

AGENDA

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING



Date: Tuesday 1 March 2016
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Ash (Vice-Chairman), Ells, Fissenden,
Fort, Hemsley, Mrs Hinder, Newton
(Chairman), Paterson and Pickett

Page No.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Notification of Substitute Members
3. Urgent Items
4. Notification of Visiting Members
5. Disclosures by Members and Officers
6. Disclosures of Lobbying

Continued Over/:

Issued on Monday 22 February 2016

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

7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information
8. Minutes of the meeting held on 5 January 2016
9. Presentation of Petitions (if any)
10. Questions and answer session for members of the public
11. Report of the Head of Finance and Resources - Plaques and People: a proposed protocol for the borough of Maidstone
12. Oral Update of the Parks and Leisure Manager - Play Area Capital Programme Project
13. Report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development - Maidstone Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan
14. Report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development - Revised Festivals and Events Policy
15. Report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development - Destination Management Plan Progress Update
16. Report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development - Policy for the Use of Jubilee Square

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 5 JANUARY 2016

Present: Councillor Newton (Chairman), and
Councillors Ash, Ells, Fissenden, Fort, Hemsley,
Paterson, Perry and Pickett

Also Present: Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Sargeant
and Vizzard

66. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Mrs Hinder.

67. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was noted that Councillor Perry was substituting for Councillor Mrs Hinder.

68. **URGENT ITEMS**

Members noted that there were two Urgent Items, the report of the Head of Finance and Resources - Medium Term Financial Strategy 2016-17 Onwards – Final Update and the report of the Head of Finance and Resources – Change to the Committee Cycle for Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee.

69. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor Vizzard indicated that he wished to speak on the Museum's Development Plan. Councillors Mrs Blackmore and Sargeant reserved their right to speak on any item.

70. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

71. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

72. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

73. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 3 NOVEMBER 2015

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 3 November 2015 be approved as a correct record and signed.

74. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no Petitions.

75. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

76. REFERENCE FROM THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE - DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN

Members considered the Reference from Policy and Resources which set out the nominations for the Task and Finish Groups.

RESOLVED: That the approved representatives for the Task and Finish Groups as nominated by Policy and Resources Committee be agreed.

77. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS - STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-20 REFRESH

Members considered the report of the Head of Policy and Communications which set the direction for the next five years of the Strategic Plan and the Committee's priority action areas.

RESOLVED: That:-

- 1) The projects under the priority action areas be agreed; and
- 2) The action plan, milestones and outcomes attached as Appendix 1 to the report of the Head of Policy and Communications be agreed.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

78. ORAL REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - UPDATE ON VISIT MAIDSTONE WEBSITE AND DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN ACTIONS

Members were given a tour of the Visit Maidstone website which had been launched in January 2015.

It was noted that 'Things to Do' was one of the most popular landing pages on the website.

In response to questions from Members, it was confirmed that:

- the website featured places of interest across the Borough, not just concentrated in the town centre
- the Parish Councils would be contacted to ensure that any events in their areas are included on the website

RESOLVED: That the information contained on the website be noted.

79. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - AMENDING AGREED MINUTES AND ADDING OMITTED DECISION TO DECISION NOTICE FOR PARKING CHARGES IN MOTE PARK

Members considered the report of the Head of Finance and Resources regarding the omission of part of the decision which related to the preferred options at paragraph 4 of the original report presented to the 13th July 2015 meeting.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the decision of the Committee on 13 July 2015 which agreed the second recommendation of the Report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development – Parking Charges in Mote Park, had been omitted from the minutes and decision notice be noted; and
- 2) That the Democratic Services Officer be instructed to amend the decision notice to include the omitted decision, wording as follows:

That the preferred options at paragraph 4 are approved to enforce the charges.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

80. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - MAIDSTONE MUSEUMS DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Members considered the report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development which set out proposals to restructure Maidstone Museum's Service and to agree the capital programme.

In response to Members questions, it was noted:-

- That the request for capital funding for children's parties was due to the fact that this was one of the Museum's best income generators and additional space was required to accommodate more parties.
- That more interactive displays would be commissioned as part of the plans for the future. However, in the meantime the Museum's website did offer a lot of interactive pages.
- That the Museums' Federation would be represented on the Strategic Board.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) The progress on the staff restructure, the appointment of a new full time Museum's Director and the museum improvements programme be noted;
- 2) The formation of a Museum's Strategic Board to develop and oversee delivery of a 20 year Strategic Plan for the Museum Service be agreed;
- 3) The appointment of the Chairmen of both Heritage, Culture and Leisure and Policy and Resources Committees to serve on the Museum's Strategic Board be supported; and
- 4) The first phase capital programme outlined for inclusion in the Council's capital programme which will go to Policy and Resources Committee on 27 January 2016 be agreed.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

81. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT - A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE FOR MOTE PARK

Members considered the report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development which informed the progress made with regard to various projects related to Mote Park, sought approval for the development of the outline spatial framework for locating the projects in Mote Park and sought approval for capital to deliver the programme of projects and improvements.

In response to Members' questions, it was noted:-

- That the Skate Park would be removed from the area adjacent to the Play Area but every effort will be made to relocate it within the Park.
- A competition would be launched for the design of the Visitor Centre.
- It was envisaged that the Adventure Zone would be built ahead of the toilet facilities. However, Officers were confident that there would be sufficient toilet facilities elsewhere in the Park until they are built.
- That at the Committee's request any consultation with Members should be to all Members, not just High Street Ward Members as what happens in the Park affects all residents.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) The progress of the programme of projects known as 'A sustainable future for Mote Park' be noted;
- 2) The development of the outline spatial framework for locating the projects in Mote Park be agreed;
- 3) A request to Policy and Resources Committee for £3.929m (subject to future review) of capital to deliver the programme of projects and improvements and to maximise operational and commercial opportunities be approved;
- 4) Should the capital programme bid be successful, delegated authority be given to the Head of Commercial and Economic Development to spend up to £100,000 developing the detailed plans; including the business case for the new visitor centre.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

82. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016-17 ONWARDS: FEES AND CHARGES**

The Committee considered the report of the Head of Finance and Resources which set out proposals for the level of fees and charges for 2016/17 for services where the Committee raises income by charging users of the service.

Members noted that the charge for memorial licences was significantly lower than other Cemeteries in Kent and should therefore be aligned as appropriate.

RESOLVED: That the proposed fees and charges for 2016/17 as set out in Appendix A to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources be approved, subject to the addition of an increase of £40 for memorial permits.

Voting: For: 7 Against: 0 Abstentions: 1

83. **REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2016-17 ONWARDS - FINAL UPDATE**

Members considered the report of the Head of Finance and Resources which detailed the current revenue and capital budget plans for the Committee.

The Head of Finance and Resources advised Members that when Policy and Resources Committee met on 16 December, the Government's financial settlement had not been released. Now that those figures had been fully considered, it had indicated that there would be significantly less resources available than earlier estimates.

Members were asked to consider accepting a further £30,000 assumption of income from the Café in Mote Park to produce as savings from this Committee.

RESOLVED: That:

- 1) The additional savings and efficiencies set out in Appendix B to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources be amended to £33,000;
- 2) The budget proposed for 2016/17, as set out in Appendix C to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources, be agreed and that this be confirmed to the Policy and Resources Committee; and
- 3) The capital programme 2016/17 to 2020/21, for this Committee, as set out in Appendix F to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources, be agreed and that this be confirmed to the Policy and Resources Committee for inclusion in the full programme.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

84. REPORT OF THE HEAD OF FINANCE AND RESOURCES - CHANGE TO THE COMMITTEE CYCLE FOR HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Members considered the report of the Head of Finance and Resources which had been requested by some Members of the Committee to put forward a Reference to the Democracy Committee to review the frequency of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee to monthly instead of bi-monthly when considering their review of the Constitution.

Members felt that this Committee should be given the same recognition as the other Service Committees especially as the areas under the Committee's remit contribute greatly to the visitor economy of this borough and have produced more commercialisation projects than any other.

RESOLVED: That the Democracy Committee be recommended to revise the frequency of meetings of this Committee from bi-monthly to monthly as part of its review of the Constitution in view of the anticipated increase in workload of this Committee.

Voting: For: 8 Against: 0 Abstentions: 0

85. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.45 p.m.

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

1 MARCH 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Plaques and People protocol

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Paul Riley, Head of Finance and Resources
Lead Officer and Report Author	Poppy Collier, Democratic Services Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Plaques and People protocol attached at Appendix A be considered.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all – through promoting Maidstone’s heritage

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	1 March 2016
Council	NA

Plaques and People protocol

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the Plaques and People protocol written by Councillor Pickett with input from Councillors English, Paterson and Newton, attached at appendix A, who request that it is considered by the Committee.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Maidstone Borough Council does not currently operate a plaque scheme.
- 2.2 There are several plaque schemes in place nationwide. A range of bodies can administer plaque schemes including local authorities, civic societies, residents associations, and societies of special groups.
- 2.3 There are plaques visible in the borough of Maidstone which have been erected by private persons and groups. An owner of a building can place a plaque on a building they own, subject to planning requirements. A notable example of a plaque already visible in the town centre is that dedicated to Edith Cavell, as erected on the wall of the Congregational Church in Week Street.
- 2.4 Members have drafted the attached Plaques and People protocol with the aim of standardising the process for the erection of plaques across the borough.

3. ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED

- 3.1 The Committee is asked to give consideration to the following Officer advice:

Paragraph	Advice
Paragraph 8: Depending on the merits, design, funding requirements and gravity of the application the HCL Committee could pass the application and recommend, in the first instance, to The Policy & Resources Committee and if listed building consent was required would go before the Planning Committee for approval, where a fee may be payable.	<p>If a protocol was put in place this would negate the need for the application to pass through committee as the process would be delegated to officers.</p> <p>The applicant would need to be responsible for gaining consent to place a plaque on a building from the building owner, and for going before the planning committee in the instance of an application regarding a listed building.</p>

<p>If a proposal was of sufficient merit e.g. a large memorial of artistic significance then it could be determined by a meeting of the full Council.</p>	<p>A large memorial would most certainly require planning permission. Funding for such a memorial would be determined via committee budget setting.</p>
<p>Paragraph 12: [12] Funding: Following deliberation and consultation the HCL should, if necessary amend or confirm the application accordingly. If proposed funding is not in place then research, if not already undertaken at the initial application stage, should be carried out to determine funding streams</p>	<p>Work would be required to establish how the research process would be implemented and by whom.</p>
<p>If funds are not available from section 106 contributions or funds allocated to the Committee from other sources then the committee should seek alternate resources. Funds could be raised by public subscription if it feels that the project has sufficient merit and should be taken forward.</p>	<p>Use of S106 money for such a scheme would need to meet all three legal tests for a S106 agreement, one of which is that it must be directly related to application in question. As such the proposal for a commemorative plaque would need to be identified before negotiations with the developer and a planning application S106 agreement was drawn up.</p> <p>Further work would be required to identify how public subscription would be led and managed.</p>
<p>Paragraph 14: Ownership & Maintenance: This would remain with Maidstone Borough Council [or the ruling body] who will be responsible for arranging the installation of the plaque or memorial and the future upkeep and repair as part of our Heritage and Culture strategy.</p>	<p>A budget would need to be allocated for the maintenance and upkeep of the plaques.</p> <p>There is not a Heritage and Culture strategy in place.</p>

3.2 In addition, an Equalities Impact Assessment would be required as with all new policies or procedures.

4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

4.1 The Committee could decide to consider the Plaques and People protocol attached at appendix A.

4.2 The Committee could decide not to consider the protocol attached at appendix A, but this is not recommended as the matter has come to Committee at Members' request.

