

AGENDA ITEM 3

T/C 13-10-16

TOWN COUNCIL
7 JULY 2016

MINUTES of the MEETING of the SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 7 JULY 2016 at 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor B E Read (Town Mayor)
Councillor Mrs A E D Barham
Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill
Councillor Ms L M Cross
Councillor Ms L C Howes
Councillor R J Lees
Councillor D J Mote
Councillor B R Parry
Councillor A S Reach
Councillor Mrs I A Read
Councillor S J Ryan
Vacancy

ALSO PRESENT:

Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer

ABSENT:

Councillor Mrs C K Openshaw

108/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies were received from Councillors' K G Basson, Ms L M Hall, Dr J M Harman, P M Harman, J A Hayes, K M Kelly and Mrs M B Kelly.

The Town Mayor asked that the council's best wishes and prayers be passed to Councillors' K M Kelly and Mrs M B Kelly at this time.

109/16-17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

110/16-17. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 MAY 2016.

Members were provided with a copy of the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 May 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 19 May 2016 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

111/16-17. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

The Town Clerk advised members that, further to minute 43/16-17 (PTE 15 June 2017) a meeting had been held with the Town Mayor and x 2 representatives from Redrow/Hardhat (Ebbsfleet Green/Castle Hill development). The Town Mayor apprised members of the discussions held at the meeting.

112/16-17. MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION & THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 4 MAY AND 15 JUNE 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation & Environment Committee Meetings held on 4 May and 15 June 2016 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

113/16-17. MINUTES OF THE RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 23 JUNE 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee Meeting held on 23 June 2016 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

114/16-17. MINUTES OF THE FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 16 June 2016 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

115/16-17. MINUTES OF THE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR & CRIME SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 20 APRIL 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Anti-Social Behaviour & Crime Site Sub-Committee meeting held on 20 April 2016 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

116/16-17. MINUTES OF THE HERITAGE PARK/SKULL SITE SUB-COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD ON 14 JUNE 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes of the Heritage Park/Skull Site Sub-Committee meetings held on 14 June 2016 be confirmed and the recommendations made therein be adopted.

117/16-17. NOTICE OF CASUAL VACANCY IN THE OFFICE OF TOWN COUNCILLOR FOR THE KNOCKHALL WARD.

Members were informed that the Notice of Casual Vacancy for the Knockhall Ward had been displayed for the appropriate periods of time, after the recent resignation of a Town Councillor, and that Dartford Borough Council Electoral Services had confirmed that no requests to hold a by-election had been received. Members were requested to consider the method of co-option for the vacancy and were provided with a draft invitation for expressions of interest.

RESOLVED:

That notices be displayed in the notice boards seeking expressions of interest, with a deadline of 5pm on 4 October 2016, and that the council fill the vacancy by co-option at the 13 October 2016 full Council meeting.

118/16-17. VACANCY ON RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE (RLA).

Member considered whether they wished to fill the vacancy on the RLA Committee due to the recent resignation of a Town Councillor. After discussion and a vote (7 for 3 against) it was agreed:

RESOLVED:

That filling the vacancy be considered after the co-option had taken place for the vacant Town Councillor position (previous item).

119/16-17. CONSULTATION ON DARTFORD'S STATEMENT OF SEXUAL ENTERTAINMENT VENUE POLICY FOR THE PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 23016 TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2021 (DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC)).

Members considered the information supplied by the Licensing Manager, DBC.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

120/16-17. **STAFF / MEMBER TRAINING - UPDATE.**

Members were informed that the following training had been booked:-

Cllr Ms L M Cross	Councillors' Conference 2016 (KALC)	7 July 2016
Cllr Ms L C Howes	Councillors' Conference 2016 (KALC)	7 July 2016
Cllr R J Lees	Councillors' Conference 2016 (KALC)	7 July 2016

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

121/16-17. **PAVILION UPDATE.**

Members were informed about the progress of the heating/boiler works and also of the challenges/issue that had arisen during the course of the work being undertaken. The additional expenditure incurred during the roof repairs/replacement works were supplied as part of the public agenda papers. The Town Clerk re-iterated that all the actions taken had been immediately reported/discussed with the Town Mayor/Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee and Vice-Chairman of Finance and General Purposes Committee and reported in to the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee 23 June 2016.

The Town Clerk updated members on the plans to re-instate the ceilings in the areas where works had been undertaken and advised that a quote had been obtained for approximately £8,000 and that attempts were being made to obtain further quotations in the normal manner.

RESOLVED:

1. That, as per minute 79/16-217 and in accordance with Financial Regulation 4.5 the actions of the Town Clerk in dealing with this matter to date be endorsed.
2. That the additional expenditure, as detailed, be approved.

122/16-17. SUGGESTIONS FOR 2017 – 2018 ESTIMATES.

The ATC/RFO updated members on the contents of the FRA Working Group meeting/discussions held on 22 June 2016.

Further to the memo that had been sent to all members on 26 May 2016 members were requested to consider items to be considered for the 2017 – 18 Estimates and to submit any to the ATC/RFO no later than 31 August 2016.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

123/16-17. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE REPRESENTATIVES.

Members were advised that this item provided an opportunity for Members' appointed as representatives on outside bodies to provide a report at the meeting.

Bluewater Forum (BF).

The Town Mayor or agreed substitute is the Town Councils representative on the BF. As previously agreed the minutes for the 17 March and 26 May 2016 meetings were available in the Chamber for inspection.

Ingress Park Greenhithe Management Limited (IPGM).

IPGM had indicated that, although unable to provide documentation, they would like to submit verbal updates to the Town Council.

Councillor P M Harman and Mr P C Harris are the Town Council's representatives on IPGM.

Mr P C Harris had submitted an update which included:

It has been a turbulent period for IPGM with another Development Manager resigning along with his deputy. The builder, Crest Nicholson who were responsible for employing First Port to manage the development have been so concerned that they recently initiated a meeting with First Port Senior Management to express their grave doubts as to their ability to manage Ingress Park. During this meeting First Port acknowledged that their poor performance has been well below acceptable standards, but reported that a new, more dynamic team from Regional Manager downwards had been recruited and are currently developing plans to improve.

The much awaited Community Centre is forecast to be completed within the next 2 months, after which the second exit should become available for Fastrack.

There ensued a considerable discussion regarding the management of the development by First Port and the possible future management of the open spaces and it was agreed:

RESOLVED:

1. That the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee be asked to consider the possibilities for the future management of Open Spaces within Ingress Park.
2. That the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation & the Environment Committee be asked to consider how the Town Council can pro-actively approach new developments and developers in the future.

124/16-17. REPORT FROM KENT COUNTY COUNCILLOR.

Unfortunately Kent County Councillor P M Harman was unable to attend so there was no update provided.

125/16-17. REPORT FROM DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCILLORS.

The Dartford Borough Councillors on the Town Council reported on the following matters:

The DBC General Assembly of Council were meeting on 11 July and prior to this a meeting with the EDC was being held.

There would be a briefing on Lowfield Street in the near future.

The new PCC, Matthew Scott had attended the borough and Parish Forum on 5 July 2016 where he had outlined his 6 point plan for the future which included increasing the a net amount of PCSO's and Police Officers. Discussions had also include the possibility of a Police Cadet Scheme in the future.

Councillors' R J Lees and B E Read had met with representatives from Arriva on 5 July 2016 where they had advised of timetable and route changes within Swanscombe which the Councillors had been resistant to.

RESOLVED:

That the item be noted.

126/16-17. SEALING OF DOCUMENTS.

There were none.

127/16-17. TOWN MAYOR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS.

The Town Mayor advised members that he had attended several events since the AGM and that theses had included the Swanscombe Tigers FC presentation night, Springfield Lodge Open Day and the 1st Swanscombe Rainbows Badge presentation Night.

128/16-17. **QUESTIONS.**

Members were informed that questions did not form part of the Meeting; they were merely the opportunity for Members to exchange information.

129/16-17. **DELEGATION TO CONDUCT NORMAL BUSINESS DURING RECESS PERIOD.**

Members were requested to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in accordance with section 101 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972, to conduct the normal business of the Council during the recess period. The Town Clerk would consult with the Chairman and Town Mayor, if appropriate, before any business was transacted

Recommended: That, in accordance with section 101 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Town Clerk be delegated authority to conduct the normal business of the Council during the recess period.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 8.15 pm.

Signed: _____ Date:- _____
(Chairman)

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MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE ON WEDNESDAY 6 JULY 2016 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs A E D Barham
Councillor Ms L C Howes
Councillor D J Mote
Councillor B R Parry
Councillor A S Reach

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk

ABSENT: Councillor K M Kelly

99/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors' K G Basson, Mrs S P Butterfill, Dr J M Harman, J A Hayes and S J Ryan.

100/16-17. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

101/16-17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

102/16-17. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

The Chairman advised members that he had met with Arriva on 5 July 2016 and appraised members of the discussions which included:

Church Road section of the route would not be being used in future with Stanhope Road being used instead. This was because of the continuing, and increasing, difficulty being experienced with navigating Church Road due to the on road parking;

Gunn Road / Bodle Avenue – this area was still causing concern and would be reviewed in the near future as the service may be withdrawn due to the continued problems.

Buses not stopping at Swanscombe Station – this was due to no official flag being in situ and it was hoped a new pole/flag would be re-instated.

The Chairman expressed his concerns about the apparent deterioration of bus services in Swanscombe which highlighted the need for integration between old and new communities in the area and confirmed that he would be raising this with the EDC at the meeting at Dartford Borough Council on Monday 11 July 2016.

103/16-17. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2016.

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 15 June 2016 were confirmed and signed.

TOWN PLANNING:

104/16-17. PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL / EBBSFLEET DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS.

DA/16/00939/FUL	Erection of a satellite dish on rear elevation (retrospective application).
OBSERVATIONS:	Members have no observations but would like to ask the Planning Authority (DBC) to ensure that the Development Control Board members are made fully aware of any restrictive covenants that are in place for the dwellings in the area that this application relates to. Please ensure that all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of this application.
DA/16/00907/FUL	Erection of a satellite dish (retrospective application). 14 Park Cliff Road, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	Members have no observations but would like to ask the Planning Authority (DBC) to ensure that the Development Control Board members are made fully aware of any restrictive covenants that are in place for the dwellings in the area that this application relates to. Please ensure that all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of this application.
DA/16/00880/FUL	Erection of a two storey rear extension. Swanscombe Health Centre, Southfleet Road, Swanscombe.

OBSERVATIONS:	Members are concerned that the limited parking on site is adequate for this development and seeks assurances that the current parking facilities within the curtilage of the site are used for this development.
DA/16/01030/TPO	Application to fell 1 No. Lime tree subject to Tree Preservation Order No.3 1991. 3 St Pauls Close, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	Members do not like to see trees being felled for reasons other than health and safety and would ask that the Planning Authorities Tree Advisor/Officer ensures that trimming/pollarding is not a viable option prior to any decision being made on this application. Were permission to be granted for felling the Lime tree members request that a condition be included that a replacement tree of suitable size and variety be planted in its place and that this be subject to a TPO
DA/16/00898/FUL	Erection of a part two / part single storey / part first floor rear / side extension. 3 Atlantic Close, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/16/01050/FUL	Demolition of existing rear addition and detached garage and erection of a part two/part single storey side extension and single storey rear extension. 158 Church Road, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council object to this application on the following grounds : Overdevelopment of the site with buildings right up to the boundaries so confirmation is sought that the requirements of the Party Wall Act 1996 will be met by this application; Lack of on-site parking, plans show demolition of a garage and open parking replacement. The space indicated is so limited that in one spot an open door would obstruct the adjacent footpath. Members also request that were this application to be

	approved that it be on condition that the development does not harm the character and appearance of the existing building or visual amenity of the locality.
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The following applications were tabled at the meeting as they were received after the additional agenda had been printed and despatched.

DA/16/01070/FUL	Provision of replacement doors on ground floor rear elevation and internal alterations. 9 Palladian Circus, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/16/01064/TPO	Application to carry out various works to various trees/groups of trees within Ingress Park subject to Tree Preservation Order No.11 1990. Ingress Park Site, Ingress Park Avenue, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.

105/16-17. GRANTED DECISION NOTICES SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION.

The following granted decision notices were noted.

DA/16/00620/FUL	Provision of a roof light in pitched kitchen roof and change the existing patio doors on rear elevation to a window of same width. 2 College Place, Greenhithe.
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106/16-17. REFUSED DECISION NOTICES SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION.

The following refused decision notices were noted.

DA/16/00610/FUL	Erection of a four storey rear extension to provide 3 flats with associated parking and vehicle access onto Bean Road. 11 Cobham Terrace, Bean Road, Greenhithe.
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107/16-17. DELEGATION TO CONDUCT NORMAL BUSINESS DURING RECESS PERIOD.

Members were requested to delegate authority to the Town Clerk, in accordance with section 101 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972, to conduct the normal business of the Council during the recess period. The Town Clerk would consult with the Chairman and Town Mayor, if appropriate, before any business was transacted

Recommended: That, in accordance with section 101 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 the Town Clerk be delegated authority to respond to Planning Applications / conduct the normal business of the Council during the recess period.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

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MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE ON WEDNESDAY 7 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor Mrs A E D Barham
Councillor K G Basson
Councillor P M Harman (substituting for Councillor Dr J M Harman)
Councillor J A Hayes
Councillor Ms L C Howes
Councillor D J Mote
Councillor B R Parry
Councillor S J Ryan

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk

ABSENT: Councillor K M Kelly

141/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors' Mrs S P Butterfill, Dr J M Harman and A S Reach.

Apologies for lateness were submitted by Councillors' J A Hayes and S J Ryan.

142/16-17. SUBSTITUTES.

Councillor P M Harman substituted for Councillor Dr J M Harman.

143/16-17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Councillor P M Harman declared a prejudicial interest in application KCC/DA/0211/2016 as he is the KCC Member for Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Councillor Ms L C Howes declared a prejudicial interest in application KCC/DA/0211/2016 as she is a Governor of the Craylands Primary School.

Councillor D J Mote declared a prejudicial interest in application DA/16/00863/FUL as he is a member of the Greenhithe & Swanscombe RBL Social Club and Branch Committee.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

144/16-17. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

145/16-17. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JULY 2016.

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2016 were confirmed and signed.

146/16-17. RESPONSES FROM EDC TO TOWN COUNCIL ENQUIRIES.

Members received the responses to the enquiries made by the Town Council regarding the creation of a "management board" for the EDC (similar to that at Ingress Park) and local bus services helping to integrate the current and new communities.

In considering the responses from the EDC members expressed their concern that there did not appear to be any form of democratic level of involvement in decisions for/at the Garden City and agreed that they would monitor this going forward.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

147/16-17. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS/DEVELOPERS.

Further to minute 123/16-17 members were asked how they wished the Town Council to approach new developments and developers in the future.

Members were also asked to agree a Policy for requests from developers to attend Committee meetings to meet/present to members.

After a lengthy discussion it was agreed:

Recommended:

- 1 That full Council be asked to form a Working Group, consisting of 7 members, tasked with exploring the setting up of a "Legacy" Committee to formulate how the Council approached developers/developments in the future.
- 2 That future requests from developers to meet with members be dealt with outside of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation & the Environment Committee and all Members be invited to attend. These meeting are only to be arranged prior to any planning applications being submitted or prior to the Council having considered any applications.

TOWN PLANNING:

148/16-17. The below planning applications had been received and responded to by the Town Clerk, in consultation with the Chairman, during the recess period (as per minute 129/16-17).

Members were advised that the following planning applications had been received from Dartford Borough Council and dealt with during summer 2015 recess.

EDC/16/0020	Application for the approval of reserved matters pursuant to conditions 2 & 25 of outline planning permission reference no. DA/12/01451/EQVAR; relating to roundabout at entrance of site off Southfleet Road. Eastern Quarry, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
DA/16/00993/FUL	Demolition of attached garage and erection of an attached garage. 35 Trebble Road, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/16/01090/FUL	Erection of a satellite dish on rear elevation (retrospective application). 29 Park Cliff Road, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	Members have no observations but would like to ask the Planning Authority (DBC) to ensure that the Development Control Board members are made fully aware of any restrictive covenants that are in place for the dwellings in the area that this application relates to. Please ensure that all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of this application.
DA/16/01137/FUL	Mixed use development including 151 residential units (16 x one bed apartments, 115 x 2 bed apartments, 6 x 3 bed houses and 14 x 4 bed houses), 832.19 square metres floorspace – Use Class A3/A4; 187.5 square metres training centre (Use Class D1); development platform and slipway; boat trailer park; permanent

	<p>diversion of Public Right of Way DS1; sustainable urban drainage systems; and associated works.</p> <p>The Pier Ingress Site, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	<p>The Town Council feel that the proposed development by virtue of its size and proximity to neighbouring dwellings is likely to result in loss of daylight and view, have an overbearing effect and result in a loss of privacy to the detriment of the amenities of its neighbouring occupiers, contrary to Policies B1 and H8 of the Dartford Local Plan, and Policies DD11 and H4 of the Local Plan Review 2004.</p> <p>The Town Council also feel the proposal offers inadequate visitor parking to serve the needs of the development in relation to those wishing to visit the riverfront, the absence of which would give rise to an increase in on street parking in the wider area where there is very limited capacity, contrary to Policy T23 of the Dartford Local Plan and Policy TP19 of the Kent and Medway Structure Plan 2006.</p> <p>The Town Council would like to ask the Planning Authority (DBC) to ensure that all pathways and roadways are built to an adoptable standard in line with Kent County Council to cater for the increase in footfall.</p> <p>The Town Council would like to commend the developer on the provision of a much needed community facility.</p>
DA/16/01155/TPO	<p>Application for continued maintenance programme for 34 Lime trees (T215-T248, subject to Tree Preservation Order No. 1 1990) to allow crown lifting (up to 3m), pruning and height reduction to provide uniformity through the Boulevard.</p> <p>The Boulevard, Greenhithe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
DA/16/01140/FUL	<p>Demolition of existing rear extensions and erection of a part two/part single storey rear extension</p> <p>28 Eglinton Road, Swanscombe</p>

OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/16/01164/FUL	Erection of a single storey rear extension 23 Maritime Close, Greenhithe
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/16/01207/OUT	West Village & Service Yards 5, 8 And 12 Bluewater Outline application for extensions and alterations to the shopping centre through part demolition, alteration and refurbishment of existing buildings/structures and erection of new buildings/structures to provide retail and related uses (Use classes A1-A5), reconfiguration of existing car and coach parking areas, reconfiguration of existing lake, open space and public realm, alteration of existing pedestrian links within the site, infrastructure and associated facilities.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
EDC/16/0071	Erection of a standalone two storey office development comprising 1093 sq. m Use Class B1a Floor Space and up to 50 car parking spaces with associated landscaping and public realm enhancements Northfleet West Grid Sub-Station- Southfleet Road, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	Whilst we have no objections to the actual application we would request that you review the travel plan. It states its connectivity with the local area and stations etc. and bus services, in particular Swanscombe Station. To our knowledge this station is heavily used by residents in adjoining new developments and the expectation is that this new development will add to this. The bus services mentioned in the plan are the 481 connecting to Swanscombe, it only reaches the fringe of Swanscombe but not to the High Street or Station. Experience now shows us that people are now using their cars and leaving them in the High Street area whilst travelling to work etc. which is creating local parking problems. We

	<p>would suggest that a condition is placed on the application to request that the developer seeks an agreement with the Town Council, with a revision to the travel plan, to take this into account and thus create a better connectivity with the development and the existing area.</p> <p>We would also like to make the point that this feature also applies to many of the other developments that the EDC are dealing with.</p>
EDC/16/0034	<p>Erection of a single storey rear extension with construction to repositioned stairs to first floor.</p> <p>The George & Dragon PH, London Road, Swanscombe.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.

Members are advised that the following planning applications have been received from Kent County Council and dealt with during summer 2016 recess.

PROW/DS20/034/EDC	Proposed diversion of part of Public Footpath DS20 at Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations but please ensure that all local walking groups, and the Ramblers Association, have been contacted for their comments/observations.

Members are advised that the following Refused Decision Notices were received from Dartford Borough Council / EDC during the summer 2016 recess.

DA/16/00612/FUL	<p>Demolition of existing rear extensions and erection of a new part 1 / part 2 storey rear extension.</p> <p>28 Eglinton Road, Swanscombe.</p>
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Recommended: That the responses submitted during the summer 2016 recess be noted and endorsed.

149/16-17. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL /
EBBSFLEET DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS.**

DA/16/00863/FUL	Provision of memorial to recognise local community war dead including associated alterations. RBL Social Club, London Road, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
DA/16/01194/FUL	Conversion of existing integral garage to habitable room with associated alterations to elevation. 72 Pentstemon Drive, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council objects to this application as the proposed development would result in the loss of a parking space which could not be replaced within the curtilage of the site and would be likely to result in undesirable on-street parking in an area with limited on street parking provision contrary to Policies B1 and T23 of the Planning Authorities Local Plan. The Town Council believes that the proposal would have a detrimental effect on the provision of parking in the vicinity.
DA/16/01263/FUL	Conversion of integral garage into habitable room together with associated alterations to front elevation. 13 Pilgrims View, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council objects to this application as the proposed development would result in the loss of a parking space which could not be replaced within the curtilage of the site and would be likely to result in undesirable on-street parking in an area with limited on street parking provision contrary to Policies B1 and T23 of the Planning Authorities Local Plan. The Town Council believes that the proposal would have a detrimental effect on the provision of parking in the vicinity.
DA/16/01335/FUL	Erection of a single storey front infill extension together with conversion of existing integral garage into habitable room with associated alterations to front elevation. 2 Chapel Court, Milton Roads, Swanscombe.

OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council objects to this application as the proposed development would result in the loss of a parking space which could not be replaced within the curtilage of the site and would be likely to result in undesirable on-street parking in an area with limited on street parking provision contrary to Policies B1 and T23 of the Planning Authorities Local Plan. The Town Council believes that the proposal would have a detrimental effect on the provision of parking in the vicinity.
DA/16/01370/TPO	Application to completely reduce crown and pollard back to previous points 1 No. Lime tree subject to Tree Preservation Order No.3 1991. 3 St Pauls Close, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
DA/16/01369/TPO	Application to completely reduce crown and pollard back to previous points 1 No. Lime tree subject to Tree Preservation Order No.3 1991. 4 St Pauls Close, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
DA/16/01371/TPO	Application to completely reduce crown and pollard back to previous points 1 No. Lime tree subject to Tree Preservation Order No.3 1991. 5 St Pauls Close, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
DA/16/01407/PCB	Permanent removal of public payphone under Section 49 of the Communications Act 2003. Junction Knockhall Chase/London Road, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
DA/16/01406/PCB	Permanent removal of public payphone under Section 49 of the Communications Act 2003. Junction Ames Road/Milton Road, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.

DA/16/01405/PCB	Permanent removal of public payphone under Section 49 of the Communications Act 2003. Junction Betsham Road/Swanscombe Street, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.
DA/16/01404/PCB	Permanent removal of public payphone under Section 49 of the Communication Act 2003. Outside 47/49 Mounts Road, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations.

150/16-17. **GRANTED DECISION NOTICES SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL/EDC FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION.**

The following granted decision notices were noted.

DA/16/00912/FUL	Erection of a satellite dish on the roof behind the parapet wall. 6 The Boulevard, Greenhithe.
DA/16/01156/TPO	Application for continued maintenance programme for 34 Lime trees (T215-T248, subject to Tree Preservation Order No.1 1990) to allow crown lifting (up to 3m), pruning (to result in a finished radius for each tree of 3m minimum) and reduction in height of the tree outside No.69 by 1m together reduction in height of all remaining trees to match this height to provide uniformity through the Boulevard, subject to the requirement that the trees shall not be reduced in height below the upper level of the second floor window to the adjoining residential premises. The Boulevard, Greenhithe.
DA/16/01050/FUL	Demolition of existing rear addition and detached garage and erection of a part two/part single storey side extension and a single storey rear extension. 158 Church Road, Swanscombe.

DA/16/01070/FUL	Provision of replacement doors on ground floor rear elevation and internal alterations. 9 Palladian Circus, Greenhithe.
DA/16/01090/FUL	Erection of a satellite dish on rear elevation (retrospective application). 29 Park Cliff Road, Greenhithe.

151/16-17. REFUSED DECISION NOTICES SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL/EDC FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION.

The following refused decision notices were noted.

DA/16/01030/TPO	Application to fell 1 No. Lime tree subject to Tree Preservation Order No.3 1991. 3 St Pauls Close, Swanscombe.
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Having already declared a prejudicial interest Councillors' P M Harman and Ms L C Howes left the Chamber and took no part in the discussion or decision of the following application.

152/16-17. PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY KENT COUNTY COUNCIL FOR MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS.

KCC/DA/0211/2016	New two storey building to provide eight class rooms, two group rooms and ancillary accommodation; kitchen extension, toilet extension and internal alterations to existing building new fenced hard games court; and alterations to the carpark to provide six additional spaces to facilitate an increase from 1FE to 2FE. Craylands Primary School, Craylands Lane, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	Members sought confirmation that the current "dropping off" provision would be adequate for the proposed increase in facilities.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

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MINUTES OF THE PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE ON WEDNESDAY 28 SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT:
Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor J A Hayes
Councillor Ms L C Howes
Councillor D J Mote
Councillor B R Parry
Councillor A S Reach
Councillor S J Ryan

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk

ABSENT: Councillor K M Kelly

176/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors' Mrs A E D Barham, K G Basson, Mrs S P Butterfill and Dr J Harman.

177/16-17. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

178/16-17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

179/16-17. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

The Town Clerk advised members that the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation public information event at the Town Council Office Community Hall on 8 October 2016 would be taking place between 12 noon and 4pm and not as the EDC had incorrectly publicised 10am to 2pm.

180/16-17. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 7 SEPTEMBER 2016.

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2016 were confirmed and signed.

181/16-17. KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (KCC) CONSULTATION - LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN 4.

Members had previously been emailed details of the consultation on 11 August 2016.

Recommended: That the responses agreed be submitted.

182/16-17. KCC HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS SURVEY.

Members considered the survey which had a deadline for responses of 25 November 2016.

Recommended: That the responses agreed be submitted.

183/16-17. KCC – PUBLIC FOOTPATH DS20 (PART) DIVERSION AND DEFINITIVE MAP AND STATEMENT MODIFICATION ORDER 2015.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

TOWN PLANNING:

184/16-17. PLANNING APPLICATIONS SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL / EBBSFLEET DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION FOR MEMBERS' OBSERVATIONS.

DA/16/01428/FUL	Erection of a front porch. 180 Milton Road, Swanscombe.
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations, please ensure all neighbouring properties are consulted prior to the decision of the application.
DA/16/01447/FUL	Erection of 35 flats (comprising 16 x 1 bed and 19 x 2 bed flats) together with the provision of associated public realm and landscaping, parking and infrastructure works. Phase 2, Land at St Clements Valley.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council are concerned that the application is for 35 flats to replace the original 8 x 4 bed houses which is two thirds of the largest houses on the site and that this will dramatically change the whole balance of the site. Another concern is the apparent lack of disabled parking which the Town Council would like the planning authority to seek clarification on.

	<p>The proposed flats are on 3 levels with no lift or disabled access being provided for levels 2 and 3 which also requires clarification.</p> <p>The application does not state whether the proposed flats will be private or affordable properties and it is felt that this should be made clear at the application stage.</p>
EDC/16/0086	<p>Erection of a temporary Sales and Marketing Suite with the use of two residential under planning permission reference DA/15/01218/ECREM as adjoining show-homes, for a temporary period of approximately 2 years up to December 2018, with associated temporary car parking, landscaping, lighting and signage.</p> <p>Part of Phase 2, Castle Hill Village.</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations (highlight that EDC website not available to view application).
EDC/16/0083	<p>Submission of Reserved Matters of sitting, design, external appearance and landscaping pursuant to conditions 2,19,26,36 and 43 of outline planning permission. DA/05/00308/OUT for phase 1 development of 74 residential units (C3) and local shop (339sq m) including details of streets, buildings and structures, materials, landscaping, car parking, noise and drainage.</p> <p>Former Northfleet West Grid Sub Station, Southfleet Road, Swanscombe</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	No observations (highlight that EDC website not available to view application).
DA/16/01517/FUL	<p>Erection of a two storey side extension incorporating conversion of existing garage into habitable room and provision of additional off road parking</p> <p>33 Caspian Way Swanscombe</p>
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council objects to this application as the proposed development would result in the loss of a parking space which could not be replaced within the curtilage of the site and would be likely to result in undesirable on-street parking in an area with limited on street parking provision contrary to Policies B1 and T23 of the Planning Authorities Local Plan. The Town Council believes that the proposal

	would have a detrimental effect on the provision of parking in the vicinity.
DA/16/015185/TPO (tabled at meeting)	Application for works to protected trees being removal of ivy, crown reduction, removal of yew shoots and canopy lifting to T29 (false Acacia), removal of T31 (Horse Chestnut), removal of ivy from T32 (Horse Chestnut), removal of ivy, crown reduction and lifting of canopy of T33 (Horse Chestnut) subject to Tree preservation Order No.11 1990. Ingress Lodge, London Road, Greenhithe.
OBSERVATIONS:	The Town Council would respectfully request that the Planning Authorities' arboriculture officer confirms that the proposed works are appropriate and that that the felled tree will be replaced with a suitable size/aged/variety of tree.

185/16-17. GRANTED DECISION NOTICES SUBMITTED BY DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL/EDC FOR MEMBERS' INFORMATION.

The following granted decision notices were noted.

DA/16/01064/TPO	Application to carry out various tree/groups of tress within Ingress Park subject to Tree Preservation Order No.11 1990. Ingress Park Site, Ingress Park, Greenhithe.
DA/16/00993/FUL	Demolition of attached garage and erection of an attached garage. 35 Trebble Road, Swanscombe.
DA/16/01164/FUL	Erection of a single storey rear extension. 23 Maritime Close, Greenhithe.
DA/16/01140/FUL	Demolition of existing rear extensions and erection of a part two/part single storey rear extension. 28 Eglinton Road, Swanscombe.
DA/16/00863/FUL	Provision of memorial to recognise local community war dead including associated alterations. Royal British Legion Social Club, London Road, Greenhithe

PLANNING, MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS, TRANSPORTATION & THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE
28 SEPTEMBER 2016

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There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 8.10 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

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MINUTES of the MEETING of the RECREATION, LEISURE & AMENITIES COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on WEDNESDAY 21 SEPTEMBER 2016 at 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor P M Harman (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Ms L M Cross
Councillor Ms L M Hall
Councillor Mrs M B Kelly
Councillor R J Lees (substituting for Councillor Ms L C Howes)
Councillor D J Mote
Councillor B R Parry
Councillor B E Read

ALSO PRESENT: Councillor K M Kelly
Graham Blew - Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/Responsible Financial Officer
Dan Usher – Senior Groundsman/Gardener

ABSENT: Councillor K G Basson

158/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors' Mrs A E D Barham, J A Hayes, and Ms L C Howes.

159/16-17. SUBSTITUTES.

Councillor R J Lees substituted for Councillor Ms L C Howes.

160/16-17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

Councillors' Ms L M Cross, P M Harman and R J Lees advised that, regarding agenda items 7.11 – Pavilion Working Group Update, they were the Town Council representatives on the Pavilion Committee. Previous advice received from the Deputy Monitoring Officer (Dartford Borough Council), was that there was no prejudicial interest as these roles were not part of any decision making.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

161/16-17. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

The Town Clerk advised that a vacancy had arisen for a Groundsman / Gardener following an unexpected resignation. The position was being advertised this week and temporary cover had been sought for the daily site checks and litter picking.

162/16-17. TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 JUNE 2016.

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 23 June 2016 were approved and signed as a true record.

163/16-17. SENIOR GROUNDSMAN/GARDENERS REPORT.

The Senior Groundsman/Gardeners report updated members on the work undertaken, by the Parks Department and also the work planned for the future which included:

Swanscombe Park, Manor Park, Broomfield Park, Heritage Park, Knockhall Park, Spring Vale, Valley View and Equipment.

The Town Clerk advised members that quotes were being sought for hard surfacing the area in front and to the side of the garage at Broomfield Park and indicated the costs that had so far been received.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

164/16-17. ADDITIONAL DOG BIN AT SWANSCOMBE HERITAGE PARK.

Members considered the financial and location information provided and, after lengthy discussion it was agreed;

Recommended: That an additional dog bin would be purchased and placed as specified within the Heritage Park. The bin would be added to the existing collection schedule.

165/16-17. REQUEST FROM ISTEAD RISE BOWLS CLUB – ELECTRONIC FENCE (WIRE) TO DETER FOX DAMAGE TO BOWLS GREEN.

Members were provided with a copy of the letter of request along with a product specification and previous advice given via Dartford Borough Council.

Members discussed the merits of the product against the implications and potential liability for its use.

It was felt that further information was required regarding the effectiveness of using electronic fences against alternative measures and certain guarantees from the Bowls Club regarding liability for the equipment/use.

Recommended: That further information be gathered and the item be put on the next Recreation, Leisure and Amenities Committee agenda.

166/16-17. TREE WORKS.

The Town Clerk detailed the work that had been undertaken/scheduled at Spring Vale and T38 Broomfield Park. The Chairman of the Recreation, Leisure & Amenities Committee had been consulted regarding both of these issues, as per Financial Regulation 4.1, and members were informed of the budgetary implications of these works.

Recommended: That the actions of the Town Clerks actions in having these works undertaken/scheduled be noted and endorsed.

167/16-17. SURFACING AT BROOMFIELD PLAY AREA.

Members considered the contents of the report including the photographs provided of the work undertaken and the Town Clerk detailed the reasons for the additional repairs.

Recommended: That the actions of the Town Clerk in dealing with this matter/having the works undertaken be noted and endorsed.

168/16-17. REPLACEMENT FENCING – KNOCKHALL PARK.

Members considered the quotations provided, the ATC/RFO clarified the guarantees/warranties involved for the materials/work and, after discussion it was agreed;

Recommended: That quotation C be used to have the works undertaken.

169/16-17. REPAIRS TO CHURCHYARD FOOTPATH.

Members received photographs of the footpath and considered the quotations that had been submitted. Members requested that, as the building was A1 listed, confirmation was sought from the Conservation Department (DBC) regarding having the work undertaken and, after discussion it was agreed;

Recommended: That quotation A be used to have the works undertaken.

170/16-17. REQUEST BY PAVILION TO USE PART OF BROOMFIELD PARK FOR FUN DAY ON SUNDAY 28 MAY 2017.

Members considered the request and it was agreed;

Recommended: That the request be granted.

171/16-17. **AGREEMENT WITH DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC) – SECTION 77-78
CRIMINAL JUSTICE AND PUBLIC ORDER ACT 1998.**

Members receive the information submitted by the Licensing Enforcement Officer (DBC) which advised that a cost of £205.00 was now required for all applications for removal of property, persons or vehicles from land (previous minute 290/13-14).

Recommended: That the item be noted and the Town Clerks actions in agreeing to this be endorsed.

172/16-17. **MANAGEMENT OF OPEN SPACES IN INGRESS PARK.**

Further to minute 123/16-17 Members discussed the implications and complexities of the existing arrangements regarding the public open spaces in Ingress Park.

Councillor P M Harman, in his role as Kent County Councillor, detailed the issues that had arisen between KCC and First Port in maintaining the open spaces in line with verge maintenance along adopted roads.

Members discussed the links with other developments and how the management of public open spaces has changed.

After considerable discussion Members felt that although a proactive approach to the Town Councils involvement with the management of public open spaces was needed careful consideration should be given to the scope of resources required.

Recommended: Due to the complexities and resource implications the Town Council are currently not in a position to consider taking on the management of the open spaces in Ingress Park.

173/16-17. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

MOVED BY Councillor B E Read and seconded by Councillor D J Mote;

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following item(s).

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following item of business.

MINUTES of the MEETING of the FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2016 at 7.00PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor R J Lees (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor K G Basson
Councillor Ms L M Cross
Councillor P M Harman
Councillor Ms L C Howes
Councillor D J Mote
Councillor B R Parry
Councillor Mrs I A Read
Councillor S J Ryan

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO

ABSENT: None

153/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors' Mrs S P Butterfill and K M Kelly,
An apology for lateness was submitted by Councillor P M Harman.

154/16-17. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

155/16-17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

156/16-17. TO RECEIVE ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

There were none.

157/16-17. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 JUNE 2016.

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2016 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

158/16-17. MONTHLY BANK RECONCILIATIONS.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 2.2 a member of the council other than the Town Mayor or a cheque signatory is required to be appointed to verify the bank reconciliations produced by the RFO for all the council's accounts on a regular basis. Councillor K G Basson was appointed (minute 57/15-16).

Recommended: That the bank reconciliations for June and July 2016, and verified by Councillor K G Basson, be noted.

159/16-17. BANK TRANSFERS.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5 (c) Members were provided with a list of bank transfers undertaken in June and July 2016.

Recommended: That the bank transfers undertaken in June and July 2016 be approved.

160/16-17. TO RECEIVE FINANCE STATEMENTS AND PASS ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT.

In accordance with Financial Regulation 5.5 (a) Members were provided with details of all receipts and payments for authorisation for June and July 2016.

Members asked that it be recorded that, as was normal practice, each page of the finance statements and accounts was scrutinised.

Recommended: That the receipts and payments for June and July 2016, as per the annexed list be approved.

161/16-17. SUMMARY OF ACCOUNTS.

Members were provided with details of the Summary of Accounts, balanced to 31 July 2016.

Recommended: That the details of the Summary of Accounts, balanced to 31 July 2016 be noted.

162/16-17. CAPACITY BUILDING FUND 2016 – DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL (DBC).

Further to minute 60/16-17 members received the notification from Member Services, DBC, of how the funding had been allocated for the 2016 – 2017 Scheme.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

163/16-17. FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT WORKING GROUP.

Members considered the notes from the 22 June 2016 Working Group meeting.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

164/16-17. APPLICATIONS FOR FUNDING.

The ATC/RFO advised members that an application had been received.

- Application – Cambria Sea Scouts (Greenhithe).

Members considered the application received and agreed to award the funding.

Recommended: That £430.00 be awarded to the Cambria Sea Scouts from the 2016 - 2017 budget.

165/16-17. EXTERNAL AUDITOR CERTIFICATE AND OPINION 2015 - 2016.

Further to minutes 22/16-17 and 23/16-17 members were pleased to receive the external auditor, PKF Littlejohn LLP, certificate and audit for the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2016 which stated "no matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Recommended: That the item be noted and that the Officers be thanked for again achieving a high standard of record keeping and administration.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 7.20 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

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MINUTES of the MEETING of the ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR & CRIME SUB-COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on WEDNESDAY 29 JUNE 2016 at 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor Ms L M Cross (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mrs A E D Barham
Councillor B R Parry

ALSO PRESENT: Martin Harding, ATC/RFO
Billy Unsworth, KCC Community Warden
Geena Beddoes, PCSO
Jazzmin Robinson, PCSO
Louise Blakey, DBC Housing
David Edie, DBC Housing
Kit Weller, DBC Housing
1 x member of the public

ABSENT: Councillor Mrs M B Kelly
Councillor A S Reach.

82/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors' S P Butterfill and P M Harman. Apologies were also received from Steve Taylor, Senior KCC Community Warden

83/16-17. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

84/16-17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

The member of the public in attendance expressed concerns over anti-social parking on Chapel Road. The parking is becoming obstructive to being able to walk on the path. KCC Warden Unsworth agreed to visit the area to review the extent of the problem.

A second concern was raised regarding the number of dog waste bins in Broomfield Park as it appeared that some were no longer there. It was agreed that this would be investigated by the Town Council.

85/16-17. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

86/16-17. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 APRIL 2016.

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 April 2016 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

At this point the Chairman requested to change the order of the meeting to allow the representatives from DBC Housing to give an update report. Agenda item 9 was moved forward to this point.

87/16-17. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR VIA DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL, DARTFORD HOUSING SERVICES (DHS).

Louise Blakey from DBC Housing gave a brief update report on their teams work. This included a summary of the 10 ASB cases currently being investigated. These related to noise, bullying, drug dealing, racial harassment and fly tipping. Members were also informed of a recent review of the estate inspection process and an article in the next Housing Newsletter 'The Link' will feature the collaborative work in Swanscombe between Housing, KCC Warden and the PCSO.

Recommended: That the report be noted and the officers be thanked for their attendance.

88/16-17. TOWN COUNCIL'S PROBLEM LOG.

Members were provided with a copy of the incidents reported to the Town Council since the last meeting. Members were reminded that the Town Council should be made aware of any incidents reported to the police, in order for them to be added to the problem log. The ATC/RFO advised that the problem log was emailed monthly to the CSU at DBC and also to the Police.

Recommended: That the problem log be noted.

89/16-17. BEAT OFFICER AND POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS (PCSO) REPORT.

PCSO Geena Beddoes introduced the new PCSO for Greenhithe Jazzmin Robinson. PCSO's Beddoes & Robinson gave a brief update on the general statistics for their areas. Members asked whether any significant problems had arisen. PCSO Beddoes mentioned a small increase in shoplifting incidents in the High Street shops involving students from Ebbsfleet Academy.

Recommended: That the report be noted and the PCSO's be thanked for their attendance.

90/16-17. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF CRIME STATISTICS FOR SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE.

Members were provided with the up to date detailed analysis of crime figures for Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

91/16-17. KCC COMMUNITY WARDENS REPORT.

KCC Warden Unsworth gave an update on cases he had been involved with in the area, including issues of ASB, fly tipping, drugs and trading standards. In addition members were given an update on the mentoring and progression of the 2 new Community Volunteer Support Wardens.

Recommended: That the report be noted and KCC Warden Unsworth be thanked for his attendance.

92/16-17. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR – ST PETER’S & ST PAUL’S CLOSE.

Members were provided with an update on the progress KCC Member P M Harman had undertaken to re-instate the all night lighting in the area. PCSO Beddoes reported 6 further calls to 101 for the area and regular patrols being undertaken. Members again reiterated the importance of reporting incidents but were pleased that work had been undertaken to follow up resident’s concerns.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

93/16-17. DECOMMISSIONING OF THE POLICE BUS.

Members were asked to note the decommissioning of the mobile police bus. In turn the officer operating this service PCSO Robinson is now the new PCSO for Greenhithe.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

94/16-17. DANGEROUS DRIVING – CROSSWAYS BOULEVARD.

Members were asked to note feedback from social media regarding dangerous driving occurring along Crossways Boulevard and around the roundabout at ASDA. PCSO Robinson indicated the Police awareness of the problems and that a joint effort with Dartford CSU was being made to undertake an operation in the area.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

95/16-17. **FEEDBACK FROM THE BOROUGH & PARISH FORUM – ROLE OF KCC WARDENS IN DARTFORD.**

Members were asked to note a recent letter from the representatives of the Borough and Parish Forum in relation to the work of Kent Community Wardens around Dartford.

The Chairman reiterated that the Town Councils representatives did not share the same view as others and that the Town Council commend the work of our Community Warden.

