

# HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 29 January 2019  
Time: 6.30 pm  
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Cuming, Fermor, Fort, Harper (Chairman), Hastie, Hinder,  
Mrs Hinder, Lewins and Mrs Wilson (Vice-Chairman)

*The Chairman will assume that all Members will read the reports before attending the meeting. Officers are asked to assume the same when introducing reports.*

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## AGENDA

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- |  |         |
|--|---------|
| 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   |         |
| 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 17 December 2018   | 1 - 3   |
| 9. Presentation of Petitions (if any)  |         |
| 10. Questions and answer session for members of the public   |         |
| 11. Committee Work Programme   | 4 - 5   |
| 12. 2018/19 Key Performance Indicators Update Quarter 3  | 6 - 13  |
| 13. Strategic Plan 2019-45 Action Plan   | 14 - 28 |
| 14. 3rd Quarter Budget Monitoring 2018/19  | 29 - 43 |
| 15. Fees & Charges 2019/20   | 44 - 63 |
| 16. Medium Term Financial Strategy & Budget Proposals  | 64 - 87 |

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**Issued on Monday 21 January 2019**

**Continued Over/:**

*Alison Broom*

**Alison Broom, Chief Executive**

### **PUBLIC SPEAKING AND ALTERNATIVE FORMATS**

If you require this information in an alternative format please contact us, call **01622 602899** or email [committee@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:committee@maidstone.gov.uk).

In order to speak at this meeting, please contact Democratic Services using the contact details above, by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting, i.e. by 5 p.m. on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2019. If asking a question, you will need to provide the full text in writing. If making a statement, you will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on. Please note that slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit [www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk).

Should you wish to refer any decisions contained in these minutes to the **Policy and Resources Committee**, please submit a Decision Referral Form, signed by **three** Councillors, to the **Head of Policy and Communications** by: **3 January 2019**

## **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE**

#### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 17 DECEMBER 2018**

**Present:** Councillors Cuming, Fermor, Harper (Chairman),  
Hastie, Hinder, Mrs Hinder, Lewins and Mrs Wilson

104. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

105. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

106. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

107. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

108. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

109. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

110. EXEMPT ITEMS

**RESOLVED:** That all items be taken in public, as proposed.

111. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 NOVEMBER 2018

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Meeting held on 27 November 2018 be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.

112. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

113. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

114. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman advised that following the approval of the Strategic Plan by Council one of the strap lines was 'Pride in Maidstone' which would have two overriding themes, heritage and bio-diversity. He felt that the Committee should consider how they could drive this forward and suggested an informal workshop where Members of the Committee and Officers could have a brainstorming session and felt that this should take place early January.

The Committee then discussed the items on the Work Programme and made the following changes:-

Cemetery Update – this item was moved to March 2019.

Leisure Scoping Report – the title was changed to Sports Scrutiny Review and would be considered in January 2019.

Museum's Future Governance - the Chairman updated the Committee on a meeting he had attended with the Vice-Chairman of the Brenchley Trust.

Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) – suggestions for new KPIs were scheduled to be discussed in depth at a forthcoming workshop.

Parks and Open Spaces Briefing Note – the Briefing Note sent out to all Members by the Vice-Chairman was due to be considered at the forthcoming workshop.

Arts Installation Maidstone East – this was a new item that needed adding to the programme.

Market Review and New Market on Jubilee Square – to be considered in April or June 2019.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee Work Programme be agreed subject to the changes made above.

Note: Councillor Cuming arrived at 6.36 p.m. during consideration of this item.

115. POLLINATORS PROJECT - A PILOT MEADOW CREATION SCHEME

Mr Andrew Williams, Parks and Open Spaces Manager, presented a report on the merits of creating a more bio-diverse borough through planting a number of pollinator friendly wildflower grasslands as a pilot project. The lessons learnt would inform future plans to make the Council's parks and open spaces more attractive for residents to enjoy and provide a better habitat for wildlife.

The Committee noted that the project was an opportunity for adults and children to get involved in the sowing and onward maintenance of these areas.

In response to questions from the Committee, Officers advised that:-

- Local schools, community groups, Parish Councils and Ward Councillors would be contacted during January to enable them to get involved. There would also be an article in the Borough Insight magazine and a Press Release issued.
- Kent County Council would be advised when areas that are maintained by them are due to be sown to enable the seeds to establish.
- The meadows should be flowering in June/July 2019 but would not be at their optimum for another year.
- Fairmeadow had been sown but due to adverse weather conditions, the seeds had not flourished. This area was due to be resown.

**RESOLVED:** That the creation of eight pollinator friendly wildflower and grassland areas to benefit bio-diversity, increase access to nature and make the borough a more attractive place be approved.

Voting: Unanimous

116. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.25 p.m.

## 2018/19 WORK PROGRAMME - HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Future of Leisure Provision in Maidstone	HCL	29/01/19	John Foster	Mike Evans
Progress Report: Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Strategic Plan 2017-2027	HCL	29/01/19	Jennifer Shepherd	Andy Williams
Key Performance Indicators Update 2018/19 Qtr 3	HCL	29/01/19	Angela Woodhouse	Anna Collier
Q3 Budget Monitoring 2018/19	HCL	05/03/19	Ellie Dunnet	Paul Holland
Fees & Charges 2019/20	HCL	29/01/19	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Strategic Plan Action Plan	HCL	29/01/19	Angela Woodhouse	Anna Collier
Medium Term Financial Strategy - Budget Proposals 2019/20	HCL	29/01/19	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
↳ Museums consultation results and fundraising strategy	HCL	29/01/19	John Foster	Victoria Barlow
Cemetery Update	HCL	05/03/19	Jennifer Shepherd	Sharon Smith
Q3 Performance Report 2018/19	HCL	05/03/19	Angela Woodhouse	Anna Collier
Museums Future Governance Options Update	HCL	05/03/19	William Cornall	Victoria Barlow
Biodiversity Action Plan	HCL	05/03/19	Jennifer Shepherd	Andrew Williams
Market Review	HCL	02/04/19	John Foster	Fran Wallis
New Market on Jubilee Square	HCL	02/04/19	John Foster	Fran Wallis

## 2018/19 WORK PROGRAMME

	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Mote Park Programme - Key Projects Update	HCL	TBC	John Foster	Mike Evans
Joint Heritage Bid - All Saints Church (requested by Cllr Joy)	HCL	TBC	William Cornall	Victoria Barlow
80th Anniversary of the start of WWII	HCL	TBC	John Foster	Laura Dickson
Arts Installation at Maidstone East	HCL	TBC	John Foster	
400th Anniversary of the Charter of the Swans to Maidstone Borough Council	HCL	TBC	TBC	(at the request of Cllr Harper)
Long Term Maintenance of Assets	HCL	TBC	TBC	TBC (at the request of HCL Committee)

# Agenda Item 12

## Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee

29 January 2019

### Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 3 18/19

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service/Lead Director</b>	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Anna Collier, Policy and Information Manager and Clare Harvey, Data Intelligence Officer
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

#### Executive Summary

The Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee is asked to review the progress of Key Performance Indicators that relate to the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The Committee is also asked to consider the comments and actions against performance to ensure they are robust.

#### This report makes the following recommendations to Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee

1. That the summary of performance for Quarter 3 of 2018/19 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be noted.

#### Timetable

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	29 January 2019

# Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 3 18/19

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Having a comprehensive set of actions and performance indicators ensures that the Council delivers against the priorities and actions set in the Strategic Plan.
- 1.2 Performance indicators are judged in two ways. Firstly on whether performance has improved, sustained or declined, compared to the same period in the previous year. This is known as direction. Where there is no previous data, no assessment of direction can be made.
- 1.3 The second way is to look at whether an indicator has achieved the target set and is known as performance indicator status. If an indicator has achieved or exceeded the target they are rated green. If the target has been missed but is within 10% of the target it will be rated amber, and if the target has been missed by more than 10% it will be rated red.
- 1.4 Some indicators will show an asterisk (\*) after the figure. These are provisional values that are awaiting confirmation. Data for some of the indicators were not available at the time of reporting. In these cases a date has been provided for when the information is expected.
- 1.5 Contextual indicators are not targeted but are given a direction. Indicators that are not due for reporting or where there is delay in data collection are not rated against targets or given a direction.

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## 2. Quarter 3 Performance Summary

- 2.1 There are 27 key performance indicators (KPIs) which were developed with Heads of Service and unit managers, and agreed by the four Service Committees for 2018/19. 5 are reported to the Committee for this quarter.
- 2.2 Overall, 20% (1) of targeted KPIs reported this quarter achieved their target compared to 80% (4) in quarter 2 and 80% (4) in the same quarter last year.

RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	1	1	3	0	5
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Last Year	3	0	2	0	5
Last Quarter	3	0	2	0	5

### **3. Performance by Priority**

#### **Priority 1: Keeping Maidstone borough an attractive place for all, & Priority 2: Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough**

- 3.1 Despite increased competition from other pantomimes the Hazlitt has achieved the quarter 3 target and performance has increased by 10% compared to 2017/18.
  - 3.2 The number of students benefiting from the museums educational service was 1,569 against a target of 2,074. Although the target was missed for this quarter, for the year to date there has been 762 more visits at the quarter 3 point compared to the same period in 2017/18. The festive period which falls in quarter 3 means that there is usually a lower take up from schools at this time as they are occupied with other activities. The Museum Manager anticipates that the annual target will be achieved.
  - 3.3 There were 11,586 people (footfall) at the Museum and Visitors Information centre in quarter 3 against a target of 16,250. Although the target for the quarter has been missed the year to date figure is 7,869 higher than at the same point in 2017/18. This overall increase in the year to date is attributed to the '5,000 Poppies' craft installation in partnership with Royal British Legion, Golding Homes and local residents which was praised by the participants and received good publicity.
  - 3.4 There were 455 contacts to the Visitor Information centre against a target of 782. Tourism enquires always fall over the winter months but the Museum Manager states that business is steady. Although the quarter target has been missed the year to date performance for this indicator is showing an increase of in excess of 100 visits compared to the same point in 2017/18.
  - 3.5 There were 184,401 users at the Leisure Centre in quarter 3 against a target of 186,079. Historically quarter 3 is the worst performing across the year for this indicator. While the quarterly target has been marginally missed performance is greater than for the same period in 2017/18 by 900 users and the year to date performance is in excess of 15,000 higher than at the same point last year.
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### **4. RISK**

- 4.1 This report is presented for information only, committees, managers and heads of service can use performance data to identify service performance and this data can contribute to risk management.

### **5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 The Key Performance Indicator Update is reported quarterly to the Service Committees; Communities Housing and Environment Committee, Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee, and Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee. Each Committee will receive a report on the relevant priority action areas. The report is also presented to the Policy &

Resources Committee, reporting only on the priority areas of: A clean and safe environment, regenerating the Town Centre, and a home for everyone.

## 6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The Council could choose not to monitor the Strategic Plan and/or make alternative performance management arrangements, such as frequency of reporting. This is not recommended as it could lead to action not being taken against performance during the year, and the Council failing to deliver its priorities.

## 7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	The key performance indicators and strategic actions are part of the Council's overarching Strategic Plan 2015-20 and play an important role in the achievement of corporate objectives. They also cover a wide range of services and priority areas.	Policy and Information Manager
<b>Risk Management</b>	The production of robust performance reports ensures that the view of the Council's approach to the management of risk and use of resources is not undermined and allows early action to be taken in order to mitigate the risk of not achieving targets and outcomes.	Policy and Information Manager
<b>Financial</b>	Performance indicators and targets are closely linked to the allocation of resources and determining good value for money. The financial implications of any proposed changes are also identified and taken into account in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and associated	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

	annual budget setting process. Performance issues are highlighted as part of the budget monitoring reporting process.	
<b>Staffing</b>	Having a clear set of targets enables staff outcomes/objectives to be set and effective action plans to be put in place	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Legal</b>	There is no statutory duty to report regularly on the Council's performance. However, under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended) a best value authority has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. One of the purposes of the Key Performance Indicators is to facilitate the improvement of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of Council Services. Regular reports on the Council's performance assist in demonstrating best value and compliance with the statutory duty.	Legal Team
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	The data will be held and processed in accordance with the data protection principles contained in the Data Protection Act 2018 and in line with the Data Quality Policy, which sets out the requirement for ensuring data quality. There is a program for undertaking data quality audits of performance indicators.	Policy and Information Manager
<b>Equalities</b>	The Performance Indicators reported on in this quarterly	Equalities and Corporate Policy

	update measure the ongoing performance of the strategies in place. If there has been a change to the way in which a service delivers a strategy, i.e. a policy change, an Equalities Impact Assessment is undertaken to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on individuals with a protected characteristic.	Officer
<b>Public Health</b>	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Policy and Information Manager
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	None identified	Policy and Information Manager
<b>Procurement</b>	Performance Indicators and Strategic Milestones monitor any procurement needed to achieve the outcomes of the Strategic Plan.	Policy and Information Manager

**8. REPORT APPENDICES**

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

- Appendix 1: Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 3 18/19

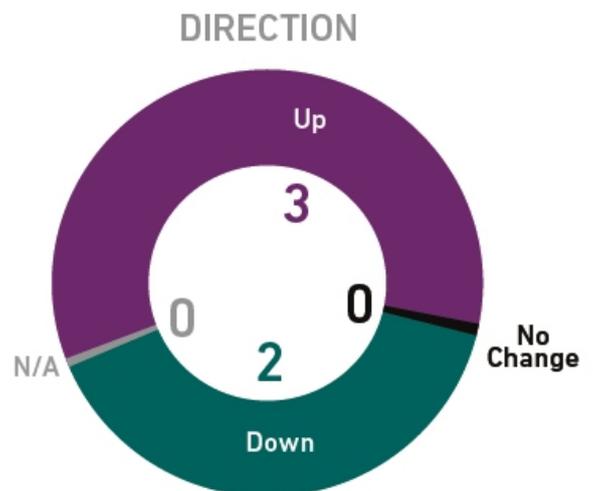
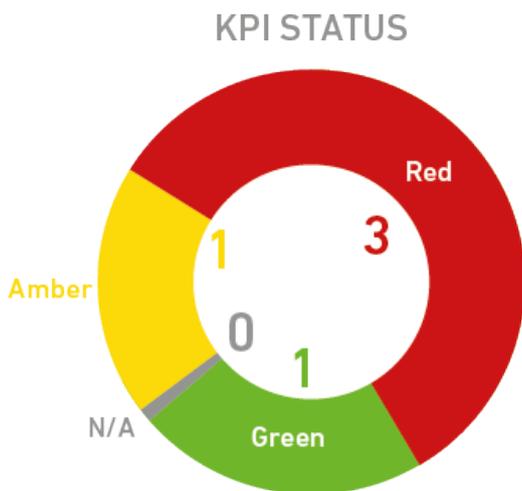
## Performance Summary

This is the quarter 3 performance update on Maidstone Borough Council’s Strategic Plan 2015-20. It sets out how we are performing against Key Performance Indicators that directly contribute to the achievement of our priorities. Performance indicators are judged in two ways; firstly, whether an indicator has achieved the target set, known as PI status. Secondly, we assess whether performance has improved, been sustained or declined, compared to the same period in the previous year, known as direction.

### Key to performance ratings

RAG Rating	
	Target not achieved
	Target slightly missed (within 10%)
	Target met
	Data Only

Direction	
	Performance has improved
	Performance has been sustained
	Performance has declined
N/A	No previous data to compare



RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	1	1	3	0	5
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Last Year	3	0	2	0	5
Last Quarter	3	0	2	0	5

**Priority 1: Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all,  
& Priority 2: Securing a successful economy for Maidstone  
Borough**

**Ensuring there are good leisure and culture attractions**

Performance Indicator					
	Value	Target	Status	Last Year	Last Quarter
Percentage of all available tickets sold at the Hazlitt	79.9%	50%			
Number of students benefiting from the museums educational service	1,569	2,074			
Footfall at the museum and Visitors Information Centre	11,584	16,250			
Contacts to the Visitor Information Centre	455	782			
Number of users at the leisure centre	184,401	186,079			

# Agenda Item 13

## Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee

29 January 2019

### Strategic Plan Actions 2019-2024

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Council
<b>Lead Head of Service/Lead Director</b>	Alison Broom Chief Executive
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Angela Woodhouse Head of Policy Communications and Governance and Anna Collier Policy and Information Manager
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

#### Executive Summary

Following agreement of a new vision, priorities and outcomes by Council in December 2018 this report sets out the proposed high level key actions the Council will take in the short term to deliver against the outcomes.

#### This report makes the following recommendations to Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee

1. To consider the high level key actions as identified in Appendix A and provide feedback to the Policy and Resources Committee

#### Timetable

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	29 January 2019
Strategic Planning and Sustainable Transport Committee	5 February 2019
Communities Housing and the Environment Committee	12 February 2019
Policy and Resources Committee	13 February 2019
Council	27 February 2019

# Strategic Plan Actions 2019-2024

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In December 2018 Council agreed the new vision, priorities and outcomes for the Borough until 2045.
- 1.2 The formation of the new vision, priorities and outcomes has been reached following an intensive process of engagement, research and involvement which included a number of councillor workshops and public and partner consultation to ensure what was developed reflects the key issues facing the borough in the long term.
- 1.3 This report identifies proposed high level key actions that the Council will take in the short to medium term to ensure that the Council is on course to achieve the agreed outcomes. The focus is on significant projects and changes to the Council's approach and work programmes. The intention is not to include every business as usual activity in the high level key action plan. Each council service produces an operational service plan and this is where actions to maintain or evolve these services is articulated.

### Key Actions

- 1.4 Proposed key actions can be seen in the sections beginning with "between 2019-24 we will place particular importance on" under each priority in Appendix A.
- 1.5 The vision in the Strategic Plan is to 2045, so key actions reflect the Council's focus of resources in the short to medium term (1-5 years). Actions will be regularly reviewed to ensure that the Council's resources are always focused in the right areas, reflecting the needs of the borough at the time.
- 1.6 The actions identified are brief and strategic, following assessment of the Council's current plans, our ambitions and the resources needed. It should be noted that not every outcome will have actions at this point in time as the Council has finite resources and the plan stretches until 2045 allowing some topics to be addressed now and others to be considered at a later date, in other words the action plan acknowledges that the Council will not be able to tackle all the outcomes straight away. The proposed actions reflect current promises and outcomes where current issues are most acute for example housing. Some areas for example community development currently have limited resource and will require careful planning and further work as well as looking at funding before we can progress.
- 1.7 The Council has a comprehensive range of topic specific strategies each of which has an associated action plan. Our Strategic Plan document will include a full strategy map. As noted above operational actions will be covered in departments' service plans which will be refreshed (as is our usual practice) in February/March 2019 to coincide with the new municipal year; they will

reflect the budget provision for 2019/20 and any preparations needed for operational changes or budget changes agreed for the period beyond.

### **Monitoring of Actions**

- 1.8 Members will be able to keep oversight of progress of these key actions through the service Committees in a number of ways:
- Quarterly and annual key performance indicators
  - Strategy and briefing updates
  - 6 monthly strategic plan updates.

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## **2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 The Committee is asked to review the strategic plan at Appendix A and identify any improvements and/or amendments for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee. The Vision, Priorities and Outcomes have already been approved by Council and cannot be amended.
- 2.2 A number of options are open to the committee:
- Review and make amendments  
This would allow the committee to influence the document prior to submission to Council and make suggestions for improvement to Policy and Resources for example additional actions or changes to actions under the priorities.
  - Review and make no amendments  
This would demonstrate that the committee is content with the document.
  - Choose not to review the plan  
This course of action is not recommended as the Committee would be forfeiting influencing a key strategic document outlining actions for services within its remit for 2019/20 onwards.
  - Recommend a rewrite of the Plan and/or request further work  
Careful consideration will need to be given to this option as this may compromise the timetable for the plan.

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## **3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Committee is recommended to review the plan and make recommendations to the Policy and Resources Committee as appropriate. A key role for the committee is ensuring that the Council delivers its strategic objectives with regard to Heritage, Culture and Leisure.

