Ashford Borough Council

Annual Performance Report

2020-2021

Ashford Borough Council

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Our borough in 2020-21
Key Facts and Figures

Size

130,000
Population estimate[1]

153,200
Population estimate by 2030[2]

2.24
People per hectare

39
Ward areas

49
Parish areas



58,062
Hectares largest geographical area in Kent (approximately 220 sq miles)

Health

80.6
Life expectancy at birth – male[3]

84.2
Life expectancy at birth – female[4]

Economy

£570.30
median resident based weekly full-time earnings 2020

28.9%
NVQ4+ level qualification or above placing Ashford in the bottom 20% of authorities in England.

Diversity

40.7yrs
Mean age[7]

25.1%
Proportion of population 19 and under

19.4%
Proportion of population aged 65 and over

Transport

4,020,566
trips Ashford International Station[8] 2019/2020 representing a 2% fall from 2018/19

History

More than
3000
listed buildings.

[1] Office for National Statistics Mid Year 2019
[2] KCC Housing Led forecast (Nov' 2020), Strategic Commissioning - Analytics, Kent County Council
[3] Office for National Statistics
[4] Office for National Statistics
[5] Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE)
[6] Annual Population Survey
[7] 2019 Mid Year Population Estimates, Office for National Statistics
[8] Office of Rail and Road 2019/20

Responding to the Pandemic

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an enormous impact on every aspect of all of our lives nationally as well as our local communities and immediate friends and families. The impact is likely to be felt for many years and there is no doubt that it will shape the future course of the council as we move forward with recovery.

At the start of the pandemic, like that of the Government, our clear objective was to save lives. To that end the council focused on a response that protected life whilst minimises the impact upon the essential services we offer and the local economy.

Overall command and control of the council's response to the outbreak was led by the Ashford Critical Emergency Resilience (ACER) Committee, which met for the first time just ahead of Public Health England (PHE) confirming the first case of COVID-19 in Kent on the 2 March 2020.

ACER, which consists of elected members and senior officers, ensured that our response to the emergency was coordinated and that we remained in the strongest position to protect our residents, businesses and staff. ACER has regularly met throughout the outbreak and has been instrumental in guiding and supporting the council's response.

Day to day operational control was provided by the council's Business Continuity Incident Management Team (BCIMT) which, in the case of this emergency, involved the whole Management Team.

In order to maintain our statutory and essential services throughout the pandemic, the council drew on its well-established and tested business continuity and emergency planning arrangements. All services have business continuity plans which have been supplemented by additional arrangements specific to COVID-19. This has necessitated services working in very different ways, including greater remote working and rapid deployment of digital services.

In the first weeks of the emergency, local authorities were asked by the Government to provide a 'stopgap' for food deliveries and essential provisions for those in need of immediate support. As the pandemic has unfolded our customer contact staff have continued to contact those placed on the Governments/NHS shielded list (whilst shielding advice was in place) and other vulnerable groups to offering support where it may be needed.

From the start of the outbreak, information regarding the council's COVID-19 response has been extensively promoted on the council's website, through regular social media messages, press releases, a special edition of our Ashford For You magazine, and mail outs to our most vulnerable. A spotlight was shone on our voluntary and community champions who have gone the extra mile in the crisis, and residents were signposted to further information, support and advice.

In early May the council's Stour Centre car park was used as a mobile testing centre. The centre managed by the army, allowed for hundreds of people who were showing symptoms to be tested. As of the 15 June a drive-through Regional Testing Centre was set up from our new car park at Victoria Road.

The council has also support Public Health England's track and trace programme. As well as administrating the Test and Trace support payment scheme.

Supporting business has been, and remains, a strategic priority for the council. During early April, letters were sent to nearly 3,000 local businesses inviting them to apply for rate relief and business grants announced by the government. Since the start of the pandemic through various business support schemes in excess of 8,000 grants have been administered to our businesses.

Our homelessness communities through the everyone in scheme were and continue to be provided with a safe place to stay and our welfare intervention officers have reached out to support those financially affected.

In short every corner of the council was and continues to be mobilised to serve the best we can the local community.







Adoption of the Recovery Plan

The Recovery Plan 2020 was developed to put in place a framework to enable a timely and structured recovery from the economic and social impact of the coronavirus pandemic. This plan set out to deliver a number of actions allowing the council to re-configure how it works in order to most effectively deliver services to residents and in collaboration with others, help mitigate the negative impacts of the pandemic on the local economy, communities and residents.

The underlying principles of the plan were to build back to a greener, more prosperous, resilient and caring borough.

The council's immediate priority turned to responding to the Covid-19 pandemic; supporting communities, residents and business. This meant that the public consultation for the Corporate Plan, planned to take place during June and July 2020, were suspended and this Recovery Plan put in place as the key strategic document spelling out the councils priorities.

This Annual Report acts as an opportunity to monitor the Recovery Plans performance and highlight any achievements made against it.

Ashford Borough Council

Our Recovery Plan 2020 - 22

The Ashford Ambition: to be a thriving, productive and inclusive borough in 2030 and beyond; a vital part of Kent and the South East where local businesses, social enterprises, communities and the public sector provide collective leadership to promote shared prosperity, happiness and wellbeing.

Recovery Plan Themes

- Economic Recovery
- Community Recovery
- Place Making, Regeneration, and Infrastructure
- Organisational Change and Workforce Development

Our Objectives

Carbon reduction; Job creation; Building community resilience; Improving the customer journey; Revitalising the local economy; Promoting health and wellbeing; Tackling inequalities

Our Service Design Principles

This is a framework that guides us when designing services to ensure our services are;

- Efficient
- Consistent
- Inclusive
- Improve the customer experience

Green principles

1. All investment to support recovery and future growth should have low or zero carbon emissions, use resources efficiently and aim for environmental net gain.
2. Employees and residents are supported to protect and enhance their wellbeing through a cleaner environment and more access to rich and varied nature.
3. Communities are well connected both digitally, and through an effective network of footpaths, cycleways and public transport.
4. Future development and existing communities are resilient and adapted to the changing climate and severe weather events
5. Biodiversity is protected, restored and created; nature-based solutions are considered first and invested in at every opportunity.
6. Ensure any green recovery solutions are equitable and fair; a green and equitable recovery go hand in hand.
7. Greater partnership working and collaboration.



Equalities Objectives

These are refreshed every four years to ensure the council has due regard to; eliminating unlawful discrimination, advancing equality of opportunity and fostering good relations

- Improve our understanding of our diverse communities in all that we do
- Encourage all residents to have a say in the decisions that affect them and get involved in their local communities
- Deliver services and customer care to meet the needs of all our residents
- Deliver organisational change to enable a more inclusive and diverse workforce

Economic Recovery

Business grants support

During the last year more than 8,000 business support grants have been paid out to businesses within Ashford borough. Ashford Borough Council has been supporting local businesses, processing and administering the many government grant schemes since the first national lockdown in March 2020.

The work of the Revenues and Benefits and Economic Development teams, assisted by colleagues from across the council, has helped hundreds of businesses stay afloat during these unprecedented times.

Ashford town centre reset approved

Plans for the future development of Ashford town centre were approved at November's Cabinet meeting as part of the Recovery Plan.

