

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL



EXECUTIVE SERVICES

Chief Executive

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NB - This agenda contains proposals, recommendations and options. These do not represent Council policy or decisions until they have received proper consideration through the full decision making process.

Contact: Democratic Services
committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk

3 June 2020

To: MEMBERS OF THE PARISH PARTNERSHIP PANEL
(Copies to all Members of the Council)

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the Parish Partnership Panel to be held online via Microsoft Teams on Thursday, 11th June, 2020 commencing at 7.30 pm. Information on how to observe the meeting will be published to our website.

Yours faithfully

JULIE BEILBY

Chief Executive

A G E N D A

Part 1 - Public

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes

5 - 12

To confirm as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Partnership Panel held on 6 February 2020

3. Response to the Coronavirus pandemic and the way forward 13 - 34

The reports of the Management Team reviewed by Extraordinary Cabinet on 19 May and Cabinet on 3 June 2020 are attached for information.

4. Kent County Council Services Update

Representatives from Kent County Council to provide an update on recent initiatives, consultations and other matters of interest with a focus on the coronavirus pandemic.

5. Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Services Update

Representatives from Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council to provide an update on recent initiatives, consultations and other matters of interest.

DISTRIBUTION

Borough Council Representatives

Cllr N J Heslop (Chairman)
Cllr M A Coffin (Vice-Chairman)
Cllr Mrs J A Anderson
Cllr R P Betts
Cllr R W Dalton
Cllr P M Hickmott
Cllr F A Hoskins
Cllr S A Hudson
Cllr Mrs C B Langridge
Cllr D Lettington
Cllr B J Luker
Cllr M R Rhodes
Cllr M Taylor

Parish and Town Council Representatives

Addington
Aylesford
Birling
Borough Green
Burham
Ditton
East Malling and Larkfield
East Peckham
Hadlow
Hildenborough
Ightham
Kings Hill
Leybourne
Mereworth
Offham
Platt
Plaxtol
Ryarsh
Shipbourne
Snodland
Stansted
Trottiscliffe
Wateringbury
West Malling
West Peckham
Wouldham
Wrotham

County Councillors

Trudy Dean, Malling Central
Matthew Balfour, Malling Rural East
Sarah Hohler, Malling North
Peter Homewood, Malling Rural North East
Harry Rayner, Malling West

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TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

PARISH PARTNERSHIP PANEL

Thursday, 6th February, 2020

Present: Cllr N J Heslop (Chairman), Cllr M A Coffin (Vice-Chairman), Cllr R P Betts, Cllr R W Dalton, Cllr F A Hoskins, Cllr S A Hudson, Cllr Mrs C B Langridge, Cllr D Lettington, Cllr B J Luker, Cllr M R Rhodes and Cllr M Taylor.

Together with Addington, Aylesford, Birling, Borough Green, Burham, East Malling and Larkfield, Hadlow, Hildenborough, Kings Hill, Offham, Platt, Plaxtol, Ryarsh, Shipbourne, West Peckham, Wouldham and Wrotham Parish Councils and County Councillors Mrs S Hohler, Mr P Homewood and Mr H Rayner.

Councillors J L Sergison, T B Shaw and N G Stapleton were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs J A Anderson and Ditton Parish Council.

PART 1 - PUBLIC

PPP 20/1 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 14 November 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PPP 20/2 UPDATE ON ACTION IDENTIFIED IN THE LAST MINUTES

There were no actions identified that were not covered elsewhere on the agenda. However, the Chairman referred to Minute Number PPP 19/29 (Speedwatch) and advised that he was meeting the Chief Constable on 24 April 2020 and would use this opportunity to raise the concerns of parish councils.

In addition, the Chairman congratulated Watringbury Parish Council on their recent media publicity to raise awareness of air quality and speeding concerns in their community.

PPP 20/3 STREET SCENE SERVICES

Updates were provided on the following issues:

(a) Waste Services Contract

The Waste Contract Officer advised that the Borough Council recognised that the poor performance related to the new service

arrangements were unacceptable and acknowledged that the last few months had been extremely difficult and frustrating.

In response to the contractor's poor performance, particularly over the Christmas period, the Borough Council escalated contract issues with Urbaser and the Chief Executive wrote personally to the Managing Director. As a result of formal meetings at the highest level the contractor had provided a detailed action plan to address and resolve the performance issues.

A number of measures had been implemented to ensure that all residents received an acceptable level of service. These included:

- Doubling capacity with twenty additional refuse vehicles and fifty more collection staff;
- Changing to new vehicles which focused on collecting either mixed recycling or food waste, not both;
- Re-planning and reducing the size of some collection rounds to ensure they were completed;
- Placing additional inspectors at depots and on collection rounds to monitor performance;
- Reducing the number of agency staff in favour of more permanent staff;
- Improving data handling to identify and respond to repeatedly missed 'hot spots; and
- Increasing temporary staffing at the Borough Council to deal with complaints and reports of missed bins.

Progress on the action plan was monitored weekly and the Waste Contract Officer was pleased to report that since the implementation of the new measures contract performance had improved significantly. There had been a reduction in the volume of complaints received and the number of calls continued to fall. However, it was essential that the improved level of performance was maintained.

Despite the issues with the contract there had been very positive engagement from residents regarding recycling. It was reported that early indications for October/November 2019 showed an improved recycling collection rate of 50% which was extremely encouraging.

In addition, there had been significant interest in the garden waste collection scheme, with 47% of residents in the Borough subscribing.

Once the service performance was consistent the Borough Council would introduce the collection of communal bins. It was anticipated that the roll-out of this service would not commence until April 2020. Members were also advised that the current bring bank sites would remain in place until after the communal bins service was in operation to allow continuity of service for those residents. There would also now be more focus on the street cleaning programme.

Finally, it was noted that scheduled major road works on the A21 for a 10 day period in February 2020 may have implications for waste collections due to congestion and potential gridlock.

The Chairman, in his role as Leader of the Council, reiterated disappointment and frustration at the poor performance of the contractor during January. However, he was pleased to see an improving position and thanked parish/town councils and their communities for their patience, particularly the positive approach to recycling.

The parish councils welcomed the progress being made on improving the contract performance but expressed concern that some outstanding issues remained, such as the number of missed bins; emptying overflowing dog bins; the street cleaning programme; the quality of the service regarding placement of bins once emptied and collection of textiles and batteries.

(b) Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) in Tonbridge and Malling

Tenders for the HWRC were currently being evaluated by Kent County Council. This process would be followed by quality and financial submission assessments and negotiation meetings. The award of the contract was due on 25 February, with a mandatory standstill period which meant that the announcement of the successful contractor would be made from 9 March – assuming there was no challenge to this decision.

Officers from Kent County Council offered to attend the next meeting of the Parish Partnership Panel to provide a more detailed update.

