

## STRATEGIC DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

The Strategic Director of Corporate Resources is responsible for a number of service areas, the most significant of which are those summarised below:

### **GOVERNANCE & LEGAL SERVICES**

**Monitoring Officer** The Monitoring Officer, (who is the Solicitor to the Council) has the traditional responsibility for advising all members and officers about vires, maladministration and probity in accordance with section 5 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989. The Monitoring Officer also has a role in advising where particular decisions were, or are likely to be, contrary to or not in accordance with the budget and policy framework. In addition, he also has responsibilities (deriving from Part 7 of the Localism Act 2011) in relation to the promotion and maintenance of the ethical standard of councillors serving on the District Council and the 35 town and parish councils within the District Council's administrative area. This includes the initial consideration of complaints made about District, Town and Parish Councillors.

### **Data Protection Officer**

Article 37 of General Data Protection Regulation 2016 requires a public body to designate a Data Protection Officer. The minimum tasks of the Data Protection Officer are:-

- To inform and advise the organisation and its employees about their obligations to comply with the GDPR and other data protection laws.
- To monitor compliance with the GDPR and other data protection laws, including managing internal data protection activities, advise on data protection impact assessments; train staff and conduct internal audits.
- To be the first point of contact for supervisory authorities and for individuals whose data is processed (employees, customers etc).

The Data Protection Officer must be able to perform their duties in an independent manner and the Council may not give the Data Protection Officer instruction on exercising their role. The Solicitor to the Council is the Council's designated Data Protection Officer.

### **Legal Services**

This section is responsible for providing a full legal service to the Council. This includes corporate and service specific legal advice, together with legal support to the Monitoring Officer and legal advice and support to the Executive and all Committees of the Council. The legal service includes planning law, conveyancing, employment law and support for the Council's regulatory functions (including both civil and criminal court work). The Legal team continues to be heavily involved in supporting the regeneration agenda and advising on numerous matters including a number of housing development schemes and the delivery of a new leisure centre in Dover.

### **East Kent Human Resources (EKHR)**

**Human Resources** – this Council is the host Authority for the East Kent HR Service, which is a shared service governed under a Joint Committee arrangement (East Kent Services Committee) and shared with Canterbury and Thanet Councils. EKHR also provide HR

services to East Kent Housing. The leadership of this service is delegated to the Head of Collaborative Services who is also the Head of Shared Services. The service is responsible for advising on HR matters including recruitment, retention, absence management, and disciplinary and grievance matters.

**Payroll** – EKHR also provides and manages a full Payroll provision for the Council and the other partner councils in the shared arrangement. This payroll service includes payment of staff, statutory and other deductions, production of interfaces to the general ledger, the production of statutory returns and liaison with statutory bodies. System security is managed within the team for all users.

**Pensions** - the employer level pension function is administered in conjunction with the administering body, Kent County Council, developing employer scheme discretions and management and staff information.

### **Democratic Services**

**Members** - The section provides support to all members of the Council. They service all committees of the Council, provide support for the scrutiny function, administer the councillors' remuneration and allowances scheme, co-ordinate training and development and provide equipment to enable the councillors to carry out their democratic role as elected representatives of the community.

**Chairman and Leader of the Council** - The section provides secretarial and administrative support to the Leader of the Council and the Chairman of the Council. In addition, civic events organised by the Chairman to commemorate such events as Merchant Navy Day, Armed Forces Day and Commonwealth Day are organised by the section

### **Elections**

Electoral Services are responsible for the organisation and conduct of Parliamentary, Police and Crime Commissioner Elections, County Council, District Council and Parish Council elections and by-elections within the district. Electoral Services are also responsible for the conduct of local and national referenda, parish polls and reviewing polling districts and places. The costs incurred in the conduct of elections are met by the body concerned. The Council is obliged to appoint an officer of the Council to act as Returning Officer (RO) to undertake their statutory duties. The officer acts as Acting Returning Officer at Parliamentary Elections and the Deputy Returning Officer at County Council Elections.

## **FINANCE AND HOUSING**

### **Financial Administration**

Section 151 Local Government Act 1972 requires the Council to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs and to make one of its officers responsible for the administration of those affairs. The Strategic Director of Corporate Resources is that officer.

