

# **‘Your Future, Our Priority’**

## **Strategic Statement**

### **Consultation Draft**

*Making Kent the best place to live, work, play, learn  
and invest in*

**Kent County Council’s 5 Year Plan 2020-25**



## The 'Your Future, Our Priority' Consultation Draft

Our 5 Year Plan sets out what we want to achieve for all residents in Kent.

### How to get involved and have your say

The 5 Year Plan is the flagship strategy for Kent County Council. It unites the Council with clear outcomes and objectives that will help make Kent a great place to live.

The 5 Year Plan has been brought together by working with and listening to our residents, young people, local businesses, the voluntary and community sector and staff. We've reflected on what we heard during our engagement process in this draft consultation document. We are keen to hear your thoughts as we further develop this draft during formal consultation.

The consultation will run from **6<sup>th</sup> January to 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020**.

You can respond online via [www.kent.gov.uk/5yearplan](http://www.kent.gov.uk/5yearplan) or request a paper copy of the draft Strategic Statement and/or questionnaire. To request paper copies and a prepaid return envelope please contact us on [PSRPolicy@kent.gov.uk](mailto:PSRPolicy@kent.gov.uk) or call us on 03000 416788.

### What happens after the consultation?

Following the end of the consultation we will bring together a 'You Said, We Did' report which will include an analysis of the engagement and consultation feedback and KCC's response to this. This will be published on the consultation website. The 'You Said, We Did' report will also be presented to our Corporate Management Team, our Cabinet and County Council in February and March 2020 as part of the approval process.

### Alternative formats

If you require any of the consultation material in an alternative format or language please email [alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk](mailto:alternativeformats@kent.gov.uk) or call 03000 421553 (text relay service number: 18001 03000 421553). This number goes to an answering machine, which is monitored during office hours.

### Your privacy

Kent County Council collects and processes personal information in order to provide a range of public services. Kent County Council respects the privacy of individuals and endeavours to ensure personal information is collected fairly, lawfully, and in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation. [Read the full Privacy Notice on kent.gov.uk](#).

## Leader's Foreword

Kent is a unique County – with its distinctive geography spanning from the North Downs to the East Coast; rural countryside in the Weald to the urban areas of North Kent; traditional market towns and villages to planned garden communities at Otterpool and Ebbsfleet. We have a proud history from our historic city in Canterbury and Channel ports, to a vibrant, modern economy founded on thriving small and medium sized businesses.



With a peninsular geography bordering all the opportunities of London and Europe, Kent is an exceptionally diverse county with endless potential. This statement draws together an assessment of Kent's distinctive challenges and opportunities, with the aim of improving the quality of life for all Kent's residents.

Kent County Council has a proud history of providing strategic leadership across the county, with strong working relationships with our local government partners at district, borough, city, town and parish level, all working together to protect Kent's distinctive character and promote a good quality of life. As such, Kent's residents identify with the county as well as their local town, village or neighbourhood. They see that Kent is more than the sum of its parts.

We have improved many outcomes despite a long period of financial challenge, which could not have been achieved without the hard work and dedication of our staff, such as our health visitors, youth workers, community wardens and social care teams who make a visible difference every day for the communities that they serve. However, we recognise there are areas where we can and must do more and we are not complacent about our need to continue to improve over the next 5 years.

We put a strong emphasis on prevention – tackling social and health problems at an early stage. This is not only about the right help for people with complex needs; it also means supporting strong connected communities that reduce isolation and promote a thriving Civil Society across all parts of Kent. Kent is a county of many different local communities that often require local solutions where the County Council is not always part of the answer. We must seek to enable and support Kent charities and community groups to improve their local communities, whilst building stronger social bonds which underpin our quality of life.

Over the last 5 months, we've been listening to what our residents, young people, partners, businesses, staff and Elected Members have told us are the most important issues and concerns facing the county. They want us to work better across the public, private and voluntary sectors to meet the challenges which impact them on a daily basis: the increasing demand for local public services from an aging and changing population, the impact of significant housing growth, and the pressure on our transport infrastructure.

Our relationship to London is critical. We must use our proximity to the capital to our advantage to drive economic development and greater prosperity, not just soak up additional pressures on our county and its public services.

The County Council has a responsibility to set out a clear plan with a strong, positive vision for the county that reflects the people we represent, to partners and to Government. With a shared vision, our voice is stronger, and we can collectively stand up for Kent's best interests nationally. We

cannot do this alone – we must work closely with our partners, businesses and the voluntary and community sector to achieve great things for a great county. What an extraordinary privilege it is for all of us to serve it.

We welcome your views on our draft 5 year plan. After the consultation, we will produce a **You Said, We Did** document to show how your voice has made a difference. Together, over the next 5 years, we want to deliver the priorities that matter most to Kent's residents.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roger Gough', written in a cursive style.

Roger Gough, Leader of Kent County Council

## Value for money for Kent's residents

We are acutely aware of the fact that the money the council spends comes from the hard work and efforts of all Kent's residents and businesses, especially as council tax and business rates take up an increasing burden on household budgets and company overheads.

So, whilst we are ambitious about what we can achieve for Kent, we are also realistic about what we can afford to deliver within the realistic funding available over the five-year period of this plan.

Our fundamental duty as a local authority is to deliver best value for Kent's residents and balance the budget, so our services are sustainable both now and into the future. We will continue to achieve this through strong budgetary management and control, with transparent decision-making and spending decisions that are clearly aligned to the priorities of our residents and identified local need.

## Kent's strengths

Kent is a county to be proud of, with its unique history, geography, natural assets and vibrant economy. There are many positive aspects to quality of life in our distinctive communities.

- Kent's proximity to London means we are uniquely placed to take advantage of being so well connected to all the vibrant employment, business and cultural opportunities of the Capital. Our convenient location for London is what attracts many people to want to live in the county, with over 300,000 train passengers a day choosing to balance commuting with a good quality of life with Kent's exceptional natural environment and community services.
- Our strategic rail connections serve major London stations and we are the only UK county with a High Speed rail line connecting East and North Kent to London St Pancras, and internationally at Ashford. There are significant opportunities for integrated rail transport including the Crossrail to Ebbsfleet extension and the expansion of Fastrack bus and rail services in North Kent and Dover.
- Kent's people are our strength and there is a strong sense of identity and community across the county as a whole and in Kent's diverse and distinctive places; from urban to rural and traditional villages to modern conurbations. Kent is home to 3,011 active voluntary organisations and over 2,000 social enterprises, supporting communities to stay connected and people to be safe and well.
- Kent is a good place to raise a family with excellent education opportunities, including specialist vocational training and grammar schools. 91% of Kent's schools are rated good or outstanding.
- Kent is renowned as the 'Garden of England' and our outstanding natural environment is a major strength. We have an abundance of green and open spaces for people to enjoy, including 350 miles of coastline with blue flag beaches, 4,827 miles of public rights of way and 12,480 hectares of publicly accessible green space. Kent's unique ecology and biodiversity is renowned with Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty in the Kent Downs and High Weald and 98 sites of Special Scientific Interest.
- Kent's 'Garden of England' reputation is now being reborn with Kent's internationally recognised food and drink production and rural industries. Kent is leading cutting-edge innovation in

viticulture and horticultural technology, including at East Malling Research, Swale's Kent Science Park and Thanet Earth. Kent-made products won the globally recognised 'Good Taste' awards for fine food and drink in 2019 and we are considered the capital for world-class English wine.

- Kent's rural communities are an integral part of the county's identity, with 26% of Kent's residents living in rural areas which is 77% of the land area in Kent. Our rural areas are home to vibrant community organisations and projects. Kent's rural economy contributes billions to Kent's Gross Value Added (GVA) and is the base for innovative and entrepreneurial local businesses, with high rates of entrepreneurialism and self-employment.
- Kent will be home to new communities to be proud of, blending new housing with quality employment, schools, health care and culture and leisure opportunities. In North Kent, work on Ebbsfleet Garden City is already progressing to create one of the first 'Healthy New Towns' providing over 12,800 homes and 32,000 jobs. Set in the countryside close to the coastal town of Folkestone, there are plans in place for Otterpool Park to become a new Garden Town, with an impressive 50% green space in the development to complement 10,000 new homes with job opportunities, schools, shops, medical facilities and other community amenities.
- Kent's peninsular position means our road, rail and port facilities are vital to the resilience of the county and the UK's economy and productivity. Each year £122 billion of trade in goods goes through Dover and over £115 billion through the Channel Tunnel. Eurostar facilities at Ebbsfleet and Ashford provide fast access for passenger journeys to mainland Europe.
- Art and culture continue to be a driving force for transformation in East Kent, attracting significant investment into the county for regeneration. The success of Margate's Turner Contemporary has welcomed 3.2 million visitors and brought £70 million into the Kent economy. The regeneration of coastal destinations includes Folkestone's Creative Quarter which has become a vibrant urban village for design, film, music, digital and art, leveraging new investment to revitalise the town centre and harbour. Creative and digital industries are also producing new opportunities to regenerate urban environments in Ashford, with imaginative new plans to transform local places and create new jobs.
- Kent's thriving economy is founded on 90% small to medium sized enterprises, with unemployment in Kent below the national average. Over 7,000 businesses choose to locate in Kent, benefiting from our excellent logistics, cost-effective commercial property and a variety of innovation hubs and business parks, including the UK's most successful Enterprise Zone at Discovery Park in Sandwich, which is a leader in life sciences hosted in ultra-modern research and development spaces.

## Kent's challenges

As a growing county with a changing population, Kent also faces some unique demands and challenges. KCC has a strategic leadership role to play to stand up for the interests of our residents and businesses to address the challenges.

- 1,583,500 people currently live in Kent, which is predicted to increase to 1,835,800 by 2038, a 16% increase. Rapid growth will require careful planning to ensure services have the capacity to meet future demand.
- Kent will have the third largest increase in number of households in the country between 2016 and 2041. There is around a £4 billion funding gap for essential infrastructure to support housing growth in Kent and Medway to 2031.
- Kent's population change is driven by an ageing population, with people living longer with increasingly complex needs. The number of people over 65 is forecast to increase by 57.5% and the number over 85 by 131% by 2036. There is also a growing number of younger adults with complex needs who require integrated support.
- Growing population pressures mean we need to take climate resilience seriously to effectively prepare and protect communities for the impact of events such as severe weather and flooding. Air quality is near or below national Air Quality Standards in 39 areas across Kent. Kent's electricity grid network is already significantly constrained which could inhibit future growth and use of low carbon technologies.
- Whilst our proximity to London brings many advantages, it also means that Kent experiences influences and pressures from in-migration from London and the placement of vulnerable families into Kent by London Authorities. These additional 'London' pressures on our public services when we are funded as a shire county mean we need different responses in parts of North and West Kent to ease the impact on local people.
- Due to our position as the gateway to Europe, Kent receives more Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children than other areas of the country, placing further pressure on children's social care services and budgets.
- By 2022-23 Kent will need to provide 11,500 additional primary school places and up to 20,000 additional secondary school places. We will also need to provide 1,400 additional places for pupils with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), where we need to rapidly make improvements following our recent SEND inspection and ongoing financial pressures.
- Kent experiences high volumes of traffic with a disproportionately higher volume of Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) using its roads than other parts of the UK, which impacts our air quality. This includes 11,500 freight vehicle movements through the Channel Ports every day, which is predicted to double in the next decade.
- A sustainable long-term solution for lorry parking is required to prevent disruption when there are delays at Channel Ports and to accommodate almost 1,000 lorries a night that are parked in lay-bys, on verges and in other inappropriate locations across the county.