Recommended: That the item be noted and the Town Councils continued thanks be given to KCC Warden Unsworth for his work in the area.

96/16-17. **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.**

Recommended: That the next meeting be held on Wednesday 21 September 2016 at 7.00pm

97/16-17. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.**

It was proposed by Councillor B E Read and seconded by Councillor L M Cross

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following item(s).

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following item of business.

98/16-17. **CONFIDENTIAL AGENDA ITEMS.**

No confidential items were discussed.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 7.55 pm.

Signed _____
Chairman Date

MINUTES of the MEETING of the ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR & CRIME SUB-COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER 2016 at 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor Ms L M Cross (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mrs A E D Barham
Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill
Councillor P M Harman
Councillor B R Parry

ALSO PRESENT: Martin Harding, ATC/RFO
Billy Unsworth, KCC Community Warden
Geena Beddoes, PCSO
Jazzmin Robinson, PCSO
1 x member of the public

ABSENT: Councillor Mrs M B Kelly

141/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A S Reach. Apologies were also received from David Edie, DBC Housing.

142/16-17. SUBSTITUTES.

There were none.

143/16-17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

The member of the public in attendance expressed concerns regarding the number of dog waste bins in Broomfield Park as it appeared that some were no longer there. It was agreed that this would be investigated by the Town Council.

144/16-17. ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES AND THEIR POSITION ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

145/16-17. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 JUNE 2016.

Recommended: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 29 June 2016 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

146/16-17. TOWN COUNCIL'S PROBLEM LOG.

Members were provided with a copy of the incidents reported to the Town Council since the last meeting. Members were reminded that the Town Council should be made aware of any incidents reported to the police, in order for them to be added to the problem log. The ATC/RFO advised that the problem log was emailed monthly to the CSU at DBC and also to the Police.

Recommended: That the problem log be noted.

147/16-17. BEAT OFFICER AND POLICE COMMUNITY SUPPORT OFFICERS (PCSO) REPORT.

PCSO's Beddoes & Robinson gave a brief update on the general statistics for their areas. Members asked whether any significant problems had arisen. PCSO Robinson indicated an increase in criminal damage reported in Greenhithe.

Recommended: That the report be noted and the PCSO's be thanked for their attendance.

148/16-17. DETAILED ANALYSIS OF CRIME STATISTICS FOR SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE.

Members were provided with the up to date detailed analysis of crime figures for Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

149/16-17. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR VIA DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL, DARTFORD HOUSING SERVICES (DHS).

David Edie from DBC Housing had submitted his apologies but provided a written report. A copy of the report had been tabled for each member's consideration.

Recommended: That the report be noted.

150/16-17. KCC COMMUNITY WARDENS REPORT.

KCC Warden Unsworth gave an update on cases he had been involved with in the area, including issues of ASB, fly tipping, drugs and trading standards. In addition members were given an update on progression of the 2 new Community Volunteer Support Wardens, including the news that the Volunteer Warden for Swanscombe had resigned.

Recommended: That the report be noted and KCC Warden Unsworth be thanked for his attendance.

151/16-17. "OBSTRUCTION AND DANGEROUS PARKING" IN INGRESS PARK.

Members were provided with an update on the progress KCC Member P M Harman had published to social media in relation to the parking issues faced on the adopted roads within Ingress Park.

The PCSO's confirmed that the only time either the Police or PCSO's are instructed to act in relation to obstruction, is when a vehicle is blocking another vehicle from leaving a driveway.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

152/16-17. DANGEROUS DRIVING – CROSSWAYS BOULEVARD.

Members were provided with an update from both Councillor P M Harman and PCSO Robinson on incidents that have occurred and the intelligence being gathered in relation to further Police action.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

153/16-17. DANGEROUS DRIVING – MOPEDS & MOTORBIKES.

Members were asked to note a recent series of posts to social media regarding accidents caused by dangerous driving in both Swanscombe and Greenhithe. In addition members were provided with images taken by the Town Council of mopeds being set fire to in our parks.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

154/16-17. VANDALISM – SWANSCOMBE AND GREENHITHE.

Members were asked to note a recent series of posts to social media provided by Councillor P M Harman. These related to reports of vandalism and damage caused to vehicles in and around Ingress Gardens.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

155/16-17. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

Recommended: That the next meeting be held on Wednesday 11 January 2017 at 7.00pm

156/16-17. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC.

It was proposed by Councillor B E Read and seconded by Councillor S P Butterfill

RESOLVED:

That, pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, that because of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the public and press leave the meeting during consideration of the following item(s).

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following item of business.

157/16-17. CONFIDENTIAL AGENDA ITEMS.

No confidential items were discussed.

There being no further business to transact, the Meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

Signed _____
Chairman Date

MINUTES of the MEETING of the HERITAGE PARK / SKULL SITE SUB-COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE, on TUESDAY 26 JULY at 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor R J Lees
Councillor D J Mote
Councillor Mrs C K Openshaw

ALSO PRESENT: Martin Harding, Assistant Town Clerk & RFO

ABSENT: None

130/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors' Mrs S P Butterfill, Ms L C Howes and Brenda Bobby (Friends of Swanscombe Heritage Park)

131/16-17. SUBSTITUTES

There were none.

132/16-17. TO DECLARE INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

133/16-17. URGENT ITEMS / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

There were none.

134/16-17. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 JUNE 2016.

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 14 June 2016 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

135/16-17. HLF BID – PROGRESS TO DATE.

The ATC/RFO gave an update on the second meeting of the Project Management Board. It was explained the bid process needed to be stimulated in order to prevent any further delays.

The Board had decided on a final submission of November 2016, this deadline would be absolute and would need to be met.

The ATC/RFO also mentioned the wider implications of not submitting a successful bid. Members discussed the Town Council investing some funding at this point to secure consultant time to ensure the bid is prepared and ready for submission.

Recommended: That the ATC/RFO be delegated authority to spend funds from within the FRA up to a ceiling of £5000, to secure time from outside bodies to prepare and submit a bid for the November 2016 deadline.

136/16-17. NATURAL ENGLAND – SWANSCOMBE NNR MANAGEMENT PLAN.

The ATC/RFO informed members that Natural England had concerns regarding the Town Council being able to fulfil its requirements without the commitment to the HLF bid. Members discussed the wider implications of losing the lease and what contingency should be in place.

Recommended: That the ATC/RFO update Natural England on the Town Councils commitment to the site and its agreement to invest in the infrastructure needed regardless of a successful bid.

137/16-17. FRIENDS OF SWANSCOMBE HERITAGE PARK (FOSHP) REPORT OF ACTIVITIES.

No member of the FOSHP was present but members were reminded that the Teddy Bears picnic would be taking place on Wednesday 27 July 2016 at 2.00pm

Recommended: That the item be noted.

138/16-17. HERITAGE PARK WEBSITE

This item reminded everyone that any items to be included on the website needed to be forwarded to the ATC/RFO.

Members discussed and suggested an article be placed on both the Heritage Park and Town Councils website explaining the HLF bid and progress

Recommended: That the ATC/RFO draft an article for both websites.

139/16-17. ANY OTHER ITEMS RELATED TO THE HERITAGE PARK / SKULL SITE.

The Chairman updated on the significance of the park within the wider issues facing social cohesion with the developments within Eastern Quarry. Councillor Read hoped to have a meeting with senior officers from EDC to discuss this matter further

140/16-17. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING.**

Recommended: That the next meeting be scheduled for Tuesday 13 September 2016 at 10.00am.

There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 10.50am.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

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MINUTES of the MEETING of the HERITAGE PARK / SKULL SITE SUB-COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE, on TUESDAY 13 SEPTEMBER at 10.00 AM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor Ms L C Howes (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill
Councillor R J Lees
Councillor D J Mote

ALSO PRESENT: Martin Harding, Assistant Town Clerk & RFO
Brenda Bobby (FOSHP)
Garnet Johnson (Groundwork)

ABSENT: None

130/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Anne Duke (Walk Tall) and Becky Plunkett (Natural England)

131/16-17. SUBSTITUTES

There were none.

132/16-17. TO DECLARE INTERESTS IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

133/16-17. URGENT ITEMS / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

There were none.

134/16-17. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 JULY 2016.

Recommended: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 July 2016 be confirmed and signed as a true record.

135/16-17. HLF BID – PROGRESS TO DATE.

The ATC/RFO gave an update on the progress of the HLF bid. Various sections of the bid are currently be drafted by members of the board. The task list and job description has now been written and are being fed into the budget and wider collaboration agreement.

The ATC/RFO updated members on the feedback from London Paramount following a meeting on 17 August 2016. An initial agreement has been made to endorse the bid with later consideration for further support.

Recommended: That the progress of the bid be noted.

136/16-17. **NATURAL ENGLAND – SWANSCOMBE NNR MANAGEMENT PLAN.**

The ATC/RFO updated members on the information provided by Becky Plunkett of Natural England in relation to the visual management plan and lease renewal.

Recommended: That the update from the ATC/RFO be noted.

137/16-17. **FRIENDS OF SWANSCOMBE HERITAGE PARK (FOSHP) REPORT OF ACTIVITIES.**

Brenda Bobby confirmed that preparations for the Halloween Disco were underway but no further events had been planned.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

138/16-17. **HERITAGE PARK WEBSITE**

This item reminded everyone that any items to be included on the website needed to be forwarded to the ATC/RFO.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

139/16-17. **ANY OTHER ITEMS RELATED TO THE HERITAGE PARK / SKULL SITE.**

There were none

140/16-17. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING.**

Recommended: That the next meeting be scheduled for a Tuesday towards the end of October, to be confirmed by the ATC/RFO.

There being no further business to transact, the meeting closed at 10.15 am.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

MINUTES of the MEETING of the EXECUTIVE & EMERGENCY COMMITTEE held at THE COUNCIL OFFICES, THE GROVE, SWANSCOMBE on THURSDAY 8 SEPTEMBER 2016 at 7.30PM

PRESENT: Councillor B E Read (Chairman)
Councillor R J Lees (Vice-Chairman)
Councillor K G Basson
Councillor Ms L M Cross
Councillor P M Harman (substituting for Councillor Dr J M Harman)
Councillor D J Mote (substituting for Councillor K M Kelly)
Councillor B R Parry (substituting for Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill)
Councillor Mrs I A Read

ALSO PRESENT: Graham Blew – Town Clerk
Martin Harding – Assistant Town Clerk/RFO

ABSENT: None

166/16-17. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE FORTHCOMING YEAR (2016-2017).

RESOLVED:

That Councillor R J Lees be elected as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year.

167/16-17. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors' Mrs S P Butterfill, K M Kelly and A S Reach.

168/16-17. SUBSTITUTES.

Councillor P M Harman substituted for Councillor Dr J M Harman.
Councillor D J Mote substituted for Councillor K M Kelly.
Councillor B R Parry substituted for Councillor Mrs S P Butterfill.

169/16-17. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA.

There were none.

The Chairman gave the opportunity for the meeting to be adjourned at this point to accept questions from the public.

170/16-17. TO RECEIVE ITEMS DEEMED URGENT BY THE CHAIRMAN / MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES.

There were none.

171/16-17. **TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 JULY 2015.**

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 29 July 2015 were confirmed and signed as a true record.

172/16-17. **PROPOSAL FOR A YOIUTH COMMUNITY WORKER (OR DETACHED WORKER) FOR SWANSCOMBE – DIOCESE OF ROCHESTER).**

The Town Clerk advised members of the need to hold the meeting as a result of the meeting with Rev. Bonnie Appleton and Lorna Hughes (EDC) on 25 August 2016.

Members were given hard copies of the additional information, supplied by Rev. Appleton in response to an enquiry by the Town Clerk, that had previously been emailed to all members on 5 September 2016.

Members discussed the merits of the post along with the importance of the local knowledge in relation to the job specification. Concerns were raised that the focus of the project might direct to the new developments only and not the wider community.

Members agreed that it is important for the Town Council to be a stakeholder on the project and help to shape its direction. The Town Council will endorse the project.

As the Town Councils budget has already been set for the year members felt that financial support could not be pledged at this time.

It was felt that a meeting between the Diocese and the Town Councils Regeneration Sub-Committee could give the opportunity for members to explore the scope and practicalities of the project.

Recommended: That the project be endorsed in principal, and an invitation be issued to Rev. Appleton to attend a meeting with the Regeneration Sub-Committee to explore the scope and detail of the project.

There being no further business, the Meeting closed at 8.00 pm.

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Chairman)

T/C 13-10-16

Graham Blew

From: Terry Martin <chief.executive@kentalc.gov.uk>
Sent: 15 September 2016 17:12
Subject: Consultation on council tax referendum principles
Attachments: 2017-18 Local Government Finance Settlement Consultation.pdf

Dear Member Councils

Please be aware that DCLG has just issued today a consultation on council tax referendum principles. The 2017-18 Local Government Finance Settlement consultation can be accessed via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/local-government-finance-settlement-2017-to-2018-technical-consultation> . A PDF of the consultation document is also attached. **The deadline for comments is 5pm on 28 October.**

NALC has issued a press release which can be viewed via the following link [press release](#).

The key paragraph on page 8 is:

- *that referendum principles are introduced for town and parish councils whose Band D precept is **higher than that of the lowest charging district council for 2016/17 (£75.46), and which have a total precept for 2016/17 of at least £500,000, while taking account of transfers of responsibilities, and that consideration is given to the extension of referendums to all local precepting authorities.***

The consultation document goes on to explain what it means by "transfers of responsibilities" on pages 13 and 14.

Para 3.3.4 states that "These parishes would face the same referendum principles as shire districts: increases of less than 2% or up to and including £5 (whichever is higher) can be set without a referendum."

As you will know, the KALC policy position, as agreed at the 2014 AGM, is to oppose the introduction of referendum principles on Parish and Town councils. We will be discussing this consultation at our 1 October Executive Committee meeting and will work closely with NALC on this as in previous years.

We would encourage all member Councils to respond to the consultation.

Kind Regards

Terry Martin
Chief Executive
Kent Association of Local Councils
Tel 01304 820173
Website: www.kentalc.gov.uk

Total Control Panel

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Department for
Communities and
Local Government

The 2017/18 Local Government Finance Settlement

Technical Consultation Paper



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Contents

Scope of the consultation	4
About this consultation	6
1. Summary of proposals	7
2. The distribution of central resources	9
3. Changes to local resources	12
Annex A: 50% Business Rates Retention: Methodology for adjusting for the 2017 revaluation	19
Annex B: Summary of consultation questions	24
Annex C: Glossary of technical terms	25

Scope of the consultation

Topic of this consultation:	This consultation covers proposals for the local government finance settlement for 2017/18.
Scope of this consultation:	This consultation seeks views on proposals for the local government finance settlement for 2017/18, in particular from representatives of local government
Geographical scope:	These proposals relate to England only.
Impact Assessment:	Since the Government does not envisage that the proposals within this consultation document will have an impact on business, no impact assessment has been produced.

Basic Information

To:	The consultation will be of particular interest to local authorities, and representative bodies for local authorities.
Body/bodies responsible for the consultation:	Local Government Finance Directorate within the Department for Communities and Local Government.
Duration:	This consultation will last for 6 weeks from 15 September 2016 to 5pm, 28 October 2016.
Enquiries:	For any enquiries about the consultation please contact James Livingston James.Livingston@communities.gsi.gov.uk or 0303 444 2075
How to respond:	Please respond by completing an online survey at: https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/583WBQL Alternatively, you can respond to the questions in this consultation by email to: LGFConsultation@communities.gsi.gov.uk If you are responding in writing, please make it clear which questions you are responding to. Written responses should be sent to: James Livingston Department for Communities and Local Government 2nd floor, Fry Building 2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF

When you reply it would be very useful if you confirm whether you are replying as an individual or submitting an official response on behalf of an organisation and include:

- your name,
- your position (if applicable),
- the name of organisation (if applicable),
- an address (including post/code),
- an email address, and
- a contact telephone number

About this consultation

This consultation document and consultation process have been planned to adhere to the Consultation Principles issued by the Cabinet Office.

Representative groups are asked to give a summary of the people and organisations they represent, and where relevant who else they have consulted in reaching their conclusions when they respond.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be published or disclosed in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA), the Data Protection Act 1998 (DPA) and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004.

If you want the information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence. In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department for Communities and Local Government will process your personal data in accordance with DPA and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.
Individual responses will not be acknowledged unless specifically requested.

Your opinions are valuable to us. Thank you for taking the time to read this document and respond.

Are you satisfied that this consultation has followed the Consultation Principles? If not or you have any other observations about how we can improve the process please contact DCLG Consultation Co/coordinator.

Department for Communities and Local Government
2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

Or by e-mail to: consultationcoordinator@communities.gsi.gov.uk

1. Summary of proposals

1.1 Summary

1.1.1 This chapter provides an overview of the wider reforms of local government finance which will help provide context to the proposals for the 2017/18 settlement:

- it provides background information regarding the ongoing reforms to business rates retention and
- it outlines the key themes that the Government is proposing for the 2017/18 local government finance settlement.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 The funding available to councils to deliver their core services for the rest of this Parliament is broadly flat, in cash terms. By then, local government will retain 100% of taxes raised locally. This will give local government additional business rates receipts of around £12.5bn to spend on local services. The system will have stronger incentives to boost growth, and areas that take bold decisions to boost growth will see the benefits. In order to ensure that the reforms are fiscally neutral, councils will gain new responsibilities, and some Whitehall grants will be phased out.

1.2.2 These reforms represent a unique opportunity to fundamentally change the role of local government and the way it is funded. The move towards self-sufficiency and away from dependence on central government is something that councils have been calling for over a number of decades. The historic 2016/17 local government finance settlement was a first step along this road. It offers those local authorities who are committed to reform far greater certainty over their future funding.

1.3 Summary of proposals

The distribution of central resources

2.1.1 This chapter outlines our proposals for distributing central resources in 2017/18 to build on the four year offer announced in the 2016/17 local government finance settlement. These proposals are intended to give councils that are committed to reform long term certainty, earlier in the year, over more sources of funding. In summary, it outlines:

- the Government's commitment to the multi-year settlement offer and seeks views on expanding this offer
- the proposed approach to distributing funding through the Improved Better Care Fund using a methodology that takes account of each council's capacity to raise resources through the adult social care precept.

Changes to local resources

2.1.2 This chapter outlines the Government's proposals for the 2017/18 local government finance settlement that have implications for the local resources collected by councils. In summary, it includes:

- the Government's proposals for the council tax referendum principles for 2017/18 which are:
 - a core principle of 2%. As in 2016/17, this would continue to apply to shire counties, unitary authorities, London boroughs, the Greater London Authority, fire authorities, and Police and Crime Commissioners except those whose Band D precept is in the lower quartile of that category
 - a continuation of the Adult Social Care precept of an additional 2%, for county councils, unitary authorities and London boroughs (including the Common Council of the City of London and the Council of the Isles of Scilly), subject to consideration of the use made of the Adult Social Care precept in the previous year
 - that shire district councils will be allowed increases of less than 2% or up to and including £5, whichever is higher
 - that Police and Crime Commissioners whose Band D precept is in the lowest quartile of that category will be allowed increases of less than 2% or up to and including £5, whichever is higher
 - that referendum principles are introduced for town and parish councils whose Band D precept is higher than that of the lowest charging district council for 2016/17 (£75.46), and which have a total precept for 2016/17 of at least £500,000, while taking account of transfers of responsibilities, and that consideration is given to the extension of referendums to all local precepting authorities.
- the proposed approach for adjusting business rates tariff and top ups to cancel out, as far as is practicable, the impact of the 2017 business rates revaluation on local authorities' income
- a proposed methodology for calculating the agreed changes in the local share of retained business rates and the level of tariff and top ups for local authorities piloting 100% business rates retention, designed to ensure that no authorities anywhere in the country are adversely affected by these pilots, and
- a mechanism which would allow places with a devolution deal to revisit the distribution of existing funding streams within their areas, if all affected councils agree.

2. The distribution of central resources

2.1 Summary

2.1.1 This chapter outlines our proposals for distributing central resources in 2017/18 to build on the multi-year settlement offer announced in the 2016/17 local government finance settlement. These proposals are intended to give councils that are committed to reform greater certainty, earlier in the year, over more sources of funding. In particular, the chapter outlines:

- the multi-year settlement offer and seeks views on expanding this offer
- the proposed approach to distributing funding through the Improved Better Care Fund, using a methodology that takes account of each council's capacity to raise resources through the adult social care precept.

2.2 The multi-year settlement offer

2.2.1 On 10 March, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government wrote to every local authority in England setting out the conditions for the offer of a multi-year settlement.¹ This made clear that the offer and the production of an efficiency plan should be as simple and straightforward as possible. It is important that plans cover the full four year period and are open and transparent about the benefits they will bring and show how greater certainty can create the necessary conditions for further savings.

2.2.2 The offer, as described in the Secretary of State's letter of 10 March, includes:

- Revenue Support Grant
- Business rates tariff and top up payments, which will not change for reasons relating to the relative needs of local authorities
- Rural Services Delivery Grant and
- Transition Grant.

2.2.3 Plans should be locally owned and driven and as such we have not provided guidance or set out what they should contain. However councils should consider sector-led advice produced by the Local Government Association and CIPFA on what efficiency plans could include (<http://tinyurl.com/zqhpsy0>). Councils have until

¹ The letter confirmed that the Government will offer any council that wishes to take it up a four-year funding settlement to 2019-20. This includes:

- Common Council of the City of London
- London borough councils
- District Councils
- County Councils
- Council of the Isles of Scilly
- Greater London Authority
- Metropolitan County Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Combined Fire and Rescue Authorities.

14 October 2016 to accept the offer by sending an email or letter to MultiYearSettlements@communities.gsi.gov.uk with a link to their published efficiency plan. After the deadline for receipt, DCLG will respond to councils on the 4 year offer as soon as practicable.