5 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 5.1 The Committee could request Officers to conduct research into the budget, resource and implementation implications of the proposed protocol and report back to the next meeting of the Committee.
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6 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all, by highlighting the heritage of the borough.	Head of Finance and Resources
Risk Management		
Financial	Potential unaffordable costs to the Council exist in funding plaques, as well as future upkeep and repair.	Head of Finance & Resources
Staffing	Will require staff time allocated to the implementation of a new plaque scheme, research and in maintenance of the plaques.	Dawn Hudd, Head of Commercial and Economic Development
Legal	Legal had not reviewed at time of publication	[Legal Team]
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	New Policy EQIA Required as per Equality Policy	Clare Wood, Policy & Information Officer
Environmental/Sustainable Development		[Head of Service or Manager]
Community Safety		[Head of Service or Manager]
Human Rights Act		[Head of Service or Manager]
Procurement		[Head of

		Service & Section 151 Officer]
Asset Management		[Head of Service & Manager]

7 REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Plaques and People protocol

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

PLAQUES AND PEOPLE – A PROTOCOL FOR THE BOROUGH OF MAIDSTONE

Introduction

Maidstone Borough is rich in historic events and characters which deserve the opportunity to be recognised and remembered. We have successfully acknowledged some but others remain unmarked.

As a commitment to our local heritage it is proposed that a protocol be proposed that will provide an opportunity for Plaques and memorials to be placed in appropriate places in the Borough so that the story of our Town and Borough can be celebrated.

A recommendation that a “Plaques & People” Protocol should come under the auspices of the Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee.

[1] Where members of the public, Councillor or local organisation may suggest that a memorial plaque or monument be placed in the Borough to commemorate a historical event or personality.

[2] This has, of course, already occurred on an ad hoc basis as evidenced by examples of plaques already in place which include The Battle of Maidstone on the Town Hall, a plaque to commemorate Havock Lane at Fremlin Walk and the latest to honour Nurse Edith Cavell now on the wall of the Congregational Church in Week Street.

[3] The development of a formal protocol would assist in the bringing forward of submissions for plaques and memorials and accessing and investigating approaches for internal and external funding.

[4] If a funding application guide was brought forward it would in certain circumstances assist in securing appropriate funding through section 106 contributions for public art.

[5] Nomination procedure: All applications to be submitted to an appointed MBC officer who would have access to the HCL Committee. The officer in the first instance would verify the authenticity and legitimacy of the application and would research the facts of the proposal.

[6] A standard application form to be used with a section for funding proposals / requirements.*

[7] The officer, once satisfied that the application is bona fide would bring the proposal in the first instance to the HCL Committee for inspection and deliberation.

[8] Depending on the merits, design, funding requirements and gravity of the application the HCL Committee could pass the application and recommend, in the first instance, to The Policy & Resources Committee and if listed building consent was required would go before the Planning Committee for approval, where a fee may be payable.

The HCL Committee may seek expert advice and may wish to consult with the Conservation officer, KCC Highways, the parks department or where other open land is managed by that section and Planning department.

If a proposal was of sufficient merit e.g. a large memorial of artistic significance then it could be determined by a meeting of the full Council.

[9] Criteria for nomination: Relevant and significant association with Maidstone town and the Borough. To include events, persons or groups.

[10] Timescale for commemoration: This would depend on whether it was an event, person or group but in most cases would be to mark an anniversary or a person now deceased.

[11] Plaque / Memorial design: A “basic” plaque [The Maidstone plaque] should be of a standard design i.e. based on the majority already installed and to give a corporate image in the Borough.

The suggested design for the Maidstone / Borough plaque is:

Smooth Grey slate 18” [460mm] x 18” [460mm] x 1.25” [30mm] Inscription to be “V” cut in the stone in Times Roman style and letters enamelled in light grey. Prominent features such as a named person or event should be gilded using 23crt gold letters.

The HCL Committee could approve a different theme or design of a plaque or memorial depending on the subject and the type and style submitted on the application.

[12] Funding: Following deliberation and consultation the HCL should, if necessary amend or confirm the application accordingly. If proposed funding is not in place then research, if not already undertaken at the initial application stage, should be carried out to determine funding streams.

The application for a Plaque or memorial could be referred to the Policy and Recourses Committee to confirm or deny a funding request. If funds are not available from section 106 contributions or funds allocated to the Committee from other sources then the committee should seek alternate resources [Funds could be raised by public subscription] if it feels that the project has sufficient merit and should be taken forward.

[13] Names in the Town Hall Chamber:

Any proposal for a name to be added on the walls of the Town Hall chamber should go through the same procedure as for plaques and memorials.

Persons nominated should [at least one of the following]

Have a Strong and notable connection to the County Town.

Lived in the Borough and made a contribution of good work.

A person of historical standing who has by accident or design made Maidstone culturally richer or made a significant contribution or service to the life of the Borough.

[14] Ownership & Maintenance: This would remain with Maidstone Borough Council [or the ruling body] who will be responsible for arranging the installation of the plaque or memorial and the future upkeep and repair as part of our Heritage and Culture strategy.

* Specimen application Form

This proposed protocol report produced by Cllr David Pickett with input from / Cllr Clive English / Cllr Jenni Paterson / Cllr Gordon Newton.

Agenda Item 13

Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee

1st March 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

MAIDSTONE PARKS AND OPEN SPACES 10 YEAR PLAN

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Leisure and Culture Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Commercial and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Jason Taylor – Parks and Leisure Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That work continues on the Maidstone Parks and Open Spaces 10 year plan as detailed in this report.
2. That when a draft document is produced, committee members are invited to give their opinions and thoughts on the document.
3. That following consultation the committee will look to adopt the final Maidstone Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan in the later part of 2016.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all
 - Encouraging good health and wellbeing
 - Ensuring there are good leisure and cultural attractions

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	March 1 st 2016

MAIDSTONE PARKS AND OPEN SPACES 10 YEAR PLAN

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report presents the project framework and timetable for the production of a new Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan. This work is currently being undertaken by Jason Taylor, Maidstone Borough Council's Parks and Leisure Manager.
- 1.2 This project looks at the value and purpose of parks and open spaces in the Borough and how we currently manage them. It will ultimately provide an outline of how we should manage them in the future to ensure their sustainability.
- 1.3 Having a clear adopted 10 Year Plan will enable us to make best use of the resources available to us, bid to any relevant funding schemes which become available, have a clear set of objectives which we have agreed with our stakeholders, ensure that we put in place the most effective and efficient management arrangements for the future and encourage the use of our parks and open spaces by residents and visitors whilst contributing to the health and wellbeing agenda

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 This work will be carried out in three stages.
- 2.2 A review of our parks and open spaces to include: Parks, Play Areas, Allotments, Sports Pitches, Natural/Semi Natural and Events and how we manage and run them. This review will look at our own provision and compare it to how parks and open spaces belonging to others organisations are managed. There will be a review of how the value of green space is measured. This will involve reviewing academic research, online research and looking at case studies, to find good examples of best practice in other organisations that are managing their parks and open spaces with their future sustainability in mind. If appropriate, site visits will be arranged to view best practice elsewhere and to interview those involved in managing these sites.
- 2.3 Identifying any issues we currently have with the ongoing management of our parks and open spaces, compare how others deal with these issues and propose solutions on how MBC can resolve these issues in the future.

- 2.4 Production of a Draft Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan incorporating the work carried out above.

3. DOCUMENT FRAMEWORK

- 3.1 Below is a draft list of contents to be included in the plan. This will be developed further as research is undertaken and information comes to light but gives an idea of what is in scope and what the Plan will achieve.

- i. The Value of Open Spaces
 - a. Why we have open spaces – History
 - b. Research into open space and play – value of, links to health, other open spaces that work well, case studies, etc
 - c. MBC open space policies – Green and Blue infrastructure, Green Spaces Strategy 2004, Local Plan, LBAP, Play Strategies, etc

- i. Maidstone Open Spaces
 - a. Detail of MBC Spaces
 - b. Green Space Types and quantities (Amenity, Allotments, Sports, Natural/Semi Natural, Play)
 - c. Other Green Space Types – (Trees, River Park, Nature Reserves,)
 - d. Management Structure – Parks Team, Rangers, Grounds Maintenance

- ii. Maidstone Play Spaces
 - a. Play Area Strategy for the future building on £1.8m investment in 2016 and 2017.

- iii. Allotments

- iv. River Medway and River Len

- v. Friends and Volunteer Groups

- vi. Open Spaces and play areas for the Future
 - a. New Green Spaces – design of future open spaces
 - b. Festivals and Events in our Parks and Open Spaces
 - c. How will people use green spaces in the future (health and well being)
 - d. Biodiversity/Conservation objectives.

- vii. Sports Pitches

- viii. 10 year action plan
 - a. Actions for the various open space types (Amenity, Allotments, Sports, Natural/Semi Natural, Play, etc.)
 - b. Policies for various open space types as required

Current Issues

3.2 A number of the current issues have already been identified with our parks and open spaces and these will be considered and solutions sought during the course of this work. These are:

- a. Toilets – management, cleaning etc.
- b. Quality standards – how we measure these and the standard we are aiming for.
- c. Green space hierarchy – should resources be focused now or in the future.
- d. Car Parking – maintenance of, demand and provision.
- e. Dogs and waste management – control of dogs.
- f. Recycling provision
- g. Management Structure – Do we have the most effective management structure in place to manage our parks and open spaces in the most effective and efficient manner.
- h. First aid responsibilities – identify and agree.
- i. Income Generation /Commercialisation – in parks
- j. Sustainable Parks
- k. Funding sources
- l. Volunteering /Friends Groups – including support and resource allocation.
- m. Sponsorship – opportunities.
- n. Links to health and wellbeing.
- o. Cuts in resources – internal and external.
- p. Events and Festivals in our parks – internal and external
- q. Education/Interpretation – what we provide and funding
- r. Green space managed by other parties (parishes, other organisations)
- s. Who doesn't visit our open spaces and why not.
- t. Disposal of surplus open space
- u. Antisocial Behaviour in open spaces – can this be better managed
- v. MBC adoption of S106 onsite Developer contributions
- w. Local Nature Reserves – ambitions, how these are managed and by whom

3.3 Initial research has shown that there are a number of sources that will be invaluable to this work; these include The Parks Alliance, International Federation of Parks and Recreation Administration (IFPRA), NESTA and the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). There is also a considerable amount of information and guidance in work carried out by other local authorities and

other organisations so this will also be reviewed.