The Ashford Town Centre Reset, which focuses on the Bank Street and Elwick Road area, are designed to reset the town centre in light of the decline in retail which has been accelerated by the coronavirus pandemic.

The council is working to ensure that the town centre remains relevant following new developments within the town, making Ashford a place to live, work, visit and invest in, enhancing and embracing the areas which give Ashford its character.

The report focused on several projects which will help revitalise the area. Following the same themes as the council's Recovery Plan.

Ashford prepares to run a Border Control Post

Preparations for the opening of a Border Control Post located at Sevington are continuing ahead of the start date for official controls which is set for the 1st January 2022.

Ashford Borough Council is recruiting circa 130 people to enable it to staff the port health service which is located on the site of the Inland Border Facility (IBF) at Junction 10A of the M20. The IBF site will also be occupied by other Government Agencies such as Border Force and HMRC, who the port health team will work closely with.

The checks that will be undertaken on the site are required as a result of BREXIT due to the UK leaving the single market. At a size of 93 hectares the IBF is one of the biggest in the UK. The Council are set to play a vital role in delivering the UK's new trading arrangements with the EU and will be responsible for undertaking official controls as follows:

- Imports of Products of Animal Origin (POAO)
- Imports of High-Risk Food not of Animal Origin (HRFNAO)
- Organic food imports (COI's)
- Illegal Unregistered and Unregulated Fishing (IUU)
- Control of Plastics used in products used with food from China

ASHFORD Port Health









Elwick Place lettings update

The flagship Elwick Place cinema, hotel and leisure development in the heart of the town centre is almost fully let, with contracts signed for more units during the latest lockdown.

The first phase of the council-owned 100,000 sq ft development was launched in December 2018, with a six-screen Picturehouse cinema and a 58-bedroom Travelodge hotel as its anchor tenants. The scheme – built on the site of a former cattle market in partnership with UK developer Stanhope PLC – also has a 282-space car park and is a stone's throw from Ashford International station.

During later phases, efforts to attract restaurant and leisure businesses to fill the remaining eight units have continued against a backdrop of business uncertainty caused by Brexit, an accelerating decline in high street retail and the pandemic.

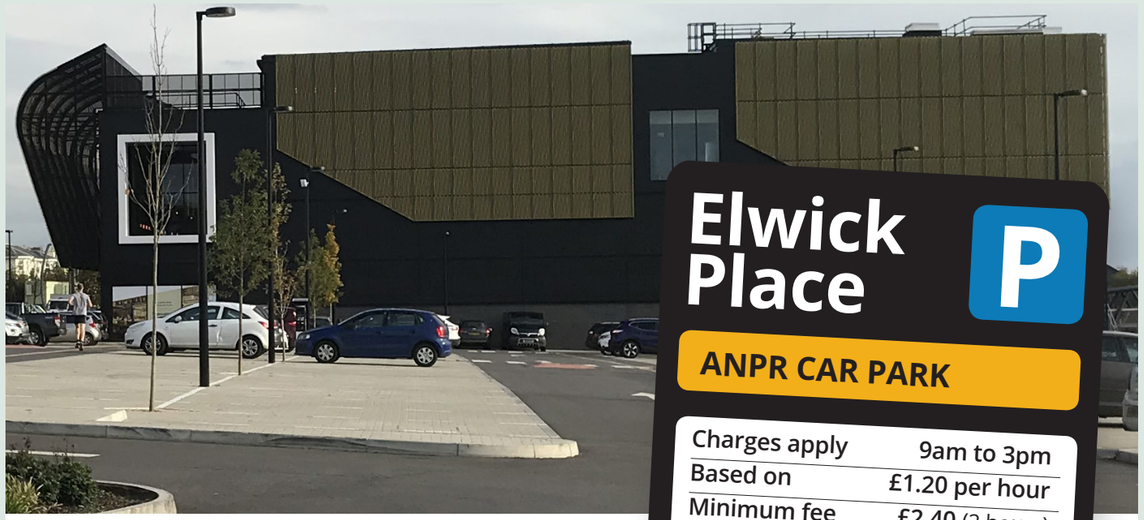
New tenants have now been secured for all but one unit at the multi-million pound centre. Restaurant operators dominate, providing the people of Ashford with a wealth of new leisure choices just as we emerge from lockdown.

New additions to the site include; family-friendly Italian restaurant Unita 4, and Matches Sports Bar.

Meanwhile food hall and restaurant operator Macknade Fine Foods has recently expanded into an adjoining unit, after a successful first 18 months trading at Elwick Place. And Snap Fitness gym will reopen in line with the Government's Coronavirus roadmap.

Ashford Borough Council has a large portfolio of corporate property assets which generate significant income, even though there has been an adverse impact caused by the pandemic. The portfolio includes Elwick Place, Park Mall shopping centre, International House and the Commercial Quarter, Carlton Road Business Park, Ellingham Road Industrial Estate and many others.





ANPR arrives in Ashford

Whilst our car parking income has taken a significant hit during the pandemic with visitor numbers down and our carparks used for testing facilities resulting in an income fall from £2,591,786 to £819,698.

As part of the council's on-going programme of investment in our car parks we are starting to introduce automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology. The Elwick Place Car Park in Ashford Town Centre was the first car park to go live with ANPR which started operating in November.

ANPR will improve the quality and convenience of using our car park. It is widely used in both public and private car parks up and down the UK.





Community Recovery

VERA supports three worthy organisations

Shortly after the start of the pandemic Ashford Borough Council launched our Voluntary Emergency Response Appeal (VERA). Seventy donations were made to the fund, with contributions from residents, councillors, ABC staff and local companies such as Givaudan and Countryside Properties.

During the pandemic many local voluntary organisations have helped supply food and essentials to those most in need. VERA funding was made available to - Ashford Vineyard Foodbank, Bright City Church Foodbank and Repton People's Pantry.

As our Corporate Recovery Plan highlights, we will continue to look at ways to strengthen the voluntary sector such as networking valuable groups so they can help each other and share resources in the future.

Ashford's Syrian resettlement programme wins top award

Ashford's proud record of welcoming vulnerable refugee families has earned national recognition, with the Syrian Resettlement Programme winning the Diversity and Inclusion category of the prestigious LGC Awards 2020.

Earlier in 2020 the council voted to continue to welcome refugee families displaced by Syria's long and bloody civil war, despite the fact that the government-organised Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS) was coming to an end. The government was amalgamating all its refugee resettlement programmes into one, called the UK Resettlement Scheme (UKRS), to continue beyond 2020.

It was agreed to extend the planned resettlement of refugees in Ashford to offer a new beginning for up to 50 people (around 10 families) each year under UKRS, subject to the availability of suitable private rented property. Councillors also agreed to continue the development of projects and infrastructure to enable successful integration and promote community cohesion to benefit the wider Ashford community.

The resettlement scheme is fully funded by the Home Office so there is no major financial burden on participating councils. Ashford decided from the outset not to use any social housing – easing any fears that refugees would jump the queue of those on the housing waiting list. Refugee families are in private sector accommodation and continue to make a positive contribution to the communities in which they have found new homes.