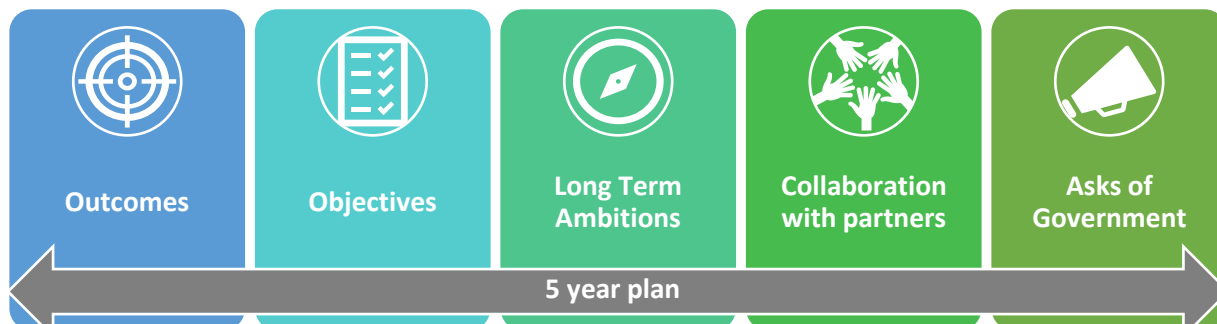
- Despite our progress to improve broadband provision across the County, some rural communities still have areas of 'market failure' for superfast broadband and present particular challenges to secure and implement investment for future mobile infrastructure.
- Youth unemployment is above the national average in six of Kent's districts, primarily in coastal communities. Skills levels in Kent are below the national average at all levels and significantly below the South East average, with skills gaps in specific industries including construction, creative and management. Kent lags behind the rest of the country on the number of people qualified to degree level or above and the percentage of students moving on to higher education is lower in Kent, including the percentage who go to Russell Group universities and Oxbridge.
- To prepare for Brexit and the longer-term impacts and opportunities from the UK leaving the EU, Kent has experienced disruptive yet essential improvement roadworks, planning our highways response and increasing capacity within Trading Standards services. Despite the uncertainty, we continue to work closely with partners to prepare for the future arrangements with investment in smart borders and potential changes in regulations for goods and services.



## Our Draft Outcomes

We want to improve everyone’s quality of life in Kent.








The 5 year plan sets out:



- Outcomes**      What we want to achieve to further improve the quality of life in Kent
- Objectives**      What Kent County Council will do over the next 5 years to deliver better outcomes
- Ambitions**      Kent County Council’s long-term goals
- Collaboration**      Working with our partners towards shared outcomes and objectives
- Asks**      What we want to secure from Central Government in Kent’s best interests

Our outcomes keep us focused on what we need to do to deliver for all residents, communities and businesses. Kent residents have told us they want clear, simple outcomes that they can understand. The outcomes have been shaped around what they have told us is important for a better quality of life and to create vibrant places across Kent.

Our engagement work has helped to define seven outcomes:

Draft outcomes			
Enterprise and investment 	Securing sustainable infrastructure 	Connected transport and communities 	A cleaner and greener Kent 
Stronger and safer Kent communities 	Opportunities for children and young people 	Quality health, care and support 	

### Cross cutting themes

- Accessibility, fairness and opportunity
- Quality
- Sustainability
- Collaboration with our partners
- Delivering statutory responsibilities, including social care, education, public health and highways.

## Outcome 1: Enterprise and investment



### What do we mean?

#### Ambitious people and places

Kent is an **ambitious County**. We want to promote aspiration, enterprise and innovation so that everyone can look forward to a bright and successful future. We want to increase **fairness** and access to opportunity, improving life outcomes for all our communities, from deprived coastal communities and isolated rural villages to urban estates.

KCC has an economic development role to accelerate **growth** faster across all of Kent, but with a particular focus on our deprived communities. To do so we need to work closely with our partners to understand shared challenges and help find the right solutions to promote growth in local areas. We will use all our infrastructure and investment powers to support Local Planning Authorities to successfully implement their Local Plans and create thriving places. We value and will support the role Kent's businesses play in increasing Kent's economic growth and prosperity.

We believe there is real potential for the Government to **reform** the way public services are funded, to allow local government partners to distribute growth and prosperity more fairly across the county. Kent's scale and successful track record of partnership working means we should exploit the potential opportunities of **devolution**, giving us more power and control to improve the lives of Kent's residents. With our partners we will lobby the Government to secure our fair share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, to drive economic growth across communities.

#### Sustaining Kent's town centres

We want to work with partners to create a vibrant future for our **urban** environments, with a compelling vision for the future of our **town centres and high streets** to respond to the challenge of online retail. We need to work together to bring in the right investment to transform the look and feel of Kent's town centres and high streets. In partnership we will find the right solutions to meet the needs of different places, from improving market towns and urban centres to regenerating seafronts and coastal towns.

In partnership with businesses, district and borough councils, we will respond to the changing face of town centres by bringing commercial spaces back to life through the No Use Empty scheme and developing cultural, digital and leisure opportunities in Kent's high streets so they can adapt and thrive as community spaces.

#### A great place to live, work and invest

Kent is already a great place to live and work, but we know there is more we can do to attract people and businesses to the county. We need to make the most of our advantageous location between London and Europe, alongside developing a skilled local workforce and excellent strategic infrastructure. Kent should be the county of choice for relocating businesses and **highly skilled workers**, a place where people want to stay or move to.

If we want people and businesses to locate in Kent, it is important that we work together with our partners to create the right choice, variety and quality of employment opportunities. Good jobs also need to be supported by a range of housing opportunities, including **affordable housing** which is a challenge across the South East but particularly important for young people. We appreciate the draw

of London, but we want to shape thriving places where Kent's young people want to build their futures.

We need to play our part in making a success of the new **Garden Towns and Communities** by supporting district and borough councils to achieve their Local Plan ambitions to match housing growth with quality employment opportunities, supporting infrastructure as well as being carbon neutral. These are complex new developments, so we will do all we can to collaborate with district and borough councils in the planning process.

To encourage investment, we want to support district and borough councils to consider the balance of **commercial sites** within new housing developments and promote **innovation hubs and business parks** within their Local Plans. Kings Hill in Mid Kent, the Discovery Park Enterprise Zone in East Kent and the Creative Quarters in Kent's coastal towns are leading examples of how the right investment and infrastructure can unlock opportunities for social enterprises, digital and research and development businesses. We want to consider how we can expand Enterprise Zones to attract new businesses, transforming the future potential of specific areas.

### Skills for life

Some areas of Kent, including rural and coastal communities, face challenges with lower wages and skills levels, or **skills gaps** in local labour markets. We know moving from a Level 2 to Level 3 skilled job makes a real difference to people's aspirations and quality of life. Whilst we want to achieve an overall increase in skills levels in Kent, we need to be realistic about matching the right jobs and skills to the needs of the local labour market and support adults to retrain to develop the skills employers need, now and tomorrow. We will set out our long-term ambition in the **Enterprise and Productivity Strategy** to create the right conditions to move towards a higher skill economy in Kent.

KCC has always been passionate about promoting the opportunity of **apprenticeships and technical and vocational training**. There have been steady increases in the number of people using apprenticeships as a stepping-stone to fulfilling careers. This needs to be promoted as an option not just for young people but for people of all ages. Kent businesses feel apprenticeships are an important part of modern **career pathways** and a creative approach needs to be taken to protect and sensibly reinvest the Apprenticeship Levy within Kent.

### Quality jobs

We understand that **job security and stable employment** is important to people's wellbeing and their ability to support their family, live in their own home and spend quality time enjoying life. People in Kent deserve **quality employment** opportunities that value people's skills and create better income prospects for the future.

We know that Kent has some productivity challenges, particularly in the more deprived parts of the County. Kent must be open for business and have a range of employment opportunities, including **high quality, high value jobs** to enable residents to both live and work locally. To be flexible around people's lives, jobs need to be supported by the right childcare and school club options in local communities to support working families.

KCC is a significant employer with large and diverse supply chains. This means we have a role to play in supporting other employers in the county to develop quality job opportunities. As part of our commitment to equalities we will work to close gaps in employment rates in specific communities, for example in areas of deprivation, care leavers and for disabled adults.

*Backing Kent's businesses*

Kent's businesses play a vital role in improving the quality of life and wellbeing for local people. We want to reset our relationship with the business community and recognise the role of small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) as the backbone of the Kent economy. Our economic development role means we need to actively support business development and leverage our **role in the market**. For example, we spend £400 million on local social care businesses, so we have a role to support these businesses to grow and develop as part of a sustainable social care market throughout the County.

Kent businesses have told us that it is vital for businesses that there is the right **infrastructure** in place to support business growth, for example business space, broadband and transport connectivity and the right mix of housing and education opportunities to attract and retain the workforce. We need to consider what more we can do to help solve these problems together to create the right conditions for business growth.

We want to encourage innovation by facilitating better access to **quality business support**, to support the sustainable growth and transition of SMEs and **social enterprises**, in a way which best meets their needs. We fully support **business mentoring** for businesses who want to diversify and expand, and encourage the business community to come together to support each other to succeed.

We will explore how learning from internationally successful cluster models could encourage innovation and **collaboration** by bringing together businesses, higher education and research facilities at universities. Enterprise Zones and innovation hubs will be an important part of the solution to connect businesses from different sectors together to improve innovation and productivity.

*Encouraging innovation*

Over the course of this 5 Year Plan, we recognise that there will be significant technology breakthroughs which will bring opportunities and challenges. These include future mobile, electric and autonomous vehicles, wider adoption of artificial intelligence (AI), big data analytics, virtual reality, and the Internet of Things. We will support our businesses to be ready to embrace these opportunities and be future ready.

We want to encourage and nurture a **culture of innovation** within KCC and with our partners, including our local Universities. We want to use new technology to transform the way we deliver services in more modern and exciting ways. We will bring our staff together to test new ideas, make better use of data and create new ways of working.

*An entrepreneurial rural economy*

Kent is a nationally and internationally recognised leader in sectors such as life sciences, viticulture and food production, with award-winning products and rural businesses. We want to expand Kent's entrepreneurial rural culture to enhance community enterprise in the **green and rural economy**.

Innovation needs to be supported by digital connectivity, future mobile and broadband provision and upskilling to optimise the potential of new technology. We want to leverage additional national investment in '**smart countryside**', not just 'smart cities' by taking advantage of Kent's proximity to London as one of the world's largest digital economies. To do so we need to support the Government's Future Telecoms push for universal connectivity and lobby for a fair share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support rural innovation and tackle digital isolation.



## Enterprise and investment objectives

### KCC 1-2 year objectives

- Broker the conversation with Government on devolution and public service funding reform
- Prioritise short term actions in the Enterprise and Productivity Strategy
- Work with businesses to better understand their needs and aspirations
- Develop a Rural Investment Delivery Plan to develop innovation in the rural economy, using this to maximise external funding leverage
- Facilitate targeted business support, start-up space, premises and transition funding for SMEs
- Promote apprenticeships for all ages and abilities, including for hard to reach groups
- Develop an all age Skills Strategy, including promoting vocational and technical training opportunities
- Expanding the role of Libraries as business and skills accelerators, including improving digital skills and intellectual property pilots to support businesses
- Continue to positively engage with Kent and Medway Economic Partnership, the Business Advisory Board and the South East Local Enterprise Partnership.