- 3.4 It is intended to look at how operators in the private and other sectors manage operations which are similar to those that we offer. Examples of these locally would be Bewl Water, Bedgebury Pinetum, the National Trust and any other similar facilities
 - 3.5 Once the initial research has taken place, consultation will be carried out with Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee, Maidstone residents and organisations such as the various friends of parks groups, allotment users, sports clubs and conservation groups to understand how they use our parks and open spaces get their views on how they think they should be managed in the future.
 - 3.6 It is important that groups that are perhaps not currently directly involved in our parks and open spaces, but could be in the future are consulted. Examples of these could be age concern, the NHS trust, local youth and disability groups.
 - 3.7 This work will take place over a six month period and it is envisaged that the final Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan will be agreed and adopted in the later part of the year
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4. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee could decide that they do not want a new Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan to be produced.
 - 4.2 This is not recommended as to not have this document will result in uncertainty for the future of these important assets.
 - 4.3 The committee are asked to identify any other areas that they would like to see included in the plan.
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5. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee agree to the following:

- 5.1 That work continues on the Maidstone Parks and Open Spaces 10 year plan as detailed in this report.
 - 5.2 That when a draft document is produced, committee members are invited to give their opinions and thoughts on the document.
 - 5.3 That following consultation the committee will look to adopt the final Maidstone Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan in the later part of 2016
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6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 Consultation will be carried out as detailed in the body of this report

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

7.1 Work will continue on the production of the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan and it will be brought back to the Committee for final decision later on in 2016

8. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Until a draft document is produced it will not be possible to identify any issues or implications. These will be highlighted in a later report when a draft of the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan has been produced.	Parks and Leisure Manager
Risk Management	The only current risk is that the work will not be able to be completed. This is a minimal risk as the resource has already been allocated to the production of the plan.	Parks and Leisure Manager
Financial	There are no long term financial implications at this time.	Parks and Leisure Manager
Staffing	Staff resource has been allocated to allow this work to take place.	Parks and Leisure Manager
Legal	There are no Legal implications at this time.	Parks and Leisure Manager
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	This will be carried out once a draft document has been produced.	Parks and Leisure Manager
Community Safety	No implications at this time.	Parks and Leisure Manager
Human Rights Act	No implications at this time.	Parks and Leisure

		Manager
Procurement	No implications at this time.	Parks and Leisure Manager
Asset Management	There are no implications at this time but production and adoption of the report should enable MBC to better manage its assets in future.	Parks and Leisure Manager
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Until a draft document is produced it will not be possible to identify any issues or implications. These will be highlighted in a later report when a draft of the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan has been produced.	Parks and Leisure Manager

9. REPORT APPENDICES

There are no appendices enclosed with this report

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

**HERITAGE, CULTURE AND
LEISURE COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday 1 March
2016**

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Revised Festivals and Events Policy

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Commercial & Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	MCL Marketing and Sales Manager Laura Dickson
Classification	Public
Wards affected	

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the committee approve the revisions to the Festivals and Events Policy as set out in Appendix 1.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all -
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough
 - § Ensuring there are good leisure and cultural attractions

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Committee (Heritage, Culture and Leisure)	1 March 2016

Revised Festivals and Events Policy

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The revised Festival and Events Policy provides classification of the size, type and purpose of events and proposes the recommended number and frequency of large events on council owned or managed land and venues.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Festival and Events Policy was written in 2014. Two areas of the policy required further research and were to be included once research was concluded. The revised policy now includes these two areas.
- 2.2 Section 4 describes the type and frequency of events. It defines what we mean by a major, large, medium and small event and the type i.e. commercial, charitable and community. It sets the maximum number of large festivals where there are considerable music noise levels.
- 2.3 The size classification for an event is based around the expected audience capacity. This is the maximum number of people expected to be at the event at one time, and not the total number of people who may experience the event throughout the day(s). The scale of an event is also considered where the event spans multiple days.
- 2.4 As large music events involving high powered amplification can cause disturbance to those living in the vicinity, the policy sets out the maximum number of these events in Mote Park and Whatman Park.
- 2.5 The number of amplified music events with a Music Noise Level (MNL) of up to and not exceeding 65dB(A) in Mote Park will be limited to 5 events per year. These events will be limited to a maximum of 3 consecutive days or a total of 8 days in the year. In Whatman Park the limit will be set to 3 events with a maximum of 2 consecutive days or a total of 5 days in a year.
- 2.6 If the frequency and timing of these events will cause additional disturbance, then the maximum Music Noise Level will be set lower and must be agreed to by the event organiser.
- 2.7 Section 9 includes references to health and safety legislation and guidance for events.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Committee decide to accept and approve the revisions to the Festivals and Events Policy.

3.2 The committee decide to reject the revisions to the Festival and Events Policy.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the committee accept the revisions to the policy. The policy enables the development of festivals and events, highlighted as an action in the Destination Management Plan.
- 4.2 The revised Festival and Events Policy will enable MBC to increase the income stream from festivals and events and ensure a sustainable use of the council's venues.
- 4.3 The revisions will ensure that we can hold festivals and events in MBC venues and ensure that they follow the same process to enable MBC to limit the amount of negative impacts and complaints.
-

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 None

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 The Festival and Events Policy will be published and shared with all stakeholders involved in delivering festivals and events.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Supports the ambition of ensuring there are good leisure and cultural attractions.	Head of Economic and Commercial Development
Risk Management	none	
Financial	none	
Staffing	none	
Legal	none	
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	none	
Environmental/Sustainable	none	

Development		
Community Safety	none	
Human Rights Act	none	
Procurement	none	
Asset Management	none	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Festivals and Events Policy Revised February 2016
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

**Maidstone Borough Council
Festivals & Events Policy
Revised February 2016**

**Version 3
February 2016**

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1. THE VISION

“To develop a festivals and events programme that creates a lively and vibrant place to live, work and visit, whilst ensuring the sustainable use of the Borough’s venues and;

That by 2017 Maidstone borough is recognised as a destination that hosts and develops high quality sustainable festivals and events; and cultivates community creativity for maximum economic benefit and social enjoyment.”

2. BACKGROUND

Well organised festivals and events are recognised for their ability to produce benefits for the local economy, bring life to an area, create interest in the area and reflect the place. This strategy will focus on events that take place in the boroughs parks and open spaces.

This document provides a strategic framework for events and festivals in Maidstone Borough. It recognises the fact that major events represent business, cultural leisure and sporting assets; they make a positive contribution in influencing perception of an area, in helping to stimulate economic activity and in enhancing social and cultural wellbeing.

Maidstone Borough has an established history and tradition of hosting Events and Festivals. There is a comprehensive and diverse range of activities; from music events, to community events that have direct links to the well-being and cohesion of the local community.

Due to the broad dynamics of events and festivals, which cover sports, leisure, special interest, culture, heritage and the arts they can each have a positive impact and make a significant contribution to the status and image of the Borough. Specific areas impacted by an events programme include:

- Quality of life improvements
- Community engagement and cohesion
- Economic value
- Social inclusion
- Education
- Prevention and diversion of anti-social behaviour
- Health, vitality & wellbeing
- Publicity & media exposure
- Added value to the Borough as a visitor destination
- Delivering & inspiring sporting opportunities
- Culture and artistic expression

Therefore, Events & Festivals constitute a fundamental element and vital component to the Borough; although all activities must be managed effectively and efficiently to maximise opportunities (e.g. by extending the season to create economic value), they should also minimise any negative impacts (i.e. on the environment).

The Borough's Events & Festivals are an integral part of delivering core elements of the Council's Strategic Plan, Economic Development Strategy, Destination Management Plan and our commitment to celebrating our rich culture and heritage.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Festivals & Events policy sets out the priorities, aims and objectives for the delivery of the Council's Events and Festivals programme and ensures that any current or proposed event, whether organised or supported by the Council or as an activity held on its land, can be evaluated against the following set of guiding principles:

3.1 Aims

Each event or festival should meet at least two of the aims and five of the objectives outlined:

- i. **Economy**
 - a) Generate income for the local economy.
 - b) Help to regenerate parts of the Borough.

- ii. **Community**
 - a) To develop, generate, facilitate and support cultural, economic, community and social events for the benefit of the Borough and its residents to improve quality of life.
 - b) Interest or involve the Boroughs diverse communities.
 - c) Prevent and divert anti-social behaviour.
 - d) Increase the number of volunteers at events.

- iii. **Destination Publicity**
 - a) Maximise promotional, publicity and marketing opportunities through the Events and Festivals programme
 - b) Promote Maidstone borough as a vibrant, successful place.
 - c) Encourage people and businesses to live in, invest in and visit Maidstone.

- iv. **Education and Employment**
 - a) Provide skills & learning opportunities for the community.
 - b) Interest or engage young learners.
 - c) Provide new temporary employment and work experience opportunities.

- v. **Income opportunities**
 - a) To create opportunities to maximise Income and sponsorship for the Council.

3.2 Objectives

- a) Maximise enjoyment for those persons participating at an Event or Festival.

- b) Contribute towards the Council's Strategic priorities.
- c) Deliver and support cultural events in the Borough.
- d) Maximise the contribution made towards the economy of the Borough through increased visitor and participant spend.
- e) Maximise sustainable, inclusive economic growth from festivals and event activities.
- f) Contribute towards the Council's objective of creating a safe, inclusive and diverse day, evening and night time economy in Maidstone.
- g) Contribute and facilitate sporting events and activities that support healthy living and contribute towards an improved quality of life.
- h) Support volunteer schemes.
- i) Manage, develop and generate local, regional, national and international publicity for the Borough.
- j) Increase the positive image and reputation of the Council and Borough.
- k) Support & encourage social inclusion, well-being and healthy living activities.
- l) Undertake sustainable event practices to ensure the protection of the environment, ecology and wildlife.
- m) Increase and obtain sponsorship and income to sustain the Events and Festivals' programme and to generate efficiency savings and ensure value for money.

3.3 Outcomes

- a) Each event or festival maximises its economic opportunities and social benefits.
- b) Delivers recognised quality improvements from inception, management and delivery of events and festivals.
- c) Increases community involvement and civic pride in events and festivals.
- d) Reduces crime and anti-social behaviour throughout the Borough.
- e) Create a safe, inclusive and diverse day, evening and night time economy in Maidstone.
- f) Achieves greater community participation in activities.
- g) Contributes to delivering a sustainable and self-financing events programme by maximising sponsorship and income opportunities.

4. TYPE AND FREQUENCY OF EVENTS

Events will differ depending on their purpose, scale, location, content, and target audience. Some events will have will have an increased impact both on the long term condition of the venue and on local residents within immediate vicinity of the venue.

Event classification is broken into two main considerations, size and purpose. Another factor to consider is noise from music events.

4.1 Size and Scale

The size classification for an event will be based around the expected audience

capacity. This is the maximum number of people expected to be at the event at one time, and not the total number of people who may experience the event throughout the day(s). The scale of an event will need to be considered where the event spans multiple days.

Type	Size	
Small	Less than 500 attending	Small events are classified as those with a potential attendee and staffing level of less than 499.
Medium	Less than 3,000 attending	Medium scale events are defined as those with a potential attendee and staffing levels of no less than 500 and no more than 2,999.
Large	Less than 9,000 attending	Large scale events are classified as those with a potential capacity in excess of 4,999 people but no more than 8,999
Special	More than 9,000 attending	Any event with attendance and staffing levels reaching 9,000 or more will be classified as a special event. If an event is considered to be particularly disruptive, it too might be labelled as a special event, even if its attendance numbers equal less than 9,000. Some special events may be small in scale but due to the quality of their programme may attract a large proportion of visitors from out with Maidstone; they therefore have a greater economic and cultural impact and national recognition than their size suggests.
Major (Strategic)	Various	May be large or small but require extensive planning and very high security. It can be large public spectacle and usually has national and/or international significance e.g. Royal visit, Tour de France, Olympic Torch Relay, G8 Summit.