#### **4. RISK**

- 4.1 The Strategic Plan sets out the Council's priorities and how they will be delivered informing the council's risk register which will pick up any actions from the Strategic Plan. A Member and Officer corporate risk workshop is being delivered on 22 January 2019 to review and identify risks in relation to the new plan and the product of this will be reported to the Policy and Resources Committee with monitoring by Audit, Governance and Standards Committee in the usual way.
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#### **5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 As the Committee will be aware from previous reports and discussions on the new Strategic Plan, consultation has been undertaken with residents, Parish Councils, Councillors and Committees to develop the agreed vision, priorities and outcomes. This report provides an opportunity to comment on the actions that have now been developed prior to consideration by Policy and Resources.
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#### **6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 6.1 The Service Committees will all have an opportunity to comment on and influence the strategic plan actions. Policy and Resources Committee will then consider all the feedback at its meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and make recommendations to Council for adoption on 27 February 2019.
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#### **7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	The plan sets out the short to medium term high level key actions to achieve the outcomes associated with Council's corporate priorities.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Risk Management</b>	Refer to section 4.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Financial</b>	This report sets out the key actions the Council will take in the short term to deliver Strategic Plan outcomes. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS), approved by Council on 12 December 2018,	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

	sets out how the Strategic Plan will be delivered in financial terms. The actions described here are consistent with the MTFS.	
<b>Staffing</b>	The Plan will inform the Council's Service Plans which in turn inform individual appraisals setting out the direction and key tasks for staff.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Legal</b>		[Legal Team]
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	We recognise the plan actions will impact what information the Council holds on our residents. As projects are developed which involve the collection and/or processing of personal data the project managers/owners of specific tasks will ensure that privacy impact assessments have been undertaken	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Equalities</b>	As decisions are made on each of the projects and actions equality impact assessments will be undertaken as needed	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Public Health</b>	The plan has actions to improve health and wellbeing of our residents	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	The plan sets out high level priorities for community safety	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Procurement</b>	No implications	

## 8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Draft Strategic Plan 2019-2045

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Report to Council: New Strategic Plan Vision, Priorities and Outcomes 2019-2045  
<http://aluminum:9080/documents/s63863/New%20Strategic%20Plan%20Vision%20Objectives%20and%20Outcomes%202019-45.pdf>

Front Cover: Strategic Plan 2019-2045

Artwork to be added

Contents

Page 3: Leader and Chief Executives' foreword - TBC

Page 4: Vision and priorities diagram - TBC

Page 5: Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure

Page 6: Safe, Clean and Green

Page 7: Homes and Communities

Page 8: Thriving Place

Page 9: Strategy Map – TBC

Leader and Chief Executive's Foreword, to be added prior to submission to Policy and Resources Committee

# Our Strategic Plan 2019-2045



- Cross Cutting Objectives:**
- Heritage is respected
  - Health inequalities are addressed and reduced
  - Deprivation is reduced and social mobility is improved
  - Biodiversity and Environmental sustainability is respected



## Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure

We want Maidstone Borough to work for the people who live, visit and work; now and in the future. We want a Borough where there is a variety of jobs, housing need is met and infrastructure is in place to meet the growing needs of our residents and economy. We also want to ensure we lead and shape our place as it grows, including leading master planning and investing to bring about high quality housing and jobs in the Borough.

### Snapshot

- As of 2017 we had 167,700 people living in the Borough
- Our population is forecast to grow by 24.3% between 2016 and 2036
- From 2011/12-2017/18 a total of 5,291 new homes have been built in the Borough
- In 2017/18 the employment rate was 78.5% (83,400 people) up from the same period in the previous year by 3.9%
- In 2018 the average home broadband speed was around 46.2Mbps, up from 36.2Mbps in 2017
- Better transport systems is the second highest priority for our residents

### Our Outcomes:

- The Council leads master planning and invests in new places which are well designed
- Key employment sites are delivered
- Housing need is met including affordable housing
- Sufficient infrastructure is planned to meet the demands of growth

### Between 2019-24 we will place particular importance on:

- Engaging with our communities on the Local Plan review 
- The Council will take a proactive role in creating and investing in new places 
- Expanding the Council's role in the delivery of affordable and market rent housing 
- Working with partners to get infrastructure planned, funded and delivered 
- Intervening where necessary in the market, to deliver key employment sites 

## Safe, Clean and Green

We will keep Maidstone an attractive and clean place for all. Maidstone is a safe place to live and we want our residents to feel safe. We want to protect and where possible enhance our environment and make sure our parks, green spaces, streets and public areas are looked after, well managed and respected.

### Snapshot

- Over 50% of waste is recycled
- The town centre and its immediate surrounds have been designated as an Air Quality Management Area
- Maidstone has 30 large parks, four of which are Green Flag parks and 80 Neighbourhood greenspaces
- Just over 40% of residents use amenity green space once a week
- Overall, 70.5% of respondents were very or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live
- 93% of residents feel safe in their own home, but 22% don't feel safe walking in their local area at night

### Our Outcomes:

- People feel safe and are safe
- A Borough that is recognised as clean and well cared for by everyone
- An environmentally attractive and sustainable Borough
- Everyone has access to high quality parks and green spaces

### Between 2019-24 we will place particular importance on:

- Taking action against those who don't respect our public spaces, streets, green spaces and parks 🏰+🌿
- Improving community safety by working with our partners to make people less vulnerable to crime 🏰+👮
- Raising resident satisfaction with the cleanliness of the Borough 🏰+🌿
- Implementing the "Go Green Go Wild" project to embrace and encourage biodiversity and protect and enhance our green spaces 🏰+🌿
- Improving air quality 🏰+🌿

## Homes and Communities

We want to have a place that people love and where they can afford to live. This means ensuring that there is a good balance of different types of homes, including affordable housing. We will have safe and desirable homes that enable good health and wellbeing for our communities. We will address homelessness and rough sleeping to move people into settled accommodation. We will work with our partners to improve the quality of community services and facilities including for health care and community activities. Residents will be encouraged and supported to volunteer and play a full part in their communities.

### Snapshot

- In 2018 we provided emergency accommodation for in excess 30 people sleeping rough
- On average people could expect to pay 9 times their annual earnings in 2018 compared to 7 times in 2007
- Only 22% of residents agree their neighbourhood is a place where homes are affordable
- Three of our wards rank in the top 10% for deprivation in Kent

### Our Outcomes:

- A diverse range of community activities is encouraged
- Existing housing is safe, desirable and promotes good health and well-being
- Homelessness and rough sleeping are prevented
- Community facilities and services in the right place at the right time to support communities

### Between 2019-24 we will place particular importance on:

- Reducing rough sleeping in a sustainable way 
- Reducing the use of temporary accommodation for homeless families 
- Improving housing through use of our statutory powers to promote good health and wellbeing 
- Increasing our interventions with Houses of Multiple Occupation 
- Supporting the health service to improve access to primary care including local care hubs 

## A Thriving Place

Maidstone is a Borough that is open for business, attractive for visitors and is an enjoyable and prosperous place to live for our residents. Maidstone is the Business Capital of Kent; we will continue to grow our local economy with high employment, good local jobs and thriving local businesses. We want our town and village centres to thrive and be fit for the future. We will lead investment in the County town and rural service centres through our regeneration projects and working with partners. We are proud of our heritage and will continue to grow our leisure and cultural offer.

### Snapshot

- We attract over 4.5 million visits a year with over £284 million spend in the local economy
- 45% of residents view the economy as thriving or on the way up
- Maidstone has the highest total GVA (£3,842m) of all the Kent districts
- Unemployment (job seeker allowance claimants) is 1.1% (Nov 2018)
- 1160 more businesses have started up or located to the Borough since 2010

### Our Outcomes:

- A vibrant leisure and culture offer, enjoyed by residents and attractive to visitors
- Our town and village centres are fit for the future
- Skills levels and earning potential of our residents are raised
- Local commercial and inward investment is increased

### Between 2019-24 we will place particular importance on:

- Reviewing and delivering leisure and cultural services that are fit for the future   
- Building the innovation centre at Kent Medical Campus, promoting inward investment in the borough 
- Working with partners to redevelop the Maidstone East site and modernise the bus station in the County Town  
- Developing and delivering plans for the five opportunity sites in the town centre and the Staplehurst regeneration project  
- Working with parishes and community groups on neighbourhood plans    

## How we do things

- Community Engagement and Leadership
- Partnership working
- Proactive Investment
- Outcome focussed commissioning and service delivery

We recognise that our vision is ambitious and the outcomes we are seeking to achieve will require us to work with our partners and key stakeholders in the Borough. We are keen to take an active role in shaping the Borough through investing our resources in housing and regeneration as well as leading the development of new communities. We will do all this whilst engaging and listening to our communities.

We are a confident organisation, so whilst central government funding has reduced, we are prepared to generate resources locally to fulfil our ambitions and aspirations to deliver our priorities. Building on our strengths - assets, knowledge and expertise and our track record for innovation and improvement we are creating a financially sustainable future so that we can continue with our undiminished plans.

### **Our Values:**

#### **Service**

It is important to understand that everything we do impacts on our customers, both internal and external. We will listen to and understand their needs, then take action to provide the right service in a positive and professional manner.

#### **Teamwork**

Working together to achieve our objectives and goals in a way that utilises the talents and creativity of everyone in our organisation.

#### **Responsibility**

Knowing that we work in an environment that encourages us to take ownership for our actions. Making the right choices and decisions that lead to a satisfactory outcome for all.

#### **Integrity**

Having the courage to act on our convictions to build trust and honesty within the organisation. Working with our partners and customers to create a feeling of openness and transparency in all that we do.

#### **Value**

Taking care and weighing up our options, aiming to get the maximum effect for every penny of public money we spend.

#### **Equality**

Valuing our differences and understanding how they can contribute to a better working environment and services that are fair and easy to access.

Strategy Map – to be added

## Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

**29 January 2019**

### 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Budget Monitoring 2018/19

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service/Lead Director</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance & Business Improvement
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Ellie Dunnet, Head of Finance
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

#### **Executive Summary**

This report sets out the financial position for this Committee at the end of Quarter 3 2018/19 against the revenue and capital budgets.

For this Committee, there is an underspend against the revenue budget of £151,000, but this is expected to reduce to an underspend of £19,000 by the end of this financial year.

Capital expenditure totalling £1.963m has been incurred between 1 April and 31 December for the projects which sit within this Committee's remit. This represents slippage of £1.850m.

#### **This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. That the revenue position at the end of the third quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted.
  
2. That the capital position at the end of the third quarter is noted.

#### **Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	29 January 2019

# 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter Budget Monitoring 2018/19

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2018/19 onwards was agreed by full Council on 7 March 2018. This report advises and updates the Committee on how each service has performed in regards to revenue and capital expenditure against the approved budgets within its remit.
  - 1.2 The Director of Finance & Business Improvement is the Responsible Financial Officer, and has overall responsibility for budgetary control and financial management. However in practice, day to day budgetary control is delegated to service managers, with assistance and advice from their director and the finance section.
  - 1.3 Attached at **Appendix 1** is a report detailing the position for the revenue and capital budgets at the end of the December 2018.
- 

## 2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 There are no matters for decision in this report. The Committee is asked to note the contents but may choose to take further action depending on the matters reported here.
- 

## 3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 In considering the current position on the revenue budget and the capital programme at the end of December 2018 the committee can choose to note this information or it could choose to take further action.
  - 3.2 The committee is requested to note the content of the report and agree on any necessary action to be taken in relation to the budget position.
- 

## 4. RISK

- 4.1 This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.
  - 4.2 The Council has produced a balanced budget for both capital and revenue expenditure and income for 2018/19. This budget is set against a backdrop of limited resources and a difficult economic climate. Regular and comprehensive monitoring of the type included in this report ensures early warning of significant issues that may place the Council at financial risk. This gives this committee the best opportunity to take actions to mitigate such risks.
-

## 5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 No consultation has been undertaken in relation to this report.

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## 6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 The third quarter budget monitoring reports are being considered by the relevant Service Committees in January and February, including a full report to Policy & Resources Committee on 13 February 2019.

6.2 Details of the discussions which take place at service committees regarding budget management will be reported to Policy and Resources Committee where appropriate.

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## 7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	This report monitors actual activity against the revenue budget and other financial matters set by Council for the financial year. The budget is set in accordance with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy which is linked to the strategic plan and corporate priorities.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
<b>Risk Management</b>	This has been addressed in section 4 of the report.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
<b>Financial</b>	Financial implications are the focus of this report through high level budget monitoring. The process of budget monitoring ensures that services can react quickly to potential resource problems. The process ensures that the Council is not faced by corporate financial problems that may prejudice the delivery of strategic priorities.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
<b>Staffing</b>	The budget for staffing represents a significant proportion of the direct spend of the council and is carefully monitored. Any issues in relation to	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

	employee costs will be raised in this and future monitoring reports.	
<b>Legal</b>	The Council has a statutory obligation to maintain a balanced budget and this monitoring process enables the committee to remain aware of issues and the process to be taken to maintain a balanced budget for the year.	Principal Solicitor Corporate Governance
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
<b>Equalities</b>	There are no equalities implications as a result of this update report.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
<b>Procurement</b>	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

## 8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix 1: Third Quarter 2018/19 Revenue and Capital Monitoring – Heritage, Culture & Leisure

## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

# Third Quarter Budget Monitoring 2018/19

Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee  
29 January 2019  
Lead Officer: Mark Green  
Report Author: Ellie Dunnet / Paul Holland

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## Executive Summary

This report is intended to provide Members with an overview of performance against revenue and capital budgets and outturn during the third quarter of 2018/19 for the services within this Committee's remit.

Robust budget monitoring is a key part of effective internal financial control, and therefore is one of the elements underpinning good corporate governance.

The aim of reporting financial information to service committees at quarterly intervals is to ensure that underlying trends can be identified at an early stage, and that action is taken to combat adverse developments or seize opportunities.

It is advisable for these reports to be considered in conjunction with quarterly performance monitoring reports, as this may provide the context for variances identified with the budget and general progress towards delivery of the Council's strategic priorities.

Headline messages for this quarter are as follows:

- For this Committee, there is an underspend against the revenue budget of £151,000, but this is expected to reduce to an underspend of £19,000 by the end of this financial year.
- The position for the Council as a whole at the end of the third quarter is an underspend against the revenue budgets of £1.0m. However this figure includes a number of large grants received that will be carried forward into 2019/20 and at this stage we expect to remain within budget for the year.
- Capital expenditure totaling £1.963m has been incurred between 1 April and 31 December for the projects which sit within this Committee's remit. This represents slippage of £1.850m.
- Overall capital expenditure totaling £8.539m has been incurred during the first three quarters, against a revised budget of £24.246m.

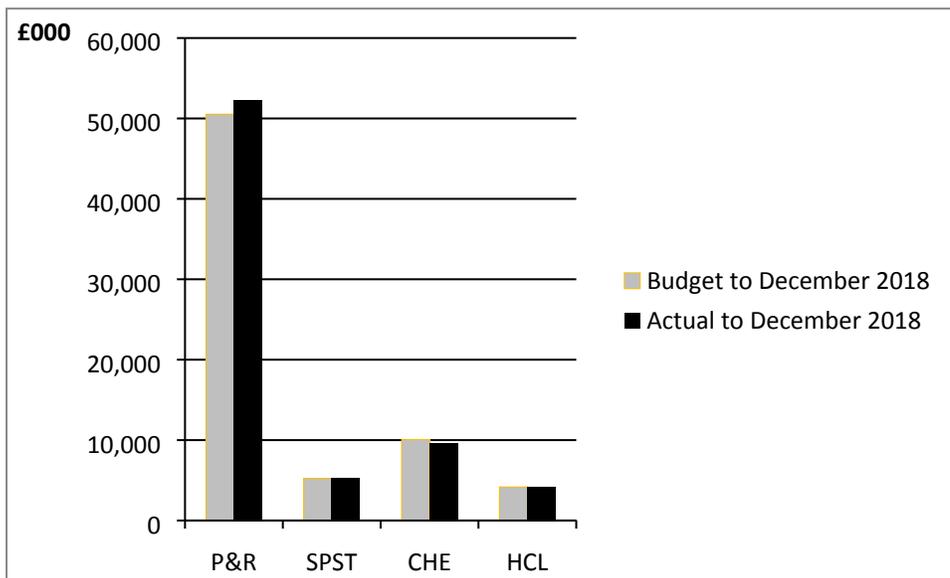
# Revenue Budget

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2018/19

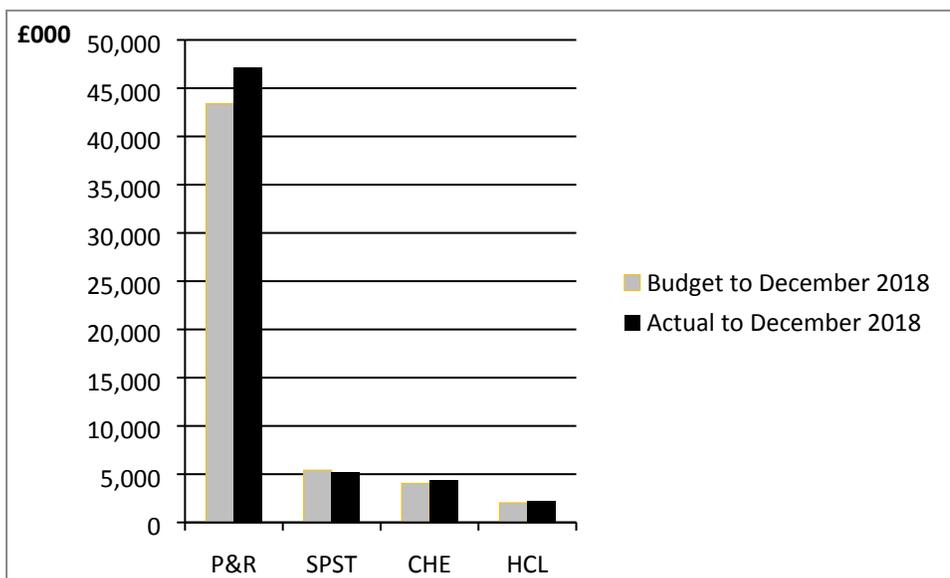
## Revenue Spending

At the end of the third quarter, there is an overall positive variance of £151,000 against the revenue budget for this Committee. Based on current information, we are forecasting that this will decrease to an underspend of £19,000 by the end of the year.

As illustrated by the chart below both this Committee and Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee are operating within budget. However Policy & Resources Committee are showing an overspend against expenditure, although this is offset by income in excess of the budget figure. Communities, Housing & Environment Committee are within budget for expenditure but also have income in excess of the budget figure.



**Chart 1 Performance against budget analysed by service committee (Expenditure)**



**Chart 2 Performance against budget analysed by service committee (Income)**

The table on the following page details the budget and expenditure position for this Committee's services during the third quarter. These figures represent the net budget for each cost centre. The actual position includes expenditure for goods and services which we have received but not yet paid for. The budget now being used is the revised estimate for 2018/19.

The columns of the table show the following detail:

- a) The cost centre description;
- b) The value of the total budget for the year;
- c) The amount of the budget expected to be spent by the end of December 2018;
- d) The actual spend to that date;
- e) The variance between expected and actual spend;
- f) The forecast spend to year end; and
- g) The expected significant variances at 31 March 2019.

The table shows that of a net annual expenditure budget of £1.688m it was expected that £1.366m would be spent up until the end of December. At this point in time the budget is reporting an underspend of £151,000, but the current forecast indicates that the year-end position for this committee will decrease to an underspend of £19,000.

## Revenue Budget Summary Q3 2018/19

(a)	(b)	(c)	(d)	(e)	(f)	(g)
Cost Centre	Budget for Year £000	Budget to 31 December 2018 £000	Actual £000	Variance £000	Forecast 31 March 2019 £000	Forecast Variance 31 March 2019 £000
Cultural Development Arts	13	10	7	3	13	0
Museum	325	275	251	24	325	0
Carriage Museum	29	23	26	-3	29	0
Museum-Grant Funded Activities	51	30	12	18	51	0
Museum Cafe	-3	-3	2	-4	-3	0
Hazlitt Arts Centre	268	206	201	4	268	0
Festivals and Events	-21	-19	-15	-4	-21	0
Lettable Halls	-3	-2	-6	4	-3	0
Community Halls	78	59	51	8	78	0
Leisure Centre	-222	-138	-193	55	-262	40
Mote Park Adventure Zone	-57	-43	0	-43	0	-57
Cobtree Golf Course	-53	-111	-114	2	-53	0
Parks & Open Spaces	920	670	645	26	920	0
Playground Maintenance & Improvements	125	89	62	27	125	0
Parks Pavilions	24	18	16	2	24	0
Mote Park	204	153	173	-20	204	0
Mote Park Cafe	-48	-33	-20	-13	-48	0
Allotments	12	9	7	2	12	0
Tourism	26	19	18	1	26	0
Museum Shop	-19	-14	-6	-8	-19	0
Leisure Services Other Activities	34	34	30	4	34	0
Cemetery	40	48	37	11	40	0
National Assistance Act	-0	-0	1	-1	-0	0
Crematorium	-778	-473	-559	86	-820	42
Maintenance of Closed Churchyards	6	4	2	2	6	0
Market	-132	-95	-54	-41	-88	-44
Leisure Services Section	50	38	21	17	50	0
Cultural Services Section	503	374	344	30	465	38
Visitor Economy Section	112	84	78	6	112	0
Bereavement Services Section	177	133	141	-8	177	0
Market Section	77	57	56	1	77	0
Salary Slippage	-50	-37	0	-37	-50	0
	1,688	1,366	1,215	151	1,669	19

Table 1 Revenue Budget Position, Q3 2018/19 – Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

## Significant Variances

Within these headline figures, there are a number of adverse and favourable variances for individual service areas. This report draws attention to the most significant variances, i.e. those exceeding £30,000 or expected to do so by the end of the year. The table below provides further detail regarding these variances, and the actions being taken to address them.

