

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 11 October 2022
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors McKenna (Chairman), Newton (Vice-Chairman), Bartlett, Brindle, Fort, Khadka, Rose, R Webb and Young

The Chairman will assume that all Members will read the reports before attending the meeting. Officers are asked to assume the same when introducing reports.

AGENDA

Page No.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Notification of Substitute Members
3. Urgent Items
4. Notification of Visiting Members
5. Disclosures by Members and Officers
6. Disclosures of Lobbying
7. To consider whether any item needs to be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.
8. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 12 July 2022 1 - 4
9. Presentation of Petitions (if any)
10. Question and Answer Session from Local Residents (if any)
11. Questions from Members to the Chairman (if any)
12. Forward Plan relating to the Committee's Terms of Reference 5 - 10

As the Forward Plan is refreshed weekly please use the below link to access the most up to date forward plan by the date of the meeting:

[Your Councillors - Maidstone Borough Council](#)

**Issued on 3 October 2022 Date Not Specified
Over/:**

Continued

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

13. Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan - Verbal Update	
14. Proposed Change to Maidstone AQMA and Request to Consult on New Air Quality Action Plan	11 - 23
15. Communication and Engagement Strategy 2022-2025	24 - 51
16. Financial Update & Performance Monitoring Report	52 - 74

INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

In order to ask a question at this meeting, please call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 5 p.m. on Friday 7 October 2022). You will need to provide the full text in writing.

If your question is accepted, you will be provided with instructions as to how you can access the meeting.

In order to make a statement in relation to an item on the agenda, please call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 5 p.m. on Friday 7 October 2022). You will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on.

If you require this information in an alternative format please contact us, call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk.

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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12 JULY 2022

Present: Councillors Bartlett, Brindle, Conyard, Fort, McKenna (Chairman), Newton, Rose, R Webb and Young

Lead Members Present: Leader of the Council, Councillor David Burton
Lead Member for Housing and Health, Councillor Simon Webb

Also Present: Councillor D Wilkinson

19. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received by Councillor Khadka.

20. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Conyard was present as a Substitute Member for Councillor Khadka.

21. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman stated that he wished to put forward an urgent Member Agenda Item Request concerning the provision of CCTV in the Parkwood area. The item would be presented after Item 12 – Forward Plan relating to the Committee’s Terms of Reference.

22. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor D Wilkinson was in attendance for the urgent item concerning the provision of CCTV in the Parkwood Area.

23. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

24. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

25. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public unless any Member of the Committee wished to refer to Item 15 – Exempt Appendix 2 to Item 14 –

Food Service Plan 2022-23, in which case the Committee would enter into closed session due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

26. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14 JUNE 2022

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 June 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

27. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

28. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS

There were no questions from Local Residents.

29. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

30. FORWARD PLAN RELATING TO THE COMMITTEE'S TERMS OF REFERENCE

RESOLVED: That the Forward Plan relating to the Committee's Terms of Reference be noted.

31. URGENT ITEM - CCTV IN THE PARKWOOD AREA

The Chairman introduced the item which concerned the feasibility and provision of CCTV in the Parkwood Area following recent criminal activity and the resulting increased safety concerns of local residents. Specific reference was made to Somner Walk.

Support was expressed for the provision of CCTV within the Parkwood area, with a request made for further information to be provided to the Executive on the matter. The relevant portfolio belonged to Councillor Parfitt-Reid, Lead Member for Communities and Engagement.

RESOLVED: That a request be made for an officer's report be sent straight to the Executive in regards to the feasibility of extra CCTV in Parkwood.

32. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND, LOCAL INVESTMENT PLAN

The Leader of the Council introduced the report and stated that the Council had been awarded £1.2 million through the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The Local Investment Plan (LIP) associated with the funding had to be submitted by the 1 August 2022 and the short-listed proposals were contained within appendix four to the report. The spending allocation across the next three years was outlined.

The Leader of the Council stated that the proposals were intended to positively enhance the Town Centre, attracting local residents and visitors

alongside the ambition to have a consistent events calendar. Increased lighting would improve the safety and security of the area, alongside greening that could be achieved in part through volunteer support. The links between the town centre and Lockmeadow complex would be improved.

The local Members of Parliament supported the proposals contained within the LIP.

In response to questions, the Leader of the Council highlighted the available transport options into the town centre alongside the easily accessible and high volume of Council owned car parks for visitors. It was stated that the available transport to and accessibility of the area would be included within the Council's Town Centre Strategy. The positive steps taken to address safety in the town centre were outlined.

The Committee expressed support for the proposed actions contained within the LIP.

RESOLVED: That the Leader of the Council be recommended to:

1. Approve the planned projects and actions as contained within Appendix four to the report, as the Local Investment Plan; and
2. Give delegated responsibility to the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance to submit the plan to government by 1 August 2022.

33. FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2022 - 2023

The Lead Member for Housing and Health introduced the report on behalf of the Lead Member for Environmental Services, who was unable to attend due to a bereavement.

The Lead Member for Housing and Health stated that the Council was required to produce a Food Service Plan, with the 2022-23 version covering a one-year period only as the Food standards Agency (FSA) intended to implement changes to the food enforcement system in 2023-24. The decision would be taken urgently as the Council were required to have a plan in place by 15 July 2022.

An update was provided on the types of enforcement action taken by the Council across 2021-22, with reference made to work undertaken in helping businesses re-open following the Covid-19 pandemic lockdown periods.

The Lead Member for Housing and Health drew specific attention to the numerous vacancies within the team, against the national shortage of food competent officers. The creation of border inspection authorities at Ashford and Dover had exacerbated the shortages. The steps taken to recruit to the service were outlined, including the additional work taken on by existing staff and the potential use of apprenticeships.

The Committee expressed their thanks to the officers for their hard work, particularly in light of the numerous staff vacancies.

RESOLVED: That the Lead Member for Housing and Health be recommended to approve the Food Service Plan 2022-23 attached at Appendix 1 to the report.

34. EXEMPT APPENDIX 2 TO ITEM 14 - FOOD SERVICE PLAN 2022-23

RESOLVED: That the item be considered alongside Item 14 – Food Service Plan 2022-23.

35. EXPRESSION OF CONDOLENCES

The Committee wished to extend their condolences to the Lead Member for Environmental Services, Councillor Round, following a family bereavement.

36. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.03 p.m.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 OCTOBER 2022 TO 31 JANUARY 2023

This Forward Plan sets out the details of the key decisions which the Executive or Lead Members expect to take and the non-Key decisions that the Executive or Lead Members expect to take during the next four-month period. The plan will be updated weekly for the relevant period and a new plan for a new four-month period, published monthly on the last Friday of the month.

A Key Decision is defined as one which:

1. Results in the Council incurring expenditure, or making savings, of more than £250,000; or
2. Is significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more Wards in the Borough

The current members of the Executive are:

5	 Councillor David Burton Leader of the Council DavidBurton@maidstone.gov.uk 07590 229910	 Councillor John Perry Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Corporate Services JohnPerry@Maidstone.gov.uk 07770 734741	 Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement LottieParfittReid@Maidstone.gov.uk 07919 360000	 Councillor Martin Round Lead Member for Environmental Services MartinRound@maidstone.gov.uk 07709 263447
	 Councillor Simon Webb Lead Member for Housing and Health SimonWebb@Maidstone.gov.uk 07878 018997	 Councillor Claudine Russell Lead Member for Leisure and Arts ClaudineRussell@Maidstone.gov.uk	 Councillor Paul Cooper Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure PaulCooper@Maidstone.gov.uk 01622 244070	

Anyone wishing to make representations about any of the matters listed below may do so by contacting the relevant officer listed against each decision, within the time period indicated.

Under the Access to Information Procedure Rules set out in the Council's Constitution, a Key Decision or a Part II decision may not be taken, unless it has been published on the forward plan for 28 days or it is classified as urgent:

The law and the Council's Constitution provide for urgent key and part II decisions to be made, even though they have not been included in the Forward Plan.

Copies of the Council's constitution, forward plan, reports and decisions may be inspected at the Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, ME15 6JQ or accessed from the Council's website: www.maidstone.gov.uk

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Executive which are normally held at the Town Hall, High St, Maidstone, ME14 1SY. The dates and times of the meetings are published on www.maidstone.gov.uk or you may contact the Democratic Services Team on telephone number 01622 602899 for further details.

David Burton
Leader of the Council

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Lead Member	Expected Date of Decision	Key	Exempt	Proposed Consultees / Method of Consultation	Documents to be considered by Decision taker	Representations may be made to the following officer by the date stated
Proposed Change to Maidstone AQMA and Request to Consult on New Air Quality Action Plan As a result of a continuing trend of improvements in air quality in Maidstone in recent years ✓	Executive	Lead Member for Environmental Services	26 Oct 2022	No	No Open	Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 11 Oct 2022	Maidstone AQMA Modelling Proposed Change to Maidstone AQMA and Request to Consult on New Air Quality Action Plan	Stuart Maxwell stuart.maxwell@midkent.gov.uk
Communication and Engagement Strategy updated strategy and in year action plan	Executive	Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement	26 Oct 2022	Yes	No Open	Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 11 Oct 2022	Communication and Engagement Strategy	Angela Woodhouse Head of Policy and Communications angelawoodhouse@maidstone.gov.uk
Fleet Replacement Programme Outline of the replacement programme for the Council's fleet over a 5 year cycle in line with the Council's Green Fleet Strategy and the Capital funding budget.	Executive	Lead Member for Environmental Services	23 Nov 2022	Yes	No Open	Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 15 Nov 2022	Fleet Replacement Programme	Jennifer Stevens jenniferstevens@maidstone.gov.uk

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Lead Member	Expected Date of Decision	Key	Exempt	Proposed Consultees / Method(s) of Consultation	Documents to be considered by Decision taker	Representations may be made to the following officer by the date stated
Granada House Refurbishment Report on the outcome of the tender process and seeking approval to proceed with the works and the necessary financial commitments	Executive	Lead Member for Housing and Health	23 Nov 2022	Yes	No Part exempt	Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 15 Nov 2022	Granada House Refurbishment	Andrew Connors Housing Enabling Officer andrewconnors@maidstone.gov.uk
Council Fire & Building Safety Policy The role and expectations on all Council's following the Grenfell tragedy is changing, and so the creation of a new policy to cover work in this area is very important and timely. The report and policy addresses and responds to changing guidance and legislation, as well as provides clarity in terms of best practice in terms of the Council will work to best effect with other authorities through partnership working, to manage risk in the community.	Executive	Lead Member for Housing and Health	23 Nov 2022	Yes	No Open	Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 15 Nov 2022	Council Fire & Building Safety Policy	John Littlemore Head of Housing & Community Services johnlittlemore@maidstone.gov.uk

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Lead Member	Expected Date of Decision	Key	Exempt	Proposed Consultees / Method(s) of Consultation	Documents to be considered by Decision taker	Representations may be made to the following officer by the date stated
Housing Strategy 2022-27 The proposed themes for the new housing strategy were approved by the CHE Committee in early 2022, and these have since been subject to public consultation. Therefore the new housing strategy, as drafted, takes account of these consultation responses, and is now ready for consideration for adoption.	Executive	Lead Member for Housing and Health	21 Dec 2022	Yes	No Open	Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 13 Dec 2022	Housing Strategy 2022-27	John Littlemore Head of Housing & Community Services johnlittlemore@maidstone.gov.uk
Mid Kent Waste Collection Contract Approval to enter into contract with the successful bidder following a competitive dialogue procurement process.	Executive	Lead Member for Environmental Services	21 Dec 2022	Yes	No Part exempt	Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 13 Dec 2022	Mid Kent Waste Collection Contract	Jennifer Stevens jenniferstevens@maidstone.gov.uk
Charges for Replacement Wheeled Bins Proposal to introduce charges for the	Executive	Lead Member for Environmental Services	25 Jan 2023	No	No Open	Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee	Charges for Replacement Wheeled Bins	Jennifer Stevens jenniferstevens@ma