4.2 Purpose of Event

What is the purpose of the event? Is it a community led project, a commercial venture, a private event or a corporate event?

a) Community Event

When the event is organised by the community for the community, it is free to enter/attend and is not for the purpose of selling or promoting a commercial product, it shall be deemed as a "Community Event". Community events are generally not-for-profit, but can be they for fundraising through charging entry to an event.

b) Charity / Fundraising Events – Local and National

This category includes events that are organised by not – for – profit organisations but can also include events run by commercial companies for charitable fund raising e.g. bike rides and charity runs.

c) Commercial Events

Commercial events provide a beneficial gain to a particular individual, group or company, be it financial or promotional. The following events are classed as commercial events; however the list is not exhaustive:

- Corporate events
- Commercial Music, Cultural, Theatre or Comedy Concerts or Festivals
- Marketing and promotional activities for profit making organisations (not charitable or fundraising)
- Funfairs and circuses
- Private events e.g. a wedding reception / private party / large picnic

An event can fall into more than one category e.g. events can be community led and be considered commercial.

4.3 Noise from Music events

Large music events involving high powered amplification can cause disturbance to those living in the vicinity. The Noise Council Code of Practice on Noise Control at Concerts provides guidance on the number and level of noise for urban venues such as parks.

The number of amplified music events with a Music Noise Level (MNL) of up to and not exceeding 65dB(A) in Mote Park will be limited to 5 events per year. These events will be limited to a maximum of 3 consecutive days or a total of 8 days in the year. If the frequency and timing of these events will cause additional disturbance, then the maximum Music Noise Level will be set lower and must be agreed to by the event organiser.

Although setting the noise limits in terms of dB(A) is convenient it does not always take into account the intrusiveness of low frequency noise. It can be the frequency imbalance which causes disturbance. Therefore it can be more of a problem further away from the open air venue than in the immediate vicinity to it. Even if the dB(A) limits are being met it can seem to residents that the noise is loud. Therefore it may be necessary to set additional criterion in terms of low frequency noise or apply additional conditions.

5. EVALUATION

As well as balancing existing events with new ones, we want to support the expansion and development of the programme of events. Occasionally an event may arise which is exceptional and will be supported even if it doesn't meet the criteria outlined above. This will be managed via the application process.

In order to ensure that all major supported events and festivals continue to meet the above aims and objectives the council has adopted the use of an Economic Impact Toolkit which all council run or funded events and festivals will be required to undertake www.eitoolkit.org.uk

For smaller events we will expect the organisers to use the event evaluation form in the Toolkit or their own equivalent evaluation questionnaire.

6. VENUES

The Borough has over 30 parks and open spaces and a number of venues that have been identified as suitable for holding events. This strategy aims to ensure that the use of these venues is sustainable and that the impact of events on parks and open spaces is managed.

6.1 Mote Park

Mote Park is within walking distance of Maidstone town centre. It is 460 acres parkland site and includes a large 30 acre lake, amenity grass areas, sports pitches as well as large areas of woodland and natural grassland which are managed for conservation. Over recent years the park has hosted a number of events ranging from: Radio 1 Big Weekend in 2008, an event attended by 30,000 music fans; the CBeebies Mr Blooms Roadshow in 2013 which attracted 18,000 people; the annual Mela which is a successful multi-cultural event, the Ramblin Man Fair held for the first time in 2015 and the Social Festival dance music event which started in 2013. In 2012 a series of Lottery funded improvements took place in the park, as part of this regeneration project a programme of smaller events put on in a partnership between officers and the Mote Park Fellowship friends group was started. This partnership continues to put on events and education walks and in 2013 put on 22 walks and worked in partnership putting on a number of events attracting over 20,000 people.

The park has huge open spaces which gives it the capacity to host very large events and potentially more than one small event at a time. There is limited infrastructure for larger events such as number of toilets and capacity and availability of power supplies but these can be overcome and brought onto site.

Whilst large areas of the park are set aside for conservation the amenity areas are of such scale that festivals and events can easily be accommodated.

6.2 Whatman Park

This 25 acre park was created as part of the Millennium River Park. The park has great potential for hosting festivals and events as it is located within walking distance of the town centre; it is surrounded by the railway line and the River Medway and has only three entrances which eliminates the need for fencing for an event; the River stage in the park provides a covered performance area as well as having a substantial electricity supply and is designed to host medium sized events. Currently the only event which has been regularly hosted in the park is Proms in the Park which has taken place every May. This has been a free event which attracts up to 1,000 people.

6.3 River Park Amphitheatre

This was built in 2000 as part of the same project as Whatman Park. It is located near to All Saints Church. Because it is located near to residential property it has limited scope for amplified music events and is more suitable for open air theatre type events. This area has a capacity of up to around 150 people.

6.4 Cobtree Manor Park

This park forms part of the Cobtree Estate which also includes Kent Life, Cobtree Manor Golf Course and a large field located between Forstal Road and the M20. There is currently an event plan for the park but this is limited to mostly educational and informative guided walks. A new visitor centre will opened in this very popular park in 2015, which provides much needed visitor facilities. There is limited capacity in the park for hosting larger events but these could be potentially located elsewhere on the estate.

6.5 Brenchley Gardens

These gardens are located within the town centre of Maidstone. It is a traditional town centre park with flower beds, ornamental trees and a bandstand. It has the capacity to host small events but due to the proximity of residential property these will be limited to non amplified events. The gardens are also located next to Maidstone Museum providing the potential for joint events.

6.6 Jubilee Square and Lower High Street

Jubilee Square is a large open public space in the middle of Maidstone Town Centre. It was created as part of the High Street Regeneration scheme and is conveniently located on Maidstone High Street, in-front of Maidstone Town Hall. The space has access to event specification power and water supplies and has the capacity for both

small and large events. As the site is located adjacent to the High Street, and the site is accessible by loading vehicles before 10.30am and after 5.30am, all events will need to consider how these vehicle movements will be managed.

6.7 Maidstone Museum and Bentrif Art Gallery

The Maidstone Museum & Bentrif Art Gallery's multi-layered history and award-winning modern architecture provides a totally unique environment for a range of events.

Available for hire are unique meeting rooms and 2 gallery spaces suitable for 2-130 delegates. Each meeting room has natural daylight and Wi-Fi. The Glass room is equipped with automatic blinds, air conditioning and hearing loop. Interactive TV and other AV equipment are available.

The Museum and its collections can be incorporated into events offering private viewing of current exhibitions, guided tours through its galleries and viewing of artifacts stored behind the scenes. The Museum is perfectly positioned to Brenchley Gardens allowing the possibility of joint events. Exclusive hire of the Museum can also be offered.

Located centrally within the town the Museum is a 2 minute walk from the Maidstone East train station or 5 minutes by car from junction 7, M20. Various bus routes stop outside, there is limited parking onsite with a multi-storey car park located opposite.

The Council will also consider requests for events in parks, open spaces and other venues that are not listed above. As with all requests, permission for events is based on suitability and considered on an event by event basis.

7. FINANCE AND COMMISSIONING

Event and festival organisers should undertake to self-finance activities through income and/or sponsorship opportunities. The Council may commission a number of festivals and events through a procurement process.

8. MARKETING AND PR

The Council will maintain the What's On section on the Visit Maidstone website and will encourage all events organisers to provide publicity information on their events. In addition an Event Planning Calendar (Clash Diary) has been created to help event organiser in the planning stages check the best dates for events by seeing what else is already planned and to help avoid diary clashes and overload on support services.

The Festivals and Events programme will be promoted via social media and organisers will be encouraged to cross promote events and collaborate on marketing activity.

All organisers of Festivals and Events that will potentially impact on the community surrounding the venue, as assessed by the application process, will be required to inform the community affected in advance about the nature of the event and when and where it will be taking place.

9. ASSOCIATED POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

There are a number of key council policies and strategies that relate to all cultural, leisure, sporting, recreational or community activity and to the delivery of events in the borough as a whole.

9.1. Strategic Plan

Maidstone Borough has many attractive urban and rural places, a relatively robust economy and diverse communities. With both a rich heritage and an ambition for growth we want to make the best of our past and the future to support people, strengthen the economy and develop the public realm to build vibrancy and prosperity.

The Strategic Plan is a five-year document produced by Maidstone Borough Council, written for residents, staff and partners. It sets out clear priorities and expected outcomes by 2020.

In order to provide focus to our efforts we have identified three priorities for the Council:

1. Keeping Maidstone as an attractive borough for all.
2. Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

The Council's Strategic Plan is available on our website.

9.2 Destination Management Plan (DMP)

The DMP process has identified three important "strands" where resources should be focused over the next three years, in order to deliver the promise of the Shared Story. These three strands are: Improving the County Town's appeal to visitors; Improving the impact of Events on the visitor economy; and Making more of the Countryside.

Events have many positive impacts on local economies and communities. The DMP is focusing on ways to improve the impact of business and leisure events on the visitor economy – which in turn will support jobs and services for local people. The DMP takes into

account MBC's Festivals & Events Strategy, which is about events that take place in the Borough's parks and open spaces – but the thinking includes larger venues such as Leeds Castle, Kent Showground and Kent Life.

The DMP's actions will support the development of events with wider reach (actual or potential) – i.e. events that will draw visitors from further afield (from beyond Kent), and/or enhance the image of the area further afield as a vibrant place to visit.

The Shared Story says Maidstone is “Kent's capital for big events ... with tens of thousands at a time coming here for the South East's biggest pop concerts, classical extravaganzas, and business shows.” This is a USP for Maidstone, so maintaining and strengthening the “capital for big events” status is a priority. It also means that there is significant events expertise in the Borough – in the big event venues as well as in the public agencies. The DMP should aim to tap into and make the most of this professional expertise.

This does not mean that the DMP will ignore smaller events – but from a visitor economy perspective the focus for actions will only be on those smaller events that are either clustered into festivals or seasons to give them greater reach, or that have a strongly distinctive niche appeal that draws visitors and generates publicity from further afield.

Equalities Policy

As a public authority, we believe we have a leading role to play in the promotion of equal opportunity in the community, both as employer and provider of services to the population of Maidstone and its visitors.

We would expect all events and festivals organisers to:

Recognise their duties under legislation and be committed to meeting them.

Take action to combat direct and indirect discrimination in all areas in respect of disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, age, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, and sexual orientation as far as is permitted by statute law and associated Codes of Practice.

The Council's full [Equalities Policy](#) is available on our website.

9.3 Environmental Policy

All events are opportunities to communicate environmental messages to the public. The Council aims to actively work with organisers to ensure that best practice is introduced at all stages of event management.

9.4 Health and Safety

Event organisers are responsible for and have a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the people attending their events, as well as that of the

employees, contractors and sub-contractors working at the event. Please refer to the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

Event organisers will also be required to conform to:

- The Events Safety Guide, A guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at music and similar events HSG 1995
- RIDDOR 1995
- Fire precautions act 1975
- The Children's Act 1989
- Health and Safety at work Act 1974
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Any specific conditions laid out, local byelaws or instructions from a Council Officer
- Any relevant legislation relating to public safety

The Council and its partners have a duty to ensure all relevant health & safety guidance is followed, including checking risk assessments, emergency evacuation plans and method statements. In many cases the Council or its partners (i.e. emergency services) may require changes to be made to plans to improve safety at the event. All health & safety paperwork must be submitted to the Council as per the application timetable requirement, although this may be reduced for smaller events if agreed in advance with the Council's nominated Events Representative.