(c) Fly Tipping Enforcement

It was reported that Kent County Council (KCC) had committed £250,000 to reduce the level of fly tipping in Kent. The funding would assist district and borough councils to undertake further enforcement, improve communications between all partners involved and aimed to better inform both householders and businesses of their Duty of Care and responsibilities relating to waste disposal.

Members were reminded that the collection and enforcement of fly tipping was the responsibility of district and borough councils and that the County Council provided support via the Kent Resource Partnership.

As part of this initiative a number of authorities were undertaking 'days of actions' in partnership with Kent Police. The Borough Council was planning a similar campaign focused on educating households to check the credentials of those collecting waste. Details would be shared with parish/town councils when these were finalised.

Parish Councils welcomed more active enforcement but queried whether fly tippers would take notice of social media messages, posters and other educational tools. In response to a query raised regarding the use of cameras to catch perpetrators in the act, it was indicated that whilst these could be a valuable tool in gathering evidence it could also be time consuming in collecting and reviewing footage.

The County Member for Malling West (Councillor Harry Rayner) referred to the joint arrangements between Districts and the County Council in policing 'hot spots' and commented that consistent problem sites within Tonbridge and Malling were not appearing on the lists reviewed under these arrangements.

The Director of Street Scene, Leisure and Technical Services advised that the Borough Council was aware of the funding available and would clarify what enforcement arrangements and proposals were being considered. A further update would be provided at the next meeting of the Parish Partnership Panel.

The Cabinet Member for Street Scene and Environment Services (Councillor Robin Betts) advised that he was attending the Kent Resource Partnership in the near future and would take this opportunity to discuss fly tipping initiatives.

(d) Car Parking Charges – Public Consultation

The public consultation on proposals for car parking management in the Borough ended on 9 February and all were encouraged to submit comments before the deadline.

Residents were invited to comment on proposals related to the Phase 11 Parking Plan, variation to parking charges and the introduction of charges in Aylesford, Larkfield and Snodland.

Members of the Street Scene and Environment Services Advisory Board would review the proposals and initial consultation responses on 9 June with a further report to Cabinet on 30 June. In respect of the proposals related to Aylesford, Larkfield and Snodland this would be followed by a further consultation period of 21 days in accordance with the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996. Members would review and consider the responses and proposals in September/October 2020.

PPP 20/4 PUBLIC CONSULTATION ON PLANNING APPLICATIONS

The Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure (Councillor David Lettington) advised that before deciding a planning application local planning authorities (LPAs) were required to undertake a formal period of public consultation, as prescribed in [article 15 of the](#)

[Development Management Procedure Order](#) (as amended). This included parish/town councils as a statutory consultee.

There was a prescribed period of 21 days from notification for consultation responses. A planning decision could not be made before this time.

Consultation was a valuable part of the planning process and it was important that the public had a say in decisions affecting them and their communities.

It was reported that the Borough Council operated a combination of processes which exceeded the statutory requirements:

- Notifications via publication of a weekly list;
- Specific notifications to Parish and Town Councils (including provision of a full copy of planning applications consulted on);
- Sending neighbour letters to those adjoining any application site;
- Publication of site notices and press notices;
- Specific consultation with statutory and non-statutory consultees; and
- Re-consulted on planning applications where substantive amendments were made.

In addition, Parish/Town Council representatives and local residents who had made written representations were given the opportunity to speak on applications to be heard by the Area Planning Committees.

However, a number of areas for improvement had been identified, especially related to deadline dates for the receipt of consultation responses. Proposals would be reviewed by the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board in March 2020. A further update would be provided at the next meeting of the Parish Partnership Panel.

The Parish Councils welcomed the comments from the Cabinet Member for Strategic Planning and Infrastructure regarding the potential to align deadline dates for the benefit of parish/town councils' consultation responses. It was hoped that the proposals arising from the Planning and Transportation Advisory Board would benefit all concerned.

PPP 20/5 ARTICLE 4 DIRECTIONS

Members noted the responses to the specific questions raised by the Tonbridge and Malling Area Committee, Kent Association of Local Councils (KALC) regarding Article 4 Directions (Permitted Development Rights).

The Chairman of KALC – Tonbridge and Malling Area Committee (Sarah Barker) advised that they were scheduled to meet in April and any further questions relating to Article 4 Directions and the responses

provided might be submitted at this time for further discussion at the next meeting of the Parish Partnership Panel.

PPP 20/6 KENT POLICE SERVICES UPDATE

Due to operational pressures representatives of Kent Police were unable to attend the meeting. However a written report had been submitted for information, which set out details of a number of recent initiatives and operations.

Further information on any of the items raised in the Kent Police Services Update report was available by contacting Kent Police direct. Alternatively, any specific community issues could be passed to the Democratic Services Officer (allison.parris@tmbc.gov.uk) to forward to Kent Police.

The Cabinet Member for Community Services (Councillor Mark Rhodes) advised that he frequently met the Police and Crime Commissioner as a 'critical friend'. Unfortunately, he was unable to attend the latest meeting which had set the budget for the next financial year. However, meetings could be viewed via the Kent County Council website.

The Parish Councils referred to the lack of police presence at parish council meetings, despite an earlier commitment from Kent Police to attend more regularly. This concern would be raised with Kent Police via the Kent Association of Local Councils and with the Chief Constable via the Chairman.

PPP 20/7 KENT COUNTY COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE

Members noted the report of the Kent County Council Member Hub Support Officer which advised that the budget proposals for 2020-21 would be considered by the County Council on 13 February 2020.

The County Member for Malling North (Councillor Sarah Hohler) referred to the significant concerns raised about Smart motorways and advised that Highways England would have to pause the implementation of the M20 until the Secretary of State had reached a decision on their future. However, this did not mean that the current roadworks would be stopped.

Details of a number of County initiatives and consultations were also set out for information. Particular reference was made to the Strategic Statement – Five Year Plan which was out for consultation until 17 February 2020. The draft Plan reflected the rural nature of Kent and there was an ambition to increase the number of community wardens.

All Kent County Council consultations could be viewed online at:

<http://consultations.kent.gov.uk/consult.ti>

Finally, reference was made to the proposals for the Lower Thames Crossing and the implications for residents in Tonbridge and Malling due to the lack of confirmed infrastructure proposals to support the scheme. Members anticipated that road networks in the Borough, particularly the A227, A228, A229, M2 and the M20 would be affected.

The Borough Council would respond to the ongoing consultation indicating that investment in the Lower Thames crossing was insufficient and impacts on the wider Kent road network should be considered. All parish/town councils were encouraged to submit comments.

PPP 20/8 TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL SERVICES UPDATE

The Chairman, in his role as Leader of the Council, advised that key points of relevance to Tonbridge and Malling had been covered elsewhere on the agenda. However, there would be an update on the Local Centres and Parades Shopfront Grant Scheme provided as part of the Service Updates at the next meeting of the Parish Partnership Panel.