- 2.2.4 We expect the take up for this offer to be high as it gives councils an excellent opportunity to increase the level of certainty they have regarding their financial position for the rest of this Parliament. Barring exceptional circumstances, and subject to the normal statutory consultation process for the local government finance settlement,² the Government intends to confirm the constituent elements of the multi-year offer for the remaining years of the Parliament for qualifying councils soon after 14 October. These amounts, together with any additional grants which might be part of the offer (see paragraph 2.2.6, below), would then be published as part of the 2017/18 provisional local government finance settlement in due course.
- 2.2.5 However, those councils that choose not to accept the offer will be subject to the existing annual process for determining the level of central funding that they will receive.
- 2.2.6 The Government would also like to consider expanding the current multi-year offer to give local councils who are committed to reform the opportunity for more security over more of their funding for the rest of this parliament. This could potentially be achieved by including more grants in the offer.

Question 1: What other, additional grants, beyond those set out in para 2.2.2, should the Government consider including in the multi-year offer?

2.3 Distribution of the improved Better Care Fund

- 2.3.1 The Spending Review 2015 announced the introduction of the improved Better Care Fund worth £105 million in 2017/18, £800 million in 2018/19 and £1.5 billion in 2019/20.
- 2.3.2 The Government set out its proposed approach to allocating the improved Better Care Fund allocations alongside the provisional Local Government Finance Settlement 2016/17 and committed to consult on the distribution of the fund in due course.
- 2.3.3 Having carefully considered its approach and the views received in response to the consultation on the settlement, the Government proposes to maintain the approach for 2017/18 set out in chapter 5 of the consultation on the provisional 2016/17 local government finance settlement published on 17 December 2015.³ This approach recognises that authorities have varying capacity to raise council tax, and will

² As prescribed in sections 78 and 78A of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.

³ Available at

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/494385/Provisional_settlement_consultation_document.pdf

allocate the funding through a separate grant to local government, using a methodology which provides more funding to those authorities which benefit less from the adult social care council tax precept.

2.3.4 The proposed methodology for each financial year is as follows:

- i. We calculate the additional funding available to spend on adult social care at a national level, combining the 2% council tax flexibility for adult social care and the additional funding for the improved Better Care Fund.
- ii. We then calculate the share of that national amount which each authority with responsibility for social care would receive if it were distributed according to the 2013 adult social care relative needs formula.
- iii. We then calculate how much each authority with responsibility for social care could raise from the additional 2% council tax flexibility for adult social care.
- iv. The additional funding for the improved Better Care Fund is then allocated in such a way that, when combined with the money which could be raised from the council tax flexibility, each council would receive its share of the combined national amount as calculated in step (ii) above.
- v. These allocations are adjusted so that, where an authority could raise more from the additional council tax flexibility for social care than its share of the national amount calculated in step (ii), its allocation for the improved Better Care Fund is set to zero rather than a notional negative figure.
- vi. The remainder of the allocations are then reduced proportionately, so that the combined totals sum to the national total for additional funding available to spend on adult social care, as calculated in step (i).

2.3.5 The resulting illustrative proposed allocations of the improved Better Care Fund by local authority can be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/core-spending-power-final-local-government-finance-settlement-2016-to-2017>

Question 2: Do you agree with the proposed methodology for allocating funding for the improved Better Care Fund as outlined in paragraph 2.3.4?

3. Changes to local resources

3.1 Summary

3.1.1 This chapter outlines the Government's proposals for the 2017/18 local government finance settlement that have implications for the local resources collected by councils. These proposals include:

- provisional council tax Referendum principles for 2017/18
- the Government's approach to adjusting tariff and top ups to ensure as far as possible that local authorities have a predictable level of income regardless of the impact of the 2017 business rates revaluation
- a methodology for calculating the change in the local share and the level of tariff and top ups for local authorities piloting 100% business rates retention
- a mechanism through which funding could be transferred to a Combined Authority if all councils affected agree to the transfer.

3.2 Council tax referendum principles for local authorities

3.2.1 In the Spending Review, the Government announced a new adult social care precept worth 2% for authorities with responsibility for adult social care for the remainder of the Parliament. This new precept was in addition to a 'core' council tax referendum principle of 2% which would be reviewed annually. A range of flexibilities were offered to certain other categories of authority, with the remainder able to increase by up to the core 2% without triggering a local referendum. The Government is committed to keeping council tax low and, under the existing principles, the average Band D increase for 2016/17 was 3.1%, which means that council tax is still 9% lower in real terms than it was in 2009/10.

3.2.2 In order to balance the aim of keeping council tax low for local residents with the need for councils to raise sufficient funding to support local services, the Government is minded to propose referendum principles the same as those set in 2016/17, subject to the views of respondents to this consultation and consideration of the use made of the adult social care precept in 2016/17. This would mean:

- a core principle of 2%. This would continue to apply to shire counties, unitary authorities, London boroughs, the Greater London Authority, fire authorities, and Police and Crime Commissioners except those whose Band D precept is in the lower quartile of that category (see below)
- a continuation of the Adult Social Care precept of an additional 2%, for County Councils, unitary authorities and London boroughs (including the Common Council of the City of London and the Council of the Isles of Scilly), subject to consideration of the use made of the Adult Social Care precept in the previous year

- shire district councils will be allowed increases of less than 2% or up to and including £5, whichever is higher
- Police and Crime Commissioners in the lowest quartile will be allowed increases of less than 2% or up to and including £5, whichever is higher.

Question 3: Do you agree with the council tax referendum principles for 2017-18 proposed in paragraphs 3.2.1 to 3.2.2 for principal local authorities?

3.3 Council tax referendum principles for parish and town councils

- 3.3.1 Since the introduction of council tax referendums in 2012/13, no referendum principles have been set for local precepting authorities such as town and parish councils ("parishes"), although the Government has made it clear that we would keep this under review and take action if necessary.
- 3.3.2 We recognise the value of parishes and the greater role in service delivery that many are performing to deliver ambitious services for their residents. However, the increase in the average Band D council tax level of 6.1% set by parishes in 2016/17 is notably higher than those in the previous 5 years, as shown in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Average percentage increase in Band D council tax levels set by parishes

	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
Parishes	2.3%	3.9%	5.2%	4.3%	3.3%	6.1%

- 3.3.3 In light of this, the Government is minded to apply referendum principles to larger, higher-spending town and parish councils in 2017/18. There are around 8,800 precepting parishes in England, which vary widely in terms of resident population and precept charge. We believe there is a strong argument in favour of extending referendums to those larger parishes whose precept is equivalent in size to that of a district council.
- 3.3.4 We propose that referendum principles are introduced for local precepting authorities (town and parish councils) whose Band D precept is higher than that of the lowest charging district council for 2016/17 (£75.46), and which have a total precept for 2016/17 of at least £500,000 (subject to the next paragraph). These parishes would face the same referendum principles as shire districts: increases of less than 2% or up to and including £5 (whichever is higher) can be set without triggering a referendum. Based on these thresholds, the Government expects this new principle will affect around 120 of England's 8,800 local precepting parishes.
- 3.3.5 In doing this, the Government wishes to ensure that parishes continue to have the flexibility to take on responsibilities from other tiers of local government without being unduly constrained by council tax referendum principles. It is therefore proposed that parishes will not be in the category to which the referendum principle

£102-07
£482,139.

✓
X

applies where there has been a transfer of responsibilities, and where three conditions are satisfied:

- i. the parish council and a principal council covering the area of the parish council have each resolved that a particular function carried out by the principal council in relation to the parish council's area in the financial year 2016-17 is to be carried out instead by the parish council in the financial year 2017-18
- ii. the parish council and the principal council have agreed the reasonable cost of the exercise of that particular function in the parish council's area by the parish council in the financial year 2017-18
- iii. that the agreed cost, if collected by way of the parish council precept, would take the parish council over the threshold of a 2% or £5 increase on the previous year.

3.3.6 A large proportion of parishes are modest in size – for example, around 4,000 parishes have precepts of £25 or less. However, the Government is aware that increases in these precepts continue to concern local tax payers and is therefore prepared to consider extending referendums to all parishes.

3.3.7 We recognise that issues of proportionality, practicality and cost could be raised by such a step, and would welcome views on this.

Question 4: Do you agree that referendum principles should be extended to larger, higher-spending town and parish councils in 2017/18 as set out in paragraphs 3.3.3 to 3.3.4?

Question 5: Do you agree with the proposed approach to take account of the transfer of responsibilities to town and parish councils as outlined in paragraph 3.3.5?

Question 6: Do you agree with the suggestion that referendum principles may be extended to all local precepting authorities as set out in paragraph 3.3.6? If so what level of principle should be set?

Question 7: Do you have views on the practical implications of a possible extension of referendum principles to all local precepting authorities as set out in paragraph 3.3.7?

3.4 The business rates revaluation adjustment

3.4.1 The next business rates revaluation takes effect from 1 April 2017. Revaluation is a revenue neutral exercise so the total rates bill will stay the same at the England level in real terms, after allowing for appeals. At the local authority level, overall bills will increase or fall depending upon whether rateable values in that area have performed above or below the average for England, after allowing for appeals.

- 3.4.2 This creates change in the system outside the control of local authorities. When the Government introduced the 50% business rate retention scheme it signalled that it would adjust each authority's tariff or top up following a revaluation to ensure, as far as is practicable, that their retained income is the same after revaluation as immediately before. This will ensure that the growth incentive created by the rates retention scheme and the delivery of public services will not be weakened by losses of income outside the control of authorities. The following section describes how we will implement this commitment.

The adjustment for the revaluation

- 3.4.3 For a local authority, the measure of rates income in the rates retention scheme is its share of "non-domestic rating income" as defined in regulations and captured on the NNDR3 form. Therefore, the objective of the revaluation adjustment is to identify and isolate the amount by which non-domestic rating income in the authority will change purely due to the revaluation. Once identified, the relevant shares of these amounts can then be deducted or added to the tariffs or top ups to cancel out the impact of revaluation.

- 3.4.4 For example:

An authority sees its local share of non-domestic rating income grow due to revaluation from £100m to £122m. It has a £20m top up. With no adjustment, the £22m increase would feed through into extra revenue for the authority. To compensate we need to deduct £22m from the £20m top up giving a tariff of £2m.

- 3.4.5 In practice we do not believe it will be possible to directly measure the changes in non-domestic rating income arising from the revaluation alone. Instead we propose to estimate the change using a proxy (derived from gross rates payable). The proxy will be calculated by comparing the local authority's rateable value before and after the revaluation to quantify the impact the revaluation has on the tax base. This effect will then be applied to the authority's gross business rates income before the revaluation to produce a figure for the council's income post-revaluation. Subtracting this post-revaluation income figure from the pre-revaluation income and apportioning it according to the authority's share of business rates income under the scheme will produce the change that needs to be made to its tariff or top up in order to ensure that it has, as far as practicable, the same income after the revaluation as it had before.
- 3.4.6 We propose to make this adjustment in three stages: on a provisional basis in the 2017-18 settlement; on a final basis with a reconciliation in the 2018-19 settlement; and finally, by cancelling out the reconciliation in the 2019-20 settlement.
- 3.4.7 Annex A provides more detailed information about the calculations involved in the proposed methodology for the revaluation adjustment.

Appeals against the 2017 rating list

- 3.4.8 The adjustment for revaluation is for those impacts discernable at the time of the revaluation only (and captured in the rateable values on 31/3/17 and 1/4/17 as we look at them on that day). Changes to the revaluation which occur after 1 April

2017 by virtue of backdated amendments or appeals (including those backdated to 1/4/17) fall within the operation of the rates retention system in the normal way.

Question 8: Do you agree with the methodology for calculating the revaluation adjustment to business rates tariff and top-up payments as outlined in paragraphs 3.4.1 to 3.4.8?

3.5 Adjustments to business rates in areas piloting 100% business rates retention

3.5.1 At the 2015 Autumn Statement the Government committed to piloting approaches to 100% business rates retention in London, Manchester and Liverpool from 1 April 2017.

3.5.2 The Government also committed that the pilots' offer would be available to other areas with ratified devolution deals and that as part of the pilots, the "local share" of business rates could be increased from as early as 2017-18.

3.5.3 To ensure that an increase in the "local share" of business rates is fiscally neutral at the point of change, the Government and pilot areas are exploring:

- ending entitlement to certain grants and other funding streams
- devolving additional responsibilities to pilot areas and
- adjusting existing business rate tariffs and top ups.

3.5.4 The Government intends to use the pilots to test mechanisms for full rollout of the 100% retention scheme. Any cost to the system from elements of the pilots will not impact on non-pilot authorities.

Methodology for calculating the additional local share in pilot areas

3.5.5 The calculation of the value of an additional local share will be based on the pilot areas' Baseline Funding Levels and notional Business Rates Baselines (i.e. the 2013/14 Business Rates Baseline, uprated by subsequent changes to the small business rates multiplier). This will preserve the integrity of the existing scheme by ensuring that the value of the additional share is exclusive of any growth (or decline) in business rates achieved by pilot authorities since 2013-14.

3.5.6 For each pilot authority, the value of funding streams and the new responsibilities rolled in to the business rates retention system (hereinafter referred to as "Grant") will be added to the existing Baseline Funding Level to create a "new" Baseline Funding Level for the authority.

3.5.7 There are two different options on offer to pilot authorities in 2017-18. Either:

- a) the local percentage share of business rates is increased only by the value of the "Grant" rolled-in or

- b) the local percentage share of business rates is increased to 100% and, to the extent that the "Grant" rolled in is not equivalent to 100% of local business rates, tariffs and top ups are adjusted appropriately.

3.5.8 Under option a) above, the additional percentage share of business rates will be equal to:

$\text{Grant} / \text{notional Business Rates Baseline} \times \text{existing \% share of business rates}$

3.5.9 This additional percentage share will be added to the existing percentage share to give the percentage to be retained in 2017/18.

3.5.10 Under option b) above, the notional Business Rates Baseline of each authority will be adjusted to reflect the increase in the local share to 100%.⁴ The adjustment to the notional Business Rates Baseline is equal to:

$\text{Business Rates Baseline} / \text{existing \% share of business rates} \times 100\%$

3.5.11 For option B, the difference between the new Baseline Funding Level and the new notional Business Rates Baseline will be the tariff or top up for 2017-18.

Calculation of Baseline Funding Levels and Tariffs and Top ups

3.5.12 Baseline Funding Level and business rate tariff and top up figures were set as part of the Local Government Finance Settlement in February 2016 using OBR estimates of the Retail Price Index (RPI) as a proxy for the changes in the small business rating multiplier. The actual multiplier for 2017-18 will be set once September 2016's RPI is published. At the 2017-18 Settlement, Government will also update Baseline Funding Levels and tariffs/top ups for later years based on up-to-date estimates of RPI.

3.5.13 If it is necessary to make any agreed changes to amounts of Revenue Support Grant, the retained local share or tariffs and top ups for 2017-18, these will be made after the change in the small business rating multiplier are known. Whilst we will publish indicative figures for later years, it is the Government's intention to recalculate the value of the local share (and the possible knock-on consequences for tariffs and top ups) for future Local Government Finance Settlements based on the actual change to the small business rating multiplier for those years.

Question 9: Do you agree that the methodology, as outlined in paragraphs 3.5.5 to 3.5.13, for calculating changes to the local share of business rates and tariff and top up payments is correct and does not adversely affect non-pilot areas?

3.6 Voluntary transfers of funding to Mayoral Combined Authorities

3.6.1 Devolution Deals have established the new duties that Mayoral Combined Authorities will be responsible for. There is the potential to adjust the calculation of

⁴ In most areas, the 100% will be split between different tiers of authority.

grant and business rates payments to reflect any changes in the way existing duties are carried out by authorities. These changes would only be made in areas where it is requested by the Mayoral Combined Authority and all authorities affected by any changes agreed to the proposals.

- 3.6.2 Before doing this, we would need all local authorities affected by the transfer of funding arrangements to agree to the process and to provide the numbers on which the calculations would be based.
- 3.6.3 If the funding is to be transferred in the form of grant, then it would be possible to decide on an authority by authority basis how much grant is to be paid to the Combined Authority instead of the authorities who currently receive funding. It would be up to the local authorities affected to agree how this should be done.
- 3.6.4 If the funding is to be transferred in the form of a share of business rates, then the same procedure as above would be followed, but an additional step would be required to convert the amount for each authority into a percentage of their business rates that would transfer to the combined authority and the shares of business rates would then need to be reflected in regulations. Section 3.5 outlines how this would be done.
- 3.6.5 If the funding is to be transferred in the form of council tax then it would be necessary to ensure any transfer did not in itself increase the burden on council tax payers. In order to affect the transfer the same Band D level would need to be transferred away from all the currently funded authorities. This could be achieved by dividing the total amount to be transferred to the Combined Authority by the total number of Band D equivalent properties within the currently funded authorities. Alternative Notional Amounts could then be used to reduce the currently funded authorities' baselines and create a new baseline for the Mayor; this would ensure that no local referendums would be triggered due to the transfer of funding. This could only be done if the service transferred was the responsibility of the Mayor rather than that of the combined authority.

Question 10: Are you considering a voluntary transfer of funding between the Combined Authority and constituent authorities?

Question 11: Do you have any comments on the impact of the proposals for the 2017-18 settlement outlined in this consultation document on persons who share a protected characteristic? Please provide evidence to support your comments.

Annex A: 50% Business Rates Retention: Methodology for adjusting for the 2017 revaluation

- B.1. In order to ensure, as far as is practicable, the impact of the 2017 revaluation is neutralised in the rates retention scheme, DCLG propose to make the following adjustments to tariffs and top ups. This will be in addition to the normal inflation adjustments made to tariffs and top ups.
- B.2. Ideally, we would directly measure the change in non-domestic rating income between 31/3/17 and 1/4/17 (the 2 days either side of the revaluation). However:
- being the last day of the financial year and a Friday there could be many alterations on 31 March 2017 with retrospective effect (typically appeals credited on that day). The authority would, therefore, need to take a view as to how much of their provision they have released to fund those appeals and how much actually reduced non-domestic rates income for that day
 - we would need to consider whether changes to the provisions for the year should also be allocated to the income for the day and if so how
 - there will be other accounting adjustments in income which would need to be reflected for the day – such as bad debt.
- B.3. In practice we believe this would be too complicated and too sensitive to refunds, backdated alterations and subjective allocations of accounting adjustments. Instead the Government will use a proxy to measure the change in rates income due to the revaluation. We will then apply that proxy (as a factor) to the non-domestic rating income for 2016/17. That would then give an estimate of the change in in non-domestic rating income between 31/3/17 and 1/4/17.

Choice of a proxy for revaluation change

- B.4. As a proxy, we propose to adopt the change in gross rates payable before all reliefs and accounting adjustments between 31 March 2017 and 1 April 2017. Essentially, this is just the rateable value x small business multiplier for those 2 days.
- B.5. This proxy will not itself reflect changes in reliefs such as Small Business Rate Relief (SBRR). However, the proxy will be applied to non-domestic rating income which will already reflect the degree to which local income is affected by reliefs. So the adjustment will, by adopting non-domestic rating income, reflect the position of those authorities with a lot of SBRR.
- B.6. Where the proxy could be less accurate is where reliefs in a local area change due to the revaluation out of line with the proxy for all properties in the area. Many percentage awards of reliefs will not change due to the revaluation (e.g. charitable

relief) as their eligibility and percentage is not driven by rateable value - so for them the proxy should work as well as it does for any property. And some have little impact (e.g. the empty property relief lower threshold) and some reliefs are insignificant (rural rate relief).

B.7. In principle, there is more scope for the revaluation factor for small properties receiving SBRR to be different to all properties. However:

- it is not possible to say what that revaluation factor for SBRR properties would have been. The Government has made large changes to the eligibility of SBRR for 1 April 2017. Had the Government not done anything to SBRR we would in any case have adjusted the thresholds for the relief and the Small Business (SB) multiplier. In the absence of the need for that decision we cannot isolate the effect of the Budget change to SBRR from the revaluation change
- we believe the impact would still be marginal.

B.8. Therefore, we believe adopting a proxy based on the gross change in rateable value using the Small Business multipliers is a practical and proportionate method. However, we will keep this under review for the final adjustment in the 2018/19 settlement (see below). We will also separately pay section 31 for the SBRR changes in the 2016 Budget including the increase in the threshold for the SB multiplier and will consider that payment in the context of the revaluation adjustment.

Provisional and Final adjustments

B.9. We will not have actual 2016/17 non-domestic rates income or rateable values at 1 April 2017 in time for the 2017/18 settlement. Therefore, we propose to make the revaluation adjustment in 3 stages:

- provisional 2017/18 top ups and tariffs will be calculated in the autumn of 2016 based on forecasts. This will be based on NNDR3 non-domestic rates income for 2015/16 increased in line with inflation and rateable values for the 2010 and 2017 lists available at the draft list stage (30 September 2016)
- final 2017/18 top ups and tariffs will be calculated in the autumn of 2017. The 2018/19 settlement will then include a reconciliation of the 2017/18 adjustment
- in 2019/20 we will cancel the one off reconciliation adjustment for 2018/19.

Appeals and the multiplier

B.10. At the revaluation the Secretary of State is allowed, in setting the multiplier, to anticipate future appeals on both the old and new rating list. This has the effect of increasing the multiplier so in effect we over-collect in the early years of the rating list and then under-collect in later years as the appeals start to come through with retrospective effect.

