

AGENDA

LEISURE AND PROSPERITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING



Overview and Scrutiny

Date: Tuesday 28 September 2010

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors: Burton, Mrs Joy (Vice-Chairman),
Nelson-Gracie, Paine (Chairman),
Pickett, Mrs Smith and Thick

Page No.

1. **The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast**
2. **Apologies**
3. **Notification of Substitute Members**

Continued Over/:

Issued on 21 September 2010

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

4. Notification of Visiting Members

5. Disclosures by Members and Officers:

- a) Disclosures of interest
- b) Disclosures of lobbying
- c) Disclosures of whipping

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 27 July 2010. 1 - 11

8. URGENT ITEM: Call-In: Core Strategy Housing Targets and Distribution of Development: 12 - 60

Interview with:

- The Leader of the Council, Councillor Chris Garland;
- The Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Councillor Malcolm Greer; and
- The Chief Executive, Alison Broom.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE LEISURE AND PROSPERITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 27 JULY 2010

PRESENT: Councillor Paine (Chairman)
Councillors Burton, Mrs Joy, Nelson-Gracie, Pickett
and Mrs Smith

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence was received from Councillors

12. The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast

Resolved: That all items on the agenda be web cast.

13. Apologies

There were no apologies.

14. Notification of Substitute Members

There were no Substitute Members.

15. Notification of Visiting Members

It was noted that Councillor English was a visiting Member with an interest on all items on the agenda.

16. Disclosures by Members and Officers:

There were no disclosures.

17. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information

Resolved: That all items on the agenda be taken in public as proposed.

18. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 22 June 2010.

Resolved: That the minutes of the meeting held on 22 June 2010 be agreed as a correct record and duly signed by the Chairman.

19. High Street Regeneration Project:

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Greer, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Mr Paul Buchanan, the Director of Colin Buchanan and Mr John Foster, the Regeneration and Economic Development Manager to the meeting. Mr Foster emphasised that the improvements to the High Street

were being undertaken to ensure the right conditions were in place to enable economic development in the town centre. The ambition was to create a sense of place, with Maidstone being considered a town of high quality and a place people wanted to visit. The design of the high street had originated from a competition and sought to exhibit the buildings in the town centre. Officers had considered best practice of similar public realm projects across the country and had subsequently appointed the contractor at an early stage in the project to ensure any problems were addressed at an early stage.

The cost benefit analysis of the High Street Regeneration project had been commissioned to review what the improvements would mean to the Maidstone Borough. Mr Buchanan informed the Committee that he had sought to put a value on the intrinsic quality of town centres as this was often overlooked. He felt it was particularly important to ascertain a value for the quality of the public realm as it ultimately impacted on the property prices and economic development. He considered that a high quality attractive public realm was imperative in retaining existing and attracting new shoppers to an area. The amount of money spent in a town would thus increase and this would consequently drive rental values up. Mr Buchanan estimated a possible £700,000 increase per year in Maidstone. He recognised this could displace custom from one part of the town to another and therefore impact on rental values in other areas of the town had been incorporated into the cost benefit analysis.

Mr Buchanan advised the Committee that the private sector generally improved their own retail frontages to attract shoppers into their outlets as a consequence of improved public realm areas. Councillor Greer and Mr Foster had spoken to the businesses on the high street about the improvements to the public realm and the businesses had been receptive to paying for improvements to their own frontages once the work had been done. The Committee was disappointed that nothing had been put in writing to require the retailers to make these improvements and agreed that a clause be added to the Area Action Plan for the Town Centre so that any new planning applications be required to install and maintain appropriate retail frontages.

A number of Members were concerned about the potential negative impact of the removal of the temporary public urinals on the high street's environment and consequently on the public's perception of the town. Mr Foster informed the Committee that this had been considered and the impact of their removal on the environment from public urination in the high street was to be closely monitored. It had been agreed that the plumbing for the temporary urinal's would remain intact in case reinstatement was required.

The Committee queried what was being done to ensure that utility companies reinstated the new paving in the high street back to the same standard if any work was undertaken. Mr Foster informed Members that an agreement had been sought to ensure that any planned works were carried out by the utility companies prior to the laying of the new paving. This prevented utility companies from carrying out non-emergency work

for a set period of time. A standard shaped granite paving was being laid to ensure they were easy to take up and reinstate. An agreement was to be sought with the utility companies to ensure that any reinstatements met a defined standard. Furthermore, Councillor Greer informed the Committee that the Council was purchasing excess paving slabs for storage to allow for use in reinstatement work if required. The Committee agreed that a means of enforcing the reinstatement agreements with utility companies be sought. Councillor Greer informed the Committee that a sample of the granite paving was being laid to test resistance, the various coatings and the aesthetics. Furthermore, work had been undertaken to identify areas of low weight bearings likely to sink in order to prepare the ground to prevent this. The Committee agreed that a repair test be incorporated into the test to determine the viability of quality repairs and reinstatements.

A Member queried whether contingency plans had been put in place if the scheme went over budget or maintenance costs escalated. Mr Foster confirmed that costed high street plans with contingency budgets were being presented to Cabinet on 13 October 2010.

The Chairman thanked the witnesses for an informative presentation.

Resolved: That

- a) A clause be added to the Town Centre Area Action Plan to require any new planning applications to have installed, and maintain, appropriate retail frontages
- b) A means of enforcing the reinstatement agreements with utility companies be sought; and
- c) A repair test be incorporated into the sample patch test to ensure the practicality of quality repairs and reinstatements.

20. Cabinet Member for Regeneration: Plans and Priorities 2010/11.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor Greer, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration to the meeting to respond to questions regarding his priorities for the 2010/11 municipal year.

In response to a question, Councillor Greer informed the Committee that the number of small businesses in Maidstone had increased and that he hoped to encourage more new businesses into Maidstone. He noted his ambition to attract more businesses with higher paid jobs to Maidstone and to raise resident's skill levels and consequently earning potential. The Committee emphasised the importance of quality design in attracting businesses to Maidstone. Furthermore, the Committee agreed that there was a requirement for further and higher education in Maidstone to raise skill levels and to attract businesses to the Borough. Members felt that the Council could do more to establish higher and further education in the Borough, noting that there was a key relationship between further and higher education and economic development.

The Committee noted Councillor Greer's priority to make further use of the river to boost Maidstone's economy and quality of life for residents. He emphasised his ambition to integrate the river with the High Street and to make the toll path useable. His vision up to 2030 included more restaurants along the river front. A Member noted the work of the Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 'making the most of the river'. As part of this review, the Committee had identified the requirement for maps depicting the ownership of the land along the river to help the Council realise the full potential of the river in Maidstone. Members noted there had been difficulties in identifying land ownership and the Committee agreed that it be further explored in order to aid the development of the river.

Members considered the diversity of Maidstone given its urban and rural economy and stressed the requirement for a holistic economic development strategy for the whole borough. The Committee felt that there was often a preoccupation with the regeneration of the town and that the rural economy had often been overlooked. Members agreed that greater priority should be given to the diversification of the rural economy. Furthermore, Members noted the success of a number of rural developments in Marden and Staplehurst. The Committee agreed that successful developments in rural areas be showcased and new developments be further encouraged. Members also agreed that developers who had developed in other borough's rural areas be encouraged to develop in Maidstone.

Councillor Greer highlighted his priority to deliver enough of the right type of new homes. He felt there was a need to be more proactive in sustainable developments, such as facilitating rain water collection and making the design of homes more adaptable to provide for families through to their old age.

The Committee thanked Councillor Greer for an informative presentation and requested a copy of the costings to date of the High Street Regeneration project and early sight of the High Street Regeneration Financials report being produced for Cabinet on 13 October 2010.

Resolved: That the Cabinet Member for Regeneration:

- a) Place greater emphasis on both further and higher education;
- b) Determines the ownership of the land along the river to aid its development and maintenance;
- c) Produces a holistic economic development strategy for the whole borough;
- d) Give greater priority to the diversification of the rural economy;
- e) Showcase and encourage developments in rural areas and encourage developers who have developed in other rural areas;
- f) Circulates costings to date of the High Street Regeneration project to the Committee and provides an early view of Cabinet's High Street Regeneration Financials report.

21. Amendment to Order of Business.

Resolved: That Agenda items 10, 'Value of Leisure and Culture Review' and 11, 'Value of Leisure and Culture Review Scoping Document' be taken together.

22. Value of Leisure and Culture Review:

The Chairman welcomed the Head of Change and Scrutiny, Angela Woodhouse to the meeting to discuss the Committee's Value of Leisure and Culture review. She explained to the Committee that a Leisure and Culture Strategy was being produced following an IDEA (now Local Government Improvement and Development) productivity review. An officer group was working on the strategy and the Committee had been asked and had subsequently agreed to contribute to this piece of work by reviewing the value of leisure and culture. Mrs Woodhouse emphasised the importance of understanding the intrinsic value of leisure and culture and considering what Maidstone would be like without each of its leisure and culture provisions. She also noted that the Council's directorates had recently been restructured and had placed the culture portfolio under one directorate.

The Committee agreed the Value and Leisure Culture review's scoping document as set out in the agenda.

Resolved: That the scoping document for the Value of Leisure and Culture Review be agreed.

23. Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture: Written Plans and Priorities for 2010/11.

The Committee considered the Cabinet Member for Leisure and Culture's vision statement for 2010/11. The Committee felt it was important that in future Cabinet Members be requested to submit written vision statements and be asked to attend the meeting to respond to any questions.

Members emphasised the importance of considering and improving all the Council's parks and green spaces and not to just consider Mote Park. Furthermore, the Committee also agreed to refer the following requests for clarification to the Environment and Transportation Committee for consideration:

- Clarification of what the potential for the newly improved crematorium was; and
- Clarification of the usage of allotments: Did this include turning them into another public space.

Resolved: That

- a) Cabinet Members submit written vision statements and attend the relevant scrutiny meetings to respond to any questions; and
- b) The Environment and Transportation Committee seek clarification with regard to:

- i. What the potential for the newly improved crematorium was; and
- ii. The usage of allotments and whether this included turning them into another public space.

24. Future Work Programme and the Forward Plan of Key Decisions.

The Committee considered its future work programme and noted its constitutional role in considering the Core Strategy documents. The Overview and Scrutiny Officer, Mrs Bell, highlighted that a Core Strategy workshop had been arranged for all Members on 23 August 2010 and encouraged the Committee to attend given its role. Furthermore she advised the Committee that two extraordinary meetings were being arranged to consider Core Strategy documents. The Committee agreed to hold an extraordinary meeting on 14 September 2010 to consider the Housing Targets and Distribution of Development and the Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Target reports in time to make recommendations to Cabinet. Mrs Bell also informed the Committee that officers had requested an extraordinary meeting on 9 November 2010 to consider the Complete Core Strategy for public consultation. Members raised concern about dates being set by other officers without consulting them and asked Mrs Bell to rearrange this meeting as a number of Members could not attend.

Mrs Bell circulated a reference from the Review of Past Reports Working Group, attached at Appendix A. The Committee agreed to consider the reference and to contact her if they wished to add any of the items to its work programme.

Resolved: That

- a) An extraordinary meeting of the Committee be held on 14 September 2010 to consider the Housing Targets and Distribution of Development and the Gypsy and Traveller Pitch Target reports to make recommendations to Cabinet;
- b) The Overview and Scrutiny Officer rearrange the proposed meeting on 9 November 2010; and
- c) Members contact the Overview and Scrutiny Officer if they wished to add any of the items suggested in the reference from the Review of Past Reports to the work programme.

25. Duration of the Meeting.

6.30pm to 8.50pm.

Maidstone Borough Council

Leisure and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 27 July 2010

Reference from the Review of Past Reports Overview and Scrutiny Working Group

1. Introduction

- 1.1 In 2007-08, Overview and Scrutiny Members agreed that a review needed to be carried out analysing the impact of those reports completed since Overview and Scrutiny's inception in 2001. This report considered all the reports produced from 2001 to 2008 to identify if any further action were required as well as the key successes.
- 1.2 Two Councillors from each Overview and Scrutiny Committee were tasked with investigating whether those reports relevant to their Committee could be formally closed (i.e. all approved recommendations had been implemented), or whether some recommendations still needed following up. Members were also seeking to identify key outcomes from the reports.
- 1.3 In 2009 a number of the completed reviews were signed off whilst some remained live issues that required further investigation. The working group agreed which reviews needed to be progressed and/or followed up and which should remain as watching briefs with updates to scrutiny committees as and when they are required.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The working group recommends the following actions for the reports reviewed relevant to the Leisure and Prosperity OSC's remit:

That the following topics be put forward to Committees in 2010-11 for follow-up and review:

- Homelessness and rough sleeping
- Listed Buildings
- Image of Maidstone Town Centre (in consultation with the Environment and Transportation Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

That the relevant scrutiny committees be asked to maintain a watching brief on:

- Housing Needs
- Lockmeadow Market
- Olympics
- Tourism

3. Relevant Extracts from the Review of Past Reports

3.1 Reviews for Follow Up and Review

3.1.1 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping

"Summary

Homelessness is all too often an invisible problem; an issue where people and organisations – including local authorities – prefer to bury their heads in the sand. We, as Councillors and residents of the Borough should be proud of the way that the Housing Department and its partner agencies have sought to tackle the problem of homelessness and rough sleeping. We are particularly pleased about the Council's success in attracting funding for the proposed new hostel in Knightrider Street.

