

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 15 November 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 11 October 2022 1 - 5
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 6 - 15
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 7 November 2022

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

| | |
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| 13. Financial Update & Performance Monitoring Report | 16 - 38 |
| 14. Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 - 2028 | 39 - 77 |
| 15. Fleet Replacement Programme | 78 - 96 |
| 16. Rural England Prosperity Fund Investment Plan | 97 - 105 |
| 17. Council Fire & Building Safety Policy | 106 - 122 |
| 18. Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Update | 123 - 167 |

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 11 November 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 11 November 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.

To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 11 OCTOBER 2022

Attendees:

| | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Committee Members: | Councillors McKenna (Chairman), Newton, Bartlett, Brindle, Fort, Rose, R Webb, Young and Conyard. |
| Lead Members: | Councillors Burton (Leader of the Council), Parfitt-Reid (Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement), Round (Lead Member for Environmental Services) and S Webb (Lead Member for Housing and Health). |
| Visiting Members: | Councillors Jeffery |

37. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received by Councillor Khadka.

38. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

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

39. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

40. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Jeffery was in attendance as a Visiting Member for Item 13 – Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan – Verbal Update and 14 – Proposed Changed Change to Maidstone AQMA and Request to Consult on New Air Quality Action Plan.

41. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

42. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

43. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That All items be taken in public as proposed

44. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12 JULY 2022

Councillor Round thanked the Committee and Officers for the message of condolence contained within the Minutes.

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 12 July 2022 be approved as a correct record and signed.

45. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

46. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FROM LOCAL RESIDENTS

There were no questions from local residents.

47. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

48. 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.

49. BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN - VERBAL UPDATE

The Leader of the Council provided a verbal update on the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan (BDCCAP). Specific attention was drawn to the categorisation of the actions within the plan, which was felt to be too optimistic and not reflective of the actions' current status; the examples given included the date given to the Design and Sustainability Development Plan Document and the District Heating System.

The importance of the BDCCAP and of conducting effective scrutiny into its progression was emphasised. Therefore, a formal update report on the BDCCAP would be provided at the Committee's next meeting, to include suggested methods for greater transparency and accountability in demonstrating the Council's commitment to the Climate Change emergency.

RESOLVED: That the verbal update be noted.

50. PROPOSED CHANGE TO MAIDSTONE AQMA AND REQUEST TO CONSULT ON NEW AIR QUALITY ACTION PLAN

The Lead Member for Environmental Services introduced the report and outlined the historical context of the Council's current Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) and Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP); the former had been implemented due to the exceedance of the annual mean objective of nitrogen dioxide in that area.

The Lead Member for Environmental Services stated that air quality had improved within much of the original AQMA, and it was therefore proposed that its boundary be reviewed to ensure that the AQAP was targeted towards the relevant areas. The boundaries of the proposed new AQMA had been modelled by air quality

consultants using air quality data from 2019, to exclude the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic. The annual mean objective of nitrogen dioxide levels had been met in all areas of the original AQMA, except for Upper Stone Street.

The Lead Member for Environmental Services stated that whilst the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on air quality levels remained unclear, air quality levels were expected to show continued improvement. The modelling undertaken suggested that it was possible for there to be no exceedances within Upper Stone Street by 2028. A public consultation on the actions taken within the proposed AQAP would take place.

Several Members of the Committee expressed concern at the air quality levels and prevalence of vehicle idling within and around the East Farleigh areas, including East Farleigh School, Farleigh Bridge and East Farleigh Station. In response, the Lead Member for Communities and Engagement stated that whilst displaying anti-idling signs within those area had been considered, no suitable locations could be identified. The Senior Scientific Officer further advised that displaying the signs required permission from Kent County Council. The Committee were advised to contact the Officers, if they wished to suggest a suitable location. Further reassurance was given that the East Farleigh area was monitored and had low levels of air pollution, in part due to the open space that allowed the pollution to diffuse.

In response further questions, the Senior Scientific Officer confirmed that the proposed AQMA and associated AQAP had been drafted in accordance with the legislative requirements, including the 40-microgram per 1m³ nitrogen dioxide limit, and the information required by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

The Environmental Protection Team Leader advised that it would be outside of both the applicable legislation and good practice to have an AQMA declared across areas that had air quality readings below the 40-microgram per m³ limit. It was reiterated that the Council would continue to work towards lowering air quality levels generally, including continued monitoring across areas that demonstrated air quality readings below the 40-microgram per m³ limit. As the Council continued to work with schools in relation to anti-idling and active travel, the Committee were encourage to contact the Environmental Protection Team Leader if further schools could be identified.

The Leader of the Council highlighted that whilst beneficial, the provision of euro six engines to improve the efficiency of local public transport services was outside of the Council's control. The significant funding required, alongside the financial difficulties faced by many operators was referenced. Specific attention was drawn to the importance of the Council considering measures, such as electric car charging points, that it could assist with.

RESOLVED: That the Executive be recommended to:

1. 1. Agree the revocation of the old AQMA in Maidstone, requiring an Air Quality Management Area Revocation Order to be issued;
2. Agree the declaration of the proposed new AQMA in Maidstone, covering Upper Stone Street as outlined in the report, requiring a new Air Quality Management Area Order to be issued; and

3. 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

51. COMMUNICATION AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY 2022-2025

The Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement introduced the report, stating that the Communication and Engagement Strategy attached at Appendix 1 to the report assisted in the support and delivery of the Council's priorities, and the protection and enhancement of its reputation. The number of press releases, press enquiries and interviews supported by the Council's Communications Team across the last year were briefly outlined.

The Strategy focused on the Council's four strategic priorities, with emphasis given to the 'Pride in Place' through the delivery of projects associated with the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The delivery of the Safer Streets fund was also highlighted, with the Committee informed that the Statement of Community Involvement would be added into the Strategy, under the 'Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure' Strategic Priority.

The associated Action Plan would be reviewed in 2023.

RESOLVED: 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.

52. FINANCIAL UPDATE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT

The Lead Member for Environmental Services introduced the report which related to the portfolios of the Lead Members applicable to the Committee's Terms of Reference.

There was a projected overspend against the revenue budget of £406,000, which was due to the £659,000 cost associated with Temporary Accommodation. However, the overspend could be offset through underspends in relation to other Lead Member portfolios. Capital expenditure had been lower than expected, due in part to the progression of site acquisitions as part of the Affordable Homes Strategy. Further property acquisitions could be identified should there be changes in the housing market that allow for more realistic property valuations for the Council to consider.

A total of £1.3 million had been built into the 2022/23 budget to allow for inflation, which would continue to be monitored with action taken as required if a council-wide overspend was likely.

RESOLVED: That,

1. 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. The Capital position at the end of Quarter 1 be noted; and

3. 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.

53. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.14 p.m.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 NOVEMBER 2022 TO 28 FEBRUARY 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:

| | | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <div><div>9</div><div></div><div><div>Councillor David Burton</div><div>Leader of the Council</div><div>DavidBurton@maidstone.gov.uk</div><div>07590 229910</div></div></div> | <div><div></div><div><div>Councillor John Perry</div><div>Deputy Leader and Lead Member for Corporate Services</div><div>JohnPerry@Maidstone.gov.uk</div><div>07770 734741</div></div></div> | <div><div></div><div><div>Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid</div><div>Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement</div><div>LottieParfittReid@Maidstone.gov.uk</div><div>07919 360000</div></div></div> | <div><div></div><div><div>Councillor Martin Round</div><div>Lead Member for Environmental Services</div><div>MartinRound@maidstone.gov.uk</div><div>07709 263447</div></div></div> |
| <div><div></div><div><div>Councillor Simon Webb</div><div>Lead Member for Housing and Health</div><div>SimonWebb@Maidstone.gov.uk</div><div>07878 018997</div></div></div> | <div><div></div><div><div>Councillor Claudine Russell</div><div>Lead Member for Leisure and Arts</div><div>ClaudineRussell@Maidstone.gov.uk</div></div></div> | <div><div></div><div><div>Councillor Paul Cooper</div><div>Lead Member for Planning and Infrastructure</div><div>PaulCooper@Maidstone.gov.uk</div><div>01622 244070</div></div></div> | |

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 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 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 |
| ∞ 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 | 21 Dec 2022 | Yes | No Part exempt | Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 13 Dec 2022 Update to Cabinet/Lead Member prior to PAC Meeting, once procurement process is complete. | Granada House Refurbishment | Andrew Connors Housing Enabling Officer andrewconnors@maidstone.gov.uk |

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|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------|---------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p>Council Fire & Building Safety Policy</p> <p>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.</p> | 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 | <p>John Littlemore</p> <p>Head of Housing & Community Services</p> <p>johnlittlemore@maidstone.gov.uk</p> |

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| <p>Rural England Prosperity Fund, Investment Plan a new fund has been allocated to the council for investment in our rural areas</p> <p>10</p> | Leader of the Council | Leader of the Council | 21 Nov 2022 | Yes | No Open | <p>Economic Regeneration and Leisure Policy Advisory Committee 8 Nov 2022</p> <p>Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 15 Nov 2022</p> <p>Informal Exec and Key Stakeholders consulted as part of developing the plan</p> | Rural England Prosperity Fund, Investment Plan | <p>Angela Woodhouse</p> <p>Head of Policy and Communications</p> <p>angelawoodhouse@maidstone.gov.uk</p> |

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| Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 - 2028 Update on the Medium Term Financial Strategy 11 | Executive | Lead Member for Corporate Services | 23 Nov 2022 | Yes | No Open | Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee (16 Nov 2022), Economic Regeneration and Leisure Policy Advisory Committee (8 Nov 2022), Planning and Infrastructure Policy Advisory Committee (9 Nov 2022) and Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee (15 Nov 2022) | Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023 - 2028 | Adrian Lovegrove Head of Finance adrianlovegrove@maidstone.gov.uk |
| Heather House and Royal British Legion site A report seeking approval to enter into contract with contractors for proposed works to Heather House and Royal British Legion Buildings. | Executive | Lead Member for Housing and Health | 21 Dec 2022 | Yes | No Part exempt | Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 13 Dec 2022 | Heather House and Royal British Legion site | Alison Elliott Housing Enabling Officer, alisonelliott@maidstone.gov.uk |

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| <p>Housing Strategy 2022-27</p> <p>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.</p> | 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 | <p>John Littlemore</p> <p>Head of Housing & Community Services</p> <p>johnlittlemore@maidstone.gov.uk</p> |
| <p>Mid Kent Waste Collection Contract Approval to enter into contract with the successful bidder following a competitive dialogue procurement process.</p> | 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 | <p>Jennifer Stevens</p> <p>jenniferstevens@maidstone.gov.uk</p> |

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| Equalities Policy and Action Plan - Update Annual Update report - providing an update on actions taken to meet objections, propose any revisions or changes | Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement | Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement | 23 Dec 2022 | No | No Open | Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 13 Dec 2022 | Equalities Policy and Action Plan - Update | Orla Sweeney orlasweeney@maidstone.gov.uk |
| Commissioning Support from the VCS Support services delivered by VCS | Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement | Lead Member for Communities and Public Engagement | 3 Jan 2023 | No | No Open | Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 13 Dec 2022 | Commissioning Support from the VCS | Anna Collier annacollier@maidstone.gov.uk |
| Charges for Replacement Wheeled Bins Proposal to introduce charges for the replacement of damaged refuse and recycling wheeled bins, in line with the Mid Kent Waste Partnership. | Executive | Lead Member for Environmental Services | 25 Jan 2023 | No | No Open | Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 17 Jan 2023 | Charges for Replacement Wheeled Bins | Jennifer Stevens jenniferstevens@maidstone.gov.uk |

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| <p>Review of Housing Assistance Policy (including DFG) This policy addresses a number of services and funding streams delivered from within the Housing and Community Services department, to include the Disabled Facilities Grant and the Help You Home scheme too. The document sets out how these funding streams are utilised to deliver the desired community benefits.</p> | Executive | Lead Member for Housing and Health | 25 Jan 2023 | Yes | No Open | Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 17 Jan 2023 | Review of Housing Assistance Policy (including DFG) | <p>John Littlemore</p> <p>Head of Housing & Community Services</p> <p>johnlittlemore@maidstone.gov.uk</p> |

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| <p>Award of Arboricultural Services Contract Report to advise committee on the scope of the contract to provide tree pruning, tree safety works, planting and emergency call out service relating to Maidstone Borough Council owned land and tree stock. Committee are asked to endorse the award of contract to the selected company.</p> | Lead Member for Environmental Services | Lead Member for Environmental Services | 23 Feb 2023 | Yes | No Open | Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 14 Feb 2023 | Award of Arboricultural Services Contract | <p>Andrew Williams</p> <p>andrewwilliams@maidstone.gov.uk</p> |

Agenda Item 13

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING & ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE

15 November 2022

2nd Quarter Financial Update & Performance Monitoring Report 2022/23

| Timetable | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Meeting | Date |
| Communities, Housing & Environment Policy Advisory Committee | 15 November 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, Resources & 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 September 2022 (Quarter 2). 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 2 for the services reporting to this committee is £4.351m, compared to the approved profiled budget of £4.037m, representing an underspend of £0.315m. However, the forecast for the end of the year shows a projected overspend of £0.455m

Capital expenditure at the end of Quarter 2 was £6.558m against a total budget of £20.080m.

Performance Monitoring

18.2% (2 of 11) targetable quarterly key performance indicators reportable to the Communities, Housing & Environment Policy Advisory Committee achieved their Quarter 2 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 September 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 2 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 2 be noted; and
3. That the Performance position as at Quarter 2 for 2022/23, including the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant issues have been identified, be noted.

2nd 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, Resources 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, Resources and Business Improvement (Section 151 Officer) |
| Risk Management | This is addressed in Section 5 of this report. | Director of Finance, Resources 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</p> | Senior Finance Manager (Client) |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy and 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, Resources 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> | Interim Team Leader (Contentious and 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, Resources 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, Resources 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 2 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 September 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.
-

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".
-

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 The Quarter 2 Budget & Performance Monitoring reports are being reported to the relevant Policy Advisory Committees during November 2022.
-

8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Second Quarter Financial Update 2022/23

Communities, Housing & Environment – Policy Advisory
Committee

15th November 2022

Lead Officer: Mark Green

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Part B: Revenue Budget Q2 2022/23

B1) Revenue Budget Page 5

Part C: Capital Budget Q2 2022/23

C1) Capital Budget Page 9

Part A

Executive Summary & Overview

This report provides members with the financial position as at 30th September 2022, covering activity for the Communities, Housing & Environment Policy Advisory Committee's (CHE PAC) revenue and capital accounts for the second 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 2 are as follows:

Part B: Revenue budget – Q2 2022/23

- Overall net expenditure at the end of Quarter 2 for the services reporting to this committee is £4.351m, compared to the approved profiled budget of £4.037m, representing an underspend of £0.315m. However, the forecast for the end of the year shows a projected overspend of £0.455m.

Part C: Capital budget – Q2 2022/23

- Capital expenditure at the end of Quarter 2 was £6.558m against a total budget of £20.080m.

Part B

Second Quarter Revenue Budget 2022/23

B2) Revenue Budget

B1.1 The table below provides a detailed summary of the budgeted net income position for CHE PAC services at the end of Quarter 2. The financial figures are presented on an accruals basis (e.g., expenditure for goods and services received, but not yet paid for, is included). An analysis by the relevant Lead Members for this Committee is also shown.

CHE Revenue Budget & Outturn – Quarter 2

| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| Cost Centre | Approved Budget for Year £000 | Budget to 30 September 2022 £000 | Actual £000 | Variance £000 | Forecast 31 March 2023 £000 | Forecast Variance 31 March 2023 £000 |
| Festivals and Events | -25 | -24 | -42 | 18 | -25 | 0 |
| Lettable Halls | -3 | -2 | -6 | 5 | -3 | 0 |
| Community Halls | 47 | 26 | 11 | 16 | 47 | 0 |
| Parks & Open Spaces | 934 | 479 | 471 | 7 | 934 | 0 |
| Playground Maintenance & Improvements | 145 | 71 | 75 | -5 | 145 | 0 |
| Parks Pavilions | 46 | 23 | 13 | 10 | 46 | 0 |
| Mote Park | 269 | 135 | 151 | -15 | 269 | 0 |
| Allotments | 13 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 13 | 0 |
| Cemetery | 34 | 43 | 10 | 33 | 34 | 0 |
| National Assistance Act | -0 | -0 | -1 | 1 | -0 | 0 |
| Crematorium | -878 | -390 | -436 | 46 | -878 | 0 |
| Community Safety | 31 | -80 | -83 | 3 | 31 | 0 |
| PCC Grant - Building Safer Communities | 0 | -22 | -19 | -3 | 0 | 0 |
| C C T V | 39 | 20 | 18 | 2 | 39 | 0 |
| Licences | -5 | 3 | -6 | 9 | -5 | 0 |
| Licensing Statutory | -60 | -30 | -64 | 33 | -104 | 43 |
| Licensing Non Chargeable | 8 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| Dog Control | 29 | 12 | 29 | -17 | 29 | 0 |
| Health Improvement Programme | 5 | 5 | 8 | -3 | 5 | 0 |
| Pollution Control - General | 24 | 8 | -1 | 9 | 24 | 0 |
| Contaminated Land | 1 | 0 | -4 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Waste Crime | -1 | 3 | -7 | 10 | -1 | 0 |
| Food Hygiene | 10 | 4 | -2 | 6 | 10 | 0 |
| Sampling | 4 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| Occupational Health & Safety | -6 | -3 | -6 | 2 | -6 | 0 |
| Infectious Disease Control | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Noise Control | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Pest Control | -12 | -6 | -2 | -4 | -12 | 0 |
| Public Conveniences | 313 | 156 | 86 | 70 | 218 | 95 |
| Licensing - Hackney & Private Hire | -59 | -32 | -42 | 10 | -59 | 0 |
| Street Cleansing | 1,182 | 581 | 563 | 18 | 1,182 | 0 |
| Household Waste Collection | 1,477 | 741 | 767 | -26 | 1,537 | -60 |
| Commercial Waste Services | -51 | -27 | -52 | 25 | -51 | 0 |
| Recycling Collection | 1,016 | 684 | 642 | 42 | 951 | 65 |
| Social Inclusion | 53 | 53 | 53 | 0 | 53 | 0 |
| Public Health - Obesity | 0 | -102 | -102 | -0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Health - Misc Services | 0 | -13 | -17 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Performance & Development | 42 | 10 | 8 | 3 | 42 | 0 |
| Press & Public Relations | 22 | 19 | 34 | -14 | 22 | 0 |

| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) |
|-------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------|---------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Cost Centre | Approved Budget for Year £000 | Budget to 30 September 2022 £000 | Actual £000 | Variance £000 | Forecast 31 March 2023 £000 | Forecast Variance 31 March 2023 £000 |
| Grants | 166 | 83 | 82 | 1 | 166 | 0 |
| Delegated Grants | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Parish Services | 137 | 70 | 70 | 0 | 137 | 0 |
| Strategic Housing Role | 12 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 12 | 0 |
| Housing Register & Allocations | 14 | 11 | 10 | 1 | 14 | 0 |
| Private Sector Renewal | -47 | -49 | -50 | 1 | -47 | 0 |
| HMO Licensing | -20 | -10 | -13 | 3 | -20 | 0 |
| Homeless Temporary Accommodation | 287 | 144 | 401 | -258 | 886 | -599 |
| Homelessness Prevention | 182 | -161 | -159 | -2 | 182 | 0 |
| Predictive Analysis and Preventing Homelessness | 0 | 0 | 2 | -2 | 0 | 0 |
| Aylesbury House | 47 | 23 | 3 | 20 | 47 | 0 |
| Magnolia House | 3 | 2 | -11 | 12 | 3 | 0 |
| St Martins House | 0 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Marsham Street | 63 | 32 | 22 | 9 | 63 | 0 |
| Sundry Temporary Accommodation (TA) Properties | -12 | -4 | -18 | 13 | -12 | 0 |
| 2 Bed Property - Temporary Accommodation | -33 | -17 | -25 | 8 | -33 | 0 |
| 3 Bed Property - Temporary Accommodation | -71 | -35 | -33 | -2 | -71 | 0 |
| 4 bed Property - Temporary Accommodation | 10 | 6 | -11 | 17 | 10 | 0 |
| 1 Bed Property- Temporary Accommodation | -4 | -2 | -3 | 1 | -4 | 0 |
| Trinity | 51 | 129 | 125 | 4 | 51 | 0 |
| Chillington House | -6 | -3 | -3 | 0 | -6 | 0 |
| Long Lease Properties | 0 | 0 | 17 | -17 | 0 | 0 |
| Marden Caravan Site (Stilebridge Lane) | 19 | 9 | 17 | -8 | 19 | 0 |
| Ulcombe Caravan Site (Water Lane) | 7 | 1 | 24 | -23 | 7 | 0 |
| Visitor Economy Section | 156 | 78 | 77 | 1 | 156 | 0 |
| Head of Environment and Public Realm | 116 | 59 | 56 | 3 | 116 | 0 |
| Bereavement Services Section | 294 | 147 | 137 | 11 | 294 | 0 |
| Community Partnerships & Resilience Section | 514 | 256 | 202 | 54 | 514 | 0 |
| Licensing Section | 126 | 63 | 49 | 14 | 126 | 0 |
| Environmental Protection Section | 280 | 140 | 111 | 29 | 280 | 0 |
| Food and Safety Section | 275 | 137 | 134 | 3 | 275 | 0 |
| Depot Services Section | 906 | 466 | 442 | 24 | 906 | 0 |
| Communications Section | 241 | 120 | 114 | 6 | 241 | 0 |
| Policy & Information Section | 481 | 195 | 212 | -17 | 481 | 0 |
| Head of Capital Projects | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Head of Housing & Community Services | 114 | 57 | 52 | 5 | 114 | 0 |
| Homechoice Section | 234 | 55 | 24 | 31 | 234 | 0 |
| Housing & Inclusion Section | 343 | -213 | -276 | 63 | 343 | 0 |
| Housing & Health Section | 285 | 9 | -6 | 15 | 285 | 0 |
| Housing Management | 258 | 53 | 42 | 12 | 258 | 0 |
| Homelessness Outreach | 6 | -193 | -207 | 14 | 6 | 0 |
| Customer Services Section | 686 | 344 | 316 | 28 | 686 | 0 |
| Salary Slippage 3CHE | -215 | -108 | 0 | -108 | -215 | 0 |
| Fleet Workshop & Management | 233 | 116 | 100 | 16 | 233 | 0 |
| MBS Support Crew | -58 | -29 | -50 | 21 | -58 | 0 |
| Grounds Maintenance - Commercial | 1 | 0 | 0 | -0 | 1 | 0 |
| Totals | 10,727 | 4,351 | 4,037 | 315 | 11,182 | -455 |

CHE Revenue Budget & Outturn – Quarter 2 (By Lead Member)

| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) |
|-----------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cost Centre | Approved Budget for Year | Budget to 30 September 2022 | Actual | Variance | Forecast 31 March 2023 | Forecast Variance 31 March 2023 |
| Festivals and Events | -25 | -24 | -42 | 18 | -25 | 0 |
| Lettable Halls | -3 | -2 | -6 | 5 | -3 | 0 |
| Community Halls | 47 | 26 | 11 | 16 | 47 | 0 |
| Community Safety | 31 | -80 | -83 | 3 | 31 | 0 |
| PCC Grant - Building Safer Communities | 0 | -22 | -19 | -3 | 0 | 0 |
| C C T V | 39 | 20 | 18 | 2 | 39 | 0 |
| Social Inclusion | 53 | 53 | 53 | 0 | 53 | 0 |
| Performance & Development | 42 | 10 | 8 | 3 | 42 | 0 |
| Press & Public Relations | 22 | 19 | 34 | -14 | 22 | 0 |
| Grants | 166 | 83 | 82 | 1 | 166 | 0 |
| Delegated Grants | 2 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 |
| Parish Services | 137 | 70 | 70 | 0 | 137 | 0 |
| Visitor Economy Section | 156 | 78 | 77 | 1 | 156 | 0 |
| Community Partnerships & Resilience Section | 514 | 256 | 202 | 54 | 514 | 0 |
| Communications Section | 241 | 120 | 114 | 6 | 241 | 0 |
| Policy & Information Section | 481 | 195 | 212 | -17 | 481 | 0 |
| Customer Services Section | 686 | 344 | 316 | 28 | 686 | 0 |
| Sub-Total - Communications & Public Engagement | 2,589 | 1,150 | 1,046 | 104 | 2,589 | 0 |

| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cost Centre | Approved Budget for Year | Budget to 30 September 2022 | Actual | Variance | Forecast 31 March 2023 | Forecast Variance 31 March 2023 |
| Parks & Open Spaces | 934 | 479 | 471 | 7 | 934 | 0 |
| Playground Maintenance & Improvements | 145 | 71 | 75 | -5 | 145 | 0 |
| Parks Pavilions | 46 | 23 | 13 | 10 | 46 | 0 |
| Mote Park | 269 | 135 | 151 | -15 | 269 | 0 |
| Allotments | 13 | 8 | 6 | 2 | 13 | 0 |
| Cemetery | 34 | 43 | 10 | 33 | 34 | 0 |
| National Assistance Act | -0 | -0 | -1 | 1 | -0 | 0 |
| Crematorium | -878 | -390 | -436 | 46 | -878 | 0 |
| Licences | -5 | 3 | -6 | 9 | -5 | 0 |
| Licensing Statutory | -60 | -30 | -64 | 33 | -104 | 43 |
| Licensing Non Chargeable | 8 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| Dog Control | 29 | 12 | 29 | -17 | 29 | 0 |
| Health Improvement Programme | 5 | 5 | 8 | -3 | 5 | 0 |
| Pollution Control - General | 24 | 8 | -1 | 9 | 24 | 0 |
| Contaminated Land | 1 | 0 | -4 | 5 | 1 | 0 |
| Waste Crime | -1 | 3 | -7 | 10 | -1 | 0 |
| Food Hygiene | 10 | 4 | -2 | 6 | 10 | 0 |
| Sampling | 4 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 0 |
| Occupational Health & Safety | -6 | -3 | -6 | 2 | -6 | 0 |
| Infectious Disease Control | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Noise Control | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Pest Control | -12 | -6 | -2 | -4 | -12 | 0 |
| Public Conveniences | 313 | 156 | 86 | 70 | 218 | 95 |
| Licensing - Hackney & Private Hire | -59 | -32 | -42 | 10 | -59 | 0 |
| Street Cleansing | 1,182 | 581 | 563 | 18 | 1,182 | 0 |
| Household Waste Collection | 1,477 | 741 | 767 | -26 | 1,537 | -60 |
| Commercial Waste Services | -51 | -27 | -52 | 25 | -51 | 0 |
| Recycling Collection | 1,016 | 684 | 642 | 42 | 951 | 65 |
| Head of Environment and Public Realm | 116 | 59 | 56 | 3 | 116 | 0 |
| Bereavement Services Section | 294 | 147 | 137 | 11 | 294 | 0 |
| Licensing Section | 126 | 63 | 49 | 14 | 126 | 0 |
| Environmental Protection Section | 280 | 140 | 111 | 29 | 280 | 0 |
| Food and Safety Section | 275 | 137 | 134 | 3 | 275 | 0 |
| Depot Services Section | 906 | 466 | 442 | 24 | 906 | 0 |
| Head of Capital Projects | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Salary Slippage 3CHE | -215 | -108 | 0 | -108 | -215 | 0 |
| Fleet Workshop & Management | 233 | 116 | 100 | 16 | 233 | 0 |
| MBS Support Crew | -58 | -29 | -50 | 21 | -58 | 0 |
| Grounds Maintenance - Commercial | 1 | 0 | 0 | -0 | 1 | 0 |
| Sub-Total - Environmental Services | 6,396 | 3,466 | 3,182 | 284 | 284 | 284 |

| (a) | (b) | (c) | (d) | (e) | (f) | (g) |
|-------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------|------------|------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Cost Centre | Approved Budget for Year | Budget to 30 September 2022 | Actual | Variance | Forecast 31 March 2022 | Forecast Variance 31 March 2022 |
| Public Health - Obesity | 0 | -102 | -102 | -0 | 0 | 0 |
| Public Health - Misc Services | 0 | -13 | -17 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Strategic Housing Role | 12 | 7 | 4 | 3 | 12 | 0 |
| Housing Register & Allocations | 14 | 11 | 10 | 1 | 14 | 0 |
| Private Sector Renewal | -47 | -49 | -50 | 1 | -47 | 0 |
| HMO Licensing | -20 | -10 | -13 | 3 | -20 | 0 |
| Homeless Temporary Accommodation | 287 | 144 | 401 | -258 | 886 | -599 |
| Homelessness Prevention | 182 | -161 | -159 | -2 | 182 | 0 |
| Predictive Analysis and Preventing Homelessness | 0 | 0 | 2 | -2 | 0 | 0 |
| Aylesbury House | 47 | 23 | 3 | 20 | 47 | 0 |
| Magnolia House | 3 | 2 | -11 | 12 | 3 | 0 |
| St Martins House | 0 | 0 | -1 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Marshall Street | 63 | 32 | 22 | 9 | 63 | 0 |
| Sundry Temporary Accommodation (TA) Properties | -12 | -4 | -18 | 13 | -12 | 0 |
| 2 Bed Property - Temporary Accommodation | -33 | -17 | -25 | 8 | -33 | 0 |
| 3 Bed Property - Temporary Accommodation | -71 | -35 | -33 | -2 | -71 | 0 |
| 4 bed Property - Temporary Accommodation | 10 | 6 | -11 | 17 | 10 | 0 |
| 1 Bed Property- Temporary Accommodation | -4 | -2 | -3 | 1 | -4 | 0 |
| Trinity | 51 | 129 | 125 | 4 | 51 | 0 |
| Chillington House | -6 | -3 | -3 | 0 | -6 | 0 |
| Long Lease Properties | 0 | 0 | 17 | -17 | 0 | 0 |
| Marden Caravan Site (Stilebridge Lane) | 19 | 9 | 17 | -8 | 19 | 0 |
| Ulcombe Caravan Site (Water Lane) | 7 | 1 | 24 | -23 | 7 | 0 |
| Head of Housing & Community Services | 114 | 57 | 52 | 5 | 114 | 0 |
| Homechoice Section | 234 | 55 | 24 | 31 | 234 | 0 |
| Housing & Inclusion Section | 343 | -213 | -276 | 63 | 343 | 0 |
| Housing & Health Section | 285 | 9 | -6 | 15 | 285 | 0 |
| Housing Management | 258 | 53 | 42 | 12 | 258 | 0 |
| Homelessness Outreach | 6 | -193 | -207 | 14 | 6 | 0 |
| Sub-Total - Housing & Health | 1,742 | -265 | -191 | -74 | 2,340 | -599 |
| Total | 10,727 | 4,351 | 4,037 | 315 | 5,213 | -314 |

B1.2 The table shows that at the end of the second quarter overall net expenditure for the services reporting to CHE PAC is £4.351m, compared to the approved profiled budget of -£4.037m, representing an underspend of £0.315m. However, the forecast for the end of the year shows a projected overspend of £0.455m.

B1.3 The table indicates that in certain areas, significant variances to the budgeted income levels have emerged during the second 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 Q2 | Adverse Variance Q2 | Year End Forecast Variance |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Communities, Housing & Environment Committee | £000 | | |
| Public Conveniences – This variance relates to a growth item for the cost of the new toilets at Mote Park. These are not yet open, so the budget is unspent. There is no confirmed handover date, the forecast assumes it will be in December. | 70 | | 95 |
| Household Waste Collection – The overspend relates to additional bin purchases and the costs of a consultant for the waste contract renewal. | | -26 | -60 |
| Recycling Collection – There has been additional income from green bin hire. | 42 | | 65 |
| Homeless Temporary Accommodation – There has been a significant increase in the demand for temporary accommodation, and this is due mainly to the rise in the cost of living over the last few months. There are also issues with getting people out of temporary accommodation as soon as possible, this has proved very difficult. Housing are currently looking at how the Homefinder scheme can help boost access to more private letting. | | -258 | -599 |

Part C

Second Quarter Capital Budget 2022/23

B1) Capital Budget: Communities, Housing & Environment Committee (ERL)

B1.1 The position of the 2022/23 CHE element of the Capital Programme at the Quarter 2 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 2)

| Capital Programme Heading | Adjusted Estimate 2022/23 £000 | Actual to September 2022 £000 | Budget Remaining £000 | Q3 Profile £000 | Q4 Profile £000 | Projected Total Expenditure £000 | Projected Slippage to 2023/24 £000 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|
| Communities, Housing & Environment | | | | | | | |
| Housing - Disabled Facilities Grants Funding | 1,640 | 410 | 1,230 | 200 | 200 | 810 | 830 |
| Temporary Accommodation | 4,330 | 10 | 4,320 | 1,635 | 662 | 2,307 | 2,023 |
| Springfield Mill - Phase 2 | 731 | 733 | -3 | | | 733 | -3 |
| Private Rented Sector Housing Programme - Scheme B - Maidstone East | 688 | 87 | 601 | 172 | 243 | 501 | 186 |
| Private Rented Sector Housing Programme - Scheme C - Heather House & Pavilion Building | 99 | 17 | 82 | 5 | 5 | 27 | 72 |
| Private Rented Sector Housing Programme - Scheme D - King Street | 74 | | 74 | | | | 74 |
| Affordable Housing Programme - Trinity Place | 500 | 203 | 297 | | | 203 | 297 |
| Private Rented Sector Housing Programme - Indicative Schemes | 2,323 | 1,554 | 769 | 63 | 136 | 1,752 | 571 |
| 1,000 Homes Affordable Housing Programme - Indicative Schemes | 4,805 | 2,305 | 2,500 | 2,786 | 82 | 5,174 | -369 |
| 1,000 Homes Affordable Housing Programme - Maidstone East | 330 | | 330 | | | | 330 |
| 1,000 Homes Affordable Housing Programme - King Street | 44 | 32 | 12 | | | 32 | 12 |
| Market Sale Housing Programme - Heather House & Pavilion Building | 515 | | 515 | 10 | | 10 | 505 |
| Acquisitions Officer - Social Housing Delivery P/ship | 160 | 96 | 64 | 32 | 32 | 160 | |
| Granada House Refurbishment Works | 950 | 37 | 913 | | 286 | 323 | 627 |
| Street Scene Investment | 70 | 28 | 42 | 21 | 21 | 70 | |
| Flood Action Plan | 430 | | 430 | | 50 | 50 | 380 |
| 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 | 209 | -72 | | | 209 | -72 |
| Continued Improvements to Play Areas | 126 | | 126 | 63 | 63 | 126 | |
| Parks Improvements | 152 | 34 | 118 | 59 | 59 | 152 | 0 |
| Gypsy & Traveller Sites Refurbishment | 1,421 | 732 | 689 | 600 | 89 | 1,421 | -0 |
| Waste Crime Team - Additional Resources | 25 | | 25 | 25 | | 25 | |
| Section 106 funded works - Open Spaces | 400 | 57 | 343 | 172 | 172 | 400 | |
| Total | 20,080 | 6,558 | 13,522 | 5,948 | 2,114 | 14,619 | 5,461 |

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, as house prices start to retreat from the elevated levels reached during Summer 2022.

Private Rented Sector Housing Programme/1,000 Homes Affordable Housing Programme – A number of schemes are at various stages of development at this stage. 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.

The overspend shown against the 1,000 Homes Affordable Housing Programme Indicative Schemes budget reflects two proposed acquisitions which should take place in the third quarter. There are projected underspends against other projects this year which will cover this cost, and the cost is factored into the overall five-year programme.





