

# AGENDA

## CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 4 October 2011  
Time: 6.30 pm  
Venue: Town Hall, High Street,  
Maidstone



Overview and Scrutiny

Councillors: Mrs Wilson, Mrs Gooch, Yates, English,  
Mrs Gibson, Hogg, Paine, Pickett and  
de Wiggondene

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1. **The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.**
2. **Apologies.**
3. **Notification of Substitute Members.**
4. **Notification of Visiting Members.**
5. **Disclosures by Members and Officers:**
  - a) Disclosures of interest.
  - b) Disclosures of lobbying.
  - c) Disclosures of whipping.

**Continued Over/:**

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**Issued on 23 September 2011**

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*Alison Broom*

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

- 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 6 September 2011** **1 - 8**
- 8. 'The Council as a Business?' Review** **9 - 10**
- Interviews with:
- John Taylor, Chair of the Regeneration and Economic Development Local Strategic Partnership Sub Group;
  - Victoria Wallace, Chief Executive Leeds Castle;
  - Elaine Collins, Marden Business Forum and the Network of Rural Business Forums;
  - Terry Collins, Marden Business Forum and the Network of Rural Business Forums;
  - Darren Hoadley, Director of Scarab Sweepers;
  - Jan Renwick, Retired Director of Inprint Ltd;
  - Councillor Chris Garland, Leader of the Council / Managing Director of Attia Financial Bookkeeping; and
  - Councillor David Burton, Managing Director of Burtons Medical Equipment Ltd.
- 9. Future Work Programme and Scrutiny Officer Update** **11 - 20**

## MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 6 SEPTEMBER 2011

**PRESENT:** Councillors Beerling, Barned, English, Mrs Gibson, Hogg, Paine (Vice-Chairman), Pickett and de Wiggondene

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

That all items be web-cast.

**49. Apologies.**

Apologies were received from Councillors, Gooch, Wilson and Harwood.

**50. Notification of Substitute Members.**

Councillors Beerling and English substituted for Councillors Wilson and Harwood respectively.

**51. Notification of Visiting Members**

There were no Visiting Members.

**52. Disclosures by Members and Officers:**

There were no disclosures.

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

It was agreed that all items should be taken in public as proposed.

**54. Minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2011**

Members discussed the resolution made on page 5 of the minutes: 'That Councillor Pickett should investigate the Parking review and charges with Steve Goulette and report back to the Committee on his findings'. Some Members expressed concern that this was an area that could be an area of exploration that could create duplication with another Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Members queried whether item 44, the complaints made reference to the accessibility and equality issues discussed at the previous meeting and whether a recommendation should have been made. The minute's state:

'The Committee questioned the complaints policy in terms of accessibility. The Officer informed Members that efforts had been made to make it as easy as possible to make a complaint to the council; the policy outlined that complaints could be made by telephone or through an advocate and that stage 2 complaints no longer needed to be made in writing.' The Officer had explained that these issues had already been addressed in the policy.

**Resolved:** that the minutes of the meeting held on 2 August 2011 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

## **55. Quarter 1 Performance Report**

The Chairman welcomed Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Manager to the meeting. The Chairman thanked Miss Kershaw for the recent training session on Policy and Performance which had been arranged to equip and prepare the Committee to deal with this area of their work.

The Officer explained that the Quarter 1 report was provided for information, subsequent reports would include Quarter 2 and Quarter 3 data which would allow a comparison and analysis to be made. Miss Kershaw informed the Committee that many of the performance indicators were showing as being on course to achieve the targets set but more would be known at Quarter 2. The Officer assured Members that if targets were not being met Managers would address those areas.

Miss Kershaw made reference to paragraph 1.5.10 in the report which identified the impact of the current economic climate in relation to performance indicator LVE 002 (number of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance) exceeding the annual target. This illustrated the factors that needed to be given consideration when scrutinising the performance report. Miss Kershaw explained that the number of people, particularly females, claiming Job Seekers Allowance had risen compared to the same period last year. The Economic Development Manager had noted that this was attributed to weakening retail and public sector employment which traditionally had a higher proportion of female workers. The Officer explained that at present this indicator would slightly miss the annual target and advised Members that it could impact on other areas including benefits and housing. The Committee highlighted performance indicator DCV 003 and the target relating to residential planning applications, observing that as with the target relating to Job Seekers Allowance, this too was an area affected by the economic down turn.

