

AGENDA

CABINET MEETING



Date: Wednesday 14 September 2011
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

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

Page No.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Urgent Items
3. Notification of Visiting Members
4. Disclosures by Members and Officers
5. Disclosures of lobbying
6. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information
7. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 10 August 2011

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Continued Over/:

Issued on 6 September 2011

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

KEY DECISION REPORTS

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| 8. | Report of Management Team - Budget Strategy 2012/13 Onwards | 10 - 48 |
| 9. | Report of the Head of Change and Scrutiny - Data Quality Policy | 49 - 63 |

NON-KEY DECISION REPORTS

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| 10. | Report of the Head of Change and Scrutiny - Corporate Improvement Plan Update | 64 - 79 |
| 11. | Report of the Head of Change and Scrutiny - Corporate Planning Timetable | 80 - 84 |
| 12. | Report of the Head of Change and Scrutiny - Open Public Services White Paper Response | 85 - 94 |
| 13. | Report of Management Team - Strategic Risks 2011 -2015 | 95 - 147 |
| 14. | Report of the Leader of the Council - Forward Plan | 148 - 150 |

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 10 AUGUST 2011

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

Also Present: Councillors Burton, English, FitzGerald,
Paine and Robertson

43. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Hotson.

44. **URGENT ITEMS**

The Leader of the Council agreed to take as urgent the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment because the draft National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) had been published for a standard twelve week consultation process; however, guidance published by the Planning Inspectorate for Inspectors had stated that it could be considered to be a material consideration and a decision needed to be taken to determine how much weight, if any, to attach to the draft for the purposes of development plan making and for determining applications for development.

45. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor David Burton indicated his wish to speak on Agenda item 10 – Core Strategy 2006-2026: Public Participation Draft.

Councillor Clive English indicated his wish to speak on Agenda item 10 - Core Strategy 2006-2026: Public Participation Draft and Agenda item 15 - Urgent Consultation on the draft National Planning Policy Framework

Councillor Mike Fitzgerald indicated his wish to speak on Agenda item 10 - Core Strategy 2006-2026: Public Participation Draft and Agenda item 15 - Urgent Consultation on the draft National Planning Policy Framework

Councillor Stephen Paine indicated his wish to speak on Agenda item 8 – Communications and Engagement Strategy and Agenda item 10 - Core Strategy 2006-2026: Public Participation Draft

Councillor Malcolm Robertson indicated his wish to speak on item 10 - Core Strategy 2006-2026: Public Participation Draft

46. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no Disclosures by Members and Officers.

47. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no Disclosures of lobbying.

48. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

49. MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 July 2011 be approved as a correct record and signed.

50. COMMUNICATIONS AND ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

DECISION MADE: That the draft Communications and Engagement Strategy 2011-2014, attached at Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Communications, for consultation with Councillors, staff, and appropriate partners and stakeholders be adopted.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=471>

51. COMPLAINTS POLICY

DECISION MADE:

1. That the Complaints Policy, as set out at Appendix A of the report of the head of Change and Scrutiny, be approved subject to recommendations from the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
2. That the responses to the Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP), as attached at Appendix A, be agreed.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=472>

52. CORE STRATEGY 2006-2026: PUBLIC PARTICIPATION DRAFT

DECISION MADE:

1. That the draft Core Strategy for public consultation under Regulation 25 of the Planning Regulations (included as Appendix A to the report of the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment) be approved.
2. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to

make any necessary changes to the Draft Core Strategy to ensure that it is fit for purpose as a consultation draft prior to publication.

3. That delegated authority be given to the Director of Change, Planning and the Environment, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree the Appendices to the Core Strategy, and that they be published alongside the Core Strategy Regulation 25 consultation draft.
4. That a methodology of document changes be developed and made available to the public, keeping the current version on the website updated at all times.
5. That the responses to the Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP), as attached at Appendix B, be agreed.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=473>

53. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Change and Scrutiny – Quarter 1 KPI Report 2011/12.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

54. FIRST QUARTER REVENUE & CAPITAL MONITORING

DECISION MADE:

1. That the satisfactory revenue position at the end of the first quarter 2011/12 be noted.
2. That the proposal at paragraph 1.4.8 a) of the report of the Head of Finance and Customer Service, to utilise £0.1m of the pensions back-funding budget to finance further redundancy payments, be approved.
3. That the proposals for slippage in the capital programme to 2012/13 be agreed;
4. That the details regarding treasury management activity, as set out in the report of the Head of Finance and Customer Services, be noted.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=474>

55. RESPONSE TO VISION FOR KENT CONSULTATION

DECISION MADE: That the response to the Vision for Kent Consultation set out at Appendix A to the joint report of the Leader of the Council and the Chief Executive be approved.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=475>

56. FORWARD PLAN

The Cabinet considered the report of the Leader of the Council regarding the Forward Plan 01 September to 31 December 2011.

RESOLVED: That the Forward Plan for the period 01 September to 31 December 2011 be noted, subject to the following amendments:

1. The Budget Strategy 2012-13 Onwards report	now for the Cabinet Meeting on 14 September 2011
2. The Tendering Strategy – Waste and Recycling Contract from 2013 report	now for the Cabinet Meeting on 12 October 2011
3. The Parish Services Scheme report (new)	Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services for October 2011

57. URGENT CONSULTATION ON THE DRAFT NATIONAL PLANNING POLICY FRAMEWORK

DECISION MADE: That little weight be attached to the draft National Planning Policy Framework as a material consideration in both plan making and the determination of planning applications.

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

<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=476>

DURATION OF MEETING

6.30pm to 8.06pm

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (SCRAIP)

Committee: Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny

Meeting Date: 2 August 2011

Minute N^o: 44

Topic: Complaints Policy

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Recommendationⁱ	Cabinet Memberⁱⁱ	Responseⁱⁱⁱ	Timetable^{iv}	Lead Officer^v
a) MEPs should be added to section 7. of the Complaints Policy to read 'Complaints from Councillors, MPs and MEPs';	Corporate Services	Agreed – policy will be amended	Cabinet – 10 August 2011	Angela Woodhouse
b) Staff Training should be extended to include long serving Officers as well as front-line customer services;	Corporate Services	Agreed- Heads of Service and Unit Managers will be requested to nominate appropriate members of staff to attend the training this should include long serving officers.		Ellie Kershaw
c) Members should be advised by email when the updates were made to the website and the leaflet being designed for customers would be circulated electronically; and	Corporate Services	Agreed		Ellie Kershaw

d) That the Committee should be updated on the implementation of the Complaints Policy in 6 months time. Corporate Services	Corporate Services	Agreed		Ellie Kershaw
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Notes on the completion of SCRAIP

ⁱ Report recommendations are listed as found in the report.

ⁱⁱ Insert in this box the Cabinet Member whose portfolio the recommendation falls within.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box either the acceptance or rejection of the recommendation.

If the recommendation is rejected an explanation for its rejection should be provided. The 'timetable' and 'lead officer' boxes can be left blank

If the recommendation is accepted an explanation of the action to be taken to implement the recommendation should be recorded in this box. Please also complete the 'timetable' and 'lead officer' boxes.

^{iv} The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box when the action in indicated in the previous box will be implemented.

^v The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box the Officer responsible for the implementation of the action highlighted in the 'response' box.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (SCRAIP)

Committee: LDD Task & Finish Scrutiny Panel

Meeting Date: 3 August 2011

Minute N^o: 18

Topic: URGENT ITEM: Core Strategy Regulation 25 Consultation.

Recommendation^v	Chief Officer / Cabinet Member^v	Response^v	Timetable^v	Lead Officer^v
The core strategy and its appendices are fit for public consultation;		Noted.		
the following grammatical errors are corrected; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Page 7 of the Core Strategy 1.3 'and the Council resolved to reject the representation'; ii. Page 22, 4.3 be re-phrased; iii. Page 45, 6.21 ends the paragraph with the word 'the'; and iv. Page 45, 6.22 'if the rural economy is to continue to make'. 	Cabinet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) Agreed. (ii) Not Agreed. This will be considered in response to any representations made during the consultation process. (iii) Agreed. Should read "the Economic Development Strategy". (iv) Agreed. 	August 2011	Flo Churchill

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the methodology of document changes be developed and made available to the public, keeping the current version on the website updated at all times;	Cabinet	Any document changes between the version of the core strategy presented tonight and the consultation document will be listed and agreed with the Leader of the Council. The consultation version will then be available on the Website from the 2 nd September.	September 2011	Flo Churchill
the simplified leaflet for mass publication be presented to the Scrutiny Panel at the next meeting;	Cabinet	Agreed. Draft to be produced to highlight key issues and signpost people to the further information and ways of responding. Cabinet is requested to give Director of Change Planning and environment delegated authority to approve the leaflet having regard to any comments made by the scrutiny panel.	August 2011	Flo Churchill
wording within policy CS7 – Sustainable Transport use the phrase ‘across the borough’ rather than ‘urban areas’; and	Cabinet	Not agreed. This will be considered in response to any representations made during the consultation process.	August 2011	Flo Churchill

the full Council should be involved in the process for responding to the consultation on the National Planning Policy Framework;	Cabinet	This point related to the National Planning Policy Framework paper that appears elsewhere on the agenda. A member workshop has been proposed to discuss this in further detail prior to a Council response by the deadline of 17 October. The Leader will consider requesting Scrutiny to advise him on the response before he agrees it. Scrutiny may also refer the issue to full Council for discussion before the Leader makes his decision.	August 2011	Flo Churchill
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Notes on the completion of SCRAIP

∨ Report recommendations are listed as found in the report.

∨ Insert in this box the Cabinet Member whose portfolio the recommendation falls within.

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If the recommendation is accepted an explanation of the action to be taken to implement the recommendation should be recorded in this box. Please also complete the 'timetable' and 'lead officer' boxes.

∨ The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box when the action in indicated in the previous box will be implemented.

∨ The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box the Officer responsible for the implementation of the action highlighted in the 'response' box.

Agenda Item 8

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

14 SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT OF MANAGEMENT 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 review the medium term financial strategy (MTFS) for 2011/12 onwards along with developments and emerging issues that will affect the revenue and capital budget for 2012/13. This will provide draft assumptions that will develop the MTFS for 2012/13 onwards for planning purposes and to enable consultation.

1.1.2 The draft assumptions for the MTFS for 2012/13 onwards should also be considered in the context of the revised strategic plan and the report elsewhere on this agenda considering the timetable for the review of the strategic plan and the development of this strategy.

1.2 Recommendations of Management Team

1.2.1 That Cabinet selects the strategic revenue projection that gives the appropriate outcome for planning purposes and agrees any necessary amendments to the projection;

1.2.2 That Cabinet gives an initial view on the level of council tax for planning purposes, currently proposed as 2.5% per annum over the period of the strategy;

1.2.3 That Cabinet notes the extent of the capital programme and the current likely financing arrangements;

1.2.4 That Cabinet agree the outline proposals for consultation and delegates the development of the final format and questions to the Head of Communications in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 For many years this authority has considered strategic budget issues at an early stage. To enable balanced consideration of the MTFS with the revised strategic plan there has been a short delay in this year's production of this initial budget strategy report. This year's revisions to the strategic plan have produced a plan focused on three key priorities and the short delay has enabled ongoing work to identify and prioritise actions to achieve the six outcomes that support those priorities.

1.3.2 The MTFS and the strategic plan must be closely aligned to achieve maximum benefit from either strategy. The three priorities set out in the strategic plan are:

- a) For Maidstone to have a growing economy;
- b) For Maidstone to be a decent place to live; and
- c) Corporate and customer excellence.

The detailed actions required to achieve the six outcomes are contained within the service plans of the organisation and within the specific budget heads for those services. At the level of the budget strategy the links with the strategic plan require an assurance that a balanced and prudent budget is set that ensures continued funding for priority service areas and where necessary funds any growth required.

1.3.3 In addition to the revision to the strategic plan, the development that occurred during 2010/11 to the MTFS for 2011/12 provided a comprehensive assessment of the Council's financial situation. It included the development of a four year plan of savings and efficiencies for the budget based upon the developments and issues known at that time. This means that proposals to achieve £1.1m in efficiency and other savings have already been identified for 2012/13 and actions already taken total approximately £0.5m.

1.3.4 This report firstly considers the context in which the MTFS 2012/13 is being developed. It then considers each of the major elements of both the revenue and capital financial projections in relation to any known further developments or emerging issues that may possibly require an amendment to the MTFS as set out for 2011/12 onwards.

1.4 Background

1.4.1 Attached at **APPENDIX A** is the budget summary for 2011/12 which was agreed by Council in March 2011. This was developed from the work on the MTFS for 2011/12 onwards. The summary has been reconfigured to show the current Cabinet portfolio structure.

1.4.2 Also attached, for further background information are the following:

- a) **APPENDIX B:** The current MTFS for 2011/12 onwards;
- b) **APPENDIX C:** The current statement of balances projected to March 2011. This takes into account the outturn position for 2010/11 as reported to Cabinet in May 2011.

1.4.3 The Local Context:

- 1.4.4 The outturn position for 2010/11 was reported to the Cabinet meeting in May 2011. The report showed that along with a small number of general carry forward requests, significant sums were carried forward against budget heads that are funded by external grant aid and the balance of revenue support so far set aside for the capital programme. The assumption used in financing the capital programme at this time is that revenue support will be utilised as the last funding stream, as revenue resources can be used more flexibly.
- 1.4.5 The resulting under spend for 2010/11 was £4m. Of this sum £2.7m was approved by Cabinet against carry forward requests of all types, leaving a contribution to balances of £1.3m. In considering a report on the heating systems at the Hazlitt Theatre, as part of the same agenda in May 2011, Cabinet approved additional revenue support to the capital programme of £0.31m. The net effect was that unallocated balances increased by £0.89m.
- 1.4.6 The work completed in 2010/11 on the MTFS means that the budget for 2011/12, a summary of which is attached at Appendix A, is a balanced and deliverable budget. The first quarter's monitoring report to Cabinet in August 2011 showed a favourable variance on more than £0.4m. This variance is formed from two major spending areas, Supplies and Services (which includes items such as office supplies and professional and consultancy services) and Building Maintenance costs. At this stage in the year budget monitoring shows that the budget is being managed well but it may be too early to be certain that a variance on these spending areas, which are often less predictable or slow to develop against a new budget, will remain throughout the year.
- 1.4.7 These local factors contribute to a very stable base on which to build the 2012/13 budget strategy.
- 1.4.8 The National Context:
- 1.4.9 Last year, when considering the MTFS for 2011/12 onwards, the Government had just announced its initial plans for the public sector spending reductions that would form a major part of its comprehensive spending review. At that time much of the information that was required to create the 2011/12 budget was speculative and, although some things

have progressed, many of the planned developments remain speculative or under consultation.

- 1.4.10 The initial effect of government plans on the country's recovery from the economic downturn has been slow and as with most long term plans it can be expected that, if the plan is successful, recovery speed will increase. Tabulated below are the national indicators of growth and debt given as a result for each calendar year along with the current position at July 2011.

Index	2008	2009	2010	2011 at July
Growth	3.5%	-3.6%	1.5%	0.7%
Debt	£614.4bn	£796.9bn	£909.0bn	£940.1bn

- 1.4.11 Other useful indices for consideration in the MTFs include RPI (retail price index), CPI (consumer price index), the base rate and the 7 day LIBOR (London inter bank offered rate). These are tabulated below but are considered at financial year end rather than at calendar year end.

Index	Mar 2009	Mar 2010	Mar 2011	Aug 2011 (Current)
RPI	-0.4%	4.4%	5.3%	5.0%
CPI	2.9%	3.4%	4.1%	4.4%
Base Rate	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%	0.5%
7 Day LIBOR	0.67%	0.55%		

- 1.4.12 The Government notified the Council of its provisional Revenue Support Grant for 2012/13 during February 2011. The sum notified is a 12% reduction when compared to the 2011/12 cash value. In October 2010 as part of the spending review the Government indicated public sector spending reductions of 25%. This grant reduction, along with the reduction received in 2011/12, form part of that cut. The balance of the spending reduction will be identified by central government over the two remaining years of the review period, 2013/14 and 2014/15.

- 1.4.13 At this time the Government has commenced consultation on future central government funding for local government. The main proposal in the first phase of their review is the potential re-localisation of business rates. The current intention is for this review to be completed in time for the 2013/14 financial year but details of how this will affect future reductions in funding are unclear. This matter is discussed later in this report when considering possible assumptions on future funding reductions in detail.

- 1.4.14 Other issues that may have a further effect upon the MTFs include:

- a) The ending of the council tax freeze grant in 2014/15;

- b) Changes to council tax and housing benefit that will be brought about by the Welfare Reform Bill;
- c) Further changes to public sector pension arrangements;
- d) Follow on consequences of the back loaded reductions in government funding for police and fire authorities.