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Lead Member	Expected Date of Decision	Key	Exempt	Proposed Consultees / Method(s) of Consultation	Documents to be considered by Decision taker	Representations may be made to the following officer by the date stated
replacement of damaged refuse and recycling wheeled bins, in line with the Mid Kent Waste Partnership.						17 Jan 2023		idstone.gov.uk

Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee

11 October 2022

Proposed Change to Maidstone AQMA and Request to Consult on New Air Quality Action Plan

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
CHE PAC	11 October 2022
Executive	26 October 2022

Will this be a Key Decision?	No
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Executive
Lead Head of Service	John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Regulatory Services
Lead Officer and Report Author	Stuart Maxwell, Senior Scientific Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All Wards but particularly High Street Ward

Executive Summary

Air Quality in Maidstone has improved significantly in recent years to the extent that most of the Borough is now in compliance with all air quality objectives. The only area in which any objective is exceeded is Upper Stone Street. The current Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) will shortly need to be updated. It is proposed that, prior to updating the AQAP, the current Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) be revoked and a new AQMA should be declared which more closely reflects the current area of exceedance. The new AQMA would cover Upper Stone Street from Wrens Cross to Old Tovil Road. The new AQAP could then be more focussed on the Upper Stone Street Area. This report includes a draft list of potential actions for inclusion in the new AQAP. We are requesting permission to hold a public consultation on these actions.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to the Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee:

1. That the Executive be recommended to agree the revocation of the old AQMA in Maidstone which will require an Air Quality Management Area Revocation Order to be issued.
2. That the Executive be recommended to agree the declaration of the proposed new AQMA in Maidstone, covering Upper Stone Street, as described in the report, which will require a new Air Quality Management Area Order to be issued.
3. That the Executive be recommended to agree that permission is granted to hold a public consultation on the proposed actions given in the report to be included in a new Air Quality Action Plan.

Proposed Change to Maidstone AQMA and Request to Consult on New Air Quality Action Plan

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>Accepting the recommendations will materially improve the Council's ability to achieve Safe, Clean and Green.</p>	Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>The report recommendation supports the achievement of the Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced and Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability cross cutting objectives by ensuring that the council is focussing its resources on the improvement of the worst areas of air quality for those people that live there and improving the environment by improving air quality through lower emissions.</p>	Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section – refer to section 5 of the report	Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already 	Paul Holland, Senior

	approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Finance Manager
Staffing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing. 	John Littlemore, Head of Housing & Regulatory Services
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accepting the recommendations will fulfil the Council's duties under The Environment Act 1995. Failure to accept the recommendations without agreeing suitable alternatives may place the Council in breach of Environment Act 1995 	Robin Harris, Team Leader, Contentious and Corporate Governance, August 2022
Information Governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The recommendations will impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council processes. The Information Governance Team will/have reviewed the processing of personal data affected and the associated documentation has been/will be updated accordingly, including a data protection impact assessment. The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council Processes. 	Stuart Maxwell, Senior Scientific Officer
Equalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An EqIA will be completed as part of the project to consider the impact of the changes to the AQMA 	Nicola Toulson Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals. In accepting the recommendations the Council would be fulfilling the 	Jolanda Gjoni, Senior Public Health Officer

	requirements of the Health Inequalities Plan	
Crime and Disorder	The proposal will have no impact on Crime and Disorder	Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health
Procurement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On accepting the recommendations, the Council will then follow procurement exercises for any individual actions that require procurement. We will complete those exercises in line with financial procedure rules. 	Head of Service & Section 151 Officer
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and Theme 1 to 4 of the LES have been used as a basis to frame aspects off the Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan, namely with actions 1.1 to 1.12 and therefore the recommendations of this report align with the Sustainable Transport theme of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan.	James Wilderspin, Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Maidstone first declared an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in 2008. The AQMA encompassed the whole of the Maidstone conurbation, including a number of areas of exceedance of the NO₂ annual mean objective. These so called 'hotspots' included the High Street, Upper Stone Street, Well Road, the Junction of Tonbridge Road and Fountain Lane, and the Wheatsheaf Junction. However, the AQMA also included many areas where there were no exceedances of any air quality objectives.
- 2.2 In 2018, the 2008 AQMA was replaced with a newer, smaller AQMA, more closely aligned to the actual areas of exceedance of the NO₂ annual mean objective, which followed the carriageways of the main roads through the district. The modelling on which the new AQMA was based was done in 2016, and based on the data from 2014, which was the most up to date available at the time.
- 2.3 Air quality in Maidstone has improved considerably in the last five or six years. This local trend reflects a national trend of improvement in air quality. The primary drivers of this trend of improvement are the introduction of Euro VI engines, particularly in HGVs, the increased uptake

of electric and hybrid vehicles, and a decrease in the popularity of diesel passenger cars. At the same time, large numbers of the oldest most polluting vehicles are being taken out of the vehicle fleet as they reach the end of their service lives.

- 2.4 The result of these improvements over several years is that most of the areas of Maidstone which were previously recognised as air quality hotspots, have now come into compliance with all air quality objectives.
- 2.5 The remaining area of concern is Upper Stone Street. Upper Stone Street has also seen a trend of decreasing pollution levels, however, levels there were particularly high, and there is still an exceedance of the annual mean objective for nitrogen dioxide. As part of our 'review and assessment' function, under the Environment Act, 1995, monitoring in Upper Stone Street includes continuous automatic monitoring of NO₂, as well as six diffusion tube sites. PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} are also monitored but the objectives are not exceeded.
- 2.6 Our Air Quality Action Plan, (which is currently called the 'Low Emission Strategy') is due to be updated. The drafting of the Low Emission Strategy coincided with the end of the Council's 2008 to 2015 Carbon Management Plan, and thus included a few actions related to 'Carbon Management' in addition to the air quality actions. It was therefore called the Low Emission Strategy to distinguish it from the usual Air Quality Action Plan. The Council now has a Climate Change Strategy, agreed in October 2020, therefore the new action plan, which will not attempt to duplicate actions being undertaken in the Climate Change Strategy, will only contain actions directed specifically at local air quality, and will simply be called the Air Quality Action Plan.
- 2.7 MBC has commissioned Air Quality Consultants (AQC) Ltd to review the current AQMA and previously used AQC to undertake air quality modelling in 2018.
- 2.8 AQC's report has confirmed that the majority of the current AQMA could now be revoked, with the only remaining area of exceedance being in Upper Stone Street, between Wrens Cross and Old Tovil Road.
- 2.9 The annual mean objective for NO₂ applies primarily at residential property. A different objective applies to people outside, eg pedestrians, shoppers etc, and this objective is not exceeded anywhere in the Borough.
- 2.10 It has been estimated that the current AQMA contains about 1400 residential properties. AQC's report suggests that there are only 53 residential properties in Upper Stone Street in an exceedance of the NO₂ annual mean and these properties would need to remain in an AQMA when the existing AQMA is revoked.
- 2.11 The annual mean objective for NO₂ is 40µgm⁻³. Of the 53 residential receptors exceeding this objective, 44 are in the range 40 to 60µgm⁻³ and a further 9 are at a level of over 60µgm⁻³.

- 2.12 AQC then went on to consider the effect of improvements to the bus fleet on air quality in Upper Stone Street. An ANPR camera survey was undertaken in order to establish baseline fleet composition and used this to model a baseline year of 2022.
- 2.13 Owing to the ongoing trend of improving air quality, the modelling predicted a reduction in the number of residential receptors in an exceedance of the annual mean objective for NO₂ from 53 to 30. This would occur in the absence of any additional interventions. Of these 30, 27 will be in the range 40 to 60µgm⁻³ and the remaining 3 will be at a level in excess of 60µgm⁻³.
- 2.14 If the buses operating on Upper Stone Street were restricted to Euro VI only, the 30 residential receptors in an exceedance would be cut to only 18, of which 15 would be in the range 40 to 60µgm⁻³ and the remaining 3 would be at a level in excess of 60µgm⁻³. The modelling suggested that allowing only electric buses to operate in Upper Stone Street would not currently bring about an additional reduction in the number of receptors in the area of exceedance, however, logically it would offer additional air quality benefits which would help to bring forward compliance with the objectives.
- 2.15 AQC's conclusions are primarily based on consideration on data from 2019, which was the last year unaffected by the impact of the COVID pandemic. Data from 2020 and 2021 are lower than 2019, mainly as a result of COVID restrictions, however, owing to the long-term trend of improvements in air quality, we would have expected somewhat lower levels even without the COVID restrictions.
- 2.16 MBC has already considered, in some depth, potential actions for improving air quality in Upper Stone Street in 2019, when a range of options was investigated by consultants Arcadis and ITP. A long list of measures which had the potential to improve air quality in Upper Stone Street was evaluated by the consultants and nearly all of them were rejected because they were either impractical, too expensive, or likely to simply displace the problems to a different location. One option previously considered and rejected by Members as part of this project was a Clean Air Zone. Our consultants demonstrated that the Clean Air Zone would actually only have a marginal benefit, and therefore it is assumed that this is still an option that Members would still not wish to pursue.
- 2.17 However, as a result of the above investigations, MBC has recently tightened parking restrictions in Upper Stone Street. Single yellow lines have been replaced with double yellow lines, and loading restrictions were also increased (no loading between 7:00am to 8:00pm). MBC also worked with KCC to ensure that new trees being planted in the area were optimised for air quality in terms of species and spacing.
- 2.18 It is proposed that the Air Quality Action Plan should primarily be focussed on the main problem area, and therefore, following the recommendations of AQC Ltd, the boundaries of the AQMA should now be changed to reflect more accurately where the problem area currently is, namely, Upper Stone Street.

- 2.19 The actions below are proposed to be included in the Action Plan. We are requesting authorisation to hold a public consultation on these actions, which will be developed in the light of consultation responses. Note that some actions are continuations of actions which have been successfully worked on previously.
- 2.20 Where possible, actions will be focussed on addressing the specific air quality issue in the new AQMA. Some actions, however, will necessarily be more generally applied, eg the Clean Air For Schools programme, which should result in Borough wide air quality improvements.
- 2.21 Delivery of these actions will require MBC to work with other stakeholders, of which the main one will be KCC. Others will include DEFRA, local bus companies, and local schools.
- 2.22 Following the declaration of the AQMA, DEFRA guidance states that the Air Quality Action Plan should ideally produced within 12 months.
- 2.23 Actions to be included in the consultation are:-
- **Improvement to bus fleet in Maidstone, with special emphasis on services operating Upper Stone Street.** The report from AQC estimates that approximately 16.4% of the NOx pollution on Upper Stone Street originates from buses. Maidstone's bus fleet is very old. Approximately 72% of the pollution from buses on Upper Stone Street arises from Euro II, Euro III and Euro IV buses. KCC has identified Maidstone as a priority corridor for electric bus upgrades, but this is dependent upon the award of government funding. In the meantime, we would like to see the best available buses operating on Upper Stone Street. Legal advice has suggested that no improvements to the bus fleet could be achieved without the involvement of KCC, other than via informal arrangements with the local bus companies.
 - **Review of Air Quality Planning Guidance to reflect updated air quality information** The current Air Quality Planning Guidance is out of date and needs to be updated to reflect current best practice and take account of the new Future Homes Standard. This may include increasing the requirement for AQ mitigation in and around the new AQMA, but we will need to ensure that the requirements are appropriate for the current air quality situation. The guidance must aim to prevent development having a negative impact on the AQMA, for example, by use of developer contributions to fund air quality improvement schemes (eg car club, bike hire schemes, travel plans etc, or similar). This review will need to take account of the status and content of the new Local Plan at the time it's undertaken.
 - **Review of Taxi Policy** to include consideration of whether any agreed improvements to vehicle standards could be brought forward, and investigation of what support might be available to facilitate these improvements.