The meeting ended at 9.15 pm

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

19 May 2020

Report of the Management Team

Part 1- Public

Executive Non Key Decisions

1 RESPONDING TO THE CORONAVIRUS EMERGENCY

Executive Summary

This report gives a strategic overview of the council's response to the national emergency, the impacts on service delivery, the introduction of priority initiatives, and financial impacts. The report also sets out a framework for the development of a future recovery plan. Cabinet is invited to endorse the response to date.

1.1 Strategic Context

- 1.1.1 In accordance with the Civil Contingences Act 2004 there is a declared state of emergency at national and local level in response to the coronavirus pandemic.
- 1.1.2 The Act requires local public services to form Local Resilience Forums. In Kent it is known as the Kent Resilience Forum (KRF), which is formed by the emergency responders and specific supporting agencies and is required to plan for emergencies. The Borough Council is an active member of the KRF.
- 1.1.3 A Gold-Silver-Bronze command structure is used to establish a hierarchical framework for the command and control of emergencies and disasters. Officers of the Borough Council will therefore participate in Gold (Strategic Planning) and Silver (Tactical Planning) command briefings throughout the emergency e.g. by participation in the strategic meetings (known as SCGs) and tactical meetings (known as TCGs).
- 1.1.4 In response to the coronavirus pandemic, all partners in the Kent Resilience Forum are now operating the above "command and control" structure to provide the county wide strategic oversight, and co-ordinate the tactical response. As a council we are active participants in this response, and deploy staff to the daily meetings on the SCG and TCG. We are also active participants in a number of themed "cells" focussing on specific activities. As Members would expect, we are also actively involved in a wide range of conference calls with the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and other agencies/ forums involved in responding to the pandemic. Notwithstanding this formal structure the Borough Council is designated as a Category 1 Responder under the Act and we have a

statutory responsibility to initiate our own response to the declared emergency. This paper will focus on the Borough Council's own response and activities.

1.2 Managing our response

- 1.2.1 As the global and national pandemic picture began to evolve, Management Team gave early consideration to what steps we should plan for, both in respect of the continued delivery of our services and any actions we may need to take in response to the pandemic.
- 1.2.2 The previous decisions Members have made in relation to the digital strategy, including the investment in more agile working solutions for staff through the replacement of PC's with laptops, meant we were well placed to ensure that staff were testing their remote working capabilities in the weeks prior to any restrictions on public movement being imposed. Management Team distanced into 2 units, to minimise risk of loss of all Directors to illness or isolation at the same time. We also started to ask staff to work from home in advance of any formal restrictions on movement and association.
- 1.2.3 On 26 March 2020, the Government imposed restrictions on the country, which were intended to prevent and protect against the spread of infection of the coronavirus. It is not the purpose of this report to reiterate the contents of the regulations nor the Coronavirus Act 2020 as all Members will be well aware of the broader picture. Members will however be interested to understand the management arrangements for our own ongoing response.
- 1.2.4 To manage our response we initiated daily "Business Continuity" (BC) virtual meetings, with an extended management team to include key staff leading on a number of themes relating to our own service delivery and to initiate our response to requests from the government and the KRF.
- 1.2.5 The key themes that formed the daily agenda for the BC meeting are as follows
- Situation Update
 - Staff
 - Members and democratic process
 - TMBC services (including financial position)
 - Business Sector
 - Community issues
 - Communications
- 1.2.6 It is not the intention that this report should set out every activity and action, but it may be helpful to set out some key issues under each of the themes above. A

number of these points along with the ongoing implications will feature in reports to various Advisory Boards and Committees over the coming months, and there will be the opportunity at that time for more detailed Member debate.

1.3 Staffing Theme

- 1.3.1 Our staff are our most valuable asset. As alluded to above, our immediate position was that wherever possible, all staff must work from home, only attending the offices if absolutely essential. Over 90% of our staff were equipped to work fully remotely from home, with access to all IT systems and telephony. Whilst this meant that an early decision was taken to close our front of house at both Kings Hill and Tonbridge Castle, this was compatible with the guidance to all to “stay at home and stay safe”. We were able to operate a full telephony and online service to residents and businesses.
- 1.3.2 Once again the staff have without exception responded in a flexible and committed way, adapting to either new ways of working from home, playing their turn in rotas to go into the office to manage for example incoming / outgoing post, or by embracing temporary redeployment into different roles to support the community hub. Our strategy of a default position of working from home, has kept our staff safe, maintaining service delivery, and showing leadership in following both the public health messaging and other restrictions on movement.

1.4 Members and democratic process

- 1.4.1 The Leader, Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member with responsibility for emergency planning, have been integral to the Council’s response to the emergency, with virtual meetings at least weekly with the Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive.
- 1.4.2 As part of our planning for “Brexit”, Members approved emergency decision making provisions within the Constitution. This has ensured that decision making has continued during the pandemic with consequential Decision Notices being published in order to ensure transparency. Where appropriate, decisions have also continued to be made at officer level under delegated authority.
- 1.4.3 Members have been advised previously of the changes introduced by the government in order to enable virtual meetings to take place in local government for the period up to 7 May 2021. In response to the changes, the Council has taken steps to implement virtual meetings locally by way of Microsoft Teams, in accordance with our agreed Digital strategy. It is expected that meetings of Council, Cabinet and other Boards and Committees will now be held virtually using this technology.

1.5 Community Issues

- 1.5.1 Community Hub – In line with Government guidance, the Council has established a Community Hub to support residents, particularly those on the NHS extremely

vulnerable “shielded” list and also others who may be considered vulnerable and in need of additional support. The Hub includes the following strands:

