee Annual Report 2019/20**

**Swale Borough Council**

## Policy Development and Review Committee Annual Report 2019/20

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

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

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

3. The table at Appendix I summarises attendance at all of the Policy Development and Review Committee meetings during 2019/20. Members appointed to serve on the Committee for 2019/20 were:

- Councillor Alastair Gould (Chairman)
- Councillor Ghlin Whelan (Vice-Chairman)
- Councillor Lloyd Bowen
- Councillor Mike Dendor
- Councillor Ann Hampshire
- Councillor Benjamin A Martin
- Councillor Ken Pugh
- Councillor Ken Rowles
- Councillor Julian Sanders
- Councillor Sarah Stephen
- Councillor Corrie Woodford.

4. A schedule of meetings and the policies, plans and strategies considered by the Committee during 2019/20 is at Appendix II. This also provides a summary of what the Committee considered.

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

6. One aspect which continued throughout 2019/20, was that while the relevant Heads of Service were attending the meetings, they were being accompanied by relatively junior members of staff and that these staff were being given the opportunity to present reports. This continued to have several benefits:

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

7. Cabinet continued to implement the reforms to the Committee's working introduced during the previous Civic Year of placing a greater emphasis on PDRC making an input at a much earlier stage, particularly where brand new policies, plans or strategies are being developed. A note setting out this change of emphasis introduced during 2018/19 is at Appendix III.

8. A trawl of the Cabinet and Council agendas for the year shows that all major policies, plans, and strategies had been considered by the Committee prior to their approval.



## Policy Development and Review Committee membership and attendance – 2019/20

Name	Role	19 Jun	17 Jul	24 Sep	16 Oct	20 Nov	29 Jan	4 Mar
<b>Committee members</b>								
Clr Alastair Gould	Chairman	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Clr Ghlin Whelan	Vice-Chairman	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Clr Lloyd Bowen	Committee member	X	√	X	√	√	√	√
Clr Mike Dendor	Committee member	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Clr Ann Hampshire	Committee member	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Clr Benjamin A Martin	Committee Member	√	√	√	√	X	√	√
Clr Ken Pugh	Committee Member	X	√	√	X	X	X	X
Clr Ken Rowles	Committee member	√	√	√	X	√	X	√
Clr Julian Saunders	Committee member	X	√	X	X	√	√	√
Clr Sarah Stephen	Committee member	X	√	√	X	√	X	√
Clr Corrie Woodford	Committee member	√	X	√	X	X	√	√
<b>Visiting members and *substitutes</b>								
Clr Mike Baldock	Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning		√	√	√	√	√	
Clr Cameron Beart	Member			√	√	√		
Clr Derek Carnell	Member				√*			
Clr Steve Davey	Member	√*			√*	√	√	√
Clr Angela Harrison	Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing				√*		√*	
Clr Alan Horton	Member	√*			√*			
Clr Ken Ingleton	Member		√	√		√*	√*	
Clr Denise Knights	Member		√					
Clr Peter Macdonald	Member	√*						
Clr Peter Marchington	Member		√		√			√*
Clr Ben J Martin	Cabinet Member for Housing							√

Name	Role	19 Jun	17 Jul	24 Sep	16 Oct	20 Nov	29 Jan	4 Mar
Cllr Richard Palmer	Cabinet Member for Communities	√*						√
Cllr Hannah Perkin	Deputy Cabinet Member for Health and Wellbeing		√					√
Cllr Paul Stephen	Member				√*	√*		
Cllr Bill Tatton	Member		√					
Cllr Eddie Thomas	Deputy Cabinet Member for Environment							√
Cllr Roger Truelove	Leader		√	√				
Cllr Tim Valentine	Cabinet Member for Environment							√
Cllr Tony Winckless	Member			√				
<b>Swale Borough Council officers</b>								
Simon Algar	Conservation and Design Manager						√	
Katherine Bescoby	Democratic and Electoral Services Manager				√			
Zoe Callaway	Strategy and Enabling Officer							√
Steph Curtis	Economy and Community Services Manager							√
David Clifford	Head of Policy, Communications and Customer Services		√	√			√	
Philippa Davies	Democratic Services Officer	√		√				
Charlotte Hudson	Head of Economy and Community Services							√
Kellie MacKenzie	Democratic Services Officer							√
Jo Millard	Senior Democratic Services Officer		√			√	√	
Lyn Newton	Economy and Community Services Manager						√	
Sarah Porter	Interim Policy and Performance Manager		√	√	√	√		√
Bob Pullen	Policy and Performance Officer	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Roxanne Sheppard	Housing Options Manager							√