- B.11. Local government is responsible for accounting for appeals through their forecast of business rates income using proper accounting practice. Therefore they will make a provision at the start of the 2017 rating list to reflect all expected future appeals. To offset the effect of this provision we propose to remove from the revaluation adjustment the impact of future appeals. We will do this by calculating the revaluation adjustment using a notional small business multiplier for 2017/18 which has not been adjusted for appeals.
- B.12. This approach will give local authorities funds to deal with volatility and ensure retained rates income and spending does not fall from 1 April 2017 due to large new provisions for the revaluation.
- B.13. Having regard to the above, the following are the adjustments we propose to make to future settlements to implement the revaluation adjustment.

2017/18 Settlement

- B.14. For the 2017/18 settlement top ups and tariffs for the previous year will be adjusted for each local authority by the addition of the following amount (such that a negative outcome gives rise to a deduction):

$$J = C \left(1 - \frac{A}{B} \right) D$$

Where:

A	is total rateable value in all of the draft 2017 local rating lists covering the authority's area using the draft lists provided to Billing Authorities on 30 September 2016 multiplied by the adjusted provisional small business non-domestic rating multiplier for 2017/18. "Adjusted provisional small business non-domestic rating multiplier" is the provisional small business multiplier as included in the draft Local Government Finance Settlement but adjusted to an assumption that the effect of the alterations referred to in paragraph 5(6) & 5(7) of Schedule 7 to the Local Government Finance Act 1988 was to have no effect on rateable values or hereditaments.
B	is the total rateable value in all of the 2010 local rating lists covering the authority's area for 23 September 2017 and measured on that day multiplied by 0.484.
C	is the non-domestic rating income for the authority for 2015/16 (line 12 page 1 NNDR3) multiplied by 0.484/0.480
D	is the local share.

2018/19 Settlement

- B.15. For the 2018/19 settlement tariffs and top ups for the previous year will be adjusted for each local authority by the addition of the following 2 amounts (such that a negative outcome gives rise to a deduction):

Amount 1 (on-going adjustment)

$$G \left(1 - \frac{E}{F}\right) H$$

Amount 2 (reconciliation of 2017/18)

$$G \left(1 - \frac{E}{F}\right) H - J$$

Where:

E	is total rateable value in all of the 2017 local rating lists covering the authority's area for 1 April 2017 and measured on that day multiplied by the adjusted small business non-domestic rating multiplier for 2017/18. "Adjusted small business non-domestic rating multiplier" is the small business multiplier as included in the Local Government Finance Settlement but adjusted to an assumption that the effect of the alterations referred to in paragraph 5(6) & 5(7) of Schedule 7 to the Local Government Finance Act 1988 was to have no effect on rateable values or hereditaments.
F	is the total rateable value in all of the 2010 local rating lists covering the authority's area for 31 March 2017 and measured on that day multiplied by 0.484.
G	is the non-domestic rating income for the authority for 2016/17.
H	is the local share.
J	is the result of the formula above for the 2017/18 settlement for the authority.

2019/20 settlement

- B.16. Finally we will need an adjustment to the 2019/20 settlement to cancel the adjustment from the previous year's top up or tariff for the reconciliation of 2017/18 (thereby leaving in the top up or tariff the ongoing adjustment only). For the 2019/20 settlement top ups and tariffs for the previous year will be adjusted for each local authority by deducting the following amount:

Amount 2 in respect of 2018/19 x -1

Notes:

- i. We aim to provide certainty for local government by explaining this methodology now. However, DCLG will keep this methodology under review in order to allow scope for further adjustments to be made in 2018/19, for example to account for any significant issues of unfairness.

- ii. The tariffs and top ups will also need to be increased in line with inflation in the normal way each year. To achieve this we may, in practice, first strip out inflation from the revaluation adjustment. We may do this by adopted a “zero inflation” SB multiplier at A above.
- iii. The revaluation factor is calculated before SBRR and before the SB supplement (i.e. it is just based on the SB multiplier). We will separately pay section 31 for the SBRR changes in 2016/17 including the increase in the threshold for the SB multiplier. We will consider that payment in the context of the revaluation adjustment.
- iv. The 2010 and 2017 lists should match – i.e. have the same hereditaments with same physical attributes etc. The draft list provided to you for 30 September will be taken from the live list on 23 September – hence the use of that date. We believe this methodology will achieve this but we will continue to check that assumption.
- v. The adjustment to the multiplier for 2017/18 is to remove the impact of the appeals assumption from the multiplier. This will reduce the multiplier in the calculation which in turn will give local authorities a surplus to offset against future appeal.

Annex B: Summary of consultation questions

Question 1: What other, additional grants, beyond those set out in para 2.2.2, could the Government consider including in the multi-year offer?

Question 2: Do you agree with the proposed methodology for allocating funding for the improved Better Care Fund as outlined in paragraph 2.3.4?

Question 3: Do you agree with the council tax referendum principles for 2017-18 proposed in paragraphs 3.2.1 to 3.2.2 for principal local authorities?

Question 4: Do you agree that referendum principles should be extended to larger, higher-spending town and parish councils in 2017/18 as set out in paragraphs 3.3.3 to 3.3.4?

Question 5: Do you agree with the proposed approach to take account of the transfer of responsibilities to town and parish councils as outlined in paragraph 3.3.5?

Question 6: Do you have any comments on the suggestion that referendum principles may be extended to all local precepting authorities as set out in paragraph 3.3.6? If so what level of principle should be set?

Question 7: Do you have views on the practical implications of a possible extension of referendum principles to all local precepting authorities as set out in paragraph 3.3.7?

Question 8: Do you agree with the methodology for calculating the revaluation adjustment to business rates tariff and top-up payments as outlined in paragraphs 3.4.1 to 3.4.8?

Question 9: Do you agree that the methodology, as outlined in paragraphs 3.5.5 to 3.5.13, for calculating changes to the local share of business rates and tariff and top up payments is correct and does not adversely affect non-pilot areas?

Question 10: Are you contemplating a voluntary transfer of funding between the Combined Authority and constituent authorities?

Question 11: Do you have any comments on the impact of the proposals for the 2017-18 settlement outlined in this consultation document on persons who share a protected characteristic? Please provide evidence to support your comments.

Annex C: Glossary of technical terms

Baseline funding level

The amount of an individual local authority's Start-Up Funding Assessment for 2013/14 provided through the *local share* of the Estimated Business Rates Aggregate uprated each year by the change to the small business multiplier (in line with RPI).

Business rates baseline

Determined for individual authorities at the outset of the business rates retention scheme by dividing the *local share* of the Estimated Business Rates Aggregate (England) between billing authorities on the basis of their proportionate shares, before the payment of any major precepting authority share.

Central share

The percentage share of locally collected business rates that is paid to central government by billing authorities. This is set at 50%. The *central share* is re-distributed to local government through grants including the *Revenue Support Grant*. This replaces the previous 'set-aside' policy.

Local government spending control total

The total amount of expenditure for Revenue Support Grant in the Department for Communities and Local Government's Local Government Departmental Expenditure Limit (LG DEL) plus the local share of the Estimated Business Rates Aggregate that is allocated to the local government sector by Government for each year of a Spending Review. It does not include the resources identified in the 2013 Spending Round for social care and Troubled Families.

Local share

The percentage share of locally collected business rates that is retained by local government. This is set at 50%.

Revenue Support Grant

Billing and most major precepting authorities receive Revenue Support Grant from central government in addition to their local share of business rates Aggregate. An authority's Revenue Support Grant amount plus the local share of the Estimated Business Rates Aggregate will together comprise its Settlement Funding Assessment.

Safety net

Mechanism to protect any authority which sees its business rates income drop, in any year, by more than 7.5% below their *baseline funding level* (with baseline funding levels being uprated by the small business rates *multiplier* for the purposes of assessing eligibility for support).

Start-up funding assessment

A local authority's share of the local government spending control *total* which will comprise its Revenue Support Grant for the year in question and its *baseline funding level*.

Tariffs and top ups

Calculated by comparing at the outset of the business rate retention scheme an individual authority's business rates baseline against its baseline funding level. Tariffs and top ups are self-funding, fixed at the start of the scheme and index linked to RPI in future years.

Tariff authority

An authority with, at the outset of the scheme, a higher individual authority business rates baseline than its baseline funding level, and which therefore pays a tariff.

Top-up authority

An authority with, at the outset of the scheme, a lower individual authority business rates baseline than its baseline funding level, and which therefore receives a top up.

T/C 13/10/16

145/16-17. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JULY 2016.

Recommended: The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 July 2016 were confirmed and signed.

146/16-17. RESPONSES FROM EDC TO TOWN COUNCIL ENQUIRIES.

Members received the responses to the enquiries made by the Town Council regarding the creation of a "management board" for the EDC (similar to that at Ingress Park) and local bus services helping to integrate the current and new communities.

In considering the responses from the EDC members expressed their concern that there did not appear to be any form of democratic level of involvement in decisions for/at the Garden City and agreed that they would monitor this going forward.

Recommended: That the item be noted.

147/16-17. FUTURE DEVELOPMENTS/DEVELOPERS.

Further to minute 123/16-17 members were asked how they wished the Town Council to approach new developments and developers in the future.

Members were also asked to agree a Policy for requests from developers to attend Committee meetings to meet/present to members.

After a lengthy discussion it was agreed:

Recommended:

- 1 That full Council be asked to form a Working Group, consisting of 7 members, tasked with exploring the setting up of a "Legacy" Committee to formulate how the Council approached developers/developments in the future.
- 2 That future requests from developers to meet with members be dealt with outside of the Planning, Major Developments, Transportation & the Environment Committee and all Members be invited to attend. These meeting are only to be arranged prior to any planning applications being submitted or prior to the Council having considered any applications.



TERMS OF REFERENCE REGENERATION / QUALITY COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEE.

➤ **DELEGATION FROM THE TOWN COUNCIL:**

These Terms of Reference were agreed by the Town Council at its Meeting on 19 May 2016.

➤ **MEMBERSHIP:**

This Sub-Committee shall consist of eight Councillors who shall be elected, and may be re-elected, each year at the Annual Meeting of the Town Council, including the Town Mayor.

➤ **PROCEDURES:**

The Sub-Committee will operate in accordance with Local Government Law (and in accordance with Standing Orders).

The Sub-Committee will submit its minutes of meetings for ratification to the next meeting of the Town Council.

The Sub-Committee will submit a budget to the Council for the forthcoming financial year at the appropriate meeting before the end of November.

The Clerk to the Council (or any other appointed person) shall provide administrative support for the Committee.

➤ **FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS:**

The Sub-Committee shall meet as required.

The Sub-Committee shall meet at the Town Council's offices at a date and time to suit the Committee membership.

➤ **COMMITTEE FUNCTIONS:**

The Sub-Committee shall:

Exercise the functions of the Council in creating links with outside organisations and creating working partnerships to assist the Council in the area regeneration of Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

Exercise the functions of the Council in obtaining Quality Status and all matters involved in achieving this.

➤ **REFERRED FUNCTIONS:**

As an advisory body to consider any recommendations laid before it by other Committees or the Council, which relate to facilities within the scope of this Committee, not contained within the delegated functions.

MEMBERS SUGGESTIONS FOR 2017 - 2018 ESTIMATES.

At the full Council meeting held on 7 July 2016 Members were asked for suggestions in relations to projects/items to be considered for the 2017-18 Estimates (agreed deadline of 31 August 2016). I would like to take this opportunity to thank members for the information/suggestions provided.

Below is the list of the projects/items received, for each of these I have attempted to gain costings and also any wider factors for members' consideration.

Suggestion:	Cost:	Implications:
Equipment and ongoing maintenance of Eagles Road Play Area (subject to agreement with DBC).	£15,000 expected contribution towards equipment	No known maintenance costs until equipment and landscaping confirmed
Town Council notice boards in Ingress Park and Castle Hill	£1,200 per notice board plus installation.	Crest are considering paying for installing this as part of the Ingress Park Community Centre. EDC have indicated that Castle Hill could be negotiated. Additional time needed for park staff to maintain 2 notice boards at opposite ends of Town.
Emergency fund to provide a specialist team to clear hanging foliage that others fail to remove	No known costs involved as extent would have to be further investigated	Who/how would area be prioritised? Time and cost required for administration and parks staff or additional team. Road closures required for anything on major roads e.g. London Road would cost £600 per day.

Town Council – 13 October 2016
RFO Report

<p>Conversion of the redundant pay office into a community meeting room.</p>	<p>Initial quotes have come back at around £4,000 to £5,000.</p>	<p>As Landlord, DBC have confirmed..... <i>That they would have no objection to the Town Council converting the old cashiers' office into a meeting room. If this would involve major works or structural alterations to the building, the landlord's consent might then be required for the works.</i></p> <p>Implications on management of bookings and opening, closing and cleaning. Would an additional caretaker be required?</p>
<p>Swanscombe & Greenhithe in Bloom – 2 members recommended lamp post planters in both Swanscombe and Greenhithe High Streets.</p>	<p>Initial cost of planters with built in water reservoirs are £2000 for 20 lamp posts. This is excluding flowers.</p>	<p>The time (approximate 3-4 man hours) per watering and the additional equipment/manpower required to get water to high planters.</p> <p>What size/design of planters would be required?</p> <p>Licences would be required to hang in each High Street in the same way as for festive lights.</p>
<p>Town Council taking over responsibility for verge maintenance – 2 members recommended</p>	<p>Please see attached report from KCC.</p>	<p>Please see the attached report from KCC and information from Town and Borough Councils.</p>
<p>Internet access for Church Road Hall</p>	<p>£110 installation & £1,000 in line rental (£42 per month for 24 months minimum term)</p>	<p>Consideration for the offset cost against the likely need.</p> <p>Wider possibility of need in each Community Hall.</p>

Town Council – 13 October 2016
RFO Report

Contribution to the Greenhithe & Swanscombe Royal British Legion war memorial	£2,500 contribution towards the capital cost.	Timing of contribution against when the memorial is planned to be completed.
Outdoor games equipment – 3 Table Tennis tables (Knockhall, Swanscombe and Broomfield Parks).	£2,245 per site/table. Total cost £6735	Each set comes with an initial supply of paddles and balls. Who would manage these? Where within the parks would the tables be located? Is there a genuine interest/requirement for/in Table Tennis?
Additional dog / waste bins DS13 and DS7.	Approx. £200 per dog waste bin. Approx. £80 per waste bin (post mounted.) Dog waste bins £52 per year for emptying/collection if agreed.	Sites are not on Town Council owned/managed land so would have to have permission from KCC to place on PROW. Waste bins outside of our parks are managed/collected by DBC and an arrangement would have to be made.
Council Meeting Webcasting – Audio Streaming.	Indicative cost for audio streaming only would be approximately £100 per meeting plus a monthly rental fee of £50.	Total potential cost if all public meetings are included £4,600. Would level of interest justify the expenditure required?
Summer Open Air Cinema.	Indicative cost for this would be £1500 to £2000 per screening.	This could be incorporated as events within the summer entertainment package but would have to be held when natural light does not affect the screen/viewing (evenings). Who would manage/oversee these events and at what cost? Locations, facilities for public use?

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From: Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member – Environment & Transport
Roger Wilkin, Interim Director Highways, Transportation and Waste

To: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee – 4 December 2015

Subject: Kent County Council Highways, Transportation & Waste Soft
Landscape Works - Service Review 2018/19

Non-Key decision

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Past Pathway of Paper: N/A

Future Pathway of Paper: Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee March 2016.

Electoral Division: County Wide

Summary: One of the objectives included in the KCC Business Plan is to review the soft landscape works service from 2018/19, after current contracts expire. A number of options for the future service have been identified and require development. This report seeks cabinet approval to engage an Member Task and Finish Group to review and identify the priority outcomes for the service. The recommendations from the Group will be reported back to Environment & Transport Cabinet Committee for final decision in March 2016.

Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to set up an Member Task and Finish Group to inform and identify the priority outcomes for the future of the service.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Highway Operations Soft Landscaping Team are responsible for the management of trees and vegetation within the highway boundary in urban and rural areas (8,500km of road network). The service is delivered through a balance of arrangements with districts and parishes and through publicly procured contracts with SME contractors. An earlier review of the service determined that co-termination of works contracts in 2017/18 would provide an opportunity to review the future service delivery of the works element.
- 1.2 The lead-in time to replace existing works arrangements, including procurement requirements, negotiations and mobilisation periods means that an executive decision on the preferred option is required by the end of March 2016. A timeline is attached as Appendix 2.

2. Background, Options and Objectives

- 2.1 A list of the soft landscape procured contracts is attached at Appendix 1. The current annual cost of soft landscape works is £2.6m. Notably reductions of £1.1m (30%) were made in 2011/12. The MTFP targeted savings of £385k

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(15%) are proposed for 2018/19. The MTFP savings will result in reduced service levels.

- 2.2 In 2015/16 the majority of the soft landscape spend is on scheduled works for urban and rural grass cutting, shrub and hedge maintenance, tree works and weed control. Regular procurement has resulted in lowering prices. These prices are used to benchmark the current arrangements with districts and parishes. Due to the frequent testing of the market officers are confident the current prices reflect value for money.
- 2.3 Five districts (and several parishes) currently provide the service on our behalf. These districts are reimbursed at the benchmarked rates and provide enhanced services at their own cost to meet their local needs. However the districts have expressed concerns that any further reduction in either funding or service levels will force them to hand back the service.
- 2.4 Current works frequencies fall short of what the highways soft landscape asset requires for long term sustainability. Further reductions in the service will contribute to long-term degradation of the asset.
- 2.5 In line with the planned review of the service and the new commissioning procedures a draft Diagnostic Report has been prepared. The draft Diagnostic Report outlines five possible options for the future of the service:
 - **Option 1: Status Quo** – continue with existing works frequencies and deliver the service through a mix of publicly procured contracts and through agreements with districts and parishes. A small amount of savings could be achieved.
 - **Option 2: Reduced Service** – to accommodate MTFP targeted savings scheduled works will be cut. The savings could be spread among urban and rural areas, however some service frequencies are already at 1 annual maintenance visit and as a result a portion will receive no maintenance. This will result in fewer scheduled works and increased reactive safety critical works.
 - **Option 3: Engage With Districts, Town Councils & Parishes** – transfer the urban service to a combination of districts, town councils & parishes, with KCC retaining the rural services and tree works. This option supports localism and the combination of urban service providers would be able to enhance high profile tourist, business and town centres according to local priorities. It is unlikely all districts, town councils and parishes would sign up and those that did are likely to require a financial incentive.
 - **Option 4: Bring In-house** – this option could accommodate MTFP targeted savings if works frequencies were reduced as in Option 2. Initially there will be increased costs for staff resources (TUPE) or depots and equipment or both, depending on the model selected.
 - **Option 5: Statutory Minimum Service Only** – this would generate greater savings than Option 2. However, the focus would shift to reactive safety works, customer enquiries and complaints would increase, and assets would require a new mapping exercise to define works that are safety

critical. This approach would be reliant on the public's acceptance of greatly reduced service standards and a cultural shift in customer perception. Communities, volunteers and third sector groups may partially fill the service gap. However, financial incentives may be required to encourage a sustainable commitment.

The Member Task and Finish Group is asked to assist in the review to identify the priority outcomes for the future service.

2.7 The key objectives for the development of the future service options are to:

- contribute to the Council's Outcomes Framework;
- identify further saving efficiencies through commissioning, partnership working and challenging existing practices;
- maximise synergies between internal and external partners;
- build greater flexibility with regard to provision of soft landscape works to achieve quality, customer satisfaction and value for money;
- ensure KCC meets its environmental compliance and safety obligations;
- future proof service delivery for customers and other stakeholders;
- ensure the long-term needs of the asset are met;
- provide a transparent, accountable service; and
- provide equitable access to services for Kent residents and compliance with the Equality Act 2010.

3. Financial Implications

- 3.1 Each of the future service options has a different financial impact and will be assessed to ensure financial viability.
- 3.2 The MTFP targeted savings figure for soft landscape works is currently set at £385k, (15%), beginning in 2018-19. This cannot be absorbed through procurement savings alone and will require reductions in service frequencies.

4. Legal implications

- 4.1 There are statutory obligations required of a Highways Authority under the Highways Act 1980. These need to be taken into account when developing the options for the future service.

5. Equalities implications

- 5.1 An initial EqIA screening has been prepared. New or full EqIAs will be conducted to understand positive and negative impacts upon customers as options are being developed.
- 5.2 Should public consultation be required, a separate EqIA will be prepared to inform the consultation approach and engagement across our customer and stakeholder base.

6. Other corporate implications

6.1 The Soft Landscape review will embed the principles and objectives of the following corporate and partnership strategies:

- KCC's Supporting Kent's physical and natural environment: Corporate Outcomes Framework 2015-19;
- KCC's Supporting business growth: Corporate Outcomes Framework 2015-19;
- KCC's Supporting residents with a good quality of life: Corporate Outcomes Framework 2015-19;
- KCC Commissioning Framework;
- Kent Environment Strategy; and
- KCC's Customer Service Policy 2015-17.

7. Governance

7.1 It is requested that a small, cross party Member Task and Finish Group, is established to support an officer options development group, led by Andrew Loosemore, Interim Deputy Director, Highways, Transportation and Waste, which in turn is accountable to the Growth Environment and Transport Portfolio Board and ultimately through to this Cabinet Committee.

7.2 Previously KCC have utilised Member Task and Finish Groups for a variety of differing scenarios. This has proved successful in the past with, one of the strengths of the process being the detailed and significant contribution of elected members.

7.3 The Member Task and Finish Group will inform and support the review of the soft landscape service and develop available options and draft recommendations to the Cabinet Committee. By using a Member Task and Finish Group, Members will be able to have confidence that the recommended service options will take into account issues of interest and concern for the communities they represent. It is anticipated that the Group will comprise six Member and meet up to five times. Draft terms of reference will be provided to the Group for consideration at the initial meeting.

