

AGENDA

CABINET MEETING



Date: Wednesday 9 March 2011
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Ash, Garland (Chairman), Greer,
Mrs Ring, Sherreard and J.A. Wilson

Page No.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Urgent Items
3. Notification of Visiting Members
4. Disclosures by Members and Officers
5. Disclosures of lobbying
6. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information
7. Minutes of the Meeting held on 9 February 2011

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Continued Over/:

Issued on 1 March 2011

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**Alison Broom, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council,
Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone Kent ME15 6JQ**

KEY DECISION REPORTS

- | | | |
|----|--|--------|
| 8. | Report of the Assistant Director of Regeneration and Cultural Services - High Street Improvement Project | 7 - 27 |
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NON-KEY DECISION REPORTS

- | | | |
|-----|--|---------|
| 9. | Report of the Director of Regeneration and Communities - Future Role of the Strategic Housing Advisory Committee | 28 - 37 |
| 10. | Report of Head of Change and Scrutiny - Corporate Improvement Plan Update | 38 - 52 |
| 11. | Report of the Leader of the Council - Forward Plan | 53 - 55 |

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 9 FEBRUARY 2011

Present: Councillor Garland (Chairman), and
Councillors Ash, Garland, Greer, Mrs Ring and J.A. Wilson

Also Present: Councillors Bradshaw, Burton, FitzGerald,
Mrs Parvin, Mrs Stockell and Mrs Wilson

123. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Sherreard.

124. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

125. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillors Bradshaw and Mrs Parvin indicated their wish to speak on Agenda Item 12 – Core Strategy 2006-2026 and Councillor Burton indicated his wish to speak on Agenda Item 12 – Core Strategy 2006-2026 and Agenda Item 16 – Reference from the Strategic Housing Advisory Committee.

Councillors FitzGerald and Mrs Wilson were in attendance.

126. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

127. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

All Members of the Cabinet disclosed they had been lobbied on Agenda Item 12 – Core Strategy 2006-2026.

128. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

RESOLVED: That the Items on the Agenda be taken in public as proposed.

129. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 22 December 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed.

130. QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2010/11

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Change and Scrutiny setting out the progress made in the third quarter of 2010/11 against the authority's key performance indicators.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

131. BUDGET MONITORING - THIRD QUARTER 2010/11

DECISION MADE:

1. That the satisfactory revenue position at the end of the third quarter 2010/11 be noted.
2. That the slippage in the capital programme to 2011/12 as set out below be agreed:-

Play Area Improvements	£25,000
Support for Social Housing	£29,000
Mote Park Regeneration	£86,000

3. That the detailed report on treasury management activity be noted.

To view full details of this decision, please click here:-

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?XXR=0&&ACT=Find&RP=0&K=0&V=0&DM=146C&HD=0&DS=3&Next=true&META=mgdelegateddecisions>

132. TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2011/12

DECISION MADE:

1. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Regeneration and Communities to refine the Prudential Indicators, should the need arise following the decision of the Cabinet on the Budget Strategy 2011/12, before Council on 2 March 2011.
2. That the draft Treasury Management Strategy for 2011/12 be recommended to Council.

To view full details of this decision, please click here:-

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?XXR=0&&ACT=Find&RP=0&K=0&V=0&DM=146C&HD=0&DS=3&Next=true&META=mgdelegateddecisions>

133. DRAFT STRATEGIC PLAN

The Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive regarding the draft Strategic Plan 2011-15.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO COUNCIL:

That the Strategic Plan 2011-15 be adopted, subject to

- i) the addition of a foreward from the Leader of the Council and an introduction from the Chief Executive; and
- ii) Delegation to the Chief Executive to make minor amendments, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, as required.

134. CORE STRATEGY 2006 - 2026

DECISION MADE:

1. That a local housing target of 10,080 dwellings and a development distribution for new housing as set out in Appendix C of the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment be agreed for the period 2006 to 2026 as the basis for the initial Core Strategy consultation document; and
2. That a decision on the distribution of employment land be deferred to enable officers to:
 - a) undertake further work on updating employment data to a base date of 2010;
 - b) investigate opportunities for alternative potential employment sites that can support a dispersed pattern of development better suited to the housing locations to replace a critical mass of employment land of 11 hectares at J8 of the M20 motorwayand report back to Cabinet in April when the draft Core Strategy will be considered for publication consultation.
3. That the revised Core Strategy programme, as set out below, be agreed:-

Core Strategy Stage	Dates
Joint Local Development Document Advisory Group and Leisure and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Committee	21 st February 2011
Cabinet approval of draft Core Strategy	13th April 2011
Public consultation (6 weeks)	28 th April to 17 th June 2011
Cabinet approval of Publication version	10 th August 2011
Publication consultation (6 weeks)	26 th August to 10 th October
Council approval of Submission version	14th December 2011
Submission	December 2011
Examination	April 2012
Receipt of Inspector's Report	July 2012

To view full details of this decision, please click here:-

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?XXR=0&ACT=Find&RP=0&K=0&V=0&DM=146C&HD=0&DS=3&Next=true&META=mgdelegateddecisions>

135. CORE STRATEGY: SETTING OF THE GYPSY & TRAVELLER PITCH TARGET

DECISION MADE: That a Gypsy and Traveller target of 71 pitches for the period 2006 to 2016 be included in the draft Core Strategy.

To view full details of this decision, please click here:-

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?XXR=0&ACT=Find&RP=0&K=0&V=0&DM=146C&HD=0&DS=3&Next=true&META=mgdelegateddecisions>

136. BUDGET STRATEGY 2011/12 ONWARDS

DECISION MADE:

1. That appropriate recommendations regarding Council Tax and spending levels for 2011/12 be recommended to Council on 2 March 2011 based upon Decisions 2 - 14 below.
2. That the revised revenue estimate for 2010/11, as set out in Appendices A and B of the report of Head of Finance and Customer Services, be agreed.
3. That there are no further budget issues identified in the third quarter budget monitoring report be agreed.
4. That the revenue estimate for 2011/12, as set out in Appendices A and B incorporating the growth and savings items set out in Appendices C and D of the report of Head of Finance and Customer Services, be agreed
5. That to continue to set an appropriate level of working balances for Cabinet's day to day activities at a level equivalent to the level set in 2010/11 of £2.3m be agreed.
6. That the creation of a budget for the direct financing of capital expenditure from revenue, as an ongoing resource, be agreed.
7. That the use of the additional revenue support grant for the direct financing of capital expenditure from revenue, as a one off resource, be agreed.
8. That the use of the remaining VAT refund for financing of capital expenditure, as a one off resource, be agreed.
9. That the capital programme as option (b) given at Appendix J of the report of Head of Finance and Customer Services, noting that a

detailed report on the High Street Regeneration project will be brought to the next meeting of the Cabinet, be agreed.

10. That the funding of the capital programme, as set out in Appendix I of the report of Head of Finance and Customer Services, noting that funding is dependent upon additional capital receipts, capital grants and other contributions in future years, be agreed.
11. That a report be brought to the September 2011 meeting on prioritised uses of future funding available for the capital programme.
12. That the Medium Term Financial Strategy, as set out in Appendix K of the report of Head of Finance and Customer Services and the resultant Financial Projection set out in Appendix F of the report of Head of Finance and Customer Services, be endorsed.
13. That Council Tax be frozen for the year 2011/12.
14. That the minimum level of general fund balances be set at £2m for 2011/12.
15. That the responses (attached as Appendix A) be sent to the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee with regard to their reference on the Capital Budget.

To view full details of this decision, please click here:-

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/mgDelegatedDecisions.aspx?XXR=0&&ACT=Find&RP=0&K=0&V=0&DM=146C&HD=0&DS=3&Next=true&META=mgdelegateddecisions>

137. FUTURE ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Cabinet considered the reference from the Strategic Housing Advisory Committee ("SHAC") relating to the proposed future role of the Committee.

RESOLVED: That consideration of this matter be deferred to the next meeting of the Cabinet.

138. FORWARD PLAN

The Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council regarding the Forward Plan for the period 1 March to 30 June 2011.

RESOLVED: That the Forward Plan for the period 1 March to 30 June 2011 be noted, subject to the following amendments:-

Core Strategy 2006-2026: Public Consultation Draft	Cabinet	Moved from 9 March to 13 April 2011
Fees and Charges for Private Water Sampling 2011/12	Cabinet Member for Environment	Mew for April 2011

Maidstone Local Bio Diversity
Action Plan

Changed to Cabinet Member for
Leisure and Culture

139. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.10 p.m.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

9th March 2011

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND CULTURAL SERVICES

Report prepared by John Foster

1. High Street Improvement Project

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider the final design, cost plan, and budget for the High Street Improvement project.

1.2 Recommendation of the Assistant Director of Regeneration and Cultural Services

1.2.1 That the final design as illustrated in Appendix 1, be agreed.

1.2.2 That phase 1a and 1b as illustrated in Appendix 3 be implemented in 2011/12.

1.2.3 That the changes set out in Appendix 4 to the Lower High Street be implemented for the reasons set out in paragraph 1.1.45.

1.2.4 That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director of Regeneration and Cultural Services, in consultation with Cabinet Member for Regeneration, to agree design changes during the construction period to keep the project within budget if unforeseen circumstances arise.

1.2.5 That a further report is brought to Cabinet to consider the implementation of Phase 2 when capital resources become available.

1.2.6 Resources for the High Street project are released in accordance with section 1.3.56 of this report.

1.2.7 That Ringway be appointed to undertake stage 2 of its contract limited to Phase 1a and Phase 1b, following its successful completion of the Stage 1 Professional Services contract.