At the same time, we believe that our report has raised a number of legitimate questions about the future of the services provided by the Council in the wake of housing transfer and about the preparedness of the Housing Department to deal with the requirements of the new Homelessness Act. We look forward to receiving the response of the Cabinet Member to our recommendations."¹

Outcomes

The Cabinet Member for Housing welcomed the Committee's report and shared the Committee's concern about the use of bed and breakfast accommodation to house the homeless. Schemes to help reduce the numbers of homeless people in the Borough have now been developed and are being implemented. A homelessness partnership scheme with English Churches Housing Group will provide 30 direct access homes for single homeless people, and will include a Day Centre to be managed by Maidstone Christian Care and 6 furnished family units for the Council to use to provide emergency accommodation. A Homelessness Review was due to be completed by the Council in early spring 2003 to provide the base data to formulate Council policy.

Action Required: We have still not identified the extent of homelessness and rough sleeping in the Borough, this could be examined by the Regeneration and Sustainable communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee next year."

3.1.2 Listed Buildings

"The majority of recommendations were for Kent County Council but needs to be followed up."

3.1.3 Image of Maidstone Town Centre

"Summary

This review looked at the image of Maidstone's town centre and made a number of recommendations for improvement. The major

¹ As taken from the conclusion of the Homelessness and Rough Sleepers report

recommendation concerning the provision of public toilets was taken forward by the Environment and Leisure OSC as part of its work programme in 2008-09. The other major issues raised were congestion and displaying artwork in the town centre.

Outcomes

Concern was expressed regarding public toilets in the town centre since the review ELOSC has reviewed public conveniences in detail resulting in substantial savings and a new community toilet scheme has been introduced.

Action required: A report was promised in early 2009 together with 6 monthly updates. The next Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny committee should ask for a report and update covering mitigation of traffic congestion, the Southern Relief Road, traffic plans, and other related issues, as well as following up other areas from the report.

Please note that the terms of reference of this review incorporate the remits of both the Environment and Transportation OSC and the Leisure and Prosperity OSC and the summary above therefore largely relates to topics within the E&T remit.

3.2 Reviews for Watching Briefs

3.2.1 Housing Need

"Summary

The terms of reference for the inquiry focussed on identifying the current and projected need for housing – Council owned and privately owned, rented and owner-occupied – in the Borough. We were then keen to establish the types of property for which supply does not meet demand and to examine whether need for a given type of property differs depending on the area concerned. We then set about gathering evidence as to the ways in which housing need is addressed by both the Council and the private sector."²

Outcomes

Most of the recommendations made have now been incorporated into the new Housing Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy.

Action Required: Housing issues remain relevant and Regeneration and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee should maintain a watching brief on the effects and outcomes from the related policies.

3.2.2 Lockmeadow Market

"Summary

² As taken from the introduction to Housing Need Report, 2003-04

The Regeneration and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review aimed to assess the economic impact of Lockmeadow Market and establish ways in which the Market can be reinvigorated and its appeal widened. Significant issues were felt to exist in the area of marketing, with limited knowledge (among both residents and visitors) of the Market, its opening days and its location all causing concern amongst Members. Members felt strongly that increased investment in the Market, particularly in advertising, was vital if the Market was to retain its place in Maidstone.

Outcomes

All the recommendations were agreed by the Cabinet Member with the exception of an increased marketing budget for the market. Key achievements include an extended opening time until 2.30pm and re-branding of the market. There are a number of outstanding actions which should be followed up including increased signage between the town centre and the market and the link with Town Centre Management.

Action required: Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee continue to receive updates until outstanding recommendations are implemented.

3.2.3 Olympics 2012 Working Group

"Summary

This review considered how the Borough was placed to take advantage of the Olympic Games 2012. The report considered how to improve the support given to local sports men and women as well as holding annual Olympics events.

Outcomes

The working group supported the development of a new multi-sport facility, as a result discussions were held with the Sport Maidstone consortium and potential sites were being discussed for inclusion in the LDF Core Strategy work. It was also agreed that the Council would consider holding an annual sporting event and that the provision of free or low-cost sport taster events would be explored. A link to the London 2012 volunteering site has been put on the Council's website. A Kent database for volunteers has been created. Business sponsorship of Olympians was being progressed in 2008.

Action required: A number of recommendations remain under progress and an update should be given to ELOSC so that they can identify appropriate action to ensure recommendations are achieved.

3.2.4 Tourism

"Summary

The Committee examined:

- The nature of tourism in the Maidstone Borough;

- Existing strategies and resources for marketing tourist attractions in the Borough;
- The provision of tourist information in the Borough; and
- Proposals to improve the quality and quantity of tourism in the Borough

Outcomes

Following the review a detailed tourism business plan is now in place, and 24 hour tourist information is available via maps and TIC boards.

Action required: the review can be signed-off but the issue of the location of the TIC remains a live issue.

Agenda Item 8

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

LEISURE AND PROSPERITY OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

28 SEPTEMBER 2010

REPORT OF HEAD OF CHANGE AND SCRUTINY

Report prepared by Esther Bell

1. Call-In: Core Strategy Housing Targets and Distribution of Development

1.1 Recommendation of the Head of Change and Scrutiny

1.1.1 The reasons for calling-in the Cabinet's decision are stated as:

"The tone and degree of pre-determination apparent within the officer report is counter-productive to the spatial planning process, in that it may well be used in evidence against the council at examination by the Inspector.

The testing of the 11,000 housing figure bestows an unwarranted dignity onto a number with no rigorous under-pinning by research. The 8,200 figure was recommended and justified by research within the KCC structure plan and the 10,080 figure was recommended by MBC for Growth Point funding. The 11,000 figure has no empirical under-pinning – other than being contested actively by MBC in relation to the now defunct South East Plan. In fact if the South East Plan figure is to be used despite the arguments against it during consultation it should at least be accurate at 11,080.

The Local Development Document Advisory Group and Leisure and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee recommendations to jettison the strategic development area aka South East Extension must be respected.

Back bench members understand that development on a scale of 5000 to 6000 properties plus commercial and economic infrastructure will inevitably swamp existing communities and destroy historic countryside and biodiversity to the South East of the town. Further, inadequate transportation links and other infrastructure to the South East of the town will cause unacceptable strain upon established communities. Regeneration and renewal must be at the very centre of spatial planning in Maidstone Borough if an economic and social renaissance is to be delivered.

The spatial direction of neglect currently being pursued will condemn large tracts of our borough to inevitable decline."

- 1.1.2 The Committee is recommended to consider the decision of the Cabinet against the above reasons.
- 1.1.3 Having considered the call-in the Committee has three options for action with regard to the Cabinet's decision:
 - i. **Take no action** – the decision will be implemented as taken by the Cabinet on 15 September 2010.
 - ii. **Refer to the Cabinet**– the comments of the Committee will be referred to the Cabinet for reconsideration of the decision within five working days, after which a final decision will be made.
 - iii. **Refer to Council** – the comments of the Committee and decision of the Cabinet will be referred to Council. If Council does not object to Cabinet's decision it will be implemented. If Council does object, it does not have power to make a decision unless the Cabinet's decision is against the policy framework or contrary to or inconsistent with the budget. Unless that is the case, Council will refer its comments back to the Cabinet for reconsideration of the decision within five working days, after which a final decision will be made.
- 1.1.4 Councillors may also choose to take no action on the decision itself (i.e. allowing it to be implemented as taken) but request further information or clarification on issues raised during the call-in. This information must be provided within one month, as is the case with ordinary requests and recommendations from Overview and Scrutiny.
- 1.2 Reason for Urgency
 - 1.2.1 Call-ins of Cabinet decisions must be heard within ten working days of the expiry of the call-in period. The completed call-in form was received by the Head of Change and Scrutiny on 20 September 2010 and the call-in period expires on 24 September 2010. The Chair of the Leisure and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Committee has agreed to take the call-in at the scheduled meeting of the Committee on 28 September 2010.
- 1.3 Background
 - 1.3.1 Councillors Fran Wilson and Tony Harwood have called-in the decision of the Cabinet with regard to the Core Strategy Housing Targets and Distribution of Development.

1.3.2 In order to assist Members in their consideration of this issue the following documents have been attached to this agenda:

Document
Call-in Form
<i>Report for Decision:</i> Core Strategy Housing Targets and Distribution of Development
<i>Record of Decision of the Cabinet:</i> Core Strategy Housing Targets and Distribution of Development

1.3.3 The Leader of the Council, Councillor Garland, the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Councillor Greer and the Chief Executive, Alison Broom will be in attendance at the meeting for interview.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 None - there are only three actions the Committee can take in response to a call-in as set out at 1.1.3.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Options 2 and 3 (subject to further assessment) appear to best reflect the spatial elements of the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy, the Strategic Plan and the Economic Development Strategy.

To: Head of Change and Scrutiny

CALL IN FORM

I would like to call in the decision as detailed below:

Decision making body or individual

Cabinet

Decision made

1. That the three options 1-3, as outlined in sections 1.3 E and F of the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment, be agreed as the basis for the further more detailed testing outlined in the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment, without any preconceptions, in order to identify the most suitable housing target for the borough.

2. That all of the options plan for the balance of housing necessary after the existing development pipeline of 5,800 dwellings is completed, to achieve total housing target figures of:-

Option 1 – 8,200 dwellings;

Option 2 – 10,080 dwellings; and

Option 3 – 11,000 dwellings

The spatial distribution that needs to be objectively considered and tested for each option should be a dispersal model and a strategic development area.

3. That the methodology and approach to testing each of the housing options should be that outlined in Diagram A and Section 1.3 of the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment be endorsed with the addition of the specific amendments to Appendix A of the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment as highlighted by the Leisure and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Committee, namely

- The diagram of methodology and approach be reformatted to depict priorities, such as by using a pyramid shape;
- The environmental capacity and land availability be listed separately in the diagram to ensure that environmental capacity was not overlooked;
- The Local Development Document Advisory Group's spatial planning exercise be included in the diagram;
- A broader geographical context be considered to include Maidstone's relationship with travel to work areas;
- Less emphasis be placed on historical evidence, more emphasis given to infrastructure and place shaping, including an emphasis on regeneration; and
- Higher and lower density dispersal patterns be applied to all three options.

4. That further work is undertaken on the weighting of the various elements; particular attention being paid to the economic and environmental factors, but considered within the context of the need for, and likelihood of, supporting housing and transportation infrastructure.

5. That any option considered should have an emphasis on incentivising regeneration and renewal.
6. That a further report be presented to the Cabinet on 10 November 2010.

Date decision made

15th September 2010

Reason for calling in the decision

The tone and degree of pre-determination apparent within the officer report is counter-productive to the spatial planning process, in that it may well be used in evidence against the council at examination by the Inspector.

The testing of the 11,000 housing figure bestows an unwarranted dignity onto a number with no rigorous under-pinning by research. The 8,200 figure was recommended and justified by research within the KCC structure plan and the 10,080 figure was recommended by MBC for Growth Point funding. The 11,000 figure has no empirical under-pinning – other than being contested actively by MBC in relation to the now defunct South East Plan. In fact if the South East Plan figure is to be used despite the arguments against it during consultation it should at least be accurate at 11,080.

The Local Development Document Advisory Group and Leisure and Prosperity Scrutiny Committee recommendations to jettison the strategic development area aka South East Extension must be respected. Back bench members understand that development on a scale of 5000 to 6000 properties plus commercial and economic infrastructure will inevitably swamp existing communities and destroy historic countryside and biodiversity to the South East of the town. Further, inadequate transportation links and other infrastructure to the South East of the town will cause unacceptable strain upon established communities. Regeneration and renewal must be at the very centre of spatial planning in Maidstone Borough if an economic and social renaissance is to be delivered.

The spatial direction of neglect currently being pursued will condemn large tracts of our borough to inevitable decline.