## Policies considered by the Policy Development and Review Committee during 2019/20

Date considered	Policy title	Summary of Committee considerations
17 July 2019	Constitutional Review	<p>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 constitutional review, diffusing power among members and improving public engagement in decision making.</p> <p>The Committee considered three papers at this session linked to the constitutional review. The first considered the objectives of a constitutional review, the second the possible creation of area committees and the third models of governance. The purpose of the discussion was to get the Committee's initial views on possible changes to the Council's Constitution rather than an in-depth consideration.</p> <p>Discussion largely centred around the idea of establishing area committees which could help the Council to diffuse powers among members and improve public engagement in decision making.</p> <p>In looking at alternative constitutional models more generally, members were said they needed to be mindful of the potential costs of proposals and additional costs to the taxpayer. There was a strong sense that in any new governance model, it was important to continue for there to be a mechanism to hold decision-makers to account.</p> <p>In considering the possible establishment of area committees, members were adamant that any model adopted should not seek to replicate the previous Local Engagement Forums (LEFs) which had become ineffective, time consuming and resource intensive. Residents had simply stopped attending and they were wound up as a result.</p>

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		<p>It was agreed that a working group of the Committee would be formed, with co-optees from the wider Council membership, to explore the question of area committees in more depth.</p>
24 September 2019	<p>Corporate Plan 2020-2023</p> <p>Area Committees</p>	<p>Following the May 2019 elections, the new administration had introduced a radical change in direction with different priorities. A new corporate plan was needed to reflect these priorities and develop the changes over the next four years.</p> <p>A first set of possible priorities were brought before the Committee for their consideration along with supporting objectives. These were very much a skeleton of a plan to form the basis of a discussion rather than a plan that was 'oven ready'.</p> <p>The Committee considered each of the priorities and objectives in turn and made comments and suggestions which were considered by Cabinet in drawing up the full version of the draft plan for public consultation.</p> <p>The Committee also considered an update from the working group which had been established to consider the area committee aspects of the Constitutional Review.</p> <p>The working group had initially been considering what delegated powers and resources area committees might have. It considered that planning matters were probably not appropriate, given issues around predetermination and the frequency with which Planning Committee needed to take place in order to keep up with business. The group had also given early consideration to how many area committees there might be and which wards they might cover. The working group had also contributed views to officers on a survey which had been issued to gather the public's views on the possible establishment of area committees.</p>
16 October 2019	Area Committees	<p>The Committee again received an update from the working group on the work they had been doing and interim results from the public survey. The group set</p>

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	<p data-bbox="427 360 712 432">Swale Active Travel Strategy</p> <p data-bbox="427 692 633 764">Marine Assets Strategy</p>	<p data-bbox="786 288 1839 316">out some of their interim findings and took the Committees views on these.</p> <p data-bbox="786 360 1924 539">The Committee were invited to consider how the Council could promote a modal shift in transport, away from car use. Topics discussed included: bus services; electric cars; promotion of 'active travel' (walking and cycling) and improvements to infrastructure; role of KCC; better broadband connectivity; flexible working; and rail services.</p> <p data-bbox="786 584 1877 651">It was suggested that Cabinet should be asked to consider feedback from the Committee and consider what more it could do in terms of its powers.</p> <p data-bbox="786 695 1912 948">The Committee were invited to consider how the Council could promote tourism and recreational use of Swale's marine assets, and to support the marine community. Topics discussed included: need for improved publicity and a joined up approach covering all of the Borough's marine assets; resource implications; encouraging overnight or longer stays; better use of tidal facilities; Sheerness Port; tapping into existing networks; infrastructure for the visiting marine community; and capitalising on tourist potential.</p> <p data-bbox="786 992 1809 1019">Cabinet would consider further the suggestions made by the Committee.</p>
20 November 2019	Area Committees	<p data-bbox="786 1066 1816 1131">The Committee considered the final report of the working group with their recommendations on Area Committees.</p> <p data-bbox="786 1160 1879 1259">The working group met three times and considered all elements of area committees, along with the results of the public survey, before producing their report and recommendations.</p> <p data-bbox="786 1287 1908 1385">Consideration of the draft report focussed on the following issues: special responsibility allowances for committee chairmen; delegated power to distribute resources; extra burdens on officers to service the committees; review</p>