- 1.2.8 That authority be given to the Head of Legal Services to enter into a contract (on terms to be agreed by the Director of Regeneration and Communities) with Ringway to undertake the construction phase of the Stage 2 contract limited to Phase 1a and 1b.
- 1.2.9 That authority be given to the Head of Legal Services to enter into a contract (on terms to be agreed by the Director of Regeneration and Communities) with Letts Wheeler Architects to undertake the Project Management function of the contractor and Focus to act as Quantity Surveyor on behalf of the Council.
- 1.2.10 That authority be given to the Head of Legal Services to enter into a Section 278 agreement with Kent County Council to undertake works to the public highway.
- 1.2.11 That authority be given to the Head of Legal Services to enter into a appropriate legal agreement (on terms to be agreed by the Director of Regeneration and Communities) with Kent County Council to secure their £600,000 contribution to the scheme and their funding of the CDM Coordinator.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.3.1 In May 2009, following a Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) managed international design competition, Cabinet agreed to appoint Letts Wheeler Architects to take forward their winning design to a detailed design stage.
- 1.3.2 Letts Wheeler led a consortium of consultants including Martin Stockley Associates (Civil Engineers) Sutton Vane Associates (lighting designers) and Chris Tipping, a public realm artist. Maidstone Borough Council has also appointed Focus Consultants as the Council's quantity surveyors and cost consultants.
- 1.3.3 Kent County Council has agreed to fund the appointment of Jacobs UK to act as CDM Coordinator (Health and Safety) and contribute £600,000 towards the project.

1.3.4 Project Description

- 1.3.5 The project aims to reduce the amount of physical space dedicated to vehicular traffic in the High Street by relocating the carriageway to the north side of the street. In doing so two large pedestrian "squares" will be created around the Cannon in the Lower High Street and around the Queen Victoria Monument in Upper High Street. The carriageway will have a kerb to delineate its route. This is not a shared surfaces scheme such as the one in Ashford. As much street clutter as possible will be removed and a mixture of granite colours used to surface the

- pavement and new public squares – with darker bands of granite setts, highlighting the old burgher plots in the High Street and creating a more pedestrian friendly environment. The carriageway will be surfaced with a black asphalt to ensure a clear distinction between the road and pedestrian areas. Asphalt is easy to repair and maintain and offers cost savings for the project.
- 1.3.6 Two way traffic will be maintained to enable buses to access the town centre and taxis will be allowed both up and down the High Street, which is an improvement on the current situation.
- 1.3.7 New trees hide some of the poorer quality buildings and add to the spaces “liveability” whilst the rest of the street is kept clear to expose the many beautiful listed buildings. The plan proposes to remove 9 existing trees and plant 15 new trees. 3 trees at the bottom of the High Street will be retained. Of some sensitivity is the proposed removal of the Plane Tree in front of the Town Hall. This Plane Tree obscures the historic Town Hall and the root system has lifted, and continues to lift, the paving slabs surrounding it, creating a trip hazard. Staff at the Visitor Information Centre in the Town Hall, have had to attend a number of incidences where elderly and infirm pedestrians have headed for the wooden seating around the trunk of the tree and tripped. The bench seat itself has moved, because of the buckling paving, and is no longer flat.
- 1.3.8 The Maidstone Centre Conservation Area Appraisal (February 2009) reinforces this view stating that “Trees outside the Town Hall and Nos 8/9 are now too large and too close to the building, obscuring views of its fine architecture and deeply overshadowing it”. The design proposes to remove the tree and seat and replace it with three new semi mature trees around which new seating will be introduced to create meeting points and places for social interaction as part of a new town square between the Town Hall and the Queen’s Monument, see Appendix 2.
- 1.3.9 A new lighting scheme has been designed to create better, safer overall lighting of the street, whilst avoiding sky glow, and make features of the trees, seats and cannon plinth at night. The area is a focus for the night time economy with visitors and residents attending the many bars, pubs, nightclubs and restaurants.
- 1.3.10 A visual interpretation of the High Street’s history, its people and businesses will be illustrated at points throughout the scheme by honing and scoring decorative patterns and shapes in to the granite paving.
- 1.3.11 The temporary toilets normally put out on a Friday and Saturday night outside the Town Hall will be retained. The Butterfly toilet in the Lower

High Street will be removed and stored in pristine condition. All underground drainage and ducting will be retained so that the toilet can be reinstalled at little cost if needed.

1.3.12 The subway under Fairmeadow will not be closed and the proposed new steps up to the crossing will not be constructed due to issues of cost. However the visual approach to the bridge gyratory from the High Street will be improved.

1.3.13 **Consultation**

1.3.14 The final design has been influenced by feedback from a programme of consultation with stakeholders undertaken over the last 18 months, including bus operators, taxi representatives, disabled groups, Kent County Council, retailers and Town Centre Management.

1.3.15 The issue of access for all, including disabled persons in to the town centre has been taken very seriously from the beginning. The new carriageway will have a kerb to delineate its route. Public transport including buses and taxis will be able to serve the High Street. This is not a shared surfaces scheme such as the one in Ashford. A number of meetings have been held with representatives of the visually impaired, including Kent Association for the Blind, Guide Dogs for the Blind, as well as those representing physically disabled groups to understand their needs. Age Concern and Kent County Council's Mobility Management Project Officer have also been involved and consulted. An RNIB Pan Disability Advisor has been appointed and has produced an Access Audit on the scheme. A significant number of design alterations have been made as a result of these discussions which have been particularly welcomed by the Guide Dogs for the Blind and the Kent Association for the Blind.

1.3.16 The design team and Council officers have held a public exhibition in the Chequers Mall on the 28th January 2010 and 60 comments forms were filled in and returned. The overwhelming feedback from this event was positive and in favour of the proposals. The designs were also exhibited in the Maidstone Gateway from the 8th February to the 13th February. A website with an online feedback form was established linked directly from the home page of the Borough Council's website www.maidstone.gov.uk. Feedback from consultation events has resulted in alterations and refinements to the design.

1.3.17 Through the planning process the plan was advertised and planning committee made a number of proposals to improve the designs including the addition of more trees. Planning Permission and Listed Building consent were granted in June 2010.

1.3.18 This work has been successfully concluded. The design team has given careful consideration to, and been able to respond to, the needs of all groups. The project now has the support of bus operators, taxi representatives, the disability focus group and most retailers. Consultation with the public has generated widespread support.

1.3.19 **Regeneration Benefits**

1.3.20 The public realm is a key backdrop which provides the setting to the character of our towns, particularly in areas of recognized importance such as Conservation Areas. Their design and management is therefore of crucial importance. The High Street falls within the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area. This area scored very poorly on English Heritage's annual conservation area survey 2010, due in part to the poor quality of the public realm and the rate of vacancies at upper floor levels. Unless improvements are made the Conservation Area is likely to be placed on the annual 'Heritage at Risk' register. The new designs and investment planned for the High Street will overcome and deliver many of improvements needed and recommended in the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area Appraisal, adopted by the Council in February 2009. This should mean that, if implemented, the Conservation Area should not remain at risk for long.

1.3.21 Furthermore, economic competitiveness and quality of place are closely linked. The Government recognises that quality of life factors, including quality of place appear increasingly important in attracting private sector investment and skilled workers. If Maidstone is to continue as the commercial and retail hub of Kent, the Borough Council must invest in its public realm to ensure that the County Town can compete successfully with other areas.

1.3.22 The Borough Council has therefore taken the lead in proposing this investment, and is determined to create the right conditions for economic development in the town. This objective is being fully supported by Kent County Council.

1.3.23 The project will regenerate the centre and rebalance the commercial heart of Maidstone – broadening the shopping appeal from just Fremlins Walk, Week Street and the Mall. The project area contains many independent retailers which add to Maidstone's distinctiveness as a place. It will attract more visitors, it will increase footfall and will increase the viability of existing shops and attract new shops into the area.

1.3.24 The need for the project, and the potential economic benefits, have been set out in an independent report by leading consultants, Colin Buchanan and Partners (CB). CB has previously demonstrated how to

value the economic and financial value associated with investments in good street design in research for both Transport for London (TfL) and the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE). This report quantified the quality of the existing town centre using the Pedestrian Environment Review System (PERS); an audit tool for measuring the quality of the pedestrian environment by placing scores on a number of established characteristics e.g. quality of the surfaces, legibility, lighting etc. The research findings enable an evidence-based approach to the design, appraisal and funding of high street improvement works.

1.3.25 The research found that the quality of environment within the study area is currently poor, with all 15 characteristics scoring negatively, the only exception being 'effective width' of footpaths with a score of zero, indicating an average standard in the PERS evaluation and therefore still necessitating significant improvement. This is particularly significant considering it falls within the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area.

1.3.26 The report goes on to state that the project if implemented will, increase footfall and generate £4.5 million of additional visitor expenditure in the town and create nearly 100 new jobs in both the day and night time economy. This is particularly important as the High Street Ward is one of the most deprived wards in Kent and England (top 20%) with an unemployment rate of 5.7% (July 2010).

1.3.27 The new designs and investment will overcome and deliver many of the improvements needed and recommended in the Maidstone Centre Conservation Area Appraisal, adopted by the Council in February 2009.

1.3.28 This type of investment has been proved to work elsewhere. In New Road in Brighton a public realm project resulted in a 22% increase in cycling and a 162% increase in pedestrian activity.

1.3.29 **Contractor**

1.3.30 Following the Cabinet decision of 14th April 2010, regarding the High Street Improvement project, an OJEU restricted tendering procedure resulted in Ringway being appointed as the main contractor in May 2010. This appointment was separated into two stages. Stage 1 required Ringway to work in a professional services role alongside the design team for a period of 4 months.

1.3.31 This period has been used to obtain the full benefit of Ringway's experience in construction sequencing, value engineering, programming and general viability.

1.3.32 The appointment of the contractor to undertake Stage 2, the construction phase, is dependent upon funding being available and on the contractor's satisfactory performance during Stage 1. Ringway's performance has been good and their team has been proactive and made significant contributions to the work of the design team.

1.3.33 Kent County Council has approved the Stage 1 Highway Technical Audit and Safety Audit. The Stage 2 Highway Technical Audit is being progressed as is the Section 278 agreement required by KCC to undertake works in the Highway. Importantly KCC has agreed to waive Commuted Sum payments to cover the long term maintenance of the road.