Desired Outcome

The officer report should be re-drafted as a balanced evidence under-pinned document. The existing report must be withdrawn.

Meaningful data on population growth dynamics in the Borough informed by realistic assumptions must be utilised by this local authority to underpin spatial planning – current ‘predict and provide’ theory will condemn residents to a poor quality of life and the Borough to unsustainable urban sprawl.

Detailed testing should be used upon the housing figures of 8,200 and 10,080 units.

The Strategic Development Area aka South East Extension must be dropped at this stage and replaced with a clear instruction to pursue a dispersal pattern of development.

Regeneration and renewal must be explicitly and energetically championed and pursued by Maidstone Borough Council.

Rigorous Planning must inform the spatial growth configuration for the Borough. We have no confidence in the current approach which is entirely led by developer/landowner aspirations as apparent within the SHLAA document and Strategic Development Area/South East Extension proposals. We must have the courage to shape the future pattern of growth within our Borough to deliver our long-held social and economic aspirations, grasping the opportunity offered by the Conservative/ Liberal Democrat coalition in Westminster. We must actively engage with landowners in areas where we may decide growth is to be encouraged due to existing infrastructure and existing land-uses rather than continuing with our current reactive stance.

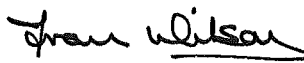
Desired Witnesses

Cllr. Christopher Garland
Cllr. Malcolm Greer
Alison Broom

Members calling in decision

Signed

1. Cllr. Fran Wilson

1. 

2. Cllr. Tony Harwood

2. 

Overview and Scrutiny Committee responsible for examining this decision

.Leisure and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Committee

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

15 SEPTEMBER 2010

REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHANGE, PLANNING AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Report prepared by Michael Thornton & Sue Whiteside

1. CORE STRATEGY HOUSING TARGETS AND DISTRIBUTION OF DEVELOPMENT

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 The Local Development Document Advisory Group (LDDAG) has considered successive drafts of the Core Strategy, but has yet to reconsider a housing target for the Core Strategy. This report addresses the setting of this target; a similar report to this has been considered by LDDAG and Prosperity and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee and their comments will be available at the meeting as references.

1.1.2 This report: (a) outlines a methodology and considerations in the setting of a housing provision target and the implications of the target on the strategy for the spatial distribution of development; (b) seeks endorsement of this approach; and (c) seeks agreement to shortlisted key options to be the subject of further detailed consideration. A further report to LDDAG on 25 October will further advise over the final recommendations to be made to Cabinet in November.

1.2 Recommendation of Director of Change, Planning and the Environment

1.2.1 That the Cabinet consider the references from the Local Development Document Advisory Group (13 September 2010) and the Leisure & Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Committee (14 September 2010).

1.2.2 That Cabinet agree:

- a) The methodology and approach to target setting outlined in diagram Appendix A and section 1.3 of this report be endorsed, together with any comments or amendments the Cabinet agree

- b) That the three Options 1-3 outlined in sections 1.3 E and F, be agreed as the basis for the further more detailed testing outlined in the report in order to identify the most suitable housing target for the borough. All of the options plan for the balance of housing necessary after the existing development pipeline of 5,800 dwellings is completed, to achieve total housing target figures of: Option 1 - 8,200 dwellings, Option 2 - 10,080 dwellings, and Option 3 - 11,000 dwellings. Options 1 and 2 would distribute the remainder development in a disperse pattern, Option 3 would focus 2,500 - 3,500 dwellings into a single strategic development area with the remainder dispersed. All three options are assessed on the basis of housing densities averaging 45 dwellings to the hectare.
- c) That the LDDAG be advised of the decisions of Cabinet, and that Cabinet request that the LDDAG consider their final recommendations to Cabinet to enable Cabinet to agree in November a housing target and distribution strategy, as the basis of the draft Core Strategy for public consultation.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

The evolution of the Core Strategy to date

- 1.3.1 The LDF Core Strategy has been in preparation over a considerable period of time; extensive evidence has been gathered and public consultation conducted and these matters thoroughly considered by the Advisory Group. An 'issues and options' public consultation in 2006 was followed by the preparation of and public consultation upon, a 'preferred options' document in early 2007. Further development of the draft plan was then halted later that year until August 2009 whilst the Council determined the representation made to the Core Strategy and the planning application submitted for the Kent International Gateway.
- 1.3.2 Meantime the Council bid for and was awarded Growth Point status with the requirement for the LDF Core Strategy to provide for a rate of development equivalent to 10,080 dwellings over the plan period. The Council also adopted various other relevant strategies including the Sustainable Community Strategy and Economic Development Strategy, all consistent with this and with which, the Core Strategy should be prepared with regard to. Subsequently the Regional Strategy (South East Plan) was published by Government in 2008 with a Maidstone Borough housing target of 11,080 additional dwellings over the plan period 2006-26.
- 1.3.3 However, as reported at the 26 July meeting of LDDAG, on 6 July 2010 the new Government revoked the Regional Strategies and advised

local authorities to proceed with preparing LDF Core Strategies on the basis of their own local determination of suitable housing targets.

- 1.3.4 Since August 2009 much of the evidence base on which the draft plan has been prepared has been updated or published, much of it underpinned by the need to achieve a housing target of 11,080 additional dwellings. Members have had briefings on much of this evidence and this contributed directly to the successive drafts of the plan considered by LDDAG over the last 5-6 months. In February, June and July the content of the plan, the 'spatial vision', 'spatial objectives' and 'core policies' were all considered. However, LDDAG have yet to reconsider the housing target figure and consequential effects on spatial distribution in the light of the revocation of the Regional Strategy.

Opportunity to set a district housing target

- 1.3.5 Setting of the housing target must be done on the basis of clear and sound evidence that will withstand scrutiny at independent examination into the Core Strategy. It is important that the target forms an integral part of the plan strategy and is not considered in isolation from the Vision and Objectives that the plan seeks to achieve. For instance the right balance must be struck between housing and employment targets, the spatial distribution strategy must be capable of delivering these targets and the target must be sufficiently ambitious to deliver the aspirations of the vision and objectives of the draft plan. In the event of significant change to the target these and other aspects of the plan may need to be revised significantly too.
- 1.3.6 Previously, housing targets were primarily determined at a strategic level, principally by Counties and other first tier authorities engaging with the regional planning body and in turn, the regional body with government; individual Boroughs and other second tier authorities had relatively little input to methodology and techniques of population, household and economic forecasting nor the national and regional scale policy debates that resulted, other than making representations alongside all other interest groups on the output figures. Districts such as Maidstone have not previously been empowered to determine their own housing targets and Government advice, best practice and regulations do not yet exist to indicate how this should be done. The Council now faces both a great challenge and opportunity to determine its own target in a robust manner.

Methodology for setting a housing target

- 1.3.7 While all local planning authorities in England have this same opportunity few have to act as quickly as Maidstone, which has a pressing need to update the saved Local Plan policies and which was

about to publish a draft Core Strategy based on the Regional Strategy just as it was revoked. Officers have been liaising with colleagues across Kent and beyond to 'compare notes' and method and are working with KCC research and intelligence group who have expertise in population and economic projections to develop an approach.

1.3.8 An overview of the approach adopted is represented by a diagram illustrating an iterative evidence based approach to determining housing targets - attached as **Appendix A**. Each aspect is explained in more detail in the headed sections A – K below.

1.3.9 It is clear that Members require extensive sound evidence to inform their decision making around all the realistic options available; not all aspects of this have been completed in the time available so far. Some verbal update on the ongoing work will be possible at the meeting, but whilst a clear picture of the likely key options for decision is emerging and confidently informs this report, it is not possible in certain respects, to make a firm recommendation at this time. Where this is the case a clear note is made. The recommendations at 1.2 above seek endorsement of the approach adopted and the agreement of key emerging options as the basis for more detailed consideration before final recommendations to Cabinet are made.

1.3.10 The explanations below refer to the draft 'spatial vision' and 'spatial objectives' for the draft Core Strategy previously considered by the Advisory Group, as well as to some of the background evidence that that has been reported previously.

1.3.11 To reiterate, it is vital that the options for the housing target figure and consequential effects for the spatial distribution strategy are not considered in isolation but as an integral part of the vision and objective the plan is seeking to achieve. To assist Members, an extract of the vision and objectives of the draft Core Strategy are attached as **Appendix B**.

Methodology and considerations

A. Meeting population and housing need

1.3.12 Previously, projections of the change in population and households, and therefore the need for more dwellings were determined at strategic level, providing district level targets of additional dwelling numbers.

1.3.13 Projections of change in population and household numbers are anchored on the 2001 Census with precise projection forecasts made on the basis of broad trend based or policy based assumptions about future behaviours; thus wide variations between different projections

of apparently precise figures are not uncommon. Concerns over the veracity of previous projections has led to joint work with KCC research and intelligence team to:(a) review previous trends in population and housing growth in Maidstone and the previous projections made to identify the most accurate 'control' point for making new projections; (b) to prepare a range of projections using different trend based assumptions of net migration; and to compare these with (c) alternative population projections assuming 10,000 or 11,000 additional dwellings are built. Comparison of these projections will help identify the level of additional dwelling targets required. Initial results should be available for verbal report at the meeting and will be analysed before the meeting of 25 October.

- 1.3.14 The dwellings requirement figure indicated by these projections does not necessarily determine the target but can be adjusted to achieve policy objectives or otherwise relate with the other factors A-K indicated in the diagram at **Appendix A**.
- 1.3.15 The Strategic Housing Market Assessment published in March 2010 considered the need for additional affordable and market housing, the types of housing needed and stock condition. It identified a need for 1,081 affordable homes per annum. The Assessment suggested that 38% of all housing built over the whole of the plan period (using a target of 11,080 dwellings) represented a balanced market option to meet need. Clearly, if the housing target is reduced then less affordable housing will be built or if a higher target is set, outstanding housing need might be addressed more quickly.
- 1.3.16 The policy response to the needs evidenced in the SHMA will also influence the provision of the right size and type of dwellings in all sectors of the housing market. A comprehensive approach is required, including in the affordable stock the requirement for: 76% social rent/24% intermediate; 45% 1-2 bedroom/55% 3-4 bedroom.
- 1.3.17 Local needs housing in rural areas is an important aspiration in meeting housing need and this influences decisions on the spatial distribution of housing made in the Core Strategy.
- 1.3.18 Underneath the 1,081pa figure, the SHMA also identifies different groups of need: those in the private rented sector who are willing and able to pay more than 25% of their income on housing (280pa); and those in private rented housing on local housing benefit support (460pa). (It is not sustainable and is poor value for public money for large numbers of households to be in private rented housing on housing benefit.) The remainder of 341pa are in acute housing need. The effects of insufficient housing are various; rising numbers on housing revenue support, homelessness, repossessions, various health

and wellbeing effects, and poor cost effectiveness of measures taken in response.

1.3.19 More widely, the Office of National Statistics (ONS) estimates national population growth to be around 65 million by 2020 with almost 12 million below 30 years of age. Many of these will be first time buyers squeezed by lack of mortgage credit and lack of housing supply – nationally a housing market structural imbalance. Furthermore, the poor quality of some of the housing stock requires further replacement dwellings to be built although these will not be net dwelling additions.

1.3.20 The Core Strategy Spatial Vision and Spatial Objectives considered previously (extract included at **Appendix B**) stress the need for adequate number and mix of housing (para 4.13 and 4.18 k). However, the council's aspirations to meet housing need also need to be balanced with competing aspirations, including for providing strategic and local infrastructure from new development and safeguarding environment.

B. Policy aspirations and drivers for prosperity

1.3.21 There are a number of council strategy aspirations for improving the economy and prosperity of the borough that can be delivered through the LDF and in particular the Core Strategy. These help form the context for setting the strategy for development and can indicate a policy driven case for adjusting the housing need target indicated by population change as above. The council's prosperity agenda aims to:

- Achieve a step change in prosperity, and to ensure Maidstone establishes a role that complements rather than competes with the growth areas in Kent Thameside, Ashford and East Kent
- Redress an imbalance in employment growth in that past job creation rates in Maidstone which are below south east growth rates.
- Introduce a quantitative and qualitative step change in local employment, including by the creation of local higher skilled jobs opportunities, to half out-commuting from some 38%
- Maintain and enhance Maidstone's role as the County town and premier shopping centre
- Regeneration of areas of deprivation and sites in the town centre
- Provision of integrated development of employment and housing with sustainable infrastructure for place shaping and to attract investment into the borough.