Market Sale Housing Programme – Heather House & Pavilion Building – A planning application has been submitted and will be considered later this month. Subject to approval work is expected to start on site next year.




Granada House Refurbishment Works – A procurement process for the works is under way. It is hoped that works will commence before the end of the financial year, with any unused funding being carried forward into 2023/24.

Crematorium & Cemetery Development Plan – It was identified earlier this year that there was an urgent need to resurface some of the footpaths at the cemetery, which is why this budget is showing as overspent. Funding for this work will come from income at the crematorium, which is performing above the budgeted level this year.

CHE: Quarter 2 Performance Report

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 | 3 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 11 |
| Last Year | 5 | 0 | 6 | 0 | 11 |

- 18.2% (2 of 11) targetable quarterly key performance indicators (KPIs) reportable to this Committee achieved their Quarter 2 (Q2) target¹.
- Compared to last quarter (Q1 2022/23), performance for 27.3% (3 of 11) KPIs have improved, and for 72.7% (8 of 11) KPIs have declined¹.
- Compared to last year (Q2 2021/22), performance for 45.5% (5 of 11) KPIs have improved, and for 54.5% (6 of 11) KPIs have declined¹.

Communities

| Performance Indicator | Q2 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 July – September) | 193 |  |  |  |  |
| Number of households living in nightly paid temporary accommodation last night of the month (average taken from July–September) | 84 |  |  |  |  |
| Percentage of successful Prevention Duty outcomes | 73.77% | 60% |  |  |  |
| Number of households prevented or | 125 | 112.5 |  |  |  |

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

| Performance Indicator | Q2 2022/23 | | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Value | Target | Status | Short Trend (Last Quarter) | Long Trend (Last Year) |
| relieved from becoming homeless | | | | | |
| Percentage of successful Relief Duty outcomes | 42.17% | 60% |  |  |  |
| Number of Rough Sleepers accommodated by the Council on the last night of the month (average taken from July – September) | 21 |  |  |  |  |
| Number of Rough Sleepers newly engaged in the period | 8 |  |  |  |  |
| Number of households newly in temporary accommodation due to loss of tenancy and home ownership | 17 |  |  |  |  |
| Number of homeless cases where the cause of homelessness is domestic abuse | 43 |  |  |  |  |
| Percentage of Community Protection Warnings to Community Protection Notices in period (Community Partnership Team /Safer Maidstone Partnership) | 42.9% |  |  |  |  |
| Percentage of noise complaints followed up with diary sheets by a customer | 20.6% |  |  |  |  |

The “**Percentage of successful Relief Duty outcomes**” indicator outcome achieved a result of 42.17 which has declined against last quarter and Q2 2021/22. An indicator missed its target by 17.8%.

The performance of 42.17% 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, applicants who are in priority need and unintentionally homeless can only be owed the relief duty of 56 days, before they become owed the main housing duty, giving only a short window of opportunity to relieve homelessness.

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE 15 November 2022

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/2028

| Timetable | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Meeting | Date |
| Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee | 15 November 2022 |
| Executive Meeting | 23 November 2022 |

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Will this be a Key Decision? | Yes |
| Urgency | Not Applicable |
| Final Decision-Maker | Executive |
| Lead Head of Service | Mark Green, Director of Finance & Business Improvement |
| Lead Officer and Report Author | Adrian Lovegrove, Head of Finance |
| Classification | Public |
| Wards affected | All |

Executive Summary

This report sets out the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to reflect the latest position and describes the issues and risks involved. It sets out key assumptions to be made in preparing the MTFS.

The report concludes by setting out the subsequent steps involved in developing an updated MTFS and the Budget for 2023/24, including a timetable for consideration by Members.

Overall it shows that the future financial position is worsening with continued high inflation and potential reductions of local government funding. Scenario 4 provides the latest view on the size of the challenge. We have also developed a scenario 5 that shows a worst case scenario if inflation continues to remain high. Therefore the MTFS focuses on these two most likely scenarios.

There is still a huge amount of uncertainty. The recent mini budget caused significant risks to local government funding and borrowing. The reversal of these and appointment of the new Prime Minister have had a positive impact with interest rates returning to levels similar to that before the mini budget.

17th November has been set as the date for publishing an Autumn statement which it is hoped will give some clarity about local government funding and the wider UK financial implications such as inflation.

The Council continues to consider savings options that may be needed to balance the budget, as whichever scenario arises, we will need to consider such options.

It should be noted that the overall financial position of the Council's balance sheet and the level of usable reserves puts us in a better position than many councils. It will give us flexibility to use reserves to manage the budget position in the short term while we develop sustainable savings options.

Recommendation to Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee

1. That the issues and risks associated with updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy are noted.
2. That the Committee recommend to the Executive to approve the MTFS and the proposed approach outlined to development of an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2023/24 – 2027/28 and a budget for 2023/24 be approved.

Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/2028

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

| Issue | Implications | Sign-off |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Impact on Corporate Priorities | The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the budget are a re-statement in financial terms of the priorities set out in the strategic plan. They reflect the Council's decisions on the allocation of resources to all objectives of the strategic plan. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |
| Cross Cutting Objectives | The MTFS supports the cross-cutting objectives in the same way that it supports the Council's other strategic priorities. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |
| Risk Management | This has been addressed in section 5 of the report. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |
| Financial | The budget strategy and the MTFS impact upon all activities of the Council. The future availability of resources to address specific issues is planned through this process. It is important that the committee considers the strategic financial consequences of the recommendations in this report. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |
| Staffing | The process of developing the budget strategy will identify the level of resources available for staffing over the medium term. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |
| Legal | The Council has a statutory obligation to set a balanced budget and development of the MTFS and the strategic revenue projection in the ways set out in this report supports achievement of a balanced budget. | Interim Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance) and Monitoring Officer |
| Privacy and Data Protection | Privacy and Data Protection is considered as part of the development of new budget proposals. There are no specific implications arising from this report. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |
| Equalities | The MFTS report scopes the possible impact of the Council's future financial position on service delivery. When a policy, service or function is developed, changed or reviewed, an evidence based equalities impact assessment will be | Equalities & Communities Officer |

| | | |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| | undertaken. Should an impact be identified appropriate mitigations will be identified. | |
| Public Health | The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |
| Crime and Disorder | The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |
| Procurement | The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |
| Biodiversity and Climate Change | The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out in financial terms how the Council will deliver its Strategic Plan over the next five years. The Council adopted a Strategic Plan for the period 2021 – 2045 in December 2018, and the existing MTFS for the period 2022/23 to 2026/27 reflects the Strategic Plan. The new MTFS will continue to reflect the Strategic Plan priorities.
- 2.2 A key outcome of the process of updating the MTFS is to set a balanced budget and agree a level of council tax for 2023/24 at the Council meeting on 22 February 2023.
- 2.3 A draft MTFS is attached to this report. As background, it comprises an assessment of the economic environment and the Council's own financial position. It will be seen that the Council faces a difficult financial position, with continued high inflation and potential reductions of local government funding.
- 2.4 We have carried out an assessment the Council's financial resilience. CIPFA provide a Resilience Index tool to test a council's financial resilience, which indicates no high risks and we have reviewed number of elements that contribute to financial resilience, according to CIPFA, using financial data and also considering financial management. Again this shows a positive position.
- 2.5 As in previous years, different future scenarios have been considered. Scenario 4 provides the latest view on the size of the challenge. We have also developed a scenario 5 that shows a worst case scenario if inflation continues to remain high. The MTFS focuses on these two most likely scenarios and sets out how the Council should respond.

- 2.6 The development of the MTFS and the detailed budget for 2023/24 will maintain short to medium term financial resilience.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Committee has the following options:

1. To note the contents but may choose to comment on the content.
 2. That the Committee recommend to the Executive to approve the MTFS and the proposed approach outlined to development of an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2023/24 – 2027/28 and a budget for 2023/24 be approved.
 3. That the Committee do not recommend approval and Council runs the risk of operating without a clear MTFS and an unclear plan of how it can balance the budget in 2023/24.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is option 2. That the Committee recommend to the Executive to approve the MTFS and the proposed approach outlined to development of an updated Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2023/24 – 2027/28 and a budget for 2023/24 be approved.
-

5. RISK

- 5.1 The preceding paragraphs have indicated at several points the risks and uncertainty surrounding the Council's financial position. In order to address these in a structured way and to ensure that appropriate mitigations are developed, the Council has developed a budget risk register. This seeks to capture all known budget risks and to present them in a readily comprehensible way. The budget risk register is updated regularly and is reviewed by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee at each meeting.
- 5.2 It should be recognised that risks are not usually discrete. There are interrelationships between the risks, such that (for example) inaccurate inflation projections could impact the overall risk of failing to deliver a balanced budget.
-

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 Consultation with all relevant stakeholders is an important part of the process of developing the MTFS. A public budget consultation is taking place during November, then individual Policy Advisory Committees will be consulted in January on the details of the MTFS proposals as they affect the respective Committee portfolios.

- 6.2 Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee on 13 July 2022 recommended that an additional alternative course of action be considered, namely a 0% council tax increase. Details of this were provided. The cost is around an additional £2m of savings that would be required by 2027/28.
-

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 An outline timetable for developing the Medium Term Financial Strategy and budget for 2023/24 is set out below.

| <i>Date</i> | <i>Meeting</i> | <i>Action</i> |
|--------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 23 November 2022 | Executive | Agree proposed approach to updating MTFS for submission to Council |
| December 2022 | | Receive 2023/24 Local Government Finance Settlement |
| January 2023 | All Policy Advisory Committees | Consider 23/24 budget proposals |
| 8 February 2023 | Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee | Agree 23/24 budget proposals for recommendation to Executive and then to Council |
| 22 February 2023 | Council | Approve 23/24 budget |

8. REPORT APPENDIX

- Appendix 1: Draft Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023/28
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2023/24 – 2027/28



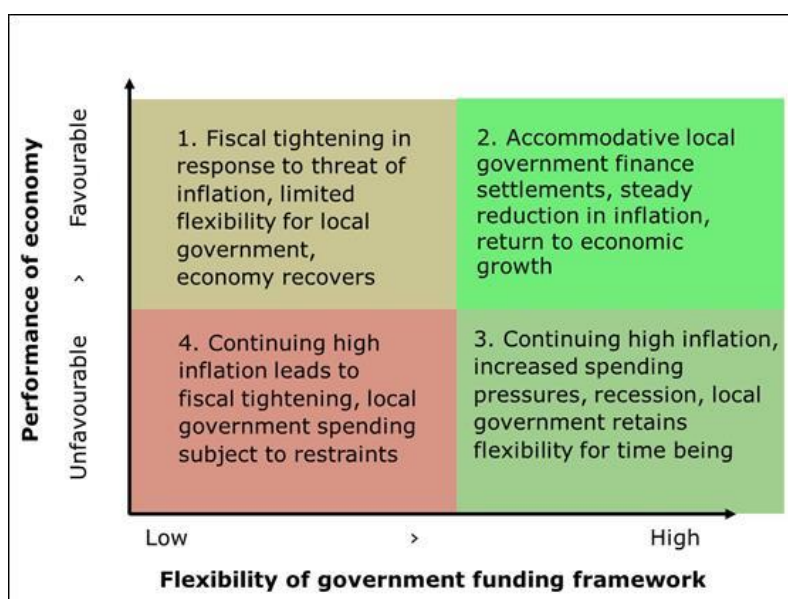
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1. OVERVIEW AND SUMMARY OF MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out in financial terms how the Council will deliver its Strategic Plan over the next five years. The Council's Strategic Plan, agreed in December 2018, covers the period 2019 to 2045. The Strategic Plan incorporates four key objectives: embracing growth and enabling infrastructure; homes and communities; a thriving place; and safe, clean and green. Further details are set out in **Section 2**.
- 1.2 Delivering the Strategic Plan depends on the Council's financial capacity and capability. Accordingly, the MTFS considers the economic environment and the Council's own current financial position. The external environment (**Section 3**) is challenging because of an impending economic recession, high inflation and the state of the UK's public finances. The state of the international economy, with tensions between the superpowers, high energy prices and the continuing war in Ukraine, only serves to exacerbate these challenges. In assessing the Council's current financial position (**Section 4**), attention therefore needs to be paid to its resilience, including the level of reserves that it holds.
- 1.3 Most key variables in local authority funding are determined by central government, such as the Council Tax referendum limit and the share of business rates that is retained locally. Although a three-year Spending Review was announced by the Chancellor in October 2021, there was only a one year settlement for Local Government for 2022/23. At the time of writing (October 2022) the government had not set out its plans for balancing government spending over the medium term, but this was expected to include tight constraints on public expenditure. More details will emerge in the Local Government Finance Settlement, expected in December 2022. A consideration of the funding likely to be available in the future is set out in **Section 5**.
- 1.4 In view of these different elements of uncertainty, it is imperative that the MTFS both ensures Maidstone Council's continuing financial resilience and is sufficiently flexible to accommodate a range of potential scenarios. The Council has prepared financial projections under different scenarios, continuing a practice that has been followed for several years. Details of the assumptions made in the different scenarios are set out in **Section 6**.
- 1.5 The MTFS sets out the financial projections in **Section 7**. Various potential scenarios were modelled, based on two key variables: (a) the performance of the economy, which is closely linked to the global economy and subject to all the pressures of war and constraints on energy supplies; and (b) how aggressively the government and the Bank of England respond to rising inflation. We originally had 4 potential scenarios, given these two key variables, which can be shown as follows.

Figure 1: Potential future scenarios



1.6 Since we last provided an update on the MTFS we have introduced a fifth scenario to reflect the potential for reduction in funding. Scenarios 4 and 5 are described as :

- Scenario 4: Continuing high inflation leads to fiscal tightening, local government spending subject to restraints
- Scenario 5: Continuing high inflation leads to fiscal tightening, local government spending subject to reductions

1.7 Scenario 4 has been used to assess the likely size of the budget gap, based on what we currently know. We need to await confirmation of funding and monitor the economic environment including the level of inflation that the UK is currently facing. There is still no clarity about local government following recent budget announcements, but we hope that the Chancellor's announcement on 17th November will start to provide some clarity. The table below shows projections for scenario 4, before taking account of budget changes, which will be considered by members at PAC meetings in January 2023, and other updates.

Table 1: MTFS Revenue Projections 2023/24 – 2027/28

| | 23/24 | 24/25 | 25/26 | 26/27 | 27/28 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Scenario 4 – Limited flexibility, continued stagflation | | | | | |
| Total Resources | 46.7 | 48.2 | 49.8 | 51.5 | 53.3 |
| Predicted Expenditure | 49.7 | 53.6 | 56.9 | 60.9 | 64.4 |
| Budget Gap | -3.0 | -5.4 | -7.1 | -9.3 | -11.1 |
| Existing Planned Savings | 0.4 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| Savings Required | -2.5 | -4.6 | -6.3 | -8.6 | -10.4 |

In accordance with legislative requirements the Council must set a balanced budget. Section 7 concludes by setting out a proposed approach which will specifically address the budget gap in 2023/24 and, more generally, provide a framework for closing the budget gap in future years.

- 1.8 The Council's strategic priorities are met not only through day-to-day revenue spending but also through capital investment. The Council's programme of building 1,000 Affordable Homes is the centre-piece of the Capital Strategy. Capital investment therefore serves to deliver the Council's strategic priorities, but must remain affordable and sustainable. As set out in **Section 8** below, funds have been set aside for capital investment, using prudential borrowing, and further funding may be available by taking advantage of opportunities to bid for external funding, e.g. the Levelling-Up Fund.
- 1.9 The MTFS concludes by describing the process of agreeing a budget for 2023/24, including consultation with all relevant stakeholders, in **Section 9**.

2. CORPORATE OBJECTIVES AND KEY PRIORITIES

2.1 The Council has a Strategic Plan which was approved by Council in December 2018. The Strategic Plan has been refreshed in light of the Covid-19 pandemic. The overall strategic priorities remain the same, but specific areas of focus for the next five years have been agreed. So far as recovery from Covid-19 is concerned, the Council's approach will be based around four themes: economic recovery, supporting resilience for communities and vulnerable people, adapting the way we work, and financial recovery. The four key objectives, as follows:

- Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure
- Homes and Communities
- A Thriving Place
- Safe, Clean and Green.

'Embracing growth and enabling infrastructure' recognises that we want Maidstone Borough 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 need is 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.

'Homes and communities' expresses that 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.

'A thriving place' 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

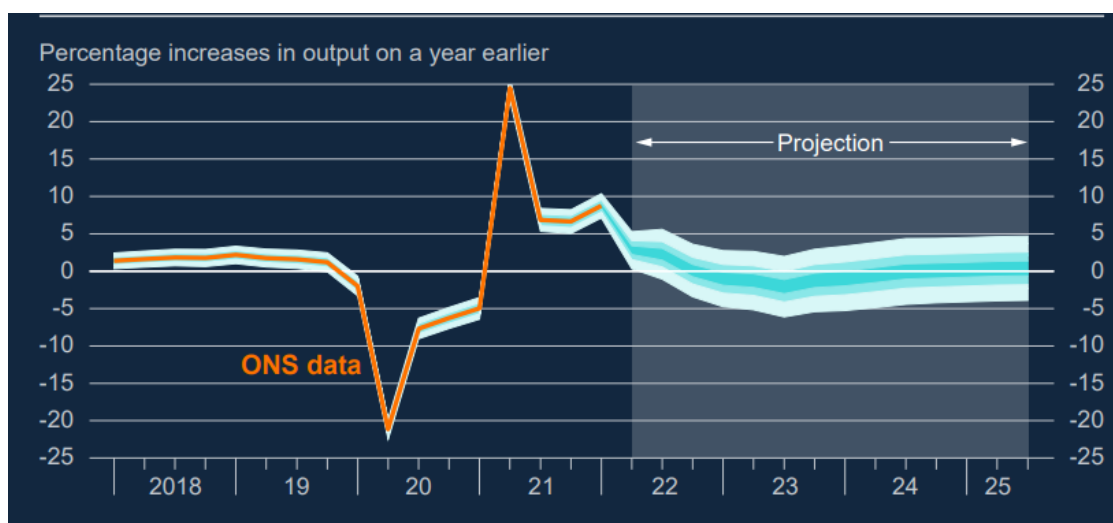
A 'safe, clean and green' place is one where we will keep Maidstone an attractive and clean place for all. Maidstone is a safe place to live and we want our residents to feel safe. We want to protect and where possible enhance our environment and make sure our parks, green spaces, streets and public areas are high quality by ensuring they are looked after, well managed and respected.

- 2.2 Since the adoption of the Strategic Plan in December 2018, the objective of 'Embracing growth and enabling infrastructure' has started to be realised, for example the completion of the Innovation Centre and development a new Garden Community.
- 2.3 Amongst initiatives to help make Maidstone a 'Thriving Place' have been MBC investment at Lockmeadow and on the Parkwood Industrial Estate, along with the emerging plans for developing a Town Centre Strategy. We will continue to leverage the Council's borrowing power, if appropriate in conjunction with partners, to realise our ambitions for the borough.
- 2.4 Our 'Homes and Communities' aspirations are being achieved by investment in temporary accommodation and the Trinity Centre and the Leader's commitment to build 1,000 new affordable homes.
- 2.5 The objective of a 'Safe, Clean and Green' place has been emphasised by the Council's commitment to a carbon reduction target and the capital investment to help enable this to be delivered and timely preparation for new waste management arrangements.
- 2.6 Within the framework of the existing Strategic Plan, the Council is therefore prioritising:
- development of the Local Plan and related strategies and policies, in particular the Town Centre Strategy
 - continued investment to make Maidstone a thriving place
 - investment in 1,000 new affordable homes
 - measures to enable the Council's carbon reduction target to be met
 - continued recovery from the Covid 19 pandemic.
- 2.7 The overall funding envelope within which these priorities must be delivered remains unclear. However, it is clear that there are financial challenges arising from a likely downturn in the economy and continuing high levels of inflation. Whilst the Council is largely self-sufficient financially, drawing most of its income from Council Tax and a range of other locally generated sources of income, including Parking, Planning Fees and the Council's property portfolio, it operates within the local authority funding framework set by central government, which is likely to impose tight constraints. The most significant element of this is the restriction set by central government on the amount by which Council Tax can be increased. The financial implications are set out in section 7 below.

3. ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENT **Macro outlook**

- 3.1 The outlook for the UK economy is exceptionally uncertain. Following the initial recovery from the Covid recession, growth has slowed and the economy is likely to move into a recession, continuing into 2023. Growth thereafter will be very weak by historical standards. This reflects global factors including sharp rises in energy prices, but local factors mean that the UK economy is affected more severely and its performance lags behind that of other leading nations. The Bank of England projects negligible growth over the next two years and any subsequent recovery will be modest.

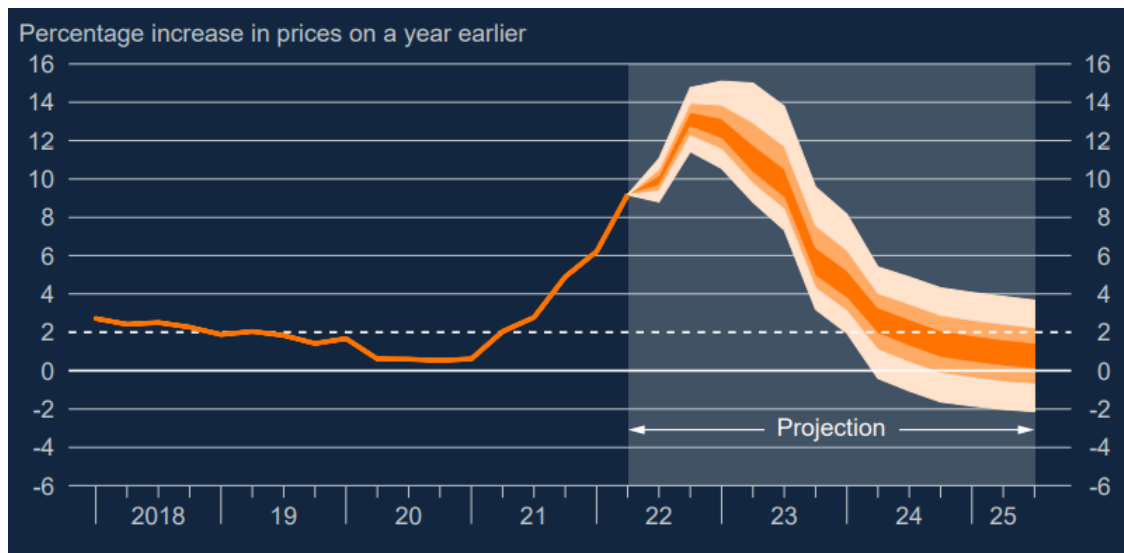
Figure 1: GDP projection based on market interest rate expectations



Source: Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee report, August 2022

- 3.2 Stagnant economic growth will be accompanied, in the short term at least, by high inflation. Currently inflation is around 10% and the Bank of England forecasts that inflation will increase further. The subsequent fall in inflation may be slower and longer than previously thought.

Figure 2: CPI inflation projection based on market interest rate expectations



Source: Bank of England Monetary Policy Committee report, August 2022

- 3.3 The projections above indicate that inflation will fall over the medium term. However, many commentators have challenged whether current policies will be successful in bringing down inflation. The example of the 1970s has been cited, when 'those countries that rapidly killed inflationary impulses with tight policy, led by the West German Bundesbank, took the pain and suffered a short and shallow downturn. Those that followed a more accommodating path ended up with persistently higher inflation rates that required much deeper recessions in the early 1980s to stamp out inflation'. (Chris Giles, FT 09.06.2022).

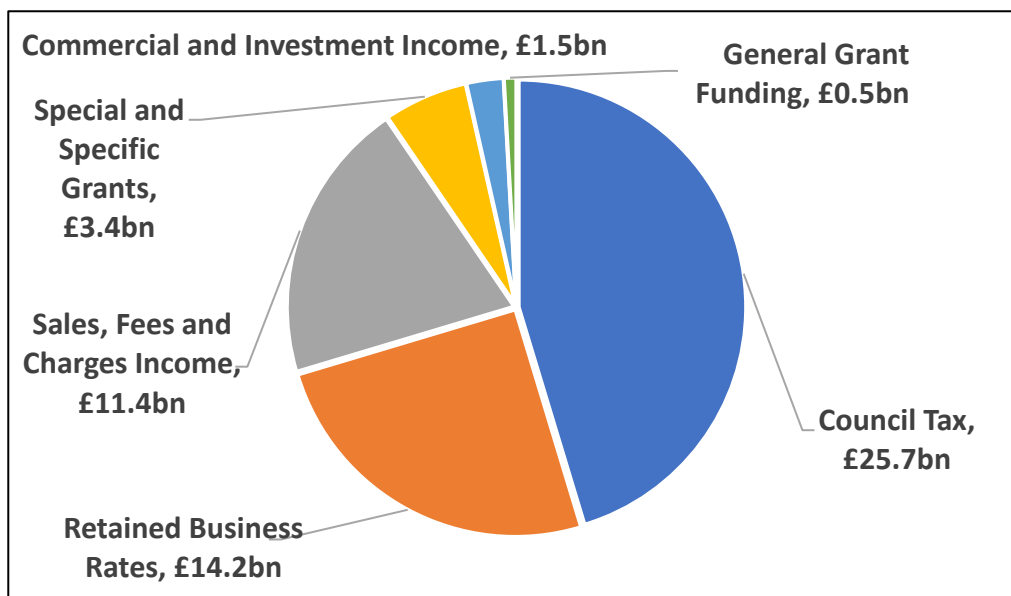
Public Finances

- 3.4 An economic downturn impacts on the public finances by reducing tax income and increasing spending pressures. The financial markets' response to the 'mini budget' of September 2022 demonstrated that these pressures cannot be addressed by increasing public borrowing without a credible medium term fiscal plan. At the time of writing, details of the government's plans have yet to emerge, but they are likely to involve constraints on public spending.
- 3.5 The local authority funding framework set by government remains a crucial determinant of the Council's future financial position. This is primarily because central government restricts the amount by which Council Tax can be increased through the referendum limit and it determines the share of business rates that can be retained locally.

Local Government Funding

3.6 The main sources of local government funding nationally are set out below.

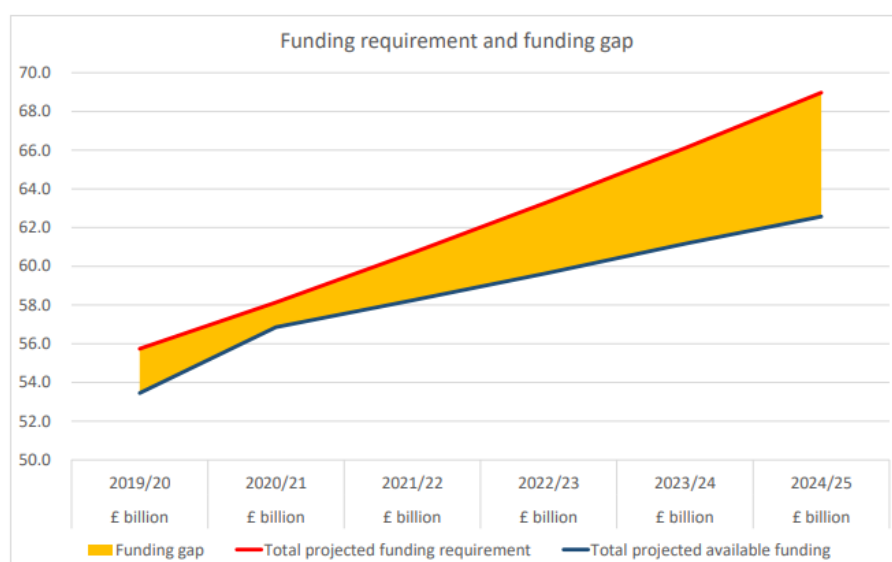
Figure 3: How Council Services are funded



Source: IFS, 'Does Funding Follow Need?', October 2022

- 3.7 In recent years, the reduction in direct central government funding for local government has been mitigated by increases in locally generated sources of income, with Council Tax rising by more than the overall rate of inflation. Upper tier authorities in particular have been able to raise additional tax through a social care precept. This has led the government's preferred measure of council spending, 'Council spending power', to increase, even though it may not reflect the actual resources available.
- 3.8 However, funding has failed to keep up with the increased demands on Council services, particularly for social care and housing. LGA analysis ahead of the 2020 Budget and Spending Review identified that Council services faced an additional funding requirement for their annual day-to-day spending and the position is likely to have worsened since then.

Figure 4: 2025 funding gap analysis



Source: LGA analysis

- 3.9 The other main element of local government funding, beside Council Tax, is Business Rates. The 2010-15 Coalition Government transferred a notional 50% of locally-collected Business Rates income back to local government, but the requirement to adjust the amount of business rates retained between authorities, based on respective service needs, means that authorities with an active commercial sector and low perceived levels of need, like Maidstone, retain a low proportion of business rates (just 10% in Maidstone's case). It was originally intended to increase the 50% share of business rates retained locally to 75%, but this is no longer government policy.
- 3.10 At the time of writing, government spending plans are still based on a three-year Spending Review, announced on 27 October 2021. This included assumptions about real terms growth in Council Spending Power (the government's preferred measure) over the next three years. It should be noted that the calculation of Council Spending Power assumes that local authorities will increase Council Tax by the maximum permissible without a referendum, which in Maidstone's case is a 2% increase. The term spending power should not be conflated with actual resources available.
- 3.11 Details of what the overall increase in spending power in year 1 of the three year Spending Review period meant for individual authorities were announced in the Local Government Finance Settlement in December 2021. A potential issue for Maidstone was that an 'across the board' increase in funding for Councils could have used the current basis of assessing funding requirements, which in 2019/20 indicated that the Council would have to pay negative Revenue Support Grant (RSG) to government, rather than receiving RSG from the government. The first element of any increase in funding would therefore have been used to reverse negative RSG, giving no benefit to the Council. In the event, the original 2013/14 needs assessment was used to allocate additional resources to Councils, in the form of a Services Grant, which gave the Council an additional £225,000.

- 3.12 Although the Spending Review covered three years (2022/23 to 2024/25), this only translated into a one-year local government funding settlement in 2022/23 and it is anticipated that this will be the case again in 2023/24.
- 3.13 Government announcements in October 2021 included various capital funds (£300m grant funding to unlock brownfield sites, £1.5bn to regenerate unused land, UK Shared Prosperity Fund £2.6bn, Levelling-Up Fund £4.8bn). Access to this funding is through a bidding process. Reflecting its low standing in the levelling up agenda, Maidstone is a Priority 2 area.
- 3.14 Spending plans for the period from 2023/24 remain to be announced at the time of writing, but current indications suggest the public sector is going to have to make cuts. With severe pressures on the health service and adult and children's social care, there is a risk that available funding will be focused on the NHS and upper tier authorities, rather than lower tier authorities like Maidstone.

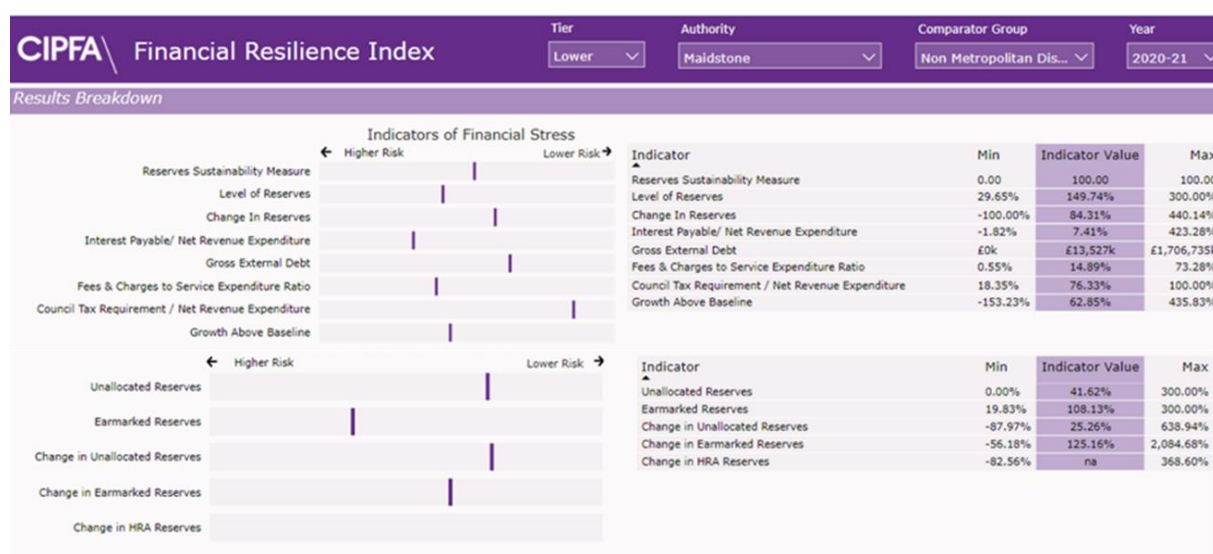
Conclusion

- 3.15 The UK economy faces exceptional challenges, which make the government's task of constructing a sustainable fiscal policy more difficult than ever. Whilst local government faces severe spending pressures, there is a risk that available funding will be prioritised around the NHS and social care rather than the services delivered by this Council.

4. CURRENT FINANCIAL POSITION

- 4.1 As a lower tier authority, Maidstone Borough Council is not subject to the extreme pressures currently faced by upper tier authorities arising in particular with respect to adults' and children's social care.
- 4.2 Prior to the Covid-19 pandemic, the Council was broadly self-sufficient financially. It had ceased receiving direct government support in the form of Revenue Support Grant (RSG) and relied mainly on Council Tax and a range of other locally generated sources of income, including parking, planning fees and the property portfolio, to fund ongoing revenue expenditure. However, during the pandemic, income fell and expenditure increased. The consequent budget gap, being the difference between cost of services and aggregate income, was covered with direct government funding.
- 4.3 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 was no more direct government funding to cover the costs of Covid, but the Council was 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. At the half-way point of 2022/23, it is expected that, with this provision, the Council will remain within budget for the year. 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.
- 4.4 It is nevertheless appropriate to assess the Council's financial resilience. CIPFA provide a Resilience Index tool to test a council's financial resilience. We have run the model for 2020/21 (comprising the most up to date data) and it confirms the council is in a good position with no 'higher risk' indicators.

Figure 5 – CIPFA Resilience Index for the Council in 2020/21.



4.5 There are a number of elements that contribute to financial resilience, according to CIPFA¹, based on financial data and also considering financial management:

- level of reserves
- quality of financial management, including use of performance information
- effective planning and implementation of capital investment
- ability to deliver budget savings if necessary
- risk management.

An assessment is set out below of how the Council performs on these measures.

Level of Reserves

4.6 Maidstone Borough Council's financial position, as shown by its most recent balance sheet, is as follows (unallocated General Fund balance highlighted, previous year shown for comparative purposes).

Table 2: Maidstone Borough Council balance sheet

| 31st March 2021 £000 | | 31st March 2022 £000 |
|-------------------------------|------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 164,760 | Long Term Assets | 186,272 |
| 35,849 | Current Assets | 50,819 |
| 57,257 | Current Liabilities | 76,301 |
| 96,857 | Long Term Liabilities | 97,854 |
| 46,495 | Net Assets | 62,935 |
| 33,691 | Usable Reserves | 34,160 |
| 12,803 | Unusable Reserves | 30,096 |
| 46,495 | Total Reserves | 64,256 |

4.7 The main changes between the two balance sheet dates and the principal reasons are as follows:

- *Increase in long term assets:* A number of additional properties were purchased during 21/22.
- *Increase in Current Assets:* The value of short-term deposits with financial institutions grew as part of the Treasury Management Policy.
- *Increase in current liabilities:* The movement in the balances for Central Government grants, e.g. for distribution to local businesses,

¹ CIPFA Financial Management Code, Guidance Notes, p 51

which have been received by the Council but not yet deployed, were accounted for as liabilities at the balance sheet date.