1.3.34 **Maintenance**

1.3.35 Granite has been selected as the dominant paving material for the scheme. It is hardwearing and durable material that will be easy to clean and maintain. A strong grout will be used which will enable the surface to be cleaned with a jet wash. Four types of granite will be laid to create an attractive mix and varying pattern. This rich mix of colours will help camouflage everyday urban scuffs and stains making them less visible. The granite is extremely dense material and capable of resisting oily stains from vehicles (e.g. Bank Street loading and unloading) and fast food outlets. A trial of the granite has taken place on a small patch laid down in front of the Town Hall. It has resisted staining and even paint has been successfully removed. The use of black asphalt in the carriage way will mean repairs are quick and cheap to undertake.

1.3.36 KCC will be requested to designate the High Street one of Special Engineering Difficulty (SED) and raise a Section 58 notice. Utility companies will be obliged to carry out planned work within 3 months of the notice being issued i.e. either before or during the works to lay the new granite surfaces. There after only emergency repairs and new customer connections will be allowed to take place in the first 5 years of the street being completed. This notice will ensure materials are reinstated by the utility companies and the quality of the work will be controlled by KCC.

1.3.37 **Post construction events and activity**

1.3.38 The construction specification has taken into account the desire to animate the new town squares with events and music. Electricity connection points will be installed in the paving around the new Town Square and around the Cannon Plinth. Water supplies have been specified too, if required, for specialist/occasional markets and other events. Event organisers will be encouraged to use the new space e.g. Town Centre Management's Jazz Festival.

1.3.39 The Christmas Lights display in the new street will have to be very different to the current one. The Lighting Canopy, supported by temporary large steel columns, will not be continued and the existing lights hung in the trees will be discontinued. A specification for new lighting sockets and power cables has been designed and will be installed to enable new Christmas Lights to be erected.

1.3.40 Opportunities for events and performances in the centre of town will be created. The design will give the High Street back to the community, for social interaction, to linger and meet up by increasing the space available to pedestrians. Spaces will be created for people to perform, dance, play music, hold specialised markets and other events. For those in the community who want to do this for charity or in support of a local group, MBC will offer to facilitate the event through the Council's Town Centre Premises License.

1.3.41 **Main Changes**

1.3.42 Since April 2010 a number of changes have been made following consultation with stakeholders, as a result of the planning process and to keep the project costs within budget. The main changes to the design since April 2010 are as follows:

- Signalised crossing points will be retained at the bottom of Lower Stone Street, at the junction of Mill Street and Bank Street and in King Street opposite the entrance to the Mall. All other signalised crossing points will be removed in favour of the courtesy crossing points.
- Additional trees will be added to the scheme and a mix of Field Maple, Hornbeam and Cherry will be planted.
- Trees will be introduced to the north side of King Street rather than the south side as previously shown and planted between the bus shelters. This change was necessary in response to a safety audit concern.
- The proposed courtesy crossing at the junction of Mill Street and Bank Street has been removed in favour of the signalised crossing point.
- The location of some of the courtesy crossing points has been changed to increase the space available for buses to pass each other and access bus stops. Bus lay bys have been lengthened and the distance between bus stops widened.
- The temporary toilets normally put out on a Friday and Saturday night outside the Town Hall will be retained. The Butterfly toilet in the Lower High Street will be removed and stored in pristine condition. All underground drainage and ducting will be retained so that the toilet can be reinstalled at little cost if needed.

- The lighting scheme has been reduced however the following elements have been kept: under seat lighting, up lighting of trees, lighting of Cannon Plinth and Queens Monument, improved street lighting.
- The subway will no longer be filled in and surface level crossing improvements will not be made to the Bridge.
- The carriageway will now be black asphalt and not Granite.

1.3.43 Despite these changes most of the objectives originally set out for the project will still be achieved with the exception of improving the connectivity between the High Street and the River.

1.3.44 **Project Phasing.**

1.3.45 Pressure on the Council's capital resources has meant that a phased approach to the project's implementation will be necessary. It is recommended that Phase 1a and 1b illustrated in Appendix 3 be implemented in 2011/12. Phase 2 can be implemented later when capital funding become available. Some immediate changes to the Lower Higher Street is proposed to enable the full implementation of the Traffic Regulation Orders and also to provide loading/disabled parking bays on the High Street. These changes are set out in Appendix 4.

1.3.46 Each of the three phases are self contained. 1a is defined by the need to relocate bus stops from the upper High Street to Middle Row and King Street. 1b is Bank Street.

1.3.47 1a includes the junction of Week Street, High Street, King Street and Gabriel's Hill. It is this point within the whole project area which will be seen by the most people (shoppers, visitors) and consequently will have the most visual impact. It will leave a lasting impression of quality on the most people.

1.3.48 Bank Street, one of the oldest streets in Maidstone, is in need of regeneration. The viability of some retailers is not strong as evidenced by the frequent churn of retailers starting up but not surviving long.

1.3.49 How much of the full benefits of the project will be captured if only a partial scheme is implemented is difficult to assess. There are still vacant units in the phase 1a and 1b areas. Strengthening this area will help increase footfall and make shops more viable. Job creation is still likely even if only 1a and 1b are delivered.

1.3.50 Undertaking phase 2 first would leave the area isolated. Most of the shoppers and visitors travelling between Fremlin Walk, Week Street

and the Mall will not see or know that phase 2 has been implemented and will draw them down to the Lower High Street.

1.3.51 The regeneration benefits of undertaking phase 1a and 1b and not phase 2 as set out in the Colin Buchanan study, will clearly be reduced in the short term. That said a survey of this area on 25th February 2011 identified 10 vacant units totalling circa 1790 sq.m. of ground floor retail space. If the project results in an increase in footfall and visitor expenditure, the job creation potential of these units is considerable. At 1 job per 20 sq.m. of net retail floor space (as suggested in Arup Economics + Planning/ English Partnerships in their report Employment Densities: A full guide (July 2001) circa 85 jobs could be created if this vacant space is fully occupied.

1.3.52 Project Costs

1.3.53 The final design has been priced by Ringway in conjunction with the Quantity Surveyor on the basis of the rates in their original tender and a re-measured Bill of Quantities following design changes post tender.

1.3.54 The Council's Capital Programme has allocated £2.25m to the project. £50,000 of expenditure will be incurred in 2010/11 leaving a budget of £2.2m. It is expected that the bulk of this expenditure will be incurred in 2011/12 leaving approximately £200,000 to be spent in 2012/13. The cost estimates for phase 1a and 1b are set out in Table 1 below:

Table 1 Project costs

Main Contract Works	£1,752,965
Additional Works	
Bus stop relocation	£22,900
Cellar and Dilapidation Survey	£9,700
Traffic Signal Civils&electrical Works	£54,505
Lower High Street Works	£25,492
Relocation of CCTV	£25,000
Fees	
Archaeologist Watching Brief Fee	£2,500
Section 278 agreement	£52,000
Post contract design team fees	£58,200
Post contract QS fees	£24,250
Project Management (LW)	£31,040
Legal	£15,000
Clerk of Works	£10,000

Additional design fees (LW etc, Focus, Ringway)	£19,400
Contingency	£97,048
Total Costs	£2,200,000

N.B. CDMC (Health and Safety) Coordinator is being funded by KCC.

1.3.55 The contingency figure is low because of Ringway's early contactor involvement and the significant amount of site investigative work already carried out.

1.3.56 Capital Programme to 2014/15

1.3.57 Subject to approval by Council on 2nd March 2011, the High Street Improvement project is currently identified in the capital programme 2011/12 to 2014/15 and, in accordance with the medium term financial strategy (MTFS), is therefore a scheme to which the Council is committed. A verbal update on any changes as a consequence of the decision by Council will be given by officers at the meeting.

1.3.58 The Council's MTFS also requires the identification of funding in advance of formal commencement of any capital programme or project. Funding assumed in the capital programme but not yet available to the Council totals £3.55m and, as this is a greater value than the resources required for this scheme, it is necessary to consider appropriate prioritisation of the capital programme.

1.3.59 It is for Cabinet to determine the prioritisation of schemes within the capital programme. Uncommitted schemes and projects in the capital programme include the High Street and those listed in the Table 2 below. Legislative requirements regarding capital expenditure are not included in the table and are funded. If all of these expenditure items were to be committed the Council would need to borrow £3.9m by 2014/15.

1.3.60 A commitment to the High Street at this time assumes that the capital receipts from the disposal of assets will be forthcoming over the next 3 years. If this doesn't occur Cabinet have committed the Council to borrowing.

1.3.61A significant disposal is close to contractual commitment and together with unallocated revenues from the Homes Bonus Scheme and revenue outturn under spend 2010/11 it would be possible to delay the risk and cost of borrowing to 2013/14 if contracts concerning the

High Street project were not signed until after this is confirmed which is expected to be by the 31st March.

Table 2

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
	£,000	£,000	£,000
Asset Management	150	100	100
Software / PC Upgrade	180	180	180
Improvements to Play Areas	50	50	50
Housing Grants (Net)	770	855	505
Support for Social Housing		210	190
Total	1,150	1,395	1,025

1.3.62 If this approach is followed expenditure set out in Table 2 in 2012/13 can be funded, together with the High Street. Expenditure from 2013/14 can only be funded by future receipts or borrowing up to £2.4m.

1.3.63 Measuring and Evaluating Outcomes

1.3.64 When complete it will be important to measure the success of the project against its key objectives and desired outcomes. It is proposed that the following is monitored:

1. Monitor vacancy levels and jobs created: A retailer survey will be carried out before the project commences and one year after opening.
2. Footfall: A footfall survey will be carried out in the Town Centre one year after the opening.
3. Monitor access issues for disability groups: The disability focus group will be assembled and consulted on their experiences of the new street.
4. Monitor and if necessary enforce new traffic regulation orders to encourage behavioural changes and ensure deliveries and other drivers adhere to the new regulations. MBC parking services will focus on the High Street for the first 6 months from opening.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The do nothing option:

1.4.2 The need for the project and the benefits have been set out in the report by Colin Buchanan and Partners. If the project does not go ahead the project area will remain in a poor physical state and opportunities to attract new footfall and visitor expenditure will be diminished. The Disability Focus Group and Access Audit have identified a number of existing access concerns which will have to be

addressed with Kent County Council. The Conservation Area will be in danger of being added to English Heritage's at risk register.

