

HOUSING, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 30 January 2024
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Hastie, Jeffery, Joy (Vice-Chairman), Khadka, Knatchbull
(Chairman), Mortimer, Riordan, Rose and Springett

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

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- | | |
|---|---------|
| 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 items should be taken in public due to the possible disclosure of exempt information | |
| 8. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 January 2024 - To Follow | |
| 9. Forward Plan relating to the Committee's Terms of Reference | 1 - 8 |
| 10. Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Update | 9 - 24 |
| 11. 1,000 Homes Programme – Individual Scheme Updates | 25 - 32 |

PART II

To move that the public be excluded for the items set out in Part II of the Agenda because of the likely disclosure of exempt information for the reasons specified having applied the Public Interest Test.

**Head of Schedule 12 A and Brief
Description**

Issued on Monday 22 January 2024

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

12. Exempt Appendix 1: Scheme Performance
Metrics

3 – Financial/Business
Affairs

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INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC

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 4 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 4 p.m. on Friday 26 January 2024). 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**.

To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit the [Council's Website](#).

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL FORWARD PLAN FOR THE FOUR MONTH PERIOD 1 JANUARY 2024 TO 30 APRIL 2024

This Forward Plan sets out the details of the key and non-key decisions which the Cabinet or Cabinet Members expect to take during the next four-month period.

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 Cabinet Members are:

→	 Councillor David Burton Leader of the Council DavidBurton@maidstone.gov.uk 07590 229910	 Councillor Paul Cooper Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development PaulCooper@Maidstone.gov.uk 01622 244070	 Councillor John Perry Cabinet Member for Corporate Services JohnPerry@Maidstone.gov.uk 07770 734741
	 Councillor Claudine Russell Cabinet Member for Communities, Leisure and Arts ClaudineRussell@Maidstone.gov.uk	 Councillor Patrik Garten Cabinet Member for Environmental Services PatrikGarten@Maidstone.gov.uk 01622 807907	 Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid Cabinet Member for Housing and Health LottieParfittReid@Maidstone.gov.uk 07919 360000

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 Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, ME15 6JQ or accessed from the [Council's website](#).

Members of the public are welcome to attend meetings of the Cabinet which are normally held at the Town Hall, High St, Maidstone, ME14 1SY. The dates and times of the meetings are published on the [Council's Website](#), 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	Relevant Cabinet 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
<p>1,000 Homes Update</p> <p>This report provides a review of the progress made towards achieving the delivery of the Council's various housing development programmes</p>	Cabinet	Cabinet Member for Housing and Health	24 Jan 2024	No	No Open	Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 16 Jan 2024	1,000 Homes Update	<p>William Cornall</p> <p>Director of Regeneration & Place</p> <p>williamcornall@maidstone.gov.uk</p>
<p>ω Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024 to 2029 - Capital Programme</p> <p>Detail of the 10 year capital programme for inclusion in the budget for 2024/25 onwards.</p>	Cabinet	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services.	24 Jan 2024	Yes	No Open	<p>Communities, Leisure and Arts Policy Advisory Committee 9 Jan 2024</p> <p>Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee 10 Jan 2024</p> <p>Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 16 Jan 2024</p>	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024 to 2029 - Capital Programme	<p>Paul Holland, Adrian Lovegrove</p> <p>Head of Finance</p> <p>paulholland@maidstone.gov.uk, adrianlovegrove@maidstone.gov.uk</p>

Details of the Decision to be taken	Decision to be taken by	Lead Member	Expected Date of Decision	Key	Exempt	Proposed Consultees / Method(s) of Consultation	Documents to be considered by Decision taker	Representations may be made to the following officer by the date stated
						Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee 17 Jan 2024 Overview and Scrutiny Committee 23 Jan 2024		
Provision of Wheeled Bins Summary of the policy for charging for replacement and new wheeled bins and review of recent developments to the policy.	Cabinet	Cabinet Member for Environmental Services	24 Jan 2024	No	No Open	Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 16 Jan 2024	Provision of Wheeled Bins	Jennifer Stevens Head of Environmental Services & Public Realm jenniferstevens@maidstone.gov.uk
Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Update	Cabinet	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services.	7 Feb 2024	No	No Open	Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee 29 Jan 2024 Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory	Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Update	James Wilderspin Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager jameswilderspin@maidstone.gov.uk

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5						<p>Committee 30 Jan 2024</p> <p>Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee 5 Feb 2024</p> <p>Communities, Leisure and Arts Policy Advisory Committee 6 Feb 2024</p>		
<p>1000 Homes Programme - Individual Scheme Updates</p> <p>Report seeking approval to enter into works contracts for the 5 sites acquired as part of the 1000 affordable homes programme.</p> <p>(Property Acquisition 1000 affordable Homes Programme)</p>	Cabinet	Cabinet Member for Housing and Health	7 Feb 2024	Yes	No Part exempt	<p>Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 30 Jan 2024</p> <p>Previous reports for site acquisitions have been to HHE committee.</p>	Property Acquisition 1000 affordable Homes Programme	<p>Philip Morris</p> <p>philipmorris@maidstone.gov.uk</p>