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		<p>comments on this version too.</p> <p>The main issues the Committee made were around: development on brownfield land; affordability of housing for local people; generation of high-skilled jobs in the Borough; cleanliness and recycling; and local democracy.</p> <p>The revised Corporate Plan was approved by Cabinet on 18 March 2020 for adoption by Council.</p>
4 March 2020	<p>Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan</p> <p>Housing Allocations Policy</p>	<p>The Committee were asked to consider and comment on a draft Climate Change and Ecological Emergency Action Plan. The draft Action Plan set out the activities needed to adapt and mitigate against a changing climate. It was a longlist of potential actions which the Committee were asked to consider and comment on.</p> <p>Discussion focussed on the following issues: sharing knowledge with parish and town councils; financial resources; electric vehicles and charging points; air quality; recycling; green space; energy use of public buildings – environmentally friendly lighting systems; carbon savings; enabling tools; buildings and energy efficiency; transport and air quality; resource consumption and waste; ecology and biodiversity; energy generation and storage; and resilience; and adaptation and offsetting.</p> <p>The Action Plan was approved by Cabinet on 22 April 2020 for adoption by Council.</p> <p>The Committee were asked to consider the draft Housing Allocations Policy which detailed the discretionary areas the Council had over allocating social housing.</p> <p>The main issues the Committee discussed were: years of residency those seeking social housing needed to prove; treatment of those fleeing domestic violence; and prison release cases.</p>

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	CCTV Policy	<p>From April 2020, the Public Space CCTV Service will be managed in-house by the Council from a new purpose-built control room. The Committee were invited to consider a draft policy and procedures designed to ensure the service operated within legal requirements.</p> <p>The main issues the Committee discussed were: ongoing partnership arrangements with Medway Council; targeting illegal parking; and location of CCTV cameras.</p> <p>The policy was approved by Cabinet on 22 April 2020.</p>



**New focus for Policy Development and Review Committee (agreed by PDRC on 18/07/18)**

1. The purpose of this discussion paper is to seek the views of the Policy Development and Review Committee (PDRC) in refocussing its work to bring further value to Council in developing new policies.
2. The focus of PDRC since it was established four years ago has been to provide an input to the review of existing policies, plans and strategies or the development of new ones.
3. Typically, PDRC has considered policies, plans and strategies during the latter stages of development or review, although there have been some exceptions. However, it is envisaged that going forward there should be more emphasis placed on PDRC making an input at a much earlier stage, particularly where brand new policies, plans or strategies are being developed. The stages at which PDRC involvement in a policy's development or review could be sought by the Cabinet Member include one or more of the following:

Stage	Description
Conceptual	The reason for introducing a new policy has been identified and several possible solutions may have been identified, but the policy is still in an embryonic stage with no firm decisions taken on the way forward.
Pre-consultation	A policy has been developed, but it needs to be tested through public consultation before it is adopted.
Pre-Cabinet decision	A policy has been subjected to public consultation and amended to e.g. remove proposals which would have adverse consequences.

4. Any such refocussing would also place greater emphasis on the Committee acting in an advisory role, with the value of the Committee's input being in ideas coming forward through discussion with the Cabinet Member(s) and Lead Officer(s) rather than formal recommendations (n.b. any recommendations the Committee currently make do **not** result in a formal response from Cabinet). A new template and guidance for Council Committee reports has been developed to ensure that points made by PDRC will be captured and incorporated into reports to Cabinet so that the role and input of PDRC is clearly shown in the decision-making process.
5. Informal Cabinet will consider a standing item on their agenda every two months listing all of the policies, plans and strategies, whether new or due for renewal, which are 'in the pipeline'. Not all of these will be items which are expected to come to PDRC for review (e.g. inward-facing policies which apply only to the Council or its staff such as Human Resources, Health and Safety or ICT). But any outward-facing policy, plan or strategy which will have a bearing on either residents, businesses, visitors to Swale or the Borough itself will be expected to come before PDRC.

6. At what stage a policy, plan or strategy might come before the PDRC will vary depending on its state of development. Some might come before PDRC up to once, twice or three times as in the following examples:

Name	Type	New/revised ?	Cabinet Member/Service area	Stage of development	PDRC meeting date
Unauthorised grazing of horses on council open spaces	Policy	New	Cllrs Lewin and Simmons; Planning Enforcement and Commission and Customer Contact	(i) Conceptual; (ii) Pre-consultation; (iii) Pre-Cabinet decision	12/09/18; 27/11/18; 12/02/19.
Homelessness and Housing Strategy	Strategy	Revision to existing policy to reflect changes in national legislation	Cllr Horton; Resident Services	(i) Pre-consultation; (ii) Pre-Cabinet decision	16/01/19; 12/02/19
Housing Allocations Policy	Policy	Minor changes to existing policy	Cllr Horton; Resident Services	(i) Pre-Cabinet decision	12/02/19

7. It is hoped that the above proposals will result in PDRC having the opportunity, particularly for policies etc. which are in the very early stages of their development, to shape the Council's policies, plans and strategies for the better.

Cllr Andy Booth, Chairman PDRC  
Cllr James Hunt, Vice-Chairman PDRC