1.5 The Strategic Revenue Projection

- 1.5.1 The strategic revenue projection is a model used annually by Cabinet to concisely project the effect of major local and national priorities on the future revenue budget of the Council. In the past Cabinet has used a document that models three outcomes. This enables Cabinet to consider the outcome recommended by this report against the best case and worse case outcomes.
- 1.5.2 All three models use a number of factors such as inflation rates and the consequences of local and national initiatives. These are assumptions about the future consequences of the current situation. In the most significant cases they are discussed individually in this section of the report.
- 1.5.3 The three strategic revenue projections are given in **APPENDIX D** to this report and Cabinet may wish to consider modifying the "most likely" outcome using individual changes to the assumptions, as another alternative to its adoption as recommended in this report.
- 1.5.4 The assumptions applied to each outcome create a significant amount of detail and the most appropriate way to show this comparatively is in a matrix. This matrix is attached as **APPENDIX E** to this report. The values quoted in this report relate to the assumptions used in the "most likely" strategic revenue projection that is recommended for approval. Details of the "best" and "worse" case assumptions are given only in Appendices D and E attached.
- 1.5.5 It is recommended that cabinet approve the "most likely" outcome as detailed in Appendix D. However cabinet may wish to amend individual assumptions from within the chosen strategic revenue projection.
- 1.5.6 Significant assumptions in the strategic revenue projections
- 1.5.7 Inflation indices: These have been considered in detail and the expenditure budget divided between employee costs; energy costs; business rates; contractual commitments and other running costs. In each case the rate of inflation applied has been discussed with service managers to ensure it is appropriate. In the case of employee costs, whilst there is no increase for 2012/13 in line with Cabinet's previous decision, the consequence of paying £250 to employees earning less

than £21,000 has exacerbated the risk that the Council faces with regard to equal pay and pay differentials.

- 1.5.8 At this time the Head of Human Resources is undertaking the normal review of the pay levels which must occur in line with the commitment made by the Council when the pay structure was adopted. Cabinet will receive a report from the Head of Human resources at its October 2011 meeting on the results of this review and other issues currently being reviewed on pay and performance. Due to the unquantifiable risk the review creates at this time a provision of £0.16m, which is equivalent to 1% of employee costs, has been incorporated into the strategic revenue projection.
- 1.5.9 Welfare Reform Bill: The consequences of the Welfare Reform Bill are expected to include amendments to council tax benefit arrangements and the transfer of housing benefit into the proposed universal credit. In the case of council tax benefit this will include a 10% reduction in government funding and an amendment to council tax benefit to make it a local "discount" rather than a benefit. For Housing benefit there will be a loss of a specific government grant and the transfer of employees to the Department for Works and Pensions over a transitional period.
- 1.5.10 For council tax benefit a budget pressure has been included in the strategic revenue projection for 2013/14 that considers the effect of an increase in bad debt from a 10% reduction in resources available to discount council tax bills. For housing benefit the strategic revenue projection includes a budget pressure in 2014/15 that is the net cost of lost administration grant and reduced employee levels. It is anticipated that this loss will be regained after the transitional period is over and this is outside the period of the MTFS.
- 1.5.11 Council Tax Freeze Grant: The grant is payable by central government for the four years from 2011/12 to 2014/15 as funding to replace a 2.5% increase in council tax. This required the Council to freeze its council tax in 2011/12. The sum payable is £0.34m per annum and the strategic revenue projection includes a provision for the additional cost to the revenue budget of no longer receiving the grant from 2015/16.
- 1.5.12 King Street Car Park lease: Although arrangements are progressing on the future use of the unit on the ground floor of King Street Car Park, the termination of the lease with the current lessor means that the annual rental income of £0.13m will not be received in future. It is unlikely that any short term agreement reached will replace this lost income. Due to this risk the strategic revenue projection includes a provision of £0.1m against this loss.
- 1.5.13 Local Development Framework: Funding for the production of the local development framework has been provided in part from balances and in

part from reward related grant such as the Housing and Planning Delivery Grant. Officers estimate that there is up to three more years of work to be completed, including various stages of inspection and consultation. Much of this cost cannot be found from base budget within the service and it is expected that the balance of one off funding will be utilised this year. Provisional estimates show a need for additional resources of just less than £1m. The strategic revenue projection incorporates a base budget pressure of £0.3m which will provide £0.9m over three years. Further work is still being completed on the provisional estimate and a more accurate budget will be produced before December 2011 when Cabinet will consider this matter again.

- 1.5.14 Funding for projects supported by grant: A number of grant funding streams have been affected by the government's reductions in public sector funding and there are occasions where grant is received by the Council indirectly and the effect on the host organisation has been "passported" to the Council. A significant example is the grant received for the Safer Maidstone Partnership. The grant has reduced in 2011/12 from just over £0.1m to less than £50,000. It is possible that this grant will not be available at all next year. A budget pressure has been shown in the strategic revenue projection to enable the Council to continue the work of the partnership through local funding.
- 1.5.15 Future service arrangements with Parish Councils: A budget pressure of £80,000 has been included in the strategic revenue projection to enable support to service areas that will be affected most heavily by the removal of the concurrent functions arrangements. This is intended to recognise the additional pressure placed upon the budgets for service areas that may be required to directly fund activity or enter into a funding arrangement with individual parish councils.
- 1.5.16 Resources Available
- 1.5.17 Income from rents, fees and charges: In general the income generated by services forms part of the net budget of the council and is treated separately from decisions on the level of RSG and the level of Council Tax.
- 1.5.18 The level of income generated by services through rents, fees and charges is in the region of £18m. In some case the council has the ability to influence the level of charge but in many cases the government either prescribes the charge or requires a charge that ensures the service reaches a break even position on cost.
- 1.5.19 Because of the variety of income types it is not appropriate to use RPI or CPI to generalise on a likely increase. To ensure that managers assess the suitability of increases in fees and charges when developing their budget the Council has a policy, adopted in 2009, on the necessary

assessment of the market. This includes issues such as competitors and the effect a change in price will have on demand.

- 1.5.20 It is recommended that Cabinet take no action to prescribe an increase in rents, fees and charges, allowing services managers to complete this work individually for their service in line with the policy and as part of the required efficiency and savings target set out in the strategic revenue projection. This would accord with the assessment of the Council as a business that is currently being considered by Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 1.5.21 To ensure that Cabinet retain awareness and control over developments with regard to income levels, future reports on savings proposals will specifically identify proposals for increases in income. In this way Cabinet will be aware of the developments. Quarterly budget monitoring reports will then give Cabinet assurance that income proposals are actually being achieved.
- 1.5.22 Revenue Support Grant: This grant is also known as formula grant due to the formulaic nature of its calculation. In fact the complex formula is one reason why central government is reviewing this funding for local government. This issue was considered earlier in this report as a national development. The government is currently consulting on the re-localisation of business rates and the consultation proposes that this will occur for the financial year 2013/14. At this time any estimate of the consequences to the Council's resources would be unreliable.
- 1.5.23 Revenue Support Grant will exist for the forthcoming financial year 2012/13 and the government's provisional values suggest the Council will receive a cash sum of £5.7m which is 12% lower than the cash sum received in 2011/12. The provisional nature of that sum will be updated by the government in December 2011. The Council will not receive final confirmation until January 2012.
- 1.5.24 Without the ability to estimate the consequences of the government's review of the formula grant process the most accurate assessment of future funding continues to be the details given in the spending review of October 2010. Modelling of the data in the spending review suggests a further reduction in grant of 1.2% in 2013/14 followed by a 7.6% reduction in 2014/15. The comprehensive spending review was a four year review and the data finishes in 2014/15. As a preliminary assumption for 2015/16 the strategic revenue projection includes a 5% loss of grant.
- 1.5.25 Council Tax: The level of council tax is affected by two factors. These are changes in the property base within the borough and increases in the charge set by the Council.

- 1.5.26 The property base or more specifically the tax base where it relates to council tax levels shows regular annual growth. In the calculation to set the council tax for 2011/12 the tax base growth was 0.9%. In the period since then property completions have not kept pace with that level. The strategic revenue projection includes a 0.5% increase in the tax base for each of the five years under consideration.
- 1.5.27 The level of charge set by the Council varies in accordance with need and prudence, it should be set to avoid the threat of capping or referendum whilst ensuring the final budget is balanced and delivers the Council's objectives.
- 1.5.28 Cabinet should be aware that due to the government control through capping legislation and the future referendum proposals, a council tax increase once forgone in any one year cannot be reinstated. The loss of council tax from the agreed freeze during 2011/12 was funded by grant aid from central government. This funding lasts until 2014/15. In 2015/16 the Council will need to find savings of £0.34m to cover the grant. As an indicative example of the long term consequences, over a period of 10 years the lost revenue expenditure equals £3.4m plus the compounding effect of future increases in council tax. If a 2.5% increase occurred in each of the 10 years, compounding would add a further £0.4m to that sum. The actual effect will not be reversible whilst capping or a local referendum exists as a controlling influence.
- 1.5.29 The strategic revenue projection includes a council tax increase of 2.5% for each year. For 2012/13 this would mean an average increase of £5.56 for each band D tax payer. This equates to 0.38% of the total tax bill of £1,476.80, which includes the charges for the county council, the police authority and the fire authority. Together with the 0.5% increase assumed for the tax base, this creates a 3% increase in this Council's tax resources.
- 1.5.30 It is recommended that cabinet set a council tax increase assumption of 2.5% for the purpose of planning and consultation and further consider this issue prior to its recommendation to Council in March 2012.

1.6 Savings and Efficiency

- 1.6.1 The strategic revenue projection identifies the predicted levels of resources available to the Council and the additional budget pressures facing the Council for each year of the MTFs. From this information a level of saving and efficiency required to create a balanced budget can be deduced.
- 1.6.2 The three versions of the strategic revenue projection attached as Appendix D produce the savings targets tabulated below.

	2012/13 £,000	2013/14 £,000	2014/15 £,000	2015/16 £,000	2016/17 £,000
Best Outcome	1,512	609	932	710	356
Most Likely Outcome	1,861	797	1,251	971	538
Worst Outcome	2,081	905	1,885	1,103	767
Savings Proposals	(1,131)	(800)	(580)	0	0

1.6.3 The work completed in advance, during the development of the MTFS for 2011/12, means that significant progress has already been made to achieve the required savings. The currently identified savings available are also given in the table at 1.6.2 above. The specific details of individual savings proposals are not replicated in this report. This is because some of the proposals relate to structural change that requires consultation with the members of staff who may be affected, before publication of the detailed information.

1.6.4 If Cabinet approve the most likely outcome from the range of strategic revenue projections then additional savings of £0.73m will need to be identified for 2012/13. In addition savings of £0.67m in 2014/15 and £0.97m in 2015/16. A number of initiatives will assist the Council in identifying actions that will achieve these revised targets. These include:-

- a) A business improvement programme currently being developed to reconsider all service areas using a number of options such as partnership working, outsourcing, income generation and process improvements;
- b) A specific focus on enhancing the Council's capacity to generate income directly from the services that are able to charge for service provision;
- c) A review of all major contractual commitments;
- d) Ongoing reviews of new ways of working and staff structures.

1.6.5 Much of this work has been ongoing for a number of years and recent examples include the shared revenues and benefits service, the new parking enforcement contract and the rationalisation of service areas such as community development.

1.7 Capital Programme

1.7.1 The current capital programme was agreed by Council in March 2011 but has twice been amended by Cabinet since that time. The amended programme is attached at **APPENDIX F** and has been moved forward to

show the financial year 2015/16. At this time it assumes no programme in that year as resources will need to be approved and an assessment of priority schemes that are affordable will need to be made.

- 1.7.2 Summarised in the table below is the current assessment of resources available from revenue support, capital grants and contributions and capital receipts. This has been modified to include the additional revenue support agreed by Cabinet in May 2011, the current level of capital receipts received and the current best assessment of the timing and value of future sales.

Funding Source	2011/12 £	2012/13 £	2013/14 £	2014/15 £	2015/16 £
Revenue Support	2,860,300	1,771,380		487,500	655,840
Capital Grants/Cont.	2,468,810	1,735,130	450,000	450,000	450,000
Capital Receipts	1,930,190	1,350,000	1,567,500	882,500	
	7,259,300	4,856,510	2,017,500	1,820,000	1,105,840

- 1.7.3 Due to the additional receipts currently available there is no longer a need for borrowing to finance the programme up to 2014/15. These additional sales also allow a revision to the timing and value of other outstanding sales to reduce the risk to the programme whilst providing a balance of resources that can be carried forward to support the development of a programme for 2015/16. The table shows that, including the potential disabled facilities grant, there will be resources of £1.1m available in 2015/16.

- 1.7.4 At this time there are no amendments proposed for schemes currently in the programme. The resources potentially available to fund additions to the programme are £1.1m as shown in the above table for 2015/16. In accordance with the MTFs an assessment of any new schemes should be carried out to identify their relative priority, benefit and affordability. This work can be completed at any time before the submission of the final budget to Council in March 2012.

- 1.7.5 As the future programme remains undeveloped and there remains a risk of potential borrowing if receipts from asset sales are not achieved at the appropriate time, it is recommended that Cabinet note the position on the programme and likely financing arrangements.

1.8 Consultation

- 1.8.1 Budget consultation is a formal and necessary element of the budget strategy process. It allows residents, customers, businesses and other stakeholders to provide feedback and opinion to Cabinet on the developing strategy. Annual consultation is completed between October and November each year to ensure the budget planning is sufficiently

robust for the consultation and in time for the responses to influence the final budget.

- 1.8.2 In recent years Cabinet has taken a coordinated approach to the views it has sought during consultation. This has been done with the intention of building a body of knowledge about consultees' opinions on various elements of the budget.
- 1.8.3 During the development of the 2009/10 budget strategy the consultation was through a budget simulator to allow respondents to create their own budget and asked them to achieve a council tax increase below 5%. The choices available for growth or savings were larger key service areas that most respondents displayed a desire to protect, such as refuse and street cleansing.
- 1.8.4 During the development of the 2010/11 budget strategy the consultation was carried out by formal market research. This research focused on income generating services through consideration of price and elasticity of demand. Questions included the preference for payment for services by council tax or by direct fee at time of use.
- 1.8.5 During the development of the 2011/12 budget strategy members and officers completed comprehensive public engagement under the banner of "My Council, What Matter to ME" which reviewed opinion on discretionary services and Cabinet's proposals for savings. It also gave an opportunity for respondents to put forward further ideas for consideration.
- 1.8.6 For the consultation during the development of the 2012/13 budget strategy it is essential that the focus is such that it builds upon and complements data from the previous consultations.
- 1.8.7 It is proposed that a "café conversations" road show be developed for 4 to 6 locations across the borough. The consultation would as usual include response through the website and directly to the council from an available leaflet along with simple advertising. It is also proposed to use a targeted survey to enable wider feedback. Although the budget was reduced during 2011/12 as part of the budget strategy work completed in 2011/12, funding for this consultation is available from within the communications budget.
- 1.8.8 Two general topics are proposed for the consultation covering the following areas:
 - a) The correlation between service standards, customer satisfaction and cost. For example the cost of a specific level of provision may be influenced by the service standards set. In value for money terms,

customers may be satisfied with an amendment to the service level if they could make a correlation to changes in the cost of the service.

- b) The importance to the customer of services identified by cabinet as low priority that are provided due to their statutory nature. This would follow from the consultation last year into the importance to customers of the discretionary services provided by the council. As these services are statutory it would be necessary to link this to service standards consultation proposal as the choice would be a lower standard of service rather than non-provision of a service.

1.8.9 The consultation could also take the opportunity to inform respondents on the subject of the actual cost of services in relation to council tax paid and the consequence to individual services of a loss of funding through council tax.

1.8.10 It is recommended that Cabinet agree this proposal and delegate the development of the final consultation format and questions to the Head of Communications in consultation with the Leader of the Council.

1.9 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.9.1 Cabinet could at this stage await the outcome of a number of the developments, such as the final level of revenue support grant and more accurate information on any of the factors discussed in this report. It is prudent to agree a revenue projection to enable planning for the required savings and for consultation to be completed.

1.9.2 With reference to the specific issues and assumptions within the report, it is inevitable that Cabinet will need to take a view on each issue and assess their future impact upon the Council. It is the intention of this report to initiate discussion and provide members with the opportunity to raise additional issues to be included in the MTFS.

1.10 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.10.1 It is the purpose of the budget strategy to allocate resources to the key outcomes in the strategic plan, including the allocation of resources to other plans and strategies developed to achieve those outcomes. It is necessary for Cabinet to be satisfied that their key objectives are fundable through this budget strategy.

1.11 Risk Management

1.11.1 Matching resources to key priorities in the context of the significant pressure on the Council's resources is a major strategic risk. The development of a more forward looking MTFS during 2010/11, the development of more focused strategic plan and the actions already

taken to develop savings for future financial years all provide mitigation for this risk.

1.11.2 Specific budget risks and opportunities are identified in the main body of the report, especially the consideration of the factors in the strategic revenue projection and the funding of the capital programme. The selection of the most appropriate factors and their continued monitoring and assessment as the MTFs develops will help to mitigate this risk.

1.12 Other Implications

1.12.1

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

1.12.2 The budget strategy and MTFs impact upon all activities of the Council. The future availability of resources to address specific issues is planned through this process. It is important that Member's give consideration to the financial consequences at services level from the recommendations considered in this report.