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3rd Quarter Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring Report 9	Cabinet	Cabinet Member for Corporate Services.	20 Mar 2024	No	No Open	<p>Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee 6 Mar 2024</p> <p>Communities, Leisure and Arts Policy Advisory Committee 5 Mar 2024</p> <p>Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 12 Mar 2024</p> <p>Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee 13 Mar 2024</p>	3rd Quarter Finance, Performance and Risk Monitoring Report	<p>Paul Holland, Adrian Lovegrove</p> <p>Head of Finance</p> <p>paulholland@maidstone.gov.uk, adrianlovegrove@maidstone.gov.uk</p>

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<p>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 - Initial priorities and feedback</p> <p>Delivering the new strategic priorities for the Council in relation to homelessness and rough sleeping. A review of the themes and priorities for the Council.</p>	Cabinet	Cabinet Member for Housing and Health	20 Mar 2024	Yes	No Open	Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 12 Mar 2024	Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2029 - Initial priorities and feedback	<p>Hannah Gaston</p> <p>hannahgaston@maidstone.gov.uk</p>
<p>Key Performance Indicators</p> <p>Key performance indicators are reviewed annually. This report proposes the KPIs for the period 2024/25.</p>	Cabinet	Leader of the Council	20 Mar 2024	No	No Open	<p>Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee 12 Mar 2024</p> <p>Communities, Leisure and Arts Policy Advisory Committee 6 Feb 2024</p> <p>Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee 5 Feb 2024</p> <p>Planning,</p>	Key Performance Indicators	<p>Carly Benville, Anna Collier</p> <p>carlybenville@maidstone.gov.uk, annacollier@maidstone.gov.uk</p>

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						Infrastructure and Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee 6 Mar 2024		

Housing Health and the Environment Policy Advisory Committee

30 January 2024

Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Update

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Corporate Leadership Team	16 January 2024
Planning, Infrastructure and Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee	29 January 2024
Housing, Health, and Environment Policy Advisory Committee	30 January 2024
Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee	5 February 2024
Communities, Leisure, and Arts Policy Advisory Committee	6 February 2024
Cabinet	7 February 2024

Will this be a Key Decision?	No
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Cabinet
Lead Head of Service	Anna Collier Head of Insight, Communities and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	James Wilderspin, Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This is the biannual report on the implementation of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan. The last update report was published in July 2023.

This report includes updates on (i) the Council’s decarbonisation progress in achieving Net Zero by 2030, (ii) updates on the new strategic direction for targeting net zero

housing and transportation, and (ii) key achievements and an overview of each action's status of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan (**Appendix 1**).

Purpose of Report

Recommendation

This report asks Committee to consider the following recommendations:

1. That the Housing Health and the Environment Policy Advisory Committee recommended to Cabinet to note the strategic considerations for tackling net zero borough wide and action plan updates shown at **Appendix 1**.

Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Update

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>Accepting the recommendations will materially improve the Council's ability to achieve all its priorities.</p>	<p>Anna Collier Head of Insight Communities and Governance</p>
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>Delivering the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan supports the achievement of the Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected cross cutting objective. It also supports cross cutting objectives of Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved as delivery of actions have the opportunity to improve the health of residents in the longer term and reduce residents' energy costs.</p>	<p>Anna Collier Head of Insight Communities and Governance</p>
Risk Management	<p>Already covered in the risk section (see paragraph 5)</p>	<p>Anna Collier Head of Insight Communities and Governance</p>
Financial	<p>The specific costed proposals will be funded from within existing budgets. Future changes to policies and strategies will need to be assessed to understand the impact to ensure they remain affordable during the year and in future years as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.</p>	<p>Section 151 Officer & Finance Team</p>

Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Anna Collier Head of Insight Communities and Governance
Legal	Local authorities have a duty under Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006 in exercising their functions to have regard, so far as is consistent with the proper exercise of those functions, to the purpose of conserving biodiversity. The Council's Biodiversity and Climate Action Plan demonstrates compliance with the statutory duty.	Legal Team
Information Governance	The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council Processes. Some individual actions may have implications in the future and the appropriate review and documentations will be completed as required	Information Governance Team
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Policy & Information Manager
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	No implications	Anna Collier Head of Insight Communities and Governance
Procurement	Some actions will have implications and the appropriate procurement exercises will be undertaken	Anna Collier Head of Insight Communities and Governance
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The updates in this report and recommendations will support the continued implementation of the	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

	Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan.	
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Policy and Resources Committee adopted the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan on 21st October 2020. The last update was July 2023.
- 2.2 Since the last update report, officers have explored options to focus the Council's Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy in discussion with Cabinet and with consideration to PACs feedback over the achievability and impact of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan. These included ways forward in achieving net-zero housing borough-wide, progressing sustainable integrated transport, solar energy generation investment, local energy action plans, and biodiversity enhancements.
- 2.3 The largest emission sources in the borough are from domestic electricity and gas consumption which accounts for nearly one third (32%) of total CO2e emissions in Maidstone Borough (216ktCO2e in 2021), and transportation which accounts for 52% of total CO2e emission in Maidstone Borough (354ktCO2e in 2021).
- 2.4 The focus and priorities of the Biodiversity and Climate Change Strategy has changed to areas where reducing the largest impacts of the Borough's carbon emissions can be made.
- I. Net Zero Housing - Progress with looking at how the Council can improve the condition of domestic homes, looking at gaps and how we add value through the potential new energy officer role, while also looking at the Council's own buildings and growing housing stock.
 - II. Sustainable Integrated Transport - To focus on 'future focused transport innovation workshop' for Councillors to develop a shared vision, expand awareness of innovative transportation solutions, enabling long-term sustainable transport planning, and building political commitment for environmentally friendly transportation, with preliminary work to bring data/inputs from a variety of stakeholder views (including young people) to the workshop for consideration.
 - III. Develop a 'Parking and Borough wide EV strategy' - to explore partnerships, provisions for on street infrastructure, that align with national climate goals, reduce range anxiety and stimulate the EV market, and look for opportunity to combine it with the town centre lighting strategy to include on street EV chargers.
 - IV. Renewable Energy - to maximising the renewable energy generation on MBC estate.
 - V. Create a Planning policy framework for solar farms in the local plan - creating zoning for renewable energy generation for longer term policy and allocated land as part of the local plan review process.

2.5 A summary of progress for the five areas are outlined in this report.

MBC Decarbonisation

2.6 The Council has set an ambitious net zero by 2030 with substantial financial commitment already set aside. As outline in [Appendix 2](#) of the July 2023 Action Plan Update report, the most substantive impact the Council can directly have on reducing Carbon Emissions are of its own operations, buildings, fleet, and contracts.

Carbon Footprint

2.7 The Carbon Footprint of the council’s buildings and fleet is updated twice a year using automated energy data by Laser Energy. The Council’s dashboard is used to calculate MBC’s scope 1 and 2 emissions (Reporting on scope 3 emissions is still under investigation). This process helps to identify priority building upgrades and fleet replacement priorities, enabling officers to accurately monitor progress/changes in carbon emissions of the Council. The dashboard also shows the Boroughs historic emissions by sector, which support officers on Borough wide priorities in keeping with the National Government’s 2050 Net Zero commitment.

2.8 The Council’s total CO2 emissions for scope 1 and scope 2 have decreased overall by 10.4% when comparing financial year 2021/22 to 2022/23. Scope 1 decreased by 15.1% and scope 2 increased by 3.7%. In both years, the largest source of scope 1 emissions is from the Maidstone Leisure Centre, accounting for 51.1% off total emissions. The second largest cause of emissions is Maidstone House (17.6%).

2.9 The emissions produced from our Depot’s fleet/vehicles was not available for tracking until January 2022, therefore data is missing for the most part of FY 2021/22. However, in 2022/23, the largest cause of emissions was the heavy-duty waste collection vehicles used for our Commercial Waste service.

Figure 2: The Council’s Carbon Footprint Summary



Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme Application

- 2.10 Officers have committed considerable time to preparing and submitting large scale bids for public sector funding to decarbonise the Council's estate as it is in the direct control of the Council.
- 2.11 In November officers submitted a largescale bid for Phase 3c of the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) for £3,126,536 to retrofit Maidstone House. Included in the bid were provisions for developing detailed designs, upgrading the heating system, replacing the glazing, fully insulating the building, upgrading all the lights to LED, and installing Solar PV on the Link business terrace roof. The preparation of this bid included a complex and technical set of documents and schematics, energy saving calculations, costing and quotes evidence, project management programme, and risks register. The submission of the bid is a first come first serve organised by [Salix](#), where applicants need to submit a bid as soon as the portal opens to be in for a chance to be considered. officers were able to submit the application in under 4 minutes and are currently replying to technical queries and developing the project programme with Salix. Members will be notified should we be successful with the grant application.

Fleet Decarbonisation

- 2.12 The Depot has undergone substantial upgrades to ensure it has the capacity to transition to an electric fleet in line with a direct aspect in the Council's control to reduce emissions from the fleet. The electricity capacity of the Depot was increased by 277kVA by connecting to a nearby substation with minimal ground works needed. The increased capacity has enabled the instillation of an additional x10 EV chargers in October 2023, bringing the total to 31 plug in charging points installed at the Depot.
- 2.13 There is now sufficient capacity to charge the growing number of EVs on site for the medium term, which currently stands at 11 EVs with 2 more ordered for 2024, out of a total of 65 vehicles in the fleet (replacement vehicles are selected as per the [Green Fleet Strategy](#)).

Domestic Housing Net Zero

- 2.14 Domestic electricity and gas consumption accounts for nearly one third (32%) of total emissions (216ktCO₂e in 2021). The UK government's aim is to have 600,000 heat pumps a year being installed by 2028, just 55,000 were installed in the UK in 2022. In regard to Action 2.1 to "Explore grants schemes for residents, landlords and housing associations, for retrofitting insulation, and low carbon heating systems," Officers have now completed a net zero scenario for existing housing across the borough, using Parity Projects software. The scenario can be used to develop a cost-effective retrofit programme that aligns with the Borough's carbon reduction targets and gives the Council pathways for every property in the borough to identify the lowest cost route to Net Zero.
- 2.15 The domestic housing net zero scenario shows an average mean cost of £23,400 per house for achieving net zero across the borough, and a mean of £7,800 per house to achieve a minimum Standard Assessment Procedure (SAP) C rating. These findings can be used to target specify parts of the borough for investment, or heat pump prioritisation, and can be assessed in

terms of low-income and priority areas. Officers will use the scenario data to develop strategies, identify energy-efficient retrofitting opportunities, and create strategic areas to support Net Zero domestic housing across the borough, seek partnerships, and open up opportunities for large scale funding to support residents reduce their utility costs.