### **Accountancy**

The Accountancy team is responsible for the General Fund revenue accounts, the capital budget, the Housing Revenue Account, supporting the Property Investment Strategy and technical matters such as VAT and Treasury Management.

Although the team is responsible for a range of tasks, the main focus is on co-ordinating and consolidating the revenue and capital budgets, producing the Medium Term Financial Plan, producing budget monitoring reports, producing the final accounts, completing statutory and other returns (including VAT), treasury management and supporting value for money achievement. The team also supports budget managers, CMT and Members through the provision of financial advice in relation to budgets, property investment, service reviews, the Employment Management process, projects, reports with financial implications, partnership working and associated matters.

### **Procurement, Creditors and Income**

The Procurement team provides support to the Council in achieving best value, complying with its constitution, EU and other legislation and procurement best practice. The team is responsible for the procurement infrastructure, including managing and upgrading the system for requisitioning and raising orders, negotiating of contracts and catalogues and updating guidance and contract standing orders. They also maintain the Contracts Register, publish Supplier Spend data and administer the Procurement Card scheme.

The Creditors team are responsible for the accurate and timely processing of approved invoices, managing the payments process and producing the monthly returns to HMRC for the Construction Industry Scheme.

The Income team are responsible for the reconciliation of income receipts, updating the daily cash records and reconciling all entries to the bank statements. They also set up sundry income invoices for the Authority and manage rechargeable works.

### **Housing Strategy**

The Council's Strategic Housing service is responsible for developing an effective strategic approach which will help meet the housing needs in the district and contribute to the development of sustainable communities.

Strategic housing includes housing strategy and enabling, housing needs, including homelessness prevention, and the private sector housing functions, as well as functions carried out by the Council's Planning service and its Property Services section.

The Strategic Housing service is also responsible for monitoring East Kent Housing, the Arms Length Management Organisation set up to provide landlord services delegated to it by the Council and three other East Kent councils.

### **Housing Strategy and Enabling**

The strategic housing function plays an important role in enabling the provision of affordable housing in the district. In the past this had been solely through partnership working with other affordable housing providers such as Housing Associations.

The service plays an important role liaising with other Council services such as Development Management, Regeneration Delivery and Corporate Property Services as well as external agencies such as the Homes & Communities Agency so as to secure new affordable housing in the district.

The service also provides input into a number of key partnerships which aim to deliver improved housing services both county wide and locally. These include:

- Kent Housing Group
- Kent Joint Planning & Policy Board
- PFI Project Boards: Better Homes Active Lives & Excellent Homes For All

## **Community Housing Programme**

The Community Housing Programme has been in operation since February 2018 and is providing information and capacity building for our communities to support them in delivering new affordable homes via Community Led Development projects. An information hub has been established, a programme of training sessions are held across the district, and the district's first Community Led Housing Conference attracted more than 150 delegates. There are now currently 8 groups in the district with a realistic prospect of delivering new homes, in addition to several fledgling groups. The government has released further funding for Local Authorities to expand the service they are providing, and an application has been made to Homes England to support 3 temporary posts to enable direct support to be provided to Community Led Housing groups to assist them in progressing their projects.

## **Housing Needs**

The Housing Needs team is responsible for ensuring social housing is allocated in accordance with statutory guidance, providing advice on housing options and dealing with homelessness in accordance with statutory duties.

The Housing Register is maintained by a small team of Allocations Officers. Social rent homes are currently let through a 'choice based lettings' system. The system is procured through a partnership of Kent district councils and housing associations with housing stock in the district. DDC is currently the lead partner and hosts the partnership manager. A recent re-procurement of the choice based lettings IT system has resulted in an enhanced system at lower cost.

The Housing Options team, overseen by a Senior Housing Options Officer, provide advice and assistance to anyone who is homeless or potentially homeless.

The Council's strategic approach to addressing homelessness is set out in the East Kent Homelessness Strategy 2014-2019 developed in partnership with Shepway, Canterbury and Thanet District Councils. This led to the establishment of a Dover district Homelessness Forum which met quarterly to share intelligence and good practice and monitor the delivery of the strategy. This Forum has recently been integrated into a new Homelessness Hub, chaired by the Community Safety Unit. The meetings are attended by a variety of agencies and are focussed on discussing issues both at a strategic and operational level.

