

Kent Resource Partnership Operating Framework

(6th approved version: 25 April 2025)

1. Purpose of the KRP Operating Framework

1.1 The purpose of this Operating Framework is to set out the following: -

Constituent councils (Section 2).
Status (Section 3).
Scope (Section 4).
Operating Framework: Regularity of Review (Section 5).
KRP Strategic Objectives (Section 6).
Functions of the KRP (Section 7).
KRP Structure (Section 8).
KRP Officers Group (KRPOG) (Section 9).
KRP Project Groups (Section 10).
KRP Resources (Section 11).
KRP Stakeholders (Section 12).

2. Constituent Councils

2.1 The constituents of the KRP are the twelve district councils (the Waste Collection Authorities: WCAs) and Kent County Council (the Waste Disposal Authority: WDA). These are (in alphabetical order): -

Ashford Borough Council	Maidstone Borough Council
Canterbury City Council	Sevenoaks District Council
Dartford Borough Council	Swale Borough Council
Dover District Council	Thanet District Council
Folkestone & Hythe District Council	Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
Gravesham Borough Council	Tunbridge Wells Borough Council
Kent County Council	

3. Status

3.1 The KRP supports the constituent councils by providing a forum for discussion about issues relating to the formation and delivery of the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (KJMWMS). For clarity the KRP is not constituted under any legislation whereby powers, functions or duties of the constituent councils become powers, functions or duties of the KRP. This includes, but is not limited to, Section 101 (5) and 102 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 20 of the Local Government Act 2000.

3.2 The KRP cannot employ staff or enter into a contract(s) in its own right. In those respects, it will have to act through an agent - normally one of the 13 Kent councils whom constitute the KRP.

4. Scope

4.1 The scope of the KRP is to consider, advise and make recommendations to the 13 Kent councils on all aspects that relate to the following services: -

- A. Waste collection and waste disposal functions, powers, duties and resources.
- B. Street cleansing functions, powers, duties and resources.
- C. Environmental enforcement functions, powers, duties and resources.

Climate change and sustainability are embraced within the KRP's activities in as much as related directly to A, B and C above.

4.2 For clarity 'all aspects' in 4.1 above includes: -

- Legal duties and powers.
- Strategic direction and objectives.
- Service planning and delivery.
- Joint working between the 13 councils and with any others.
- Innovation and creativity.
- Customer engagement.

Anything else not specified in this list and agreed by the KRPOG.

5. Operating Framework: Regularity of Review

5.1 This Operating Framework (6th approved version) was amended by the KRP Officers Group on 25th April 2025 and reported to all constituent councils through their own procedures as necessary. The Operating Framework will be reviewed periodically and amended as required.

5.2 If following review, there is a proposal to disband the KRP, this will be done subject to a minimum of nine of the constituent councils supporting any formal motions put forward.

6. KRP Strategic Objectives

6.1 The purpose of the KRP is to deliver three strategic objectives: -

Objective 1: Deliver the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy. This is the Strategy agreed by all 13 Kent councils in 2007 to manage municipal waste. The Strategy may be updated from time to time to reflect changing circumstances and ambitions and is published on the KCC website. All 13 councils adopted a set of refreshed policies in 2017/18.

Objective 2: Deliver financial and performance benefits to Kent taxpayers; and manage risks to finances and performance as appropriate.

Objective 3:

Proactively work to achieve a circular economy, through a whole system approach to securing value from discarded materials, delivering a lean supply chain by trialing new approaches, delivering projects and/or adopting best practice to achieve efficient and effective services.

6.2 The objectives above are supported by three clear principles of how the KRP (and, by definition, the functions of the 13 constituent councils) will deliver in practice: -

KRP Principle 1: Empower citizens to reduce, re-use and recycle waste and to engage with activities in the community, maintaining high resident satisfaction with waste and street cleansing services. Create a sense of local co-ownership of services between residents and councils, as perceived by residents themselves.

KRP Principle 2: Ensure the contributions to Kent's economy by the 13 councils' waste and street cleansing services are clearly defined and understood and that jobs, value and skills in the Kent economy are well supported by the KRP.

