

AGENDA

CORPORATE SERVICES AND COMMUNITIES JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING



Overview and Scrutiny

Date: Tuesday 29 November 2011

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors: Ash, Mrs Blackmore, English, Field,
FitzGerald, Mrs Gibson, Mrs Gooch,
Hogg, D Mortimer, Paine, Mrs Parvin,
Paterson, Pickett, Mrs Stockell,
de Wiggondene, Mrs Wilson and Yates

Page No.

1. **The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda be web-cast.**
2. **Apologies.**

Continued Over/:

Issued on 21 November 2011

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact Orla Sweeney on 01622 602524**. To find out more about the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk/osc

Alison Broom

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

3. Notification of Substitute Members.

4. Notification of Visiting Members.

5. Disclosure by Members and Officers:

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

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

7. Parish Services Scheme

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Interviews with:

- Councillor John Wilson, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services;
- Zena Cooke, Director of Regeneration and Communities;
- Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Customer Services;
- Ryan O'Connell, Corporate Projects and Overview and Scrutiny Manager;
- Geraldine Brown, Chairman of Kent Association of Local Councils;
- John Perry, Chairman of Staplehurst Parish Council;
- A representative from Bredhurst Parish Council; and
- Harry Rayner, Chairman of Wrotham Parish Council (Borough of Tonbridge and Malling).

Maidstone Borough Council

Joint Corporate Services and Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 29 November 2011

Parish Services Scheme

Report of: Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 A concurrent function is a function or service that can be carried out by two or more local authorities. Section 136 of the Local Government Act 1972 states that: 'Two or more local authorities may make arrangements for defraying any expenditure incurred by one of them in exercising any functions exercisable by both or all of them.'
- 1.2 Overview and Scrutiny have a duty to hold the executive to account as part of the decision making process. In December 2011 the Executive will be considering the outcome of the concurrent functions review and agreeing a new Parish Services Scheme.
- 1.3 The decision on the new Parish Services Scheme cuts across the remit of two Overview and Scrutiny Committees; value for money and the Medium Term Financial Strategy for Corporate Service and the impact on Parishes for Communities. Therefore a joint meeting is appropriate.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to consider whether the proposed Parish Services Scheme (**Appendix A**) is 'fit for purpose' and make recommendations as appropriate. The Committee should consider, as a background to this, the current scheme as well as the Council's current financial planning constraints including the impact of the Government's comprehensive spending review on the Council's strategic and financial priorities.
- 2.2 The Committee are recommended to interview Councillor John Wilson, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services, Zena Cooke, Director of Regeneration and Communities, Ryan O'Connell, Corporate Projects and Overview and Scrutiny Manager, Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Customer Services, Geraldine Brown, Chairman of Kent Association of Local Councils, John Perry, Chairman of Staplehurst Parish Council, a representative from Bredhurst Parish Council and Harry Rayner Chairman of Wrotham Parish Council (Borough of Tonbridge and Malling).

3 The Strategic Plan and the Council's Priorities

3.1 The Council's new priorities, as set out in the new Strategic Plan 2011-15 (as identified in the Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-20). The three priorities and six outcomes set out in the strategic plan are:

- a) For Maidstone to have a growing economy
 - A transport network that supports the local economy
 - A growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy
- b) For Maidstone to be a decent place to live
 - Decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures
 - Continues to be a clean and attractive environment for people who live and visit the borough
- c) Corporate and customer excellence
 - 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 Council will continue to have value for money services that residents are satisfied with.

3.2 The Committee should consider the proposed new scheme primarily against priority c) and specifically its two outcomes.

4 The Budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS)

4.1 Maidstone Borough Council has historically considered strategic budget issues at an early stage. As part of the development of the 2012/13 budget strategy and to enable balanced consideration of the MTFS with the revised strategic plan, there has been a focus on the council's three key priorities in order to identify and prioritise actions to achieve the six outcomes that support the priorities. The MTFS and the strategic plan must be closely aligned to achieve maximum benefit. The MTFS assumes a complete reduction in concurrent functions grant by 2014/15 with a provision for growth of £80,000 to support some parish funding.

4.2 The Council faces a number of financial pressures including:

- A cut to the Revenue Support Grant;
- Reduced Council Tax Income;
- Reduced Service income;
- Increase in service costs, and

Other factors and considerations, for example:

- Introduction of Welfare Reform.