Transportation Net Zero

2.16 Across Kent, Carbon emissions are generally maintaining a downward trend in terms of tonnes of CO2 per capita. Across North Kent transport emissions comprise the largest component (39%) of emissions followed by domestic (29%). Across the borough of Maidstone, carbon emissions have steadily decreased from 1044ktCO2 in 2005 to 677ktCO2 in 2021. Carbon emissions from transport in Maidstone have showed a slower rate of decline, reducing from 442ktCO2 in 2005 to 354ktCO2 in 2021.

2.17 In respect to Action 1.5 to “Deliver an Electric Vehicle (EV) Strategy for the borough that provides sufficient EV charging infrastructure” there are currently 66 public charge points in Maidstone and 27 of these are 50 kWh devices. On a per population basis, Dartford has the highest rate of provision in North Kent with 73.6 EV charge points per 100,000 people, whilst Maidstone has 37.3 EV charge points per 100,000 people. Plug-in vehicle ownership is steadily increasing in Maidstone. The zero-emission vehicle mandate requires 80% of new cars and 70% of new vans sold in England to be zero emission by 2030, increasing to 100% by 2035. Maidstone is expected to require 1,377 public EV charge point sockets by 2030 and 2,735 by 2035 to meet the increase in demand from zero emission vehicle users.

2.18 In respect to Action 1.1 to “Update the Integrated Transport Strategy, and work towards a Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan” Kent County Council (KCC) is currently consulting on the Kent Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan (KCWIP). The KCWIP is part of the Government’s Local Cycling & Walking Infrastructure Plan process. It has a 10-year timeframe but is a ‘living document’ subject to regular review. At present Maidstone Borough Council is preparing for the development of its own LCWIP to cover the Borough. This will be complementary to the KCWIP when it is developed and support the delivery of the active travel actions in Maidstone’s Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan.

2.19 The Quality Bus Partnerships has been replaced with Local Bus Focus Groups. Establishing a new Local Bus Focus Group as outlined in the KCC structure within the BSIP, would align with Action 1.8 to “Actively participate in Quality Bus Partnership and ensure that the borough’s infrastructure is bus friendly” as well as supporting several actions in the plan to reduce borough carbon emissions and pollution, while supporting public transportation.

Other Achievements in the Action Plan

Climate Emergency UK Scorecard of the implementation of MBC’s Action Plan

2.20 In October 2023, Maidstone Borough Council was [scored joint 35th place out of 186 Councils](#), and 3rd in Kent on the implementation of our Action

Plan. Climate Emergency UK (CEUK) has assessed all UK Councils on the actions they've taken towards net zero. This is a second phase update on CEUKs 2021 scoring of [Councils Plans](#). Scores across the country were low with the district average score of 29% with Maidstone scoring 35%.

2.21 In summary, MBC has been recognised for its actions and has scored well relatively to other authorities, however several actions were inaccurately scored or missed by CEUK and the full breadth of MBC progress is not completely captured by this scoring. For more information please see CEUK's [Press Release](#). Officers will take these scores on board as part of prioritising aspects of the Action Plan that scored poorly.

Maidstone's Eco Hub

2.22 The Eco Hub hosted 14 events and talks to raise awareness and create positive behaviour change on climate action, energy efficiency, sustainable living, biodiversity loss, and the cost of living crisis, and partnered with over 24 local sustainable businesses, community groups, and charities.

2.23 1,926 visitors came into the Eco Hub over 17 opening days, with an average of 113 users per day. This is a 121% increase in users of the Eco Hub in 2023 when compared to the 2022 pilot project.

2.24 In partnership with The Mall Maidstone, Officer's entered Maidstone's Eco Hub for the '[best local authority/private sector partnership](#)' Revo award, and Maidstone's Eco Hub is one of three projects that was shortlisted for this national award.

2.25 Officers in the climate change team also worked with the communications team, waste team, and welfare officers to run a community support roadshow which visited three locations in the Borough to help residents with the cost-of-living crisis.

Solar Projects

2.26 Officers have identified seven potential solar PV projects on Council buildings to maximise the renewable energy generated on these buildings for direct use by the Council cutting utility bills and reducing the Council's carbon emissions with a relatively fast payback period for investment (outline in Appendix 2 of the July 2023 Action Plan Update report). Progress on these projects includes:

- Submission of the PSDS bid to include provision for a 16 kWp solar PV array to be installed on the Link Building business terrace roof, combined with green roof. Pending success of bid.
- Preplanning advice to install a 122kWp solar PV canopy over the Mote Park Car Park to be private wired and used to reduce costs of the Leisure Centre. Pending Preplanning advice.
- Investigation into doubling the existing 60 kWp array on the Parkwood Depot roof top to private wire for use of the depot, charge the growing number of Electric Vehicles in the fleet. Pending Investment / Council Decision.
- Lockmeadow Leisure Complex has the largest capacity of MBC properties for solar PV instillation of 995 kWp over 4 roof locations. Pending Council Decision.