KRP Principle 3: Support the resourcing of wider services of all 13 councils by freeing-up money that would have otherwise been spent on waste, streetscene and environmental enforcement services.

7. Functions of the KRP

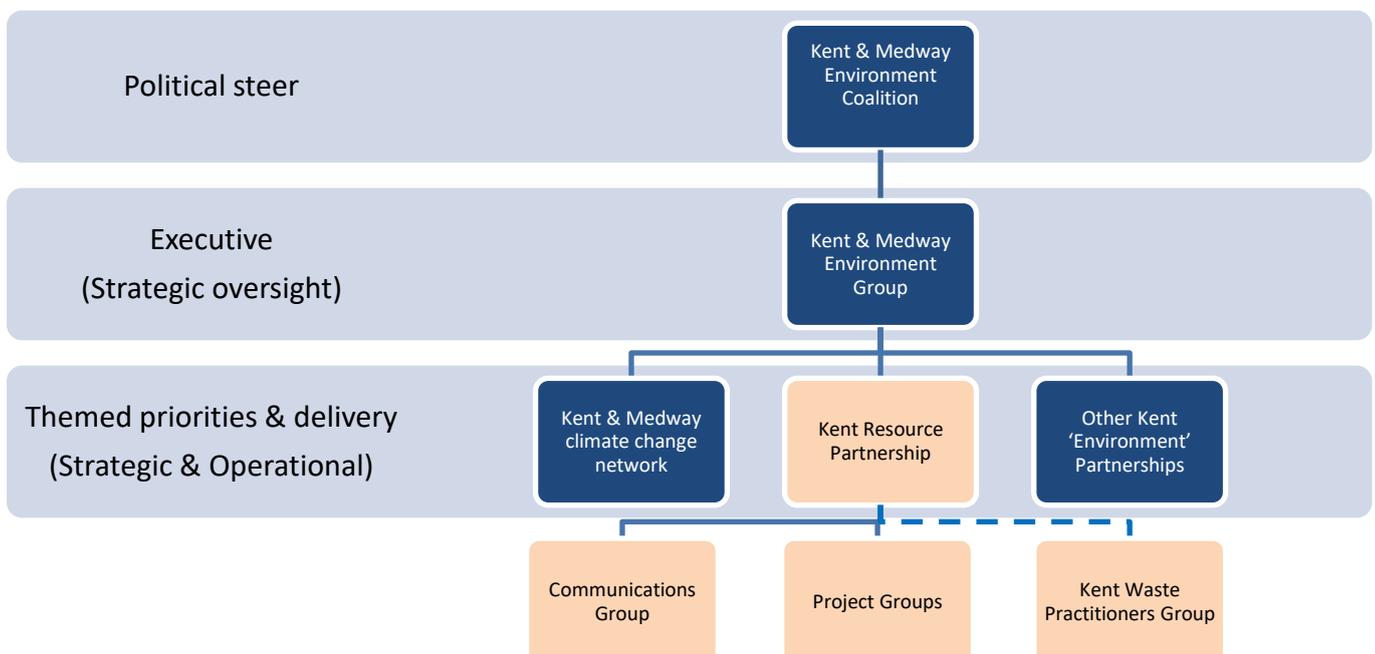
7.1 The KRP's functions are as follows: -

- a. Provide a platform for co-operative and joint working to improve or deliver services, including promoting honest, open and frank discussion between partners;
- b. Act as a single voice for strategic waste issues for Kent local authorities and to influence Central Government and other bodies as necessary on key strategic waste, street cleansing and environmental enforcement issues;
- c. Increase awareness of waste as a resource and interact with other stakeholders to promote waste minimization, re-use and recovery to achieve an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable waste strategy and ultimately a circular economy;
- d. Work with and support as required statutory agencies, non-governmental organisations (NGO's), small and medium sized enterprises (SME's), business, scientific and commercial organisations and other bodies whom share the KRP's aspirations of developing, supporting and influencing the future direction of sustainable waste/resource management;
- e. Ensure the implementation, monitoring and review of the approved Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (KJMWMS);
- f. Advise the 13 Kent councils on the future development of the KJMWMS;
- g. Produce plans, including resources that are needed, which support the activities of the KRP in delivering the KJMWMS;
- h. Approve allocations of the KRP's budget that supports the KRP's activities each year. The budget is held by Kent County Council as the host authority on the KRP's behalf. The KRP's funds are protected and will not be seen by the host authority as being part of its own funds.