- 4.3 The Council is therefore prioritising all spending on all services.
- 4.4 The changes to Benefits with the Government's Welfare Reforms and the introduction of Universal Credit will place additional financial pressures on the authority. The implementation of Welfare Reforms which began in April 2011 will place an emphasis on the authority to protect the most vulnerable people in the borough in its administration of Council Tax Benefit.
- 4.5 The Committee may wish to consider the relationship between the Concurrent Function Grant and the Council's budget and savings over an extended time frame as shown in the graph (**Appendix B**) **to follow.**

5. The Current Scheme

- 5.1 The Council has had a Concurrent Functions scheme in place since 1974. The current scheme, including amendments, (**Appendix C**) has been in existence for over 20 years. The scheme details a number of Concurrent Functions headings under which the Parish allocates Concurrent Functions expenditure. The Parish is required to tell the Council how much they have spent under each. The grant is then paid in two instalments up to the maximum allowance. The maximum allowance consists of a 'block grant' (a set amount) and an amount per head of population.

6. The proposed Parish Services Scheme

- 6.1 The proposed Parish Services Scheme is the result of a review which began in January 2011. Throughout the review there has been consultation with parishes and the Kent Association of Local Councils. The main consultation began in August 2011 with a presentation (**Appendix D**) and question and answer session for all Parish Councils. The timetable has subsequently been amended, with the parish consultation ending on 25 November 2011. A transitional year, 2012/13, has now been agreed.
- 6.2 The proposed Parish Services Scheme (**Appendix A**) has the following aims:
- To ensure equity of council tax funded service provision between non-parished and parished areas;
 - Accountability and Transparency; and
 - To provide a mechanism to agree the local provision of services.

- 6.3 'Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) will provide funding via funding agreements for specific concurrent services provided by parishes in their area. Any service funded through this scheme will need to be assessed and meet MBC's corporate and service priorities.'

7. Concurrent Function Grant Provisions in Kent

- 7.1 Of the 11 other local authorities in Kent, three have a Concurrent Grant provision. Canterbury's grant is awarded on the basis of scoring on specific criteria as desirable or non-desirable when grants are applied for. Tonbridge and Malling's grants are allocated on population within each parish and Ashford's grants are allocated in line with the Parish Tax Base but will be cut in line with the Borough's grant cut. See table attached at **Appendix E**.
- 7.2 The Committee may wish to interview the Chairman of Wrotham Parish Council, Harry Rayner, to gain an understanding of how Concurrent Function Grants are administered in other areas.

8. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 8.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the Council's priorities:
- 'Corporate and Customer Excellence'
 - 'For Maidstone to have a growing economy'; and
 - 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live';
- 8.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. The Committee's work will contribute to the delivery of these key objectives over the next year.

9. Further Information and background reading.

- 9.1 There is a wide range of information available on Concurrent Functions. This can be provided on request. Please contact Orla Sweeney on 01622 602524.

Maidstone Borough Council

Parish Services Scheme

1. The Parish Services Scheme has the following aims:
 - To ensure equity of council tax funded service provision between non-parished and parished areas;
 - Accountability and Transparency; and
 - To provide a mechanism to agree the local provision of services
2. Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) will provide funding via funding agreements for specific concurrent services provided by parishes in their area. Any service funded through this scheme will need to be assessed and meet MBC's corporate and service priorities.
3. MBC will meet with parishes on an individual basis to put in place a single funding agreement to cover multiple services. This agreement can be amended to include additional services or remove services at additional meetings with the parish. Funding agreements will run for several years, to be determined in each case, with annual reviews and suggestions for improved working between MBC and the parish, for example through making MBC contract prices available to a parish.
4. The services previously funded through a concurrent functions grant have been categorised as set out below. This is to enable parishes to see what sort of service they can propose for funding and the factors that will be considered in discussions with parishes on service funding.
5. Category 1 - services that would be provided by MBC in a parished area because an equivalent service provision is made in non-parished areas fall under category 1. Funding these services avoids double taxation in parish areas. Funding agreements could be put in place for these functions. Each service would be assessed based on MBC standards and costs for non-parish areas.
6. Category 2 - functions that MBC provides for either the whole borough or not at all. Therefore a parish undertaking these services is in addition to the borough level of provision and should be paid for through parish funding (i.e. raising a precept). This is to avoid non-parish council tax subsidy of parished areas. Importantly, if an exceptional case can be demonstrated, funding agreements can be considered for these functions.
7. Category 3 is for functions provided by another authority. In the two cases listed the other authority is KCC. Parishes should contact KCC regarding the services they provide in this area. MBC will be happy to help with this liaison as required but will not be funding KCC services. In the case of footway lighting that is not of a sufficient standard to be adopted by KCC, MBC will consider providing if lights are on MBC owned land or are part of another service (for example in a park) that MBC is providing funding toward.
8. Category 4 covers those functions that are considered to be out of date or defunct and are therefore removed.