1.4.3 Reduce the size of Project:

1.4.4 It may be possible to reduce the size of the project or phase it. Whilst elements of the project may be achieved e.g. the creation of a new public square in front of Town Hall, if only part of the Street were to be improved the visual impact may be lessened and the consequential projected visitor expenditure and increase in footfall may be reduced.

1.4.5 Reduce Capital Costs Option:

1.4.6 Changing the specification of the materials may offer some savings on capital costs. However a vital element of the scheme is to provide a 'wow' factor to the environment of the entire High Street complementing the existing historic architecture and features. Cheaper materials would significantly reduce this effect and may not lead to the desired increase in footfall and visitor numbers. Some savings may be possible if cheaper materials are used on the edges of the project area focusing the high quality materials in the centre.

1.4.7 Delay the Project option:

1.4.8 Any delay to the project exposures it to the risk of fluctuations in material costs, which invariably only go up. A delay would only be warranted if there was a realistic prospect of bidding for or attracting new sources of finance into the project.

1.4.9 Use Prudential Borrowing:

1.4.10 The Council has approved, as part of its prudential indicators, a maximum limit for prudential borrowing of £4m. The capital programme, as currently approved, requires the sale of assets valued at £3.55m and the identification of a source for further funding totalling £0.35m. The total of these sums is £3.9m which is within the prudential borrowing limit approved by Council. It would therefore be possible to utilise borrowing to achieve the programme and remain within the agreed principles set out in the MTFS. If Cabinet were to consider borrowing to deliver the programme before the asset sales are achieved the effect on revenue resources must be considered. Borrowing at this level would incur an annual cost in the region of £0.3m to repay principle and interest over 25 years. The current MTFS is developed around the assumption that only the balance of £0.35m will be borrowed and resources are not currently set aside in the revenue projection to meet this level of repayment.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 1.5.1 The High Street Design public realm scheme supports the Council's Corporate Strategy 2011-2015 Priority 1, to have a growing economy catering for a range of skills sets, and specifies the Council's intention to deliver the High Street Regeneration project. It also supports Priority 2 to have a decent place to live, with an attractive and well designed environment.

1.6 Risk Management

Risk Description	Likelihood	Seriousness or Impact	Mitigation Measures
The costs for the construction phase of the project are found to exceed the budget	D	2	Ringway has been appointed at an early stage to work alongside the designers to ensure deliverability/ manage risk. A provisional sum has been allowed in the Bill of Quantities where exact amounts are unknown. A contingency sum has been allowed in the budget which is thought adequate to cover other unforeseen costs.
There is risk that the Council may borrow and may need to borrow close to the prudential limit.	C	2	Contracts will not be signed until after the 31 st March when there will be more certainty about the Council's funding for the Capital programme in 2012/13 which will delay the need to borrow and reduce the maximum borrowing requirement.
Stage 2 Highways Technical Approval not granted	D	3	Stage 1 has been approved and KCC has been working with the design team on Stage 2.
Lighting: Not all owners agree to have utility lights fixed to their building	D	3	Only those properties on which street lighting is required are critical and alternative solutions are possible if building owners are not co-operative.
Retailers object to the proposed	D	3	All retailers have been approached and informed

permanent Traffic Regulation Orders			of the scheme. Only 2 objections were noted.
-------------------------------------	--	--	--

(Likelihood: A = very high; B = high; C = significant; D = low; E = very low; F = almost impossible)

(Seriousness or Impact: 1= catastrophic; 2 = critical; 3 = marginal; 4 = negligible)

1.7 Other Implications

1. Financial	X
2. Staffing	X
3. Legal	X
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment	X
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development	X
6. Community Safety	X
7. Human Rights Act	
8. Procurement	X
9. Asset Management	X

1.7.1 Financial: Capital: The capital cost for the project is set out in Table 1 and is funded as part of the Capital programme see paragraph 1.3.56 to 1.3.61. The cost for new Christmas Lights is estimated to be £40,000 to be made available from Regeneration Budget line in the Capital Programme. Revenue: There is an electricity cost to the Council for the feature lighting which is estimated to be £4,000 per annum for all phases. Keeping the High Street clean and litter free will not result in an increase in labour costs. Revenue costs associated with the maintenance of the Highway will be Kent County Council's responsibility after the first 12 months following completion.

1.7.2 Staffing: The project will continue to require input from a range of officers across the Council to manage the construction phase, which will form the Project Team working alongside Letts Wheeler and the design team. In particular this has required significant involvement of the property and procurement team.

- 1.7.3 Legal: The Contractor will be appointed on the basis of the NEC3 Form of Contract for Stage 2. Letts Wheeler and Focus will require a contract. A Section 278 agreement will be required.
- 1.7.4 Equality Impact Needs Assessment: The needs of all groups to access the High Street has been taken into consideration during the detailed design stages and through consultation.
- 1.7.5 Environment and Sustainable Development: The Environmental Management System Project Manager was involved in the early design stages of the project. Environmental performance of the Contractor has been considered, reuse of materials where possible and a planting scheme has been incorporated into the design.
- 1.7.6 Community Safety: Issues surrounding lighting design, impact on CCTV and other security matters have been brought to the attention of the Police and Community Safety Partnership and changes to the location of CCTV cameras agreed.
- 1.7.7 Procurement: The recommendations in this report comply with EU Procurement Directives and the Council's Constitution. It is considered that the implementation of Phase 2 should be treated as a new contract opportunity and be tendered in accordance with the appropriate regulations.
- 1.7.8 Asset Management: Cleansing regimes will be put in place to keep the street clean.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.2 Appendices

Appendix 1: Final Design Layout

Appendix 2: Artist's impression of the proposed designs for Upper High Street.

Appendix 3: Phase 1a and 1b

Appendix 4: Planned changes to Lower High Street

1.8.3 Background Documents

- 1.8.4 Economic Impact Assessment of the High Street Improvement Project by Colin Buchanan and Partners 2010.

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

.....July 2010.....

This is a Key Decision because:

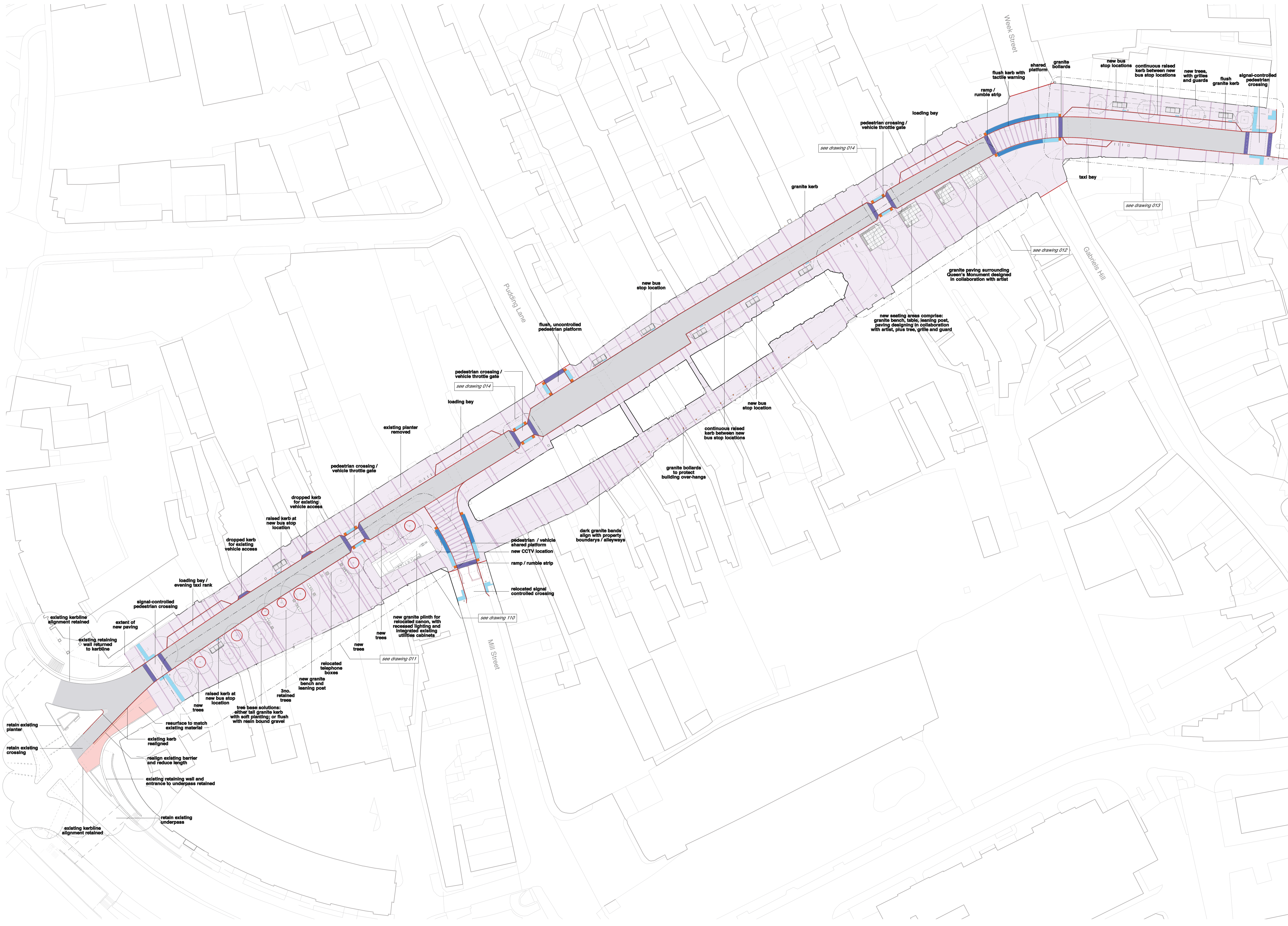
It will be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in the area of the local authority. Whilst not committing the Council to expenditure over £250,000 at this time, the report relates to the expenditure of £4 million which the Council has made provision for in its Capital Programme.