- Key elements of the strategy include – shifting the balance of local employment from non-B Class shops and services and B8 warehousing towards higher skilled B1 and some B2 Class uses; developing strong sector specialism, promotion of new further and higher education facilities, investment in transport access, and ensuring a suitable supply of sites to support this.
- 1.3.22 Clearly, economic prosperity is not increased simply by increasing population / resident workforce supply and a range of measures are required to increase demand for local employment. The jobs target is based on a Gross Value Added growth rate rather than dwellings or labour supply. However, a higher housing target will increase labour supply and will increase local demand for goods and services. In general terms, inadequate labour supply can be a major constraining factor to economic growth. Further work is in hand to assess past performance compared to other factors.
- 1.3.23 Economic prosperity and growth underpins the demand for housing through the impact on household incomes and migration. Similarly, the economy affects household formation and housing demand. The gap between local wages and house prices is clearly of concern to residents; overall a good housing balance supports long term economic growth prospects.
- 1.3.24 Literature reviews confirm that an area's offer of good housing locations (and a mix of relevant facilities) will attract higher and intermediate social economic groups which are vital to developing/maintaining a robust resident labour supply and therefore improving the prosperity of the local economy.
- 1.3.25 The Spatial Vision stresses the aspiration of sustainable economic growth and regeneration, strengthening the boroughs retail and leisure offers, creation of high quality employment and regeneration and encouraging a wide range of new development including shops and businesses (see **Appendix B**).
- 1.3.26 The overall aspiration of the Economic Development Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy is for 10,000 additional jobs. Demographic patterns mean that 10,000 additional dwellings would produce less than 10,000 additions to the workforce so the achievement of this target will also need a significant increase in inward commuting for work and a significant decrease in outward commuting, however, the contribution of the growth in the resident employee workforce will be a significant factor.
- 1.3.27 With the Regional Strategy evidence base and a target of 11,080 dwellings this aspiration appeared achievable. Detailed ongoing work

with the KCC research and intelligence unit will refine new estimates of resident workforce growth associated with differing options for dwelling growth levels, and help indicate the realism of the policy aspiration to achieve 10,000 new jobs and the other measures necessary to achieve this or any future revision to this target. Further information and recommendations in this respect will be made in the 25 October report.

C. Past housing figures and trends

1.3.28 In the process to determine development targets, it is important to consider past building rates, which can give an indication of future trends and also the realism of the future options being considered. In the 19-year period between 1991 and 2010 a total of 10,130 units have been constructed across the borough, which translates to an annual average rate of 533 dwellings.

1.3.29 There are wide variations over individual years but over the period 1991 to 2000 annual rate averaged 513; over the past 10 years (2000 to 2010), the annual average completion rate increases to 626 dwellings; and for the past 5 years (2005 to 2010) construction rates have been even higher at 697 dwellings p.a. Furthermore, despite the recession, Maidstone constructed 581 units during the year ending March 2010.

Period	No. of years	Annual dwelling construction rates
1991 to 2010	19	533
1991 to 2000	9	513
2000 to 2010	10	626
2005 to 2010	5	697
2009 to 2010	1	581

1.3.30 Further work is in hand to consider significant changes in the net migration rates into/out of Maidstone as part of population change over these periods.

1.3.31 If taking forward these trends based on past completion rates and taking into account the number of units that have been constructed in the period 2006 to 2010 (2,728 units), the outcome for the period 2006 to 2026 would be:

- For a 5-year trend rate - 13,900 dwellings
- For a 10-year trend rate - 12,750 dwellings
- For a 19-year trend rate - 11,250 dwellings.

D. Past policy targets

1.3.32 For comparison, it is helpful to consider the plan-led housing targets that have been based on previous population forecasting but adjusted to meet planning policy strategies. The KCC submission to the South East Plan was below past trend rates and reflected a policy of seeking lower house building targets in total in the southeast, and then directing growth in Kent to the Kent Thameside and Ashford and East Kent growth areas. The MBC submission in fact reflected past long term trend building rates and which equated to an up lift on the RPG9 regional plan. The adopted South East Plan figure reflects the then governments policy of significantly increasing housebuilding in England and the southeast in particular to support economic growth.

Former South East Plan	Housing target 2006 to 2026	Annual dwelling target
KCC submission to examination	8,200	410
MBC submission to examination + new growth point target	10,080	504
Former South East Plan target	11,080	554

E. Commitments and completions:

1.3.33 In setting a housing target for 2006 to 2026, the number of dwellings that have already been built since 2006 plus outstanding planning permissions must be taken into account. It is also prudent to build in a 10% contingency figure after deducting the completed dwellings from the target, to address the possibility that not all planning consents within the plan period will be built and to allow some flexibility in the delivery of local housing targets. This approach will help to meet the tests of soundness which will be applied to the Core Strategy at examination and is provided for in the provision figures set out below.

1.3.34 Between April 2006 and March 2010 2,728 dwellings were built and at April 2010 there were 3,077 dwellings with an outstanding planning consent, representing a total housing land supply of some 5,800 dwellings of the total target already in hand. Plan strategy now needs to be focussed on this balance.

1.3.35 At this stage it is recommended that 3 options for housing targets are further tested in detail. First, a target of 8,200 representing County's submission to the former south east plan examination in December 2005. Second, the target of 10,080 which identified by this Council and was the basis for Maidstone securing Growth Point status and funding. The third target for testing should be 11,000 which approximates to the adopted Regional Plan target and the long term trend in Maidstone's housing growth. When accounting for completions and

outstanding planning consents, the residual balance or target for each option is set out below.

Option	Plan period target 2006 to 2026	Residual target 2010 to 2026	Annual dwelling rate 2010 to 2016 ¹	Annual dwelling rate 2016 to 2026
1	8,200	2,942	513	294
2	10,080	5,010	513	501
3	11,000	6,022	569	569

F. Environmental capacity and land availability

1.3.36 Members are aware of the environmental and policy factors that constrain the growth of the borough and the need for measures to mitigate the impact of development. The council's evidence base has addressed, for example, issues of flooding have been assessed in detail in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, water supply and sewage in the Water Cycle Strategy, landscape sensitivity and quality in the ongoing Landscape Character Strategy, built and natural heritage, habitat and bio-diversity with reference to appropriate evidence bases that are maintained and updated and augmented by specialist bodies.

1.3.37 The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), taking account of these constraints, 'rejected' many sites and 'accepted' sites potentially capable of supplying some 16,300 units of housing land in the borough. After excluding the known development pipeline, this provided for over 10,700 potential new sites. However, some of the 'accepted' sites will be found more suitable than others for some form of development once more detailed assessments are complete. Further work is in hand, but initial analysis by officers has broadly categorised sites into three groups: (a) those with few constraints, (b) those with more constraints, and (c) those with many. Under different options more all sites in category (a) and more in (b) or possibly (c) would be required.

1.3.38 These are only informed assumptions at this stage to help appraisal of the different housing target options. It must be stressed, however, that any sites identified for this testing are not recommendations for allocating development to sites, and nor is there any presumption that such sites would be released for development.

1.3.39 With the range of targets identified in section E above, it is not necessary to 'urgently' allocate strategic housing sites in the Core Strategy because the scale of recent building rates and planning

¹ Years 2010-2016 include commitments of 3077 (513 p.a.)

permissions means the council can readily maintain and plan for a rolling 5-year supply of housing land supply. Sites will need to be identified in due course in a land Allocations DPD or successor Local Plan. However, a target significantly higher than 11,000 would present a challenge to demonstrating a five year supply.

1.3.40 The scale and delivery rate within the plan period for a potential urban extension – referred to as the 'strategic development area' - are in the region of 2,500 and 3,500 dwellings, dependent on the planning policy objectives. However, looking beyond 2026, the total capacity of a mixed use urban extension could be 5,000 to 6,000 dwellings to achieve a maximum benefit of a properly planned new community with new supporting infrastructure.

1.3.41 Realistically, with existing housing commitments Option 1 (8,200 dwellings) is too small a target to support a strategic development area and a dispersed spatial pattern of development would be the only realistic pattern. Conversely, it appears that option 3 (11,000 dwellings) could only be delivered with significant reliance on a strategic development area, although a combination of a single larger urban extension and development on some of the more suitable dispersed greenfield sites at the urban periphery and rural service centres is achievable. Option 2 (10,080) can be accommodated with a dispersed pattern of development, although this approach would require the use of the more constrained and less suitable sites in category (b) above.

1.3.42 Options 2 or 3 could deliver a strategic development area with very little development elsewhere, but could be a high risk strategy, is less flexible or potentially deliverable in a period of economic uncertainty, and is likely to be challenged by some developers with sites of equal potential but located elsewhere. Option 2 could not allocate enough dwellings for a properly planned new community in addition to dispersal.

1.3.43 The realistic shortlisted options emerging as most suitable for further testing are:

Option 1 - 8,200 dwellings

The option could result in retail, office and housing development in Maidstone town centre with limited additional housing development dispersed within the built up area of the town and at the edge of the town and villages. The option would not include a strategic development area. After allowing for the existing development pipeline of 5,800, mostly on urban brownfield sites, plan making would focus on a residual of 2,942 to mostly greenfield sites.

Option 2 – 10,080 dwellings

The option could result in greater demand for retail, office and housing development in Maidstone town centre and some housing development within the built up area of the town. In addition to the housing pipeline as in Option 1, plan making would focus around the edge of Maidstone town the majority of new housing development for 5,010 dwellings to be concentrated in larger pockets of approximately 100 – 600 units on greenfield sites around the edge of the urban area. There would be a need for greenfield sites for employment development at the edge of Maidstone town and the villages. In addition, this option would result in the greatest amount of development at the villages and the greatest dispersal of development. The option would not include a strategic development area.

Option 3 – 11,000 dwellings

The option will result in the greatest level of demand for retail, office and housing development in Maidstone town centre and some housing development within the built up area of the town. After the existing housing pipeline as in Options 1 and 2, plan making would focus on the further 6,022 dwellings around Maidstone town where the majority of housing development together with some employment opportunities would be located in a mixed use new strategic development area at the edge of the town together with some larger pockets of housing around the edge of the urban area. There may be scope to expand the strategic development area beyond the plan period in order to maximise the benefits of sustainable development. There would be a need for greenfield sites for employment development at the edge of Maidstone town. This option would also result in some additional development at the villages.

1.3.44 The recommendations as 1.2 seek endorsement of these key options for further testing and the identification of any further options that should be considered in greater detail. Further evidence assessing the shortlisted options will be presented at the 25 October meeting. These options are discussed in greater detail in a later section of this report.

G. Infrastructure capacity

1.3.45 Consultations with stakeholders in respect of existing infrastructure capacity and the need for new infrastructure were well advanced but focussed on the original housing target of 11,080 using a SDA and a more dispersed alternative pattern of development. Providers have now been requested to respond to alternative growth target options and spatial distributions and many of the necessary responses are not yet available. Further information will be available for the 25 October

meeting, including on further transport modelling and resultant infrastructure assessments that are underway.

- 1.3.46 Initial indications are that infrastructure costs for a specific target number of dwellings, whether provided in a SDA with new significant new infrastructure or a dispersed pattern and utilising more existing infrastructure in different locations but encountering a wider number of shortcomings to be resolved, are not greatly dissimilar. However, the new options involve three target levels and a critical issue will be that of the transport implications and necessary sustainable transport infrastructure.
- 1.3.47 Transport modelling work on further alternative patterns and targets is not yet completed but issues are clearly emerging. A SDA concentrates traffic growth on certain sectors whereas a dispersed pattern increases flows across the outer-traffic model cordon throughout the town. These lead to requirement for differing sets of measures and costs and impacts that need to be compared. The required transport strategy will provide for the preferred approach and therefore cannot be finalised at this time.
- 1.3.48 Further updates will be possible in October and a full report on infrastructure matters in November. One particular uncertainty is the funding of necessary infrastructure identified; new Government intentions signalled in the Planning Green Paper for a 'development incentive' or New Homes Bonus scheme based on grant matching Council tax income are now unclear and no further information is available yet on the intended reforms to the system of Community Infrastructure Levy or s106 based planning tariffs. The strength of the housing market and developers / landowners ability to contribute will also have significant effect.
- 1.3.49 The ability to deliver the necessary infrastructure associated with the three key options for housing targets and spatial distribution is likely to be a very significant factor to decision making; at this point in time it is not possible to make full recommendations to Members in this respect. Further information will be available for 25 October and most likely, further still after the Government's Spending Review in the Autumn.

H. Place Making

- 1.3.50 Alongside the setting of Maidstone's quantitative housing targets, decisions must be made about the distribution of development. Options include that of reliance on the creation of a single large strategic development area to accommodate the vast majority of development in a new mixed use community, or a very dispersed

pattern of development, or a combination of the two.