CATEGORY 1 - Functions to be assessed on a case by case basis to ensure they avoid double-taxation of parish areas

- **Administration** – These costs will be included in any agreement for provision of a service on behalf of MBC, but not paid in a lump sum.
- **Bus Shelters** – The provision of bus shelters is a discretionary service. MBC has previously assessed the provision of bus shelters in rural areas and was unable to use its agreement with a private contractor for the provision of free bus shelters as it does in some non-parished areas. Therefore there is the potential for one off payments to parishes for a bus shelter or for MBC to provide the bus shelter directly based on an assessment of the need identified and evidenced by the parish.
- **Off street car parking** – parking demand surveys would need to be conducted to confirm the need for the car park. A contribution could then be made toward the net cost of providing the car park.
- **Open spaces, Recreation Grounds and Village Greens** – These categories combined form the most significant area of expenditure by parishes and will be the subject of discussions with all parishes for funding contributions. Due to the complicated nature of the provision of open spaces, recreation grounds and village greens, including the status of land ownership, leases etc. it will be necessary to always assess these on a case by case basis. The assessments will be based on standards applied across the whole Borough and the maintenance cost of land will be calculated based on MBC's contract costs. MBC will endeavour to make its contract arrangements and prices available for Parishes to utilise where possible.
- **Play Areas** – An audit will be carried out of play areas across the borough. Where a need is identified in a parish area MBC will fund, through this scheme, the provision of the play area(s) necessary to meet that need and to MBC's standards. Additional play areas should be paid for through precepts.
- **Play Schemes** – Funding could be provided for the net cost of these – possibly through increased play scheme grants through existing system.

Maidstone Borough Council

Parish Services Scheme

- **Public war memorials** – MBC will consider a contribution toward public war memorials and will set the contribution based on how much MBC would expect to pay to maintain the war memorial were it to carry out the work itself. Where this is a one-off capital cost rather than regular maintenance this will need to be considered for funding separately to the parish services scheme.
- **Other one off functions as identified with individual parishes** – functions which the parish want to provide on behalf of the borough through a service level agreement – to be identified with each parish.

CATEGORY 2 - Provided by MBC for whole or none of the borough – would lead to non-parished areas subsidising parishes through council tax. If extraordinary circumstances can be demonstrated funding agreements could be considered

- **Allotments** – Both parish and borough councils are responsible for provision of allotments and manage their own sites and allocations.
- **Burial Ground, Cemeteries & Crematoria (not closed churchyards)** – Vinters Park Crematorium and Maidstone Cemetery are run for whole borough not just non-parished areas, therefore additional provision should be paid for at parish discretion. The cemetery has capacity for over 50 years of burials.
- **CCTV (installation and maintenance)** – MBC provides a CCTV service for the Borough. Some parished areas pay for coverage in their area. Where the CCTV service assesses the need for additional CCTV cameras and this is technically feasible MBC will consider expanding its existing camera estate. In some cases there may be a contribution required from parishes to make this feasible.
- **Entertainment & the arts** – MBC provides central facilities for entertainment and the arts and can be contacted to discuss individual events in parishes.
- **Litter bins** – duty to remove litter falls to Borough Council and covers whole Borough, additional bins can be provided and paid for by parish at their discretion. In some cases MBC empties the additional parish bins as a service and at a cost to the parish. This cost cannot be claimed through a funding agreement.
- **Public conveniences** – MBC now offers the community facility alternative in non-parished areas and currently provides a separate public conveniences payment to parishes.
- **Street sweeping** – MBC provides Borough wide coverage, additional sweeping will need to be funded by the parish.
- **Tourism Encouragement** – MBC have a borough wide approach to tourism encouragement (visitor economy). Additional specific activities in parish areas will need to be paid for by the parish.

Maidstone Borough Council

Parish Services Scheme

- **Village Halls and Community Centres** – MBC would not run these facilities in the event of the parish ceasing to operate them. MBC would look to lease council owned facilities on long term leases, giving consideration to community need, where possible.