- *Increase in unusable reserves:* this primarily relates to the difference between council tax and non-domestic rates income, as credited to the Comprehensive Income & Expenditure Statement, and council tax and non-domestic rates income calculated in accordance with statutory requirements, where this income is dealt with through the Collection Fund. The abnormal movement between years arises from the way that the Council was reimbursed for Covid business rates relief.
- 4.8 The unallocated general fund balance, part of usable reserves, represents the Council's core reserves. It is an essential part of the Council's strategic financial planning, as this amount represents the funds available to address unforeseen financial pressures.
- 4.9 For local authorities there is no statutory minimum level of unallocated reserves. It is for each Council to take a view on the required level having regard to matters relevant to its local circumstances. CIPFA guidance issued in 2014 states that to assess the adequacy of unallocated general reserves the Chief Financial Officer should take account of the strategic, operational and financial risks facing their authority. The assessment of risks should include external risks, such as natural disasters, as well as internal risks such as the achievement of savings.
- 4.10 Maidstone Council historically set £2 million as a minimum level for unallocated reserves. In the light of the heightened risk environment facing the Council, it was agreed from 2021/22 that this minimum should be increased to £4 million. This level of reserve provides flexibility to fund financial pressures on a one off basis.

Current Position

- 4.11 Current indications are that the Council will deliver a balanced budget for 2022/23, allowing the level of reserves to be maintained. The balanced position does reflect some increased pressures in Temporary Accommodation. Further pressures are expected arising from end of the current contract for waste collection. These costs are being managed in year, but as they are likely to be ongoing, they will need to be reflected in the MTFS.

Financial management

- 4.12 Financial management at Maidstone Borough Council contains a number of elements. Officers and members are fully engaged in the annual budget setting process, which means that there is a clear understanding of financial plans and the resulting detailed budgets
- 4.13 Detailed financial reports are prepared and used on a monthly basis by managers, and on a quarterly basis by elected members, to monitor performance against the budget. Reports to members are clear, reliable and timely, enabling a clear focus on any areas of variance from the plan.

- 4.14 Financial reports are complemented by performance indicators, which are reported both at the service level to the wider leadership team, and at a corporate level to members. Member reports on performance indicators are aligned with the financial reports, so that members see a comprehensive picture of how services are performing.
- 4.15 Financial management and reporting is constantly reviewed to ensure that it is fit for purposes and meets the organisation's requirements. Quarterly financial reports to members have been redesigned over the last two years to make them more user-friendly.
- 4.16 Where variances arise, prompt action is taken to address them. Action plans are put in place at an early stage if it appears that there is likely to be a budget overspend.
- 4.17 The authority consistently receives clean external and internal audit opinions.

Capital investment

- 4.18 The Council's capital programme (5 year rolling programme) is intended to support local public services and to help the Council achieve its strategic priorities for the borough. The Council plans to continue investing through the capital programme.
- 4.19 All schemes within the capital programme are subject to appropriate option appraisal. Any appraisal must comply with the requirements of the Prudential Code, which requires that capital investment should be funded in a way that is prudent, affordable and sustainable. Increased cost of borrowing will require investments to provide a better return to ensure they are sustainable.
- 4.20 The capital programme is largely funded through external sources, so it depends on the availability of funding, whether through Public Works Loan Board borrowing or other sources of finance. The Council has locked in £80 million of future borrowing, to be drawn down between 2024 to 2026, in order to mitigate the funding risk.
- 4.21 Member oversight is ensured, first by inclusion of schemes in the capital programme that is approved as part of the annual budget setting process. Subsequently, prior to any capital commitment being entered into, a report setting out details of the capital scheme is considered by the relevant service committee.
- 4.22 The Council has a corporate project management framework that applies to most of the projects included within the capital programme. This provides for designation of a project manager and sponsor and includes a mechanism for progress on major projects to be reported to a Strategic Capital Investment Board.
- 4.23 Financial monitoring of capital projects is incorporated within the quarterly reports to Service Committees.

Ability to deliver budget savings

- 4.24 The Council has a good track record of delivering budget savings, whilst sustaining and investing in services. Savings initiatives are planned so far as possible across the five-year period of the MTFS, rather than the focus being simply on achieving whatever savings are necessary in order to balance the budget for the coming year.
- 4.25 A common criticism of local authority financial planning is that proposed savings are often over-optimistic and are not based on realistic evidence of what is achievable. The Council aims to mitigate this risk with a robust process for developing budget savings proposals:
- New and updated savings proposals are sought on a regular annual cycle, with Service Managers typically briefed on the savings remit in August/September
 - Savings proposals are then developed over a period of around two months
 - Savings proposals have to be formally documented and signed off by the Service Head who will be responsible for delivering them.
- 4.26 Once savings have been built into the budget, their achievement is monitored as part of the regular financial management process described above.

Risk management

- 4.27 The Council's MTFS is subject to a high degree of risk and uncertainty. In order to address this in a structured way and to ensure that appropriate mitigations are developed, the Council has developed a budget risk register. This seeks to capture all known budget risks and to present them in a readily comprehensible way. The budget risk register is updated regularly and is reviewed by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee at each meeting.
- 4.28 The major risk areas that have been identified as potentially threatening the Medium Term Financial Strategy are as follows.
- Failure to contain expenditure within agreed budgets
 - Inflation rate is higher than 2% government target
 - Financial impact from resurgence of Covid-19 virus
 - Fees and Charges fail to deliver sufficient income
 - Adverse impact from changes in local government funding
 - Collection targets for Council Tax and Business Rates missed
 - Capital programme cannot be funded
 - Planned savings are not delivered
 - Constraints on council tax increases
 - Litigation costs exceed budgeted provisions
 - Business Rates pool fails to generate sufficient growth
 - Shared services fail to meet budget
 - Council holds insufficient balances

- Increased complexity of government regulation.
- Other income fails to achieve budget
- Increased complexity of government regulation
- Financial Impact from IT security failure
- Pension liability cannot be funded

4.29 The Council is implementing JCAD risk management software, which allows individual service areas to log and monitor risks. By reviewing risks on a regular basis in this way, it is expected that any major new risks will be identified and appropriate mitigations developed.

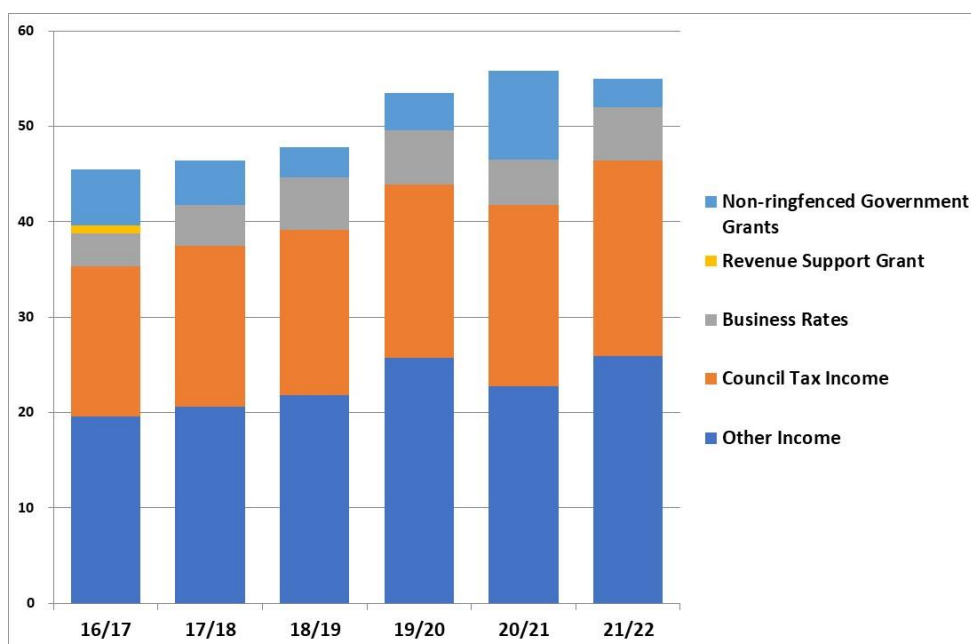
Conclusion

4.30 When assessed against the CIPFA criteria for financial resilience, the Council can be seen to have adequate reserves in the short term and to be positioned well to manage the financial challenges it will face. The following section considers whether this position is sustainable.

5. AVAILABLE RESOURCES

- 5.1 The Council's main sources of income are Council Tax and self-generated income from a range of other sources, including parking, planning fees and property investments. It no longer receives direct government support in the form of Revenue Support Grant; although it collects around £60 million of business rates annually, it retains only a small proportion of this.

Figure 6: Sources of Income (£ million)



Council Tax income remained resilient throughout the Covid-19 pandemic, with only a slight deterioration in collection levels. Other income fell back sharply in 2020/21, but has now largely recovered.

Council Tax

- 5.2 Council Tax is a product of the tax base and the level of tax set by Council. The tax base is a value derived from the number of chargeable residential properties within the borough and their band, which is based on valuation ranges, adjusted by all discounts and exemptions.
- 5.3 The tax base has increased steadily in recent years, reflecting the number of new housing developments in the borough. See table below.

Table 3: Number of Dwellings in Maidstone

| | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|----------------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|
| Number of dwellings | 70,843 | 71,917 | 73,125 | 75,034 | 76,351 |
| % increase compared with previous year | 1.74% | 1.52% | 1.68% | 2.61% | 1.76% |

Note: Number of dwellings is reported each year based on the position shown on the valuation list in September.

- 5.4 Whilst the effect of the increased number of dwellings is to increase the Council Tax base, this is offset by the cost of reliefs for council tax payers, in particular Council Tax support, and any change in the percentage of Council Tax collected. The increase in the number of households and people living in the borough also impacts on the cost of service delivery, for example refuse collection and street cleansing.
- 5.5 The level of council tax increase for 2023/24 is a decision that will be made by Council based on a recommendation made by the Executive. The Council's ability to increase the level of council tax is limited by the requirement to hold a referendum for increases over a government set limit. The referendum limit for 2022/23 was the greater of 2% or £5.00 for Band D taxpayers. Council Tax was increased by the maximum possible, ie £5.40 (2%).

Business Rates

- 5.6 Under current funding arrangements, local government retains 50% of the business rates it collects. The aggregate amount collected by local government is redistributed between individual authorities on the basis of perceived need, so that in practice Maidstone Borough Council retains only around 10% of the business rates that it collects.
- 5.7 The amount of business rates retained by individual authorities is currently based on a needs assessment that dates back to 2013/14. A reset is expected at some point, based on a 'Fair Funding Review'. The overall amounts to be allocated as part of the Fair Funding Review are yet to be determined. It is therefore difficult to predict with any degree of accuracy whether the proportion of business rates retained by Maidstone in the medium term will remain the same, increase or decrease.
- 5.8 The current local government funding regime gives authorities the opportunity to pool their business rates income and retain a higher share of growth as compared with a notional baseline set in 2013/14. Maidstone has been a member of the Kent Business Rates pool since 2014/15. Its 30% share of the growth arising from membership of the pool has hitherto been allocated to a reserve which is used for specific projects that form part of the Council's economic development strategy. A further 30% represents a Growth Fund, spent in consultation with Kent County Council. This has hitherto been spent on the Maidstone East development. Following Maidstone's acquisition of Kent County Council's 50% share in the development in 2021/22, the Growth Fund will be split equally between Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council.
- 5.9 It should be noted that, when re-allocating business rates according to need, following a Fair Funding Review, the business rates baseline is likely to be reset, so all growth accumulated to that point will be reallocated between local authorities as described in paragraph 5.8 above.
- 5.10 Total projected business rates income for 2022/23, and the ways in which it is planned to deploy it, are summarised in the table below.

Table 4: Projected Business Rates Income 2022/23

| | £000 | |
|----------------------------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| Business Rates baseline income | 3,593 | Included in base budget |
| Growth in excess of the baseline | 1,692 | Included in base budget |
| Pooling gain (MBC share) | 507 | Funds Economic Development projects |
| Pooling gain (Growth Fund) | 204 | Funds Maidstone East development |
| Total | 5,996 | |

Revenue Support Grant

- 5.11 Maidstone no longer benefits directly from central government support in the form of Revenue Support Grant, as it is considered to have a high level of resources and low needs. In fact, Councils in this situation were due to be penalised by the government under the four-year funding settlement which ran from 2016/19 to 2019/20, through negative Revenue Support Grant. Maidstone was due to pay negative RSG of £1.589 million in 2019/20. However, the government faced considerable pressure to waive negative RSG and removed it in the 2019/20 and subsequent Local Government Finance Settlements.
- 5.12 Any increase in overall funding for local authorities could simply be used to reverse negative RSG for those authorities where it was payable. As has been seen, a different mechanism was used in 2022/23, which provided some benefit to the Council in the form of the Services Grant.
- 5.13 More generally, a needs-based distribution of funding will continue to create anomalies like negative RSG, so it cannot be assumed that the threat of an adverse impact, such as Maidstone was due to experience in 2019/20, has gone away.

Other income

- 5.14 Other income is an important source of funding for the Council. It includes the following sources of income:
- Parking
 - Shared services (as agreed in collaboration agreements and where MBC is the employer)
 - Commercial property
 - Private rented sector housing (Maidstone Property Holdings)
 - Planning fees
 - Crematorium and cemetery
 - Garden waste collection
 - Commercial waste collection

Where fees and charges are not set by statute, we apply a policy that guides officers and councillors in setting the appropriate level based on demand, affordability and external factors. Charges should be maximised within the limits of the policy, but customer price sensitivity must be taken into

account, given that in those areas where we have discretion to set fees and charges, customers are not necessarily obliged to use our services.

- 5.15 Commercial property income in particular has increased rapidly in recent years. This has arisen from a deliberate strategy of focusing capital investment on projects such as the acquisition of the Lockmeadow Leisure Complex and Maidstone House which have served the dual purposes of meeting the Council's strategic priorities and generating income. See below.

Table 5: Net Property Income 2016/17 – 2022/23

| | 16/17 | 17/18 | 18/19 | 19/20 | 20/21 | 21/22 | 22/23 |
|-------------------------------------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Commercial Property | 847 | 1,064 | 1,467 | 1,590 | 2,774 | 2,819 | 3,437 |
| Maidstone Property Holdings (PRS Housing) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 188 | 280 | 837 | 830 |
| Total | 847 | 1,064 | 1,467 | 1,778 | 3,054 | 3,656 | 4,267 |

Source: MBC Budget Books

- 5.16 Other income, particularly parking, was seriously affected by Covid-19. However, income levels in most categories have now recovered to pre-Covid levels.

Conclusion

- 5.17 It can be seen that ongoing revenue resources are subject to uncertainty, owing to the economic environment and lack of clarity about the government's plans for funding local government. The previous section indicated that the Council's reserves, while adequate, do not leave it with a large amount of flexibility. This puts a premium on accurate forecasting and strong financial management.

6. SCENARIO PLANNING

- 6.1 Owing to uncertainty arising from the economic environment, and from the lack of clarity about what the government's plans for local government funding will mean for the Council, financial projections were prepared in July 2022 on four different scenarios. Following a further deterioration in the economic outlook and the impact of the September 2022 'mini budget' it is now considered that unfortunately Scenario 4, the most adverse of these scenarios, is the most likely to materialise. We have also now developed a scenario 5 to reflect the potential impact of the latest views from government.

Scenario 1: Fiscal tightening in response to threat of inflation, limited flexibility for local government, economy recovers

This is the scenario in which the government takes prompt action to bring down inflation. This would be likely to involve restrictions on government spending, including limits on Council Tax increases. If successful, this policy would mean that inflation would return to the government's long term target rate of 2% and the economy would recover, leading to renewed growth in the Council Tax base and the Council's other sources of income.

Scenario 2: Accommodative local government finance settlements, steady reduction in inflation, return to economic growth

Current government and Bank of England policy was previously based on the assumption that drastic action was not required to combat inflation, and there would be a return to growth in any case. Growth would however be anaemic, with external income returning to pre-Covid levels over a period of 3-4 years. There would continue to be growth in the Council Tax base, but constraints in the construction sector mean there is a slow-down for the first 2-3 years of the planning period. The Council would be able to fund inflationary increases in expenditure through matching increases in Council Tax. This is the most optimistic scenario.

Scenario 3: Continuing high inflation, increased spending pressures, recession, but local government retains flexibility for time being

Heightened assumptions about the inflation rate, capacity constraints and low economic growth compared with other national economies lead to prolonged inflation in excess of the government's 2% target. As a result, there is no real terms growth in Council income. Whilst under this scenario, the Council would be able to match inflationary growth in costs through increases in Council Tax, the poor performance of the economy would nevertheless lead to an overall deterioration in its financial position.

Scenario 4: Continuing high inflation leads to fiscal tightening, local government spending subject to restraints

In this scenario the government is forced to take action to bring down inflation. This would involve restrictions on government spending, including limits on Council Tax increases. The Council would not be able to match inflationary growth in costs through increases in Council Tax and the poor performance of the economy would mean minimal growth in the Council Tax base and other sources of income. This is now considered to be the most likely scenario.

Scenario 5: Inflation peaks at a higher level than previously envisaged and remains high. Local government spending is subject to reductions.

In this scenario inflation remains higher than originally expected. The Government and Bank of England take action to stabilise the economy, but this is not sufficient to avoid a prolonged recession. This will be reductions in government spending, including limits on Council Tax increases. The Council will not be able to match higher and sustained inflationary growth in costs through increases in Council Tax and the poor performance of the economy would mean minimal growth in the Council Tax base and other sources of income. This is the most pessimistic scenario.

Strategic Revenue Projection

6.2 For illustrative purposes, assumptions about what scenarios 4 and 5 might mean are set out in this section, and high-level revenue projections are shown for both. The key dimensions are:

- the Council Tax base;
- the level of Council Tax;
- retained Business Rates, which in turn depends on overall business rates income and government policy on distributing it between local authorities and central government;
- other local income, eg fees and charges;
- the cost of service delivery, which is subject to the effect of inflation on input prices.

Each of these is considered in more detail below.

Council Tax base

6.3 Projected Council Tax income for 2022/23 amounts to £18.2 million and is the Council's single biggest source of income. Council Tax is a product of the tax base and the level of tax set by the council. The tax base is a value derived from the number of chargeable residential properties within the borough and their band, which is based on valuation ranges, adjusted by all discounts and exemptions. As described in the previous section, the tax base has increased steadily in recent years, reflecting the number of new housing developments in the borough.

6.4 The Council tax base is also affected by collection rates and the number of households benefitting from the Council Tax Reduction Scheme. Typically these factors do not vary significantly between years but in the event of a major downturn in the economy, collection rates could be expected to fall and more households would be eligible for the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

6.5 Future growth assumptions for each scenario are set out below.

Table 6: Council Tax Base Growth

| Council Tax base growth assumptions | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 23/24 | 24/25 | 25/26 | 26/27 | 27/28 |
| Scenario 4 – Limited flexibility, continued stagflation | 1.5% | 1.0% | 1.0% | 1.0% | 1.0% |
| Scenario 5 – Limited flexibility, potential funding reductions, continued stagflation | 1.5% | 1.0% | 1.0% | 1.0% | 1.0% |

Level of Council Tax

6.6 In practice, the Council's ability to increase the level of council tax is limited by the need to hold a referendum for increases over a government set limit. In 2022/23, the limit was 2%. The Council approved the maximum possible increase. The rationale for this approach was that:

- pressures on the Council's budget mean that even a marginal difference in Council Tax income is of value;
- the referendum limit might revert to a lower level in later years;
- because the starting point for calculating the referendum limit in any given year is the previous year's Council Tax, agreeing a lower increase reduces the Council's room for manoeuvre in later years.

6.7 The referendum limit of 2% was intended broadly to reflect the rate of inflation. It was also assumed in the government's planning for local government expenditure that local authorities would indeed increase by the maximum permissible amount, and this was reflected in the 'Spending Power' data published for each local authority. At this stage there is no indication as to whether the government will set a higher referendum limit in 2023/24 to reflect current inflation levels.

6.8 Assumptions for each scenario are set out below, on the basis that these increases represent the government's referendum limit and the Council follows its practice of increasing Council Tax by the maximum permitted.

Table 7: Council Tax Increase

| Council Tax increase assumptions | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 23/24 | 24/25 | 25/26 | 26/27 | 27/28 |
| Scenario 4 – Limited flexibility, continued stagflation | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% |
| Scenario 5 – Limited flexibility, potential funding reductions, continued stagflation | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% |

Retained business rates

- 6.9 Under the current business rates regime, local government in aggregate retains 50% of business rates income. However, most of the 50% share collected locally is lost to Maidstone, because it is redistributed to other authorities and the government through a system of tariffs and top-ups.

Table 8: Projected Business Rates Income 2022/23

| | £000 | % |
|------------------------------------|---------------|------------|
| Maidstone Borough Council | 5,285 | 10 |
| Kent County Council | 4,631 | 9 |
| Kent Fire & Rescue Authority | 515 | 1 |
| Central Government | 41,410 | 80 |
| Total Business Rates Income | 51,841 | 100 |

- 6.10 To the extent that business rates income exceeds a notional baseline, this growth element is retained locally, subject to a levy payable to central government by tariff authorities like Maidstone. The Council has been able to minimise the levy payable on business rates growth through its membership of the Kent Business Rates Pool. This is because, by pooling our income, the levy payable by some pool members (district councils) is offset against the top-up received by the major preceptors (Kent County Council and Kent Fire and Rescue). Details are set out in the previous section.
- 6.11 It is assumed at this stage that pool proceeds continue to be earmarked as currently. Note that in the event of a business rates reset there would initially be no growth available for pooling.
- 6.12 In general, projections of business rates income for the years after 2023/24 must, of necessity, take a cautious position on how much business rates income is likely to be retained locally, given that this is the element in our total resources that is most at risk from the vagaries of government policy. Future growth assumptions for each scenario are set out below.

Table 9: Business Rates Growth Assumptions

| Business Rates growth assumptions | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 23/24 | 24/25 | 25/26 | 26/27 | 27/28 |
| Scenario 4 – Limited flexibility, continued stagflation | 0.0% | 0.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% |
| Scenario 5 – Limited flexibility, potential funding reductions, continued stagflation | 0.0% | 0.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% | 2.0% |

Other income

6.13 The main components of other income are set out below:

Table 10: Projected Other Income 2022/23

| | £ million |
|--------------------------------------------|-------------|
| Fees and charges | 9.2 |
| Property rental income and service charges | 6.9 |
| Shared services trading income | 3.3 |
| Other income | 2.3 |
| TOTAL | 21.7 |

Each component is subject to different inflationary factors. Some fees and charges are set by central government and are not necessarily increased annually. However, where the council has the flexibility to review fees and charges, it is assumed that they are increased in line with inflation. Rents may only change at the point of periodic rent reviews. Future growth assumptions, using a composite inflation rate, are set out below.

Table 11: Other Income growth assumptions

| Other income growth assumptions | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 23/24 | 24/25 | 25/26 | 26/27 | 27/28 |
| Scenario 4 – Limited flexibility, continued stagflation | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% |
| Scenario 5 – Limited flexibility, potential funding reductions, continued stagflation | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% |

Cost of Service

- 6.14 The cost of services is subject to inflation. Salaries account for around 50% of total input costs, and whilst salary increases tend to lag behind published inflation figures, market pressures are likely to mean that inflation will impact salaries in the medium term. Many other costs, in particular contract costs, are directly linked to inflation indices.
- 6.15 A recent benchmarking exercise indicates that salaries at Maidstone have fallen behind the policy target of the public and not for profit sector median level for any given grade. It is estimated that an additional £675,000 growth, including salary on-costs, less amounts that can be recharged, would be required to bring salaries into line. For the purposes of the MTFS projections, this growth has been excluded, on the basis that it will need to be self-financing, ie any growth will need to be funded from new savings.
- 6.16 Assumptions for each scenario, using a composite rate at this stage, are set out below. Note that these figures do not equate to inflation projections, because the growth in cost of services tends to lag behind headline inflation

indices. The figures below exclude any growth to address the shortfall against the salary benchmark described in the previous paragraph.

Table 12: Cost of Service growth assumptions

| Cost of services growth assumptions | | | | | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | 23/24 | 24/25 | 25/26 | 26/27 | 27/28 |
| Scenario 4 – Limited flexibility, continued stagflation | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% |
| Scenario 5 – Limited flexibility, potential funding reductions, continued stagflation | 10.0% | 7.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% | 5.0% |

For the purposes of detailed budget planning, a more granular approach is taken to forecasting budget growth, and specific percentages are applied to the different categories within cost of services. Additionally, specific provision has been built into the strategic revenue projections for two major known future pressures, namely the continuing additional cost of providing temporary accommodation and the likely additional costs arising from relet of the waste collection contract.

7. REVENUE PROJECTIONS

- 7.1 Strategic revenue projections, based on the assumptions set out above, are summarised in table 14 below for scenarios 4 and 5. In light of the many uncertainties around future funding, it is important to note that projections like these can only represent a 'best estimate' of what will happen. These projections will be updated as more information becomes available, prior to a final version of the projections being included in the updated Medium Term Financial Strategy. The figures exclude the cost of potential changes in pay and grading as set out above.

Table 13: MTFS Revenue Projections 2023/24-2027/28

| | 23/24 | 24/25 | 25/26 | 26/27 | 27/28 |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| | £m | £m | £m | £m | £m |
| Scenario 4 – Limited flexibility, continued stagflation | | | | | |
| Total Resources | 46.7 | 48.2 | 49.8 | 51.5 | 53.3 |
| Predicted Expenditure | 49.7 | 53.6 | 56.9 | 60.9 | 64.4 |
| Budget Gap | -3.0 | -5.4 | -7.1 | -9.3 | -11.1 |
| Existing Planned Savings | 0.4 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| Savings Required | -2.5 | -4.6 | -6.3 | -8.6 | -10.4 |
| Scenario 5 – Limited flexibility, potential funding reductions, continued stagflation | | | | | |
| Total Resources | 46.9 | 48.7 | 50.3 | 52.0 | 53.8 |
| Predicted Expenditure | 51.9 | 56.9 | 60.4 | 64.6 | 68.3 |
| Budget Gap | -5.0 | -8.3 | -10.1 | -12.6 | -14.5 |
| Existing Planned Savings | 0.4 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 | 0.7 |
| Savings Required | -4.5 | -7.5 | -9.4 | -11.8 | -13.8 |

Notes

- Resources comprise Council Tax, retained Business Rates and Other Income.
- Predicted expenditure comprises the cost of services and finance costs.
- A negative figure represents the amount of savings required to balance the budget; a positive figure represents a budget surplus.
- All scenarios incorporate the assumption that Council Tax income is increased by the maximum possible given the referendum limit, and fees and charges are increased in line with inflation to the extent that the Council has the flexibility to do so.

- 7.2 Even in the more favourable scenario, government constraints on local government spending, principally a freeze in the Council Tax referendum limit at the current level of 2%, lead to a deficit in 2023/24 if no further savings are made.

Approach to balancing the budget

- 7.3 In delivering a balanced budget, the requirement to make savings or generate increased income will need to be balanced against the key priorities set out in the Council's Strategic Plan, namely:

- Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure
- Homes and Communities
- A Thriving Place
- Safe, Clean and Green.

- 7.4 In recent years, the Council has been successful in simultaneously generating additional income and meeting its strategic priorities, through successful investments (Lockmeadow, Maidstone House) and its programme of delivering private rented sector housing through Maidstone Property Holdings. The Council will continue to seek similar opportunities in the future. However, it would not be prudent to rely solely on this approach to balance the budget, both because of the scale of the budget gap and because of current challenges in delivering capital investment, namely the availability of affordable finance and the paucity of suitable opportunities.
- 7.5 Accordingly, all budgets will be reviewed in detail to identify opportunities for savings, or increased income, which can be delivered with the minimum impact on the strategic priorities. To the extent that further growth is planned, above and beyond existing budgets, this will need to be offset by further savings. It should be noted that the savings requirement in scenario 4, whilst significant, amounts to just 3% of gross revenue expenditure. If this level of savings were achieved across all services, it may be possible to close the budget gap with a minimal impact on service delivery.
- 7.6 Option 5 provides a more challenging savings target for 2023/24. However, it will be seen from section 5 that the Council has sufficient reserves to manage a shortfall of this scale. Reserves can however only be used once, so the ongoing impact of such an adverse scenario would have to be addressed through more significant budget savings in the future.

8. CAPITAL STRATEGY

8.1 The capital programme plays a vital part in delivering the Council's strategic plan, since it is only through long term investment that our ambitions for the borough can be realised. The capital programme is a rolling five year programme. The existing capital programme was approved by Council at its budget meeting on 23rd February 2022. An updated capital strategy and capital programme is due to be considered by the Executive in January.

8.2 Major schemes include the following:

- 1,000 Affordable Homes programme
- Private rented sector housing programme
- Temporary accommodation
- Biodiversity & Climate Change capital projects
- Garden Community preliminary work.

8.3 Schemes may be included in the capital programme if they fall within one of the following categories:

- Required for statutory reasons, eg to ensure that Council property meets health and safety requirements or maintain the condition/value of the asset;
- Schemes focused on strategic plan priority outcomes that are self-funding.

A further two categories have also been defined, namely:

- Other schemes focused on strategic plan priority outcomes;
- Other priority schemes that will attract significant external funding.

Note that these further categories of expenditure will only meet the Prudential Code requirement for sustainable investment if specific revenue provision is made for their funding.

8.4 Prior to inclusion in the capital programme, all schemes are subject to an initial assessment. The assessment of self-funding is to ensure we achieve the appropriate rate of return, which will be subject to the cost of borrowing.

8.5 All schemes within the capital programme are then also subject to appropriate option appraisals, requiring the preparation of a business case, before approval to spend is agreed. Any appraisal must reflect the Prudential Code, which requires that capital investment should be funded in a way that is prudent, affordable and sustainable.

8.6 The current capital programme amounts to £230 million over the next five years. In the light of inflation, this amount will need to be increased if the same outputs are to be delivered, and higher input costs will need to be factored into the appraisal of individual capital schemes to ensure that they are still affordable.

- 8.7 It is envisaged that the capital programme will primarily be funded from external borrowing. In view of uncertainty about the future trajectory of interest rates and the availability of funds from the Public Works Loan Board, the Council has secured forward borrowing of £80 million, which will be drawn down between 2024 and 2026. The balance of the capital programme will still need to be funded, with the cost of finance dependent on rates applying when the borrowing requirement arises.

New Homes Bonus

- 8.8 Prior to 2022/23, New Homes Bonus, which is a form of revenue grant from central government, was earmarked for capital expenditure. This reduced the Council's borrowing requirement and meant that Maidstone remained debt-free until 2019/20. For 2022/23, Council agreed when setting the budget that the first £1 million of New Homes Bonus would be allocated for strategic policy and plan making, with the balance of £3.1 million transferred to a Housing Investment Fund, to be used to subsidise the Council's Affordable Housing Programme.
- 8.9 There is an inherent requirement for subsidy within the Affordable Housing programme, as it involves providing housing at less than a market rent. In due course, as the Affordable Housing programme is rolled out, the Council will be legally obliged to establish a Housing Revenue Account, which explicitly cannot be subsidised by the General Fund. However, in the meantime, the Council is able to set funds aside to subsidise affordable housing as agreed when setting the 2022/23 budget. Inclusion of the Affordable Housing Programme within the Capital Programme implies a continuing requirement for funds to be accumulated in this way.
- 8.10 At the time of writing, there is no certainty about the future of New Homes Bonus. If it is reduced or withdrawn, alternative sources of subsidy will need to be identified for the Affordable Housing programme.

9. CONSULTATION AND NEXT STEPS

- 9.1 Each year the Council carries out consultation as part of the development of the MTFS. A budget survey is being carried out and is due to close on 20th November 2022. The results of the survey will be considered as part of the detailed budget and can be considered by Policy Advisory Committees.
- 9.2 Consultation with members will take in January 2023 on the detailed budget proposals. Individual Policy Advisory Committees will consider the budget proposals relating to the services within their areas of responsibility. The final budget will be presented to Council on the 22nd February 2023.

Agenda Item 15

Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee

**Tuesday 15
November 2022**

Fleet Replacement Programme

| Timetable | |
|------------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Meeting | Date |
| Communities, Housing and Environment PAC | Tuesday 15 November 2022 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Will this be a Key Decision? | No |
| Urgency | Not Applicable |
| Final Decision-Maker | Not Applicable – report for noting by the Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee |
| Lead Head of Service | William Cornall, Director of Regeneration and Place |
| Lead Officer and Report Author | Jennifer Stevens, Head of Environment and Public Realm |
| Classification | Public |
| Wards affected | All |

Executive Summary

This report sets out the operational mechanisms for renewing the Council's fleet, to ensure that it supports the business need whilst minimising the impact on the environment.

The Vehicle Replacement Programme utilises the annually agreed Capital budget to replace aging and costly operational vehicles to enable the street cleansing and grounds maintenance services can continue to deliver the corporate objectives and statutory duties.

Purpose of Report

Noting

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

1. That the contents of this report relating to the Fleet Replacement Programme and planned vehicle purchases be noted;
2. That the Green Fleet Strategy contained within Appendix 1 be noted;

Fleet Replacement Programme

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>The Fleet Replacement Programme supports the delivery of the street cleansing, commercial waste and grounds maintenance services through the provision of vehicles that are fit for purpose, cost effective and minimise the impact on the environment.</p> | Head of Environment and Public Realm |
| 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 includes information relating to the actions being taken to ensure that our fleet are as environmentally sustainable as possible whilst meeting the needs of the business and being financially viable.</p> | Head of Environment and Public Realm |
| Risk Management | The risks related to the Fleet Replacement Programme are included in Section 5. | Head of Environment and Public Realm |
| Financial | The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved Capital Budget for 2022/23 and the ongoing funding requirements will be part of the future Capital Funding approval process by Full Council. | Senior Finance Manager |

| | | |
|----------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Staffing | We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing. | Head of Environment and Public Realm |
| Legal | Acting on the recommendations is within the Council's powers as set out in local authority legislation (including the general power of competence under the Localism Act 2011) and the Council's Constitution. | Interim Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance) |
| Information Governance | The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council Processes. | 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 | No implications identified | Head of Environment and Public Realm |
| Crime and Disorder | No implications identified | Head of Environment and Public Realm |
| Procurement | The Council will follow procurement exercises for the purchase of all fleet replacements. We will complete those exercises in line with financial procedure rules. | Head of Environment and Public Realm |
| Biodiversity and Climate Change | The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and aligns with the MBC intentions of the action plan to gradually transition the fleet from petrol/diesel to fully electric vehicles to cut carbon emissions in line with MBC's 2030 net zero commitment. Provision for the medium term to increase the Depot's electricity capacity to charge electric vehicles is underway, to ensure there will be no disruption to the depot's operations by transitioning to fully EVs. | Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager |

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Maidstone Borough Council operates in-house street cleansing, grounds maintenance and commercial waste services using 54 vehicles ranging from 26 tonne refuse collection vehicles (RCVs) to small supervisor vans.