1.3.51A dispersed development pattern can exploit the capacity of existing infrastructure, potentially offer investment into enhancing the capacity of existing infrastructure, spread negative impacts more 'thinly', and help absorb new residents into existing communities. Dispersal spreads the risk of development sites not coming forward as planned, and it creates flexibility in the phasing of the release of sites to achieve objectives. However, transport modelling of the greater resulting trip generation and are yet to be fully modelled. Further, this approach would create the need to develop all identified sites at the edge of Maidstone urban area and a greater amount of development would need to be directed to the rural service centres and smaller villages. There is no strategy looking beyond 2026.

1.3.52The planning of a new community has a number of advantages, particularly in terms of co-ordinating the provision of physical, social and green infrastructure. The economies of scale present more scope for shared local infrastructure, it offers the greatest opportunity for exemplar and visionary masterplanning to create a new community development, and also provides potential for development and a transportation strategy that looks beyond 2026 to future planning and transport needs. The promotion of a 'new place' can help attract investment in housing and new employment opportunities as well as facilitate more sustainable patterns of travel, reduce trip generation rates and facilitate community scale sustainable green and blue strategy, energy and waste schemes. Infrastructure can be viewed in new ways as demonstrated at 'The Bridge' in Dartford where new education, health and community facilities are coordinated in one integrated development with share facilities.

1.3.53A combination of the two approaches would mitigate risk of development sites not coming forward as planned. The approach would create the opportunity to develop a well integrated, coordinated and sustainable community and to develop it at a slower rate for flexibility; and would not require the need to develop all the identified potential sites at the edge of Maidstone urban area in one go or require such significant quantities for housing in the rural service centres.

1.3.54One important point of detail is the densities of development assumed in the option testing. The SHLAA assessments and subsequent work applied specific site density assumptions based on site circumstances but averaging 45 dwellings to the hectare but a minimum of 30/ha reflecting the previous PPS3 minimum requirement of 30/ha. PPS3 was recently amended to remove this minimum standard but the land take calculations used for the Core Strategy continue with these assumptions at this time. Clearly, if the density standards are reduced then more land will be required. Members are requested to express

any comment on this approach now as it underpins all the option testing. Whether to set a minimum density is an issue Members will need to return to in consideration of the relevant Core Policy.

1.3.55 The recommendations at paragraph 1.2 seek agreement to the spatial distributions options (including assumptions on housing density) as the basis of further testing and for members to identify any further combinations they wish to see assessed in similar detail.

I. (Initial draft) Sustainability Appraisal

1.3.56 Having deliberated the potential options for setting housing targets together with the distribution of development, the sustainability of the 3 options set out above can be tested with further objectivity by reference to the Sustainability Framework adopted for all the Maidstone LDF documents.

1.3.57 Members will recall approving the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Core Strategy in December 2009. The scoping report sets a framework against which Core Strategy policies and objectives can be assessed. The 3 options are being appraised against 18 sustainable objectives derived from the scoping report (**Appendix C**). The results will be colour coded so that green indicates the option would likely meet the sustainability objective, amber that it partially meets the objective, and red that it does not significantly contribute to meeting the objective. This cannot be completed as yet a identified above but patterns are emerging.

1.3.58 Option 1 (8,200 dispersed) does not appear to be a sustainable development option. It appears (subject to further detailed assessment) to not cater for the natural growth of the borough nor established trends in migration, it would mean a shortfall in necessary housing and a reduced supply of affordable housing, and would not support the council's wider objectives of prosperity and regeneration, employment growth, and would secure the least funding for infrastructure.

1.3.59 Option 2 (10,080 dispersed) appears closer to meet natural growth in population but not migration trends (subject to further testing). It would appear to generate investment in new social and green infrastructure. Less affordable housing would be provided than option 3. This option could be likely to meet the council's employment aspirations (subject to further testing, to be confirmed), and to some extent support the prosperity agenda and regeneration. However, this option would result in the greatest amount of development at the edge of Maidstone urban area and the villages and category more constrained sites and would result in trips of greater length. There would be little opportunity for a focused approach to sustainable

transport measures. The option could perform poorly in terms of air pollution and the emission of greenhouse gases.

1.3.60 Option 3 (11,000 strategic development area with some dispersal) appears to meet the needs of the natural growth of the borough and much of recent migration trends, provides for the highest number of affordable homes, and supports the council's economic development strategy. This like Option 2 would help to deliver the prosperity agenda and would be a catalyst for the regeneration of certain areas of deprivation but comparison of the two in this respect is ongoing. This option could support a new community adjacent to the urban area with a focused approach to sustainable transport measures, and would provide opportunities for a well designed and integrated sustainable development.

J. Risks

1.3.49 There will be a number of risks associated with any set housing targets and agreed development strategy. The prime risks include:

- The potential for ongoing legal challenge to the Government's action to revoke the Regional Plans, this could mean the reintroduction of the previous targets.
- The viability and deliverability of development
- The availability of Government funding streams and mechanisms for development contributions for necessary supporting infrastructure
- Ensuring targets and the distribution of development are based on sound methodology evidence to withstand challenge at examination – Maidstone appears to be one of the earlier authorities to be taking this challenge on.

K. Localism and the local agenda

1.3.61 It is critical that the council's housing and employment targets, together with its strategy for distributing development, are based on sound evidence, but also very important are the views of residents and businesses. It may be that with the expectations of the new 'localism agenda' accompanied by the lack of clear explanation of the 'development incentive' New Home Bonus scheme from government, that it is increasing hard to make the case for necessary development to local communities.

1.3.62 Public consultation on the Core Strategy will be one means of inviting comment on the strategy, but the council has already engaged with stakeholders and the public, bringing together local views through the production of various documents and holding of stakeholder events:

- Sustainable community strategy
- Strategic plan
- Economic development strategy
- Core Strategy evidence base and stakeholder workshops
- Town centre management
- Parish councils
- Developers and agents
- Service providers.

Recommendation

1.4 The recommendations at 1.3 seek endorsement and comment to the methodology and approach outlined above, agreement to the 3 shortlisted options as the basis of further testing to identify Maidstone's housing target and associated approach to the distribution of development. A further report on 25 October with additional evidence available will enable me to make clear recommendation on the preferred option to be incorporated into the draft Core Strategy.

1.4.1 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.2 A number of alternative options have been considered throughout this report. The three options appear realistic options to focus to enable Members and the public a clear set of options to consider.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Options 2 and 3 (subject to further assessment) appear to best reflect the spatial elements of the Council's Sustainable Community Strategy, the Strategic Plan and the Economic Development Strategy.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 The different risks associated with the delivery of the options are addressed in the report.

1.6.2 The risks have been mitigated by testing the viability and availability of development sites; including a 10% contingency for housing targets to manage sites not coming forward; building flexibility into the option 3 through the planned dispersal of development sites in addition to the identification of a strategic development area; ensuring that all options are built on evidence testing and sound sustainability principles; and testing soundness further through public engagement, seeking to build

local consensus. Risks associated with government funding decisions cannot be controlled, other than by responding to changes promptly.

1.7 Other Implications

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

1.7.1 **Financial:** There are no financial implications directly arising from this report. However, this report recommends targets for housing and the strategy for distributing development in the Core Strategy DPD, which will have implications for the securing of funding for local and strategic infrastructure, and affordable housing, through various funding streams. The production of the Core Strategy DPD during 2010/11 can be managed within the LDF budget.

1.7.2 **Environmental/Sustainable Development:** The options set out in this report have been initially tested against the sustainability objectives of the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Core Strategy.

1.8 Relevant Documents

Maidstone Borough Council Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report (November 2009)

1.9 Appendices

Appendix A: An evidence based approach to determining housing targets

Appendix B: extract for the 26 July draft Core Strategy - spatial vision and spatial objectives

Appendix C: Comparison of Options against the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report

1.10 Background Documents

None

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No **X**

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

.....

This is a Key Decision because: It affects all wards and parishes, and it will influence the Core Strategy which sets the Council's planning policy framework.

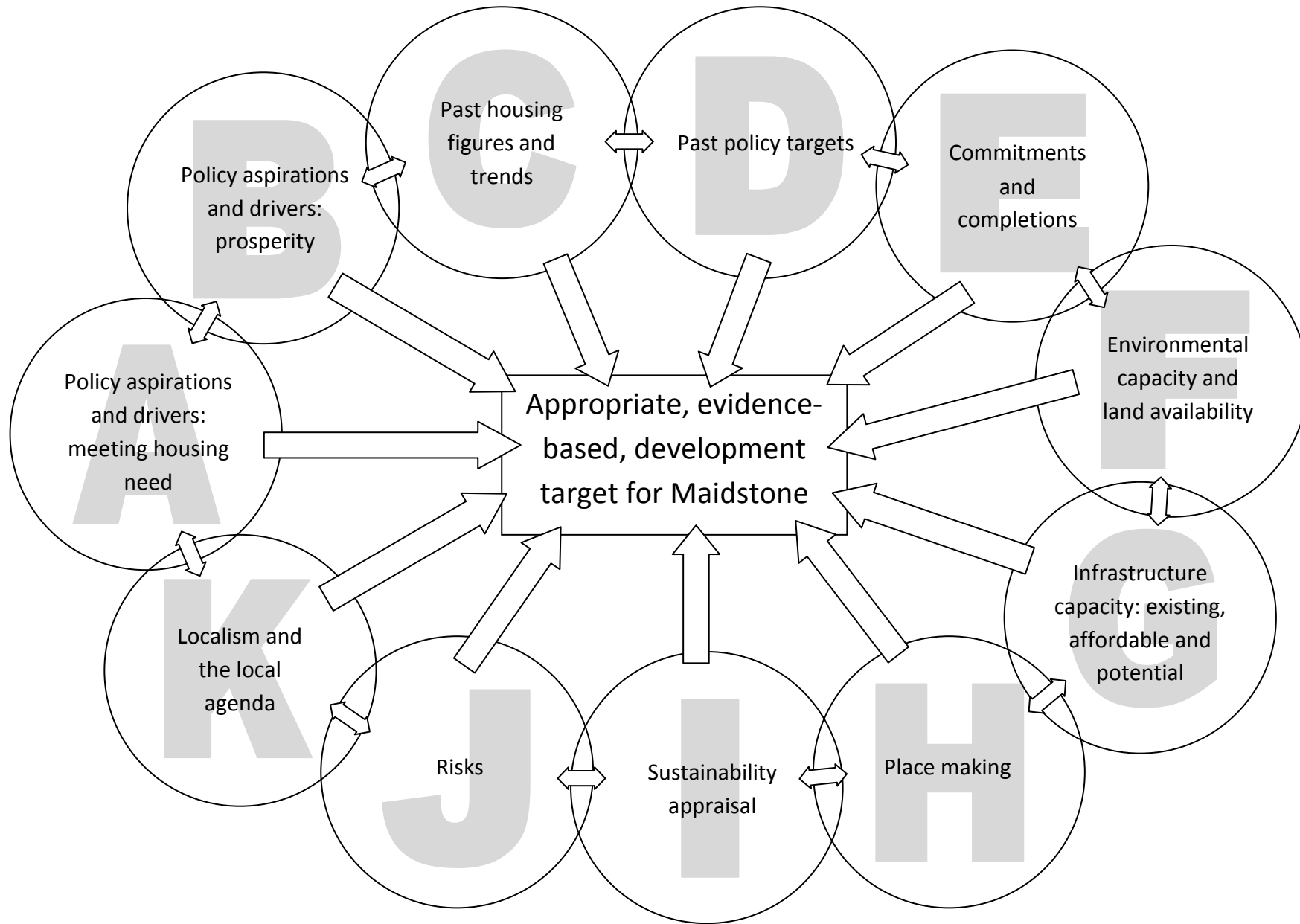
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Wards/Parishes affected: All wards and parishes.

.....

Appendix A

Maidstone housing figures - Diagram of the methodology and evidence-based approach



APPENDIX B
EXTRACT FROM DRAFT MAIDSTONE CORE STRATEGY
13 SEPTEMBER 2010

4 Vision and Objectives

Spatial Vision

4.1 The council's vision for the borough, set out in its sustainable community strategy and strategic plan, seeks prosperity and vibrancy for Maidstone's urban and rural communities whilst retaining and enhancing the borough's distinctive history, landscape and character. The vision for Maidstone's Economic Development Strategy seeks to create a model 21st century county town as a distinctive place known for, amongst other things, a dynamic service sector based economy.