- **Information campaign to residents of the new AQMA?** A grant has been applied for from DEFRA to fund this action and we are waiting to hear whether the funding has been approved.
- **Extension to the Clean Air For Schools (CAFS) programme.** Officers are currently developing a digital air quality resource, with funding from a DEFRA air quality grant awarded in 2021. This will start to be rolled out to schools in 2022.
- **A campaign of anti-idling signage across the Borough, focussing on schools and other known or identified problem areas.** Officers are currently working to identify suitable locations for anti-idling signage and some signs have already been deployed.
- **Consider discount on resident's parking for EV vehicles.** It is anticipated that it should be possible to offer this in the next 3 to 5 years (and conversely, perhaps an increased tariff for the most polluting vehicles) Environmental Health will continue to liaise with parking to influence future reviews of Parking Strategy.
- **Review provision of EV parking in Council car parks.** Whilst data currently shows that the current provision of 18 EV charging points is underutilised, this will be closely monitored and expanded to meet demand over time.
- **Continuation of MBC sponsorship of the Walk on Wednesday Scheme.** MBC currently supports the Kent Messenger Walk on Wednesday scheme, which encourages schoolchildren to walk to school.

2.24 Across the Mid Kent Environmental Health Service, other actions are being considered, which might be adapted to have relevance in Upper Stone Street. These include, promotion of the Kent Revs e-van loan scheme, e-bike hire schemes, car clubs, increased use of travel plans, live information bus stops, and signage to notify drivers that they are in an AQMA.

2.25 Consideration has also been given to the possible introduction of a 20mph speed limit in Upper Stone Street (and adjoining side streets). AQC's report includes an assessment of this idea, based on relevant literature, and concludes that the impact of a 20mph speed limit on air quality in Upper Stone Street is likely to be very small, but beneficial. The report also notes that 20mph speed limits can offer other benefits apart from their impact on air quality, e.g. reduced noise and improved safety. However, due to uncertainty about the implementation and enforcement of such a scheme, we have not added it to the list of measures to be consulted on.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 **Option 1** is to do nothing, however, unless the Action Plan is updated, the Council will fail to comply with its statutory duties on Local Air Quality Management.

- 3.2 **Option 2** is to leave the boundary of the AQMA unchanged and just update the action plan. However, there is not really any advantage in having a larger than necessary AQMA. In the view of officers, updating the AQMA to reflect changing pollution levels is good practice.
- 3.3 **Option 3** is to revise the boundary of the AQMA in line with AQC's recommendations. The Action Plan can then be updated with a particular emphasis on addressing the air quality issues specific to the new AQMA. Members request Environmental Health to undertake a public consultation on the measures listed in the report.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is option 3, which is the option which best complies with the current statutory guidance. As part of the process of revoking the old AQMA and declaring the new AQMA, MBC is required to consult with DEFRA, which has been done through MBC's Annual Status Report to DEFRA which DEFRA has accepted. The smaller AQMA will more accurately reflect the true air quality picture in Maidstone, as compared to the current AQMA. It will also help to keep the new Air Quality Action Plan focussed on the relevant area.
-

5. RISK

- 5.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. The only risk would be associated with taking no action, which would mean that the Council could no longer demonstrate compliance with the relevant legislation and statutory guidance. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.
- 5.2 We note that if the recommendation is approved, the next stage is to consult on the proposed measures. This will provide an additional opportunity to identify any risk associated with the proposed changes before they are implemented.
-

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 Changes to the AQMA and the preparation of an AQAP require consultation. DEFRA is the key statutory consultee in both cases. Other consultees are
- The Environment Agency.
 - Highways England.
 - The County Council.
 - Neighbouring Authorities.
 - Bodies representing local businesses.
 - The public.

- 6.2 Officers from Mid Kent Environmental Health and MBC’s Policy Team will organise the consultation, following approval of the recommendation in this report.
-

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 Following the consultation on the Action Plan actions, described in Section 6, the consultation responses will be evaluated, and any additional actions arising from the consultation will be included in the final AQAP, if appropriate. The final Action Plan will come back to the Executive for approval.
- 7.2 Details of the final AQMA and AQAP are required to be submitted to DEFRA. They will also be made available on the Council’s website.
- 7.3 In order for the old AQMA to be formally revoked, an AQMA revocation order will need to be produced, which will need to be signed and sealed.
- 7.4 In order for the new AQMA to be formally declared, an AQMA order will need to be produced, which will need to be signed and sealed. A draft of the AQMA order is appended to this report.
-

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- **Appendix A:** Draft AQMA Order for Proposed AQMA
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Air Quality Consultants - AQMA Review Maidstone – December 2021
(Appendix F of MBC’s Annual Status Report to DEFRA, 2022)

[MBC Annual Status Report 2022](#)

APPENDIX A

Draft AQMA Order for Proposed AQMA

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

THE UPPER STONE STREET AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT AREA (AQMA) ORDER 2022

ENVIRONMENT ACT 1995 PART IV – SECTION 83(1)

Whereas Maidstone Borough Council ("The Council") is satisfied that as a result of its air quality review and the Detailed Assessment report dated December 2021 the air quality objective for Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) (annual mean) may not be achieved by the relevant date prescribed by the Air Quality (England) (Wales) Regulations 2000 in some parts of the area described below.

The Council, in exercise of the powers conferred on it by section 83(1) of the Environment Act 1995 HEREBY ORDER THAT:-

1. The area of Upper Stone Street, between Wrens Cross and Old Tovil Road as shaded in red on the attached map shall be designated as an Air Quality Management Area, to be known as the Upper Stone Street Air Quality Management Area.
2. The Air Quality Management Area will be an air quality management area in relation to Nitrogen Dioxide (NO₂) only.
3. The order shall be cited as The Upper Stone Street Air Quality Management Area Order (2022).
4. The order shall come into force on 1st December 2022 and shall remain in force until varied or revoked by subsequent order.

**THE COMMON SEAL OF MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL WAS HERE
UNTO AFFIXED ON THE 1st DAY OF DECEMBER 2022 AND SIGNED IN THE
PRESENCE OF
Solicitor – Authorised Signatory**



Proposed Upper Stone Street AQMA

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Agenda Item 15

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

11 October 2022

Communications and Engagement Strategy 2022-2025

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee	11 October 2022
Executive	26 October 2022

Will this be a Key Decision?	No
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Executive
Director	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance and Julie Maddocks, Communications Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

Appendix 1 of this report is the Communications and Engagement Strategy for 2022-25; the Strategy sets out our priorities for and our approach to external communication and engagement. The Strategy is focussed on achieving Pride in Place with communications leading on a project to promote the Borough through events and promotion of the Town Centre over the next three years delivering the UKSPF. The Strategy is also supported by an action plan to deliver Council priorities, the plan is not exhaustive and is regularly updated to reflect the needs and priorities of services.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to the Policy Advisory Committee

1. That the Communications and Engagement Strategy for 2022-25 and Action Plan for 2022-23, at Appendix 1 be recommended to the Executive for approval.

Communications and Engagement Strategy 2022-25

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>Accepting the recommendations will materially improve the Council’s ability to achieve the vision and priorities set out in the Strategic Plan.</p>	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>The report recommendation supports the achievement of the cross-cutting objectives by setting out actions to communicate, inform and engage with key audiences on our priorities.</p>	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Risk Management	<p>Communications have a key role to play in managing and mitigating risks through proactive campaigns and responsive media relations.</p>	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Financial	<p>The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.</p>	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Staffing	<p>We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.</p>	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance

Legal	No specific legal implications are identified. Under Section 3 of the Local Government Act local authorities have a duty to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". The Council's Strategic Plan and the Communications and Engagement Strategy demonstrate compliance with the statutory duty. The Council is required to observe the code of recommended practice on local authority publicity; the Strategy supports this.	Interim Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance)
Information Governance	The Communications team process data in accordance with the principles of data protection.	Information Governance Team
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	Safe, Clean and Green is a key priority for the Council, the strategy and action plan contain actions to improve public perception in terms of safety and campaigns to promote safety and the work of the Council's enforcement teams.	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Procurement	Any procurement required to enact the Strategy and Action Plan will be completed in line with financial procedure rules.	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Biodiversity and Climate Change	A fundamental element in combating biodiversity loss, mitigating and adapting to the impacts of Climate Change is effective communication and engagement. Flooding, heatwaves, drought and storms are projected to worsen in Maidstone due to climate change and residents and businesses must be informed and able to adapt and build resilience to the worsening impacts. Vulnerable community members will be hardest hit. Rising energy bills, food waste, and petrol cars are costly and polluting, and	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

	<p>effective engagement with the public and businesses to raise awareness of small changes and greener alternatives will ultimately save money and go a long way to mitigating and preparing for the impacts of climate change.</p>	
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Strategy has been updated to reflect the emphasis on increasing Pride in Place and the proactive role communication and engagement plays in this.
- 2.2 The purpose of the Communications and Engagement Strategy is to ensure there is a consistent approach to delivering key Council messages, protecting and promoting our reputation and establishing a strong and trusted brand.
- 2.3 The strategy sets out that the Council’s approach to communication and engagement including which channels we use and how we communicate and engage with local residents, stakeholders and businesses. Effective community engagement is essential to ensure the services the Council delivers are fit for the communities it serves. At other times the Council voluntarily and actively seeks out the views of the community to ensure that it is delivering high-quality, cost-effective services which meet the needs of our communities. An example of this is the Residents Survey which helps the Council to understand the needs of everyone across the borough and shape decisions and services required moving forward.
- 2.4 The Action Plan for 2022-23 sets out key campaigns and actions the Communications Team will be undertaking over this year to deliver the strategy and the council’s priorities. The action plan does not contain every action and campaign undertaken by the team; for example, the internal communication activities, Borough Insight or activities to support the Mayor and civic events. Included in the plan are the strategic actions for each of our priorities. The action plan is a living document developed with the Executive and the Wider Leadership Team; as new projects are identified by services requiring communications support or delivery these will be added. Key activities for the team this year include delivering the Pride in Place project submitted as part of the Local Investment Plan for the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. This includes a creative communities grant for local voluntary and community groups to bid for funding to deliver events, funding for a Christmas event and promotion of events and activities in our Town Centre.
- 2.5 The team have responsibility for all internal and external messaging including through digital channels, social media platforms and working with the media. Core work for communications includes creating press releases and media statements to inform the public about initiatives and campaigns, branding, design and print for all signs, campaigns, events and Council initiatives as well as digital communications including video production. The

team actively seek opportunities to engage with the media to share messages about the Council's services, achievements and events.

2.6 Over the past year the team have:

- Issued 166 Press Releases
- Responded to 501 press enquires

This has led to

- 5,360 published articles
- Reach of 494 million

Across social media channels we have achieved:

- 27,931 followers
- 4,321,787 impressions
- 202,858 engagements

2.7 The Action Plan for this year focusses on the Council's priorities with activities and campaigns to support Thriving Place, Safe, Clean and Green, Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure and Homes and Communities. The strategy and plan focusses on sharing positive stories and a positive image of the Borough to promote pride in place whilst supporting the Council's core work and services.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Do not recommend the Communications and Engagement Strategy and Action Plan for approval. This would mean the new activities and actions to support our priorities are not captured and we miss an opportunity to clarify the teams work aligned to the Council's priorities. This option is not recommended.
- 3.2 Make recommendations to amend the strategy and action plan as it deems appropriate for example requesting additional actions.
- 3.3 Agree to recommend the Communications and Engagement Strategy and Action Plan to the Executive for approval to ensure we have an up-to-date strategy and appropriate action plan to support our Strategic Priorities. This is recommended.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Option 3.3 is recommended to ensure the Council has an up-to-date strategy and action plan for communication and engagement activity. The action plan has been developed with the Executive and Leadership Team to support the delivery of the Council's four strategic priorities within service budgets.