Jasmin Vardimon secures funding for creative laboratory in Ashford

Work on building the Jasmin Vardimon Creative Laboratory and 29 light industrial units on a Kent County Council owned site in Javelin Way, is scheduled to get under way.

The Creative Laboratory, due to open in Spring 2022, will be a major new arts facility for the county, providing a long-term base for internationally renowned dance company Jasmin Vardimon Company who have been resident in Kent, and a key partner in the county's cultural infrastructure, since 2012.

The new facility has been made possible by success in securing £3.069m of capital investment from Arts Council England, alongside £750,000 from Ashford Borough Council (ABC) from the Business Rates Retention Pilot and investment of £578,724 secured by KCC from the Getting Building Fund administered by the South East Local Enterprise Partnership (SELEP).

As well as the construction of a creative laboratory production space, with an area of 13,530sq ft, the development will also provide 29 light industrial units with an area of 47,163 sq ft for sale and/or lease, suitable for additional creative businesses as well as the general market.

The light industrial units are an enabling development with the income from the sales making a contribution to the cost of the creative laboratory. They will also seek to support the growth of small and medium-sized enterprises in the post-pandemic world by providing opportunities for business development in the creative sector, as well as income from business rates.



Place Making, Regeneration and Infrastructure



Stour Centre closed ahead of major refurbishment

The redevelopment plans for the Stour Centre Leisure Centre in Ashford were altered following the pandemic, keeping the site closed following the first lockdown to allow a major refurbishment and works programme to progress at pace, which will significantly improve the leisure offer of the centre from mid-2021.

The council in partnership with Freedom Leisure, will be investing £6.5m for the Stour Centre, transforming tired features and providing new spaces to boost participation and improve the health and wellbeing of residents.

The changes include an extended gym with new equipment, a new soft play and clip and climb and dedicated café area, improved reception and access to the existing seating area, new leisure pool features targeted at younger children and major redecoration throughout including the dry and wet changing areas.

Stour power boost for refurbished leisure centre

Ashford Borough Council has secured a £1.45m Government grant to replace the ageing power plant at the Stour leisure centre with a state-of-the-art system which will slash running costs, cut carbon emissions by 45% and provide a boost to bold ambitions to make the borough carbon neutral by 2030.

The council submitted a bid to the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS), which provides grants for public sector bodies to fund energy efficiency and heat decarbonisation measures.

Benefits of the scheme include:

- Reduction of the Stour Centre's annual carbon emission total by 657 tonnes or 45% (the equivalent to the co2 emissions from the annual heating of 243 homes).
- Energy savings of 40%, contributing to lower running costs at the centre.
- A significant contribution to the council's goal of making the borough 100% carbon neutral by 2030.
- Frees up vital council funds to be spent on other priority projects.



Ashford Borough Council acquired the New Quarter

Ashford Borough Council complete a deal with developers Dukelease to buy the New Quarter – with an east and west wing (Stour and Somerset Heights) adjacent to the Panorama building in the heart of Ashford town centre – comprising 109 units of one and two bedroomed flats.

The deal is an £18.5m investment by the council and represents the largest ever handover of general needs accommodation to be managed on one site by the council.

This is to provide affordable rented accommodation to key workers that have an identified housing need. In addition it will also free up existing homes through transfers of keyworkers and, where possible, will provide vacant units in which to house those in temporary accommodation, or from the housing waiting list.

The council was successful is securing grant funding from Homes England of £2.265m.



Ashford Borough Council secured Government funding to build more affordable housing

Ashford Borough Council has secured more than £1 million of Government funding that will enable it to build 17 homes for affordable housing at Halstow Way in south Ashford, on the site of a former run down play area.

The council will receive £1,020,000 to help build the homes, which will be available to tenants on a social rent basis – that's 60% of the level of open market rent.

The funding has been secured from Homes England, with £765,000 paid up front to the council and the remainder handed over on completion of the scheme. The new apartment block is a mix of one, two and three-bed homes.

The play area will be re-provided through the section 106 agreement as the money secured (£61,520) will be put towards informal play, sport, ecological and open space improvements in the area. This will help meet the needs generated by the development. A small number of additional parking spaces are also provided.

Opening of £1m homeless project by Ashford Borough Council

An innovative project that's set to benefit homeless households and save local taxpayers money has opened in Ashford.

Ashford Borough Council bought the large disused home in Beaver Road for £430,000 and has invested around £500,000 to convert it into eight homes, capable of accommodating up to 25 people.
An extensive refurbishment programme has been completed, adding facilities like a communal kitchen, dining room and laundry room.

Christchurch Lodge, as the building has been renamed, follows the same blueprint adopted by the council when it created Christchurch House, a rundown property bought at auction for £278,000 in 2013.

Statement on Habitat Regulation issues affecting development in Ashford borough

In mid-July 2020 Ashford Borough Council, received formal statutory advice from Natural England (NE) regarding development proposals in the Stour Valley catchment area with the potential to increase harmful nutrient impacts (principally nitrogen and phosphorus) at designated protected lakes at Stodmarsh in Canterbury. This covers large parts of the borough including the urban area in and around Ashford itself.

In summary, NE's advice is that a significant adverse effect is possible from some types of new development in the catchment area. This applies mainly to housing development but also other schemes involving overnight accommodation.
The council is legally obliged to give significant weight to the views of NE in relation to relevant planning applications.

The immediate practical effect of the NE advice is that planning applications for housing development (and some other types of development involving overnight accommodation) within the Stour catchment area cannot be determined until a process of formal assessment of the potential effects on the Stodmarsh Lakes has been undertaken, considered and approved by the council.

In parallel, the council will be working with its partners in central and local government and applicants to draw up a mitigation strategy to address any impacts from development and enable schemes to proceed.

Vision set out for the South of Ashford Garden Community

A Five Year Vision & Strategy setting out how three major combined developments in the south of Ashford will come together, has been adopted by Ashford Borough Council. The Strategy received major endorsements by partners including private developers and the Chilmington Management Organisation, ensuring a commitment to achieving the Vision for the South of Ashford Garden Community (SAGC).

This strategy represents the aspirations of local residents, local organisations and key partners who are looking to ensure that these developments come forward with quality in mind, where infrastructure is planned and delivered in tandem with new homes, as the community grows.

The importance of high quality design and placemaking, guided by Garden City principles but shaped to reflect 21st century living, is a key theme running through the strategy. Most importantly, it offers a vision of living and working in the wake of Covid-19 as we all seek to recover from the impact of the pandemic and come back stronger as a community.



Urban Tree Challenge branches out into Ashford

Chilmington Green part of the wider South of Ashford Garden Community, which also includes the site areas known as Court Lodge and Kingsnorth Green developments will see the planting of 6,666 trees following a successful bid to the Forestry Commission's Urban Tree Challenge.

The trees are planned to be planted in an area currently referred to as Discovery Park, with residents invited to be involved in the tree planting project to encourage a greater sense of local ownership.

Recycling success continues

Ashford Borough Council's recycling service remains the best in Kent, according to the latest national recycling league tables. Ashford's position is certainly one to be proud of and demonstrates the excellent recycling our residents have been doing.