8. Conclusions

8.1 It is proposed that an Member Task and Finish Group is established to identify outcomes and support development of options for the future soft landscape service.

8.2 A subsequent report with recommendations for decision will be presented to this Cabinet Committee for consideration in March 2016, prior to any public consultation, should it be required.

8.3 The process is subject to an outline timeframe that recognises the procurement and mobilisation periods required to provide new works arrangements in 2018.

9. Recommendation:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to set up an Member Task and Finish Group to inform and identify the priority outcomes for the future of the service.

10. Background Documents

10.1 Contracts List

10.2 Timeline

11. Contact details

<p>Report Author: Richard Diplock – Soft Landscape Asset Manager 03000 413603 richard.diplock@kent.gov.uk</p> <p>Andrew Loosemore – Interim Deputy Director Highways Transportation & Waste 03000 411652 andrew.loosemore@kent.gov.uk</p>	<p>Relevant Director: Roger Wilkin Interim Director of Highways, Transportation and Waste 03000 413479 roger.wilkin@kent.gov.uk</p>
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Appendix 1

Soft Landscape Contracts at 01/10/2015

Aeltem No.	Contract Type	Districts Covered	Supplier	Start Date	End Date	Contract ID
1	Urban Grass, Shrubs and Hedges - Lot 1	Maidstone & Dartford	Grasstex Ltd	01/04/2013	31/12/2017	SS12 33
2	Urban Grass, Shrubs and Hedges - Lot 2	Canterbury & Thanet	Grasstex Ltd	01/04/2013	31/12/2017	SS12 33
3	Urban Grass, Shrubs and Hedges - Lot 3	Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling & Tunbridge Wells	Cleartrack (EvL) Ltd	01/04/2014	31/12/2017	SS13 82
4	Rural Swathe cutting & Visibility Lot 1	Dartford, Gravesham, Sevenoaks, Tonbridge & Malling and Tunbridge Wells	Grasstex Ltd	01/04/2015	31/03/2017	SS14 055
5	Rural Swathe cutting & Visibility Lot 2	Maidstone & Ashford	Grasstex Ltd	01/04/2015	31/03/2017	SS14 055
6	Rural Swathe cutting & Visibility Lot 3	Swale, Canterbury & Thanet	Grasstex Ltd	01/04/2015	31/03/2017	SS14 055
7	Weed control – Lot 1	Dartford, Gravesham, Sevenoaks and Tonbridge & Malling	LanGuard Ltd	01/05/2014	30/04/2016	SS13 75
8	Weed control – Lot 2	Tunbridge Wells, Maidstone and Ashford	Sussex Rail Ltd T/A SRL Environmental Management	01/05/2014	30/04/2016	SS13 75
9	Weed control – Lot 3	Swale, Canterbury & Thanet	LanGuard Ltd	01/05/2014	30/04/2016	SS13 75
10	Arboricultural Works Term Contract Lot 1	West Kent	City Suburban Tree Surgeons Ltd	01/09/2014	31/08/2017	SS13 76
11	Arboricultural Works Term Contract Lot 2	East Kent	City Suburban Tree Surgeons Ltd	01/09/2014	31/08/2017	SS13 76

Appendix 2 - Timeline for Executive Decision - HTW Soft Landscape Works

TASK	Nov-15	Dec-15	Jan-16	Feb-16	Mar-16	Apr-16	May-16	Jun-16	Jul-16	Aug-16	Sep-16	Oct-16	Nov-16	Dec-16
Meet MB: Set terms of reference for ETCC/IMG; review Cabinet Committee Report	2nd Nov													
Submit Report to ETCC	9th Nov													
ETCC Meeting		4th Dec												
Set up IMG														
IMG Briefings														
Develop Soft Landscape Options														
Finalise IMG Option Recommendations; draft Executive Decision Rpt														
Finalise Executive Decision Rpt														
Executive Decision Meeting														
Feed Executive Decision into Category Plan														
Procurement Board														
Market engagement for new soft landscape contracts/arrangements									Swathe contracts			Tree works	Urban Grass, shrubs and hedges	



SWANLEY TOWN COUNCIL WEBSITE

9 June 2016

Swanley Town Council is currently in the process of handing back the grass cutting of certain areas to Kent County Council and Sevenoaks District Council. The grass verges on the highways are the responsibility of Kent County Council and these areas are now being cut by them.

Sevenoaks District Council will be taking back their responsibilities from mid July. We appreciate residents' patience during the handover period and the Council recognises that this may result in some delays in the usual schedules. If you wish to report areas which you feel require

attention please telephone **03000 41 81 81** or report the problem via the direct portal <http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/report-a-problem> Kent County Council are in the process of organising Land Registry searches for some areas in the town and in the next edition of the Town Crier we hope to be able to provide you with up to date information, together with a map which clearly shows whether the responsibility for the grass cutting belongs to Kent County Council, Sevenoaks District Council or Swanley Town Council.

Stringer

Give us a tip: 01474 564327 email: taores@thekmgroupp.co.uk

Can't see the signs for the trees

If you think the grass is getting long, you'd better get used to it if you live in Gravesham.

Grass verges, hedgerows alongside roads and roundabouts will be cut less from next year following Kent County Council budget cuts.

Presently grass on KCC's highways land is cut eight times a year, and shrubs and hedges are cut annually.

However, from next year the contract to maintain the land is being reduced by 45% to £40,000 a year and the number of times the grass is mown could fall.

Most of the land on or next to highways belongs to KCC. Gravesham council's landscaping team has operated the "soft landscaping" contract on behalf of the county council but has decided it is no longer viable and the cabinet is being recommended to end the deal at its meeting on September 5. While it is unlikely that decision will face opposition there, another point was raised during a pre-cabinet meeting that should the council agree to the proposals, it would incur extra costs. With the grass being much longer, the council's landscaping team would need new equipment to mow it. Some years ago weed control spraying was reduced by KCC from three times to once a

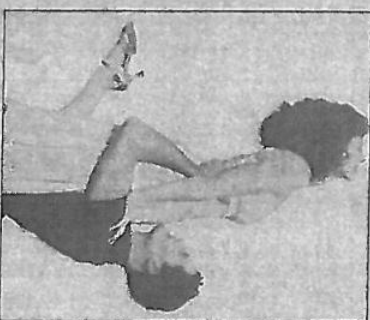


Trees and weeds have been allowed to grow out of control in The Avenue, Gravesend

year. Deputy leader Gilr David Turner said: "We have actually tended some areas for the county council more frequently than specified in the contract - effectively subsidising KCC - but this change from County Hall is a cut too far and is not going to be affordable."

"The borough council will continue to look after its own parks and open spaces to the same standard as present but residents may notice a difference between highways verges and our land."

The county council will now have to look for a new contractor in Gravesham. A KCC spokesman said: "Due to ongoing financial pressures and reductions in central government funding, urban grass maintenance will get between five and



Dirty Dancing will be at the Orchard Theatre Picture, Infram Kenton

I'll have the time of my life at show

Each week Stringer must fight to disguise his raw and rugged manly prowess.

So readers might be amazed to discover that the roving reporter is looking forward to Dirty Dancing, which begins at Dartford's Orchard Theatre tonight (Thursday). He's got Hungry Eyes for this 80s classic.

Reporter Lizzie Massey has tickets for the opening night, so if you haven't decided if you want to go yet, check out the What's On page on Kent Online for her review.

To book tickets visit orchardtheatre.co.uk or call 01322 220000. The story of love and loyalty is on until Saturday, September 10.



Kate French with Cobham Hall head of PE Kelli Hooper

Perfect picture could win rings

Talking of romance, a jeweller is giving away £2,000 wedding rings in exchange for the perfect-proposal selfie.

Beaverbrooks, at Bluewater, wants couples to share a picture of their engagement to be in with the chance of winning the specially selected rings. Manager Vicky Jones said: "Engagements are becoming almost as important as the big day itself."

"It's not only picking the perfect ring that counts for couples but also the location, atmosphere and little details that mean a lot to them that really make a proposal special." "The rise in social media means that proposals are

Pupils cheer on our great Kate

Which leads Stringer nicely to another winner.

Exams are important (just ask the pupils who appear in our results special later in the paper), but working hard is what delivers results.

And pupils at Cobham Hall were given a lesson in that when they tuned in to watch the Olympic games and cheer on one of its very own alumni Kate French, who came sixth in the modern pentathlon, is originally from Meopham, and was a sixth-former at the Gravesend school before heading to the Modern Pentathlon National Training Centre in Bath. Head teacher Paul Mitchell said: "I am absolutely delighted and very pleased that all her hard work has paid off with such a wonderful result."

GRAVESHAM COUNCIL

CARPET TIME We want to know

In this Issue...

- Pages 2 and 3 - Our Chairman Writes: Challenges in Devolution
- Page 4 - President's Piece: Membership Survey Feedback
- Page 5 - NALC's Take on Devolution
- Pages 6 and 7 - Leading Your Learning!
- Page 8 - Transparency Fund Updates
- Page 9 - Came and Company Advertisement
- Page 10 - News from NALC
- Page 11 - Council and Government Consultations
- Page 12 - Kent County Council Waste Strategy
- Page 13 - Kent Fire and Rescue launches its Road Safety Experience
- Page 14 - Flying the Flag for Your Commonwealth
- Page 15 - Councillors' Conference
- Page 16 - Japanese Knotweed: Know Your Stuff!
- Page 17 - In Your Neck of the Woods
- Page 18 - Missing from Your Inbox
- Page 19 - Back Page.

Half Way Through the Year Already!

Where is the year going? 2016 seems to have whizzed by and we are already approaching the traditional Recess of Parliament, and the "quiet time" of local councils. It has been an eventful six months for everyone in the UK, let alone in Kent. We have celebrated the 90th birthday of Her Majesty the Queen in our villages and towns. We have seen an historic referendum being held nationwide, and within the space of three short weeks said "Goodbye" to one Prime Minister and welcomed another.

With Mrs May's new government we have an equally new Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government. For those of you who may be unaware, [the Right Honourable Sajid Javid MP](#) took the baton from Greg Clark, who some were lucky enough to hear speak at our Chairmanship Conference back in February.



His role in this government is, of course, very fresh and we can only guess what might lie ahead for Communities and Local Government in the future.

We will have to see how this new era in our country develops, but one thing is for sure- local councils have an important role as the first tier of local government closest to the community and our Chairman makes a few comments about this in his piece written for The News.

In the meantime, the Association wishes you all a happy summer.

*Ray Evison, KALC Chairman
Writes*

Challenges in Devolution

DEVOLUTION AND OUR FUTURE

The County Council published a paper, 'Devolution Position Statement', in mid-July 2016 outlining its views on the various devolution proposals by Government. The paper presented an unclear picture of future developments. It suggested that the three West Kent Districts had made significant progress with enhanced working with the County Council, whilst the other Districts in East Kent and North Kent were in the early stages of considering alternative alliances. It appears that Kent County Council (KCC) are expecting the devolution process to slow down whilst the Government concentrates on resolving Britain's new relationship with Europe, but it will not stop.

Devolution is coming, driven by the decreasing amounts of funding that have been and will continue to be in Government funding. What is clear is that there will be new relationships between County and District Councils (even if District Councils regroup).

Whilst the KCC paper referred to two-tier governance (forgetting ourselves as the fundamental grass-roots tier of governance) we know that there will be new relationships between ourselves and the emerging governance organisations above us.

Imminent Changes in Organisation

Set aside the County and District Council relationships for a moment. Let's concentrate on our likely new roles and responsibilities. Town Councils will probably more easily manage change than the smallest Parishes, even though both will continue to enjoy the same powers. Towns, having many more electors, will have larger budgets and will be able to respond to invitations to take on responsibilities from District and County Councils much more readily than those with smaller budgets.

Smaller parishes should therefore look to work with neighbouring parishes in clusters or partnerships so that whilst retaining their long-standing identity and autonomy, they are able to respond to invitations. I am therefore promoting partnerships and inter-council co-operation as a way forward.

So far KCC has proposed that devolution be considered around what is called 'Soft Landscaping'. That is hedgerows, verges, grass mowing, ditch clearing, sign cleaning. This is work that should be done on a regular basis by either District or County Council agents, but which are now done on a minimum number of occasions, rather than as and when needed. It is proposed that by offering these responsibilities to Town & Parish Councils, with the appropriate funding to match, local councils can take charge of their environments, having work done when it is necessary and not having to wait for someone else's convenience.

No two local councils or group of councils will be the same, so there is scope for real flexibility in setting up any new arrangements. There will also be real flexibility in timetabling the acceptance of new responsibilities. The adventurous, those with initiative, or those in a fortunate position to do so will be able to offer examples to others of how to move forward.

If devolution is to be successful, we need to prepare well and we can do that best by training both our Councillors and our Clerks. I would like to suggest that all councils, even the smallest ones, should ensure that their training budget meets the needs of sending the clerk to

Challenges in Devolution

a Clerks' Conference at least once every three years and one councillor to a training event every year. This is only the minimum and would be much better if every councillor attended at least one Training Conference in each electoral period of four years.

KALC can offer training for every aspect for both the Clerks and Councillors work and for their preparation of future issues. Do look at the website for further details of upcoming events.

Imminent Changes in the Management in Our Councils

Electronic communication is already preferred by an overwhelming majority of our members. It cannot be long before electronic communication will be our only way of working. It follows that those who do not have computing skills and a personal computer will probably no longer be able to be an effective councillor.

Councillors will need to be personally well informed and not reliant on fellow councillors who are 'experts' in particular subjects. In particular, all councillors will need to be familiar with the law on planning, especially as the laws and rules on planning are likely to be changed and the responsibility for decision making devolved.

Clerks are bound to have their job descriptions modified as electronic communication becomes standard and they will probably take on more responsibilities. For this they will require greater remuneration. I think increasingly the clerking of smaller parishes will be done by fewer clerks who will work for several councils. This may result in them becoming almost full-time in their employment. Clerks will increasingly become better qualified and probably professionally qualified to degree level.

Increased responsibilities and commitments mean we are going to have to look again at how councillors can be recompensed. Travelling expenses have always been claimable but what about the costs of printing associated with electronic communication? Likewise, how long will it be before we expect councillors to have their own laptop on which to hold information rather than any printed material? Not very long I would suggest.

How long before we have to consider Councillor's allowances for the (increasing) work they do for their communities ?

Summary

I hope this provides readers with some insight into the political processes being pursued by the levels of government above us, about the opportunities there will be for closer working and sharing between parish and town councils and of the opportunities KALC is providing through training to ensure we are all ready to respond to our devolved future.

Ray Evison

Chairman

Membership Survey - Listening To Your Comments

I would like to thank those of you who took the time to complete this year's KALC Membership Survey, which remains anonymous. It is very important to us to receive your feedback. We do read every response and use the results to guide us: our 5-year rolling business plan being just one example. I can assure you that our survey is **not** just a 'tick-box' exercise, paying lip-service to consultation!

I want to take this opportunity to highlight some of the findings from this year's survey:

- o Training Data –
 - o 76% of those who answered said they had attended training.
95% rated the training as excellent, very good or good.
83% have a training budget but only 50% allocated £300
 - o Regarding subjects requested for training, Planning remains very popular. We are now following this up, in the autumn, with three specific planning sessions.
 - o One Member Council said that *"KALC training costs are becoming too expensive and should not be increased ~ as costs affect the numbers that can be trained within the budget. Surely better trained Councillors is more important than KALC's income?"*
 - o An interesting point, but we have actually held the price for six years so far at £60.00p plus VAT. Over this time, according to the Bank of England, inflation has been running at an average of 2.9% per annum, so the true cost should now be £69.39 plus VAT per member, per course. So we are even better value for money!
- o Parish News is rated 91% Excellent or Good:
 - o *"I think it covers what is necessary: breaking news, training opportunities, etc., are all included."*
 - o *".....relevant to Parish Councils, Clerks or Councillors ~ written in plain English."*
- o Legal Advice
 - o 89% of those answered had used KALC for Legal and Technical Advice, with legal advice being the single most important service KALC provides.
 - o *"Dealt with Clive Powell. Very quick to get back to us and provided good concise advice."*
- o Top Priority for Councils
 - o Ongoing review of the Ashford Local Plan and uncertainty associated with sites submitted; parking of HGVs and related noise/pollution nuisance; noise arising from the M20 between junctions 8 and 9.
 - o Swale Local Plan – *"We are working to ensure inappropriate development is not allowed particularly in the open countryside. We are also in the process of deciding our position on an application for 4 wind turbines with much opposition locally from residents living in close proximity to the proposal. Besides that, one of our main focusses has to be addressing the increasing amount of planning applications we get in to ensure the proposals do not have any negative impact."*
 - o *"Clerk's workload is expanding (due to Borough transferring activities). Need to expand into premises, in a central part of the Parish, rather than 'home working'."*

We are very pleased with the comments we received. Rest assured, we will continue to strive to do our very best for you, our members, over the coming year.

Until next time ...

The National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recently attended the Local Government Association Conference that was held in Bournemouth this month. Their fringe event "Devo Local" had some very interesting views regarding the future of devolution. First of all, that it must begin with communities...

Here is the article in full, which can also be found on their [website](#).

Devolution - A National Issue

"NALC's fringe event, Devo Local, held on 6th July, at the LGA Annual Conference in Bournemouth demanded that any devolution of power must begin with community involvement.

In the middle of this current political upheaval there is no time like the present to make sure power and influence rests with local people. People feel alienated and removed from the centres of decision-making.

In an era where decentralisation has to be the driving force, NALC believes that only 'double devolution' – where power is moved from Westminster to principal (county, district, unitary, and borough) authorities, and from there spread to local (parish and town) councils – truly brings services and decision making closer to the public.

The Government and the majority of local government seems distracted by civic devolution where all the focus is on structures of forming larger and more remote combined principal authorities – Devo Deals.

Baroness Jane Scott, leader of Wiltshire County Council, said: "Local communities and businesses are not being asked about Devo Deals.

"We should be talking to communities, local councils and businesses about potential changes in their areas and how they can influence the direction of development in local places."

Cllr Neil Clarke, chair of the District Councils Network, said: "The public are no longer prepared to just listen to and do as instructed by local and central government. They now want real influence and power.

"Devolution must be about local people working closer together. It is about collaboration instead of confrontation."

Mark Rogers, chief executive of Birmingham City Council, responded: "Devo Deals started in the wrong place.

The conversation and discussions should have started with communities and people. Furthermore before we get further into all this Government-led devolution, we should just allow communities and local councils to get on solve problems of their area.

"It falls to local government to address the implications for our places and, in doing so, this gives us a golden opportunity to show the leadership the country needs and to demonstrate that we should now be empowered to deliver a radical devolution settlement

that goes far beyond the first phase of deals.

Jonathan Owen, chief executive of NALC, reminded the fringe: "That in working out what the demands of a local area are, you must involve people in how they can be met. We should never forget with local councils being so close to communities they have a better understanding of local needs.

"Our recent supplement Power to the People showed the transformative nature of these councils, with more and more of them than previously thought engaged in health, boosting the local economy, housing and social care issues."

LGC editor, Nick Golding, chair of the fringe, said: "So much of the current devolution debate has centred on councils grouping together or indeed merging to form ever larger units of 'local' government.

"Greater Manchester, the poster boy of devolution, has a total population of nearly three million, for instance. There is some irony that in many cases services are being centralised further from people's homes in order for devolution to occur."

LEADING YOUR LEARNING...

ENCOURAGING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR COUNCILS

DID YOU KNOW ...

KALC will run a tailored learning event for your council if you ask us to! We are always happy to come to a venue of your choosing and run a workshop for you, be it on one of our regular well established subjects or something else that you think could be of use to your Council. We offer a discount to the Council who hosts the event. We also recruit external delegates who might also like to attend. Generally speaking, we need to have ten attendees, but there is nothing to stop you from approaching your neighbouring council and making a cluster. This is sometimes the way ahead for many of you, as it does drive the cost down, encourages co-operation with neighbours, and makes sure that your Council obtains the learning and development it needs to be up to date.

The Executive Committee of KALC strongly encourages its member Councils to set a training budget and to implement a training policy and plan.

With that in mind, If you would like a copy of a template policy, do let us know and we can forward a copy for download.

Likewise, if you need to set a budget for your learning and development provision. We would suggest that it would be worthwhile to start discussion on it in September/October when you are beginning to think about setting your Council Budget for the next financial year. Our next page gives you an idea as to how you might arrive at a ***reasonable figure for your council.***

If you need any further advice, do give our office a call; we can help make the process a little easier for you, but of course, we can't recommend how much you might be able to spend. That is, naturally, up to your Council, but it is clear that any training budget is better than none!

LEADING YOUR LEARNING

ENCOURAGING LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN YOUR COUNCILS

How Much Should We Budget For?

As much as your Council can afford... remember it is an investment in the future and should carry your council forward over a four year electoral cycle. So we recommend that within a year, an officer and Chairman should attend at least one Conference/Workshop a year. For example:

- The Planning Conference (March)

- The Clerks Conference (In May/June)
- The Finance Conference (October)

Each of these events cost £60 plus VAT at our current member rate. You will also need to allow for travel but we try to make sure that we arrange our big Conferences at venues that are generally central to all.

Members of your Councils should at least attend our Councillors Conference or a freestanding Dynamic Councillor Workshop at least once during their four year term. We do recommend attendance at another event if at all possible, especially when you have councillors that sit on specific Committees - such as Finance or Planning.



Making a Learning and Development Policy and setting a budget for your Council's training will pay dividends for your Officers and Councillors in equal measure. KALC has developed a draft policy template which is available for download by request. This should give you a standard to work from and you can, of course, tailor it to your Council's specific needs. An up to date Council will be in tune with new legislation and procedures. Training and learning enable Councils to achieve those goals and therefore it is always in your best interests to attend a learning event when at all possible.