5. RISK

- 5.1 The Communications and Engagement Strategy seeks to minimise and manage risks in relation to the council's reputation. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.
-

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 The Communications and Engagement Strategy sets out how we will communicate the council's priorities and strategic narrative which were heavily consulted on during 2018-19 as the new Strategic Plan was developed and then again when the plan was updated in 2020. The strategy includes an action plan setting out key campaigns to engage, communicate and consult with the public and key stakeholders across a range of services.
-

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 Following approval, the Strategy will be made available on the Council's website and the actions will be implemented.
-

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Communications and Engagement Strategy 2022-2025 and Action Plan 2022-23
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Maidstone Borough Council

DRAFT Communications and Engagement Strategy

2022 - 2025

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For more information contact the MBC Communications Team

☎ 01622 602660 @ communications@maidstone.gov.uk

Author: Julie Maddocks, Communications Manager - August 2022





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Introduction

The MBC Communications and Engagement Strategy is driven by our Strategic Plan which sets out the Council's long-term aspirations for the whole borough and how they will be achieved.

At the centre of the Strategic Plan is a vision to make Maidstone a vibrant, prosperous, urban and rural community at the heart of Kent where everyone can realise their potential.





Purpose of the Strategy

The aims and objectives of the Communications and Engagement Strategy are to support the delivery of the MBC Strategic Plan by ensuring that all campaigns and projects are aligned to and support the narrative of the four priorities.

We deliver an excellent service internally and externally to demonstrate and promote the effectiveness of the Council, helping to build a good reputation and promote a positive perception of who we are and what we do.

Communications Priorities

The Communications team promotes, protects and upholds the Council's reputation as an effective, efficient and innovative organisation. We support the delivery of the Strategic Plan through working with Members, Services, Residents and other key Stakeholders delivering timely and effective campaigns, messages and events which promote and deliver the Council's Priorities. The Action plan for 2022-23 sets out the communications priorities highlighted below are key areas of activity.

Thriving Place

We will coordinate and facilitate engagement events (both internally and externally) to help create pride of place across the borough, this includes the delivery of the pride in place project funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

Homes and Communities

We will increase the opportunities for people to engage with the Council on issues and services that affect them by developing existing and new channels of communication. We will deliver campaigns that support our goals to prevent homelessness and provide affordable homes for our residents

Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure

We will continue to support the Local Plan Review including making sure public facing documents are accessible and promoting engagement opportunities. We will promote our regeneration projects and our open for business approach.

Safe, Clean and Green

We will deliver communications support to achieve our ambitions for climate change and biodiversity through engaging and informing residents and businesses. We will deliver communication support as part of the Safer Streets Fund to promote Maidstone borough as a place where people feel safe and are safe.





Importance of Communications

It has never been more important for councils to communicate effectively with residents, media, partners and employees.

Whether it's to encourage greater self-service or to promote understanding of local priorities, effective communication has the power to engage communities, challenge misconception and help your council achieve its objectives.

Local Government Association

Through effective messaging, communications and engagement, we will support and deliver the four priorities contained within the Strategic Plan; A Thriving Place, Homes and Communities, Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure and Safe, Clean and Green.

It is vital that we communicate effectively with all our stakeholders, including residents, communities, businesses, charities and other public sector services. Good communications not only builds relationships but also maintains them. It helps provide clarity, accountability and reduce conflict.

Many residents, organisations, businesses and stakeholders interact with the Council regularly. During the pandemic we strengthened our relationship with the community and voluntary sector, we will continue to invest resource in maintaining those relationships and engaging with our residents.

There are a wide range of channels and techniques that the Communications Team use to tailor our messages, promotional material and publications to ensure we reach the right audiences.

With ever changing technology and information sharing communications needs to continuously evolve and improve the way messages are shared whilst promoting the work of the Council. This strategy aims to provide a consistent approach in delivering key messages from Maidstone Borough Council, protecting and promoting its reputation, establishing a strong identifiable brand and ensuring we have a borough that works for everyone.

Importance of Engagement

Effective community engagement is essential to ensure the services the Council delivers are fit for the communities it serves. At other times the Council voluntarily and actively seeks out the views of the community to ensure that it is delivering a high quality, cost effective services which meet the needs of our communities. An example of this is the Residents Survey which helps the Council to understand the needs of everyone across the borough and shape decisions and services required moving forward.

Events also play a large part in community engagement and MBC is committed to delivering and facilitating a wide range of events across the borough. It works closely with partner organisations to explore new ways of engaging with our communities. We value our partnerships, particularly with community and voluntary groups, as well as statutory/public sector partners and working with elected Members to promote the work of the Council.

One of the main focusses of our engagement will be to restore Pride in Place for the Maidstone Town Centre; according to High Street Renaissance research – 69% of people think culture on their high street makes their area a better place to live.

By developing our engagement we will help:

- Create civic pride
- Attract footfall to the high street and town centre and generate spend in our Borough
- Involve our residents in shaping and informing decisions and services





Who We Are and What We Do

The Communications Team is responsible for producing and delivering all internal and external messaging this includes via digital channels, social media platforms as well as working with the media. We also proactively create campaigns, marketing, branding and design for all our services.

We work to protect and enhance the trusted name of Maidstone Borough Council as well as the reputation of borough itself. By targeting the right audiences the Communications team support services to achieve better outcomes for the borough through promotion, raising awareness, changing perceptions and behaviour. We also help to identify, prevent and mitigate risks before they become a crisis during critical incidences.

The Communications Team is responsible for producing the MBC residential magazine – Borough Insight which is produced twice a year, (Spring and Autumn), reflecting, promoting and reporting on key issues, services and campaigns delivered, supported or led by the Council. A community focussed publication, the magazine is printed and delivered to 82,000 residential properties across the borough.

As well as reaching out externally we recognise the importance of internal communications. The Communications Team works on internal campaigns throughout the year promoting our priorities, key messages and initiatives such as health and wellbeing.

Channels of Communication

Press and Media Engagement

Press releases form the initial communications tool to provide accurate and timely information which is shared across a variety of channels; including direct contact with the media, locally, regional, nationally and internationally; social media, digital and internal comms.

From August 2021 to July 2022

- Number of press releases issued: 166
- Number of press enquires answered by communications: 501

38 Digital Communications

Communications is responsible for all of the Council's social media channels including Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn.

All of these are used to share information, create messaging, promote the work of the Council, and encourage engagement with our residents and businesses.

The followers and engagement has grown year on year and continues to do so.

We have also recently introduced GovDelivery – 'Stay Connected' digital newsletters which cover a variety of subjects including events, what's on, business, environment, waste and recycling.

Facebook, Twitter and Instagram channels between August 2021 - July 2022:

- Followers: 27,931
- Impressions: 4,321,787
- Engagements: 202,858

Branding, Design and Print

The Communications Team is responsible for ensuring that the Council's corporate identity is used consistently throughout the organisation in all messaging and design work. A strong brand inspires confidence and positivity, which is why consistency is needed and a corporate identity style guide has been developed which is adhered to throughout our publications and literature.





How We Measure Success

The Communications Team delivers messages which reflect the strategic plan; to help achieve this they work to an action plan which outlines the four priorities, meet with each service area across the Council to help deliver messages around their work and review the plan on a monthly basis to ensure that messages are delivered in a timely manner. This helps to achieve the aims and deliver the outcomes of the Communications Strategy. PR campaigns created by the MBC team are driven by the priorities outlined in the Council's Strategic Plan.

We monitor daily, articles about Maidstone Borough Council across all media platforms and undertake sentiment analysis, the value of the coverage and the reach. We work with services to identify their desired outputs and outcomes and structure communications plans to meet this need. Assessing following the project whether these have been achieved.

Through using the Onclusive Media monitoring we can see accurate analytics:

31 July 2021 to 1 August 2022:

- Volume of articles published: 5,360
- Total average Advertising Value Equivalent - £14.5m
- Reach – opportunities to see: 494million people
 - Press: 29 million
 - Web: 312 million
 - Broadcast: 153 million

Maidstone Borough Council

DRAFT Communications Action Plan

2022 – 2023

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For more information contact the MBC Communications Team

☎ 01622 602660 @ communications@maidstone.gov.uk

Author: Julie Maddocks, Communications Manager - July 2022





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Priority – Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure	15 - 17
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Communications Action Plan 2022 – 2023

The team works in line with a communications and engagement calendar which is populated and updated on a monthly basis reflecting services, projects and campaigns with both internal and external partners and stakeholders.

We work in partnership to produce, facilitate and run campaigns and projects highlighting what the Council does and how it works supporting residents and businesses to be a safe place to work and live.

Part of the role of the Communications Team is to help raise awareness and engagement of these campaigns using a variety of channels to deliver appropriate messages.

Focusing on the four MBC priorities under Thriving Place we also promote Maidstone as the Business Capital of Kent to inform and engage with investors, residents, businesses and stakeholders.



Priority - A Thriving Place

Maidstone is a borough that is open for business, attractive for visitors and is an enjoyable and prosperous place to live for our residents.

Maidstone is the Business Capital of Kent; we will continue to grow our local economy with high employment, good local jobs and thriving local businesses.

We want our town and village centres to thrive and be fit for the future. We will lead investment in the County town and rural service centres through our regeneration projects and working with partners.

We are proud of our heritage and will continue to grow our leisure and cultural offer.



MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

PRIORITY AREA	Key campaign messages	Audience and outcomes
A THRIVING PLACE		
UK Shared Prosperity Fund – Communities and Engagement	<p>The UK Shared Prosperity Fund (UKSPF) is a central pillar of the UK government’s Levelling Up agenda and provides £2.6 billion of funding for local investment by March 2025. The Fund aims to improve pride in place and increase life chances across the UK investing in communities and place, supporting local business, and people and skills.</p> <p>MBC will be using the funding (£1.2m) over three years to restore and build Pride of Place in Maidstone Town Centre.</p> <p>This would include community engagement, marketing material, creative community grants to support and promoting all events and activities taking place. The Council would also establish MBC led flagship annual events - spring, autumn and winter – suggestions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 24 Nov 2022 – Magic of Christmas in Maidstone (working in conjunction with One Maidstone) • Harvest Food & Drink Festival – Oct 2023 <p>Creative Communities Grants:</p> <p>In addition, as part of the UKSPF, the Council is inviting people to apply for Creative Community Grants; this will include individual artists and creatives, community groups and cultural organisations.</p> <p>The grant funding will help support events and activities that encourage arts engagement and community cohesion in the borough of Maidstone.</p>	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Improved awareness of the work being carried out by Maidstone Borough Council and partners to introduce enforcement through our services areas work. To recognise the contribution of our resident’s contribution to our borough.</p> <p>Aims: An improved sense of safety reflected Raise awareness of joint schemes between the community protection team, Police and any other third-party agencies</p>

MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

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<p>Maidstone – The Business Capital of Kent - Economic Development</p>	<p>To support and promote Maidstone as the Business Capital of Kent including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Networking events – at the MBC Business Terrace • Produce and publish a monthly Business Newsletter • To produce business led communications • To support and promote the work of the Maidstone Innovation Centre 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Improved awareness of Maidstone as the Business Capital of Kent and raise the profile of the Business Terrace and Innovation Centre</p> <p>Aims: To raise number of tenants to the Business Terrace and Innovation Centre and to encourage new businesses locate in Maidstone</p>
<p>Compassionate City – Communities and Engagement</p>	<p>To promote and launch the annual Compassionate Community Awards working with Heart of Kent Hospice (HoKH).</p> <p>Supporting HoKH to promote and launch Maidstone Compassionate City – spring 2023</p>	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To establish Maidstone as a Compassionate City</p> <p>Aims: To work with communities to encourage engagement and introduce Maidstone as a Compassionate City</p>

MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

<p>Visit Maidstone - Economic Development</p>	<p>To support and promote the visitor economy across the borough working with the MBC tourism led team – Visit Maidstone to encourage and increase visitor numbers to the attractions across the borough. This would help improve the economic picture for the entertainment, leisure and hospitality industry in and around Maidstone.</p> <p>The communications team will help promote and facilitate a variety of things including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Events • Things to do in Maidstone • Visitor Information • Venues • What's On • Shopping • Food and drink 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Raise and improve the awareness of Maidstone as a place to visit, shop and stay</p> <p>Aims: Establish Maidstone as a first class visitor destination and to increase footfall, economic spend and visitor numbers to the borough</p>
<p>Lockmeadow - Economic Development</p>	<p>To support and promote the Lockmeadow entertainment complex marketing and promotional events.</p> <p>MBC owns the Lockmeadow building and works closely with all the tenants to support their work.</p> <p>The Council is also responsible for a variety of events which they schedule throughout the year including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maidstone River Festival entertainment stage • Producers Market – monthly • Maidstory (with One Maidstone) • Monthly charity Quiz- ongoing • Music on Terrace – Monthly • Santa's big post box – annually Nov/Dec • Riverside illuminated walk - ongoing 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Improved awareness of the work being carried out by Maidstone Borough Council and partners to introduce enforcement through our services areas work</p> <p>Aims: An improved sense of safety reflected Raise awareness of joint schemes between the community protection team, Police and any other third-party agencies</p>

MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

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<p>Town Centre Planning - Planning, Policy and Environment</p>	<p>Working with the Planning, Policy and Environment team we support and promote Maidstone as the County Town highlighting the changes and improvement work planned to help restore trust, a feeling of safety and pride in the town centre including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business and investment opportunities • Town Centre Task Force • Reinvigorating the town • Five Opportunity Sites • Sustainability and Growth • Public Consultation 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To restore trust in Maidstone as a town centre for residents, visitors and businesses</p> <p>Aims: An increase in visitor numbers and businesses locating in the town centre. Promote improvement projects in and around the town centre and raise awareness of joint schemes between MBC and partner organisations</p>
<p>Residents Survey - Communities and Engagement</p>	<p>To promote and support the annual MBC Residents Survey including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public engagement events • Social media • Digital Marketing • Press Releases 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To understand what people think of Maidstone; their concerns, needs and the way people live and work across the borough</p> <p>Aims: An improved understanding of what our residents like, dislike, want and don't want in Maidstone. How they would like it to develop and improve</p>

<p>Maidstone Museum – Economic Development</p>	<p>To promote and support Maidstone Museum exhibition and events including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exhibitions • School visits • Meeting venue • Holiday activities for children • Schools virtual learning workshops • Father Christmas & festive producers market 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To raise the profile of Maidstone Museum by promoting events, exhibitions and encourage local people and visitors to use the facilities of the Museum and highlight the way that it supports the town centre community</p> <p>Aims: Increased visitor numbers to the Museum; improve dwell time, increase number of events planned and held as a meeting venue and improve sales to ticketed events and in the Museum shop</p>
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Priority - Homes and Communities

We want to have a place that people love and where they can afford to live. This means ensuring that there is a good balance of different types of homes, including affordable housing.

We will have safe and desirable homes that enable good health and wellbeing for our communities. We will address homelessness and rough sleeping to move people into settled accommodation.

We will work with our partners to improve the quality of community services and facilities including for health care and community activities. Residents will be encouraged and supported to volunteer and play a full part in their communities.



HOMES AND COMMUNITIES		
1,000 Affordable Homes – Planning and Development	<p>To promote and support MBC’s commitment to acquiring an additional 1,000 houses for Local People on affordable terms including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promotion of work that is being carried out to achieve the commitment through press releases, social media and digital communications 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To enable and support MBC in reaching its commitment to acquiring 1,000 affordable homes in the borough</p> <p>Aims: To promote and establish Maidstone as a place for people to move to, live and buy a home</p>
MBC Engagement Events – Economic Development	<p>To support and promote engagement events taking place across the borough including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parks and Open Spaces Town Centre Jubilee Square Maidstone Museum Lockmeadow Maidstone Leisure Centre Trinity Community Hub 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Raise awareness of events and increase community engagement across the borough</p> <p>Aims: To promote all that is happening in Maidstone to improve a feeling pride of place and increase visitor numbers, dwell time and tourism economy</p>

MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

<p>46 Help for Ukraine – Communities and Engagement</p>	<p>To help and support Help and Homes for Ukraine across Maidstone borough including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community events for refugees and host families • Produce and provide information/literature • Provide information regarding housing, health and community facilities • Support – refugees and host families • Promote monetary payments 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To support host families and refugees from Ukraine providing them with a sense of place and reassurance in the borough of Maidstone</p> <p>Aims: To inform and reassure both host families and refugees of MBC services and community support that is available to them</p>
<p>Energy Efficiency Support – Housing, Revenues and Benefits, Communities and Engagement</p>	<p>To promote and support energy efficiency support and the work MBC services are providing including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Exceptional hardship payments; social housing payments • Debt advice and support • Housing Benefit • Universal credit customers • Council Tax Arrears funding – ongoing • Financial Inclusion – ongoing • Winter Fuel Allowance • Winter hardship payments 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To provide reassuring messages for residents and businesses outlining what is available to them through the work of the MBC energy efficiency support services</p> <p>Aims: To increase reassurance and provide information to refugees and host families to the support available to them</p>

MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

<p>Housing – Housing and Inclusion</p>	<p>To promote and support the work of the MBC Housing Team including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homefinder – Landlord promotion • Helping You Home • Trinity Community Hub • Annual Homeless Count • Outreach Team • Severe Weather Emergency Protocol (SWEP) 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To raise awareness of the work of the MBC Housing services</p> <p>Aims: To inform and engage with those that need help and support from the MGC Housing Teams</p>
<p>Democratic and Electoral Services</p>	<p>Support and promote the work of the Democratic and Electoral Services Team including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual Canvass • Electoral Register • MBC Committee Meetings • Local, PCC, Parish and General Elections • Candidate Nomination process • Registering for postal vote 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Highlighting and raising awareness of the MBC Democratic and Electoral Services Team</p> <p>Aims: To increase awareness and the community engagement and improve number of people casting their votes at elections</p>

<p>Policy & Resources</p>	<p>To promote and support the work of the MBC Policy & Resources Team including Public Consultations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residents Survey • Community Resilience Fund • Public engagement events • Local Plan Review • Community Infrastructure Levy • Leisure Facilities 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To encourage public engagement in all the consultations and events that MBC facilitate</p> <p>Aims: To improve awareness and increase engagement with residents and businesses</p>
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Priority - Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure

We want Maidstone Borough Council to work for the people who live, visit and work; now and in the future.

We want a borough where there is a variety of jobs, housing needs are met and infrastructure is in place to meet the growing needs of our residents and economy.

We also want to ensure we lead and shape our place as it grows, including leading master planning and investing to bring about high quality housing and jobs in the borough.



EMBRACING GROWTH AND ENABLING INFRASTRUCTURE		
Local Plan Review – Planning, Policy and Environment	<p>To promote and publicise the Maidstone Local Plan Review (LPR) to report on the process and inform the public of where they can access information on the progress of the review.</p> <p>The communications team supports the LPR by reporting on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing information on each stage of the process • Inform the public on the LPR outcomes • Each consultation stage • How the process works 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Increase awareness of the requirements of a Local Plan Review and highlight the process behind it</p> <p>Aims: To engage with all residents, businesses and stakeholders to promote the process of the Maidstone Local Plan Review and improve understanding of the legal requirement</p>
Trinity Community Hub - Housing and Inclusion	<p>Supporting communications and promoting the re-opening of Trinity House ad a Community Hub in the centre of Maidstone comms including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public and stakeholder engagement event • Official opening of Community Hub • Trinity Venue Hire • Community engagement events • The work of the MBC Outreach and Housing Teams • Partner organisations working with MBC teams 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Improved awareness of Trinity and the role it plays as a Community Hub in the town centre</p> <p>Aims: Provide an understanding and reassurance to residents, the local community and stakeholders of the role of Trinity Community Hub and increase awareness of the important role it will have</p>

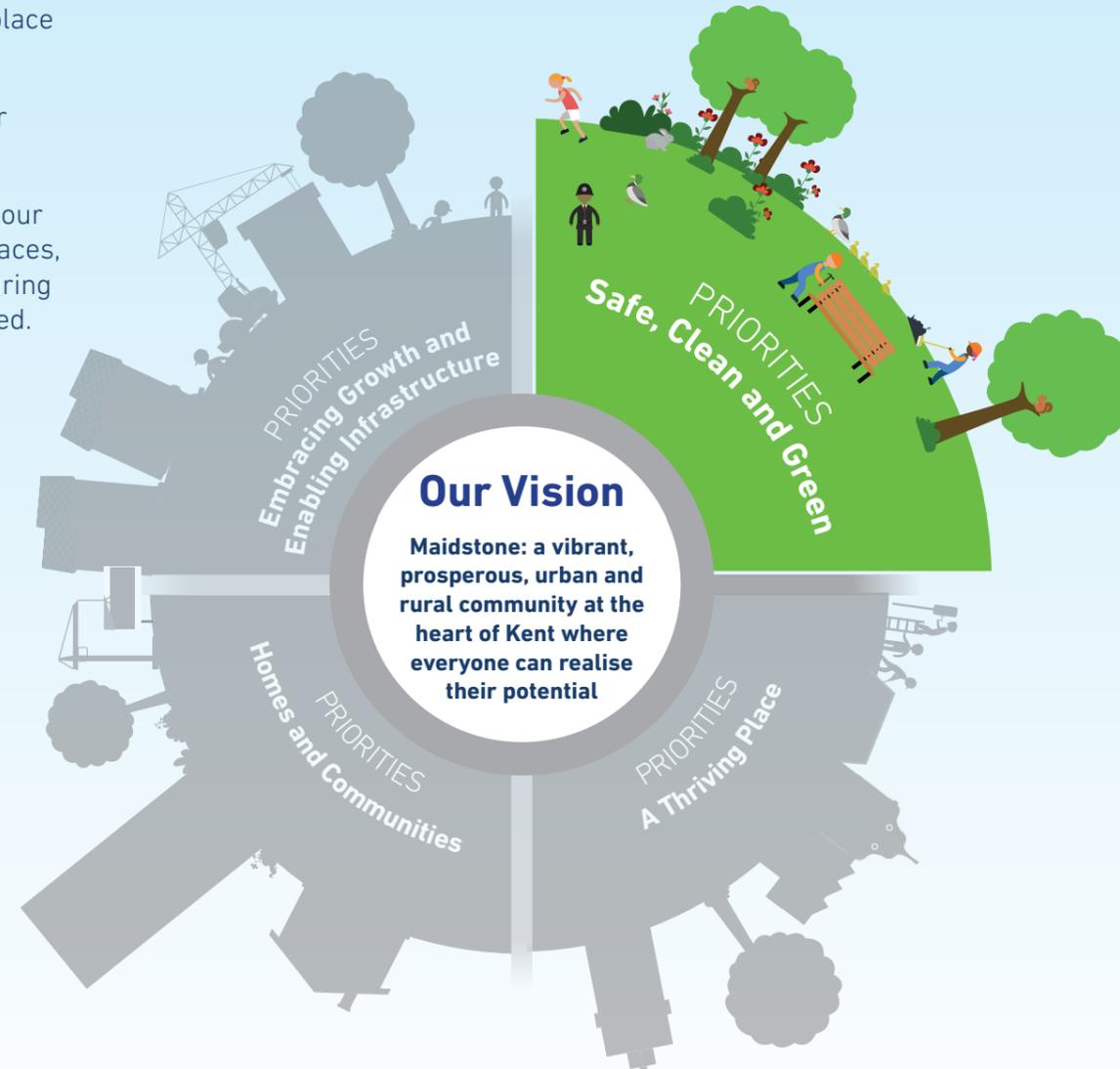
Maidstone Innovation Centre - Economic Development and Regeneration	<p>To support and promote the Maidstone Innovation Centre as the Med-Tech industry business centre including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenants business profile • Business and office space available • Meeting venue hire 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To improve and raise awareness of the Maidstone Innovation Centre and the role it plays in the community</p> <p>Aims: Increase the number of tenants at the MIC and encourage usage of the conference room and venue hire</p>
LOC8 – Economic Development and Regeneration	<p>To promote and support the construction and opening of LOC8 - the new business development park situated just off junction 8 of the M20 including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate official opening event • Promote and work with partner organisations 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To introduce LOC8 as a new facility for residents, businesses and stakeholders to use in the borough</p> <p>Aims: To help establish LOC8 as a Maidstone’s premiere commercial park</p>

Priority - Safe, Clean and Green

We will keep Maidstone an attractive and clean place for all.