4.2 The Core Strategy determines the spatial expression of the council's vision for the borough. The DPD sets out the "why, what, where, when and how" for a development strategy to deliver the spatial vision and objectives; the need for planned growth and regeneration together with supporting infrastructure, within the context of protecting the borough's built and environmental assets; the scale of that development, general locations and timing, and necessary delivery mechanisms.

4.3 The borough has a complex set of characteristics that require distinctive planning strategies to achieve the Core Strategy vision, in order to face the challenges of the 21st century and specifically the period to 2026.

4.4 By 2026, prosperity will be achieved through sustainable economic growth **across the borough**, supported by the creation of high quality employment opportunities, the regeneration of key sites, investment in the town centre, and access improvements.

4.5 There will be a first class traditional town centre in Maidstone, maintaining its place as one of the premier town centre offers in the region, by creating a distinctive, accessible, safe and high quality environment for the community to live, work and shop. The town centre will be transformed by encouraging a wide range of new development including shops, business, residential development, cultural and tourism facilities, education and enhanced public spaces.

4.6 There will be an emphasis on sustainable transport access improvements to the town centre through an integrated approach to transport strategy, to promote the role of Maidstone's urban area as a transport hub with national and regional links. By 2026, the general location of growth will help bring about a step change in the use of public transport and other sustainable means of travel, coupled with restraints on parking where this will not prejudice economic growth, together with the creation of new and improved cycle and pedestrian networks.

4.7 The urban area of Maidstone will be revitalised throughout with the regeneration of key commercial and residential sites and areas of existing social and environmental problems, and by improving links to surrounding areas that will create better access to jobs and other facilities.

4.8 A high quality green and blue infrastructure that forms the setting of the urban area and creates suitable access to the surrounding countryside will be developed. This will protect and enhance the borough's rich natural heritage and wildlife with a special emphasis on rivers and local landscape character.

4.9 For the first part of the delivery of the plan, the focus of development across the borough will be on brownfield land in the urban area, extending in the latter part to greenfield land adjacent to Maidstone's urban area. Growth will be **led by the timely provision of strategic and local infrastructure, including quality green spaces, sustainable transportation and utilities, as well as a full range of social and leisure facilities.**

4.10 By 2026 **major new development** will be laid out in a manner that reduces the need to travel and is designed as an exemplar of low energy consumption and minimal carbon and other emissions.

4.11 To protect the special character of the countryside and to provide for needs in rural areas, the role of the rural service centres of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst will be reinforced as the focus of additional limited housing development, supported by necessary infrastructure and enabling local choice. **All** new development will be mixed and well integrated with the existing settlements and will maintain the character and identity of villages.

4.12 Development in smaller rural settlements and the countryside will be tightly restricted to local needs housing, rural economic diversification and meeting community needs. The separate identity and unique character of individually distinct villages and the urban area will be maintained. **Robust landscape protection policies will be developed to safeguard the borough's locally significant and cherished landscape.**

4.13 Prosperity will be created by strengthening the borough's employment, retail and leisure offers, which should exceed the growth in population with the creation of additional jobs so that more and better jobs are provided locally. New jobs will be located where existing infrastructure and new investment in transport and other infrastructure underpins growth.

4.14 There will be a better mix and balance of housing in the borough, achieved through the provision of an adequate number, range and mix of housing, including affordable housing, accommodation for the elderly, local needs housing at rural settlements, and sites for gypsy and traveller communities **based on an assessment of local need.**

4.15 The phasing, density and location of development will ensure the best use of previously developed land and buildings to help regenerate urban areas, and minimise the necessary release of greenfield land in total, and will make best use of a finite resource in a manner that protects and enhances the borough's best built and natural heritage, including its rivers and water bodies.

4.16 Development throughout the borough will be of a high quality, utilising designs that respond to the distinctive local character of areas. The design of new development will incorporate sustainability principles, and will take into account the impact of climate change.

4.17 **Sustained development growth throughout the period will be maintained by ensuring an appropriate supply of suitable development sites. Demanding but realistic expectations of development to contribute to the type of accommodation required to meet needs (including affordable housing) will be**

carefully balanced with a tariff for development contributions and the introduction of development incentive-grants from government to fund necessary strategic and local infrastructure. Good design quality and sustainable construction standards of at least national standards will apply.

Spatial vision

By 2026 Maidstone will be a vibrant, prosperous and sustainable community benefiting from an exceptional and unique urban and rural environment.

The Core Strategy will help in delivering sustainable growth and regeneration while protecting and enhancing the borough's built and natural assets. Regeneration will be prioritised and delivered at the urban area of the county town first to make best use of brownfield land, so the release of greenfield sites, **well related to existing urban areas**, will be phased after 2016. Development will be **led** by a sustainable and integrated transport strategy, together with necessary strategic and local infrastructure.

The establishment of a multi-functional green and blue network of open spaces, rivers and water courses will safeguard biodiversity and define the urban character of Maidstone while offering access to the countryside, which will be valued in its own right. The character and identity of **all rural settlements** will be maintained by directing **suitable** development and supporting infrastructure to the rural service centres of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst.

Employment skills will be expanded to meet an improved and varied range of local jobs, and there will be a better balanced housing market to meet the community's needs. Development will be of high quality design, and constructed in a sustainable manner to respond to climate change and protect the environment and biodiversity.

Spatial Objectives

4.18 A number of spatial objectives have been identified to ensure the Core Strategy vision is achieved. The effectiveness of these objectives will be monitored, and performance indicators are included in each section of the DPD.

Spatial objectives

- a. To provide for xxxxx new homes and xxxxx new jobs, primarily in skilled employment uses, in the borough alongside developing learning opportunities.
- b. To focus new development at Maidstone urban area with:
 - 90% of new housing built within and adjacent to the urban area of Maidstone, appropriate sustainable greenfield development being well located to the existing urban area
 - The aim of providing 60% of new housing across the plan period on previously developed land and through the conversion of existing buildings
 - New employment allocations in Maidstone town centre strictly coordinated and targeted with opportunities on the most suitable greenfield sites only.
- c. To transform the offer, vitality and viability of Maidstone town centre, including office, retail, further and higher education, leisure and tourism functions, together with a significant enhancement to the built and natural environment.
- d. To create sustainable, innovative and well designed new neighbourhoods of sufficient scale to achieve good levels of local services, green space, development mix, and strategic infrastructure in a timely manner, as well as creating opportunities for local power generation.
- e. To consolidate the roles of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst as rural service centres with successful village centres, as the focus of the network of rural settlements, with retained services and regenerated employment sites.
- f. To support new housing in the borough's smaller villages that meets local need and is of a design, scale, character, tenure and location appropriate to the settlement, and supports the retention of services and facilities.

- g. To safeguard and maintain the **unique** character of the district's landscapes, **including** the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty **and distinctive local landscapes**, whilst facilitating the economic and social well-being of these areas including the diversification of the rural economy.
- h. To respect and enhance the character, extent and biodiversity of green spaces and the aquatic environment within and around built areas, together with the linkages between the spaces.
- i. To ensure that new development takes account of the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change and improve air quality by locating development to minimise energy use; to promote travel patterns that reduce the need to travel by car; to develop a greater choice of sustainable transport measures, particularly in the urban area; to support water and energy efficiency measures in existing development; and to encourage renewable energy sources and sustainable drainage solutions in new development.
- j. To ensure that a new development is designed to a high quality and makes a positive contribution to the distinctive character of the area in which it is situated, including the protection of the built and natural heritage and its biodiversity.
- k. To provide for the type of future housing that meets the changing needs of the borough's population, including provision for an ageing population and family housing, affordable housing at x%, and accommodation that meets the **local** needs of the gypsy and traveller community.
- l. To ensure that key infrastructure and service improvements needed to support delivery of Core Strategy objectives and policies are brought forward in a co-ordinated and timely manner, and that new development makes an appropriate contribution towards any improvements required as a result of such new development.

Appendix C

Framework for comparison of options - Sustainability Appraisal

Would be likely to meet the sustainability objective			
Would be likely to partially meet the sustainability objective			
Would not contribute significantly to meeting the sustainability objective			
Objective	Option 1 8,200 dwellings - dispersed	Option 2 10,080 dwellings - dispersed	Option 3 11,000 dwellings – with SDA & dispersed
1 To ensure that everyone has the opportunity to live in a decent, sustainably constructed and affordable home suitable to their need			
2 To improve the health and well-being of the population and reduce inequalities in health			
3 To reduce poverty and social exclusion and stimulate economic revival in deprived areas			
4 To raise educational achievement levels and develop the opportunities for everyone to acquire the skills needed to find and remain in work			
5 To reduce crime and perceptions of disorder			
6 To create and sustain vibrant communities			
7 To improve accessibility to all services and facilities			
8 To develop a dynamic, diverse and knowledge-based economy and ensure high and stable levels of employment			

9 To improve efficiency in land use through the appropriate re-use of previously developed land and existing buildings, including re-use of materials from buildings, and encourage urban renaissance			
10 To reduce the risk of flooding			
11 To reduce air pollution and ensure air quality continues to improve			
12 To address the causes of climate change through reducing emissions of greenhouse gases			
13 To conserve and enhance biodiversity			
14 To protect and enhance the countryside and historic environment			
15 To improve the efficiency of transport networks by enhancing the proportion of travel by sustainable modes and by promoting policies which reduce the need to travel			
16 To reduce waste generation and disposal, and achieve the sustainable management of waste			
17 To maintain and improve the water quality and to achieve sustainable water resources management			
18 To increase energy efficiency, security and diversity of supply and the proportion of energy generated from renewable sources			

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION OF THE CABINET

Decision Made: 15 September 2010

CORE STRATEGY HOUSING TARGETS AND DISTRIBUTION OF DEVELOPMENT

Issue for Decision

Following revocation of the South East Plan and the abolition of regionally set housing provisions, to set housing targets and confirm employment targets for the borough, and to agree an approach towards the distribution of development in the Core Strategy.

Decision Made

1. That the three options 1-3, as outlined in sections 1.3 E and F of the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment, be agreed as the basis for the further more detailed testing outlined in the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment, without any preconceptions, in order to identify the most suitable housing target for the borough.
2. That all of the options plan for the balance of housing necessary after the existing development pipeline of 5,800 dwellings is completed, to achieve total housing target figures of:-

Option 1 – 8,200 dwellings;
Option 2 – 10,080 dwellings; and
Option 3 – 11,000 dwellings

The spatial distribution that needs to be objectively considered and tested for each option should be a dispersal model and a strategic development area.

3. That the methodology and approach to testing each of the housing options should be that outlined in diagram A and Section 1.3 of the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment be endorsed with the addition of the specific amendments to Appendix A of the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment as highlighted by the Leisure and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
4. That further work is undertaken on the weighting of the various elements; particular attention being paid to the economic and environmental factors, but considered within the context of the need for, and likelihood of, supporting housing and transportation infrastructure.

5. That any option considered should have an emphasis on incentivising regeneration and renewal.
6. That a further report be presented to the Cabinet on 10 November 2010.

Reasons for Decision

The evolution of the Core Strategy to date

The LDF Core Strategy has been in preparation over a considerable period of time; extensive evidence has been gathered and public consultation conducted and these matters thoroughly considered by the Advisory Group. An 'issues and options' public consultation in 2006 was followed by the preparation of and public consultation upon, a 'preferred options' document in early 2007. Further development of the draft plan was then halted later that year until August 2009 whilst the Council determined the representation made to the Core Strategy and the planning application submitted for the Kent International Gateway.

Meantime the Council bid for and was awarded Growth Point status with the requirement for the LDF Core Strategy to provide for a rate of development equivalent to 10,080 dwellings over the plan period. The Council also adopted various other relevant strategies including the Sustainable Community Strategy and Economic Development Strategy, all consistent with this and with which, the Core Strategy should be prepared with regard to. Subsequently the Regional Strategy (South East Plan) was published by Government in 2008 with a Maidstone Borough housing target of 11,080 additional dwellings over the plan period 2006-26.

However, as reported at the 26 July meeting of LDDAG, on 6 July 2010 the new Government revoked the Regional Strategies and advised local authorities to proceed with preparing LDF Core Strategies on the basis of their own local determination of suitable housing targets.

Since August 2009 much of the evidence base on which the draft plan has been prepared has been updated or published, much of it underpinned by the need to achieve a housing target of 11,080 additional dwellings. Members have had briefings on much of this evidence and this contributed directly to the successive drafts of the plan considered by LDDAG over the last 5-6 months. In February, June and July the content of the plan, the 'spatial vision', 'spatial objectives' and 'core policies' were all considered. However, LDDAG have yet to reconsider the housing target figure and consequential effects on spatial distribution in the light of the revocation of the Regional Strategy.