- 2.2 Given the nature of the work these vehicles undertake, they are generally depreciated over 5 years and require replacing within 5-7 year period. Usually after 5 years, the vehicles maintenance costs start to significantly increase, and they start becoming less reliable with longer periods of downtime. However, where a vehicle remains cost effective and in good condition it will be retained.
- 2.3 Therefore, the Council has a 5-year rolling Vehicle Replacement Programme, to enable the ongoing investment in the Council's fleet. The current fleet is estimated to be worth approximately £1,280,000. A new fleet would cost in the region of £2,750,000.
- 2.4 The annual Capital budget varies each year as it is profiled based on the vehicles requiring replacement. This is approved by Full Council each year. The table below sets out the 5-year budget which was set in 2021 and will be reviewed as part of the Capital Programme to reflect the changing market and updated quotes for replacement vehicles.

| Year | Capital Budget |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| 2022/23 | £532,860 |
| 2023/24 | £456,560 |
| 2024/25 | £457,000 |
| 2025/26 | £270,000 |
| 2026/27 | £96,300 |

- 2.5 Every year the fleet is reviewed by service managers and the Transport and Compliance Manager and vehicles are identified for potential replacement based on their age, running costs and needs of the business. This information is used to update the Fleet Replacement Programme and ensure there is sufficient budget available.
- 2.6 In 2022-23, 10 vehicles have been purchased including two large sweepers, a pavement sweeper, two 7.5 tonne vehicles, two 3.5 tonne vehicles and three pick-up trucks. This quantity was higher than originally planned but reflects the current vehicle market, which have significantly increased lead-times for delivery. Several orders have therefore been placed earlier than planned and two 7.5 tonne vehicles were purchased as they became available due to order cancellations and would have been unavailable to order until 2024.
- 2.7 This has put the expected expenditure for 2022-23 above budget however this will be offset by income from vehicle sales, delays to some vehicles being delivered until 2023-24 and a reduction in purchases in subsequent years.
- 2.8 For 2023-24, there are seven vehicles due to be purchased including two grounds maintenance beavertails, three 3.5 tonne vehicles, a pick-up truck and a 7.5 tonne refuse collection vehicle (RCV). The purchase of a 7.5 tonne RCV has been identified as it will reduce the operational costs to the

Council of emptying parks litter bins and will provide wider benefits that the 7.5 tonne caged vehicle it will be replacing.

- 2.9 The table below shows the planned vehicle purchases over the 5-year programme. This is reviewed annually based on the actual running costs and condition of each vehicle.

| Vehicle | 2022-23 | 2023-24 | 2024-25 | 2025-26 | 2026-27 |
|-------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| Van | 0 | 2 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Pick-up | 3 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Flatback | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 3.5 tonne | 3 | 5 | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| 7.5 tonne | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Sweeper | 0 | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| HGV Sweeper | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| RCV | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| TOTAL | 10 | 9 | 9 | 3 | 4 |

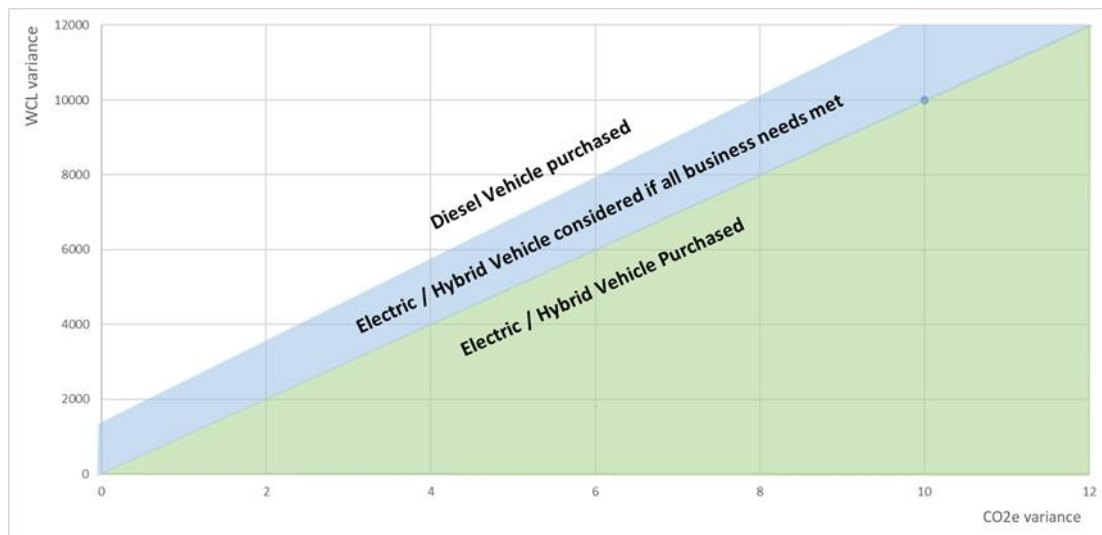
Green Fleet Strategy

- 2.10 In 2019, the Council declared a Climate Change Emergency and with the current fleet contributing over 260 tonnes of CO₂e per year, reducing this impact is a key objective within the Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy as shown by the excerpt below.

Making our estate carbon neutral

Aim: We will reduce emissions from our estate to as close to carbon neutral as possible by 2030. We emit 480 tCO₂e from council owned vehicles and 679 tCO₂e from electricity and gas in our buildings and indirectly emit 3,030 tCO₂e from services outsourced.

- 2.11 An operational strategy was developed earlier in the year to enable the service and fleet managers to balance the business needs, the significant cost variations and the environmental impact when purchasing new vehicles.
- 2.12 The Green Fleet Strategy is included in Appendix 1. It outlines the current fleet profile and the decision-making process (Appendix 2) for determining whether a replacement vehicle is required, what vehicles are available in the market that meet the business needs and the Cost Viability Matrix.
- 2.13 The Cost Viability Matrix is shown below and takes into consideration the Whole Life Costs (WLC) of the vehicle – such as maintenance and running costs – and the CO₂e variance.



2.14 The Green Fleet Strategy has resulted in the Council purchasing two electric caged vehicles which are due for delivery later in the year. However, for the replacement of 7.5 tonne trucks used for the removal of fly tipping, a diesel vehicle has been purchased as there was no viable electric vehicle on the market.

2.15 The Cost Viability Matrix was also applied to the purchase of replacement sweepers and resulted in the purchase of diesel vehicles at this time due to the cost for the electric sweeper being twice as much as the diesel alternative.

2.16 For the seven vehicles requiring replacement in 2023-34, five have been identified for the purchase of electric vehicles. This is expected to cost an additional £136k compared with the diesel alternatives and funding has been set aside from the Biodiversity and Climate Change Capital Fund. There are not currently suitable electric vehicles on the market for the 7.5 tonne RCV and 3.5 tonne rear wheel drive tipper so diesel vehicles will be purchased.

2.17 The results of a feasibility study, conducted by SWARCO found there was a need to upgrade the electric capacity to 600KVA for an entirely electrified fleet by 2030, with a recommendation to instal a new substation on the Depot site. However, officers identified an existing substation near to the depot, and with basic low-cost ground works planned for Autumn 2022 can connect to the existing supply and increase the depot's capacity to 227KVA. This will be ample capacity for a new 50kw rapid charger to be installed on site as well as sufficient capacity for the medium-term needs of the depot's light vehicles EV replacements.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 There are no matters for decision within this report. The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report but may choose to comment.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 In considering the operational strategy for determining which fleet to purchase and the current programme of replacements, the Committee can choose to note this information or choose to comment.

4.2 The Committee is requested to note the content of the report.

5. RISK

5.1 The commercial vehicle market, particularly for alternative fuels, is rapidly developing and this poses several risks to the Council, including purchasing vehicles that are not fully tested in the 'real' world or become quickly outdated as technology evolves. Therefore, it is important that the Council has policies in place that recognise this and enable decisions to be taken based on the immediate market conditions.

5.2 The reliability of the Council's fleet is a key service risk as it would have a significant impact on the ability to deliver statutory functions as well as the corporate objective of a "Safe, Clean and Green" Borough. The Fleet Replacement Programme is designed to ensure that the Council has a newer and therefore more reliable fleet that meets the needs of the business. A newer fleet is not only likely to have less downtime, but maintenance costs will also be lower, the visual impression will also be improved, and drivers are more likely to look after them.

5.3 Availability of fleet is also a growing concern as the market lead-times have increased substantially over the last 12 months with some manufacturers closing their order books for smaller vehicles until 2023-24. Therefore, the replacement plan enables the Transport and Compliance Manager to place orders early and factor in lead-times to ensure the services are not left without the resources they need. Improved forward planning has enabled the Council to benefit from order cancellations and purchase vehicles that are already on the production line.

5.4 The Council's fleet also contributes over 260 tonnes of CO₂e and therefore without taking action to reduce this, the Council will not achieve its objectives to tackle climate change. The Green Fleet Strategy sets out an operational plan to consider the whole benefits and costs of each vehicle at the point of replacement and seeks to identify opportunities to reduce CO₂e through fleet reduction, aligning purchases with market availability and promoting alternative fuel options.

5.5 There is also a financial risk to the Council of not having an operational strategy for the purchase of new vehicles as electric vehicles are proving to be twice as expensive as diesel equivalents. Therefore, considering the whole life costs with the environmental benefits is key to ensuring that a balance is achieved. The Green Fleet Strategy provides a clear decision-making model (Appendix 2) that will consider the rapidly evolving EV market.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 The Capital Programme is approved annually by Full Council. This provides Members with the opportunity to comment on the Capital budget allocated for the purchase of replacement vehicles.
- 6.2 Members have also provided feedback through the Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy to show a commitment to reducing emissions from the Council's estate and fleet. The Green Fleet Strategy seeks to deliver this whilst recognising the importance of delivering high-quality, cost-effective services.
-

7. REPORT APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Green Fleet Strategy 2022

Appendix 2: Fleet Selection Process

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Maidstone Borough Council

Green Fleet Strategy

Introduction

Maidstone Borough Council currently operates 64 fleet vehicles, excluding operational plant such as tractors or mowers. These range from heavy goods vehicles including 26 tonne refuse compaction vehicles and specialist sweepers to 3.5 tonne vans, pick-up trucks and cars. Most of these vehicles are operated by the Council's depot services. Data shows that on average the entire fleet produce 264 tonnes of CO₂e and travel over 430,000 miles per year.

Maidstone Borough Council declared a climate change emergency in April 2019 and has committed to an action plan to reduce emissions and mitigate the environmental impact of its vehicle fleet.

The Street Cleansing Team has already invested in two electric supervisors' vans and two further electric vans are on order for Grounds Maintenance and Parking Services. A feasibility study into the infrastructure requirements is also underway for the Council's Depot as there are currently only two charging points installed.

The Council operates a Fleet Replacement Programme which sets out the annual capital investment to replace end of life vehicles. Generally, vehicles are depreciated over a 5-year period, and are then replaced based on mileage, condition, annual running costs and business need.

New vehicles are purchased using a procurement framework operated by CTS, a trading company of Kent County Council.

Objectives

The primary objective of this Strategy is to enable the purchasing of vehicles that deliver the business needs and consider their whole life costs whilst minimizing their environmental impact.

It is important that when purchasing new vehicles, attention is given to whether the vehicle is necessary and if so, whether there is a commercially viable electric or hybrid alternative. This requires the consideration of several factors including the whole life costs (WLC) of the vehicle and its operational requirements.

This Strategy sets out the decision-making process for selecting new or replacement fleet vehicles and how the Council will seek to deliver its commitment to reducing emissions, miles, and fuel usage.

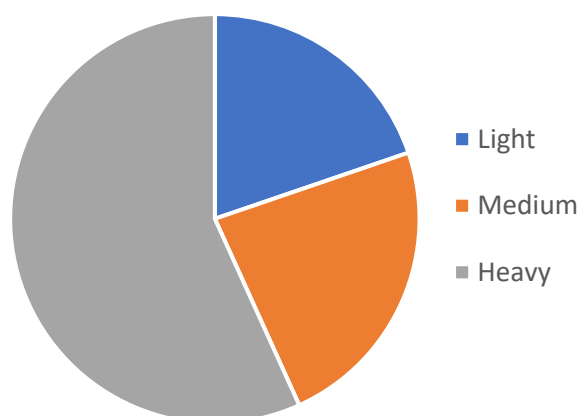
Fleet Profile

Table 1 below outlines the fleet profile of the Council; these are separated into light, medium and heavy commercial vehicles.

This data shows that 264 tonnes of CO₂e were emitted in 2020/21, with the 10 heavy commercial vehicles responsible for the highest proportion of this.

Graph 1 shows the average CO₂e per vehicle by class. Whilst collectively the light, medium and heavy commercial vehicles contribute similar levels of CO₂e, this is skewed by the number of vehicles operated and therefore the average CO₂e per vehicle is more reflective of the situation.

Graph 1: Average CO₂e per vehicle by class



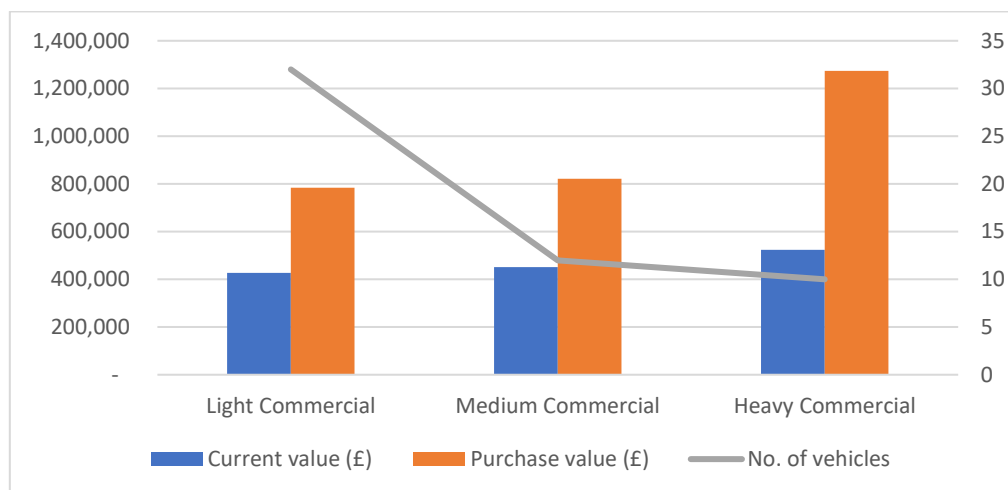
| Category | Total | Vehicle Type | Quantity | Total Annual Mileage | Total Annual fuel usage (Litres) | Total CO ₂ e | Combined Total CO ₂ e |
|------------------------------------------------------------|-------|---------------------------------|----------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Light Commercial (up to 2 tonne) | 32 | Van | 16 | 101,659 | 15,538 | 39.47 | 89.85 |
| | | Pick up | 7 | 56,057 | 9,883 | 25.64 | |
| | | Flatback | 7 | 39,151 | 7,575 | 19.24 | |
| | | Other | 2 | 11,186 | 2,164 | 5.50 | |
| Medium Commercial (from 2.25 tonne to 7.5 tonne) | 22 | 3.5 tonne | 19 | 121,437 | 26,124 | 66.35 | 78.64 |
| | | Sweeper | 2 | 12,781 | 3,392 | 8.80 | |
| | | Other | 1 | 6,391 | 1,375 | 3.49 | |
| Heavy Commercial (over 7.5 tonne) | 10 | 7.5 tonne | 3 | 17817 | 9293.94 | 24.11 | 95.09 |
| | | Refuse Compaction Vehicle (RCV) | 2 | 25902 | 17369.85 | 45.06 | |
| | | Sweeper | 5 | 15833 | 9992.95 | 25.92 | |
| TOTAL | 64 | | 64 | 408,214 | 102,708 | 264 | 264 |

Table 1: MBC fleet profile

When considering the vehicle emissions, the Street Cleansing Service is the largest contributor. However, when averaging the emissions based on vehicle numbers, commercial waste is the largest contributor, highlighting this as a priority area for the future.

Vehicle Replacement Programme

The total value of the current fleet is estimated to be £1.4 million, and the replacement cost is projected to be £2.9 million taking into account current market conditions. Graph 2 below illustrates these costs according to vehicle class.



Graph 2: Value of Council's current fleet

The average age of the fleet is 3 years 11 months. As shown in the table below the average age of the heavy commercial vehicles is almost a year higher at 4 years 10 months, indicating that several of these vehicles are due or approaching replacement:

| Vehicle Class | Average age |
|-------------------|----------------|
| Light Commercial | 3 yrs. 11 mths |
| Medium Commercial | 3 yrs. 8 mths |
| Heavy Commercial | 4 yrs. 10 mths |

The oldest vehicles in the fleet are 9 years old, these include a manager's van, a 3.5 tonne caged vehicle and a 7.5 tonne lorry, all of which are due for replacement this year.

Vehicle capital costs are depreciated over 5 years. The Council operates a Vehicle Replacement Programme which is funded from the Capital Programme to purchase replacement vehicles when required. This programme is currently built around the services' requirements and is shown in the table below.

| | Projected Budget 2021/22 | Five Year Plan | | | | | Total 21/22 to 25/26 |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|----------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----------------------|
| | | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | |
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 |
| Fleet Vehicle Replacement Programme | 748 | 149 | 456 | 457 | 270 | 96 | 1,428 |

Additional capital funding was secured in 2020/21 to support the higher costs of purchasing electric vehicles and further funding has also been made available through the Biodiversity and Climate Change Capital Fund. Any income achieved from the sale of vehicles is reinvested in the Vehicle Replacement Programme.

Whole Life Costs (WLC)

The whole life cost of a vehicle takes into consideration not only the purchase or lease costs of the vehicle but also the fuel, maintenance, and insurance costs from operating the vehicle.

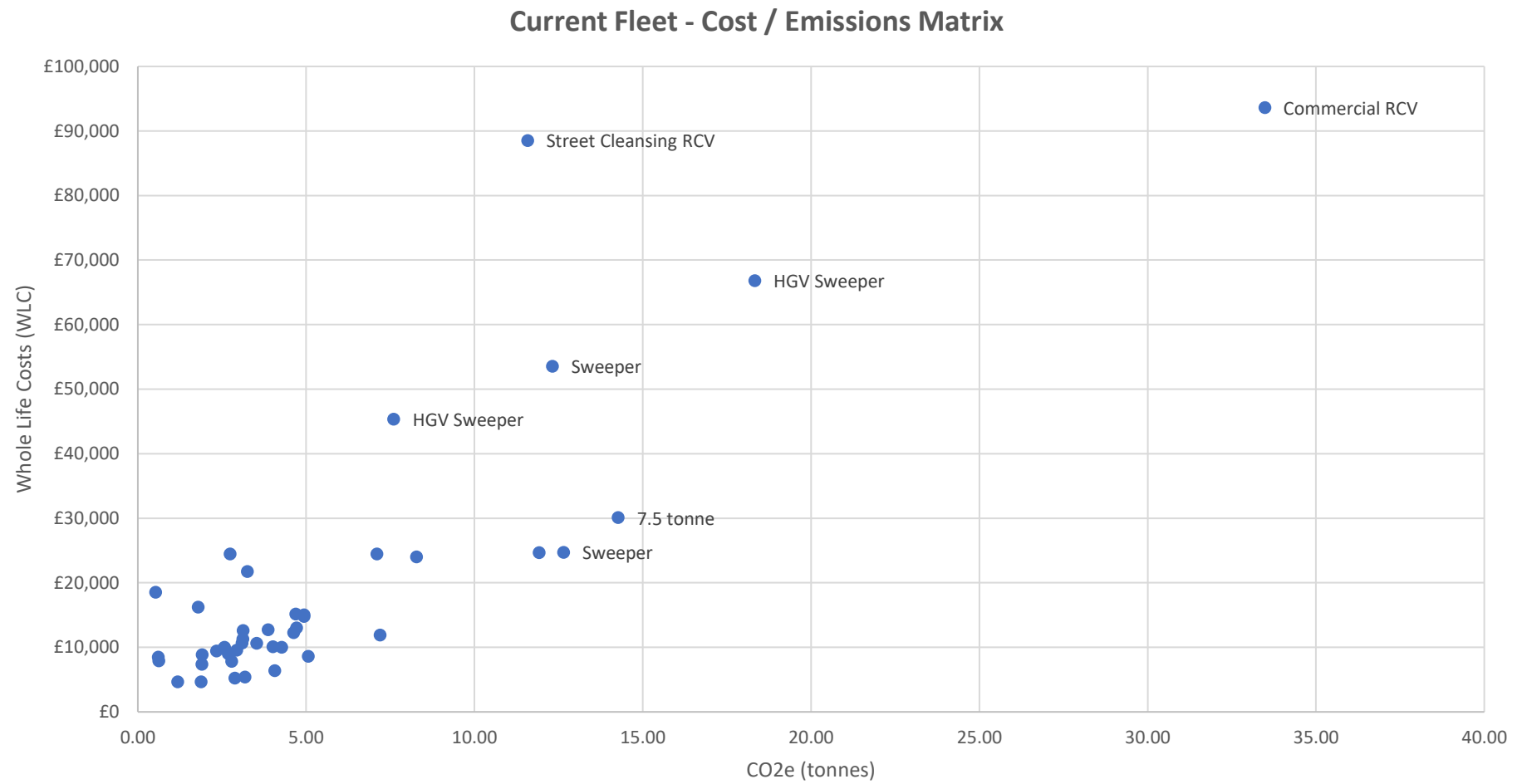
The table below shows an example comparison between the actual whole life costs of a flatback grounds maintenance vehicle (Fiat Doblo) and a comparable electric vehicle on the market.

| Whole Life Cost Comparison | Fiat Doblo Cargo 1.3 Multijet 1.1 | Nissan e-NV200 109 Visia |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| TOTAL Purchase Price | £21,324 | £31,500 |
| Energy Source | Diesel | Electric |
| Fuel / Electricity Cost | £1,071 | £511 |
| Maintenance Costs | £884.00 | £201.25 |
| Insurance | £789.96 | £789.96 |
| TOTAL Running costs | £2,745 | £1,502 |
| Vehicle depreciation | £4,264.80 | £6,300.00 |
| Annualised WLC | £7,009.94 | £7,801.84 |
| Annual CO ₂ e (tonnes) | 2.81 | 0.68 |

Table 2: Whole Life Cost Comparison of diesel and electric small van

In this example, whilst the electric vehicle has a substantially higher purchase price, this is offset by the reduced fuel and maintenance costs and the benefits of reduced carbon emissions.

Comparing the whole life costs with the carbon impact provides an overall picture of the true cost of the vehicle. Graph 3 shows this for the Council's current fleet. As expected, the heavy commercial vehicles have the greatest cost to the Council and environmental impact, with the commercial refuse compaction vehicle (RCV) contributing over 33 tonnes of CO₂e and an annualised WLC of over £90,000.



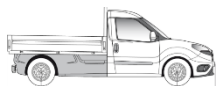
Graph 3: Whole Life Cost verses CO₂e comparison for current fleet (based on 2020-21 data)

The average annual WLC for the Council's fleet is £19,500. However, across the fleet this ranges from £4,659 to £93,627.

The data from the Council's fleet indicates that the heavy commercial and specialist vehicles, predominately sweepers and refuse compaction vehicles (RCV) have the greatest impact. However, at the present time, there are very little alternative fuel options for these vehicles on the market.

Greening the Fleet

From Maidstone's data, several conclusions can be drawn regarding the future fleet options:



Small vans contribute the lowest emissions and the WLC are relatively low, however these are the highest proportion of the fleet and viable electric alternatives are already available on the market.



The average emissions from medium commercial vehicles are only marginally higher than the light commercial vehicles (small vans), however there are currently limited alternative options available.



Heavy commercial vehicles and specialist sweepers are the highest contributors to CO₂e emissions, with the average emission over 3.5 times greater than the medium commercial vehicles. Whilst this is clearly a priority area to target for green alternatives, these have only recently been brought to market and are exceptionally expensive.

It is important that the future fleet delivers lower emissions whilst remaining financially viable and meets the needs of the service. This can be a challenge to ensure that both the cost and environmental impact are taken into consideration during the decision-making process, particularly where technology is developing so quickly.

For the Council's current fleet profile, it is evident that there are limited green options for many of the large and specialist vehicles, or the cost of them is prohibitive at this time. For example, an electric refuse compaction vehicle is currently available on the market for £415,000 compared to £230,000 for the diesel equivalent. However, for the smaller and medium vehicles, there is an increasing range of green alternatives, which have comparable whole life costs to their diesel equivalents.

Therefore, to deliver a green fleet for the future, this Strategy sets out several principles for the decision-making process. This will enable decisions to consider the most current information and options available at the time of purchase.

Chart 1 shows the decision-making process for all future vehicle purchases.

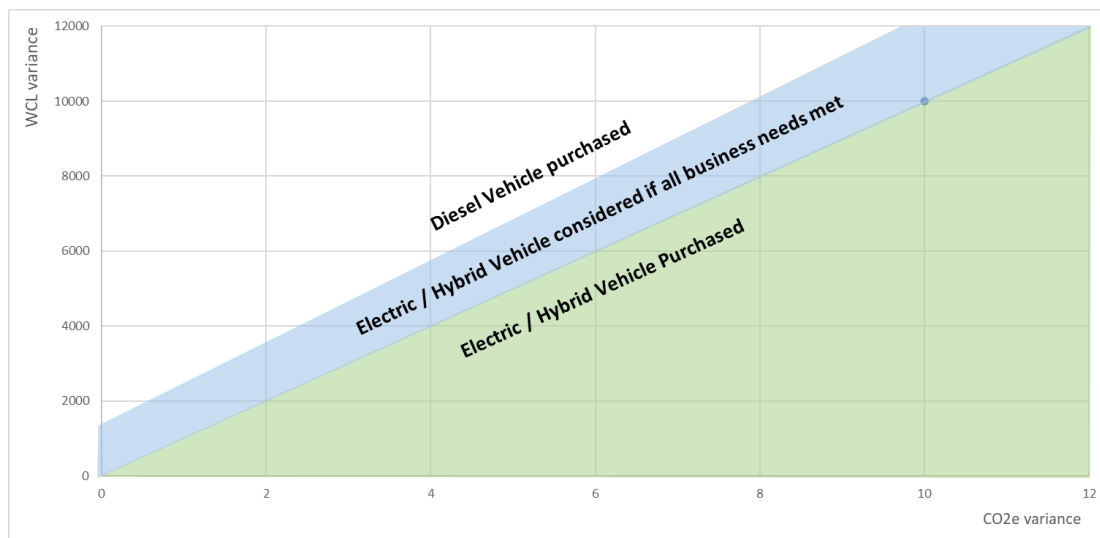
Use of telematics on the vehicles will enable managers to determine whether the vehicles are truly needed to deliver the service and what their environmental impact is. This will be fundamental to the decision-making process going forward and will not only seek to deliver a greener fleet but also reduce the fleet and improve efficiency.

Cost Viability Matrix

Given the price variance for electric vehicles, further consideration of the cost viability is required to determine whether any additional costs are sufficiently offset by the environmental benefits.

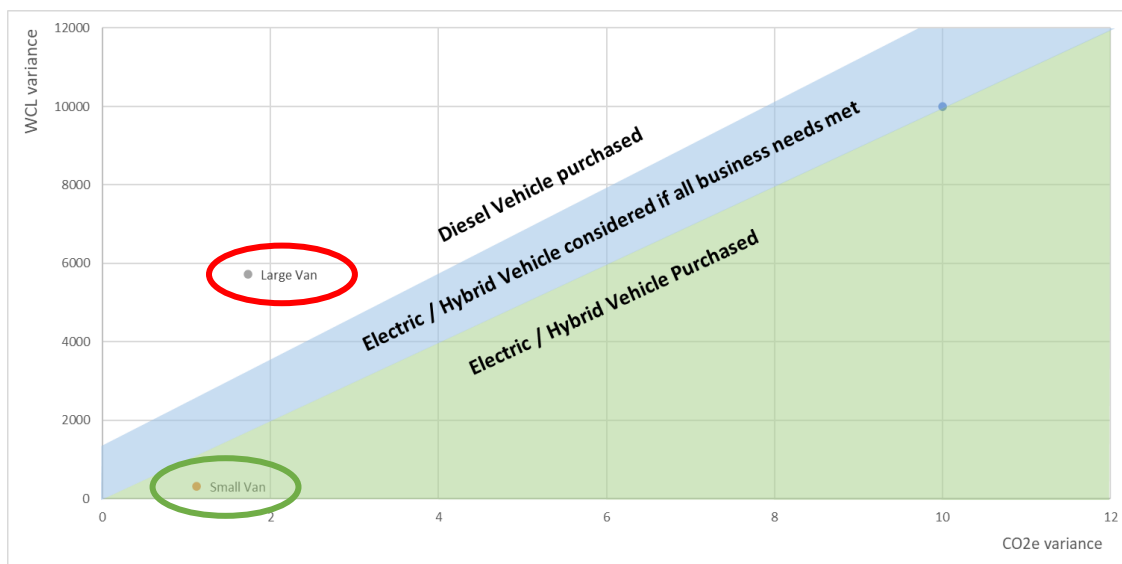
Graph 5 shows the variation in cost and emissions for electric and diesel vehicles, based on data from the Energy Saving Trust. Using this information to compare electric, hybrid and diesel options enables the Council to determine which vehicle should be purchased and will most closely meet the Council's objectives.

The Cost Viability Matrix (shown below) considers the variance in the CO₂e emissions and annualised whole life costs (based on 5-year depreciation) between an electric and diesel vehicle. If the variance of the two variables falls within the green section, it indicates that the electric vehicle is financially viable to purchase. However, if the variance falls within the white section, then the diesel vehicle offers the most viable option. A middle blue area enables further consideration to be made regarding which vehicle meets all the business needs and would be most appropriate for the service.



Cost Viability Matrix – Green Fleet Purchase

Graph 4 below shows how the matrix applies to the purchase of a small van and a large van. The small electric van falls within the green section and therefore is financially viable. However, the high variance in annualised WLC for a large electric van means that the environmental benefit is not sufficiently offset by the high additional cost. It would be expected that over time, the cost of the larger electric vehicles will reduce as more vehicles are developed and the market broadens.



Graph 4: Cost Viability Matrix for the purchase of small and large vans

Conclusion

The priority for this Strategy is to reduce the impact our fleet has on the environment in a sustainable and deliverable way. It is paramount that the vehicles purchased can support staff to deliver the high standard of work expected by residents and visitors to the Borough. Overall reducing our fleet and increasing efficiency delivers the most benefit, both in terms of

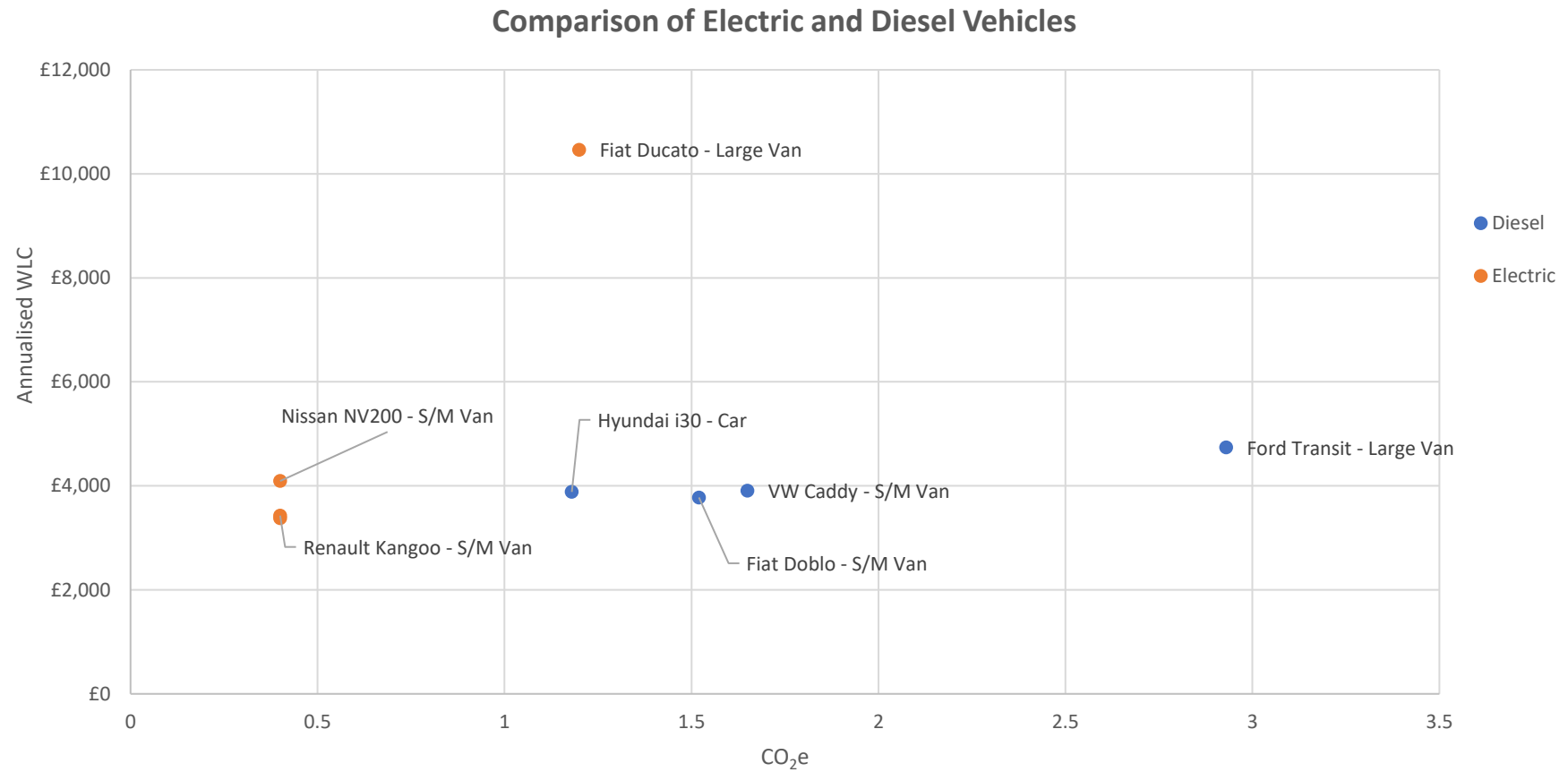
environmental and financial impact. Therefore, this is our priority for the future and telematics within all vehicles will be used to deliver this.

Investing in electric or alternative fuels, where they offer sufficient environmental benefits to offset any additional costs, will remain a priority. The Cost Viability Matrix will be used to determine this and ensure that the Council invests appropriately in emerging technologies.