### KCC 2-5 year objectives

- Leverage additional powers and funding, including a fair share of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support our long-term ambitions for the County
- Deliver the ambitions in the Enterprise and Productivity Strategy, aligned to the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) and national Industrial Strategies
- Ensure there are good employment opportunities for all skills levels in Kent, particularly improving higher-skilled employment opportunities, complemented by the right businesses located in the County to retain highly skilled people within Kent
- Seek to improve adult skills across the County, championing vocational skills and trades
- Ensure there are good childcare facilities within new developments to support parents into, and returning to, work
- Actively promote business parks, enterprise zones, tourism zones and innovation hubs
- Nurture a KCC culture that encourages innovation, supporting our approach to business change

### Long term ambitions

- Communities feel the benefit of productivity so that everyone can aspire, succeed and live well
- Attract devolved Government funding and powers to Kent
- Realise the economic potential of our strategic location, positioned between London and Europe
- Transform the quality of Kent's town centres and high streets
- Improve the adult skills levels of the population of Kent
- Promote good quality employment opportunities for all skills levels in Kent
- Better enable continuous, ongoing training and skills development
- Retain skilled people to want to work and live within Kent
- Maximise the potential of Kent's rural economy
- Encourage innovation and digital connectivity.

### Collaboration with our partners

- Define our collective lobbying position for devolution, building on and strengthening relationships with key partners such as district and borough councils

- Define our collective lobbying position to maximise funding from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to support local priorities, including investment in regeneration and rural initiatives
- Deliver targeted programmes to enhance Level 2 to Level 3 skills and tackle unemployment and skills gaps in Kent's most deprived areas
- Work with Inward Investment Services to ensure the right employers are attracted into Kent to provide high skills jobs to match the needs of the local economy and workforce
- Work with partners to promote Kent Business and improve our connection with Chambers of Commerce
- Work with partners to invest in commercial space, including the No Use Empty Commercial scheme in partnership with all 12 district and borough councils with funding from the South East Local Enterprise Partnership to redevelop eight commercial units and 28 homes above them in the town centres of Dover, Folkestone and Thanet by March 2022
- Work with businesses and district and borough councils to develop a High Street Commission to explore a compelling vision for town centre regeneration
- Explore the potential of expanding Tourism Zones
- Seek to establish new Enterprise Zones
- Work with the business community to promote business mentoring and coaching opportunities to support Kent's diverse and innovative businesses and social enterprises to succeed
- Redefine the relationship with the Further Education Sector and Businesses to develop learner-led skills pathways, taking into account business needs
- Work with commercial digital and mobile providers to maximise spend in Kent on 'future mobile'.

#### **Our ask of Government**

- Open the opportunities of devolution and public service reform for two-tier areas to devolve funding and powers to Kent
- Devolve a fair allocation of the UK Shared Prosperity Fund to county areas, with local partnership leadership of priority projects
- Be bolder and more creative about devolution of adult skills responsibilities and skills funding, to allow local government to enable growth and productivity
- Greater flexibility on the use of the Apprenticeship Levy at a local level
- Secure additional funding from the Government's £1 billion Future High Streets Fund.

#### **Signposting**

- Enterprise and Productivity Strategy (*in development*)
- 14-24 Learning, Employment and Skills Strategy
- Skills Strategy (*in development*)

## Outcome 2: Securing sustainable infrastructure



### What do we mean?

#### Infrastructure first

As a gateway peninsular close to London, Kent has always been a vibrant, continually evolving county. Whilst growth brings opportunities, it also causes significant infrastructure challenges as our demographics change and the population increases to 1,835,800 by 2038. There is a £4 billion gap in funding in Kent and Medway to deliver the **sustainable infrastructure** that communities need.

Kent's residents and businesses are rightly concerned about the pace of housing development and the pressure this places on local infrastructure. In particular, North and West Kent are experiencing the impact of **London growth pressures** on their communities. An '**infrastructure first**' approach is critical before further housing growth. We must be increasingly ready to challenge development where this is not the case.

We need to work together to collectively determine the key pieces of infrastructure the county and local communities require and then stand up for Kent's interests at a regional and national level to secure them. Where possible, KCC will work closely with our partners to secure sufficient **forward funding** to meet Kent's immediate and future infrastructure needs.

Physical infrastructure needs to be complemented by the right public **service provision** to support quality of life, including essential transport, education, digital and health services. By working together to influence the planning process we will help to ensure the right **local service provision** such as school and nursery places, GP capacity and community, sports, arts and waste facilities.

#### Supporting our partners in infrastructure and planning

KCC has a statutory and strategic infrastructure duty which supports Local Planning Authorities. It is vital that we work collaboratively and constructively with our district and borough council partners to help secure the right infrastructure for a growing county that takes account of the needs of local communities. Kent and Medway were the first multi-tier area nationally to agree a joint **Growth and Infrastructure Framework** and a **Housing Strategy**, which has supported us in taking a more strategic view of Kent's planning and infrastructure needs and underpinned a single, collaborative dialogue with Government.

We know this shared approach is successful and we want to expand on this by developing our robust evidence base to use as a collective lobbying tool to maximise external funding. Kent and Medway Leaders and Chief Executives have already agreed to come together to pursue a potential '**Infrastructure Proposition**' with the Government and the time is right to embed our work on this together.

Housing delivery in Kent is amongst the highest of all shire counties and we are building on established and successful joint working arrangements between partners in Kent and Medway. We want to support the creation of vibrant, well-designed communities and homes that people are proud to live in – Kent's residents deserve more than chasing national housing targets or bland housing developments.

There needs to be a balance of **affordable housing** options and consideration of **housing density** in urban areas, particularly in North and Mid Kent. It is important that we have a collective understanding of the impact of new housing growth on existing residents and the local community

infrastructure, whilst prioritising availability for existing Kent communities so they are not priced out of the market.

This means we need to work closely with Central Government, the South East Local Enterprise Partnership, and all Kent's Local Planning Authorities to secure sustainable infrastructure through the planning process. **National planning policies** are not always conducive to responding to local need and sometimes drive perverse incentives for housing development that do not support local authority partners and communities to work together, for example the fragmented approach to the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Despite these national challenges, within Kent we want to work more closely with our district and borough council partners to **help shape emerging Local Plans**, progress strategic planning applications and make full use of Developer Contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy. We will work with Local Planning Authorities to **maximise developer contributions** across Kent's new and existing communities, so all residents benefit from enhanced community facilities.

It can take too long to secure developer contributions to fund the infrastructure communities need. We need to find constructive ways to work with developers and the Government to speed up the process of securing **sufficient forward funding**. Where necessary, with our district and borough council partners, we will seek to engage developers and key stakeholders including Homes England to explore innovative new ways of securing the right infrastructure at the right time for local people.

Jointly, we will continue to work collaboratively with developers on issues such as unblocking stalled sites particularly where viability is an issue and finding innovative ways to **discouraging land banking** where it still occurs. With district and borough councils we will seek to do what we can to distribute growth more fairly across the county, not just in the most commercially profitable sites. We will work together with one Kent voice to **prioritise brownfield development** and balance residential and commercial development.

#### High quality design

We want to challenge and motivate housing developers to deliver **high quality housing design** across the county, working through Local Plans and with the Local Planning Authorities. We support community and neighbourhood involvement in development decisions. As the needs of our population changes, we want to work with key partners including district, borough and local councils, Housing Associations and Registered Providers to create housing that will support future residents with a range of complex needs to ensure they can remain in their homes safely for as long as possible with minimal adaptations required.

By understanding our demand forecast we can plan to deliver high quality Extra Care housing and accommodation solutions for an ageing population and increasing demand from working age adults with social care needs. An essential part of quality design is building in safety and wellbeing as intrinsic elements of good planning.

We will collaborate with Local Planning Authorities through the new Kent Design Guide, to protect biodiversity and create quality green spaces in new housing developments. We must preserve the character of the surrounding natural environment, particularly to safeguard the unique character of **rural** life as well as delivering high levels of energy efficiency, ensuring new homes are fit for the future.



### 'Future ready' infrastructure

**Transport** infrastructure needs to be sustainable and well-connected to support people's journeys to work and learn and respond to future modal shifts including smart infrastructure and flexible/remote working. We will work positively with utilities companies in their 20-30 year plans to support investment and improvement in **utilities** infrastructure (including energy, waste and water) to benefit both new and existing communities.

We want to respond to the Government's fast-paced shift towards universal connectivity by securing the maximum investment in Kent's future **digital infrastructure**. Our partnership work with the Government's Building Digital UK team has already brought faster broadband to over 138,000 Kent homes and businesses who would have otherwise been left with no, or slow, broadband. Further accelerating the implementation and adoption of superfast broadband and future mobile will promote innovation, productivity and digital inclusion for everyone.

In our economic development leadership role, we want to maximise market led investment in providing **'full fibre'** internet connection to homes and businesses, which allows for much faster internet speeds, including in rural areas that currently experience poor connectivity. We will actively work with the Government and commercial providers to minimise and address areas of market failure so everyone in Kent benefits.

## Securing sustainable infrastructure objectives



### KCC 1-2 year objectives

- Update our approach and guidance on developer contributions (Section 106 and Community Infrastructure Levy) to influence investment and manage the timely delivery of infrastructure
- Refresh the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework
- Refresh the Kent Design Guide to influence good quality design in new housing developments
- Develop the right provision of extra care housing and accommodation options for children, young people and adults to support our changing demographics, including consideration of the Adult Social Care Accommodation Demand Forecast
- Deliver the £2.8 million Kent 'Top-Up Voucher' to help those communities and businesses in the hardest-to-connect locations get faster broadband, particularly supporting rural businesses
- Initiate a more efficient and effective approach for KCC's capital programmes and projects.

### KCC 2-5 year objectives

- Implement our actions in the Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework (GIF)
- Using our role as a strategic authority to influence the accessibility and provision of strategic infrastructure and public services within district and borough Local Plans, including the need to consider population and demographic changes, as well as advances in technology
- Champion the need for climate resilience and flooding to be considered as part of planning for new developments, through the Energy and Low Emissions Strategy
- Progress Kent's Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK) programme, to put in place the 'future ready' digital infrastructure and promote sustainable connectivity
- Develop a Kent Digital Infrastructure Plan to maximise national investment which meets the needs of Kent's distinctive communities.

**Long term ambitions**

- Champion an ‘infrastructure first’ approach so housing growth is complemented by sufficient physical, economic, cultural and social infrastructure
- A shared strategic overview of Kent’s planning and infrastructure with our partners, based on the Growth and Infrastructure Framework
- Build communities, not estates, where people can enjoy a good quality of life and sense of belonging in an attractive environment
- Future ready infrastructure to embrace the opportunities of digital and mobile innovation
- A strong, collective approach with partners to maximise developer contributions (through Section 106 contributions and Community Infrastructure Levy) to ensure communities have the infrastructure they need
- Ensuring that infrastructure supports growth and productivity, whilst protecting and enhancing the environment.

**Collaboration with our partners**

- Work with partners in Kent and Medway to expand the Growth and Infrastructure Framework approach into a strategic overview and evidence base for joint planning and infrastructure lobbying to Government
- Work together with Kent Leaders and Kent Joint Chiefs towards an Infrastructure Proposition with Government
- Continue to be an active member of Kent Housing Group, working collaboratively with Kent’s housing sector to champion Kent’s voice and ensure a strategic approach where appropriate
- Deliver our shared commitments in the Kent and Medway Housing Strategy
- Secure funding from the South East LEP for essential regional and local infrastructure projects, influencing through the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership
- Work with district, borough and local councils to maximise developer contributions for the whole community’s benefit, including adequate social infrastructure for new and existing communities
- Work with local councils to champion the role of community involvement in neighbourhood planning
- Work with district, borough and local councils through the Community Infrastructure Levy Boards to plan appropriate infrastructure for future growth
- Work with partners in Kent and Medway to secure forward funding for the infrastructure to support new development
- Work with district and borough councils to prioritise brownfield sites and balance residential and commercial development
- Undertake joint lobbying activity with district, borough and local councils on land banking, to unlock housing, particularly affordable housing, across the county
- Work with Government and commercial providers to tackle areas of poor digital connectivity in Kent, as part of the Government’s ambition for universal connectivity within the next 10 years.