- i. Undertake joint funding applications relevant to the implementation and future development of the KJMWS and the Annual Action Plan;
- j. Encourage the adoption and sharing of resource management good practices and initiatives that provide value for money to Kent taxpayers;
- k. Co-ordinate baseline evaluation and monitoring of services;
- l. Facilitate constructive partnership working internally among the 13 councils and externally;
- m. Inform and raise awareness of Members, officers, and the community with regards to key resource management, street scene and environmental enforcement issues;
- n. Influence, advise and lobby government and other agencies both nationally and internationally, where to do so is consistent with Kent's JMWMS and in the interests of Kent taxpayers; and
- o. Carry out such other activities calculated to facilitate, or which are conducive or incidental to, the discharge of the KRP's functions.

8. KRP Structure

8.1 The KRP is part of a wider governance framework covering Kent & Medway encompassing all aspects of environmental strategies and plans delivered in partnership, as shown in the diagram below:



Decision Making

- 8.2 As a general convention, every question shall be determined by the voices of those voting Officers present.
- 8.3 For all votes at KRPOG meetings, only the appointed senior officer of each constituent authority (or a valid substituting officer in the absence of the senior officer) shall be entitled to vote.
- 8.4 In the event of a tied vote, the co-chairs shall have the choice to use, or not to use, a casting vote. In the event a vote remains tied, the motion shall be declared to be 'not carried'. A casting vote cannot be used to create a tied situation
- 8.5 Any officer, including a co-chair, may request that a decision is determined by a show of hands. A simple majority is required, including taking abstentions into account, except on the matters of voting for co-chairs and major issues relating to disbandment of the KRP (see Section 5).
- 8.6 Any officer, including the co-chairs, may request that votes are recorded. In that event, the KRP Manager shall ask each council in turn, alphabetically beginning with Ashford BC and ending with Tunbridge Wells BC, to state whether 'for, against or abstention'. The exception to a recorded vote is the election of co-chairs, which is carried out by means of written papers, if required.
- 8.7 For some decisions officers may first need to discuss the matter with their elected Member portfolio holder and/or Council Leader before providing a formal response or ask for the matter to be referred to the Kent and Medway Environment Coalition Group (elected Members). A response deadline will be agreed allowing sufficient time for discussions to take place without unduly delaying the decision. Decisions to be referred to KMECG will be taken by one of the co-chairs.

Special Meetings

- 8.8 A co-chair may summon a Special Meeting of the KRPOG at any time in relation to the Functions of the KRP.
- 8.9 Senior officers of the KRPOG may summon a Special Meeting on the requisition in writing to the co-chairs of not less than four senior officers. The requisition shall specify the business to be considered at the Special Meeting, which must relate to the Functions of the KRP.
- 8.10 The co-chairs may decide to decline a request for a Special Meeting if a scheduled meeting is due within one calendar month of the proposed date for a special meeting and he considers that the business for discussion can wait until that time.
- 8.11 Special Meetings must be quorate for any decisions to be made. Special Meetings do not have to be quorate for a discussion to be had, subject to the co-chairs agreeing that a meeting may continue if there is no quorum.