Ashford's recycling rate remains comfortably above the national target of 50%, and the overall figure for Ashford (54.2%) places us 48th in the country, 16th in the South East and top in Kent. These statistics form part of DEFRA's nationwide recycling league tables

Organisational Change and Workforce Development

Ashford Borough Council has adopted an asset management strategy for its corporate property portfolio with the intention to ensure it invests prudently, achieves long term value for money, meets the needs of customers and supports the authority's carbon neutrality objectives.

The Corporate Property Asset Management Strategy (2020 –2024) replaces the previous Corporate Property Management Strategy and sets out the council's high-level strategic framework for managing its portfolio of nearly 2,000 corporate property assets for the next four years.

It will align corporate and property strategies, ensuring the optimisation of corporate property assets in a way which best supports key services, corporate objectives and to provide affordable levels of service within financial resource risk constraints.

It lays the foundation for the efficient use of all assets, providing a platform for structured and rigorous forward thinking and decision-making about operational and property asset strategies. The strategy enables the council to be clear about the extent, value, condition and suitability of its corporate property portfolio and will form the basis for consultative strategy development and clear methodologies for measuring performance and supporting service delivery.

The strategy takes consideration of the council's objective to become 80% carbon neutral by 2025 and 100% carbon neutral by 2030.

The council's wide-ranging portfolio includes International House and other offices, Park Mall shopping centre, the Elwick Place cinema, hotel and leisure development in Ashford town centre, industrial estates and business parks, car parks, leisure facilities, community centres, public toilets, allotments and other land, plus more than 1,500 individual garages for rent across the borough.

Ashford Borough Council

New commercial approach by Ashford Borough Council

Ashford Borough Council has outlined how they are looking to take their approach to commercialisation onto the next level.

The council has been successful in the past on a fairly small scale, but with uncertainty over future Government funding, a considerable budget impact from the COVID-19 pandemic and a refocusing on future priorities, this work is now being accelerated after Cabinet endorsed a Commercialisation Strategy.

The council believes it has a great opportunity to fundamentally change how we do business and deliver services in the future, which not only supports our community and economy to recover locally, but also helps to bring in income to protect our front line services.

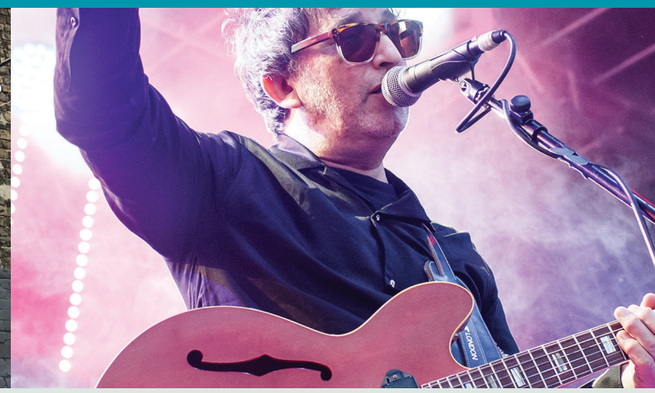
With the impact of COVID-19 on the community continuing to be felt, this work is even more relevant due to the additional financial pressures dealing with the crisis has caused.

Initially service areas like Lifeline, CCTV, parking, garden waste, category and contract management, Aspire Landscape Management and our in house electrical services team will be looked at first, and other areas will be explored over time.









ASHFORD Climate Action

Ashford Borough Council is committed to being open and transparent and we follow the code of recommended practice for local authorities on data transparency. As well as our performance reports we produce a number of monitoring reports which are made available on our webpages including:

- Annual Governance Statement
- Statement of accounts and Budget books
- Quarterly Financial monitoring report
- Medium term financial monitoring report
- Housing current delivery reports
- Planning updates and many more.

Ashford Borough Council

Recovery Plan, Annual Performance Indicators 2020/21

Economic Recovery

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
RPKPI30 **Parking usage**	Parking usage Ashford and Tenterden Car Parks	269,625			44,422			169,865			140,180			73,602 Total Parking usage: 2019/2020: 1,164,161 2020/21: 428,069		
Latest Note																



Mar 2021 Update

In Ashford, using car parks is often preferable to parking on the street as many town centre roads are reserved for resident permit holders only. Our car parks provide access to the town and an availability of parking space, absorbs traffic and reduces congestion.

This has been a challenging year for us, the impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic, is unprecedented in our operation, and management has warranted greater attention.

During 2020, we reassessed our strategy given this and various other factors and approved a significantly tighter approach that looks to increase growth where we can, however given we may lose some of our car parks along the way as part of Town Regeneration.

The effect of COVID-19 continues and end of year takings decreased from £2,591,786 to £819,698**.**

- Therefore achieved around 32 % against forecast target
- We have given free parking for key workers per UK government advice has effected income
- Free parking for COVID testers working at Victoria Road Car Park provided in Elwick Rd Car Park
- Free parking throughout year in various car park in Tenterden
- Elwick Rd being used to give free parking to staff of testing centre = over 100 staff on rotation.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status

- Losses to income were also made when Edinburgh Rd C/P was closed in this fiscal year for upgrade to the lighting, in view of car park becoming open 24/7 in the Summer of 2021 and some anti-social behaviour.
- Vicarage Rd Car Park top car park in Ashford town was also closed for ground testing, in view that this car park may be developed over the next few years.
- In Oct 2020 we installed ANPR into Elwick Place Car park with 2020 occupancy levels being at 17% and 2021 11%. Two thirds of visits made to this car park receive free parking.

Working with finance we look to set targets for our car park income for 2021/22, given loss of some of our car parks, 3 day working week for some businesses, on line shopping and effects on visit to town. We aim to look at all car park tariffs, payment charging times and amend accordingly where appropriate.

Removal of cash transactions (Car Parks) report available from Sept 2020 Cabinet, which introduced the phased removal of cash from Council business in response to the wider changes we are seeing in society as a result of digitisation of services and COVID19. This will result in reduced costs including future replacement of machines as they reach end of life.

Edinburgh Road car park (ERCP) provides a large number of town centre parking bays, however it does not operate 24 hours a day and is closed in accordance with the operating hours. Due to the changing nature of Ashford town centre; namely the increase in residential premises being developed and the change in shopper behaviour linked to Covid-19 a review of this asset is necessary to ensure it is being utilised to meet these demands. Dec 2020 Cabinet

RPKPI51 **Vacancy rates (in our corporate property)**	Vacancy rates (in our corporate property)	New Performance indicator not previously recorded	New Performance indicator not previously recorded	25.1%	16.6%	15.4%
Latest Note						

Percentage Occupancy Rate

Ellingham	69,336 sf	69,336 sf		100.0%
Carlton Road	13,118 sf	50,046 sf		26.2%
Elwick Place	66,185 sf	66,185 sf		100.0%
International House	73,700 sf	77,328 sf		95.3%
Total	222,339 sf	262,895 sf		**84.6%**

Major sites that we acquired for commercial/investment purposes included. Please note Park Mall and the Commercial Quarter are not included as these were purchased for development and regeneration purposes.