**Our ask of Government**

- Continue to prioritise the robust working relationship within Kent and Medway, building on the strong track record of collaboration, particularly with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) and Homes England
- Secure an ‘Infrastructure First’ proposition for Kent and Medway, to leverage national investment in the infrastructure and quality housing the County needs

- Provide clarity on future arrangements for developer contributions and the Community Infrastructure Levy, so we can speed up forward funding for the facilities our new and existing communities need
- Secure a fair share of the future UK Shared Prosperity Fund to promote growth, regeneration and investment in improving the County's infrastructure
- Enhanced Government funding and accelerated roll out for digital, mobile and broadband infrastructure to support Kent's economic growth and digital innovation
- Fair, sustainable funding for education capital investment from the Education Skills Funding Agency, to deliver the right school places and education facilities for growing communities
- Recognise the added value of the role of local authorities in working with Government to secure sufficient resource for digital investment to meet the needs and complexities of delivering in Kent, including the disruptive impacts that implementation can have on communities and businesses

#### **Signposting**

- Kent and Medway Growth and Infrastructure Framework
- Kent and Medway Housing Strategy (*in development*)
- Kent Design Guide
- Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (*in development*)
- Kent Education Commissioning Plan

## Outcome 3: Connected transport and communities



### What do we mean?

#### Integrated transport

Kent is England's largest county, with a network of small towns and 73% rural land area, intersected by a nationally and internationally important strategic motorway and rail network. Transport **connectivity and accessibility**, both across and throughout Kent, is vital for the county and UK economy, as are our transport connections to London. Good transport connectivity is essential for Kent's businesses to operate and grow.

[Following the UK's Exit from the European Union], investment in the quality and adaptation of Kent's strategic rail and Channel **ports** infrastructure will be vital to support freight fluidity and ease of movement of vital goods and services which are the essence of a successful economy. We will work with national partners and businesses to support the development of 'smart borders' and logistics, which avoid border friction via the use of technological solutions, and ensure free-flowing trade whilst getting the best deal for Kent and Medway businesses and exporters. Our aim is for Kent to be a centre for excellence for this.

Kent's strategic position means we have close proximity to major international airports and ports. We continue to work with the **air and maritime** industries and our partners in Europe to encourage sustainable growth and acceptable airspace change and to support our Government's aim in achieving a low-carbon maritime sector.

Kent's strategic road network means that there are high levels of freight and Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) travelling through the county. Whilst this is vital to support the economy and logistics industries, we accept the negative impact **HGVs and lorry parking** can have on Kent's local communities. We will prioritise collective lobbying with our partners to secure appropriate funding and a joined-up, long term solution to these issues.

We will work with our regional partners on integrated transport solutions to meet the needs of our growing population and Kent's commuters, including improving the capacity and affordability of **rail services**, easing traffic congestion and supporting easy access to employment opportunities. We already have a strong shared voice on rail transport through working closely with our partners and we want to be ready to stand up together to secure further improvements for rail travel in Kent.

We are supporting our partners to come together to consider the future potential of bus transport, holding a bus summit in 2020. We are committed to expanding Kent's premier **Fastrack** bus rapid transport system in Ebbsfleet and working towards the introduction of a Dover Fastrack service. This flexible and reliable mode of transport will help to transform people's journeys for work and leisure and encourage connectivity between bus and rail services.

#### Quality highways

The quality and condition of our 5,400 miles of highways and 4,000 miles of footpaths is vital to our residents' safety and quality of life, impacting daily journeys and the accessibility of health, education and employment opportunities. The **quality of highways, pavements and roadworks**, effectiveness of traffic management and public transport are amongst the highest priorities for Kent's residents.

We appreciate how disruptive **roadworks** and highways improvements can be for local communities. We want to make sure that we prioritise essential works and get the quality of repairs right first time. We will extend the lane rental scheme to charge utilities companies for roadworks, in order to encourage improved working by utilities companies. We want to make a visible difference on improving Kent's highways to demonstrate better quality and well-maintained highways for all our residents.

We have already secured significant **investment in Kent's highways** including leveraging Government funding for highways improvements and delivering our pothole and carriageway patching programme. We are making the money go further by prioritising and targeting the areas that need it most, whilst responding to the ongoing challenge of investing in maintaining the overall condition of our highways and drainage across Kent.

### The importance of public transport

At a community level, access to **affordable, reliable and frequent public transport**, particularly bus transport, is vitally important in people's daily lives - commuting to work, getting children to school, attending health and care appointments and accessing leisure opportunities. We recognise the important **value of local bus services** in tackling social isolation and access to community services, especially for younger and older people.

We are trialling innovative **rural bus pilot** schemes with Kent Connect and Kent Feeder services, in addition to supporting over 150 bus routes, 298,000 concessionary travel passes for older and disabled people and 35,000 children to travel to school every day. We have also run **electric bus trials** in urban and rural locations with an ambition towards working with commercial operators to make Kent's bus fleet electric from 2021.

**Quality Bus Partnerships** are a positive example of voluntary partnerships between KCC, district and borough councils and bus companies. We are committed to working together to encourage the use of bus transport to help people get around more easily and to reduce traffic congestion and emissions. We will consider how we can expand Quality Bus Partnerships to improve local bus travel.

We want to have more direct influence over the quality of public transport provision and will proactively lobby Government for the right powers and responsibilities to do so. In the short term, we will use our **community leadership** role to influence improvements in the bus franchises and networks, to ensure they better meet people's needs. We want to see real improvements in bus travel across Kent to encourage behaviour change, so more people choose to use public transport as a safe, convenient and cost-effective option.

### Active travel

Growing volumes of traffic linked to housing and freight growth means Kent residents are rightly concerned about **air quality**. It is important that we promote and enable alternative public transport, walking and **active travel** options as a viable and safe alternative to car travel. We want to work with partners to champion the use of dedicated cycle and bus lanes to speed up journeys and make them safer.

### Connected communities

Accessible, inclusive public services that meet people's needs and the way they lead their lives are essential to quality of life. The importance of a **consistent offer of services across the county**, was a key theme which emerged from our conversations with Kent residents. In such a large and diverse

county, people felt it was important that there were **fair and accessible opportunities** for everyone. Residents told us some examples of where opportunities can feel unequal which we will work to address through this 5 year plan so everyone can benefit from all the County has to offer.

**Connected communities** is all about opportunities to bring people together, including from different ages, backgrounds and places. We value the active role that the social sector, volunteers and carers play to create positive opportunities at a local level, and want to work together with our partners to tackle **social isolation** and support both **personal and community resilience**.

We want to be innovative and creative about how we maximise the use of **community assets** such as libraries, children's centres and cultural and leisure spaces. These civic amenities play an important role in providing places for people to come together to learn, play and enjoy new experiences. This enhances and enriches our daily lives, supports people to live well and creates the conditions for civil society to thrive in Kent.

Connected communities must be supported by **integrated transport** and **digital innovation**, to promote easier access to public services. This is especially important for vulnerable people or those without access to cars. This means we need better public transport services so people can travel to health and care services, improving transport and digital infrastructure so everyone can access skills and employment opportunities and better access to activities for young people across the county.

## Connected transport and communities objectives



### KCC 1-2 year objectives

- Develop and adopt the KCC Local Highway and Transport Plan 1, to complement Local Transport Plan 4
- Visibly improve the condition of KCC controlled highways to demonstrate better quality of service and value for money, whilst developing a plan for long term sustainability
- Deliver a county wide programme of non-urgent pothole repairs and carriageway patching using local SME contractors to repair roads
- Extend the lane rental scheme (to charge utilities companies for roadworks), in order to encourage improved working by utilities companies and reduce disruption to local communities
- Launch a targeted programme to improve the quality of Kent's pavements
- Hold a Rail Summit to champion new routes and frequency in rail travel across Kent and consider broader safety and wellbeing issues, including preventative action on County Lines and suicide prevention
- Develop a public transport ticketing strategy to support connected communities
- Hold a Bus Summit to identify opportunities for positive action on bus transport across the county
- Develop a Bus Strategy with industry partners
- Implement the outcome of the rural bus services pilots to provide sustainable transport solutions to rural communities throughout Kent
- Provide advice and access to funding options to support Kent's bus fleet to be electric from 2021 and make improvements in our KCC vehicle fleet to help improve air quality
- Develop an overarching Kent Maritime Strategy
- Integrate information on alternative journey options to car travel, so residents can make more informed travel choices

- Progress the work of the KCC Member Group on HGVs and Lorry Parking, to tackle the impact on Kent's communities, including the potential for HGV control zones to keep lorries away from residential areas
- Complete the Kent Design Guide review to make highways and pavements safer, especially in new developments, and to set strategic highway adoption standards
- Invest in digital infrastructure and community networks to provide and support opportunities for the VCSE sector to collaborate with each other
- Progress our work on social inclusion and connected communities through the forthcoming Civil Society Strategy and Adult Social Care and Health Strategy.

### **KCC 2-5 year objectives**

- Deliver priority projects in our current Local Transport Plan 4, including high profile strategic schemes and community transport projects, to benefit all residents in Kent
- Deliver our Highways Capital Programme, to improve transport infrastructure and connectivity across the county
- Deliver our highways asset management approach to improve quality, reduce costs and maximise capital funding from the Department for Transport
- Deliver a new commissioning model to secure best value in highways maintenance contracts
- Managing utility opening of road assets to limit the impact of roadworks and diversions for local communities
- Use our influencing role to secure improvements in the quality of Kent's public transport
- Update our Rail Action Plan, to promote an integrated rail approach, including passenger and freight services
- Deliver the Active Travel Strategy to increase the use of sustainable travel options
- Create safer cycle routes with segregated lanes to encourage behaviour change
- Promote car sharing in new developments to improve air quality
- Maximise the role of libraries in social inclusion and connecting communities
- Be creative about how we use our own community assets and facilities to bring people together.

### **Long term ambitions**

- Improve the quality and condition of Kent's highways, with enhanced asset management
- Improve the quality of roadworks and minimise disruption for residents
- Create a coordinated public transport network and promote initiatives to encourage greater use of bus and rail travel in Kent, better connecting where people live and work
- Protect the Kent Young Travel Saver to continue to support affordable transport for over 30,000 young people
- Promote sustainable alternatives to car travel to improve health and wellbeing, and to protect air quality and the natural environment
- Encourage communities to be more cohesive, strong and resilient.

### **Collaboration with our partners**

- Influence the development of the Transport for the South East's Transport Strategy
- Work with national and local partners in the Brexit highways and freight management response to keep Kent moving as the UK leaves the EU
- Secure and gain approval for effective, fully funded transport strategies within district local plans to provide a programme of transport infrastructure required to deliver housing growth
- Implement the review of on street parking management arrangements, that is delivered through partnership agreements with district and borough councils

- Maximise the opportunities for communities to engage with Local Councils and KCC Members to develop local transport improvement projects
- Further develop Parish Highway Improvement Plans (PHIPS) and consider ringfenced funding for non-Parished urban centres, with project prioritisation involving Joint Transportation Boards
- Working with partners to explore collaborative schemes to expand Fastrack Active Travel and feeder bus services
- Expand the use of Quality Bus Partnerships to improve local bus travel
- Develop and adopt cycling and walking strategies with every district and borough council in Kent and with Medway Council
- Develop new approaches to modernise community assets and civic amenities
- Work with our partners to promote community cohesion.