Opportunity to set a district housing target

Setting of the housing target must be done on the basis of clear and sound evidence that will withstand scrutiny at independent examination into the Core Strategy. It is important that the target forms an integral part of the plan strategy and is not considered in isolation from the Vision

and Objectives that the plan seeks to achieve. For instance the right balance must be struck between housing and employment targets, the spatial distribution strategy must be capable of delivering these targets and the target must be sufficiently ambitious to deliver the aspirations of the vision and objectives of the draft plan. In the event of significant change to the target these and other aspects of the plan may need to be revised significantly too.

Previously, housing targets were primarily determined at a strategic level, principally by Counties and other first tier authorities engaging with the regional planning body and in turn, the regional body with government; individual Boroughs and other second tier authorities had relatively little input to methodology and techniques of population, household and economic forecasting nor the national and regional scale policy debates that resulted, other than making representations alongside all other interest groups on the output figures. Districts such as Maidstone have not previously been empowered to determine their own housing targets and Government advice, best practice and regulations do not yet exist to indicate how this should be done. The Council now faces both a great challenge and opportunity to determine its own target in a robust manner.

Methodology for setting a housing target

While all local planning authorities in England have this same opportunity few have to act as quickly as Maidstone, which has a pressing need to update the saved Local Plan policies and which was about to publish a draft Core Strategy based on the Regional Strategy just as it was revoked. Officers have been liaising with colleagues across Kent and beyond to 'compare notes' and method and are working with KCC research and intelligence group who have expertise in population and economic projections to develop an approach.

An overview of the approach adopted is represented by a diagram illustrating an iterative evidence based approach to determining housing targets – as attached at Appendix A to the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment. Each aspect is explained in more detail in the headed sections A – K below.

It is clear that Members require extensive sound evidence to inform their decision making around all the realistic options available; not all aspects of this have been completed in the time available so far. Some verbal update on the ongoing work will be possible at the meeting, but whilst a clear picture of the likely key options for decision is emerging and confidently informs this report, it is not possible in certain respects, to make a firm recommendation at this time. Where this is the case a clear note is made. The recommendations at 1.2 above seek endorsement of the approach adopted and the agreement of key emerging options as the basis for more detailed consideration before final recommendations to Cabinet are made.

The explanations below refer to the draft 'spatial vision' and 'spatial objectives' for the draft Core Strategy previously considered by the Advisory Group, as well as to some of the background evidence that that has been reported previously.

To reiterate, it is vital that the options for the housing target figure and consequential effects for the spatial distribution strategy are not considered in isolation but as an integral part of the vision and objective the plan is seeking to achieve. To assist Members, an extract of the vision and objectives of the draft Core Strategy is attached at Appendix B to the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment.

Methodology and considerations

A. Meeting population and housing need

Previously, projections of the change in population and households, and therefore the need for more dwellings were determined at strategic level, providing district level targets of additional dwelling numbers.

Projections of change in population and household numbers are anchored on the 2001 Census with precise projection forecasts made on the basis of broad trend based or policy based assumptions about future behaviours; thus wide variations between different projections of apparently precise figures are not uncommon. Concerns over the veracity of previous projections has led to joint work with KCC research and intelligence team to: (a) review previous trends in population and housing growth in Maidstone and the previous projections made to identify the most accurate 'control' point for making new projections; (b) to prepare a range of projections using different trend based assumptions of net migration; and to compare these with (c) alternative population projections assuming 10,000 or 11,000 additional dwellings are built. Comparison of these projections will help identify the level of additional dwelling targets required. Initial results should be available for verbal report at the meeting and will be analysed before the meeting of 25 October.

The dwellings requirement figure indicated by these projections does not necessarily determine the target but can be adjusted to achieve policy objectives or otherwise relate with the other factors A-K indicated in the diagram at Appendix A to the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment.

The Strategic Housing Market Assessment published in March 2010 considered the need for additional affordable and market housing, the types of housing needed and stock condition. It identified a need for 1,081 affordable homes per annum. The Assessment suggested that 38% of all housing built over the whole of the plan period (using a target of 11,080 dwellings) represented a balanced market option to meet need. Clearly, if the housing target is reduced then less affordable housing will be built or if a higher target is set, outstanding housing need might be addressed more quickly.

The policy response to the needs evidenced in the SHMA will also influence the provision of the right size and type of dwellings in all sectors of the housing market. A comprehensive approach is required, including in the affordable stock the requirement for: 76% social rent/24% intermediate; 45% 1-2 bedroom/55% 3-4 bedroom.

Local needs housing in rural areas is an important aspiration in meeting housing need and this influences decisions on the spatial distribution of housing made in the Core Strategy.

Underneath the 1,081pa figure, the SHMA also identifies different groups of need: those in the private rented sector who are willing and able to pay more than 25% of their income on housing (280pa); and those in private rented housing on local housing benefit support (460pa). (It is not sustainable and is poor value for public money for large numbers of households to be in private rented housing on housing benefit.) The remainder of 341pa are in acute housing need. The effects of insufficient housing are various; rising numbers on housing revenue support, homelessness, repossessions, various health and wellbeing effects, and poor cost effectiveness of measures taken in response.

More widely, the Office of National Statistics (ONS) estimates national population growth to be around 65million by 2020 with almost 12 million below 30 years of age. Many of these will be first time buyers squeezed by lack of mortgage credit and lack of housing supply – nationally a housing market structural imbalance. Furthermore, the poor quality of some of the housing stock requires further replacement dwellings to be built although these will not be net dwelling additions.

The Core Strategy Spatial Vision and Spatial Objectives considered previously (extract included at Appendix B to the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment) stress the need for adequate number and mix of housing (para 4.13 and 4.18 k). However, the council's aspirations to meet housing need also need to be balanced with competing aspirations, including for providing strategic and local infrastructure from new development and safeguarding environment.

B. Policy aspirations and drivers for prosperity

There are a number of council strategy aspirations for improving the economy and prosperity of the borough that can be delivered through the LDF and in particular the Core Strategy. These help form the context for setting the strategy for development and can indicate a policy driven case for adjusting the housing need target indicated by population change as above. The council's prosperity agenda aims to:

- Achieve a step change in prosperity, and to ensure Maidstone establishes a role that complements rather than competes with the growth areas in Kent Thameside, Ashford and East Kent
- Redress an imbalance in employment growth in that past job creation rates in Maidstone which are below south east growth rates.
- Introduce a quantitative and qualitative step change in local employment, including by the creation of local higher skilled jobs opportunities, to half out-commuting from some 38%
- Maintain and enhance Maidstone's role as the County town and premier shopping centre

- Regeneration of areas of deprivation and sites in the town centre
- Provision of integrated development of employment and housing with sustainable infrastructure for place shaping and to attract investment into the borough.
- Key elements of the strategy include – shifting the balance of local employment from non-B Class shops and services and B8 warehousing towards higher skilled B1 and some B2 Class uses; developing strong sector specialism, promotion of new further and higher education facilities, investment in transport access, and ensuring a suitable supply of sites to support this.

Clearly, economic prosperity is not increased simply by increasing population / resident workforce supply and a range of measures are required to increase demand for local employment. The jobs target is based on a Gross Value Added growth rate rather than dwellings or labour supply. However, a higher housing target will increase labour supply and will increase local demand for goods and services. In general terms, inadequate labour supply can be a major constraining factor to economic growth. Further work is in hand to assess past performance compared to other factors.

Economic prosperity and growth underpins the demand for housing through the impact on household incomes and migration. Similarly, the economy affects household formation and housing demand. The gap between local wages and house prices is clearly of concern to residents; overall a good housing balance supports long term economic growth prospects.

Literature reviews confirm that an area's offer of good housing locations (and a mix of relevant facilities) will attract higher and intermediate social economic groups which are vital to developing/maintaining a robust resident labour supply and therefore improving the prosperity of the local economy.

The Spatial Vision stresses the aspiration of sustainable economic growth and regeneration, strengthening the boroughs retail and leisure offers, creation of high quality employment and regeneration and encouraging a wide range of new development including shops and businesses (see Appendix B to the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment).

The overall aspiration of the Economic Development Strategy and Sustainable Community Strategy is for 10,000 additional jobs. Demographic patterns mean that 10,000 additional dwellings would produce less than 10,000 additions to the workforce so the achievement of this target will also need a significant increase in inward commuting for work and a significant decrease in outward commuting, however, the contribution of the growth in the resident employee workforce will be a significant factor.

With the Regional Strategy evidence base and a target of 11,080 dwellings this aspiration appeared achievable. Detailed ongoing work with

the KCC research and intelligence unit will refine new estimates of resident workforce growth associated with differing options for dwelling growth levels, and help indicate the realism of the policy aspiration to achieve 10,000 new jobs and the other measures necessary to achieve this or any future revision to this target. Further information and recommendations in this respect will be made in the 25 October report.

C. Past housing figures and trends

In the process to determine development targets, it is important to consider past building rates, which can give an indication of future trends and also the realism of the future options being considered. In the 19-year period between 1991 and 2010 a total of 10,130 units have been constructed across the borough, which translates to an annual average rate of 533 dwellings.

There are wide variations over individual years but over the period 1991 to 2000 annual rate averaged 513; over the past 10 years (2000 to 2010), the annual average completion rate increases to 626 dwellings; and for the past 5 years (2005 to 2010) construction rates have been even higher at 697 dwellings p.a. Furthermore, despite the recession, Maidstone constructed 581 units during the year ending March 2010.

Period	No. of years	Annual dwelling construction rates
1991 to 2010	19	533
1991 to 2000	9	513
2000 to 2010	10	626
2005 to 2010	5	697
2009 to 2010	1	581

Further work is in hand to consider significant changes in the net migration rates into/out of Maidstone as part of population change over these periods.

If taking forward these trends based on past completion rates and taking into account the number of units that have been constructed in the period 2006 to 2010 (2,728 units), the outcome for the period 2006 to 2026 would be:

- For a 5-year trend rate - 13,900 dwellings
- For a 10-year trend rate - 12,750 dwellings
- For a 19-year trend rate - 11,250 dwellings.

D. Past policy targets

For comparison, it is helpful to consider the plan-led housing targets that have been based on previous population forecasting but adjusted to meet planning policy strategies. The KCC submission to the South East Plan was below past trend rates and reflected a policy of seeking lower house building targets in total in the southeast, and then directing growth in Kent to the Kent Thameside and Ashford and East Kent growth areas. The MBC submission in fact reflected past long term trend building rates and which equated to an up lift on the RPG9 regional plan. The adopted South East Plan figure reflects the then governments policy of significantly increasing housebuilding in England and the southeast in particular to support economic growth.

Former South East Plan	Housing target 2006 to 2026	Annual dwelling target
KCC submission to examination	8,200	410
MBC submission to examination + new growth point target	10,080	504
Former South East Plan target	11,080	554

E. Commitments and completions:

In setting a housing target for 2006 to 2026, the number of dwellings that have already been built since 2006 plus outstanding planning permissions must be taken into account. It is also prudent to build in a 10% contingency figure after deducting the completed dwellings from the target, to address the possibility that not all planning consents within the plan period will be built and to allow some flexibility in the delivery of local housing targets. This approach will help to meet the tests of soundness which will be applied to the Core Strategy at examination and is provided for in the provision figures set out below.

Between April 2006 and March 2010 2,728 dwellings were built and at April 2010 there were 3,077 dwellings with an outstanding planning consent, representing a total housing land supply of some 5,800 dwellings of the total target already in hand. Plan strategy now needs to be focussed on this balance.

At this stage it is recommended that 3 options for housing targets are further tested in detail. First, a target of 8,200 representing County's submission to the former south east plan examination in December 2005. Second, the target of 10,080 which identified by this Council and was the basis for Maidstone securing Growth Point status and funding. The third target for testing should be 11,000 which approximates to the adopted Regional Plan target and the long term trend in Maidstone's housing growth. When accounting for completions and outstanding planning consents, the residual balance or target for each option is set out below.

Option	Plan period target 2006	Residual target 2010	Annual dwelling rate	Annual dwelling rate
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	to 2026	to 2026	2010 to 2016 ¹	2016 to 2026
1	8,200	2,942	513	294
2	10,080	5,010	513	501
3	11,000	6,022	569	569

F. Environmental capacity and land availability

Members are aware of the environmental and policy factors that constrain the growth of the borough and the need for measures to mitigate the impact of development. The council's evidence base has addressed, for example, issues of flooding have been assessed in detail in the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, water supply and sewage in the Water Cycle Strategy, landscape sensitivity and quality in the ongoing Landscape Character Strategy, built and natural heritage, habitat and bio-diversity with reference to appropriate evidence bases that are maintained and updated and augmented by specialist bodies.