Across the year we have seen a decrease in vacancies due to a number of new leases being signed. However we have seen a percentage decrease in expected income due the ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status

Corporate Property Performance Annual Report 2019/20 and update to the Property Acquisition, Investment and Disposal Strategy available from Sept 2020 Cabinet. This report provided a summary of how our main commercial assets are performing and the work the Council is undertaking to improve or maintain such performance. Whilst this report looks back to the financial year 2019-2020, due to the unparalleled events over the past 18 months such as the changes in the retail shopping market, the impact and uncertainty caused by Brexit and the coronavirus pandemic, the report also considers what impacts these events may have on the council's property portfolio in the short term.

RPKPI80 **Business survival - current vacancy rates**	Business survival, measure based upon our business rates records	New Performance indicator not previously recorded	8.64%	8.4%	8.4%	8.4%
Latest Note						

Business survival, measure based upon our business rates records. comparing the total number of rated premises against those which have an empty property exemption or relief applied to their accounts

Q2 Sept 2020, 5059 rated properties in the borough with 256 exemptions and 169 empty reliefs
Q3 Dec 2020, 5148 rated properties in the borough with 271 exemptions and 164 with empty reliefs
Q4 March 2021, 5161 rated properties in the borough with 266 exemptions and 165 empty reliefs.

RPKPI81 **Percentage business survival of those who have received support during the pandemic**	Percentage business survival of those who have received support during the pandemic	New Performance indicator not previously recorded	Percentage business survival of those who have received support during the pandemic - Following the final tranche of Covid-19 related support, a report will be produced summarising the support provided and to which businesses, these businesses will subsequently be surveyed at a future date to identify their survival.
Latest Note			

Information on the support provided and available to businesses is available on our webpages.

More information on the prosperity of our local businesses is available within the Kent and Medway COVID-19 Economic Recovery Dashboard.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status

MB). This dashboard has been developed to help support the economic recovery from COVID-19 in Kent and Medway. It draws from a range of economic indicators and uses modelled data to help identify the possible impact on local economies and those areas which may be more economically vulnerable.

Summary of support provided to businesses

Schemes from March 2020 – September 2020:

Small Business Grants	1,757 grants paid	£17,570,000
Retail Hospitality (RHL) Grants	560 grants paid	£10,205,000
Discretionary Grants	175 grants paid	£1,351,000

Schemes from November 2020 onwards: (figures to date, as at 26.3.21)

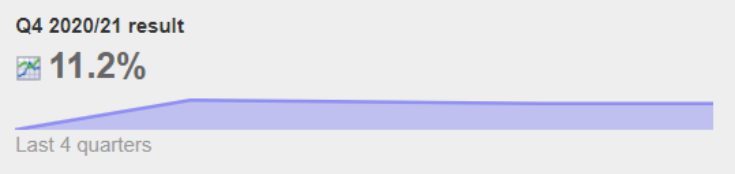
Local Restrictions Support Grants	5,472 grants paid	£13,407,171
Additional Restrictions Grants	2,227 grants paid	£3,517,973

RPKPI82 Unemployment	Unemployment figures taken monthly from Kent County Councils Economy and employment data.	2.9%	6%	6.2%	6%	6.1% (February figure)
Latest Note						



COVID-19 continues to have a significant impact on the number of claimants of unemployment benefits. Total unemployment: Ashford: 6.1% (4725) which compares to the Kent figure 6.1% and slightly under the national 6.5%.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
Statistics on the Government's Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme (CJRS) and Self-Employment Income Support Scheme (SEISS) measured down to borough level is available on the .gov website, Job retention and Self Employment Income support.																
RPKPI83 Unemployment 18-24yr olds	Unemployment 18-24yr olds taken monthly from the Kent County Council economy and employment data	5.4%			12.1%			11.7%			11.2%			11.2% (February Figure)		
Latest Note																



Unemployment for 18-24: Ashford 11.2% (990) which compares to a Kent figure of 9.7% and a national figure of 9%.

Community Recovery

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
RPKPI01 Rent arrears/loss (Housing)	Snapshot figure of total rent arrears.	New Performance indicator not previously recorded			£531,232			£558,949.55			£638,245.91			£312,078.81		
Latest Note																
Collected 98.78% of rents this year, we will see a decrease in the arrears brought forward from £526,878.41 to £312,078.81. Trend continues to be monitored to understand if this alters as the economic hardships of Covid measures work through as support schemes coming to an end.																
RPKPI04 Homelessness Presentations	No. of homelessness presentations	469			367			408			352			365		
RPKPI05 Homelessness Preventions (still in accommodation)	No. of households where homelessness was prevented	41			28			30			44			29		
Latest Note																

The latest data tables on local government housing including Ashford Borough Council, covering social housing sales, homelessness, and affordable housing supply are available at the following links: Social housing sales Homelessness Housing statistics Affordable housing supply

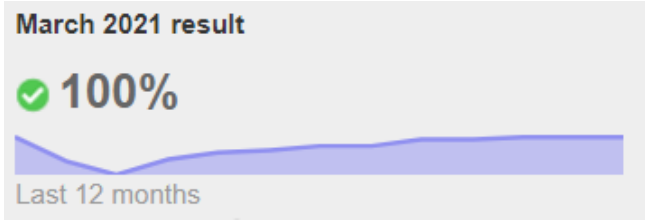
A report provides the current position on homelessness following the implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act in April 2018 and the impact of Covid 19 in 2020/21 was taken to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in October.

Officers continue to work from home and contact as much as possible is via telephone interviews or online. IT developments such as 'YOTI' digital signatures have been implemented to enable digital document signing.

ABC continues with the "Everyone in" campaign, launched by the Government back in March to bring all rough sleepers off the streets and into emergency accommodation. We have obtained funding to allow us to be able to do this. We are working on pathway plans for this group of people to move them on to long term secure accommodation and are hoping to start a Housing Led scheme in the near future.

The courts have been operating on a limited basis during the past year due to the Covid-19 pandemic. This has the potential for increased evictions once they reopen more fully which could in

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
turn lead to increased presentations and placements, increased General Fund spend particularly when the furlough scheme comes to an end. The Early Interventions Accommodation Officer is working with estate agents and landlords. There are also communications campaigns targeted at landlords and tenants to help mitigate this risk.																
RPKPI06 **Number of new complaints cases opened (Housing)**	No. of complaints regarding poor conditions and/or ASB in the private rented sector resolved with formal action	3			1			3			2			1		
Latest Note																
Q4 Most cases resolved via informal route. The one case that required action has been an ongoing case. Across the year small increase in antisocial type complaint seen due to tenants remaining at home for longer periods of time due to movement restrictions.																
RPKPI07 **Gas Safety Certificates**	% of ABC properties with up to date gas safety certificates	99.93%	100%	✓	96.29%	100%	⚠	98.37%	100%	✓	99.43%	100%	✓	99.93%	100%	✓
Latest Note																



The downturn in the landlord gas safety record compliancy in Q1 was due to the CV-19 situation with residents shielding and reluctant to provide access. Our compliance consultant, heating service provider and Council staff in housing all worked pro-active to mitigate the dip in compliance working with residents to ensure access where possible and return compliance figures to target.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
RPKPI08 **Disabled Facilities Grants Completed**	No. of disabled facilities grants administered by the council	22			6			6			17			20 Total completions 2019/20: 70 2020/21: 49		
Latest Note																

Reduced figures for Q1 and 2 as Covid lockdowns restricted access and ability to commence building works.