1.12.3 The process of developing the budget strategy will identify the level of resources available for staffing over the medium term.

1.12.4 An equalities impact assessment is attached as **APPENDIX G**

1.12.5 Resources available for asset management are affected by both the strategic revenue projection and the capital programme.

1.13 Relevant Documents

1.13.1 Appendices

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

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

18 May 2011

This is a Key Decision because:

The report considers strategic budget issues.

Wards/Parishes affected:

All

- APPENDIX A – Budget summary for 2011/12
- APPENDIX B – The current medium term financial strategy
- APPENDIX C – Statement of balances projected to March 2012
- APPENDIX D – Strategic revenue projections.
- APPENDIX E – Assumptions built into the strategic revenue projections
- APPENDIX F – Proposed capital programme
- APPENDIX G – Equalities Impact Assessment

1.13.2 Background Documents

Strategic Plan 2011/12 Onwards
Provisional revenue support grant 2012/13 – notification
Corporate Fees & Charges Policy

1.13.3 All Documents are available from the Head of Finance & Customer Services.

BUDGET STRATEGY 2012/13 Onwards

BUDGET 2011/12

AMENDED PORTFOLIO SUMMARY

2011/12 PORTFOLIO:	2009/10 ACTUAL £	2010/11 ORIGINAL ESTIMATE £	2010/11 REVISED ESTIMATE £	2011/12 ESTIMATE £
Leader of the Council	720,828	3,102,720	2,857,020	2,985,780
Community & Leisure Services	7,695,821	8,850,120	10,499,820	8,455,380
Corporate Services	(921,527)	877,470	(1,834,320)	(857,990)
Economic Development & transport	6,377,634	6,425,270	7,665,880	7,082,560
Environment	7,348,004	6,200,630	6,081,540	6,241,010
TOTAL SERVICE SPENDING	21,220,760	25,456,210	25,269,940	23,906,740
General Underspend	-	(317,290)	(131,700)	(250,000)
NET SERVICE SPENDING	21,220,760	25,138,920	25,138,240	23,656,740
Contribution to (from) Balances				
- Planned - General	(114,000)	(255,000)	(255,000)	(886,000)
- Planned - In Year General	(905,132)			
- Carry Forward	2,837,669	(1,746,400)	(1,746,400)	(2,849,890)
- Asset Replacement	(178,500)	40,000	40,000	40,000
- Invest to Save	(15,040)	(11,640)	(11,640)	(53,340)
- LDF Earmarked Reserves	(550,427)	(352,960)	(352,960)	-
TOTAL CONTRIBUTION TO (FROM) BALANCES	1,074,570	(2,326,000)	(2,326,000)	(3,749,230)
BUDGET REQUIREMENT	22,295,330	22,812,920	22,812,240	19,907,510

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.

BUDGET STRATEGY 2012/13 ONWARDS

PROVISIONAL GENERAL FUND BALANCES AT 31 MARCH 2012

	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	7,206	30	47	1,977	559	203	10,022
Use of 2010/11 carry Forward in 2011/12	-2,851						-2,851
Proposed Uses 2011/12							
Concessionary Fares Transition	-150						-150
Local Development Framework	-400					-203	-603
Shared Service Set-up Cost				-336			-336
Carbon Reduction Plans					-55		-55
Localism Related Activity				-100			-100
Contribution to works at Hazlitt Theatre	-310						-310
Contribution to Capital Financing				-1,541			-1,541
Projected Balance 31 March 2012	3,495	30	47	0	504	0	4,076

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

		BEST CASE OUTCOME				
2011/12		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
£,000		£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,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	13,813	14,227	14,654	15,094	15,547
19,907	TOTAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE	19,516	19,862	19,861	20,041	20,247
20,655	CURRENT SERVICE SPEND	19,907	19,516	19,862	19,861	20,041
	INFLATION INCREASES					
354	PAY AND CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS	251	345	351	355	362
	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					
	LOSS OF COUNCIL TAX FREEZE GRANT				335	
	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK	300				
	SAFER MAIDSTONE PARTNERSHIP					
	LOCAL PRIORITIES					
150	LOSS OF INTEREST	80	20			
50	CAPITAL RESOURCING	150	150			
160	LEISURE CENTRE REFURBISHMENT					
50	LOSS OF INCOME					
50	CAR PARK INCOME LOSS	50	50	50	50	50
	LOST INCOME FROM REGENERATION		200	200		
	PAY EQUALITY	100				
	SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARISHES					
	MINOR INITIATIVES					
250	GROWTH PROVISION	150	150	150	150	150
21,835	TOTAL PREDICTED REQUIREMENT	21,028	20,471	20,793	20,751	20,603
1,928	ANNUAL SAVINGS TARGET	1,512	609	932	710	356

		MOST LIKELY OUTCOME				
2011/12		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
£,000		£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,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	13,813	14,227	14,654	15,094	15,547
19,907	TOTAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE	19,516	19,862	19,861	20,041	20,247
20,655	CURRENT SERVICE SPEND	19,907	19,516	19,862	19,861	20,041
	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	300				
	SAFER MAIDSTONE PARTNERSHIP	30	30			
	LOCAL PRIORITIES					
150	LOSS OF INTEREST	80	20			
50	CAPITAL RESOURCING	150	150			
160	LEISURE CENTRE REFURBISHMENT					
50	LOSS OF INCOME					
50	CAR PARK INCOME LOSS	50	50	50	50	50
	LOST INCOME FROM REGENERATION	100	200	200		
	PAY EQUALITY	160				
	SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARISHES			80		
	MINOR INITIATIVES					
250	GROWTH PROVISION	150	150	150	150	150
21,835	TOTAL PREDICTED REQUIREMENT	21,377	20,659	21,112	21,012	20,785
1,928	ANNUAL SAVINGS TARGET	1,861	797	1,251	971	538

		WORSE CASE OUTCOME				
2011/12		2012/13	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16	2016/17
£,000		£,000	£,000	£,000	£,000	£,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	13,813	14,227	14,654	15,094	15,547
19,907	TOTAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE	19,516	19,862	19,861	20,041	20,247
20,655	CURRENT SERVICE SPEND	19,907	19,516	19,862	19,861	20,041
	INFLATION INCREASES					
354	PAY AND CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS	420	541	724	748	773
	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			500		
	LOSS OF COUNCIL TAX FREEZE GRANT				335	
	LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK	350				
	SAFER MAIDSTONE PARTNERSHIP	90				
	LOCAL PRIORITIES					
150	LOSS OF INTEREST	80	20			
50	CAPITAL RESOURCING	150	150			
160	LEISURE CENTRE REFURBISHMENT					
50	LOSS OF INCOME					
50	CAR PARK INCOME LOSS	50	50	50	50	50
	LOST INCOME FROM REGENERATION	100	200	200		
	PAY EQUALITY	260				
	SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARISHES		100	80		
	MINOR INITIATIVES					
250	GROWTH PROVISION	150	150	150	150	150
21,835	TOTAL PREDICTED REQUIREMENT	21,597	20,767	21,746	21,144	21,014
1,928	ANNUAL SAVINGS TARGET	2,081	905	1,885	1,103	767

BUDGET STRATEGY 2012/13 ONWARDS

TABLE OF ASSUMPTIONS USED IN DEVELOPMENT OF THE STRATEGIC REVENUE PROJECTIONS

ISSUE	BEST OUTCOME					MOST LIKELY OUTCOME					WORST OUTCOME				
	12/13 %	13/14 %	14/15 %	15/16 %	16/17 %	12/13 %	13/14 %	14/15 %	15/16 %	16/17 %	12/13 %	13/14 %	14/15 %	15/16 %	16/17 %
PAY	0.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	0.0	1.0	2.0	2.0	2.0
	Low inflation/government pressure					Slow rise to target CPI					Fast rise to target CPI				
ENERGY	16.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	16.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	3.0	18.0	6.0	6.0	6.0	6.0
	2012/13 known - then to target RPI					2012/13 known then drop to CPI					2012/13 at market & remain high				
NNDR	4.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	3.0	5.2	4.8	3.5	3.5	3.0	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2	5.2
	Based on RPI but government set					Slow drop with RPI					Static at current RPI				
CONTRACTUAL COMMITMENTS	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	4.2	3.8	3.0	3.0	2.0	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.2
	Minimal, at target CPI					Slow drop to target CPI					Static at current CPI				
OTHER RUNNING COSTS	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	No increase					No increase					No increase				

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ISSUE	BEST OUTCOME					MOST LIKELY OUTCOME					WORST OUTCOME				
	12/13 £,000	13/14 £,000	14/15 £,000	15/16 £,000	16/17 £,000	12/13 £,000	13/14 £,000	14/15 £,000	15/16 £,000	16/17 £,000	12/13 £,000	13/14 £,000	14/15 £,000	15/16 £,000	16/17 £,000
UNIVERSAL CREDIT - TRANSITIONAL COSTS	Net change = zero					150 Residual loss after staff cost adjusted					500 Grant lost no staffing change				
LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK	300 Limited cost of finalising LDF					300 Limited cost of finalising LDF					350 Maximum cost of finalising LDF				
SAFER MAIDSTONE PARTNERSHIP	Current service - no additional support					30 30 Additional support provided					100 Grant loss replaced				
PAY EQUALITY	100 Minimum provision					160 provision = 1% of employee costs					260 maximum provision				
SERVICE ARRANGEMENTS WITH PARISHES	All costs intergrated into service budgets					80 residual need in some service areas					100 80 maximum need in service areas				

BUDGET STRATEGY 2011/12 ONWARDS

APPENDIX F

DRAFT CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2012/13 TO 2015/16

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CAPITAL PROGRAMME DETAIL	Revised Estimate 2011/12 £	Estimate 2012/13 £	Estimate 2013/14 £	Estimate 2014/15 £	Estimate 2015/16 £
CCTV	250,000				
Housing Grants	1,513,700	1,432,000	1,305,000	1,300,000	
Support for Social Housing	956,000	1,131,000	382,500	190,000	
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	1,358,640	913,510			
Small Scale Capital Works Programme	71,500				
Community & Leisure services	4,302,590	3,526,510	1,737,500	1,540,000	0
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	0
Hazlitt Heating	310,000				
Leisure Centre Roof	20,830				
Museum Improvements (Access / Toilets)	872,290				
Gypsy Site Improvements	100,000				
High Street Regeneration	1,189,500	1,000,000			
Planning Delivery	9,350				
Regeneration Schemes	111,500				
Economic Development & Transport	2,613,470	1,000,000	0	0	0
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	0
TOTAL	7,259,300	4,856,510	2,017,500	1,820,000	0

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.

Stage 2: Equality Impact Assessment

Name of Policy/Service/Function
BUDGET STRATEGY AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2012 ONWARDS
Purpose
What are you trying to achieve with the policy / service / function?
<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>
Who defines and manages it?
<p>The Policy is defined ultimately by Council.</p> <p>The development occurs through Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny.</p> <p>Management Team, the Chief Finance Officer, Member's, Senior Management Team, Unit Managers, Staff and external stakeholders are all consulted during development.</p> <p>Management is a result of the annual review and quarterly monitoring both against budget and against performance.</p>
Who do you intend to benefit from it and how?
The community ultimately benefits from the control over public money and the ability to accurately focus the resources to strategic priorities.
What could prevent people from getting the most out of the policy / service / function?
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A failure to engage effectively in consultation during the development stages. 2. A failure to monitor and control the implementation.
How will you get your customers involved in the analysis and how will you tell people about it?

<p>Formal budget consultation occurs during October / November each year. Other stakeholders are consulted through appropriate channels.</p> <p>Efforts are made to ensure that responses reflect an appropriate balance of the community through marketing on the website, local advertising and the use of modelling to track responses.</p>
<p>Evidence</p>
<p>How will you know if the policy delivers its intended outcome / benefits?</p>
<p>The agreement at Council of a balanced budget. Delivery against that budget to achieve the key outcomes identified in the strategic plan. This will be measured through regular monitoring and reporting.</p>
<p>How satisfied are your customers and how do you know?</p>
<p>Customer satisfaction is measured through surveys, comments and complaints which are all formally measured and reported.</p>
<p>What existing data do you have on the people that use the service and the wider population?</p>
<p>Budget strategy consultation occurs annually and for the last three years the cabinet policy has been to build upon previous consultations to ensure the knowledge base.</p> <p>The use of feedback forms enables the Council to map the responses geographically and socially within</p>
<p>What other information would it be useful to have? How could you get this?</p>
<p>By creating a programme of annual consultations the cabinet intention is to obtain the information on all key aspects of the budget strategy over a period of years. Much of this data is already available.</p>
<p>Are you breaking down data by equality groups where relevant (such as by gender, age, disability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, marital status, religion and belief, pregnancy and maternity)?</p>
<p>Where this is considered necessary to gauge the value of the responses effectively.</p>
<p>Are you using partners, stakeholders, and councillors to get information and feedback?</p>
<p>Yes</p>

Impact
Are some people benefiting more – or less - than others? If so, why might this be?
The majority of the Council’s services are targeted at the whole borough. Some services are focused according to need and the relevant criteria do not form part of this policy and will be assessed where appropriate through an EIA for that service.
Actions
If the evidence suggests that the policy / service / function benefits a particular group – or disadvantages another - is there a justifiable reason for this and if so, what is it?
The policy does target resources and this can be to the benefit of a certain group. The justification for that targeting comes from the links to the sustainable communities strategy and the strategic plan priorities.
Is it discriminatory in any way?
No
Is there a possible impact in relationships or perceptions between different parts of the community?
Yes, however this is developed further by individual services in their
What measures can you put in place to reduce disadvantages?
N/A
Do you need to consult further?
No
Have you identified any potential improvements to customer service?
No
Who should you tell about the outcomes of this analysis?
Corporate Management Team, cabinet, Corporate services Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Audit committee
Have you built the actions into your Service Plan or Policy Implementation Plan with a clear timescale?
N/A

When will this assessment need to be repeated?
Annually

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

14 SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT OF HEAD OF CHANGE & SCRUTINY

Report prepared by Clare Wood

1. DATA QUALITY POLICY UPDATE

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider the updated Data Quality Policy for the Council.

1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Change & Scrutiny

1.2.1 **It is recommended** that Cabinet agree the updated Data Quality Policy at Appendix A and the accompanying Equalities Impact Assessment at Appendix B; and

1.2.2 Agree Data Quality Actions for the inclusion in the Corporate Improvement Plan at Appendix C.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 Public services need information that is fit for purpose with which to manage services and performance. For example, service providers need good information to make judgements about the efficiency, effectiveness and responsiveness of their services. At the same time there must be a balance between the use and importance of the information and the cost of collecting the required data to the necessary level of accuracy and reliability.

1.3.2 Successful bodies have recognised data quality as a corporate priority and have taken action to embed arrangements for managing the quality of the data they collect and use.

1.3.3 The Government is committed to increasing transparency and accountability at a local level. At a national level the localism bill and ethos of the national localism agenda aims to enable local people to hold politicians and public bodies to account over how their council tax is being spent and decisions made on their behalf. By reviewing Data Quality arrangements and carrying out checks on a regular basis

should ensure that the data provided to decision makers and residents is reliable, accurate, valid, timely,

1.4 Updates to Maidstone's Data Quality Policy

1.4.1 The Data Quality Policy was last updated in March 2009 within the inclusion of risk management. Although the current policy is in line with the current best practice when comparing our policy to other local authorities it was apparent that the inclusion of additional elements for example a definition of data and the key principles of data quality would aid understanding.

1.4.2 Updates to this version of the policy include:

- A definition of 'data';
- An outline of the key principles of data quality to enhance understanding;
- Changes to the procedures around Service Planning and providing supporting documents; and
- Sections on partners, contracts and monitoring, reviewing and reporting have been added.

1.4.3 Consultation on the revised policy has been undertaken. The policy was emailed to a sample of data managers and data entry officers, who were asked to read it and respond to consultation. A total of 29 people responded to the consultation and some minor changes were made as a result.

1.4.4 As set out in action plan at Appendix C and page 8 of the revised Data Quality Policy the policy will be fully reviewed every two years and any updates to the policy presented to Cabinet for approval.

1.5 Data Quality Actions

1.5.1 Appendix C sets out actions identified as part of the review of Data Quality. The areas which were identified for improvement as part of the review were training and raising awareness. It is recommended that these actions be integrated into the Corporate Improvement Plan and reported through this mechanism.

1.6 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.6.1 Not reviewing the Data Quality Policy is not recommended, as failing to take this seriously could mean the reliance that the Council can place on various information as part of the decision making process will be significantly reduced.

1.6.2 However, the Council needs to be mindful that the systems that are put in place are not overly bureaucratic, complicated or confusing for the officers who are involved

1.7 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.7.1 Data quality impacts on the efficiency of services provided by the Council and value for money.

1.8 Risk Management

1.8.1 If data quality is not considered effectively across the Council this will impact on the decision making process.

1.8.2 By using inaccurate data the Council would be at risk of reducing the efficiency of services and will not be achieving value for money for local residents.