- 1.5.2 Support with essential food supplies. For those on the shielded list, a weekly Government parcel is delivered, however, the Council provides a food box if for some reason there is a problem with this delivery. Reasons might include a missed delivery, a registration difficulty or a delay between someone registering for the Government service and the time the parcel is likely to arrive. In addition, the Council will provide food parcels to anyone on this list who has a special dietary requirement (as the weekly food parcel from Government is a standard pack and does not cater for any special or medically restricted diets). Aside from all those included on the shielded list, the Council will provide a food parcel to vulnerable residents who contact the Hub and are in need of urgent emergency food. Deliveries have been undertaken by TMBC employees from a variety of services and include: Civil Enforcement Officers, Park Rangers, Environmental Health Officers and Technical Service teams.
- 1.5.3 Telephone contact to residents on the shielded list. Contact is made with all residents included on the NHS shielded list (to date this is around 3,000 people, but the list is updated and added to on a daily basis). Checks are made to confirm that they have support in place from either family, friends or neighbours and that they have adequate food supplies and any medication that is required. The Community Hub telephone number is provided, to allow them to make contact if they need any additional ongoing support. This work has been undertaken by TMBC employees across a variety of services, including; Elections, Executive Services, Community Safety, Customer Services and Leisure teams. Where residents require support appropriate action is taken including onward signposting to local community support networks such as Parish Council support and community volunteers. This ensures practical local support that can be sustained for as long as required.
- 1.5.4 Telephone befriending service. The Community Hub offers telephone befriending to anyone struggling with social isolation and loneliness during the period of lockdown or for those shielded or in self-isolation. This has been undertaken predominantly by the TMBC One You Health team. Members of this team have been ideally placed to offer emotional support, talking to people who often have complex health needs. Guidance and signposting to other services (such as mental health support, debt advice etc.) is offered, along with a regular friendly chat. The team have also become aware of an increasing number of safeguarding issues, which have been followed up with referrals to KCC Social Services, or support from the Community Safety Unit.
- 1.5.5 In terms of council tax, the government announced that it will give (up to) £150 help towards Council Tax if a working age taxpayer gets help through Council Tax Reduction, being a credit directly to the recipient’s council tax account. A fund of some £867k was provided to the council by the government for this. Under Emergency powers, Cabinet and the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed a policy. Staff have also been assisting any taxpayer who is

finding it difficult to make council tax instalments to re-profile their payments, and also signposting to other forms of potential assistance.

1.6 Business Sector

1.6.1 The overall support given by the council to local businesses to date has covered a number of key strands:

- a) Covid-19 Helpline: In partnership with Kent County Council and the other Kent Districts and Boroughs, a local Covid-19 Helpline was set up to give local businesses much needed guidance during the crisis and to explain the Government's Business Support Package. The helpline, run by the Kent & Medway Growth Hub, has been very well used - with 384 Tonbridge and Malling businesses using the service between 25 March and 24 April 2020. It will continue to run until at least 30 June 2020. Whilst business enquiries into the council have been extremely high, having the ability to signpost to this service has been very useful.
- b) Communicating directly with Business: this includes a number of strands, such as a dedicated Covid-19 business page on the TMBC (which is regularly being updated by the Economic Regeneration Team and has had over 2,500 visits since late March 2020), social media activity, and 3 Covid-19 e-bulletins to 600 of our local businesses.
- c) Rate Relief: Facilitating the 12-month Business Rates Holiday for all businesses in the Retail, Hospitality and Leisure sector (as defined by Government) and the Nursery Relief, which has been led by the Revenues Team.
- d) The delivery of Small Business Grants and Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Grants to eligible businesses in the Borough: following the receipt of £18.7m from Central Government, the Revenues Team, with the support of the Economic Regeneration Team, have been tracking down eligible businesses, getting them to provide necessary details in order to process the grant funding, undertaking checks to verify the claims and getting the grants to businesses as expediently as possible. This has been a considerable undertaking, and has involved getting messaging out via the website, social media, and e-newsletters as well as using extensive internet searches to track down contact details of individuals and businesses in order to contact them directly and encourage them to apply. It is no mean feat that c.80% of the grant money had been handed to eligible businesses as of 11 May 2020. Work is ongoing to continually track down eligible businesses that have yet to apply.

1.6.2 The Borough Council has also started initial work on preparing for the recently announced discretionary top-up grant funding which is aimed at small businesses (fewer than 50 employees) that missed out on the existing grant offer. Both guidance and funding are still to be received from Government, but it currently looks like this funding is to be steered towards businesses in shared space, regular

market traders, small charity property (that would meet the criteria for Small Business Rate Relief) and Bed & Breakfast establishments. There has already been a high level of interest in this scheme from local businesses.

1.7 TMBC Services

- 1.7.1 Executive services – All staff have worked on direct response to the emergency either in respect of the Community Hub, led by the Scrutiny and Partnerships Manager, or in supporting our business community, led by the Economic Regeneration Manager. These areas of work are referenced elsewhere in this report. There are however implications arising from these priorities. The timetable for the Climate Change Strategy will need to be revisited, as will the content of the Borough Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan which was adopted in 2019. Both will be the subject of reports to future Advisory Boards or Committees.
- 1.7.2 Central Services – staff have been involved in the Community Hub, both by providing the first point of contact for resident queries via Customer Services and by supporting the telephone contact to residents on the shielded list. Staff in Licensing Services and in Property Services have been managing requests for deferral of payments and other economic impacts of the pandemic. Other staff/teams in Central Services e.g. Human Resources, Media & Communications have been directly involved in the day to day Business Continuity issues created by the pandemic and in ensuring key messages are communicated both internally and externally.
- 1.7.3 Finance and IT Services – alongside existing ‘peak’ workload at the start of a new financial year, staff from across Service have worked to apply new rate reliefs to relevant business rate accounts; identify, validate, award and pay business support grants; manage the hardship funds for working age council tax payers in receipt of council tax support and manage requests for re-profiling of payments; assist and signpost claimants affected by furlough or other work related arrangements; prepare and collate financial data and contribute to work within Kent regarding financial impacts and cash-flow issues; and throughout providing, facilitating and developing digital and IT solutions to assist residents, businesses, staff and the Council generally. Although not a COVID 19 issue in itself, Members will also be aware of the UK Power networks substation issue which caused power outage on 5 and 6 April. This was a complex issue which tested our IT Disaster Recovery plans alongside the demands of the emergency, but overall staff coped extremely well and systems were back up and running quickly. It is intended to report in greater detail on some of these aspects to a meeting of the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board in July.
- 1.7.4 Planning – the service has not seen a decrease in levels of applications and as such have been engaging with applicants about extensions of time and application detail whilst planning committees have been suspended. Public consultation processes on applications have remained as previously as there has been no relaxation to these requirements, albeit that there were some delays between

validation of applications and consultation periods at the outset of the 'lockdown' period due to fundamental adjustments to operational processes. Paper based consultation materials for Parish Councils have been suspended. In addition to development management activity, work on the Local Plan has continued with a large amount of engagement with PINS around new dates for examination hearings in line with PINS revised timetables nationally.