For larger or more complex events the Council may take a more active role. We may wish to meet with event organisers to discuss plans in more detail, and it may be a condition of hire that event organisers attend Safety Advisory Group meetings.

It may also be a condition of approval that management plans are submitted in advance of the application timetable requirement due to their complexity. If this is the case sufficient notice will be given of any change in deadline.

10. HOW TO APPLY

There will be a single point of entry for all festivals and events in the Borough via the Council's website. The website will provide all the relevant information on running a festival or event in Maidstone in the form of a toolkit which will include information on:

- Event Classification
- Application Timescales
- Do I need to apply for any other licences?
- Legislation
- Pre Planning

- Detailed Planning
- Final Preparations
- Health & Safety
- Help with your Risk Assessment
- Road Closures
- Stewarding
- First Aid and Medical Cover
- Insurance
- Contingency Planning
- Counter Terrorism
- After the Event
- Event Notification Form
- Road Closure Notification Form
- Event Application form: Public Open spaces
- Event Risk Assessment Form

Item 14

Urgent Update to the Report of the Head of Commercial and Economic Development - Revised Festivals and Events Policy

**Maidstone Borough Council
Festivals & Events Policy
Revised February 2016**

**Version 3
February 2016**

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1. THE VISION

“To develop a festivals and events programme that creates a lively and vibrant place to live, work and visit, whilst ensuring the sustainable use of the Borough’s venues and;

That by 2017 Maidstone borough is recognised as a destination that hosts and develops high quality sustainable festivals and events; and cultivates community creativity for maximum economic benefit and social enjoyment.”

2. BACKGROUND

Well organised festivals and events are recognised for their ability to produce benefits for the local economy, bring life to an area, create interest in the area and reflect the place. This policy will focus on events that take place in the boroughs parks and open spaces.

This document provides a strategic framework for events and festivals in Maidstone Borough. It recognises the fact that major events represent business, cultural leisure and sporting assets; they make a positive contribution in influencing perception of an area, in helping to stimulate economic activity and in enhancing social and cultural wellbeing.

Maidstone Borough has an established history and tradition of hosting Events and Festivals. There is a comprehensive and diverse range of activities; from music events, to community events that have direct links to the well-being and cohesion of the local community.

Due to the broad dynamics of events and festivals, which cover sports, leisure, special interest, culture, heritage and the arts, they can each have a positive impact and make a significant contribution to the status and image of the Borough. Specific areas impacted by an events programme include:

- Quality of life improvements
- Community engagement and cohesion
- Economic value
- Social inclusion
- Education
- Prevention and diversion of anti-social behaviour
- Health, vitality & wellbeing
- Publicity & media exposure
- Added value to the Borough as a visitor destination
- Delivering & inspiring sporting opportunities
- Culture and artistic expression

Therefore, Festivals & Events constitute a fundamental element and vital component to the Borough; although all activities must be managed effectively and efficiently to maximise opportunities (e.g. by extending the season to create economic value), they should also minimise any negative impacts (i.e. on the environment).

The Borough's Festivals & Events are an integral part of delivering core elements of the Council's Strategic Plan, Economic Development Strategy, Destination Management Plan and our commitment to celebrating our rich culture and heritage.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Festivals & Events Policy sets out the priorities, aims and objectives for the delivery of the Council's Festivals and Events programme and ensures that any current or proposed event, whether organised or supported by the Council or as an activity held on its land, can be evaluated against the following set of guiding principles:

3.1 Aims

Each event or festival should meet at least two of the aims and five of the objectives outlined:

- i. **Economy**
 - a) Generate income for the local economy.
 - b) Help to regenerate parts of the Borough.

- ii. **Community**
 - a) To develop, generate, facilitate and support cultural, economic, community and social events for the benefit of the Borough and its residents to improve quality of life.
 - b) Interest or involve the Boroughs diverse communities.
 - c) Prevent and divert anti-social behaviour.
 - d) Increase the number of volunteers at events.

- iii. **Destination Publicity**
 - a) Maximise promotional, publicity and marketing opportunities through the Festivals and Events programme
 - b) Promote Maidstone borough as a vibrant, successful place.
 - c) Encourage people and businesses to live in, invest in and visit Maidstone.

- iv. **Education and Employment**
 - a) Provide skills & learning opportunities for the community.
 - b) Interest or engage young learners.
 - c) Provide new temporary employment and work experience opportunities.

- v. **Income opportunities**
 - a) To create opportunities to maximise Income and sponsorship for the Council.

3.2 Objectives

- a) Maximise enjoyment for those persons participating at a Festival or Event.

- b) Contribute towards the Council's Strategic priorities.
- c) Deliver and support cultural events in the Borough.
- d) Maximise the contribution made towards the economy of the Borough through increased visitor and participant spend.
- e) Maximise sustainable, inclusive economic growth from festivals and event activities.
- f) Contribute towards the Council's objective of creating a safe, inclusive and diverse day, evening and night time economy in Maidstone.
- g) Contribute and facilitate sporting events and activities that support healthy living and contribute towards an improved quality of life.
- h) Support volunteer schemes.
- i) Manage, develop and generate local, regional, national and international publicity for the Borough.
- j) Increase the positive image and reputation of the Council and Borough.
- k) Support & encourage social inclusion, well-being and healthy living activities.
- l) Undertake sustainable event practices to ensure the protection of the environment, ecology and wildlife.
- m) Increase and obtain sponsorship and income to sustain the Events and Festivals' programme and to generate efficiency savings and ensure value for money.

3.3 Outcomes

- a) Each event or festival maximises its economic opportunities and social benefits.
- b) Delivers recognised quality improvements from inception, management and delivery of events and festivals.
- c) Increases community involvement and civic pride in events and festivals.
- d) Reduces crime and anti-social behaviour throughout the Borough.
- e) Create a safe, inclusive and diverse day, evening and night time economy in Maidstone.
- f) Achieves greater community participation in activities.
- g) Contributes to delivering a sustainable and self-financing events programme by maximising sponsorship and income opportunities.

4. TYPE AND FREQUENCY OF EVENTS

Events will differ depending on their purpose, scale, location, content, and target audience. Some events will have will have an increased impact both on the long term condition of the venue and on local residents within immediate vicinity of the venue.

Event classification is broken into two main considerations, size and purpose. Another factor to consider is noise from music events.

4.1 Size and Scale

The size classification for an event will be based around the expected audience

capacity. This is the maximum number of people expected to be at the event at one time, and not the total number of people who may experience the event throughout the day(s). The scale of an event will need to be considered where the event spans multiple days.

Type	Size	
Small	Less than 500 attending	Small events are classified as those with a potential attendee and staffing level of less than 499.
Medium	Less than 3,000 attending	Medium scale events are defined as those with a potential attendee and staffing levels of no less than 500 and no more than 2,999.
Large	Less than 9,000 attending	Large scale events are classified as those with a potential capacity in excess of 4,999 people but no more than 8,999
Special	More than 9,000 attending	Any event with attendance and staffing levels reaching 9,000 or more will be classified as a special event. If an event is considered to be particularly disruptive, it too might be labelled as a special event, even if its attendance numbers equal less than 9,000. Some special events may be small in scale but due to the quality of their programme may attract a large proportion of visitors from out with Maidstone; they therefore have a greater economic and cultural impact and national recognition than their size suggests.
Major (Strategic)	Various	May be large or small but require extensive planning and very high security. It can be large public spectacle and usually has national and/or international significance e.g. Royal visit, Tour de France, Olympic Torch Relay, G8 Summit.

4.2 Purpose of Event

What is the purpose of the event? Is it a community led project, a commercial venture, a private event or a corporate event?

a) Community Event

When the event is organised by the community for the community, it is free to enter/attend and is not for the purpose of selling or promoting a commercial product, it shall be deemed as a "Community Event". Community events are generally not-for-profit, but can be they for fundraising through charging entry to an event.

b) Charity / Fundraising Events – Local and National

This category includes events that are organised by not – for – profit organisations but can also include events run by commercial companies for charitable fund raising e.g. bike rides and charity runs.

c) Commercial Events

Commercial events provide a beneficial gain to a particular individual, group or company, be it financial or promotional. The following events are classed as commercial events; however the list is not exhaustive:

- Corporate events
- Commercial Music, Cultural, Theatre or Comedy Concerts or Festivals
- Marketing and promotional activities for profit making organisations (not charitable or fundraising)
- Funfairs and circuses
- Private events e.g. a wedding reception / private party / large picnic

An event can fall into more than one category e.g. events can be community led and be considered commercial.

4.3 Noise from Music events

Large music events involving high powered amplification can cause disturbance to those living in the vicinity. The Noise Council Code of Practice on Noise Control at Concerts provides guidance on the number and level of noise for urban venues such as parks.

The number of amplified music events with a Music Noise Level (MNL) of up to and not exceeding 65dB(A) in Mote Park will be limited to 5 events per year. These events will be limited to a maximum of 3 consecutive days or a total of 8 days in the year. The number of amplified music events with a Music Noise Level (MNL) of up to and not exceeding 65dB(A) in Whatman Park will be limited to 3 events per year and a maximum of 2 consecutive days and no more than 5 days in the year. If the frequency and timing of these events will cause additional disturbance, then the maximum Music Noise Level will be set lower and must be agreed to by the event organiser.

Although setting the noise limits in terms of dB(A) is convenient it does not always take into account the intrusiveness of low frequency noise. It can be the frequency imbalance which causes disturbance. Therefore it can be more of a problem further away from the open air venue than in the immediate vicinity to it. Even if the dB(A) limits are being met it can seem to residents that the noise is loud. Therefore it may

be necessary to set additional criterion in terms of low frequency noise or apply additional conditions.

5. EVALUATION

As well as balancing existing events with new ones, we want to support the expansion and development of the programme of events. Occasionally an event may arise which is exceptional and will be supported even if it doesn't meet the criteria outlined above. This will be managed via the application process.

In order to ensure that all major supported events and festivals continue to meet the above aims and objectives, the council has adopted the use of an Economic Impact Toolkit www.eitoolkit.org.uk and requests all event organisers evaluate their event by this method.

For smaller events we will expect the organisers to use the event evaluation form in the Toolkit or their own equivalent evaluation questionnaire.

6. VENUES

The Borough has over 30 parks and open spaces and a number of venues that have been identified as suitable for holding events. This strategy aims to ensure that the use of these venues is sustainable and that the impact of events on parks and open spaces is managed.

6.1 Mote Park

Mote Park is within walking distance of Maidstone town centre. It is 460 acres parkland site and includes a large 30 acre lake, amenity grass areas, sports pitches as well as large areas of woodland and natural grassland which are managed for conservation. Over recent years the park has hosted a number of events ranging from: Radio 1 Big Weekend in 2008, an event attended by 30,000 music fans; the CBeebies Mr Blooms Roadshow in 2013 which attracted 18,000 people; the annual Mela which is a successful multi-cultural event, the Ramblin Man Fair held for the first time in 2015 and the Social Festival dance music event which started in 2013. In 2012 a series of Lottery funded improvements took place in the park, as part of this regeneration project a programme of smaller events put on in a partnership between officers and the Mote Park Fellowship friends group was started. This partnership continues to put on events and education walks and in 2013 put on 22 walks and worked in partnership putting on a number of events attracting over 20,000 people.

The park has huge open spaces which gives it the capacity to host very large events and potentially more than one small event at a time. There is limited infrastructure for larger events such as number of toilets and capacity and availability of power supplies but these can be overcome and brought onto site.