Maidstone is a safe place to live and we want our residents to feel safe.

We want to protect and where possible enhance our environment and make sure our parks, green spaces, streets and public areas are high quality by ensuring they are looked after, well managed and respected.



MBC COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN – July 2022 – June 2023

SAFE CLEAN AND GREEN		
<p>Enforcement – Community Protection, Waste Crime, Housing and Inclusion</p>	<p>Town Centre Task Force launch summer 2022- joint operation with Maidstone Borough Council Community Protection Team Kent Police and partners organisations.</p> <p>Place Based Enforcement including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Enforcement • Community Protection • Waste Crime • Housing & Homelessness - • Animal welfare • Antisocial Behaviour Awareness 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Improved awareness of the work being carried out by Maidstone Borough Council and partners to introduce enforcement through our services areas work</p> <p>Aims: An improved sense of safety reflected Raise awareness of joint schemes between the community protection team, Police and any other third-party agencies</p>
<p>Safer Streets – Community Protection</p>	<p>Maidstone has received £565,877 funding which has been secured by the Police & Crime Commissioner (Matthew Scott). This is to provide safety improvements around the town centre and Brenchley Gardens district. This will include more outreach workers, self-defence classes for women and an expansion of the Best Bar None scheme for licensed premises, which promotes good practice and improved customer safety.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBC will be working with: Kent PCC’s Office • Kent Police • Kent County Council • Maidstone & Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Improved awareness of the work being carried out by Maidstone Borough Council and partners to introduce enforcement through our services areas work</p> <p>Aims: An improved sense of safety reflected Raise awareness of joint schemes between the community protection team, Police and any other third-party agencies</p>

Community Protection	<p>Promoting the work of the MBC Community Protection Team including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maidstone Town Centre Task Force • Rural Task Force (based in Marden) • Safer Streets • Safety Advisory Group 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: To help the people of Maidstone to understand the work of the Community Protection Team and feel safer in the town and across the borough</p> <p>Aims: An improved sense of safety across the borough To raise awareness of the work of the Community Protection Team and improve their understanding of how they are helping the residents, businesses and third party partner organisations in the borough</p>
Environmental Services - Environmental Health	<p>Promoting the work of the Environmental Services Team including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clean Air for Schools • Improve air quality • Improve health and wellbeing • Improving environmental health • Anti-idling outside schools campaign 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve air quality • Improve health and wellbeing • Improving environmental health • Improving air quality across the borough of Maidstone • Improving the health of our children <p>Aims: Anti-idling - Clean Air for Schools campaign – to raise awareness for drivers to switch off engines outside schools. To improve air quality, health and wellbeing for residents of Maidstone</p>

Environmental Waste Team	<p>To promote and support the Waste & Recycling Team including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste collections services across Maidstone • Recycling advice and information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – including waste collections and services • Volunteer Opportunities – Litter Picking 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To improve awareness of service • Improve recycling in the borough • Encourage people to improve their recycling and waste habits <p>Aims: To raise awareness and continue to inform residents and businesses of the work of the Environmental Waste Team and services they provide</p>
Flood protection - Environmental Health, Communities and Engagement	<p>Flood preparation –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raising Awareness of flooding – town centre and surrounding areas • Call for Flood Wardens • Informing of danger of potential floods • Sign up for flood alerts 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the awareness of flooding and the dangers • Increase number of flood wardens across the borough <p>Aims: To keep our residents and businesses out the danger of floods, inform them of when flooding is expected and update them of the changing weather situation. To encourage people to sign-up to become Flood Wardens and for flood alerts</p>

<p>Waste Crime Services</p>	<p>To promote the work of the MBC Waste Crime Services including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • #CleanUpMaidstone campaign • Community Projects including fly-tipping • Vehicle seizure joint operations with Kent Police 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Improved awareness of the work being carried out by Maidstone Borough Council and partners to introduce the Waste Crime Team</p> <p>Aims: An improved awareness of what the MBC Waste Crime Services carry out and promote the work that they do</p>
<p>Parks and Open Spaces - Grounds & Open Spaces</p>	<p>To promote Maidstone's Parks & Open Spaces including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • National Love Parks Week • Green Flag Awards • Mote Park Café and visitor centre opening • Safety in Parks • Cobtree Manor Park Golf Club House • Events being held in the parks across the borough 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders - everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: An improved awareness for residents and visitors of the parks and open spaces that are available across the borough of Maidstone</p> <p>Aims: An increase in numbers of visitors to the parks and open spaces across the borough and more events in those areas</p>

<p>Mote Park Café and Visitor Centre - Economic Development, Parks and Open Spaces</p>	<p>Working with the contractor - BBS Construction to promote the work being carried out on the new café and visitor centre in Mote Park including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New café leaseholder • Opening event • Venue availability • Facility Hire and use of the café for community groups 	<p>Audiences: Residents, businesses, partner organisations, visitors to Maidstone, trade press stakeholders – everyone</p> <p>Outcomes: Promote the new facilities in Mote Park for residents, visitors and community groups</p> <p>Aims: An increase in number of users to the Mote Park Café and visitor centre and to encourage more community groups to use the facilities</p>
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Agenda Item 16

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING & ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

11 October 2022

1st Quarter Financial Update & Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Communities, Housing & Environment Policy Advisory Committee	11 October 2022

Will this be a Key Decision?	No
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Not Applicable – report for noting by the Communities, Housing & Environment Policy Advisory Committee
Lead Head of Service	Mark Green, Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Paul Holland, Senior Finance Manager Georgia Harvey, Senior Information Governance Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report sets out the 2022/23 financial and performance position for the services reporting into the Communities, Housing & Environment Policy Advisory Committee (CHE PAC) as at 30th June 2022 (Quarter 1). The primary focus is on:

- The 2022/23 Revenue and Capital budgets; and
- The 2022/23 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that relate to the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2019-2045.

The combined reporting of the financial and performance position enables the Committee to consider and comment on the issues raised and actions being taken to address both budget pressures and performance issues in their proper context,

reflecting the fact that the financial and performance-related fortunes of the Council are inextricably linked.

Budget Monitoring

Overall net expenditure at the end of Quarter 1 for the services reporting to CHE PAC is £0.988m, compared to the approved profiled budget of £1.128m, representing an underspend of £0.140m. However, due to ongoing budget pressures the year-end forecast is projecting an overspend of £0.406m.

Capital expenditure at the end of Quarter 1 was £1.906m against a total budget of £20.080m.

Performance Monitoring

66.7% (2 of 3) targetable quarterly key performance indicators reportable to the Communities, Housing & Environment Policy Advisory Committee achieved their Quarter 1 target.

Purpose of Report

The report enables the Committee to consider and comment on the issues raised and actions being taken to address both budget pressures and performance issues as at 30th June 2022.

This report makes the following recommendations to the Communities, Housing & Environment Policy Advisory Committee:

1. That the Revenue position as at the end of Quarter 1 for 2022/23, including the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted;
2. That the Capital position at the end of Quarter 1 be noted; and
3. That the Performance position as at Quarter 1 for 2022/23, including the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant issues have been identified, be noted.

1st Quarter Financial Update & Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>This report monitors actual activity against the revenue budget and other financial matters set by Council for the financial year. The budget is set in accordance with the Council’s Medium-Term Financial Strategy which is linked to the Strategic Plan and corporate priorities.</p> <p>The Key Performance Indicators and strategic actions are part of the Council’s overarching Strategic Plan 2019-45 and play an important role in the achievement of corporate objectives. They also cover a wide range of services and priority areas.</p>	Director of Finance and Business Improvement (Section 151 Officer)
Cross Cutting Objectives	This report enables any links between performance and financial matters to be identified and addressed at an early stage, thereby reducing the risk of compromising the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2019-2045, including its cross-cutting objectives.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement (Section 151 Officer)
Risk Management	This is addressed in Section 5 of this report.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement (Section 151 Officer)
Financial	<p>Financial implications are the focus of this report through high level budget monitoring. Budget monitoring ensures that services can react quickly enough to potential resource problems. The process ensures that the Council is not faced by corporate financial problems that may prejudice the delivery of strategic priorities.</p> <p>Performance indicators and targets are closely linked to the allocation of resources and determining good value for money. The financial implications of any proposed changes are also identified and taken into account in the Council’s Medium-Term Financial Strategy and</p>	Senior Finance Manager (Client)

	associated annual budget setting process. Performance issues are highlighted as part of the budget monitoring reporting process.	
Staffing	<p>The budget for staffing represents a significant proportion of the direct spend of the Council and is carefully monitored. Any issues in relation to employee costs will be raised in this and future monitoring reports.</p> <p>Having a clear set of performance targets enables staff outcomes/objectives to be set and effective action plans to be put in place.</p>	Director of Finance and Business Improvement (Section 151 Officer)
Legal	<p>The Council has a statutory obligation to maintain a balanced budget and the monitoring process enables the Committee to remain aware of issues and the process to be taken to maintain a balanced budget.</p> <p>There is no statutory duty to report regularly on the Council's performance. However, under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended) a best value authority has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. One of the purposes of the Key Performance Indicators is to facilitate the improvement of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of Council services. Regular reports on Council performance help to demonstrate best value and compliance with the statutory duty.</p>	Senior Lawyer (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Information Governance	The performance data is held and processed in accordance with the data protection principles contained in the Data Protection Act 2018 and in line with the Data Quality Policy, which sets out the requirement for ensuring data quality. There is a program for undertaking data quality audits of performance indicators.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	There is no impact on Equalities as a result of the recommendations in this report. An EqIA would be carried out as part of a policy or service change, should one be identified.	Equalities and Communities Officer

Public Health	The performance recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	There are no specific issues arising.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement (Section 151 Officer)
Procurement	Performance Indicators and Strategic Milestones monitor any procurement needed to achieve the outcomes of the Strategic Plan.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement (Section 151 Officer)
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and there are no direct implications on biodiversity and climate change.	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Medium-Term Financial Strategy for 2022/23 to 2026/27 - including the budget for 2022/23 - was approved by full Council on 23rd February 2022. This report updates the Committee on how services have performed over the last quarter with regard to revenue and capital expenditure against approved budgets.
- 2.2 This report also includes an update to the Committee on progress against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- 2.3 Attached at Appendix 1 is a report setting out the revenue and capital spending position at the Quarter 1 stage. Attached at Appendix 2 is a report setting out the position for the KPIs for the corresponding period.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 There are no matters for decision in this report. The Committee is asked to note the contents but may choose to comment.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 In considering the current position on the Revenue budget, the Capital Programme, and the KPIs at the end of June 2022, the Committee can choose to note this information or could choose to comment.
 - 4.2 The Committee is requested to note the content of the report.
-