## **REGULATORY SERVICES**

### **Public Protection**

- **Food Safety and Hygiene Control** - the Council undertakes visits and inspections of food establishments on a programmed, risk rated basis to ensure that appropriate standards of food hygiene are maintained. It also operates the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme throughout the area, investigates complaints of unsound food / unhygienic premises and applies infectious disease controls.
- **Health and Safety at Work** - the Council is responsible for investigating accidents (including fatalities) and dangerous occurrences in premises such as offices, shops, warehouses and clubs. A risk-based, targeted and proportionate approach to interventions

and enforcement is utilised when ensuring compliance with the relevant Acts and Regulations.

- **Port Health** – Dover District Council is the Port Health Authority for Dover Port and the Channel Tunnel. The Port Health function includes inspections of vessels that enter the Port, such as cross channel ferries and cruise ships, to ensure that food hygiene standards are maintained. Certain imported foodstuffs are also identified, examined and sampled when necessary to ensure compliance with food safety regulations. Additionally ferries, cruise and cargo ships are inspected when requested to issue Ship Sanitation Certificates to demonstrate that such vessels are free from pests. The impact of Brexit on the councils port health controls (at Dover Port and the Channel Tunnel) remain unknown, but are widely accepted to be considerable and will require new data systems, staff, equipment and facilities etc. that can respond 24 hours a day throughout the year.

### **Licensing**

The Council is responsible for the issuing and enforcement of local licences including:

- Alcohol, public entertainment and late night refreshments, including Temporary events,
- Gambling,
- Private Hire and Hackney Carriages vehicles, drivers and operators,
- Animals - boarding and breeding establishments, Riding establishments, Zoo's, Pet Shops, Dangerous Wild animals
- Beauty Treatments – Tattooing, piercing, acupuncture, electrolysis etc.
- Street Trading
- Scrap Metal

### **Environmental Protection**

- **Pollution Control** - the primary aim of the service is to facilitate acceptable standards for those living, working or visiting the district in respect of air, land and water quality. In particular, the team has a key role in fulfilling the Council's statutory duties in relation to Air Quality Management, Contaminated Land and Drinking and Bathing Water Quality.
- **Environmental Protection** - the team responds to service requests relating to a range of public health and environmental issues. There is a statutory duty to investigate potential statutory nuisances, which include noise (from commercial and domestic premises, burglar and car alarms etc.), dust, smoke (e.g. bonfires), odours, fumes, animals, etc. In addition, service requests relating to matters including drainage, rodents, accumulations on private land, filthy and verminous premises and dark smoke from industrial/commercial premises are also responded to.
- **Public Health Act burials** – the team is responsible for arranging funerals undertaken under relevant Public Health legislation.

### **Environmental Crime**

A team of uniformed and non-uniformed staff, combined with an external contractor seek to promote behavioural change through a range of enforcement and educative activities with the aim of creating a cleaner, safer and greener environment. The work of the team is supplemented and enhanced by partnership working with Kent Police, KCC, Parish Councils etc. The principal focus of this team area is to tackle environmental crimes including:

- Littering
- Enforcement of the Council's PSPO e.g. Dog Fouling

- Stray Dogs
- Fly tipping
- Trade waste
- Accumulations of rubbish

### **Planning Enforcement**

The team investigate breaches of planning control, including responding to complaints raised by interested parties, and taking formal enforcement action in appropriate cases. In addition they deal with appeals to the planning inspectorate against enforcement notices, prosecute for non-compliance with notices and organise Direct Action where necessary. The team are also driving forward the Councils Town Centre Initiative s215 work which is seeking to improve the appearance and condition of Dover Town.

### **Private Sector Housing**

Services provided by the Private Sector Housing team comprise:

- Tackling rogue landlords and improving the private rented sector through legal/formal action to require owners/landlords meet the minimum Health and safety requirements laid down in the Housing Act 2004 and other regulations.
- The licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation.
- The provision of Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants and other discretionary grants and loans to adapt homes for independent living.
- The provision of financial housing assistance to vulnerable owner occupiers living in substandard homes.
- The licensing of Caravan Sites.
- Bringing empty homes back into use

Most enforcement work relating to housing conditions takes place in Dover where a significant proportion of the housing stock is in poor condition due to its age and where there are relatively high numbers of privately rented properties.