THE TRANSPARENCY FUND -

APPLICATIONS WELCOME!



Does your Parish Council have a turnover of less than £25,000? If yes, then you will need to meet the mandatory requirements of the Transparency Code for smaller authorities. Further details on the Code can be found in the Transparency Code section of the KALC website at

http://kentalc.gov.uk/resources/Documents/Transparency%20Code/Transparency_Code_for_Smaller_Authorities.pdf

However, there is some good news for those smaller Councils who have a turnover below the £25,000 threshold. In recognition of the extra burden being placed on the smaller

councils, the Government has set up a Transparency Fund which is being managed by NALC.

We have had over 50 successful applications for funding from smaller councils in Kent and Medway, but we believe there are many more smaller councils under the threshold that are eligible to apply but



have not done so to date.

We would encourage all smaller Councils (under £25,000 turnover) to carefully consider the guidance notes and application form (available on the KALC website or phone the office on 01304

820173) to see whether they are able to claim for their costs of becoming compliant, and then maintaining compliance, with the Transparency Code.



News from
The National
Association
Of Local
Councils



NALC Supports the Great British High Street Awards

Now in its third year, the Awards Celebrate
Everything Great about our High Streets...

The Great British High Street Competition is a Government and business-led initiative which celebrates our nation's much-loved high streets.

The 2015 Competition was a huge success. Over 230 high streets took part and the campaign to find the winners made a huge dent in the public consciousness, with over 200,000 votes cast for the finalists. This year, the Competition is back and it is bigger and better, with new categories and new awards for individuals, our 'High Street Heroes', who have made a special

effort to support their high street.

NALC is encouraging all local (parish and town) councils, neighbourhoods and communities to enter The Great British High Street

Competition. **The closing date for applications is 9 September 2016.** The 2016 categories are:

For Places:

- Village – population between 500 to 2,500 residents
- Local centre - precinct or parade of shops
- Market Towns – small – population of less than 10,000
- Market Towns – large – population between 10,000 - 30,000

CAPTURE A MAGNIFICENT MOMENT
SET NEW STANDARDS FOR FUTURE
RESPECT AMONGST YOUR PEERS
SHOW OFF TO YOUR FRIENDS
MAKE MUM AND DAD PROUD
IMPRESS YOUR COMMUNITY
SHOW YOUR WORTH
BOOST MOTIVATION
BRAGGING RIGHTS



Reap the benefits and enter our Star Councils 2016 Awards today!

Six awards up for grabs; Local Council and CALC Outstanding Project, Councillor, Clerk, Young Councillor and Council of the Year.

To enter visit: www.nalc.gov.uk/starcouncils
Send all enquiries to: starcouncils@nalc.gov.uk

Closing date: 31 July 2016

- Town Centre - population of more than 30,000
- City Location - population of more than 200,000
- Coastal Community
- London
- Rising Star - to recognise towns that are turning fortunes around

Further information can be found at the official website here:

<http://thegreatbritishhighstreet.co.uk/>

Good Luck!

CONSULTATION, CONSULTATION CONSULTATION

What Next For Sandwich?

Kent County Council (KCC) and STC appointed Rummey Design to consider how the public realm, transport, and general wider issues could contribute to a strategy that could bring in a number of potential funding bids. The study aims to connect the town within the walls with the town to the south and other parts and to help 'civilise' traffic issues which many residents are concerned about. Funding options are being explored to ease some of the pedestrian and traffic conflict areas, to improve the difficult areas such as around the Barbican, and to explore how Dover District Council's strategic proposals for the parks in Sandwich work closely with this study.

Over the last few months we have been gathering feedback from residents, businesses, groups and visitors. This has included walkabouts and workshops with representatives from community organisations, an [online discussion forum](#), which was viewed over 1,000 times and received 475 comments, while the infants' school produced their own town map on what they'd like to see.

Have Your Say

We have now launched a public consultation, which will run from 2nd July until 31st July 2016.

The proposals will be available to view and comment on in the foyer of Guildhall (in the Cattle Market) during normal opening hours throughout the consultation period.

You can view the information on display at the exhibition by clicking [here](#): [Exhibition Boards](#)

To tell us your views please take part in the [online questionnaire](#) or fill in a hard copy available from the Town Council.

**Kent
County
Council**
kent.gov.uk



Department for Communities and Local Government

Self Sufficient Local Government: 100%

Business Rates Retention.

This consultation seeks views on the government's commitment to allow local government to retain 100% of the business rates that they raise locally. Specifically this consultation seeks to identify some of the issues that should be kept in mind when designing the reforms.

The government has announced it will undertake a fair funding review of what the needs assessment formula should be following the implementation of 100%

business rates retention. As a first step, alongside this consultation, the government has issued a call for evidence which sets out the key questions that will need to be addressed as part of this review.

Ways to respond

Email to:

BRRConsultation@communities.gsi.gov.uk

Write to:

Business Rates Retention Consultation

Local Government Finance

Department for Communities and Local
Government

2nd floor, Fry Building

2 Marsham Street

London SW1P 4DF

Did You Join Us? Councillors' Conference 2016

Following the success of our Chairmanship Conference in February, we held our Councillors' Conference at The Orchards East Malling too. A packed programme that covered many relevant subjects along with excellent facilities and catering guaranteed a good day... Here are some highlights of the event. You might just spot yourself in the pictures!

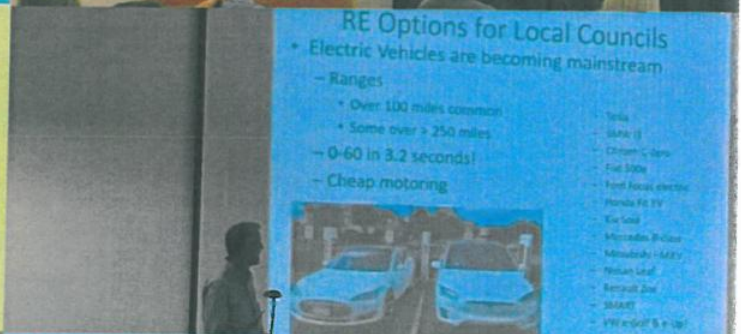
Lunchtime at the Orchards...delegates get the chance to network as well as grab a sandwich...



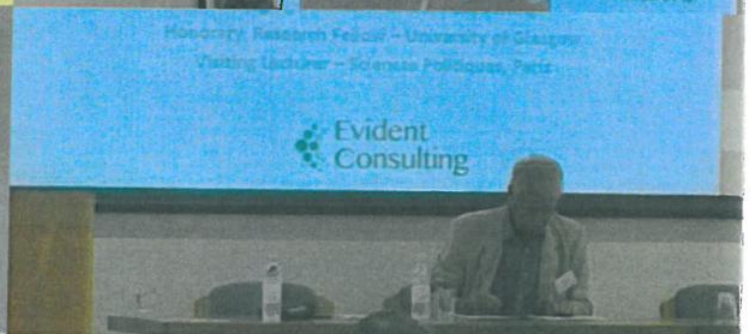
Dr Peter Welsh explains the benefits of proper project management. It was a topic that went down very well with our delegates.



We welcomed Matt Morris for the first time to one of our Conferences. Matt's speciality is the subject of renewable energy. It's a new departure for the Association but extremely relevant in this day and age. Matt's advice was well received by everyone, and certainly gave his audience something to think about.



Cllr Raymond Evison, KALC Chairman, takes notes at the Conference. Ray kindly spoke on the subject of devolution at the event and what it may mean for the Local Council tier of governance.





YOUR FRIENDLY NEIGHBOURHOOD WEED...NOT!



Japanese Knotweed - What the Royal Horticultural Society has to say...

"Although rather attractive, Japanese knotweed (*Fallopia Japonica*) is a real thug as it spreads rapidly. In winter the plant dies back beneath ground but by early summer the bamboo-like stems shoot to over 2.1 metres (7 ft), suppressing all other growth. Eradication requires steely determination as it is very hard to remove by hand or with chemicals. New legislation now covers its control."¹

¹ RHS Website

<https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/practicefile?PID=218>

Its Latin name is rather grandly titled "*Fallopia Japonica*", but knotweed it is far from pretty when it grows everywhere. It is an invasive plant that can damage structures if left to grow. You may not see it in the winter, but come Spring, it is in its element and needs to be controlled.

The government has produced some very useful information regarding knotweed and other invasive non - native plants.

The web page explains how to recognise and identify certain species, and also gives further guidance as to who might be able to help in terms of treatment of same. It is wise to thwart its growth as soon as possible as there is a potential fine of £5000 for non - compliance. You can access this information here:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/prevent-the-spread-of-harmful-invasive-and-non-native-plants>

Likewise, there is a myriad of information available from the GB Non Native Species Secretariat which you can see here:

<http://www.nonnativespecies.org/factsheet/factsheet.cfm?speciesId=1495>

You may also procure the advice you need by approaching your Principal Authority's Environmental Officers, but it is always

good to keep up to date with legislation and make sure that your community is aware of any potential threat or risk.

There is now an amendment to the Anti Social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Act 2014 that can be used for individuals that continually fail to act when asked to control any knotweed (or other invasive non native plants that cause damage) by their Authority. You can read the document by following this link:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/364846/Japanese_Knotweed_information_note.pdf

and it should help Councils, or Principal Authorities, to decide their best course of action with persistent offenders.

In Your Neck of the Woods

WALMER'S WEB

Local website WalmerWeb has been recognised for its work in ensuring Walmer remains a very special place to live, work and visit, through the 2016 KALC Community Awards Scheme which is supported by the High Sheriff of Kent, Chairman of Kent County Council and the Mayor of Medway.

The community website was nominated by Walmer Parish Council to the Kent Association of Local Councils. Chairman Councillor Pat Heath presented the award to web master Harold Wyld at the recent Walmer Parish Meeting. Councillor Heath said: "It is a pleasure to be able to recognise the hard work of volunteers such as Harold who give their time tirelessly for the benefit of the whole community. WalmerWeb is an invaluable online tool for residents and visitors alike."

Mr Wyld, who established the website in 2004 with the support of the Parish Council and has been regularly updating it ever since. He said: "People seem to find it useful as a source of information for public services, local news, upcoming events and history of the area. I enjoy keeping the content up to date and am extremely grateful to the good folk who help with new information."

WalmerWeb can be found at:

<http://www.walmerweb.co.uk>

and has an associated Facebook page at

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/walmer/>

Well Done to Harold and Well Done to Walmer for supporting his good work!



Boxley Makes a Community Award Too!

At the Annual Meeting of Boxley Parish Council held on 9 May Robert Burrows was presented with a 2016 Kent Association of Local Council's Community Award. Parish Councillors nominated Rob for the award in recognition of his sterling work as a member and then Chairman of the Walderslade Woodlands Group. The departing Chairman Cllr Ivor Davies said "it is an honour to be able to present Rob with this award as with the support of the volunteers the woodlands are in a marvellous condition and are a wonderful asset for the community and wildlife."



MISSING FROM YOUR INBOX

Items That May Have Slipped from Your Radar...

My Community

THE LATEST FROM MY COMMUNITY AND LOCALITY

MyCommunity is a valuable resource for Parish and Town Councils everywhere. It often has articles and funding information that you might have missed elsewhere, and as such, provides a helpful insight to what may be available to your community. The latest Round Up of news can be found by following this link:

<http://us8.campaign-archive2.com/?u=07291e1f441c8ad999e6a72f6&id=af1cf7b762&e=f24a4c4ab5>

Do take a look and sign up for their latest updates too. You may just find the way ahead for your community.

EAST PECKHAM GETS 'APPY!

East Peckham Parish Council is now the proud owner of an App which can be downloaded by following the links below. If your Council has an App - do let us know. We love to hear how technology is used by our members!

iTunes Apple Store

<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/east-peckham-parish-council/id1133345325?mt=8>

Google Play

https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=com.app_eppc01.layout&hl=en_GB



By now, you will be aware that Terry Martin holds the title of Chief Executive of KALC. Likewise, Trish Casey-Green is known as the Communications Officer.

At their meeting on 23 July 2016, the Executive Committee of the Kent Association of Local Councils agreed that both Laura Dyer and Clive Powell should have new titles that better reflect the roles undertaken by them.

Accordingly, Laura Dyer will now be known as The Finance and Administration Manager.

Likewise, Clive Powell has a change of title, and he will be known as our Local Councils Adviser and Learning and Development Manager.

Back Page



Don't forget that our Annual Meeting takes place on Saturday 19 November at Ditton Community Centre. The new Police and Crime Commissioner, Matthew Scott, has confirmed his attendance as one of the speakers at our keynote event of the year.

The deadline for submitting motions for debate to the Kent Association of Local Councils Annual Meeting is 23 September 2016,



Fundraising Opportunities



•The Kent Community Foundation has a whole new round of themed funding

programmes that have a closing date of 26 August 2016. Do take a look at their website here:

<http://www.kentcf.org.uk/apply/funding-round/>

Which should give you all the relevant information that you require should you be eligible to apply.

- When did your community last hold a one off event that brought everyone together? The Diamond Jubilee, the Olympics? Further back than that? It is a sad fact that, according to a recent survey run by the Big Lottery Fund, six

out of ten people who were asked could not remember attending such an event in recent years. The Big Lottery Fund wishes to change that sad statistic with its "Celebrate England" scheme. There is funding available from £300 to £10000 for communities who wish to get together via an event. The criteria is pretty fluid, but could be of use to our members who have something special to celebrate. Funding opened on 6 July 2016 and will continue until all grants have been awarded. Further details can be found by following this link:

<https://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/celebrateengland>

Vacancies

We advertise various vacancies from our member Town and Parish Councils. You can view them by following this link:

<http://kentalc.gov.uk/page-1172115>

Likewise, if you would like to advertise your Council's vacancy, you can do so free of charge via our website as part of the benefits of membership. Contact Laura or Tricia at the office for more details.

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Welcome Back!

In this Issue:

- Front Page Matter
- Page 2 Leading your Learning - Our Training and Development Events
- Page 3 Came and Company, Local Council Insurance
- Page 4 Chairman's Comment - Cllr Evison writes for us
- Page 5 President's Piece - Cllr John Rivers regular column
- Page 6 Financial Updates
- Page 7 Missing From Your Inbox
- Page 8 Devolution on Your Doorstep
- Page 9 Kent County Council
- Page 10 Transparency Fund
- Page 11 Kent Fire and Rescue Service
- Page 12 Kent County Council Consultations
- Page 13 Annual Meeting Updates
- Back Page

The Holidays Are Over... Back to Work!

How did that happen? One moment we are all waiting in anticipation for that elusive break that we have been looking forward to since last year, and then it is over. Gone, Kaput. For quite a few months whilst the autumn sets in. September is well and truly upon us all after the first good weather we had at the beginning of the month.

However, local councils have much to talk about now. Budgets and precepts need to be discussed and set. Finance becomes a major topic for discussion in the Autumn each year, which is why we hold one of our major conferences on finance at this time so that you can be sure that your Council is up to date with the latest legislation.

Our event programme continues to be one of our main activities here, as well as being able to help our members with



their legal and technical enquiries. Do look at our timetable for the next few months - which you can find in The News or online - and book your place on one of our sessions.

As previously mentioned our next major event will be our Finance Conference in mid October. Many of our members have already registered to attend, so demand is high.

We hope to see you there!

Leading Your Learning

Training at KALC



Learning and Development At KALC

Much of what we do at KALC is concentrated on offering our members good learning and development strategies. Our last issue of the News detailed the importance of Councils having a training policy and budget, and we hope that those pointers will have helped you in any new discussion you have, now that Councils have come back from the traditional quiet time of August. We are launching some specialist workshops during this season, which we are confident will be of help to both Councillors and Officers alike. Watch our website!

What's On In the Autumn?

- 28 September 2016 - Introducing Allotment Law and Management.
Harrietsham Village Hall, 9am to 2pm
- 4 October 2016 - An Introduction to Finance for Local Councils
New Romney Town Council, 7pm to 10pm
- 18 October 2016 - Annual Finance Conference
Teynham Village Hall, 9am to 4:30pm
- 21 October 2016 - Website Training from Hugo Fox.
Lenham Community Centre, 9am to 4:30pm
- 24 October 2016 - Website Training from Hugo Fox
Lenham Community Centre, 9am to 4:30pm
- 12 November 2016 - The Dynamic Councillor
Rusthall Parish Council, 9am to 12:30pm

Dates are to be confirmed on these Conferences/Workshops:

- Emergency Planning Conference
- Media and Communication Conference
- Rural Issues Conference

Cllr Ray Evison - KALC Chairman, writes for *The News*

Chairman's Comment ...On Chairmanship Matters

Chairmanship requires thoughtful, considerate leadership. A good Chairman should lead but not be overbearing...not leading by domination. A good Chairman will listen to other's views and seek to summarise them into a cogent balanced statement.

Seek Consensus. Remember you represent the Council and the Council represents your whole community.

In Local Council matters there are bound to be politics, but not, under any guise should there be party politics. Party politics are anathema to harmonious local government.

Responsibilities of A Chairman.

Always be sure of why you make a decision. Whenever it is appropriate, offer a rationale for your decision making.

Make all decisions on expenditure public. It is public money that you are allocating.

Relationship with the Clerk.

Formal when needs be. Informal/social whenever possible.

You and the Clerk are a team. Always inform your Clerk of your plans.

Whenever possible, respond to questionnaires or surveys addressed to the Council together with your Clerk.

Encourage Clerk's training and updating. Encourage your Clerk to attend the Clerk's

Annual Conferences. Not only do they provide up to

date information, they encourage networking and the sharing of good practice.

Invite the Clerk to report what was obtained from the Conference.

Offer an annual appraisal to your Clerk. Constructively review changing roles and responsibilities. Consider remuneration of your Clerk annually with your fellow councillors. Invite the Clerk's commentary on your own way of working.

Preparation for Council meetings. Two hour meeting needs two hours preparation.

Always have your copy of the Terms of Reference with you. The general public have

the right to KNOW that you are chairing the meeting correctly.

Encourage public participation in their prescribed slot. Be relaxed about public participation at other times, when appropriate. Be formal when necessary, conversational when you can. Earn the Respect of the electorate.

Invite District Councillors and your County Councillor to participate and report to each P C meeting.

Expect your PCSO to attend or provide a report. If possible, have each Councillor have distinctive responsibility for some aspect of the Council's work or community matters.

Ensure those who are not part of the electorate (children, businesses) have their interests considered. Provide an annual report to your electorate on all that the Council has done in their name. Invite your electorate to comment on the report.

President's Piece

A Word or Two from John Rivers - KALC President

Arguably after many decades '*in the wilderness*', the time for Parish & Town Councils to become a more integral part of Local Government has arrived. Localism, along with a pragmatic approach to managing the public purse, has meant that District and County Councils, across the country, have woken up and '*smelt the coffee*'!

Our tier of local government is now seen as a way in which some Borough and County services can be maintained, albeit in a different form, by making use of our local knowledge and expertise. Money following those services will help to make that happen. Discussions are ongoing, but much of the talk is about how £ x can make £ x+ value by allowing Parishes to locally manage work that was otherwise done by others.

Of course, none of this is new! It is amazing to think that the '*Caretaker scheme*', a joint venture by Kenardington, Stone, Warehorne and Wittersham Parish Councils, has been in operation for over 5 years now! This model, and there are

several to choose from, allows Kent County Council Highways and Ashford Borough Council works to be carried out by a full-time locally employed caretaker. It means that the cost to run the work is shared across a wider area, generating sufficient income to run the scheme, plus allowing for additional work to be carried out. The ability to share expertise, where appropriate, amongst the four parishes is yet another bonus.

This does not mean that those Parish Councils have lost their own identity! There is no suggestion, or wish, to 'merge'. Working together empowers local communities, even small ones, to achieve a lot and to pick-up certain tasks that a County or District Council may be offering. If something else was offered by, say, a District Council, there is likely to be more scope for additional workload as each Parish is not working in isolation. Each 'Cluster' of Parishes can identify one of them to take a lead on certain categories of work if they so wished. The larger the cluster, the greater the opportunity for taking

work from the District and County Council.

"Why would we want to get involved in work previously carried out by others?" Let me remind you when, from around 80 years ago, Parish & Town Councils complained about not being regarded as a serious player in local government. If your parish council is offered the opportunity to carry out work previously managed by County or your District, I would hope that you would at least examine the possibilities and see what benefits you could gain for your local community? Talking with your neighbouring Parishes, in clusters, or, in the case of a larger Town Council, maybe 'satellite' Parishes, may support your aspirations? You might find that you are not alone in wanting to finally make things happen in your community?

The time to approach neighbouring Parish & Town Councils is now. Expertise already exists within KALC member councils. Please don't leave it too late to capitalise on the fast-changing local government scene. Until next time ...

IMPORTANT INFORMATION PLEASE READ!!!!!!

One of the recurring comments KALC have received over the past few weeks is the approach of the External Auditor, PKF Littlejohn, with regard to the information local councils have been providing regarding the "Explanation of variances – pro forma". David Buckett, KALC's Financial Consultant, has been looking into this matter and has spoken to one of the Senior Audit Managers at PKF Littlejohn about their approach this year.

The Senior Audit Manager did confirm that the team have been given instructions to be more "robust" in their reviews of the information provided supporting the variances between the two financial years 2014-15 and 2015-16. However, it was pointed out that the instructions/guidance set out within the covering letter and the "Explanation of variances – pro forma" is no different to previous year.