1.9 Other Implications

1.9.1

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	
9. Asset Management	X

Financial

It is essential that the Council is clear on the information that is collected and this is used to assess performance against key priorities. In the long run accurate and focused data collection should go towards creating greater efficiency savings within services. However, the

Council will continue to develop the policies and procedures on data quality where it is cost effective to do so.

Staffing

By following the procedures and guidelines set in place for data quality less staff time should be taken up with auditing and checking the figures provided.

Legal

Inaccurate data could raise legal issues.

Asset Management

Good data quality will support asset management, as several measures focus in this area.

1.10 Relevant Documents

- Third Party Data Sharing Protocol
- Data Quality Responsibility Statement
- Data Quality Audit Template

1.10.1 Appendices

Appendix A – Data Quality Policy – Updated August 2011

Appendix B – Equalities Impact Assessment for Data Quality Policy

Appendix C – Data Quality Action Plan

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

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

.....

This is a Key Decision because:

.....

Wards/Parishes affected:

.....

Updated August 2011

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2 Scope of this Policy	2
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Given the authority’s strategic commitment to data quality, the updated policy has been approved by the Leader of the Council and applies to all business areas in relation to data collection, recording, analysis and reporting. National standards for data quality are also taken into account.

1. Why do we need a Data Quality Policy?

- 1.1 All businesses need information that is fit for purpose to manage services and measure performance. Service providers and users also need accurate information to make judgments about the efficiency, effectiveness and the responsiveness of their services.
- 1.2 Ultimately we use data to:
- Inform good decision making and effective service planning.
 - Help measure the effectiveness and efficiency of our services to the public.
 - Benchmark cost and performance with other authorities.
 - Set targets to improve performance, reduce cost and improve customer care.
- 1.3 Consistent, high quality, timely and comprehensive information is vital for good decision making, improved service outcomes and robust public accountability. Good data quality is a fundamental element of:
- Supporting the Council's improvement and resource planning
 - Monitoring the delivery of effective, efficient and economic services
 - Aiding the identification of areas for improvement
 - Effectively communicating our priorities and performance
 - Providing information about user satisfaction and demand for services
- 1.4 Having an effective system of control enables us to deliver a better understanding of the organisation and business environment, allowing it to increase value for money, improve service delivery and minimise inefficiencies.

2 Scope of this Policy

- 2.1 This policy sets out Maidstone Borough Council's approach to achieving better service delivery through improving the quality of our data. Through implementation of this policy we will support staff to be more aware of their role and responsibility for improving the quality of data we handle and to make better decisions that affect the outcomes of people in the community of Maidstone. We will provide effective training and ensure that our systems support and reflect activity.
- 2.2 **Data** can be defined as "numbers or words collected, stored or processed to provide information on activities and outputs" and in so being, can be either qualitative or quantitative. Data items need to be defined to give them meaning.
- 2.3 Policy Objectives
- To ensure that the Council's data is relevant, accurate, timely and complete;
 - To ensure that data is held and released lawfully;
 - To ensure that data is held securely and systems for producing data are robust;
 - To ensure that where data is exchanged with other organisations appropriate protocols are in place;
 - To ensure that the quality of data is regularly monitored and checked; and
 - To ensure that appropriate mechanisms are in place for ensuring staff are aware of the Council's data quality requirements and provided with suitable training.

- 2.4 This policy covers data used for service management and performance monitoring across all areas of Maidstone Borough Council. It includes data shared with partners, confirmed through Data Sharing Agreements.
- 2.5 This document does not cover:
- IT security
 - Records management
- 2.6 This policy outlines the principles, responsibilities and reporting structures to be able to maintain a high standard of data quality - from the establishment of performance measures and their definition, via the collection and input of individual pieces of data into a system, to the production of performance management information for validation by an internal or external auditor to ensure robust and accurate performance reporting. This policy is a framework of management arrangements to ensure the quality of the data the Council uses to manage and report on its activities.

3 Principles of data quality

- 3.1 The concept of data quality is relative, depending on the different perceptions and needs of data users. However, it is possible to identify several characteristics of good data quality. These are sometimes referred to as 'principles' of good data quality and are captured in the Audit Commission's document: *'Improving Information to Support Decision Making: Standards for Better Data Quality'* (November 2007). In summary, they are:

Accuracy	Data should be sufficiently accurate to present a fair picture of performance and enable informed decision-making at all appropriate levels. The need for accuracy must be balanced with the costs and effort of collection. A prerequisite is that definitions for data should be specific and unambiguous. Officers should know exactly what data is to be collected, how and by when, and which performance indicators are produced from the data. Performance information must be at an appropriate level of detail to influence related management decisions and must be within a reasonable margin of error.
Validity	Data should represent clearly and appropriately the intended result and should be used in accordance with the correct application of any rules or definitions. Where proxy data is used, consider how well this data measures the intended result.
Reliability	Data should reflect stable and consistent data collection processes and analysis methods across collection points and over time, whether using manual or computer based systems, or a combination. Systems and processes for data collection, recording and collation need to be fit for purpose - and incorporate controls and verification procedures proportionate to risk. Managers and stakeholders should be confident that progress toward performance targets reflects real changes rather than variations in data collection methods.
Timeliness	Data input should occur on a regular ongoing basis rather than being stored to be input later. Verification procedures should be as close to the point of input as possible. Data outputs must be available for the intended use within a reasonable time period, and

	frequently enough to influence the appropriate level of management decisions. For example, it may be appropriate to accept a small degree of inaccuracy where timeliness is important.
Relevance	Information reported should comprise the specific items of interest only. Sometimes definitions need to be modified to reflect changing circumstances in services and practices, to ensure that only relevant data of value to users is collected, analysed and used. Information should be presented in such a way as to be easily understood by the audience it is intended for (see Section 6.6).
Completeness	All the relevant data should be recorded. Monitoring missing or invalid fields in a database can provide an indication of data quality and can also point to problems in the recording of certain data items

4 Applying the policy

- 4.1 As part of the Council's Data Quality Policy the following assurance procedure relating to systems and the production of performance data has been adopted:
- a. Overall responsibility for data quality at a strategic level lies with the Chief Executive; however, operational responsibility has been assigned to heads of service and section managers on their behalf.
 - b. As part of the service planning process, each section manager will produce a statement on how they will assure data quality and publicise expectations to staff. Where appropriate this will cascade into performance appraisals.
 - c. Heads of service and section managers will ensure that appropriate systems are in place to collate performance data ('right first time'), that they are fit for purpose and that procedure notes/manuals are in place for business-critical systems and that these are reviewed and updated as appropriate.
 - d. Heads of service and section managers will provide the relevant training to staff where appropriate to ensure they are aware of how data quality relates to their work and what the requirements are for assuring data quality. Where appropriate data champions will be appointed and national, key and local performance indicator comparisons sought.
 - e. Heads of service and section managers will ensure that appropriate risk management and business continuity management arrangements are in place, paying particular attention to the areas highlighted below:
 - Where there is a high volume of data transactions;
 - Technically complex performance information/definition guidance;
 - Problems identified in previous years;
 - Inexperienced staff involved in data processing/performance information production;
 - A system being used to produce new performance information; and
 - Known gaps in the control environment.
 - f. Each performance indicator will have a designated officer ('the responsible officer') who will regularly monitor progress against any targets that have been set, manage any risks associated with the indicator and verify the accuracy of published outturns.

- g. Outturn data will be produced as soon as is practicable after the required timescale has elapsed.
- h. The responsible officer will ensure that calculations are checked by a colleague to reduce the potential for mistakes.
- i. Working papers for audit inspection will be forwarded to the Policy and Performance Team when requested and copies will also be maintained locally.
- j. The Council will work to ensure that financial and activity data collected as part of partnership working, particularly in the Mid Kent Improvement Partnership, is checked and validated, as part of business cases and ongoing monitoring.
- k. All Data Managers and Data Entry Officers will sign a data quality responsibility statement to confirm they understand their role and will adhere to the Data Quality Policy.

4.2 In addition to the above procedure and principles in section 3 of this document there are also a number of additional elements to be considered relating to the management of data.

4.3 **Keep data secure** - Systems, spreadsheets and documents that are used to record data should be password protected. This prevents any unauthorised access to or amendment of the data. Spreadsheets could be set to read only so that formulae are not accidentally deleted or amended by those who are not trained to use those systems. Security arrangements should also conform to legislation, such as the Data Protection Act, where applicable.

4.4 **Awareness** - Data quality is the responsibility of every member of staff entering, extracting or analysing data from any of the Council's information systems. Every relevant officer should be aware of his or her responsibilities with regard to data quality.

4.5 **Record data once and in one location** - Data should only be recorded or input once to ensure there are no duplication errors. Data should also be recorded in one location. Databases should not be copied and pasted elsewhere. This prevents two versions of the same set of data existing. If files need to be used by more than one person they should be saved in a shared location.

4.6 This policy and the Council's overall approach to data quality will be monitored by Management Team and the Chief Executive. The Council's Internal Auditors will review internal assurance controls for the performance indicators and other data related information as part of their ongoing audit work. These documents are available on the Policy & Performance Vindex site.

4.7 Current controls

- **Accuracy** – All performance indicators (except RTS) have audit commission style guidance. Setting out the rationale, definition and calculation of each indicator.
- **Validity** – Once performance indicator data is submitted it will not be used in reports until the responsible officer has signed it off.
- **Reliability** – All officers responsible for either entering or signing off indicators will each year sign a Data Quality statement to show that they understand and will adhere to the Data Quality Policy.

- **Timeliness** – Data will be submitted within 21 days of the end of the reporting period and is reported to CMT within three weeks of this deadline.
- **Relevance** – Performance indicators will be reported with the appropriate objective or outcome so that the context in which the data is provided is clear to the reader.
- **Completeness** – Every year we will produce an annual performance report detailing performance against targets and setting out progress made on our priorities.

- 4.8 Internal Audit undertake systems audits of most service areas, including those where data collection and reporting need to be accurate and robust. Following an audit, they produce a report containing recommendations that services must respond to. Internal Audit subsequently checks that action relating to agreed recommendations has been taken.
- 4.9 If a data quality concern has been raised, in the first instance, the service manager should complete the Data Quality Audit Template (DQAT), The outcome of completing this template is to either show that there is an adequate 'control environment' in place, or that action is being taken to address weaknesses. Once completed the DQAT is a "live" management document – which managers are encouraged to review or update.
- 4.10 If you have any concerns about data quality or would like further information on the subject of data quality please contact the Performance & Scrutiny Officer on 01622 602491.

5. Roles and responsibilities

- 5.1 A successful approach to data quality requires clear leadership from the top, together with a comprehensive management and accountability framework and an active commitment to securing a culture of data quality throughout the organisation. The Council's approach to discharging these responsibilities is set out below:
- 5.2 **All Employees** - Data quality is the responsibility of all employees in the Council, and all need to understand their role in ensuring good data quality. Employees should be aware of the Council's approach to data quality as set out in this policy, and attend any relevant training and awareness sessions.
- 5.3 **Responsible Officers** are responsible for checking and confirming performance data. Heads of service and section managers are not always Data Managers but still have responsibility for assuring data quality as set out in the procedure.
- 5.4 **Data Managers** The responsibilities of a Data Manager include: checking the accuracy and calculation of performance data, signing off (activating) performance data within the specified timeframe, providing commentary where indicators have under or over performed, creating action plans to improve performance, highlighting any areas of concern in relation to data quality and the creation and monitoring of procedures to collect and store data within their areas.
- 5.5 **Data Entry Officers** are responsible for Calculating performance data, inputting performance data accurately within the specified timescales, ensuring that working papers are retained and stored correctly and highlighting any areas of concern in relation to data quality.

- 5.6 **Line managers**¹ are required to ensure that employees are adequately trained and follow the appropriate systems, processes and policies. Line managers are also required to make sure that any relevant guidance is updated where necessary and that any changes are effectively communicated to staff.

6 Partners

- 6.1 The Council works in partnership with other organisations therefore it is important that data provided by partners and other third parties is accurate. Managers will make arrangements to ensure that third party data is in line with authority standards where appropriate. Any doubts about data quality should be addressed with the organisation. Responsibility for data verification lies within the division receiving the information.
- 6.2 In order to ensure that robust data quality arrangements exist within the partner organizations involved in providing data for council purposes there is a third party data quality protocol. The protocol is not a binding contractual agreement but is intended as a tool to show a commitment to data quality. It is a shared set of principles which describe the key elements of a robust approach to data quality. Each of the organisations providing data to the council must be committed to using these principles as a framework to assess and inform arrangements for securing data quality. A copy of the protocol is available on the Policy & Performance VIndex site.

7 Contracts

- 7.1 Maidstone Borough Council recognises that data quality is an important part of any contract where a service is outsourced to a third party to deliver. This is of particular importance to public-facing service contracts where large amounts of performance data are requested by the Council from which to judge a contractor's performance.
- 7.2 We will ensure that where data collection and data quality are instrumental to the delivery of the service all appropriate contracts will have a clause inserted into the contract which defines data quality and how it should be embedded into the contractor's processes.
- 7.3 Responsibility for the verification of data lies within the service managing the contract.

8 Risk Assessment

- 8.1 Data quality needs to be embedded in the Council's Strategic Risk Register and the Service Risk Registers. Areas that can be classified as 'high risk' include:
- Where there is a high volume of data transactions;
 - Technically complex performance information definition / guidance;
 - Problems identified in previous years;

¹ The term 'line manager' encompasses any officer with responsibility for other staff, and therefore covers all officers who manage and appraise others - from team leaders through to service managers, service directors and corporate directors.

- Inexperienced staff involved in data processing / performance information production;
- A system being used to produce new performance information; and
- Known gaps in the control environment.

8.2 Responsible Officers should consider the risks in relation to each of these points in terms of likelihood and impact. Appropriate actions should then be taken to manage the risk.

9 Monitoring and Reviewing this Policy

9.1 This policy and the Council's overall approach to data quality will be monitored by Management Team. The Council's internal and external auditors will review the adequacy of internal assurance controls for the national and local indicators and other data related information

9.2 The monitoring and review process will involve:

- Meetings with responsible officers to ensure that the correct systems and procedures are in place.
- Quarterly monitoring and review of PI's by Management Team.
- Follow up of any data quality queries from members of staff.
- Liaising with Internal Audit and External Audit regarding any data quality issues they have come across as part of their review / Inspection programme.

9.3 The Data Quality Policy itself will be reviewed by the Policy & Performance team and an update sent to Cabinet every two years to ensure that advice is current and in line with best practice.

10. Data Quality Documents

The following documents mentioned in this policy can be found below on the Policy & Performance Vindex site.

- Third Party Data Quality Protocol
- Data Quality Responsibility Statement
- Data Quality Audit Template

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 purpose of this policy is to outline the Maidstone Borough Council's position and its obligations for ensuring data quality. It is also to raise awareness and adherence to data quality standards across the organisation. It is applicable to all staff including those that enter, process and handle data.</p> <p>The scope of this policy covers all data which Maidstone Council uses to monitor its own, partners, service providers and commissioners performance to council, cabinet, government agencies and local people. The policy directly relates to the council's corporate value of integrity and high standards of corporate governance.</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.
There is no impact on the above aims.
3. What aspects of the policy including how it is delivered or accessed could contribute to inequality?
None.
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>No impacts.</p> <p>The risk in not identifying and addressing weaknesses in data quality, or the arrangements that underpin data collection and reporting activities, is that information may be misleading, decision making may be flawed, resources may be wasted, poor performing services may not be improved, and policy may be ill founded.</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.

Action Plan Objective: **Improve Data Quality throughout the organisation**

Action Plan End Date: 30th September 2013 (DQ Policy Review actions to then be absorbed into Service Plan)

Activities	Allocated to Officer	Deadline	Comments
Ensure Performance Indicator Handbook is up to date	Clare Wood / Unit Managers	30 th September 2011	The majority (90%) of this was completed when the new indicators were defined in March.
Collate Data Quality Statements 2011-13	Clare Wood	31 st October 2011	Statement to be requested once policy is agreed. Outstanding statements will be chased at Q2 review of progress meetings.
Provide Data Quality Training a) inductions/new starter b) general	Clare Wood/Tina Edwards	30th November 2011	Including a briefing at SMT.
Carry out a review of staff awareness of data quality procedures once new policy is launched and identify any areas for further training (check for specific requests as part of appraisals).	Clare Wood / Sharon Morgan	31 st January 2012	Last one done November 2009.
Publish Data Quality tips & Article in Wakey wakey	Clare Wood/ Karen Jeal	Between now and 30 th March 2012	To raise awareness throughout the organisation.
Review DQ policy (every two years)	Clare Wood	30 th September 2013	

Agenda Item 10

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

14 SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF CHANGE AND SCRUTINY

Report prepared by Ellie Kershaw

1. Corporate Improvement Plan update

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider progress made on the actions within the Corporate Improvement Plan (CIP).

1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Change and Scrutiny

1.2.1 That Cabinet note any recommendations made by Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6 September 2011.