RPKPI24 **Estimated total no. of people supported monthly at VERA funded foodbanks**	• Monitor monthly • Completion Date: 1st February 2021	New Performance indicator not previously recorded	New Performance indicator not previously recorded	In response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Ashford Borough Council launched its Voluntary Emergency Response Appeal (VERA) to help with the borough's response to and recovery from the pandemic. Thanks to contributions from residents and businesses £10,205.00 was raised and shared between three local organisations who have been supplying food and essentials to those most in need during the height of the crisis; Ashford Vineyard Foodbank, Bright City Church Foodbank and Repton People's Pantry.
Latest Note				

"As the Covid-19 pandemic has evolved, so has Repton Community Trust's approach to supporting people through their community led foodbank 'The Peoples Pantry'. With support from VERA funding, the team developed online ordering and can now offer 24-hour access to food through a unique locker system placed outside Repton Connect Community Centre."

"Since March, Ashford Vineyard Compassion has given out over 2,000 frozen meals, food parcels, fresh food boxes, and art/activity packs for children to over 550 families across Ashford."

Bright City Church Foodbank, ""We are so grateful for the generous funds given by VERA and other funders which have enabled us to support 154 households and families with weekly food parcels throughout the pandemic. This Christmas every household received a Christmas hamper and we gave out 70 individually packed home-cooked Christmas dinners and 50 family portions."

RPKPI 26 MEMBER GRANTS – 14 Covid related grants provided in Q2 totalling £17,994.53. No member grants specifically for covid related projects in Q3. This is because VCS responded quickly to source the funding and volunteers needed to tailor services in response to covid restrictions during the first lockdown, so were already well prepared by Q3. Local support networks are now established so the reliance on the council had reduced by Q3 as groups and individuals have adapted and found ways of helping themselves.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
RPKPI25 **EMERGENCY ASSISTANCE GRANT**	ABC was allocated £59,297.47 from the Emergency Assistance Grant received in August 2020 via Kent County Council. The fund was to be used to support initiatives for 12 weeks starting August but with an understanding that pressures may extend past this point. We have strong connections with the voluntary sector and already assisted a number of Covid-19 community support projects, this allowed us to quickly identify where this funding would have the largest impact and this funding has helped with the below.															
Latest Note																

Ashford Vineyard, Renew Social Supermarket - This funding aided with increasing the hours of both Vineyard's compassion Support Worker and Projects Manager, providing help and support for people to tackle the root causes of food poverty and financial crisis. 307 people helped to date.

Ashford & Tenterden CAB - Providing support to cover the cost of debt relief orders for residents who are in need of serious financial relief, due to COVID impacts. Aiming to support 90 residents.

Ashford Volunteer Centre - providing targeted support to the wider Voluntary and Community Sector, ensuring the wide-ranging cluster of Ashford based organisations are better networked, referring on appropriately, and are aware of latest COVID advice and funding opportunities. 508 organisations, including repeat orgs, contacted and supported.

Ashford Together, Covid-19 Crisis Clinic - A new pilot signposting initiative set in a retail unit right in the heart of the Town Centre, helping link residents suffering from the impact of the pandemic to local community groups and support services available.

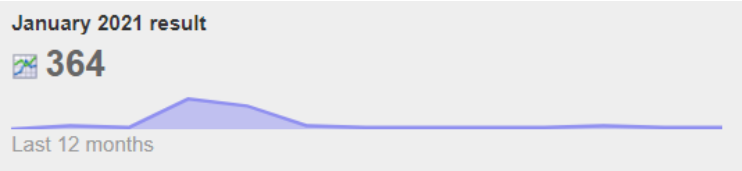
Kent Community Pantry, Stanhope - The service provides a food subscription service with a community collection point every Friday. 168 people subscribed to the scheme.

Fareshare Kent – Children & Families Ltd, Food Parcels – help with additional pressure of free food boxes. 588 free food parcels supplied to Ashford Foodbanks.

Report providing reassurance on the processes and contract monitoring of grants to our Voluntary, Community and Faith sector, particularly over the pandemic period was taken to the April meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
RPKPI31 Food Hygiene Rating	% of businesses in the borough with a food hygiene rating above 3*	99%	98.5%		99.1%	98.5%		99.4%	98.5%		99.2%	98.5%		99.1%	98.5%	
Latest Note																
This figure covers all inspections including for those inspections which are now overdue for their next inspection. Although the backlog was reducing, inspections ceased again with effect from 21st December. Lockdown meant that our food inspection programme was suspended for most of 20/21. However, the team have made contact with most of the premises due an inspection to provide advice and gather key information to help prioritise and speed up the physical inspection process. The figures for 2020/21 shown above are based on inspection data which is no longer current. Many inspections could not be completed during the last year because of restrictions on visits during the pandemic. The Food and Health & Safety team have contacted almost all the premises that were due an inspection in this period to establish what they are doing and to support them where they have changed their business offer. Many new businesses have been registered which have not yet been inspected. Fortunately, to date, not as many have closed as was expected. It is anticipated visits will resume to some establishments in April 2021 and so this figure over the course of the year will start to become more robust again.															
RPKPI62 Benefit Change of Circumstance Processing	Average time taken to process a benefit change of circumstance in no. days	2.29	10		1.94	10		2.02	10		2.11	10		1.94	10	
RPKPI63 Benefit New Claim Processing Time	Average time taken to process a new benefit payment claim in no. days	22.97	28		26.83	28		25.39	28		25.77	28		26.33	28	
Latest Note																
Benefit change of circumstance and new claims processing time has remained on target throughout the year. The latest data tables on local government finance including Ashford Borough Council, covering borrowing and investment, capital payments and receipts, local Council Tax support, quarterly revenue outturn and receipts of Council Taxes and national non-domestic rates is available from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government.																

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
RPKPI64 **Universal credit new claims**	Universal credit Monthly new starts	961			5,338			1,101			1,247			364 Latest available date up to Jan 21.		
Latest Note																



This looks at the number of starts to Universal Credit. The starts figures show the number of claims which have gone through the application process and been awarded Universal Credit. This data is available to Jobcentre Plus areas. The Jobcentre Plus office at which a claimant is recorded at, is based upon the postcode of where the claimant lives. There are thirteen Jobcentre Plus areas in Kent and Medway and this figure is associated to the Ashford office.
Source DWP Stat Xplore, Most recent figure likely to be revised.

RPKPI67 **Welfare intervention new cases**	Welfare intervention new cases	462	406	434	256	435
Latest Note						

Increase in Q4 due to pro-active calls. Officers have been calling people who haven't paid any council tax offering help and financial advice. Increase in cases expected when courts start to operate again properly.