CATEGORY 3 - Functions that are the responsibility of another authority (KCC)

- Footway Lighting (see paragraph 6 above)
- Traffic Calming and Road Safety Issues

CATEGORY 4 - Headings that are out of date/defunct

- **Boating Pools**
- **Charities (must operate within parish boundary and contribution must cover one of the concurrent functions listed)** – If the donation is part of service delivery it will be covered by the funding agreement for the relevant service.
- **Conferences** – Conferences would not fall under a funding agreement as they are not a service.
- **Grants to Bus Operators** – providing grants to bus operators is not a service. Public transport issues are considered for the whole borough by MBC.
- **Information about transport** – please note that KCC provide bus information at bus stops in the town centre.
- **Notice Boards** – Parish notice boards are specifically for the use of parish councils. MBC has no interest in these.
- **Public Clocks** – the council would not pick up the costs for maintaining public clocks.
- **Subsidies for uneconomic post or telecommunication services** – Modern changes to post and communications render this far less relevant than previously.
- **Taxi fare concessions**

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

SCHEMES FOR

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

AVAILABLE TO PARISH AREAS

CONTENTS

CONCURRENT FUNCTIONS

1. WHAT IS A CONCURRENT FUNCTION
2. THE CONCURRENT FUNCTION AGREEMENT
3. THE CONCURRENT FUNCTION TIMETABLE
4. THE GENERAL SCHEME
 - 4.1 ALLOCATION METHOD
 - 4.2 WHAT CAN I SPEND THE GRANT ON
 - 4.3 THE END OF YEAR CERTIFICATE
5. CARRY FORWARDS AND UNDERSPENDS
6. CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE

1. WHAT IS A CONCURRENT FUNCTION?

A concurrent function is a function or service that can be carried out by two or more local authorities. The provision of resources for such services is contained in Section 136 of the Local Government Act 1972.

The list on the next page details the services/functions covered by your concurrent function agreement. Maidstone Borough Council is always willing to consider additional services to those already included on the programme.

When requests are made for additional services, careful consideration is given to the matter and every endeavour is made to include any valid suggestion. However this is not always possible because:-

1. Some services have been specifically excluded from the scheme:-
eg. Planning.
2. Some services are not concurrent because they can only be provided by the Borough Council OR the Parish Council but not both: - ie. Closed Churchyards.
3. Some services are not concurrent because the Parish Council does not itself have the power to perform them but acts as the agent of the Borough Council: - ie. Street sweeping.

CONCURRENT FUNCTION SERVICES

Acquisition of land for the purpose of a concurrent service

Allotments

Boating Pools

Burial Ground, Cemeteries & Crematoria (not closed churchyards)

Bus Shelters

CCTV (installation and maintenance)

Charities (must operate within parish boundary and contribution must cover one of the concurrent functions listed)

Commons, common pastures & open spaces

Conferences

Cost incurred in administering concurrent services (up to 20% of grant)

Entertainment & the arts

Footway lighting

Grants to Bus Operators

Information about transport

Off street car parking

Play schemes

Provision of litter bins

Public Clocks

Public conveniences

Recreation grounds

Subsidies for uneconomic post or telecommunication services

Taxi fare concessions

Tourism encouragement

Traffic calming & Safety Issues

Village greens

Village halls & community centres

War memorials

Notice Boards

2. THE CONCURRENT FUNCTION AGREEMENT

This document sets out the Borough Councils obligations and the Parish Councils obligations within the terms of the agreement:-

The Borough Council will :-

1. Inform the Parish Council of the level of grant due prior to the beginning of the financial year.
2. Pay the 1st & 2nd grant instalments on 31st May & 31st October.
3. Withhold grant payments until an end of year certificate has been provided by the Parish Council.
4. Reduce the amount of the current year's grant by the amount of any previous years underspend.

The Parish Council will :-

1. Provide concurrent services in an efficient and economic manner.
2. Submit an end of year certificate within three months of the end of the financial year.
3. Effect adequate public & employee liability insurance in respect of the provision of concurrent function services.
4. Provide accounts relating to the provision of concurrent function services upon reasonable request.
5. Return any grant payment to the Borough Council which has not been spent on the provision of concurrent services.

3. THE CONCURRENT FUNCTION

TIMETABLE

DECEMBER	Notification letter to Parishes of grant allocation for forthcoming year based on final draft of register of electors.
JANUARY	Precept requirements can be assessed with the knowledge of the proposed level on concurrent function resources. Precept requests should be back by 31 January if possible, as this facilitates the efficient administration of the tax arrangements.
FEBRUARY	Precept must be set by the end of the month.
MARCH	End of year certificate for Concurrent Function expenditure despatched to Parishes.
MAY	End of year certificate should be returned to the Borough Council by the end of the month in order that the first grant instalment may be paid on 31 May. End of year certificate to be returned by the end of the month at the latest.
JULY & SEPTEMBER	Reminders sent to those Parishes that have still not submitted the end of year certificate.
OCTOBER	2 nd grant instalment paid.