9. KRP Officers Group (KRPOG)

- 9.1 The KRPOG will meet as activity and plans dictate, and as a minimum, hold three meetings per year.
- 9.2 Membership of KRPOG comprises officers from the 13 constituent councils who direct and/or manage services within the scope of the KRP. One or more officers from constituent councils may attend meetings.
- 9.3 KRPOG meetings are designed to be informal as the aim is to arrive at co-operative solutions following discussion and understanding of councils' and officers' positions. However, the goal is always the delivery of the KRP's objectives and functions.
- 9.4 The quorum for a meeting shall be five councils in attendance to enable decisions to be made. Meetings do not have to be quorate for a discussion to be had, subject to the Chair agreeing that a meeting may continue. However, no decisions can be made.
- 9.5 The purposes of KRPOG meetings are to ensure that: -
 - A. The objectives and functions of the KRP are delivered effectively by the 13 councils as a collective.
 - B. Each constituent council is contributing within the KRP, to the best of its abilities, to the delivery of the objectives and functions of the KRP; and delivery of the KJMWMS in the overall interests of Kent taxpayers.
 - C. Issues are discussed openly, professionally and objectively. In all discussions, the goal is to arrive at the best possible solutions to support the delivery of the KJMWMS and the overall best interests of Kent taxpayers.
 - D. Meetings are planned effectively and professionally according to a schedule prepared at least a year in advance.
 - E. Reports on key issues are discussed and agreed for transmission to Kent & Medway Environment Group/Members Environment Coalition Group meetings and/or Chief Executives and Leaders (see governance structure).
 - F. The KRP budget is allocated appropriately towards delivery of the KRP's objectives and functions.
 - G. Sufficient resources are secured to deliver the KRP's objectives and functions including staff resources for the KRP itself, and also that staff resources in the constituent councils are available to support the KRP's interests when required.
- 9.6 Elections of co-Chairs to KRPOG will normally take place at the October meeting and usually last for a period of two years.
- 9.7 One of the co-Chairs of KRPOG shall also be the reporting manager for the KRP Strategic Lead. There is a responsibility to hold regular meetings with the KRP Strategic Lead and to ensure the KRP Strategic Lead is empowered to take forward business.

10. KRP Project Groups

- 10.1 KRP Project Groups may be established to help deliver the KRP's objectives.

- 10.2 The KRPOG shall decide the creation and cessation of any Projects Groups; and that Projects Groups remain effective over their lifetime.
- 10.3 The key areas of focus for KRP Project Groups are to: -
- A. Support all councils' operations and services within the scope of the KRP by designing and delivering campaigns and communication resources, that increase resident engagement and inform residents of the actions that they can take to help deliver the aims and objectives of the KJMWMS.
 - B. Do more than ensure the councils operate legally by identifying, creating and implementing best practices on services within the scope of the KRP.
 - C. Be a forum for innovation, creativity and energy on ways to provide better value for money to Kent taxpayers. This includes a major focus on identifying recommendations relating to the services within the scope of the KRP to reduce costs now and in the future through improved joint working, better contracting, implementing lean management applications, reducing bureaucracy, sharing staff resources, and any other means considered appropriate.
 - D. Consider, discuss and recommend options for the best possible solutions to support taxpayers' needs. This includes openness of information on the web and other channels on councils' costs, performance, services and means of communication – and doing that in the most efficient ways possible as a collective of councils. It also includes mechanisms that secure high resident satisfaction with services in the scope of the KRP whilst maintaining excellent value for money in their provision.
- 10.4 KRP Project Groups will arrange their activities to co-ordinate with KRPOG meetings. With the agreement of the KRP Strategic Lead, KRP Project Groups are able to arrange other meetings, workshops and forums that are consistent with the need to deliver effective results whilst also ensuring that administration, staff and travel costs are proportionate to the benefits that will be delivered.
- 10.5 It is not an automatic requirement that all councils need to be represented at all KRP Project Group meetings. The key issues are that KRP Project Groups have defined programmes of work; talent and resources are used effectively; and officers have opportunities to make a difference over-and-above what they already deliver in their home authorities.
- 10.6 KRP Project Groups shall each elect a Chair who shall work closely with the KRP Strategic Lead to organise activities.
- 10.7 KRP Project Group Chairs who are not usual attendees of KRPOG meetings may be invited to attend to report progress on projects, receive feedback from KRPOG, and be part of KRPOG discussions.
- 10.8 Officers from external organisations, or from within the 13 councils, may be invited to attend KRP Project Group meetings and contribute to projects where that is deemed helpful to the delivery of the KRP's objectives and functions.
- 10.9 Oversight of KRP Project Groups' activities is done by the KRPOG. The KRP Project Group Chairs should meet as regularly as is needed to ensure consistency in direction.
- 10.10 The majority of Project Groups will be established on a task and finish basis with the exception of the following groups, which will meet at an agreed frequency, until such time the group is deemed no longer required: -
- **KRP Communications Group:** the remit is to achieve a consistent approach to communications and campaign resources, identifying and taking forward county-wide

initiatives that deliver a step-change in resident engagement and behaviours towards waste moving Kent towards a Circular Economy. As a principle, activities should be geared to providing financial AND performance benefits. Such initiatives may be in addition to existing complimentary activities by individual councils in respect to their own services (e.g. communicating changes in services or supporting new materials for collections).