Whilst large areas of the park are set aside for conservation the amenity areas are of such scale that festivals and events can easily be accommodated.

6.2 Whatman Park

This 25 acre park was created as part of the Millennium River Park. The park has great potential for hosting festivals and events as it is located within walking distance of the town centre; it is surrounded by the railway line and the River Medway and has only three entrances which eliminates the need for fencing for an event; the River stage in the park provides a covered performance area as well as having a substantial electricity supply and is designed to host medium sized events. Currently the only event which has been regularly hosted in the park is Proms in the Park which has taken place every May. This has been a free event which attracts up to 1,000 people.

6.3 River Park Amphitheatre

This was built in 2000 as part of the same project as Whatman Park. It is located near to All Saints Church. Because it is located near to residential property it has limited scope for amplified music events and is more suitable for open air theatre type events. This area has a capacity of up to around 150 people.

6.4 Cobtree Manor Park

This park forms part of the Cobtree Estate which also includes Kent Life, Cobtree Manor Golf Course and a large field located between Forstal Road and the M20. There is currently an event plan for the park but this is limited to mostly educational and informative guided walks. A new visitor centre will opened in this very popular park in 2015, which provides much needed visitor facilities. There is limited capacity in the park for hosting larger events but these could be potentially located elsewhere on the estate.

6.5 Brenchley Gardens

These gardens are located within the town centre of Maidstone. It is a traditional town centre park with flower beds, ornamental trees and a bandstand. It has the capacity to host small events but due to the proximity of residential property these will be limited to non amplified events. The gardens are also located next to Maidstone Museum providing the potential for joint events.

6.6 Jubilee Square and Lower High Street

Jubilee Square is a large open public space in the middle of Maidstone Town Centre.

It was created as part of the High Street Regeneration scheme and is conveniently located on Maidstone High Street, in-front of Maidstone Town Hall. The space has access to event specification power and water supplies and has the capacity for both small and large events. As the site is located adjacent to the High Street, and the site is accessible by loading vehicles before 10.30am and after 5.30am, all events will need to consider how these vehicle movements will be managed.

6.7 Maidstone Museum and Bentrif Art Gallery

The Maidstone Museum & Bentrif Art Gallery's multi-layered history and award-winning modern architecture provides a totally unique environment for a range of events.

Available for hire are unique meeting rooms and 2 gallery spaces suitable for 2-130 delegates. Each meeting room has natural daylight and Wi-Fi. The Glass room is equipped with automatic blinds, air conditioning and hearing loop. Interactive TV and other AV equipment are available.

The Museum and its collections can be incorporated into events offering private viewing of current exhibitions, guided tours through its galleries and viewing of artifacts stored behind the scenes. The Museum is perfectly positioned to Brenchley Gardens allowing the possibility of joint events. Exclusive hire of the Museum can also be offered.

Located centrally within the town the Museum is a 2 minute walk from the Maidstone East train station or 5 minutes by car from junction 7, M20. Various bus routes stop outside, there is limited parking onsite with a multi-storey car park located opposite.

The Council will also consider requests for events in parks, open spaces and other venues that are not listed above. As with all requests, permission for events is based on suitability and considered on an event by event basis.

7. FINANCE AND COMMISSIONING

Event and festival organisers should undertake to self-finance activities through income and/or sponsorship opportunities. The Council may commission a number of festivals and events through a procurement process.

8. MARKETING AND PR

The Council will maintain the What's On section on the Visit Maidstone website and will encourage all events organisers to provide publicity information on their events. In addition

an Event Planning Calendar (Clash Diary) has been created to help event organisers in the planning stages check the best dates for events by seeing what else is already planned and to help avoid diary clashes and overload on support services.

The Festivals and Events programme will be promoted via social media and organisers will be encouraged to cross promote events and collaborate on marketing activity.

All organisers of Festivals and Events that will potentially impact on the community surrounding the venue, as assessed by the application process, will be required to inform the community affected in advance about the nature of the event and when and where it will be taking place.

9. ASSOCIATED POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

There are a number of key council policies and strategies that relate to all cultural, leisure, sporting, recreational or community activity and to the delivery of events in the borough as a whole.

9.1. Strategic Plan

Maidstone Borough has many attractive urban and rural places, a relatively robust economy and diverse communities. With both a rich heritage and an ambition for growth we want to make the best of our past and the future to support people, strengthen the economy and develop the public realm to build vibrancy and prosperity.

The Strategic Plan is a five-year document produced by Maidstone Borough Council, written for residents, staff and partners. It sets out clear priorities and expected outcomes by 2020.

In order to provide focus to our efforts we have identified three priorities for the Council:

1. Keeping Maidstone as an attractive borough for all.
2. Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

The Council's Strategic Plan is available on our website.

9.2 Destination Management Plan (DMP)

The DMP process has identified three important "strands" where resources should be focused over the next three years, in order to deliver the promise of the Shared Story. These three strands are: Improving the County Town's appeal to visitors; Improving the impact of Events on the visitor economy; and Making more of the Countryside.

Events have many positive impacts on local economies and communities. The DMP is focusing on ways to improve the impact of business and leisure events on the visitor economy – which in turn will support jobs and services for local people. The DMP takes into account MBC’s Festivals & Events Strategy, which is about events that take place in the Borough’s parks and open spaces – but the thinking includes larger venues such as Leeds Castle, Kent Showground and Kent Life.

The DMP’s actions will support the development of events with wider reach (actual or potential) – i.e. events that will draw visitors from further afield (from beyond Kent), and/or enhance the image of the area further afield as a vibrant place to visit.

The Shared Story says Maidstone is “Kent’s capital for big events ... with tens of thousands at a time coming here for the South East’s biggest pop concerts, classical extravaganzas, and business shows.” This is a USP for Maidstone, so maintaining and strengthening the “capital for big events” status is a priority. It also means that there is significant events expertise in the Borough – in the big event venues as well as in the public agencies. The DMP should aim to tap into and make the most of this professional expertise.

This does not mean that the DMP will ignore smaller events – but from a visitor economy perspective the focus for actions will only be on those smaller events that are either clustered into festivals or seasons to give them greater reach, or that have a strongly distinctive niche appeal that draws visitors and generates publicity from further afield.

9.3 Equalities Policy

As a public authority, we believe we have a leading role to play in the promotion of equal opportunity in the community, both as employer and provider of services to the population of Maidstone and its visitors.

We would expect all events and festivals organisers to:

Recognise their duties under legislation and be committed to meeting them.

Take action to combat direct and indirect discrimination in all areas in respect of disability, sex, gender reassignment, race, age, marriage, and civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief, and sexual orientation as far as it is permitted by statute law and associated Codes of Practice.

The Council’s full Equalities Policy is available on our website.

9.4 Environmental Policy

All events are opportunities to communicate environmental messages to the public. The Council aims to actively work with organisers to ensure that best practice is introduced at all stages of event management.

9.5 Health and Safety

Event organisers are responsible for and have a legal duty to ensure the health, safety and welfare of the people attending their events, as well as that of the employees, contractors and sub-contractors working at the event. Please refer to the Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.

Event organisers will also be required to conform to:

- The Events Safety Guide, A guide to Health, Safety and Welfare at music and similar events HSG 1995
- RIDDOR 1995
- Fire precautions act 1975
- The Children's Act 1989
- Health and Safety at work Act 1974
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- Any specific conditions laid out, local byelaws or instructions from a Council Officer
- Any relevant legislation relating to public safety

The Council and its partners have a duty to ensure all relevant health & safety guidance is followed, including checking risk assessments, emergency evacuation plans and method statements. In many cases the Council or its partners (i.e. emergency services) may require changes to be made to plans to improve safety at the event. All health & safety paperwork must be submitted to the Council as per the application timetable requirement, although this may be reduced for smaller events if agreed in advance with the Council's nominated Events Representative.

For larger or more complex events the Council may take a more active role. We may wish to meet with event organisers to discuss plans in more detail, and it may be a condition of hire that event organisers attend Safety Advisory Group meetings.

It may also be a condition of approval that management plans are submitted in advance of the application timetable requirement due to their complexity. If this is the case sufficient notice will be given of any change in deadline.

10. HOW TO APPLY

There will be a single point of entry for all festivals and events in the Borough via the Council's website. The website will provide all the relevant information on running a festival or event in Maidstone in the form of a toolkit which will include information on:

- Event Classification

- Application Timescales
- Do I need to apply for any other licences?
- Legislation
- Pre Planning
- Detailed Planning
- Final Preparations
- Health & Safety
- Help with your Risk Assessment
- Road Closures
- Stewarding
- First Aid and Medical Cover
- Insurance
- Contingency Planning
- Counter Terrorism
- After the Event
- Event Notification Form
- Road Closure Notification Form
- Event Application form: Public Open spaces
- Event Risk Assessment Form

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

Tuesday 1 March 2016

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

Destination Management Plan – Action Plan Progress Update

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Commercial and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	MCL Marketing & Sales Manager, Laura Dickson
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the update report on the progress on the Destination Management Plan three year action plan be noted.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all -
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough -

Timetable

Meeting	Date
(Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	1 March 2016

Destination Management Plan - Action Plan Progress

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the progress made against the three year Action Plan relating to Maidstone Borough's Destination Management Plan.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Destination Management Plan was adopted by Committee in July 2015 and the accompanying three year Action Plan was endorsed by Committee.

Following a launch event in September 2015, the DMP Board members were appointed and four working groups set up to deliver the Action Plan.

River - River Access Improvement & River Experience
Town - Look, Feel and Do, Access and Visitor Management
Events - The Place for Big Events
Countryside - Explore Further

The purpose of the working groups is to bring together the delivery partners from within the tourism and visitor economy. In addition the groups have member representation from other Council committees where action requires their involvement.

The DMP Board and working groups are chaired by MBC officers. Cllr David Pickett has been appointed to the DMP Board to represent Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee and has also attended all the initial working group meetings.

2.2 Prioritisation of Action Plans

The board considered the action plans allocated to each working group and prioritised the following which was communicated to the individual groups:

River Group

- River Management

Town Group

- Shop front improvements
- Clutter & signage - ward councillors could provide info on their area on redundant signage
- Distinctive Lighting (TCM)
- Street Food (TCM)
- Maidstone in Bloom (TCM)

Events Group

- Three seasonal events (TCM)
- Audit Gap analysis

- No Clash Diary

Countryside group

- Marketing Audit
- Rural information points
- Redundant signage

Some actions will be led by the new town centre Management (TCM) organisation One Maidstone.

2.3 **Key Successes to Date**

A number of initial key activities were required in addition to the actions by the specific working groups. These are now in place:

- Shared Story toolkit created and available online.
- Stakeholder event in December to launch Shared Story toolkit.
- Creation of an Image Library.
- Online Event Planning Calendar created.
- New Historic Interpretation Panels in the town centre designed and installed.