4. THE GENERAL SCHEME

4.1 The Allocation Method

The current method of general allocation is twofold. Firstly every Parish receives a lump sum with the remaining resources being allocated to Parishes on a per capita basis. This method of allocation ensures that every Parish will have a basic minimum grant allocation regardless of the size of its population and the larger Parishes receive a larger grant allocation.

4.2 What can the Grant be spent on?

Parishes are able to allocate their funds to any Concurrent Function Service which is listed, as clearly Parish Councils are best placed to assess the priorities and needs of their own Parish.

The responsible Cabinet Member will always be willing to consider the addition of further services to the approved list.

Any underspend of funding will be accounted for in the following financial year. The method of payment is explained in greater detail in the following section (4.3).

4.3 The End of Year Certificate

This is a simple statement giving details of how the Concurrent Function grant has been spent.

The certificate is sent to each Parish Council during March and should be completed by the end of May, but at the very latest, the end of June.

There are two sections to be completed giving details of:-

- 1) Basic Grant Expenditure
- 2) Sums set aside for large projects

1) Basic Grant Expenditure

On this part of the form all Concurrent Function services will be listed. The net expenditure incurred in respect of any service must be entered on the form. Any funds allocated during the year towards a large project should also be included.

The amount of grant allocation for the year will be pre-printed on the form. Any overspend must be funded by the Parish Council, however an underspend will be deducted from the grant allocation in the following year.

Up to 20% of the total grant allocation may be attributed to the costs of administration. This may be anything from reimbursement to the Parish Clerk, to stationary, postage etc.

2) Large Projects

This section is intended to keep a record of the Parishes saving towards the project and to provide a reconciliation when the project is completed.

Any monies set aside during the current financial year will be shown under Basic Grant expenditure (see 1 above).

When the project is carried out the total cost can be entered on this part of the form. If the sum set aside amounts to more than the total cost of the project the balance must be repaid to the Borough Council.

5. THE CARRY FORWARD OF CONCURRENT FUNCTION RESOURCES FROM ONE FINANCIAL YEAR TO THE NEXT

Since June 1994 the Cabinet Member has had access in the following financial year to Parish Council underspends arising from the general scheme.

General Grant Underspends

These must be repaid to the Borough Council, in practice any underspend is deducted from the following year's grant.

These sums are then available to the Cabinet Member for distribution as current demands for funds dictates.

Large projects

Parishes may carry forward sums from their general grant allocation from one financial year to another if the following criteria are met.

- i) The funds are being put towards a large project which could not be funded by the parish from one year's resources.
- ii) What is considered to be a large project will vary according to the size of the parish and the level of its committed expenditure.
- iii) The intention to allocate funds towards a large project must be minuted prior to the end of the financial year in which funds are first allocated.
- iv) Continuity in the allocation of funds must be demonstrated from year to year.
- v) This method of carrying forward funds is not a means of utilising a one-off underspend occurring in a particular financial year.

6. CLOSED CHURCHYARD MAINTENANCE GRANTS

This is paid to Parochial Church Councils and is intended to cover 50% of the net cost of maintaining the closed churchyard up to a predetermined maximum.

Parochial Church Councils are required to complete a certificate at the beginning of each financial year, giving details of the actual closed churchyard income and expenditure for the preceding year and applying for grant aid in the current financial year.

Further details are available from John Owen on 01622 602039.

Concurrent Functions

- Objectives and Approach
- Current scheme
- New Scheme
- Implementation



Objectives

- To clarify our proposals
- To set the timetable for the transition to a new scheme
- To inform parishes of the consultation process
- To be as open and transparent as possible



Our Approach

- Appreciate the role of parishes
- Do not want to damage our relationship
- New way of working in a different climate
- Build relationships including alternatives to finances
- Keep localism in mind



Local Government Act 1972

136 Contributions towards expenditure on concurrent functions

Two or more local authorities may make arrangements for defraying any expenditure incurred by one of them in exercising any functions exercisable by both or all of them.



Aims of current scheme

- To avoid double taxation in parish areas
- To give full discretion to parish councils
- Minimise administration
- Achieves all three aims but...