1.2.1 That the progress against the objectives set in the CIP is noted.

1.2.2 That where actions are out of target responsible officers are asked to provide reasons as to why these have not been completed and plan for how they intend to complete the action as quickly as possible.

1.2.3 That requests for the removal of some actions from the plan are agreed.

1.2.4 That the target date extension request is agreed.

1.2.5 That undertaking a corporate peer review is agreed.

1.2.6 That undertaking a planning peer review is agreed.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The purpose of the CIP is to identify and monitor progress on key areas for improvement.

1.3.2 Fourteen actions have been completed since the last report in March.

- 1.3.3 Appendix A shows the ongoing actions within the plan. There are currently five outstanding actions of which four are out of target.
- 1.3.4 It has been requested that the following actions are removed from the plan:

12.03 Assess the appropriateness of the actions within action plans in relation to 2010 results

12.04 Identify any patterns or trends following the completion of the second survey

The Place survey is no longer a requirement. A residents' survey will be conducted to replace this. However, options for methodology are still being discussed. These actions are therefore no longer relevant. Replacement actions will be included in the plan once the new customer satisfaction survey has been agreed and carried out.

- 1.3.5 An extension has been requested on the following action;

020.05 Explore options for a more specialised central project management or project support function

Requested target 30 September 2011

Recently an officer has temporarily been acting as Corporate Project Manager, providing project management expertise for a number of projects across the Council. This post sits within the Change and Scrutiny Team and has recently been extended until March 2012. At present the Head of Business Improvement coordinates the Council's approach to projects and provides reports to management team. Project management for the Hazlitt capital works is currently being provided by another officer not based in the Hazlitt team. Moving the deadline for this action to 30 September 2011 will allow a report to be prepared for Management Team by the Head of Business Improvement that considers how well these arrangements have worked and suggests a way forward.

- 1.3.5 Continuous Improvement

It is recognised that with the abolition of the Audit Commission and inspection regime the Council has made a commitment to be proactive in how it monitors performance and seeks improvement going forward. There will be other additions to the plan following peer reviews. The Council will be undertaking a Corporate Peer Review in September 2012 to consider how we are meeting the needs of residents and addressing the Corporate and Customer Excellence Priority. An additional Peer Review is also planned for Planning in January 2012, to consider how we meet our corporate priority For Maidstone to have a growing economy. Both of these reviews will result in actions being added to the improvement plan.

The corporate approach to improvement at the Council was discussed at the Cabinet away day on 13 July 2011. It was identified that improvement and change should be driven by efficiency and customer satisfaction. A report summarising the discussion and options for implementing change will be taken to the next away day on 24 August 2011. This should result in a number of actions that will be added to the CIP.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 Cabinet could decide not to produce a CIP or consider its progress. If not properly monitored improvement actions may not be delivered. This would have a detrimental impact upon service delivery and the Council’s reputation.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 Having a CIP supports Priority 3 in the Strategic Plan, Corporate and customer excellence.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 There are risks to the reputation and performance of the authority associated with not responding to recommendations made through inspections such as IIP. Now that there is no formal inspection regime it is more important than ever that the Council has a mechanism for driving improvement.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

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



1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes No

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

This is a Key Decision because:

Wards/Parishes affected:

Appendix A- CIP outstanding actions
Appendix B- CIP completed actions

Appendix A-Corporate Improvement Plan outstanding actions

Icon	Panic Icon	Name				
		012 Progress and monitor action plans to improve satisfaction on those services where one in five people were dissatisfied with the service.				
CIP 012.03	Assess the appropriateness of the actions within action plans in relation to 2010 results	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 80px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">0%</div>		30-Jun-2011	Angela Woodhouse	The Place survey is no longer a requirement and was not carried out in 2010, following national changes.
CIP 012.04	Identify any patterns or trends following the completion of the second survey	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 80px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;">0%</div>		30-Sep-2011	Angela Woodhouse	The Place survey is no longer a requirement. However the Council will be monitoring customer satisfaction with services as part of monitoring the Corporate and Customer Excellence priority as identified in the Strategic Plan 2011-15.





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Icon	Panic Icon	Name				
		019 Use customer and staff feedback to improve the way the Council delivers services				
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 019.01	Hold focus groups to explore how people want to be engaged and develop a robust plan to deliver this	<div style="border: 1px solid black; width: 80px; height: 20px; display: flex; align-items: center; justify-content: center;"><div style="background-color: #4a86e8; width: 85%;"></div>85%</div>		30-Apr-2011	Roger Adley	Our experience from budget, Planning for Real, local development framework and many other consultations suggests that people want to be engaged on the issues and in the ways that interest them - often face to face at venues that are convenient to them. Our consultation tool kit includes this advice. Further focus groups are planned to keep this subject under review.





Icon	Panic Icon	Name				
		020 Determine the top priorities of the Council and ensure that plans, policies and strategies link to these				
CIP 020.05	Explore options for a more specialised central project management or project support function	<input type="text" value="0%"/>		30-Apr-2011	Georgia Hawkes	Recently an officer has temporarily been acting as Corporate Project Manager, providing project management expertise for a number of projects across the Council. This post sits within the Change and Scrutiny Team and has recently been extended until March 2012. At present the Head of Business Improvement coordinates the Council's approach to projects and provides reports to management team. Project management for the Hazlitt capital works is currently being provided by another officer not based in the Hazlitt team. Moving the deadline for this action to 30 September 2011 will allow a report to be prepared for Management Team by the Head of Business Improvement that considers how well these arrangements have worked and suggests a way forward

Icon	Panic Icon	Name				
		021 Ensure equality issues are considered and addressed across the organisation				
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 021.01	All staff to undertake equalities training to ensure awareness of the new legislation	<input type="text" value="30%"/>		31-Mar-2011	Tina Edwards	194 staff have completed the e learning module which is 60% those with access to a pc. Reminders will be sent to staff to encourage them to complete the training.



Appendix B-Corporate Improvement Plan completed actions

001 Developing a clear view of where partnership resources can be focused to improve service outcomes (LINKED TO AGS 2)						
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 001.01	Resource Mapping exercise undertaken and presented to LSP board			31-Aug-2011	Sarah Robson	Phase two of the resource mapping exercise was presented to the LSP Board and Delivery Group at the LSP Away Day on 1 April 2011.
CIP 001.02	Decisions made by the LSP on the future allocation of resources			30-Apr-2011	Sarah Robson	



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

003 Addressing the outstanding learning and development issues from the IIP reassessment and equality impact assessments						
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 003.01	Create action plan of outstanding L&D issues to be implemented before reassessment			31-Jan-2011	Tina Edwards	Re-accreditation for IIP was gained in March 2011. Tina is currently on leave- further update awaited
CIP 003.02	Undertake child protection training			30-Apr-2010	Claire Hayes	


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Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 003.03	Include Transgender training on the new corporate training calendar			30-Jun-2011	Claire Hayes	Sessions added in quarterly for 2010/11







004 Improve areas of weakness where Audit reports have shown a level of assurance lower than substantial one area remains outstanding since March 2009: Aspects of section 106 Agreements

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







005 Further work is required to build on work currently undertaken by the Council with partners on delivering outcomes for the public.











Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 005	Further work is required to build on work currently undertaken by the Council with partners on delivering outcomes for the public.			30-Sep-2010	Zena Cooke	The work to incorporate the Safer Maidstone Partnership and the Local Children's Trust Board into the Local Strategic Partnership arrangements has been completed. Further work in relation to partnership working and delivering outcomes with partners will be undertaken as part of the Locality Board arrangements and will also be monitored as part of the Community Partnerships Team Service Plan.





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







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

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



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



010 Ensuring evolving partnerships maintain principles of good governance						
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 010.01	Carry out assessments of key partnerships			30-Apr-2010	Sarah Robson	The LSP delivery groups and partners was finalised in June 2011. However, the next stage will be to manage the transition from LSP to Locality Board.
CIP 010.02	Review partnership protocol			30-Sep-2010	Sarah Robson	The partnership protocol has been completed and endorsed at Committee. SR to upload onto Community Partnerships Sharepoint site and promote internally.



011 The council considers and tracks with its significant partners the impact on users when making decisions on reducing costs.						
CIP 011.01	Work with KCC to coordinate the effects of savings on inter-organisations			31-Oct-2010	Paul Riley	Development work completed through the MTFS at a strategic level, ongoing dialogue and coordination now part of relevant managers' service plans
CIP 011.02	Expand the consultation on the budget strategy and the MTFS to include the impact of the identification savings with partners			31-Dec-2010	Paul Riley	This work has been completed as part of the MTFS. Ongoing consultation on savings targets will be a formal part of the annual budget strategy process
CIP 011.03	Work with the LSP on the resource mapping project and feed into the MTFS			31-Dec-2010	Paul Riley	LSP resource mapping project on track, initial results received, further work progressing.

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



013 The authority has made a commitment to carbon reduction and has established a Climate Change Strategy. Ensure that the Strategy is successfully implemented over the next three years.						
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 013.01	To develop the Carbon Reduction Action Plan in conjunction with the Energy Saving Trust One-to-One Programme			30-Apr-2010	Jenny Hunt	The Carbon Reduction Action Plan was developed and 15 actions were taken forward. Although this was never developed into published action plan due to delays with the Climate Change Framework amid central government policy changes, these have now all been delivered. The Carbon Reduction Action Plan will be updated in due course to reflect the work undertaken and to move this forward.
CIP 013.02	To implement the actions of the Carbon Reduction Plan and report back progress and update the action plan on a yearly basis			30-Mar-2011	Jenny Hunt	The 15 actions that were chosen to form part of the Carbon Reduction Action Plan have now been delivered. The Carbon Reduction Action Plan will now be updated to reflect this progress and to move this action plan forward.

014 Seek technical advice when accounting for complex capital transactions, discuss proposed action with the external auditor early on so that the accounting treatment can be agreed prior to productions of draft financial statements						
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 014.01	Ensure that all future quarterly review meetings with Auditor include an agenda item on issues that may involve complex accounting transactions.	 100%		30-Mar-2011	Paul Riley	This has now been achieved







015 The Council should review asset valuations at each year-end considering both impairment and other material changes in asset values						
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 015.01	Request, as part of annual review of 20% of assets, an assessment of material changes in all asset values.	 100%		31-May-2010	Chris Finch; Paul Riley	complete

016 Once the Council has taken a decision to dispose of an asset this should be re-categorised from operational assets to non-operational assets, surplus for resale, and revalued to market valuation obtained prior to sale in accordance with the SORP						
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 016.01	Identify process in closedown procedure and formally reconcile actions with asset sales detailed in usable capital receipts / cabinet member decisions	 100%		31-May-2010	Paul Holland; Gill West	













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

Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 017.01	Set up share point site accessible to revenues team to hold records of VO balancing	 100%		28-Feb-2010	Steve McGinnes	An area has been created within the existing Revs and Bens team site to provide a full audit trail.

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

Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 018.01	Consideration given to a review being carried out across the four MKIP authorities of the audit committees.	 100%		30-Mar-2010	Brian Parsons	Review agreed by all four MKIP authorities in September 2010
CIP 018.02	Commission the IDEa to carry out a review of the Council's Audit Committee The role of the Committee in ensuring action plans are implemented and risk identification will be considered as part of the review.	 100%		30-Jun-2010	Brian Parsons	The IDEa commissioned via proposal in August 2010
CIP 018.03	Present findings to the Audit Committee on the options for future development.	 100%		30-Jun-2010	Brian Parsons	The report arising from the LGID review was presented to the Audit Committee on the 17 January 2011. The Committee agreed to create an action plan and will meet informally to agree the detail to be included. The Plan will be endorsed at the next formal meeting of the Committee on 21 March 2011, and will be implemented over the coming months.

77

019 Use customer and staff feedback to improve the way the Council delivers services						
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 019.02	Involve staff in the service planning process	 100%		04-Mar-2011	Angela Woodhouse	Staff events have been held to discuss the new priorities. New guidance and support has been issued to managers
CIP 019.03	Carry out consultation on the Strategic Plan	 100%		31-Jan-2011	Angela Woodhouse	Consultation carried out with staff and customers
CIP 019.04	Learn from complaints by spotting trends at first stage	 100%		31-Jan-2011	Ellie Kershaw; Ellie* Kershaw	Complaints are analysed for their reasons and then reported to CMT and the Standards Committee
CIP 019.05	Consider staff engagement as part of the Councils Communication Strategy	 100%		30-Apr-2011	Roger Adley	
CIP 019.06	Create an intranet site with information on the demographics etc of those living in the borough	 100%		30-Jun-2011	Georgia Hawkes	New intranet page created under Business Improvement site with links to KCC's facts and figures pages and other useful links e.g. Kent Police, health statistics etc. Unit Managers will now be asked for any other useful links they are aware of.
CIP 019.07	Service specific reviews supported by business improvement to include the use of customer feedback & insight	 100%		30-Apr-2011	Georgia Hawkes	When Business Improvement support other teams in making improvements customer feedback and customer insight e.g. Mosaic is always used. For example, Mosaic has been used to support Waste and Recycling - maximising take up of services and maximising volunteers for the Mote Park improvements. In 2011 work will also start with Private sector Housing and customer feedback through complaints and surveys will be considered and the customers of the service will be examined and profiled using Mosaic.

020 Determine the top priorities of the Council and ensure that plans, policies and strategies link to these						
Code	Title	Progress Bar	Status Icon	Due Date	Assigned To	Latest Note
CIP 020.01	Define the Council's top three priorities and use these to determine the focus of the Council in terms of members, staff, finances and partnership working.	 100%		31-Jan-2011	Angela Woodhouse	
CIP 020.02	Develop a budget strategy action plan to show where efficiencies and savings will be delivered	 100%		31-Jan-2011	Paul Riley	
CIP 020.03	Project management toolkit presentation at unit managers meeting	 100%		31-Mar-2011	Georgia Hawkes	Presentation on the Project Management Toolkit made to Unit Managers meeting in March 2011.
CIP 020.04	Research project sponsor training for management team	 100%		31-Mar-2011	Georgia Hawkes	Project Sponsor training will be carried out with Senior Management Team in November 2011.

Agenda Item 11

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

14 SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT OF HEAD OF CHANGE AND SCRUTINY

Report prepared by Angela Woodhouse

1. CORPORATE PLANNING TIMETABLE

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 The Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy are key elements of the corporate planning framework for the council. They are also a key part of the 'golden thread' which runs from the vision for the borough set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy through to Corporate priorities and outcomes and targets for individuals in appraisals.

1.1.2 Cabinet is asked to agree the timetable for corporate planning for 2012-13.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Change and Scrutiny

1.2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet agree to update the strategic plan and the corporate planning timetable as set out in the report.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The corporate planning process within the Council ensures the overall vision for the borough is delivered. The priorities and outcomes in the Strategic Plan are developed alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to ensure a consistent approach between service delivery and budgets. Service planning allows the Council to convert high level objectives from the Strategic Plan into actions for each directorate, service or team across the Council, which then feeds into individual staff appraisals.

1.3.2 On 12 August 2009 Cabinet agreed to decide annually whether to update the existing Strategic Plan or to create a new one. Following extensive change in the national arena it was agreed to write a new Strategic Plan 2011/12 to take the Council through to

2015 alongside the MTFFS. It is recommended that in light of the new plan only being developed last year, the plan for 2011-15 is updated for 2012-13. The update will include the work of the Cabinet on the future shape of the organisation and medium term planning and prioritisation of the actions required to achieve the outcomes outlined in the Strategic Plan.

1.3.3 Cabinet have been considering each of the Council’s corporate outcomes at Cabinet Away Days throughout the summer to identify priority actions for each. This has been developed alongside developing proposals for investment and savings for the budget. This work will continue into September, with an away day planned for October to look at the future shape of the organisation based on the priorities and actions identified. These cabinet away days will inform the update of the Strategic Plan.

1.3.4 An update would include:

- A review of all the outcomes and associated actions;
- An update of what was achieved in the year (in 2011/12 we...);
- An update to any local or national context where relevant;
- An update to the foreword; and
- An update on the Sustainable Community Strategy refresh if available.

1.3.4 Timetable for developing the Strategic Plan 2012/13 update.

The following timetable is proposed for the development of the 2012/13 update.

Date	Action
14 September 2011	Cabinet consider the corporate planning timetable
June – November 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of the Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy at Cabinet Away Days, reviewing each priority and agreeing priority actions. • Assessment of progress against priorities and outcomes • Informal discussions with Cabinet • Meetings with Heads of Service and officers • Identification of savings and growth items • Scrutiny Budget Working group to look at proposals
September to October 2011	Budget Consultation and Resident Survey of customer satisfaction and actions for outcomes

December 2011	Updated Strategic Plan and MTFS agreed for consultation by Cabinet
January 2012	Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny consider updated Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy and make recommendations to Cabinet
February 2012	Cabinet consider Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy and recommend to Council
March 2012	Council agree and adopt the Strategic Plan and Medium Term Financial Strategy
April 2012	Implementation of the Updated Strategic Plan and MTFS

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

- 1.4.1 Cabinet could decide to produce a full new Strategic Plan for 2012-16. This is not recommended as a new strategic plan was only created last year.
- 1.4.2 Alternatively, Cabinet could decide that the Council already has a four year plan in place and therefore there is no reason to produce either an update or another full document. This is not recommended as the local and national context is constantly changing and the Council needs to be able to demonstrate how it is planning and managing the issues arising from these changes.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 1.5.1 The Corporate Planning process is centred on identifying and achieving the Council's corporate priorities and outcomes.