5. RISK

- 5.1 This report is presented for information only and has no direct risk management implications.
 - 5.2 The Council produced a balanced budget for both revenue and capital income and expenditure for 2022/23. The budget was set against a continuing backdrop of limited resources and a difficult economic climate, even before the final impact of the Covid-19 pandemic became clear. Regular and comprehensive monitoring of the type included in this report ensures early warning of significant issues that may place the Council at financial risk. This gives the Executive the best opportunity to take actions to mitigate such risks.
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6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 The KPIs update ("Performance Monitoring") have been reported to the Policy Advisory Committees (PAC) quarterly: Communities, Housing & Environment PAC; Economic Regeneration & Leisure PAC; and the Planning & Infrastructure PAC. Each committee also received a report on the relevant priority action areas. The report was also presented to the Corporate Services PAC reporting on the priority areas of "A Thriving Place", "Safe, Clean and Green", "Homes and Communities" and "Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure".
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 The Quarter 1 Budget & Performance Monitoring reports are being reported to the relevant Policy Advisory Committees during September and October 2022.
-

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: First Quarter Budget Monitoring 2022/23
- Appendix 2: First Quarter Performance Monitoring 2022/23

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

First Quarter Financial Update 2022/23

Communities, Housing & Environment – Policy Advisory
Committee

13th September 2022

Lead Officer: Mark Green

Report Author: Paul Holland

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Part B: Revenue Budget Q1 2022/23

B1) Revenue Budget Page 5

Part C: Capital Budget Q1 2022/23

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Part A

Executive Summary & Overview



This report provides members with the financial position as at 30th June 2022, covering activity for the Communities, Housing & Environment Policy Advisory Committee's (CHE PAC) revenue and capital accounts for the first quarter of 2022/23.

In 2021/22, income recovered more strongly than expected from the pandemic and the Council generated a modest surplus compared with budget. For 2022/23, there is no more direct government funding to cover the costs of Covid, but the Council has been able to set a balanced budget. Additional provision of £1.3 million was made within the 2022/23 budget for the expected impact of higher inflation on the Council's input costs. The projected peak level of inflation has continued to increase since the budget was set and this is likely to have an impact in particular on contract and energy costs, so the requirement for this provision will be monitored carefully to assess whether it will be adequate. If at any stage it appears that an overspend is likely, measures will need to be taken in-year to bring the budget back into balance.

The headlines for Quarter 1 are as follows:

Part B: Revenue budget – Q1 2022/23

- Overall net expenditure at the end of Quarter 1 for the services reporting to CHE PAC is £0.988m, compared to the approved profiled budget of £1.128m, representing an underspend of £0.140m. However, due to ongoing budget pressures the year-end forecast is projecting an overspend of £0.406m.

Part C: Capital budget – Q1 2022/23

- Capital expenditure at the end of Quarter 1 was £1.906m against a total budget of £20.080m.

Part B

First Quarter Revenue Budget 2022/23



B2) Revenue Budget

B1.1 The table below provides a detailed summary on the budgeted net income position for CHE PAC services at the end of Quarter 1. The financial figures are presented on an accruals basis (e.g., expenditure for goods and services received, but not yet paid for, is included).

CHE PAC Revenue Budget & Outturn – Quarter 1

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Cost Centre	Approved Budget for Year £000	Budget to 30 June 2022 £000	Actual £000	Variance £000	Forecast 31 March 2022 £000	Forecast Variance 31 March 2022 £000
Festivals and Events	-25	-23	-28	5	-25	0
Lettable Halls	-3	-1	-3	2	-3	0
Community Halls	47	17	10	7	47	0
Parks & Open Spaces	989	254	215	39	989	0
Playground Maintenance & Improvements	145	35	44	-8	145	0
Parks Pavilions	46	11	1	11	46	0
Mote Park	269	69	68	1	269	0
Allotments	13	3	3	0	13	0
Cemetery	69	46	22	24	69	0
National Assistance Act	-0	-0	-3	3	-0	0
Crematorium	-849	-174	-225	51	-987	138
Community Safety	31	-29	-34	5	31	0
PCC Grant - Building Safer Communities	0	-20	-21	1	0	0
C C T V	39	10	15	-5	39	0
Licences	-5	-1	-3	2	-5	0
Licensing Statutory	-60	-15	-22	7	-60	0
Licensing Non Chargeable	8	2	2	0	8	0
Dog Control	29	4	12	-7	29	0
Health Improvement Programme	5	5	8	-3	5	0
Pollution Control - General	24	13	1	11	24	0
Contaminated Land	1	0	-1	2	1	0
Waste Crime	-1	-2	-3	1	-1	0
Food Hygiene	10	1	-1	2	10	0
Sampling	4	1	0	1	4	0
Occupational Health & Safety	-6	-2	-3	2	-6	0
Infectious Disease Control	1	0	0	0	1	0
Noise Control	1	0	0	0	1	0
Pest Control	-12	-3	-0	-2	-12	0
Public Conveniences	313	79	50	29	263	50
Licensing - Hackney & Private Hire	-59	-17	-29	12	-59	0
Street Cleansing	1,198	291	277	13	1,198	0
Household Waste Collection	1,387	344	386	-41	1,387	0
Commercial Waste Services	-49	-14	-26	12	-49	0
Recycling Collection	912	316	287	29	912	0
Social Inclusion	53	53	53	0	53	0

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Cost Centre	Approved Budget for Year £000	Budget to 30 June 2022 £000	Actual £000	Variance £000	Forecast 31 March 2022 £000	Forecast Variance 31 March 2022 £000
Public Health - Obesity	0	-110	-140	30	-66	66
Public Health - Misc Services	0	-15	-11	-4	0	0
Performance & Development	12	4	0	3	12	0
Press & Public Relations	22	4	2	3	22	0
Grants	166	82	82	1	166	0
Delegated Grants	2	2	0	2	2	0
Parish Services	137	70	70	0	137	0
Strategic Housing Role	12	3	4	-0	12	0
Housing Register & Allocations	14	10	10	-0	14	0
Private Sector Renewal	-47	1	0	1	-47	0
HMO Licensing	-20	-5	-6	1	-20	0
Homeless Temporary Accommodation	287	72	174	-102	946	-659
Homelessness Prevention	182	-336	-337	1	182	0
Aylesbury House	47	12	4	8	47	0
Magnolia House	3	1	-6	7	3	0
St Martins House	0	0	-2	2	0	0
Marsham Street	63	16	18	-2	63	0
Sundry Temporary Accommodation (TA) Properties	-12	-0	-2	2	-12	0
2 Bed Property - Temporary Accommodation	-33	-7	-11	3	-33	0
3 Bed Property - Temporary Accommodation	-71	-17	-24	8	-71	0
4 bed Property - Temporary Accommodation	10	4	-7	11	10	0
1 Bed Property- Temporary Accommodation	-4	-1	1	-2	-4	0
Supported Accommodation	0	0	-0	0	0	0
Trinity	21	3	25	-22	21	0
Chillington House	-6	-1	-2	1	-6	0
Long Lease Properties	0	0	7	-7	0	0
Marden Caravan Site (Stilebridge Lane)	19	5	9	-4	19	0
Ulcombe Caravan Site (Water Lane)	7	-1	13	-14	7	0
Visitor Economy Section	120	30	37	-7	120	0
Head of Environment and Public Realm	134	34	38	-4	134	0
Bereavement Services Section	262	66	66	1	262	0
Community Partnerships & Resilience Section	556	139	97	42	556	0
Licensing Section	126	31	27	5	126	0
Environmental Protection Section	280	70	61	9	280	0
Food and Safety Section	275	69	60	8	275	0
Depot Services Section	969	250	238	12	969	0
Communications Section	199	50	49	1	199	0
Policy & Information Section	402	101	97	3	402	0
Head of Housing & Community Services	114	28	28	1	114	0
Homechoice Section	234	-34	-51	17	234	0
Housing & Inclusion Section	311	-498	-529	31	311	0
Housing & Health Section	285	-120	-128	8	285	0
Housing Management	290	-23	-26	4	290	0
Homelessness Outreach	6	-250	-260	10	6	0
Customer Services Section	697	175	166	9	697	0
Salary Slippage 3CHE	-215	-54	0	-54	-215	0
Fleet Workshop & Management	233	58	40	18	233	0
MBS Support Crew	-58	-15	4	-19	-58	0
Grounds Maintenance - Commercial	-130	-33	54	-87	-130	0
Total	10,424	1,128	988	140	10,829	-406

CHE Revenue Budget & Outturn – Quarter 1 (By Lead Member)

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Cost Centre	Approved Budget for Year £000	Budget to 30 June 2022 £000	Actual £000	Variance £000	Forecast 31 March 2022 £000	Forecast Variance 31 March 2022 £000
Festivals and Events	-25	-23	-28	5	-25	0
Lettable Halls	-3	-1	-3	2	-3	0
Community Halls	47	17	10	7	47	0
Community Safety	31	-29	-34	5	31	0
PCC Grant - Building Safer Communities	0	-20	-21	1	0	0
C C T V	39	10	15	-5	39	0
Social Inclusion	53	53	53	0	53	0
Performance & Development	12	4	0	3	12	0
Press & Public Relations	22	4	2	3	22	0
Grants	166	82	82	1	166	0
Delegated Grants	2	2	0	2	2	0
Parish Services	137	70	70	0	137	0
Visitor Economy Section	120	30	37	-7	120	0
Community Partnerships & Resilience Section	556	139	97	42	556	0
Communications Section	199	50	49	1	199	0
Policy & Information Section	402	101	97	3	402	0
Customer Services Section	697	175	166	9	697	0
Sub-Total: Communications & Public Engagement	2,456	664	591	74	2,456	0

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Cost Centre	Approved Budget for Year £000	Budget to 30 June 2022 £000	Actual £000	Variance £000	Forecast 31 March 2022 £000	Forecast Variance 31 March 2022 £000
Parks & Open Spaces	989	254	215	39	989	0
Playground Maintenance & Improvements	145	35	44	-8	145	0
Parks Pavilions	46	11	1	11	46	0
Mote Park	269	69	68	1	269	0
Allotments	13	3	3	0	13	0
Cemetery	69	46	22	24	69	0
National Assistance Act	-0	-0	-3	3	-0	0
Crematorium	-849	-174	-225	51	-987	138
Licences	-5	-1	-3	2	-5	0
Licensing Statutory	-60	-15	-22	7	-60	0
Licensing Non Chargeable	8	2	2	0	8	0
Dog Control	29	4	12	-7	29	0
Health Improvement Programme	5	5	8	-3	5	0
Pollution Control - General	24	13	1	11	24	0
Contaminated Land	1	0	-1	2	1	0
Waste Crime	-1	-2	-3	1	-1	0
Food Hygiene	10	1	-1	2	10	0
Sampling	4	1	0	1	4	0
Occupational Health & Safety	-6	-2	-3	2	-6	0
Infectious Disease Control	1	0	0	0	1	0
Noise Control	1	0	0	0	1	0
Pest Control	-12	-3	-0	-2	-12	0
Public Conveniences	313	79	50	29	263	50
Licensing - Hackney & Private Hire	-59	-17	-29	12	-59	0
Street Cleansing	1,198	291	277	13	1,198	0
Household Waste Collection	1,387	344	386	-41	1,387	0
Commercial Waste Services	-49	-14	-26	12	-49	0
Recycling Collection	912	316	287	29	912	0
Head of Environment and Public Realm	134	34	38	-4	134	0
Bereavement Services Section	262	66	66	1	262	0
Licensing Section	126	31	27	5	126	0
Environmental Protection Section	280	70	61	9	280	0
Food and Safety Section	275	69	60	8	275	0
Depot Services Section	969	250	238	12	969	0
Salary Slippage 3CHE	-215	-54	0	-54	-215	0
Fleet Workshop & Management	233	58	40	18	233	0
MBS Support Crew	-58	-15	4	-19	-58	0
Grounds Maintenance - Commercial	-130	-33	54	-87	-130	0
Sub-Total: Environmental Services	6,256	1,725	1,646	79	6,068	188