Consequences

- Minimal controls and monitoring
- Funding has not been aligned against MBC objectives
- Some subsidisation of parish areas by non-parish areas
- Unsustainable grant in current climate



2012/13

- Current scheme will continue
- Current budget only allows for a maximum pot of £203k
- Separate discussions to take place with KALC between now and December
- Important but can have no impact on them today



New Scheme

Aims

- To ensure equity of council tax funded service provision between non-parished and parished areas
- Accountability and transparency; and
- To provide a mechanism to agree the local provision of services

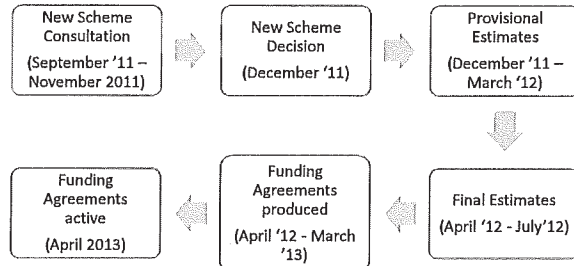


Scheme Outline

- See 'Parish Services Scheme' document
- No open grant pot from 2013/14
- Funding provided for MBC priority services
- Funding Agreements in place
- Parish discharge the service as they see fit – just need to meet the standards
- Open for other services to be included in future (phase 2)



Implementation



New Scheme Consultation

- 9 September 2011 – Financial information to be returned
- 30 September 2011 – Consultation document issued
- 11 November 2011 – Deadline for comments on consultation document
- December 2011 – Proposed scheme reviewed and finalised



New Scheme Decision

- 1 December 2011 – Report to Cabinet Member published
- 9 December 2011 – Decision taken by Cabinet Member on the new scheme
- 16 December 2011 – Call-in period ends



Provisional Funding Estimates

- Financial returns analysed
- New scheme applied – services MBC will fund identified
- Meeting with parish to consider special cases
- Provisional estimate based on 2010/11 figures provided



Final Funding Estimates

- 2011/12 Financial return to be provided by 31 May 2012
- Standard returns for final year of grant, plus
- Detailed finance forms completed for agreed parish services
- Final estimate given 30 September 2012



Which Funding Estimate?

- 3 estimates will be produced
 - MBC estimate (our decision – no financial return)
 - Provisional estimate (negotiated based on 10/11)
 - Final estimate (accurate based on 10/11 and 11/12)



Funding Agreements produced

- Negotiations begin January 2012
- Estimates based on agreed services
- Use Parish Services Scheme
- New services and ideas welcome
- Signed by both parties in 2012/13



Funding Agreements Active

- Live and monitored from April 2013
- Open to amendment and review
- New services considered with business case (phase 2)



What is a Funding Agreement?

- Sets standards and amount paid toward service(s)
- Run for agreed period but reviewed annually
- Not a contract – more flexible and rely on trust
- Not a service agreement – parish discretion



Advantages

- Ensures accountability and transparency
- Confidence in funding
- Clear service expectations
- Services are genuinely concurrent
- Delivers priorities
- Parishes retain control of service (not a contract)
- MBC audit controls over expenditure



Disadvantages

- Financial demands on MBC services
- Increased admin, particularly for MBC
- Less parish services funded by MBC
- Less flexibility
- Enforcement and recovery needed



What next

- Follow consultation timetable
- Views and comments from parishes welcome
- Where can we work smarter together?
- Alternatives to financial provision – parish input into services



What we want from you

- Feedback and discussion today
- Financial information (9 Sept 11 & 31 May 12)
- Response to consultation document
- Contacts for funding agreements and estimate discussions



Authority	Concurrent Grant Provision Made (Y/N)	Total Grant 2010/11 £k	Population 000s	Concurrent Grant Per Population	Details of Grant Scheme Administration
Maidstone	Y	423	145	£2.92	
Canterbury	Y	226	150	£1.51	Scored on specific criteria as desirable or non-desirable. Grants are applied for
Dartford	N	0	92		
Sevenoaks	N	0	115		
Shepway	N	0	100		
Tonbridge & Malling	Y	295	117	£2.52	Allocated on population within each parish
Tunbridge Wells	N	0	107		
Ashford	Y	77	114	£0.68	Allocated over Parish Tax Base. Will be cut in line with Borough's grant cut
Dover	N	0	107		
Thanet	N	0	130		
Swale	N	0	132		
Gravesham	N	0	98		