Actions

The data analysis and application of the decision-making process and cost viability matrix enables us to identify several actions to be taken forward. These are outlined below and will evolve over time as the process and strategy remains live and responsive to market changes.

| Class | Actions |
|----------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| All | For the Compliance and Transport Manager and Head of Service to independently assess whether replacement vehicles are required to meet the business need |
| Light | Priority for electric or alternative technologies as market is more developed and data indicates that these offer viable alternatives to current diesel fleet |
| Medium | Some opportunities currently exist for hybrid or full electric vehicles, which will be considered where the whole life costs are sufficiently offset by the real environmental benefits |
| Medium / Heavy | To extend the life – where financially and operationally viable – of medium and heavy commercial vehicles in the fleet to enable alternative options to be considered in the future |



Graph 5: Based on Data from Energy Saving Trust – Comparison of Annualised WLC and CO₂e emissions from comparable electric and diesel vehicles

Green Fleet Strategy:
Fleet Selection Process

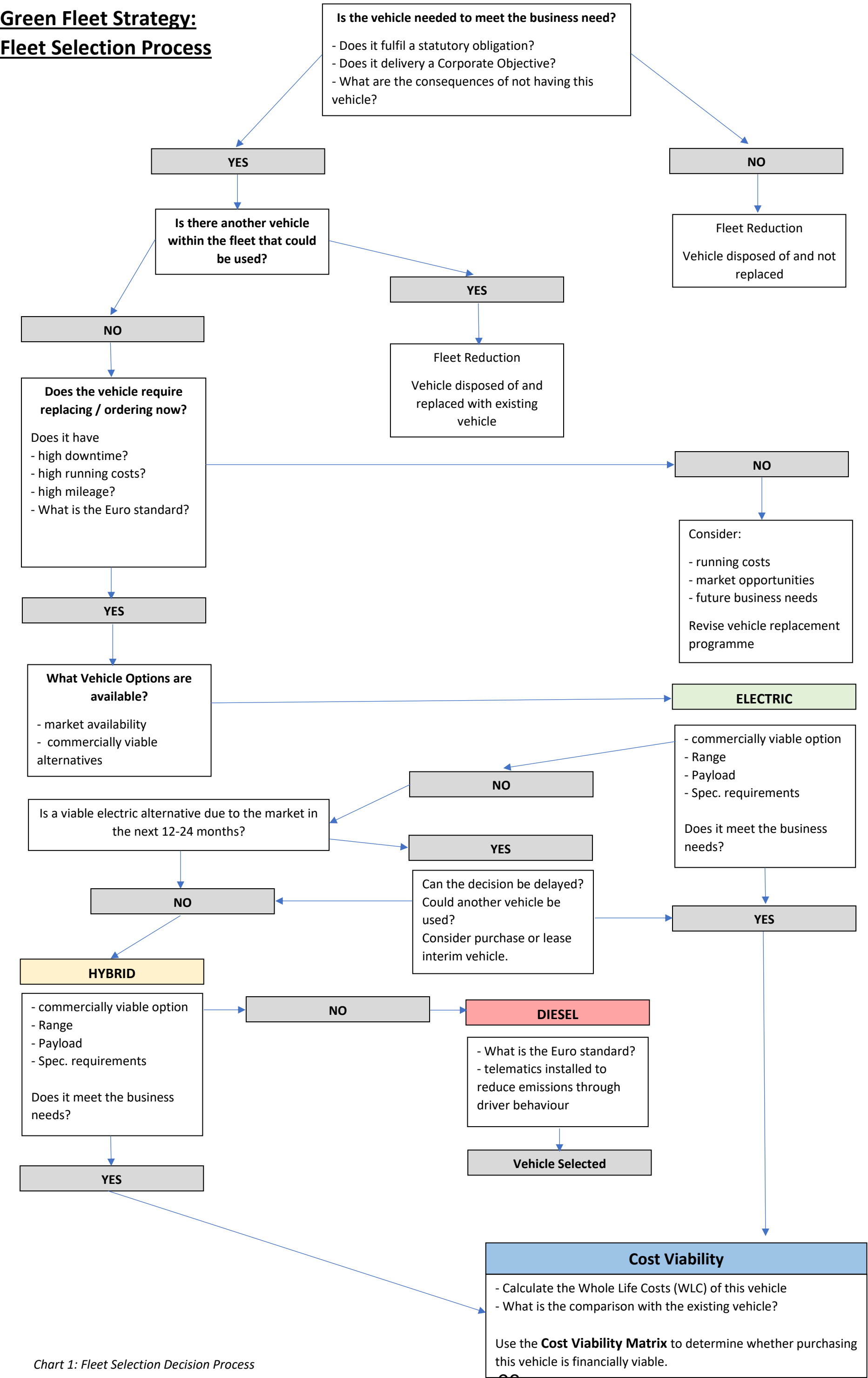


Chart 1: Fleet Selection Decision Process

**COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT
POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

15 November 2022

Rural England Prosperity Fund Investment Plan

| Timetable | |
|------------------------------------------|------------------|
| Meeting | Date |
| Communities, Housing and Environment PAC | 15 November 2022 |
| Leader | 21 November 2022 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Will this be a Key Decision? | Yes |
| Urgency | Not Applicable |
| Final Decision-Maker | Leader |
| Lead Director | Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance |
| Lead Officer and Report Author | Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance and Anna Collier, Insight, Communities and Governance Manager |
| Classification | Public |
| Wards affected | Rural Wards |

Executive Summary

This report sets out the plan for spending the Rural England Prosperity Fund which has been allocated to the council as an addendum to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund allocated earlier this year.

Purpose of Report

Recommendation for Decision

This report makes the following recommendation:

1. To recommend to the Leader that the Intervention for the Rural England Prosperity Fund be approved and then submitted to Government by the Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance.
2. To recommend to the Leader whether a cap per grant (as set out at 2.18) is appropriate and at what level.

Rural England Prosperity Fund Investment 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>The investment plan proposed aligns with the council's objectives for Homes and Communities and Safe, Clean and Green.</p> | Anna Collier, Insight, Communities and Governance 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 cross-cutting objectives by enabling rural communities to apply for funding to improve community infrastructure whilst also contributing to our ambition to achieve net zero by 2030.</p> | Anna Collier, Insight, Communities and Governance Manager |
| Risk Management | 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. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy | Anna Collier, Insight, Communities and Governance Manager |
| Financial | The proposals set out in the recommendation will be funded by the Council's Rural England fund allocation. A funding breakdown is set out at 2.10. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |

| | | |
|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| Staffing | This fund is an addendum to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund so no money from the fund is allocated for supporting delivery as UKSPF allows for up to 4% of that fund to be spent each year supporting the delivery of local investment plans. The proposal is that work will be managed with our existing staffing with additional project management support funded through the 4% of the UKSPF allowance to be combined with other major project support | Anna Collier, Insight, Communities and Governance Manager |
| Legal | Acting on the recommendations is within the Council's powers. | Legal Team |
| Information Governance | The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council Processes. | Anna Collier, Insight, Communities and Governance Manager |
| Equalities | The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment | Anna Collier, Insight, Communities and Governance Manager |
| Public Health | We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals. | Anna Collier, Insight, Communities and Governance Manager |
| Crime and Disorder | We recognise that the recommendations have the potential to have a positive impact on local communities for example through the creation or improvement of community infrastructure. | Anna Collier, Insight, Communities and Governance Manager |
| Procurement | The Council will act within the Council's financial procedure rules and the rules of the Rural England Prosperity Fund. | Anna Collier, Insight, Communities and Governance Manager |
| Biodiversity and Climate Change | The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and align with the intentions of the MBC Action Plan to encourage renewable energy generation, reducing carbon, supporting EV | Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager |

| | | |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|
| | infrastructure development, improving and developing green and blue space for Nature Based Solutions and community cohesion. | |
|--|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--|

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Council submitted its UKSPF Local Investment Plan to the Government in August 2022. The Rural Fund is a top-up to the UKSPF and is available to eligible local authorities in England. It succeeds EU funding from LEADER and the Growth Programme which were part of the Rural Development Programme for England.
- 2.2 The Rural England Prosperity Fund (referred to as the Rural Fund) objectives sit within the UKSPF investment priorities for:
- Supporting Local Business; and
 - Community and Place
- 2.3 They also relate to two of the Levelling Up White Paper Missions:
- Mission 1 – Living standards; and
 - Mission 9 – Pride in place
- 2.4 The Rural Fund has been developed by the Government as a top-up to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and provides capital funding to:
- support new and existing rural businesses to develop new products and facilities that will be of wider benefit to the local economy. This includes farm businesses looking to diversify income streams.
 - support new and improved community infrastructure, providing essential community services and assets for local people and businesses to benefit the local economy.
- 2.5 Projects must be in a rural area. For Rural Fund purposes, rural areas are:
- towns, villages, and hamlets with populations below 10,000 and the wider countryside
 - market or 'hub towns' with populations of up to 30,000 that serve their surrounding rural areas as centres of employment and in providing services

Interventions

- 2.6 The Government have identified a list of interventions, objectives, outputs, and outcomes attached at Appendix A. Below is information taken directly from the Rural Fund prospectus:
- "The list of interventions also provides example projects you could fund, such as grants for:
 - food processing equipment to scale up from domestic to commercial kitchens (non-farming businesses only)
 - converting farm buildings to other business uses
 - rural tourism such as investments in visitor accommodation and farm diversification for event venues

- 2.7 Investments should demonstrate value for money and additionality. We'll provide materials to help support your assessment of projects and to share best practice.
- 2.8 You should also consider how investments contribute to net zero and nature recovery objectives. These include:
- the UK's commitment to cut greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2050
 - wider environmental considerations, such as resilience to natural hazards the 25 Year Environment Plan commitments
 - To support green growth, think about how projects can work with the natural environment to achieve objectives. At a minimum, you need to consider the project's impact on our natural assets and nature.
 - You should prioritise projects that deliver the greatest economic, environmental, and social benefits.
- 2.9 Rural Fund projects can be part of a wider UKSPF intervention. They can provide extra funding where the objectives are the same to add value.

Funding

- 2.10 The Council's fund allocation is £539,728 and all the funding must be capital spend delivered over two years 2023/24 and 2024/25. There is no guidance yet on how this should be profiled.
- 2.11 This fund is an addendum to the UK Shared Prosperity Fund so no money from the fund is allocated for supporting delivery as UKSPF allows for up to 4% of that fund to be spent each year supporting the delivery of local investment plans. The proposal is that work will be managed with our existing staffing with additional project management support funded through the 4% of the UKSPF allowance to be combined with other major project support.
- 2.12 To access the funding the council has been asked to provide specific additional information as an addendum to our UKSPF Local Investment Plan. The information requested includes the local context including evidence of challenges, market failures and opportunities. We will also have to set out the interventions and outcomes we have selected and explain how these meet local challenges and opportunities. The final section to be completed concerns delivery, including an indicative spending profile for the 2 years of the fund and approach to engagement with rural partners and plans for future engagement.

Delivery

- 2.13 On reviewing the list of interventions, we have identified that the fund could be used to support and improve community infrastructure with a view to supporting our ambitions to reach net zero and reflecting that there are few funding schemes available for parishes and community groups to access.
- 2.14 The fund would be delivered by providing a grant scheme for Parishes and Community Organisations to apply for either

- grants for their village halls and community assets to improve facilities with a view to creating a greener and more sustainable community infrastructure, for example introducing Low carbon heating solutions, improving energy efficiency, insulation, renewable energy generations, nature base solutions solar panels to reduce electricity bills.
- grants to refurbish/fit out community assets so they can become multi use facilities supporting community activities.

2.15 Example projects from the government guidance:

| Investment Priority | Intervention | Example Projects | Objectives | Indicative Outputs | Indicative Outcomes |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Supporting rural communities | <p>Funding (capital grants) for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups.</p> <p>This intervention corresponds to the UKSPF intervention E11.</p> | <p>Capital grants for provision of net zero infrastructure for rural communities and to support rural tourism activity, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • EV charging points • community energy schemes such as scaled up biomass, heat pumps or solar <p>Capital grants for kitchens in community hubs which are capable of supporting food and drink entrepreneurs to get accreditation for food production.</p> <p>Funding for resilience infrastructure and nature-based solutions that protect local businesses and community areas from natural hazards including flooding and coastal erosion.</p> | <p>Strengthening our social fabric and fostering a sense of local pride and belonging, through investment in activities that enhance physical, cultural and social ties and amenities. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • community infrastructure • local green space • community led projects | <p>Number of EV charging points</p> <p>Number of visitors or locals using charging points</p> <p>Number of community energy projects funded</p> | <p>Improved perception of facilities or amenities</p> <p>Increased users of facilities or amenities</p> <p>Improved perceived or experienced accessibility</p> <p>Number of new businesses created</p> |

- 2.16 Parish councils have already been approached to identify whether there was a need for this type of fund, and the suggestion has been met very positively, with examples of projects that they would like to be considered, such as Solar Panels, EV charging points, Broadband.
- 2.17 Views have been sought from Helen Grant MP and Helen Whatley MP and our Anchor Institution partners, which include representatives from the NHS, Police, Fire Service, KCC, faith groups, Housing Associations, and the VCS, will be consulted on the 9 November.
- 2.18 A cap could be placed on the value of applications. We recognise that some projects could score very highly across the scoring criteria but may be very costly, thus limiting the number of projects that could be supported. Similar schemes such as LoCASE have a cap of £10K, however having no cap or increasing the cap will enable parishes and community schemes to do more and reflects limited alternative funding sources.
- 2.19 It is also recognised that two stage process may be helpful to allow for initial survey or feasibility work to be undertaken and then a second phase for funding of the actions identified as deliverable.
- 2.20 A draft template for grant application can be seen at Appendix B along with an example draft scoring matrix, the scoring matrix has been developed based upon achieving interventions objectives and outcomes.
- 2.21 The grant application panel will be chaired by the Leader with member and officer support.

Important dates

- 2.22 Dates are indicative and may be subject to change.
- 3 September 2022 - Rural Fund launch
 - 12 September 2022 - Rural Fund addendum platform launch
 - September 2022 - engagement sessions with local authorities and local partners to support the Rural Fund process
 - 3 October 2022 to 30 November 2022 - Rural Fund addendum submissions window
 - November 2022 to January 2023 - Rural Fund assessment period for government
 - January 2023 - anticipated date for approval of Rural Fund proposals
 - April 2023 - first payments expected to lead local authorities
 - April 2023 to March 2025 - funding period

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Having considered how the fund can have the most impact, legacy, and fairness the intervention proposed is to support rural communities via 'Funding (capital grants) for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups', to

support and improve community infrastructure with a view to supporting our ambitions to reach net zero via the administration of a grants scheme.

- 3.2 The Policy Advisory Committee (PAC) could choose to recommend an alternative Intervention as shown at Appendix A or retain the current intervention and propose an alternative delivery method.
 - 3.3 It is important to note that if the PAC choose to do this, that any recommendation should be made with consideration of the available funds and the eligibility and spending criteria as set out at 2.10.
 - 3.4 PAC could choose to recommend a new project to be explored. Should the PAC consider this option then the timeline as set out at 2.22, should be considered as well as the requirement to engage key stakeholders.
 - 3.5 Reject Entirely, if the Committee recommends that the Council should not create an addendum to the Local Investment Plan for the delivery of the rural fund projects the Council would risk losing the allocation. If a completely new plan was proposed this would require significant work in a very short space of time, with the final deadline for submission set as 30 November 2022.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Having given consideration as to how the fund can have the most impact, legacy, and fairness the intervention proposed is to Support rural communities via 'Funding (capital grants) for investment in capacity building and infrastructure support for local civil society and community groups', to support and improve community infrastructure with a view to supporting our ambitions to reach net zero via community grants.
-

5. RISK

- 5.1 The projects selected for delivery as part of this fund will be overseen monthly by the Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance. Funding is allocated by government based on the provision of monitoring delivery, outputs and outcomes, which are reviewed at these meetings.
 - 5.2 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. 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 PACs were consulted on the UKSPF projects in July 2022, this is a Top Up to the UKSPF Investment Plan, for the benefit of rural communities.
-

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 Once approved by the Leader of the Council the Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance will prepare the addendum to the UKSPF Investment Plan and submit it by the deadline of the 30 November 2022.
 - 7.2 Key officers will continue to develop the documentation and guidance ready for publication.
 - 7.3 The Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance already chairs a monthly operational programme board to monitor delivery of the UKSPF project, the delivery of the Rural Fund will be added to this meeting to monitor delivery.
 - 7.4 As with UKSPF projects it is proposed that strategic oversight is achieved through the MBC Executive and regular engagement with the MBC Anchor Institutions Group plus Maidstone MPs.
-

8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix 1: Interventions
 - Appendix 2: Draft Application
 - Appendix 3: Draft Matrix
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Local Investment Plan Report July 2022 -
<http://app07:9080/documents/s82663/UK%20Share%20Prosperity%20Fund%20Local%20Investment%20Plan.pdf>

Agenda Item 17

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING & ENVIRONMENT POLICY & ADVISORY COMMITTEE

15 November 2022

Maidstone Borough Council Fire & Building Safety Policy

| Timetable | |
|-------------------|------------------|
| Meeting | Date |
| CHE PAC Committee | 15 November 2022 |
| Executive | 23 November 2022 |

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------|
| Will this be a Key Decision? | Yes |
| Urgency | Not Applicable |
| Final Decision-Maker | EXECUTIVE |
| Lead Head of Service | William Cornall Director of Regeneration & Place |
| Lead Officer and Report Author | John Littlemore Head of Housing & Community Services |
| Classification | Public |
| Wards affected | All |

Executive Summary

The CHE Policy & Advisory Committee is asked to consider and make recommendation to the Executive on the adoption of a new policy that will inform how the Housing Service delivers the Council's obligations in relation to 'Fire and Building Safety'.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to the Executive:

1. The CHE PAC recommends that the Executive adopts the Fire & Building Safety Policy attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

Maidstone Borough Council Fire & Building Safety Policy

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 • Accepting the recommendations will materially improve the Council's ability to achieve the corporate priorities. | Head of Housing & Regulatory Services |
| 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.</p> | Head of Housing & Regulatory Services |
| Risk Management | This is covered in the body of the report. | Head of Housing & Regulatory Services |
| Financial | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation. | Section 151 Officer & Finance Team |
| Staffing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing. | Head of Housing & Regulatory Services |
| Legal | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to accept the recommendations without agreeing suitable alternatives | Interim Team Leader |

| | | |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | <p>may place the Council in breach of the Building Safety Act 2022, the Fire Safety Regulations 2022 and associated fire safety legislation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • | (Contentious and Corporate Governance) |
| Information Governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council Processes. | Information Governance Team – either Anna, Georgia or Lauren to review and approve. |
| Equalities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment | 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. | Head of Housing & Regulatory Services |
| Crime and Disorder | Accepting the recommendations will have no negative impact in assisting the Council in reducing crime and disorder. | Head of Housing & Regulatory Services |
| Procurement | None identified | Head of Housing & Regulatory Services |
| Biodiversity and Climate Change | The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and are and there are no direct implications on biodiversity and climate change. | Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager |

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 Following the Grenfell Fire Tragedy in 2017, the government set up a Public Inquiry into a range of matters relating to fire and building safety. As a result of the recommendations to date and on the government's own initiative, a range of regulatory and statutory changes have been introduced or in the process of being enacted.

- 2.2 This report sets out how these changes affect the delivery of the Council's Housing Service and the response required. This report does not cover other areas of the Council's services, such as Building Control and Planning, which will be dealt with separately.
- 2.3 As this is a specialist area of legislation, the Council has taken advice from Pinsent Masons law firm on the implications for the Council. For the purpose of this report their advice covered Housing Legislation: including the Housing Health and Safety Rating System, the regulation of HMOs, interaction with the Fire and Rescue Service and the application of legislation to low, medium, and high-rise apartment blocks.
- 2.4 The report covers a number of areas but of particular note is that Members are asked to consider the proposal set out at Paragraph 3.7, which addresses how the Council will respond to serious dereliction of duty by property owners or managing agents. The suggested approach is in line with discussions had with the Department of Levelling Up, Homes and Communities specialist adviser team.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Option 1. Recommend the Fire & Building Safety Policy is adopted by the Executive.
- 3.2 Option 2. Do not recommend the Fire & Building Safety Policy is adopted by the Executive. This option is not recommended as it is important for the Council to have an adopted policy to guide officers and residents on the approach the Council will take in relation to Fire & Building Safety by the Housing Service.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Option 1 is the preferred recommendation, as this will enable the Council to have a Fire & Building Safety Policy for the Housing Service that is compliant with current regulations.
-

5. RISK

- 5.1 If the Council does not have an adopted Fire & Building Safety Policy, it may leave itself open to criticism and risk of a failure to comply with current legislation. Having a clear policy to guide officers and residents reduces the risk of failure in this important aspect of the Council's statutory Housing duties.
-

6. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix 1: Maidstone Borough Council Fire & Building Safety Policy
-

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Maidstone Borough Council's

Fire and Building Safety Policy – Housing Service

This document sets out the Council's policy for governing how the Housing Service will fulfil its statutory duties in relation to regulations covering Fire and Building Safety.

CONTENTS

1. STATUTORY BACKGROUND
2. REGULATORY REFORM (Fire Safety) ORDER 2005
3. HOUSING HEALTH and SAFETY RATING SYSTEM
4. DECENT HOMES STANDARD
5. HOUSES OF MULTIPLE OCCUPATION
6. DATA GATHERING
(MBC'S ROLE AS LANDLORD)
7. BUILDING SAFETY ACT 2022
8. FIRE SAFETY (England) REGULATIONS 2022
9. EMERGENCY EVACUATION INFORMATION SHARING
10. ACCOMMODATION TEAM

Appendix A.

Interim Joint Working Protocol between Kent Fire and Rescue

VERSION CONTROL INFORMATION

1. Statutory Background

- 1.1 Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) has a general duty to keep housing conditions in its area under review by virtue of Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004. This does not, however, impose a duty that MBC must review all housing proactively. To comply with its duty, MBC will, through its Housing Strategy, enable a general review of housing conditions and an ability to act when inadequate housing conditions are reported to them. *Responsibility for this activity is delivered through the Housing & Health Team.*
- 1.2 A guidance note on Local Authority Enforcement Powers was issued by the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government in February 2019. It stated that where a local authority is aware of a high-rise residential building with potentially unsafe ACM cladding and there is no plan in place to remediate the building, it should undertake a HHSRS assessment to ascertain the risk of harm to an occupier that the cladding poses.
- 1.3 As part of future reforms, the Regulator of Social Housing's consumer regulation objective is to include safety explicitly. All landlords will be required to make a public nomination of the person responsible for Health & Safety (H&S). The Regulator of Social Housing will enter into a memorandum of understanding with the Health & Safety Executive (HSE), once the Building Safety Regulator is established, to ensure information can be shared effectively.

2. Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 ("RRO")

- 2.1 Enforcement of the RRO within the MBC area is the responsibility of Kent Fire and Rescue Service (KFRS). The detail of the RRO is relevant for MBC because:
 - (a) MBC's Housing & Health Team will need to coordinate with KFRS in relation to private residential buildings, where MBC have responsibilities under the Housing Act 2004; and
 - (b) KFRS is the enforcing authority where MBC is the landlord.
- 2.2 Amendments introduced by the Fire Safety Act 2021, which came into force on 16 May 2022, confirm that external walls do fall within the remit of the RRO. The Act makes clear that where a building contains two or more residential units, the structure of the building, external walls and cladding systems, windows, balconies and flat entrance doors all fall within the scope of fire safety legislation, in addition to the common parts.
- 2.3 Kent local housing authorities have entered into an Interim Joint Working Protocol between themselves and Kent Fire & Rescue Service that sets out how each responsible authority will deliver their duties through co-operation and understanding. This important document is attached as Appendix A to this Policy document.
- 2.4 The Regulators' Code requires regulatory activity to be based on risk and an evidence-based approach to determining priority risks and the allocation of resources.

3. Housing Health and Safety Rating System

- 3.1 MBC's Housing & Health Team will exercise its general duty to keep housing conditions in our area under review in accord with Section 3 of the Housing Act 2004. Housing will be assessed using the Housing Health and Safety Rating System ("HHSRS") to determine whether the condition of the housing creates a hazard for residents or visitors. Fire is one of 29 hazards that are required to be assessed as part of the HHSRS. *Officers who have undertaken the relevant HHSRS training will carry out residential building assessments.*
- 3.2 The HHSRS is a risk-based assessment approach, which looks at evidence of hazards associated with residential property. The HHSRS applies to residential property of all tenures. It applies inside the demise of individuals' flats or homes, as well as to common parts of multi-occupied buildings.
- 3.3 An inspection under the HHSRS may be triggered by a complaint from a tenant or occupier. The local housing authority may also receive information from another statutory agency that gives rise to the need to investigate further. In addition, the Council's Housing & Health Team can conduct inspections if they become aware of an issue.
- 3.4 In cases where MBC suspects there may be a hazard it has a duty to inspect the premises. If, while undertaking s.3 duties, MBC consider it would be appropriate for housing to be inspected with a view to determining whether a Category 1 or 2 hazard exists, then MBC must arrange for such an inspection to be carried out.
- 3.5 During the assessment the Housing & Health Officer (HHO) needs to determine whether there are any category 1 hazards (where a property contains potentially serious risks to the health and safety of the occupants). In such cases MBC has a duty to take an appropriate course of action that may require the landlord / building owner to rectify a defect to reduce the likelihood of harm occurring. Where there is a category 2 hazard (less serious risk) MBC has a power to take action but is not obliged to do so.
- 3.6 On 29 November 2018, the government announced that they were backing local authorities to take emergency remedial action where private sector building owners are refusing to remediate high-rise buildings with unsafe cladding. Where MBC identifies potentially unsafe ACM cladding and there is no plan in place to remediate the building, a HHSRS assessment will be undertaken to ascertain the risk of harm to occupiers that the cladding poses. The same set of legal criteria to apply in relation to low, medium and high-rise buildings.
- 3.7 *Officers will have regard to the Council's Housing Standards Enforcement Policy when determining the appropriate steps to be taken and authorisation required. Where works in default are being considered to remediate cladding work, the Housing & Health Manager must seek advice from the government's specialist adviser. Works in default exceeding £250,000 must be notified to the Head of Housing & Regulatory Services, who will seek approval by the Council's Executive before the remedial work is commenced.*

4. Decent Homes Standard

- 4.1 The Decent Homes Standard is a government target to ensure all social housing meets certain standards of decency. The HHSRS is the statutory element of the Decent Homes Standard. Under this standard a decent home meets the following 4 criteria:
- (a) It meets the current statutory minimum standard for housing;
 - (b) It is in a reasonable state of repair;
 - (c) It has reasonably modern facilities and services; and
 - (d) It provides a reasonable degree of thermal comfort.
- 4.2 Government is considering enlarging the scope of the decent homes standard to include the private rented sector. This might mean that Local housing authorities will have to work with partner agencies to make all applicable private sector homes meet the standard where possible. Where these standards are not met, officers of the Council will have regard to its Housing Standards Enforcement Policy when determining the appropriate action to take.
- 4.3 MBC is a Registered Provider of social housing. It is a requirement of the home standard that Registered Providers of social housing will meet the standard set out in section 5 of the Government's Decent Homes Guidance. MBC will ensure that its dwellings are free of category 1 hazards under the HHSRS. The Regulator of Social Housing has enforcement powers where the home standard is not met. *Responsibility for ensuring MBC's residential stock meets the Decent Homes Standards is with the Housing Portfolio Manager.*

5. Houses of Multiple Occupation ("HMOs")

- 5.1 Under the Housing Act 2004 and associated Regulations, licences are required for HMOs. A Licensed HMO is now defined as a property which houses 5 people or more in 2 separate households, this is an expansion on the original definition and applies regardless of the number of storeys in the property.
- 5.2 The HMO licencing regime provides the procedures to assess the fitness of the person to be a licence holder, the management arrangements of the premises and suitability of the property for the number of occupants. It is a requirement on local housing authorities to satisfy themselves as soon as practicable and not later than 5 years from the date of receipt of the application that there are no part 1 functions (relating to assessment of categories 1 and 2 described above) under the HHSRS which need to be exercised.
- 5.3 MBC has a duty to effectively implement mandatory licencing in the area and must ensure applications for licences are determined within a reasonable time period. This includes a statutory requirement for MBC to satisfy itself that there are no housing condition functions which ought to be exercised under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004. This is achieved through the HHO visiting premises to satisfy themselves that the property is compliant with the legislation or otherwise what action the landlord/owner must take. *Responsibility for HMO licencing and compliance sits with the Housing & Health Manager in the Housing & Health Team.*

6. Data Gathering

6.1 MBC has obligations to carry out reviews of housing in their area, making sure they inform Department for Levelling Up, Homes & Community (DLUHC) of any buildings over 18 metres in height. There are a limited number of buildings in the Maidstone area to which this might have applied. Where buildings are identified and remedial action must be taken by a landlord or building owner, then Local Housing Authorities are expected to utilise their powers to ensure this work is undertaken and if not, pursue the appropriate enforcement action.

6.2 Guidance on the precise details of the data that local authorities and building owners will need to retain is awaited from Government. Below is a summary of the data gathering requirements notified to date:

Low-Rise blocks of flats with up to four floors - owner:

(a) Identify blocks with ACM cladding and provide a sample.

Medium-Rise blocks of flats (five and six floors – 11m to under 18m from ground level) – owner.

(a) Identify blocks with ACM cladding and provide a sample.

High-Rise blocks of flats (18m or more from ground level) – local authority.

(a) Notify MHCLG of buildings of this height.

(b) Collect data as to the external wall and insulation materials.

(c) Identify blocks with ACM cladding and the owner to provide a sample.

6.3 Local housing authorities must also take steps to identify residential buildings over 18m that are clad in Aluminium Composite Material (ACM) but to date no buildings have been found in Maidstone to be clad with ACM. *The Housing & Health Manager has responsibility for ensuring compliance with the data gathering requirements.*

MBC Role as a Landlord

7. Building Safety Act 2022

7.1 The Building Safety Act 2022 imposes extensive reforms for England. The heart of this new regime is the safety of residents in high rise buildings. The regime will carry criminal sanctions which will be enforced by the HSE, as the new Building Safety Regulator. The Building Safety Act will be gradually brought into force over the next 18 months. It will have a phased implementation for existing buildings, all of which will come into scope by October 2028.

7.2 For higher risk buildings, a new set of roles and responsibilities will be allocated throughout the lifecycle of a building. Initially, the new regime will apply to buildings of at least 7 storeys or 18 metres with a residential element.

7.3 MBC is a stock transfer council and at the current time does not have any buildings of more than ground plus 4 storeys in its portfolio and therefore not all of the aspects of the Building

Safety Act will apply to the Council at present. The scope of the Act is also likely to expand over time and therefore it is important that this Policy is kept under review as and when the regulations are amended.

- 7.4 However, some aspects of the wider reforms will apply to MBC when they come into force because they impact on all buildings. These regulations relate to the development and refurbishment of property and are outside the scope of this Strategy. *The Housing Portfolio Manager is responsible for ensuring the operational and strategic compliance with the regulations.*

8. Fire Safety (England) Regulations 2022

- 8.1 These new regulations should not be confused with the Fire Safety Act 2021, which clarifies that of the FSO applies to the structure, external walls (including balconies, doors and windows) and the flat entrance doors in multi-occupied residential buildings and came into force on 1 October 2021. They implement many of the Grenfell Phase 1 recommendations:

In high-rise residential buildings, responsible persons will be required to:

- (a) Building Plans: provide their local Fire and Rescue Service with up-to-date electronic building floor plans and to place a hard copy of these plans, alongside a single page building plan which identifies key firefighting equipment, in a secure information box on site.
- (b) External Wall Systems: provide to their local Fire and Rescue Service information about the design and materials of a high-rise building's external wall system and to inform the Fire and Rescue Service of any material changes to these walls. Also, they will be required to provide information in relation to the level of risk that the design and materials of the external wall structure gives rise to and any mitigating steps taken.
- (c) Lifts and other Key Fire-Fighting Equipment: undertake monthly checks on the operation of lifts intended for use by firefighters, and evacuation lifts in their building and check the functionality of other key pieces of firefighting equipment. They will also be required to report any defective lifts or equipment to their local Fire and Rescue Service as soon as possible after detection if the fault cannot be fixed within 24 hours, and to record the outcome of checks and make them available to residents.
- (d) Information Boxes: install and maintain a secure information box in their building. This box must contain the name and contact details of the Responsible Person and hard copies of the building floor plans.
- (e) Wayfinding Signage: to install signage visible in low light or smoky conditions that identifies flat and floor numbers in the stairwells of relevant buildings.

In residential buildings with storeys over 11 metres in height, responsible persons will be required to:

- (a) Fire Doors: undertake annual checks of flat entrance doors and quarterly checks of all fire doors in the common parts.

In all multi-occupied residential buildings with two or more sets of domestic premises, responsible persons will be required to:

(a) Fire Safety Instructions: provide relevant fire safety instructions to their residents, which will include instructions on how to report a fire and any other instruction which sets out what a resident must do once a fire has occurred, based on the evacuation strategy for the building.

(b) Fire Door Information: provide residents with information relating to the importance of fire doors in fire safety.

9. Emergency Evacuation Information Sharing (EEIS+)

9.1 On the 18th May 2022 the Government published its conclusions to the consultation on personal emergency evacuation plans (PEEPs) for vulnerable residents in residential buildings. Concerns around practicality, proportionality, and the safety case have led the government to conclude that mandating PEEPs as described in the consultation would have a detrimental effect on those with certain protected characteristics: in particular, disabled individuals, the elderly, and those who are less mobile due to pregnancy or maternity. The report further concluded that compelling RPs to administer PEEPs at this point could prove counterproductive because it could increase the risks posed to vulnerable people.

9.2 The Government concluded that a requirement to mandate RPs to acquire and store this information should not proceed at this time and will be consulting further. In the interim, MBC considers it good practice to have in place PEEPS for those residential buildings that may be accommodating vulnerable clients. This includes Trinity, 1 Marsham Street and Aylesbury House. *The Housing & Inclusion Manager is responsible for ensuring that PEEPS for these properties are kept current and are accessible to the emergency services.*

9.3 The type of information that will be contained in the PEEP includes:

(a) A requirement for vulnerable residents to self-identify with the responsible person.

(b) For those who self-identify, the responsible person will need to offer a person-centred fire risk assessment and connect the residential with a home fire safety visit from the local fire and rescue service.

(c) Details of mobility impaired residents to be shared with the local fire and rescue service and in the premises information box.

(d) Guidance will be published to help responsible persons judge what measures it is practical to put in place to support the person-centred fire risk assessment.

10. Accommodation Team

10.1 Maidstone Borough Council's Accommodation Team has responsibility for managing housing stock across the range of its portfolio, including temporary accommodation, affordable housing and on behalf of Maidstone Property Holdings Ltd.

10.2 The Accommodation Team has a suite of documents to support the management of the portfolio and guide staff when complying with the various regulations governing housing management. Below is an extract from the 'Health and Safety – Housing Services Policy'

4.6 Fire Safety

4.6.1 Fire safety and compliance is an essential part of H&S adherence. There are many aspects to fire safety including fire risk assessments, alarm and call point testing and smoke detectors. It is the responsibility of the Accommodation Team to ensure fire safety is complaint across our stock.

4.6.2 All our shared accommodation will have a Fire Risk Assessment conducted every two years by a qualified assessor. These assessments will highlight the actions required to ensure compliance and safety and these actions will need to be completed in a required timeframe as set out in the assessment.

4.6.3 All our self-contained units will have as a minimum and annual internal inspection by a qualified fire contractor.

4.6.4 Many properties within our portfolio have varying requirements – some have shared communal space but still self-contained, so will need more frequent checks, than a completely self-contained street properties. The matrix of requirements of all our properties is found in Fire Safety Inspection Matrix or Appendix 1.

- 10.3 An annual review of the documents will be undertaken by the Housing Portfolio Manager to ensure that the documents are maintained and kept up to date with current regulations.

Interim Joint Working Protocol between Kent Fire and Rescue

Authority and Local Housing Authorities

1. Purpose

To create a strong working relationship and to allow both authorities to work together effectively and in a structured way in order to achieve the best outcome in matters relating to the Housing Act 2004 (HA 2004) and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 (FSO).

When working together each authority will take the role of 'lead' authority, or 'supporting authority', dependent on the criteria set out below.

2. Key principle

Both authorities will support each other in providing technical advice and support beyond the requirements of the HA2004 and the FSO, when the lead authority's work (see below) will be complemented by the supporting authority'.