.....

.....

Wards/Parishes affected:High Street Ward.....

.....



- Notes**
- Refer to Specifications **Q10, Q25, Q31 and Q50**.
 - Refer also to Engineer's Specification and Drawings.
 - Refer also to Lighting Consultant's drawings for detailed information on light fittings.
- MATERIALS PALETTE**
- Granite setts
 - Dark granite bands
 - Blister paving
 - Reclaimed Yorkstone paving
 - 'Pineapple' paving
 - Shaped granite bollard
 - Granite rumble strips / ramps
 - New tarmac carriageway
 - Tarmac surface to match existing pavement
 - Granite kerb
- Bus Stops:**
Contractor to provide attendance for 10no. existing, relocated by JCDcaux
- Litter Bins:**
20no. Half-jumbo (85L) in stainless steel by Larkin Street Products, Galway locations to be agreed on site
- Cycle racks:**
12no. Zenith Cycle Stands in satin polished stainless steel by Furnitubes, Greenwich locations to be agreed on site

- Rev F - 10.12.10
Revised Bishop's Way crossing and underpass. Tree removed
- Rev E - 30.09.10
Revised Bishop's Way ramp
- CONTRACT ISSUE**
- Rev D - 17.09.10
Updated layout. 'Pineapple' paving added.
- Rev C - 03.08.10
Amendments to King Street Middle Flow, Mill St junction and crossing locations
- Rev B - 04.06.10
Wider crossings. New seats
- Rev A - 21.04.10
Amendments to bus stop and trees within King Street

Date	01.12.09
Scale	1 : 500 @ A1 (height)
Revision	F
Drawing No.	100
Drawing Title	Site layout proposals
Project	Maidstone High St Improvement Project

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LettsWheeler

www.lettswheeler.com



Notes

- Phase 1a
- Phase 1b
- Phase 2

Date
07.01.11

Scale
1: 1250

Revision
/

Drawing No.
002b

Drawing Title
Phasing

Project
Maidstone High St
Improvement Project

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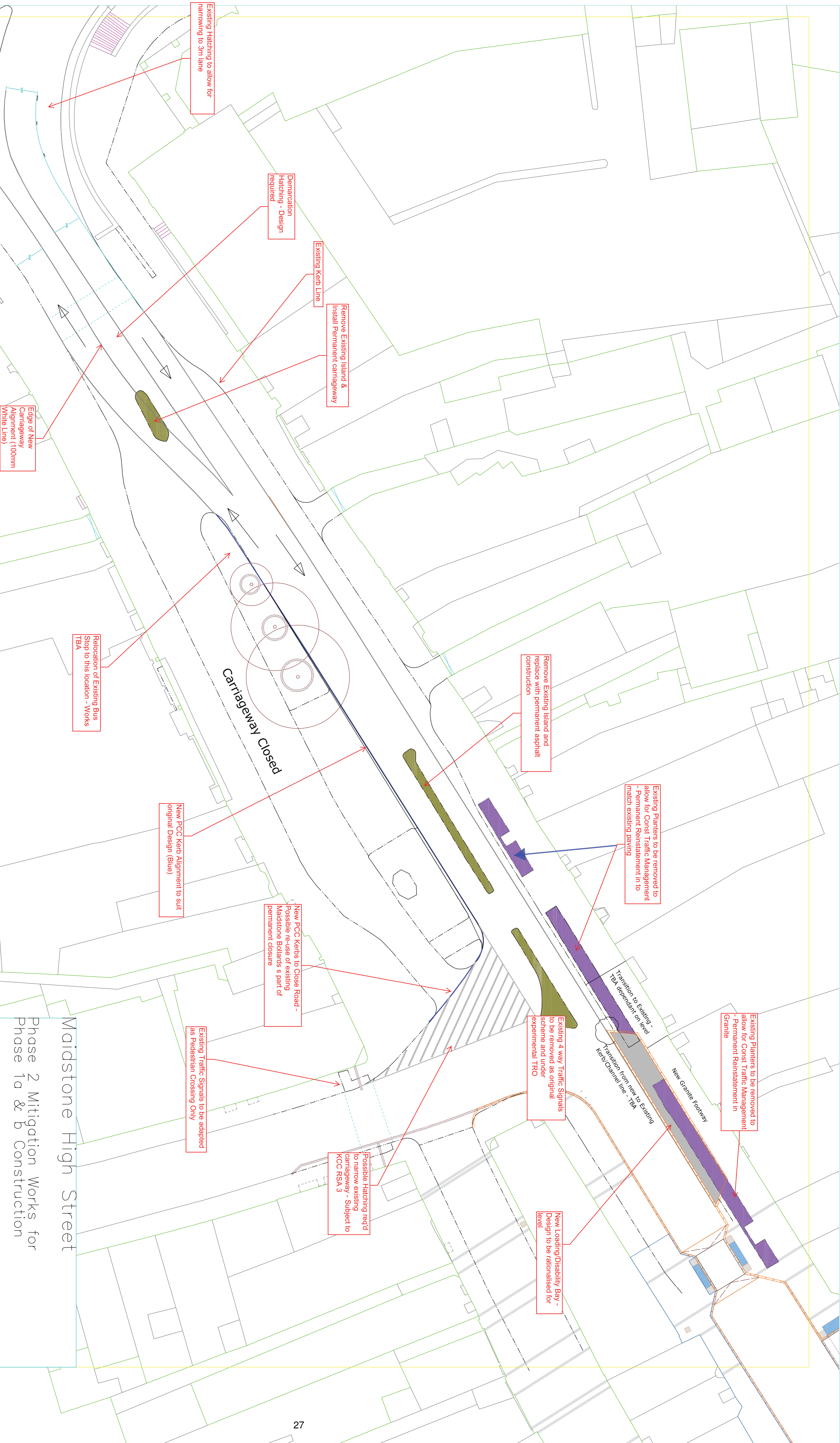
Artists Impression of New Town Square in Front of Town Hall





Maidstone High Street
Phase 2 Mitigation Works for
Phase 1a & b Construction

Status: For Discussion
Date: 8.02.2011
Author: AJH
Scale 1:200 @ A1



Agenda Item 9

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

9 MARCH 2011

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND COMMUNITIES

Report prepared by John Littlemore

**1. ADDENDUM TO THE CABINET REPORT 9TH FEBRUARY 2011
FUTURE ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY
COMMITTEE**

1.1 Revised Recommendation of the Director for Regeneration and
Communities

1.1.1 That the Cabinet recommends the Council disbands the Strategic Housing Advisory Committee;

1.1.2 That the Cabinet agrees as part of the review of standing committees an all-party advisory body for Cabinet and Cabinet Member be formed with terms of reference on matters relating to housing in Maidstone;

1.1.3 That the Cabinet recommends to the Council that the new body is named the Housing Consultative Board; and exists for an initial 12 month period after which time its effectiveness is reviewed.

1.2 Background

1.2.1 The coalition government has proposed a number of major changes to housing statute and policy that have will have a significant impact across a number of areas including the economic wellbeing of Maidstone. The Cabinet deferred making a decision to the report presented to Cabinet on 9 February 2011 and requested that officers review the role and purpose of a housing advisory body in the light of these proposals.

1.2.2 A discussion with Cabinet Members suggested that there is merit in having an all-party body to advise the Cabinet and Cabinet Members on matters related to housing. However, it was also felt important to differentiate this new body from the role of SHAC, which was in effect to monitor the progress of the promises made prior to stock transfer.

1.2.3 Key Issues

Over the next 12 months the key areas the Council needs to respond to are:

- (i) Affordable rent – respond to the new regime for providing affordable housing; develop the Council’s policy with affordable housing providers in connection with new and existing homes; develop cross-authority agreements and delivery of the West Kent Local Investment Partnership
- (ii) Tenure strategy – the Localism Bill propose a new duty on local authorities to adopt a tenure strategy and there will be a need to develop the new tenure strategy in conjunction with our housing providers to take account of the range of suggested changes e.g. the use of fixed term tenancies
- (iii) Allocation scheme – the Localism Bill provides the context for greater self determination as to who can access the housing register and who is given priority which will require a review the current allocation scheme
- (iv) Alterations to the homelessness statute – review our homelessness strategy; policy and practice in response to the proposed changes to the homelessness legislation; review the impact of housing benefit changes
- (v) The impact of welfare reform and changes to housing benefit – including the provision of homes in multiple occupation; collective response with partners to encouraging employment, increased poverty and homelessness; responding to migration from London as a consequence of housing benefit changes

1.3 Action Plan

1.3.1 To assist the Housing Consultative Board in developing its work programme an action plan was suggested and the table below sets this out around the five key issues. The action plan, once developed further, could then be used to assess the impact and relevance of the HCB at its 12 month review.

Issue	Outcome	Key milestones
Affordable rent	<p>New affordable homes continue to be delivered</p> <p>The new affordable rents remain accessible to applicants on the housing register</p> <p>A broader range of applicant is assisted</p> <p>Agreement is reached with registered providers as to the percentage of existing social rented homes that are converted to affordable rent</p>	<p>Follow progress of the Localism Bill</p> <p>Influence government policy</p> <p>Negotiate with registered providers and other stakeholders</p> <p>Develop new policy on affordable rent</p> <p>MBC adopts affordable rent policy in partnership with local affordable housing providers</p>

<p>Tenure Strategy</p>	<p>Consensus is reached between registered providers and MBC on the application of new tenures</p> <p>A tenure strategy is adopted expeditiously in order to support new housing delivery</p> <p>The new approach does not result in an increase in homelessness or use of temporary accommodation</p>	<p>Follow progress of the Localism Bill</p> <p>Influence government policy</p> <p>Negotiate with registered providers and other stakeholders</p> <p>Develop new tenure strategy</p> <p>Develop advisory services to inform and assist tenants on fixed term tenancies</p> <p>MBC adopts tenure strategy</p>
<p>Allocation scheme</p>	<p>MBC has a clear mandate as to who should be given access and priority to affordable housing</p> <p>The identified priority groups housing needs are met through a scheme quota or other outcome lead measure</p>	<p>Review the allocation scheme</p> <p>Consult with stakeholders and service users</p> <p>Review position in relation to Kent wide scheme</p> <p>Adopt new allocation scheme or confirm existing</p>
<p>Homelessness</p>	<p>Homelessness Strategy is updated</p> <p>Homelessness prevention outcomes remain positive in proportion to the approaches for assistance</p> <p>The use of inappropriate temporary accommodation does not exceed the agreed target</p>	<p>Follow progress of the Localism Bill</p> <p>Review homelessness strategy in the response to statutory reform</p> <p>Agree new policy and procedure as required</p>
<p>Benefit changes</p>	<p>The changes do not have a negative impact on Maidstone's economy</p> <p>Homelessness does not increase as a result of the changes</p>	<p>Develop our understanding of the impact of the changes</p> <p>Respond to changes in a positive and active manner</p> <p>Work with partners and stakeholders to implement initiatives to bring about positive change</p>

1.4 Revised terms of reference

Committee and Membership	Functions	Delegated of Functions
<p>Strategic Housing Advisory Committee</p> <p>7 Members of the Authority</p>	<p>To give advice to the Cabinet and the Cabinet Member with responsibility for housing on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Housing Strategy, housing needs and the Housing Investment Programme b) The provision of housing including the type, size and tenure c) The delivery of new affordable homes d) Homelessness, temporary accommodation and the provision of housing advice e) The council's Allocation Scheme and performance of the housing register f) The Supporting People programme g) Changes to housing legislation, regulation and policy 	<p>Not Applicable</p>

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

26 JANUARY 2011

REFERENCE FROM THE STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1. FUTURE ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1.1 Background

At the meeting of the Strategic Housing Advisory Committee ("SHAC") on 5 January 2011, the Committee considered the report of the Director of Regeneration and Communities (copy attached at Appendix A) regarding the options for SHAC now the original period of its terms of reference has expired.

All Members felt there was a future role for this Committee following the completion of the stock transfer to Golding Homes.

Members felt that, should the Committee continue as proposed, it was important to ensure that there is an opportunity to build up an expertise of housing amongst the Members of the Committee. Members also felt it was important that meeting dates were set in advance, rather than on the current ad-hoc basis, and that the number of Members on the Committee should be an odd number.

The Committee made slight amendments to the Terms of Reference and the amended version is attached at Appendix B.

1.2 RECOMMENDED:

1. That the Strategic Housing Advisory Committee remains as the advisory body for the Cabinet and/or the Cabinet Member on matters relating to housing in Maidstone.
2. That, subject to agreement to 1 above, the Council be recommended to approve the new Terms of Reference, including an increase in the number of Members on the Committee, as set out in the attached Appendix, and the Constitution be amended accordingly.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

5TH JANUARY 2011

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION
& COMMUNITIES**

Report prepared by John Littlemore

1. THE FUTURE ROLE OF THE STRATEGIC HOUSING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 To advise the Cabinet on the options for the Strategic Housing Advisory Committee now the original period of its terms of reference has expired.

1.2 Recommendation of the Director of Regeneration & Communities

1.2.1 That SHAC recommends to Cabinet that SHAC should remain as the advisory body for Cabinet and Cabinet Member on matters relating to housing in Maidstone; with new terms of reference including the provision of affordable housing, the management of housing in the public and private rented sectors, and policy matters across all forms of tenure and ownership, as outline in Appendix A.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 Formed prior to stock transfer to advise the council on the process towards large scale voluntary transfer, the Strategic Housing Advisory Committee (SHAC) was subsequently given the remit to ensure the terms of the promise made to tenants as part of the transfer consultation were delivered by the newly created Maidstone Housing Trust (now Golding Homes).

1.3.2 The current terms of reference permit SHAC to give advice to the cabinet on the performance of MHT against specific measures. A number of measurable obligations were imposed on MHT at time of transfer and SHAC to monitor the progress made by MHT in delivering these and reported to the Executive accordingly. SHAC continued to meet regularly to review and monitor the performance of Maidstone Housing Trust. Certain of these promises were encapsulated into a

- five year period, which has now come to an end. This provides an opportune moment to review the role of SHAC and its future.
- 1.3.3 Research has been undertaken to look at other models used by strategic housing authorities following stock transfer. Some Local Authorities have chosen to maintain the status quo after the ending of the 5 year period and concentrate on the relationship with the transferred housing association. This might include negotiating a further five-year agreement to cover decent homes standards, management standards, or investment in new build.
 - 1.3.4 Alternatively local authorities have set up arrangements to enable interaction between various agencies, and across multiple departments with some relevant counterparts meeting as frequently as once a week, although more often on a monthly or quarterly basis. The housing associations are required to appear before committees every 3 – 6 months to respond to questions or concerns that elected members, or their constituents, may have.
 - 1.3.5 Finally, some Local Authorities (LAs) that have transferred their stock have decided to institute a Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) – whilst partnership working is a growing feature of LA working, the Audit Commission has highlighted that an LSP can contribute most effectively to the emphasis that has been placed on the strategic role of LAs in delivering improvements to housing within their localities.
 - 1.3.6 Whilst the make up and design of these strategic partnerships can vary, the broad structure and scope remains the same. The partnership is usually chaired by the local authority and is composed of invited members from the housing association sector and other Registered Providers such as private developers; together with some voluntary sector service providers to give a broader scope.
 - 1.3.7 This approach would represent a significant broadening of the scope and membership of SHAC, and could absorb the Housing Sounding Board – which is the current mechanism used by Housing Services to consult with stakeholders other than housing associations. This approach would also recognise the proposed changes to the council's management structure with the bringing together of community services and housing.
 - 1.3.8 Maintaining an advisory body with responsibility for advising the Cabinet Member with responsibility for housing and/or the Cabinet recognises the important and fundamental role that housing has in building stable and prosperous communities. A raft of significant changes has been announced by the Coalition Government that has implications for both public and private housing sectors. To enable the council to properly consider and take advantage of the changes a reconfigured SHAC is the best mechanism for achieving an advisory

role. This could be supported by reference to the Maidstone LSP on specific issues that could be tackled on a task & finish basis.

1.3.9 Other external influences to be considered include the dissolution of the Tenant Services Authority, which is due in 2011. Social Housing regulation will come under the auspices of the Homes & Communities Agency but in a far less regulatory way than previously. There will be less emphasis on inspection and an expectation that housing associations will be monitored at a local level. The Communities & Local Government consultation document on the future of social housing proposes 'an enhanced role for elected councillors, MPs and tenant panels in the complaints process'. A revised SHAC could form part of that aspiration.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The SHAC could consider maintaining the status quo but this approach is limited in its sphere of influence and out-dated in terms of its relationship with Golding Homes and is not recommended by the author of the report as a positive way forward. Other models have been considered such as a sub-group of Overview & Scrutiny but have not been recommended in view of the breadth of issues relating to the single banner of housing. The aspiration is to create a degree of housing expertise within a reformed SHAC that would be diluted through alternative mechanisms.

1.4.2 The SHAC could recommend to Cabinet that no single body is required to advise the Cabinet Member on housing matters. However, this would fail to recognise the important and fundamental role of housing in providing stable communities that promote opportunities and prosperity. Central government is exploring ways of devolving responsibilities to local councils and their communities; it would be remiss not to have an advisory committee for housing with a broad housing remit in order to respond to this new agenda.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

The recommendations to continue with a forum to advise the Cabinet Member on matters relating to housing would provide benefit towards achieving the priority "Maidstone to be a decent place to live".

1.6 Other Implications

1.6.1

1. Financial
2. Staffing
3. Legal

- 4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment
- 5. Environmental/Sustainable Development
- 6. Community Safety
- 7. Human Rights Act
- 8. Procurement
- 9. Asset Management

1.7 Relevant Documents

1.7.1 Deed of Transfer

1.7.2 Local Decisions – a fairer future for Social Housing (CLG consultation)

1.7.3 MBC Constitution

1.7.4 Appendices

1.7.5 Appendix A – draft terms of reference

<u>IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?</u>	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?	
.....	
This is a Key Decision because:	
.....	
Wards/Parishes affected:	
.....	

1.7.6 Background Documents

1.7.7 None

**Draft Terms of Reference for the
Strategic Housing Advisory Committee**

Committee and Membership	Functions	Delegated of Functions
<p>Strategic Housing Advisory Committee</p> <p>7 Members of the Authority</p>	<p>To give advice to the Cabinet and/or the Cabinet Member with responsibility for housing on;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Housing Strategy, housing needs and the Housing Investment Programme b) The provision of housing including the type, size and tenure c) The delivery of new affordable homes d) Homelessness, temporary accommodation and the provision of housing advice e) The council's Allocation Scheme and performance of the housing register f) Management of the council's Gypsy sites g) The Supporting People programme h) Home Improvement Agency, the adaptation of homes including Disabled Facilities Grant i) The renovation and maintaining of housing standards within the private rented sector j) The provision and licensing of houses in multiple occupation (HMO) k) The development of and changes to housing legislation, regulation, national and local policy l) To receive reports from and liaise with appropriate housing forum such as the Maidstone Housing Sounding Board, Registered Providers Forum and partnership boards for housing in Kent 	<p>Not Applicable</p>

Agenda Item 10

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

9 MARCH 2011

REPORT OF HEAD OF CHANGE AND SCRUTINY

Report prepared by Ellie Kershaw

1. Corporate Improvement Plan

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 Cabinet are asked to consider the progress made on actions within the Corporate Improvement Plan at Appendix A

1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Change and Scrutiny

1.2.1 That the progress against the objectives set in the Corporate Improvement Plan is noted.

1.2.2 That the actions which are out of date and the reasons for this are noted.

1.2.3 That criterion for extending target dates in exceptional circumstances is put in place.

1.2.4 That any recommendations made by the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the meeting on 1 March 2011 are considered.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The purpose of the Corporate Improvement Plan (CIP) is to identify and monitor progress on key areas for improvement. The way the plan is laid out makes it easy to see where work is not progressing in a timely manner.