The service has been very successful over the years in bringing long term empty properties back into use. It works closely with KCC on a partnership project which provides funding to bring empty property back into use.

## **COMMUNITY AND DIGITAL SERVICES**

### **Community Development**

The Community Development Team strive to build social capacity throughout the Dover District by providing support for the District-wide community in the delivery of a wide range of community based projects including:

- Researching and publicising funding opportunities and supporting communities in bidding for funding, facilitating community consultations on behalf of DDC and information sharing events.
- Delivery of the Inspire programme to support vulnerable young people in our District.
- Other activities include administrating the Event Process and liaising with other departments to facilitate events across the District.

This is done by building social capital by developing confident communities with a sense of place and who are engaged and empowered in the decision-making process; raising the District's profile to create a sense of pride of place within the community and to raise awareness of opportunities for inward investment; developing partnerships to create opportunities for people to learn new skills through employment and volunteering; building community cohesion through events which bring people together to celebrate and to raise the District's distinctive profile; and working to secure a higher level of external funding into the District to support communities and to develop/broker skills, training and learning opportunities through partnerships with education providers to address local business needs and build self-sufficiency in communities.

## **Community Safety**

The Council facilitates the Dover District Community Safety Partnership (CSP), a group of agencies including Dover District Council, Kent Police, Kent County Council, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, the Probation Service (encompassing National Offender Management and Community Rehabilitation Company) and the Clinical Commissioning Groups. The Kent Police and Crime Commissioner provides the funding for this partnership.

The Partnership funds many initiatives across the District, tackling community safety issues identified by our communities.

## **Anti-Social Behaviour Unit (ASB)**

The Council's Anti-Social Behaviour Unit was established in November 2004 to tackle anti-social behaviour across the District. This has now evolved into the Community Safety Unit run jointly with Kent Police and staffed by personnel from DDC, Kent Police and KCC. The Community Safety Unit works closely with other DDC departments, especially Environmental Health, Waste Services and East Kent Housing and other relevant agencies to tackle ASB and community safety issues across the District.

The Council is continuing to embed crime reduction activities in all its services (the Section 17 Project).

The division is also responsible for DDC's approach to Safeguarding issues (Child and Adult Protection) and the Disclosure and Barring Service (previously known as CRB) policy.

## **CCTV**

The Council's CCTV system comprises a mixture of dome cameras and "shoe-box" type cameras with 23 cameras located in Dover, 17 in Deal and 9 in Sandwich.

The cameras are monitored and maintained by a team of CCTV operators based at a dedicated Control Centre, which is a restricted and secure centre, operated in accordance with Home Office Guidelines with access strictly controlled. All our CCTV Operators have undergone formal training and achieved a recognised qualification in the operation of CCTV.

The team works closely with the police, other law enforcement agencies, Dover/Deal/Sandwich Partnerships against Crime, the Town Centre Crime Reduction Group and DDC's Community Safety Unit to reduce crime, and the fear of crime throughout the District.

The performance of the unit is reported upon on an annual basis following an independent audit of the section's activities and this report is in the public domain.

## **Digital Services**

The Digital Services Team shape and implement the Council's digital vision. Ensure the Council's websites meet customer needs and deliver business objectives to change behaviours and achieve channel shift. Influence the Council's approach to digital, using insight and analytics to understand the customer. Provide advice and guidance to ensure the Council's digital initiatives are aligned and customer focussed.

The Head of Community Services also acts as EKS ICT Client Officer.

## **SHARED SERVICES**

### **EAST KENT HOUSING**

Dover District Council is the major social landlord in the district. As of 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, it owned a stock of 4,311 dwellings comprising 2,681 houses and bungalows and 1,630 flats and maisonettes.

On 1 April 2011 the Council delegated the provision of day to day housing management services to East Kent Housing, an Arms Length Management Organisation (ALMO), set up jointly with Shepway, Thanet and Canterbury councils.

Ownership of the stock remains with the Council and East Kent Housing manages and maintains the stock under the terms of a Management Agreement with the Council for which it receives a management fee funded from the Housing Revenue Account.

A primary aim behind the decision to set up East Kent Housing (EKH) was to improve the quality of services provided to tenants. EKH is required to produce an Annual Delivery Plan and to provide the Council with regular performance management reports.