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Cost Centre	Approved Budget for Year £000	Budget to 30 June 2022 £000	Actual £000	Variance £000	Forecast 31 March 2022 £000	Forecast Variance 31 March 2022 £000
Public Health - Obesity	0	-110	-140	30	-66	66
Public Health - Misc Services	0	-15	-11	-4	0	0
Strategic Housing Role	12	3	4	-0	12	0
Housing Register & Allocations	14	10	10	-0	14	0
Private Sector Renewal	-47	1	0	1	-47	0
HMO Licensing	-20	-5	-6	1	-20	0
Homeless Temporary Accommodation	287	72	174	-102	946	-659
Homelessness Prevention	182	-336	-337	1	182	0
Aylesbury House	47	12	4	8	47	0
Magnolia House	3	1	-6	7	3	0
St Martins House	0	0	-2	2	0	0
Marsham Street	63	16	18	-2	63	0
Sundry Temporary Accommodation (TA) Properties	-12	-0	-2	2	-12	0
2 Bed Property - Temporary Accommodation	-33	-7	-11	3	-33	0
3 Bed Property - Temporary Accommodation	-71	-17	-24	8	-71	0
4 bed Property - Temporary Accommodation	10	4	-7	11	10	0
1 Bed Property- Temporary Accommodation	-4	-1	1	-2	-4	0
Supported Accommodation	0	0	-0	0	0	0
Trinity	21	3	25	-22	21	0
Chillington House	-6	-1	-2	1	-6	0
Long Lease Properties	0	0	7	-7	0	0
Marden Caravan Site (Stilebridge Lane)	19	5	9	-4	19	0
Ulcombe Caravan Site (Water Lane)	7	-1	13	-14	7	0
Head of Housing & Community Services	114	28	28	1	114	0
Homechoice Section	234	-34	-51	17	234	0
Housing & Inclusion Section	311	-498	-529	31	311	0
Housing & Health Section	285	-120	-128	8	285	0
Housing Management	290	-23	-26	4	290	0
Homelessness Outreach	6	-250	-260	10	6	0
Sub-Total: Housing & Health	1,712	-1,262	-1,249	-13	2,305	-593
Total	10,424	1,128	988	140	10,829	-406

B1.2 The table shows that at the end of the first quarter overall net expenditure for the services reporting to CHE PAC is £0.988m, compared to the approved profiled budget of £1.128m, representing an underspend of £0.140m. However, due to ongoing budget pressures the year-end forecast is projecting an overspend of £0.406m.

B1.3 The table indicates that in certain areas, significant variances to the budgeted income levels have emerged during the first quarter of the year. The reasons for the more significant variances are explored in section B2 below.

B2) Variances

B2.1 The most significant variances for this Committee are as follows:

	Positive Variance Q1	Adverse Variance Q1	Year End Forecast Variance
Communities, Housing & Environment Committee	£000		
Parks & Open Spaces – The Grounds Maintenance team is being restructured and this underspend will be used to fund the costs of that.	37		0
Crematorium – Income is forecast to increase by 5% this year, and some of this additional income will be used to fund grounds maintenance works.	51		138
Public Conveniences - This cost centre was awarded a growth item, to fund the additional costs of the new toilets at Mote Park. The toilets are not yet open, so the additional budget is unspent. The toilets are expected to open in September.	29		50
Household Waste Collection - The variance of this cost centre is caused by the expected rise in the waste collection and recycling contract, which is expected to increase by more the 12% from 1st April. When confirmed the contract will be funded by the additional budget set aside in the contingency for this purpose.		-41	0
Public Health Obesity – The year-end forecast represents unused grant monies that will be carried forward to 2023/24 .	30		65
Homeless Temporary Accommodation - This is due to a surge in the need for temporary accommodation, and this is likely due to, but not limited to the rise in the cost of living at the moment. There are also issues with getting people out of temporary accommodation as soon as possible, and this has proved very difficult. The Housing team are currently looking at how the homefinder scheme can help boost access to more private letting.		-101	-659

Part C

First Quarter Capital Budget 2022/23

B1) Capital Budget: Communities, Housing & Environment (CHE)

B1.1 The position of the 2022/23 CHE element of the Capital Programme at the Quarter 1 stage is presented in Table 3 below. The budget for 2022/23 includes resources brought forward from 2021/22.

CHE Capital Programme 2022/23 (@ Quarter 1)

Capital Programme Heading	Adjusted	Actual to June 2022 £000	Budget Remaining £000	Q2 Profile £000	Q3 Profile £000	Q4 Profile £000	Projected		
	Estimate 2022/23 £000						Expenditure Total £000	Slippage to 2023/24 £000	
Communities, Housing & Environment									
Housing - Disabled Facilities Grants Funding	1,640	93	1,547	90	210	210	603	1,037	
Temporary Accommodation	4,330	10	4,320	285	1,352	1,370	3,017	1,313	
Springfield Mill - Phase 2	731	735	-4				735	-4	
Private Rented Sector Housing Programme - Scheme B - Maidstone East	688	25	662	74	172	189	460	227	
Private Rented Sector Housing Programme - Scheme C - Heather House & Pavilion Building	99	5	94			94	99	-0	
Private Rented Sector Housing Programme - Scheme D - King Street	74		74					74	
Private Rented Sector Housing Programme - Indicative Schemes	2,323	356	1,967	1,601	63	136	2,155	168	
1,000 Homes Affordable Housing Programme - Indicative Schemes	4,305		4,305	1,601	2,786	82	4,469	-164	
1,000 Homes Affordable Housing Programme - Maidstone East	1,330		1,330					1,330	
1,000 Homes Affordable Housing Programme - King Street	44	29	15				29	15	
Market Sale Housing Programme - Heather House & Pavilion Building	515		515			515	515		
Acquisitions Officer - Social Housing Delivery P/ship	160	20	140	45	45	50	160	0	
Granada House Refurbishment Works	950	24	926	8		300	332	618	
Street Scene Investment	70		70	50	20		70	-0	
Flood Action Plan	430		430			100	100	330	
Electric Operational Vehicles	84		84		84		84		
Vehicle Telematics & Camera Systems	22		22	22			22		
Rent & Housing Management IT System	11	13	-2				13	-2	
Installation of Public Water Fountains	15		15			15	15		
Crematorium & Cemetery Development Plan	137	124	12	13			137	-0	
Continued Improvements to Play Areas	126		126	50	50	26	126	-0	
Parks Improvements	152	10	142	75	35	32	152	0	
Gypsy & Traveller Sites Refurbishment	1,421	424	997	500	497		1,421	-0	
Waste Crime Team - Additional Resources	25		25	25			25		
Section 106 funded works - Open Spaces	400	38	362	175	100	87	400	0	
Total	20,080	1,906	18,174	4,614	5,413	3,206	15,139	4,941	

B1.2 Comments on the variances in the table above are as follows:

Disabled Facilities Grants – Expenditure is historically less than the committed budget in each year, but unused funding is always carried forward allowing for works to be programmed in over the course of a number of years. A review of the DFG process is currently being undertaken and will feature in the draft new Housing Assistance Policy that will be delivered to the CHE PAC later in the year for commentary before being presented to the Executive.

Temporary Accommodation - This is the funding for the latest phase of property acquisitions to provide accommodation for temporarily homeless families and persons. There have been no acquisitions to date. It is hoped to acquire more properties this year, but it is proving difficult to obtain properties at reasonable valuations given the current overheated housing market.

Private Rented Sector Housing Programme/1,000 Homes Affordable Housing Programme – A number of schemes are at various stages of development at this stage, the main one at present being the Springfield Library site. Expenditure is very much indicative at this stage and expected to increase during the remainder of the year once schemes that are currently at the feasibility stage have progressed further and new sites are potentially secured. Some schemes will also contain elements of both private rented and affordable housing so the costs may change depending on the mix at the sites where this happens.

Granada House Refurbishment Works – The procurement process for the works is now complete and it is anticipated that works will commence in January 2023 and will take 8 months to complete. The unused funding will be carried forward into 2023/24. The costs of the works are likely to exceed the approved budget of £2.0m, so further funding will need to be identified as part of the development of the capital programme for 2023/24 onwards.

Key to performance ratings

RAG Rating	
	Target not achieved
	Target slightly missed (within 10%)
	Target met
	Data Only

Direction	
	Performance has improved
	Previous data not captured
	Performance has declined
N/A	No previous data to compare

Performance Summary

RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A ¹	Total
KPIs	2	0	1	8	11
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Last Quarter	6	0	5	0	11
Last Year	3	0	8	0	11

- 66.7% (2 of 3) targetable quarterly key performance indicators (KPIs) reportable to this Committee achieved their Quarter 1 (Q1) target¹.
- Compared to last quarter (Q4 2021/22), performance for 54.5% (6 of 11) KPIs have improved, and for 45.5% (5 of 11) KPIs have declined¹.
- Compared to last year (Q1 2021/22), performance for 27.3% (3 of 11) KPIs have improved, and for 72.7% (8 of 11) KPIs have declined¹.

Communities

Performance Indicator	Q1 2022/23				
	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend (Last Quarter)	Long Trend (Last Year)
Number of households living in temporary accommodation last night of the month (NI 156 & SDL 009-00) (average taken from April – June)	169				
Number of households living in nightly paid temporary accommodation last night of the month (average taken from April–June)	73				
Percentage of successful Prevention Duty outcomes	71.65%	60%			
Number of households prevented or relieved from becoming homeless	140	112.5			

¹ PIs rated N/A are not included in the summary calculations.

Performance Indicator	Q1 2022/23				
	Value	Target	Status	Short Trend (Last Quarter)	Long Trend (Last Year)
Percentage of successful Relief Duty outcomes	47.12%	60%			
Number of Rough Sleepers accommodated by the Council on the last night of the month (average taken from April – June)	30				
Number of Rough Sleepers newly engaged in the period	18				
Number of households newly in temporary accommodation due to loss of tenancy and home ownership	14				
Number of homeless cases where the cause of homelessness is domestic abuse	46				
Percentage of CPWs to CPNs in period (CPT/SMP)	31.4%				
Percentage of noise complaints followed up with diary sheets by a customer	20.1%				

The “**Percentage of successful Relief Duty outcomes**” indicator achieved a result of 47.12% against a target of 60% and missed it by 12.88%. The performance of 47.12% of homelessness relieved in the quarter demonstrates average performance and is much higher than the national average of homelessness relieved for the quarter of 38.2%, taken from the detailed LA tables for statutory homelessness Jan-Mar 22. It is also much higher than the Kent average of 33.8%, also taken from the LA tables for statutory homelessness.

It is recognised that relieving homelessness is more difficult than preventing homelessness, in particular with restricted access to the Private Rented Sector as a result of unaffordable market rents and an increase in demand for private rented accommodation from those who are not economically disadvantaged.

Additionally, we have experienced a sharp increase in the number of households that are presenting as homeless on the day due to domestic abuse, which limits the opportunity to relieve the homelessness before the main housing duty is triggered.