Finance... Keeping Up To Date

Annual Return 31 March 2016

Covering letter extracts:-

Documentation to be submitted with the Annual Return. If your body had financial transactions in the year, please return **only** the following:

- a full explanation, with figures, of any significant variances between the current and prior Accounting Statements (we have enclosed a pro forma for your information which shows which variances require an explanation and explains what is meant by 'significant');

Explanation of variances – pro forma

Name of smaller body:

The 'Practitioners' Guide' provides guidance on explaining significant variances. **Please provide full explanations, including numerical values**, for the following:

- variances of more than 15% between totals for individual

boxes (except variances of less than £200);

- if the total reserves (Box 7) figure is more than twice the annual precept value (Box 2).

Hence **full explanations, including numerical values**, are expected, PKF Littlejohn are not accepting generalisations such as "the grass cutting contract cost more this year". They want to know how much it cost last year (2014-15) and how much it cost this year (2015-16), which hopefully accounts for the differences between the two amounts to within £200.

David's view is that accounting for the differences should be part of the local council's "governance" arrangements, in that councillors and clerks should be aware of these financial variances and when councillors are approving the Accounting Statements for 2015-16 (Section 2) they should be looking at the "Explanation of variances – pro forma" as well. This pro forma gives a different

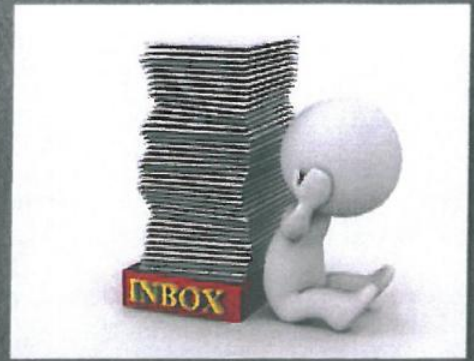
view from the in-year budget monitoring reports councillors should be receiving on a regular basis, which compares the 2015-16 original budget figures against the actual figures for 2015-16 which does NOT provide a comparison with the previous year's activity; although a lot of clerks provide this type of year to year comparison as part of the annual budget/precept setting exercise carried out during December/January each year.

During David's conversation with the Senior Audit Manager, it did come to light that the PKF Littlejohn staff have had to deal with a lot more unpleasantness on the phones from clerks unwilling to provide the requested information this year than before (from all around the country, not just Kent), which is totally unacceptable.

David will be reviewing the Annual Return process as part of his training module at this year's KALC Finance Conference on 18 October.



MISSING FROM YOUR INBOX...



Local Councils And Pension Auto Enrolment... Don't Get Caught Out!

It would appear that there are still some local councils who still believe that Pension Auto Enrolment does not apply to them as they have no employees that need to be auto-enrolled. Perhaps this is because their officers have low earnings, but some duties apply to all employers. Even if your staff aren't eligible to be automatically enrolled into a scheme, you should complete the Pensions Regulator Duties Checker – there will be a link provided at the end of this article for you. Your Council may well be described as a small or micro employer, but even the smallest firm has been known to be fined recently – at the present time, that figure stands at around 3000! This has been for simply not submitting the required

Declaration of Compliance – which is, in layman's terms, the notification you should send to the Regulator that indicates that you have no employees that need enrolment.

The Pensions Regulator advises that the employer – in our case, the Parish or Town Council – must make sure it knows its obligations, so it is important that someone within the Council does the work necessary. Make sure that this is done and make sure you comply. Otherwise, you may well find there is a real threat of a fine. You can find more information at:

<http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/en/employers>

Real Examples of Non Compliance ...Read On!

The latest bulletin from the Pensions Regulator (June 2016) details the number of times that it has used its powers to maximise compliance with employer duties. In said report, it details two cases where employers were fined £400 when they did not comply with their duties - it was a clear case of failing to understand how the law affected them:

- *The garage owner who failed to complete a declaration of compliance because he thought another member of staff had completed the task*
- *The travel agent with no staff eligible for automatic enrolment who failed to complete their duties such as the completion of their declaration of compliance after wrongly assuming that the law did not apply to them.*

Clearly the advice to heed here is to comply...even if you think you don't need to. Further details on this can be found at :

<http://www.thepensionsregulator.gov.uk/press/pn16-42.aspx>

Devolution

Time To

Talk...

Devolution has become a modern “buzzword” within regional government. Successive parliaments in the 21st century have talked about it, legislated it and now put it into practice. The National Association of Local Councils has devoted much time to the subject, and there is a myriad of information and indeed help that is accessible to members when the need arises.

NALC asked this question of its members: What Do You Think Of Local Councils Clustering Together To Represent And Deliver Services?

The answers given, by those who completed the survey, were not only encouraging but objective too. Many spoke of “economies of scale” being a large factor in deciding whether to join other councils in a cluster arrangement, but agreed that the idea might be feasible when approaching a standalone project. Some Councils were concerned that larger councils could become “mini boroughs” with more regulation and costing money rather than saving it. Others were worried that the concept could prove difficult and might affect the individuality of smaller councils.

It is, of course, a story that will run and run. It won't disappear from government agendas any time soon.

It is wise, then, to be “Devolution Savvy” and know as much about the subject as your Council cares to. On a local level, Cllr Harry Rayner (KALC Vice Chairman) will be speaking about devolution, and what it could mean to our county, at our Finance Conference later on in the Autumn. You may also like to consult the NALC webpages that approach the subject in some detail.

You can find all of that information here:

<http://www.nalc.gov.uk/devolution>



Parish Seminars

**Kent
County
Council**
kent.gov.uk



Kent Highways issued its "Tracker Survey" on 12 September 2016. The closing date for the survey return is on Friday 12 November 2016. It would be helpful if Councils would engage with the initiative and complete their feedback as soon as possible.

The Highways team has also arranged for a series of "Parish Seminars" to take place in October and November to which representatives from Local Councils are particularly encouraged to attend.

Whilst the agenda for the seminars has not been finalised at the time of writing, you can expect to hear the latest news regarding Kent Highways, including:

- Priorities and Spending
- Budgets available

In attendance at the seminars will be:

- The Director of Kent Highways, Roger Wilkin

And where available

- The Cabinet Member for Environment & Transport, Cllr Matthew Balfour
- Friday 21 October - Spitfire Ground in Canterbury. Dover, Canterbury and Thanet areas. 9am to 12:30pm
- Thursday 27 October - Oakwood House in Maidstone. Tonbridge and Malling, Maidstone and Gravesham areas. 9am to 12:30pm
- Thursday 3 November - Holiday Inn Central in Ashford. Shepway, Swale and Ashford areas. 9:30am to 1pm
- Thursday 10 November - Mercure Hotel in Tunbridge Wells. Dartford, Sevenoaks and Tunbridge Wells areas. 9:30am to 1pm

Full confirmed agenda will be available in the near future, but in the meantime, do save the date in your area!

SAVE THE DATE

**COMING
UP**



The Transparency Fund... What's Not To Like?

If your Council has a turnover not exceeding £25000, your Council should be compliant with the mandatory requirements of the Transparency Code for smaller authorities which requires certain information to be published online. Further details on the mandatory requirements of the Transparency Code, which came into force on 1 April 2015, can be accessed via the following link

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/transparency-code-for-smaller-authorities>.

All smaller authorities with a turnover not exceeding £25,000 must make sure they are compliant with the Code.

We wanted to remind all those Councils that have a turnover not exceeding £25,000 that the Government has set up a Transparency Fund to enable them to become compliant with the mandatory requirements of the Transparency Code. The Fund can be used to purchase a computer/laptop, software and a scanner if the Council does not already own them and staff costs for becoming and maintaining compliance with the mandatory Code. Further details on what can be claimed are set out in the updated guidance notes and new application form on the NALC website <http://www.nalc.gov.uk/our-work/the-transparency-fund>.

Thank you to those Councils that have already submitted applications. The national board has so far approved 52 applications from our county totalling just over £32,500 and payments have now been sent to all those councils.

We would encourage all councils that have a turnover not exceeding £25,000 to look closely at the new Guidance Notes and consider whether they are able to claim for costs associated with compliance with the Transparency Code for smaller authorities. Authorities with a spend of over £25,000 are not eligible to apply for funding from the Transparency Fund unless they can prove that their turnover has not been exceeding the £25,000 limit 3 years in a row.

Please note that those councils that made an application for funding in 2015/2016, can now apply for monthly staff costs for 2016/2017. See the Guidance Note for further details.



Kent Fire & Rescue Service

Keep safe near water

Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS) is urging everyone to stay safe around water and to be aware of the everyday dangers of being near water or mud.

Around 400 people on average drown in the UK every year, that's one person every 20 hours. What is surprising is that nearly half of those are people who had no intention of entering the water but who simply slipped or went in after pets or to rescue others.

KFRS was involved with 40 mud and water rescues over the last 12 months.

KFRS Community Safety Manager, Charlie Smith said: "Being near water or mud is often perceived as a low risk activity, while water-based activities are considered high risk. But statistics show that's not the case. People shouldn't assume they're not at risk of drowning just because they don't intend to go into or on the water."

Charlie added "Most people would be shocked to hear that those people drowning just happen to be near water, such as runners, dog walkers and anglers. They are unaware of the risks and are totally unprepared for the scenario of ending up in the water. By highlighting this issue and making sure simple safety messages reach them we hope to reduce the number of these needless deaths."

By following some simple advice, you can reduce your risk of ending up in the water, and as a result putting the life of your rescuer or the life of a firefighter at risk:

- Never fool around near water - you might trip and fall in.
- Take care on riverbanks - they may be slippery or unstable.
- Go with a friend if you're going swimming, fishing or boating - they can help - or get help - if you're in trouble in difficult water.

KFRS is encouraging parents to make sure their children are aware of these safety messages, especially if there are rivers or lakes nearby.

Charlie said: "Rivers, lakes and quarries may look inviting, but they're not playgrounds and are full of unseen hazards. A quick dip can turn into a disaster, especially as you won't know how deep the water is or how strong the currents are that can drag you away from the bank. Even when the sun is shining the water is likely to be cold and can tire the most experienced swimmers. Apart from the risk of drowning, taking a plunge in unclean water could make you seriously ill and, in some cases, can be fatal."

Consultations...Add Your Voice to the Debate

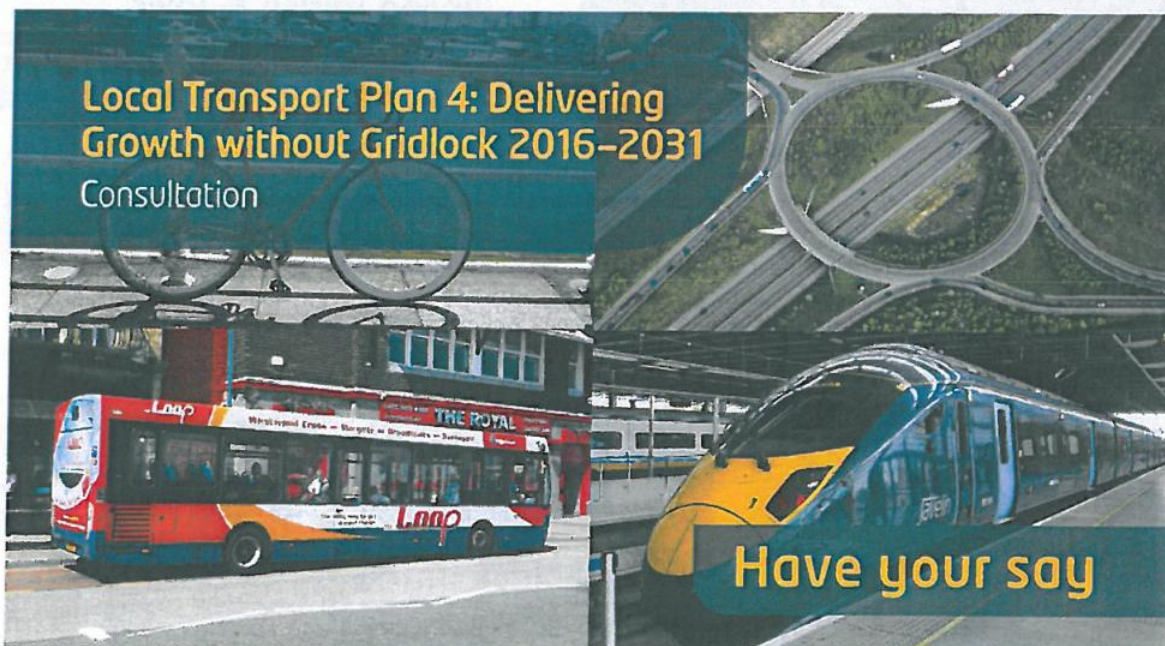


kent.gov.uk/wastestrategy
Consultation closes 2 October 2016



Local Transport Plan 4: Delivering Growth without Gridlock 2016-2031

Consultation

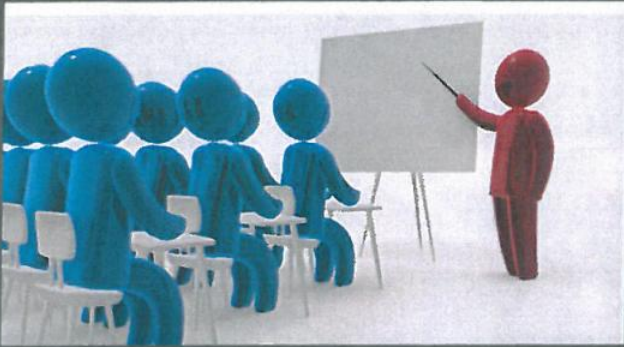


Have your say

Visit kent.gov.uk/localtransportplan to download a copy of the Local Transport Plan draft and fill in the online questionnaire.
Consultation closes 30 October 2016.



Things You Should Know



The Annual Meeting
of the
Kent Association
Of
Local Councils
Takes place on
Saturday 19
November 2016
At
Ditton
Community Centre

You should receive your Papers for the event in early October and you may send two voting members from your Council to the event. Our midday meal and refreshments will be provided by our sponsors, Came and Company - Local Council Insurance Specialists, so there is such a thing as a free lunch!



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Fundraising Opportunities

We are always happy to advertise any vacancy that you Council may have. This is a service that is free of charge to our members - so please take advantage of it when you have an employment to offer. Likewise, our website is the ideal place to start if you are looking for local council employment - you can access the relevant page here: <http://kentalc.gov.uk/page-1172115>

VACANCIES

Need funding for your Project...
You might just find it here.

- *The Gatwick Foundation*
Fund: Deadline for Applications - 21 October. This is open to areas of west Kent, specifically targeting the boroughs of Sevenoaks, Tunbridge Wells, and Tonbridge and Malling. You may be eligible to apply for funding if your project involves elderly people, young people or families.
- *Tesco Bags for Help*
Grants of up to £5,000 are available to not-for-profit organisations for capital improvements to local community greenspaces. Each month, an in-store vote will determine which projects will be funded. Three local community

projects will be voted on in Tesco stores each month across 200 regions throughout Great Britain. In each region, the project that received the most votes from all stores in their region will receive a grant of up to £5,000. The second placed project receives up to £2,000 and third placed up to £1,000. Every year, over 7,000 projects will receive funding through this scheme.

- Grants must be used for projects which deliver improvements to the physical environment and/or encourage the use and long-term stability of outdoor spaces. Examples

include: Developing a community garden or nature trails in a local park or nature reserve
Purchasing bee hives and seeding wildflower meadows on a community allotment
Developing a garden in a hospice, purchasing plants, benches and pergola
Supporting a gardening project which helps local isolated residents form a gardening club
Supporting practical training for young people learning horticultural skills
Funding a series of summer events in a local park
Funding a programme of beach clean-up events
Repainting swings and play equipment in a park

- Deadline: Continuous rolling programme (no deadlines)

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T/C 13/10/16-

Graham Blew

To: Harris, Peter C2
Subject: Reply : Expression of Interest to Serve as a Town Councillor for Knockhall Ward
Importance: High



Dear Mr Harris

Many thanks for your submission below. This item is due to be considered at the full Council ,meeting scheduled for 13 October 2016 at 7pm. to which you are invited to attend.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Blew
Town Clerk

SWANSCOMBE & GREENHITHE TOWN COUNCIL
Council Offices | The Grove | Swanscombe | Kent | DA10 0GA.
Tel: 01322 385513 | Fax: 01322 385849
www.swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk

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From: Harris, Peter C2 [mailto:]
Sent: 09 August 2016 12:11
To: Graham Blew <graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk>
Cc: 'Bryan Read' <Bryan.Read@dartford.gov.uk>
Subject: Expression of Interest to Serve as a Town Councillor for Knockhall Ward

Graham,

Please find my submission below in relation to the above casual vacancy.

1. I am qualified to be such pursuant to s79 of the Local Government Act 1972 and not disqualified pursuant to s80.
2. I believe my commitment is demonstrated by my previous time as a Town Councillor, when my attendance record was very good. I would expect this to be replicated should I be co-opted.
3. I already engage well with the local community, being both an active member of the local Neighbourhood Watch (NHW) as well as serving on the main North West Kent NHW committee. For the past 2 years I have also lead the Community Speed Watch team that covers Knockhall, Greenhithe Riverside and Stone, a team that was started at my instigation.
4. I have experience and knowledge from being a Town Councillor previously, contributing constructively on a number of committees, especially the ASB committee where I was Deputy Chair. I have also been the Town Council's nominee on the IPGM board for the past 9 years and have regularly submitted concise and timely reports to the full Town Council.
5. I am a fellow of the Institute of Leadership & Management and so skilled in dealing with people on a daily basis.

6. I am due to retire from full time work so would be able to devote even more time to the community/Town Council activities, in addition to what I already do.

Regards

Peter Harris

Peter Harris

[Redacted signature block]

For further information on Accreditation opportunities visit the [Accreditation](#) page on the D Ed Cap Intranet site

Please see the [AES Newsletter](#) for links and guidance on educational policy, JSPs, DINs, ABNs and forms.

30 AEC Group [MOSS](#)

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To: graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk [Remove this sender from my allow list](#)
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08 SEP 2016



● Knockhall Road
Greenhithe
Kent
DA9 9HF

Swanscombe and Greenhithe Town Council
Council Offices
The Grove
Swanscombe
Kent
DA10 0GA

8th September 2016

Dear Sirs,

Expression of Interest: Town Councillor (Knockhall Ward)

I write with regard to your notice dated 8th July 2016 concerning the vacancy for a Town Councillor for the Knockhall Ward. Please accept this letter as my expression of interest in this position, in which I would stand as an independent candidate.

I have been a resident of Knockhall for over five years and therefore meet the qualification under S79 of the Local Government Act 1972. I am not disqualified from standing as Councillor under S80 of the Act.

The Knockhall Ward is particularly complex, in that it includes both established residential areas, those under development currently (e.g. Castle Hill, Empire Bowls Club) and those where future development is planned (e.g. the ex-Biffa site). The management of the impact of the changing face of our area to both mitigate any negative impact and to maximise the benefits for new and existing residents is critical to the wellbeing of residents. Having previously lived in an area with significant residential development and been an active member of the Residents' Association in that area, I am experienced in critiquing development proposals and challenging the delivery of the non-residential aspects of development, for example the investment towards and delivery of recreation and leisure facilities.

I believe that we lack facilities for youths in the area and, as a parent, I'd like to see greater provision for those members of our community who currently lack a focal point to spend their free time positively. I see partnering with property developers and other local stakeholders as being key to understanding the leisure facilities which should be delivered for the benefit of residents.

As the development of our area continues, we need to consider the impact upon our transport infrastructure. I commute to London daily by train and regularly use the roads and it is clear that both the local road and rail networks are over capacity. The needs of local residents should be represented when considering the impact of planning applications.

Much is said of the provision of affordable housing in the area, but I would challenge whether properties are genuinely affordable by those on low incomes in critical professions who wish to buy a property. As the lowest level of government, the Town Council should challenge the provision of properties to ensure that they are attainable by those in critical professions.

I look forward to the opportunity to work with you.

Yours truly,

Sam Dalton

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TC 13/10/16

Graham Blew

From: Graham Blew
Sent: 04 October 2016 12:42
To: 'Linda Manchester'
Subject: Invitation : Application to be co-opted as a Swanscombe Ward Town Councillor
Importance: High



Dear Linda Manchester

Many thanks for your below submission. This item is due to be considered at the full Council, meeting scheduled for 13 October 2016 at 7pm. to which you are invited to attend.

Yours sincerely,

Graham Blew
Town Clerk

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From: Linda Manchester [mailto:████████████████████]
Sent: 04 October 2016 12:28
To: Graham Blew <graham.blew@swanscombeandgreenhithetowncouncil.gov.uk>
Subject: Application to be co-opted as a Swanscombe Ward Town Councillor

Hello Graham,

I would like to apply to be co-opted to serve as a Town Councillor for the Swanscombe Ward vacancy. Please see my supporting statement shown below.

Kind regards

Linda

Linda Manchester
(01322) 386194

I have had an interest in working with the community throughout my adult life, and from 1986 was an active member of the Tenants Association in the Southwark area where I lived. In 1994 I was elected as a Southwark Borough Councillor for Abbey Ward (later renamed Grange Ward); and subsequently served the

Council in a range of posts including being a member the Housing Committee, a member of the Planning Committee, a member of the Standards Committee, the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Chair of the Licencing Committee, the Executive Member for Community Safety, and also as Deputy Mayor for Southwark. I was made a Honorary Alderman for the Borough of Southwark in 2015. Among many other duties, I was actively involved with the planning and construction phases for "The Shard" development adjacent to the London Bridge Train Station.

I moved home from Southwark to Greenhithe in 2012, and have sought to become involved with the community here. I am a member of the local Neighborhood Watch, and have become involved with the Residents Association in Swanscombe and Greenhithe. I am retired from full-time working, and am keen to use the spare time I have available to further help residents of our local community. If I am co-opted into the position of Town Councillor for Swanscombe Ward I will endeavour to fulfil my obligations to Town Council and local residents to the best of my ability.

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