### **Our ask of Government**

- Devolve powers and funding to Local Authorities to help improve the quality and accessibility of the public transport network, particularly powers to improve bus transport
- Allocate a fair share of the Government's 5 year spending commitment on highways infrastructure to deliver essential improvements and joint transport infrastructure projects
- Deliver a sustainable long term lorry parking solution for Kent
- Seek appropriate Government investment in smart border infrastructure
- Seek further powers of enforcement including at yellow box junctions and in relation to Heavy Goods Vehicles.

#### **Signposting**

- Local Transport Plan 4
- Active Travel Strategy
- Freight Action Plan
- Rail Action Plan
- Civil Society Strategy (*in development*)
- Your Life, Your Wellbeing
- Libraries, Registration and Archives Strategy



## Outcome 4: A cleaner and greener Kent



### What do we mean?

#### A quality public realm

Kent is a unique county with distinct and diverse places. People identify strongly with their local sense of place and want to feel **proud of the communities they live in**. Our residents feel strongly that we need to protect these spaces by looking after the **quality, maintenance and cleanliness of our physical environment**, especially town centres, local streets and public parks. The quality of the public realm is important and the environment has a positive effect on residents' wellbeing and feelings of safety.

We already work collaboratively with partners to make a difference at community level through a joined-up response on issues such as recycling, air quality, litter and graffiti. We want to explore how we can work even better together and provide the resources to make visible improvements at a local level.

KCC has already invested £250,000 to reduce the level of **fly tipping** in Kent, building on the close work already undertaken with district and borough councils, Kent Police and other partners through the Kent Resource Partnership. This will assist district and borough councils to undertake further enforcement, improve communications between all partners involved and better inform both householders and businesses of their Duty of Care responsibilities.

#### Investing in waste management

We work in partnership with the 12 district and borough councils in Kent to find the most sustainable solution to dispose of Kent's household waste. We are committed to responsible **waste management and waste reduction**, with 99% of Kent's waste already recycled or recovered for energy. We are planning further work with partners to transform our waste services.

As the minerals and waste planning authority for Kent, we plan for future waste management capacity, allocating land to put in place **waste infrastructure** to support growing communities. We are undertaking a review of Household Waste Recycling Centres and Waste Transfer Stations to determine the capacity and facilities needed across the county and secure the necessary investment. This involves working closely alongside Local Planning Authorities' Local Plans and neighbourhood plans to ensure that this essential development is well planned with local communities.

#### Protecting Kent's environment

The **quality of Kent's natural and historic environment** is one of the outstanding features of the county. Our spectacular green spaces, coastline, woodlands and wetlands make the county special and improve quality of life, health and **wellbeing**.

Kent residents and visitors value being able to enjoy all the county has to offer, and feel that a strength of the county is the abundance of **green and open spaces**. Kent's network of public rights of way, country parks and our leadership of environmental projects helps to protect our natural assets and make these accessible for everyone. This supports the visitor economy, work-life balance, being active and provides quality spaces for people to spend time together.

We want to take active leadership of the environment agenda, recognising our contribution to global and local challenges. We want to ensure Kent's unique environment, ecology and biodiversity is recognised, protected and enhanced. It is vital we work together to **protect the environment for**

**future generations.** We know environmental issues are a high priority for Kent's young people and we want to work with young people to develop a proactive social media campaign on environmental action.

### Climate resilience and clean growth

Sustainability underpins all other outcomes, so we have an important leadership role in mitigating climate change by delivering **clean growth and working towards net zero carbon emissions by 2050.** We remain committed to taking bold action on sustainability and KCC has formally recognised the UK Environment and **Climate Emergency.** We demonstrated this leadership by achieving our five-year target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from our estate and services two years early. This is a positive step towards our shared commitment with partners, but we are ambitious to achieve further progress towards net zero emissions in the shortest possible time and support residents and businesses to play their part. We are bringing forward proposals to accelerate this in our own estate and operations, while performing a role of community leadership to achieve net zero for Kent and Medway overall.

We appreciate how much **air quality** matters for Kent residents and it is a high priority for the Council. We've already made excellent progress with our partners to improve air quality. To keep up momentum in the long term we have worked together to develop the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy. As we continue to strive towards net zero emissions, sustainable energy use and tackle traffic congestion, improvements in Kent's air quality will bring health benefits and improve the quality of our natural environment. Practical ways we can exercise our community leadership role include encouraging more tree planting, greater use of electric charging points and promoting behaviour change through active travel.

We need to work together on a collective response to environmental challenges such as pollution, energy efficiency and **fuel poverty.** New developments need to design in sustainability, including efficient insulation and electric charging points for cars.

Our role includes influencing the Government on **climate resilience.** We will continue to develop resilience across Kent communities, businesses and the public sector, including maximising investment to protect communities from **flooding** and coastal erosion.

We want to promote a joined-up response to **drainage** and flooding, influencing the provision of effective drainage within new development as a material consideration in planning decisions. We need to manage resources well, including water and energy conservation and undertake effective planning for the community response to extreme weather events.

### Supporting Kent's rural and green economy

Our **rural communities** are an intrinsic part of Kent's identity. We are determined to protect and defend our unique 'Garden of England' heritage whilst actively promoting the regeneration and vitality of our rural areas. We want to maximise investment in **digital connectivity** to unlock the potential of rural businesses and encourage rural community action and entrepreneurship so communities can create solutions to meet their needs.

We have strong relationships with businesses to promote growth in the **green economy** and make the most of new green technology opportunities. A sustainable environment means Kent will benefit from a competitive, innovative and resilient economy.

The scale of our purchasing power in local markets means we can lead the way in taking environmental considerations into account in the **social value** of our commissioning, ensuring our specifications prioritise businesses who are or are moving towards being carbon neutral. We actively want to support businesses who have strong green credentials and act in an environmentally responsible way.

**Offshore wind** is a growth area of Kent and Medway's green economy, which maximises the potential of our expansive coastline. This industry is a significant contributor to renewable energy, and we want to support the expansion of Kent-based companies in the offshore wind sector and create quality employment for local people.

## A cleaner and greener Kent objectives



### KCC 1-2 year objectives

- Develop a Rural Investment Delivery Plan, as part of a wider Rural Strategy to protect and maximise innovation in rural areas
- Measure and communicate KCC's contribution on working towards net zero, with clear targets and timelines for our estate and operations, to improve energy efficiency and air quality
- Take ownership of the environment agenda as a council, including undertaking a KCC Select Committee on Climate Change and identifying priority actions for the Environment Member Working Group
- Undertake a Kent Climate Change Risk Assessment for Kent and Medway
- Use the update of the Kent Design Guide to promote sustainable, zero carbon development
- Develop and approve a tree policy
- Seek out opportunities to promote environmental standards in our commissioning and through our supply chains
- Work with Kent Youth County Council to develop an environment communications and engagement campaign aimed at young people up to 18, including targeted use of social media channels, blogs and vlogs
- Maximise developer contributions for waste infrastructure.

### KCC 2-5 year objectives

- Deliver the actions in the Kent Environment Strategy
- Promote the Active Travel Strategy as a sustainable alternative to car travel
- Deliver KCC's Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and the Flood Response Plan through a joined-up approach to enhance climate resilience and protect local communities
- Use procurement to secure carbon neutrality in our supply chains
- Promote the use of electric charging points for cars, including in rural areas and schools
- Plant one tree for every resident, as part of our drive for carbon reduction and air quality
- Improve the quality of high street environments, including tree planting and protecting green spaces
- Leverage funding to improve energy efficiency in homes across Kent, lowering people's energy costs and tackling fuel poverty
- Promote the green infrastructure network to enhance wellbeing and as an important community asset, including public rights of way and country parks
- Deliver the Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Deliver the Plan B: Pollinator Action Plan to enhance our ecological diversity.

### Long term ambitions

- Maximising natural capital and green infrastructure to create a 21<sup>st</sup> Century ‘Garden of England’ for health and wellbeing, tourism and business location
- Commit KCC resources to address our response to the UK Environment and Climate Emergency
- Develop climate resilience and flood protection for Kent communities and businesses
- Promote the growth of the Low Carbon and Green Economy and innovation in green technology
- Encourage people to grow, eat, buy, sell and employ locally to reduce carbon emissions, with KCC leading by example to buy local
- Deliver our accelerated target of net zero emissions position and climate adaptation for the activities of KCC, our trading companies and the KCC estate by 2030, including an action plan to enhance electric vehicle charging points, solar energy and water saving.

### Collaboration with our partners

- Maximise joint working with district, borough and local councils to strengthen our local partnerships to improve the quality of Kent’s public realm
- Implement the Fly Tipping Enforcement Plan working with the Kent Resource Partnership, district and borough councils and Kent Police
- Create a joint operational taskforce for fly tipping to tackle both commercial and domestic waste and target fly tipping hot spots
- Explore opportunities to enhance local capacity to tackle litter in Kent’s communities
- Work with partners across Kent and Medway to reach our shared commitment to achieve net zero emissions by 2050, including supporting businesses and residents to help reach this target
- Deliver the Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy to improve air quality and work towards carbon neutrality
- Encourage businesses to use green technology in their operations and logistics (e.g. biogas and electric vehicles)
- Deliver the Kent Nature Partnership’s Biodiversity Strategy, to take action to leave the biodiversity of development sites in a better state than it was before
- Work with farmers, landowners and food producers on protecting pollinators
- Contribute to the development of a South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP) Clean Growth programme and tri-LEP Energy Strategy.

### Our ask of Government

- Accelerate their response to the 25 Year Environment Plan and the UK’s climate emergency
- Ensure that new environmental legislation and regulations uphold and enhance our commitment to a quality environment when the UK has left the EU
- Consider legislative change in sustainable waste management, with clear roles and appropriate funding for local waste authorities
- Greater flexibility in Government investment in flood management schemes
- Provide grant funding for carbon neutral schemes
- Commit to a Government Sector Deal on offshore wind
- Provide incentives for growth of green businesses and development of green technology.

#### Signposting

- Kent Environment Strategy
- Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy (*in development*)
- Kent Nature Partnership’s Biodiversity Strategy
- Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and Flood Response Plan
- Public Rights of Way Improvement Plan
- Kent Country Parks Strategy
- Fly Tipping Enforcement Plan

## Outcome 5: Stronger and safer Kent communities



### What do we mean?

#### Supporting strong communities

Strong and safe communities are essential foundations of quality of life, vitally important for people to feel connected to the place they live in and feel safe in their local area. We want everyone to live in a community that they feel part of, where people work together to solve problems and play their part in supporting members of the community when they need help. Working with our partners, we will support communities to come together and remove barriers to help make this happen.

We want to ensure all our services work together to make Kent a great place to live. **KCC already works every day in every community in Kent** – including through our Community Wardens, Children’s Centres, youth services and adult social care services supporting people where they live. We want to make this vital work more visible, so people know that we are there to help.

We are already making great progress, for example we are a pilot area for the Government-funded ‘Breaking Barriers’ project to improve wellbeing and delivering our Libraries, Registration and Archives Strategy which demonstrates how community services can support people to live well. However, we know there is still more we can do to join up better within KCC and with our partners, to take more effective action to support and strengthen communities.