Miss Kershaw referred Members to Appendix A of the report, explaining that the reporting system used was Covalent and the status indicators for targets: red - target missed, amber - within 10% of the target, green - hits target, unknown - new targets so nothing to measure against from the previous year and data only for contextual information.

The Committee asked a series of questions regarding the performance figures for KPI R&B 077 and partnership working. Members discussed the target set and whether a higher target could have been achieved if staff cuts had not taken place. Miss Kershaw explained that all service related enquires would need to be raised with the appropriate officer, advising that in this case that would be Steve McGuinness, Head of Revenues and Benefits. It was felt that this would be extremely beneficial, particularly as the income aspect of this investigation would feed into the Committee's current review topic with its focus on income generation and efficiency savings.

The Committee asked Miss Kershaw to investigate whether there would be any benefit in aligning performance management with seasonal trends rather than the current quarterly reporting method.

Members also discussed the performance indicator explanations on page 23 of the agenda relating to the outcome, 'By 2015 Maidstone has decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures.' It was felt that these should be highlighted to the Housing Consultative Board.

**It was resolved that:**

- a) Steve McGuinness, Head of Benefits and Council Tax should be invited to the next available meeting to discuss Performance Indicator R&B 007 – value of fraud identified by the fraud partnership;
- b) Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Manager, should report back to the Committee on her findings on why Performance Management targets are not amended to take seasonal trends into account; and
- c) All performance indicator explanations relating to outcome 'By 2015 Maidstone has decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures' should be highlighted and referred to the Housing Consultative Board.

**56. Quarter 1 Complaints Report**

Miss Kershaw remained to discuss the next item on the agenda, the Quarter 1 Complaints report. The Officer explained that complaints answered within the statutory timescale of 10 days were down on the previous year. She informed the Committee that with regards to Housing issues where the department exceeded 10 days, contact was maintained with the customer. In relation to the previous quarter, the Committee was informed that Housing were performing better and that they had appointed a dedicated complaints officer within the team. The Officer explained that services that affected everyone in the borough such as Council Tax and Waste and Recycling were expected to generate the highest numbers of complaints.

Members raised questions surrounding the litter enforcement team who operate in the Town Centre issuing penalty fines to those caught dropping litter in the street. It was felt that their 'combat style' uniform was

intimidating. The Committee were updated on these issues by Miss Kershaw who informed them that new uniforms were being issued and the team would also be carrying cameras that would monitor the ways in which litter enforcement cases were dealt with. Members were assured that any complaints received regarding the team were investigated and further training was provided where required.

The Committee was informed that complaints customer surveys were now sent out monthly rather than quarterly to help improve and monitor the complaints process and feedback would be given to the team concerned. Complaints could also be escalated to a Stage 2 complaint and these would be dealt with by Paul Fisher, Head of Corporate Law and Legal Services. Miss Kershaw told the Committee that most of the recommendations made by the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee with regards to the Complaint Policy had been implemented. Work to improve the the web pages, making them more accessible for customers was in progress.

Members were informed that as a result of customer feedback via the complaints process it had been established that the withdrawal of Council Tax payment slips had proved too hasty a decision for many customers. The lesson learnt for the Council was to provide more public consultation for policy issues.

Miss Kershaw brought the ombudsman's report to the attention of the Committee, explaining that it had been considerably shorter this year than last year which was a positive reflection of the Council's work in dealing with complaints as full reports were only sent to Council's with a high level of complaints.

Council Tax and the outsourcing of letters, primarily the Single Person's Discount review form was discussed. The Committee felt that overall this action had proved its financial viability to the council but had initially generated a large number of complaints due to the content of the letter and the manner in which residents were asked for information. It was felt that it was extremely important that language used in letters was accessible to all residents. The Committee also discussed Benefits letters which they cited as particularly problematic. They felt that they were difficult to understand and the problem was exasperated by the lack of national guidance offered. The Officer explained that a letter writing course was being offered to those in charge of letter writing and the use of plain English was encouraged across the council.