- 1.7.5 Housing – the service has seen a large increase in approaches and applications and is following MHCLG guidance on challenging the needs of households to move in the current circumstances, whilst working hard to address housing need in cases such as domestic violence, severe overcrowding and rough sleeping, which has been a particular focus for MHCLG and Public Health England during the crisis. At the time of writing, there are over 100 households currently accommodated in Temporary Accommodation by TMBC and this has significant resource implications.
- 1.7.6 Environmental Health – officers have been involved in the Community Hub in a number of ways, including leading on social isolation issues via the One You team and specialist food requirements and food parcel deliveries via the Food and Safety team, who are also responding to food and drink businesses not adhering to guidelines. The service has seen a marked increase in complaints about garden bonfires and is responding to these safely. Following DEFRA guidance, our air quality monitoring work has also been able to continue whilst observing social distancing.
- 1.7.7 Leisure Services - the provision and maintenance of public open spaces has continued and has been essential in allowing residents to undertake daily exercise. On site facilities such as ball courts, tennis courts and play areas have been closed due to their enclosed nature. The main car parks serving the Country Parks have been closed.
- 1.7.8 Tonbridge Cemetery and grounds remain open and are being operated in accordance with government and industry guidance. Maintenance of the site and funerals have continued throughout the lockdown period. Use of the chapel for services has been suspended due to its size and the inability to adhere to social distancing rules.
- 1.7.9 The lockdown has had the greatest impact on the operation of the leisure centres and golf course, with the closure of these facilities. The Trust are taking measures to minimise the financial impact including the majority of its staff being furloughed. The Council is in close liaison with the Trust and has provided an advanced payment under PPN - 2/20 (Procurement Policy Note) to assist with immediate cash flow issues. On a more positive note the capital works at Larkfield Leisure Centre are continuing, and planned works to the roof replacement at Tonbridge Swimming Pool have been brought forward.
- 1.7.10 Waste Services - Urbaser has continued to deliver priority kerbside collection services. This has proven to be a significant challenge due to staff shortages and

increased volumes of waste being presented. In accordance with government and industry guidance, prioritisation has been given to the collection of residual (Black Bin) waste, clinical waste and mixed dry recycling. The collection of garden waste and the household bulky collection service were temporarily suspended and were reinstated in early May with support from KCC. KCC's Household Waste Recycling Sites have also been closed.

- 1.7.11 Technical Services - the Head of Technical Services and the Emergency Support Officer have been fully engaged with the Business Continuity response to the virus.
- 1.7.12 Parking enforcement stopped on 24th March and charges in car parks were temporarily suspended on the 26th March.
- 1.7.13 A number of capital projects have continued including the replacement of the sewage treatment plant at Haysden Country Park.

1.8 Communications

- 1.8.1 Our priority has been to ensure that our communication to residents, businesses and the media are clear, consistent and aligned with messages from government, public health bodies and the Kent Resilience Forum. From mid-March, it was agreed with the management team that all outbound messaging relating to the outbreak, including social media, news and website updates would be co-ordinated by the Communications team.
- 1.8.2 The decision was made early in the pandemic to create three key webpages to help residents navigate to the information they may need.
 - A central coronavirus landing page, attracting approximately 6,000 visitors, providing rolling updates on changes to services with links to more detail on specialist pages elsewhere on the site
 - A community hub page outlining the help available and additional sources of help, mental health and financial advice
 - A business page setting out the support available and a portal for grant applications
- 1.8.3 Social media has been the primary outlet for getting information out quickly to people during what has been a fast-moving situation. Around 100 coronavirus-related posts have been published across a range of topics, including changes to services, health advice, the community hub, business grants and government messaging. We also issued two updates from the Leader to residents via email and social media. Since March, our coronavirus posts have received more than 1,000 likes, prompted 370 comments and been shared more than 1,300 times by our followers.

- 1.8.4 The public reaction has generally been positive, albeit with some criticism of issues around waste services, notably the suspension of garden waste collections, and the closure of country park car parks. Supportive coverage highlighting the work of the community hub has also been achieved on TV, online and in print media.
- 1.8.5 Greater central control of social media and website updates, which would normally be published by individual departments, has worked well and enabled the flow of information to be delivered in a clear and consistent way. This more co-ordinated approach to public messaging will undoubtedly offer useful insights for the recovery and re-orientation phases to come as well as the longer term digital agenda.

1.9 The way forward

- 1.9.1 At the time of writing, it is unclear as to how long the emergency arrangements will continue, but it is right and proper for us to plan for the next phase(s), once restrictions begin to be relaxed. None of us know how the national guidance will evolve, but our strategy of following the national and public health messaging, must be the bedrock of our future thinking in managing a potentially phased transitional period. At the time of writing, further headline announcements from the government were made on 10/05/2020. These announcements identified a phased approach to cautious relaxation of restrictions, but the detailed guidance had not been published at the time of going to print. A further update on the initial response to any announcements will be provided at the meeting.
- 1.9.2 We do need to start to plan for “recovery”, but will need to do this not only within the national framework, but also at a county level. In accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the County Council has a statutory responsibility to establish the recovery framework. These plans are evolving and it is proposed that there will be a number of work strands, in which we and other partners are actively participating in.
- 1.9.3 This Council, working within this broader context needs to develop, our own strategy to both our own activity, but more broadly in relation to our own communities and economies.
- 1.9.4 Nobody can predict how long “recovery” may take. Nor should we assume that the world, our locality, or our Council can or should return to exactly the same “business as usual”. It is more likely that there will be a “new normal”, and we need to take this opportunity to position ourselves to manage this transition.
- 1.9.5 It is too early for us to be able to write a detailed plan, but we do need to be giving serious consideration to a wide range of issues. In order to provide a framework for this, Members may wish to consider the development of a 1 year Addendum to the Corporate Strategy to cover the forthcoming year. Furthermore it is proposed that this work be underpinned by three themes

- **Review**- how did we respond to the pandemic emergency, and what have we learnt from this
- **Re-orientation** – how might we re-position the Council’s finances and operations to be fit for purpose in the “new normal”
- **Recovery** – how to work with others to encourage recovery in our communities and economy, in adapting to both the transition period and into the “new normal”

1.9.6 Given the uncertainties, it is proposed that this Addendum be time limited for 1 year, to allow Members to “take stock” at that time in the light of the national and local conditions.

1.10 Legal Implications

1.10.1 The Civil Contingencies Act 2004 sets out the legislative framework for civil protection. It imposes statutory responsibilities on those organisations with a role to play in preparing for and responding to emergencies. Local Authorities are a Category 1 responder under the Act, which means that the Borough Council is subject to the full set of civil protection duties.

1.10.2 The Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) Regulations 2020 prohibit anyone leaving the place where they live without reasonable excuse, ban public gatherings of more than 2 people and require the closure of certain businesses to protect against the risks to public health arising from coronavirus.

1.10.3 The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 make provision to enable local authorities to hold meetings remotely e.g. by telephone conferencing, video conferencing, live webcast, and modify existing legislative provisions to remove the requirement for local authorities to hold annual meetings.

1.11 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.11.1 Updates have been provided by the Director of Finance & Transformation to all Members by email on financial matters throughout this emergency.

1.11.2 Two tranches of ‘emergency’ funding has been provided by the government. The first tranche received was just over £40k. The Secretary of State announced a second tranche of funding for local government as a whole on 18 April, and on 28 April, we heard that TMBC was to receive an allocation of £1.316m from this second tranche.