1.6 Risk Management

- 1.6.1 Risks associated with the delivery of the Strategic Plan will be set out in the Strategic Risk Management Plan and operationally through the service planning process.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

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

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

None

1.8.2 Background Documents

Strategic Plan 2011-15
Sustainable Community Strategy

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

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

.....

This is a Key Decision because:

.....

Wards/Parishes affected:

.....

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

14 SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT OF HEAD OF CHANGE AND SCRUTINY

Report prepared by Angela Woodhouse

1. RESPONSE TO THE OPEN PUBLIC SERVICES WHITE PAPER

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 Cabinet is asked to agree the proposed response from the Council to the open public services white paper and actions to be taken.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Change and Scrutiny

1.2.1 That Cabinet Agree:

(i) The attached response to the white paper set out at Appendix A; and

(ii) The proposed actions outlined at paragraph 1.3.4

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The Government has recently launched the much anticipated Open Public Services White Paper. A summary of the white paper is attached at Appendix A.

1.3.2 The Government has stated that the paper will be subject to a listening period from July until September, they have set up a website about the changes which invites responses from all sectors including the public. Following the consultation there will be a programme of work undertaken from November this year.

1.3.3 The paper reiterates much of the information and initiatives covered by the Localism Bill rather than introducing new policies. The paper contains ambitions for public service delivery rather than concrete policy proposals and states that the Government will be consulting on these ambitions. The principles within the white paper fit with our own

priorities and our service design principles as identified in the Strategic Plan 2011-15.

- 1.3.4 The white paper has highlighted a number of potential actions and issues for the Council these are outlined below under the three headings used in the paper:

Individual Services - Actions and Issues:

- Resident/Customer focused and what action we should be taking as a Council to achieve this.
- Agreements to develop a local accountability framework – and ensure residents are engaged in this process.
- The changing role of the Ward Councillor in the community and any support they require.
- Ensure the work on the future shape of the organization identifies how services will be delivered and models of service delivery.

Neighbourhood Services - Actions and Issues:

- Continuing to develop our relationship and understanding of parish councils and community groups who may want to deliver services, also the support they may require to do this.
- Reviewing the appetite for urban parishing.
- If appropriate piloting a community budget with the Government (prospectus inviting pilots out in September).

Commissioned Services -Actions and Issues:

- Identifying services we may want to deliver on behalf of others as part of the work on the future shape of the organisation.
- Ensuring we know how we would like our services delivered and by whom.
- Setting and agreeing criteria for results from commissioned services i.e. resident satisfaction.
- Having an agreed approach to publishing procurement and contract data.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Council could choose not to respond to the white paper and not to act proactively in respect of its implications. The intentions of the paper and the proposed actions however fit well with the Council's priorities and service design principles.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Council has agreed the corporate priority to achieve Corporate and Customer Excellence the actions identified accord with this priority.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 The actions identified aim to ensure we are prepared for the implications of the white paper and fulfil our own ambitions as a Council.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

- 1. Financial
- (iii) Staffing
- (iv) Legal
- (v) Equality Impact Needs Assessment
- (vi) Environmental/Sustainable Development
- (vii) Community Safety
- (viii) Human Rights Act
- (ix) Procurement
- (x) Asset Management

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

- Appendix A – Summary of the Open Public Services White Paper
- Appendix B – Proposed Response

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

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

.....

This is a Key Decision because:

.....

Wards/Parishes affected:

.....

Open Public Services White Paper - Summary

5 principles for modernising public services:

- **Choice**- Wherever possible choice will be increased. People should either have direct control over the services they use or, where this is not possible, elected representatives should have more choice about who provides services and how.
- **Decentralisation**-Public services should be decentralised to the lowest appropriate level.
- **Diversity**-Public services should be open to a range of providers.
- **Fairness**-We will ensure fair access to public services – where required disadvantaged people should be given extra help and resources targeted in their favour.
- **Accountability**-Public services should be accountable to users and to taxpayers.

For the purposes of applying these principals, 3 categories of public services have been defined:

- **Individual services** e.g. housing support, education, skills training- power to be given to service users using mechanisms such as personal budgets, direct cash payments to individuals and vouchers. A framework will be put in place to ensure choice, fair access, that quality standards are maintained and the right to redress where choice is not given. Providers will all be licensed or registered by the appropriate regulator. Key data about satisfaction and performance of all providers will be published.
- **Neighbourhood services** –provided locally on a collective basis e.g. grounds maintenance, community safety- power to be given to elected councils, at neighbourhood level if communities wish. DCLG will be working with two areas to enable local residents to play a part in commissioning neighbourhood level budgets and service solutions, giving them more power to shape their communities and acting as an example for other areas that are interested.
- **Commissioned services**-local and national services that can't be devolved e.g. tax collection- the government will open up and where appropriate, decentralise commissioning. In these areas the state will stop providing services and instead commission them from a wide range of providers. A minimum of 3 providers should be sought and fully considered and payment linked to results.

The government will consult about opening up locally commissioned services in the following areas that are currently delivered by local government ; customer contact, planning, property and facilities management, back office transactional services, family support, support for looked after children, trading standards and environmental services and housing management. The government would also like to consult on opening up commissioning for national services including; court and tribunal administration, payment processing, prevention, detection and investigation of fraud, debt management and enforcement services,

identity related services, land and property information services, customer contact services, back office functions for prosecutors and immigration and visa administration. Further consultation will be undertaken in decommissioning in areas where value for money could obviously be improved including; natural environment support, public transport support, skills and services for families with multiple problems. Where local areas come forward with proposals to do things differently, these will be seriously considered. Consultation will also be held on how best to ensure greater accountability as services are opened up.

Benefits

- **Individuals** will have more choice
- **Communities** will have more opportunity to take control of local powers and services
- **Local government** will have more freedom to innovate in services they control and opportunities for influence across services such as helping families in multiple need
- **Public service staff** will have new opportunities to innovate and be encouraged to start their own enterprises
- **Independent providers of all sizes from all sectors** will be able to compete to deliver public services

Ensuring diversity in provision

There are already a number of autonomous providers in the public sector including local health trusts, Academies, leisure trusts and Arms Length Management Organisations who compete for their income and with each other. The government wishes to consult on how this status could be extended to most organisations in the public sector that provide services, while ensuring transparency and accountability.

The option of introducing legislation to guarantee choice is being explored.

Public service workers will be invited to share their ideas on how staff could be enabled to work smarter and identify areas where central government could reduce bureaucracy.

Barriers to new providers will be addressed such as early disclosure of TUPE liabilities. Consultation will be held on whether companies should be able to appeal to an independent body where they feel they have been unfairly precluded from a commissioning process.

Consultation Questions

Individual Services

How best, in individual services and on a case-by-case basis, can we ensure that people have greater choice between diverse, quality providers?

Consistent with the Government's fiscal plans, what further opportunities exist to target funding to help the poorest, promote social mobility and provide fair access to public services?

Are there additional areas where personal budgets would be appropriate and could existing initiatives on personal budgets be accelerated?

How can the principle be implemented that providers (from whichever sector) who are receiving public money for individual services should collect satisfaction data in a standardised form to enable comparison and put it into the public domain?

How can we ensure that people are aware of, and can exercise, their right to choice effectively in specific services, through choice champions, choice prompts, data and a possible new role for Ombudsmen?

What is the appropriate role for elected and unelected office-holders in championing individuals' ability to exercise choice and ensure accountability from service providers?

How can we ensure that our approach to opening public services protects and enhances accountability rather than dispersing it?

Neighbourhoods

What is the scope for neighbourhood councils to take greater control over local services?

What help will neighbourhood councils need to enable them to run any services devolved to them?

What would make it easier to establish new neighbourhood councils in areas where local people want them?

Do additional checks and balances need to be created to ensure proper financial control?

How can we improve the delegation and financial framework for neighbourhood councils?

How do we ensure appropriate accountability for services run by communities to ensure that those not involved directly are not disadvantaged?

Commissioned services

What is the scope to extend and/or deepen the commissioning approach across public services?

What further potential is there to decentralise central government commissioning to locally elected individuals and authorities?

To which areas should we apply the open commissioning policy?

What else can government do to overcome any traditional boundaries between public service providers, which get in the way of solutions to people's needs?

How can we ensure that commissioners and providers are best held to account?

What new skills and training will commissioners need?

General

How can we stimulate more openness and innovation in public services through new types of provision?

What more could we do to support and catalyse new enterprises (e.g. mutuals) spinning out from the public sector?

Where and how should we extend autonomous status for public sector providers?

Proposed Response

In developing Maidstone Borough Council's response to the white paper we have considered the issues and implications for the three areas the paper is split into:

- Individual Services
- Neighbourhood Services
- Community Services

Whilst we welcome the intentions of the white paper we have also considered the areas that the white paper does not cover that would lead to more open public services. There are several gaps for example changes to contract and procurement rules that would allow more smaller voluntary sector and community groups to bid for services. The White Paper does not deal with the support required to encourage innovation and grow social enterprise to deliver services for residents. Other gaps include detail on how to measure the social and financial value of services – will there be a consistent approach nationally or is it up to us locally to determine how we measure success? The other area of concern is getting the critical mass of groups and organizations to run services and the support needed to do this. We have concerns that the accountability measures will increase bureaucracy and the administrative burden for local government and others recreating new regulatory bodies in place of those the government removed.

Individual Services

The paper outlines that funding will follow choice, there will be consultation on how to collect performance satisfaction data and there will be a means of redress through the Ombudsman. As a Council we are already considering implementing our own local accountability framework which will include measuring satisfaction with our services through a resident survey. As part of developing the accountability framework we will be introducing more performance reporting to our residents. We are concerned that the intentions of the paper in regard to collecting performance data will introduce new burdens and possibly reintroduce a new version of the place survey. We believe that it is important that we are accountable to our residents and any measures must be developed locally and reported to residents, rather than looking to national government. With regards to the focus on accountability and Members, Councillors should be given more training and support to act as community champions.

Neighbourhood Services

The paper identifies that neighbourhood councils could be given new rights to take over some local services. How will this be developed in areas that are not fully parished and/or areas where community groups are not well developed or willing to take on this role? The suggestion of a national framework for local schemes – seems to imply more regulation and control, which we would treat with caution.

Commissioned Services

The paper identifies that we should be focused on outcomes when commissioning services. We support this and agree that agreement of outcomes will be needed as part of any service model developed that involves the Council commissioning others to deliver services. We also agree that we need to transparently link payments to results and this should form part of any agreement we have in place with third parties. In terms of services commissioned by central government, no services have been identified in the paper, we will be reviewing this to identify areas where we may want to deliver services on behalf of others. The paper outlines that full access to public sector procurement and contract data will be given. This could have a financial impact on the council, careful thought will need to be given on how data will be published and used.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

14 SEPTEMBER 2011

REPORT OF MANAGEMENT TEAM

Report prepared by Brian Parsons

1. STRATEGIC RISKS

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider and adopt a new Strategic Risk Register which is aligned with the Council's priorities as set out in the Strategic Plan 2011-15

1.1.2 To note that the strategic risks in the Register have been allocated to specific senior managers by Management Team.

1.1.3 To note the action that the 'risk owners' will be taking in order to manage the risks.

1.2 Recommendation of the Corporate Management Team

1.2.1 That Cabinet adopts the Strategic Risk Register 2011-15 (Appendix A).

1.2.2 That Cabinet notes the action that the allocated senior managers will be taking to manage the risks to the successful delivery of the Council's key strategic outcomes (Appendix B).

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 Cabinet agreed a new draft Strategic Risk Register at its meeting on 22 December 2010, subject to any changes to the Council's key objectives that might emerge through the consultation process.

1.3.2 The new Register was developed through a risk workshop process which sought to identify the risks to the successful delivery of the newly developed strategic outcomes. The Risk Register is intended to align as closely as possible with the Strategic Plan 2011-15.

1.3.3 The Strategic Plan 2011-15 has been subject to consultation and has been formally adopted by the Council. The Strategic Risk Register now similarly needs to be formally adopted.

1.3.4 Management Team has allocated the individual strategic risks to specific senior managers so that they can take personal responsibility for managing those risks as follows:

Risk Description and 'Risk Owner'

- 'The Borough needs a transport network that supports the local economy' – Interim Head of Core Strategy (Flo Churchill)
 - 'The Borough needs a growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy' – Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy (Brian Morgan)
 - 'The Borough needs decent affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures' – Head of Housing and Community Safety (John Littlemore)
 - 'Maidstone needs a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the borough' – Assistant Director of Environment and Regulatory Services (Steve Goulette)
 - 'The Council needs to ensure that residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are; vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced' – Head of Housing and Community Safety (John Littlemore)
 - The Council needs to deliver value for money council services that residents are satisfied with' – Head of Change and Scrutiny (Angela Woodhouse)
- 1.3.5 The 'risk owners' have completed Management Action Plans setting out the required management action, the officer responsible for taking the action and the key dates for the action to be taken by. The Management Action Plans are shown at Appendix B.
- 1.3.6 The Action Plans will be entered onto the corporate performance management system, Covalent so that actions can be monitored and tracked. The actions will be reported as part of the performance monitoring reports that are provided to Management Team and Cabinet on a quarterly basis.
- 1.3.7 A report, setting out the Strategic Risk Management process and the Risk Register, will be provided to the Audit Committee at its meeting on 19 September 2011 so that the Committee can 'monitor the effective development and operation of risk management and

corporate governance in the Council' in accordance with its terms of reference.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 Having identified the risks to the delivery of the Council's key strategic outcomes, it is vital that an effective process is put in place to manage the risks. No alternative action could be recommended.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Strategic Risk Register mirrors the Strategic Plan 2011-15; therefore the effective management of the strategic risks has a direct result on the delivery of all corporate objectives.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 Risk management is the basis of the report. A failure to take the necessary actions would result in a greater likelihood that the risks would materialize with greater impact and that the Council's objectives will not be achieved.

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	
9.	Asset Management	

1.7.2 Some of the strategic risks have financial implications in terms of their management and the treatment applied.

1.7.3 The effective management of strategic risks will require staff and management resources to be committed to the process. However, as the risks are aligned to the Council's objectives, their management should be part of the broader management process.

1.7.4 Some of the key strategic outcomes relate to service areas which are statutory.

1.8 Conclusions

1.8.1 The Council has committed to a four-year Strategic Plan for delivering its priorities. The delivery of the priorities is subject to risk. Having identified the risks, it is essential that an effective process is put in place to manage the risks and to report progress to Management Team and Cabinet on a regular basis.

1.9 Relevant Documents

1.9.1 Appendices

Appendix A – Strategic Risk Register 2011-15

Appendix B – Strategic Risks – Management Action Plans (at August 2011)

1.9.2 Background Documents

Report to Cabinet 22 December 2010 – Strategic Risks

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

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

.....

This is a Key Decision because:

.....

Wards/Parishes affected:

.....