LED light upgrades

2.27 Upgrading to LED lighting can have a substantial decrease in utility costs and generally have a very fast pay back period. Several MBC buildings have now been upgraded to fully LED lighting, including:

- The Depot's lights have all been replaced in November 2023 to LEDs.
- Maidstone House Lights have all been replaced with LEDs during the summer 2023.
- The Crematorium Chapel lights have all been replaced with LED lights in Autumn 2023.
- The Elephant House Cob Tree, all the lights have been replaced with LEDs.

2.28 Parking Services remain committed to 100% LED lighting in MBC car parks by the end of 2025. Lamps are being replaced with LED lights as and when they require replacement.

Tree Planting and Rewilding

2.29 Officers are continuing to seek partnerships for tree planting and rewilding projects. In Autumn 2022 and spring 2023 the Council' planted 5,800 trees as part of several partnerships with landowners and Parish Councils ([details here](#)). This planting season, officers have identified a number of potential projects and partners with an estimated 6,000 trees to be planted in Spring 2024. Officers are also supporting the preparation for mandatory 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) which came into law in January 2024, to find alternative funding for continued tree planting and rewilding projects.

The Rural England Prosperity Fund

2.30 Climate Officers have led the organisation and distribution of the Rural England Prosperity Fund. MBC was allocated £539,728 to spend between April 2023 and March 2025 to be awarded to projects for rural communities across the borough. Officers supported applicants and supported the panel with technical inputs. Phase 1 of the funding saw grants awarded as listed below:

- Staplehurst Free Church (SFC) which received £45,000;
- Teston Parish Council which received- £45,000
- Hollingbourne Parish Council - phase 1 funding £22,466 / phase 2 funding allocation of £16,906
- Boxley Parish Council - phase 1 funding £22,466 / phase 2 funding allocation of £32,532

2.31 Officers are now in the process of rolling out the second phase of funding, open on Monday 27th of November to Monday 22nd of January 2024, and supported applicants through a free Introductory webinar held on Wednesday 6 December to highlight key information, provide details of phase one's successful projects, and answer any questions, as well as through the [Sustainable Business Directory](#) that showcases an array of eco-businesses to support upgrades and retrofits.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 That the Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee receive these updates every six months and are recommended to note updates on implementation to ensure ongoing progress towards tackling net zero borough wide.
- 3.2 The Committee could ask to receive an update more or less frequently. However, this is not recommended as less frequently wouldn't offer the oversight and more regular updates wouldn't allow sufficient time for substantial work to be undertaken.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the Housing, Health and Environment Development Policy Advisory Committee recommended to Cabinet to note the strategic considerations for tackling net zero borough wide and action plan updates shown at **Appendix 1**.
-

5. RISK

- 5.1 Responding to the climate emergency is a key corporate risk. Ongoing monitoring of the delivery of the Action plan is a key mitigation as the annual review of the action plan is ensures continued accountability.
- 5.2 Understanding the costs associated with achieving net-zero and allocate resources effectively, prioritise initiatives, putting appropriate capacity to seek funding, and set realistic targets and timelines.
-

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 The Policy and Resources Committee adopted the Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan on 21st October 2020. Progress has been regularly reported to Policy Advisory Committees and the Cabinet.
-

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 Continue to update the implementation of the Action Plan, monitor progress, and updates to members.
-

8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- **Appendix 1:** Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan Implementation Status

Biodiversity and Climate Change *Successes*

Placed Joint
35th
186 Councils

on the implementation of our Action Plan
by Climate Emergency UK and
placed second in Kent



Carbon reduction in scope
1 and 2 emissions from
2021/22-2022/23



Largely due to a reduction
in emissions from the
Leisure centre.



of our fleet upgraded to EV's

54

Officers and elected members
carbon literacy trained
with 3 more training days
booked for early 2024



50%

Climate change newsletter
subscribers doubled in 2023



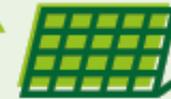
31

Plug in charging points
installed at the depot



65%

Maidstone residents installing solar panels
on their property through the 2023 Solar Together
Scheme compared with the 2022 scheme.