3. Which Authority Should Take the Lead Enforcing Role for Fire Safety?

The legal powers of the lead authority should act as a starting point when considering taking action regarding a property. However, where it may be more appropriate for an issue to be dealt with by the legal powers of the supporting authority, this should be considered.

Both authorities, whether they are a lead or a supporting authority, retain their statutory responsibilities and powers such as the power of entry. It should not be assumed that all inspections of such properties will be undertaken by the lead authority as this will depend on their resources.

The table below lists the authority that will normally take the lead in inspection and enforcement action in different types of property.

- a) Single dwellings, including shared housing (Fire Risk assessment not required under RRO) LHA**
- b) All Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) whether or not subject to mandatory, selective or additional licensing LHA**
- c) All self-contained flats, whether purpose built or converted ¹ LHA**
- d) Premises with mixed commercial and associated residential accommodation and sheltered housing² KMFRA**
- e) Hostels / B&B / Hotels³ KMFRA**

Note

¹ Local Housing Authorities (LHAs) will normally take the lead role; however, Kent and Medway Fire and Rescue Authority (KMFRA) will take the primary role in enforcement matters within the common parts, as defined by the FSO, of converted commercial property to residential, and purpose-built blocks of flats that are six floors or more, or over 18 meters, or where there is an engineered solution as can be found in BS9999 or BS7974. This also includes where rising mains are installed.

² Where there is clear and adequate fire resisting separation and separate entrances, the Local Housing Authority (LHA) will take responsibility for the residential premises (unless owned by the LHA) and the FRA will take responsibility for the commercial premises.

³ (a) Hostels generally require residents to have a particular need or dependency and do not provide permanent accommodation.

(b) B&B and hotels are meant (in the context of this Protocol) to be types of premises which are put to commercial use.

(c) Where there is a long-term stay, containing otherwise homeless residents which in housing terms may be a house in multiple occupation (HMO), closer communication between KFRS and LA should take place. If the property is determined as an HMO (licensable or otherwise) the LA should take the lead.

4. What will Local Housing Authorities do?

LHAs will undertake inspections of the premises identified in Section 3 of this protocol in line with their statutory responsibilities. They will enforce fire safety standards in accordance with the provisions of the HA, having regard to relevant documents published by the Government including the statutory operating and enforcement guidance on the HHSRS and in accordance with any guidance jointly agreed with KMFRA e.g. LACoRS Housing Fire Safety document.

LHAs will, when taking enforcement action under the HA, have regard to the principles and requirements of the FSO. Although LHAs may offer a suitable means of complying with fire safety requirements, they will also:

- a) Ensure that guidance for landlords of relevant multi occupied properties on undertaking their own fire risk assessments in accordance with the FSO accompanies all statutory notices
 - I. **All multiple-occupied accommodation that is owned or managed by the LHA**
KMFRA 7 Single unit caravan sites and those caravan sites solely occupied by family groups for permanent residential use LHA
 - II. **Holiday caravan sites and those permanent residential caravan sites that do not fall into item 7 above. KMFRA**
- b) Ensure that the owner/landlord is afforded in writing the opportunity to bring forward alternative means of complying with the fire safety requirements in accordance with their own fire risk assessment. In most cases it is expected that this will be discussed within the owner/landlord prior to the service of any statutory notice.
- c) Where such alternatives are brought forward by the owner/landlord, the Local Housing Authority will consult with KMFRA. They will undertake consultation with KMFRA in line with the criteria detailed in Section 6 of this protocol.

They will provide KMFRA with relevant, timely and comprehensive data in an agreed format to enable those authorities to maintain adequate property and risk-based data sets. LHAs will consider the use of the full range of powers under the HA, including Emergency Prohibition Orders, where appropriate.

LHAs will provide KMFRA with suitable out of hours contact details for their homelessness unit so that where appropriate consideration is given to ensure vulnerable persons are not left homeless as a result of emergency enforcement action. Conduct training with KMFRA Building Safety Teams twice a year to provide a better understanding of one another's legislation and technical application.

5. What will Kent & Medway Fire & Rescue Authority do?

KMFRA will undertake, in line with their risk-based inspection strategy, monitoring and auditing of premises, identified in Section 3 of this protocol, which fall under the scope of the FSO.

They will enforce fire safety standards in accordance with the FSO having regard to relevant documents published by the Government including: HM Government Fire Safety Risk Assessment - Sleeping Accommodation and in accordance with any guidance jointly agreed with the LHA, e.g. LACoRS Housing Fire Safety document.

They will undertake consultation with LHAs in line with the criteria detailed in Section 6 of this protocol.

They will provide LHAs with relevant, timely and comprehensive data to enable those authorities to maintain adequate property and risk-based data sets.

They will provide LHAs with information, within their scope of competency, of serious matters that may need to be addressed by those authorities. (This may include such information as apparent overcrowding, poor management or unsafe practises by tenants).

KMFRA will undertake to inform LHAs of any significant fire incident within premises covered by this protocol.

KMFRA is an emergency organisation which provides twenty-four hour cover. Information about dangerous fire safety conditions may come via complaints or post incident and may occur outside normal working hours. KMFRA is under an obligation to take action in such situations. Where possible, and especially outside of normal office hours, efforts will be made to mitigate the dangerous conditions and LHAs will be informed as soon as practicably possible.

KMFRA will, in principle, be willing to support LHAs at First-tier Tribunal hearings by offering professional opinion on fire safety matters.

Conduct training with LHA Housing Teams twice a year to provide a better understanding of one another's legislation and technical application.

6. Consultation

Statutory

Formal consultation between authorities should take place in accordance with the requirements of the Housing Act 2004 Section 10 and the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005 Article 46 and responded to within 7 days of being notified.

Non-Statutory

In Emergency situations communication should take place between local LHA and FRA teams where possible to discuss the best way to deal with the situation considering both authorities legislative powers.

Day-to-day

Local teams should be actively encouraged to support one another with technical advice and support where it will add value.

7. Data Exchange

Each LHA and KMFRA will exchange information.

8. Regular Review Meeting

A meeting will be held every quarter to review the effectiveness of the protocol and share good practice.

Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Update

| | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Final Decision-Maker | Executive |
| Lead Head of Service | Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance |
| Lead Officer and Report Author | Anna Collier, Corporate Insight, Communities & Governance Manager and James Wilderspin, Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager |
| Classification | Public |
| Wards affected | All |

Executive Summary

The Policy and Resources Committee adopted the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan on 21st October 2020. This report is the fourth update of the status and implementation of the Action Plan, and includes an overview of each action's status, and details of indicators used to monitor progress (**Appendix 1**).

Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to note progress made on delivery of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee notes the progress made towards delivery of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan.

Timetable

| Meeting | Date |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Wider Leadership Team | 20 September 2022 |
| Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee | 15 November 2022 |
| Executive | 23 November 2022 |

Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Update

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

| Issue | Implications | Sign-off |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|
| Impact on Corporate Priorities | Accepting the recommendations will materially improve the Council's ability to achieve (i) Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure (ii) Safe, Clean and Green (iii) Homes and Communities (iv) A Thriving Place. | Anna Collier Insight Communities and Governance Manager |
| Cross Cutting Objectives | The report recommendations support the achievement of the biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability and supports respected cross cutting issues including respecting nature and heritage, reducing inequalities through engagement and public wellbeing through access to open and green spaces, and ensuring Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected. | Anna Collier Insight Communities and Governance Manager |
| Risk Management | 5.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. Responding the climate emergency is a key corporate risk. Ongoing monitoring of the delivery of the Strategy and Action plan is a key mitigation as the annual review of the action plan is ensures continued accountability. | Anna Collier Insight Communities and Governance Manager |
| Financial | £2.9 million funding has been allocated to the implementation of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan. Additional bids for external funding to help achieve the aims of the strategy will also be sought at every opportunity. | Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager |
| Staffing | We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing. | Anna Collier Insight Communities and Governance Manager |
| Legal | There are no legal implications associated with the recommendations set out in the report which is to note the update on the action plan and not for decision. The Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 by virtue of | Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager |

| | | |
|----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | Section 40 places a duty on local authorities to have regard to the conservation of biodiversity in exercising their functions. The duty is an integral part of policy and decision making in relation to all the council functions, services, and actions of the Council. | |
| Privacy and Data Protection | There are no impacts on Privacy and Data Protection identified as a result of the report and recommendation. | Anna Collier Insight Communities and Governance Manager |
| Equalities | A high-level Equality Impact Assessment has been carried out on the Action Plan and further assessments and inclusive measures will be made for relevant projects and will be intrinsic to the Biodiversity and Climate Engagement Strategy. | Anna Collier Insight Communities and Governance Manager |
| Public Health | We recognise that implementing the biodiversity and climate change action plan will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals. | Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager |
| Crime and Disorder | There are no Crime and Disorder issues to Note. | Anna Collier Insight Communities and Governance Manager |
| Procurement | Contracts and services are the highest contributing factor to the council estimated at between 60% to 90% of the councils' total emissions (scope 3) – from areas such as capital construction projects and investments. MBC can put in place software and policy to ensure that carbon prices are calculated as part of any purchase the council makes. This would ensure that for any goods or services MBC staff are planning to purchase will have a cost to the council in terms of carbon. | Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager |
| Biodiversity and Climate Change | This report strengthens the council's position, through a review/update, budget allocation, and commencement of projects set out in the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan to achieve Net Zero in keeping with the Councils commitment by 2030 and increase and sustain biodiversity across the Borough. | Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager |

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Policy and Resources Committee adopted the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan on 21st October 2020. This the fourth report that provides a sixth monthly progress update of the implementation of the Action Plan (**Appendix 1**). The previous update was to Policy and Resources Committee on the 9th of February 2022.
- 2.2 In the last report additional adequate capital funding was allocated as part of the Budget Report to allow the Council to continue to implement the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan beyond 2022. Local authorities are in a key position to influence behaviour change, lead by example, and support communities and businesses to reach the UK's Net Zero and biodiversity commitments. Adequate funding and urgency are needed not only to make savings to the Council in the long term through transitioning away from fossil fuels and investment in renewables, but also to ensure the Council's actions are proportionate to the biodiversity and climate emergency the council declared in April 2019. For this reason the original £1 million biodiversity and climate change budget was increase to £2.9 million as part of the Five Year Capital Programme (see Appendix E3 [MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL CAPITAL STRATEGY 2022/23](#)).

| FIVE YEAR CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2022/23 - 2026/27 | Five Year Plan | | | | | | Total 22/23 to 26/27 £000 |
|----------------------------------------------------------|----------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|------------------------------|
| | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | 2023/24 | 2024/25 | 2025/26 | 2026/27 | |
| | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | £000 | |
| Corporate Property Acquisitions | 11,809 | 2,500 | 2,500 | 2,500 | 2,500 | 2,500 | 12,500 |
| Kent Medical Campus - Innovation Centre | 3,000 | 250 | | | | | 250 |
| Lockmeadow Ongoing Investment | 932 | 500 | 1,300 | | | | 1,800 |
| Garden Community | 1,613 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 1,000 |
| Infrastructure Delivery | | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 1,000 | 5,000 |
| Asset Management / Corporate Property | 1,653 | 175 | 175 | 175 | 175 | 175 | 875 |
| Other Property Works | | 980 | | | | | 980 |
| Biodiversity & Climate Change | 100 | 1,400 | | 500 | 500 | 500 | 2,900 |
| Feasibility Studies | 162 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 50 | 250 |
| Digital Projects | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 25 | 125 |
| Software / PC Replacement | 342 | 200 | 200 | 200 | 200 | | 800 |
| Maidstone House Works | | 1,000 | | | | | 1,000 |
| Automation Projects | | 200 | | | | | 200 |
| New Ways of Working - Make the Office Fit for Purpose | | 40 | | | | | 40 |
| Archbishop's Palace | | 400 | 400 | | | | 800 |
| Fleet Vehicle Replacement Programme | 748 | 149 | 456 | 457 | 270 | 96 | 1,428 |
| Sub-total Policy & Resources | 20,384 | 9,069 | 6,306 | 5,107 | 4,920 | 4,546 | 29,948 |
| Bridges Gyrotory Scheme | 86 | 120 | | | | | 120 |
| Sub-total Strategic Planning & Infrastructure | 86 | 120 | | | | | 120 |
| TOTAL | 33,179 | 27,530 | 31,099 | 51,404 | 53,572 | 69,738 | 233,343 |

- 2.3 The MBC Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan scored a 72% or joint 25th place in the UK out of 325 councils who have declared a climate emergency according to [Climate Emergency UK's campaign](#). Recognition of MBC's commitment and the robustness of the Action Plan is valuable, as it raises MBC's profile on these important topics and shows Maidstone Council to be a strategic leader.

- 2.4 It is however vital to continually review and update the Action Plan ensuring actions are tangible and deliverable across multiple service areas of the council also ensuring ongoing accountability.
- 2.5 Officers have been working to embed biodiversity and climate into decision making across the council and create measurable indicators of progress against the action plan (**Appendix 2**). The process has been challenging as not all actions are clearly defined and do not have measurable outcomes. Some actions require expertise from a number of departments or specialist sustainability knowledge to ensure the action plan is achievable across the entire council's operations.
- 2.6 MBC appointed a Biodiversity and Climate Engagement Officer in July. The newly appointed Officer has received training from the [Carbon Literacy Project](#) to enable them to deliver accreditation training to staff and members. The Officer is currently developing a training manual tailored to different department needs across the council to be rolled out commencing November 2022. Additionally, a staff training module on Climate Change and Biodiversity has been made mandatory on the ELMS system for all staff and new joiners at the Council. With wide scale training and awareness building on carbon literacy, the integration of Biodiversity and Climate Change into decision making across the council will be more achievable.
- 2.7 The Council Leader has made a commitment that the council will prioritise biodiversity and climate change in everything it does and that this commitment will be led by the Executive, to ensure that it is central to all decisions made. As part of the annual review process the following actions will be undertaken to strengthen the accountability and transparency of the action plan:
- Officers and Executive will undertake the annual review of the action plan to create greater clarity and ensure actions are specific and transparent and have estimated costs and timescales
 - Identify actions that are (i) in direct control of the council and (ii) actions under the influence of the council.
 - Align direct and influence actions to Portfolio holders and PACs to ensure accountability at an Executive and Member level.
 - Consult PACs on the revised plan, alignment of the actions, along with potential costs and timeframes.
 - Prioritise actions in direct control of the council.
- 2.8 Work on these changes will start towards the end of the calendar year and as part of the process the relevant PACs and officers will be consulted to ensure that plan is robust, deliverable and remains central to the Council's priorities.

Current Status of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan

- 2.9 In summary, of a total of 68 Actions across the Biodiversity and Climate Change action plan, 29 actions are Red (delayed or incomplete), 33 are

Amber (ongoing or being investigated), and 6 action are Green and have been completed. For full details of each action's status, including the February 2022 update, responsible officers, outputs, and outcomes please see **Appendix 1** with this report.

| RAG Rating | Number of Actions |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------|
| Red (Incomplete or delayed) | 29 |
| Amber (ongoing or being investigated) | 33 |
| Green (Complete) | 6 |

- 2.10 To demonstrate strategic impact an Indicator framework has been developed for the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan that incorporates specific measures of progress for each action and aligns with Strategic Planning existing indicators. Where possible indicators were also aligned with national Government and Kent County Council indicators. The indicators will support operational improvement, provide an analytical basis for decision making and prioritisation, ensuring the council is monitoring its progress toward its climate and biodiversity commitments. The Key Performance Indicators can be found in **Appendix 2**.
- 2.11 Highlights from the Implementation of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan can be seen below, and a full update is provided at **Appendix 1**.

The Go Green Information Centre (Actions 8.1 / 8.4 / 8.5)

- 2.12 The Go Green Information Centre pilot project ran from the 8th of September to the 2nd of October and has now concluded. A pop-up, walk-in community information centre was established in The Mall shopping centre in Maidstone town centre, for 4 weeks and staffed by volunteers. The aims of the centre were to enable residents, vulnerable groups, and businesses to make more informed sustainable decisions, learn about funding opportunities and grant support, learn about products and practices that can reduce waste, reduce energy consumption, carbon emissions and to ultimately build resilience to the impacts of climate change. Local sustainable businesses were invited to showcase and demonstrate their goods and services for free to reach local people and create clarity and confidence in making greener choices. The centre also hosted numerous interactive events, talks and demonstrations.
- 2.13 A total of 870 Maidstone Residents came into the Go Green Information Centre over the full period the centre was open (17 days), an average of 51 users per day. Feedback from the public was largely positive and child centred events such as 'soap making' and 'seed bomb making' were very popular and overbooked. Users were mainly interested in grant opportunities, reducing their energy bills, and issues around waste collection and recycling. A stand-alone summary report of the Go Green Information Centre pilot project is being developed by officers to highlight the successes and failures of the pilot, with the aim to learn from and develop the project to roll out again in 2023 for a longer period to continue to support and engage with residents and businesses.

Decarbonisation Study (Action 7.1)

2.14 A comprehensive Decarbonisation Study of the Council's key assets has been underway since February and is nearing completion. The study led by APSE Energy and the Salvis Group has conducted in depth site surveys of:

1. Maidstone House
2. The Link
3. Town Hall
4. The Archbishops Palace and Gate House
5. Maidstone Museum
6. Lockmeadow Shopping Centre and Market Hall
7. The Depot
8. The Crematorium and Offices
9. Cob Tree Golf Clubhouse
10. Maidstone Leisure Centre (*note: this survey is incomplete as of October 2022*)

2.15 The study takes a whole building approach and will give recommendations to decarbonise the buildings in line with the council 2030 Net Zero commitment. The recommendations include upgrades and retrofits to heating systems to ensure they are zero carbon/electric equivalents such as ground and air source heat pumps, and solar thermal energy. As well as recommendations for upgrading each building's fabric and electrical equipment, such as wall and roof insulation, glazing, LEDs, smart controls for greater energy efficiency. The study also sought opportunities and tangible recommendations for onsite EV charging infrastructure and renewable energy generation from photovoltaic panels. The study results will be used to apply for funding and to prioritise carbon reduction goals for the council.

Electrification of MBC's Fleet (Action 7.1)

2.16 MBC has developed a Green Fleet Strategy. The primary objective of this Strategy is to enable the purchasing of vehicles that deliver the business needs and consider their whole life costs whilst minimizing their environmental impact. In support of this a feasibility study was conducted by SWARCO to ascertain the infrastructure required over the next 8 years to ensure that a change over to a fully electric fleet is viable at the depot without hindering operations.

2.17 The results of the study found there was a need to upgrade the electric capacity to 600KVA for an entirely electrified fleet by 2030, with a recommendation to instal a new substation on the Depot site. However, officers identified an existing substation near to the depot, and with basic low-cost ground works planned for Autumn 2022 can connect to the existing supply and increase the depot's capacity to 227KVA. This will be ample capacity for a new 50kw rapid charger to be installed on site as well as sufficient capacity for the medium-term needs of the depot's light vehicles EV replacements. The Depot currently has 6 electric vehicles in use with a further two ordered for delivery in Autumn this year. The higher capacity will ensure the depot operations will continue with rapid charging and the

depot is ready in the short to medium term for the changeover to a fully EV fleet.

Tree Planting and Rewilding (Actions 6.1 / 6.3 / 6.5 / 6.8 / 6.9)

- 2.18 National Government has [committed](#) to increasing tree planting rates across the UK to 30,000 hectares per year, with intentions to spend over £500 million of the £640 million Nature for Climate Fund on trees and woodlands in England between 2020 and 2025 to support the ambition to plant the right trees in the right places for the right reasons, sequester carbon, and the additional benefits they provide for nature and people.
- 2.19 Action 6.9 of the MBC Action Plan is to contribute to this target and to the KCC aim to plant 1.5 million trees in Kent and increase canopy cover by 2%. Maidstone Borough's proportion is to increase canopy cover from 16% to 18%. With the intention of expanding ancient forests and reconnecting existing woodland including urban woods, greening town centres, and where feasible increase tree cover on MBC estate land.
- 2.20 Maidstone Borough's current tree coverage is average in the UK and above average compared to other Kent districts. A 2% increase in canopy cover for Maidstone is equivalent to a total of 784ha needed for tree planting or natural regeneration by 2050 (Maidstone Borough total area is 39,342ha). At the rate proposed by the Central Government and the Climate Change Committee this would be the equivalent of planting or rewilding 47.4ha per year for the next 17 years (to 2040) or planting approximately 71,000 trees per year (at a rate of 1,500 trees per ha). Even with central Government support there will be a finance gap in cost of trees and planting costs, as well as a land shortage for rewilding and tree planting efforts. MBC acknowledges KCCs target and will continue to work closely with KCC to establish tangible targets.
- 2.21 MBC initiated a partnership approach with private landowners to plant trees to meet these targets. A call for tree planting sites was posted on the MBC website campaigns page in January 2022 inviting tree planting and rewilding project proposals. A total of 15 medium to large scale private landowners submitted proposals to MBC with proposed tree planting projects. Of the proposals received only 6 tree planting projects we scored as viable and shortlisted with a total combined 12 hectares of land offered by private landowners for tree planting. However, due to the legal terms and conditions of the agreement between the landowner and MBC - namely that MBC would retain ownership of trees, as well as the maintenance required, access needed, and stipulation that the trees must adhere to DEFRA guidelines and be left to grow for a minimum of 30 years – the majority of the private landowners dropped out of the MBC scheme. The number of interested private landowners has now reduced to just two (totalling 3 hectares). The cost effectiveness of the MBC planting scheme will be considered on small scale projects and MBC is awaiting confirmation from the landowners on whether the terms are accepted to go ahead with planting in autumn 2022. Officers are seeking other partnership opportunities on tree planning in the borough.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 Option 1: Noting

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Option 1: Noting

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. Responding the climate emergency is a key corporate risk. Ongoing monitoring of the delivery of the Strategy and Action plan is a key mitigation as the annual review of the action plan is ensures continued accountability.

5.2 6 monthly reports will continue to ensure key mitigations and oversight continues

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 Approved, regular updates, as key projects emerge consultation with members and residents are managed as individual projects.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

7.1 Continue to update strategy and updates to members.

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Implementation Status and RAG
 - Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators
-

Appendix 1: Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Implementation Status and RAG

The following table breaks down the status of each action in the Action Plan and details the responsible officer, the outputs and outcomes of the action and the previous status of the action in February 2022 with and updated status for October 2022. A RAG (Red-Amber-Green) ratings, also known as ‘traffic lighting,’ are used in the table below to summarise the status of specific actions, where **green denotes ‘completed’, amber as ‘ongoing, being investigated’ and red as ‘delayed or incomplete’**. The following table details, by theme, each action in the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan, its responsible officer, timescale, status and RAG.

Of a total of 68 Actions across the Biodiversity and Climate Change action plan, 29 actions are Red (delayed or incomplete), 33 are Amber (ongoing or being investigated), and 6 action are Green and have been completed. For full details of each action’s status, including the February 2022 update, responsible officers, outputs and outcomes please see Appendix 1 with this report.

| RAG Rating | Number of Actions |
|---------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Red (Incomplete or delayed) | 29 |
| Amber (ongoing or being investigated) | 33 |
| Green (Complete) | 6 |

| 3 | Action | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
|----------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Active travel and green transportation | | | | | | | | |
| 1.1 | Influence the Development Plan to <ul style="list-style-type: none">Establish policies that enable the infrastructure required for low carbon vehicles;Ensure policies encourage and enable development proposals that give first priority to pedestrian and bicycles, both within the scheme and its surrounding areas; andEnsure policies facilitate high quality public transport connectivity. | Number of Policies Indicator M42: Applications accompanied by an Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) which demonstrate that the air quality impacts of development will be mitigated to acceptable levels Indicator M41: Progress in achieving compliance with EU Directive / national regulatory requirements for air quality within the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) Indicator M42: Applications accompanied by an Air Quality Impact Assessment (AQIA) which demonstrate that the air quality | Improvements in Borough Air quality Reduction of CO2e | Claire Weeks Mark Egerton Helen Garnett | 2020-22 | Started – so far incorporated as part of Local Plan review is ‘POLICY LPRSP14(C) – CLIMATE CHANGE’ which includes prioritising active travel by ensuring good provision and connectivity of walking and cycling routes in new developments. | The Local Plan Review (LPR) is currently undergoing examination in public. Annual Monitoring Report indicators are reported in the autumn. Work has started on Design and Sustainability Development Plan Document which will build on LPR policies in relation to sustainable movement. | Red |

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| | | impacts of development will be mitigated to acceptable levels Indicator SA8: Distance travelled to services ¹ | | | | | | |
| 1.2 | Work with Kent County Council (KCC) to develop our Integrated Transport Strategy, and Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan, as part of the Local Plan review to promote and support a modal shift to walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicles. | <p>Completion of Strategy</p> <p>Indicator M48: Sustainable transport measures to support the growth identified in the Local Plan and as set out in the Integrated Transport</p> <p>Indicator M50: Achievement of modal shift through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No significant worsening of congestion as a result of development Reduced long stay town centre car park usage Improved ratio between car parking costs and bus fares² | Increase usage in walking, cycling, public transport, and electric vehicles. | Mark Egerton | 2020-22 | <p>Started – Incorporated as part of local Plan review POLICY LPRSP12 – SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT includes the provision of attractive and safe walking and cycling routes with adequate cycle parking is incorporated within the updated ITS. The borough’s walking environment, its walking routes and its public realm will be developed and improved through local plan policies, the ITS, the IDP, and through the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. These strategies and documents, together with the adopted Maidstone Walking and Cycling Strategy, will have the aim of increasing the proportion of trips made by walking and cycling in the borough by 2037.</p> <p>In total 16% of the actions within the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) have not been actioned. A total 27% are on track to be actioned and 57% are being appropriately actioned. This has meant there has been an increase in the number of actions categorised as not being actioned due to growing concern at the lack of delivery of the highways schemes identified in the Maidstone Integrated Transport Package (MITP). Whilst the majority of sustainable transport measures to support the growth identified in the</p> | Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) indicators are reported in the autumn. | Red |

¹ Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

² Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| | | | | | | Local Plan remain broadly on track to be delivered within the time periods identified within the Infrastructure Delivery Plan, the MITP schemes are now at risk of being delivered beyond the timeframes identified in the IDP. | | |
| 1.3 | Produce a business case for the introduction of a workplace parking levy to fund active travel or public transport. | Business case produced | Increase in active travel and use of public transport | James Wilderspin | 2024 | Not due to start | Not due to start Discounted public transport fares for trains and buses for MBC staff have been implemented. | Red |
| 1.4 | <p>Develop a travel plan for our staff that sets out objectives and actions to encourage the shift to electric/ultra-low emission vehicles, more flexible working from home, more sustainable travel patterns and an increase in the use of public transport and active transport modes through:</p> <p>134 Parking management on council premises</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discounted public transport fares Pool cars Car-sharing Electric bicycles Promoting fuel efficient driving techniques to all staff <p>Update travel expenses policies and avoid any contrary incentives. Update before any moves to new premises. Include any learning from changes in working practices due to COVID-19.</p> | <p>Number of pool cars in use</p> <p>Millage use of pool cars verses reduction in milage claimed from payroll</p> <p>Reduction in number of car parking spaces requested / purchased</p> <p>Comparison of Staff travel before and after covid</p> | <p>Increase in staff remote working</p> <p>Increase in active travel</p> <p>Reduction in staff milage and CO2e</p> | <p>Katie Exom</p> <p>James Wilderspin</p> | 2021 | <p>Started – this action's implementation is delayed to 2022 due to COVID19 mandated change of working habits across council personnel. However, progress has been made with several meetings with car club operators held, discount public transportation fares are currently being assessed, and electric bike schemes are being researched.</p> | <p>Discounted public transport fares for trains and buses has been completed and policy updated within MBC.</p> <p>At Maidstone House Pool car operator options have been shortlisted. Implementation is subject to budget for an EV pool car and use or interest by MBC staff. The decision to go ahead with the business case that allows public use of pool cars outside of MBC operating hours (eg. Evenings and Weekends) is still being investigated.</p> <p>At the MBC Depot a fully Electric Pool car is in operation for use by Depot Staff.</p> <p>A Travel Hierarchy has been completed with posters and information for staff to prioritise active travel and public transportation over personal car usage to/from work.</p> <p>A staff travel to work survey is being developed to calculate travel method and change before and pre and post Covid19. The survey will be issued in October and ill be used to calculate MBC staff travel to/from work carbon footprint.</p> | Amber |
| 1.5 | Develop policies and increase remote working to | Percentage shift in remote working | Increase in staff remote working | Bal Sandher | 2021 | Started – flexible and digital working has continued to be encouraged at | Completed - Hybrid working model has been encouraged and implemented across MBC through | Green |

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| | reduce travelling to work and office energy needs, without a reduction in outputs or access to services. Uses any learning from new working practices adopted due to COVID-19. | Percentage Increase in video conferencing Changes in desk booking per month/year based on anonymous data from Desk booking system | Increase in active travel Reduction in staff mileage and CO2e | James Wilderspin | | the council and a travel hierarchy is to be implemented in 2022. Delays to this action is due to COVID19 mandated change of working habits across council personnel. | policy and active desk booking system, with a rise in remote / home working and increased use of video conferencing. Monitoring will continue and reported on in future updates. | |
| 1.6 | Influence design and specification of any new office buildings to ensure infrastructure enables Electric Vehicles (EV) and low-carbon energy charging infrastructure, supports active travel with bike storage, lockers and showers, and supports digital working. | Number of green innovations utilised in new buildings and retrofitting of MBC estate | Increase of EV charging points at MBC buildings Increase in active travel by MBC staff | Katie Exom James Wilderspin | 2020 to when any new building completed | Started – with the example of MBC's new Innovation Centre, EV infrastructure, bike racks, green walls have been utilised and will be used as a standard for future design specifications. | A comprehensive Decarbonisation Study is ongoing by APSE Energy which includes detailed energy trajectory and retrofitting options for 12 priority MBC buildings to ensure MBC's NetZero 2030 commitment is completed. The study included options and viability of renewable energy generation, EV charging infrastructure at each MBC asset, including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Maidstone House and the Link 2. The Archbishops Palace, gate house and carriage museum 3. Town Hall 4. The Museum 5. The Crematorium 6. Lockmeadow Shopping Centre 7. Cob Tree golf club 8. The Leisure Centre EV charge points will be installed at any viable location owned by MBC in line with retrofits/upgrades to said buildings in keeping with national government commitment. Bike Racks have been installed at the Depot. | Red |
| 1.7 | Building on our Low Emission Strategy, Kent and Medway Energy and Low Emissions Strategy , and the emerging policies relating to electric vehicles, work with KCC, district network operators and other relevant partners to seek grants and funding to provide sufficient EV charging hubs. | Number of EV chargers installed across Maidstone Borough Resident Confidence in Charging infrastructure determined through surveys and EV purchases across Borough Indicator SA23: Peak traffic flow Indicator SA24: Travel times ³ | Increase in EV charging points Increase in EV market confidence and reduced range anxiety | Jen Stevens Claire Weeks Jeff Kitson Alex Wells James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – MBC is currently seeking options for larger scale roll out of EV charging stations and Parking Services team is developing an EV Strategy forthcoming in 2022 | Parking Services team are developing a parking EV strategy for MBC car park assets. Which is data driven and currently shows the number of EV chargers provided by the council are meeting demand of EVs in Maidstone town Centre. A Kent County wide EV strategy is being investigated, with potential links to KCC 'Connected KIRB / Kent 600 Plan'. A wider borough scale EV strategy is also needed for MBC to adhere to central Government recommendation for 300,000 public chargers needed as a minimum by 2030. Maidstone Borough's share is | Amber |

³ Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | | | | | | approximately 862 EV charging points needed by 2030 (we currently have 65 publicly accessible ones). | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.8 | <div>Utilise advice from the Energy Saving Trust (EST) Local Authority Transport Service to facilitate a move to electric taxis. Liaise with relevant partners to monitor use and ensure infrastructure is provided appropriately.</div> <div>Output: Achieve the minimum number of rapid (50kW) EV charging points dedicated to taxi use needed in the town centre in-line with the EST report recommendations of:</div> <div>3 by 2021 16 by 2025 21 by 2027 23 by 2030 25 by 2036</div> | Number of participants in EV taxi trials | Number of EV chargers for Taxis Number of EV taxis | Lorraine Neale James Wilderspin | 2021-2030 | Started – ongoing discussions and initiatives are being sought in partnership with Maidstone’s local taxi companies to increase the uptake of EVs. Including free test drives of EV cars, and potential of grants to encourage EV take up by taxi trade. | <div>In line with 2021 to 2024 projected taxi usage. Two 50kW electric chargers for taxi trade use only have been installed and are in operation in Maidstone Town Centre, Pudding Lane, ME14 1LN (x,y 575919, 155768). The chargers are restricted to E-Taxi only to increase confidence in EV charging and reduce disruption to business for the taxi trade. Over initial 3-month period (excluding April when chargers needed maintenance) 1434,79kWh equivalent to 334.507 kg of CO2e in car emissions has been reduced.</div> <table><tr><th colspan="6">Pudding Lane - SEC50216 - commissioned 02/03/2022</th></tr><tr><th></th><th>Sessions</th><th>Energy (kWh)</th><th>Avg sessions (min)</th><th>Total Revenue</th><th>District Share</th></tr><tr><td>Mar-22</td><td>30</td><td>625.32</td><td>00:45</td><td>£195.12</td><td>£39.02</td></tr><tr><td>Apr-22</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>£0.00</td><td>£0.00</td></tr><tr><td>May-22</td><td>10</td><td>179.41</td><td>00:55</td><td>£90.38</td><td>£18.08</td></tr><tr><td>Jun-22</td><td>31</td><td>630.06</td><td>00:47</td><td>£316.06</td><td>£63.21</td></tr><tr><td></td><td>71</td><td>1434.79</td><td>00:36</td><td>£601.56</td><td>£120.31</td></tr></table> <div>For 2024 and beyond projections additional sites are under investigations for additional rapid chargers for the taxi trade.</div> | Pudding Lane - SEC50216 - commissioned 02/03/2022 | | | | | | | Sessions | Energy (kWh) | Avg sessions (min) | Total Revenue | District Share | Mar-22 | 30 | 625.32 | 00:45 | £195.12 | £39.02 | Apr-22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | £0.00 | £0.00 | May-22 | 10 | 179.41 | 00:55 | £90.38 | £18.08 | Jun-22 | 31 | 630.06 | 00:47 | £316.06 | £63.21 | | 71 | 1434.79 | 00:36 | £601.56 | £120.31 | Amber |
| Pudding Lane - SEC50216 - commissioned 02/03/2022 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | Sessions | Energy (kWh) | Avg sessions (min) | Total Revenue | District Share | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Mar-22 | 30 | 625.32 | 00:45 | £195.12 | £39.02 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Apr-22 | 0 | 0 | 0 | £0.00 | £0.00 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| May-22 | 10 | 179.41 | 00:55 | £90.38 | £18.08 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Jun-22 | 31 | 630.06 | 00:47 | £316.06 | £63.21 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | 71 | 1434.79 | 00:36 | £601.56 | £120.31 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.9 | Draft new licensing policy to reduce number of taxis using fossil fuel by more than 90% by 2030 and by 100% by 2036. | Policies Enacted | Increase in EV taxis | John Littlemore Lorraine Neale James Wilderspin | 2021 | Licensing committee did not agree the policy based on concerns raised by the taxi trade. BCC manager is currently scoping alternative options in partnership with the local taxi firms to seek alternatives for encouraging taxi EVs | <div>KCC have organised a Climate Change Network subgroup for Taxi Licensing Policy to support councils across Kent. Discussion on shared policy statement ongoing.</div> <div>Redrafting of licensing policy to reduce number of taxis using fossil fuel by more than 90% by 2030 ongoing.</div> <div>Officers seeking consultation with taxi trade on free test and drive in EV and raising discussion around the draft policy.</div> | Red | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1.10 | Promote workplace vehicle chargers and government Workplace Charging Scheme | Number of Electric Vehicle Charging Points operated by MBC | Increase in EV charger instillation across borough and businesses | Chris Inwood | 2020 until scheme ends | Started – several EV charging points are being scoped for the MBC Crematorium, Museum and office buildings. | <div>EV charge schemes and grants are promoted via the council’s business e-newsletter.</div> <div>Maidstone Innovation Centre has 6 EV charging points.</div> | Amber | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| 1.11 | Promote ECO stars recognition scheme to fleet operators. | Number of fleets business who have investigated ECO stars recognition scheme | Number of operators taking part | Chris Inwood | 2020 until scheme ends | Not Started | Started - Promoted via the council's business e-newsletter. This will also be included in green business support initiatives in the councils new Maidstone in Business website to be launched Autumn 2022. | Red |
| 1.12 | Work with KCC to gather baseline data on the buses operating in the borough and their Euro classification. Support operators to develop their commercial networks in the borough, ensuring that the borough's infrastructure is bus friendly. Work with the Quality Bus Partnership to identify actions to support bus companies to switch to clean technology and EVs. | Bus partnerships established | Improvement in Borough Air quality Reduction in CO2e Increase in EV and/or low emission public transportation | Duncan Haynes | 2020-30 | Started | Baseline bus data is now available but shows that that rather than improving the bus fleet it is becoming older and therefore more polluting. It is possible that newer buses are being concentrated in areas where Clean Air Zones have been imposed. The DEFRA air quality grant scheme has not favoured projects that support bus retrofitting for several years and other schemes that could help with costs for purchasing new buses require significant investment from the bus company which they do not have. Bus companies are suffering very significant financial difficulties as a result of the pandemic, and it is highly unlikely that they will be in a position to make investments in new buses in the short to medium term. Older buses have therefore had their operational life extended. KCC have recently announced cuts to bus service subsidy and MBC have cut the Park and Ride service completely. EH have yet to be invited to attend the quality bus partnership and officers looking into identify actions to support bus companies to switch to clean technology and EVs ongoing. | Red |
| Decarbonising and insulating homes and buildings | | | | | | | | |
| 2.1 | Support KCC to explore the potential for Combined Heat and Power systems and District Heating scheme developments across the community. | Policy enabling Combined Heat and Power systems and District Heating scheme | Number of potential schemes identified and under investigation | Rob Jarman William Cornall James Wilderspin | 2020-2021 | Started – the Maidstone Heat Network funding has been secured and the project will serve over 100 homes and the prison in the town by 2024. The BCC Manager is seeking to add additional buildings to network planning in 2022. | The Local Plan Review Supports inclusion/development of Combined Heat and Power systems and District Heating schemes. Maidstone Heat Network project has now halted due to funding issues at KCC. The MBC BCC Manager is looking into alternative collaborating with KCC on potential of Alington Shared Heat Network Business Proposal (see action 2.3 for details). | Amber |