#### A stronger Civil Society

We are developing a **Civil Society Strategy** to create a stronger relationship with the vibrant and diverse Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector that operates for social good, enhancing our communities and the lives of our residents. A strong civil society is central to the identity of ‘place’. It helps to build connected communities and makes an invaluable contribution to Kent’s economy.

We need to ensure we create the right environment for strong, cohesive and resilient communities to thrive and help each other, driven by a strong sense of **social responsibility**. Our relationship with the civil society and the support we provide should facilitate innovative local action, which is driven by the needs of communities.

#### Investing in the voluntary, community and social enterprise sector

Kent has a diverse and thriving Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise (VCSE) sector, with a total income of £397.7 million in active voluntary organisations. We understand there are challenges for the sector including to secure the funding they need to remain independent, sustainable and resilient. Representatives of the sector have also told us that they would value more opportunities to **collaborate** with other organisations to achieve their goals and to be able to communicate more widely about what they can offer.

To support the sector we need to increase **access to blended funding** (including grants and social loans) and create opportunities for networking with other VCSE organisations, businesses and KCC. VCSE organisations have told us that accessing **business support** and expertise in order to grow and develop can be a challenge. We will work with the sector and with our partners and local businesses to allow them to more easily access affordable expert advice and support.

Supporting rural communities

Kent's rural communities have a strong sense of identity and an active sense of community, with a diverse range of community led activities and groups. We want to support and encourage this **community action**, where rural communities are coming up with innovative ideas of what works best for their local area.

However, we know that rural areas can also experience challenges in terms of isolation, accessibility and connectivity to public services. We want to consider how KCC services can better support rural areas, for example supporting small rural schools and delivering social care in isolated areas where there can be difficult employment issues. We need to work with our partners to tackle some of the unique community safety issues that may impact landowners, businesses and residents. We will develop an ambitious **Rural Strategy** to address these challenges, empower rural communities and better support rural life.

Feeling safe

We know that Kent is a safe county to live in. We have statutory duties to safeguard the vulnerable and reduce crime and disorder, working with our partners at countywide, community and neighbourhood levels to help people **feel secure and safe**. Our partnership efforts are focused on reducing crime and anti-social behaviour, safeguarding, substance misuse, domestic abuse, road safety and developing community resilience.

We are committed to delivering shared priorities through the Kent Community Safety Partnership. The joint **Kent Community Safety Team** brings together staff from Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service and KCC to promote joined-up working.

We will complement this by investing in our **community wardens and volunteer warden schemes**, who play a vital role in providing a visible deterrent for crime and anti-social behaviour and promoting community cohesion. This local intelligence means we understand the distinctive challenges in Kent's communities from rural villages to urban town centres. We want to provide targeted support to help people feel safer in their local environment.

A joined-up response

We work collaboratively with national and local partners to keep Kent a safe place to live, promoting a **'joint taskforce'** approach in Margate and supporting a targeted operational response where required on serious issues such as gangs, county lines and knife crime. We want to do more to support partners to come together in a joined-up community response to work together on key issues.

We are joining forces with the Police and Crime Commissioner and statutory partners to deliver local projects on issues such as victim support, reducing re-offending and mental health. We also support the implementation of **multi-agency operations** across the county to tackle violence and keep vulnerable people safe in the night-time economy.

We have worked closely with partners to develop a new multi-agency strategy to deliver appropriate responses to people affected by **domestic abuse** in Kent and Medway. By working together more effectively we can pool our resources and improve our response to domestic abuse.

We have a lead role in delivering the **Prevent** Strategy in Kent, working with Police, health and district and borough councils. We will continue to protect vulnerable children, young people and adults from being drawn into terrorism, minimising the threat of extremism and radicalisation and keeping our county and the people in it safe.

### Safeguarding

One of our core purposes as a council is to work with partners to safeguard children and adults at risk of abuse, harm or neglect. In a statutory leadership role, we've worked collaboratively to introduce new shared **safeguarding** partnership arrangements in Kent and Medway, to help protect our most vulnerable residents. This will ensure better multi-agency working with statutory partners with a 'shared and equal duty' to safeguard and promote the welfare of vulnerable people.

### Improving safety and reducing the harm to Kent's communities

The growing volume of car traffic in the county impacts on how safe Kent's residents feel on their daily journeys. It is essential that the quality of our roads and pavements supports everyone to travel safely. We want to tackle speeding and improve road safety, particularly in rural areas and around Kent's schools.

We want to do more to create a cohesive rural road network, which promotes safety and avoids traffic congestion in rural towns and villages. We will work with partners to address issues such as the quality of **pavements**, parking allocation in new developments and **on-street parking** affect people's feeling of **safety and accessibility**, especially for those with disabilities and young children.

## Stronger and safer Kent communities objectives



### KCC 1-2 year objectives

- Deliver a new Civil Society Strategy
- Improve access to blended funding, business support and networking opportunities for VCSE organisations
- Transform our grant funding arrangements to explore crowdfunding and develop new commissioning models with the VCSE sector
- Consider how we can better promote the offer from VCSE organisations in Kent
- Develop an ambitious new Rural Strategy, to unlock the potential of our rural communities, better support rural life and improve access to public services
- Recommit and prioritise KCC's role in supporting the Margate Task Force
- Invest in KCC's capacity in the countywide Kent Community Safety Team and promote its role
- Invest in restoring and strengthening the capacity of Community Wardens
- Enhance and expand the reach of the Community Warden Volunteer Scheme and roll out the provision of Community Wardens in urban areas
- Deliver the action plan to respond to the recommendations of the Knife Crime Select Committee
- Take action on doorstep crime, with a leading role for Trading Standards
- Effective sharing of information and data to protect against serious and organised crime
- Deliver new road safety interventions to address speeding in rural towns and villages
- Investigate the use of road safety cameras in specific circumstances to reduce speeding
- Investigate the introduction of 20mph speed limits by schools during school arrival and pick up.

### KCC 2-5 year objectives

- Progress our Volunteering Charter to value and encourage volunteering
- Deliver the Libraries, Registration and Archives Strategy
- Deliver the wider library offer, including prison libraries to help reduce reoffending
- Develop a task force model for roll out in key target areas where a multi-agency problem solving approach will yield rapid benefits
- Support community action and enterprise in Kent's distinctive rural communities
- Tackle rural safety issues
- Develop a new model for community/neighbourhood governance, to enhance the role of Elected Members in supporting and championing their local communities.

### Long term ambitions

- Raise the visibility of KCC's services which support Kent communities
- An active and vibrant civil society in Kent
- Support the resilience and sustainability of the VCSE sector
- Ensure that people in Kent continue to remain safe and feel safer
- An effective joined-up response with partners on the issues that communities care about
- Ensuring that everyone can travel safely on Kent's roads and pavements.

### Collaboration with our partners

- Use the Civil Society Strategy to renew our relationship with the VCSE sector, local councils and local communities and create sustainable funding opportunities to support social good
- Co-ordinate staff from partner organisations who are based in the community to support local people and promote a strong sense of place
- Encourage and support the VCSE sector to take innovative action to meet local needs
- Implement the action plan in the Kent Community Safety Agreement to deliver the shared priorities of the Kent Community Safety Partnership
- Support Kent Police in their expansion of Violence Reduction Units
- Contribute to achieving the priorities in the Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Support multi-agency operational responses on gangs, violence, extremism and knife crime
- Create a joint partnership campaign to tackle perceptions of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Work with the Police and Crime Commissioner and Kent Police to enhance resources around a visible community safety presence for town centres
- Explore with Kent Police, universities and other local authorities the potential for predictive analytics to identify the causes and trends of crime and anti-social behaviour
- Progressing work on multi-agency safeguarding arrangements
- Refresh the Casualty Reduction Strategy, working with our partners to make journeys safer.

### Our ask of Government

- Deliver sustainable funding to counties to deliver the aims of the national Civil Society Strategy
- Enhance national funding programmes to support community action in rural communities
- Provide adequate funding for new local authority statutory responsibilities for domestic abuse.

#### Signposting

- Voluntary and Community Sector Policy and Civil Society Strategy (*in development*)
- Kent Community Safety Agreement
- Kent and Medway Domestic Abuse Strategy
- Libraries, Registration and Archives Strategy
- Multi-Agency Safeguarding Partnership Scrutiny and Assurance Framework
- Casualty Reduction Strategy



## Outcome 6: Opportunities for children and young people



### What do we mean?

#### A County that works for all children

We want children and young people in Kent to have the best possible future. Our vision is that all Kent children should feel safe, secure, loved, fulfilled, happy and optimistic. Our **statutory responsibilities** mean we play an important role in providing quality school places, giving children the healthiest start in life and protecting vulnerable children and families from harm.

Kent is a great place to grow up, with excellent schools providing high quality education, fun and fulfilling things to do and a broad range of opportunities for the future. We know there are also areas where we need to do more for our children and young people, including to support those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) to live a good life and reach their potential. The mental and emotional health and wellbeing of our children and young people is a priority and we will do more to support them to be resilient.

#### The best start in life

Improving children's health and wellbeing begins by giving every child the best start in life to support children and young people to achieve the best outcomes possible. This starts from adopting a healthy lifestyle during and after pregnancy, with our **health visiting** services visiting 99% of babies within 30 days of birth and providing over 67,500 checks a year. Parents and carers, of course, play the most important role in the development of resilient, more confident and physically and emotionally healthy children, but we are there to provide additional support where this is needed.

The **early years** are critical, so it is important that we do all we can to work with families to prepare children to be ready for school. We are working to improve the take up of quality early education places for targeted two year olds and ensuring greater numbers of children achieve a Good Level of Development to narrow the achievement gap.

KCC has a statutory duty to commission services to improve the health of the population, which includes health and measurement checks for school age children. 1 in 5 primary school children in Kent are obese or overweight, so we work with parents and children to set **healthy habits for life** around healthy eating and nutrition. In partnership with health, we are targeting our work with children living in deprived areas, learning disabilities, autism, those in care and care leavers.

#### Supporting children and families

We work closely with our partners to enable children and families to get the right support they need to improve their outcomes and life chances. We are re-shaping services by **listening** to our children and families and learning from what works both locally and nationally.

Our **Change for Kent Children** programme joins up services to bring together one highly effective offer of early help and statutory social work. The focus is on prevention, which is vital to improve outcomes, support family resilience and avoid issues escalating to the point where people need more complex interventions. Our new **Adolescent Service** will be an important part of helping to support vulnerable young people better in an integrated way.

We will always protect the children who are in our care, and we are ambitious for their futures. Our **corporate parenting** responsibilities for children and young people in our care and care leavers provide a clear shared commitment with our partners to keep them safe. Our ambition to make Kent the best Corporate Parent we can be and doing what any parent should do to promote the safety, health and welfare of their child.

As with many Counties, the demand for children's social care and disability services is growing, but Kent's unique geographical position means we can experience additional pressures such as the placement of vulnerable children and families from other authorities. To deliver our statutory duties for Kent's growing communities we need sufficient and **sustainable funding** to secure the right education, social care, public health and disabilities provision to meet our current and future needs.

#### Quality education

Kent's residents highly value the excellent quality of education in Kent's schools, which open up opportunities for children and young people. We have a strong track record over the last 7 years in improving the quality of primary education, but we know we need to do even more to close the **achievement gap** for vulnerable and disadvantaged learners, particularly at Key Stage 4.