It is important that the potential implications of variances are considered at this stage, so that contingency plans can be put in place and if necessary, this can be used to inform future financial planning.

	Positive Variance Q3	Adverse Variance Q3	Year End Forecast Variance
<b>Heritage, Culture &amp; Leisure Committee</b>	<b>£000</b>		
<b>Leisure Centre</b> – Serco have made a payment in respect of the profit share arrangement for 2016 and 2017. Some of this has been spent this year but the balance will need to be carried forward pending a decision on the future of leisure provision across the borough.	55		40
<b>Mote Park Adventure Zone</b> - This was due to open in Summer 2018, however due to the flooding incident that occurred earlier this year the project has been substantially delayed and will not now open until Spring 2019. This means that the estimated income of £57,000 will not now be realised this year.		-42	-57
<b>Crematorium</b> – Income has been exceeding the budget for the first three quarters but this is forecast to reduce in the final quarter. The additional income is being used to fund temporary staff to cover long-term sickness which will further reduce the forecast year-end variance.	86		42
<b>Market</b> - Income is down against the budget, and there are increased costs in respect of service charge payments due and internal trade refuse collection charges, so the negative variance is forecast to increase slightly by the end of the year.		-41	-44
<b>Cultural Services Section</b> – This variance is mainly due to staff vacancies.	30		38

**Table 2 Significant Variances – Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee**

# Capital Budget

## 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2018/19

## Capital Spending

The five year capital programme for 2018/19 onwards was approved by Council on 7 March 2018. Funding for the programme remains consistent with previous decisions of Council in that the majority of capital resources come from New Homes Bonus along with a small grants budget.

Progress made towards delivery of planned projects for 2018/19 is set out in the table below. The budget figure is the revised estimate for 2018/19 and includes resources which have been brought forward from 2017/18, which have been added to the agreed budget for the current year.

To date, expenditure totaling £1.963m has been incurred against a budget of £1.850m. At this stage, it is anticipated that there will be slippage of £0.927m, although this position will be reviewed at the end of the year when the Committee will be asked to approve/note the carry forward of resources into the next financial year.

### Capital Budget Summary Q3 2018/19

Capital Programme Heading	Revised Estimate 2018/19 £000	Actual to December 2018 £000	Budget Remaining £000	Q4 Profile £000	Projected Total Expenditure £000	Projected Slippage to 2019/20 £000	Budget Not Required £000
<b>Heritage, Culture &amp; Leisure</b>							
Continued Improvements to Play Areas	574	74	500	100	174	400	
Commercial Projects - Crematorium Projects	416	296	121		296	121	
Commercial Projects - Mote Park Adventure Zone	1,957	1,355	602	602	1,957	-0	
Mote Park Improvements	391	9	383	75	84	308	
Mote Park Visitor Centre	150	90	60	60	150	-0	
Mote Park Lake - Dam Works	200	116	84	84	200	-0	
Other Parks Improvements	100		100			100	
Museum Development Plan	25	23	2	2	25	-0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,814</b>	<b>1,963</b>	<b>1,850</b>	<b>923</b>	<b>2,886</b>	<b>927</b>	

**Table 3 Capital Expenditure, Q3 2018/19**

- The play area improvements scheme is now substantially complete, but the budget does include funding for ongoing maintenance and replacements which is unlikely to be needed this year so this will be slipped into 2019/20.
- The Crematorium Development Plan included improvement works to the Car Park which are now substantially complete. As described in previous monitoring reports, the final cost of this project exceeded the original estimates. The remaining budget for the Crematorium Development Plan has

been earmarked for future projects as per the Bereavement Services report to a previous meeting of this Committee.

- The Mote Park Improvements budget is for the construction of the new estate services building. It is currently anticipated that the major expenditure on this project will now take place in 2019/20.

# Agenda Item 15

## Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

29 January 2019

### Fees & Charges 2019/20

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service/Lead Director</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance & Business Improvement
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Ellie Dunnet, Head of Finance
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

#### Executive Summary

This report sets out the proposed fees and charges for 2019/20 for the services within the remit of this committee. Fees and charges determined by the council are reviewed annually, and this forms part of the budget setting process.

The committee is invited to consider the appropriateness of the proposals for charges which are set at the council's discretion.

Charges which are determined centrally have been included in Appendix 1 for information.

#### This report makes the following recommendations to Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

1. That the proposed discretionary fees and charges set out in Appendix A to this report are agreed.

#### Timetable

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Policy & Resources Committee	23 January 2019
Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	29 January 2019

# Fees & Charges 2019/20

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The council is able to recover the costs of providing discretionary services through making a charge to service users. A charging policy is in place for charges which are set at the council's discretion and this seeks to ensure that:
- a) Fees and charges are reviewed regularly, and that this review covers existing charges as well services for which there is potential to charge in the future.
  - b) Budget managers are equipped with guidance on the factors which should be considered when reviewing charges.
  - c) Charges are fair, transparent and understandable, and a consistent and sensible approach is taken to setting the criteria for applying concessions or discounted charges.
  - d) Decisions regarding fees and charges are based on relevant and accurate information regarding the service and the impact of any proposed changes to the charge is fully understood.
- 1.2 The policy covers fees and charges that are set at the discretion of the council and does not apply to services where the council is prohibited from charging, e.g. the collection of household waste. Charges currently determined by central government, e.g. planning application fees, are also outside the scope of the policy. However, consideration of any known changes to such fees and charges and any consequence to the medium term financial strategy are included in this report for information.
- 1.3 Managers are asked to consider the following factors when reviewing fees and charges:
- a) The council's strategic plan and values, and how charge supports these;
  - b) The use of subsidies and concessions targeted at certain user groups or to facilitate access to a service;
  - c) The actual or potential impact of competition in terms of price or quality;
  - d) Trends in user demand including an estimate of the effect of price changes on customers;
  - e) Customer survey results;
  - f) Impact on users, both directly and on delivering the council's objectives;

- g) Financial constraints including inflationary pressure and service budgets;
- h) The implications of developments such as investment made in a service;
- i) The corporate impact on other service areas of council wide pressures to increase fees and charges;
- j) Alternative charging structures that could be more effective;
- k) Proposals for targeting promotions during the year and the evaluation of any that took place in previous periods.

### **Discretionary Charges for 2019/20**

- 1.4 Charges for services which fall within the remit of this committee have been reviewed by budget managers in line with the policy, as part of the development of the medium term financial strategy for 2019/20 onwards. The detailed results of the review carried out this year are set out in Appendix A and the approval of the committee is sought to the amended fees and charges for 2019/20 as set out in that appendix.
- 1.5 Table 1 below summarises the 2017/18 outturn and 2018/19 estimate for income from the discretionary fees and charges which fall within the remit of this committee. Please note that the table only reflects changes relating to fees and charges and does not include other budget proposals which may impact these service areas.
- 1.6 The overall increase in income if these changes are agreed and implemented as planned is expected to be £20,00 which amounts to a 1.22% increase in the overall budgeted income figure for this committee for the current financial year.

<b>Service Area</b>	<b>2017-18 Outturn</b>	<b>2018-19 Estimate</b>	<b>Proposed change in income</b>	<b>2019-20 Estimate</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Museum	56,088	64,100	0	64,100
Parks and Open Spaces	38,370	60,040	0	60,040
Cemetery	163,473	138,280	0	138,280
Crematorium	1,284,816	1,230,710	20,000	1,250,710
Market	148,410	139,840	0	139,840
<b>Total income from fees set by the Council</b>	<b>1,691,157</b>	<b>1,632,970</b>	<b>20,000</b>	<b>1,652,970</b>

*Table 1: Discretionary Fees & Charges Summary (HCL)*

- 1.7 A number of proposed changes to these fees are detailed within Appendix A and summarised below:

Museum – no changes are being proposed to the existing fees in order to encourage take up of the services on offer.

Use of sports pitches - no changes are being proposed to the existing fees in order to ensure that prices remain competitive.

Events – increases are being proposed to the charges made to hire parks. This is in order to facilitate recovery of the costs which the Council incurs in delivering this service. No increase has been proposed to the income budgets as these are not currently being met.

Bereavement Services – a number of increases have been proposed in order to meet price inflation and ensure that the costs associated with delivering these services are recovered in full. Charges made to non-residents have been increased with reference to other areas in order to manage demand.

Market – no increases have been made to the charges in this area for a number of years in order to manage the burden on market traders. For this year, a larger inflationary increase has been applied for certain services to reflect the impact of the increased costs to provide this service. There are existing pressures on the income budget in this area, so no corresponding increase to the budget is proposed.

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## **2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

### Option 1

- 2.1 The committee could approve the recommendations as set out in the report, adopting the fees and charges as proposed in Appendix A. As these proposals have been developed in line with the council's policy on fees and charges they will create a manageable impact on service delivery whilst maximising income levels.

### Option 2

- 2.2 The committee could increase the charges proposed within Appendix A. Any alternative increase may not be fully compliant with the policy, would require further consideration before implementation and may not deliver the necessary levels of income to ensure a balanced budget for 2019/20. The impact on demand for a service should also be taken into account when considering increases to charges beyond the proposed level.

### Option 3

- 2.3 The committee could propose to decrease the charges proposed within Appendix A. However, this would limit the Council's ability to recover the cost of delivering discretionary services, and could result in the Council being unable to set a balanced budget for 2019/20.

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## **3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 Option 1 as set out above is recommended as the proposed fees and charges shown within Appendix A have been developed by budget managers in line with the Council's Charging Policy. The proposed charges are considered appropriate and are expected to create a manageable impact on service delivery whilst maximising cost recovery.

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#### **4. RISK**

- 4.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.
- 

#### **5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 As part of this year's budget survey, residents were asked to rank the approaches to balancing the budget in order of preference. The results of the survey indicated that providing fewer discretionary services was the most preferred option, with a score of 2.25 out of 3. Increasing fees and charges scored the second highest, with 2.11 out of 3.
- 

#### **6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 6.1 Fees and charges are being considered by service Committees throughout January, with an overarching report to Policy & Resources Committee on 23 January 2019.
- 

#### **7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>The Council's policy on charging has been developed to support corporate priorities as set out in the strategic plan.</li></ul>	Head of Finance
<b>Risk Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Risk implications have been set out in section 4 of the report.</li></ul>	Head of Finance
<b>Financial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Financial implications are set out in the body of the report. If agreed, this income will be incorporated into the Council's medium term financial strategy for</li></ul>	Head of Finance

	2019/20 onwards.	
<b>Staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.</li> </ul>	Head of Finance
<b>Legal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Section 93 of the Local Government Act 2003 permits best value authorities to charge for discretionary services provided the authority has the power to provide that service and the recipient agrees to take it up on those terms. The authority has a duty to ensure that taking one financial year with another, income does not exceed the costs of providing the service.</li> <li>A number of the fees and charges made for services by the Council are set so as to provide the service at cost. These services are set up as trading accounts to ensure that the cost of service is clearly related to the charge made. In other cases the fee is set by statute and the Council must charge the set fee. In both cases the proposals in this</li> <li>report meet the Council's obligations. Where a customer defaults the fee or charge for a service must be defensible, in order to recover it through legal action. Adherence to the policy</li> </ul>	Legal Team

	on setting fees and charges provides some assurance that appropriate factors have been considered in setting these charges.	
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There are no specific privacy or data protection issues to address.</li> </ul>	Legal Team
<b>Equalities</b>	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
<b>Public Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific impact identified.</li> </ul>	Head of Finance
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific impact identified.</li> </ul>	Head of Finance
<b>Procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>No specific impact identified.</li> </ul>	Head of Finance

## 8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix A: Proposed fees & charges 2019/20 (Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee)

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## 9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Charging Policy: <http://aluminum:9080/documents/s58019/Appendix%201%20-%20Charging%20Policy%20November%202017.pdf>

## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee	Statutory Fee	2017-2018 Actuals	2018 - 2019 Current Estimate	Current Charges 2018-2019	Proposed Charges 2019-2020	% Change	2019- 2020 + / - Income	2019 - 2020 - Estimate	Comments
				£	£	£	£		£	£	
<b>Museum</b>											
<b>School visits</b>		x		22,707	24,300					24,300	<b>No changes to 2018/19 pricing to encourage take up</b> 15% discount for schools in MBC area.
First Hour		x				85.00	85.00	0.00%			
Each Subsequent Hour		x				40.00	40.00	0.00%			Per additional class
Craft Sessions		x				85.00	85.00	0.00%			
Object Inspired		x				30.00	30.00	0.00%			Self-led package
Lunch room hire						15.00	15.00	0.00%			School charged to use lunch room if on an unpaid for visit
<b>Outreach to schools</b>											
<b>Out with 1 staff member</b>											
1 workshop		x				175.00	175.00	0.00%			
2 workshops		x				250.00	250.00	0.00%			
3 workshops		x				325.00	325.00	0.00%			
3 workshops + Giant craft		x				475.00	475.00	0.00%			
4 workshops		x				400.00	400.00	0.00%			
<b>Out with 2 CLA</b>											
Loan Boxes to schools per half term		x				50.00	50.00	0.00%			
<b>Room hire</b>	*	x		9,122	14,000					14,000	
Glass Room - Per day	*	x				135.00	135.00	0.00%			
Library - Per day	*	x				300.00	300.00	0.00%			
Museum out of hours (based on 4 hours))	*	x				600.00	600.00	0.00%			
<b>Events</b>				13,050	9,200					9,200	
Per Child minimum charge depending on activity		x				3.00	3.00	0.00%			Or 2 for £5
<b>Children's Parties</b>	*			9,954	15,000					15,000	
Per Child minimum charge depending on activity		x				12.50	12.50	0.00%			

## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee	Statutory Fee	2017-2018 Actuals	2018 - 2019 Current Estimate	Current Charges 2018-2019	Proposed Charges 2019-2020	% Change	2019- 2020 + / - Income	2019 - 2020 Estimate	Comments
				£	£	£	£		£	£	
<b><u>Carriage Museum Admission</u></b>				1,255	1,600					1,600	
Adult		x				2.50	2.50	0.00%			
Senior Citizen		x				1.00	1.00	0.00%			
Child over 5		x				1.00	1.00	0.00%			
Family Ticket		x				5.00	5.00	0.00%			
<b><u>Collections enquiries</u></b>											
QORWK - enquiries		x				15.00					QORWK enquiry £15 per family history enquiry. The fee is waived for collections based enquiries or where the museum gains research/information
<b>Museum Total</b>				<b>56,088</b>	<b>64,100</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>64,100</b>	

\*\* Can not be defined as it depends on uptake for each room

## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee Statutory Fee	2017-2018 Actuals	2018 - 2019 Current Estimate	Current Charges 2018-2019	Proposed Charges 2019-2020	% Change	2019- 2020 + / - Income	2019 - 2020 Estimate	Comments
			£	£	£	£		£	£	
<b>Parks and Open Spaces</b>										
<b>Football</b>										
Seniors - single let (hirer to erect nets)	*		6,066	15,900	60.50	60.50	0.00%		15,900	
Seniors - 10 or more lets (hirer to erect nets)	exempt				50.50	50.50	0.00%			
Juniors - single let (hirer to erect nets)	*				24.00	24.00	0.00%			
Juniors - 10 or more lets (hirer to erect nets)	exempt				20.00	20.00	0.00%			
Use of five-a-side football nets - per set	*				21.00	21.00	0.00%			Charges for football and rugby pitches held at the current level given that these are already amongst the most expensive in the area. An increase is expected to result in a reduction of teams booking these pitches and consequently an overall reduction in income. In the local playing pitch strategy produced for Planners, pitch users commented that the high cost of pitches as a reason for the decline in the number of teams in the leagues at all age groups.
<b>Rugby</b>										
Seniors - single let	*		0	1,610	63.50	63.50	0.00%		1,610	
Seniors - 10 or more lets	exempt				53.00	53.00	0.00%			
Juniors - single let	*				32.00	32.00	0.00%			
Juniors - 10 or more lets	exempt				26.50	26.50	0.00%			
<b>Bowls - Season - Adult</b>										
- OAP/Junior	*		1,102	1,220	80.00	80.00	0.00%		1,220	
- per Green - Adult	*				40.00	40.00	0.00%			
- OAP/Junior	*				6.00	6.00	0.00%			
- Match fees	*				3.00	3.00	0.00%			
Use of Woods - per hour/match - Adult	*				4.80	4.80	0.00%			
- OAP/Junior	*				3.50	3.50	0.00%			
- per match - Adult	*				2.30	2.30	0.00%			
- OAP/Junior	*				3.50	3.50	0.00%			
<b>Rounders - Weekends</b>	*				2.30	2.30	0.00%			
- Evenings 5 - 9.30pm	*				53.50	53.50	0.00%			
	*				41.50	41.50	0.00%			
<b>Use of Changing Rooms and Showers</b>	*				20.00	20.00	0.00%			No increase for the same reason as shown above for football pitches

## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee	Statutory Fee	2017-2018 Actuals	2018 - 2019 Current Estimate	Current Charges 2018-2019	Proposed Charges 2019-2020	% Change	2019-2020 + / - Income	2019 - 2020 Estimate	Comments
				£	£	£	£		£	£	
<b>Events</b>											
Fairs and circuses - per day (min. charge)	exempt			6,599	21,330	600.00	620.00	3.33%		21,330	
Big top show - per evening (min. charge)	exempt					420.00	430.00	2.38%			
<b>Hire of Parks</b>											
Fitness Classes (10-70 participants) - per session (min charge)				4,980	5,200	17.50	18.50	5.71%		5,200	
<b>All Events (Commercial Opportunities)</b>											
<b>Disruption fee for all events (min charge) per day G715</b>				19,623	14,780					14,780	
- up to 100 participants	exempt					40.00	45.00	12.50%			
100 to 499 participants	exempt					80.00	90.00	12.50%			
500 - 899 participants	exempt					350.00	400.00	14.29%			
901+ by negotiation	exempt										
<b>Booking and hire fee (min charge) per day</b>											
Commercial and charity ticketed events - Mote Park						280.00	295.00	5.36%			0
Free events - Mote Park						55.00	60.00	9.09%			
Commercial and charity ticketed events - All other Parks						140.00	150.00	7.14%			
Free events - All other Parks						55.00	60.00	9.09%			
<b>Fees per head all events (min charge)</b>											
Commercial (ticketed) Concerts						0.40	0.45	12.50%			
Commercial (ticketed) Walks/runs/sporting						0.40	0.45	12.50%			
Commercial (ticketed) Other						0.30	0.35	16.67%			
Charity Fundraising (ticketed) Concerts						0.30	0.30	0.00%			
Charity Fundraising (ticketed) Walks/runs/sporting						0.15	0.17	13.33%			
Charity Fundraising (ticketed) Other						0.15	0.17	13.33%			
Commercial (free event) Concerts						0.09	0.10	11.11%			
Commercial (free event) walks/Runs/Sporting						No Charge	No Charge				
Commercial (free event) Other						No Charge	No Charge				
Charity Fundraising (free event) Concerts						0.10	0.10	0.00%			
Charity Fundraising (free event) Walks/Runs/Sporting						No Charge	No Charge				
Charity Fundraising (free event) Other						No Charge	No Charge				
Not-for-profit (free event) Concerts						0.10	0.10	0.00%			
Not-for-profit (free event) Walks/Runs/Sporting						No Charge	No Charge				
Not-for-profit (free event) Other						No Charge	No Charge				

The increases in the charge for the hire of parks and events reflects the increasing cost of not only maintenance of the park but also the officer time making sure that event are suitably organised.

## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee	Statutory Fee	2017-2018 Actuals	2018 - 2019 Current Estimate	Current Charges 2018-2019	Proposed Charges 2019-2020	% Change	2019- 2020 + / - Income	2019 - 2020 Estimate	Comments
				£	£	£	£		£	£	
<b>Filming companies</b> -(min charge) per day											
- Mote Park	exempt					300.00	320.00	6.67%			Very limited bookings
- Brenchley Gardens	exempt					200.00	210.00	5.00%			Very limited bookings
- others by negotiation											Very limited bookings
<b>Commercial medical units</b> - per day						140.00	145.00	3.57%			Very limited bookings
<b>Hot air ballooning</b> (per flight/landing) - Private	exempt					110.00	115.00	4.55%			Low volume of bookings although this has recently increased.
<b>Mooring Fee</b> PER VESSEL (20 feet length)											
per Night	*					7.00	8.00	14.29%			Not currently collected but there may be opportunities to do so in the future.
per Week	*					35.00	40.00	14.29%			Not currently collected but there may be opportunities to do so in the future.
per Month	*					120.00	140.00	16.67%			Not currently collected but there may be opportunities to do so in the future.
per Quarter	*					300.00	350.00	16.67%			Not currently collected but there may be opportunities to do so in the future.
<b>55</b>											
<b>Parks and Open Spaces Total</b>				<b>38,370</b>	<b>60,040</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>60,040</b>	

## Cemetery

<b>Purchase of Exclusive Right of Burial</b>				82,798	62,070					62,070	
<b>Resident Fees</b>											
General Section - 30 years Exclusive Rights	x					810.00	825.00	1.85%			
Class: Lawn - 30 years Exclusive Rights	x					810.00	825.00	1.85%			
General Section - 60 years Exclusive Rights	x					1,620.00	1,650.00	1.85%			
Class: Lawn - 60 years Exclusive Rights	x					1,620.00	1,650.00	1.85%			
Class: Vault						POA	POA				
Class: Cremated remains burial plot - 30 years Exclusive Rights	x					450.00	460.00	2.22%			
Class: Cremated remains burial plot - 60 years Exclusive Rights	x					900.00	920.00	2.22%			
Deed of grant	x					48.50	50.00	3.09%			Admin fee
Transfer of Exclusive Rights	x					87.00	89.00	2.30%			Admin fee
To add an existing name to Exclusive Rights	x					46.50	48.00	3.23%			
Grave Selection Fee	x					50.00	50.00	0.00%			Charge made for personal selection of plot - where staff time is involved



## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee	Statutory Fee	2017-2018 Actuals	2018 - 2019 Current Estimate	Current Charges 2018-2019	Proposed Charges 2019-2020	% Change	2019- 2020 + / - Income	2019 - 2020 Estimate	Comments
				£	£	£	£		£	£	
<b>Monuments</b>				13,735	12,840					12,840	
Headstone		x				146.50	148.50	1.37%			
Kerbstone		x				146.50	148.50	1.37%			
Indicator stone		x				40.00	40.00	0.00%			
Cremated remains memorial		x				146.50	148.50	1.37%			
Tablet 12" x 12"		x				146.50	148.50	1.37%			
Vase		x				146.50	148.50	1.37%			
Initial inscription		x				146.50	148.50	1.37%			
Additional inscription		x				100.00	105.00	5.00%			
Any other monument		x				146.50	148.50	1.37%			
Memorial inspection re-instatement (standard)		x				142.50	145.00	1.75%			
Lawn Grave foundation - by MBS		x				125.00	135.00	8.00%			To reflect current labour costs.
<b>Search fees</b>											
1-5 years		x				10.00	10.00	0.00%			General searches to be priced at £10, however, should the request be particularly involved or urgent then it is suggested that the £40.00 charge be made.
6-10 years		x				10.00	10.00	0.00%			
Over 10 years		x				10.00	10.00	0.00%			
Personal search (by appointment)		x				40.00	40.00	0.00%			
<b>Maintenance</b>											
Earthing		x				70.00	80.00	14.29%			Dependant on charges from ground maintenance team
Turfing		x				70.00	80.00	14.29%			Dependant on charges from ground maintenance team
<b>Memorials</b>				4,677	3,950					3,950	
Mushrooms (new) been in place since July 2013		x				67.00	67.00	0.00%			
Mushrooms dedication (new)		x				158.00	158.00	0.00%			
Benches (new location)		x				405.00	410.00	1.23%			
Existing bench		x				340.00	360.00	5.88%			
Benches dedication annual (new)		x				72.00	75.00	4.17%			
Majestic Mausolia		x									
Majestic Mausolia dedication 30 year (new) with 4 caskets		x				2,500.00	2,500.00	0.00%			
Inscription on Mausolia plaque front (price per line)		x				36.00	36.00	0.00%			
Additional removal of plaque for additional inscription		x				52.00	52.00	0.00%			
Posy Holder for Mausolea		x									
Circular Bench		x				164.00	164.00	0.00%			
Circular Bench dedication		x				66.00	66.00	0.00%			
<b>Cemetery Total</b>				<b>163,473</b>	<b>138,280</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>138,280</b>	

## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee	Statutory Fee	2017-2018 Actuals	2018 - 2019 Current Estimate	Current Charges 2018-2019	Proposed Charges 2019-2020	% Change	2019- 2020 + / - Income	2019 - 2020 Estimate	Comments
				£	£	£	£		£	£	
<b>Crematorium</b>											
<b>Cremations</b>				1,085,984	1,055,530				20,000	1,075,530	
Service charges		x									
Medical Referee's Fee		x				27.00	27.50	1.85%			£23.50 fee set by relevant professional body. £5.00 per visit to cover mileage
Non viable foetus and stillborn		x				no charge	no charge				
Less than 5 years		x				95.00	95.00	0.00%			
5 to 15 years 364 days		x				109.00	109.00	0.00%			
Adult		x				565.00	580.00	2.65%			
08.30 cremation only - no service and no attendees		x				355.00	365.00	2.82%			
Adult - committal slot 9.00 A.M. (includes Environmental surcharge, Medical Referee fee & Cremation Carton)		x				485.00	495.00	2.06%			
Adult - reduced cremation slot 9.30 A.M. (includes Environmental surcharge, Medical Referee fee & Cremation Carton)		x				555.00	565.00	1.80%			
Environmental Surcharge		x				64.00	65.00	1.56%			
Cremation of body parts		x				105.00	105.00	0.00%			Double ceremony slots - this is an additional 1/2 hour in the Chapel, so effectively eliminates potential fee generation from the days capacity - this increase reflects the income lost by offering a double ceremony.
Use of chapel (additional item)		x				255.00	270.00	5.88%			
Use of chapel organ		x				10.00	10.00	0.00%			
Visual Tributes for services up to 30 slides		x				50.00	50.00	0.00%			
Visual Tributes for services over 30 slides		x				100.00	100.00	0.00%			
DVD of Visual Tribute		x				50.00	50.00	0.00%			
Webcasting		x				50.00	60.00	20.00%			
DVD of Webcasting		x				50.00	50.00	0.00%			
Witness fee		x				40.50	41.50	2.47%			
Saturday morning supplement fee		x				435.00	450.00	3.45%			Charge reflects cost for staff premium rates + high utility costs
Service over-run fee		x				From 70.00	From 70.00				Services that over-run can severely affect the days schedule - charges to be levied on Funeral Directors who fail to control length of services

## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee	Statutory Fee	2017-2018 Actuals	2018 - 2019 Current Estimate	Current Charges 2018-2019	Proposed Charges 2019-2020	% Change	2019- 2020 + / - Income	2019 - 2020 Estimate	Comments
				£	£	£	£		£	£	
<u>Containers for cremated remains</u>											
Polytainer / Cremation carton / strewing tube	*	x				17.00	17.50	2.94%			
Urn	*	x				38.50	40.00	3.90%			
Casket	*	x				56.00	58.00	3.57%			
Baby urn	*	x				12.75	12.75	0.00%			
<u>Other related services</u>											
Exhumation of cremated remains		x				225.00	240.00	6.67%			
Disposal from other crematoriums		x				60.00	62.00	3.33%			
Burial in individual plot		x				50.00	52.00	4.00%			Admin cost to find vacant or family burial plot
<b>Memorials</b>				156,221	134,770					134,770	To satisfy VAT regulations the elements of the memorial charge are identified separately as distinct elements. Customers may provide such elements of the memorial as appropriate providing that such elements satisfy the specification set by the Bereavement Services Officer from time to time to ensure the correct
<u>Book of Remembrance</u>											
line entry (min 2 lines) *	*	x				105.00	107.00	1.90%			
Flower/Crest/or Badge *	*	x				265.00	268.50	1.32%			
Folded Remembrance Card		x									
Card purchase *	*	x				12.50	13.00	4.00%			
per line entry (minimum 2 lines) *	*	x				54.50	55.00	0.92%			
Flower/Crest/or Badge *	*	x				186.00	188.00	1.08%			
Mini Books of Remembrance		x									
Book purchase *	*	x				27.50	28.00	1.82%			
per line entry (minimum 2 lines)	*					77.50	78.00	0.65%			
Flower/Crest/or Badge	*					248.00	250.00	0.81%			
<u>Cloister Hall of Remembrance</u>											
Wall vases		x									
Vase	*	x				15.00	25.00	66.67%			
Plot Rental - per annum		x				64.00	50.00	-21.88%			
Stone Block vase	*	x				20.00	30.00	50.00%			
Plot Rental - per annum		x				75.00	65.00	-13.33%			
Cloister Hall of Remembrance		x									
Cloister wall tablets		x									
Single	*	x				158.00	160.00	1.27%			
Plot Rental - 10 year dedication		x				155.00	160.00	3.23%			£16 p.a.
Double (1 inscription)	*	x				182.00	184.00	1.10%			
Plot Rental - 10 year was		x				210.00	215.00	2.38%			£21.5 p.a.
Double (2 inscriptions)	*	x				320.00	322.00	0.63%			
Plot Rental - 10 year		x				210.00	215.00	2.38%			£21.50 p.a.
Refurbishment per letter - re-gild	*	x				5.00	5.00	0.00%			
Refurbishment per letter - repaint	*	x				5.00	5.00	0.00%			
Second inscription	*	x				180.00	184.00	2.22%			

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				£	£	£	£		£	£	
<u>Memorial Hall</u>			X								
Leather plaques	*		X			41.50	44.00	6.02%			
Plot Rental -5 year			X			82.50	85.00	3.03%			£17 p.a.
Added inscription	*		X			41.50	44.00	6.02%			
<u>Gardens of Remembrance</u>			X								
Stone effect plaque	*		X			92.50	93.00	0.54%			
Stone effect plaque for bench	*		X			92.50	93.00	0.54%			
Stone effect plaque on spike	*		X			92.50	93.00	0.54%			
Plot Rental 10 year			X			190.00	200.00	5.26%			£20.0 p.a.
Added inscription	*		X			92.50	93.00	0.54%			
Refurbishment	*		X			25.00	25.00	0.00%			Bronze plaques only
<u>Gardens of Remembrance</u>			X								
<u>Sanctum Vault</u>			X								
Vault with inscription	*		X			380.00	390.00	2.63%			
10 year lease			X			720.00	730.00	1.39%			
20 year lease			X			1,035.00	1,045.00	0.97%			
30 year lease			X			1,710.00	1,720.00	0.58%			
<u>Family Sanctum Vault (From Jan 15)</u>			X								
5 year lease			X			1,100.00	1,120.00	1.82%			
10 year lease			X			1,640.00	1,660.00	1.22%			
15 year lease			X			2,160.00	2,180.00	0.93%			
20 year lease			X			2,705.00	2,725.00	0.74%			
25 year lease			X			3,240.00	3,260.00	0.62%			
30 year lease			X			3,775.00	3,795.00	0.53%			

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				£	£	£	£		£	£	
<u>Gardens of Remembrance</u>		x									
Bench & Plaque	*	x				350.00	350.00	0.00%			Cost + 20%
Plot Rental - 5 years		x				360.00	367.50	2.08%			£73.50 p.a.
Plot Rental - bench and SE Plaque - Annual		x				72.00	73.50	2.08%			
Added inscription	*	x				92.50	93.00	0.54%			
Sanctum Panorama Vault 5 years		x				740.00	750.00	1.35%			
Sanctum Panorama Vault 5 years renewal		x				490.00	490.00	0.00%			
Sanctum Panorama Vault 10 years		x				1,350.00	1,400.00	3.70%			
Sanctum Panorama Vault 10 years renewal		x				850.00	900.00	5.88%			
Barbican		x				205.00	210.00	2.44%			
Barbican - annual renewal		x				23.00	24.00	4.35%			
Woodside Sundial		x				162.00	165.00	1.85%			
Woodside Sundial annual renewal		x				17.00	18.00	5.88%			
Granite bench x 2 plaques		x				160.00	160.00	0.00%			
Granite bench		x				20.00	20.00	0.00%			
Illustration, photo plaques etc.		x				P.O.A.	P.O.A.				
Chapel Lawn Planter		x									
Plaque with inscription	*	x				57.50	59.00	2.61%			
Plus 10 year dedication		x				185.00	195.00	5.41%			£19.50 p.a.
Birdbath Memorial	*	x									
6" x 3" plaque with inscription	*	x				116.50	118.00	1.29%			
Annual dedication		x				12.50	13.00	4.00%			
7 1/4" x 3" plaque with inscription	*	x				121.50	123.00	1.23%			
Annual dedication		x				13.00	13.50	3.85%			
8 1/2 " x 3" plaque with inscription	*	x				127.00	128.50	1.18%			
Annual dedication		x				13.50	14.00	3.70%			
9 3/4 " x 3" plaque with inscription	*	x				132.00	133.50	1.14%			
Annual dedication		x				14.00	14.50	3.57%			
11 " x 3" plaque with inscription	*	x				137.00	138.50	1.09%			
Annual dedication		x				14.50	15.00	3.45%			
		x									
<u>Woodside Walk Book</u>		x									
Plaque with inscription	*	x				69.00	69.00	0.00%			not a great seller to leaving price the same
Plus 10 year dedication		x				222.00	222.00	0.00%			
		x									
<u>Woodside Walk Mushrooms</u>		x									
Tablet with inscription	*	x				73.00	74.50	2.05%			
Plus 10 year dedication		x				245.00	250.00	2.04%			£25.00 p.a.

## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee Statutory Fee	2017-2018 Actuals	2018 - 2019 Current Estimate	Current Charges 2018-2019	Proposed Charges 2019-2020	% Change	2019- 2020 + / - Income	2019 - 2020 Estimate	Comments
			£	£	£	£		£	£	
<u>Gardens of Remembrance</u>		x	42,611	40410					40410	
<u>Memorial shrubs in beds</u>		x								
Shrubs with Stone Effect Plaque on Spike										
Annual	*	x			92.00	93.00	1.09%			
Adoption renewal	*	x			117.50	120.00	2.13%			
Added inscription	*	x			92.00	92.00	0.00%			£24 p.a.
Standard roses in bed (5 years)	*	x			144.00	144.00	0.00%			
Standard roses in bed with SE Plaque - annual charge *		x			247.00	247.00	0.00%			
Adoption renewal annual	*	x			44.00	45.00	2.27%			
Individual standard rose with Plaque (5 years)	*	x			280.50	280.50	0.00%			
Adoption renewal	*	x			150.00	150.00	0.00%			
Adoption renewal annual	*	x			50.00	50.00	0.00%			
SpecimanTree and SE Plaque - Annual	*	x			132.00	132.00	0.00%			
Plot rental - annual Speciman Tree		x			40.00	41.50	3.75%			
Acer & Plaque on stake	*	x			140.00	140.00	0.00%			
Adoption renewal		x			72.00	72.00	0.00%			
<u>Search fees</u>		x								
1-5 years		x			10.00	10.00	0.00%			
6-10 years		x			10.00	10.00	0.00%			
Over 10 years		x			10.00	10.00	0.00%			
Personal search (by appointment)		x			35.00	35.00	0.00%			
<b>Crematorium Total</b>		x	<b>1,284,816</b>	<b>1,230,710</b>				<b>20,000</b>	<b>1,250,710</b>	

## Medium Term Financial Strategy 2019/20

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee	Statutory Fee	2017-2018 Actuals	2018 - 2019 Current Estimate	Current Charges 2018-2019	Proposed Charges 2019-2020	% Change	2019- 2020 + / - Income	2019 - 2020 Estimate	Comments
				£	£	£	£		£	£	
<b>Market</b>											
<b>Deadstock Sales C250</b>											
Mon/Tue/Fri charge per month 1st April - 31st March	x			4,853	4,360	440.00	460.00	4.55%	0	4,360	Raised from £105 to £110 per week ( Budget not to be increased)
<b>Tuesday &amp; Saturday Market Pitches C223/C226</b>				62,144	66,040				0	66,040	All pitch fees includes £1 towards the Market Traders Fund Estimate not changed as current budget will not be attained
<b>Open Market</b>											
<b>Regular Rate Market Square</b>											
Up to 10 feet - 1 April - 31 Dec	x					25.00	25.00	0.00%			
Up to 10 feet - 1 Jan - 31 Mar	x					18.00	18.00	0.00%			
Undercroft Rate - 1 April - 31 Dec	x					26.00	26.00	0.00%			
Undercroft Rate - 1 Jan - 31 Mar	x					19.00	19.00	0.00%			
<b>Saturday Rate for 2 day Traders</b>											
Up to 10 feet (2 day Trader) - 1 April - 31 Dec	x					24.00	24.00	0.00%			
Up to 10 feet (2 day Trader) - 1 Jan - 31 Mar	x					17.00	17.00	0.00%			
<b>Lettings-General C251/D358/C227</b>				76,878	65,940					65,940	
<b>Hire of Agricultural Hall</b>											
Standard Hire - per day - regular hire	x					390.00	400.00	2.56%			Regular hire - twice per month
Standard Hire - per day - casual hire	x					495.00	495.00	0.00%			Casual hire - once per month
Standard Hire minimum 3 hours	x					30.00	35.00	16.67%			£35.00 per hour / £105 per session to C251
<b>Local Community &amp; U16 Events</b>											
Per Day	x					125.00	150.00	20.00%			
Per hour - minimum 3 hours	x					30.00	35.00	16.67%			£35.00 per hour / £105 per session to C251
<b>Boot Fair -When in undercroft</b>											
10' - pitch (£10 per each additional 10' pitch)						10.00	10.00				
<b>Commercial Hire</b>											
Per half day ( maximum 8 hours )	x					545.00	545.00	0.00%			Market Manager to consider the commercial viability when confirming these charges to secure the booking
Per day ( over 8 hours )	x					1,030.00	1,030.00	0.00%			Charged pro rata
Hire of chairs for events - per 100	x					47.00	47.00	0.00%			
<b>Farmers Market C253</b>				4,536	3,500	25.00	25.00	0.00%	0	3,500	
Every other Friday - daily rate April - March	x										
<b>Market Total</b>				<b>148,410</b>	<b>139,840</b>				<b>0</b>	<b>139,840</b>	
<b>GRAND TOTAL</b>				<b>1,691,157</b>	<b>1,632,970</b>				<b>20,000</b>	<b>1,652,970</b>	

# Agenda Item 16

## HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

29 January 2019

### Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Proposals

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Council
<b>Lead Head of Service/Lead Director</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

#### Executive Summary

This report forms part of the process of agreeing a budget for 2019/20 and setting next year's Council Tax. Following agreement by Council of the Medium Term Finance Strategy at its meeting on 12 December 2018, this report sets out budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee. These proposals will then be considered by Policy & Resources Committee at its meeting on 13 February with a view to determining a budget for submission to Council.

#### This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the revenue budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee, as set out in Appendix A, be agreed for submission to Policy and Resources Committee.
2. That the capital budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee, as set out in Appendix B, be agreed for submission to Policy and Resources Committee.