1.11.3 It is important to note that financial implications can be categorised into 3 different areas:

- 1) New costs that arise simply as a result of the emergency (e.g. setting up and operation of community hub facilities)
- 2) Expansion of some service costs that were not budgeted at the 'new' level due to the emergency (e.g. increase in temporary accommodation need)
- 3) Loss of income that would otherwise have been received by the Council in 'normal' times (e.g. car parking, other fees and charges, investment income, council tax receipts)

1.11.4 Of course predicting what the impact of this pandemic might be for TMBC is a tough call because it all depends on how long restrictions will last for and how quick or slow the recovery will be. However, Members will know that we have attempted to estimate what this might be if only to inform the funding discussions; and have worked with other Kent councils in doing so.

1.11.5 The indicative 'ballpark' figures we arrived at which were reported to government through the monitoring process, are:

Shortfall in income estimated to be £700,000 in April 2020; and between £3m and £5m for the year to 31 March 2021. Key areas of loss:

- Council tax receipts
- Business rates
- Fees and charges
- Rental income
- Investment income

Increased spend estimated to be £50,000 for the month of April 2020, with key additional costs being the Community Hub operations and increased homeless spend. Future increased spending is likely to be in region of £350,000 for the year.

1.11.6 As mentioned above, it is important to understand that these figures are best guesses and these will undoubtedly change.

1.11.7 In accordance with the Cabinet Office's 'Procurement Policy Note (PPN) - Supplier relief due to COVID-19' all contracting authorities are required to put in place the most appropriate payment measures to support supplier cash-flow. The Leisure Trust, which manages all the Council's major leisure facilities, approached the Council with regard to cash-flow and in the spirit of the PNN under emergency powers it was agreed to pay in advance a sum of £300,000 to the Trust in lieu of payments that will be due during the course of the year. These (currently unquantified) payments relate to loss of income claims, utility cost sharing arrangements and/or increased pension costs in accordance with the Management Agreement. A reconciliation will of course be done throughout the year.

- 1.11.8 More financial information will be provided to the next meeting of the Cabinet in June, the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board in July, and also the Audit Committee in July in relation to Treasury management.
- 1.11.9 Budgets will need to be reassessed as we move forward to ensure that we can manage our cash-flow and overall resources.
- 1.11.10 Members are advised that the Management Team has imposed an ***‘essential spend only’*** policy in order to preserve resources, and we **welcome Cabinet’s endorsement of this principle in the weeks and months ahead as we get to grips with the impacts.** At this stage we do not believe we need to consider a formal ‘emergency’ revision of the Council’s Budget as set, but obviously this needs to be kept under review.
- 1.11.11 Unless there are further significant tranches of funding provided by the government which meet the expected shortfalls as set out above (which seems unlikely), Members should expect to see significant balances wiped from our reserves. **This will necessitate a complete review of our Medium Term Financial Strategy and our Savings and Transformation Strategy.** We will be starting to consider this in the coming weeks and will report to Members in due course, although we think it is safe to say that the funding gap will increase along with the savings targets.
- 1.11.12 The “new normal” is likely to require a complete review of our budget in any event as we adapt to delivering the priority services in different ways.

1.12 Risk Assessment

- 1.12.1 The biggest risk is to “do nothing”. We do need to learn from experience, re-orientate our thinking and develop a strategy that allows the council to position itself in the transition period to a “new normal” and provide sustainable services for our communities.
- 1.12.2 Members should also note the financial risks as outlined in paragraph 1.11 above.

1.13 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.13.1 None directly arising from this paper.

1.14 Policy Considerations

- 1.14.1 In developing our proposed 1 year strategy, we will need to be mindful of all aspects of council policy considerations within the context of national and regional framework.
- 1.14.2 Communications
- 1.14.3 Customer Contact
- 1.14.4 Human Resources

1.14.5 Community

1.14.6 Business Continuity/Resilience

1.15 Recommendations

1.15.1 That the overview of the Council's response to the coronavirus emergency be NOTED

1.15.2 That for the time being, until the overall impact can be better assessed, Cabinet ENDORSE the principle of an '*essential spend only*' policy in relation to the Council's budget as imposed by Management Team;

1.15.3 As referenced at various points above, NOTE that future reports will be submitted to the relevant Advisory Boards and Committees including in relation to Climate Change Strategy, Economic Development Strategy, Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Savings & Transformation Strategy.

1.15.4 That the preparation of a one year Addendum to the Corporate Strategy be AGREED, and reported to a future Cabinet Meeting.

Background papers:

contact: Julie Beilby

Nil

Management Team

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

03 June 2020

Report of the Chief Executive and Management Team

Part 1- Public

Executive Non Key Decisions

1 CORPORATE STRATEGY – FIRST YEAR ADDENDUM

This report sets out the proposed approach to a one- year addendum to the Corporate Strategy to provide a framework within which to consider a wide range of issues in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

1.1 Background:

1.1.1 At the meeting of Cabinet held on 19 May 2020, it was agreed that a one-year Addendum to the Corporate Strategy, should be prepared for consideration at future Cabinet meeting

1.1.2 At the time of writing, whilst the Government has set out plans for a phased approach to relaxation of restrictions, subject to certain criteria, it is still unclear as to how long the various phases of emergency arrangements will continue. As agreed by Cabinet, it is right and proper for us to plan for the next phase(s). None of us know how the national guidance will continue to evolve, but our strategy of following the national and public health messaging, and government guidance – must be the bedrock of our future thinking in managing a phased transitional period.

1.1.3 Following announcements from the government made on 10 May 2020, we have now reopened our country park, car parks, toilets and catering, all in accordance with national guidance, and have seen increased usage of all our open spaces. Further announcements on potential changes to restrictions are expected on 28 May, with a suggested implementation date of 1 June 2020. These announcements will no doubt be supported by detailed guidance which will steer the next steps. An update will be given at the meeting

1.2 Planning for Recovery:

1.2.1 To remind Members, that as we move into recovery phase(s) we will need to do this not only within the national framework, but also at a county level. In accordance with the Civil Contingencies Act 2004, the County Council has a statutory responsibility to establish the recovery framework. These plans are progressing and

there are a number of work strands, in which we and other partners are actively participating.

- 1.2.2 This Council, working within this broader context, needs to develop our own strategy for our own activity, but also more broadly in relation to our own communities and economies.
- 1.2.3 In order to provide a framework for our own recovery plan, Cabinet agreed development of a 1 year Addendum to the Corporate Strategy, underpinned by three themes:
- Review- how did we respond to the pandemic emergency, and what have we learnt from this
 - Re-orientation – how might we re-position the Council’s finances and operations to be fit for purpose in the “new normal”
 - Recovery – how to work with others to encourage recovery in our communities and economy, in adapting to both the transition period and into the “new normal”
- 1.2.4 It is proposed that these are considered on a thematic basis, using the county wide Recovery Plan cell themes as a starting point, but amending them to greater reflect our roles and responsibilities within the recovery.