500

Eco Bags given to
Maidstone residents

Our main offices,
Maidstone House,
the Depot,
and the Crematorium
upgraded to fully LED



4 Community organisations provided funding
for carbon reduction projects through the
Rural England Prosperity Fund,
with an expected eight more organisations
to be awarded funding in 2024

6,000

Trees to be planted
in winter 2023/24



£3,126,536

of funding bid for to retrofit Maidstone House



Action	Portfolio Holder and PAC	Responsible Officer(s)	February 2024 Update	Key Performance Indicator	Likely Start Date	Likely Completion Date	Progress	
Decarbonising and Insulating Homes and Buildings								
21	<p>Action 2.1 Explore grants schemes for residents, landlords and housing associations, for retrofitting insulation, and low carbon heating systems.</p>	<p>Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid</p> <p>Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee</p> <p>And</p> <p>Councillor Claudine Russell</p> <p>Communities, Leisure and Arts Policy Advisory Committee</p>	<p>John Littlemore</p> <p>Philip Jennings</p>	<p>The Home Upgrade Grant phase 2 grant funding agreement has been signed by all relevant parties. The grant is being advertised (targeted advertising first before being opened to wider advertising to relevant wards in the early 2024.</p> <p>Meetings have progressed with Eon to partner to promote and administer ECO Flex (Energy Companies Obligation) to increase ECO's eligibility criteria. The grant provides low carbon heating and insulation measures.</p> <p>There was a delay in the HUG2 grant funding agreement being signed by partners, therefore the roll-out of the scheme has been delayed. This will result in a delay of getting works completed at eligible properties in Spring 2024.</p> <p>Further work is required to partner with Eon and make the Council's ECO Flex statement of intent ready for implementation. This should be ready for advertising to households in early 2024.</p>	Number of residents with EPC rating improvements of A-C from D-G	2023	Across timeline to 2030	On track
	<p>Action 2.2 Enforce Energy Efficiency (Private Rented Property) (England and Wales) Regulations 2015.</p>	<p>Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid</p> <p>Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee</p>	<p>John Littlemore</p> <p>Philip Jennings</p>	<p>Enforcement of the regulations have progressed well with over 650 rented properties improved from EPC F and G to A-E.</p> <p>Landlords may apply for exemptions for their properties. (33 properties have been exempted). A small number are now in the process of either being improved or the landlord being fined.</p> <p>Further Energy Performance Certificates are entered on the database monthly, and these must be checked further.</p> <p>The Landlord forum will also be used to disseminate information to landlords.</p>	As above	2023	Across timeline to 2030	On track

Action	Portfolio Holder and PAC	Responsible Officer(s)	February 2024 Update	Key Performance Indicator	Likely Start Date	Likely Completion Date	Progress
			The Council's Accommodation Standards Policy will be amended in the New Year so that only dwellings with an EPC of A to C (D in exceptional circumstances) will be used to place homeless households.				
Reducing Waste							
Action 4.1 Investigate recycling strategies in the Town centre.	Councillor Patrik Garten Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee	Jen Stevens John Edwards	Clear bags are ordered and we hope to start segregating recycling from litter at the start of February. This will be through litter picking rather than litter bins at this stage.	NA	2024	Across timeline to 2030	On track
Action 4.2 Ensure MBC offices and buildings have recycling facilities.	Councillor Patrik Garten Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee	Mark Green Katie Exon	Maidstone House internal waste team cannot provide any other recycling, other than paper and card. Officers have asked managing agents (Fidum) to source an alternative provider and provide us with a cost for provision of bins and disposal. They plan to furnish us with these costs by March, we have asked for 2 options – one for the entire building and one for the areas only occupied by MBC, this is in respect of MH only. Once we have received the costs, we can look at the viability of rolling this out to other buildings – Town hall, museum etc.	Increase in office recycling and reduction in waste	2024	Across timeline to 2030	Delayed due to existing contract term
Adapting to Climate Change							
Action 5.2 Identify actions to mitigate climate change in existing developments.	Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee	James Wilderspin Gemma Bailey	Officers have identified seven potential solar PV projects on Council buildings to maximise the renewable energy generated on these buildings for direct use by the Council cutting utility bills and reducing the Council's carbon emissions. A business case to invest in a solar farm has been presented to Cabinet. Officers continue to investigate nature-based solutions projects and tree planting opportunities, to reduce flooding and urban heat islands. Shared heat network solutions continue to be investigated with third parties for Maidstone Town Centre.	NA	2023	Across timeline to 2030	On track

Action	Portfolio Holder and PAC	Responsible Officer(s)	February 2024 Update	Key Performance Indicator	Likely Start Date	Likely Completion Date	Progress
Enhancing and Increasing Biodiversity							
23	<p>Action 6.4 Enhance and expand wetland coverage across the Borough to support nutrient neutrality, flood prevention, and enhance biodiversity.</p> <p>Councillor David Burton</p> <p>And</p> <p>Councillor Paul Cooper</p> <p>Planning, Infrastructure, And Economic Development Policy Advisory Committee</p> <p>And</p> <p>Councillor Patrik Garten</p> <p>Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee</p>	<p>Mark Green</p> <p>Rob Jarman</p> <p>James Wilderspin</p>	<p>Officers are preparing to go out to tender for specialist expansion and desilting of several MBC wetland and pond areas (see July report for further details). Works in parks and on MBC land is planned to commence in autumn 2024.</p> <p>Officers are working with South East Rivers Trust (SERT) to identify funding, and partners with Ashford Council to expand the "Bring back the Beult" project to introduce wide scale water retention and nature based solutions to the Upper Medway catchment. Senior officers have met with SERT and further meetings are to be held with Alsford Council to determine project and funding scope.</p>	Water quality	2022	2025	In progress
		Making our Estate Carbon Neutral					
	<p>Action 7.4 Identify temporary accommodation assets eligible for insulation and low carbon heating upgrades under funding schemes and arrange installation. Provide top up funding for any measures not fully funded to ensure all homes let by MBC as</p> <p>Councillor Lottie Parfitt-Reid</p> <p>Housing, Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee</p>	<p>William Cornall</p> <p>John Littlemore</p>	<p>When the Council buys and refurbishes homes to utilise for Temporary Accommodation, we stipulate that they must be refurbished to an Energy Performance Certificate rating of C. Unfortunately, the social housing decarbonisation grant does not appear to be available for temporary accommodation. Something overlooked by DUHLC, something the Council has lobbied on.</p> <p>The Council is also currently undertaking a comprehensive refurbishment of Granada House, comprising 20</p>	NA	2023	Across the timeline to 2030	Delayed due to lack of grant