The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA), taking account of these constraints, 'rejected' many sites and 'accepted' sites potentially capable of supplying some 16,300 units of housing land in the borough. After excluding the known development pipeline, this provided for over 10,700 potential new sites. However, some of the 'accepted' sites will be found more suitable than others for some form of development once more detailed assessments are complete. Further work is in hand, but initial analysis by officers has broadly categorised sites into three groups: (a) those with few constraints, (b) those with more constraints, and (c) those with many. Under different options more all sites in category (a) and more in (b) or possibly (c) would be required.

These are only informed assumptions at this stage to help appraisal of the different housing target options. It must be stressed, however, that any sites identified for this testing are not recommendations for allocating development to sites, and nor is there any presumption that such sites would be released for development.

With the range of targets identified in section E above, it is not necessary to 'urgently' allocate strategic housing sites in the Core Strategy because the scale of recent building rates and planning permissions means the council can readily maintain and plan for a rolling 5-year supply of housing land supply. Sites will need to be identified in due course in a land Allocations DPD or successor Local Plan. However, a target significantly higher than 11,000 would present a challenge to demonstrating a five year supply.

The scale and delivery rate within the plan period for a potential urban extension – referred to as the 'strategic development area' - are in the region of 2,500 and 3,500 dwellings, dependent on the planning policy objectives. However, looking beyond 2026, the total capacity of a mixed use urban extension could be 5,000 to 6,000 dwellings to achieve a maximum benefit of a properly planned new community with new

¹ Years 2010-2016 include commitments of 3077 (513 p.a.)

supporting infrastructure.

Realistically, with existing housing commitments Option 1 (8,200 dwellings) is too small a target to support a strategic development area and a dispersed spatial pattern of development would be the only realistic pattern. Conversely, it appears that option 3 (11,000 dwellings) could only be delivered with significant reliance on a strategic development area, although a combination of an single larger urban extension and development on some of the more suitable dispersed greenfield sites at the urban periphery and rural service centres is achievable. Option 2 (10,080) can be accommodated with a dispersed pattern of development, although this approach would require the use of the more constrained and less suitable sites in category (b) above.

Options 2 or 3 could deliver a strategic development area with very little development elsewhere, but could be a high risk strategy, is less flexible or potentially deliverable in a period of economic uncertainty, and is likely to be challenged by some developers with sites of equal potential but located elsewhere. Option 2 could not allocate enough dwellings for a properly planned new community in addition to dispersal.

The realistic shortlisted options emerging as most suitable for further testing are:

Option 1 - 8,200 dwellings

The option could result in retail, office and housing development in Maidstone town centre with limited additional housing development dispersed within the built up area of the town and at the edge of the town and villages. The option would not include a strategic development area. After allowing for the existing development pipeline of 5,800, mostly on urban brownfield sites, plan making would focus on a residual of 2,942 to mostly greenfield sites.

Option 2 – 10,080 dwellings

The option could result in greater demand for retail, office and housing development in Maidstone town centre and some housing development within the built up area of the town. In addition to the housing pipeline as in Option 1, plan making would focus around the edge of Maidstone town the majority of new housing development for 5,010 dwellings to be concentrated in larger pockets of approximately 100 – 600 units on greenfield sites around the edge of the urban area. There would be a need for greenfield sites for employment development at the edge of Maidstone town and the villages. In addition, this option would result in the greatest amount of development at the villages and the greatest dispersal of development. The option would not include a strategic development area.

Option 3 – 11,000 dwellings

The option will result in the greatest level of demand for retail, office and housing development in Maidstone town centre and some housing development within the built up area of the town. After the existing housing pipeline as in Options 1 and 2, plan

making would focus on the further 6,022 dwellings around Maidstone town where the majority of housing development together with some employment opportunities would be located in a mixed use new strategic development area at the edge of the town together with some larger pockets of housing around the edge of the urban area. There may be scope to expand the strategic development area beyond the plan period in order to maximise the benefits of sustainable development. There would be a need for greenfield sites for employment development at the edge of Maidstone town. This option would also result in some additional development at the villages.

The recommendations at 1.2 of the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment sought endorsement of these key options for further testing and the identification of any further options that should be considered in greater detail. Further evidence assessing the shortlisted options will be presented at the 25 October meeting.

G. Infrastructure capacity

Consultations with stakeholders in respect of existing infrastructure capacity and the need for new infrastructure were well advanced but focussed on the original housing target of 11,080 using a SDA and a more dispersed alternative pattern of development. Providers have now been requested to respond to alternative growth target options and spatial distributions and many of the necessary responses are not yet available. Further information will be available for the 25 October meeting, including on further transport modelling and resultant infrastructure assessments that are underway.

Initial indications are that infrastructure costs for a specific target number of dwellings, whether provided in a SDA with new significant new infrastructure or a dispersed pattern and utilising more existing infrastructure in different locations but encountering a wider number of shortcomings to be resolved, are not greatly dissimilar. However, the new options involve three target levels and a critical issue will be that of the transport implications and necessary sustainable transport infrastructure.

Transport modelling work on further alternative patterns and targets is not yet completed but issues are clearly emerging. A SDA concentrates traffic growth on certain sectors whereas a dispersed pattern increases flows across the outer-traffic model cordon throughout the town. These lead to requirement for differing sets of measures and costs and impacts that need to be compared. The required transport strategy will provide for the preferred approach and therefore cannot be finalised at this time.

Further updates will be possible in October and a full report on infrastructure matters in November. One particular uncertainty is the funding of necessary infrastructure identified; new Government intentions signalled in the Planning Green Paper for a 'development incentive' or New Homes Bonus scheme based on grant matching Council tax income are now unclear and no further information is available yet on the intended

reforms to the system of Community Infrastructure Levy or s106 based planning tariffs. The strength of the housing market and developers / landowners ability to contribute will also have significant effect.

The ability to deliver the necessary infrastructure associated with the three key options for housing targets and spatial distribution is likely to be a very significant factor to decision making; at this point in time it is not possible to make full recommendations to Members in this respect. Further information will be available for 25 October and most likely, further still after the Government's Spending Review in the Autumn.

H. Place Making

Alongside the setting of Maidstone's quantitative housing targets, decisions must be made about the distribution of development. Options include that of reliance on the creation of a single large strategic development area to accommodate the vast majority of development in a new mixed use community, or a very dispersed pattern of development, or a combination of the two.

A dispersed development pattern can exploit the capacity of existing infrastructure, potentially offer investment into enhancing the capacity of existing infrastructure, spread negative impacts more 'thinly', and help absorb new residents into existing communities. Dispersal spreads the risk of development sites not coming forward as planned, and it creates flexibility in the phasing of the release of sites to achieve objectives. However, transport modelling of the greater resulting trip generation and are yet to be fully modelled. Further, this approach would create the need to develop all identified sites at the edge of Maidstone urban area and a greater amount of development would need to be directed to the rural service centres and smaller villages. There is no strategy looking beyond 2026.

The planning of a new community has a number of advantages, particularly in terms of co-ordinating the provision of physical, social and green infrastructure. The economies of scale present more scope for shared local infrastructure, it offers the greatest opportunity for exemplar and visionary masterplanning to create a new community development, and also provides potential for development and a transportation strategy that looks beyond 2026 to future planning and transport needs. The promotion of a 'new place' can help attract investment in housing and new employment opportunities as well as facilitate more sustainable patterns of travel, reduce trip generation rates and facilitate community scale sustainable green and blue strategy, energy and waste schemes. Infrastructure can be viewed in new ways as demonstrated at 'The Bridge' in Dartford where new education, health and community facilities are coordinated in one integrated development with share facilities.

A combination of the two approaches would mitigate risk of development sites not coming forward as planned. The approach would create the opportunity to develop a well integrated, coordinated and sustainable community and to develop it at a slower rate for flexibility; and would not require the need to develop all the identified potential sites at the edge of

Maidstone urban area in one go or require such significant quantities for housing in the rural service centres.

One important point of detail is the densities of development assumed in the option testing. The SHLAA assessments and subsequent work applied specific site density assumptions based on site circumstances but averaging 45 dwellings to the hectare but a minimum of 30/ha reflecting the previous PPS3 minimum requirement of 30/ha. PPS3 was recently amended to remove this minimum standard but the land take calculations used for the Core Strategy continue with these assumptions at this time. Clearly, if the density standards are reduced then more land will be required. Members are requested to express any comment on this approach now as it underpins all the option testing. Whether to set a minimum density is an issue Members will need to return to in consideration of the relevant Core Policy.

The recommendations at paragraph 1.2 seek agreement to the spatial distributions options (including assumptions on housing density) as the basis of further testing and for members to identify any further combinations they wish to see assessed in similar detail.

I. (Initial draft) Sustainability Appraisal

Having deliberated the potential options for setting housing targets together with the distribution of development, the sustainability of the 3 options set out above can be tested with further objectivity by reference to the Sustainability Framework adopted for all the Maidstone LDF documents.

Members will recall approving the Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report for the Core Strategy in December 2009. The scoping report sets a framework against which Core Strategy policies and objectives can be assessed. The 3 options are being appraised against 18 sustainable objectives derived from the scoping report (attached as Appendix C to the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment). The results will be colour coded so that green indicates the option would likely meet the sustainability objective, amber that it partially meets the objective, and red that it does not significantly contribute to meeting the objective. This cannot be completed as yet as identified above but patterns are emerging.

Option 1 (8,200 dispersed) does not appear to be a sustainable development option. It appears (subject to further detailed assessment) to not cater for the natural growth of the borough nor established trends in migration, it would mean a shortfall in necessary housing and a reduced supply of affordable housing, and would not support the council's wider objectives of prosperity and regeneration, employment growth, and would secure the least funding for infrastructure.

Option 2 (10,080 dispersed) appears closer to meet natural growth in population but not migration trends (subject to further testing). It would appear to generate investment in new social and green infrastructure. Less affordable housing would be provided than option 3. This option could be likely to meet the council's employment aspirations (subject to

further testing, to be confirmed), and to some extent support the prosperity agenda and regeneration. However, this option would result in the greatest amount of development at the edge of Maidstone urban area and the villages and category more constrained sites and would result in trips of greater length. There would be little opportunity for a focused approach to sustainable transport measures. The option could perform poorly in terms of air pollution and the emission of greenhouse gases.

Option 3 (11,000 strategic development area with some dispersal) appears to meet the needs of the natural growth of the borough and much of recent migration trends, provides for the highest number of affordable homes, and supports the council's economic development strategy. This like Option 2 would help to deliver the prosperity agenda and would be a catalyst for the regeneration of certain areas of deprivation but comparison of the two in this respect is ongoing. This option could support a new community adjacent to the urban area with a focused approach to sustainable transport measures, and would provide opportunities for a well designed and integrated sustainable development.

J. Risks

There will be a number of risks associated with any set housing targets and agreed development strategy. The prime risks include:

- The potential for ongoing legal challenge to the Government's action to revoke the Regional Plans, this could mean the reintroduction of the previous targets.
- The viability and deliverability of development
- The availability of Government funding streams and mechanisms for development contributions for necessary supporting infrastructure
- Ensuring targets and the distribution of development are based on sound methodology evidence to withstand challenge at examination – Maidstone appears to be one of the earlier authorities to be taking this challenge on.

K. Localism and the local agenda

It is critical that the council's housing and employment targets, together with its strategy for distributing development, are based on sound evidence, but also very important are the views of residents and businesses. It may be that with the expectations of the new 'localism agenda' accompanied by the lack of clear explanation of the 'development incentive' New Home Bonus scheme from government, that it is increasing hard to make the case for necessary development to local communities.

Public consultation on the Core Strategy will be one means of inviting comment on the strategy, but the council has already engaged with stakeholders and the public, bringing together local views through the production of various documents and holding of stakeholder events:

- Sustainable community strategy
- Strategic plan
- Economic development strategy
- Core Strategy evidence base and stakeholder workshops

- Town centre management
- Parish councils
- Developers and agents
- Service providers

At the meeting, recommendations from the Local Development Document Advisory Group and the Leisure and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Committee were circulated and these recommendations were taken into consideration when making this decision.

Alternatives considered and why rejected

A number of alternative options have been considered above. The three options appear realistic options to focus to enable Members and the public a clear set of options to consider.

Background Papers

Maidstone Borough Council Sustainability Appraisal Scoping Report
(November 2009)

Should you be concerned about this decision and wish to call it in, please submit a call in form signed by any two Non-Executive Members to the Head of Change and Scrutiny by: 24 September 2010
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