We want to ensure that there are **good and outstanding school places** available for everyone, in every part of the County. As the county continues to grow, we need an appropriate supply of good school places and to work with our partners to ensure families have a good **choice of education options** in their local area, including free schools. We will continue to work with the Department for Education to secure adequate funding and clarity on future funding to allow us to effectively plan ahead. We also want to ensure there is sufficient funding to keep our school buildings safe and well-maintained for the future.

#### Action on Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)

We are committed to working in partnership to make the necessary improvements for children and young people with SEND and their families. Following the result of our **Ofsted and Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection**, we are focusing on designing better, more inclusive services to improve the quality of services for children and young people with SEND. We recognise that all too often the experience of SEND young people and their families has been poor. We have been progressing our SEND action plan to make rapid improvements, supported by investment across KCC and health services.

All key partners involved in offering services to children with SEND are committed to making the improvements required and to ensure that there are sufficient resources available to do this. We are equally determined to change the way we work with families, moving rapidly to a greater openness, engagement and where appropriate, genuine co-production.

We have now integrated the Children with Disabilities Team with our wider Children, Young People and Education services, to join up services and better support children and young people with disabilities, their families and carers. The team is reviewing the experience of **neurodevelopmental services** (including autism and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) to better support those with complex needs.

*Children and young people's mental health and wellbeing*

We want every child in Kent to have the emotional resilience to deal with challenges and reach their potential. The **mental health** of children and young people is a priority for KCC and we want to enhance emotional and mental health support services including those based in schools.

We are successfully delivering the **HeadStart** Kent programme which aims to help young people cope better when faced with difficult circumstances in their lives, preventing them from experiencing common mental health problems. As the programme completes in 2020, we will consider how to sustain and roll-out the resilience learning to all children and young people across Kent.

Where children and young people do experience mental health problems, we want to ensure that they receive the right support at the right time. We will commission high quality mental health services for children and young people and ensure that they have the capacity to meet demand to avoid delays in receiving support.

*A countywide youth offer*

We know that our residents want a consistent county-wide offer of positive opportunities for young people. We want to enable an ambitious **youth offer** that is accessible for all young people, but also targets resources for young people in deprived areas or who may experience social isolation. We already support open access youth services and district early help hubs, which are available for all young people across Kent. We want to better enable community led activities, further invest in the youth offer at a local level and maximise developer contributions to develop modern youth facilities. We will consider the national review of youth provision and what investment is needed to best support our ambition.

We appreciate the valuable **preventative impact** that youth services, sport, culture and leisure can provide in tackling social problems such as anti-social behaviour and reducing youth offending. We will work with our partners to ensure that the youth offer is open to those who might benefit most from new opportunities, which might not otherwise be accessible to them.

We want to work with district and borough councils, local councils and the VCSE Sector to increase the number of safe places for young people to undertake positive activities within their community. Some of the most creative and successful activities for young people are **led by communities themselves** – they know what works best for their local area. Where communities want to lead activities for a broader range of young people, we want to support them find the right funding to make this sustainable and successful.

*Opportunities for the future*

Developing **skills for life** starts at a young age. We want to work with schools, the further education sector and Kent businesses to help young people find the right skills and career opportunities that meet their needs. We will start the conversation about the opportunities that are open to children and young people far earlier in primary and secondary education.

We will continue to promote **apprenticeships and vocational training** to provide a choice of high-quality training options that suit the interests and ambitions of all young people. We want to open up opportunities for young people to develop skills to take on vital jobs in health and social care, which can be rewarding and fulfilling career and help to close some of the sector's workforce gaps.

We want to create more opportunities to build the confidence, resilience and sense of ambition amongst young people, so they have brighter hopes and aspirations for the future. We want to ensure that all young people have the right **work-related and social skills**, such as communication skills, to fulfil their potential.

Once they have developed the right skills, we want to encourage young people to stay in the county and build a positive future in Kent. To do so we need to work together to ensure they can use their skills to access quality jobs and make sure there are affordable housing options available for local people.

With our corporate parenting role it is important that we do not just focus on education but do all we can to support care leavers to have access to **affordable housing** and accommodation as they progress to working life. We want to explore how we can use Council Tax discounts for care leavers to give them a head start in their adult life.

## Opportunities for children and young people objectives



### KCC 1-2 year objectives

- Raise awareness of the work we do in local communities to support a wide range of children and young people across Kent
- Further close the attainment gap for vulnerable groups at Key Stage 4
- Use Public Health action plans to deliver our public health responsibilities to give children and young people the best start in life
- Ensuring children have the best start in early years by working with providers to ensure children are school ready and more children benefit from the uptake from high quality early education, particularly disadvantaged two year olds
- Progress the Change for Kent Children programme, integrating our services to better support children and families
- Supporting our Children's Social Care workforce through the development of our new Academy to provide continuous professional development for staff
- Promote our corporate parenting responsibilities for children in care and care leavers
- Deliver rapid improvements in our action plan for Special Educational Needs and Disabilities
- Complete the £10 million Headstart programme and use the learning to enhance young people's resilience and emotional wellbeing across Kent
- Recommissioning the Early Help Children and Young People's offer within Kent
- Develop an ambitious and creative youth offer to maximise opportunities for young people and provide preventative services for those most in need
- Deliver our 16+ Review in 2020 to examine current provision for education, training and career pathways for young people, balance academic, vocational and work pathways and influence funding options for the future
- Promote opportunities for young people to pursue a future career in the health and social care sector
- Consider young people's specific skills needs and requirements in an all-age Skills Strategy
- Implement Council Tax discounts for care leavers

### KCC 2-5 year objectives

- Raise school standards and closing the gap for vulnerable groups at all Key Stages

- Improve placement stability for children in care by expanding in-house and provider placement options
- Consider how we can make the right level of capital investment in our schools and children's social care estate to meet the requirements of future demand, including the school places needed in the Education Commissioning Plan
- Enhance emotional and mental health support in schools
- Effectively commission high quality and timely child and adolescent mental health services
- Reduce the number of young people entering the Youth Justice System
- Continue to maximise the Apprenticeship Levy to promote new opportunities and career pathways for young people into the world of work
- Promote the development of social, communication and resilience skills for young people to help them access employment opportunities and achieve their potential, particularly for vulnerable young people
- Provide the right advice on affordable housing options for care leavers, as part of our corporate parenting responsibilities

### **Long term ambitions**

- Give children the best start in life through excellent early years and public health services
- Enable children and families to get the right support they need to improve their outcomes and life chances
- Secure sustainable and sufficient funding for education, children's social care and public health services
- Deliver a creative and ambitious countywide youth offer to increase positive opportunities for young people
- Improve the education and skill levels of young people in Kent
- Develop the right skills, training and career pathways for post 16 education, so young people have the best possible access to quality employment opportunities

### **Collaboration with our partners**

- Listen to and engage with children, young people and families in the design and delivery of services to better meet their needs earlier
- Strengthen the universal offer by working with voluntary, public, and private providers to provide safe places for young people to undertake positive activities
- Continue our collaborative work with partners to provide one clear route for children and families to get help from all the services they need in one place
- Explore with our partners more integrated ways of supporting children and families experiencing issues with mental health, domestic abuse and substance misuse
- Work with education partners to develop support for mental health in schools
- Work with district, borough and local councils to bring in additional developer contributions for community and youth facilities.
- Improve children, young people and families outcomes through a range of commissioned services from The Education People and other KCC commercial services.

### **Our ask of Government**

- Deliver sustainable, fair funding models for children's social care, public health, mental health and disability services, to tackle our financial pressures

- Provide sufficient funding for school place provision and education assets, so we can keep Kent's schools safe, warm and dry and create the right facilities for the future
- Challenge London Boroughs on the inappropriate placement of vulnerable children in Kent.

#### Signposting

- Kent Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- 14-24 Learning, Skills and Employment Strategy
- Kent's Strategy for Vulnerable Learners
- Strategy for Children with SEND
- Children in Care and Care Leavers Strategy
- Education Commissioning Plan

## Outcome 7: Quality health, care and support



### What do we mean?

#### Promoting health and wellbeing

We want to support a happy and healthy society in Kent, with good health and wellbeing at every stage of life. Our statutory public health duties mean we have a leadership role to encourage **personal and community responsibility** for wellness throughout people's lives. We want to improve and protect the health of everyone in Kent and reduce health inequalities to close the gap in outcomes for different communities across the County, going further and faster to improve outcomes in our most deprived areas.

We are passionate about actively improving the **wider determinants of health** across Kent's whole population. Put simply people are healthy when they have a good start in life, reach their full potential, have control over their lives, have a healthy standard of living, have good jobs and working conditions and live in supportive and sustainable places and communities.

Our focus on prevention helps people feel and stay well and helps to tackle **social isolation and loneliness** at all ages across Kent's communities. Our role runs from providing the best start in life through maternal health services, health visiting and children's centres, to promoting wellbeing as the foundation of workforce productivity, and supporting ageing well.

We cannot do this alone, we need to work closely with the NHS, local government partners including district, borough and local councils, and the VCSE sector for the benefit of all Kent's residents. Health and wellbeing spans all our outcomes and the work of all these organisations – if we achieve our ambitions in this 5 year plan, we will be helping to **improve the health of the whole population**.

#### Sustainable and integrated health, care and support

Alongside our ambition to support wellbeing and independence, we will never lose sight of our **statutory duties** to support and safeguard the most vulnerable in our society with quality social care and family support services. We strive to deliver the best services we can with the resources available. This includes promoting **social value** in the way we commission children's, adults and public health services. This means we make a conscious effort to ensure that any external services we purchase are positively contributing to the long-term wellbeing and resilience of individuals, communities and society in general.

Yet to effectively deliver our statutory responsibilities, the Government needs to ensure that social care and public health services are **adequately and sustainably funded**. The way these services are funded needs to be fair to all the people who need them. Within Kent we must promote choice through a **sustainable social care market**, working with a range of independent and VCSE sector providers and standing up for Kent's interests with Government when we need to respond to legislative pressures.

We will continue to actively lobby the Government to provide clarity on the long-term model for **adult social care**, with centralising funding which does not place the burden on local authorities to deal with increasing financial and demand pressures through local taxation. We will continue to champion the needs of self-funders to retain more of their hard-earned assets for their families.

Being able to access local health care services is essential to everyone's quality of life in Kent and being able to get a GP appointment when it is needed is a high priority for our residents. KCC is a partner in the developing Kent and Medway **Integrated Care System (ICS)**, supporting the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership's 5 Year Strategic Delivery Plan to transform health and social care services. We want to make some changes to how we are organised to enable us to provide better and more joined-up services. As a partner in the ICS we are working more closely than ever with our health colleagues to ensure we are bringing together the full potential of our organisations to improve outcomes for all our residents.

#### Quality support in Kent's communities

We focus on **promoting independence** and **person-centred care**, whatever the setting. When people have health or social care needs, they need quality care, at the right time, in the right place, preferably at home or in their local community.

We want to help people live independent and fulfilling lives in their own homes and communities by using **digital innovation and technology**. Our Adult Social Care 'Being Digital' Strategy will be fundamental to delivering changes to modernise our services and embrace the opportunities of technology to complement more traditional forms of care and support. Technology will not be a replacement for in-person care, but we believe it can bring improvements in efficiency, effectiveness and help improve the quality of care.

**Community services** need the right capacity to support those with complex long-term issues, including those with special educational needs and disabilities, older people and adults who may find it harder to access help, for example those needing mental health, substance misuse or homelessness support. We want to work with partners to put a more cohesive offer of support in place to meet people's needs and play an active role in prevention.