1.3 Corporate Plan Addendum

- 1.3.1 As well as being underpinned by the three themes of review, re-orientation and recovery, it makes sense to use the thematic cells from the county wide Recovery Plan as a means of starting to structure the addendum to the Borough Council’s Corporate Strategy. These are as follows:

- Economy cell
- Infrastructure cell
- Children and young people cell
- Health and social care cell
- Districts and community cell
- Voluntary and Community Sector cell
- Finance cell

- 1.3.2 As the above thematic structure relates more to a county council operation, it is suggested that, for simplicity and appropriateness, the themes used by the Borough Council could be rationalised as follows, with each having a few key principles underlining them:

- **Economy:** Maximising the unique strengths of the local area to help create a resilient, dynamic and inclusive economy that fosters sustainable growth
- **Infrastructure:** Embracing technology and the opportunities it presents – for homeworking, reducing trip generation and congestion, tackling air pollution.

- **Communities and Health:** Supporting our most vulnerable residents – be it the elderly, unemployed or people living in our most deprived communities (which are the ones that have been disproportionately hit by the crisis).
- **Environment:** Tackling the challenges presented by Climate Change
- **Running the Council:** Ensuring an efficiently run Council that meets the needs of its residents and businesses.

1.3.3 It must be recognised that we are in a period of continuous change, and that as such this cannot be an “absolute and fixed” plan, but a framework that guides our thinking and ensures that there is a strategic overview to guide our plans. The framework and approach allows for a flexible approach, to adapt to change in both the case of increased relaxation, but also should there be a further wave of coronavirus. The proposed addendum is attached as **Appendix 1**, for Members consideration. Subject to endorsement, this framework sets out broad considerations which will be developed further and reported to Members for consideration at appropriate Boards and Committees.

1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 The statutory framework governing the response to the pandemic is evolving and changing on a frequent basis, both in the restrictions placed upon individuals and upon the responsibilities of local authorities. Any specific proposals or changes brought about by the Addendum will be assessed at the appropriate time to ensure they are lawful.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 The financial impacts of the pandemic and, in turn, the implications for the Medium Term Financial Strategy are still being assessed.

1.5.2 As previously reported, the Council received funding from the government in two tranches totalling some £1.35m. This funding is very unlikely to cover the current financial impacts as previously reported to Members. Returns are being submitted to government by the Director of Finance & Transformation on a monthly basis as required by MHCLG.

1.5.3 An earmarked Reorientation/ Post Emergency Reserve of £200,000 is being established - see recommendation in Revenue and Capital Outturn 2019/20 report elsewhere on the agenda – to assist the Council in some of its recovery activity. This may prove to be insufficient, and will be kept under review.

1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 The Council’s Strategic Risk Register has been updated substantially and is included in a report elsewhere on the agenda.

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act at this stage. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.8 Policy Considerations

- 1.8.1 Procurement
- 1.8.2 Community
- 1.8.3 Business Continuity/Resilience
- 1.8.4 Healthy Lifestyles
- 1.8.5 Climate Change
- 1.8.6 Asset Management
- 1.8.7 Customer Contact
- 1.8.8 Health & Safety
- 1.8.9 Human Resources

1.9 Recommendations

- 1.9.1 That the one-year addendum to the Corporate Strategy be **ADOPTED**
- 1.9.2 The actions, therein be **ENDORSED**, for further reporting to Advisory Boards or Committees as appropriate
- 1.9.3 That the proposed extension to the Climate Change Strategy consultation and the revised programme for adoption be **NOTED**.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Julie Beilby
Jeremy Whittaker

Julie Beilby
Chief Executive

Appendix 1: First Year Addendum to the Corporate Plan

Theme/Activity	Review	Re-orientate	Recovery
Economy	Undertake review of the effectiveness of initiatives undertaken through the current action plan and appropriateness of planned future initiatives in light of the changes to the economy, including statistical analysis of the local economy	Refresh the Borough Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2023 in line with findings of the review. <u>Subject to review stage</u> , but current indicators are that we might focus on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Building resilience in the local economy through investment (with an emphasis on new technology) - Supporting increase in R&D and Productivity - Rebranding the economy - Green Growth (in support on Climate Change Strategy) - Upskilling and Transferable Skills - Town Centre Reinvention – including movements/social distancing/signage 	Delivery of refreshed Borough Economic Regeneration Strategy and Action Plan.
Business Support & Finance	Review the West Kent Business Support Programme (including start-up, scale-up and retail support programmes).		
Skills and Work-Readiness	Look at alternative approaches to delivering the West Kent Enterprise Adviser Network, Skills Events, Jobs Fairs and community work-readiness events.		
Our Town Centres	Undertake local health checks of our town centres. Assess impact of the Shopfront Improvement Schemes. Review approach to Town Centre Investment and consideration of accommodating future ways of using our town centres.		
Promotion and Tourism	Review effectiveness of marketing and promotion through Visit Kent and Locate in Kent. Undertake perceptions study of the Borough to identify perceived economic strengths.		
Infrastructure			
Delivery of the Local Plan	Review implications of delays to hearing sessions on overall delivery trajectory.	Prepare for hearing sessions that enable virtual attendance as well as socially distanced physical presence. Update the Local Plan timetable and highlight key considerations based on review activity.	Adoption of the TMBC Local Plan
Strategic Projects	Review our commitments and support to key strategic projects in the Borough, such as LEHES and East Malling Research Station, to ensure they are still priorities, and to consider any changes of approach that might be required.	Have meetings with strategic partners to discuss any key considerations arising from the review.	Proceed as per the review and subsequent dialogue with strategic partners.
Housing Infrastructure	Review implications of housing build out slow down on delivery of all housing types, with a particular focus on delivery of affordable housing products.	Work with partners including Homes England to ensure options for supporting the construction industry are being well advertised and considered	Use networks to contact private sector landlords about working with TMBC on housing provision and supporting existing tenants.