#### Timetable

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	29 January 2019
Policy and Resources Committee	13 February 2019
Council	27 February 2019

# Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Proposals

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 1.1 At its meeting on 12 December 2018, Council agreed a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the next five years. The MTFS sets out in financial terms how the Strategic Plan will be delivered, given the resources available. A new Strategic Plan was adopted by Council on 12 December 2018 and the MTFS reflects this.
- 1.2 There is considerable uncertainty about the resources which will be available to deliver the Strategic Plan, for a number of reasons. Outcomes for the national economy could vary widely depending on how the UK's planned exit from the EU is managed. These wider economic factors will affect the level of public expenditure generally. The framework for local government expenditure in particular is anyway subject to uncertainty, with the four year local government funding settlement 2016/17 to 2019/20 coming to an end next year, and no definitive information about the what subsequent arrangements will mean in practice for the Council.
- 1.3 Given these multiple layers of uncertainty, the financial projections underlying the MTFS have been prepared under three different scenarios – adverse, neutral and favourable. All three scenarios assume that budget proposals for future years which have already been agreed by Council will be delivered, and that Council Tax is increased by 3% in 2019/20. Existing budget savings proposals within the remit of this Committee are shown in Appendix A and total £366,000 over the MTFS period.
- 1.4 The outcomes for the Council's budget gap, before allowing for any further growth or savings, are set out below.

	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m

<b>Scenario 1 – Favourable</b>					
<b>Budget surplus</b>	<b>-0.8</b>	<b>-0.9</b>	<b>-1.6</b>	<b>-3.3</b>	<b>-4.8</b>

<b>Scenario 2 – Neutral</b>					
<b>Budget gap</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>1.1</b>	<b>1.7</b>	<b>1.5</b>	<b>1.7</b>

<b>Scenario 3 – Adverse</b>					
<b>Budget gap</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>2.4</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>4.7</b>	<b>6.1</b>

- 1.5 It can be seen that next year's budget is close to being balanced in the neutral scenario, given the various assumptions underlying the projections. However, in 2020/21 the budget gap will be significant under both the

neutral and adverse scenarios. It is essential that the Council starts planning now for 2020/21.

- 1.6 Budget proposals have been developed which seek to deliver the Council's strategic priorities and achieve a balanced budget, using the 'neutral' scenario as the basis for planning. The proposals now being submitted to Service Committees will deliver a balanced budget in 2019/20 and will achieve a substantial reduction in the projected budget gap in 2020/21.
- 1.7 It is recognised that delivering the strategic priorities will require budget growth. Of particular relevance to this Committee are the strategic priorities 'Safe, Clean and Green' and 'A Thriving Place'. It is proposed that, to facilitate the 'Safe, Clean and Green' objective, £50,000 is provided for the maintenance and inspection of trees.
- 1.8 The approach taken in developing budget savings proposals has followed the principles set out in the MTFS, ie:
  - *Revenue savings will be sought in:*
    - *Discretionary services which are not strategic priorities.*
    - *Statutory services which are not strategic priorities, where there is scope for reconfiguring services to reduce costs.*
    - *Improved efficiency in delivering strategic priorities.*
    - *New income generation and identification of external funding.*
  - These principles will be applied both to service expenditure and to corporate overheads.*
  - *Revenue growth will be built into the budget where strategic priorities cannot be delivered within existing revenue budgets, provided this can be accommodated by making savings elsewhere.*
  - *Capital schemes will be reviewed and developed so that investment is focused on strategic priorities.*
- 1.9 The new revenue budget savings proposals for services within the remit of this Committee are set out in Appendix A and reflect the principles above in that new income generation opportunities have been identified. There is scope for additional income from greater volumes of business in bereavement services (£20,000) and from investment in the Cemetery chapel (£30,000).
- 1.10 An existing budget saving of £119,000 which assumed a successful appeal against the Museum's business rates valuation has been deferred for a year, as the appeal is still going through the Valuation Office process.
- 1.11 The net new revenue budget savings proposals total £50,000.
- 1.12 The capital budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee are set out in Appendix B. The capital proposals update the existing capital programme and meet the strategic priorities as follows:

### *Safe, Clean and Green*

- Crematorium and Cemetery Development Plan - The Crematorium Car Park was expanded in 2018 as part of this Development Plan. It is now proposed to use the residual capital funding to carry out improvement works at the Cemetery.
- Mote Park Visitor Centre - A contract is due to be let shortly for the new Visitor Centre at Mote Park. The scope of the work has been expanded to include toilet facilities that meet 'Changing Places' standards.
- Mote Park Dam Works - Mote Park Lake is effectively a reservoir retained by a dam at its western end. A review of dam safety under the Reservoirs Act 1975 included a mandatory recommendation that the spillway capacity be increased to reduce the risk of dam failure due to overtopping. Consultants have designed a suitable scheme and a planning application to carry out the work was submitted at the end of 2018. The scope of the work has had to be extended to include a replacement sluice. The work is likely to take place in Summer 2020 and current estimates are that the total scheme cost will be around £2 million.

### *A Thriving Place*

- Museum Development Plan - The amount in the capital programme represents the balance of funding set aside for development projects at Maidstone Museum. Specific proposals for the funding remain to be developed and are likely to rely on match funding from external sources.

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## **2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 Agree the budget proposals relating to this Committee as set out in Appendices A and B for onward submission to the Policy and Resources Committee.
- 2.2 Propose changes to the budget proposals for consideration by the Policy and Resources Committee.
- 2.3 Make no comment on the budget proposals.

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## **3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Policy and Resources Committee must recommend to Council at its meeting on 13 February 2019 a balanced budget and a proposed level of Council Tax for the coming year. The budget proposals included in this report will allow the Policy and Resources Committee to do this. Accordingly, the preferred option is that this Committee agrees the budget proposals at Appendices A and B.
-

#### **4. RISK**

- 4.1 The Council's MTFS is subject to a high degree of risk and uncertainty. In order to address this in a structured way and to ensure that appropriate mitigations are developed, the Council has developed a budget risk register. This seeks to capture all known budget risks and to present them in a readily comprehensible way. The budget risk register is updated regularly and is reviewed by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee at each of its meetings.
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#### **5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 Policy and Resources Committee received an initial report on the MTFS at its meeting on 27 June 2018 and it agreed the approach set out in that report to development of an MTFS for 2019/20 - 2023/24 and a budget for 2019/20.
- 5.2 Service Committees and Policy and Resources Committee then considered a draft MTFS at their meetings in November 2018, and this was agreed for submission to Council. The MTFS included descriptions of the different scenarios facing the Council and described how budget proposals would be sought for all scenarios, so that the Council might be suitably prepared for the adverse scenario, as defined. Council agreed the MTFS at its meeting on 12 December 2018.
- 5.3 Public consultation on the Council's budget priorities was carried out in parallel with consultation on the Strategic Plan. Details are set out in Appendix B. Note that the public were consulted on eight expenditure priorities, in line with the eight priorities included in the first draft of the Strategic Plan.
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#### **6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 6.1 The timetable for developing the budget for 2019/20 is set out below.

<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>Meeting</i></b>	<b><i>Action</i></b>
January 2019	All Service Committees	Consider 19/20 budget proposals
13 February 2019	Policy and Resources Committee	Agree 19/20 budget proposals for recommendation to Council
27 February 2019	Council	Approve 19/20 budget

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## 7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the budget are a re-statement in financial terms of the priorities set out in the strategic plan. They reflect the Council's decisions on the allocation of resources to all objectives of the strategic plan.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Risk Management</b>	This has been addressed in section 4 of the report.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Financial</b>	The budget strategy and the MTFS impact upon all activities of the Council. The future availability of resources to address specific issues is planned through this process. It is important that the committee gives consideration to the strategic financial consequences of the recommendations in this report.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Staffing</b>	The process of developing the budget strategy will identify the level of resources available for staffing over the medium term.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Legal</b>	Under Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 (LGA 1972) the Section 151 Officer has statutory duties in relation to the financial administration and stewardship of the authority, including securing effective arrangements for treasury management. The Medium Term Financial Strategy demonstrates the Council's commitment to fulfilling its duties under the Act. The Council has a statutory obligation to set a balanced budget and development of the MTFS and the strategic revenue projection in the ways set out in this report supports	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS

	achievement of a balanced budget.	
<b>Equalities</b>	The overall approach to the MTFS is to direct resources into areas of need as identified in the Council's strategic priorities. The equalities impact of individual budget decisions will be determined when setting the budget.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium term Financial Strategy.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Procurement</b>	The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

**8. REPORT APPENDICES**

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

- Appendix A: Revenue Budget Proposals 2019/20 – 2023/24
- Appendix B: Capital Budget Proposals 2019/20 – 2023/24
- Appendix C: Residents' Survey

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There are no background papers.

## Budget Proposals 2019/20 - 2023/24

Service	Proposal	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	Total
		£000					
Museum	Review operating and governance model	-50	0	0	0	0	-50
Museum	Potential Saving on NNDR at the museum	-119	0	0	0	0	-119
Festivals & Events	Cease direct delivery of festivals and events	-10	-10	0	0	0	-20
Festivals & Events	Withdrawal of Christmas lights provision	-30	0	0	0	0	-30
Parks & Open Spaces	New operational model - Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan	-50	0	0	0	0	-50
Mote Park Adventure Zone	Mote Park Adventure Zone	-57	0	0	0	0	-57
Mote Park Centre	Income from new Café	0	-40	0	0	0	-40
<b>Total Existing Savings</b>		<b>-316</b>	<b>-50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-366</b>

Table 1 - Savings agreed within current MTFS

Service	Proposal	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	Total
		£000					
Museum	Reprofile NNDR saving	119	-119	0	0	0	0
Bereavement Services	Increase income target	-20	0	0	0	0	20
Bereavement Services	Income from investment in chapel	0	-15	-15	0	0	30
<b>Total adjustments and new savings</b>		<b>99</b>	<b>-134</b>	<b>-15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>

Table 2 - Adjustments to existing savings and new proposals

<b>TOTAL SAVINGS (£000)</b>	<b>-217</b>	<b>-184</b>	<b>-15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-316</b>
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Service	Proposal	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	Total
		£000					
Parks & Open Spaces	Maintenance & inspection of new trees	50	0	0	0	0	50
<b>Total Budget Growth</b>		<b>50</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>50</b>

Table 3 - Proposed growth in budgets

<b>OVERALL CHANGE IN BUDGET (£000)</b>	<b>-167</b>	<b>-184</b>	<b>-15</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-266</b>
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Negative figures shown above represent a reduction in expenditure budgets, or increased income targets. Positive figures indicate increased expenditure, or a reduction in the income budget.

**Capital Budget Proposals 2019/20 - 2023/24**

	18/19	Five Year Plan					Total
	Projected	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Continued Improvements to Play Areas	574						
Crematorium and Cemetery Development Plan	416	140	130				270
Mote Park Adventure Zone	1,957						
Mote Park Improvements	391						
Mote Park Visitor Centre	150	2,090					2,090
Mote Park Lake - Dam Works	200	200	1,650	100			1,950
Other Parks Improvements	100						
Museum Development Plan	25		125	200	64		389
<b>Total Heritage, Culture &amp; Leisure</b>	<b>3,814</b>	<b>2,430</b>	<b>1,905</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>64</b>		<b>4,699</b>

# Budget Survey Report 2018

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## Methodology

The survey was open between 24<sup>th</sup> September and 4<sup>th</sup> November 2018. It was promoted online through the Council's website and our social media channels. Residents who have signed up for consultation reminders were notified and sent an invitation to participate in the consultation. An incentive of entering a prize draw for £50 of shopping vouchers was offered to encourage responses.

A total of 870 people responded to the survey. The results in this report have been weighted by age and gender based on the population in the ONS mid-year population estimates 2017. Based on Maidstone's population aged 18 years and over this means overall results are accurate to 3.3% at the 95% confidence level.

However, the under-representation of 18 to 34 year olds means that high weights have been applied to responses in this group, therefore results for this group should be treated with caution. It should also be noted that respondents from BME backgrounds are slightly under-represented at 4.9% compared 5.9%<sup>1</sup> in the local area.

Please note not every respondent answered every question, therefore the total number of respondents refers to the number of respondents for the question being discussed not to the survey overall.

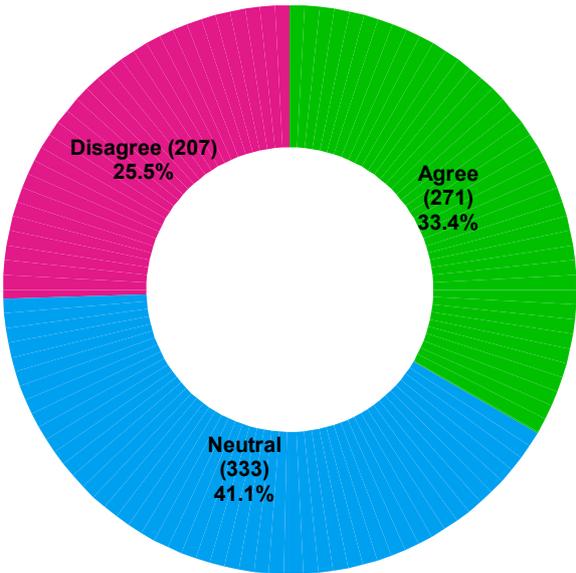
## Summary Findings

- There has been a 3.2% increase in the proportion of responding positively when asked if they agree or disagree if the Council provides Value for Money.
- The top three priorities are:
  - Well connected safe and empowered communities
  - Better transport systems
  - Great environmental quality
- For mandatory services respondents would like more spent on Community Safety and less on Democratic and Electoral Services.
- For discretionary services respondents would like more spent on Parks and Open Spaces and less on Members' facilities.
- The majority of respondents said Environmental Services was most important to them.
- As with the 2017 Resident Survey the preferred approach to balancing the budget is to provide fewer discretionary services.

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<sup>1</sup> 2011 Census

**Value for Money**



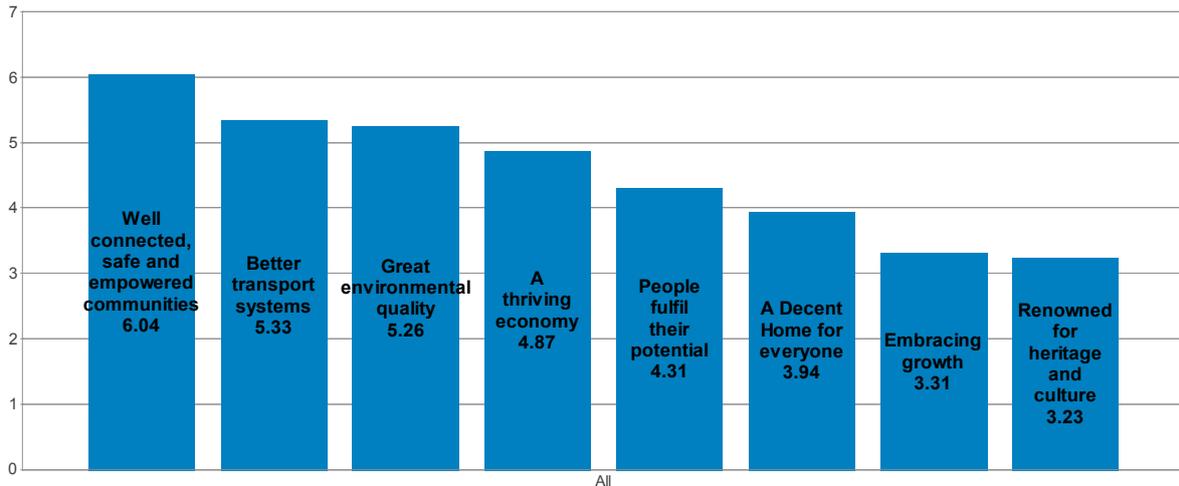
Respondents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree that Maidstone Borough Council provides value for money. The questionnaire contained a pie chart illustrating what proportion of Council tax is received by each agency.

The most common response was neither agree nor disagree.

The data shows that respondents aged 65 years had lower proportions responding dissatisfied than the other age groups with 18.8% responding this way.

We previously asked residents this question in the 2017 resident survey and 30.2% of respondents agreed. This year's result shows an improvement on the 2017 figure of 3.2%. This is positive as this increase is a result of fewer people responding disagree (the proportions responding with no strong opinion either way has only changed by 0.1%).

Which of the following priorities are most important to you?

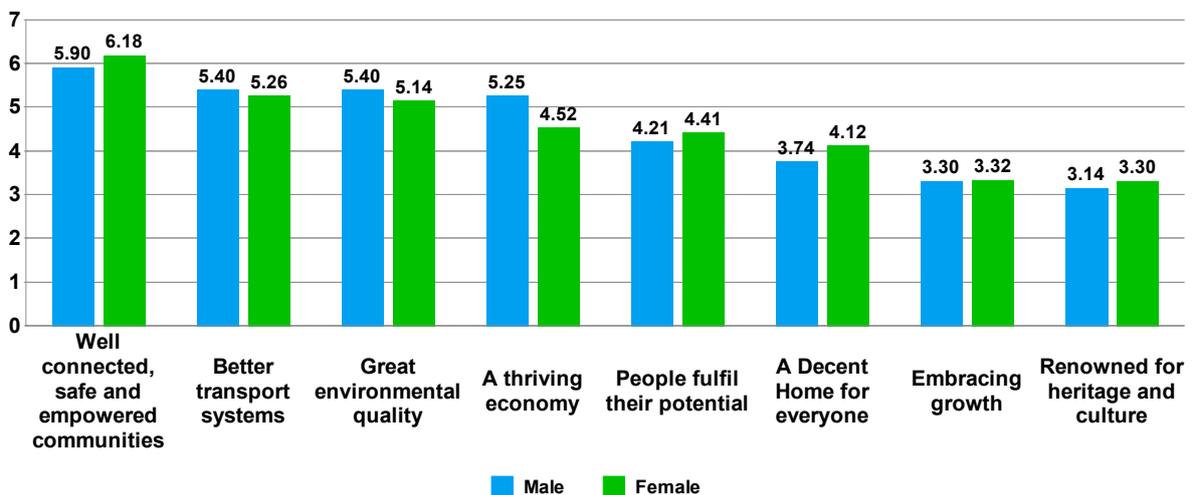


Respondents were asked to put the list of priorities in order of preference. In order to assess this data a weighted average has been used with the priorities placed as first receiving eight points and the priority ranked last given 1 point. These are then added together and divided by the number of respondents to give a weighted average.

Overall, just over half of all responders placed ‘Well connected, safe and empowered communities’ as being the most important or second most important priority and 44% placed ‘Renowned for heritage and culture’ as either seventh or eighth.

The charts below show the difference in response levels for this question between demographic groups.

Priority by gender



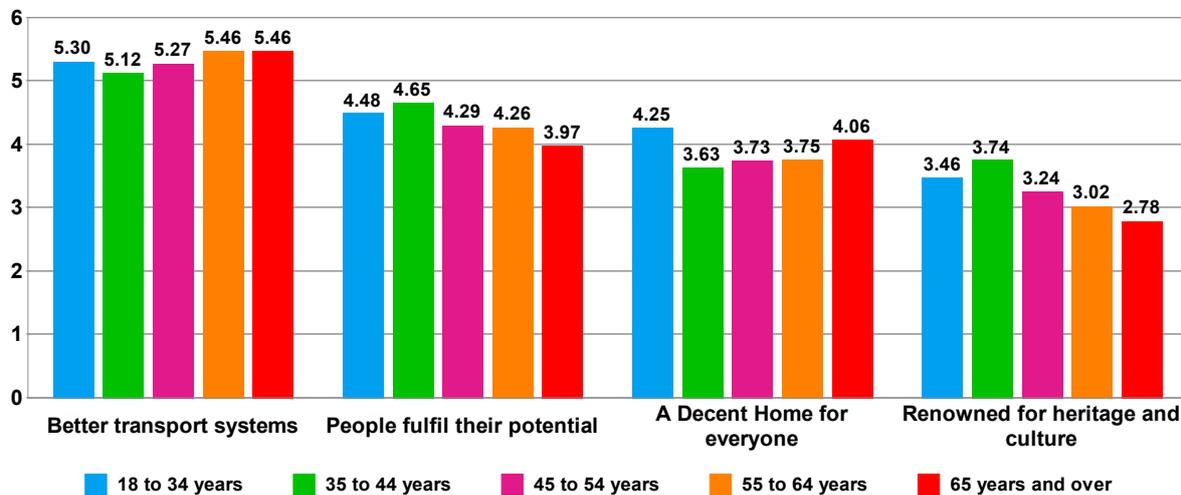
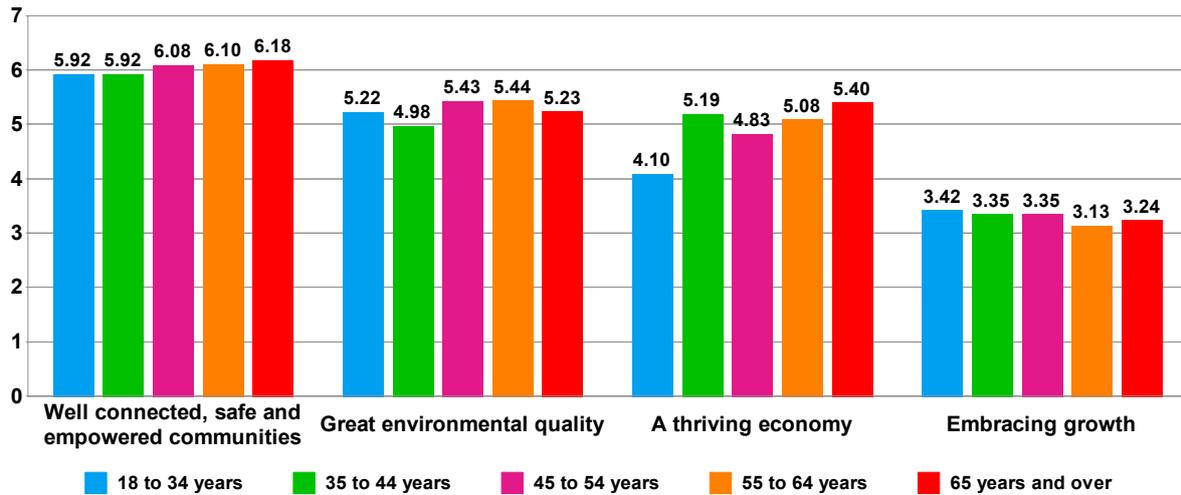
The chart above shows that the profile of responses is broadly the same for both men and women with the priorities ranked in the same order for both sexes. There are some slight differences between the two groups: men were more likely than women to rank a thriving economy higher with 49% selecting this as one of their top three priorities compared to 35.3% of female respondents.