- **Kent Waste Practitioners Group (KWPG):** the remit is to gather a 'Kent-wide' picture on the scale of fly tipping, build a strong culture to tackle waste crime together, share intelligence and learn from local and national best practice. This may include working with external agencies such as the Environment Agency, Defra, Kent Police, National Farmers Union etc.

11. KRP Resources

- 11.1 To enable the KRP to support the constituent councils in delivering shared objectives, a core fund is required from which costs for staff resources, meeting management and other supporting functions can be drawn.
- 11.2 The KRP shall ensure there is a sufficient ongoing core fund to enable business to be taken forward effectively and efficiently. A review of available funds and annual partner contributions shall take place at least annually, in advance of each new financial year.
- 11.3 Up to March 2030 the agreed contributions to the Core Fund are: WDA £69k per annum; and WCAs £69k per annum (£5,750 per district).
- 11.4 A dedicated KRP Strategic Lead is appointed to ensure the 13 councils are supported in the delivery of the Kent Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (KJMWMS) and taking forward the KRP's activities.
- 11.5 The appointment of the KRP Strategic Lead shall be on a full-time basis. The KRP Strategic Lead may take-on responsibilities subject to any prevailing circumstances that may prohibit such arrangements. (These may include conflicts of priorities with the KRP's objectives, and/or capacity issues, as examples). Kent County Council is the host authority for the KRP Strategic Lead and any other KRP staff. The KRP Strategic Lead shall have a title commensurate with the duties and profile of the role, and which assists in maximising reputational, status and funding benefits within the public and private sectors.
- 11.6 The core funds may also support the appointment of any other position that is required to ensure the effective delivery of the objectives, Functions of the KRP, and the wider delivery of activities within the scope of the KRP. Appointments may be on a full-time, permanent basis or otherwise as required to attract the skills needed.

- 11.7 A KRP Project Fund of £120,250 was decided in 2019/20 as being appropriate to support the partnership's activities from 2020/21 onwards. This sum is made up of each of the 13 Kent councils contributing £9,250 per year. (A total fund of £258,250 with a contribution per district of £15000 and KCC contribution of £78,250)
- 11.8 The KRP shall agree a Partnership Business Plan (PBP) and a Partnership Risk Plan (PRP). These will demonstrably support the effective, appropriate and timely delivery of the objectives and functions of the KRP, and the KJMWMS.
- 11.9 Should any KRP staff be made redundant, the costs of redundancy shall be shared by all 13 councils in equal proportion to their contributions to Core Costs. Thus, KCC would share 50/110 of costs, and the district councils 60/110 of costs (5/110 per district). This ensures fairness towards all councils. Should a redundancy situation be faced, it should be timed (if at all possible) such that redundancy costs can be covered within existing Core Costs budgets within a financial year.

12. KRP Stakeholders

- 12.1 The KRP shall engage with stakeholders who relate to the delivery of the objectives and functions of the KRP. An output of the KRP shall be the organisation of an annual event titled the 'KRP Annual Conference' to which stakeholders are invited to attend.
- 12.2 Ordinarily, the event shall be held in September.
- 12.3 KRP stakeholders are those who wish to support the work of the KRP, or whom the KRP wishes to engage. These include Members and officers of the 13 Kent councils as well as waste industry contractors, major retailers, packaging designers and producers, government officials, representatives of civil society and consumer organisations, environmental groups, and others.
- 12.4 The KRP Annual Conference is designed to promote shared thinking and doing by interested organisations and individuals. The KRP Annual Conference has no specific status other than to gather parties together who may be interested to understand what is happening in Kent on waste and resource issues, to hear speakers' views on issues of national and local relevance, and to provide views among each other on future direction.

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