	Review implications of national context on the private rented and affordable housing sectors	on sites in borough that could assist with maintaining a level of housing delivery. Consider in detail with Members TMBC's ability to deliver a range of housing products, through partnership working, utilising our own assets.	Implement agreed projects emerging from reorientation activity.
(Sustainable) Transport	Review available data on usage of cycle and walking networks during lockdown.	Ensure emerging TMBC Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan (LCWIP) draft responds to government guidance and engages with all partners. Consider changed funding landscape.	Consult on LCWIP proposals
Digital Infrastructure	Review any available information/data to identify if there were any specific "gaps" of digital capability or infrastructure highlighted through pandemic, including analysis of how these gaps relate to provision within our more deprived and/or isolated communities	Work with Kent partners to finalise scoping paper for a "Smart Kent and Medway Project" plan, linking to TMBC digital strategy.	Work with partners to identify how existing or planned digital related projects within Kent could contribute or be enabled by a wider Kent Connect Strategy and Implementation Plan, including a Smart Kent IOT/5G initiative.
Empty Property	Review the extent to which the lockdown has impacted on the number (and condition) of empty properties in the borough, with a specific emphasis on prominent and heritage buildings.	Work with KCC No Use Empty and other key stakeholders to create an action plan identifying priority buildings	Proceed as per action plan.
Communities and Health			
Community Safety & Safeguarding	Review Community Safety Partnership safeguarding referrals and data capture regarding vulnerable residents who contacted the Community Hub to access support.	Continue to deliver community hub, in appropriate format for duration of emergency, but seeking to direct individuals to local, sustainable support networks.	Vulnerable residents are supported appropriately via Community Safety Partnership and other local support networks.
Supporting the Community & Voluntary Sector	Review the impact of COVID-19 on key Community and Voluntary Sector bodies supported by the Council	Reconsider Community Partnership Action Plans to capture specific issues that may have been highlighted as a result of COVID-19. Undertake O&S review of existing funding arrangements for the Voluntary Sector.	Delivery of Community Partnership Action Plans in the Borough's Priority Communities. Ensure that funding for Key Voluntary Sector organisations is reviewed and allocated to ensure ongoing support for residents.
Housing	Review impact of COVID-19 on housing waiting lists and reasons for housing duties being accepted. Review impact of COVID-19 on specific sections of community more likely to have housing need including rough sleepers, victims of domestic abuse, armed forces and young people.	Ensure review findings form part of considerations for the revised Housing Allocations Scheme	Implement Housing Allocations Scheme Work with partners including MHCLG and WK boroughs on schemes to support specific groups and funding opportunities for service reorientation. Work in close partnership with Registered Providers to explore opportunities for refocused services.
Healthy Living	Review role in Public Health response to COVID-19 and where health networks and projects offered most value in supporting our residents	Re-consider options to be presented to O&S in light of change in focus on Public Health services	Implement agreed option for Public Health delivery and engagement
Environment			
Climate Change	Review the timetable for the consultation process. An extension from 1 May until the end of June will allow for analysis of responses received to date and provide additional opportunity for residents to comment on the draft Climate Change Strategy, giving consideration to the impact that the Covid-19 crisis could have on meeting aspirations.	Adopt a new timetable to reflect the additional consultation phase with a report to SSEAB on 1 September to include analysis of consultation responses and setting out next steps for the Climate Change Strategy. Cabinet are asked to	Delivery of Final Adopted Climate Change Strategy and Year 1 Action Plan

		note the extended consultation phase up to the end of June 2020.	
Parks and Leisure	<p>Review opening of main leisure centres in light of government guidance, as well as the re-opening remaining outdoor leisure facilities.</p> <p>Review completion timescales of delayed capital leisure schemes</p> <p>Review events calendar</p>	<p>In liaison with the Trust, look at indoor leisure provision service delivery arrangements – future amendments will be required.</p> <p>Ensure the financial sustainability of the Trust.</p> <p>Give consideration to the potential transfer of the management of Leybourne Country Park to the Trust.</p>	Implementation of new service delivery arrangements and other elements agreed through the review and re-orientation process.
Parking	<p>Review and evaluate timescales for new charges, and the forthcoming consultation on parking charges in Aylesford and Martin Square.</p> <p>Evaluate the potential of capital investments (such as contactless payments and other digital payment options) to car parks.</p>	Revise timescales where required and come to an agreed approach on capital investments	Implement timescales and initiatives in line with review and re-orientation.
Street-scene and Waste	<p>Review timescale for reintroducing weekend bulky collection service and subscriptions for garden waste including direct debit.</p> <p>Review any implications of covid-19 for the transfer of public conveniences to parish councils.</p>	<p>In liaison with the contractor, Urbaser, undertake risk assessments and gear back up for complete reintroduction of core services.</p> <p>Refocus resources on the transfer process.</p>	<p>Complete reintroduction of core services and implement revised timescale for new services arrangements to flats and communal areas and reduce number of recycling banks.</p> <p>Complete transfer of public conveniences</p>
Environmental Health	Review implications of COVID-19 for businesses	<p>Ensure guidance on reorienting business (for example to a takeaway food business or utilising different working practices) is available and up to date in line with Government guidance.</p> <p>Use knowledge of borough's businesses to carry out targeted engagement.</p> <p>Respond to likely changes in DEFRA/FSA/HSE guidance and requirements by updating approaches</p>	Implement updated approaches to managing EH issues.
Air Quality	Review AQ monitoring data from lockdown period	Bring forward a revised AQ Management Action Plan (AQMAP), in line with Climate Change strategy and other key policy documents.	Deliver AQMAP
Running the Council			
Decision Making Capability	Undertake review of effectiveness of virtual meetings and decision making processes generally. Note that regulations empowering Councils to hold virtual meetings are to expire on 7 May 2021 unless extended by the government.	Re-focus decision making processes to ensure that Council is able to effectively consider and implement its refreshed priorities	Deliver a revised decision making process

	Review work programme for Overview and Scrutiny Committee to ensure oversight of response to, and recovery from COVID-19 pandemic		
Financial Recovery	Understand immediate impacts on income and spend from pandemic response and the Council's "essential spend only" ethos	Re-focus and re-determine Council budget priorities. Rebuild Medium Term Financial Strategy based on impacts during pandemic and forecast impacts into the future. Reset Savings and Transformation Strategy Set aside £200k in an earmarked reserve for recovery.	Deliver MTFS and STS, adjusting priorities in line with other strategies and outcome of Fair Funding Review by government
New Ways of Working	Undertake a review of the effectiveness of homeworking/flexible working and the potential to embed it within the culture of the Council in the longer term.	Where appropriate, Managers to build flexible working into the work patterns for their teams in order to build resilience into the organisation and embed new ways of working. Review office accommodation requirements in light of changes to homeworking/ flexible working and in order to reduce overheads and meet the targets set within the adopted Climate Change Strategy.	Delivery of new working arrangements and benefits to operational resilience, financial overheads and climate change.
Property and Investments	Review impacts on treasury management activity, opportunities and risks Review impact on Asset Management Plan	Update Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategy as needed reviewing risks and opportunities	Investment income potential to be updated in MTFS
Business Rates and Council Tax	Understand and review impacts on council tax and business rates collection	Review and implement recovery of debts as appropriate; reassess bad debt provisions. Reassess tax base for council tax in terms of impact on collection and growth potential, and forecasting for future. Consider whether changes needed to Council Tax Support scheme. Working with Kent pool partners, assess impacts on business rate retentions and growth fund opportunities	Link to the update of the MTFS, also having regard to the Government's review of business rate retention scheme and revaluation of business rateable values.