The role of **carers** (including young carers) is fundamental to support people to enjoy life at home, access activities in their local communities and live independently for longer. Carers are the backbone of our society and are highly valued for the vital work they do. We need to make it easier for carers to access the **information, advice and guidance** they need, by embracing digital innovation. We need to make sure that carers have high quality support and respite care to protect their resilience and wellbeing as they continue to care for loved ones.

**Local Care** models will be an important part of the future solution in Kent to provide high quality, proactive, coordinated care that is easier to access and will enable people to live independently for as long as possible in their home setting. We are supporting the Local Care model by providing professional expertise for multi-disciplinary teams and Primary Care Networks, (GPs and GP

practices working together with other GPs and with local professionals in their community) to promote choice about where, when and how people access services. We continue to work closely with the VCSE Sector to deliver **care navigation and social prescribing** as positive options to help people to stay well and play an active role in their community.

### Mental health and emotional wellbeing

KCC is now directly managing adult social care mental health services with an ambition to transform the quality of support. Our **'Live Well' Strategic Partnership** is providing a more consistent offer for mental health services across Kent, promoting independence and preventative interventions to keep people well in their community.

Locally based **Community Mental Health Teams** are now delivering integrated and targeted support within communities, bringing together multi-agency partners to enhance social inclusion and work consistently together when people are in crisis. We are supporting the integration of mental health into Local Care arrangements across Kent and Medway.

Promoting **mental wellbeing** will continue to be a priority. We will work together to reduce deaths by suicide and continue to support prevention and access to help such as through our 'Release-The-Pressure' and Live Well Kent services.

Every person with **dementia**, their carers and families should be supported to live well, be as independent as possible and receive high quality, compassionate care from diagnosis through to end of life care. We will continue to champion Dementia Friendly Communities and deliver the right support in all care settings, whether home, hospital or care home.

## Quality health, care and support objectives



### KCC 1-2 year objectives

- Clearly communicate KCC's role as a key partner in the Integrated Care System
- Create a new Adult Social Care Strategy by 2021, which builds on the ambitions in our current Your Life, Your Wellbeing Strategy
- Develop an integrated model of support for carers, including provision of respite services
- Respond to the findings of the Select Committee on Social Isolation and Loneliness through the Civil Society Strategy
- Progress our Learning and Development Hub and Social Care Academy to increase the number of outstanding quality ratings from the Care Quality Commission (CQC)
- Renew our national campaign offer to recruit and retain staff in the social care sector
- Develop a new Health and Wellbeing Strategy to improve and protect the health of the population and reduce health inequalities across Kent
- Deliver pilots in two distinct communities to test how community and whole population health and social care interventions contribute to 'Starting Well, Living Well and Ageing Well'
- Continuing to promote Dementia Friendly Communities across Kent and targeting support for people living with dementia, their families and carers in specific communities

### KCC 2-5 year objectives

- Deliver Public Health Action Plans and campaigns which support our statutory responsibilities
- Develop our care navigator model to provide effective information, advice and guidance so people can understand and access the support available to them in their local community



- Expand our approach on social prescribing, including co-funded place based public health initiatives
- Use the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) and Case for Change priorities, as the evidence base for commissioning and service interventions to reduce health inequalities across Kent
- Develop a shared evidence base of what good looks like to inform future prevention work
- Increase mental health awareness through networking opportunities, campaigns and training
- Develop a new Whole Council Technology Strategy to maximise opportunities for digital innovation to transform information, advice and guidance and provide digital options in how we deliver services.

### **Long term ambitions**

- Develop a sufficient and sustainable social care market and shape future investment in the market
- A sustainable way to deliver social care and public health with adequate central funding
- Good wellbeing at every life stage, from the best start in life to ageing well
- Harness the opportunities of digital innovation and technology to help people live independent and fulfilling lives
- Put the conditions in place so people can get the support they need within their local communities to stay active and connected to others
- Value and support the vital role of carers
- Improve mental wellbeing and resilience and provide the right mental health support when people need it.

### **Collaboration with our partners**

- Work creatively with a range of social care providers, including care businesses, social enterprises and charities, to develop a more sustainable social care market
- Continue our collaborative work with partners to provide one clear route for adults with mental health, social care or health needs to get help from all the services they need in one place
- Support the development of the Kent and Medway Integrated Care System, including the development of a Kent-wide clinical commissioning group, integrated care partnerships and primary care networks
- Support the NHS Long Term Plan and Local 5 Year Plan, including the STP Mental Health workstream, Workforce workstream and the STP Prevention Strategy and Action Plan to tackle health inequalities
- Support Local Care models to create responsive health and social care services within local communities, working with health and VCSE sector partners
- Continue our work with district and borough councils to make the best use of Public Health Grant to improve the health and wellbeing of local communities
- Progress our work on '6 Ways to Wellbeing' to improve the health of Kent's population
- Initiate creative and energetic work with all district and borough councils to promote healthy living and share good practice on what works in local areas
- Work together with our partners on joined up services for vulnerable people in our communities, including homelessness, addiction and communicable diseases such as tuberculosis and hepatitis

- Work with the Business Advisory Board and Chambers of Commerce to develop a Business Carers Pledge, to create a shared sense of what good looks like for supporting carers in the workforce
- Work with the NHS on the Mental Health Matters 365 hotline, 'Release the Pressure' campaign and 'safe havens' to provide support and advice for people experiencing mental health problems outside of core hours
- Work with partners including health and Kent Police on crisis care for people experiencing acute mental health problems, making sure we work together to respond in the right way
- Work with local councils on community-based health and wellbeing projects.

#### **Our ask of Government**

- Provide clarity on how social care and public health will be adequately, sustainably and centrally funded by delivering the Social Care Green Paper
- Enhance NHS funding for prevention and allow communities to help shape the spend
- Deliver sustainable, fair funding models for social care, public health, mental health and disability services, to tackle our financial pressures
- Provide further investment in local mental health services
- Clarify the role of local authorities in health transformation, in a way that respects our unique governance arrangements, statutory responsibilities and funding models.

#### **Signposting**

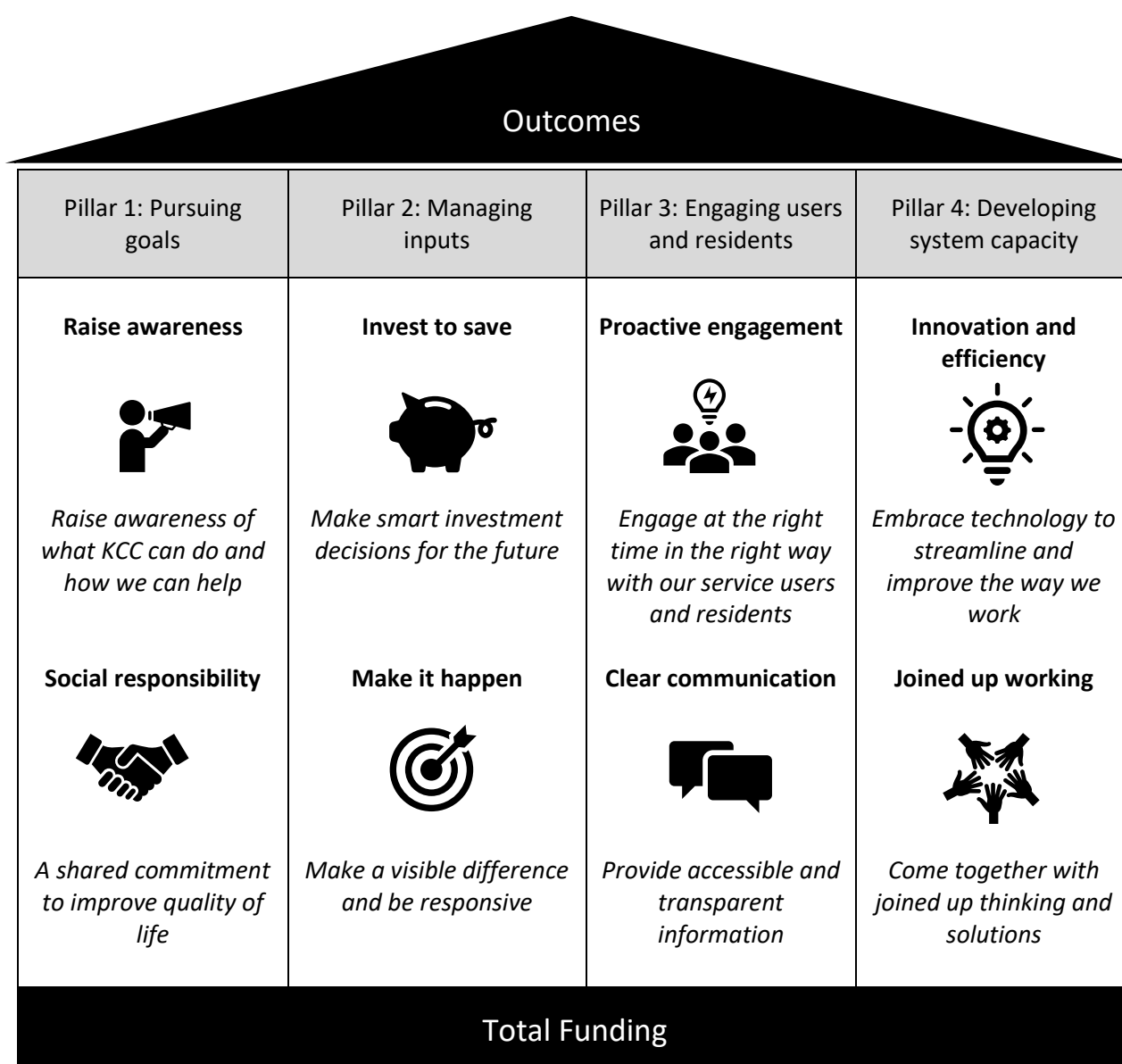
- Your Life, Your Wellbeing
- Kent Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- NHS Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) 5 Year Plan
- Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) Prevention Strategy
- Joint Strategic Needs Assessment/Case for Change
- Being Digital Strategy

## Delivering public value – how we work

We are clear on the outcomes and objectives we want to achieve and we want to be able to demonstrate we are making a difference.

Throughout our engagement process, residents and partners have clearly told us how they want KCC to work for them. We want to respond to this feedback by setting out a way we can evidence how we make a visible difference, every day.

We want to be able to show how our outcomes and budget come together to improve quality of life in Kent. This supports the Government’s ‘**Public Value Framework**’ which is a way of demonstrating how public spending improves people’s lives and wellbeing. This helps us to be efficient and effective and makes us accountable to Kent’s residents and communities.



## How will we measure success?

Measuring long-term outcomes can be difficult to do in a meaningful way. Traditional ‘input’ and ‘output’ key performance indicators can be helpful to track progress over time, but we want to go a step further and really understand the impact we are having across Kent and at a local level. We have a responsibility to improve quality of life for residents and communities, not just monitor service activity.

Our solution will be to develop a more meaningful and rounded view of the difference we are making for Kent residents. This could include:



### Outcomes Based Budgeting

Understanding what impact our investment and funding has on improving outcomes



### Strategic Delivery Plan Monitoring

Tracking quarterly progress on significant activity across the Council



### Community Needs Assessment

Understanding our evidence base and identifying a baseline to measure against



### Quantitative Data

Measuring changes and trends in performance indicators over time



### Qualitative Data

Evaluating our impact by engaging with residents and service users to better understand their experience and how things are changing in local communities

A deeper understanding of what progress we are making and why will keep us on track throughout the 5 Year Plan and help to identify anything we need to change to improve the way we work. We remain committed to being transparent and open about our progress, so we will consider how reporting can be made publicly available, including for oversight from Elected Members.