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| 2.2 | Promote access to schemes to residents, landlords and housing associations, for retrofitting insulation to existing homes including ECO3, LA Flex and the Green Homes Grant Scheme. | Promotion and support to residents and housing associations | Reduction of Fuel Poverty Change in fuel type used in homes Number of Homes Retrofitted | John Littlemore Nigel Bucklow Hannah Gaston James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – MBC has agreed terms and continues to support local housing associations (Golding Homes) apply for grants and is seeking opportunities in 2022 as part of the social housing decarbonisation fund | An agreement has been entered into with South East region consortium to deliver an energy efficiency programme. The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority and Group of Authorities (Kent Consortium) are collaborating as part of Green Homes Grant (GHG) Local Authority Delivery (LAD) Phase 2. Additionally, as part of the engagement and information provided at the Go Green Information Centre, residents were able to directly discuss and take leaflets on the Green Homes Grant Scheme and learn benefits and options for insulation and funding available. | Amber |
| 2.3 | Investigate how to support low carbon heat networks | Viability and feasibility studies | Identified viable low carbon heat networks options available for decision | Mark Egerton James Wilderspin | 2020-22 | Started – Maidstone Heat Network Project led by KCC delayed | The Local Plan Review policy is supportive of Low Carbon Heat Network development. KCC and AECOM water source heat pump from Medway to central district heat network has been indefinitely postponed due to budget constraints. An alternative heat source viability is being investigated by 'Innovate' commissioned by 'FCC Environment' owners/operators of 'Allington Integrated Waste Management Facility'. A heat load study, and feasibility of harnessing energy from the waste facility for heat network in Maidstone has been completed. Costs, network viability and linkages to large heat loads to be part of network across Maidstone town centre linking multiple buildings, with a business case to be made for consideration by KCC/MBC/other private businesses. Due to long term planning and feasibility required, it is recommended this action be extended to 2025. | Amber |
| 2.4 | Promote low carbon heating including government domestic and non-domestic renewable heat incentive scheme and any other suitable schemes. | Number of households with improved access to clean Energy Number of homes upgrades to heat source pumps | Reduction in borough CO2e | Gemma Bailey James Wilderspin | 2020 to scheme end | Started | As part of the engagement and information provided at the Go Green Information Centre, residents were able to directly discuss and take leaflets on low carbon heating including government domestic and non-domestic renewable heat incentive schemes. Funding options were made apparent and linkages to local business to support residents were also identified and shared with residents. | Amber |

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| 2.5 | Enforce Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015 | Number of households EPC rating increase to C standard | Improvement in EPC ratings across Borough | John Littlemore Nigel Bucklow | 2020-30 | Started | <p>There are around 75,000 homes in the borough and the government data shows that there have been around 65,000 EPC's produced, but the likelihood that these EPC's will include repeat EPC's for a relatively small portion of the overall stock that is repeatedly sold and relet, as well as all the new homes (circa 10,000) that have been built since 2008.</p> <p>The data shows that of the 65,000 EPC's produced 48% are A-C and 52% are D-G. However, as stated previously, these percentages are not necessarily reflective of the boroughs whole stock, just those properties that have had an EPC. Also, the government data does not provide enough detail to show how many existing homes have been upgraded to C or above.</p> <p>The Council itself does not offer grants to homeowners to help them improve the thermal performance of their homes but from time to time, the government has delivered incentive schemes which we do signpost householders to, for example with our recent go green information centre.</p> <p>The most positive opportunity for improving the thermal efficiency of housing in the borough, for those in most need, is the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund, and Golding Homes, the borough's largest social landlord, is making a bid for this in the coming months, that the council are supporting and endorsing. Furthermore, in respect of solutions for older properties, which are generally more challenging, the Council is part of the South-East Consortium that is looking to deliver the Green Homes Grant (GHG) Local Authority Delivery (LAD2) scheme. Finally, the Council is now part of the Net Zero Hub, which will access the Sustainable Warmth Fund and provide further signposting to residents to the funding available.</p> | Red |
| 2.6 | Promote water efficiency to residents in partnership with South East Water | Engagement and education initiatives | Reduction in water wastage Increase in residents' | Gemma Bailey James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started | Led by KCC and in partnership with South East Water a water saving campaign is underway with 110k postcards sent to lower income Maidstone residents on the 1 st August to encourage them to order water saving devices for their homes to reduce water | Amber |

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| | | Indicator SA36: Water availability/consumption ratios ⁴ | knowledge of water conservation | | | | consumption and also increase awareness of the link between water usage and domestic energy consumption. As part of the engagement and information provided at the Go Green Information Centre, residents were able to directly discuss and take leaflets on water saving advice and were able to discuss options available including water butts, aerating taps, and reduced water flow showers. | |
| Generating Renewable Energy | | | | | | | | |
| 3.1 | Use Local Plan review to investigate how to encourage on-site renewables on all types of new developments | Indicator SA38: New installed renewable energy capacity ⁵ | On-site renewables on all types of new developments | Mark Egerton James Wilderspin | 2020-22 | <p>Started – As part of local plan review policy to encourage renewables in new developments has been included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POLICY LPRSP14(C) – CLIMATE CHANGE includes support the provision of renewable energy infrastructure within new development POLICY LPRINF3: RENEWABLE AND LOW CARBON ENERGY SCHEMES <p>Information published by Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy states that between the end of 2014 and end of 2020 there has been an increase in the number of renewable energy installations in Maidstone Borough from 1,484 installations to 2,416. The largest contributor being photovoltaics. The installed capacity has increased from 56.3 MW to 66.8 MW at the end of 2020.</p> | <p>The LPR is currently undergoing examination in public.</p> <p>LPR indicators are reported in the autumn.</p> <p>Work has started on Design and Sustainability Development Plan Document which will build on LPR policies in relation to sustainable movement.</p> | Red |
| 3.2 | Support residents, businesses and third sector to install renewable energy | Support help to buy and grant schemes | Reductions in CO2 from industrial | Nigel Bucklow | 2020-30 | Started – monthly business newsletters now include green financing/grants, carbon footprints | As part of KCC led Solar Together Scheme Phase 2, MBC in partnership with KCC and the other borough/district councils joined a letter campaign, | Amber |

⁴ Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

⁵ Maidstone Authority Monitoring Report (AMR) 2020-2021

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| 141 | generation by providing information and promoting grants, shared investment, and savings schemes. | Facilitate partnerships for investment in renewable energy generation | and commercial sector | James Wilderspin | | <p>and sustainable business practices and tips.</p> <p>Solar Together Kent is a collective buying scheme to help able-to-pay households get a reduced-price installation of solar panels. It relies on large numbers of households signing up to negotiate a better deal for everyone taking part. The scheme is administered by iChoosr.</p> <p>Solar together scheme round 1 mailed out 10,000 letter to raise awareness of the scheme. 129 households registered, of which a total of 20 households were accepted. As of 11 of October 2021 solar PVs were installed at five accepted households, a total of 57 panels or 4,252kg CO2 reduction.</p> | and 8,000 letters were sent to residents in Maidstone Borough, with information about the scheme. Phase 2 exceeded capacity of Kent residents applying for the solar scheme, with 109 residents (5.5% of total applications in Kent) in Maidstone requesting solar panels fitted to their homes and 8 residents opting for battery storage to also be fitted to their homes. Home by home surveys and assessments are still ongoing, and phase 3 of the scheme is under discussion for continuation in 2023. | |
| 3.3 | Encourage and support community energy projects. Assess viability of these for carbon offsetting | Facilitate partnerships and engage community on potential local energy projects | <p>Increase of residents, businesses and third sector installed capacity of renewable energy generation</p> <p>Increase in Community led/invested renewable energy projects</p> | <p>Gemma Bailey</p> <p>James Wilderspin</p> | 2020-30 | <p>Started – the BCC manager is currently scoping options for joint renewable energy partnerships and investment options.</p> | <p>As part of the engagement and information provided at the Go Green Information Centre, residents were able to directly interact with solar panels, meters and connections needed for home installation. Local businesses who provide advice and supply of PV were sign posted to the public. Funding opportunities and costs were outlined, and average carbon footprint reductions were detailed through use of solar panels.</p> <p>Viability of MBC partnerships with The Mall shopping Centre and Fremlin's Walk Shopping centre on joint renewable energy projects are being investigated. A feasibility study looking in a solar canopy car park for the top floor of the Mall's carpark is underway, with potential to private wire the energy created to 50% Maidstone House and 50% to the Malls operational usage. Additionally, Fremlin's walk have sought MBC advice on large scale solar PV roof top space for primary use by the complex, with potential to private wire a % (TBD) to Maidstone Museum.</p> | Amber |

Reducing waste and increasing energy efficiency

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| 4.1 | <p>Increase percentage of waste re-used recycled/composted by;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging residents to separate food and recyclables (particularly metals and textiles), use appropriate bins and avoid contamination reviewing, and where possible, improving recycling facilities for flats and those with communal collections produce waste and recycling guidance with as much planning policy as possible to be adopted for all new developments; and assess feasibility of weekly recycling collections | <p>Indicator SA33: Number of complaints to the Council related to waste storage and collection at new developments</p> <p>Indicator SA35: Waste generated per capita⁶</p> | <p>Increase in borough recycling</p> <p>Increase in home anaerobic composting</p> | Graham Gosden | 2020-30 | <p>Started – the Biodiversity and Climate Change Engagement Strategy, which includes awareness raising on composting and recycling is rolling out in 2022, in partnership with local community groups, and will encourage widescale behaviour change to increase recycling and composting for residents.</p> <p>There has been a decrease in the amount of household waste generated in Maidstone of 4%. Similarly, the amount of household waste collected per person in Kent has also seen a decrease of 9%.</p> | The Councils recycling rate for 2021/22 is 51% one of the highest rates recorded in Kent this year and a slight increase on last years. This year's main focus has been on the quality of recycling collected and we have noted a reduction in the number of rejected loads by promotion of the 5 Step approach to all residents via bin hangers. | Amber |
| 4.2 | Create and implement a plan to ensure all types of waste are processed in or as close to the borough as possible | Indicator SA34: Amount of construction and demolition waste ⁷ | Waste processed in or as close to the borough as possible | Graham Gosden | 2021-23 | Started | Local waste processing is undertaken by KCC via various contractors, 73.9% disposed of in Kent, 15.5K elsewhere in UK, and 10.6% abroad in 2020. The information on local processing is published in the annual end destination report and the vast majority is treated within Kent. MBC currently have no direct control over this aspect although it is a shared aim with KCC. | Amber |
| 4.3 | Introduce recycling into the street cleansing service including offering community litter picks the opportunity to recycle the waste collected | Trial period to ascertain capacity and inputs needed for recycling as part of street cleansing service | Increase in recycling from street cleansing | John Edwards | 2022-22 | Started | <p>After a 6 months trial of asking a selected community/volunteer groups to separate recyclable litter, the waste management team have decided to stop the trial as the standard of waste separation was poor with a high level of contamination.</p> <p>The newly appointed Biodiversity and climate Engagement Officer is seeking awareness activities</p> | Red |

⁶ Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

⁷ Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| | | | | | | | and events to support raising public awareness of this topic to reduce contamination. | |
| 4.4 | Reduce fly-tipping | Seek policy, enforcement measures and awareness raising | Reduction in fly-tipping | John Edwards | 2020-25 | Started | <p>Reducing fly-tipping is a standard street cleansing requirement and the reduction of fly tipping is linked with other factors such as increase levels of enforcement, wider KCC communications and national views.</p> <p>The newly appointed Biodiversity and climate Engagement Officer is seeking awareness activities and events to support raising public awareness and reducing fly-tipping.</p> | Red |
| 4.5 | Investigate options to encourage home composting and using an anaerobic digester to process the domestic food waste collected. | Support residents to access affordable home compost units | Increase in home composting and use of anaerobic digesters | Graham Gosden | 2021-22 | Started | <p>Home compost units can be purchased online with a discount for MBC residents. The link is promoted on MBC website and environment services quarterly newsletter.</p> <p>The newly appointed Biodiversity and climate Engagement Officer is seeking awareness activities and events to support raising public awareness of home composting.</p> | Red |
| Adapting to climate change | | | | | | | | |
| 5.1 | Provide policy on climate change adaptation in Local Plan review, including consideration of flooding, heat and drought. | <p>Indicator M36: Number of qualifying developments failing to provide BREEAM very good standards for water and energy credits</p> <p>Indicator SA27: Number of new residential developments where the energy/emissions standards in the Building Regulations Part L have been exceeded⁸</p> | Flooding, heat and drought impacts of climate change integrated in to local plan, DPD and policy documents. | <p>Mark Egerton</p> <p>James Wilderspin</p> | 2020-22 | <p>Started - As part of local plan review policy to ensure climate adaptation is now included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POLICY LPRSP14(C) – CLIMATE CHANGE requires the integration of blue-green infrastructure into qualifying new development in order to mitigate urban heat islands, enhance urban biodiversity, and to contribute to reduced surface water runoff through the provision of SuDS. POLICY LPRQ&D 1: SUSTAINABLE DESIGN is incorporated into the local plan review process to ensure new developments mitigate climate impacts in their design. | <p>The LPR is currently undergoing examination in public.</p> <p>LPR indicators are reported in the autumn.</p> <p>Work has started on Design and Sustainability Development Plan Document which will build on LPR policies in relation to sustainable movement.</p> | Red |

⁸ Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| | | | | | | This action is also integrated into the forthcoming Design and Sustainability DPD | | |
| 5.2 | Ensure Local Plan review considers level of current and future projected flood risk and that new developments are planned accordingly. | Indicator SA4: New development in the floodplain Indicator SA5: Development permitted contrary to advice by the Environment Agency on flood risk ⁹ | New developments are planned in projected flood resilient/resistant area | Mark Egerton | 2020-22 | Started - There have been 111 applications permitted within the floodplain during the monitoring year of 2020/21. Of this number 28 included a flood risk assessment as part of the application. A further 17 applications included flood mitigation conditions such as details regarding floor level, materials and the submission of a floor risk assessment. The remaining applications did not include any flood risk mitigation as the developments were considered suitable. | AMR monitoring reported in Autumn | Red |
| 5.3 | Use Severe Weather Impacts Monitoring System (SWIMS) to understand impacts of severe weather in borough. Work with Kent County Council to implement actions from the Climate Change Risk and Impact Assessment in the borough. | Number of Major / Minor impacts recorded / detailed on SWIMS and back log of events also to be put up from 2020 Record of actions Implemented alongside KCC for Maidstone Borough | Use of past incidences to gather 'lessons learnt' and for future planning | Uche Olufemi James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – SWIMS is in use at MBC, sever incidences are recorded and logged. | There has been little progress on this action because of other pressing priorities responding to Covid19, flooding and heatwave response. However, MBC have now recruited an Emergency Planning Officer who will be trained on SWIMS and take on the task of uploading impacts on SWIMS more regularly and with closer ties to KCC. | Red |
| 5.4 | Work with Medway Flood Partnership to identify and develop actions, including natural flood management (nature-based solutions and sustainable urban drainage), which can help to reduce flooding. | Utilise natural flood management and integrated with planning Indicator SA6: Percentage of developments implementing SUDs ¹⁰ | Flooding reduced across borough Surface run off reduced at new developments | Mark Green | 2020-30 | Started - Over 2021, the Partnership has been working hard to deliver the actions within the Medway Flood Action Plan. Action Plan End of Year 1 Report . While this flood action plan is a significant milestone in addressing flood risk in the Medway catchment, it is part of a longer journey with the partnership, communities and with individuals to build awareness and preparedness for flooding and identify and develop more actions which can help to reduce flood levels. | South east rivers trust – schemes of | Amber |

⁹ Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

¹⁰ Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

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| | | | | | | In the coming years, the partnership will continue to work with communities to develop this plan further and consider the 25-year vision and the pathway to getting there. | | |
| 5.5 | Work with Medway Flood Partnership to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a funding strategy to identify and secure additional resources for natural flood management. Build local communities' resilience to flooding | Support to parishes to develop plans | Increase in Parishes involved Increase in number of emergency plans implemented | Mark Green Uche Olufemi | 2020-30 | Started - Following the floods of winter 2013/14, extensive work was carried out to investigate the feasibility of large-scale engineering solutions to flood risk. The only large-scale capital scheme in the overall Medway Flood Partnership programme is the expansion of the Leigh Flood Storage Area in Tonbridge & Malling. Other capital investment and maintenance work has been on a smaller scale, focused on local flood risk. The two projects within Maidstone Council's capital programme are described below. | Officers have been in touch with local parishes to share the importance of creating community flood and emergency plans. Support has been offered to the parishes with templates and material shared to help kick start the process. Some parishes have effective plans which have been rehearsed multiple times because of incidents like flooding. We have now contacted the KALC chair and plan to work with the other parishes without community emergency plans to develop one for their communities, promote the plans and recruit volunteer flood wardens to support the response to incidents. | Amber |
| 5.6 | Review our arrangements around our estate, parks and recreation facilities in severe weather situations as part of business continuity management | Develop plans for Parks & Open spaces and recreation facilities owned and operated by MBC | Reduction in recovery time following severe weather situation | Uche Olufemi Lucy Norman Andrew Williams | 2021 | Started – Plans in development. | Business Continuity Plans have been developed for facilities owned and operated by MBC. The Business Continuity Plan's primary aim is to ensure that maintenance and management of Council properties continue if an emergency situation occurs. This plan is to be used in the event of a major incident affecting the provision of the Council's services and is to be used in conjunction with the full MBC Business Continuity Plan and may be used in conjunction with the Council's Emergency Plan. | Amber |
| 5.7 | Work with the Kent Resilience Forum, spatial planners and other partners to enhance adaptation and emergency planning contingencies for severe weather and other climate impacts. 'Strengthening' of power and water supply and other critical infrastructure should be a priority | Incorporate climate adaptation and emergency planning contingencies in to planning | Improved resilience of power and water supply and other critical infrastructure | Mark Egerton Uche Olufemi James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started | The Local Plan Review (LPR) is currently undergoing examination in public. Annual Monitoring Report indicators are reported in the autumn. Work has started on Design and Sustainability Development Plan Document which will build on LPR policies in relation to sustainable movement. | Red |

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| | alongside ensuring more resilient settlements | | | | | | | |
| 5.8 | Support local businesses to be resilient to climate change including referring to Kent Prepared website | Signpost and support local businesses to make climate informed decisions and access to resilience information | Climate resilience and awareness increased for local businesses | Chris Inwood | 2021 | Not Started – this action is delayed to 2022. However, through the business newsletter local business have been supported through awareness raising and the option to contact the council for advice. | The Kent prepared website will be listed in the business green business support section of the new Maidstone in Business Website due to go live in Autumn 2022. | Red |
| Enhancing and increasing biodiversity | | | | | | | | |
| 6.1 | Draft Local Plan to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> require biodiversity net gain as a standard across the borough ensure Garden communities are an exemplar for biodiversity and deliver semi natural open space increase tree coverage and other wildlife habitats to allow biodiversity in new developments; and ensure that sustainable urban drainage schemes (SuDS) maximise biodiversity potential. | Natural Environment – Biodiversity Indicator M33: Loss of designated wildlife sites as a result of development (hectares) M34: Loss of Ancient Woodland as a result of development (hectares) Indicator M38: Loss of designated open space as a result of development (hectares) Indicator M39: Delivery of open space allocations Indicator M40: Delivery of new or improvements to existing designated open space in association with housing and mixed-use developments Indicator SA6: Percentage of developments implementing SuDS Indicator SA29: Net loss/gain of designated wildlife habitats Indicator SA30: Condition of wildlife sites Indicator SA21: Net loss of agricultural land Indicator SA22: Number of new allotment pitches provided through | Increase in local biodiversity Increase in green spaces Increase in tree canopy coverage Decrease in surface water run off | Mark Egerton | 2020-2022 | Started - Incorporated into Local Plan Review is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> POLICY LPRSP14A: A minimum of 20% biodiversity net gain expected to be delivered on-site and Development proposals will be expected to demonstrate the protection of natural landscape assets including Ancient Woodland, veteran trees, hedgerows and features of biological and geological interest. Recognised garden city principles A full suite of open space will be delivered in accordance with Policy INF1 including natural/semi natural open space The green and blue infrastructure is considered to be of such importance that a Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBIS) has been developed as a supplementary doc during the Local Plan Review Process. A green and blue infrastructure approach represents a means to positively tackle these issues. It can offer alternative flood mitigation strategies, such as Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) and the creation of water meadows. | Please see update from February 2022 – further updates from AMR monitoring reported due in Autumn | Red |

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
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| | | development contributions ¹¹ | | | | Also comes under new design and sustainability DPD forthcoming <table><tr><th rowspan="2">Natural Environment Assets and Constraints</th><th colspan="3">2020</th><th colspan="3">2021</th></tr><tr><th>KM²</th><th>% of Borough</th><th>Number</th><th>KM²</th><th>% of Borough</th><th>Number</th></tr><tr><td>Total area of the Borough</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>391.88</td><td></td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Metropolitan Green Belt</td><td>5.27</td><td>1.34%</td><td></td><td>5.27</td><td>1.34%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</td><td>106.8</td><td>27.25%</td><td></td><td>106.8</td><td>27.25%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>National Flood Zone 3</td><td>41.39</td><td>10.56%</td><td></td><td>41.3</td><td>10.56%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>National Flood Zone 2</td><td>25.05</td><td>6.39%</td><td></td><td>25.0</td><td>6.39%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Landscape of Local Value</td><td>75.58</td><td>19.29%</td><td></td><td>75.5</td><td>19.29%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Ancient Woodland (semi-natural and replanted)</td><td>23.13</td><td>7.18%</td><td></td><td>23.1</td><td>7.18%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Special Area of Conservation</td><td>1.42</td><td>0.36%</td><td></td><td>1.42</td><td>0.36%</td><td></td></tr><tr><td>Sites of Special Scientific Interest</td><td>4.92</td><td>1.25%</td><td>9</td><td>4.92</td><td>1.25%</td><td>9</td></tr><tr><td>Local Wildlife Sites</td><td>23.85</td><td>6.09%</td><td>62</td><td>23.8</td><td>6.09%</td><td>62</td></tr><tr><td>Roadside Verges of Nature Conservation Interest</td><td></td><td></td><td>34</td><td></td><td></td><td>34</td></tr><tr><td>Local Nature Reserves</td><td>0.33</td><td>0.08%</td><td>3</td><td>0.33</td><td>0.08%</td><td>3</td></tr></table> Table 6.2: Key assets and constraints of the natural environment (Source: MBC 2021). | Natural Environment Assets and Constraints | 2020 | | | 2021 | | | KM² | % of Borough | Number | KM² | % of Borough | Number | Total area of the Borough | | | | 391.88 | | | Metropolitan Green Belt | 5.27 | 1.34% | | 5.27 | 1.34% | | Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | 106.8 | 27.25% | | 106.8 | 27.25% | | National Flood Zone 3 | 41.39 | 10.56% | | 41.3 | 10.56% | | National Flood Zone 2 | 25.05 | 6.39% | | 25.0 | 6.39% | | Landscape of Local Value | 75.58 | 19.29% | | 75.5 | 19.29% | | Ancient Woodland (semi-natural and replanted) | 23.13 | 7.18% | | 23.1 | 7.18% | | Special Area of Conservation | 1.42 | 0.36% | | 1.42 | 0.36% | | Sites of Special Scientific Interest | 4.92 | 1.25% | 9 | 4.92 | 1.25% | 9 | Local Wildlife Sites | 23.85 | 6.09% | 62 | 23.8 | 6.09% | 62 | Roadside Verges of Nature Conservation Interest | | | 34 | | | 34 | Local Nature Reserves | 0.33 | 0.08% | 3 | 0.33 | 0.08% | 3 | | |
| Natural Environment Assets and Constraints | 2020 | | | 2021 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| | KM² | % of Borough | Number | KM² | % of Borough | Number | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Total area of the Borough | | | | 391.88 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Metropolitan Green Belt | 5.27 | 1.34% | | 5.27 | 1.34% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty | 106.8 | 27.25% | | 106.8 | 27.25% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| National Flood Zone 3 | 41.39 | 10.56% | | 41.3 | 10.56% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| National Flood Zone 2 | 25.05 | 6.39% | | 25.0 | 6.39% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Landscape of Local Value | 75.58 | 19.29% | | 75.5 | 19.29% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Ancient Woodland (semi-natural and replanted) | 23.13 | 7.18% | | 23.1 | 7.18% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Special Area of Conservation | 1.42 | 0.36% | | 1.42 | 0.36% | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Sites of Special Scientific Interest | 4.92 | 1.25% | 9 | 4.92 | 1.25% | 9 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Local Wildlife Sites | 23.85 | 6.09% | 62 | 23.8 | 6.09% | 62 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Roadside Verges of Nature Conservation Interest | | | 34 | | | 34 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Local Nature Reserves | 0.33 | 0.08% | 3 | 0.33 | 0.08% | 3 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6.2 | Adopt Parks and Open Space Biodiversity Action Plan ensuring it is reviewed to keep up to date with latest practices. | Complete Plan Implement biodiversity friendly practices adopted across parks and open spaces | Increase in biodiversity | Andrew Williams | 2021 | Completed – submitted to committee for approval (Link) | Parks and Open Space Biodiversity Action Plan is in place and driving changes for Biodiversity (including 6.11 below). Key successes identified since implantation of the plan include: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Biodiversity Pledge – to be rolled out with staff cohort Autumn 2022 and included with Arb contract retender.2. Skills and awareness training to begin Autumn 2022.3. All deadwood is retained on site where practicable – as illustrated at Mote Park, Park Wood.4. LNR declaration for Fant imminent Aug-Sept 2022.5. Ecological survey work at Mote Park – bats, flora informing management practices.6. Queens Green Canopy project to go ahead Autumn 2022 – 500 trees to be planted with 70+ oaks. Large lime planted at Brenchley Gardens.7. No mow May extended to 6 sites and 10000m2 of pollinator meadows.8. Maidstone In Bloom 2021 & 2022 – pollinator friendly category promoting environmental benefits to gardeners. | Green | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

¹¹ Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

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| 6.3 | Support and signpost community groups on tree planting and after care | Engage and outreach with community groups on social media and through Go Green Go Wild initiative and calendar of events | Improvement in biodiversity friendly maintenance practices from community groups and residents | James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – the go green go wild website has been updated, and local community groups engaged as part of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Engagement Strategy. | Meetings have been held with Kent Life, Rochester Bridges Trust, Leeds Castle, Cob Tree Estate, Barming Parish Council and Parish Councils Environment Group, and Marden Farming Cluster on potential tree planting projects and after care needed. | Amber |
| 6.4 | Work with Kent County Council to draft common position statement on biodiversity (including ensuring maintenance regimes which protect and enhance biodiversity) | Produce common position statement | Improved coordination on biodiversity enhancing efforts | Andrew Williams James Wilderspin | 2020-22 | Started | AMR monitoring reported in Autumn Partnership with KCC in discussion on joint task force and biodiversity enhancing maintenance regimes across common areas, paths and boarder areas. | Red |
| 6.5 | Liaise with Kent Wildlife Trust to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote relevant schemes to residents, schools and community groups to encourage them to enhance biodiversity in their gardens and grounds. Provide information on habitat development and the benefits of it to nature and ecosystem services | Support and signpost KWT projects with residents and community groups | Increased community inclusion and engagement on biodiversity enchantments | Gemma Bailey James Wilderspin Andrew Williams | 2020-30 | Started – several projects with Kent Wildlife Trust including greening the town centre and education and outreach are currently being planned | Through the Green and Wild Events Calendar on the Go Green Go Wild Website, local groups raised interests in supporting activities for World Bee Day on the 20th of May. MBC Parks and Open Spaces partnered with Medway Countryside Partnership, and volunteers were supported to find 5 locations around MBC estate spaces and parks to establish bee hotels and log piles to encourage insect's species and bee corridors. Additionally, MBC is Partnering with KWT through their Wild About Gardening (WAG) project to enlist local gardeners and enthusiasts to enhance green spaces in Maidstone Town Centre to encourage biodiversity. Several sites in the town centre have been identified, including the Business Terrace green roof top which will be enhanced to encourage biodiversity, insects and birds. | Amber |
| 6.6 | Work with Environment Agency, South East Rivers Trust, Kent Wildlife Trust and Medway Valley Countryside Partnership to enhance and expand wetland coverage in Borough (including removal of dams and culverts, achieving improvements to water quality and restoration | Identify potential wetland area Facilitate partnerships on wetland projects | Increase in wetlands across borough Reduction in flooding and surface water run off Improvement in water quality | Rob Jarman James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – Project opportunities are in the process of being scoped to expand wetlands in the borough. MBC supported development of a 2.2-hectare wetland on unproductive farmland that lies South of Carpenters Lane in Staplehurst. Total projected costs are £59,785 in partnership with The Environment Agency. | No additional update since February 2022 | Red |

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| | of ponds, lakes, marshes, wet woodland and bogs) | | | | | | | |
| 6.7 | Work with partners to develop and implement a Nature Recovery Strategy, linking habitat restoration and creation to improve flood protection and water quality | Create a Nature Recovery Strategy Indicator SA37: Ecological/chemical status of water bodies ¹² | Improved flood protection and water quality | Rob Jarman James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – KCC leading | Local Nature Recovery Strategy provides the opportunity to deliver an ecologically coherent and landscape scale, strategic approach to nature recovery in Kent and Medway – this is being led and implemented by Kent County Council. As spatial strategies, Local Nature Recovery Strategies are under development to establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits. Secondary legislation and statutory guidance, yet to be published. | Red |
| 6.8 | Work with local farms and landowners to deliver landscape scale biodiversity initiatives – including reconnection of fragmented natural habitats, floodplain restoration, reduced chemical inputs and reintroduction of lost key stone species | Form partnerships and collaboration with farmers and landowners | Landscape scale biodiversity improvements | Rob Jarman James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – a partnership with the Kent Agricultural Society is being initiated to work with local farmers. | Monthly Marden Farm Cluster Blog to be distributed through MBC comms aimed at wider farmer community to encourage sustainable practices with farming community. Meetings have been held with Rochester Bridges Trust and Leeds Castle on Biodiversity and Climate actions and plans. Further collaboration is being sought with Leeds Castle. Other than resource sharing no landscape scale initiatives or partnerships have been formed yet for this action. Officers seeking collaboration through KWTs cluster system to create closer ties with famers and large-scale landowners. | Red |
| 6.9 | Contribute to the KCC aim to plant 1.5 million trees in Kent by 2050 to increase canopy cover by 2% increase to 19%, of which Maidstone's proportion is to increase canopy cover from 16% to 18%. With an emphasis on expanding ancient forests and reconnecting of existing woodland including urban woods, greening town | Seek partnership on land and tree planting Seek to purchase land for rewilding projects Partner with KCC on wider scale tree planting initiative | Borough tree canopy increased by 2% | James Wilderspin Rob Jarman Andrew Williams | 2021 -2030 | Started – MBC has launched the Call for Tree Planting Projects to seek partners for widescale tree planting. In collaboration with KCC Kent Plan Tree Partnership, large scale areas for tree planning and funding is being sought. | Following a call for tree planting sites on the MBC website campaigns page and comms outreach a total of 15 medium to large scale landowners submitted proposals to MBC of which only 6 tree planting projects we deemed viable and shortlisted. With a combined 12 hectares for planting owned by private landowners. However, Due to legal agreement requiring MBC ownership of trees, maintenance required, access needed and stipulation that the trees must adhere to DEFRA guidelines and be left to grow for a minimum of 30 years several private landowners dropped out of the MBC scheme. The | Amber |

¹² Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

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| | centres, and where feasible increase tree cover on our estate land. | | | | | | <p>number of interested private landowners has now reduced to just two (totalling 3 hectares). Cost effectiveness of the MBC planting scheme will be considered on small scale projects and MBC is awaiting confirmation from the landowners on whether the terms are accepted to go ahead with planting in autumn 2022.</p> <p>One tree planting project funded by MBC is set to go ahead in October 2022 collaboration with Medway country Valley partnership and working with Maidstone Victory Angling Society (MVAS) to create a new community woodland on MVAS land adjacent to the River Medway between Yalding and Nettlestead. The proposed creation of this small community woodland on land at Grid Ref: TQ6864350752 is currently a mixture of neutral and improved grassland covering approx. 1.5 hectares. It has some wildflowers but is currently heavily affected by the presence of non-native invasive Himalayan balsam and largely inaccessibly. The site has no protected habitat designations. In the short term 1200 whips will be planted. We propose a site specific broadleaved mixed woodland with tree species such as oak, lime and alder (on the wetter parts of the site) plus ash and elm if ash die back and Dutch elm disease strains have been identified ahead of planting. Whilst the planting and activities we propose will be slightly further than 8m from the waterbody, the land in question is in Flood Zone 3. As such, MVCP have prepared a Flood Risk Assessment and Method Statement and will submit a Be-Spoke Permit Application to the Environment Agency and gain confirmation that the planting is supported by the E.A ahead of project start. No trees will be planted closer than 4m from the adjacent path. Trees will not be planted adjacent to the access gate which allows access to the site from across the railway line. A route for potential future machinery through the gate and across the site will be left to ensure the facilitation of future access. To ensure the success of the planting, MVCP will carry out Himalayan balsam removal activities with volunteers in the first year after planting. Whilst doing so we</p> | |