## Priority by Age

The charts below show priority ranking by age group.

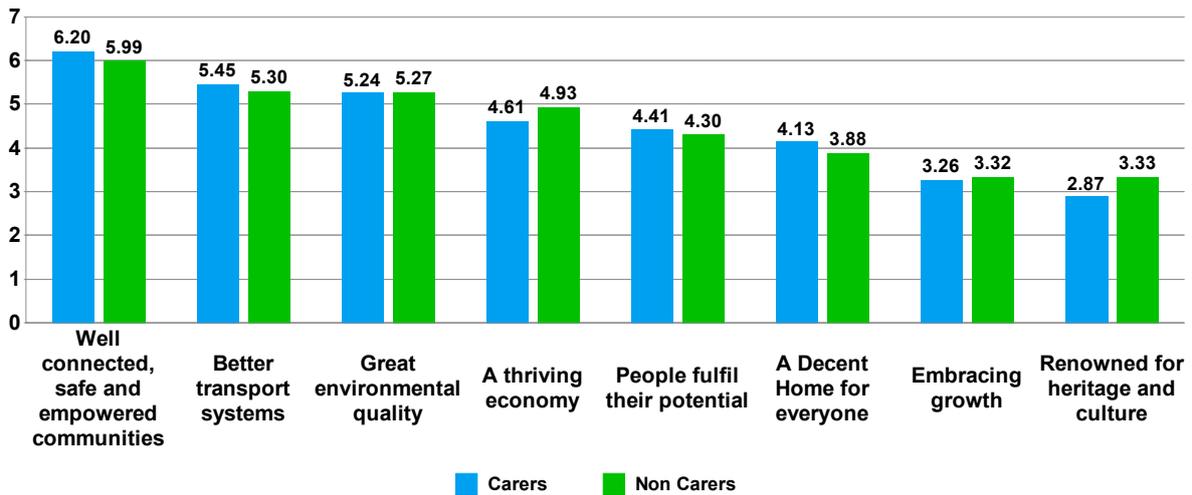
The priority of ‘Well connected, safe and empowered communities’ was the highest ranked priority for all age groups. In addition ‘Better transport systems’ appeared in each group’s top three priorities and ‘Great Environmental Quality’ appears in each group’s top four.

Heritage was ranked bottom by the age groups aged 45 years and over, but was rated sixth by the 35 to 44 years groups.



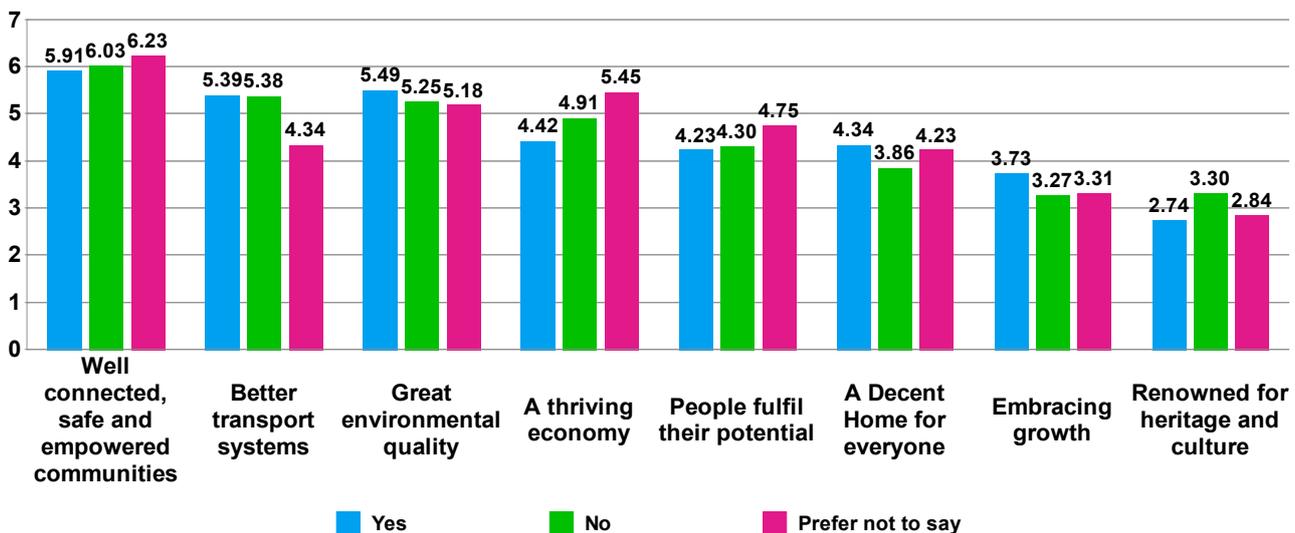
## Priority by Carer Responsibility

Although the profile of the ranking of priorities is in line with the overall result the data shows respondents with caring responsibilities tended to give a higher ratings to ‘Well connected, safe and empowered communities’ and ‘A Decent Home for Everyone’ than those who do not have any caring responsibilities.



**Priority by Disability**

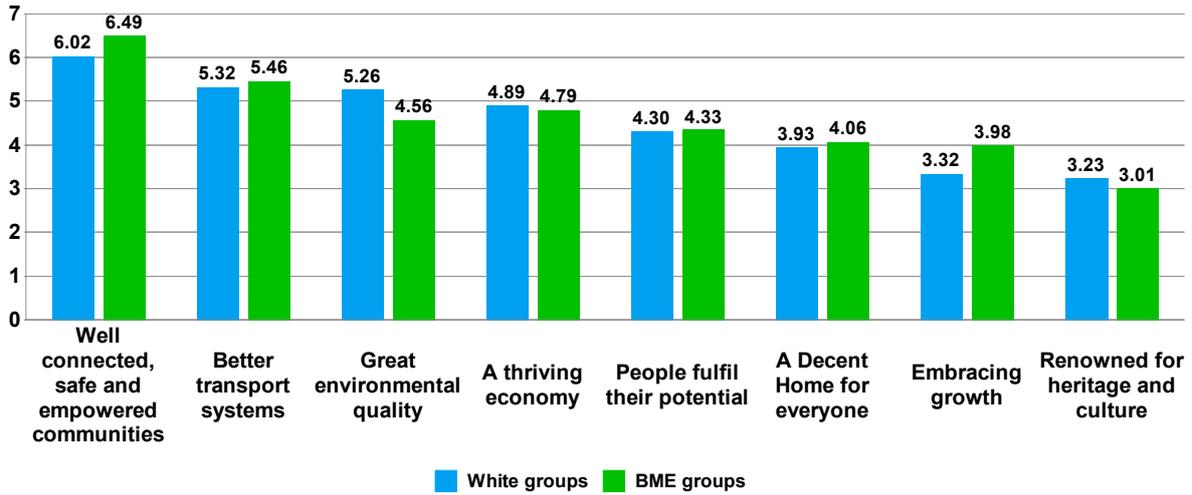
The priorities at the top and bottom of the scale remain the same for respondents with a disability. The data shows that respondents with a disability gave ‘Great Environmental Quality’ and ‘A Decent Home for Everyone’ a higher rating than respondents without a disability.



**Priority by Ethnicity**

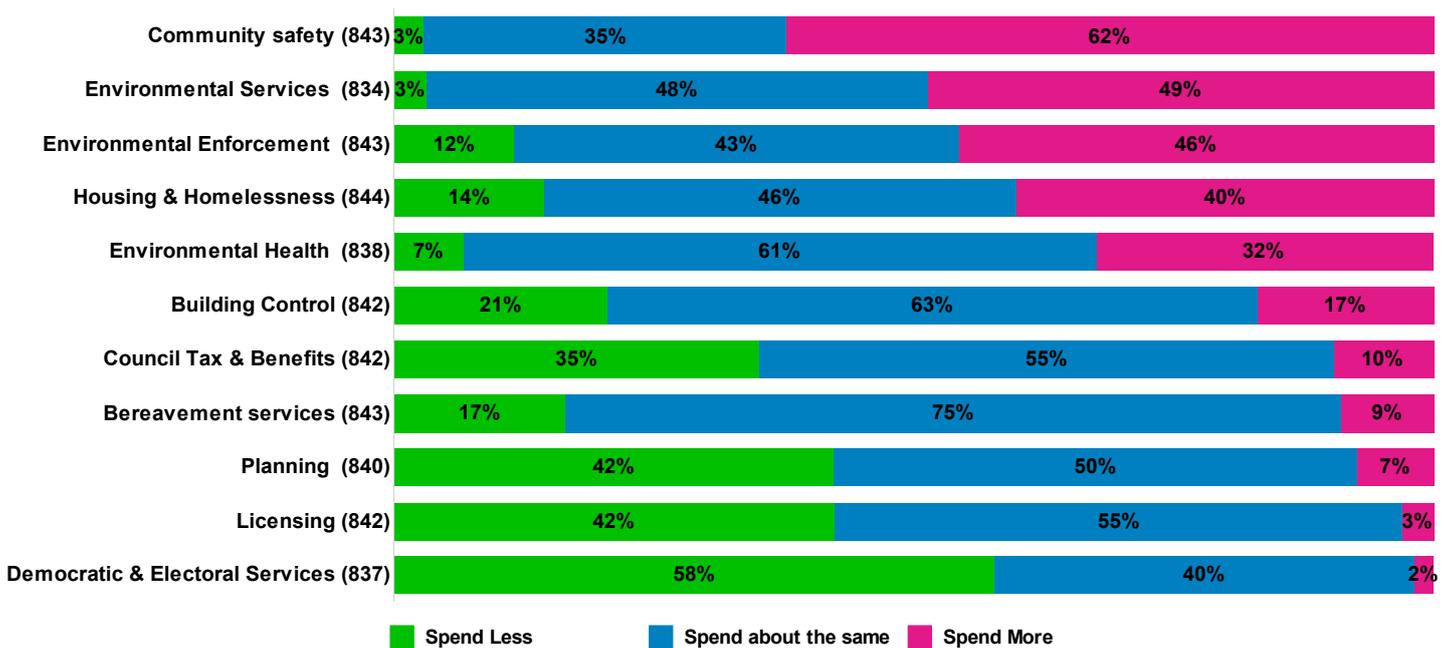
As with disability and carers there is no change in the priorities that are first and last between respondents from white groups and respondents from BME groups.

Respondents from White groups rated ‘Great environmental quality’ higher than those from BME groups and respondents from BME groups rated ‘Embracing growth’ higher than respondents from White groups. However the results for BME groups should be treated with caution owing to the small sample.



### Spending – Mandatory Services

Respondents were given a list of mandatory services that the Council is required to provide and were asked if they thought there should be more or less or the same level of spending for that service going forward. The total number of respondents to each question is show in bracket next to the service name.



The top three services where respondents said the Council should spend less were Democratic & Electoral Services, Licensing and Planning.

For Democratic and Electoral Services respondents from White groups had a significantly greater proportion saying that the Council should ‘Spend less’ in this area than respondents from BME groups, with 58.9% responding this way compared to 28.3% of BME groups. Respondents that have carer responsibilities were slightly more likely than those without carer responsibilities to say more should be spent in this area with 4.4% answering this way compared to 1.1% of non-carers.

## APPENDIX C

For Licensing, as with Democratic & Electoral Services, there is a difference in response levels between those from BME groups and those from White groups, with 43.3% of White groups saying 'Spend Less' and 26.1% of those from BME answering in the same way.

In relation to planning the data indicates Male respondents had a greater proportion saying 'Spend more' and Female respondents had a greater proportion responding 'Spend less' than their counterparts, however the greatest proportional response for both groups was 'Spend about the same'.

Bereavement Services, Building Control and Environmental Health had the greatest proportion of respondents saying that the Council should spend about the same.

Across all the different demographic groups the majority of respondents in each responded 'Spend about the same'. The data does show some variation; Women were more likely than men to respond 'Spend more' with 12.7% of women responding this way compared to 5.0% of men. The same is true for Carers versus Non-Carers with 13.1% of Carers saying the Council should spend more in this area compared to 7.8% of Non-carers.

There were no significant variations in the response levels across the demographic groups for Building Control, with the majority of each demographic group responding 'Spend about the same'. Respondents aged 65 years and over had the greatest proportion responding 'Spend more' with 23.4% answering this way and respondents with a disability had the greatest proportion responding 'Spend less' at 27.0%.

For Environmental Health, across all demographic groups, the majority of respondents answered 'Spend about the same'. The data indicates some differences between the age groups with the 35 to 44 years group having a greatest proportion responding 'Spend less' compared to respondents age 55 years and over with 10.5% answering this way.

Community Safety, Environmental Services and Environmental enforcement had the greatest proportions of respondents answering 'Spend more'.

Community Safety had the greatest proportion of respondents saying the Council should 'Spend more' in this area, with the majority of each demographic group responding this way. Female respondents had the greatest proportion saying that the Council should 'Spend more' in this area at 65.0% and male respondents had the greatest proportion responding 'Spend less' at 4.8%. The data also indicates that the difference in proportions of Carers and Non-carers responding 'Spend less' is significant, with response levels of 0.4% and 3.6% respectively. Although the sample of respondents from BME groups was too small to make any valid comparisons there were no respondents in this group that said the Council should 'Spend less' in this area.

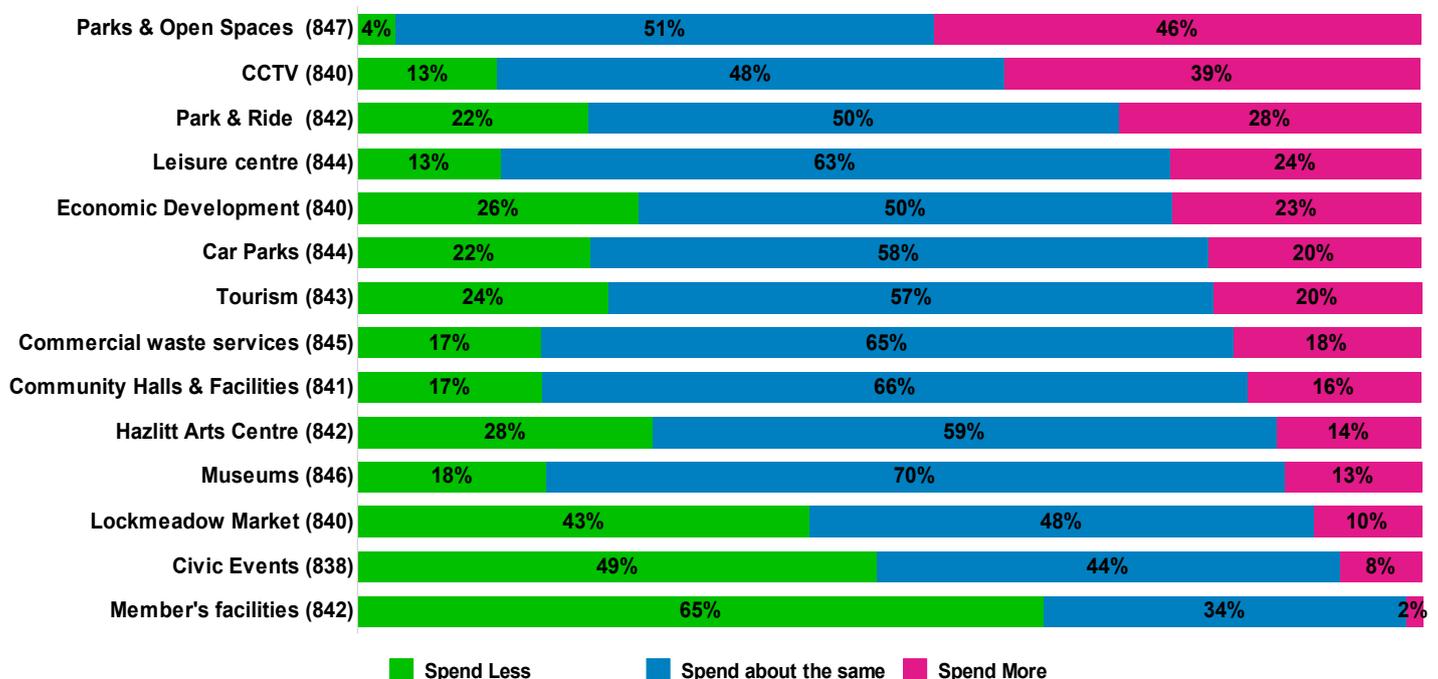
While Environmental Services had the second greatest proportion responding 'Spend more', the response to this question was fairly evenly split between 'Spend more' with 48.6% and 'Spend about the same' with 48.3%. Across all demographic groups the 35 to 44 years age group had the greatest proportion responding 'Spend more' at 56.0% and the 45 to 54 years had the greatest proportion responding 'Spend less' at 5.0%. As with Community Safety although the sample of respondents from BME groups was too small to make any valid comparisons there were no respondents in this group that said the Council should 'Spend less' in this area.

## APPENDIX C

For Environmental Enforcement the data shows that there is a significant difference in response levels between men and women with a greater proportion of women responding 'Spend less' at 14.3% compare to 8.7%. The difference between those responding 'Spend less' aged 35 to 44 years and those responding this way aged 65 years and over is significantly different with the younger group having a greater proportion that responded 'Spend less' than those aged 65 years and over at 16.3% compared to 5.8%, however almost identical proportions of these groups say 'Spend more' at 50.0% and 49.9% respectively. .

### Spending – Discretionary Services

Respondents were presented with a list of discretionary services that the Council are not required to provide, but are currently being provided by the Council and were asked if they thought there should be more or less or the same level of spending for that service going forward. The total number of respondents to each question is show in bracket next to the service name.



The top three services where respondents said the Council should spend less were Members' Facilities, Civic Events and Lockmeadow Market.

More than six out ten respondents said there should be less spending on Members' facilities, the majority of respondents across all demographic groups responded this way. The 55 to 64 years group had the greatest proportion responding 'Spend less' at 78.0%. There were no respondents aged 65 years and over or with a disability that said the Council should 'Spend more' in this area.

Just under half of all respondents said that the Council should 'Spend less' on Civic Events, across the demographic groups there were three where the majority of respondents said 'Spend less' there were; Carers (57.3%), 55 to 64 years (63.4%) and 65 years and over (60.9%). Respondents from BME groups had the greatest proportion responding 'Spend about the same' at 68.8% and respondents age 18 to 34 years had the greatest proportion responding 'Spend more' at 12.9% however due to invalid sample sizes the significance of these differences are untested.