Action	Portfolio Holder and PAC	Responsible Officer(s)	February 2024 Update	Key Performance Indicator	Likely Start Date	Likely Completion Date	Progress
temporary accommodation are energy efficient and EPC rating improved to requirement.			<p>apartments, with monies from the Local Authority Housing Fund. Granada House was previously a Private Rented Sector asset that is being converted to affordable housing with a comprehensive specification that will deliver a high EPC rating and there is an ongoing commitment to explore the deployment of solar PV on the roof too.</p> <p>AHP technology will start going into our 1,000 affordable homes programme to meet the Future Homes Standard (FHS) via Building Regulations.</p>				

**HOUSING, HEALTH
& ENVIRONMENT POLICY
ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

30 January 2024

1,000 Homes Programme – Individual Scheme Updates

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Housing Health and Environment Policy Advisory Committee	30 th January 2024
Cabinet	7 th February 2024

Will this be a Key Decision?	Yes
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Cabinet
Lead Head of Service	Philip Morris, Head of New Business & Housing Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Philip Morris, Head of New Business & Housing Development
Classification	<p>Private – The information contained within the Appendix has been considered exempt under the following paragraph of part 1 of schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972:-</p> <p>3 = Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)</p> <p>Public Interest Test</p> <p>It is in the public interest that the Appendix be taken in private because it relates to commercially sensitive information and releasing the information could jeopardise the financial position of the Council and third parties.</p>
Wards affected	Fant, Bridge, and North

Executive Summary

In 2023, the Policy & Resources Committee and HHE Committee approved the acquisition of 4 brownfield sites, including the Bathstore, Britannia House, Corbens Place and Land at Granville Road, with the intention of delivering these sites as 100% affordable housing, as part of the 1000 affordable homes program. The approvals received for all 4 sites were based on an assumed level of grant funding from Homes England and an anticipated works cost with a condition that once out to tender, should there be a variance to these figures, officers would return to the committee and seek approval for the new works price based on tender returns. The report also relates to one further previously approved scheme, the Royal British Legion (RBL) site adjacent to Heather House, where approval is sought to change the tenure of seven units from private rented sector (PRS) to affordable.

The schemes are all included in the capital programme, Officers are seeking approval for the updated works cost, changes in tenure and to appoint the contractor to deliver four of the schemes.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report asks the Committee to consider the recommendation to the Cabinet:

1. That the increased works costs for Bathstore, Land at Granville Road and Britannia House, be approved, taking note of scheme performance summaries in Appendix 1. To approve the switch in tenure from Affordable Rent to Social rent for all 4 sites and in addition the 7 Market rented units to social rented units at the RBL site.
2. That the Director of Finance, Resources and Business Improvement, be given delegated authority, to appoint the preferred contractor to carry out the necessary building works as per the tenders for Britannia House, Corbens place, Land and Granville Road, and the Bathstore noting that the Corbens place works tender was returned under the works budget previously approved.

1,000 Homes Programme – Individual Scheme Updates

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: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure; • Homes and Communities. 	William Cornall-Director of Regeneration & Place
Cross Cutting Objectives	The project will support the cross-cutting objectives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected. 	William Cornall-Director of Regeneration & Place
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section	William Cornall-Director of Regeneration & Place
Financial	Funding for this project is included within the capital programme.	Adrian Lovegrove-Head of Service
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing within the New Business & Development Team and Mid-Kent Legal Services.	William Cornall-Director of Regeneration & Place
Legal	Under s1 of the Localism Act 2011 the Council has a general power of competence which enables it to do anything that individuals generally may do.	Robin Harris-Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance)

	<p>Under section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council has power to do anything (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of its functions.</p> <p>The Council has the power to acquire properties by agreement under the Local Government Act 1972, section 120.</p>	
Information Governance	The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council processes.	Lauren McNicol and Georgia Harvey-Information Governance Team
Equalities	We recognise the recommendations may have varying impacts on different communities within Maidstone. Therefore, we have completed an Equalities Impact Assessment responding to the needs of the community.	Nicola Toulson-Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	No implications	Shafiqullah Hemat-Senior Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	No implications	Philip Morris-Head of New Business & Housing Development
Procurement	On accepting the recommendations, the Council will then follow a standard	Adrian Lovegrove-Head of Service