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| | | | | | | | <p>will provide training to MVAS members and volunteers to ensure this activity continues.</p> <p>Additionally, Biodiversity and Climate officers are developing a business case for the purchase of land specifically for green projects including nutrient neutrality, SuDS and wetland creation, Biodiversity banks, offsetting schemes and tree planting.</p> | |
| 6.10 | Evaluate our Go Green Go Wild work. Amend as needed and commit ongoing funds to ensure of work continues. | <p>Upgrade and maintain Go Green Go Wild Website</p> <p>Allocate budget and support community groups on biodiversity enhancing projects</p> | Go Green Go Wild continues to operate and grow network | <p>Gemma Bailey</p> <p>James Wilderspin</p> | 2021 | Completed due to recommence with additional budget in 2022 | The newly appointed Biodiversity and Climate Change Engagement Officer's responsibilities will be to run and maintain the GGGW website, community engagement and events organisation. Officers are looking to allocate funding for small scale biodiversity enhancing grants to be rolled out in early 2023. A Green and Wild Calendar of events has been added to the website to support collaboration and information sharing between community groups. Further suggested ideas are to include a swap and share page for community groups to trade items such as shovels, work tools, litter pick equipment via the Go Green Go Wild website and social media pages. | Green |
| 6.11 | Ensure that all MBC land and property holdings and land subject to MBC maintenance interventions maximise value for biodiversity | Support and maintain biodiversity enhancements across MBC assets | Increase in biodiversity across MBC assets | <p>Andrew Williams</p> <p>James Wilderspin</p> | 2020-30 | Completed with new biodiversity enhancing maintenance practices being implemented across MBC land and property holdings | <p>Continuous development of new ideas and enhancements are under development. For example, at Brenchley Gardens site specific improvements such as nest boxes, deadwood habitat are currently underway. Additionally, officers are exploring pond wetland option at Brenchley Gardens.</p> <p>MBC Parks and Open Spaces partnered with Medway Countryside Partnership, and volunteers were supported to find 5 locations around MBC estate spaces and parks to establish bee hotels and log piles to encourage insect's species and bee corridors.</p> | Green |
| 6.12 | Audit trees on council land and create maintenance plan. | <p>Conduct audit</p> <p>Prepare growth bid for creation of tree officer position at MBC</p> <p>Allocate budget to state-of-the-art GIS software and tree auditing tools</p> <p>Produce maintenance plan</p> | <p>MBC tree stock full audited and maintained</p> <p>Risk reduced from storms and falling trees</p> | <p>Andrew Williams</p> <p>James Wilderspin</p> | 2021 | Started – A GIS mapping exercise has been conducted to audit the number of trees on MBC property, however this action is delayed to 2022 due to GIS technology/software requirements needed to complete the auditing. | Remaining 1/3 of borough is still to be inspected/audited for safety and tree stock mapped for risk-based works. This informs the maintenance plan for the following three years – this approach keeps residents safe, retains trees for as long as possible with pro-active works. However, it does not provide detail on canopy cover. GIS ' TreePlotter ' software packages and subscriptions are being explored by officers that can develop a detail inventory or tree assets and future audits. | Amber |

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| 6.13 | Review our non-operational land to assess potential for enhancing biodiversity including allowing community groups to take responsibility for management | Complete review Facilitate partnerships | Community partnerships formed MBC estate biodiversity maintained and enhanced | Lucy Norman James Wilderspin | 2022 | Started – BCC Manger currently seeking different options for non-operational land planting/wetland and community engagement | Meeting held with Kent Wildlife Trust to discuss services to measure existing biodiversity and carbon sequestration, make recommendations on how to improve, and then measure new levels of biodiversity and carbon sequestration. Now seeking consultants that provide this service so that Procurement rules can be met. There was a suggestion that this becomes part of the wider piece of work around mapping biodiversity across the borough, with an eye to informing biodiversity net gain (for planning), nutrient neutrality (for planning) and actions around siting of wetlands, tree planting, etc. | Red |
| Making our estate carbon neutral | | | | | | | | |
| 7.1 | Utilise the commissioned Carbon Trust report and 2020 baseline calculations to improve our: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> energy and water efficiency measures investment for upgrades/retrofits in our infrastructure; and onsite renewable energy generation. Outputs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> investigate how to fund recommendations from our carbon reduction report including Public Section Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme and options for revolving loan fund to pay for renewable energy developments that payback over time investigate offsetting through our estate, partnerships, and schemes. Offset | Reduction in CO2e from MBC directly operated Fleet Increase in number of Electric Vehicles operated by MBC Anti-Idling and efficient driving Maidstone House and other MBC Buildings increase take up and usage of Shared EV Cars | Calculated in KWH and CO2e The CO2e Tonnes sequestered as part of direct MBC tree planting/wetland projects and/or carbon credit schemes bought into Number of new Solar PV installed / increased capacity of energy produced in KWH Capacity of energy produced in KWH from MBC estate | Lucy Norman Darren Guess James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – the procurement process has been completed to undertake a comprehensive feasibility study for decarbonising all MBC buildings. Building surveys and energy audits will be conducted in early 2022, with road maps and plans drawn out to retrofit and upgrade for decarbonising each MBC building by 2030 | The Decarbonisation study led by APSE Energy is ongoing. A separate report will be developed for each key MBC building that recommends: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tangible recommendations for upgrading Heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) to zero carbon/electric equivalents such as ground and air source heat pumps, and solar thermal energy; Tangible recommendations for upgrading building fabric and electrical equipment, such as wall and roof insulation, glazing, LEDs, smart controls for greater energy efficiency; Seeking opportunities and tangible recommendations for onsite EV transportation and renewable energy generation, from photovoltaic panels or others where feasible. Give appropriate level of detail required to aligned recommended upgrades and retrofits with funding opportunities/rounds (eg. KWH savings, cost savings ect); and Support MBC through prioritisation, detailed design stage and procurement of works. The Study results will be used to apply for funding from the second phase of Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme in September 2022. MBC has developed a Green Fleet Strategy. The primary objective of this Strategy is to enable the purchasing of vehicles that deliver the business needs and consider their whole life costs whilst | Amber |

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| 153 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> projects invested in with preference given to those in borough, followed by in county implement Carbon Trust report recommendations under spend to save and investing in measures where needed; and commission energy audits, building surveys and feasibility studies for each MBC building to find tangible, upgrade and retrofit options to decarbonise our estate and transition to a green fleet | | | | | | <p>minimizing their environmental impact. It is important that when purchasing new vehicles, attention is given to whether the vehicle is necessary and if so, whether there is a commercially viable electric or hybrid alternative. This Strategy sets out the decision-making process for selecting new or replacement fleet vehicles and how the Council will seek to deliver its commitment to reducing emissions, miles, and fuel usage.</p> <p>Fleet Telematics software has been in use across all the Depot, and parks vehicles in 2022. Highly accurate driving data, and mileage data will be utilised to improve driving habits of MBC staff, stop idling, find the most direct routes in case of an incident and for regular scheduling, as well as accurately record vehicle emissions and fuel usage.</p> | |
| | 7.2 Measure our carbon footprint each year and report findings to relevant committees and the public. | <p>Overall Reduction in Energy (Gas/Electricity) Usage at MBC directly managed, priority buildings</p> <p>Total Carbon Offset or sequestered through direct tree planting/carbon sink projects or as part of carbon credit schemes MBC enters into</p> <p>Increased quantity of renewable energy produced from Solar PV arrays/capacity in KWH</p> <p>Quantity of Electricity produced by MBC current Solar PV arrays/capacity in KWH</p> | <p>Calculated in KWH and CO2e</p> <p>The CO2e Tonnes sequestered as part of direct MBC tree planting/wetland projects and/or carbon credit schemes bought into</p> <p>Number of new Solar PV installed / increased capacity of energy produced in KWH</p> <p>Capacity of energy produced in KWH from MBC estate</p> | <p>James Wilderspin</p> <p>Individual Facilities Managers</p> | Annually | <p>Started – 2021 calculations delayed to 2022 (Note: due to poor data quality the updated Carbon footprint has not been completed for 2021. MBC currently is in the process of upgrading all its buildings meters to automatic, along with instillation of fleet telematics software, updated calculations will be possible from 2022 with highly accurate automated data and integrated dashboard system).</p> | <p>Clean data is now available from MBC's fleet telematics software and automated utility data provided by LASER. Both data sources are provided on a monthly basis and a Carbon Dashboard system is under development, that will accurately show and update monthly, MBC's Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions. Once established, additional footprint data will be added, including staff millage, pool car usage, and taxi and bus carbon for the borough. The dashboard interface will be made user friendly and can be made publicly accessible via the MBC website.</p> <p>Instantiation of Automatic utility meters in all MBC buildings is ongoing.</p> | Amber |

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| | | | Indicator SA26: CO2 emissions per capita ¹³ | | | | | |
| 7.3 | Purchase 100% renewable energy for our buildings and operations where we control the supply. | Commit to percentage shift of MBC estate to renewables energy supply/green tariff | 100% renewable tariff across MBC buildings | James Wilderspin Lucy Norman | 2022 | Started – Laser Energy are developing MBC roadmap to 100% renewable energy by mid-2022 | This Action has been delayed significantly due to price changes and demand on renewable energy generation due in part to the invasion of Ukraine and Europe wide energy concerns. Both Npower and Total have been contacted to upgrade MBC buildings meters to automated meters, however installation of new meters has been severely delayed due to high demand for meter change overs across the UK. Officers currently seeking options with Laser on energy tariffs over short term, and longer term Green Basket and PEPPA options. | Red |
| 7.4 | Work in partnership to review our portfolio to identify temporary accommodation assets eligible for insulation upgrades under ECO3 funding and arrange installation. Provide top up funding for any measures not fully funded under the ECO3 to ensure all homes let as temporary accommodation are energy efficient and EPC rating improved to requirement. | Signposting and support to join schemes for housing associations, MBC short let properties and residents | Total Energy Bill Reductions Number of premisses converted from gas boilers to electric heating systems Increased EPC category improvements | Nigel Bucklow | 2020-22 | Started | No Update | Red |
| 7.5 | Incorporate energy saving principles into our office strategy. Utilise any learning from new working practices adopted due to COVID-19. | Conduct staff training and awareness raising | Reduction in Council Estate energy/water usage | Katie Exom Gemma Bailey | 2021-23 | Started | A staff training module on Climate Change and Biodiversity has been made mandatory on the ELMS system for all staff and new joiners at MBC. In part this course outlines energy saving principles, however as part of ongoing training and awareness raising, energy saving principles will be incorporated into tailored modules for all departments across the council. Training is set to commence in November 2022. As part of the events at the Go Green Information Centre, a staff energy clinic was implemented to | Red |

¹³ Maidstone Authority Monitoring [Report](#) (AMR) 2020-2021

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| | | | | | | | support MBC staff reduce their household bills during the energy price increase and winter 2022. | |
| 7.6 | Increase data and improve data management on our leased buildings. Identify assets with the highest emissions to prioritise action. Use role as a landowner (e.g. at Lockmeadow) to ensure that council-owned sites set a high standard for carbon reduction and demonstrate how to achieve biodiversity and combat climate change. | Automate utility data input from leased buildings for accurate carbon reporting and support to lease holders | Total Energy Bill Reductions EPC category improvements | Lucy Norman James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started | MBC has a continual program in place to replace lighting with LED low energy alternatives, and support tenants to achieve their own carbon reduction goals by ensuring buildings can support solar panels and more efficient heating systems. The Decarbonisation Study led by APSE Energy has been extended to now include Maidstone Leisure Centre, Cob Tree Golf Club, and Lockmeadow Shopping Centre. Findings and recommendations from the study will support renewable energy generation and energy efficiency measures that can be implemented by lease holders to reduce their energy consumption and bills. | Amber |
| 7.7 | Provide LED lighting in our car parks that have not yet been upgraded. | Continue upgrade to LED through maintenance schedule | Reduction in electricity usage from carparks | Jeff Kitson | 2020-30 | Started – 90% of MBC carparks currently utilise LED lights and is due to be 100% in 2022 as part of existing maintenance and upgrade schedule | Of the 331 lights installed in off-street car parks, 301 have been converted to LED equating to 90.9% of all units. The remaining lamps will continue to be replaced as part of the existing maintenance operation to ensure that all car park lighting has been converted to LED in the next 5 years'. | Amber |
| Communications and engagement strategy | | | | | | | | |
| 8.1 | Support residents to understand the changes they can make to reduce and prepare for climate change and to enhance biodiversity, including raising awareness of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> climate change through education in schools and education for the public, including adults, faith groups, seniors, youth groups, businesses and farmers upskilling and green jobs financial opportunities through energy efficiency and low-carbon energy generation measures | Create engaging content, information and strategies to increase awareness and inclusion on climate and biodiversity topics | Increase in resident's involvement on green issues Green Job creation Reduction in borough CO2e/waste and water usage | Gemma Bailey James Wilderspin Julie Maddocks | 2020-30 | Started – the Biodiversity and Climate Change Engagement Strategy is being rolled out in 2022, with an event scheduled each month on different biodiversity and climate awareness and national campaigns | MBC officers successfully implemented the first annual Vegetarian Food Festival. Held in Lockmeadow Love Food and Royal Star Arcade as part of Vegetarian Week on 21 st and 22 nd of May 2022. Eleven restaurants took part and were given £250 each to cater vegetarian alternatives for free tasters for the public to promote local businesses and a reduced meat diet. Led by the Vegetarian Society who set up a stall, supported alternative meat free products and advised the public on healthier, less costly meat free alternatives to reduce individual carbon footprints. MBC have established the Go Green Information Centre to enable residents, vulnerable groups, businesses, and partner organisations to make informed decisions on climate change and biodiversity and access funding to build resilience to the impacts of climate change. MBC setup a pop-up, walk-in community information centre for residents to access information and see real world solutions to | Amber |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> creating less waste and increase proportion of recycling/composting using less water buying from local businesses and supporting the circular economy reducing red meat consumption in line with Eatwell guidance | | | | | | <p>help them become more sustainable in The Mall shopping centre for 6 weeks. People who are confused, sceptical or don't know where to start can drop by for advice, resources, and to see sustainable solutions, products and services already out there that can help them become more sustainable. Manned by volunteers, the information centre answers questions, point people in the right direction, hand out leaflets and information on suitable practices to reduce energy bills, encourage active travel, and using greener products. Local sustainable businesses were invited to showcase and demonstrate their goods and services for free to reach local people and create clarity and confidence in making greener choices. The centre also hosted numerous events, talks and coincide with other climate and biodiversity campaigns subject to funding and staff/expert availability.</p> <p>Pending the successes of the pop up centre, additional budget will be sought to establish the centre again in 2023 for a longer period or to be made permanent.</p> | |
| 8.2 | Provide staff awareness information of biodiversity and climate change at induction and provide job specific sustainability training to each service area. | <p>Develop ELMs course</p> <p>Develop Training Manual specific to service areas</p> | MBC staff awareness increased | <p>Gemma Bailey</p> <p>James Wilderspin</p> | 2020-21 | Started – delayed to 2022 due to COVID19 and to be part of engagement strategy | <p>Completed - A staff training module on Climate Change and Biodiversity has been made mandatory on the ELMS system for all staff and new joiners at MBC. The Climate and Ecological Emergency module includes what climate change is, the evidence there is for it, how you can help to combat it and MBCs Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy.</p> <p>MBC's newly appointed Biodiversity and Climate Engagement Officer has also received training from the Carbon Literacy Project enabling her to accredit members of the staff and council members as carbon literate following basic training. the Biodiversity and Climate Engagement Officer is currently developing a training manual tailored to different department needs across the council to be rolled out commencing November 2022.</p> | Green |
| 8.3 | Inform partner organisations and residents about the threats from climate change | Create and maintain monthly newsletter | Improve residents and partner | Gemma Bailey | 2020-30 | Started – delayed to 2022 due to Covid19 and to be part of engagement strategy | MBC has developed a Biodiversity and Climate Change monthly newsletter first published September 2022. It includes the steps Maidstone | Amber |

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| | and the ways they and we can adapt and mitigate its impacts. | | organisations awareness | James Wilderspin Julie Maddocks | | | Borough Council is taking to reduce carbon emissions and protect our local environment, introduce climate change and biodiversity loss issues and provide information to help make positive change. The newsletter will include energy saving tips, active travel advice, sustainable living ideas, water saving suggestions, local biodiversity news and updates on all upcoming climate change and biodiversity events and introduce you to local organisations and groups who are working to help protect our planet. This newsletter will give local flood/heatwave/storm information based on projected Climate impacts to the local area and support residents to mitigate and adapt to the impacts of climate change locally. | |
| 8.4 | Engage with and build support from key stakeholders and the wider public on enhancing biodiversity and addressing climate change. Engage, highlight, and support relevant events and outreach in line with national and international days of action from the Environmental Awareness calendar. | Create and maintain calendar of environmental events Engage and collaborate with stakeholders to organise and support events | Increase in engagement on environmental topics | Gemma Bailey James Wilderspin Julie Maddocks | 2020-30 | Started – the Go Green Go Wild website has been updated to include the Green and Wild Events calendar, which is being rolled out in 2022, with an event scheduled each month on different biodiversity and climate awareness and national campaigns. | Completed - The Green and Wild Events calendar is supporting residents to come together, organise events, and collaborate on enhancing biodiversity and addressing climate change through community projects, litter picks, and walk to school campaigns. MBC is using the calendar to facilitate event organisation, find venues and fund community projects. A Grant scheme similar to that which launched Go Green Go Wild is being developed by officer. Community groups and schools will be offer grants of £500 to £1000 for climate and biodiversity related projects. The scheme aims to start in November. | Green |
| 8.5 | Support local businesses to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> utilise support available, such as funding and carbon calculators, to reduce their emissions, align their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), and generate renewable energy including liaising with KCC on LoCASE funding opportunities implement travel plans that promote walking, | Maintain newsletters and support to local businesses | Local Business supported to apply for green grants | Julie Maddocks Chris Inwood Rachael Bennet Gemma Bailey James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – monthly business newsletters now include green financing/grants, carbon footprints and sustainable business practices and tips. | MBC is continuing to promote green grant funding in our business e-newsletter and via Maidstone Business Boost. MBC also hosted a LOCASE workshop at MIC in mid July 2022. | Amber |

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| | cycling and public transport to work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> use the Kent Prepared website to raise awareness of how to prepare for flooding | | | | | | | |
| 8.6 | Liaise with Parish Councils to support their work on biodiversity and climate change | Support parish council develop local action plans | Parish Council's engaged with individual action plans | Gemma Bailey James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – partnerships currently being sought on large scale tree planting projects | Officers have presented to Parish Councils Environment Group on supporting the develop of Parish led biodiversity and climate action plans. MBC has provided templates, advice and feedback on action plans as parishes are developing them. Engaging with tree planting, officers have met and conducted site visits with Barming Parish Council, Sutton Valence Parish Council, and Parish Councils Environment Group, to discuss collaboration and areas for tree planning projects. | Amber |
| 8.7 | Work with partners to address climate change and biodiversity effectively and sustainably | Develop partnerships and common strategies across Kent | Partnerships | Gemma Bailey James Wilderspin | 2020-30 | Started – MBC is a collaborator with KCC and all other Kent districts as part of the Climate Change Network that meet quarterly. | Officers continue to work collaboratively with partner organisation, KCC and other districts through the Kent Climate Change Network. County level subgroups now meet regularly to develop sustainable procurement policies, taxi licencing policy, transport and tree planting strategies and carbon accounting across the county. | Amber |
| 8.8 | Following successful legal action by the Housing and Health Team regarding category 1 hazards of excess cold, and the Building Control Team regarding buildings not built to required standards – publicise details through communications team. | Support housing associations and residents with information on category 1 hazards of excess cold | Warmer homes | Nigel Bucklow Robert Wiseman Julie Maddocks | 2020-30 | No opportunity has arisen yet | No Update | Red |
| Sustainable decision-making processes and governance | | | | | | | | |
| 9.1 | Provide briefings and training for councillors and our managers on carbon, climate change, and biodiversity to create a culture change and ensure climate change and biodiversity are integrated into decision making. | Create training materials | Carbon literate accreditation for all members | Gemma Bailey James Wilderspin | 2020-21 | Started – Carbon Literacy Training is due to commence in 2022 | MBC's newly appointed Biodiversity and Climate Engagement Officer has also received training from the Carbon Literacy Project enabling her to accredit council members as carbon literate following basic training. the Biodiversity and Climate Engagement Officer is currently developing a training manual tailored to executive members and committees to be rolled out commencing November 2022. | Amber |

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| 9.2 | Establish biodiversity and climate change overview and scrutiny committee. | Regular Updates for council members | Oversight of Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan | Angela Woodhouse | 2020-21 | Unable to be Completed – A decision was taken to Not put an O&S committee in place, as the action plan is intended instead to be integrated into every department of the council and therefore scrutinised as part of all MBC operations and reports. | With the introduction of the new cabinet system the oversight of Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan is as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fortnightly update to the council leader and Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance. An update to the council's wider leadership team and the executive every quarter. A six-monthly update and an annual review of the action plan to identify amendments and decisions and report these to the Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee and the executive. | Red |
| 9.3 | Ensure service plans consider biodiversity and addressing climate change and performance indicators are set as needed. | Develop dashboard to create transparent means for monitoring progress of implementation of action plan | Performance Indicators monitor progress of BCC implementation | Anna Collier James Wilderspin | 2020-21 | A Key Performance Indicator framework to monitor progress of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan has been developed and was noted by the policy and resources committee on 9 th of February 2022. Biodiversity and Climate Risk implications are now standardised across every report form MBC. | Overarching indicators for the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan are being automated to be regularly updated via a Carbon Dashboard system. The Dashboard system is under development and will be utilised by the end of 2022. | Amber |
| 9.4 | Review guidance used to help managers plan their services to ensure opportunities for enhancing biodiversity and mitigating and adapting to climate change are taken. | Support data collection, indicators and managers to report | Biodiversity and Climate Change imbedded in decision making across council | Anna Collier James Wilderspin | 2020-21 | Started – delayed to 2022 | Overarching indicators for the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan are being automated to be regularly updated via a Carbon Dashboard system. The Dashboard system is under development and will be utilised by the end of 2022. | Amber |
| 9.5 | Establish criteria for investment in climate change and biodiversity and invest to save schemes. These will consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) relative impact in terms of carbon reduction and b) ease of delivery, such that expenditure is focused on deliverable, affordable initiatives that maximise impact | Create criteria Develop business case | Investments in climate change and biodiversity save schemes | Paul Holland James Wilderspin | 2020-21 | Started – delayed to 2022 | As part of Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements coming into law in 2023, officers investigating a business case to invest in land to be used for green projects including, carbon offsets, reptile sanctuaries, tree nurseries, SuDS schemes, open space creation, and BNG units sold to developers. | Red |

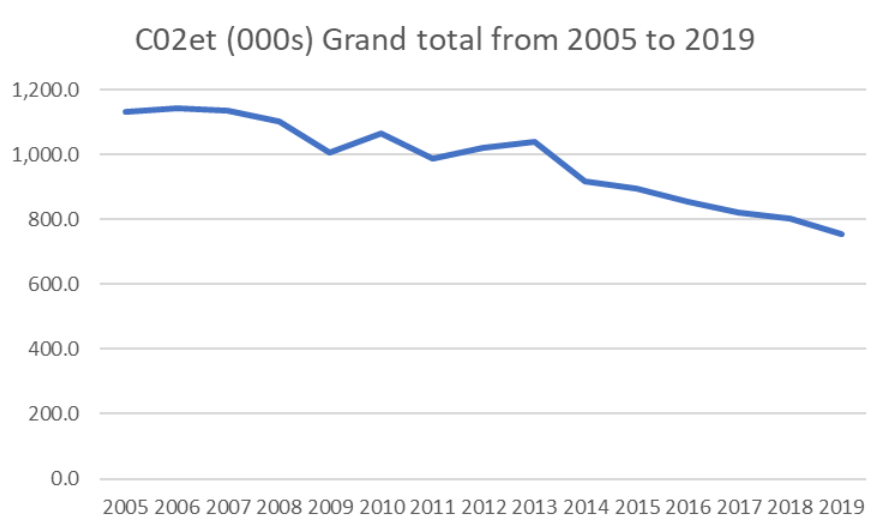
| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
|--------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|-------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| | on the carbon reduction targets. | | | | | | | |
| 9.6 | Develop a corporate policy and procurement approach to social value that incorporates enhancing biodiversity and reducing our (scope 3) carbon footprint through the way we design, carry out and procure our services. | <p>Develop policy</p> <p>Support supply chain to reduce carbon and disclose net zero plans</p> | Sustainable Procured Policy enacted | <p>Dan Hutchins</p> <p>Adrian Lovegrove</p> <p>James Wilderspin</p> | 2021 | Started – delayed to 2022 | <p>In collaboration with Tunbridge Wells and Maidstone Borough Councils through our shared procurement team a Sustainable Procurement Policy has been defined that will</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guide the Council in considering whole life sustainability impacts in all contracts, ensuring that we take a proportional approach and to support suppliers in assisting us to reduce our joint carbon footprint. • This policy will support the Council in encouraging suppliers to assist us in reducing our consumption on utilities. • This policy aims benefit our communities in encouraging small and medium size enterprises (SME's) to work with the Council and to engage with sustainability issues. The policy will also aim to provide information on guidance on how they can calculate and reduce their carbon footprint. • Assess where the emission hotspots are in their supply chain • Identify resource and energy risks in their supply chain • Identify which suppliers are leaders and which are laggards in terms of their sustainability performance • Identify energy efficiency and cost reduction opportunities in their supply chain • Engage suppliers and assist them to implement sustainability initiatives • Improve the energy efficiency of their products • Positively engage with employees to reduce emissions from business travel and employee commuting. <p>Due to the varying industries the Council procure works and services from, this policy proposes a flexible timeline to ensure compliance, fair competition and measurable results. This flexibility will also allow us to remain committed to supporting local SME's as we progress this journey.</p> | Amber |

| Action | | Outputs | Outcomes | Responsibility | Timescale | Previous Status February 2022 | Current Status October 2022 | RAG |
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| | | | | | | | Additionally, procurement software is being investigated that will support accurate scope 3 emission foot printing for MBC. | |

Appendix 2: Key Performance Indicators

The purpose of the indicators is to provide a focus for strategic and operational improvement to the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan, create an analytical basis for decision making and prioritisation, and ensure the council is monitoring its progress toward its climate and biodiversity commitments. Thematic Key Performance Indicators in the table below show overall progress of the implementation of the Action Plan.

| Action Plan Theme | Key Performance Indicators | Progress |
|-------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Active travel and green transportation | a. Improvement in Borough wide Air Quality | <p>There is a year-on-year decrease for most pollution monitoring sites since 2017 across the borough air quality 40µg/m³ or lower. In 2020, there was a drop in NO₂ levels, as a result of the lockdowns, in 2021 data mostly shows a small increase compared to 2020 level, however this is not as high as pre-pandemic levels.</p> |

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|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | b. Borough wide carbon reduction | <p>C02et (000s) Grand total from 2005 to 2019</p>  <p>Borough wide carbon emissions have reduced by 1,130.9 to 754.2 (These cover territorial emissions of CO₂, CH₄ and N₂O)¹. Or a -33% Percentage change between 2005 to 2019 in CO₂ emissions per sq km.</p> |
| | c. Number EVs charge points across the borough | There are currently 65 public EV charging points in Maidstone Borough. According to government targets, Maidstone should aim to install 862 EV charging points by 2030. |
| 2. Decarbonising and insulating homes and buildings | a. EPC category improvements | Of 65,000 house EPC's produced in the borough 48% are A-C and 52% are D-G. Since 2017 it looks like 15,760 have become EPC C or higher ² . |

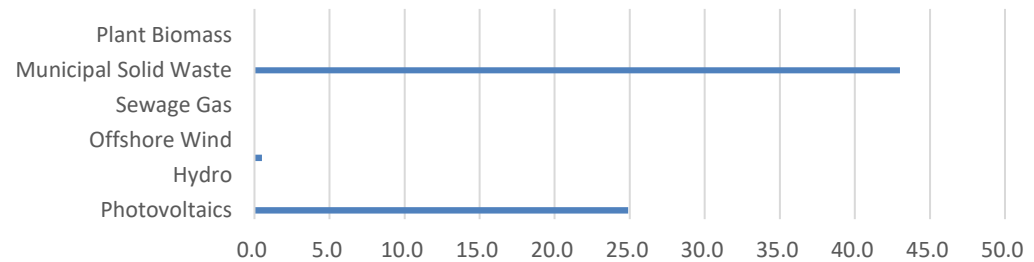
¹ [UK local authority and regional greenhouse gas emissions national statistics](#)

² [Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities: Energy Performance of Buildings Data: England and Wales](#)

3. Generating renewable energy

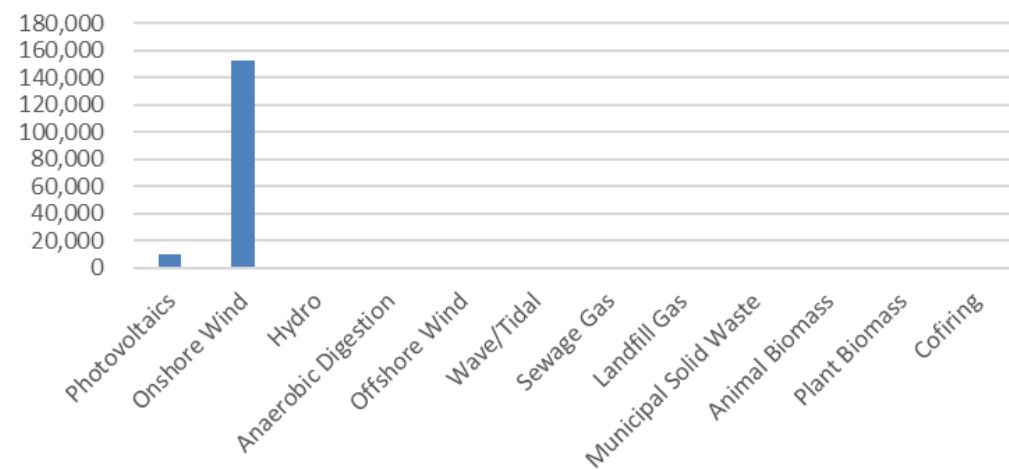
a. Level of installed capacity of clean energy (GWh) across borough

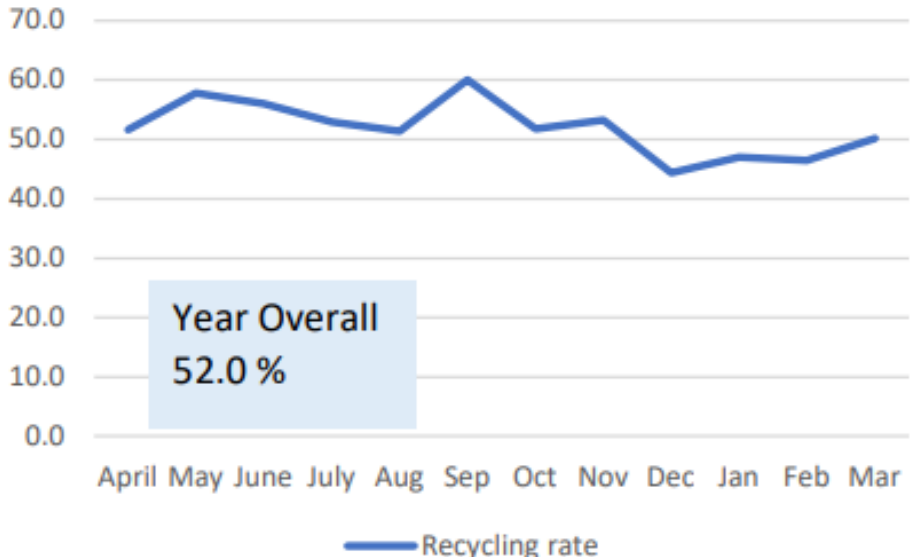
Maidstone Borough Renewable Electricity: Installed Capacity (MW) as at end of 2021



Maidstone Borough has an installed capacity of 68.4MW of renewable electricity installed and a total of 163,242MWh Renewable electricity generation as of the end of 2021.

Maidstone Renewable electricity generation (MWh) as of end of 2021



| | | |
|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 4. Reducing waste and increasing energy efficiency | a. Reduction in solid waste in tonnes across borough | <p style="text-align: center;">2021/22</p>  <p style="text-align: center;">Year Overall 52.0 %</p> <p style="text-align: center;">— Recycling rate</p> <p>52% of waste in Maidstone borough is reused, recycled or composted.</p> |
| 5. Adapting to climate change | a. Sustainable (climate and biodiversity) Policies adopted as part of local plan review/DPD | TBD |
| 6. Enhancing and increasing biodiversity | a. Increase in Forest area as a proportion of total land area and protected, restored | 784ha additional land or change of land for tree planting and rewilding to increase canopy cover by 2% (Maidstone total 39,342ha). 71,000 trees planted per year for 17 years. In 2022 approximately |

| | | |
|-------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | existing trees, hedgerow, and woodland | |
| | b. Amount of Protected area coverage of important biodiversity areas and access to natural green space | TBD |
| | c. Reductions in water source nitrates and phosphate levels | Information gathered by the Environment Agency in Table 5.9 shows the ecological and chemical status of water bodies in and around Maidstone. In total, 73% of water bodies have been classified as moderate in terms of ecological status or potential (this figure excludes groundwater bodies). 85% of water bodies have a chemical status of good ³ . |
| 7. Making our estate carbon neutral | a. Reduction in Carbon Emission Scope 1 and 2 (tonnes of CO2 equivalent) primarily monitored from the MBC estate and fleet | Awaiting completion of Carbon Dashboard system integrating MBC buildings and Fleet for updated 2022 carbon footprint to compare to 2020 baseline. |
| 8. Communications and engagement strategy | a. Increase in engagement events on climate and | There were 0 Biodiversity and Climate Change focused events held in 2021. There have been 17 separate events held in 2022, supported, facilitated or developed by MBC, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Vegetarian Food Festival |

³ [Authority Monitoring Reports 20-21](#)

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|---------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| | biodiversity related issues | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Bee Day • LUSH Bubble Bar Workshop • Active Travel Day with San Fairy Ann Cycling Club • Intro to Heat Pumps Talk • Communigrow Workshop - Making mini bug hotel • MBC Staff Energy Clinic • Kids Craft Morning – making wildflower seed bombs • Climate & Health Talk • Small Changes Towards Sustainable Living Talk by the Bare Bazaar • Communigrow workshop- make natural plant labels • Sustainable Business Event • Vegetarian Society talk recipes |
| 9. Sustainable decision-making processes and governance | a. Reduction in Scope 3 Carbon Emission (tonnes of CO2 equivalent) from procurement (contracts and services) | TBD |
| | b. Change in staff mileage, active travel, miles reclaimed | TBD |