1.4 Summary

1.4.1 Appendix A shows the current status of the CIP. This report shows that there are 31 completed actions, 10 that are ongoing and have not yet reached their target date and 8 that are out of target.

- 1.4.2 It should be noted that the number of actions contained in the plan is variable as it is a living document and new actions will be added as they are identified from service reviews, peer reviews and any other source.
- 1.4.3 In areas of poor performance there are often instances where this is due to policies awaiting approval or information being needed from partners. In some cases it would be reasonable for the target date of the action to be extended.
- 1.5 Areas of strong performance
- 1.5.1 The vast majority of actions are either completed or on target to be completed within the timescale.
- 1.5.2 One of the key actions identified in the IdEA peer review was that the Council's priorities should be streamlined and used to inform strategies and policies as well as staff learning and development. An exercise has recently been undertaken to reduce the priorities to 3. Staff and residents were consulted on these priorities and they will be used to inform next year's staff learning and development programme.
- 1.5.3 Another area that was identified as part of the peer review was that complaints should be analysed for trends to enable the Council to learn from them. This work is now being undertaken by the Policy and Performance Team and is reported to CMT and to the Standards Committee.
- 1.5.4 The Waste and Recycling Strategy has been approved and implementation has begun. Various aspects of the strategy will be implemented over the next five years such as the food waste collection that is currently being implemented.
- 1.6 Areas of poor performance
- 1.6.1 **CIP 003.01 Create action plan of outstanding L&D issues to be implemented before reassessment.** This will be completed prior to the IIP reassessment in March 2011.
- 1.6.2 **CIP 010.01 Carry out assessments of key partnerships.** It has proved problematic getting responses from partners as many of them are going through significant structural and organisational change. This action has been escalated to the Director of Regeneration and Communities.
- 1.6.3 **CIP 011.01 Work with KCC to co-ordinate the effects of savings on inter-organisations.** This action has been started. The financial information from KCC has been considered but was judged to be

somewhat out of date. This information will therefore be updated and returned to the Kent Finance Officers meeting in March.

1.6.4 **CIP 011.02 Expand the consultation on the budget strategy and the MTFS to include the impact of the identification savings with partners.** Consultation with the voluntary sector and the LSP has proved successful. However, MKIP partners do not yet have a protocol for considering the impact that MBC savings would have on them. The Head of Finance will continue working with partners to agree a way forward.

1.7 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.7.1 Cabinet could decide not to produce a CIP or consider its progress but not considering progress against the plan could mean improvement work is not progressed. This would have a detrimental impact upon service delivery and the reputation of the Council.

1.8 Impact On Corporate Objectives

1.8.1 The CIP supports the Council in achieving its corporate objectives by identifying key areas of corporate improvement and identifying how these improvements will be delivered. Any additions are made in accordance with the Council's current Strategic Plan to ensure it is in line with the vision and priorities of the Council.

1.9 Risk Management

1.9.1 Actions in relation to risk management are reported through the CIP where appropriate. Risks related to particular actions will be set out in the Strategic Risk Register or, below that, in individual service plans.

1.9.2 There are also risks to the reputation and performance of the authority associated with not responding to inspection and ensuring that best practice identified in other councils is considered. The CIP provides a mechanism for driving improvement

1.10 Other Implications

1.10.1

- 1. Financial
- 2. Staffing
- 3. Legal
- 4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment

- 5. Environmental/Sustainable Development
- 6. Community Safety
- 7. Human Rights Act
- 8. Procurement
- 9. Asset Management

1.10.2 Officers identified in the plan will need to ensure that they keep their actions on target and that the Covalent monitoring and reporting system is updated accordingly.

1.11 Relevant Documents

1.11.1 Appendices

- Appendix A Corporate Improvement Plan

<u>IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?</u>			
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?			
.....			
This is a Key Decision because:			
.....			
Wards/Parishes affected:			
.....			

Appendix A Corporate Improvement Plan

Report Type: Scorecard Report
Report Author: Ellie Kershaw
Generated on: 11 February 2011







Ob	001 Developing a clear view of where partnership resources can be focused to improve service outcomes (LINKED TO AGS 2)
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 001.01	Resource Mapping exercise undertaken and presented to LSP board		31 Aug 2011	Sarah Robson	SQW have now provided the second phase of report. A workshop to review the findings is being held in March.
CIP 001.02	Decisions made by the LSP on the future allocation of resources		30 Apr 2011	Sarah Robson	


Ob	002 Monitoring effectiveness of counter fraud partnership with Tunbridge Wells
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 002.01	Provide the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services and the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee with an update on the operation of the counter fraud partnership		31 Aug 2010	Steve McGinnes	Following a request from the Audit Committee and further to discussion with the Overview and Scrutiny Manager, it was agreed that an update would be provided to the Audit Committee instead of Overview and Scrutiny. A presentation was made to the Committee on the 20.09.2010, with agreement for future updates to be provided annually.

	003 Addressing the outstanding learning and development issues from the IIP reassessment and equality impact assessments
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 003.01	Create action plan of outstanding L&D issues to be implemented before reassessment		31 Jan 2011	Claire Hayes	Reassessment for IIP is taking place in March 2011
CIP 003.02	Undertake child protection training		30 Apr 2010	Claire Hayes	
CIP 003.03	Include Transgender training on the new corporate training calendar		30 Jun 2011	Claire Hayes	Sessions added in quarterly for 2010/11


	004 Improve areas of weakness where Audit reports have shown a level of assurance lower than substantial one area remains outstanding since March 2009: Aspects of section 106 Agreements
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 004.01	Undertake six monthly follow-up review by Internal Audit on these areas to ensure recommendations have been implemented		30 Sep 2010	Brian Parsons	This is an ongoing process. All reports are followed-up after six months. Where action has not been taken, the Head of Service is made aware in a report, with a copy to the Director and the Chief Executive. If this occurs in an area where only limited control assurance was in place at the time of the original audit, the lack of action will be reported to a meeting of the Audit Committee.

	005 Further work is required to build on work currently undertaken by the Council with partners on delivering outcomes for the public.
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 005	Further work is required to build on work currently undertaken by		30 Sep 2010	Zena Cooke	The Local Children's Trust Board is now formally part of the LSP structure as one of the five "delivery" groups. This was the final action of

Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
	the Council with partners on delivering outcomes for the public.				the formal governance structure arrangements. The SCS refresh is on target to be completed by March 2011 and takes account of the County level priorities as well as Maidstone specific priorities. The resource mapping exercise results are being analysed and further work will be completed to identify where resources could be redirected and/or "pooled". The LSP work programme is progressing, with the event on Tackling Domestic Violence attended by almost 100 people identifying a range of actions for the partnership to progress. The 19 LSP funded community projects are progressing well and will be reporting on their performance to date in March.




	006 Develop and implement a Waste and Recycling Strategy
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 006.01	Research existing strategies, particularly amongst waste partnerships		30 Apr 2010	Jennifer Gosling	Existing strategies have been researched and reference visits to Southend on Sea and Tunbridge Wells have been undertaken to learn about different recycling strategies. Maidstone's Waste and Recycling Strategy has now been drafted and links with the existing Kent Waste Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy.
CIP 006.02	Develop a short strategy for the Cabinet Member for Environment to approve		30 Apr 2010	Jennifer Gosling	The Waste and Recycling Strategy 2010 - 2015 was approved on Friday 24th September 2010.
CIP 006.03	Implement Waste and Recycling Strategy		31 May 2010	Jennifer Gosling	The strategy was approved on 24th September 2010 and implementation has started on the new food waste collection service. The strategy will be implemented over the next 5 years.






Ob	007 Ensure that the finance section has the appropriate skill mix to meet the more challenging reporting requirements of IFRS.
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 007.01	Annual Training Programme of Seminars and Workshops		31 Mar 2010	Claire Hayes; Paul Riley	
CIP 007.02	Undertake Internal Development of team members through cross training		30 Jun 2010	Claire Hayes; Paul Riley	
CIP 007.03	Enhance team through filling vacancy		28 Feb 2010	Paul Riley	

Ob	008 Implement strategies for managing the expectations of consultees
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 008.01	Review of consultation handbook and toolkit carried out as part of communication strategy		31 Dec 2009	Roger Adley	Review was completed in December 2009 and the revised handbook and tool-kit has been rolled out to staff.
CIP 008.02	Present handbook and toolkit to members and officers		31 Mar 2010	Roger Adley	The revised consultation handbook and tool-kit have been rolled out. A presentation on the handbook has been given to section managers and was also undertaken with the staff forum.
CIP 008.03	Actions developed to manage the expectations of consultees		31 Jul 2010	Roger Adley; Angela Woodhouse	The consultation toolkit includes advice to ensure that this is considered at the onset.


Ob	009 Demonstrating improved service delivery and customer satisfaction from Council initiatives (e.g. Gateway)
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 009.01	Evaluate results from the 2009 mystery shopping exercise		30 Jun 2010	Sandra Marchant	The results from the 2009 Mystery Shopping programme have been analysed and a report was submitted to Corporate Management Team and agreed on 3 August 2010.
CIP 009.02	Undertake mystery shopping exercise and evaluate results		30 Jun 2011	Sandra Marchant	The 2010 Kent wide Mystery Shopping exercise is still underway with all the shops across each Authority completed. Results are being finalised and discussed between partners and then once the results have been submitted by everyone the final report for 2010 will be produced.
CIP 009.03	Benchmark performance of Contact team through KCSNG		31 Oct 2010	Sandra Marchant	Another Measurement and Benchmarking exercise was completed in November 2010 and results form across Kent will be available at the end of January. The KCSNG have agreed to continue to run the exercise on a quarterly basis.
CIP 009.04	Undertake benchmarking with the national one stop shop benchmarking group		28 Feb 2011	Sandra Marchant	Data for the annual National One Stop Shop (NOSS) benchmarking exercise was submitted in June 2010 for the year 2009 to 2010. The overall results have now been issued to members of the group submitting data.
CIP 009.05	Review customer care charter		30 Apr 2010	Sandra Marchant	A Customer Care Charter has been drawn up but still requires agreement from the Head of Communications and then reported to Management Team for final approval.