Welfare Intervention Officers have taken on Test & Trace payments

RPKPI84 **Number of positive covid 19 cases**	Number of positive covid 19 cases	45	1,217	152	5,235	3,173
Latest Note						

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status



Number of people with at least one lab-confirmed positive COVID-19 test result source **https://coronavirus.data.gov.uk/**

RPKPI85 **Website visits to covid 19 pages**	Website visits to covid 19 pages	15,400 incomplete quarter only March 2020 collected	56,835	22,292	50,407	44,890
Latest Note						

Unique page views in March: 8,746 (13.5% decrease on February)
Top 5 pages: **Coronavirus Business Grants** (1,481), **Additional Restrictions Grant** (1,169), **Coronavirus Homepage** (1,139), **Local Restrictions Support Grant** (967), **Coronavirus testing centre article** (730).

RPKPI86 **Number of referrals to voluntary sector**	Number of referrals to voluntary sector	New Performance indicator not previously recorded	345	117	201	62
Latest Note						

QCovid population risk assessment tranche added to the Clinically Extremely Vulnerable list during Q4.

Place Making, Regeneration and Infrastructure

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
RPKPI02 **Council Affordable Housing - New Build**	No. of additional new build affordable homes delivered by council housing	4			0			2			44			0		
Latest Note																

Q2 Two chalet bungalows have been delivered in The Weavers, Biddenden
Q3 Currently on site with East Stour Court and The Poplars - The acquisition of New Quarter West block happened in this quarter.
The West Wing contains: 23 x 1-bed apartments and 21 x 2-bed apartments
Q4 East block at New Quarter completion nearing will be 65 flats when it does. 27 x 1-bed and 38 x 2-bed.

The acquisition of the New Quarter (Stour and Somerset Heights) represents the largest handover of general needs accommodation to be managed on one site by the council. In today's climate, such a transaction makes a major announcement about our commitment to affordable housing. The council was successful is securing grant funding from Homes England of £2.265m.

The Council has secured more than £1m of Government funding to enable it to build 17 homes for affordable housing at Halstow Way in south Ashford, on the site of a former run down play area, equating to £60,000 per unit.

RPKPI03 **Council Affordable Housing - On-Street Purchases**	No. of additional on-street purchase affordable homes delivered by council housing	24			12			12			16			6		
Latest Note																

Completions in Q4 sit at 6, with a further 16 in conveyancing. The revised target of 50 is within reach but the lag, is that solicitors (external) have been in high demand pushing through sales to beat the initial deadline for stamp duty. This has since been extended in the Chancellor's budget and things may settle during the next month or so.

Though we can now set affordable rents (60% in this instance) the stamp duty-free extension is having an impact on viability as prices have increased, given that vendors know purchasers will not have to pay for the stamp duty. Therefore prices are higher.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
Affordable housing – our delivery, aspiration and Housing Revenue Account Business Plan was presented at December's Cabinet.																
RPKPI10 Planning Application Approvals	% of planning applications approved	91%	90%		90%	90%		90%	90%		90%	90%		83%	90%	
Latest Note																
The Council's ability to determine applications in the Stour catchment part of the Borough is constrained at present by the potential impact of new residential accommodation on the Stodmarsh Lakes European Designated Sites, which lie east of Canterbury. Without necessary mitigation of additional nitrates caused by new residential development, the granting of planning permission may be regarded as unlawful. A strategic mitigation plan is under consideration and this may enable permissions to be granted the Stour catchment area when secured. In the meantime, this is likely to have a negative impact on the ability of the Council to approve applications. Advice has been given by Natural England on Nutrient Neutrality for new developments in the Stour catchment and more information is available on the planning pages of our website.															
RPKPI11 Speed of Major Planning Application Decisions	% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks (or within such extended period as agreed in writing between the applicant and the local authority)	71%	60%		94%	65%		100%	65%		100%	65%		91%	65%	
RPKPI11A % of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks amended to reflect 24 rolling month	% of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks amended to reflect 24 rolling month	58%	75%		64%	75%		67%	75%		88%	75%		72%	75%	
Latest Note																

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
The latest data tables on local government Planning including Ashford Borough Council, covering the speed and quality of planning decisions are available at the following link: Live tables on planning application statistics Performance has significantly improved across the year and remains good in respect of major application determinations although it is recognised that the impact of the Stodmarsh Lakes habitats issue on the ability to determine applications is likely to result in a delay to determination timescales in the short term for residential proposals in the Stour catchment area. Officers will continue to work closely with applicants to ensure that potential solutions can be identified and revised timescales for determination agreed where possible.																
RPKPI12 **Speed of Non-Major Planning Application Decisions**	% of minor and other planning applications determined within 8 weeks (or within such extended period as has been agreed in writing between the applicant and the council).	88%	70%		93%	75%		95%	75%		96%	75%		88%	75%	
RPKPI12A **% of non majors determined within 8 weeks amended to reflect 24 rolling month**	% of non majors determined within 8 weeks amended to reflect 24 rolling month	78%	80%		80%	80%		82%	80%		88%	80%		86%	80%	
Latest News																
The latest data tables on local government Planning including Ashford Borough Council, covering the speed and quality of planning decisions are available at the following link: Live tables on planning application statistics Performance in non-major schemes remains strong and above target. Enhanced use of officer delegations is helping to maintain performance levels.																
RPKPI14 **Number of live**	Number of live planning applications reducing backlog with a capacity set at 550 open cases	613	550		619	550		643	550		665	550		681	550	

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
planning applications reducing backlog																
Latest News																

The Council's ability to determine applications in the Stour catchment part of the Borough is constrained at present by the potential impact of new residential accommodation on the Stodmarsh Lakes European Designated Sites, which lie east of Canterbury. Without necessary mitigation of additional nitrates caused by new residential development, the granting of planning permission may be regarded as unlawful. A strategic mitigation plan is under consideration and this may enable permissions to be granted the Stour catchment area when secured. In the meantime, this is likely to have a negative impact on the ability of the Council to approve applications. Advice has been given by Natural England on Nutrient Neutrality for new developments in the Stour catchment and more information is available on the planning pages of our website. Alongside this, there is evidence of a rise in planning application numbers which is driving up overall caseload in the Service coupled with remaining resource gaps associated with the final stages of the restructure of the Planning & Development Service. A programme of recruitment is well under way and this should assist in bringing overall case numbers down in the months ahead.