In response to a suggestion that had been made by a satisfied customer, the Committee discussed offering an award to staff who were responsible for turning around difficult complaints on behalf of the customer. Members were informed that there was currently no protocol or criteria in place to allow this to happen.

**It was resolved that:**

- a) The contents of the complaints report and the ombudsman's report be noted by the Committee; and

- b) Steve McGinnes, Head of Benefits and Council Tax should be invited to discuss the accessibility of Council tax and Benefits letters to residents.

## **57. Corporate Improvement Plan Update**

The Committee welcomed Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Manager back for the next item on the agenda, the Corporate Improvement Plan Update.

The Officer explained that this was an update on the actions within the Corporate Improvement Plan that would be going to Cabinet and advised the Committee that any recommendations made would be added to the report.

Miss Kershaw informed the Committee that 14 of the actions in the plan had been completed since the last report, with five outstanding. She explained that it was a living document that could be added to when relevant, such as following inspections. Although there had been no inspections recently, Members were told that there were two Peer reviews planned in 2012, a planning review and a corporate review and actions would be added to the plan as a result of these. The Committee were also informed that the Council had retained the Investors in People accreditation and there would be actions to follow as a result of this. The Officer explained that Cabinet away days focused on priority setting around 'Corporate and Customer Excellence' and as a result also generated actions for the plan.

The Committee questioned CIP 019.01 'Hold focus groups to explore how people want to be engaged and develop a robust plan to deliver this'. Members felt that this action lacked meaning and should be reworded to provide clarity.

Members discussed project management and it was felt there was a need for a Senior Officer in this role. They discussed various project management roles that they were aware of with the authority, including a role at the Museum, the High Street regeneration project as well as highlighting past problems with Millennium Park. The Committee aired their concern over possible duplication in officer roles occurring. It was felt that the responsibility for project management role was vital given the level of financial investment. They felt that that it was an in-house skill that was lacking and suggested that it would be a suitable topic for a Scrutiny review with a focus on offering best value in this area.

Members questioned the actions relating to learning and development and equality issues for staff. It was felt that these were vitally important but wanted clarification on how the Learning and Development team ensured that all staff were completing these courses within the target dates set. Miss Kershaw advised that Tina Edwards, Learning and Development Manager, would be able to advise the Committee further.

The Committee thanked the Officer for attending the meeting.

**It was resolved that:**

- a) The following action: CIP 019.01 'hold focus groups to explore how people want to be engaged and develop a robust plan to deliver this' should be reworded to form a more meaningful target and to clearly identify the purpose. Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Manager and the Scrutiny Officer should formalise the Committee's suggested rewording: 'to explore methods in which to engage with the public for consultation purposes and develop a robust plan to deliver this' for the Officer to take to Cabinet on 14 September; and
- b) The Scrutiny Officer should investigate with Tina Edwards, Learning and Development Manager, the methods in place to ensure staff are completing the training actions detailed in the Corporate Improvement Plan.

**58. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010-2011**

The Committee reviewed the Annual Report 2010-11 and discussed the topics covered over the past year by Overview and Scrutiny Committees. Members highlighted Domestic Abuse and the Partnership and Well-Being Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work on Obesity which included a visit to Zeroth Active Centre, a provider of one of the 'Weight for Life' programmes, part of the Healthy Lifestyles Programme run by Maidstone Borough Council as part of a 2 year service agreement with the Primary Care Trust. It was felt that the annual report could be broader and cover more of the year's work including the many 'one-off' items looked at well as the larger review topics. Members felt that the report would benefit from an index so the reader could quickly identify the Committee responsible for each topic.

The Committee concluded that they would note the report and made no recommendations to alter the report's current state, resolving that their suggestions could be addressed at the upcoming Chairman's meeting and considered for future reports. Members also highlighted to the Scrutiny Officer that due to the restructuring of the Scrutiny Committees there was not complete clarity amongst Members on the terms of reference for each Committee. The Scrutiny Officer suggested that the terms of reference be revisited at the Chairman's meeting to provide a refresh.

**It was resolved that:**

- a) The Annual Report 2011-11 be agreed to go to Council; and
- b) The upcoming Chairman's meeting should be used as an opportunity to:



- i. Discuss the Committee's suggestions for improvements to the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report to include a broader coverage of all scrutiny topics in future reports and the addition of an index to enable the reader to quickly establish which Committee had dealt with which item; and
- ii. Discuss the terms of reference for each Scrutiny Committee.

## **59. 'The Council as a Business?' Survey Results**

The Committee evaluated the responses to their staff/Councillor survey for 'The Council as a Business?' review and the comments and ideas put forward by the public in response to a press release and a post on the Council's social networking page on Facebook. The survey and press release had asked for ideas on income generation and ways in which the Council could become more efficient.

The Committee discussed the review topic and considered if the focus of the review should be on developing a 'business like' culture at the Council and establishing this as a corporate outlook. It was felt that the review would benefit from external engagement with the local business community to help determine how the Council could become 'business like'.

The Scrutiny Officer updated Members on her engagement with other authorities as part of the review. She explained that Kent County Council had been approached regarding the Committee's interest in exploring commercial trading arms of the Council but they had declined the invitation. She also informed Members that Braintree Council would be available to attend a later meeting to provide the alternative 'executive' view of a Medium Term Financial Strategy requested by Members. With regards to exploring events management as a means of generating an income from the Council's properties and parks and open spaces, the Committee was informed that Westminster City Council, Tower Hamlets Council and Lambeth Council had been contacted.

Members discussed the litter enforcement team, responsible for keeping the Town Centre litter free. It was suggested that their services could be deployed to areas outside the Town Centre also. It was felt that this should be added to the scope of the review to investigate the cost effectiveness of expanding this service. Members also suggested that it would be beneficial to look at strategies for maximising the new homes bonus and business rates.

Members felt that there was an overwhelming number of responses to the survey and press release and that it would take time to go through each idea and consider it fully. It was felt that the Committee Members who had volunteered previously to design the survey and press release should meet with the Scrutiny Officer ahead of the next meeting to go through the suggestions.

**It was resolved that:**

- a) Councillors English, Paine and Pickett should meet with the Scrutiny Officer to consider all the suggestions put forward and identify which should be taken forward by the Committee; and
- b) The business community should be engaged with and sought as witnesses for a future meeting to explore a 'business like' culture for the Council.

**60. Future Work Programme and Scrutiny Officer Update**

The Committee was reminded that the Mela was due to take place on Sunday 11 September and as previously agreed Members would attend to conduct surveys with the public on ways in which the Council could generate an income and become more efficient in their delivery of services. Councillors English, Paine and Pickett volunteered to attend. Members were asked to consider their availability for future events at Morrisons, Lenham Farmers Market and the Switch cafe.

Members were informed that three volunteers had put themselves forward for the Budget Working Group; Councillors Gooch, Paine and Pickett. A meeting would be arranged with Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Customer Services, and the group would report back to the Committee.

The Committee considered the items on the forward plan and resolved that they would like to see the Community Halls Audit at their next meeting.

**It was resolved that:**

- a) Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager should be invited to the next meeting to discuss the Community Halls Audit; and
- b) The Committee should provide the Scrutiny Officer with their weekday and weekend availability to enable her to organise further events to allow them to engage with the public on their review 'The Council as a Business?'

**61. Duration of Meeting**

6.30pm to 7.57pm

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

### **Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

**Tuesday 4 October 2011**

#### **'The Council as a Business?' Review – A Business like Culture**

**Report of:** Overview & Scrutiny Officer

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 At their meeting held on 6 September 2011 the Committee made the following recommendation: 'The business community should be engaged with and sought as witnesses for a future meeting to explore a 'business like' culture for the Council.'
- 1.2 The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee are conducting a review called 'The Council as a Business?'. There are two areas being investigated:
  - Engage with staff, Councillors and the public to get their ideas on income generation and efficiency savings for the Council; and
  - Creating a business like culture at the Council.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Committee interview the following witnesses to gain an understanding of how the Council could take a business like approach by developing a business culture within the organisation:
  - John Taylor, Chair of the Regeneration and Economic Development Local Strategic Partnership Sub Group;
  - Victoria Wallace, Chief Executive Leeds Castle;
  - Elaine Collins and Terry Collins, Marden Business Forum and the Network of Rural Business Forums;
  - Darren Hoadley, Director of Scarab Sweepers;
  - Jan Renwick, Retired Director of Inprint Ltd;
  - Councillor Chris Garland, Leader of the Council; and
  - Councillor David Burton, Managing Director of Burton's Medical Equipment Limited.
- 2.2 Areas of questioning could include but are not limited to:
  - What forms the basis of your business in terms its ethos;
  - How do you measure the performance of your business;
  - How do you measure the satisfaction levels of your customer base;
  - How do you ensure continuity in the service you provide;
  - What are the three most important elements of your business;
  - Is 'branding' important to your business;

- How did you develop your 'brand';
- What are the main criteria in creating a business like environment in the workplace;
- What factors can detract from a business like environment;
- What is your perception of the Council as a service provider;
- What services have you utilised as part of your business activity;
- How do you think a Council is perceived by other organisations, particularly in the business community;
- What do you think are the Council's strengths in projecting a business like approach; and
- What are the Council's failings in projecting a business like approach?

### **3. Reasons for Recommendation**

3.1 The Committee felt that it was important to look outside the organisation and seek the opinion of the business world in order to establish an informed consensus on what was considered to be a business like culture.

3.2 The Council is responsible for delivering regulatory services to the residents of Maidstone. The services provided include:

- Licensing;
- Environmental Enforcement;
- Environmental Health;
- Economic Development and Tourism;
- Building Surveying;
- Council Tax;
- Housing Benefits;
- Parking Services; and
- Development Control.

3.3 The manner in which the Council delivers its services impacts on the public and businesses community. In 2011 the Council re-evaluated its priorities as part of the Strategic Plan. The three priorities set were:

- For Maidstone to have a growing economy;
- For Maidstone to be a decent place to live; and
- Corporate and Customer Excellence.

### **4. Impact on Corporate Objectives**

4.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following Council priority:

- 'Corporate and Customer Excellence'.

## Maidstone Borough Council

### Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 4 October 2011

#### Future Work Programme and Scrutiny Officer Update

**Report of:** Overview & Scrutiny Officer

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 To consider the Committee's future work programme and the Forward Plan of Key Decisions.
- 1.2 To consider the information update given by the Overview and Scrutiny Officer.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Committee considers the draft Future Work Programme, attached at **Appendix A**, to ensure that it is appropriate and covers all issues Members currently wish to consider within the Committee's remit.
- 2.2 That the Committee considers the sections of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions, attached at **Appendix B** relevant to the Committee and discuss whether these are items requiring further investigation or monitoring by the Committee.

#### **3 Future Work Programme**

- 3.1 Throughout the course of the municipal year the Committee is asked to put forward work programme suggestions. These suggestions are planned into its annual work programme. Members are asked to consider the work programme at each meeting to ensure that remains appropriate and covers all issues Members currently wish to consider within the Committee's remit.

#### **4 Forward Plan of Key Decision**

- 4.1 The Forward Plan for October 2011 to January 2012 contains the following decisions relevant to the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's current work programme:
  - Budget Strategy 2012/13 onwards
  - ICT Partnerships
  - Parish Services Scheme
  - Council Tax 2012/13 – Collection fund adjustments
  - Building Surveying Charges
  - Fees & Charges - Bereavement Services 2012/13

- Review of Fees and Charges for Maidstone Market at Lockmeadow 2012/13
- Review of Fees and Charges for Waste Services 2012/13

## **6. Impact on Corporate Objectives**

- 6.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following Council priority:
- Corporate and Customer Excellence.
- 6.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's priorities for the medium term and has a range of outcomes which support the delivery of the priorities. Actions to deliver these outcomes may therefore include work that the Committee will consider over the next year.

## Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

### Future Work Programme 2011-2012

Date	Items to be considered
24 May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman</li> <li>• Work Programming 2011/12</li> </ul>
7 June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman</li> <li>• Work Programming 2011/12</li> </ul>
5 July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman</li> <li>• <b>The Marketing of Council Buildings</b></li> <li>• Interview with Councillor Rob Field</li> <li>• <b>Annual Review of Complaints 2010-11</b></li> <li>• <b>Interviews with Angela Woodhouse, Head of Change and Scrutiny and Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Officer</b></li> <li>• <b>The Council as a Business – Scoping Document for Review</b></li> <li>• <b>The Leader and Cabinet members – Written Updates</b></li> </ul>
02 August 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Complaints Policy</b></li> <li>• Interview with Angela Woodhouse, Head of Change and Scrutiny</li> <li>• <b>The Council as a Business? Review</b></li> <li>• Interviews with Chief Executive and Directors and</li> <li>• Interim report on Staff Survey results</li> </ul>
06 September 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>1<sup>st</sup> quarter performance monitoring report</b></li> <li>• Interview with Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Officer</li> <li>• <b>Complaints Quarter 1 Report</b></li> <li>• Interview with Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Officer</li> <li>• <b>Corporate Improvement Plan Update</b></li> <li>• Interview with Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Officer</li> <li>• <b>The Council as a Business? Review</b></li> <li>• Written updates from Committee Members on best practice and evaluation of Staff Survey results</li> </ul>
4 October 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>The Council as a Business? Review</b> Interviews with:</li> <li>• John Taylor, Chair of the Regeneration and Economic Development Local Strategic Partnership Sub Group;</li> <li>• Victoria Wallace, Chief Executive Leeds Castle,</li> <li>• Elaine Collins, Marden Business Forum and the Network of Rural Business Forums;</li> <li>• Terry Collins, Marden Business Forum and the</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Network of Rural Business Forums;</li> <li>Darren Hoadley, Director of Scarab Sweepers;</li> <li>Jan Renwick, Retired Director of Inprint Ltd;</li> <li>Councillor Chris Garland, Leader of the Council; and</li> <li>Councillor David Burton, MD of Burton's Medical Equipment Limited.</li> </ul>
01 November 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> quarter performance monitoring report</li> <li>2<sup>nd</sup> quarter complaints monitoring report</li> <li><b>Community Halls Audit</b> Interview with Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager</li> <li><b>The Council as a Business? Review</b> Interview with Leader and Director Braintree Council (TBC)</li> </ul>
29 November 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Budget Strategy</li> <li>Strategic Plan</li> <li>LSP thematic quarterly performance report</li> </ul>
10 January 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Agree report for The Council as a Business? Review</b></li> </ul>
7 February 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>The Council as a Business? Review</b></li> <li>LSP thematic quarterly performance report</li> <li>3<sup>rd</sup> quarter performance monitoring report</li> <li>3<sup>rd</sup> quarter complaints monitoring report</li> </ul>
6 March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Agree report The Council as a Business? Review</b></li> <li>Interview with Leader and Cabinet Progress Over the Year</li> </ul>
3 April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li></li> </ul>

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# **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

# **FORWARD PLAN**

15

**1 October 2011 to  
31 January 2012**

**Councillor Christopher Garland  
Leader of the Council**



## **Forward Plan October 2011 - January 2012**

### **INTRODUCTION**

This is the Forward Plan which the Leader of the Council is required to prepare. Its purpose is to give advance notice of all the “key decisions” which the Executive is likely to take over the next 4 month period. The Plan will be up-dated monthly.

Each “key decision” is the subject of a separate entry in the Plan. The entries are arranged in date order – i.e. the “key decisions” likely to be taken during the first month of the 4 month period covered by the Plan appear first.

Each entry identifies, for that “key decision” –

- the subject matter of the decision
- a brief explanation of why it will be a “key decision”
- the date on which the decision is due to be taken
- who will be consulted before the decision is taken and the method of the consultation
- how and to whom representations (about the decision) can be made
- what reports/papers are, or will be, available for public inspection
- the wards to be affected by this decision

### **DEFINITION OF A KEY DECISION**

A key decision is an executive decision which is likely to:

- Result in the Maidstone Borough Council incurring expenditure or making savings which is equal to the value of £250,000 or more; or
- Have significant effect on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in Maidstone.

**Forward Plan  
October 2011 - January 2012**

**HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?**

The Council encourages and welcomes anyone wishing to express his or her views about decisions the Cabinet plans to make. This can be done by writing directly to the appropriate Officer or Cabinet Member (the details of which are shown for each decision to be made).

Alternatively, the Cabinet are contactable via our [website](#) where you can submit a question to the Leader of the Council. There is also the opportunity to invite the Leader of the Council to speak at a function you may be organising.

**Forward Plan  
October 2011 - January 2012**

<b>Decision Maker, Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made and, if delayed, reason for delay:</b>	<b>Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:</b>	<b>Consultees and Method:</b>	<b>Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:</b>	<b>Relevant Documents:</b>
<b>Cabinet</b>  Due Date: 12 Oct 2011	ICT Partnership  Report detailing the business case for a MKIP ICT shared service/partnership	Staff, Heads of Service, Members Questionnaire	David Lindsay, Head of IT Services davelindsay@maidstone.gov.uk  31/7/2011	Cabinet, Council or Committee Report for ICT Partnership
<b>Cabinet</b>  Due Date: 21 Dec 2011	Budget Strategy 2012/13 Onwards  To agree a draft Council Tax and Budget Strategy for 2012/13 onwards.	Management Team Heads of Service Members Internal - Management Team External - Options as agreed by Cabinet in August 2010	Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk 25 November 2011	Cabinet, Council or Committee Report for Budget Strategy 2012/13 Onwards - Cabinet
<b>Cabinet</b>  Due Date: 21 Dec 2011	Council Tax 2012/13 - Collection Fund Adjustments  To agree the levels of Collection Fund Adjustment	Management Team Heads of Service Members Internal communication/report to Management Team	Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk 25 November 2011	Cabinet, Council or Committee Report for Council Tax 2012/13 - Collection Fund Adjustments - Cabinet

**Forward Plan  
October 2011 - January 2012**

<b>Decision Maker and Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made:</b>	<b>Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:</b>	<b>Consultees and Method:</b>	<b>Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:</b>	<b>Relevant Documents:</b>
<p><b>Cabinet</b></p> <p>Due Date: 11 Jan 2012</p>	<p>Building Surveying Charges</p> <p>Review of Building Surveying Charges for 2012</p>		<p>David Harrison davidharrison@maidstone.gov.uk 21/11/2011</p>	<p>Cabinet, Council or Committee Report for Building Surveying Charges</p>
<p><b>Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services</b></p> <p>Due Date: Dec 2011</p>	<p>Parish Services Scheme</p> <p>To consider the outcome of the concurrent functions review and agree the new Parish Services Scheme</p>	<p>All Parish Councils. The review began in January 2011 and has had consultation throughout including with parishes and KALC. The main consultation for the report will commence in August with a presentation and question and answer session for all parish councils, followed by a formal consultation document on the new scheme which is planned to close in November 2011</p>	<p>Ryan O'Connell ryanoconnell@maidstone.gov.uk 1 December 2011</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Report for Parish Services Scheme</p>

**Forward Plan  
October 2011 - January 2012**

<b>Decision Maker and Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made:</b>	<b>Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:</b>	<b>Consultees and Method:</b>	<b>Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:</b>	<b>Relevant Documents:</b>
<b>Cabinet Member for Environment</b>  Due Date: Nov 2011	Fees & Charges - Bereavement Services 2012/13  To set the level of fees and charges for bereavement services for 2012/13.	Local funeral directors; site users; applicants for cremation or burial services. Feedback from site users	Debra Herbert-Evers debraherbertevers@maidstone.gov.uk 15/10/2011	Cabinet Member Report for Fees & Charges - Bereavement Services 2012/13
<b>Cabinet Member for Environment</b>  Due Date: Nov 2011	Review of Fees and Charges for Maidstone Market at Lockmeadow 2012/13  To set the level of fees and charges for Maidstone Market for 2012/13.	Market traders; site hirers; site users; contacts on site Discussions with stakeholders	Robert Holmes, Market Manager robertholmes@maidstone.gov.uk 15/10/2011	Cabinet Member Report for Review of Fees and Charges for Maidstone Market at Lockmeadow 2012/13
<b>Cabinet Member for Environment</b>  Due Date: Nov 2011  Original Date: Sep 2011	Review of Fees and Charges for Waste Services 2012/13  To review the fees and charges of the charged waste services offered by Maidstone Borough Council for 2012/13.	Internal departments including contact centre Discussions with staff involved in delivery of existing charged for waste services	Jennifer Gosling jennifergosling@maidstone.gov.uk 15th October 2011	Cabinet Member Report for Review of Fees and Charges for Waste Services