APPENDIX A

**Maidstone Borough Council
STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER
2011/15**

Risk Scenario: Priority 1: For Maidstone to have a growing economy

Risk Description 1	The Borough needs a transport network that supports the local economy.	
Vulnerability / contributing factors	Trigger(s) / Event(s)	Potential Impact / Consequences
<p>The Council is not in control of the provision or planning of transport networks – These are controlled by KCC (Highways) and Network Rail (Rail links)</p> <p>LEPs are being formed which have a strong influence over transport infrastructures</p> <p>There is a lack of appetite in Kent to tackle congestion issues</p> <p>Maidstone is growing and has an increasing need for good transport networks</p>	<p>The Local Transport Plan (LTP) does not meet the Council’s transport needs.</p> <p>Network Rail does not provide an adequate rail service for Maidstone</p> <p>LEPs do not meet the Council’s priorities</p> <p>The Council uses its funds to influence the delivery of adequate transport networks</p> <p>The Council develops partnerships with Mid and West Kent Councils to achieve a stronger level of influence with transport network providers</p> <p>Maidstone loses its appeal as a commuter town</p> <p>Housing development stalls</p>	<p>Contraction /relocation of business out of the Borough</p> <p>Commuters chose to live elsewhere</p> <p>Existing residents relocate</p> <p>Economic growth stalls</p> <p>Negative impact on environmental quality - increased road congestion and pollution</p> <p>The Council is forced to reprioritise its capital investment plans to fund transport improvement schemes.</p> <p>Partnerships fail/do not deliver objectives</p> <p>Housing development stalls</p>

Risk Scenario: Priority 1: For Maidstone to have a growing economy

Risk Description 2	The Borough needs a growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy.	
Vulnerability / contributing factors	Trigger(s) / Event(s)	Potential Impact / Consequences
<p>The local economy depends on local schools and colleges delivering a wide range of education and skills</p> <p>Business growth depends on an adequate quality workforce – and will only locate/stay in the Borough if it has a good range of employment skill sets</p> <p>A high proportion of employment opportunities within the Borough are provided by the public sector or businesses linked to providing public sector services</p> <p>The Borough currently includes a high number of low wage earners</p> <p>The Council’s Economic Development policy/strategy is in need of review</p>	<p>Changing educational policies (Importance of Teaching – Schools White Paper)</p> <p>The Borough comprises a number of low performing schools</p> <p>The LDF is not agreed</p> <p>Planning policies do not support business development</p> <p>Land is not allocated for business development where it is needed and at a pace that is needed</p> <p>Developers do not build the required quality of housing in the required locations to attract a good quality workforce</p> <p>Business leaders decide not to locate their operations in the Borough or leave the area</p>	<p>There is a miss-match of skills</p> <p>Skilled residents are forced to take lower skilled/lower pay employment</p> <p>Skilled residents relocate away from the Borough</p> <p>Key decision makers/business opportunities/economic growth goes elsewhere</p> <p>Reduced employment opportunities leading to rising unemployment</p> <p>Economic decline/stagnation</p>

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

Risk Description 3	The Borough needs decent affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures	
Vulnerability / contributing factors	Trigger(s) / Event(s)	Potential Impact / Consequences
<p>The Council has a statutory responsibility to provide housing to certain homeless groups</p> <p>There is a resistance to social housing allocations, particularly in rural areas</p> <p>A review of the Affordable Housing DPD under estimates the scale of need for affordable housing</p> <p>The planned schemes in the Local Investment Plan are not delivered through lack of funding; housing associations choose not to build/improve property in the borough</p> <p>Housing development stalls and the market moves elsewhere</p>	<p>The Council does not deliver its housing strategy and is unable to deliver a range of affordable housing</p> <p>There is a revised emphasis on ways of delivering affordable housing</p> <p>The Council’s Affordable Housing strategy needs to be updated to reflect the proposed changes contained in the Localism Bill and responds to the housing market</p> <p>The new affordable rent regime is unable to generate the surplus required to invest in new affordable housing; or surpluses are invested in other areas</p> <p>There is a long-term lack of Government investment in housing at a time when the council has less money to invest in affordable housing initiatives</p>	<p>Housing quality declines; increase in homelessness results in higher revenue costs to the council</p> <p>New housing is not delivered and communities become unbalanced or unsustainable</p> <p>Our ability to provide a range of affordable diminishes whilst demand for affordable housing increase leading to an increase in homelessness</p> <p>Homelessness increases</p> <p>Community cohesion declines and damage is caused to the Council’s reputation</p>

<p>The housing market declines and makes Maidstone a less attractive place to live and invest in.</p> <p>Increase in poverty amongst existing low earners; Maidstone becomes a more attractive proposition for London authorities to house their homeless households due to increased restrictions in their own areas</p> <p>Vulnerable households or those with dependents fall into a spiral of repeat homelessness as tenancies expire</p>	<p>The reduced funding for private sector for housing initiatives leads to a decline in the private rented market or worsening conditions</p> <p>Changes to the welfare system including local housing allowance; new Universal Benefit places a cap on housing benefit</p> <p>The tenure strategy is ill-conceived or does not address housing need</p>	<p>Economically mobile move out of Maidstone; worsening housing conditions that lead to an increase in pressure on the council for social housing</p> <p>Increased homelessness and welfare dependency; migration into Maidstone from London for high needs households looking for cheaper private rented accommodation.</p> <p>Increase in homelessness that results in additional use of inappropriate accommodation such as B&B; communities become fragmented and more transitory</p>
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Risk Scenario: Priority 2: For Maidstone to be a decent place to live

Risk Description 4	Maidstone needs a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the borough	
Vulnerability / contributing factors	Trigger(s) / Event(s)	Potential Impact / Consequences
<p>The Council has limited influence on delivering the required built environment</p> <p>Funding pressures to reduce spending on street cleansing and grounds maintenance, including parks and open spaces</p> <p>The Council is largely dependent on its in-house contractor (MBS) to deliver a clean and attractive environment</p> <p>The Council has an ongoing responsibility for the public realm</p> <p>Public perception of 'run down' parts of the town</p> <p>The prolonged economic downturn leads to stalled investment in improvements to the built environment</p> <p>Priorities for delivering leisure and culture services have changed (Localism Bill)</p>	<p>Ongoing lack of investment - both for the delivery of new, and the maintenance of the current environment</p> <p>Bad planning decisions are made</p> <p>Supply chain failure</p> <p>High Street regeneration project</p> <p>Poor public perception could develop</p> <p>Reduced RSG</p> <p>Negative press opinion / lack of press support</p> <p>Greater involvement from the private and voluntary (CSO) sector</p> <p>Private sector and CSO fail to engage</p> <p>The Council reviews how leisure and cultural services are provided</p>	<p>Declining standards of cleansing services</p> <p>Increased litter and graffiti</p> <p>Public realm infrastructure becomes dilapidated</p> <p>Built environment becomes dilapidated</p> <p>Poor customer satisfaction</p> <p>Visitor numbers decline – retail and tourism</p> <p>Residents move out of the Borough or chose not to move to the Borough</p> <p>Business leaves/ does not locate to the Borough</p> <p>Economic growth stalls</p> <p>Failure/closure of leisure and culture facilities</p>

		Reputational damage due to Localism failure
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Risk Scenario: Priority 3: Corporate and Customer Excellence

<p>Risk Description 5</p>	<p>The Council needs to ensure that residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are; vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced.</p>	
<p>Vulnerability / contributing factors</p>	<p>Trigger(s) / Event(s)</p>	<p>Potential Impact / Consequences</p>
<p>The council has a commitment to assist vulnerable people</p> <p>Partnership working and the funding it brings is essential to enable services to be effectively delivered</p> <p>Demand for council services is increasing while funding is decreasing</p> <p>Lack of clarity on what communities need and how best to deliver support to meet these needs</p> <p>The 'Big Society' is expected to deliver effective solutions</p> <p>Vulnerable people are dependent on benefits support</p> <p>Government decentralisation provides opportunities for the Council to take on new responsibilities</p>	<p>Ineffective partnership working</p> <p>Consequences of welfare reform</p> <p>Reduction in preventative measures</p> <p>Lack of buy-in to the 'Big Society' vision</p> <p>Lack of ability to deliver the 'Big Society' vision</p> <p>Benefits reforms</p> <p>The council commits to new responsibilities and opportunities</p>	<p>Service failure</p> <p>Increased deprivation</p> <p>Declining community cohesion</p> <p>Increased demand on council services</p> <p>Reprioritisation of expenditure is required across council services</p> <p>Failure to deliver economic prosperity</p> <p>Failure to deliver a skilled and healthy workforce</p> <p>Displacement from London places greater demand on Council housing services</p> <p>The Council receives new funding streams</p>

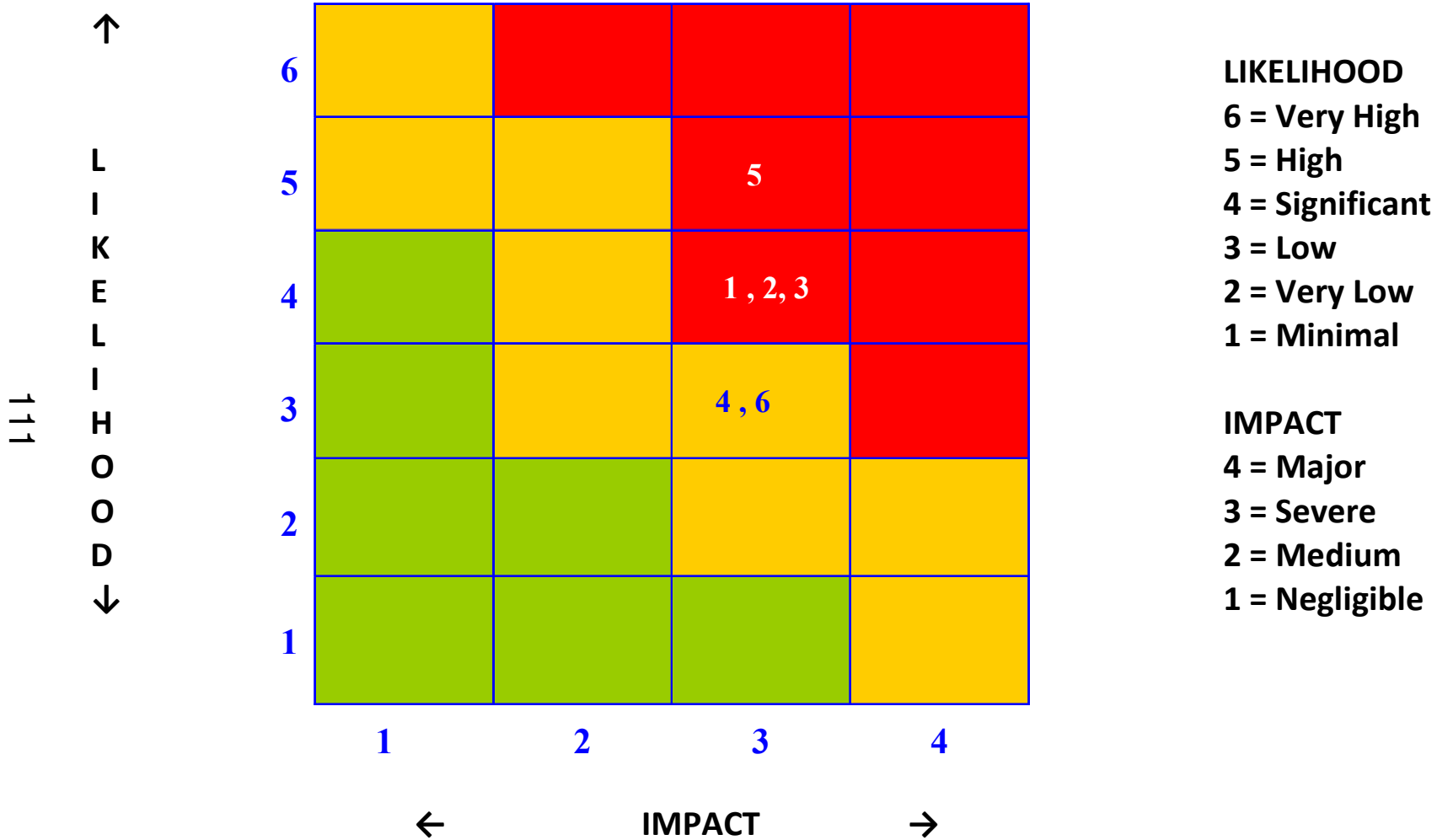
		The Council takes on new services
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Risk Scenario: Priority 3: Corporate and Customer Excellence

Risk Description 6	The Council needs to deliver value for money council services that resident are satisfied with.	
Vulnerability / contributing factors	Trigger(s) / Event(s)	Potential Impact / Consequences
<p>The Council needs to deliver value for money services</p> <p>The Council needs to deliver the services that the public/local business wants</p> <p>Government decentralisation delegates greater control to the Council</p> <p>There is a need to manage customer/partner expectations</p> <p>There is an expectation that the cost/value of council services can be compared with other local council services</p> <p>It is difficult to accurately and reliably compare costs and value for money across councils' services</p> <p>Accurate and timely performance data is required</p> <p>There is an expectation to deliver</p>	<p>The Council fails to deliver on its promises</p> <p>Councils set local service standards which do not meet customer/ business expectations</p> <p>Inadequate communications</p> <p>Benchmarking is ineffective</p> <p>The Council selects the wrong</p>	<p>Public dissatisfaction</p> <p>Loss of credibility leading to reduced external funding</p> <p>Loss of partnership opportunities</p> <p>Post code lottery for services</p> <p>Service costs increase</p> <p>Political instability</p> <p>Poor business decisions are made</p>

<p>services through partnerships/ shared services or outsourcing</p> <p>The ability to deliver value for money services depends on a productive workforce with people in the right place at the right time</p>	<p>commissioning 'model'</p> <p>The council has insufficient skills and capacity to deliver services</p> <p>Organisational change is not managed well</p>	<p>The service fails or does not provide value for money</p> <p>Governance failure</p> <p>Decline in staff morale and engagement and high Staff turnover</p> <p>Damage to the to the Council's reputation</p>
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Risk Prioritisation Matrix



**STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER 2011-15
MANAGEMENT ACTION PLANS**

Risk 1 The Borough needs a transport network that supports the local economy: Interim Head of Core Strategy

Management Action Plan

Likelihood	6				
	5				
	4			1	
	3				
	2				
	1				
		1	2	3	4
	Impact				

Risk Number	Current Risk Score	Target Risk Score	Description
1	4.3	2.3	The Borough needs a transport network that supports the local economy
Notes: The current likelihood and impact are 4.3. The impact is unlikely to change greatly but if the current plan of action is fully implemented the likelihood can be reduced.			

Risk Owner: Interim Head of Core Strategy (Flo Churchill)

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
MBC has limited impact on management of highways infrastructure	Average	Continuing liaison and dialogue with partners including KCC Highways and the Highways Agency	SW	Continue with current partnership	Annual Review	April 2012
Production of an Integrated Transport Strategy to support the Core Strategy	Good	Partnership working required with Kent County Council Highways and internally within MBC	SW	ITS endorsed by KCC and MBC	Annual Review	April 2012
Core Strategy needs to be found sound and adopted by MBC	Average	CS to be put before Secretary of State for independent examination following endorsement by Cabinet	SW/FC	Submission to Secretary of State by December 2011	Annual Review	Dec 2011

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
ITS in line with Local Transport Plan (LTP) produced by KCC	Average	Partnership working required. Seconded KCC resource likely to be reduced. LTP used as basis for funding bids	SW	Proposals for works within MBC have priority within LTP	Annual Review	April 2012
Internal officer working group to discuss LDF, ITS, and LTP	Good	Create and maintain momentum to sustain officer involvement in the policy creation process through quarterly meetings	FC	Regular meetings of officer group	Quarterly review	April 2012
Economic Development Strategy to be reviewed	Good	Influence the ITS and partnering strategies to ensure that they result in a transport network that supports the local economy	FC/JF	Adoption of reviewed Economic Development Strategy	Annual Review	April 2012

Risk 2 The Borough needs a growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy: Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy

Management Action Plan

Likelihood	6				
	5				
	4			2	
	3				
	2				
	1				
		1	2	3	4
	Impact				

Risk Number	Current Risk Score	Target Risk Score	Description
2	4/3	2/2	The Borough needs a growing economy
Notes:			

Risk Owner: Assistant Director of Development and Community Strategy (Brian Morgan)

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
Provision of skill centre at Senacre	Good	Maintain dialogue with KCC	JF	Centre complete/	Annual	March 2012
		Participate on the development and involvement in the Advisory Steering group.	JF	courses delivered	Annual	March 2012

Delivery of further educational courses	Good	<p>As part of the Mid Kent College Advisory Panel:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor success through participation through to qualification rates • Plan of future programme of courses • Maintain dialogue within panel over the balance between local economic requirement and the demand from students • Work with partners to explore opportunities for provision of apprenticeships and other opportunities 	JF	Appropriate courses delivered	Annual	Sept 2012
Improved educational qualifications	Good	Monitor qualifications obtained in order to identify failing schools and report back to relevant partners to seek opportunities and plan improvements	JF	Improved educational results	Annual	Nov 2011
Development and Delivery of the Development Plan Document	Good	Develop appropriate land allocation policies	FC/SW	Policies adopted and in place	Annual	April 2015

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
Economic development strategy in place	Good	Refresh strategy in the context of the development of the core strategy and the current economic environment	JF	Review completed	Annual	March 2012
Provision of a range of employment	Good	In partnership with Spatial Planning identify the quantity of employment land needed	JF/SW	Appropriate strategy developed	Quarterly	April 2012
		In partnership with Spatial Planning identify the geographical distribution of employment land	JF/SW		Quarterly	April 2013

Risk 3 The Borough needs decent affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures: Head of Housing and Community Safety

Management Action Plan

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Likelihood	6				
	5				
	4			3	
	3				
	2				
	1				
		1	2	3	4
	Impact				

Risk Number	Current Risk Score	Target Risk Score	Description
3	4,3	3,3	The Borough needs decent affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures
Notes:			
The next 12 months are a critical period of change and uncertainty. It is unclear at this stage how successful the new affordable rent regime will be in delivering a range of affordable housing; hence the score of 4,3. It is anticipated that building on the strong partnership arrangements that currently exist the changes proposed in the Localism Bill can be introduced in a managed and beneficial manner thereby reducing the risk to 3,3.			