EKH continues to be involved in the implementation of a new single, housing management IT system which had been identified as enabling the delivery of significant financial efficiencies and service improvements. The project is being funded by loans provided by the four council owners with the expectation that the loan will be repaid from the financial savings achieved.

The four partner Councils of EKH, Canterbury, Thanet, Folkestone and Dover are currently in consultation with tenants over whether management of the housing stock should remain with EKH or return to the Councils.

### **EAST KENT AUDIT PARTNERSHIP**

This Council is the host of the East Kent Audit Partnership and therefore the team forms part of the directorate. The service delivers an agreed annual internal audit plan, undertakes special investigations and reports to the s151 Officer and also independently to the Governance Committee.

### **EK SERVICES<sup>1</sup>**

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<sup>1</sup> The information for EKS relates to the current position for the area. This information will be updated subject to changes awaiting consideration and approval by the East Kent Services Committee. This section will be updated for the final version based on the recommendations from that process.

The Strategic Director of Corporate Resources, working with other DDC colleagues, acts as the lead officer for the following services which transferred to EK Services (EKS) in February 2011 and are provided jointly for Dover, Thanet & Canterbury under a joint committee arrangement, the East Kent Services Committee (EKSC). The services are fully delegated to the EKSC who in turn have delegated the full responsibility for the service to the Head of Shared Services who is also responsible for the EKHR service in a different capacity, namely as the Head of Collaborative Services. EKS provides the following services to Dover Council and the other partner councils in the shared arrangement (it should be noted that Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services are outsourced by the East Kent Councils to Civica and EK Services acts as a joint strategic client on behalf of the three East Kent Councils)

## **Revenues**

Council Tax has to be calculated, billed and collected for over 52,000 dwellings within the district. Council Tax includes monies billed and collected for Dover District Council, Kent County Council, The Police & Crime Commissioner for Kent, Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue and the district's town and parish councils. The service target is to collect 97.85% of Council Tax in the year.

Business Rates / Non Domestic Rates (NDR) also have to be calculated, billed and collected for around 4,000 businesses in the district. NDR is distributed by the council to the Government, KCC, Police, Fire and Rescue. The service target is to collect at least 98.20% of NDR by end of financial year.

Any shortfall in revenue collection continues to be collected or attempted to be collected beyond the end of the financial year.

## **Benefits**

The service anticipates that it will pay out benefits and financial assistance to nearly 2,800 council tenants, over 5,500 private tenants and more than 9,600 council tax payers.

Under the Universal Credit initiative, responsibility for Housing Benefit administration for working age customers has started to move to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) under a timetable between 2017 and 2023. Universal Credit Full Service began in May 2017, and the Benefits Service will work closely with the council and DWP on this transfer.

## **Customer Services**

Customer Services provides on-line, telephone, and face to face service delivery for all customers.

The service is seeking to increase the level of electronic service provision and self-service by customers. Innovation around electronic service provision for the council as a whole, seeking to drive through efficiency and service transformation, will be integrated with coordination of the Local Land and Property Gazetteer. In addition, the service will continue to develop our website and further develop the system to enable increased self-service and reduced paper transactions.

## **ICT**

The ICT service provides a strategic and operational technology service to the council under an agreed service level agreement working alongside the Council's digital team. This includes

support to desktop facilities for officers and councillors by the provision of a service desk that is open 8am – 6pm during the working week; the provision and maintenance of the local and wider area network supporting the main council office and remote sites, and infrastructure in terms of the data centre and associated servers and storage. This service also supports existing business systems and works with the digital team on the implementation of new business systems.

A Geographical Information Systems (GIS) service is provided that maintains the existing GIS platforms, the Local Land and Property Gazetteer, and provides a GIS development service. Software development, technical business analysis and system testing services are also provided.

New opportunities are assessed and a seven year technology renewal plan is in place. A project management service is provided and also support to the Dover SIRO for information governance and compliance matters. ICT work closely with Dover District Council's procurement team to ensure that any hardware or technology systems that are purchased by the council are centrally managed by the ICT teams to ensure compliance with various national and local protocols such as Public Service Network compliance. ICT have a dedicated network and infrastructure security team who work closely with the Council Senior Information Risk Officer (SIRO) to ensure the councils information and systems remain secure.