RPKPI21 **% of working population cycling to work (atleast once per week)**	% of working population cycling to work .	Not measured for Quarters Latest data for Ashford (Local Authority area) from 2019 (published in August 2020) shows the following: 3.5% traveling by bike once a month 2.4% traveling once a week 1.6% traveling 3 times a week 1.6% traveling 5 times a week Based on the national walking and cycling data statistics, data is from the National Travel Survey and Active Lives Survey
RPKPI22 **Number of organisations committed to active travel plans cycling/walking**	Number of organisations committed to travel plans cycling/walking	Annual target that increases in each year based on our plans to fund the production of travel plans. In year 1 we're looking at a pilot of working with 10 organisations and are hoping that once we see more people returning to offices that this will become more of a priority.
Latest Note		

The procurement of projects has been delayed due to the covid pandemic. Partner organisations are currently prioritising the return to the office and in the process are delaying input into other projects such as the setting up of active travel plans.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
	It is anticipated there will be more traction and interest for active travel projects once businesses have settled into new modes of working, with workers returning to offices under new working arrangements and hours split between the office and home. Discussions continue with our business partners to understand the pace of change and when they will have the time and resources to engage in the project more directly. We are currently forecasting interest will pick up over the autumn once businesses have established their new working arrangements.															
RPKPI40 Recycling Rate	% of borough waste recycled or composted	49.33%	50%		53.67%	50%		48.33%	50%		50%	50%		45% Januarys data only	50%	
Latest Note	The rate is distorted by there being three weeks of residual waste and two weeks of recycle for the period. Average recycle rate for period until end of January is 50%. Residents continue to present high tonnages in lockdown. Ashford's recycling rate remains comfortably above the national target of 50%, and the overall figure for Ashford (54.2%) places us 48th in the country, 16th in the South East and top in Kent. These statistics form part of DEFRA's nationwide recycling league tables. Waste data from UK local authorities is reported to WasteDataFlow with statistics available at the following links. WasteDataFlow Waste and recycling statistics															
RPKPI41 Refuse Collection Success Rate	% of successful refuse collections per 100,000 refuse collections made.	99.97%	99.97%		99.96%	99.97%		99.97%	99.97%		99.97%	99.97%		99.97%	99.97%	
Latest Note	Waste data from UK local authorities is reported to WasteDataFlow with statistics available at the following links. WasteDataFlow Waste and recycling statistics															

Organisational Change and Workforce Development

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
RPKPI50 Contribution to budget from commercial investments	Contribution to budget from commercial investments utilising the budgeted figures provided as part of the councils budget books. Measure to start from Sept 20	New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			74%			66%			82%		
Latest Note																

Figure based on Ellingham, Carlton Road, Elwick Place, International House, Matalan and Wilkos.

Corporate Property Performance Annual Report 2019/20 and update to the Property Acquisition, Investment and Disposal Strategy Cabinet 24th Sept 2020

We have seen a decrease in vacancies due to a number of new leases being signed. However we have seen a percentage decrease in expected income due the ongoing impact of the coronavirus pandemic.

RPKPI60 Business Rates Collection	% of national non-domestic rates collected by the council - cumulative figure per month	99.1%	99%		27.18%	24.75%		51.61%	49.5%		76.92%	74.25%		94.25%	99%	
RPKPI61 Council Tax Collection Rate	Council Tax Collection Rate	98.1%	98.25%		29.77%	24.57%		57.6%	49.14%		85.4%	74.25%		96.7%	98.25%	
Latest Note																

The collection rates are below target, with more council tax payers struggling to pay council tax, and more businesses struggling to pay business rates, additionally we have not been able to

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21			
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	

take any recovery action in this financial year, due to the pandemic and the courts being closed. In a normal year, if somebody doesn't pay their council tax/business rates, then they get a formal reminder, and then if they still fail to pay, they get a summons to the magistrates court. At court a liability order is then obtained, which gives us a number of enforcement options to recover the debt (e.g. attachment to earnings, enforcement agents etc).

In 2020/21 none of this has been possible, as the courts have been closed. Which means no enforcement action is possible. So no formal reminders, no court summonses, no liability orders. We have been sending what we call 'soft' reminders asking for payment when they fall into arrears, but this of course has no legal standing.

Finally, for business rates, whilst the government has supported the retail/hospitality/leisure sector in 2020/21 with the 100% rates relief, other sectors (e.g. industrial/manufacturing etc) have not been supported at all…they have had no rates relief in the pandemic, and many are struggling to pay anything.

Government finance including Ashford Borough Council, covering borrowing and investment, capital payments and receipts, local Council Tax support, quarterly revenue outturn and receipts of Council Taxes and national non-domestic rates are available here

Council Tax Base 2021/22 – report taken to Novembers Cabinet

RPKPI70 **Number of days sickness per full time equivalent**	Based on the total FTE	9.1 annualised days	9.1 annualised days	10.42 annualised days	7 annualised days	6.98 annualised days
Latest Note						

Q4, Based on the total number of FTE – was 454.54 at 31.3.21 (including new PHA staff).

Total Average sickness absence (including absence due to CV19) 6.98 days per FTE annualised (793 days lost in Q4)
Total Average sickness absence (excluding absence due to CV19) 5.7 days per FTE annualised (648 days lost in Q4)
Total Average absence due to CV19 1.28 days per FTE annualised (145 days lost in Q4)

In this quarter we observed a small number of staff taking time off within the coronavirus category due to minor reactions to their vaccination.

RPKPI90 **number of ongoing litigation/court proceedings (volume**	number of ongoing litigation/court proceedings (volume measure)	New performance indicator not previously recorded	New performance indicator not previously recorded	New performance indicator not previously recorded	69	79 Measure covers those litigation/court proceedings being furthered by legal services.

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21			
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
measure)																	
RPKPI90A **Litigation number of cases in which costs have been awarded against ABC (effectiveness measure)**	number of cases in which costs have been awarded against ABC (effectiveness measure)	New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			0			0			
RPKPI91 **number of new S106 files opened**	number of new 106 files opened	New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			6			5			
RPKPI91A **number of draft S106 agreements sent out**	number of draft 106 agreements sent out	New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			7			0			
RPKPI91B **number of S106 cases completed**	number of 106 cases completed	New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			2			4			
RPKPICOM1 **Income Generation and Savings**	Increased income attributable to commercialisation projects – income and cashable efficiency savings.	New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			£73,162.5			£140,600			£163,015			

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21		
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status
Latest Note																
Garden Waste Development project, aims to increase customer base through new online payment systems and ability to sign up for annual contract at any time of year are proving successful. Further marketing and route analysis is planned. Other projects that will contribute to overall target require a longer lead in time before financial returns found, eg efficiency savings anticipated through the Category Management project which aims to streamline council contracts. Much of the work undertaken this year will realise revenue and efficiencies in the coming years and is not reflected in the quarterly return. Whilst significant developments have been made in only 9 months of delivery, we are planning on resetting targets to reflect the longer term nature of income generation and will adjust targets to be more heavily loaded towards end of strategy. It is requested that focus is on the direction of travel, rather than individual quarters at this stage. Commercial Services Strategy taken to July's Cabinet.															
RPKPICOM2 **Project Completion**	Projects completed target Projects complete 80% planned 20/21 tasks.	New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			28%			48.25%			68%		
Latest Note																
Please note value is a %. All projects in commercialisation programme have a detailed project task plan, the % of complete tasks across all projects are combined to create this % score. Work is progressing well, we are adjusting our project plans for new financial year that will better reflect the unexpected scale of some of the project areas.																
RPKPICOM3 **Improved Commercial Acumen**	Increase staff awareness of commercialisation and a positive response towards it. Percentage of officers who have completed commercial awareness training.	New performance indicator not previously recorded			New performance indicator not previously recorded			8%			16.4%			32%		

Code & Short Name	Description	Q4 2019/20			Q1 2020/21			Q2 2020/21			Q3 2020/21			Q4 2020/21			
		Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	Value	Target	Status	
Latest Note																	

Supplemented with additional legal training on trading and charging powers, for info 47% have completed or started the training.