## APPENDIX C

Just over four in ten respondents said that the Council should 'Spend less' on Lockmeadow Market. The 55 to 64 years groups had the greatest proportion responding this way at 50.0%. The data shows that the difference between response levels for men and women is significant. The data show that men may value or use the market less than women with 48.7% saying spending should be reduced compared to 36.5% of women.

Museums, Community Halls & Facilities and Commercial waste services had the greatest proportions responding that the Council should 'Spend about the same'.

Seven out ten respondents said funding for the Museum should remain about the same, the majority of people responded this way across all the demographic groups. Respondents with a disability had the greatest proportion stating that the Council should 'Spend less' on Museums at 27.4% and the data indicates the difference answering this way between respondents with a disability and those without is significant. This suggests that museums are a lower priority for this group.

Overall, 66% of respondents said that funding should remain about the same. The majority of respondents across demographic groups said that the Council should 'Spend about the same' on Community Halls and Facilities. The data shows that the difference between response levels for men and women is significant. The data show that men may value or use Community Halls and Facilities less than women with 20.4% saying spending should be reduced compared to 14.6% of women. Community Halls often host various community activities such as exercise classes, crèches, hobby and support groups; some of these activities are more frequently attended by women. It also shows the difference in proportions of Carers and Non-carer responding 'Spend more' is significant with Carers having a greater proportion answering this way at 23.0% compared to 14.3% for Non-careers.

Overall, 65% of respondents said that funding should remain about the same for Commercial Waste services. The majority of respondents across all demographic groups responded this way. Female respondents had the greatest proportion responding 'Spend about the same' across all the demographic groups and Males responders had the greatest proportion responding 'Spend less' at 22.6%. The data indicates that the difference in proportions responding 'Spend less' between men and women is significant - 12.3% of female respondents answered this way.

Parks & Open Spaces, CCTV and Park & Ride had the greatest proportions of respondent saying that funding should be increased.

Overall, 46% of respondents said that the Council should 'Spend more' on Parks & Open Spaces. Respondents aged 35 to 44 years had the greatest proportion saying that funding in this area should be increased at 58.7% and respondents with a disability had the greatest proportion saying that spending in this area should be reduced at 8.9%.

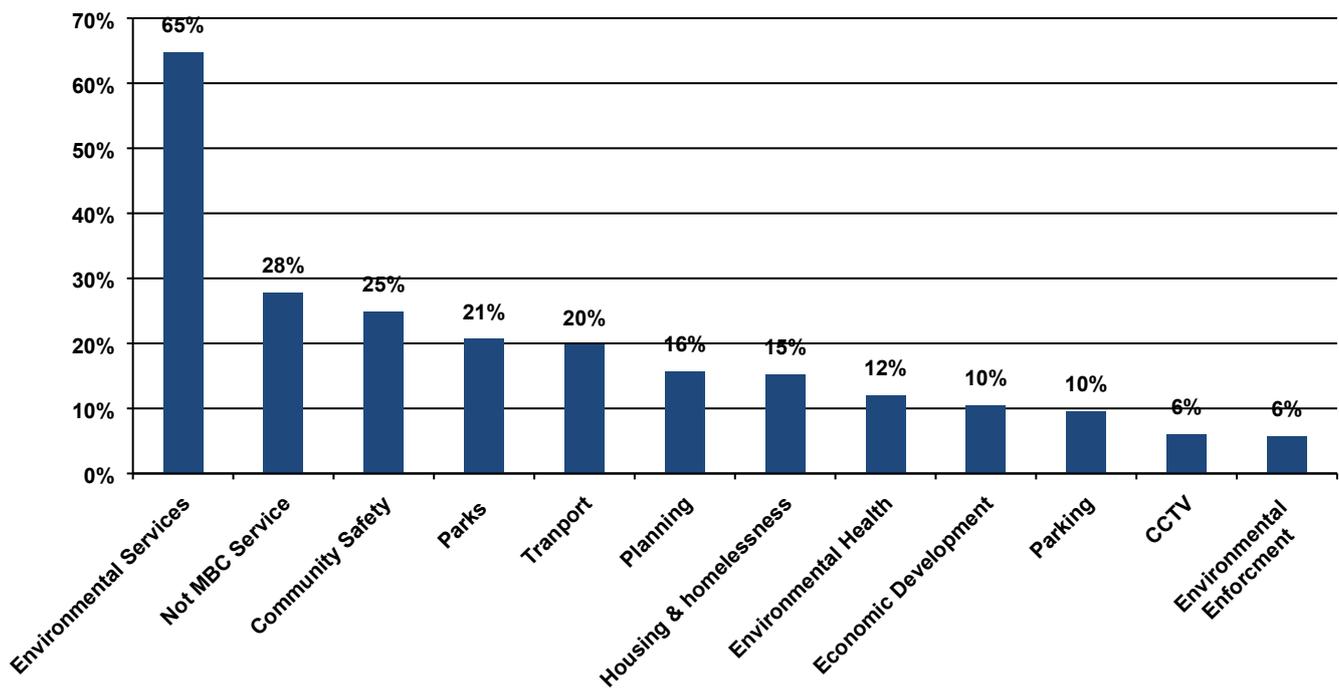
CCTV had the second greatest proportion of respondents that said 'Spend more' with just under four in ten people responding this way. Testing on the response to this service from men and women shows the differences between these groups are significant suggesting each group may have different motivations for their views. Women had a greater proportion than men responding 'Spend more' at 44.4% compared to 33.5% and male respondents had a greater proportion responding 'Spend less' at 16.9% compared to 9.6% for female respondents. Community Safety was the top mandatory services in terms of increasing spending for mandatory services, both of these services having high rates of people saying to increase spending may indicate that people do not feel safe.

## APPENDIX C

Overall, 28% of respondent said that the Council should 'Spend more' on Park & Ride. Recent changes to the service introduced 'pay to park' which meant that people with Older person's Bus passes could no longer use them on this service. It is this group, the 65 years and over, that have the greatest proportion responding 'Spend more' at 42.6%. The data suggests an age trend with the proportion of people responding 'Spend more' increasing with age. The majority of women said funding should remain the same whereas there was no majority response from male respondents.

### Important Services

All survey respondents were given a free text box and asked to state which three services are most important to them. The services which received 50 or more mentions are shown in the chart below.



Environmental services was the most frequently mentioned with 65% of respondent stating this is one of their top three most important services.

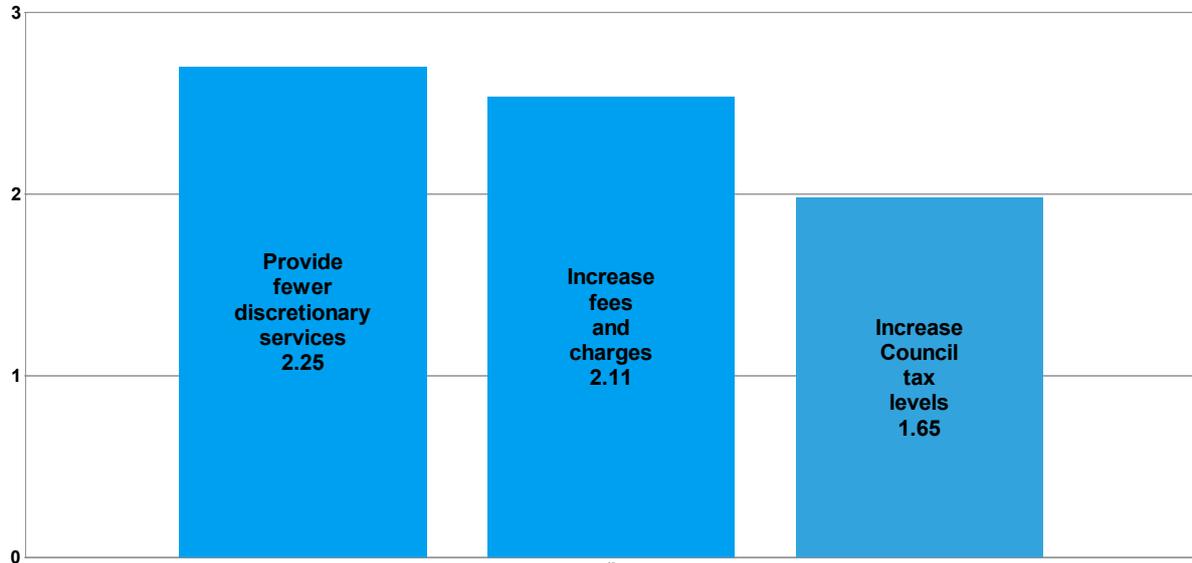
More than a quarter of respondents mentioned a service that is not provided by Maidstone Borough Council, the most common being road maintenance, but there were also people who mentioned the police, health services and adult and children's social services. As these are not MBC services, it suggests there is still some confusion amongst residents about which organisation is responsible for delivering what.

A quarter of respondents mentioned Community Safety and a further 6% mentioned CCTV. Considering responses to other areas of the survey it is clear that Community Safety is a service that residents believe is a high priority on which the Council should spend more.

The top three mandatory services and the top three discretionary services where survey respondents said the Council should 'Spend more' all appear in the services that got 50 or more mentions.

## Approaches to balancing the Council’s budget

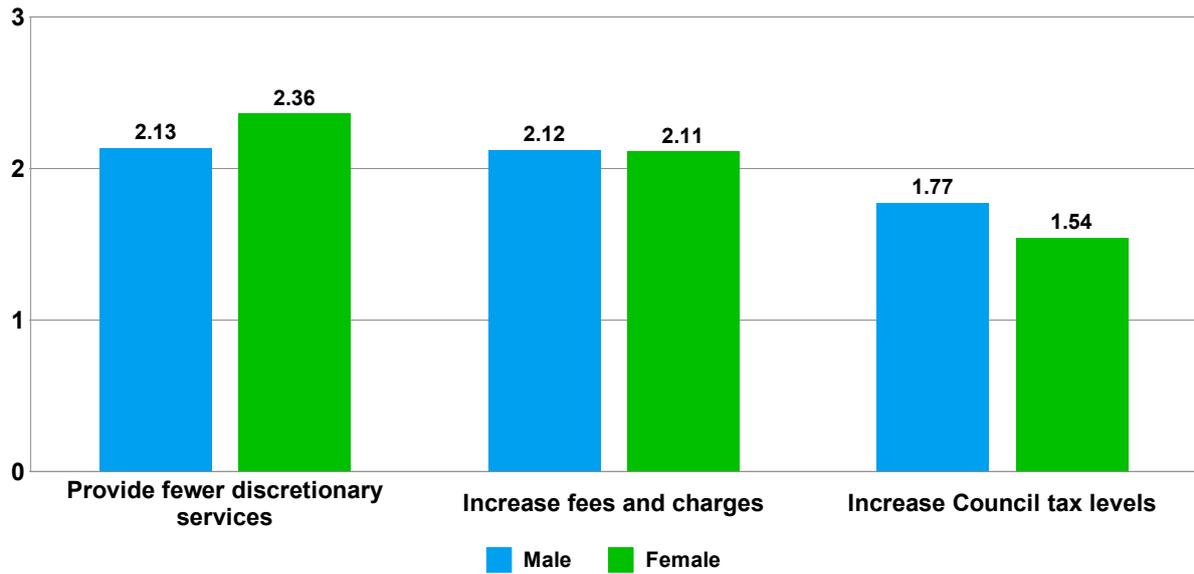
Respondents were asked to put the approaches to balancing the budget in order of preference. In order to assess this data a weighted average has been used with the approach placed as first receiving three points and the approach ranked last is given one point. These are then added together and divided by the number of respondents to give a weighted average.



Overall, ‘Providing fewer discretionary services’ was the most preferred option and ‘Increase Council tax levels’ was the least preferred option. The charts below show the differences between different demographic groups.

A similar question was asked in the 2017 Resident Survey in which respondents were asked to select which out of four options was their preferred approach to balancing the Council’s budget. The result of this were that 61.0% of respondents said that MBC should prioritise stopping delivery of non-essential services in order to balance the budget, 19% said that we should increase fee and charges for services to balance the budget and 16.4% said we should increase council tax (there was a fourth option to provide services less frequently or to a lower standard which 3% of respondents selected).

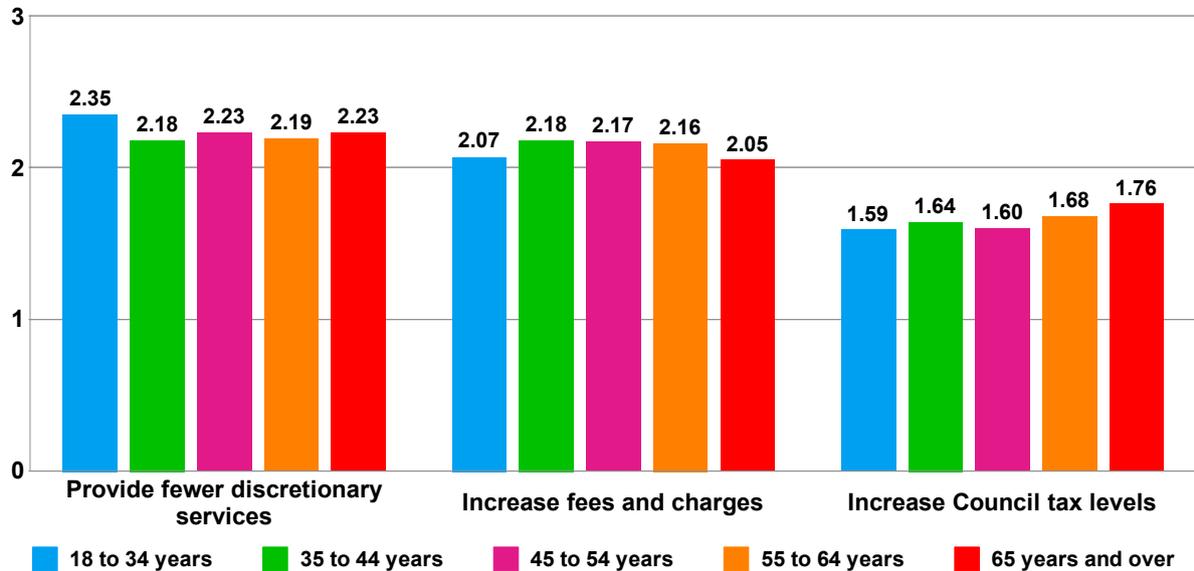
Priority by Gender



The response profile for men and women matches the overall result in terms of priority order. The data shows there is very little difference in the rating between genders to ‘providing fewer discretionary services’ and ‘increase fees and charges’. It also shows more women rated ‘provide fewer discretionary services’ higher than men with 57% of women ranking this approach as first compared to 45% of men. Just over a quarter of male respondents ranked ‘Increase Council Tax levels’ as their preferred approach compared to 16% of women respondents.

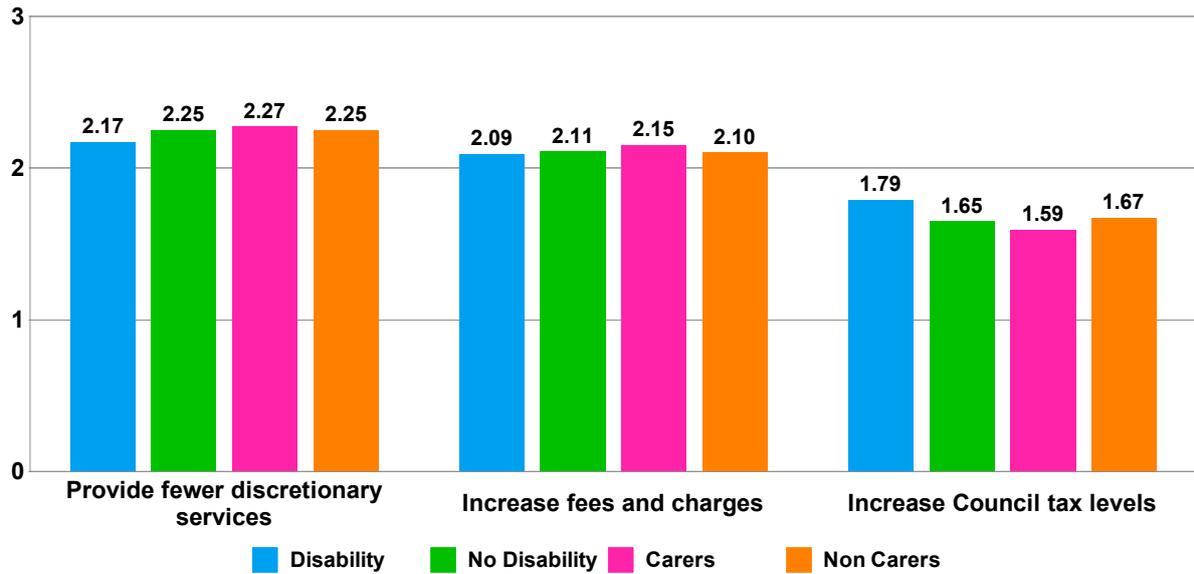
Priority by age

Again across the age groups the order of ranking has not changed from the overall results, in terms of preferred approach.



The data shows that the 35 to 44 years ranking was split between ‘Provide fewer discretionary services’ and ‘Increase fees and charges’ however it should be noted that the there was a greater proportion of this groups that put ‘Provide fewer discretionary service’ as first (51%) than put ‘Increase fees and charges’ first (30.4%).

Priority by Disability & Carer Responsibility



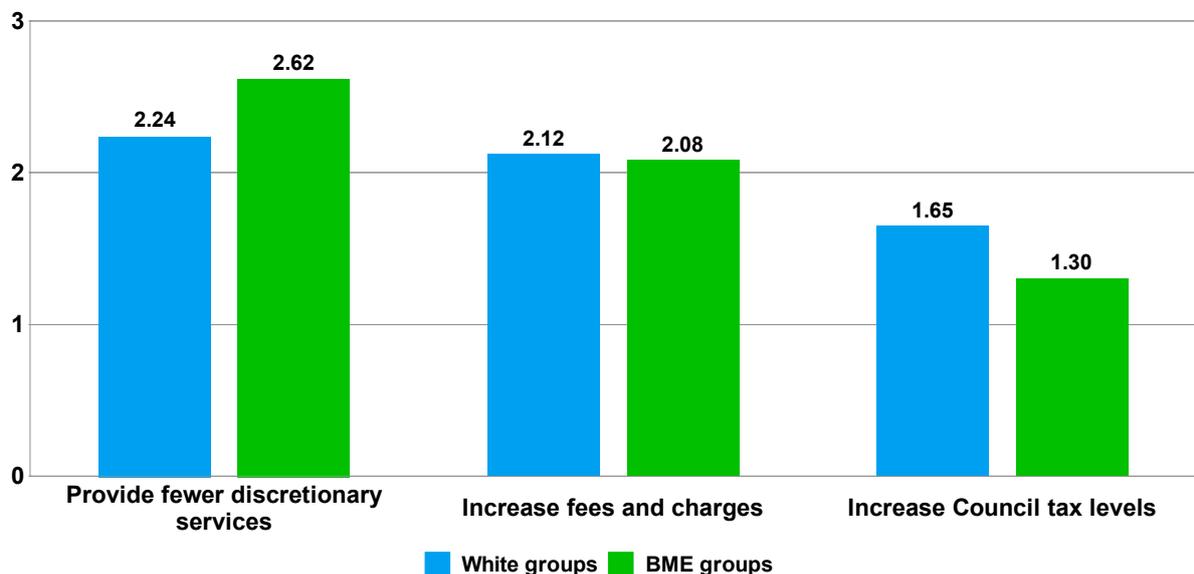
For both respondents with and without a disability and those with and without carer responsibilities the order of ranking has not changed from the overall results, in terms of preferred approach.

Respondents with a disability had a lower proportion ranking ‘Provide fewer discretionary service’ as first, with 44% responding this way compared to 51% of respondents without a disability. Those with a disability also had a greater proportion than those without a disability ranking ‘Increase council tax levels’ with 27% putting this approach first compared to 21% for respondents without a disability.

Respondents that are Carers had a greater proportion ranking ‘Increase Council tax levels’ and the least preferred option compared to those without caring responsibilities with 61% answering this way compared to 55% non-carers.