Ob	010 Ensuring evolving partnerships maintain principles of good governance
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 010.01	Carry out assessments of key partnerships		30 Apr 2010	Sarah Robson	An assessment of the key partnerships was undertaken as part of the review of the LSP Board membership. Further work is now being

Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
					done to review the number of multi-agency meetings attended by key partners to streamline activities and improve their effectiveness. The majority of key partners are going through significant structural and organisational change which may require a further review.
CIP 010.02	Review partnership protocol		30 Sep 2010	Sarah Robson	The partnership protocol has been completed and endorsed at Committee. The Community Partnerships Sharepoint site will be uploaded and promoted internally.



 011 The council considers and tracks with its significant partners the impact on users when making decisions on reducing costs.

Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 011.01	Work with KCC to co-ordinate the effects of savings on inter-organisations		31 Oct 2010	Paul Riley	Kent Finance Officers considered the documentation in January. Information needs updating and actions will come back to their next meeting in March
CIP 011.02	Expand the consultation on the budget strategy and the MTFS to include the impact of the identification savings with partners		31 Dec 2010	Paul Riley	Work with the voluntary sector and the LSP is effective and ongoing. MKIP and other shared service partners do not yet have a protocol for considering this.
CIP 011.03	Work with the LSP on the resource mapping project and feed into the MTFS		31 Dec 2010	Paul Riley	LSP resource mapping project on track, initial results received, further work progressing.


Ob	012 Progress and monitor action plans to improve satisfaction on those services where one in five people were dissatisfied with the service.
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 012.01	Assess the possible use of mosaic to raise satisfaction		30 Sep 2010	Georgia Hawkes	The 2008 Place survey results have been submitted for analysis using Mosaic Public sector and the results are expected shortly. This will give information on how different types of people answered the questions in the Place Survey, including satisfaction with specific services and overall satisfaction with the way the Council runs things. These results could then be used to try and influence people's perceptions of the Council and the services it provides. However, as central government has removed the requirement to undertake the Place Survey and the Council has taken a decision not to undertake a similar survey for the present, there is no way of measuring this and comparing with the original Place Survey results.
CIP 012.02	Continue to monitor the action plans and present reports to Cabinet		31 Oct 2010	Angela Woodhouse	Report went to Cabinet May 2010
CIP 012.03	Assess the appropriateness of the actions within action plans in relation to 2010 results		30 Jun 2011	Angela Woodhouse	The Place survey is no longer a requirement. Discussions are taking place about how to collect this information if it is deemed necessary.
CIP 012.04	Identify any patterns or trends following the completion of the second survey		30 Sep 2011	Angela Woodhouse	The Place survey is no longer a requirement. Discussions are taking place about how to collect this information if it is deemed necessary.

Ob 013 The authority has made a commitment to carbon reduction and has established a Climate Change Strategy. Ensure that the Strategy is successfully implemented over the next three years.

Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 013.01	To develop the Carbon Reduction Action Plan in conjunction with the Energy Saving Trust One-to-One Programme		30 Apr 2010	Jenny Hunt	A Climate Change Framework has now been drafted and will be taken through to CMT and Cabinet in the near future. After this, the Carbon Reduction Action Plan will be put in place which will hopefully be by April 2011.
CIP 013.02	To implement the actions of the Carbon Reduction Plan and report back progress and update the action plan on a yearly basis		30 Mar 2011	Jenny Hunt	

Ob 014 Seek technical advice when accounting for complex capital transactions, discuss proposed action with the external auditor early on so that the accounting treatment can be agreed prior to productions of draft financial statements


Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 014.01	Ensure that all future quarterly review meetings with Auditor include an agenda item on issues that may involve complex accounting transactions.		30 Mar 2011	Paul Riley	This has now been achieved

Ob 015 The Council should review asset valuations at each year-end considering both impairment and other material changes in asset values

Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 015.01	Request, as part of annual review of 20% of assets, an assessment		31 May 2010	Chris Finch; Paul Riley	complete

Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
	of material changes in all asset values.				


Ob 016 Once the Council has taken a decision to dispose of an asset this should be re-categorised from operational assets to non-operational assets, surplus for resale, and revalued to market valuation obtained prior to sale in accordance with the SORP



Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 016.01	Identify process in closedown procedure and formally reconcile actions with asset sales detailed in usable capital receipts / cabinet member decisions		31 May 2010	Paul Holland; Gill West	


Ob 017 Prime council tax records should be retained until completion of the annual audit, and otherwise in accordance with the Council's document retention policy.


Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 017.01	Set up share point site accessible to revenues team to hold records of VO balancing		28 Feb 2010	Steve McGinnes	An area has been created within the existing Revs and Bens team site to provide a full audit trail.


Ob 018 Promoting the role of the Audit Committee in ensuring action plans are implemented and contributing to risk identification


Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 018.01	Consideration given to a review being carried out across the four MKIP authorities of the audit committees.		30 Mar 2010	Brian Parsons	Review agreed by all four MKIP authorities in September 2010


Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 018.02	Commission the IDeA to carry out a review of the Council's Audit Committee The role of the Committee in ensuring action plans are implemented and risk identification will be considered as part of the review.		30 Jun 2010	Brian Parsons	The IDeA commissioned via proposal in August 2010
CIP 018.03	Present findings to the Audit Committee on the options for future development.		30 Jun 2010	Brian Parsons	The report arising from the LGID review was presented to the Audit Committee on the 17 January 2011. The Committee agreed to create an action plan and will meet informally to agree the detail to be included. The Plan will be endorsed at the next formal meeting of the Committee on 21 March 2011, and will be implemented over the coming months.


	019 Use customer and staff feedback to improve the way the Council delivers services
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 019.01	Hold focus groups to explore how people want to be engaged and develop a robust plan to deliver this		30 Apr 2011	Roger Adley	
CIP 019.02	Involve staff in the service planning process		04 Mar 2011	Angela Woodhouse	Staff events have been held to discuss the new priorities. New guidance and support has been issued to managers
CIP 019.03	Carry out consultation on the Strategic Plan		31 Jan 2011	Angela Woodhouse	Consultation carried out with staff and customers
CIP 019.04	Learn from complaints by spotting trends at first stage		31 Jan 2011	Ellie Kershaw	Complaints are analysed for their reasons and then reported to CMT and the Standards Committee

Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 019.05	Consider staff engagement as part of the Councils Communication Strategy		30 Apr 2011	Roger Adley	

	020 Determine the top priorities of the Council and ensure that plans, policies and strategies link to these
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 020.01	Define the Council's top three priorities and use these to determine the focus of the Council in terms of members, staff, finances and partnership working.		31 Jan 2011	Angela Woodhouse	
CIP 020.02	Develop a budget strategy action plan to show where efficiencies and savings will be delivered		31 Jan 2011	Paul Riley	

	021 Ensure equality issues are considered and addressed across the organisation
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Code	Title	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 021.01	All staff to undertake equalities training to ensure awareness of the new legislation		31 Mar 2011	Claire Hayes	

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

9 MARCH 2011

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Report prepared by Karen Luck

1. **FORWARD PLAN**

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To note the Forward Plan for the period 1 April 2011 – 31 July 2011.

1.2 Recommendation of the Leader of the Council

1.2.1 That the proposed Forward Plan for the period 1 April 2011 – 31 July 2011 be noted.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The Forward Plan is a way to ensure that members of the public have longer from the point at which they learn that a decision is coming up, until the time it is made, to encourage greater interaction between stakeholder and decision makers.

1.3.2 The Forward Plan is published monthly, to cover decisions starting on the first day of each month and is a rolling four month programme of decisions.

1.3.3 The current index to the proposed Forward Plan is attached as an Appendix to this report. However, please note that Officers have until 12 Noon on 16 March 2011 to submit further entries or make any amendments.

1.3.4 If Members wish to receive a complete copy of the Forward Plan it can be obtained from Karen Luck (01622) 602743 and from 18 March 2011 will be on public deposit in the following locations: The Gateway, Public Libraries and the maidstone.gov website.

1.4 Alternative Actions and why not recommended

1.4.1 The proposed Forward Plan includes key decisions as defined in the Constitution and the development of the budget and plans which form the policy framework. The entries have been made by the relevant managers who have the best idea of the issues likely to be coming up.

1.5 Impact of Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Forward Plan should help to realise on the core values set out in the Corporate Plan as follows:

"It (the Council) welcomes, encourages and values public participation in its activities and will inform, advise and listen carefully to people in developing its key strategies, policies and programmes".

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 There are no risk management implications in this report.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1	Financial	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Staffing	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Legal	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Equality Impact Needs Assessment	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Environmental/sustainable development	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Community safety	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Human Rights Act	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Risk Management	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Procurement	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Asset Management	<input type="checkbox"/>

1.8 Background Documents

None

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

This is a Key Decision because:

.....

Wards/Parishes affected:

.....

Index April 2011 – July 2011

Title	Decision Maker and Date of Decision
Climate Change Framework	Cabinet 13 April 2011
Carbon Management Plan	Cabinet 13 April 2011
Core Strategy 2006 – 2026: Public Consultation Draft	Cabinet 13 April 2011
Information Strategy 2011 - 2014	Cabinet 13 April 2011
Housing Strategy 2011 - 15	Cabinet 13 April 2011
Performance Plan 2011 - 14	Cabinet 18 May 2011
Annual Governance Statement	Cabinet 18 May 2011
Fees and Charges for Private Water Sampling 2011/2012	Cabinet Member for Environment April 2011