	procurement & appointment exercise. We will complete that exercise in line with financial procedure rules.	
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The implications of this report on biodiversity and climate change have been considered and will impact Action 7.1 "Deliver Maidstone Borough Council 2030 Net Zero Commitment" by increasing the Council's carbon footprint. Ensuring development is aligned with the Future Homes Standard with 75-80% less carbon emissions, efficiency measures and on-site renewables will reduce the impact of the five schemes.	James Wilderspin- Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The development strategy to deliver 1,000 new affordable homes was agreed by the Policy and Resources Committee on 19th January 2022.
- 2.2 This report relates to the five schemes that form part of the 1000 homes programme, that have already been approved by Cabinet since the inception of the programme. The schemes in question are:-
- a. Royal British Legion Site (RBL) Heather House Site
 - b. Bathstore
 - c. Corbens Place
 - d. Britannia House
 - e. Land at Granville Road
- 2.3 Cabinet re-approvals are required on all five sites in respect of changes to each scheme. These changes are as follows:
- a. Royal British Legion Site (RBL) Heather House site – a change in tenure from 7 market rented homes to 7 affordable homes, with the addition of grant funding from Homes England and the use of MBC S106 contributions. The four First Homes units will remain unchanged.
 - b. Bathstore- Increased construction costs.
 - c. Corbens Place- Reduced construction costs.
 - d. Britannia House- Increased construction costs.
 - e. Land at Granville Road-Increased construction costs.

- 2.4 The RBL scheme is already on site, and for the others the tender procurement process has been completed and there is now a need to appoint the preferred contractor on aggregate higher cost than previously approved.
- 2.5 However more positively, the increased cost and tenure change can be accommodated without materially diminishing the financial returns to the council. If the Council chooses to let the properties at Affordable Rents (80% of market rent capped to the Local Housing Allowance), this is **Option A** and the returns are broadly maintained because the Local Housing Allowance has recently risen, and because the council is advised to allocate £15,000 per affordable homes of S106 monies that it holds from developers contributions for off-site affordable housing provision.
- 2.6 If the Council chooses to let the properties at Social Rents (a formula linked to local property prices in 1999, and average local earning), that yields rents at circa 50% of the Market Rent plus service charges, then this is **Option B**, the returns are maintained by a more favourable grant rate for this tenure from Homes England.

Financial Commitments

- 2.7 The exempt Appendix 1 sets out the previously agreed metrics of the schemes, with the latest tenures, and construction costs as either **Option A Affordable Rent** or **Option B Social Rent**.

Proposed Schedule of Events

- 2.8 All Contractors were invited to tender based on a maximum construction period of 105 weeks including any allowance for the detailed design of the schemes. Details of the programme proposals, in accordance with the preferred contractor’s tender submission are given below.

Activity	Finish Date
Design Period	16 weeks
Contractor Appointment	February 2024
Construction Period	66 weeks
Start on Site	July 2024
Practical Completion	October 2025

3 AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 **Option 1:** The Committee could choose to approve that the Director of Finance and Business Improvement is granted delegated authority to enter into the works contract based on Option A of the exempt appendices, (Affordable Rent) and to approve the change in tenure for the RBL site from Market rent to Affordable Rent, noting the grant rates from Homes England and the allocation of MBC Section 106 monies to all five schemes.
- 3.2 **Option 2:** The Committee could choose to approve that the Director of Finance and Business Improvement is granted delegated authority to enter into the works contract based on Option B of the exempt appendices (Social Rent) and to approve the change in tenure for the RBL site from Market rent to Social Rent, noting the grant rates from Homes England and the allocation of MBC Section 106 monies to all five schemes.
- 3.3 **Option 3:** The Committee could choose not to approve entering into the works contract, leave the sites secured and re tender at a later date although tender prices are unlikely to come down. This however would continue to incur utilities costs and site security costs. This is not recommended as there would continue to be uncertainty as to the future of four of the sites.
- 3.4 If Cabinet were minded to pursue option 1, they could advise officers to bid for more favourable terms from Homes England, but that would be above the level allocated by Homes England generally, so this may not be successful. Homes England have provided a verbal confirmation in respect of the terms set out in Option 2 above.
-

4 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is Option 2, outlined above in paragraph 3.2. This is because:-
- a. The amount of external borrowing per new home is reduced due to the favourable grant rate for social rented units available.
 - b. The eventual income stream to the council will be more secure as it will be more affordable to the end user.
 - c. The residents will benefit from lower rents. The housing team have advised that they are aware of a number of individuals, 86, within temporary accommodation that cannot afford affordable rent. They would therefore recommend the provision of some social rented units within our stock.
-

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. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy. It is worth noting that the Council have invested a lot of time and resource into the delivery of these sites.
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6 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 Informed by the Communities, Housing & Environment Policy Advisory Committee consideration of this report, the Executive will make the final decision regarding the recommendations.
- 6.2 The approval of the recommendations will enable the project team to appoint the contractor to commence works.
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7 REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Exempt Appendix 1: Scheme Performance Metrics
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8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

- Bathstore – Executive, 25/01/2023
- Britannia House – Executive, 27/07/2022
- Corbens Place - Cabinet, 28/06/2023
- Land at Granville Road – Cabinet, 18/04/2023

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted