

AGENDA

CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING



Overview and Scrutiny

Date: Tuesday 10 January 2012

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors: Mrs Wilson, Mrs Gooch (Chairman),
Yates, English, Mrs Gibson, Hogg,
Paine (Vice-Chairman), 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.**

Continued Over/:

Issued on 30 December 2011

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Alison Broom

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

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.	
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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 1 NOVEMBER 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Gooch (Chairman)
Councillors Mrs Wilson, Yates, Mrs Gibson, Hogg,
Paine (Vice-Chairman), Pickett and de Wiggondene

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

It was resolved that all items be webcast.

73. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Councillor English.

74. Notification of Substitute Members.

There were no Substitute Members.

75. Notification of Visiting Members.

There were no Visiting Members.

76. Disclosures by Members and Officers:

There were no disclosures.

77. 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.

78. Minutes of the Meeting held on 4 October 2011

It was resolved that the minutes of the meeting held on 4 October 2011 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

79. Quarter 2 Complaints Monitoring Report

The Committee welcomed Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Manager to the meeting. Miss Kershaw introduced the Quarter 2 Complaints Monitoring Report.

The Officer began by highlighting the success achieved by Housing in dealing with their complaints since the previous quarter. This had been achieved by redeploying an Officer whose role was dedicated to dealing with complaints. It was explained that Housing complaints were often complex but if the timescale to respond to a customer was exceeded the customer was kept informed throughout.

The Committee were informed that the reported Waste and Recycling complaints, on further investigation, had not been issues with the service. There had been a problem with missed food waste collections due to contamination but these had been resolved. The Waste Manager had met with the contractors and procedures had now been put in place to combat future problems.

Members were informed that complaints satisfaction surveys showed that over 50% of customers were happy with the outcome of their complaint. Ms Kershaw explained that in the area of complaints handling 33% was considered 'good'.

Members considered point 1.3.1, 'In order to ensure that complaints are being dealt with effectively and within corporate timescales it is important that a monitoring mechanism is in place'. The Officer explained that this had been investigated to a level where she was satisfied that complaints had been understood.

Members sought a progress update on new IT system for managing complaints and were informed that it was ready to be launched. It would be used for front line service in the contact centre later in the month but the back office system would take a little longer.

The Officer referenced Green Sacks and a recent problem with stock levels. Members were informed that there had not been procedures in place at the Gateway to ensure that stock levels were monitored but these were now in place, the lesson had been learnt and the complaints dealt with.

The Chairman referenced a comment made at the Committee's previous meeting which had focused on the review 'The Council as a Business?' The business community had been asked what the council could do to improve its services and their response had been that they would like to see the planning system speed up. It was observed that this concern was not reflected in the complaints report. The Officer explained that for residents complaints were often more to do with developments in their local area.

It was resolved that the report be noted.

80. Revenues and Benefits Update

The Committee welcomed Steve McGinnes, Head of Revenues and Benefits to the meeting.

The Officer had been invited to attend the meeting to respond to recommendations made in response to the Quarter 1 Performance Report and the Quarter 1 Complaints Monitoring Report (Appendix A). Members had sought further clarification on the Fraud target detailed in the Performance Monitoring Report and a broader understanding of any issues surrounding Revenues and Benefits correspondence.

Mr McGinnes began by discussing Fraud. He explained that there had been changes to the Visiting and Fraud Function with a dedicated Fraud team established and a reduced Visiting team. It was felt that the responsibilities of the Visiting Team could be achieved more efficiently with customers being contacted by post. It was clarified that the Visiting Officer's responsibilities had been to check if residents were receiving the correct Benefits and to assist with changes to circumstances. One Visiting Officer had been retained to assist the Fraud Team.

Members sought clarification on the number of households receiving Benefits. It was explained that 10,000 households in the borough were in receipt of Benefits and generally fraudulent activity was low but it was labour intensive process for Officers. Members were informed that a low level fraud offence would be dealt with by a financial penalty. Fraud cases were risk profiled to decide whether they should be taken forward. The impact on the public purse was the main consideration as a great deal of time was involved-time in preparing a case for prosecution. Members considered whether it would be cost effective in terms of the achievable results to employ more fraud officers. Members were informed that there was no financial benefit to the council as benefits were funded centrally. With reference to the performance target, it was explained that changes in staffing and the structure of the team had occurred at the beginning of the year and the change to the target reflected the change in function.

Concerns were raised regarding the change to contacting customers by letter and how this would combat the discrepancies in information supplied that could impact on the public purse. It was explained that this was achieved by matching data with the Department for Works and Pensions (DWP) and Inland Revenue; information such as interest on savings which would change a benefit claim were reported to the fraud team as matter of course. Members queried whether the data was 'clean data'. It was explained that matching data meant that changes to information and any other changes were picked up routinely.

The Committee were informed of the changes ahead. In future the fraud function would change and a central team for all agencies would be established. By 2013 fraud would not be a council function. With regards to staff, Benefit fraud would transfer to the DWP. A consultation was ongoing at present and possible option would be that staff would be operationally based at Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) but would work for the DWP.

Mr McGinnes moved on to discuss the second area of concern for the Committee which was that customers were finding Revenues and Benefits correspondence difficult to understand. It was explained that the

Government stipulated the financial information that had to be included in each Benefits letter, how it was calculated and the right to appeal. MBC had very little influence over the content but made every effort to use plain English. The Officer agreed that retrospective changes to a customer's Benefit award could result in a letter with a number of pages that could cause confusion. The Officer emphasised to the Committee that there was a duty to offer support to the customer and 'avoidable contact' was a key area for the council. Members clarified that included in the letter were details of where help and support could be found. In addition to this, it was explained that the benefits team worked closely with estate managers and took on their advice and feedback on the matter.

The Committee highlighted a case to the Officer where it transpired the customer could not read and questioned how well trained were staff to make judgement calls and deal with claimants fairly. Mr McGinnes informed Members that the frontline Customer Services team were very well trained and when the Benefits team were advised of any difficulties they would send out a welfare officer to assist with form filling. He highlighted that estate managers and welfare officers were also a good point of contact.

Members queried how often forms were reviewed and whether this was done by an expert body. The Committee considered the possibility of this being a task that could be undertaken by an Overview and Scrutiny committee. It was explained that application forms were reviewed regularly in-house and could achieve the crystal mark (Launched in 1990 by the Campaign for Plain English, the Crystal Mark has now become firmly established as the standard organisations aim for if they want to provide the clearest possible public information) to ensure they met customer needs. As part of the shared service with Tunbridge Wells they were already working on improving the common forms in use by both authorities.

Members highlighted the Single Person's Discount Form and the confusion caused by the majority of information that needed to be completed being found on the reverse of the form. Mr McGinnes informed Members that this form was one that the authority had total discretion with and it could be reviewed and made easier.

The Committee considered the withdrawal of Council Tax payment slips that had been highlighted by the complaints process. The Officer explained that there had been a high proportion of waste with the issue of payment slips as many residents opted to pay via direct debit, online or simply did not use the slips. As a result of the complaints made, all those who had contacted the council would be provided with payment slips in future.

At the discretion of the Chairman, Mr McGinnes gave the Committee a presentation on Welfare Reform and how the changes would affect Maidstone. Maidstone offered support for over 10,000 households, the density of claimants in the High Street and Park Wood was clearly

illustrated as well as a reasonable number in outlying areas by the GIS data presented.

The Committee was taken through a summary of the proposal to the existing Benefits scheme. It was explained that the changes began to come into affect from April 2011 but had so far only affected new customers. Existing customers had been protected until January 2012 when their annual review would take place. It would be at this time that their Housing Benefit would be brought down in line with the new Housing Benefit rates; this would make it more difficult for those renting properties in the Private Sector as benefit rates would be set at the market rate but would be capped. It was estimated that the changes would affect approximately 1800 households in the borough. A specific group highlighted that would be affected by the changes were single persons under the age of 35. Prior to the changes coming onto affect in April 2011 single persons under the age of 25 would receive a shared room rate in housing benefit but this was to be upped to the age of 35 and it was estimated that this change would affect 120 households.

Mr McGinnes informed Members that there had been a fall in the level of customer satisfaction in the last month but overall this remained high at 94%. He reported there had been no increase in complaints or applications for Discretionary Housing Payments so far as a result of the changes.

The Committee was told that Universal Credit which would bring all state Benefits together and they would be administrated centrally by the DWP. This would create one benefit claim that would potentially follow a customer though their lifetime. The aim was to remove the complexity of the Benefits system and the barriers this created for customers. The changes would not affect pensioners.

Payments would change to one single monthly payment which would result in a new requirement for customers to manage their money which was considered to be a risk area. The impact on landlords would be negligible as they would continue to receive regular payments but an area of risk remained where the benefit payments was going to the claimant.

Throughout the presentation and discussion there remained areas where the details were still to be provided by central government. The Committee was informed that Zena Cooke, Director of Regeneration and Communication was part of the national steering group so any further information and clarification would reach the authority sooner rather than later.

The DWP's aim was to deliver 80% of their service as an online self service. There would be a real time link between agencies. This would create a secure system with fewer onuses on the customer to provide information changes. Members raised concerns on the feasibility of an online, self service approach. It was explained that the target had been based on research and a business case. Mr McGinnes agreed to research

the target and provide the Committee with evidence on how it was achievable.

Members were all in agreement that the Benefits team were doing an extremely good job and asked that their praise was noted. Any issues surrounding the new scheme they felt should be directed to Central Government. They were in agreement that change was needed to achieve a cleaner and more simplified system but felt that any real problems would not surface until January 2012. Members felt they would benefit from regular updates on the changes as they develop and suggested that two to three examples of 'real' scenarios in Maidstone should be provided to the committee to further their understanding.

The final area discussed was the Local Council Tax scheme which was described as something that would give councils 'new freedoms to meet local needs'. The Committee was informed that national schemes were to be abolished and the expenditure would be returned to councils in the form of a un-ring fenced annual grant. Nationally there would be a 10% reduction in Council Tax benefit or £500m with an estimated £1.1m reduction for Maidstone from 2012/13. As part of the scheme pensioners and vulnerable needed to be protected which for Maidstone was equivalent to 46% of residents meaning that savings needed to be found elsewhere. A consultation was taking place to determine whether the risk could be shared with the County (Kent County Council). Members were informed that the timeframe for the consultation was limited with the new operation due to be implemented in spring 2013.

The Committee considered possible ways in which savings or income could be found. Their awareness that the council already had a high collection rate for council tax of 98% left them to resolve that there was little that could be achieved in that particular area.

It was concluded that there were significant changes to come for the authority and the effects would be far reaching across the borough from January 2012 onwards. With regards to the savings that would have to be found in the Council Tax benefit shortfall, it was felt that the council faced a difficult decision in whom they chose to protect.

It was resolved that:

- a) The Single Person Discount Form should be reviewed and simplified and the Committee consulted on the changes made;
- b) The Welfare Reform presentation should be circulated electronically to the Committee by the Scrutiny Officer;
- c) The DWPs target of dealing with 80% of claimants via an online self service should be investigated by the Head of Revenues and Benefits and his findings on this reported back to the Committee;

- d) Steve McGinnes should provide 2 to 3 real-case scenarios such as a family a single person and a couple or pensioner and prepare a brief presentation to show the real financial calculation and impact of the changes; and
- e) The Committee should keep a watching brief of Welfare Reform and the timeframes for implementation. The Head of Revenues and Benefits should provide the Scrutiny Officer with important updates in order to keep the Committee up to date.

81. The Budget Strategy

The Chairman introduced Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Customer Service.

Mr Riley took the Committee through the most likely forecast for the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy (appendix B). The Cabinet had made their decision on the Budget Strategy on 14 September 2011. The forecast showed the Committee the Council's current position and the next 5 years.

The first calculation 'Available Finance' showed the revenue support grant received from government, the loss incurred and the collection fund adjustment for Council Tax. Members were informed that the revenue support grant would be confirmed in January 2012 and that a 2.5% rise in council tax was included in the projection each year. The Officer explained that a correlation was made with the Consumer Price Index (CPI), and reflected rises in fuel and other utilities with the cost totalling £410,000 for 2012/13. Under the various headings, Inflation Increase, Contractual Commitments, National Initiatives, Local Priorities and Minor Initiatives, Various Priorities and Council Assets, incomes and losses were accounted for. Single Voter Registration scheduled for 2014 /15 was incorporated into the outgoing costs for 2014/15.

Mr Riley made reference to the £1.1 million deficit forecast as a result of the changes to Council Tax Benefit and collections. He explained that from a financial perspective this shortfall would be shared with the other precepts for whom Maidstone collected on behalf of including the Police, Fire and Parishes. The government suggestion for 12 monthly payments for Council Tax rather than 10 was highlighted to the Committee as this would prevent reinvestment, although it was explained that payments could be changed to the 1st of the month.

Another Financial consideration highlighted was in relation to Welfare Reform, discussed under the previous item on the agenda, and the 'transitional costs' faced as Universal Credit was introduced. The loss of grant combined with the retention of staff as the scheme was phased in until 2017 would have a negative impact on the council's financial affairs. The Officer informed Members that there was £700,000 to £800,000 of savings still to find for 2012/13. He explained that Senior Officers would

be aligning their decision making process with the council's priorities and the strategic plan rather than taking a 'salami slice' approach. Mr Riley highlighted areas where future changes to Council Tax and Benefits could affect services currently provided such as the Gateway and the Contact Centre.

The retention of Business Rates was explained to the Committee. It was explained that there would be a focus on incentivised business growth but that disproportionate success in this area would be levied which could impact negatively on Maidstone with only 10% being retained by MBC and the rest to go to Kent County Council (KCC). Concern was raised that Kent as a two tier authority had not been taken into account, and Maidstone's structure had not been considered. The effect of this would mean that more money would leave Maidstone for other areas in Kent. Mr Riley informed Members that he hoped the consultation process taking place would reveal that there were still two tier authorities in place like Maidstone and not just unitary authorities to consider.

The Capital Programme was discussed. Members were informed that the Hazlitt Theatre's heating had been replaced and there was funding set aside to assist the Museum.

Mr Riley moved affairs on to the future including the council's Core Strategy and the Infrastructure Delivery plan that would follow. He explained that a great deal of funding was needed to deliver the core strategy and he informed the Committee that changes to capital funding would include section 106 agreements and the introduction of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). This was something that MBC would not have to give to KCC until they reached an agreement with KCC on changes they required to their infrastructure. It was discussed that the Leader of the Council, Councillor Garland, had confirmed that the general principle would be to work with KCC on infrastructure and agreement would most likely take place once the Infrastructure Delivery Plan was in place from the Core Strategy which would demonstrate where needs were to be met.

Members were informed that a project was underway to address fees and charges. This would look across the whole council and provide comprehensive analysis of where there would be an ability to make an income.

Finally, Leader of the Council, Councillor Garland, updated the Committee on three main areas that he felt required further consideration. Members were informed that Cabinet would have to reconsider a saving that had been identified. The proposal would be not to reduce the funding for Concurrent Functions for 2012/13 (the grant scheme for Parishes in the borough) which would result in a need to find an additional £100,000 in savings. Councillor Garland informed the Committee that Parishes Members had been informed that in principle an agreement had been reached by the Cabinet Member for an interim period of 12 months which would result in the grant being maintained at its current level. He told Members that he was in support of this.

The last area discussed was the Council Tax Grant and the government proposal to keep council tax at 0% and replace it with a grant of 2.5%. Councillor Garland told the Committee that this would result in a loss of £375,000 year on year for the Council with a continued loss of £7m in total due to the accumulative loss of interest. Members considered whether Council tax should be frozen following the governments lead of a 0% rise against a 2.5% year on year increase which would result in a approximately £5 a year for a band D council Tax Payer. The Committee felt that it would be beneficial to investigate the opinions of other local authorities on the matter.

It was resolved:

- a) That Committee should investigate other authorities' opinions on the Government's decision to freeze council tax and replace this with a grant; and
- b) That the Head of Finance should provide the Committee with a timetable for setting the budget for 2012/13.

82. Future Work Programme and Scrutiny Officer Update

Members considered their future work programme and the forward plan. Members resolved that the Parish Services Scheme should be the focus of the meeting on 29 November.

With regards to the changes to the Local Strategic Partnership and Locality Boards, it was felt that a written update would be sufficient.

The Committee were informed that a visit to Braintree District Council had been proposed for December 2011 to gain an understanding of another authority's financial outlook and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

It was resolved:

- a) That the Parish Scheme should be the focus of the next meeting; and
- b) A Written Update should be provided by the Local Strategic Partnership lead officer to inform the Committee on the recent changes to the Local Strategic Partnership and Locality Boards.

83. Duration of Meeting

6.30p.m. to 8.48 p.m.

Maidstone Borough Council

Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 10 January 2012

The Budget Strategy

Report of: Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny has within its terms of reference the scrutiny of the Council's budget. Its review for 2011/12 'The Council as a Business?' is focused on the financial restraints faced by the Council and the need for efficiency savings and innovation in terms of income generation. At its meeting on 2 August 2011, the Committee resolved that a cross-party Budget Working Group should be established to enable the Committee to become involved in the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) at an early stage. It was felt that this would improve Member understanding and enable more constructive debate, seeking to help balance the council's financial pressure with public acceptability.
- 1.2 Following the Budget Working Group's last meeting on 19 December 2011 with the Head of Finance and Customer Services, the Chairman felt it appropriate for the Committee to concentrate on two main topics at its next meeting:
 - The debate on an increase in Council Tax vs. a Council Tax Freeze; and
 - The Council's Fees and Charges.
- 1.3 On 21 December 2011 Cabinet considered the Budget Strategy 2012/13 onwards (Appendix A) the Budget Strategy 2012/13 Fees and Charges (Appendix B).
- 1.4 Cabinet made the following decisions:

The Budget Strategy 2012/13 onwards

- That the revised strategic revenue projection at Appendix B to the report of the Corporate Leadership Team, which incorporates the review of strategic projection, be agreed.
- That the proposed savings for 2012/13 onwards, as detailed at Appendix C to the report of the Corporate Leadership Team be agreed, subject to an additional saving of £10,000 from adjustments to the support service budget within the Corporate Services portfolio.

- That the proposed use of the New Homes Bonus as outlined below be agreed.
- That no capital programme be set for 2015/16 at this time, awaiting a report from officers on prioritisation of options once the infrastructure delivery plan is sufficiently detailed for evaluation.
- That the issues relating to revenue resources, including the council tax levels, the tax base and the provisional revenue support grant be noted.
- That the results of the budget consultation and the issues identified for future years of the medium term financial strategy and the strategic plan be noted.
- That the utilisation of a one-off £100,000 from general balances to support the concurrent functions grant process during 2012/13 to allow for consultation to be completed and the delivery of the new parish services scheme be agreed.

Budget Strategy 2012/13 Fees and Charges

- That the increases in fees and charges as set out in detail at Appendix A to the report of the Corporate Leadership Team, with the exception of the proposed increase in the one hour parking charge and that the reduction of £10,000 in the proposed income be found from adjustments to the support service budget within the Corporate Services portfolio, be agreed.
- That the proposed changes to the budgets for fees and charges that occur as a consequence of the revision in fees and charges be agreed as £140,150 and this sum to then be a budget strategy saving for 2012/13.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to consider the Budget Strategy 2012/13 and the ongoing forecast for the medium term. The Committee should consider ways in which the Budget Working Group can be utilised over the coming months to assist the Committee in their exploration and understanding of the Budget Strategy in order to make recommendations to Cabinet to be fed into the final budget strategy proposal in February 2012 and the Budget Strategy 2012/13 onwards. The Committee should also consider the information contained in the Budget Strategy and consider how this could impact on its investigations as part of the 'Council as a Business?' Review.

- 2.2 Members are also recommended to interview Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Customer and ask questions with regard to the debate on a Council Tax increase vs. a Council Tax freeze and the Council's Fees and Charges as they feel appropriate.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has responsibility for Budget Scrutiny as part of its remit.
- 3.2 At its meeting on 1 November 2011 the Committee considered the Budget Strategy and discussed the Government Proposal to keep council tax at 0% and replace it with a grant of 2.5%.
- 3.3 Leader of the Council, Councillor Garland, told the Committee that this would result in a loss of £375,000 year on year for the Council with a continued loss of £7m in total due to the accumulative loss of interest. Members considered whether Council tax should be frozen following the Government's lead of a 0% rise against a 2.5% year on year increase which would result in a approximately £5 a year for a band D Council Tax Payer. The Committee felt that it would be beneficial to investigate the opinions of other local authorities on the matter.
- 3.4 The Committee resolved that they 'should investigate other authorities' opinions on the Government's decision to freeze Council Tax and replace this with a grant'.
- 3.5 The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review for 2011/12 is focused on the financial restraints faced by the Council. The review, 'The Council as a Business?' will 'explore the financial restraints the Council face and establish how savings and income could be generated in a more innovative manner.' It will seek to establish the following outcomes:
1. What does Maidstone Borough Council want to be and what do our residents want from us, including identifying who our customers are and what their requirements are;
 2. Establish what the Council perceives its core function to be now and in the future and what statutory services we must provide;
 3. Establish what funding opportunities are available to the Council;
 4. Identify the factors which are currently considered when savings are made and practical measures and actions for future savings and increasing revenue, income and service improvement;
 5. Establish where the Council sees itself in 4 years time;
 6. Identify how the culture of Maidstone Borough Council can more business focused; and

7. Focus on the following Council services:

- Planning
- Print Function
- Back office functions and productivity
- Recycling
- Building Surveying

3.6 The Committee may wish to consider the Budget Strategy 2012/13 report on Fees and Charges that was considered at Cabinet on 21 December 2011 in order to deliver the outcomes of its review topic.

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

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

- 'Corporate and Customer Excellence'.

4.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. The Committee's work will contribute to the delivery of these key objectives over the next year.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21 DECEMBER 2011

REPORT OF CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Report prepared by Paul Riley,
Head of Finance & Customer Services**

1. BUDGET STRATEGY 2012/13 ONWARDS

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 This report allows Cabinet to consider the previously agreed budget strategy in the context of the provisional formula grant settlement announced on 8th December 2011 and any changes that have occurred to national and local circumstances since the previous consideration by Cabinet in September 2011.

1.1.2 The report will also update Cabinet on proposals for changes to the strategic projection and savings proposals as a result of their request for continued work to ensure a balanced budget can be developed.

1.1.3 Cabinet can then update its proposals for the budget strategy in order to formally consult Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Cabinet can consider the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February 2012 whilst considering the appropriate recommendations to Council.

1.2 Recommendation of Corporate Leadership Team

1.2.1 That Cabinet agree the revised strategic revenue projection at **APPENDIX B** which incorporates the changes outlined in section 1.8.

1.2.2 That Cabinet agree the proposed savings for 2012/13 Onwards, as detailed in **APPENDIX C**.

1.2.3 That Cabinet agree the proposed use of the New Homes Bonus as outlined in section 1.11 and await a further report on the use of the balance of that funding.

- 1.2.4 That Cabinet do not set a capital programme for 2015/16 at this time and await a report from officers on prioritisation of options once the infrastructure delivery plan is sufficiently detailed for evaluation.
- 1.2.5 That Cabinet note the issues relating to revenue resources including the council tax levels, the tax base and the provisional revenue support grant as set out in section 1.7.
- 1.2.6 That Cabinet note the results of the budget consultation and agree to consider the issues identified for future years of the medium term financial strategy and the strategic plan following further work by officers in 2012/13.
- 1.3 Executive Summary
- 1.3.1 The Government announced the proposed level of Revenue Support Grant (also known as Formula Grant) for Maidstone Borough Council on 8th December 2011 and this is equal to the assumption in the September 2011 budget strategy report at £5.7m. This is a 12% reduction in this grant.
- 1.3.2 Council Tax levels consistent with a 2.5% increase in the Council Tax charged are built into the strategic Revenue projection at this time. This is equivalent to the Government's offer of a second one year council tax freeze grant and no decision needs to be made at this time about whether to freeze or increase Council tax.
- 1.3.3 The strategic revenue projection agreed, for planning and consultation purposes, by Cabinet in September 2011 identified a need to find £1.861m in savings to produce a balanced budget for 2012/13. Since that time work by Members and Officers, to ensure the delivery of a strategy that enables a balanced budget to be recommended to Council in February 2012, has brought about the following amendments:
- a) Reductions in the budget pressures identified in the strategic revenue projection totalling £0.26m
 - b) Increases in the proposed savings of £0.32m
 - c) Increased income from fees and charges of £0.15m
- The net result of these changes enables a balanced budget to be proposed at this time.
- 1.3.4 The capital programme has been amended during the year by Cabinet to enable the essential works to the heating system at the Hazlitt Theatre and to provision a potential overspend on the Museum extension. By using revenue balances to fund these

schemes there has been no adverse effect on the programme agreed by Council in March 2011.

- 1.3.5 At this time there is no proposal to develop a programme for the year 2015/16 as it is essential to understand the requirements of the infrastructure delivery plan; prioritise those requirements along with other proposed schemes and understand the mechanisms for funding. Funding options include Community Infrastructure Levy, New Homes Bonus and Borrowing. These issues will develop during the last quarter of 2011/12 and into 2012/13 and a report will be brought to a later Cabinet meeting once the funding and scheme proposals are clear.
- 1.3.6 Additional and unplanned receipts of a capital nature have enabled a reduction in the projected level of borrowing required by the current programme in 2014/15. This report makes a proposal to use New Homes Bonus to support the Capital programme and reduce the risk presented by assumed receipts from as yet unsold assets. This means that the need to borrow can be overcome during the period of the capital programme.
- 1.3.7 The amended estimate of general balances as at 31 March 2012, taking into consideration all changes that have occurred during 2011/12 to date, is predicted to be £3.593m.
- 1.4 Reasons for Recommendation
 - 1.4.1 At its September 2011 meeting Cabinet considered the initial budget strategy for 2012/13 onwards. It agreed a strategic revenue projection, a level of council tax for use in planning and consultation on the budget and the method by which consultation would be carried out.
 - 1.4.2 The key assumptions made in that initial projection set separate indices for inflation, for contractual commitments and for business rates. It assumed no increase in general inflation for supplies and services budgets and set no provision for a pay award. In addition Cabinet chose to set no general target for increases in income so that a review of fees and charges could be completed in line with the Council's corporate policy on fees and charges. This work has resulted in a separate report to Cabinet that is elsewhere on this agenda.
 - 1.4.3 The budget strategy for 2011/12, which was developed last year, identified £0.7m in budget pressures for 2012/13. However the strategic revenue projection approved by Cabinet in September 2011 increased this sum to £1.4m.

- 1.4.4 The strategic projection assumed a 2.5% increase in Council Tax along with a 0.5% increase in the tax base, giving a 3% increase in income from Council Tax. In addition revenue support grant assumptions were based upon the guideline figures provided by central government with the 2011/12 settlement figures in February 2011.
- 1.4.5 A number of risks were considered, in the main these were related to assumptions in the strategic revenue projection, including:
- a) The risk surrounding the current pay structure and the effect of equal pay legislation;
 - b) The potential effects of the Welfare Reform Bill on Council Tax benefit and the housing benefit service;
 - c) The consequences to the future years of the budget strategy from a further Council Tax freeze grant arrangement;
 - d) The Formula Grant settlement and the possible consequences of the slower than expected growth forecasts.
- 1.4.6 The capital programme was also considered. Cabinet had amended the programme during the year to include funding for works to the heating systems at the Hazlitt Theatre and the creation of a reserve to support the potential additional cost of the Museum extension. These items were both funded from revenue balances.
- 1.4.7 Although no proposals for the continuation of the programme for a further year were considered at that time. The report showed that due to the level of miscellaneous and small receipts into the capital programme the risk of borrowing in 2014/15 had significantly reduced.
- 1.4.8 The risks that remain for the capital programme is the delivery of the capital receipts from the approved asset sales both to time and at assumed value. These risks continue to exist and will have a consequential effect on the need to borrow to finance the current programme.
- 1.4.9 Since the time of that initial report and consideration by Cabinet a number of important factors have changed, further announcements from central government have occurred and members and officers have continued to work on identifying the amendments required to ensure a balanced budget is achieved. It is an appropriate time for cabinet to review the strategy and for the result of this review to be considered by Corporate Services Overview and scrutiny Committee.
- 1.5 Economic Background

- 1.5.1 The international financial climate continues to have a significant effect upon the country and this effect can be seen in the levels of activity and demand for services in Maidstone.
- 1.5.2 The Council's treasury management advisors have reported a series of downgrades in the credit ratings on an international scale. This has had the effect of reducing the range of institutions with which the Council can invest. This could potentially reduce the return on investment that can be obtained.
- 1.5.3 The economic indicators for October 2011 all show adverse movement since the indicators for October 2010, which were reported to Cabinet last year when considering the budget strategy.
- a) The consumer price index has risen to 5.0% (3.2%, October 2010);
 - b) The retail price index has risen to 5.2% (4.5%, October 2010);
 - c) In the quarter to September 2011 the economy grew by 0.5% (0.8% September 2010);
 - d) The deficit at October 2011 is £966.5bn which is 62.3% of GDP; and
 - e) Unemployment has risen to 8.3% (7.7% September 2010)
- 1.5.4 The Council's front line services, such as housing benefit and homelessness, have all seen increases in demand, generating additional cost pressures.
- 1.6 Review of Current Performance 2011/12
- 1.6.1 The current financial year's performance is reported on a quarterly basis to Management Team and to Cabinet. The first two quarterly monitoring reports for 2011/12 show a reasonably stable under spend against profiled budget of just over £0.4m.
- 1.6.2 The capital programme approved by Council in March 2011 has been amended by Cabinet to incorporate an additional scheme to upgrade the heating system at the Hazlitt Theatre, this was funded by the use of some of the 2010/11 underspend that was transferred to balances at the end of that year. In addition Cabinet considered a report on the Museum Extension and agreed that a provision against a potential overspend on that scheme should be held in balances.
- 1.6.3 Capital funding has been increased by two unexpected asset sales and a receipt from Golding Homes from right to buy sales. At the same time two predicted assets sales have been adjusted, one has been reduced in potential value and one has been slipped into future years. The current programme is still affordable, subject to the

planned asset sales providing the expected receipts. The level of borrowing still projected for 2014/15 has reduced slightly.

1.6.4 Following the decisions on the use of balances by Cabinet during the year, balances remain at a satisfactory level. The minimum level of working balances set by Cabinet is £2.3m and before any further possible adjustments the expected level of balances at 31st March 2012 is £2.8m. In addition to this value there is over £1m of balances provisionally set aside for specific uses.

1.6.5 Along with the quarterly budget monitoring reports, Cabinet has received quarterly performance reports. The performance report to September 2011 shows that over 73% of KPI and LPI are forecast to end the year at or above target.

1.7 Review of Revenue Resources

1.7.1 **Formula Grant**

1.7.2 On 8th December 2011 the Government announced the 2012/13 provisional formula grant settlement for consultation. The provisional grant for Maidstone Borough Council is £5.703m, which is identical to the advance notification received in February 2011 along with the confirmation of the 2011/12 formula grant.

1.7.3 The reduction in grant, when compared to the grant received in 2011/12 is 12%. However the government measures the reduction in terms of "revenue spending power". The Council's reduction, measured on this basis, is less than the Government set maximum of 8.8%.

1.7.4 This announcement is for consultation and the Council is able to comment only on the factors used in the formula, such as population and tax base. However the Council's grant is restricted by damping and the Council is in the highest damping group. Any changes successfully obtained through the consultation process are unlikely to affect the grant after damping.

1.7.5 This is expected to be the final year of formula grant and the government has already consulted on the planned localisation of business rates. The scheme should be in place for the 2013/14 financial year. The Council has responded to the consultation.

1.7.6 **Council Tax**

1.7.7 The Council's current Council Tax charge has been stable for the two years 2010/11 and 2011/12. The Council's band D rate of tax is £222.39.

- 1.7.8 In 2011/12 the Council set a zero percent increase and is now in receipt of Council Tax freeze grant of £0.335m per annum for the four years 2011/12 to 2014/15. In 2015/16 the strategic revenue projection identifies the loss of this grant as a budget pressure.
- 1.7.9 At its September 2011 meeting Cabinet agreed a strategic revenue projection for planning and consultation purposes that included an increase in Council Tax income of 3%. This represented a 0.5% increase in the tax base and a 2.5% increase in the Council Tax.
- 1.7.10 A 2.5% increase in the level of Council Tax, for Maidstone Borough Council's element of the charge, equates to £5.56 per annum for a band D tax payer. This is 10.7 pence per week. This is because the borough council charge is only 15% of the total charge. The value of a 2.5% increase at band D for each preceptor is detailed in the table below.

	2011/12	2011/12	2012/13	Increase	% Effect
Tax Charges	Precept	Band D	if +2.50%	Yr on Yr	on tax bill
	£	£	£	£	%
Maidstone Borough Council	13,410,811	222.39	227.95	5.56	0.38
Kent County Council	63,184,382	1,047.78	1,073.97	26.19	1.77
Kent Police Authority	8,362,834	138.68	142.15	3.47	0.23
Kent & Medway Fire	4,097,596	67.95	69.65	1.70	0.12
		1,476.80	1,513.72	36.92	2.50

- 1.7.11 Since that meeting central government has announced a second phase of Council Tax freeze grant. However this grant is for one year only, 2012/13. The grant would have a value equivalent to a 2.5% increase in Council Tax.
- 1.7.12 The grant for this second phase is greater in value than the grant for the first phase because of the increase in the tax base. On 14th December 2011 the General Purposes Committee agreed a tax base of 60,985.3 which is 1.1% greater than the tax base for 2011/12. As stated above the strategic revenue projection agreed by Cabinet in September 2011 included a 0.5% increase in the tax base.
- 1.7.13 The decision not to increase Council Tax in 2011/12, leading to the acceptance of the Council Tax freeze grant, has had a significant impact on the Council's future financial situation. As an indicative example, for the ten years 2011/12 to 2020/21, allowing for the receipt of the grant for years and compounding at 2.5% the foregone revenue totals £2.4m.
- 1.7.14 The second phase of the Council Tax freeze grant will have a greater impact over the same time period. This is because it is a larger sum

and the grant is only available for one year. Projected forward to 2020/21 the foregone revenue is £3m.

- 1.7.15 Should the Council choose to accept the Council Tax freeze grant for a second year, the future net revenue resource foregone would total £5.5m by 2020/21. The full calculation of this sum is attached to this report as **APPENDIX A**
- 1.7.16 A decision on the level of increase in Council Tax need not be taken at this time. The income in 2012/13 from accepting the Council Tax freeze grant is equivalent in value to the 2.5% increase in Council Tax built in to the current strategic revenue projection. The effect of the Council deciding to take the freeze grant will become a budget pressure in 2013/14. Cabinet may wish to consider the issue further, await the views of Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2012 and make a final decision on a recommendation to Council at the February 2012 Cabinet meeting.
- 1.7.17 Elsewhere on this agenda Cabinet has considered a report on the Collection Fund adjustment. The recommendation of that report was a nil adjustment for 2012/13. Combining this proposed value with the formula grant settlement and the Council Tax level gives the budget requirement for the Council. This value for each year of the strategy is given in the table below. In order to achieve a balanced budget, these are the maximum values for net revenue expenditure that the Council can budget for in the years from 2012/13 onwards.

	2012/13 £,000	2013/14 £,000	2014/15 £,000	2015/16 £,000	2016/17 £,000
Formula Grant	5,703	5,635	5,207	4,947	4,700
Collection Fund Adj.	0	0	0	0	0
Council tax	13,902	14,319	14,749	15,191	15,647
Budget Requirement	19,605	19,954	19,956	20,138	20,347

1.8 Review of Strategic projection

- 1.8.1 Since Cabinet agreed the strategic revenue projection in September 2011 officers have continued to work on balancing growth and savings to ensure a balanced budget is achieved.
- 1.8.2 A number of budget pressures outlined in the strategic revenue projection have been considered and it is proposed to modify the strategic projection as follows:
- a) **Local Development Framework (LDF)** – Officers have completed the required analysis of funding for the LDF. The estimated level of expenditure has not changed, however

management action has identified additional resources, from within base budgets and agreed carry forwards and these provide an additional £0.13m. The overall result of this work is that the three year programme previously reported to Cabinet now requires funding of £0.77m rather than the £0.9m previously reported. It is proposed that the budget pressure be reduced in 2012/13 by £0.13m to £0.17m. This approach would add an immediate need for £0.13m in 2013/14 to ensure a total resource of £0.77m is identified by 2014/15. It is intended that officers will review progress on the LDF budget annually for consideration as part of the budget strategy process.

- b) **Interest on Investments** – the Council’s Treasury Management Strategy ensures that risk takes precedence over reward in investment decisions and declining interest rates have meant that the level of income received from investments has declined in recent years. In addition the advice received from the Council’s treasury management advisors has reduced the range of institutions with which the Council invests. In contrast the Council’s cash flow is healthy. Resources held in balances and for the capital programme mean that the interest from investment is expected to be resilient to these pressures and the current budget pressure of £80,000 will not be required.
- c) **Car Parking** – the strategic revenue projection has provisioned an annual reduction of £50,000 in income levels. This is intended to support any actions taken as part of the developing parking strategy and, in recent years, as protection from the effects of the recession on demand. It is proposed that this provision is removed and, for future years, this budget pressure is linked to the development of the actual parking strategy and any budget pressures are brought forward in specific detail.

1.8.3 In addition to the proposed reductions detailed above, there are two service areas where additional pressures are developing.

- a) **Housing Homelessness** – the continuing economic climate has had a negative impact through increasing demand for this service. The work of the team on both homeless prevention and temporary housing costs for the homeless have increased significantly during 2011/12. An assessment of the current levels of service suggests a net annual increase of £60,000 is required. This would maintain, into the future, the level of provision that exists today. In addition to this action management are reviewing alternative methods of provision

that may reduce this cost in future years and will be the subject of a report to Cabinet during 2012/13.

- b) **Economic Development** – this is a priority service, identified as the only service area where the Cabinet expected to see growth. The service has been set a series of priorities for the future as part of the development of the strategic plan. This work is currently undertaken by staff who are on fixed term contracts that terminate in the near future. No base budget funding exists for this service and the activity is currently resourced by various one off funding sources. The funding required for the two posts on fixed term contracts totals £70,000. During 2012/13 the fixed term contract for one post expires at a cost of £30,000, the second end in 2013/14 at a cost of £40,000. The pressure in 2012/13 would therefore be £30,000.

- 1.8.4 These amendments give a net reduction in the pressure on the budget strategy of £0.17m. Along with the changes to the tax Base discussed under the revenue resources section of this report, the budget pressure for 2012/13 is now £1.602m. The savings targets created by the pressures, as amended, for each year of the strategic revenue projection are tabled below. Cabinet should note that, if the Council Tax freeze grant is accepted for 2012/13, the savings target for 2013/14 will increase by £0.34m.

	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000
Budget Requirement	19,605	19,954	19,956	20,138	20,347
Predicted Budget	21,207	21,187	21,154	21,057	20,832
Saving Required	1,602	1,233	1,198	919	485

- 1.8.5 A revised strategic revenue projection is attached to this report as **APPENDIX B**

1.9 Review of Savings Proposals

- 1.9.1 The savings proposals reported to Cabinet in September 2011 have been reviewed along with the growth items detailed above. This forms part of the review of growth and savings to ensure a balanced budget can be proposed.

- 1.9.2 The savings proposals reported to Cabinet in September 2011 totalled £1.131m. The following actions have since been taken by officers: reviewing the level of savings available from each proposal; considering the possibility of bringing forward any actions proposed for future years; considering any new proposals and reviewing the

level of fees and charges income. The review of fees and charges has resulted in a report elsewhere on this agenda which is summarised in a later section of this report. The other actions have resulted in the following changes to the savings proposals:

- a) **Amended savings levels** – in the case of the revenues and Benefits Partnership and Finance and Customer Services, amended savings levels have been proposed.
- b) **Proposals brought forward** – changes to the Policy and Scrutiny Team, changes to the Democratic Service Team, Delivery of savings in the Waste and Recycling Service, changes to the ICT Team and changes within the Finance Team have all been brought forward from future years.
- c) **New proposals** – the increases from new proposals are all minor issues as major ideas are already identified in the strategic projection of savings. New proposals have come from the Audit Partnership and Democratic Services.

1.9.3 The increase in the value of savings proposals from these actions is £0.32m. A summary of the current savings proposals is attached to this report at **APPENDIX C**. An amended structure for this appendix allows Cabinet to see clearly whether the saving is in the service, structure or income budgets. This format will enhance the monitoring of the delivery of savings during 2012/13.

1.9.4 Cabinet should note that the detailed analysis in APPENDIX C represents the proposals delivered as well as planned, for 2012/13. An example of this is the savings delivered by staffing changes in Revenues and Benefits. The shared service delivered all expected savings in an earlier than planned phase of its development and the savings have been held to meet the needs of the budget strategy. This has had no adverse impact on service delivery.

1.9.5 The savings proposed from the partnership based new contract for waste services is identified in the proposals at the lower end of the range of possible savings. At this time in the development of the new services it is considered prudent to plan only for the lowest level of benefit.

1.9.6 The savings proposals do not, at this time, include the planned changes at the Hazlitt Theatre. A business case is being considered for the most appropriate method of future service delivery. It is expected that this will deliver the hope for reduction in the subsidy provided to the Theatre by the Council. Following a future report to cabinet, any savings that can be released will be built into the 2013/14 budget strategy.

1.10 Other Income

- 1.10.1 As part of the approval of the strategic revenue projection, Cabinet took the decision to not set a corporate target for increases in income from fees and charges. The Council has a corporate policy on fees and charges and the Cabinet decision enabled the use of this policy to guide officers to the most appropriate levels of fees and charges. The results of the officer review is reported elsewhere on this agenda and that report recommends the adoption of new fees and charges for some services that will deliver an additional £0.15m of income. This enhances the reduction in the budget pressure detailed earlier in this report.
- 1.10.2 The Council also receives income from the rent and lease of land and buildings. The majority of these are on agreements that enable occasional negotiation and uplift. Opportunities to negotiate increases in rents and leases are being considered by the Property Services Manager for inclusion in future years of the strategic revenue projection.
- 1.10.3 The final category of income is from grants and contributions. At this time, given the economic climate and the reduction in funding seen throughout the public sector there is little opportunity to identify permanent increases in this income source. One off increases would not form part of the budget strategy as there is no guarantee of future funding from one off grants. The focus of the officers involved in developing this source of income remains mainly fixed upon the Museum and Social Housing at this time.

1.11 New Homes Bonus

- 1.11.1 The Government recently announced the New Homes Bonus (NHB) allocation for 2012/13. This Council will receive an allocation that is slightly lower than the value of the 2011/12 payment. In addition it receives the second year of the 2011/12 allocation and the first year of the affordable homes premium. In total the Council is due to receive just under £1.8m in 2012/13. The detailed breakdown of this figure is given in the table below.

	£
2011/12 Allocation	892,316
2012/13 Allocation	825,216
Affordable Homes Premium	78,120
Total Due 2012/13	1,795,652

- 1.11.2 This payment is a rolling grant that should be maintained by central government for a period of six years.
- 1.11.3 Cabinet should note that the Government also announced that the total allocation is £6m more than the resources available and a claw back would be necessary from a top slice of the baseline for localised business rates in 2013/14.
- 1.11.4 Government consultation on the localisation of business rates has proposed the top slicing of the business rates baseline. The amount top sliced should be the Government's calculated overspend during the full six years of the programme. This means that future payments of NHB may be significantly reduced and this announced £6m over allocation will be a small element of that top slice.
- 1.11.5 At this time it is recommended that future NHB payments be treated as uncertain, due to the fact that they may, in part, need to supplement the receipt of localised business rates in future years. At this time the most appropriate use of this money is for major time limited projects.
- 1.11.6 An effective use of the resources would be to mitigate the cash flow risks currently inherent in the capital programme. As Cabinet is aware the programme relies for resources on identified but as yet unsold assets. Using the NHB payment to substitute for the value of the unsold assets in the medium term will mean that the funding need covered by the unsold assets will slip into future years of the programme and the opportunity to gain best price for the assets is improved.
- 1.11.7 If Cabinet agree this action approximately 10%, £0.18m, of the NHB payment would be available for other uses. It is recommended that this money is placed in balances and a report is brought to the January 2012 Cabinet meeting on potential uses of this money.

1.12 Capital Expenditure

- 1.12.1 The capital programme agreed by Council in March 2011 has been modified by Cabinet during the year. Slippage of £0.684m between 2011/12 and 2012/13 has been agreed. Although this slippage changes the profile of the programme it does not change the underlying value that the Council must resource. In addition Cabinet has approved a scheme to upgrade the heating system at the Hazlitt Theatre and has set aside a provision against potential overspend on the Museum Extension. Both of these schemes were funded from identified revenue balances and have not altered the funding requirements of the programme.

1.12.2 At this time the capital programme ends in 2014/15. A number of projects can be considered to create a future programme and whilst some options can be considered now, the development of the infrastructure delivery plan (IDP) as an element of the core strategy is essential to an assessment of all options.

1.12.3 At this time it is recommended that no proposals for a capital programme beyond 2014/15 be considered until the IDP is completed and cabinet can consider the relative priority of all schemes proposed for the future capital programme.

1.13 Capital Funding

1.13.1 The funding of the capital programme was agreed by Council in March 2011 and includes assumptions about the value of unsold assets. In addition the funding assumes that in 2014/15 the Council may need to borrow to complete the programme.

1.13.2 During 2011/12 a small number of changes to the level of assumed capital receipts, together with four minor receipts that were unplanned, have all but removed any need to borrow for the future of the programme.

1.13.3 The Council agreed, as part of the budget strategy for 2011/12, to develop a funding mechanism from revenue resources over the three years from 2011/12 to 2013/14. By 2014/15 this fund will generate an annual contribution from revenue of £0.35m. This resource will be available in the years following the current capital programme.

1.13.4 If Cabinet agree to the recommendation, in this report, on the use of the New Homes Bonus allocation the major assumed asset sale will also be available to resource a programme beyond 2014/15. Future work on the capital programme as outlined in the section above will need to include assessment of the means of funding the future schemes from resources such as new homes bonus, community infrastructure levy, further asset sales, revenue contribution and prudential borrowing.

1.14 Balances

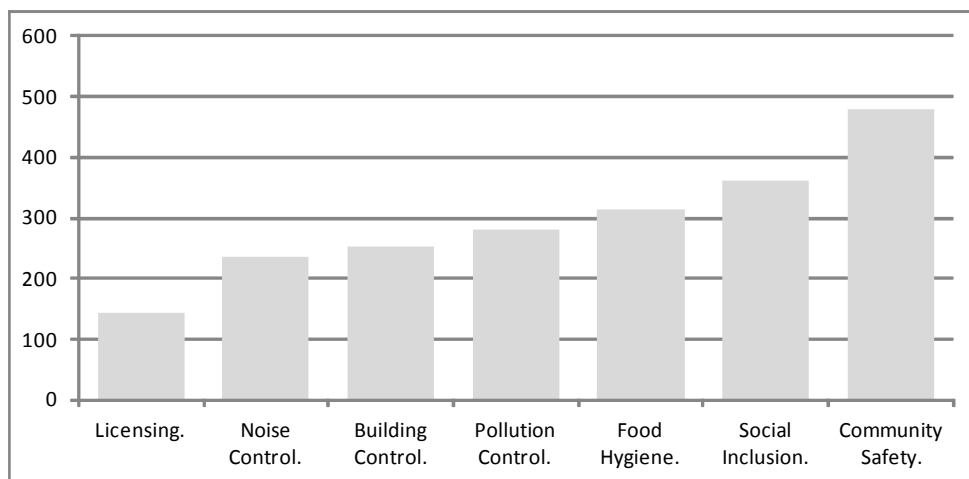
1.14.1 The budget strategy for 2011/12, as approved at Council in March 2011, estimated the level of general balances as at 31 March 2012 as £2.67m.

1.14.2 An additional contribution to balances from the under spend reported at outturn 2010/11 increased this estimate to £3.671m.

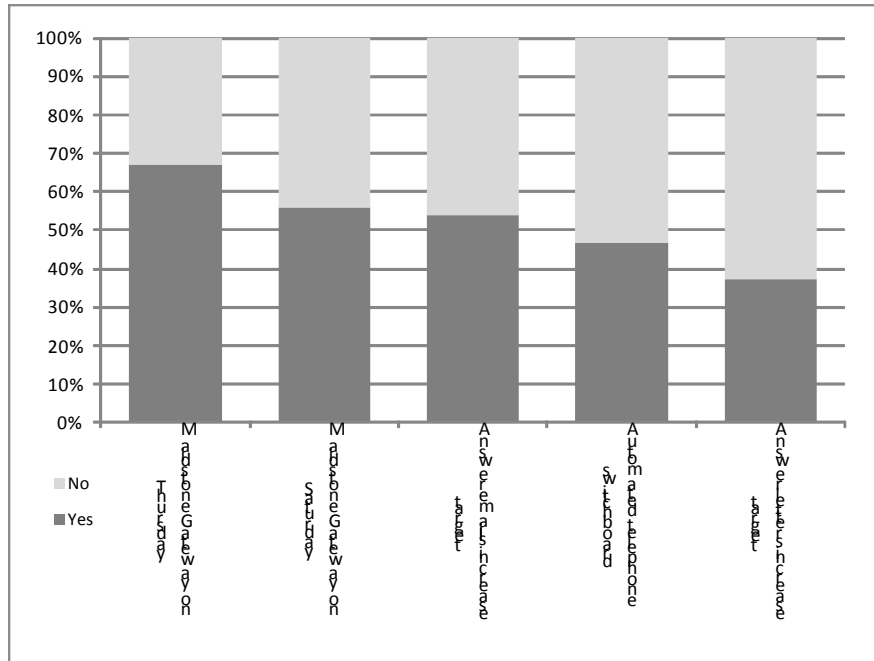
The use of balances by Cabinet in relation to Capital programme items then reduced the general balance to £3.361m.

- 1.14.3 During the year a further receipt from HM Revenue and Customs in relation to a VAT Rebate was received and Cabinet agreed to transfer this sum to balances.
- 1.14.4 As part of the use of balances in 2011/12, as agreed by Council in March 2011, a sum of £0.15m was set aside to fund any transitional costs of the transfer of the concessionary fares function to the County Council. This sum has not been used and it is proposed to return this sum to balances.
- 1.14.5 Following all of these changes the estimated level of balances as at 31 March 2012 will be £3.593m. The use of balances leading to this figure is detailed in **APPENDIX E**.
- 1.14.6 Cabinet should note that a provisional figure has been reserved from within general balances. This is as a contribution to the potential over spend on the Museum Extension project.
- 1.15 Consultation
 - 1.15.1 At its September meeting Cabinet considered options for consultation on the budget for 2012/13. The chosen approach was a continuation of the 2011/12 consultation under the banner of "MY Council, what matters to ME".
 - 1.15.2 In 2011/12 the key consultation questions assessed public opinion on the plans of Cabinet, requested ideas to assist the Cabinet with identifying savings and requested an evaluation of eight major discretionary services.
 - 1.15.3 This year the consultation followed a similar format requesting ideas for savings beyond those already identified. In addition it requested an evaluation of 7 statutory services that were not placed as high priority in the Cabinet's priority matrix.
 - 1.15.4 Cabinet agreed a target of 500 responses to the consultation on the basis of the reduced budget available for this activity, the majority of the budget having been saved as part of the 2011/12 strategy. The actual response received was 518. Of these 428 were responses received from the public at road show events and 80 were responses to the online survey run on the Council's website. The online survey replicated the road show survey.

- 1.15.5 The consultation process commenced later this year in line with the budget strategy process in general. Evaluation of the results and comparisons with earlier consultation exercises is required.
- 1.15.6 In relation to some areas of the consultation, further customer survey work could be linked to the current review of the customer care policy currently being undertaken by the Head of Finance & Customer Services. For example, where possible post code data has been collected from respondents and this will allow analysis of opinion by location.
- 1.15.7 In general the responses collected show a consistent trend and identify many areas where the data can be followed up during 2012.
- 1.15.8 The chart below identifies the responses to the evaluation. The chart shows services moving from left to right in increasing order of public priority. The "X-Axis" indicates the number of respondents identifying the service as a priority.



- 1.15.9 In addition Cabinet requested that the consultation assess public opinion on the potential savings available from variations in the level of customer service. Five areas were identified where savings could be made. The results displayed in the chart below indicate the acceptability to the public of the change in customer service given the reduction in cost available to the Council.



1.15.10 This direct representation of the results confirms that Cabinet’s current proposals for the budget strategy are in line with public opinion. For example Licensing, Building Control and environmental and regulatory Services are all areas where budget strategy has had some focus for 2012/13 onwards.

1.15.11 The Council has been reviewing the options for an automated telephone answering system for switchboard calls and the survey suggests slightly over 50% of respondents were happy for this saving. Consideration has previously been given to the opening hours of the Gateway and further work on this and many other areas remains ongoing.

1.15.12 Much of this information will enable actions during 2012/13 to develop proposals for the budget strategy process for the forthcoming year. It is intended to bring forward reports on these matters during 2012/13 as they will assist the Council in preparing for the significant risks the Council may face in that year. In preparation for this there is an additional amount of work to be completed in assessing the level of savings for these proposals and to ensure there is no effect on the Council’s key outcomes under the corporate and customer excellence priority.

1.16 MTFS and Risk Assessment

1.16.1 The review of the Strategic Plan in preparation for 2012/13 onwards is presented to Cabinet elsewhere on this agenda. This draft

Strategic Plan update provides greater clarity on the outcomes required to achieve the priorities of the Council.

- 1.16.2 The current medium term financial strategy is attached as **APPENDIX F**, this document will be updated to incorporate the changes approved during the budget strategy work for 2012/13 and the identification of the new risks that the strategic financial projection covers.

1.17 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

- 1.17.1 A number of alternative assumptions are included within the report and in each case Cabinet could chose to take an alternative action to the one recommended. The recommendations of this report provide a balanced budget and do not apply pressure to make decisions at this time where it is not necessary.

- 1.17.2 The production of the budget for 2012/13 is an element of the statutory process of calculating the Council Tax for 2012/13. In addition the completed and approved document is required to be robust and adequate under the Local Government Act 2003. A statement to this effect must be given by the Chief Financial Officer. On this basis the actions outline in this report must be considered and a balanced budget ultimately achieved for recommendation to Council in February 2012.

1.18 Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 1.18.1 The budget strategy and the resultant medium term financial strategy involve assessing the level of resources available for the delivery of the Council's key outcomes and is a means by which the Council directs these resources. In particular this report should be seen as complementary to the Strategic Plan report elsewhere on this agenda.

1.19 Risk Management

- 1.19.1 The process of development of this budget strategy followed on from the comprehensive work completed in 2010/11 for the previous budget strategy. It is supported by the budget monitoring reports. Both contain assessment of budget pressures in 2011/12 and future years, consideration of the level of resources available, review of a wide range of factors affecting the budget and consideration of other financial activity of the Council. This work enables Cabinet to address the risks identified in this report and the medium term financial strategy in an effective and consistent manner over the period of the strategy.

- 1.19.2 The projection discussed in this report includes a Council Tax increase that enables a balanced budget to be produced. This increase is considered in light of the recent announcement by central government regarding a further Council Tax freeze.
- 1.19.3 Cabinet should note that the greatest risk in the current strategy lies in the number of factors that will or may affect 2013/14. The potential issues for the medium term financial strategy could be greater than the currently proposed £1.2m savings target. The issues include:
- a) The possible recommendation of a zero percent increase in Council Tax and obtaining the Council Tax freeze grant. This will mean an additional budget pressure of £0.34m in 2013/14;
 - c) The risks surrounding the replacement of Council Tax benefit; and
 - d) The localisation of business rates and potential top slicing of the baseline to fund New Homes Bonus.

1.20 Other Implications

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

- 1.20.1 The financial implications are all detailed in the body of the report.

- 1.20.2 The budget strategy considers the resources necessary to fund staffing levels and pay increments. In addition the report contains proposals that may produce organisational change following the appropriate consultation.
- 1.20.3 This report intends to provide the Cabinet with firm proposals to enable the Council to set a balanced budget and a Council tax for the year 2011/12 as it is statutorily obliged to do.
- 1.20.4 The equality impact needs assessment is attached as **APPENDIX G**.

1.21 Relevant Documents

1.21.1 Appendices

Appendix A – Council Tax Freeze
Appendix B – Strategic Revenue Projection 2012/13 Onwards
Appendix C – Savings Proposals 2012/13 Onwards
Appendix D – Capital Programme 2011/12 Onwards
Appendix E – General Fund Balances as at 31 March 2012
Appendix F – Medium Term Financial Strategy 2011
Appendix G – Equality Impact Assessment

1.21.2 Background Documents

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan? 21/11/2011

This is a Key Decision because: A budget strategy report

Wards/Parishes affected: All

BUDGET STRATEGY 2013/13 ONWARDS**COUNCIL TAX FREEZE GRANT ANALYSIS****POTENTIAL RESOURCES FOREGONE BY A TWO YEAR COUNCIL TAX FREEZE****COMPOUNDED AT 2.5% FOR AN INDICATIVE 10 YEAR PERIOD**

Council Tax from a 2.5% increase £	335,270	339,063	Total
2011/12	-	-	-
2012/13	8,382	-	8,382
2013/14	16,974	347,540	364,514
2014/15	25,780	356,229	382,009
2015/16	370,092	365,135	735,227
2016/17	379,344	374,263	753,607
2017/18	388,828	383,620	772,448
2018/19	398,549	393,211	791,760
2019/20	408,513	403,041	811,554
2020/21	418,726	413,117	831,843
Total lost after 10 years	2,415,188	3,036,156	5,451,344

**BUDGET STRATEGY 2012/13 ONWARDS
STRATEGIC REVENUE PROJECTION**

2011/12 £,000		2012/13 £,000	2013/14 £,000	2014/15 £,000	2015/16 £,000	2016/17 £,000
	AVAILABLE FINANCE					
7,731	RSG	6,481	5,703	5,635	5,207	4,947
-1,250	RSG LOSS	-778	-68	-428	-260	-247
15	COLLECTION FUND ADJUSTMENT					
13,411	COUNCIL TAX	13,902	14,319	14,749	15,191	15,647
19,907	TOTAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE	19,605	19,954	19,956	20,138	20,347
20,655	CURRENT SERVICE SPEND	19,907	19,605	19,954	19,956	20,138
	INFLATION INCREASES					
354	PAY AND CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS	410	503	440	616	544
	CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS					
	ELECTIONS		-80	180		
36	REDUCTION IN BENEFIT GRANT	40	40			
80	COBTREE FINAL PAYMENT					
	NATIONAL INITIATIVES					
	COUNCIL TAX BENEFIT REDUCTION		80			
	UNIVERSAL CREDIT - TRANSITIONAL COSTS			150		
	LOSS OF COUNCIL TAX FREEZE GRANT				335	
	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK	170	130			
	SAFER MAIDSTONE PARTNERSHIP	30	30			
	LOCAL PRIORITIES					
150	LOSS OF INTEREST					
50	CAPITAL RESOURCING	150	150			
160	LEISURE CENTRE REFURBISHMENT					
50	LOSS OF INCOME					
50	CAR PARK INCOME LOSS					
	LOST INCOME FROM REGENERATION	100	200	200		
	PAY RATIONALISATION	160				
	HOMELESSNESS INCREASED DEMAND	60				
	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	30	40			
	SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARISHES				80	
	MINOR INITIATIVES					
250	GROWTH PROVISION	150	150	150	150	150
21,835	TOTAL PREDICTED REQUIREMENT	21,207	21,187	21,154	21,057	20,832
1,928	ANNUAL SAVINGS TARGET	1,602	1,233	1,198	919	485

BUDGET STRATEGY 2012/13 ONWARDS SAVING PROPOSALS

HEAD OF SERVICE	Values			
	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £
Income				
Communications				
PR & Marketing	43,010			
Environment & Regulatory Services				
Income Options - Depot		40,000		
Mote Park - Income Generation	15,000			
Inter-Authority Trading	54,000			
Income Sum	112,010	40,000		
Service				
Environment & Regulatory Services				
New Contract / Partnership	100,000	150,000	250,000	
Concessionary Fares Contingency	200,000			
Parking Contract	100,000			
Alternative for Dog Bins	12,000			
Sittingbourne Rd Rent Reduction	20,000			
Finance & Customer Services				
Finance		40,000		
Concurrent Functions Grant	100,000	100,000	80,000	
Minor Supplies Budget	39,510			
Housing & Community Safety				
CCTV	68,000			
Human Resources				
HR Shared Service	20,000			
IT Services				
IT - Shared Service	47,740			
IT Strategy	14,000			
Revenues & Benefits				
Revenues & Benefits IT	50,000			
Service Sum	771,250	290,000	330,000	
Staffing & Related Costs				
Change & Scrutiny				
Restructure	30,290			
Communications				
PR & Marketing	50,620			
Democratic Services				
Restructure	23,380			
Environment & Regulatory Services				
Parking Shared Service	30,000			
Finance & Customer Services				
Customer Services	58,390			
Finance	28,130	74,740		
Housing & Community Safety				
Housing	58,420	25,000		
Human Resources				
HR Terms & Conditons	7,700	5,000	5,000	
IT Services				
IT - Shared Service	36,840	47,950		
Planning				
Joint Team Restructure	25,000	25,000		
Spatial Policy Saving	50,000			
Chief Executive				
Further Senior Officer Review		128,140		
Chief Exec's Review Full Year	50,000			
Revenues & Benefits				
Revenues & Benefits Shared Service	120,000			
Staffing & Related Costs Sum	568,770	305,830	5,000	
Grand Total	1,452,030	635,830	335,000	

BUDGET STRATEGY 2011/12 ONWARDS

DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2011/12 TO 2015/16

CAPITAL PROGRAMME SUMMARY	Revised	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate	Estimate
	Estimate 2011/12	Estimate 2012/13	Estimate 2013/14	Estimate 2014/15	Estimate 2015/16
	£	£	£	£	£
CCTV	250,000				
Brenchley Gardens - Upgrading & Improvements	6,300				
Cobtree Golf Course	6,950				
Continued Improvements to Play Areas	125,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	
Green Space Strategy	14,500				
Mote Park Regeneration	921,975	1,350,175			
Small Scale Capital Works Programme	71,500				
Community & Leisure	1,396,225	1,400,175	50,000	50,000	
Asset Management / Corporate Property	143,700	150,000	100,000	100,000	
Software / PC Upgrade and Replacement	146,400	180,000	180,000	180,000	
Upgrade Amenity lighting	3,100				
Corporate Services	293,200	330,000	280,000	280,000	
CCTV - Park & Ride Sites	5,200				
Improvements to the Council's Car Parks	20,940				
Land Drainage/Improvement to Ditches & Watercourses	23,900				
Environment	50,040	0	0	0	
Hazlitt Heating	310,000				
Leisure Centre Roof	20,830				
Museum Improvements (Access / Toilets)	872,290				
Gypsy Site Improvements	100,000				
High Street Regeneration	1,885,670	303,830			
Planning Delivery	9,350				
Housing Grants	1,513,700	1,432,000	1,305,000	1,300,000	
Support for Social Housing	927,000	1,160,000	382,500	190,000	
Regeneration Schemes	111,500				
Economic Development & Transport	5,750,340	2,895,830	1,687,500	1,490,000	
TOTAL	7,489,805	4,626,005	2,017,500	1,820,000	0

BUDGET STRATEGY 2012/13 ONWARDS
PROVISIONAL GENERAL FUND BALANCES

	PROVISIONALLY ALLOCATED					Overall Total £000	
	Total General Fund £000	Trading Accounts £000	Asset Replacement £000	VAT Reclaim £,000	Invest to Save £000		LDF Fund £000
Balance 31/03/2011	7,117	30	47	1,977	559	203	9,933
Use of 2010/11 c/fwd in 2011/12	-2,850						-2,850
Future Proposed Use			133				133
Local Development Framework	-400					-203	-603
Rural Busses	-46						-46
Shared Service Set-up Cost				-336			-336
Carbon Reduction Plans					-55		-55
Contribution to Capital Financing							
General				-1,541			-1,541
Theatre	-310						-310
Additional Refund	82						82
Projected Balance 31/03/2012	3,593	30	180	100	504	0	4,407
Localism Related Activity				-100			-100
NHB - Priorities Activitiy							0
Projected Future Balance	3,593	30	180	0	504	0	4,307

BUDGET STRATEGY 2011/12 ONWARDS
MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2011
ONWARDS

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1. **INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This financial strategy aims to support the council's corporate objectives as identified in the strategic plan 2011 to 2015. Whilst achieving this, major issues relating to resources and facing the council in the medium term will also be highlighted.
- 1.2 The intention is to set out the revenue and capital spending plans of the council at a high level. The success of these plans will depend upon the resources available to the council, the approach taken to ensure that these resources are aligned over the medium term to reflect corporate objectives and these resources being controlled in a way that ensures long-term stability.
- 1.3 The government announced details of its spending review in October 2010 and has since announced the formula grant settlement for 2011/12 along with a provisional settlement for 2012/13. This settlement means significant reductions in revenue support grant for the Council. The approach of this strategy is to develop a four year plan with consideration of the impact of material issues on a fifth year. The two year settlement has required a number of assumptions about further years of the strategy and these have been based around the Spending Review 2010 data.
- 1.4 Although this document is developed for the medium term with an outlook from four to five years, the council will review the strategy on an annual basis for the following period in order to reflect changes in circumstances which impact upon the strategy. This review will be completed to coincide with the annual review of the strategic plan. This will enable Members and Officers to ensure changes are appropriately reflected in both documents through links to the strategic plan key outcomes. Production of this document and the balanced budget it facilitates support the key outcomes of the strategic plan in their own right.
- 1.5 In addition the council has consulted with a wide range of stakeholders and partners during the development period and give serious consideration to their views and responses.

2. REVENUE

2.1 Expenditure

2.1.1 The portfolio budgets in the full revenue estimates include detailed proposals for dealing with financial pressures and service demand, this financial strategy adopts a high-level review of the corporate objectives and budget pressures over the five-year period. This approach ensures a focus on factors that may influence the Council's stated aim to maintain working balances and ensure that they are used for specific and special activities and not to balance the budget. The financial projection assumes that the level of balances will be maintained, over the five year period, at or above the working level set annually by Cabinet.

2.1.2 Pay and price inflation:

The financial projection makes an allocation for pay increases on an annual basis. This increase must allow for a staff pay award, any incremental increases earned through competence appraisal and any increase in employer contributions such as national insurance.

Other costs will need to consider a suitable inflation index balanced with the objectives of the strategy. Large elements of this cost will be tied to conditions of contracts which will specify the annual increase necessary, other costs will increase by the annual increase in an inflation index such as the retail price index or the consumer price index. The strategy may intentionally use levels of increase lower than these indices to enhance general efficiencies.

Table 1 below details the factors used for each year.

Strategic Issue	2011/12 %	2012/13 %	2013/14 %	2014/15 %	2015/16 %
Pay Inflation	0.0	0.0	1.0	1.5	2.0
Other Costs Inflation	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Contractual Commitments	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0

[Table 1: Pay & price Indices]

2.1.3 Corporate objectives and key priorities:

In addition to these inflationary pressures the Council will develop and implement improvements to the corporate objectives identified in the strategic plan and, where significant, any local objectives identified in service plans. This may place additional pressure on the revenue budget.

The financial projection will also provide, where necessary, resources for national statutory responsibilities where these are to be provided locally.

Table 2 below identifies the links between the financial projection and key objectives.

SP KO	Strategic Issue	2011/12 £,000	2012/13 £,000	2013/14 £,000	2014/15 £,000	2015/16 £,000
	Capital Resourcing	50	150	150		
	Leisure Centre	160				
	Set-up cost provision	250				

[Table 2: Strategic Issues, links to other documents]

2.2 Funding

2.2.1 Resources available for the revenue budget are heavily constrained making the issue key to the financial planning process. The financial projection assumes that resources are maximised. The strategy identifies three separate categories of resource government grant, council tax and locally derived income from fees and charges. Where the financial projection includes the use of fixed term grant or other time limited income sources each portfolio is responsible for preparing and acting on suitable exit strategies at the end of the fixed term.

2.2.2 Government Grant:

The current revenue support grant settlement is a two year settlement with the second year notified to Councils as provisional. The Government has reported that during that two year period they will adopt a new method for the distribution of revenue support. The strategy responds to this by utilising the figures from the two year settlement and projecting forward on the basis of the Government's intentions as outlined in the Spending Review of 2010.

Other grants received from the government are similarly under threat from the effects of the national economy and the efficiency agenda as it affects government departments. The strategy will assume future grant aid is likely to be at risk but only freezes such grants at their 2010/11 cash values unless further data is available. Table 4 identifies expected variances from this assumption.

2.2.3 Fees & Charges

The Council has a policy on the development of fees and charges that fall within its control. This policy ensures that an evaluation of market forces and links to the strategic plan or service plans are drivers of changes in price. This means that any increases in this funding source will be identified through each portfolio's detailed budget preparation work. At the level of this strategy the assumption is that in overall terms the increase will be

commensurate with general inflation. Due to the final effects of the recession, for 2011/12 the financial projection will assume total cash income is frozen at 2010/11 values but will increase slowly in response to the predicted end of the recession.

2.2.4 Council Tax

The Council has a responsive approach to the level of Council tax and will set this at an appropriate level commensurate with the needs of the strategic plan. It has set a policy in recent years of an increase that avoids the threat of council tax capping but remains flexible on the level of that increase, thus focusing the strategy on its ability to set a balanced budget.

The Government's objective of a national Council Tax freeze has been formulated into the strategic projection and the Council has modelled the future financial risk inherent in accepting the Government grant. The fifth year of this strategy identifies the loss of grant and the resulting additional savings required. The purpose of this strategy is to identify such risk and provide the Council with opportunity to prepare for future events in a considered and timely manner.

Table 3 below details the factors used for each resource type and Table 4 details the links between the financial projection and the major risk factors.

Strategic Issue	2011/12 %	2012/13 %	2013/14 %	2014/15 %	2015/16 %
Revenue Support Grant decrease	-16.2	-12.9	-1.2	-7.6	-7.6
Fees & Charges increase	0.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
Council Tax increase	0.0	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5

[Table 3: Resource and income indices]

SP KO	Strategic Issue	2011/12 £,000	2012/13 £,000	2013/14 £,000	2014/15 £,000	2015/16 £,000
	Housing Benefit Admin Grant	36	40	40	40	40
	Parking Income	50	50	50	50	50
	Regeneration Income			200		
	Interest on Investments	150	100	100		
	Income Generation	50				
	Cobtree Charity	80	20			

[Table 4: Strategic Issues, links to other documents]

3. CAPITAL

3.1 Programme

3.1.1 The strategy for the capital programme requires consideration of two issues, the scheme specifics and the overall programme.

3.1.2 The overall programme is considered in terms of the prudential borrowing principles of sustainability, affordability and prudence. The overall programme assessment also considers the relative priority of schemes as they enhance the provision of corporate or service based objectives.

3.1.3 The inclusion of specific capital schemes within the overall programme requires an assessment based on affordability in revenue and capital terms, deliverability in terms of ability to complete, whole life cost and risk assessment.

3.1.4 Prioritisation of schemes will occur in the following order:

- a) For statutory reasons;
- b) Fully or partly self funding schemes with focus on corporate objectives;
- c) Other schemes with focus on corporate objectives;
- d) Maintenance / Improvement of property portfolio not linked to corporate objectives;
- e) Other non priority schemes with a significant funding gearing.

3.1.5 The programme for the period 2010/11 to 2014/15 focuses on a series of key projects reflecting the strategic plan and a series of projects providing investment in the property assets. The detailed Capital Programme provides the link between the strategic plan key objectives and the current programme.

3.1.6 The capital programme is a four year programme and Table 5 below summarises the programme by portfolio and includes revised figures for the current year.

Portfolio	2010/11 £,000	2011/12 £,000	2012/13 £,000	2013/14 £,000	2014/15 £,000
Leader	0	0	0	0	0
Community Services	27	250	0	0	0
Corporate Services	335	330	330	280	280
Environment	31	26	0	0	0
Leisure & Culture	3,158	3,290	50	50	50
Regeneration	4,090	3,815	3,563	1,687	1,490
	7,641	7,711	3,943	2,017	1,820

[Table 5: Capital programme]

3.2 Funding

3.2.1 Since 2004 the Council has been debt free and the major funding for capital expenditure has come from capital receipts and government grant. The medium term financial strategy has, in the past, identified the time when such resources would reduce to the point where alternative funding would be required to support a continued programme of capital expenditure. The most recent strategy identifies that the most likely need for alternative funding will occur in 2014/15.

3.2.2 Although commitment to a scheme is given by its inclusion in the programme, the strategy requires that funding is identified in advance of formal commencement of work. This assumption can be maintained up to the level of the Council's prudential borrowing limit as set in the Prudential Indicators. The quarterly monitoring of the capital programme enables Cabinet to take effective decisions based on current levels of funding before major projects commence.

Table 6 below identifies the current funding assumptions and the minimum risk of prudential borrowing need.

Funding Source	2010/11 £,000	2011/12 £,000	2012/13 £,000	2013/14 £,000	2014/15 £,000
Confirmed:					
Capital receipts	2,011	2,002	1,361	0	0
Capital grant	3,987	2,686	450	450	450
Revenue	1,643	2,423	200	350	323
External funding		600	300		
Assumed:					
Capital receipts	0	0	1,632	1,217	701
Prudential borrowing or other source.	0	0	0	0	346
	7,641	7,711	3,943	2,017	1,820

[Table 6: Capital financing, confirmed and assumed]

4. RESERVES

- 4.1 The Council holds a series of balances and reserves in order to provide financial stability and protection from unforeseen circumstances or events. In setting the level of these balances and reserves an assessment is made of the potential risks and opportunities that could reduce or enhance those balances.
- 4.2 All revenue balances at 1st April 2010 total £8.3m and it is estimated that this balance will be £5.8m by 1st April 2011. The major items reducing the balance are approved budget carry forwards of £1.7m from 2009/10 resources into 2010/11 for prior agreed purposes and support for the Local Development Framework and minor initiatives.
- 4.3 The balances comprise a general balance and a series of specific allocations the breakdown of these is given in Table 7 below.

Balances	01/04/2010 £,000	01/04/2011 £,000	01/04/2012 £,000
General balance	5,222	3,220	2,670
Trading account surpluses	30	30	30
Asset replacement	7	47	47
Invest to save initiatives	551	539	484
Local development Framework	352	0	0
VAT Reclaim	2,227	1,977	0
Total	8,389	5,813	3,231

[Table 7: Revenue balances]

- 4.4 In addition to revenue reserves a small number of capital reserves exist due to the timing of expenditure in the Capital Programme.
- 4.5 Available capital receipts at 1st April 2010 total £2m and it is estimated that this balance will be used up during 2010/11.
- 4.6 Other capital balances include grants and contributions unapplied which total £1.5m at 1st April 2010. These balances are, in most cases, received for specific schemes and applied only to finance those schemes.

5. Efficiency

- 5.1.1 The Council's strategic plan recognises corporate excellence as a priority, identifying value for money (vfm) services that residents are satisfied with, as a key outcome. This theme runs through service plans and by this the Council's approach to efficiency is integrated in to all decision making.
- 5.1.2 The Council has successfully achieved all its government set efficiency targets and will not cease to monitor and improve upon levels of efficiency both through improved service levels and reduced costs.
- 5.1.3 The Council uses a number of measures to identify locations to achieve efficiency and gauge success. These include:
- Annual best value reviews performed by officers and by members.
 - Kent wide benchmarking to measure unit cost and performance levels and compare these over time and across Kent.
 - Other benchmarking exercises undertaken by local managers to challenge service delivery in their own area.
 - The identification of efficiency targets that match the Council's need over the period of this medium term financial strategy.
- 5.1.4 Efficiency proposals are carefully measured for effect upon capacity, acceptable levels of service, quality standards, and the potential of shared service provision. All efficiency proposals consider the effect of fixed costs and the effect on the base financial standing of the Council and the opportunity for reinvestment of gains into priority services or toward achievement of corporate objectives.
- 5.1.5 The adoption of efficiency and VFM as part of this strategy helps to ensure that the financial projection will remain within available resources.
- 5.1.6 The financial projection identifies the need for savings to make a balanced budget, which must be considered in line with the development of efficiency savings. Table 8 below details the required saving for each year, based on the factors used in the financial projection, and the percentage of net revenue spend the given saving represents.

Strategic Projection	2011/12 £,000	2012/13 £,000	2013/14 £,000	2014/15 £,000	2015/16 £,000
Annual Savings Requirement	1,982	1,167	607	768	963
Percentage Saving	9.6%	5.86%	3.12%	3.88%	4.86%

[Table 8: Annual savings requirement]

5.1.7 The Council has required the savings target to be met in the medium term and at this time proposals are in place to provide efficiency and savings to meet the requirement through to 2013/14. The Council is continuing to develop long term proposals to ensure the future risk is mitigated at the earliest time.

6. **CONSULTATION**

- 6.1 The Council has a co-ordinated approach to consultation on the budget process. To this end a programme has been proposed that ensures the focus of annual consultations avoids the review of similar themes and builds a body of opinion.
- 6.2 The Council consults annually on this strategy and the proposed budget for the forthcoming year. The intention of the consultation is to both inform and be informed by local residents, businesses and stakeholders.
- 6.3 In recent years the consultation has considered the level of council tax increase acceptable and the service areas where reductions should occur, the elasticity of demand for services provided by the Council with a related fee and for this strategy the consultation focused on the long term factors faced by the Council due to the current economic climate and the relative importance residents place on a range of discretionary services provided by the Council.

7. **RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 In outlining the resources available to the Council and the focus of those resources on the strategic priorities, this strategy must consider the barriers to achieving the resource levels assumed by the budget.
- 7.2 A full risk assessment of the strategy has been completed and forms part of the operational risk assessment of the services provided by the Head of Finance and Customer services.
- 7.3 Twelve major risk areas have been identified and action plans have been developed for each. The twelve areas are as follows:
- a) The level of balances;
 - b) Inflation rates;
 - c) The national deficit;
 - d) External grants and contributions;
 - e) Limitations on Council Tax increases;
 - f) Fees and charges;
 - g) Capital financing;
 - h) Horizon scanning;
 - i) Delivery of efficiency;
 - j) Pension fund valuations;
 - k) Savings targets;
 - l) Treasury Management.

Stage 1: Equality Impact Assessment

1. What are the main aims purpose and outcomes of the Policy and how do these fit with the wider aims of the organization?
<p>The intention is to set out the revenue and capital spending plans of the council at a high level. The success of these plans will depend upon the resources available to the council, the approach taken to ensure that these resources are aligned over the medium term to reflect corporate objectives and these resources being controlled in a way that ensures long-term stability.</p> <p>This financial strategy aims to support the council's corporate objectives as identified in the strategic plan. Whilst achieving this, major issues relating to resources and facing the council in the medium term will be highlighted.</p>
2. How do these aims affect our duty to:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the act. • Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. • Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
<p>The major aim is to target resources appropriately. This means to focus on the Council's strategic priorities and the key outcomes required over the planning period.</p> <p>Included within those priorities is the following key outcome: "residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced." The correct development of the policy with a focus upon the corporate priorities will ensure that there is no negative effect.</p>
3. What aspects of the policy including how it is delivered or accessed could contribute to inequality?
<p>None, it is the objective of this policy to eliminate inappropriate or poor focusing of the available resources as this could contribute to inequality.</p>
4. Will the policy have an impact (positive or negative) upon the lives of people, including particular communities and groups who have protected characteristics? What evidence do you have for this?
<p>The policy will have a positive impact as it will enhance the lives of all members of the community through the provision of resources to core services. In addition it will affect particular groups within the community. It will achieve this through the focus of resources into areas of need as identified in the Council's strategic priorities.</p>

If the answer to the second question has identified potential impacts and you have answered yes to any of the remaining questions then you should carry out a full EQIA set out as stage 2 below.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21 DECEMBER 2011

REPORT OF CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM

**Report prepared by Paul Riley,
Head of Finance & Customer Services**

- 1. Budget Strategy 2012/13 Onwards – Corporate Fees & Charges Review**
 - 1.1 Issue for Decision
 - 1.1.1 To set the appropriate level of fees and charges for 2012/13 for services where the council raises income by charging the user of a service and where the setting of the fee to be charged is discretionary.
 - 1.1.2 The council has adopted a policy on the setting of fees and charges to ensure that a rational approach is used that takes account of all factors and creates a result that supports the priorities set out in the strategic plan.
 - 1.2 Recommendation of Corporate Leadership Team
 - 1.2.1 That Cabinet approves the increases in fees and charges proposed by this report and set out in detail in **APPENDIX A**.
 - 1.2.2 That Cabinet approves the proposed changes to the budgets for fees and charges that occur as a consequence of the revision in fees and charges. The approved sum to then be a budget strategy saving for 2012/13.
 - 1.3 Reasons for Recommendation
 - 1.3.1 The Council adopted a corporate fees and charges policy in May 2009. This policy sets out the approach that the Council requires in setting fees and charges, promotes consistency across the authority and is focused on the strategic aims of the authority.
 - 1.3.2 The policy covers fees and charges that are set at the discretion of the Council. It does not relate to services where Councils are prohibited from charging, e.g. collection of household waste or services where

the charge is currently determined by Central Government e.g. planning application fees.

1.3.3 The headline objective of the policy is that fees and charges are set at the maximum level after taking into account conscious decisions on the subsidy level for individual services, concessions, impact of changes on users and any impact on the delivery of the Strategic Plan. Therefore, there is a presumption that charges will be levied for a service unless justified by strategic consideration or legal constraints.

1.3.4 The policy also proposes that a review of all fees and charges will occur annually in line with the development of the medium term financial strategy. The review of fees and charges should consider the following factors:

- a) The Council's vision, objectives and values, and how they relate to the specific services involved.
- b) The level of subsidy currently involved and, hypothetically, the impact of eliminating that subsidy on the level of fees and charges, users and social impact.
- c) The actual or potential impact of any competition in terms of price or quality.
- d) Trends in user demand including the forecasted effect of prices changes on customers.
- e) Customer survey results.
- f) Impact on users of proposals both directly and in terms of delivery of the Council's objectives.
- g) Financial constraints including inflationary pressure and service budget targets.
- h) The implications arising from developments such as an investment made in the service.
- i) The corporate impact of Council wide pressures to increase fees and charges in other service areas.
- j) Alternative charging structures that could be more effective.
- k) Proposals for targeting promotions during the year and the evaluation of any that took place in previous periods.

1.3.5 At its September 2011 meeting Cabinet considered the level of increase in income as part of the strategic revenue projection. The

decision made by Cabinet at that time was to set no overall level of increase in income. Cabinet tasked officers with a formal review of all fees and charges in line with the corporate fees and charges policy.

1.3.6 Such a review has recently been completed by officers. The detailed results of which are set out in **APPENDIX A** and the approval of Cabinet is sought to the amended fees and charges and the proposed income budgets for 2012/13.

1.3.7 The table given below lists the areas where fees and charges have been reviewed. It shows the 2011/12 budget for income from the different fees and charges, the proposed budget increase that can be achieved from each proposal and the percentage increase in budget achieved. The table is sub-divided by the effect the service and its increase can have on the budget strategy.

SERVICE CHARGE TYPE	2011/12 BUDGET	2012/13 INCREASE	PROPOSED INCREASE
Cemetery	106,450.00	10,000.00	9.39%
Crematorium	955,880.00	40,230.00	4.21%
Parking Services	2,529,600.00	61,000.00	2.41%
Recycling & Refuse Collection	560,910.00	15,920.00	2.84%
Community Development	19,990.00	1,000.00	5.00%
Planning (Development Control)	756,070.00	12,000.00	1.59%
Licences	117,510.00	10,000.00	8.51%
EFFECT ON BUDGET STRATEGY	5,046,410.00	150,150.00	2.98%
Land Charges (Development Control)	252,660.00	0.00	0.00%
Building Control	393,920.00	0.00	8.00%
BREAK EVEN	646,580.00	0.00	
Parks & Open Spaces	71,350.00	0.00	6.00%
Hazlitt Arts Centre	113,560.00	0.00	3.00%
Museum	16,990.00	0.00	-
Street Naming And Numbering	10,000.00	0.00	190.00%
TARGET PRESET	211,900.00	0.00	
Market	455,150.00	0.00	2.00%
Park And Ride	772,709.00	0.00	-
Environmental Health	17,610.00	0.00	5.00%
Private Sector Housing	2,380.00	0.00	0.00%
CURRENT BUDGET SHORTFALL	1,247,849.00	0.00	
Environmental Enforcement	187,500.00	0.00	0.00%
STATUTORY FEE	187,500.00	0.00	
TOTAL	7,340,239.00	150,150.00	2.05

- 1.3.8 The level of increase in budget proposed in the table above reflects consideration of the effects of increased charges, such as elasticity of demand and potential movement of users to competitors.
- 1.3.9 A number of services have either not proposed an increase or, where they have, the increase has not resulted in an increased budget. The reasoning behind these actions are all in line with the Council's policy on setting fees and charges that has been outlined earlier in this report.
- 1.3.10 Each service has been considered separately and in all cases the policy has been followed. A brief explanation of the consideration officers have given to changes in price is given in the following paragraphs.
- 1.4 Fees & Charges supporting budget strategy (increase available to count as a saving)
- 1.4.1 Cemetery – The fees proposed for this service have considered demand, value for money and comparison with other local service providers and an evaluation of the current administrative cost of the service. The resulting proposals are expected to generate a net increase in income of £10,000 after consideration of any cost increases required.
- 1.4.2 Crematorium – careful consideration has been given to the charges that can be increased in line with the review carried out for the cemetery above. Some charges have been held at their currently level, this is because the charges have only recently been introduced and a full evaluation of their relevance and accuracy at recovering the cost to the Council cannot yet be carried out. In relation to search fees it is proposed that future charges relate directly to the cost of the request, where a charge is required.
- 1.4.3 Parking – The proposed increases relate to rationalising the charges in various car parks. The proposal removes from some car parks the charge for a 2 hour stay. The increases proposed are in line with the developing infrastructure delivery plan.
- 1.4.4 Recycling & Refuse – the service review carried out for this service proposes an increase in bulky collection charges that is in line with other service providers and an increase in green waste sacks. There is no increase proposed in the annual charge for a green wheeled bin.
- 1.4.5 Community Development – An inflation based increase in fees is proposed.
- 1.4.6 Planning – The major income received by the development management service is statutory fees for planning applications. The service does however provide pre application advice at a charge. This

is a successful service and is generating significant levels of income. A review of demand and the cost of officer time at meetings with prospective applicants have lead to the proposed increase in the budget outlined in the table above. If necessary the actual fee will be considered for increase in future years.

1.4.7 Licensing – Increases agreed at Licensing Committee will enable a small increase in expected income from this service. The service is provided in partnership with Sevenoaks DC and Tunbridge Wells BC. Discussions with the service manager are ongoing to identify additional areas where income generation can be maximised. Cabinet will not make a decision on the level of fees and APPENDIX A does not contain this detail.

1.5 Break-even service (that cannot generate a surplus)

1.5.1 Land Charges – This service is provided at a break-even level and current government proposals are to cease charging for some services. There are no proposals at this stage to amend these fees and charges.

1.5.2 Building Control – This service is set up as a trading account and surpluses require re-investment in the service. The service is expected to break even over a rolling three year period. Increased fees and charges have already been agreed for commencement on 1 January 2012 in order to ensure the service breaks even. No further consideration is given to this service at this time.

1.6 Pre-set target (already included in the budget strategy)

1.6.1 Parks & Open Spaces – This service was set increased income targets for 2011/12 and 2012/13 at Council in March 2011. Increased fees and charges are detailed in the APPENDIX A but these are designed to assist the service in achieving that target. An assessment of service demand has been undertaken and proposed increases vary according to that assessment with the proposal suggesting that the fee for junior pitch hire should reduce.

1.6.2 Hazlitt – the service has a previously agreed target to reduce the subsidy provided by the Council. While the proposed increases are modest at this stage a report on options will be brought separately to the Cabinet Member.

1.6.3 Museum – the service has a previously agreed target to reduce the subsidy provided by the Council through the generation of income following the opening of the new wing. A separate business proposal will be brought to the Cabinet Member on options for its achievement.

- 1.6.4 Street naming & numbering – a review charges for this service formed part of the budget strategy proposals of the Head of Information and Communications Technology. The charges have already been approved and the increase in budgeted income will go towards achieving the currently approved budget strategy.
- 1.7 Current budget shortfall (Income required to aid delivery of current budget)
- 1.7.1 Market – The Maidstone Market did not achieved it budgeted income target during 2010/11. the situation has continued into 2011/12. The proposed increase in fees and charges that is detailed in APPENDIX A does not consider increases in the charges currently made for the standard market due to the currently low levels of demand. The proposal does recommend increases for some ancillary services and other market activity.
- 1.7.2 Park & Ride – this service has not been considered for an increase at this time. The service continues to place an increasing burden upon the Council subsidy and this has been reported in the budget monitoring reports. The revised service management arrangements that occurred as part of the restructure earlier this year are now in place and officers are currently undertaking a full review to be brought to the Cabinet Member on ways to reverse the trend in overall subsidy. This will include the fee structure.
- 1.7.3 Environmental Health – income from fees and charges in this area represents a minor element of the total fees and charges budget for the Council. The budget is not being achieved currently and a proposed increase in line with inflation is outlined in the appendix to assist with achieving the current target.
- 1.7.4 Private Sector Housing – A number of minor fees are charged by the Private sector Housing Team. These are not all annual fees and have recently been increased, prior to this consideration. At this time the charges proposed will allow achievement of the current budget.
- 1.8 Fees & Charges set without discretion (Generally statutory charges)
- 1.8.1 Environmental Enforcement – The statutory fee is used for this service.
- 1.8.2 Planning – There is some discretion with pre application advice and other potential services. At this time the actual planning fees are statutorily set and no announcement has been made by government regarding an increase. Government is considering allowing a locally set fee to cover the cost of the service. Officers have commenced work on developing those fee levels so that, should the Government

allow this freedom, the Council will be well placed to agree and charge at this level.

1.8.3 Licensing – A number of the license fees, especially those relating to liquor licensing are set statutorily and over recent years there has been no increase for these licenses. Other licenses are locally determined but responsibility lies with the Licensing Committee to set these fees. The result of the Committee’s recent consideration of fees for 2012/13 is detailed in the table above but do not require Cabinet approval.

1.9 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.9.1 The Cabinet could consider these proposals as individual Cabinet Members as has happened in the past. This is not recommended as the consideration of the full range of fees and charges in this way enables the impact of all charges to be considered together. This gives Cabinet the ability to assess the impact of changes on individual customers. The consideration of fees and charges in this way removes the need to set a generic target for increases as part of the budget strategy. This is in line with the approved policy on fees and charges.

1.9.2 Cabinet could agree different increases to those proposed. Officers have considered all aspects of the policy in developing these proposals and they are in line with the factors set out earlier in this report.

1.10 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.10.1 Increases in fees and charges can have a significant impact on the Council’s objectives. The use of the policy as a guide to assessing an appropriate level of increase means that the most appropriate levels are proposed in this report.

1.10.2 The direct charging of a fee for a service reduces the level of subsidy required by all Council Tax Payers and ensures a greater element of the cost is obtained from the service user where this approach is appropriate.

1.11 Risk Management

1.11.1 The major risk is that the proposed increases do not deliver the increased income expected. This expectation will form part of the budget strategy for 2012/13. If the income does not reach the levels expected within the budget the Council will have to take corrective action to balance the budget.

1.11.2 This risk is faced by service managers every year and where the income generated is not sufficient to reach the budget corrective action is taken. In such cases the quarterly budget monitoring reports

received by cabinet will highlight any variances to Cabinet. In addition the constitution requires significant variances from income targets to be reported to the relevant Cabinet Member along with proposals to rectify any problems created.

1.12 Other Implications

1.12.1

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

1.12.2 Financial – The proposals in this report will provide £150,150 towards the requirements of the budget strategy 2012/13 onwards that is reported elsewhere on this agenda.

1.12.3 Legal – a number of the fees and charges made for services by the council are set so as to provide a service at cost. These services are set up as trading accounts to ensure that the cost of service is clearly related to the charge made. In other case the fee is set by statute and the Council must charge the set fee. In both cases the proposals in this report meet the Council’s obligations.

1.12.4 The fee or charge for a service, to be collectable through legal action in circumstances where a customer defaults must be clearly defensible. Adherence to the policy on setting fees and charges provides cabinet with some assurance that appropriate factors have been considered in setting these charges.

1.13 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.13.1 An equality impact assessment is attached as **APPENDIX B** to this report.
- 1.13.2 The objective of the review of fees and charges in this corporate way, including a focus on the factors required by the corporate policy minimises the opportunity for unintended disadvantage to be created. The overview granted to Cabinet by this single report also reduces the possibility of an unintentional focus on a single group by multiple separate decisions.
- 1.14 Relevant Documents
- 1.14.1 Appendices
- a) APPENDIX A – Schedule of all fees and charges by service.
b) APPENDIX B – Equality Impact Assessment.
- 1.14.2 Background Documents
- 1.14.3 The Corporate Fees & Charges Policy is available from the Head of Finance & Customer Services.

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan? 21/10/2011

This is a Key Decision because: A Budget Strategy report

Wards/Parishes affected: All

	FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
CEMETERY									
1.	<u>Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial</u>		58,056	47,050				4,950	52,000
(a)	<u>Resident Fees</u>								
	General Section				625.00	700.00	12.00%		
	Class:Lawn				625.00	700.00	12.00%		
	Class:Vault				POA	POA			
	Class:Cremated remains burial plot				325.00	400.00	23.08%		
	Deed of grant				40.00	40.00	0.00%		
	Transfer of Exclusive Rights				70.00	75.00	7.14%		
(b)	<u>Non Resident Fees</u>								
	General Section				1,250.00	1,400.00	12.00%		
	Class:Lawn				1,250.00	1,400.00	12.00%		
	Class:Vault				POA	POA			
	Class:Cremated remains burial plot				650.00	800.00	23.08%		
	Stillborn to 4 years				74.00	80.00	8.11%		
	5 to 15 years				100.00	150.00	50.00%		
	Deed of grant				40.00	40.00	0.00%		
	Transfer of Exclusive Rights				67.00	75.00	11.94%		
2.	<u>Interment Fees</u>		46,610	48,350				4,400	52,750
	Stillborn to 4 years				No Charge	No charge			
	5 to 15 years (15 years, 364 days)				205.00	250.00	21.95%		
	16 years and over (16 years and 1 day)				465.00	500.00	7.53%		
	Double				550.00	600.00	9.09%		
	Treble				725.00	800.00	10.34%		
	Cremated remains				130.00	200.00	53.85%		
	Interment in existing vault and interment/excavation new vault				POA	POA			
	Ashes casket (to purchase)				45.00	47.00	4.44%		
	Ashes urn (to purchase)				30.00	32.00	6.67%		
	Unpurchased grave				360.00	400.00	11.11%		
	Excavation of non standard grave (additional charge to above)				95.00	110.00	15.79%		
	Exhumation of cremated remains				185.00	210.00	13.51%		
	Exhumation of buried remains				POA	POA			
3.	<u>Other charges</u>								
	Use of chapel and organ								
	Witness Fee				34.00	40.00	17.65%		
	Hardwood seat with Stone Effect plaque								
	New Seat				POA	POA			
	New Base				POA	POA			
	Stone Effect Plaque	*			52.00	54.00	3.85%		
	Plot rental - 5 years				205.00	213.00	3.90%		
4.	<u>Monuments</u>		22,681	11,050				650	11,700
	Headstone				85.00	90.00	5.88%		
	Kerbstone				85.00	90.00	5.88%		
	Indicator stone				30.00	35.00	16.67%		
	Cremated remains memorial				85.00	90.00	5.88%		
	Tablet 12" x 12"				85.00	90.00	5.88%		
	Vase				85.00	90.00	5.88%		
	Additional inscription				85.00	90.00	5.88%		
	Any other monument				85.00	90.00	5.88%		
	Memorial inspection re-instatement (standard)				120.00	120.00	0.00%		
	Lawn Grave foundation - by MBS				35.00	45.00	28.57%		
5.	<u>Search fees</u>								
	1-5 years				16.00	0.00			
	6-10 years				21.00	0.00			
	Over 10 years				26.00	0.00			
	Personal search (by appointment)				35.00	35.00	0.00%		
6.	<u>Maintenance</u>								
	Heather-5 years*				135.00	140.00	3.70%		
	renewal - 5 years*				113.00	117.00	3.54%		
	Rose bush-10 years*				150.00	155.00	3.33%		
	renewal 5 years*				135.00	140.00	3.70%		
	Miniature rose-10 years*				120.00	125.00	4.17%		
	renewal 5 years*				115.00	120.00	4.35%		
	Earthing				40.00	50.00	25.00%		
	Turfing				48.00	50.00	4.17%		
	CEMETERY TOTAL		127,347	106,450				10,000	116,450

	FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
CREMATORIUM									
1.	Cremations		860,455	837,110				35,480	872,590
	Service charges								
	Medical Referee's Fee				20.00	22.00	10.00%		
	Non viable foetus and stillborn				no charge	no charge			
	Less than 5 years				89.00	93.00	4.49%		
	5 to 15 years 364 days				102.00	106.00	3.92%		
	Adult				490.00	510.00	4.08%		
	Environmental Surcharge				55.00	57.00	3.64%		
	Cremation of body parts				88.00	92.00	4.55%		
	Use of chapel (additional item)				93.00	97.00	4.30%		
	Use of chapel organ				7.50	8.00	6.67%		
	Witness fee				34.00	35.00	2.94%		
	Saturday morning supplement fee				270.00	280.00	3.70%		
	Containers for cremated remains								
	Polytainer	*			13.50	15.00	11.11%		
	Urn	*			30.00	32.00	6.67%		
	Casket	*			45.00	47.00	4.44%		
	Baby urn	*			12.50	12.50	0.00%		
	Other related services								
	Forwarding of cremated remains								
	Temporary deposit of remains (per month)				6.50	7.00	7.69%		
	Exhumation of cremated remains				185.00	185.00	0.00%		
	Disposal from other crematoriums				52.00	54.00	3.85%		
	Burial in individual plot				36.00	37.00	2.78%		
2.	Memorials		139,521	118,770				4,750	123,520
	Book of Remembrance								
	line entry (min 2 lines) *	*			85.00	88.00	3.53%		
	Flower/Crest/or Badge *	*			225.00	234.00	4.00%		
	Folded Remembrance Card								
	Card purchase *	*			9.50	10.00	5.26%		
	per line entry (minimum 2 lines) *	*			47.00	49.00	4.26%		
	Flower/Crest/or Badge *	*			153.00	159.00	3.92%		
	Mini Books of Remembrance								
	Book purchase *	*			23.00	24.00	4.35%		
	per line entry (minimum 2 lines) *	*			67.00	70.00	4.48%		
	Flower/Crest/or Badge *	*			195.00	203.00	4.10%		
	Cloister Hall of Remembrance								
	Wall vases								
	Vase *	*			7.50	8.00	6.67%		
	Plot Rental - per annum				55.50	58.00	4.50%		
	Stone Block vase *	*			11.00	11.50	4.55%		
	Plot Rental - per annum				64.00	67.00	4.69%		
	Cloister Hall of Remembrance								
	Cloister wall tablets								
	Single *	*			136.00	141.00	3.68%		
	Plot Rental - 10 years				125.00	130.00	4.00%		
	Double (1 inscription) *	*			158.00	164.00	3.80%		
	Plot Rental - 10 years				176.50	184.00	4.25%		
	Double (2 inscriptions) *	*			266.00	277.00	4.14%		
	Plot Rental - 10 years				176.50	184.00	4.25%		
	Refurbishment per letter - regild *	*			3.60	3.75	4.17%		
	Refurbishment per letter - repaint *	*			3.60	3.75	4.17%		
	Second inscription *	*			109.00	113.00	3.67%		
	Memorial Hall								
	Leather plaques *	*			26.00	27.00	3.85%		
	Plot Rental - 5 years				70.00	73.00	4.29%		
	Added inscription *	*			26.00	27.00	3.85%		
	Gardens of Remembrance								
	Stone effect plaque *	*			52.00	54.00	3.85%		
	Plot Rental - 10 years				146.50	152.00	3.75%		
	Added inscription *	*			45.50	54.00	18.68%		
	Refurbishment *	*			17.50	18.00	2.86%		
	Gardens of Remembrance								
	Sanctum Vault								
	Vault with inscription *				330.00	330.00	0.00%		
	10 year lease				660.00	660.00	0.00%		
	20 year lease				940.00	940.00	0.00%		
	30 year lease				1,500.00	1,500.00	0.00%		
	Illustration, photoplaques etc.				P.O.A.	P.O.A.			
	Chapel Lawn Planter								
	Plaque with inscription *				50.00	50.00	0.00%		
	Plus 10 year dedication				160.00	160.00	0.00%		
	Woodside Walk Book								
	Plaque with inscription *				60.00	60.00	0.00%		
	Plus 10 year dedication				180.00	180.00	0.00%		

BUDGET STRATEGY 2012/13 ONWARDS
FEES AND CHARGES REVIEW

APPENDIX A

	FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
	Woodside Walk Mushrooms								
	Tablet with inscription *				60.00	60.00	0.00%		
	Plus 10 year dedication				140.00	140.00	0.00%		
	Gardens of Remembrance								
	Memorial shrubs in beds								
	Shrubs (5 years) *	*			140.00	146.00	4.29%		
	Adoption renewal	*			90.00	94.00	4.44%		
	Added inscription *	*			23.75	54.00	127.37%		
	Standard roses in bed (5 years) *	*			125.00	130.00	4.00%		
	Adoption renewal	*			105.00	109.00	3.81%		
	Standard roses-added inscription *	*			23.75	25.00	5.26%		
	Individual standard rose (5 years) *	*			160.00	166.00	3.75%		
	Adoption renewal	*			130.00	135.00	3.85%		
	Added inscription *	*			23.75	25.00	5.26%		
	Specimen tree *	*			20.50	25.00	21.95%		
	Plot Rental - 10 years				183.50	190.00	3.54%		
	Gardens of Remembrance								
	Hardwood seat	*			POA	POA			
	Plaque *	*			52.00	54.00	3.85%		
	Plot Rental - 5 years				205.00	213.00	3.90%		
	Added inscription *	*			70.00	54.00	-22.86%		
3.	Search fees								
	1-5 years				16.00	0.00	-100.00%		
	6-10 years				21.00	0.00	-100.00%		
	Over 10 years				26.00	0.00	-100.00%		
	Personal search (by appointment)				35.00	35.00	0.00%		
	CREMATORIUM TOTAL		999,976	955,880				40,230	996,110

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
PARKING SERVICES								
Business Permits	*	9,513	12,710	100.00	100.00	0.00%		12,710
Residents Permits		89,400	130,440	25.00	25.00	0.00%		130,440
Visitors Permits		93,800	58,240	25.00	25.00	0.00%		58,240
Replacement Permits	*	2,028	780	10.00	10.00	0.00%		780
Carers Permits - Organisation	*	2,337	1,290	20.00	20.00	0.00%		1,290
Carers Permits - Individuals				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
Work Permits	*			20.00	20.00	0.00%		
Waivers	*			20.00	20.00	0.00%		
Dispensations 1 Day	*	2,932	2,560	10.00	10.00	0.00%		2,560
Dispensations Over 1 Day	*			50.00	50.00	0.00%		
Dispensations 10 or more additional per vehicle	*			5.00	5.00	0.00%		
Cones/ Suspension administration Fee	*			60.00	60.00	0.00%		
PCN Low - Statutory		759,242	848,970	50.00	50.00	0.00%		848,970
PCN High - Statutory				70.00	70.00	0.00%		
Season Tickets		94,186	93,670					93,670
3 Month 5 days Mon - Fri	*			230.00	230.00	0.00%		
3 Month 6 days Mon - Sat	*			280.00	280.00	0.00%		
6 Month 5 days Mon - Fri	*			405.00	405.00	0.00%		
6 Month 6 days Mon - Sat	*			500.00	500.00	0.00%		
12 Month 5 days Mon - Fri	*			710.00	710.00	0.00%		
12 Month 6 days Mon - Sat	*			860.00	860.00	0.00%		
PAY AND DISPLAY								
On Street		190,175	171,880					171,880
30 mins				0.60	0.60	0.00%		
1 hr				1.00	1.00	0.00%		
1.5 hr				1.50	1.50	0.00%		
2 hr				2.00	2.00	0.00%		
3 hr				2.10	2.10	0.00%		
4 hr				2.70	2.70	0.00%		
Off street		1,252,901	1,209,060				61,000	1,270,060
Medway St								
30 mins	*			0.30	0.50	66.67%		
1 hr	*			0.50	0.90	80.00%		
2 hr	*			1.00	0.00	-100.00%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.00	2.70	35.00%		
Brewer Street [E]								
30 mins	*			0.40	0.50	25.00%		
1 hr	*			0.00	0.90	100.00%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
Wheeler Street								
30 mins	*			0.40	0.50	25.00%		
1 hr	*				0.90			
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
Palace Avenue								
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
Mote Road								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
Mill Street								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
Long Stay								
Barker Road								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
5 hr	*			4.50	5.00	11.11%		
Brooks Place								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
5 hr	*			4.50	5.00	11.11%		
Brunswick Street								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
5 hr	*			4.50	5.00	11.11%		
College Road								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
5 hr	*			4.50	5.00	11.11%		
Lucerne Street								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
5 hr	*			4.50	5.00	11.11%		
Sitingbourne Road								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
5 hr	*			4.50	5.00	11.11%		
Union Street [E]								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
5 hr	*			4.50	5.00	11.11%		
Union Street [W]								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
5 hr	*			4.50	5.00	11.11%		
Well Road								
1 hr	*			0.70	0.90	28.57%		
3 hr	*			1.80	1.80	0.00%		
4 hr	*			2.70	2.70	0.00%		
5 hr	*			4.50	5.00	11.11%		
Multi Storey King Street								
1 hr	*			0.50	0.70	40.00%		
2 hr	*			1.00	1.30	30.00%		
3 hr	*			1.40	1.50	7.14%		
4 hr	*			1.80	2.00	11.11%		
5 hr	*			2.00	2.50	25.00%		
5+	*			5.50	5.50	0.00%		
PARKING SERVICES TOTAL		2,496,514	2,529,600				61,000	2,590,600

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Includes VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
RECYCLING & REFUSE COLLECTION								
Bulky Collection		62,435	62,000				6,000	68,000
1-6 items				20.00	23.00	15.00%		
7-12 items				30.00	35.00	16.67%		
13-18 items				45.00	45.00	0.00%		
Garden Waste Service								
Compostable sacks - retailer		158,984	150,230	2.90	3.05	5.17%	8,220	158,450
Compostable sacks - resident		22,254	32,980	3.25	3.50	7.69%	1,700	34,680
240 litre bin hire		283,355	315,700	30.00	30 & 32		0	315,700
RECYCLING & REFUSE COLLECTION TOTAL		527,028	560,910				15,920	576,830

		*							
	FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	Include	2010-11	2011 - 12	2011 - 12	Proposed 2012 -		2012 - 13	2012 - 13
		s VAT	Actual	Budget	Current Charge	13 Charges	% Change	+ / -	Next Year
				Estimate				Income	Estimate
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT									
	Hotfoot Summer/Easter		25,602	19,990				1,000	20,990
	Price per Week for 1 Child				25.25	26.56	5.20%		
	Price per Week for 2 Children				50.50	53.13	5.20%		
	Price per Week for 3 Children				61.80	65.01	5.20%		
	Price per Week Concession for 1 Child				15.15	15.94	5.20%		
	Price per Week Concession for 2 Children				29.00	30.51	5.20%		
	Price per Week Concession for 3 Children				36.35	38.24	5.20%		
	COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TOTAL		25,602	19,990				1,000	20,990

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
PLANNING (Development Control)								
<u>Application to discharge conditions related to a permission</u>								
The standard fee for conditions per request; or				85.00	85.00	0.00%		
Where the related permission was for extending or altering a dwellinghouse or other development in the curtilage of a dwellinghouse.				25.00	25.00	0.00%		
<u>Written confirmation of conditions previously discharged relating to a permission</u>						0.00%		
Per request; or				85.00	85.00	0.00%		
Where the related permission was for extending or altering a dwellinghouse or other development in the curtilage of a dwellinghouse.				25.00	25.00	0.00%		
Pre-Application Fees		51,290	47,000			48.89%	22000	69000
Written Advice for Householder applications								
charged for written advice on Householder applications	*			36.00	36.00	0.00%		
Written Advice for small commercial applications								
charged for written advice on all small proposals	*			60.00	60.00	0.00%		
Written Advice for Minor applications								
charged for written advice on all Minor proposals	*			120.00	120.00	0.00%		
Advice involving meetings with Officers								
An hour long meeting	*			300.00	300.00	0.00%		
Additional fee				120.00	120.00	0.00%		
Other Pre-Application Fees								
Administration fees								
Research of Permitted Development Rights and Planning Histories								
Research on Planning Histories				36.00	36.00	0.00%		
Research on Permitted Development Rights				36.00	36.00	0.00%		
All Outline Applications		584,449	709,070			0.00%		709070
£335 per 0.1 hectare for sites up to and including 2.5 hectares				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
Not more than 2.5 hectares								
£8,285 + £100 for each 0.1 in excess of 2.5 hectares to a maximum of 125000				8,385.00	8,385.00	0.00%		
More than 2.5 hectares								
Householder Applications								
Alterations/extensions to a single dwelling , including works within boundary				150.00	150.00	0.00%		
Full Applications (and First Submissions of Reserved Matters)								
Alterations/extensions to two or more dwellings , including works within boundaries				295.00	295.00	0.00%		
Two or more dwellings (or two or more flats)								
New dwellings (up to and including 50) (not more than 50)				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
New dwellings (for more than 50) £16,565 + £100 per additional dwelling in excess of 50 up to a maximum fee of £250,000				16,665.00	16,665.00	0.00%		
New dwellings (more than 50)								
Full Applications (and First Submissions of Reserved Matters) continued...								
Erection of buildings (not dwellings, agricultural, glasshouses, plant nor machinery):								
Gross floor space to be created by the development				170.00	170.00	0.00%		
No increase in gross floor space or no more than 40m ²								
Gross floor space to be created by the development				335.00	335.00	0.00%		

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Gross floor space to be created by the development More than 75m ² but no more than 3,750m ²				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
Gross floor space to be created by the development More than 3,750m ²				16,665.00	16,665.00	0.00%		
The erection of buildings (on land used for agriculture for agricultural purposes)								
Gross floor space to be created by the development More than 3,750m ²				70.00	70.00	0.00%		
Gross floor space to be created by the development				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
Gross floor space to be created by the development More than 540m ² but not more than 4,215m ²				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
Gross floor space to be created by the development More than 4,215m ²				16,665.00	16,665.00	0.00%		
Full Applications (and First Submissions of Reserved Matters) continued...								
Erection of glasshouses (on land used for the purposes of agriculture)								
Gross floor space to be created by the development Not more than 465m ²				70.00	70.00	0.00%		
Gross floor space to be created by the development More than 465m ²				1,870.00	1,870.00	0.00%		
Erection/alterations/replacement of plant and machinery								
Site area Not more than 5 hectares				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
Site area More than 5 hectares				16,665.00	16,665.00	0.00%		
Applications other than Building Works								
Car parks, service roads or other accesses For existing uses				170.00	170.00	0.00%		
Waste (Use of land for disposal of refuse or waste materials or deposit of material remaining after extraction or storage of minerals)								
Site area Not more than 15 hectares				170.00	170.00	0.00%		
Site area More than 15 hectares				25,415.00	25,415.00	0.00%		
Operations connected with exploratory drilling for oil or natural gas								
Site area Not more than 7.5 hectares				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
Site area More than 7.5 hectares				25,100.00	25,100.00	0.00%		
Other operations (winning and working of minerals)								
Site area Not more than 15 hectares				170.00	170.00	0.00%		
Site area More than 15 hectares				25,415.00	25,415.00	0.00%		
Other operations (not coming within any of the above categories) Any site area				170.00	170.00	0.00%		
Lawful Development Certificate								
LDC - Existing Use - in breach of a planning condition								
LDC - Existing Use LDC - lawful not to comply with a particular condition				170.00	170.00	0.00%		
LDC - Proposed Use								
Prior Approval								
Agricultural and Forestry buildings & operations or demolition of buildings				70.00	70.00	0.00%		
Telecommunications Code Systems Operators				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
Reserved Matters								
Application for approval of reserved matters following outline approval				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
Approval/Variation/discharge of condition								
Application for removal or variation of a condition following grant of planning permission				170.00	170.00	0.00%		
Request for confirmation that one or more planning conditions have been complied with request				25.00	25.00	0.00%		
Change of Use of a building to use as one or more separate dwellinghouses, or other cases								
Number of dwellings not more than 50				335.00	335.00	0.00%		

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Includes VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
Number of dwellings More than 50				16,665.00	16,665.00	0.00%		
Other Changes of Use of a building or land				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
Advertising								
Relating to the business on the premises				95.00	95.00	0.00%		
Advance signs which are not situated on or visible from the site, directing the public to a business				95.00	95.00	0.00%		
Other advertisements				335.00	335.00	0.00%		
<u>Application for a New Planning Permission to replace an Extant Planning Permission</u>								
Applications in respect of major developments				500.00	500.00	0.00%		
Applications in respect of householder developments				50.00	50.00	0.00%		
Applications in respect of other developments				170.00	170.00	0.00%		
<u>Application for a Non-material Amendment Following a Grant of Planning Permission</u>								
Applications in respect of householder developments				25.00	25.00	0.00%		
Applications in respect of other developments				170.00	170.00	0.00%		
TOTAL PLANNING FEES		635,739	756,070				22,000	778,070

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
DEVELOPMENT CONTROL (LAND CHARGES)								
		244,181	252,660					252,660
Search and Enquiries (LLC1 and CON29) - Paper Search				95.00	95.00	0.00%		
Search and Enquiries (LLC1 and CON29) - Electronic Searches - NLIS				95.00	95.00	0.00%		
Search only (LLC1 only) - Paper Search				35.00	35.00	0.00%		
Search only (LLC1 only) - Electronic Search				35.00	35.00	0.00%		
CON 29 Optional Enquiries (printed) each				15.00	15.00	0.00%		
CON 29 Additional Enquiries each				20.00	20.00	0.00%		
Additional Parcel of Land				10.00	10.00	0.00%		
Personal Search Register only				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
Refined Information								
Question								
1.1 (a) - (e)				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
1.1 (f) - (h)				4.06	4.06	0.00%		
1.2				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
2 (a)				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
2 (b) - (d)				3.83	3.83	0.00%		
3.1				3.48	3.48	0.00%		
3.2				3.83	3.83	0.00%		
3.3 (a)				SOUTHERN WATER	SOUTHERN WATER	0.00%		
3.3 (b)				SOUTHERN WATER	SOUTHERN WATER	0.00%		
3.4 (a), (e), (f)				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
3.4 (b) - (d)				3.83	3.83	0.00%		
3.5				3.83	3.83	0.00%		
3.6 (a) - (l)				3.83	3.83	0.00%		
3.7				11.42	11.42	0.00%		
3.8				4.06	4.06	0.00%		
3.9 (a) - (n)				3.48	3.48	0.00%		
3.10 (a)				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
3.10 (b)				3.48	3.48	0.00%		
3.11				3.83	3.83	0.00%		
3.12 (a)				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
3.12 (b) (i)				3.52	3.52	0.00%		
3.12 (b) (ii)				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
3.12 ©				3.52	3.52	0.00%		
3.13				HPA	HPA	0.00%		
Unrefined Information								
Question								
1.1 (a) - (e)				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
1.1 (f) - (h)				3.25	3.25	0.00%		
1.2				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
2 (a)				KCC	KCC			
2 (b) - (d)				KCC	KCC			
3.1				3.09	3.09	0.00%		
3.2				KCC	KCC			
3.3 (a)				SOUTHERN WATER	SOUTHERN WATER			
3.3 (b)				SOUTHERN WATER	SOUTHERN WATER			
3.4 (a), (e), (f)				KCC	KCC			
3.4 (b) - (d)				KCC	KCC			
3.5				KCC	KCC			
3.6 (a) - (l)				KCC	KCC			
3.7				5.64	5.64	0.00%		
3.8				3.26	3.26	0.00%		
3.9 (a) - (n)				3.09	3.09	0.00%		
3.10 (a)				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
3.10 (b)				3.09	3.09	0.00%		
3.11				2.88	2.88	0.00%		
3.12 (a)				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
3.12 (b) (i)				3.10	3.10	0.00%		
3.12 (b) (ii)				0.00	0.00	0.00%		
3.12 ©				3.10	3.10	0.00%		
TOTAL LAND CHARGES		244,181	252,660				0	252,660

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
BUILDING CONTROL								
Erection of a single dwelling house	*			790.00	790.00	0.00%		
Erection of 2 dwelling houses	*	345,093	393,920	1,085.00	1,180.00	8.76%		393,920
Garages up to 60m ²	*			380.00	390.00	2.63%		
Extensions up to 6m ²	*			355.00	390.00	9.86%		
Extensions over 6m ² and up to 40m ²	*			505.00	565.00	11.88%		
Extensions over 40m ² and up to 100m ²	*			675.00	755.00	11.85%		
Loft Conversions up to 40m ²	*			520.00	575.00	10.58%		
Loft Conversions over 40m ² and up to 100m ²	*			665.00	740.00	11.28%		
Garage or Basement Conversion under 40m ²	*			335.00	370.00	10.45%		
Installation of single steel beam or lintel	*			210.00	230.00	9.52%		
Installation of Boiler or Electrical works up to £10000	*			200.00	220.00	10.00%		
Alterations up to the value of £1000	*			160.00	175.00	9.38%		
Alterations from £1001 to £5000	*			295.00	300.00	1.69%		
Alterations from £5001 to £10,000	*			355.00	390.00	9.86%		
Alterations from £10,001 to £25,000	*			455.00	495.00	8.79%		
Extensions over 6m ² and up to 40m ²	*			580.00	630.00	8.62%		
Extensions over 40m ² and up to 100m ²	*			720.00	780.00	8.33%		
Raised Storage Platform up to 50m ²	*			510.00	520.00	1.96%		
Shop Fitting up to 500m ²	*			440.00	480.00	9.09%		
Alterations from up to £5000	*			295.00	325.00	10.17%		
Alterations from £5001 to £10,000	*			375.00	400.00	6.67%		
Alterations from £10,001 to £25,000	*			485.00	530.00	9.28%		
TOTAL BUILDING CONTROL FEES		345,093	393,920	10,390.00	11,230.00		0	393,920

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
PARKS & OPEN SPACES								
FOOTBALL								
Seniors - single let (hirer to erect nets)	*			54.00	57.60	6.67%		
Seniors - 10 or more lets (hirer to erect nets)	exempt			45.22	48.00	6.15%		
Juniors - single let (hirer to erect nets)	*			24.60	22.80	-7.32%		
Juniors - 10 or more lets (hirer to erect nets)	exempt			20.50	19.00	-7.32%		
Use of five-a-side football nets - per set	*			19.00	19.90	4.74%		
RUGBY								
Seniors - single let	*			57.00	60.50	6.14%		
Seniors - 10 or more lets	exempt			47.50	50.40	6.11%		
Juniors - single let	*			29.00	30.50	5.17%		
Juniors - 10 or more lets	exempt			24.00	25.40	5.83%		
TENNIS - per court per hour								
Adult - single hire	*			7.50	8.00	6.67%		
Adult -10 or more hires	exempt			6.21	6.60	6.28%		
OAP/Junior - single hire	*			4.00	4.40	10.00%		
OAP/Junior - 10 or more hires	exempt			3.40	3.60	5.88%		
BOWLS - Season - Adult								
- OAP/Junior	*			35.00	36.90	5.43%		
- per Green - Adult	*			5.00	5.40	8.00%		
- OAP/Junior	*			2.50	2.80	12.00%		
-Match fees	*			4.00	4.40	10.00%		
Use of Woods - per hour/match - Adult	*			3.00	3.30	10.00%		
- OAP/Junior	*			2.00	2.20	10.00%		
- per match - Adult	*			3.00	3.30	10.00%		
- OAP/Junior	*			2.00	2.20	10.00%		
ROUNDERS - Weekends								
- Evenings 5 - 9.30pm	*			48.00	50.90	6.04%		
Use of Changing Rooms and Showers	*			16.80	17.90	6.55%		
EVENTS								
Fairs and circuses - per day (min. charge)	exempt			510.00	540.60	6.00%		
Big top show - per evening (min. charge)	exempt			350.00	371.00	6.00%		
HIRE OF PARKS								
up to 100 participants (min. charge)	exempt			33.00	35.00	6.06%		
- 100 to 500 participants (min. charge)	exempt			64.00	67.90	6.09%		
- 500+ participants or more (min. charge)	exempt			275.00	291.50	6.00%		
Filming companies - per day								
- Mote Park	exempt			260.00	275.60	6.00%		
- Brenchley Gardens	exempt			175.00	185.50	6.00%		
- others by negotiation								
Commercial medical units - per day	*			115.00	122.20	6.26%		
Hot air ballooning (per flight/landing) - Private	exempt			65.00	68.90	6.00%		
GOLF-PITCH & PUTT & PUTTING								
Weekdays - Putting - per round - Adult	*			2.25	2.50	11.11%		
- Adult (Own Eqpt)	*			1.95	2.20	12.82%		
- OAP/Junior	*			1.75	1.90	8.57%		
- OAP/Junior (Own Eqpt)	*			1.50	1.70	13.33%		
Weekends/Bank Hols - Putting - per round - Adult	*			2.50	2.70	8.00%		
- Adult (Own Eqpt)	*			2.20	2.40	9.09%		
- OAP/Junior	*			1.80	2.00	11.11%		
- OAP/Junior (Own Eqpt)	*			1.60	1.80	12.50%		
Weekdays - Pitch and Putt - per round - Adult	*			3.60	4.00	11.11%		
- Adult (Own club/ball)	*			3.25	3.70	13.85%		
- OAP/Junior	*			2.50	2.90	16.00%		
- OAP/Junior (Own club/ball)	*			2.20	2.70	22.73%		
Weekends/Bank Hols-Pitch and Putt-per round-Adult	*			4.00	4.20	5.00%		
- Adult (Own club/ball)	*			3.75	3.90	4.00%		
- OAP/Junior	*			3.00	3.10	3.33%		
- OAP/Junior (Own club/ball)	*			2.60	2.90	11.54%		
Weekdays - Family Tickets	*			10.40	11.70	12.50%		
Family Tickets (Own Eqpt)	*			8.80	10.00	13.64%		
Weekends/Bank Hols - Family Tickets	*			11.80	12.60	6.78%		
Family Tickets (Own Eqpt)	*			10.40	11.00	5.77%		
Ball deposit	*			1.00	1.00	0.00%		
Equipment deposit - single player	*			10.00	10.00	0.00%		
Equipment deposit - group	*			10.00	10.00	0.00%		
MOORING FEES								
PER VESSEL (20 feet length)								
per Night	*			5.30	5.70	7.55%		
per Week	*			26.50	30.00	13.21%		
per Month	*			77.00	96.00	24.68%		
per Quarter	*			180.00	240.00	33.33%		
SLIPWAY FEES								

BUDGET STRATEGY 2012/13 ONWARDS
FEES AND CHARGES REVIEW

		*		2011 - 12	2011 - 12	Proposed 2012 -		2012 - 13	2012 - 13
	FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	Includes VAT	2010-11 Actual	Budget Estimate	Current Charge	13 Charges	% Change	+ / - Income	Next Year Estimate
	per Canoe/Dinghy	*			4.00	4.20	5.00%		
	other Craft	*			10.00	10.30	3.00%		
	PARKS & OPEN SPACES TOTAL		69,710	71,350				0	71,350

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
HAZLITT ARTS CENTRE								
<u>Maidstone Room</u>		4,810	4,830					4,830
Mon - Fri Per Hour 8am - 5pm				37.00	38.00	2.70%		
5pm - 11pm				37.00	38.00	2.70%		
Sat - Sun Per Hour 8am - 5pm				37.00	38.00	2.70%		
5pm - 11pm				43.00	44.50	3.49%		
<u>Exchange Studio</u>		20,676	27,400					27,400
Mon - Fri 8hr hire				240.00	250.00	4.17%		
				240.00	250.00	4.17%		
Sat - Sun 8 hr hire				350.00	360.00	2.86%		
				350.00	360.00	2.86%		
Weekly Hire				1,300.00	1,340.00	3.08%		
<u>Fourth Wall</u>		3,968	6,000					6,000
Mon - Fri Per Hour 8am - 5pm				80.00	82.00	2.50%		
5pm - 11pm				80.00	82.00	2.50%		
Sat - Sun Per Hour 8am - 5pm				100.00	105.00	5.00%		
5pm - 11pm				100.00	105.00	5.00%		
Weekly Hire				280.00	290.00	3.57%		
<u>Hazlitt Theatre</u>		59,588	73,620					73,620
Mon - Fri Per Day				550.00	570.00	3.64%		
Sat - Sun Per Day				675.00	695.00	2.96%		
Weekly Hire Per Week				2,275.00	2,345.00	3.08%		
<u>Graham Clarke Gallery</u>		1,820	1,710					1,710
Weekly Hire Per Week				100.00	100.00	0.00%		
HAZLITT ARTS CENTRE TOTAL		90,862	113,560				0	113,560

		*								
	FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate	
MUSEUM										
	School visits		16,221	12,210						12210
	First Hour				50.00	50.00	0.00%			
	Each Subsequent Hour				30.00	30.00	0.00%			
	Sessions with clay extra				8.00	8.00	0.00%			
	Outreach to schools									
	Half day				150.00	150.00	0.00%			
	Full day				225.00	225.00	0.00%			
	Children's holiday activities									
	Room hire		1,310	4780						4780
	Brenchley Room - Per day				400.00	400.00	0.00%			
	Glass Room - Per day				150.00	150.00	0.00%			
	Library - Per day				200.00	200.00	0.00%			
	MUSEUM TOTAL		17,531	16,990				0		16,990

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Includes VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
STREET NAMING AND NUMBERING								
			10,000				0	29,000
Name change					25.00			
Addition of Name to numbered Property					25.00			
Amendment to Postal Address					25.00			
New Build - Individual Property					75.00			
Official Registration of Postal Address previously not Registered					50.00			
New Development - Fee per unit/flat					40.00			
Creation of New Street					100.00			
Renumbering of Development or Block of Flats - Fee per unit/flat					20.00			
		0	10,000				0	29,000

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
MARKET								
Deadstock Sales								
Mon, Tue & Fri charge per month - 1 April - 31 Dec	*	4,500	4,360	385.00	395.00	2.60%		4,360
Mon, Tue & Fri charge per month - 1 Jan - 31 Mar	*			385.00	395.00	2.60%		
Tuesday & Saturday Market Pitches		99,199	139,540					139,540
Open Market								
Casual Rate (Min 10 feet) - 1 April - 31 Dec				32.00	32.00	0.00%		
Casual Rate (Min 10 feet) - 1 Jan - 31 Mar				32.00	32.00	0.00%		
Regular Rate Market Square								
Up to 10 feet - 1 April - 31 Dec				24.25	24.25	0.00%		
Up to 10 feet - 1 Jan - 31 Mar				17.00	17.00	0.00%		
Undercroft Rate - 1 April - 31 Dec				25.25	25.25	0.00%		
Undercroft Rate - 1 Jan - 31 Mar				18.00	18.00	0.00%		
Per each additional 5 feet or part - 1 April - 31 Dec				11.35	11.35	0.00%		
Per each additional 5 feet or part - 1 Jan - 31 Mar				7.65	7.65	0.00%		
Saturday Rate for 2 day Traders								
Up to 10 feet (2 day Trader) - 1 April - 31 Dec				23.20	23.20	0.00%		
Up to 10 feet (2 day Trader) - 1 Jan - 31 Mar				15.65	15.65	0.00%		
Per each additional 5 feet or part - 1 April - 31 Dec				10.80	10.80	0.00%		
Per each additional 5 feet or part - 1 Jan - 31 Mar				7.65	7.65	0.00%		
2nd Hand Dealers - Saturday only - 1 April - 31 Dec				16.00	16.00	0.00%		
2nd Hand Dealers - Saturday only - 1 Jan - 31 Mar				16.00	16.00	0.00%		
Boot Fair								
10' - 1 table space - 1 April - 31 Dec				13.50	13.50	0.00%		
10' - 1 table space - 1 Jan - 31 Mar				13.50	13.50	0.00%		
20' - 2 table spaces - 1 April - 31 Dec				24.75	24.75	0.00%		
20' - 2 table spaces - 1 Jan - 31 Mar				24.75	24.75	0.00%		
30' - 3 table spaces - 1 April - 31 Dec				33.00	33.00	0.00%		
30' - 3 table spaces - 1 Jan - 31 Mar				33.00	33.00	0.00%		
Stores & Creche								
Stores charge per annum		7,360	5,970	780.00	780.00	0.00%		5,970
Creche charge per annum				2,600.00	2,600.00	0.00%		
Car Parking Charges								
1 Hour -	*	232,944	240,270	0.80	0.80	0.00%		240,270
1 - 4 hours	*			1.60	1.60	0.00%		
Over 4 hours	*			4.60	4.60	0.00%		
Hire of Agricultural Hall								
Standard Hire - per day - regular hire		71,970	65,010	365.00	370.00	1.37%		65,010
Standard Hire - per day - casual hire				475.00	475.00	0.00%		
Local Community & U16 Events								
Per Day				110.00	115.00	4.55%		
Per hour - minimum 3 hours				16.50	17.00	3.03%		
Commercial Hire								
Per half day (maximum 8 hours)				520.00	520.00	0.00%		
Per day (over 8 hours)				995.00	995.00	0.00%		
Hire of chairs for events - per 100				46.00	46.00	0.00%		
MARKET TOTAL		415,973	455,150				0	455,150

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Includes VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
PARK AND RIDE								
On Bus Charges								
Peak Day Return (up to 9am inclusive, Mondays to Fridays)		598,666	657,139					657,139
Off-Peak Day Return				2.50	2.50	0.00%		
10 Single Trip Ticket -10 singles				1.50	1.50	0.00%		
				10.00	10.00	0.00%		
Season tickets								
Twelve-Week Season Ticket		111,865	115,570	100.00	100.00	0.00%		115,570
Annual Season Ticket				400.00	400.00	0.00%		
PARK AND RIDE TOTAL		710,531	772,709				0	772,709

FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Includes VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH								
Level 2 Food Hygiene Courses		3,050	4,610	59.00	61.95	5.00%		4610
Voluntary Surrender of unsound food (certificate)				70.00	73.50	5.00%		
Food Export certificate				116.00	121.80	5.00%		
Contaminated Land search fee		955	1,000	60.00	63.00	5.00%		1000
Heavy Metal Monitoring		1,140	2,000	1,300.00	1,365.00	5.00%		2000
Private Water Risk Assessment				100.00	105.00	5.00%		0
Private Water Sampling				100.00	105.00	5.00%		0
Private water Authorisation				100.00	105.00	5.00%		0
Private Water Investigation				100.00	105.00	5.00%		0
Private Water Analysis				100.00	105.00	5.00%		0
Statutory Fees for 48 Pollution Prevention Control Processes		9,997	9,570	10,000.00	10,000.00	0.00%		9570
ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH TOTAL		15,142	17,180					17,180

	FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	* Include s VAT	2010-11 Actual	2011 - 12 Budget Estimate	2011 - 12 Current Charge	Proposed 2012 - 13 Charges	% Change	2012 - 13 + / - Income	2012 - 13 Next Year Estimate
PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING									
1	Mandatory HMO Licensing								
1.1	Initial Licence Fees								
	Landlord Accreditation Status		2,100	2,380				0	2380
	Accredited landlord on application				450.00	450.00	0.00%		
	Non-accredited landlord				500.00	500.00	0.00%		
1.2	Renewal Licence Fees								
	Landlord Accreditation Status								
	Accredited landlord on application				450.00	450.00	0.00%		
	Non-accredited landlord				500.00	500.00	0.00%		
1.3	Variation application licence fees applicable								
	Proposed Licence Variation								
	Change of address details of any existing licence holder, manager, owner, mortgagor, freeholder, leaseholder etc				0.00	0.00			
	Change of mortgagor, owner, freeholder, and leaseholder (unless they are also the licence holder or manager)				0.00	0.00			
	Reduction in the number of maximum occupiers for licensing purposes				0.00	0.00			
	Variation of licence instigated by the council				0.00	0.00			
	Increase in the number of habitable rooms				0.00	0.00			
	Increase in the number of maximum occupiers for licensing purposes				0.00	0.00			
	Change of use of HMO, e.g. from bedsits to shared house				0.00	0.00			
	Change in room sizes of HMO				100.00	100.00	0.00%	0	0
	Change in amenity provision				100.00	100.00	0.00%	0	0
1.4	Other licence fees applicable								
	Action								
	Revocation of licence				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Application to licence following revocation of licence				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Application refused by the council				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Application withdrawn by the applicant				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Application made in error				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Properties that cease to be licensable during the licensing process				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Application received following the expiry of a Temporary Exemption Notice (TEN) made by the council				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Enforcement action under Part 1 of the Housing Act 2004 relating to a licensed HMO				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Charge for enforcement under s49 of the								
2	Housing Act 2004								
	Enforcement Action								
	Service of Improvement Notice under s11 and/or s12				375.00	375.00	0.00%	0	0
	Service of Prohibition Order under s20 and/or s21				375.00	375.00	0.00%	0	0
	Service of Hazard Awareness Notice under s28 and/or s29				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Taking Emergency Remedial Action under s40				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Making of Emergency Prohibition Order under s43				375.00	375.00	0.00%	0	0
	Suspension of notices detailed above				0.00	0.00		0	0
	Immigration - housing inspection and								
3	accommodation certificates							0	0
	Fee for inspection				100.00	100.00	0.00%	0	0
	PRIVATE SECTOR HOUSING TOTAL		2,100	2,380				0	2,380

		*							
	FEES & CHARGES April 2012 - March 2013	Include	2010-11	2011 - 12	2011 - 12	Proposed 2012 -		2012 - 13	2012 - 13
		s VAT	Actual	Budget	Current Charge	13 Charges	% Change	+ / -	Next Year
				Estimate				Income	Estimate
ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT									
	Fixed Penalty Fines		178,716	187,500	75.00	75.00	0.00%	0	187,500
	ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT TOTAL		178,716	187,500				0	187,500

Stage 1: Equality Impact Assessment

<p>1. What are the main aims purpose and outcomes of the Policy and how do these fit with the wider aims of the organization?</p>
<p>The council has adopted a policy on the setting of fees and charges to ensure that a consistent approach is used that takes account of all factors and creates a result that supports the priorities set out in the strategic plan.</p> <p>The outcome of this review is to set the appropriate level of fees and charges for 2012/13 for services where the Council raises income by charging the user of a service and where the setting of the fee to be charged is discretionary.</p>
<p>2. How do these aims affect our duty to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimization and other conduct prohibited by the act. • Advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. • Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.
<p>The major aim of the corporate fees and charges policy and this review is to ensure that an appropriate approach to funding of services is considered. The Council charges a fee for services where appropriate to ensure the charge to tax payers is consistent with affordability for all and the charge to service users is optimised. This action can only be taken where the Council possesses the power to make the charge.</p> <p>The policy identifies the assessment to be made in considering an initial charge or an increase. The factors identified as being necessary considerations include the direct effect on service users and the indirect effect upon tax payers of making the charge. This includes an assessment of the effect upon demand and dependent upon the nature of the service.</p> <p>In ensuring the corporate policy is followed, factors adversely affecting the Council's duties detailed above are minimised. The direct charging for services will advance equality of opportunity by ensuring the charges are fit for purpose and cost equates to use and enables choice.</p>
<p>3. What aspects of the policy including how it is delivered or accessed could contribute to inequality?</p>
<p>None, the policy has been developed to ensure the appropriate consideration of equality and other factors when setting fees and charges.</p>
<p>4. Will the policy have an impact (positive or negative) upon the lives of people, including particular communities and groups who have protected characteristics? What evidence do you have for this?</p>
<p>The policy will have a positive impact as the factors assessed as part of the policy includes ability to pay and need along with demand for the service. Adherence to the policy will help to ensure that charges are fit for purpose.</p>

If the answer to the second question has identified potential impacts and you have answered yes to any of the remaining questions then you should carry out a full EQIA set out as stage 2 below.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 JANUARY 2011

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Report prepared by Ellie Kershaw

1. REFRESH OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2012/13

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 To consider the newly defined focus of the outcomes and the updated action plan.

1.2 Recommendation of the Chief Executive

- 1.2.1 It is recommended that the Committee
- i. Note the focus of the outcomes and list of priorities at 1.3.5 and make any recommendations to Cabinet
 - ii. Note the moving of the outcome on disadvantage and the addition of a new customer focus outcome making any recommendations to Cabinet with regards to the wording
 - iii. Note the other areas to be refreshed
 - iv. Note the progress on the action plan from April-November 2011

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The vision for Maidstone in the Sustainable Community Strategy is "We want Maidstone Borough to be a vibrant, prosperous 21st century urban and rural community at the heart of at the heart of Kent, where its distinctive character is enhanced to create a safe, healthy, excellent environment with high quality education and employment where all people can realise their aspirations." The essence of this message can be distilled as "Great place, great people, great opportunity" and this is what the Strategic Plan sets out to achieve.

1.3.2 Key objectives in the Strategic plan are developed alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The service planning process then allows these objectives to be translated into actions for each team in the Council.

1.3.3 In September 2011 Cabinet agreed that the Strategic Plan 2011-15 would be retained for 2012/13 but refreshed to reflect key changes including work that Cabinet would undertake on the future shape of the organisation and the planning and prioritisation of actions needed to achieve the outcomes set out in the Strategic plan.

1.3.4 In the Strategic Plan for 2011-15 three priorities and six outcomes were agreed. Since that time the Council's funding has been cut meaning that some tough decisions have to be made with regards to where the Council should concentrate its budget. Cabinet agreed that the overarching aim of the Council should be to achieve economic prosperity and with this in mind, discussions have been held at Cabinet away days to define which areas of activity the Council should focus on. A list of priority areas has been drawn up and is shown at 1.3.5. At their meeting on 21 December 2011 Cabinet formally agreed this approach.

1.3.5 Whilst the above exercise was being carried out it became apparent that the first outcome under priority 3 relating to disadvantage and deprivation, would more appropriately sit under priority 2, a decent place to live. It is further suggested that a new customer focused outcome is created under priority 3 to meet 'customer excellence' as there is currently only an outcome relating to 'corporate excellence'.

1.3.6 The refreshed plan will contain the following information;

Priority 1 For Maidstone to have a growing economy

Outcomes

- A transport network that supports the local economy

Integrated transport strategy with KCC
– Sustainable transport approach
– Behavioural change/modal shift
– Maidstone town centre as a regional transport hub
– Integrated parking strategy

- A growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy

Creating the right planning environment
Development of key infrastructure
Business expansion
Inward investment
Development of stronger business relationships
Tackling worklessness

Priority 2 For Maidstone to be a decent place to live

Outcomes

- Decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures

Develop sustainable communities
Increase choice and improve the quality of life for vulnerable people
Improve our existing homes
Improve access to housing advice and work to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in Maidstone

- Continues to be a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the Borough

New waste management arrangements in place by 2013
Development of commercial services –including business case for commercial waste
Completion of “new” cleansing model – area working, deep cleaning, enforcement
Improve perception of cleanliness in the borough
Reduce the Council’s energy consumption
Implement Air Quality Management Area Action Plan

- Residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced

Early intervention preventative approach to tackle disadvantage – young children and their families
Intervention with families already with multiple needs; key criterion – intergenerational worklessness
Other intervention including health and community safety

Priority 3 Corporate and Customer Excellence

Outcomes

- The Council will continue to have value for money services that residents are satisfied with

Strategic Plan – Medium Term Financial Plan alignment
Improvement Journey
Customer centred organisation
Localism and “Bigger Society”
Future Shape of the Organisation – including structure and governance

Workforce strategy

- 1.3.7 The refresh of the Strategic Plan will take into account the Cabinet's desired approach that the Council will use its influence wherever possible to encourage partners to invest in Maidstone in both the priority and non priority areas and will seek to position itself on boards and Committees that can help this aim, such as the Ambition Boards and the Locality Board. It is not the aim of the Council to stop work in areas that have not been identified as a priority but to stop funding these from its own budget and this will be made clear in the refreshed plan.
- 1.3.8 A number of KPIs have been identified that could be used to measure success in the priority areas and these are identified at Appendix A, Keys Performance Indicators.
- 1.3.9 A resident survey was sent out to 3,000 residents in November. The Council will know the results of this survey in January and, along with information from the budget consultation which was undertaken in November, the information will be used to update the section 'What matters to Maidstone Residents'
- 1.3.10 General updates will be made to reflect changes in local and national context such as the introduction of Locality Boards.
- 1.3.11 The section on Localism will be updated to reflect the Bill having been given Royal Assent. A report on Maidstone's approach to the Bigger Society will be taken to Cabinet on 21 December. If this report is agreed this will also be included in the refresh.
- 1.3.12 Service planning will take place between December 2011 and March 2012. Each section will create objectives that relate to their delivery of the outcomes as described in the Strategic Plan. During this process actions will also be identified that will be included in the Strategic Plan Action Plan. An up to date copy of this plan is attached at Appendix B, Strategic Plan Action Plan. It should be noted that this is a living document and actions will be added and completed throughout its four year life.
- 1.3.13 Following the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny meeting the plan will be refreshed and taken to Cabinet in February for recommendation to Council in March.
- 1.3.14 The Strategic Plan action plan is attached at Appendix B. The actions currently contained in it are not yet due for completion but have been updated to show the current position.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 Cabinet could decide not to refresh the Strategic Plan. However, this would lead to out of date information being publicly available and make it difficult for officers to maintain the 'golden thread'. The Council also needs to be able to demonstrate how it is reacting to changes in the local and national context.

1.4.2 Cabinet could request the development of a new plan. However, this is not recommended as the development of a new plan would require additional resources and would risk not being produced in time for the new financial year.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Strategic Plan sets out the Council's Corporate Objectives and is the top level document from which other plans and strategies flow.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 Refining the priorities within the outcomes will allow a more robust risk management process to be undertaken.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1 The Strategic Plan has a range of implications which are discussed in the body of this report.

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

1.7.2 The Medium Term Financial Strategy and Strategic Plan are developed in conjunction with each other to ensure that priorities and resources are considered together.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

Appendix A Key Performance Indicators
Appendix B Strategic Plan Action Plan

1.8.2 Background Documents

- Strategic Plan 2011-2015
- Corporate Planning Timetable Cabinet report September 2011

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

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

December 2011

This is a Key Decision because: It affects all wards

Wards/Parishes affected: all

Appendix A- Key Performance Indicators

Priority 1: For Maidstone to have a growing economy

Outcome 1

Maidstone has a growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy.

	Existing KPIs	Possible new KPIs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Creating the right planning environment • Development of key infrastructure • Business expansion • Inward investment • Development of stronger business relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of business enquires to locate in Kent • Percentage of commercial planning applications completed within statutory timescales • Percentage of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance • Percentage of vacant units within the town centre • Percentage of economically active people in Maidstone • Completions of business space gained a) Office b) Industrial c) Logistics • Cost of Revenues & Benefits Service • Value of business rateable floor space • Supply of business rateable floor space • Pre-applications advice a) Percentage of major business planning applications taking-up pre-application advice b) Percentage of those taking pre-application advice where the applications were approved 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No. Of businesses in borough (SPI) • GVA per head (3yrs in arrears) • 3 year business survival rates (KCC) • NEETs (KCC) • Working age people educated to NVQ level 4 or higher (KCC)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tackling worklessness 		

Outcome 2

Maidstone has a transport network that supports the local economy

•	Existing KPIs
• Integrated transport strategy with KCC	• Percentage of parking spaces used (annual survey)
– Sustainable transport approach	• Percentage change in bus usage on services from Maidstone depot (Arriva Services)
– Behavioural change/modal shift	• Average journey time per mile for key routes (Congestion)
– Maidstone town centre as a regional transport hub	• Number of Park and Ride transactions
• Integrated parking strategy	• Income from pay and display car parks per parking space
• Consultation February/March 2012 alongside Core Strategy	

Priority 2: For Maidstone to be a decent place to live

Outcome 1

Maidstone as decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures.

•	Existing KPIs	
• Develop sustainable communities	• Percentage of residential planning applications granted a) Urban area	
• Increase choice and improve the quality of life for vulnerable people	• Percentage of residential planning applications granted a) Rural area	Time taken to process DFG (SPI)
• Improve our existing homes	• Percentage of residential planning applications processed within statutory timescales	
• Improve access to housing advice and work to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in Maidstone	• Percentage of planning applications determined within statutory timescales a) Majors	Annual estimate of rough sleepers (Homeless link)
•	• Percentage of planning applications determined within statutory timescales b) Minors	
•	• Percentage of planning applications	

	<p>determined within statutory timescales c) Others</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of affordable homes delivered • Number of homes occupied by vulnerable people made decent • Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land • Average grant per MBC funded affordable home unit • Cost of planning per head of population 	
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Outcome 2

Maidstone has a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the borough

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New waste management arrangements in place by 2013 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost of maintaining the Borough's parks & green spaces per head of population • Cost of waste collection (per household) • Cost of street cleaning per head of population • Percentage reductions in CO2 emissions from local authority operations (Tonnes) • Number of listed building consents granted • Percentage of waste recycled (NI 192) • Visits/Uses of the Museum per 1,000 population • Number of Tree Preservation Orders granted • Percentage of relevant land assessed with unacceptable levels of a) litter • Percentage of relevant land assessed with 	Residual waste per household (SPI)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of commercial services – including business case for commercial waste 		Any new indicators for this would depend on business case.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completion of “new” cleansing model – area working, deep cleaning, enforcement 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve perception of cleanliness in the borough 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce the Council’s energy consumption 		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Air Quality Management Area Action Plan 		

	unacceptable levels of b) detritus • Percentage of fly-tipping reports responded to within 1 working day	
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Outcome 3

Residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced.

•	Existing KPIs	
• Early intervention preventative approach to tackle disadvantage – young children and their families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Percentage of the Borough covered by Broadband Average time taken to process and notify applicants on housing register Number of individual volunteers registered on the Voluntary Action Maidstone Database of volunteers Number of volunteer organisations registered with VAM Number of residents participating in Neighbourhood planning as a percentage of the ward population Average time taken to process new benefit claims and changes of circumstances (NI 181) Number of households prevented from becoming homeless through intervention Gap between median wage of employee (residents) and the median wage of employees (workplace) (salary differences) 	Achievement gap between those eligible for Free School Meals and their peers – Key stage 4 (KCC)
• Intervention with families already with multiple needs; key criterion – intergenerational worklessness		Benefit claimants (already do JSA but could do disability and others)
• Other intervention including community safety		Percentage change in no. of first time entrants to Youth justice System (KCC)
•		
•		
•		

Priority 3: Corporate and Customer Excellence






Outcome 1

Maidstone Council provides value for money services that residents are satisfied with.


•		
• Strategic Plan – Medium Term Financial Plan alignment	Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things (biennial survey)	
• Improvement Journey	Satisfaction with Council's recycling service (biennial survey)	Monitoring of business improvement Plan
• Customer centred organisation	Satisfactions with Council's refuse collection service (biennial survey)	Complaints within timescale (SPI) Satisfaction with complaints handling (SPI)
• Localism and “Bigger Society”	Satisfaction with Council's parks and open spaces (biennial survey)	Participation rates on initiatives
• Future Shape of the Organisation – including structure and governance	Satisfaction with Street Cleansing (biennial survey)	
• Workforce strategy	Satisfaction with the Leisure Centre (biennial survey)	Annual HR Workforce Report
•	Percentage of business rates collected	Percentage agreeing that Maidstone Borough Council provides value for money
•	Percentage of Council tax collected	
•	Savings delivered through reviews (Value for Money)	
•	Value of fraud identified (Housing benefits)	


Strategic Actions





Action Status	
	Cancelled
	Overdue; Neglected
	Unassigned; Check Progress
	Not Started; Resuming; In Progress; Assigned
	Completed


Objective 1. A transport network that supports the local economy

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
OUT 001.01	Deliver an integrated transport strategy	31-Mar-2015		Planning & Environment Directorate Change; Sue Whiteside	The results of the transport modelling that support the development strategy set out in the Core Strategy were presented to Members at a transportation workshop held in March 2011. These findings were published as part of the Core Strategy Public Participation consultation that commenced on 2 September and closed on 14 October 2011. The representations made during the consultation will be reported to Members in due course. In the interim, initial draft parking and cycle




Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					strategies that will form part of the Integrated Transport Strategy were considered by the Local Development Document Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel on 19 July 2011. Further research, survey and appraisal work is underway, to test the viability of proposals and to evaluate potential schemes and transportation measures in more detail. Economic impact will be assessed, schemes quantified and a cost benefit analysis completed to ensure the Integrated Transport Strategy is robust and fit for purpose.
97 OUT 001.02	Implement an infrastructure delivery plan	31-Mar-2015		Planning & Environment Directorate Change; Sue Whiteside	An initial draft infrastructure delivery schedule was subject to Public Participation consultation with the Core Strategy from 2 September to 14 October 2011. The representations made during the consultation will be reported to Members in due course. The schedule was prepared in consultation with the service and infrastructure providers, and included a list of unprioritised infrastructure schemes together with costs (that excluded the identification of funding sources). In advance of engagement with Members to prioritise the schemes that will form part of the detailed Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), a project management team which includes the Head of Finance is being set up, in order to refine the





Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					schedule and to provide greater detail on project costs and funding. Public consultation on the IDP will be undertaken at the same stage as the formal consultation on the Core Strategy Publication version in spring 2012. The project management team is currently scoping the work that will be required to produce the charging schedule which will accompany the IDP and set the Council's community infrastructure levy (CIL).
OUT 001.03	Support an efficient, integrated, sustainable and multi-modal transport network	31-Mar-2015		Planning & Environment Directorate Change; Sue Whiteside	
06 OUT 001.04	Maintain traffic flow through effective parking enforcement	31-Mar-2015		Planning & Environment Directorate Change; Steve Goulette	The parking enforcement contract specification defines the level of deployed enforcement officer hours to specific locations/areas throughout Maidstone. This is closely monitored and controlled to meet changing demands. Our contractor APCOA UK continues to meet our expectation in terms of deployment, enforcement and quality which ultimately influences driver behaviour maintaining traffic flow.

Objective 2. A growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of the skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
OUT 002.01	Local Development Framework and Core Strategy	31-Mar-2015		Planning & Environment Directorate Change; Sue	The Core Strategy has been developed with a cross-departmental




Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
66				Whiteside	<p>officer working group and Corporate Management Team, and by engagement with Members through workshops, the Core Strategy Members Working Group and the Local Development Document Task and Finish Scrutiny Panel (TFSP). A broad cross-section of external stakeholders contributed to the document, in particular the service and infrastructure providers. The Core Strategy was deemed fit for Public Participation consultation by the TFSP, and Cabinet approved the document for consultation on 10 August 2011. The approach to the Core Strategy Public participation consultation was agreed with the TFSP and consultation commenced on 2 September 2011 in accordance with the agreed programme, running for 6 weeks to 14 October. In addition to widespread publicity and a permanently manned exhibition at the Town Hall, 21 road shows/exhibitions were held and 26 presentations were made to a wide range of groups including parish councils, residents and businesses. Consultation statistics cannot be confirmed at this point, but early indications are that the Council has received about 750 representations from individuals and organisations which will translate to approximately 3,000 comments. (This compares with</p>

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					297 representations and 1,729 comments received during the previous Core Strategy consultation in 2007). The Local Development Scheme for Maidstone (adopted by Cabinet on 12 October 2011) sets the programme for preparing LDF documents, including the Core Strategy. The next step is the analysis of representations with recommended amendments to the Core Strategy for Members' approval, to meet the milestone for formal public consultation on the Publication version of the document programmed for spring 2012.
109 OUT 002.02	Review Economic Development Strategy	31-Mar-2015		Regeneration & Communities Directorate; Brian Morgan	Approval to fund this work will be included in a report to Cabinet Member regarding the uncommitted Growth Point revenue funding. A key decision report is due in December.
OUT 002.03	Assistance for businesses	31-Mar-2015		Regeneration & Communities Directorate; Brian Morgan	The launch of the new locateinmaidstone website has attracted over 450 visits per month on average. We are aware of one business that has used the site, together with our support, to help them relocate to Maidstone and one Charity.
OUT 002.04	Review Parkwood Industrial Estate and implement a strategy for its regeneration	31-Mar-2015		Regeneration & Communities Directorate	Details have been submitted to KMIF for an initial view of its suitability for inclusion as a project. Arrangements are also in hand to engage a

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					consultant for a strategic review of the estate and the options for the future.
OUT 002.05	Work with partners through the LSP to deliver a step change in Maidstone's learning and skills performance to ensure a high-quality skills base sufficient to enable people in Maidstone to realise their full potential.	31-Mar-2015		Regeneration & Communities Directorate	The LSP model has moved into a Locality Board model. Skills is currently being addressed through the Economic Development and Regeneration delivery group through its 'Worklessness' stakeholder event being held in February 2012.
OUT 002.06 01	Deliver the High Street Regeneration Project	31-Mar-2015		Regeneration & Communities Directorate	On programme. Costs have risen but work is ongoing to find savings to offset these and keep the project on budget. Communication channels are working well. Eurovia construction gangs have received positive feedback from retailers and public.
OUT 002.07	Regeneration Statement Milestones Update	31-Mar-2015		Regeneration & Communities Directorate	The Regeneration Statement needs to be reviewed in the face of challenging economic circumstances and is being discussed in the Regeneration Working group. It is expected that the review will be complete by March 2012.
OUT 002.08	Local Implementation Plan Homes and Community Agency milestones	31-Mar-2015		Regeneration & Communities Directorate; John Littlemore	Initial indications are that the majority of schemes in the Local Implementation Plan will receive grant assistance. Working with housing as partners we have successfully lobbied the Homes and Communities Agency which will again provide significant amounts of external funding into MS to enable the delivery of new






Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					affordable homes.







Objective 3. Decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
OUT 003.01	New Housing: Enable the delivery of a range of high quality homes that are desirable and affordable to all sections of the community	31-Mar-2015		Regeneration & Communities Directorate; John Littlemore	West Kent Local Investment Plan signed off and submitted to the HCA. The majority of new affordable housing schemes have received funding commitment from the HCA and MBC for the period up to 2015. 2011/12 will see over 200 new affordable homes completed.
OUT 003.02	Existing Housing: Ensure our existing housing is suitable and able to meet future challenges; providing sought after homes now and into the future	31-Mar-2015		Regeneration & Communities Directorate; John Littlemore	The Housing Assistance Grant Policy is being reviewed to ensure that a range of priorities benefit from grants provided to the private sector. The council is working in partnership with KCC's Supporting People Team to procure a new Home Improvement Agency for 2012.
OUT 003.03	Homelessness & vulnerable groups: Commission and provide services with partners that meet identified needs, reduce inequalities, are responsive and timely, promote stable, strong communities, self-reliance and encourage positive aspirations	31-Mar-2015		Regeneration & Communities Directorate; John Littlemore	Following the DCLG peer review the housing advice service is taking forward a range of improvements to service delivery in conjunction with the Gateway and contact centre. The housings service is investigating new ways of unlocking housing through the private sector as the effect of the economic difficulties continues to exhibit itself in an increase in demand for assistance with housing. A review of the

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					Allocation Scheme is being undertaken to make sure the allocation of affordable housing promotes strong communities.

Objective 4. Continue to be a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the borough



Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
OUT 004.01	Deliver focussed enforcement activity to ensure high impact on the cleanliness of the Borough	31-Mar-2015		David Edwards; Steve Goulette	Area based enforcement has been trialed and the revised scheme has been implemented. A new contract is now in place and campaigns on littering are being undertaken.
OUT 004.02	Work with partners to ensure that all areas of the Borough are clean and well-maintained	31-Mar-2015		Zena Cooke; Steve Goulette	Trials of Area Deep Cleaning and a revised scheme is being implemented.
OUT 004.03	Ensure provision of timely specialist advice and services on heritage and landscape design to protect and enhance Maidstone's environment	31-Mar-2015		Deanne Cunningham; David Edwards	Reviewed working procedures and new processes have been implemented which are being monitored. Service Level Agreements have been drafted to ensure advice is provided in a timely manner.
OUT 004.04	Deliver the Carbon Management Plan to ensure that the Council reduces it's carbon footprint by 3% per annum	31-Mar-2015		David Edwards; Steve Goulette	report to cabinet member identified areas for improvement . Action identified and being implemented.
OUT 004.05	Maximise our leisure and cultural offer to enhance the quality of life for our residents whilst attracting visitors, new residents and businesses	31-Mar-2015			A new partnership with Tunbridge Wells (TW) has been established to promote Maidstone and TW as tourist destinations following the demise of the Heart of Kent partnership. Maidstone mobile App has been launched. Maidstone Museum and



Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					Bentlif Art Gallery East Wing ground floor open to the public from October 2011. Kent Conference Bureau nominated for a Tourism South East Award. Plans to profile Maidstone during the Olympics are developing including Torch Relay event and associated programme of events.
OUT 004.05a	Complete the Leisure and Culture Strategy with a focus on getting others to deliver and lead on leisure and culture	30-Apr-2011		Angela Woodhouse	
OUT 004.05b	Complete the redevelopment of the Museum's East Wing	31-Oct-2011		Zena Cooke; Brian Morgan	Museum extension nearly complete the projected handover date is 21/10/11. Snagging issues have been identified internally and externally. Staffing training and familiarization is presently taking place. As areas become available there will be soft openings but the main opening will be in early 2012 .
OUT 004.05c	Complete a review of play areas and produce a strategy for future provision	31-Jan-2012		Steve Goulette	draft proposals prepared and due to be discussed with Cabinet Member
OUT 004.05d	Complete Mote Park regeneration project capital works	31-Mar-2012		Steve Goulette	new contract started and works on schedule
OUT 004.06	New Waste Contract	30-Apr-2013		David Edwards; Steve Goulette	Cabinet has agreed a partnership contract with Ashford, Swale, Canterbury and KCC. Ojeu notice being prepared and document preparation has commenced. On schedule.
OUT 004.07	Air Quality Action Plan Update	31-Mar-2015		John Newington	MBC continued to carry out it's statutory air quality function through

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
105					<p>our monitoring programme and reporting mechanisms to Defra. The latest Air Quality Annual Progress Report was submitted to and accepted by Defra in May 2011. The Progress report highlighted the exceedence of a new NO2 exceedence area along Forstal Road (which falls within the Air Quality Management Area). In response to this MBC have instigated meetings with T&M as the source of the nitrogen dioxide exceedence is from vehicle emissions, predominantly from the industrial estate which falls in both areas.</p> <p>Installation of extra continuous monitoring equipment and a project investigating the emission inventory along Upper Stone Street are ongoing. This work is key to enhance the effectiveness of the Action Plan Measures and also supports future feasibility and quantification studies.</p> <p>Pollution Control have successfully bid for £40K grant from Defra to carry out a feasibility study of Low emission zone/schemes. This work will start in November 2011 and should complete by 2013. The Air Quality Action Plan Quantification study has begun and will provide evidence of air quality benefits of the proposed measures within the AQAP and also supports the</p>

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					evidence base for the Integrated Transport Strategy, Parking Strategy and ultimately 4th LDF Core Strategy.

Objective 5. Residents in Maidstone are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced




Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
OUT 005.01	Reduce inequalities within communities through preventative action	31-Mar-2015		Zena Cooke	There are a range of activities that the community development team commission/deliver that address inequalities including; Be Free play activities, health preventative commissioning including a new 8-12 yr old activity club, youth diversionary activities, Hotfoot play schemes, DMAX disabled children's sports club and Switch Youth Café – all have an increasing emphasis on raising aspirations, addressing health inequalities and tackling risk taking behaviour
OUT 005.02	Promote active citizenship – to facilitate and support increased involvement by local people in decision making and involvement in their neighbourhoods	31-Mar-2015		Zena Cooke	Pilot Park Wood Neighbourhood Management Programme started in Park Wood and will run from Oct 2011 to end of March 2012 including; support to community groups, monthly visits from the Mobile Gateway, bi-monthly visual audits to address littering, rubbish dumping and criminal damage, bi-monthly listening evenings to provide a forum



Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					for residents to meet MBC and other agencies and to review progress on the action plan. In addition a Democratic Engagement Strategy is being drafted which will set out the tools to be used by the Council to get local people to get involved in the democratic process. The strategy and action plan are due to be submitted to the Cabinet Member for approval in December 2011.
OUT 05.03	Review the Parkwood Planning for Real activity to inform further work and activities supporting communities in identifying and meeting their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities	31-Mar-2015		Zena Cooke	A review was carried out and a report submitted to management team in June. A meeting was held with partners in July (to be held every six months), the action plan has been updated, environmental improvements are being pursued and task and finish groups being set up.
OUT 005.04	Implement meaningful community commissioning of services for local people	31-Mar-2015		Zena Cooke	The community development team has started commissioning services utilising CDRP and health funding. These have been carried out jointly with the police, RSLs and Children's Preventative Services. The next step will be to involve users in this process. This has been trialed with residents involved in commissioning Groundwork to carry out the environmental improvements in Park Wood. A commissioning tool-kit may need to be written to ensure that lessons are learnt and a consistent approach is developed.

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
OUT 005.05	Support and encourage people to participate in their communities through staff volunteering and supporting local businesses in developing social enterprise initiatives	31-Mar-2015		Zena Cooke	The Kent and Medway Social Enterprise Network gave a presentation on social enterprise to unit managers in September.
OUT 005.05.0 1	Promote volunteering and funding streams to voluntary groups	31-Mar-2015		Sarah Robson	Volunteering opportunities and funding streams promoted through the department's quarterly newsletter and through Voluntary Action Maidstone's (VAM) email circulation list.
OUT 005.05.0 2 108	Set up meeting on social enterprise with local businesses to ascertain the appetite and develop support for social enterprise	30-Apr-2011		Brian Morgan; Sarah Robson	This is being addressed through a Worklessness event being hosted the Maidstone Locality Board in February 2012 supporting business growth, business set up/social enterprise, education, skills and training.
OUT 005.05.0 3	Encourage services to look at social enterprise models as part of future service planning	30-Apr-2014		Brian Morgan; Sarah Robson	'Models of Social Enterprise' was an agenda item at the last Unit Managers, with a presentation from the Social Enterprise Network.
OUT 005.05.0 4	Work with Voluntary Action Maidstone and the LSP to create a database of volunteers to match to volunteering activities	30-Apr-2013		Zena Cooke; Brian Morgan; Sarah Robson	The Community Partnerships team currently supports, though a Service Level Agreement, Voluntary Action Maidstone's Volunteer Bureau, which maintains a database of volunteering opportunities in the Maidstone borough.

Objective 6. The Council will continue to have and demonstrate value for money services that residents are satisfied with

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
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Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
OUT 006.01	Seek out and implement new ways of delivering services that are not our core business, such as the Theatre and the Museum	31-Mar-2012		Zena Cooke; Brian Morgan	Consultants have been appointed to examine the present operation of the theatre and advise on future governance .The report should be available at the end of October .In relation to the museum discussion are taking place in relation to shared services,as part of the work on the further development of the Business Plan the issue of future governance will be examined .
109 OUT 006.02	Progress the shared services programme for those services that it is practical to do so and savings can be achieved.	31-Mar-2015		David Edwards; Georgia Hawkes	Shared services are now in place for HR, Legal, Revenues and Benefits, Internal Audit, Parking and Licensing. The Revenues and Benefits partnership will deliver approximately £192K savings in 2011/12. Work is on-going to take forward a three authority ICT shared service and discussions are continuing with partner authorities on Procurement, with the most likely model that the Maidstone Procurement team will undertake joint and individual procurement exercises for other partner authorities. The MKIP Management Board is currently considering what the future MKIP work programme will look at.
OUT 006.03	Ensure we use performance management data, customer satisfaction and customer feedback to improve services	31-Mar-2015		Dave Lindsay; Angela Woodhouse	Information received via complaints questionnaires is actioned and fed back to the relevant services. An accountability framework is currently being designed and will be consulted

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					on early in 2012.
OUT 006.04 110	Undertake a programme of business improvement service reviews to ensure services are customer focused and delivered efficiently and effectively.	31-Mar-2015		David Edwards; Georgia Hawkes	Much of the work of the Business Improvement team over the last 6 months has concentrated on channel shift. A Channel Shift Strategy was agreed by Cabinet in July 2011 and work has been carried out with a number of service areas to improve their on-line offer. For example, it is now possible to view details of parking penalty charge notices, pay and appeal via the website. The next priorities are booking bulky waste collections and funeral directors on-line booking, before work begins on a new look more transactional website – which is critical to the success of the Channel Shift Strategy. A joint BI/BTP review of the Visitor Economy Business Unit has just been completed, with recommendations made for more efficient working, and outlines for reviews/improvement work with Housing and Executive Support are currently being planned. A corporate Business Improvement Plan is being compiled for December 2011 which will inform the future work programme of the Business Improvement team.
OUT 006.05	Ensure that the authority has a productive, proactive and flexible workforce	31-Mar-2015		Dena Smart	The Council continues to use flexible and modern employment practices and although the workforce has reduced by 23% since 2008 it has

Code	Title	Due Date		Assigned To	Latest Note
					<p>improved performance in many areas. The Council's workforce strategy is in the process of review to take account of significant changes in the sector and to ensure that the work force plan is aligned to the strategic plan for 2015. The Council continues to manage sickness effectively so that it remains a top quartile performer for this indicator.</p>

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Agenda Item 10

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

10 JANUARY 2012

REPORT OF HEAD OF BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT

Report prepared by Georgia Hawkes

1. DRAFT IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2012-15

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 To consider the Council's improvement journey detailed in the draft Improvement Plan 2012-15 (Appendix A).

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Business Improvement

1.2.1 That Overview and Scrutiny note:

- i. The objectives of the draft Improvement Plan (paragraph 1.3.3);
- ii. The workstreams and priority services and projects for improvement (paragraphs 1.3.4 and 1.3.5) ; and
- iii. The governance and monitoring arrangements (paragraphs 1.3.6 and 1.3.7).

1.2.2 That Overview & Scrutiny consider the draft Improvement Plan 2012-15 and make any recommendations to Cabinet.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The Council has set the priorities and outcomes for the borough of Maidstone in its Strategic Plan. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out what will be spent and where savings will be made. In order to deliver the priority outcomes and the savings required, a number of key pieces of work and projects will be carried out. These are detailed in the draft Improvement Plan 2012-15, which ensures the improvement work is aligned with the Strategic Plan and the MTFS.

1.3.2 The draft Improvement Plan will be considered again by Cabinet in February 2012 alongside the MTFS and Strategic Plan.

1.3.3 The draft Improvement Plan has three objectives:

1. A reduction in net cost, through making savings or increased income
2. Improving or maintaining quality: ensuring we deliver excellent services, which means delivering what is promised to agreed standards
3. Identifying and responding to opportunities aligned with the Strategic Plan

1.3.4 The four corporate workstreams (1-4) and enablers (5-7) of the draft plan are:

1. Incremental improvement
2. Asset management
3. Transformation
4. External challenge
5. Organisational culture
6. Good information and knowledge management
7. Councillor assurance

1.3.5 The priority services and projects for improvement have also been identified in the draft Improvement Plan, based on priorities in the Strategic Plan, our current knowledge of any external or internal opportunities and potential for improvement and/or reduction in net cost. These are as follows:

- Waste and Recycling
- Customer Services delivery
- ICT
- Parking transport management
- Hazlitt Arts Centre
- Planning
- Revenues and Benefits
- Housing
- Finance
- Building Control
- Future use of Town Hall
- Community asset transfer
- Major assets review
- More proactive use of Covalent
- Management & Admin recharges review
- Other shared services and Mid Kent Improvement Partnership work
- Cross-organisational collaboration
- Better internal collaboration

- Corporate peer review

1.3.6 Compiling a draft Improvement Plan allows the key workstreams to be brought together and monitored. It is proposed that a working group made up of officers responsible for each of the workstreams and enablers and Cabinet members (the Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Services) make up a monitoring group to ensure the plan progresses and benefits are delivered. It is proposed the group would include:

- Leader – provides political leadership and councillor assurance (as defined in the draft Improvement Plan)
- Chief Executive - accountable for delivery of Improvement Plan
- Assistant Director of Environmental & Regulatory Services – responsible for Asset management workstream
- Head of Change & Scrutiny – responsible for Incremental improvement and External challenge workstreams
- Head of Business Improvement – responsible for Transformation workstream and Good information and knowledge management enabler
- Head of HR – responsible for Organisational culture enabler
- Head of ICT – responsible for Use of technology, which is not a workstream or an enabler but a critical tool for improvement

1.3.7 It is recommended that the Plan is updated annually and progress is reported to Cabinet on a six-monthly basis.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 Overview and Scrutiny could decide not to consider or make recommendations on the draft Improvement Plan. This is not recommended as the draft Improvement Plan is essential for allowing oversight of a number of different pieces of work across the organisation. It is aligned with the Strategic Plan and MTFS and it is recommended that it is consulted on in the same way as these documents.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The draft Improvement Plan contains projects that will have a positive effect on all the priorities and outcomes for Maidstone set out in the Strategic Plan. However, the priority that it aligns with most is Corporate and Customer Excellence, outcome “the Council will continue to have value for money services that residents are satisfied with”, because of the objectives in the Improvement Plan of reducing net cost whilst improving or maintaining quality.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 The draft Improvement Plan and associated governance minimises the risk that important projects will not be undertaken or will not deliver and that new opportunities are missed.

1.6.2 There is still a risk that the Council does not have the resources, both in terms of staff time or money to undertake the projects envisaged in the draft Improvement Plan. However, the plan minimises the risk that effort will be put into pieces of work that are not deemed to be a priority and will allow corporate resources to be devoted to the priorities stated in the draft Improvement Plan.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

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

Financial and staffing

1.7.2 An objective of the draft plan is to reduce net cost. This could be by reducing cost, including possibly reducing numbers of staff, or by increasing income, which would have an effect on the work that staff carry out.

Legal

1.7.3 A number of the projects are likely to require legal advice and support.

Procurement and asset management

1.7.4 Asset management is a workstream in the draft Improvement Plan and procurement is an important tool in achieving improvement.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

Appendix A – Improvement Plan 2012-15

1.8.2 Background Documents

None.

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

Draft Improvement Plan 2012-15

Maidstone Borough Council has been recognised under previous inspection regimes as providing good quality value for money services. However, we want to be even better, offering the services that people want for a cost they think is good value. Last year the Government announced its plans to reduce public spending by 25% and reduce the national deficit. The Council has to save around £2.9m over the next three years, which is a substantial reduction in the budget we have to spend on providing services for local people, at the same time that the number of potentially vulnerable people requiring some of those services, like housing advice and Housing and Council Tax Benefit, is increasing.

The Strategic Plan details the priorities and priority outcomes for Maidstone until 2015 and how these will be delivered. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out what the Council will spend and when and where savings will be made. In order to deliver the Strategic Plan and MTFS the Council is undertaking various pieces of work and projects to improve value for money and quality of customer service, and this must be aligned with the Council's strategic objectives and Medium Term Financial Plan. This improvement work makes up the building blocks that will make Maidstone a better council.

This plan explains the key workstreams for the Council's improvement journey, the drivers for improvement as well as priority services and projects for improvement. It will allow work to be planned, sufficiently supported and monitored to ensure savings needs and the improvements required for the Council to meet its priority outcomes are delivered.

Objectives

It is important that the Council delivers services that are value for money and that residents are satisfied with. We must make savings and maximise income where we can but also be flexible enough to take opportunities as they arise, including those that come from external influences like changes in legislation. Therefore, the objectives of the improvement journey are:

1. A reduction in net cost, through making savings or increased income
2. Improving or maintaining quality: ensuring we deliver excellent services, which means delivering what is promised to agreed standards
3. Identifying and responding to opportunities aligned with the Strategic Plan

Improvement workstreams

The Council's Improvement Plan is corporate and involves a number of different workstreams, which are owned by different officers in the organisation. Those workstreams identified as most important are:

- 1. Incremental improvement** (Head of Change and Scrutiny) – making good use of performance and financial information and good business planning to enable service managers to make small changes to enable continuous improvement in the services their teams provide.
- 2. Asset management** (Asst Director of Environmental & Regulatory Services) – making the best use of what we have in terms of buildings and land and management of our use of water, gas, electricity and petrol/diesel. It is important we know what assets we keep and what we want to sell or transfer to others, and that we actually dispose of those assets we no longer require. This is essential in terms of providing capital income and ensuring services are delivered to residents in the best way. This may mean that we transfer assets to others, including community groups, to enable them to deliver more services in the future. It may also mean that we work with public service providers and local people to redesign services and pool budgets through Community Budgets.
- 3. Transformation** (Head of Business Improvement) – larger changes to ensure key outcomes are delivered effectively and efficiently. Making good use of unit cost information and benchmarking to consider different ways of delivering services, for example using shared services to gain economies of scale and increase resilience, and using business improvement techniques to improve processes. This also includes working with other organisations and residents to deliver shared goals as well as different teams within the Council working together better. More internal and/or external support to make these improvements may be required.
- 4. External challenge** (Head of Change & Scrutiny) – using information and challenge from residents and critical friends to improve services. This includes complaints information, feedback from local people, peer reviews, nationally driven change like the welfare and reform changes and Overview & Scrutiny reviews.

These workstreams and the whole Improvement Plan are underpinned by the following enablers:

- **Organisational culture** (Head of HR) – creating an organisational culture where there is permission to experiment and time to learn and where all officers and members are engaged and are able to give their feedback and ideas. Also ensuring that change is well managed and there is the capacity and capability to deliver the required outcomes.
- **Good information and knowledge management** (Head of Business Improvement) – smart use of information we gather about our customers and making use of other customer insight, like Mosaic Public Sector, to create messages that people hear and understand and which cause them to make positive changes in behaviour.

- **Councillor assurance** – leadership and involvement of elected members in shaping, implementing and monitoring the progress and outcomes of policies and projects.

Other important tools for improvement are:

- Procurement
- Use of technology

Priority services and projects for improvement

In order to ensure we can deliver our priority outcomes in the Strategic Plan and savings in the MTFS is important to ensure we make changes in the following service areas. The list of service areas below is in order of priority for improvement, from highest priority to lowest. These improvements may be to deliver savings, improve the quality of a service or respond to an opportunity that may arise.

1. **Waste & Recycling** – procuring a new waste contract with other Kent authorities and working to achieve the target of 50% recycling by 2015
2. **Customer Services delivery** (including Gateway, Contact Centre and Corporate Support) – becoming more customer-centric and designing a sustainable model of customer services delivery for the long term
3. **ICT** – sharing our ICT service with local authority partners
4. **Parking Transport Management** – completing our Transport Strategy and implementing this
5. **Hazlitt Arts Centre** – investigating options for governance and implementing the chosen option to ensure value for money
6. **Planning** – developing the synergy between Planning and Economic Development to improve the prosperity of the borough and being ready to respond to any change in legislation that would allow us to set our own planning fees
7. **Revenues and Benefits** – embedding the shared service, preparing for the national welfare reforms and exploring different ways of delivering the service for the future
8. **Housing** – ensuring we can respond to the increased need for homeless services, preventing homelessness wherever possible, enabling the provision of more housing and ensuring that there is a supply of decent, affordable and accessible housing, including in the private rented sector
9. **Finance** – building a service that supports the Council make informed strategic financial management decisions, manage and

control budgets and commit and measure resources and investigating how this service could be delivered in the future

10. **Building Control** – re-designing the service, diversifying work to undertake more trading rather than statutory work and looking to both public and private sector partners to investigate and develop a model for delivery for the future

The following table shows our top priorities for the next three years:

2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Waste & Recycling	Waste & Recycling	Customer Services delivery
Customer Services delivery	Customer Services delivery	Revenues & Benefits
Revenues & Benefits	ICT	Housing
ICT	Revenues & Benefits	Building Control
Hazlitt Arts Centre	Housing	Finance
Planning		
Parking Transport Management		

As well as work in particular service areas there are number of other important projects that need to be undertaken in each of the improvement workstreams. This is how the priority services and projects for improvement fit in with the 4 improvement workstreams:

Asset management	Incremental improvement	Transformation	External challenge
Future use of Town Hall	More proactive use of Covalent	Customer services delivery	Revenues & Benefits
Community asset transfer	Management & Admin recharges review	Waste & Recycling	Planning
Major assets review:		ICT	Parking Transport management
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King Street • Medway Street • Park Wood 		Finance	Hazlitt Arts Centre
		Housing	Building Control
		Other shared services and Mid Kent Improvement Partnership work	Corporate peer review
		Cross organisational	

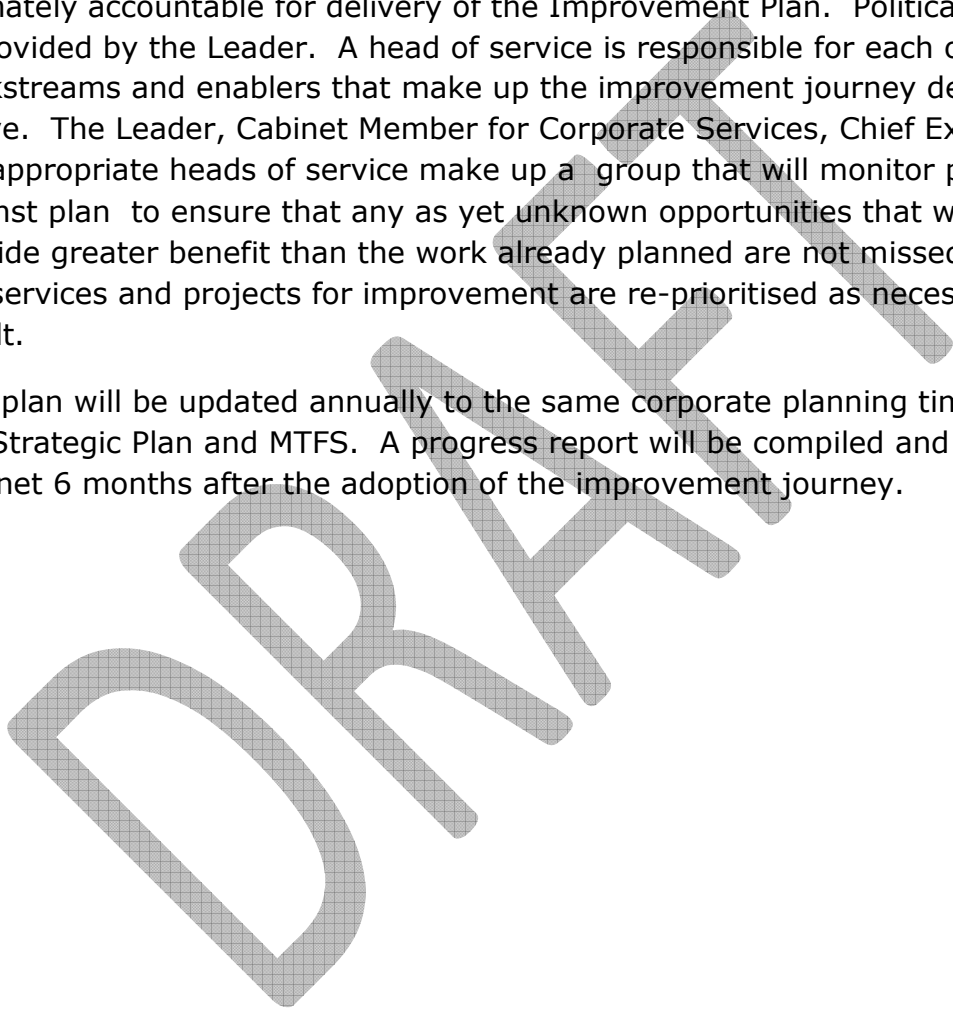
		collaboration Better internal collaboration	
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More detail on the work to be undertaken on the priority service areas in the Transformation and External challenge workstreams in Appendix 1.

Governance and Monitoring

The Cabinet own the Council’s improvement journey and the Chief Executive is ultimately accountable for delivery of the Improvement Plan. Political leadership is provided by the Leader. A head of service is responsible for each of the workstreams and enablers that make up the improvement journey detailed above. The Leader, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Chief Executive and the appropriate heads of service make up a group that will monitor progress against plan to ensure that any as yet unknown opportunities that would provide greater benefit than the work already planned are not missed and that the services and projects for improvement are re-prioritised as necessary as a result.

This plan will be updated annually to the same corporate planning timetable as the Strategic Plan and MTFS. A progress report will be compiled and sent to Cabinet 6 months after the adoption of the improvement journey.



Future for priority service areas in Transformation and External challenge workstreams

<u>Service area</u>	<u>Long term</u>	<u>Medium term</u>	<u>2012-13</u>
Waste & Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recycling 50%+ • New open book waste contract • Refresh strategy in 2015 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review staff structures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake tender process • Clarify how bulky collections etc will work • Clarify role of contractors • Use of ICT for monitoring performance/contract • Strategy alignment with Kent County Council (KCC) • Maximise recycling rates to maximise KCC funding • Moving processes on-line (next 6 months)
Customer Services Delivery (Contact Centre, Gateway & Corporate Support)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced cost of provision • Greater range of partner provision 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effect of welfare reforms • Effect of waste contract • Break clause in Gateway contract in 2 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer service review • Ownership of website and resources – one service for customer contacts • Voice recognition software – automated switchboard • More work on Electronic Document and Record Management System (EDRMS) project and effects of moving towards this e.g. increased work
ICT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fully integrated ICT partnership • Considering models for delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete phase 3 – governance and organisational structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preparing business case and vision/10 yr strategy for April 2012/13 • Phase 1 – moving kit to Maidstone • Phase 2 – Move virtual services to MKIP cloud • Start phase 3 • Quick wins in consolidation, single systems and joint working e.g. new website Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells councils
Hazlitt Arts Centre	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vibrant theatre that people want to go to all the time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different governance structure – 2013/14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and implementing different governance structure

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut subsidy by 50%+ • Increased community participation and involvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Run more like a business • Link to Museum on education 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work to make Hazlitt financially ready - maximising savings and income • New governance means asset management and support structure issues
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making sure vision including leisure and business opportunities is delivered in a sensitive way • Effects of Local Development Framework – less planning enforcement • So could move resources to deal with increased levels of development • Skills development – more negotiation and selling 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate options for improvement of processing and delivery of planning support e.g. shared • Channel shift to website • Restructure to include Spatial Policy, plus support for those in management roles • Investigation of Management & Admin recharges • Consider options for service e.g. gold plated • Efficiency work e.g. Business Improvement process improvement • Participating in and responding to peer review
Parking Transport Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More customer power to pay, less enforcement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transport Strategy – models considered and delivery set up including Park and Ride issues • Consolidate parking partnership • Investigate other ways to pay e.g. mobile phone • Channel shift on-line (into medium term)
Revenues & Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop wider shared service or pursue commercial opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure and change through welfare reform • Decide if we take the saving or use the capacity for income generation • Effect of Council Tax reforms e.g. possible reduced collection rate • Opportunities through business rate reforms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efficiency work e.g. channel shift and reducing avoidable contact – building capacity to sell • Planning to manage welfare reforms – need to have Council Tax benefit structure in place by 2012

<p>Housing</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality housing that people want and is accessible to the whole community • Affordable housing delivered to strategy – challenges in achieving this • Good private sector market with choice • Good housing advice that prevents homelessness 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welfare reforms – manages effects on private sector • Improved working with registered providers and private sector landlords 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review policies and priorities • Business Improvement process review – Private Sector Housing then Housing Options • Review tenancy strategy, homelessness strategy, empty homes approach, affordable housing programme • Understand, respond to and begin prevention of increased homelessness • Decide how to respond to increased legal challenges • Review use of local Bed & Breakfast accommodation • Review housing assistance grants • Decide on home improvement agency approach • Threat to Disabled Facilities Grant funding – internal and external • Plan approach for tackling disadvantage with early years (into medium and long term)
<p>Finance</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support the business make informed decisions, manage budgets, commit and measure resources • Investigate model of delivery 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One ICT system across Mid Kent Improvement Partnership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restructure to work towards long term better support for business • Decide approach to recharges • Develop use of Agresso e.g. for Direct Debits for more things
<p>Building Control</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Model of delivery – trading arm doing work on behalf of private companies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversify work – less statutory, more trading account • Develop and take advantage of partnership opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break even • Staff restructure • Channel shift on-line

Maidstone Borough Council

Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 10 January 2012

Local Strategic Partnership - Written Update

Report of: Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

1.1 At its meeting of the 1 November 2011, the Committee resolved that:

- A written update should be provided by the Local Strategic Partnership lead officer to inform the Committee on the recent changes to the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) and Locality Boards.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Committee is recommended to consider the information provided in the written update (**Appendix A**). The Committee may wish to make recommendations to Officers, request further information or make the LSP and Locality Boards the focus of a future meeting.

2.2 Areas for discussion may include:

- The level of input at County level and how this is envisaged to increase with the Locality Board;
- The advantages and disadvantages of County input
- The future of the delivery groups;
- The delivery of existing and ongoing LSP projects and funding arrangements;
- The changes to the membership of the delivery groups as a result of the Locality Board; and
- The impact overall on Maidstone and the Council's priorities.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee has an overarching role within the Scrutiny structure. Its remit includes the Local Strategic Partnership and Locality Boards.

3.2 The Maidstone Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) was a partnership of key public, private, community and voluntary organisations and is a voluntary framework for local co-operation. Members included representatives from Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone's Chamber of Commerce, Citizens Advice Bureau, the Federation of Small Businesses, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, Kent Police, KCC,

Voluntary Action Maidstone, The University for Creative Arts, and West Kent PCT.

3.2 The Partnership was the overseeing body for the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for Maidstone. This strategy fulfils the duty of the Council to promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of the people and communities of Maidstone Borough. The SCS identified the LSP as having a role in six key areas:

- The Safer Maidstone Partnership (Crime, anti social behaviour, drugs & alcohol abuse);
- Climate Change (carbon reduction, flood and fuel poverty);
- Health Action (Community health, older people's services);
- Creating Quality Place (economy, skills needs, transport, regeneration);
- Children's Services Partnership (education, attendance, attainment, teenage pregnancy); and
- Community Cohesion (Equality, diversity, access to services)

3.3 The Local Strategic Partnership consisted of 5 delivery groups:

- Economic Development and Regeneration
- Environmental Quality
- Health and Wellbeing
- Local Children's Trust
- Safer Maidstone Partnership

3.4 The Local Strategic Partnership was dissolved in September 2011 and was replaced with the Locality Board.

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

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

- 'Corporate and Customer Excellence'.

4.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. The Committee's work will contribute to the delivery of these key objectives over the next year.



MAIDSTONE DELIVERY GROUPS
Quarter 3 update: Corporate Services
Date: 15 December 2011
Report Prepared by: Sarah Robson

1.0 Overview - Maidstone Locality Board update

Following on from the dissolution of the Maidstone Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in September 2011, the final scoping meeting of the Maidstone Locality Board was held on 18 November 2011. Attendees discussed the role of the Locality Board, constitution, membership and future work programme, including a review of the existing LSP delivery groups. The key difference between the LSP and Locality Board will result in a greater input from county and district councillors, but with representation from the wider public sector, including Kent Police, Kent Fire and Rescue Service, NHS, the voluntary and community sector and the business community.

2.0 Delivery Groups

The five delivery groups that previously existed under the Local Strategic Partnership now report directly to the Locality Board. The groups are;

- Economic Development and Regeneration
- Environmental Quality
- Health and Wellbeing
- Local Children's Trust
- Safer Maidstone Partnership

In early 2012, the delivery groups will be reviewed to bring them in line with the Maidstone Locality Board work programme.

3.0 Delivery Group Priorities

The following priorities have been adopted by each delivery group;

Economic Development and Regeneration

Priority: Worklessness

Focus: Young people not in employment, education or training. Develop apprenticeship, mentoring and training opportunities.

Environmental Quality

Priorities: Waste reduction, climate change and carbon reduction

Adaption

Focus: Reduce residential and business waste (organise a stakeholder event), travel plans

Health and Wellbeing

Priorities: Teenage conception, Health Weight and Healthy Eating and Mental Health

Focus: Improved awareness of positive relationships/domestic abuse, tackling obesity through nutrition and exercise and positive mental health

Local Children's Trust

Priorities: Safeguarding, emotional and mental health, a healthy start in life, adolescent engagement

Focus: Community Budgets pilot

Safer Maidstone Partnership

Priorities: Anti social behaviour, domestic abuse, road safety (killed and seriously injured) and substance misuse

Focus: Partnership working through education, intervention and enforcement to support the priorities

Maidstone Borough Council

Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 10 January 2012

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 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 it remains appropriate and covers all issues Members currently wish to consider within the Committee's remit.
- 3.2 The Committee is reminded that the Constitution states under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules number 9: Agenda items that 'Any Member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee shall be entitled to give notice to the proper officer that he wishes an item relevant to the functions of the Committee or Sub-Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting. On receipt of such a request the proper officer will ensure that it is included on the next available agenda.'

4 Forward Plan of Key Decision

4.1 The Forward Plan for 1 January 2012 to 30 April 2012 (**Appendix B**) contains the following decisions relevant to the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's current work programme:

- Budget Strategy 2012-13 Onwards;
- Treasury Management Strategy 2012/13;
- Parish Services Scheme;
- ICT Partnership;
- 2012/13 Refresh of the Strategic Plan; and
- Growth Point Revenue Expenditure.

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 key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. Actions to deliver these key objectives 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"> • Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman • Work Programming 2011/12
7 June 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman • Work Programming 2011/12
5 July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman • The Marketing of Council Buildings • Interview with Councillor Rob Field • Annual Review of Complaints 2010-11 • Interviews with Angela Woodhouse, Head of Change and Scrutiny and Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Officer • The Council as a Business – Scoping Document for Review • The Leader and Cabinet members – Written Updates
02 August 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complaints Policy • Interview with Angela Woodhouse, Head of Change and Scrutiny • The Council as a Business? Review • Interviews with Chief Executive and Directors and • Interim report on Staff Survey results
06 September 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st quarter performance monitoring report • Interview with Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Officer • Complaints Quarter 1 Report • Interview with Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Officer • Corporate Improvement Plan Update • Interview with Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Officer • The Council as a Business? Review • Written updates from Committee Members on best practice and evaluation of Staff Survey results
4 October 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council as a Business? Review 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

Appendix A

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network of Rural Business Forums; Councillor Chris Garland, Leader of the Council; and Councillor David Burton, Burton's Medical Equipment Limited
01 November 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2nd Quarter Complaints Monitoring Report Interview with Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Manager Revenues and Benefits Update Interview with Steve McGinnes, Head of Revenues and Benefits The Budget Strategy Interview with Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Customer Services
29 November 2011 CANCELLED	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Budget Strategy Community Halls Audit Interview with Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager Strategic Plan 2nd quarter performance monitoring report LSP thematic quarterly performance report The Parish Scheme (Provisional)
10 January 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Budget Strategy Interview with Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Customer Services. Strategic Plan Refresh Interview with Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Manager. Draft Improvement Plan Interview with Georgia Hawkes, Head of Business Improvement LSP Written Update
7 February 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council as a Business? Review LSP thematic quarterly performance report 3rd quarter performance monitoring report 3rd quarter complaints monitoring report
6 March 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Draft The Council as a Business? Review report Interview with Leader and Cabinet Progress Over the Year
3 April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agree The Council as a Business? Review report

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORWARD PLAN

133

**01 January 2012 to
30 April 2012**

**Councillor Christopher Garland
Leader of the Council**



Forward Plan January 2012 - April 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.

WHO MAKES DECISIONS?

The Cabinet collectively makes some of the decisions at a public meeting and individual portfolio holders make decisions following consultation with every member of the Council. In addition, Officers can make key decisions and an entry for each of these will be included in the Forward Plan.

**Forward Plan
January 2012 - April 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
January 2012 - April 2012**

Decision Maker, Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made and, if delayed, reason for delay:	Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:	Consultees and Method:	Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:	Relevant Documents:
<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Due Date: 08 Feb 2012</p>	<p>2012/13 Refresh of the Strategic Plan</p> <p>To agree the approach to the refresh of the Council's Strategic Plan 2011-15 and note the updated action plan.</p>	<p>Management Team, Cabinet Members, Service Managers, Committee Draft copies of the plan will be available for comment back to Ellie Kershaw</p>	<p>Ellie Kershaw elliekershaw@maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>30/11/2011</p>	<p>Cabinet, Council or Committee Report for 2012/13 refresh of the Strategic Plan</p>
<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Due Date: 08 Feb 2012</p>	<p>Budget Strategy 2012/13 Onwards</p> <p>Agree proposed General Fund revenue and capital estimates for 2012/13 and revised figures for 2011/12, in accordance with the Budget Strategy and the Medium Term Financial and Capital Strategies and Projections, and the consequent level of Council Tax for submission to the Council.</p>	<p>Management Team Heads of Service Members Based on budget consultation strategy</p>	<p>Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>16 January 2012</p>	<p>Cabinet, Council or Committee Report for Budget Strategy 2012/13 Onwards - Cabinet</p>

**Forward Plan
January 2012 - April 2012**

Decision Maker and Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:	Consultees and Method:	Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:	Relevant Documents:
<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Due Date: 08 Feb 2012</p>	<p>Treasury Management Strategy 2012/13</p> <p>Review Treasury Management for 2011/12 and consider future Treasury Management Strategy for 2012/13. This will include Prudential Borrowing limits and a proposed Approved Investment Strategy. These matters will be submitted to Council.</p>	<p>Management Team Heads of Service Members Internal communication/report to Management Team</p>	<p>Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>16 January 2012</p>	<p>Cabinet, Council or Committee Report for Treasury Management Strategy 2012/13 - Cabinet</p>
<p>Cabinet</p> <p>Due Date: 11 Apr 2012</p> <p>Original Date: 3 Oct 2011</p>	<p>ICT Partnership</p> <p>Report detailing the business case for a MKIP ICT shared service/partnership</p>	<p>Staff, Heads of Service, Members Questionnaire</p>	<p>David Lindsay, Head of IT Services DaveLindsay@maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>31/7/2011</p>	<p>Cabinet, Council or Committee Report for ICT Partnership</p>

**Forward Plan
January 2012 - April 2012**

Decision Maker and Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:	Consultees and Method:	Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:	Relevant Documents:
<p>Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services</p> <p>Due Date: Jan 2012</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</p> <p>1 December 2011</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Report for Parish Services Scheme</p>
<p>Cabinet Member for Economic Development and Transport</p> <p>Due Date: Jan 2012</p>	<p>Growth Point Revenue Expenditure</p> <p>To consider uncommitted Growth Point revenue funding and propose project expenditure to meet corporate objectives.</p>	<p>Consultees will vary depending upon each project. Where appropriate a consultation plan will be produced for each project</p>	<p>John Foster, Economic Development Manager johnfoster@maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>25th November 2011</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Report for To consider Growth Point revenue expenditure</p>