Risk Owner: Head of Housing and Community Safety (John Littlemore)

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
MBC has nurtured partnerships with the HCA and housing providers that has resulted in sustained delivery of new affordable housing and will continue to do so; new bids for affordable housing submitted	Good	Deliver the three year programme to enable 750 high quality new affordable homes.	JL/AC	Quarterly affordable housing delivery risk assessment	Quarterly	April 2012
Adopt a new Housing Strategy that reflects the current and future housing challenges	Good	The new Housing Strategy provides the necessary framework and is adopted by the council	JL	Adoption of the Strategy	Annual	Oct 2011
Respond to the Localism Bill; participating in the development of new statute and responding to change	Good/average	An initial response has been submitted the Bill's passage through Parliament will continue to be observed.	HSM	Bill becomes law – able to respond positively to changes and improve opportunities	Quarterly	April 2012
		Policies will then be amended as required, including; the housing allocation scheme	HSM		Quarterly	July 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
Engagement in LDF/Core Strategy process to ensure the Housing Strategy reflects and supports the vision for Maidstone	Good	<p>The Housing team has fully participated in Member briefings and will continue to be involved in consultation including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining dialogue with Spatial planning on the future affordable housing Development Plan Document and gypsy & traveller accommodation • Working with planning policy on process for identifying suitable land. • Monitoring bid to Homes and Community agency. 	AC	Core Strategy is adopted; new affordable housing DPD agreed that delivers adequate housing to meet the identified need	Quarterly	April 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
Fully participate in the LIP process; lobbying for resources for West Kent and investment in Maidstone	Good/average	Annual reviews will be held with the HCA and other west Kent partners to consider whether any changes will be required and what priority investment is needed	AC	Investment commensurate with Maidstone's needs is approved	Quarterly	Oct 2011
Finding alternatives ways of ensuring a sustained delivery of affordable housing	Average	Uncertainty as to how successful the affordable rent regime will be; exploring other methods such as partnerships across Kent to generate housing/infrastructure investment and capital return schemes	JL	New income models are initiated that generate sustained investment	Quarterly	April 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
Agree a position with Registered Providers that allows affordable rents to generate an investment surplus that can be reinvested in Maidstone	Average	Each RP is driven by its own business plan – the council needs to ensure those Registered providers (RPs) operating in Maidstone are able to generate surplus that is invested in Maidstone and does not unbalance the housing market; meetings are taking place with RPs and HCA to develop an understanding that could become a protocol	JL	Protocol or operating agreement that benefits Maidstone is agreed	Bi- annual	April 2012
Adopt a Tenure Strategy that achieves flexible use of social housing without destabilising communities	Average	Final framework dependant on the outcome of the Localism Bill; negotiations taking place with RPs and neighbouring LAs develop a West Kent Strategy	JL	The Tenure Strategy is agreed by partners	Quarterly	April 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
Working with colleagues in DC to ensure affordable housing continues under new planning regime ; particularly rural housing	Good/Average	Pre application consultation over sites with affordable housing obligations.	AC	A range of new affordable continues to be delivered	Quarterly	April 2012
		Early engagement regarding rural settlements with identified housing need to assess availability and suitability of land for development	AC		Quarterly	April 2012
		Monitoring of sites through the strategic housing land availability assessment and those identified through the core strategy	AC		Quarterly	April 2012
Work with Parish Councils and communities to enable affordable rural housing to flourish	Good/average	Work with parish councils and Action with Communities in Rural Kent to facilitate housing needs surveys to ascertain the level of affordable housing need.	AC	Affordable housing is delivered that keeps rural Areas sustainable for all	Quarterly	April 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
Ensure the private rented sector remains buoyant; providing good quality housing and management standards	Average	Update the Housing Strategy to address diminishing investment through encouraging better use of the accreditation scheme and rigorous enforcement of housing standards Review local performance indicators for private sector housing interventions to create baseline and ensure performance is improved	NC		Quarterly	March 2012
		Review and update Empty Property Strategy			Quarterly	March 2012
		Private sector landlords forum to be re-launched in partnership with the National Landlords association			Quarterly	Jan 2012
		Review the Rent Deposit Bond Scheme			Quarterly	March 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review frequency	Key dates
Review how housing advice is delivered to ensure that interventions are timely and make a positive difference including reviewing access to affordable housing	Good	Update the Housing Strategy to address diminishing investment through encouraging better use of the accreditation scheme and rigorous enforcement of housing standards Review local performance indicators for private sector housing interventions to create baseline and ensure performance is improves	NC	Interventions are effective in reducing homelessness; the use of temporary accommodation and B&B is minimal	Quarterly	Sept 2011
		Review and update Empty Property Strategy			Quarterly	March 2012
		Private sector landlords forum to be re-launched in partnership with the National Landlords association			Quarterly	June 2012
		Review the Rent Deposit Bond Scheme			Quarterly	July 2012

Risk 4 Maidstone needs a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the borough: Assistant Director of Environment and Regulatory Services

Management Action Plan

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Likelihood	6				
	5				
	4				
	3			4	
	2				
	1				
		1	2	3	4
	Impact				

Risk Number	Current Risk Score	Target Risk Score	Description
4	3, 3	3, 2	Clean and attractive environment
Notes:			
The current likelihood and impact are both 3 The impact is unlikely to change if we maintain the current arrangements. If all the measures identified below are undertaken, the likelihood of the risk occurring will reduce to 2.			

Risk Owner: Assistant Director of Environment and Regulatory Services

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review dates	Key dates
Street cleansing arrangements reviewed and new area-based working in place	Good. Costs reduced.	Regular monitoring to take place. through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Benchmarking Performance on Litter and Detritus 	JS	Clean streets	Quarterly	Dec 2011
Improve Customer satisfaction surveys to improve quality of feedback	Average	Carry out face to face surveys on a quarterly basis Give consideration to benefits of taking part in future corporate surveys	JS	Good customer satisfaction	Quarterly	Dec 2011
Contract with third party supplier to provide litter enforcement in the town centre	Good	Deliver against contracted performance criteria	JS	Reduced litter in the town centre	Annual	Sept 2012
		Develop and monitor mechanism to manage public reaction			Annual	Sept 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review dates	Key dates
Undertake a range of activities to encourage personal responsibility around litter and dog fouling	Good	Deliver programme of educational activity to schools and groups to discourage littering	JS	Reduced litter overall	Annual	April 2012
		Monitor and develop campaigns to discourage littering and dog fouling		Reduced litter and dog fouling	Annual	April 2012
Work with parties to influence good cleansing regimes in areas not controlled by the Council	Average	Work with partners through streetscene and other liaison groups to ensure that Maidstone Council is delivering on its actions and there are good standards throughout the borough	JS SG	Reduced litter	Annual	Dec 2011

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review dates	Key dates
Enforce against fly tippers	Average	Deliver anti fly tipping campaigns	JS	Reduced fly tipping	biannually	April 2012
		Maintain close operation links between street cleaning and enforcement to continue to seek evidence to prosecute fly tippers				April 2012
Work with Maidstone Leisure Trust to ensure Leisure Centre operations meet the Council's strategic aims	Good	Attend quarterly strategic meetings and monthly operational meetings with the trust and deliver on any actions	JT	Programme meets council's priorities	Annual	Feb 2012
		Monitor 15 year programme of investment and project work				Annual

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/controls to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPIs	Review dates	Key dates
Town-wide AQMA action plan agreed and being implemented	Average	Deliver and monitor actions within plan in partnership	SG	Improved air quality	Annual	April 2012
Delivery of the High Street Regeneration project	Good	Monitored delivery of programme of works	BM SG	Improved environment	In line with Project timetable	May 2012
		Monitored outcomes including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced vacancy rate • Increase in foot fall • Increase in employment 			In line with Project timetable	March 2013
Delivery of the Museum extension	Good	Monitor delivery of programme of works and impact on delivery of service	SL	Improved Museum and activity	Project timetable	Dec 2011

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/controls to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPIs	Review dates	Key dates
Asset Management Plan in place and regularly reviewed	Good	To ensure effective management of the Council's assets including ongoing maintenance	SG	Properly managed property portfolio	Annually	April 2012
The Council has limited influence on delivering the built environment	Average	Detailed, quality discussions with developers both at the pre-application stage and prior to planning discussions.	RJ	Quality developments/buildings	Annual review by Planning Committee	April 2012
Implementing the Mote Park Lottery scheme	Good	Project management of the lottery-funded capital scheme to ensure improvements are achieved and visits increase	JT	Quality of improvements Increased visitors	Quarterly	June 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/controls to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPIs	Review dates	Key dates
Implement management plans for parks and open spaces	Good	Management plans are monitored and updated quarterly	JT	Quality of maintenance as per management standard Visitors' numbers remain the same or improve	Quarterly	April 2012

Risk 5 The Council needs to ensure that residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are; vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced: Head of Housing and Community Safety

Management Action Plan

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Likelihood	6				
	5			5	
	4				
	3				
	2				
	1				
		1	2	3	4
		Impact			

Risk Number	Current Risk Score	Target Risk Score	Description
5	5,3	4,3	The Council needs to ensure that residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are; vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced.
Notes:			
The council has partnership arrangements with a variety of statutory and voluntary agencies that work towards reducing inequalities. Some of these relationships are more effective than others in tackling key issues. As funds reduce following the comprehensive spending review it becomes paramount for the council to engage in effective relationships and initiatives if it is to reduce the current risk assessment from 5,3			

Risk Owner: Head of Housing and Community Safety (John Littlemore)

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review Dates	Key dates
Review of the Local Strategic Partnership arrangements	Good	Review existing LSP arrangements which includes their constitutions and associated delivery groups Finalise locality board proposal	JL/SR	New constitution in place with clear terms of reference and outcome focused targets	Annual	April 2012
Review existing partnerships that exist with various statutory and voluntary agencies to ensure they are relevant and effective in delivering the council's priorities	Good	Build upon existing relationships and explore new partnerships; the council to adopt an enabling role that encourage and assists stakeholders and the community to deliver change; encourage the use of payment by result for those organisations that receive grants from the council	SR	Effective partnerships that produce tangible improvements	Annual	Feb 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review Date	Key dates
Experience has been gained through consultations on specific topics e.g. waste, budget planning; Planning for Real	Average	Improve consultation with the community to provide clarity on what communities need and how best to deliver support to meet these needs; Lessons to be understood from the Planning for Real pilot.	JB	Adoption of a community engagement toolkit	Annual	August 2012
		Engage communities so people have the opportunity to participate and have a real say in what happens in their local areas; Review best practice elsewhere to understand what makes effective consultation and participation			Annual	August 2012
Improve social, economic and environmental outcomes for communities in priority areas	Average	Develop a clear, multi-agency plan for the Parkwood Pilot that has outcome focused targets which partners with a mandate to resolve can be challenged to deliver in conjunction with the council	JB	Area based action plan developed and agreed by the community. Monitoring Action Plan	Annual	August 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review Date	Key dates
Improving the health of people living in the borough and reduce health inequalities through a programme of healthy weight, mental health, wellbeing and community cohesion delivered in partnership with the Health Authorities	Average	Review outcomes from the first programme to understand what worked well and where there were failures. Use this intelligence together with improved consultation with service users to better inform the next stage of funding from the Health Service	JB	Health outcomes improve	Annual	Dec2011
Review the Sustainable Community Strategy	Average	Review requirement for the SCS in line with Government legislation and as part of LSP review. Ensure SCS or replacement document is relevant and is responsive to today's challenges	SR	The council responsive to changes at a local and national level	Annual	August 2012
Develop a Maidstone view of the Big Society and its role within the community	Limited	The policy has yet to be fully evolved by government but is expected to play a major role in delivering services; the council needs to develop its interpretation of the Big Society and promote this to the community	SR	The council expresses its interpretation of the Big Society	Annual	Dec 2011

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review Date	Key dates
The council works in partnership with local housing providers and schools & colleges to improve life outcomes	Average	Investigate alternative methods for generating more effective outcomes for educational attainment and t help eradicate worklessness	JL	Improved results against education and worklessness measures	Quarterly	Annual

Risk 6 The Council needs to deliver value for money council services that residents are satisfied with: Head of Change and Scrutiny

Management Action Plan

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Likelihood	6				
	5				
	4				
	3			6	
	2				
	1				
		1	2	3	4
		Impact			

Risk Number	Current Risk Score	Target Risk Score	Description
6	3,3	2,3	The Council needs to deliver value for money services that residents are satisfied with.
Notes: Whilst the impact of this risk is severe the likelihood is low as we currently have a number of measures in place to combat and manage the risk. The Management action plan therefore focuses on improving the measures in place and introducing new measures where there are gaps.			

Risk Owner: Head of Change and Scrutiny (Angela Woodhouse)

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review Dates	Key dates
Programme of Business Improvement	Poor	Agree with Cabinet and SMT what we mean by improvement and change	AW and AB	Definition agreed and shared Services identified		Nov 2011
		Identify which services are required to be reviewed Identify and agree tools for improvement and change	Cabinet and CMT Cabinet and CMT	Resources and approach agreed Services reviewed and changes implemented		Nov 2011
		Set a business improvement programme	GH			Dec 2011

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review Date	Key dates
Programme of Benchmarking in place	Adequate	Value for Money group to direct support group to carry out programme of benchmarking and identify action to be taken as a result of benchmarking	PR	Action is taken to reduce costs increase efficiency learning from others	Annual	Jan 2012
Value for money working group.	Adequate	Review working group and identify action plan for the year	PR	The costs of council services are reduced	Annual	April 2012

Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review Date	Key dates
Communications Strategy	Adequate	Measure customer satisfaction with priority services on a biennial basis.	RA and AW	Survey carried out	Biennial	Sept 2011
		Report publicly on satisfaction levels.		Customer satisfaction reported	Quarterly in line with PI reporting	March 2012
		Identify actions to address satisfaction performance indicators if they are below target.		Action plan created following consultation		March 2012

		Report to the public on performance measures for front-line services through Borough Update and the Website		Survey used to identify areas that are important to the public and measures reported		aug 2012
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Action/controls already in place	Adequacy of action/control to address risk	Required management action/control	Responsibility for action	Critical success factors & KPI's	Review Date	Key dates
Workforce Planning & Performance Management	Good -	Appraisal returns monitored and action identified for improvement	DS	% return rate Strategy produced and agreed	Biennial	June & Nov 2011
		All managers to have performance appraisal training.				June & Nov 2011
		Induction processes followed for all new staff				June & Nov 2011
		Write workforce planning strategy and agree action plan				Dec 2011

		Implement action plan	Corporate Management Team		In accordance with agreed plan	Dec 2011
Performance Management	Good -Very effective management and control system in place with covalent as well as a data quality policy	Data Quality policy revised and actions implemented	AW	Revised Policy approve and enacted	quarterly	30 Sept 2011

Agenda Item 14

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

14 September 2011

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

Report prepared by Karen Luck

1. **FORWARD PLAN**
- 1.1 Issue for Decision
- 1.1.1 To note the Forward Plan for the period 01 October 2011 – 31 January 2012.
- 1.2 Recommendation of the Leader of the Council
- 1.2.1 That the proposed Forward Plan for the period 01 October 2011 – 31 January 2012 be noted.
- 1.3 Reasons for Recommendation
- 1.3.1 The Forward Plan is a way to ensure that members of the public have longer from the point at which they learn that a decision is coming up, until the time it is made, to encourage greater interaction between stakeholder and decision makers.
- 1.3.2 The Forward Plan is published monthly, to cover decisions starting on the first day of each month and is a rolling four month programme of decisions.
- 1.3.3 The current index to the proposed Forward Plan is attached as an Appendix to this report. However, please note that Officers have until 12 Noon on 14 September 2011 to submit further entries or make any amendments.
- 1.3.4 If Members wish to receive a complete copy of the Forward Plan it can be obtained from Karen Luck (01622) 602743 and from 16 September 2011 will be on public deposit in the following locations: The Gateway, Public Libraries and the maidstone.gov website.
- 1.4 Alternative Actions and why not recommended
- 1.4.1 The proposed Forward Plan includes key decisions as defined in the Constitution and the development of the budget and plans which form the policy framework. The entries have been made by the relevant managers who have the best idea of the issues likely to be coming up.
- 1.5 Impact of Corporate Objectives
- 1.5.1 The Forward Plan should help to realise on the core values set out in the Corporate Plan as follows:

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

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 There are no risk management implications in this report.

1.7 Other Implications

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

1.8 Background Documents

None

<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:	
.....	

Index October 2011 – January 2012

Title	Decision Maker and Date of Decision
ICT Partnership	Cabinet 12 October 2011
Local Development Scheme 2011	Cabinet 12 October 2011
Tendering Strategy – Waste and Recycling Contract from 2013	Cabinet 12 October 2011
Budget Strategy 2012/13 Onwards	Cabinet 21 December 2011
Council Tax 2012/13 – Collection Fund Adjustments	Cabinet 21 December 2011
Building Surveying Charges	Cabinet 11 January 2012
CCTV Monitoring – Contract Award	Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure October 2011
Community Development Strategy 2011 to 2016	Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure November 2011
Maidstone Local Bio Diversity Action Plan	Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure November 2011
Parish Services Scheme	Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure December 2011
Adoption of Dog Control Orders in Maidstone	Cabinet Member for Environment December 2011

Last submission date for next Forward Plan: 14 September 2011
 Publication of next Forward Plan: 16 September 2011