2.4 The Action Plan updates from the four working groups can be found in Appendix 1.

The key actions from the groups so far are:

River Group:

Formation of Friends of Maidstone River Park
Proposed signage from new bridge gyratory scheme and cycle path
New River Park website

Events Group:

Audit of venue facilities and suppliers underway
Event Planning Calendar tested and live

Town Group:

Farmers Market in Jubilee Square
Audit of shopfront at North End of Week Street

It should be noted that the town Group actions overlap with TCM/Town Team and the new Town Centre Strategic Board. The work of this action group is currently being reviewed to establish where the best place for the action plan to sit and to avoid duplication and overlap

Countryside Group:

Product and marketing audit of tourism in the rural area. Survey to all parishes, tourism businesses and other organisations such as Produced in Kent and Explore Kent
Brown signage audit

2.5 **DMP Budget**

There is a DMP Budget for 2015-16 of £20,000. The budget for 2016-17 has yet to be confirmed. The board have approved the proposed budget

plan. (See Appendix 2)

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 This report is an information update only.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 None

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 None

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 None

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	This work contributes to the priority 'Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all'.	Head of Commercial and Economic Development
Risk Management	none	[Head of Service or Manager]
Financial	None. The action plan will be delivered through a combination of exiting related budgets, collaboration with the sector and bids for funding to appropriate sources. Finance have not reviewed at time of publication.	[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]
Staffing	None. This project is being delivered within current resources.	[Head of Service]
Legal	Legal have not reviewed at time	[Legal Team]

	of publication	
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	none	[Policy & Information Manager]
Environmental/Sustainable Development	none	[Head of Service or Manager]
Community Safety	none	[Head of Service or Manager]
Human Rights Act	none	[Head of Service or Manager]
Procurement	none	[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]
Asset Management	none	[Head of Service & Manager]

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: DMP Action Plan Progress
- Appendix II: DMP Action Plan Draft Budget

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Destination Management Plan

WORKING GROUP 1: RIVER

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Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scale	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
<p>Programme of enhancements and improvements to make the river more accessible and appealing to visitors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • signing and entrance points to the river from the town centre • footpath investment – signing to include distances to key points, accessibility for cyclists • investment in moorings • parking for river visitors 	<p>Kent County Council – cycle routes and infrastructure Maidstone Borough Council Environment Agency Town Centre Management</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>M-L</p>	<p>£2m of Single Local Growth Funding has been allocated to create a cycle path along the river from Allington to East Farleigh. MBC £500,000 subject to final decision on funding.</p>	<p>MBC Funding has been confirmed. KCC currently writing brief for detailed design. DMP group will be kept updated with opportunity for input.</p> <p>Signage as part of the Bridges Gyrotory scheme is for vehicular signage only. Potential for pedestrian signage as part of cycle route project.</p>
<p>Focus on strengthening visitor hubs on the river:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve access, facilities, activities and interpretation • Explore opportunities for more camping cabins/pods (luxury camping huts – alternative to camping in the open) to enable long distance walking, 	<p>Attractions and businesses e.g. Kentish Lady River Cruises, boat restaurant, All Saints Church, Museum of Kent Life, Lockmeadow Maidstone Borough Council Visit Kent Environment Agency Medway River Users Association, Rowing Club</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>M-L</p>	<p>Arts Council – Grants for the Arts</p>	<p>Formation of ‘Friends of Maidstone River Park’ Group to improve promotion of the river, current facilities and attractions. More people visiting and aware of the ‘River Park’ will make future events more attractive to event organisers. Opportunities for event organisers need to be better promoted. This could be done through the River Park Website (see below)</p>

Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scale	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
<p>canoeing etc</p> <p>Priority hubs :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Church of All Saints/amphitheatre • Cobtree by Kent Life • Lockmeadow 	Kent County Council				Opportunities for camping, etc. will follow from this work.
<p>Create river-based events & activities that will appeal to visitors, animate the river, provide a reason to come today, contribute to extending the visitor day into the early evening. Opportunities could include – dragon boat racing, rowing events, festival of lights, regattas etc</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council</p> <p>Business owners</p> <p>Medway Valley County Partnership</p> <p>Maidstone Town Team</p> <p>Town Centre Management</p> <p>Invicta Rowing Club and other river user groups</p>	Medium	S-M	<p>Sponsorship</p> <p>Town Centre Management, Town Team, Arts Council – Grants for the Arts</p>	<p>River Park website has been produced by Ian Tucker. This will be a single place to identify all of the attractions and events along the river to be promoted. This will be aimed at both residents and visitors.</p> <p>Future events will then be more attractive to event organisers.</p> <p>Potential events and organisers to be identified.</p>
<p>Build up marketing activity over time linking to countryside theme. Develop marketing collateral – maps, trails, leaflets</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council</p> <p>Visit Kent</p> <p>Business owners</p> <p>Explore Kent</p> <p>Kent Downs AONB Unit</p>	Low	S-M-ongoing	<p>Maidstone Borough Council</p> <p>Businesses involvement in campaigns/advertising in leaflets etc</p>	Leaflets of canoe trail being shared on websites, and websites now linking to each other.
<p>Prioritise river management – litter, dredging, landscaping, lighting, policing, anti-social behaviour, mooring, illegal camping</p>	<p>Police</p> <p>Environment Agency – dredging, water litter picks</p>	High	S-M and ongoing	<p>Volunteering e.g. for litter picks with Environment Agency, prioritisation of existing maintenance</p>	<p>Ian Tucker has been nominated to Chair a 'Friends of Maidstone River Park'. This organisation (once formalised) will undertake to identify</p>

Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scale	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
	Maidstone Borough Council Kent County Council – Highways Town Centre Management and Maidstone Town Team			budgets	‘grot spots’ and help co-ordinate clean-ups etc. EA has offered use of boats to assist in litter and vegetation clearance.
Develop Riverside Walking and Cycling Path from Allington to East Farleigh with connections to the wider Maidstone area. Potential to expand this up to Aylesford Bridge	Kent County Council Maidstone Borough Council	High	M-L	£2m of Single Local Growth Funding has been allocated to create a cycle path along the river from Allington to East Farleigh. MBC £500,000. Funding from Tunbridge and Malling is in doubt and the project may need re-scoping as a result.	MBC Funding has been confirmed. KCC currently writing brief for detailed design. DMP group will be kept updated with opportunity for input. Tonbridge and Malling BC are not contributing to the scheme. However they <i>may</i> be some scope to extend a footpath up to Aylesford.

WORKING GROUP 3: EVENTS

Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scale	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
<p>Create an Events Experts Group that brings together senior decision makers from the main venues & MBC to “join the dots” when it comes to planning & infrastructure, programming & marketing</p>	<p>Main venues Maidstone Borough Council Kent County Council Safety Advisory Group</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>S</p>	<p>Members of the group</p>	<p>First meeting took place November 2015. Events Working groups comprises required decision makers and will invite others as they become apparent.</p>
<p>Carry out an Audit & Gap Analysis – looking at infrastructure & resources (physical & people), including venue capacities, transport links, traffic management, parking, signing, policing & crowd management. Must take into account potential negative impact on local communities & environment. Should include analysis of processes (licensing, highways, planning etc) too. Gap Analysis will then identify if new infrastructure/processes needed - & specific actions should then be developed.</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council Kent County Council Emergency services Venues Event organisers</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>M</p>	<p>To be explored</p>	<p>List of questions for venue audit to be prepared by Jo and Barbara from an event organisers perspective and Natalie from a venue perspective. Now been circulated to group members for comment. Survey questionnaire being prepared to go out early January.</p> <p>Additional questions added and questionnaire sent to group for approval. To be sent out once countryside survey returned .</p>
<p>Develop an Event Organisers’ Toolkit – to make it easier to hold an event in the borough. (We understand this is already under way – but it will need to be updated once the above Audit & Gap Analysis is</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council Kent County Council Venues, Event organisers Emergency services, Safety Advisory Group</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>S</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council</p>	<p>Once audit complete this will be done. Work is not underway as per the action comment.</p>

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Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scale	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
completed)					
Set up a “No Clash Diary” – for venues to enter information on provisional as well as firm bookings. This is an “internal” tool for venues, organisers, accommodation providers and public agencies within the Borough (and neighbouring areas) to use – to help them avoid clashes, to spread events across the year, and also facilitate identification of potential “clusters” for joint development & marketing (see next action).	Main venues Maidstone Borough Council Kent County Council Visit Kent Culture Kent	High	S	Venues Maidstone Borough Council	This has been set up using google calendar and is being tested by the group before making available to external organisers. It sits on DMP pages on visitmaidstone.com/dmp It has been tested. No needs to have more explanation added and then send to event organisers, SAG administration and our venues to ask organisers to add to. They must email activation request to add on events.
Develop themed seasons/festivals , inspired by the Shared Story and by major events. May need a DMP Group sub-group – an “Events Development Taskforce”. Members of the Taskforce to be selected for their specific skills (marketing, events management, programming, fundraising).	Venues Locally-based organisers Maidstone Borough Council	Medium	M	Taskforce members Sponsors	TCM leading. Group looking at themes from 2016 onwards i.e. sporting, comedy and come with idea for next meeting. Food fair already being organised by Barbara
Develop a consumer-facing “Events	Maidstone Borough	High	M	Visit Maidstone	Consumer events calendar

Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scale	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
<p>for Visitors Calendar – comprising an online realtime database of confirmed events for consumer marketing (website content, emarketing, social media & traditional media relations work), linked to the Culture Kent data pool. Evolution of current online events calendar on Visit Maidstone. Related to “No Clash Diary” – but serves different purpose. Drives events information on Visit Maidstone & Visit Kent websites, but also for tourism industry’s own marketing (could incorporate a “widget” for tourism providers to use on their own websites, providing a live feed). Will need to be promoted to visitor-facing businesses as well as consumers. Needs tight criteria & market focus so only features events with clear visitor-appeal, and presents them in a way that motivates visits (e.g. clustering them, using Shared Story themes etc).</p>	<p>Council - Visit Maidstone Venues Event organisers Visit Kent Culture Kent Kent County Council</p>			<p>Venues Event organisers</p>	<p>available on visit Maidstone.com/whats-on. List and images can be enhanced and linked to social media. Event organiser can add their events on directly.</p> <p>Widget to pool information for other providers is being investigated.</p>

WORKING GROUP 2: COUNTY TOWN

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Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scales	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
<p>Develop local markets and fairs – food (including a farmer’s market), arts & crafts etc:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing provision • Develop and deliver new markets in different town centre locations and develop a calendar of markets throughout the year • Use County Town Market Charter and history as part of the positioning for street markets • Introduce street food • Develop local market management plan – litter/cleaning, selection of stall traders, access 	<p>Maidstone Borough Council Maidstone Town Team Land Securities (Fremlin Walk) Produced in Kent (food events and link to Kent programming and promotion) National Association of British Markets Stall holders Town Centre Management</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>S-M-ongoing</p>	<p>Kent Business Rates Pool, Town Team, Private Sector</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MBC progressing with fortnightly Farmers Market on Jubilee Square. • Other locations considered for other markets are Brenchley gardens and in front of County Hall. However issues with space/access and low footfall. • Work with PinK to investigate Street Food
<p>Use themed trails and quarters to help make the town more legible for visitors and encourage exploration:</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council – planning department</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>S-M</p>	<p>Section 106 planning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Town Team already looking at themed trails for schools. Need to be mindful DMP relates to <i>visitors</i>

Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scales	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify trail themes and quarters Develop a programme of animation and interpretation including: Making use of green spaces Pavement trails/digital trails using app Distinctive lighting Mark the quarters e.g. with sculpture, distinctive street sign branding, lighting etc. 	Local businesses Town Teams Town centre Management				<p>– how can the Town Team’s trail be modified for tourists?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Town Team installed lighting on Town Hall with a view to establishing it in policy to be expanded elsewhere. Need to identify which buildings could be lit, and funding.
<p>Shopfront improvements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shop front design and window displays (produce toolkit) Maintenance to frontages e.g. redecoration, brand signs 	Maidstone Borough Council – including Planning Department Building owners	MEDIUM	S-M	Building owners, shops and eating places, Matched funding for shopfront upgrades from Kent Business Rates Pool and Section 106	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ken Scott and volunteers have done audit of shop fronts in North end of Week Street. Need to discuss next steps, and funding.
<p>Strengthen town’s association with the countryside through celebrating and promoting local food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage local 	Produced in Kent Local restaurants and cafes Maidstone Borough	Medium	S-M L – for local produce	To be explored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is PinK already doing re promoting local food in restaurants? How can Maidstone promote?

Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scales	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
<p>restaurants to source local produce and promote it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore potential for a new local produce centre 	Council		centre		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Need to identify suitable location for possible local produce centre, and funding
<p>Agree a strategy for improved access by car and coach into the town centre and support with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear uncluttered road signing Signing to car parks/coach park Visitor orientation in the car/coach parks Pedestrian signing from car parks to the town centre and main attractions. 	<p>Maidstone Borough Council Kent County Council Highways Department Car park companies Coach operators</p>	Medium	M-L	Kent Business Rates Pool	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can signage into town be improved? Need an audit of pedestrian signing from car parks into town – is it logical to visitors who are unfamiliar with town? Integrated transport strategy will address some of these issues.
<p>Review coach parking provision – volume, location and facilities – to reflect needs of international coach parties for shopping, and take account of potential growth</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council Coach operators Businesses welcoming coach groups e.g. House of Fraser, Museum</p>	Medium	M	To be explored	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach park currently at Sittingbourne Road – not ideal location. Maidstone East possible alternative. If Maidstone has good facilities for drivers, more coaches will visit.
<p>Improve welcome and visitor</p>	Southeastern Trains	High	S-M-L	Redevelopment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Network Rail investing in

Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scales	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
<p>facilities at the rail stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome sign and town map on board • Clear signing to drop-off/pick-up points <p>Longer term, a need to deliver new development at Maidstone East station to improve first impressions and provide additional welcome & visitor facilities.</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council Network Rail</p>			<p>proposals exist for Maidstone East Station and these improvements could be incorporated. £1m of Single Local Growth Fund is available in 2016/17 for the redevelopment of the Ticket Office buildings.</p>	<p>Maidstone East – what influence can group have on welcome signs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North end of Week Street due to have public realm improvements

WORKING GROUP 4: COUNTRYSIDE

Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scales	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
<p>Product audit – map & gap current provision of trails, walks and countryside & river experiences</p>	<p>Explore Kent AONB Maidstone Borough Council Visit Kent Produced in Kent Parishes Rural stakeholders e.g. Young Farmers, WI, CPRE, National Trust, RSPB, Kent Wildlife Trust, Hadlow Pilgrims’ Way Company – Walk Awhile</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>S</p>	<p>Partner time Commission co-ordinator</p>	<p>Survey has gone out to Parish Council at the beginning of January with 6 weeks to return it. We have done a chase before the final day which was 14th February, but have not as yet has time to assess all information sent. Brown sign audit from Parish Councils returned a very poor result, so we are going to have to do that in house. Some parish councils have been keener than others to encourage visitors.</p>
<p>Marketing audit – understand who currently markets the countryside experiences, where and how. Find best digital solution to make sure that online information for visitors from various sources is easily found. Consider how best to use/work with existing brands and sub-brands e.g. Garden of England, Heart of Kent, Our Land</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council Explore Kent Kent Downs AONB Unit Kent Wildlife Trust Visit Kent</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>S</p>	<p>Partner time</p>	<p>We have had an excellent result from this and have found potential new partners to develop and market with.</p>
<p>Develop themed experiences and trails that use Shared Story for inspiration, include key attractions, pubs etc along trail to drive more</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council Kent County Council Visit Kent</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>S-M</p>	<p>Leader funding</p>	

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Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scales	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
<p>spend</p> <p>Develop marketing collateral – digital and offline. Rich online content.</p>	<p>Key visitor attractions</p> <p>Other tourism businesses – including pubs and accommodation</p> <p>Transport operators (to enable circular walks/cycle + rail/bus routes)</p> <p>AONB</p> <p>Explore Kent</p> <p>Parishes</p>				
<p>Audit walks and trails selected for promotion to visitors to ensure they are easy to use and attractive – safe and easy to find car parks at start points, good facilities along the way, e.g. picnic sites, interpretation, benches, viewpoints etc. Ensure the routes are consistently signed and that refreshment stops and attractions along the route provide appropriate facilities for walkers and cyclists, e.g. cycle lock ups . Develop a plan for investment to plug gaps in provision.</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council</p> <p>Kent County Council</p> <p>Environment Agency</p> <p>AONB</p> <p>Parish Councils</p> <p>Southeastern Farmers</p> <p>Fishing Clubs</p>	Medium	M		Still in assessment process and waiting returns.
<p>Develop rural Visitor Information Points – “i” branded.</p>	<p>Maidstone Borough Council</p> <p>Tourism South East</p> <p>Local rural tourism businesses</p>	High	M	Leader funding	Work has started on Leader funding bid and potentially there will be new electronic visitor activity data as well, possibly using Scout.

Actions	Who needs to be involved	Priority	Time-scales	Estimated costs and potential funding sources	Progress to date
	Parish Councils Kent County Council, Highways				
<p>Work towards becoming Kent's first "Walker Friendly" destination using the Cyclist Welcome and Walkers Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key towns/villages and support Walkers Welcome accreditation (prioritise villages with direct train links into Maidstone) • Promotional activity 	Visit Kent Explore Kent Maidstone Borough Council Tourism South East	Medium	M	Leader funding, participant fees	Going to have be the 4 th Walker Friendly destination but it would seem that this could be a great place for walking without the car. North Downs Way and Stations are working together and have potential to join in.

DMP Budget 2015-16 £20,000 (2016-17 tbc)

DMP Action	Description	Proposed Budget	Other funding proposed	Date of delivery
Town and Countryside - improve signage	Removal of redundant brown signage	£2,000.00	None	End of March 2016
Town	Strategic Signage on M20 promoting Maidstone as a heritage destination.	£8,000.00		In progress
Town - improve look and provide information	Replace all event poster sites with new cases and updated systems	£15,000.00	None	End of March 2016
Historic Interpretation	Installation of new Historic Interpretation panels throughout the town centre,	£2,000.00	None	End of March 2016
DMP toolkit	Image Library license	£500.00		Annual
DMP toolkit	New Photography including drone	£6,000.00		Start May / June 2016 or when specific events arise
DMP toolkit	Video - series of short medium and long themed videos	£5,000.00	May include partners contribution	Throughout year starting spring 2016.
Events consumer facing	Develop search box widget for What's On, Accommodation and Places to Visit to provide to external businesses for their websites	£1,320.00	set up £1,320 & £1,320 annually -Include in web fee in year 2 onward	End of March 2016
Rural TIC's	4 rural Tourist Information points	£10,000.00	Leader Plus - will bring down total. Will require annual on costs	2016-17
Events toolkit	Develop online information for event planners	£1,500.00		
	Total	£51,320.00		

Agenda Item 17

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

Tuesday 1 March
2016

Is this the final decision on the recommendations?

Yes

Additional Inscription Charge

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee
Lead Director or Head of Service	Head of Environment & Public Realm
Lead Officer and Report Author	Head of Environment & Public Realm
Classification	Non-exempt
Wards affected	None

This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That the Committee considers the reasons for the original agreed proposal to reduce the charge for an additional subscription to £52
2. That the Committee decides whether to overturn this decision and retain the charge of £97 which was set for 2015/16

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

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

Timetable

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	Tuesday 1 March 2016

Additional Inscription Charge

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Committee agreed the fees and charges for Bereavement Services at the meeting held on 5 January 2016. However have asked for the opportunity to review the charge for Additional Inscriptions which is due to be reduced from £97 to £52 in 2016/17.
- 1.2 This report outlines the reasons for the reduction, the impact of the reduction and asks that the Committee agree the charge for Additional Inscriptions for 2016/17.

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Fees and Charges for Bereavement Services were presented to the Committee at the meeting on 5 January 2016.
- 2.2 Within this report the proposed memorial permit charges were set out as follows:

Monuments	2015/16	2016/17
Headstone	£97	£140
Kerbstone	£97	£38.50
Indicator stone	£37.70	£140
Cremated remains memorial	£97	£140
Tablet (12" by 12")	£97	£140
Vase	£97	£140
Initial inscription	£97	£140
Additional inscription	£97	£52
Any other monument (Note: monument permit fees are reduced by 50% for under 16 years)	£97	£140

- 2.3 For the majority of these charges there was a 44.33% proposed increase, as research undertaken regarding other cemeteries and crematoria across Kent indicated Maidstone's charges were around £50 lower than its competitors.
- 2.4 However in light of the increased charges for headstones, kerbstones, indicator stones, cremated remains memorial, tablets, vases and initial inscriptions, it was proposed that the additional inscription charge should be reduced by £40.
- 2.5 The reduced charge for the additional inscription is an accurate reflection of the amount of staff time proportionately that is spent on processing such

applications. This is far less than the time spent processing initial memorial applications, which is particularly demanding.

- 2.6 These new charges will have a small reduction on the potential income which could be obtained from all memorial permits on a single memorial, where space has been left for a future inscription, compared to the 2015/16 charges. This would total £277 instead of £277.60 at present, a reduction of £0.60.
 - 2.7 However, it is also recognised that the reduced fee may attract more additional inscriptions than currently carried out which could increase the income generated.
 - 2.8 Should the additional inscription fee be held at 2015/16 price, the charge for all memorial permits on a single memorial, where space has been left for a future inscription, would be £322 for 2016/17.
 - 2.9 Therefore reinstating the charge from 2015/16 may generate a small additional income.
 - 2.10 In the past 12 months there have been 27 Additional Inscriptions. Assuming a similar level of uptake next year, the higher charge would result in an additional income of £1,215.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 **Option 1:** The Committee could decide to retain the reduced charge of £52 for Additional Inscriptions for 2016/17 as agreed in their January Committee Meeting.
 - 3.2 **Option 2:** The Committee could decide to reinstate the previous years charge the charge of £97 for Additional Inscriptions for 2016/17.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is recommended that the Committee consider the charge for the Additional Inscriptions and determine which is the most appropriate for 2016/17.
-

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Chair of Heritage, Culture and Leisure has requested that the Committee have the opportunity to discuss and agree the Additional Inscription fee for 2016/17.
-

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 Following agreement by the Committee, the new Fees and Charges will be published and will be provided to local Funeral Directors and Stonemasons.

6.2 The Fees and Charges will take effect from 1 April 2016.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Increases in fees and charges can have a significant impact on the Council's objectives. The use of the policy as a guide to assessing a correct level of increase means that the most appropriate levels are proposed in this report.	Head of Environment and Public Realm
Risk Management	There is a risk that if the prices are not set at an acceptable level, customers may be deterred and income levels may drop.	Head of Environment & Public Realm
Financial	Reinstating the higher charge for the Additional Inscriptions is likely to generate a small amount of additional income (in the region of £1,200) per annum.	Finance Team
Staffing	None	
Legal	None	
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	N/A	
Environmental/Sustainable Development	None	
Community Safety	None	
Human Rights Act	None	
Procurement	None	
Asset Management	None	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None