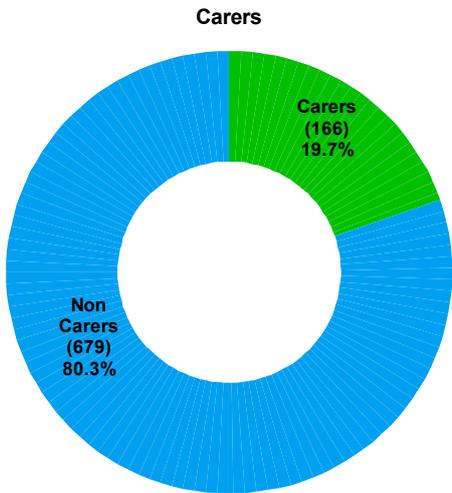
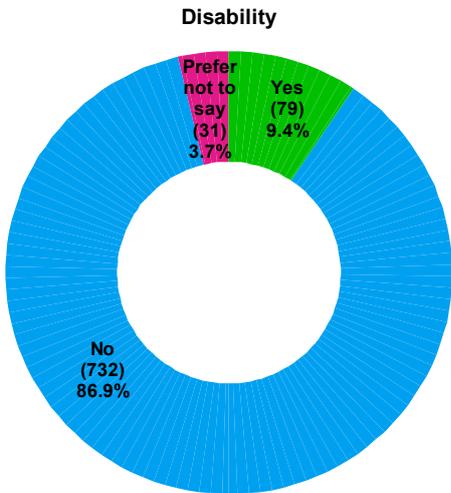
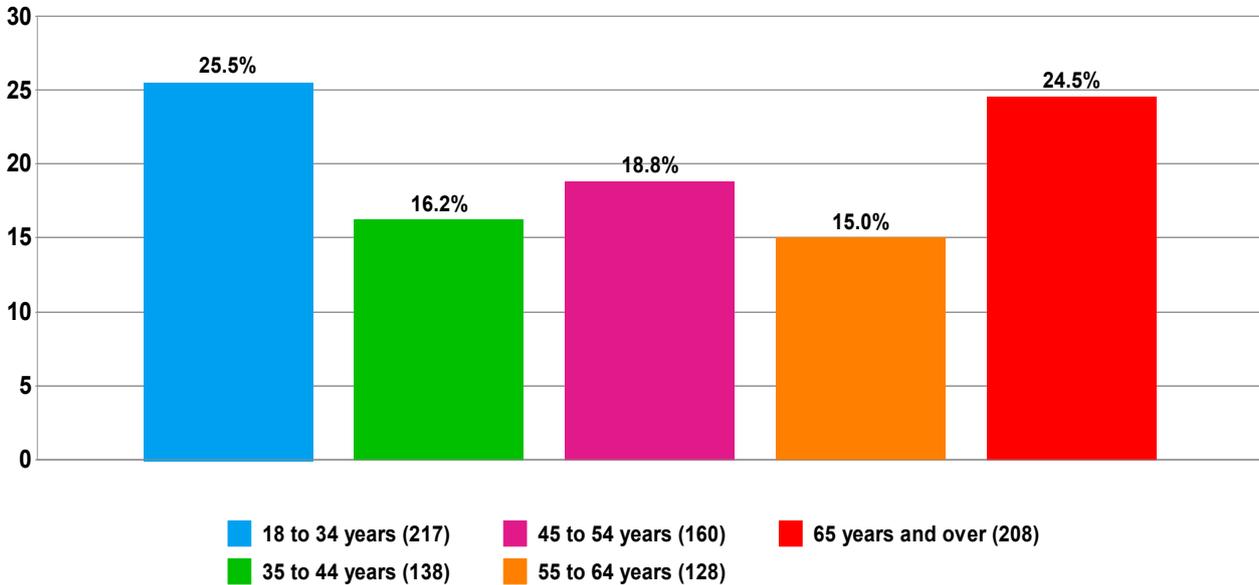
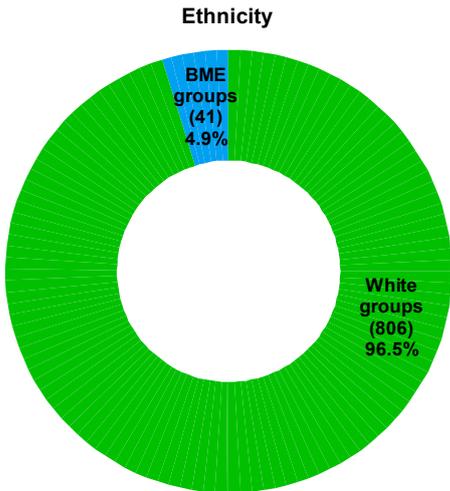
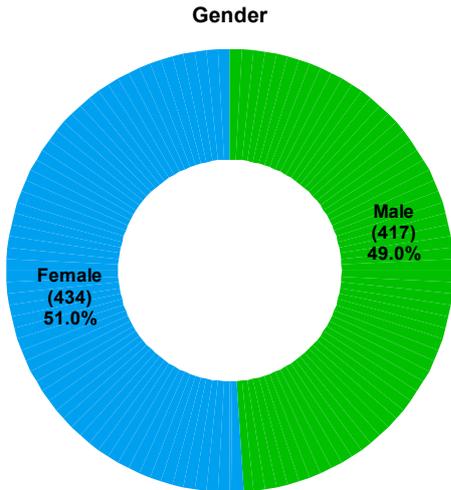
Ethnicity

Again the order of the approaches between these two groups is the same as the overall result. Although the data suggests differences between the way these two groups have responded the sample size for BME respondents is too small to make valid comparisons.



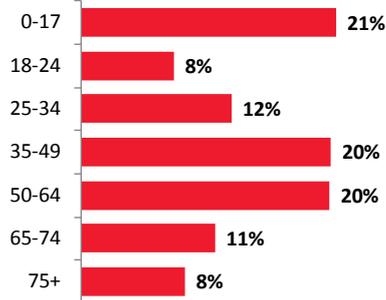
# APPENDIX C

Survey Demographics (weighted by gender and age).

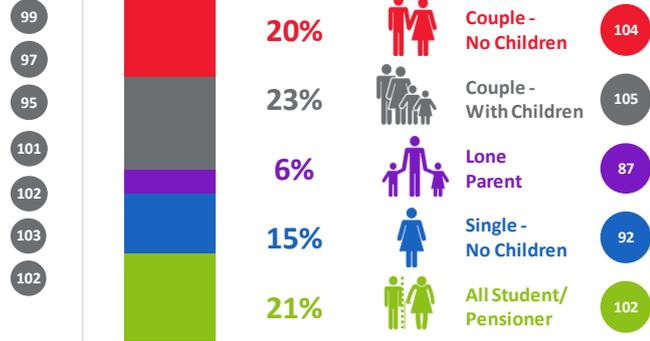


## Acorn Respondent Profile

### AGE



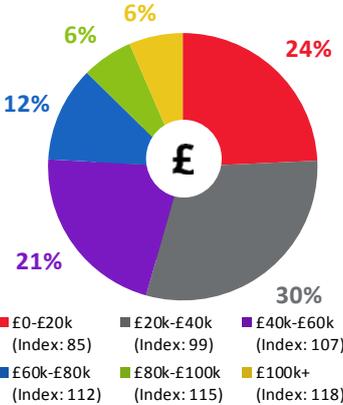
### FAMILY



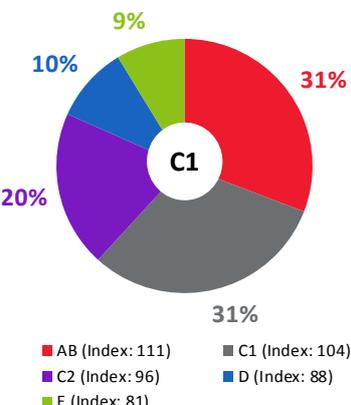
### KEY INSIGHTS

- The average age of the population in the profiled households is slightly older when compared to the base.
- Households containing couples with children occur more in this profile than in the base.
- 6.5% of the profile live in households with an income of over £100k.
- The dominant Social Grade is C1 and the most over-represented is AB.
- There is a higher proportion of people in this profile who are self employed than in the base.

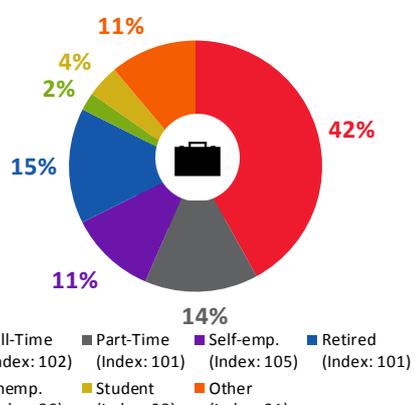
### INCOME



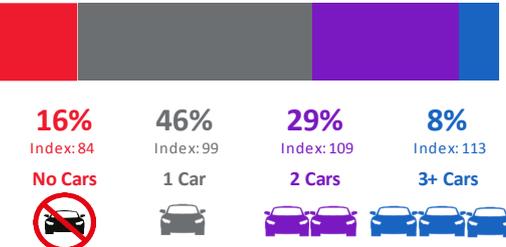
### SOCIAL GRADE



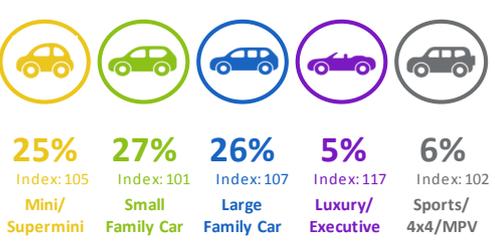
### EMPLOYMENT



### CARS



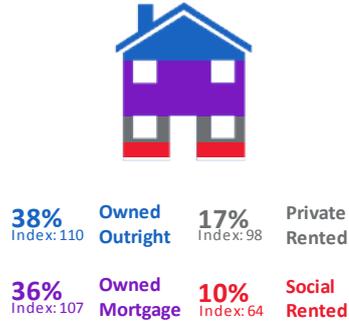
### CAR TYPE



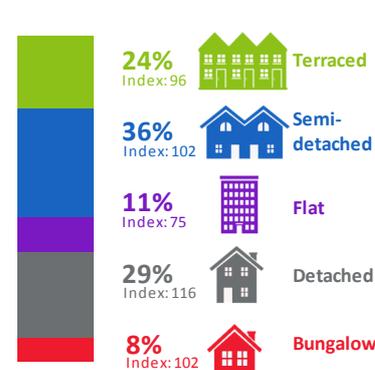
### KEY INSIGHTS

- Most households will have access to a small family car.
- A higher proportion, in comparison to the base, are likely to have a luxury/executive car.
- Detached houses are 16.3% more likely than in the base.
- 37.6% of the households in the profile are likely to be owned outright.
- About 21% of households will have 4 bedrooms.
- The prevailing size is 2 people but households with 3-4 people appear more than in the base.

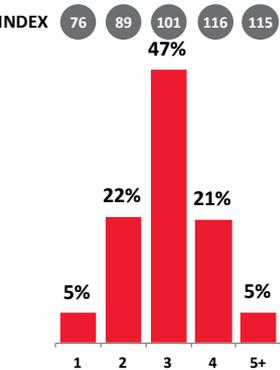
### TENURE



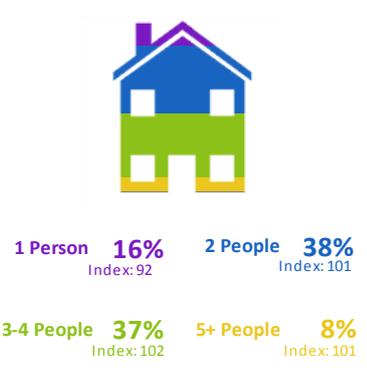
### TYPE



### BEDROOMS



### SIZE



# Agenda Item 17

**Heritage, Leisure and Culture**

**29<sup>th</sup> January 2019**

## **Progress Report : Parks and Opens Spaces 10 year Strategic Plan**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Heritage, Leisure and Culture Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	Jennifer Shepherd, Head of Environment & Public Realm
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Andrew Williams, Parks and Open Spaces Manager
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

### **Executive Summary**

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee is asked to review the progress made in the delivery of the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan. The Committee is also asked to consider the comments and forward plan items.

### **This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. That the first annual summary of progress for Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Strategic Plan is noted.

### **Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Heritage , Leisure & Culture Committee	29 <sup>th</sup> January 2019

# Progress Report : Parks and Opens Spaces 10 year Strategic Plan

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

1.1 The Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan was agreed at HCL in July 2017 (Appendix 1). The adoption of the plan concluded over 12 months research and consultation into the future direction of the service and how our Parks and Open Spaces should be managed and protected for the future.

1.2 The 10 year plan included position statements on biodiversity, nature reserves, S106 contributions and adoption of open space. It also highlights the key links to Maidstone's Strategic Plan and supporting strategies, as well as highlighting the challenges ahead.

1.3 The Plan sets out 3 priority areas:

- Open Spaces supporting Vibrant and Healthy Communities
- Open Spaces Fit for the Future
- Quality Spaces – Quality Service

From this six principles have been identified and four action areas.

1.4 The Parks and Opens Spaces team leading on the delivery of this strategy is comprised of experienced staff in the following roles;

- Parks and Open Spaces Manager
- Mote Park Officer
- Parks Projects Officer - (S106 schemes – 2 yr fixed term)
- Parks Officer
- Community Partnership Officer (Go Green Go Wild – 2 yr fixed term)

1.5 The team works on a wide variety of project based work, commissioning and procuring parks improvements, risk management and operational management issues. Customer service requests average 1200 per year.

1.6 Grounds Maintenance functions across the borough are delivered in-house by a team comprising:

- Grounds Maintenance Manager
- Supervisors x3
- Grounds staff x 39 (includes 3 apprentices )

## Progress to date

1.7 The 10 year Plan is presented in four themes shown below, though there is significant cross working and impact felt across a number of these themes, for example Action areas 2, 3 and 4 all work to provide Action 1 'An Open Spaces Estate which best serves Maidstone's needs'.

1.8 The tables below set out the actions within each Action Area and the projects and progress made.

<b>Action Area 1 : An Open Spaces Estate which best serves Maidstone's needs</b>	
<b>i) Identify Maidstone's needs</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Play Area Policy reviewed, strategic and non-strategic play areas and provision within 12mins of homes.</li> </ul>
<b>ii) Assess Current Provision against Identified Need</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parks audit system to be developed 2020 (Quality Value Matrix)</li> <li>• Play area policy has been reviewed and started to implement changes to MBC's provision.</li> </ul>
<b>iii) Identify and formulate Site Management and Improvement Plans for Key Sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Woodbridge Drive – creation a natural play area &amp; removal of very old multi-play unit and redundant fencing.</li> <li>• Bridge Mill Way – improved access, sports wall and surfacing &amp; greatly improved safety surfacing.</li> <li>• Renewal of fencing at Albert Reed Gardens around play area and stream</li> <li>• Mangravet Recreation Ground – extended play area with new fencing and junior agility play.</li> <li>• Green Flag management plans at Whatman Park, Clare Park &amp; Mote Park.</li> </ul>
<b>iv) Implement Site Management and Investment Plans for key Sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implementation of pro-active tree safety inspection programme; currently every 4 years to move to 3 yearly cycle. Providing a risk management approach to retain safe tree stock across the borough's estate.</li> <li>• Veteran &amp; ancient tree survey Mote Park</li> <li>• Mallards Way – new boundary fencing(300m+), handrails and gates</li> <li>• Buckland Hill – pocket local nature reserve – glade creation , access work, fencing</li> <li>• Capital Investment Project in MBC Play areas concluded</li> </ul>

	<p>Feb 2018 – 30+ play areas benefitted from £1.1 million scheme.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Control of Invasive species – Japanese Knotweed &amp; Giant Hogweed</li> <li>• South Park – landscaping works to remove damaged conifer hedge and old chain-link fence and replant with native beech hedging and install rigid panel fencing</li> <li>• Working with Friends of South Park to realise aspirations for improved paths, restore fountain and increase tree planting.</li> </ul>
<b>v) Assess and Implement Alternative Management Options for Non-key Sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategically Important Play Areas maintained by Parishes – Grant scheme launched Summer 2018. £87K awarded from total of £200k, second round of funding to be launched</li> <li>• Disposal of Franklin Drive non-strategic play area to Boxley Parish agreed and nearing formal transfer.</li> <li>• Further sites to be considered during 2019 : Fairhurst Drive &amp; Whitebeam Drive</li> </ul>

## Action Area 2 : Providing Open Spaces for a Changing Population

<b>i) Understanding Supply and Demands - now &amp; future</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Future work to understand the borough growth identified in Local Plan</li> <li>• Investigate open space deficiencies (5 typologies – Amenity, natural, allotments, play &amp; sport)</li> </ul>
<b>ii) Ensure that the new supply delivers Principles &amp; Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All new developments are assessed for quality opens spaces and how they serve the local community.</li> </ul>
<b>iii) Develop robust protocols and management agreements to ensure long term quality is assured on new Open Space Sites</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• During 2018 over 18 developer schemes with play &amp; open space provision have been advised through pre-application and planning process. During 2018 all new housing developments over 10 units have been assessed for open space deficit, detailed calculations made and S106 contributions for offsite provision requested where appropriate.</li> <li>• During 2019 this will be delivered through the Community Infrastructure Levy</li> </ul>

<p><b>iv) Ensure Development contributes to open spaces which meet Maidstone's needs</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buckland Hill – pocket local nature reserve – glade creation , access work &amp; fencing</li> <li>• Complete renewal of Somerset Road play area – tender complete contract to commence Feb 2019 (Value £70k)</li> <li>• Bridge Mill Way Play Area - £55k capital investment from S106 – renewed play bark, created access path, installed new multi-play goal/hoop and improving path down to towpath</li> </ul>
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<b>Action Area 3 : Connected Delivery - Multiple Benefits</b>	
<p><b>i) Plan Strategically for Multiple Benefits</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess best format and terms of reference for Corporate Green &amp; Blue Infrastructure forum in 2020 – engagement across Council required with participation from external organisations</li> </ul>
<p><b>ii) Embed Cross-Sector Working</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop stakeholder Group during 2019-20</li> </ul>
<p><b>iii) Build Capacity and Community Support</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Go Green Go Wild project – initiated with project officer to progress biodiversity agenda, community involvement. Building capacity and increasing engagement.</li> </ul>
<p><b>iv) Develop a 'Quality of Life Programme'</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop working relationship with Public Health – recognise parks and open spaces as a public health asset.</li> <li>• Health Lifestyle initiatives – to be developed including 'No Smoking in Play areas' .</li> </ul>
<p><b>v) Develop a Biodiversity Enhancement Programme</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Biodiversity Strategy underway – working in partnership with stakeholders, residents with Medway Valley Countryside Partnership</li> <li>• Go Green Go Wild project – initiated to progress biodiversity agenda , community involvement. Building capacity and increasing engagement.</li> <li>• Go Green Go Wild Project officer role created and officer in post (2 yr fixed term) to lead on Biodiversity and Community Engagement initiatives.</li> </ul>

## Action Area 4 : Working Smarter

<p><b>i) Take a Whole-council Approach</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mote Park Dam – legal obligations to manage risk ‘as low as reasonably practicable’. Project underway to create an engineered spillway to ensure dam withstands a 1 in 1000 year flood event</li> </ul>
<p><b>ii) Assess Income generation potential of all sites</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mote Park Project Board – moving towards completion of adventure zone Spring 2019</li> <li>• Review of parks with potential to hold events – auditing access, capacity &amp; constraints to provide Events Officer with reliable information to better advise potential clients and try new venues</li> </ul>
<p><b>iii) Review Service Delivery and Implement Improvements</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of Parks Officer &amp; creation and recruitment of S106 Parks Project Officer</li> <li>• Resilience planning for service post-brexit; anticipation maintenance needs for play areas from specialist suppliers in EU. Maintenance needs for fleet and grounds maintenance equipment manufactured predominantly in Germany.</li> <li>• EU nursery stock supply chain issue for seeds, plants and bulbs.</li> </ul>
<p><b>iv) Review &amp; improve</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop Parks and Open Spaces Key Performance indicators during 2019-20</li> </ul>
<p><b>v) Forward Plan</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Annual Work-plan to be agreed with Management team &amp; HCL</li> </ul>
<p><b>vi) Implement an External Funding Programme</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No action to date</li> </ul>
<p><b>vii) Communicate Effectively</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Regular contributions to ‘365 Good News Stories’</li> <li>• Annual ‘Tweet-athon’</li> <li>• Parks Newsletter circulation approx. 1000</li> <li>• Responsive to press and media enquiries</li> </ul>

## Forward Planning

Parks and Open Spaces Stakeholder group	2019
Quality Value Matrix to be developed	2020-22
Develop Parks and Open Spaces KPI's during 2019	2019-20
Mapping exercise to be undertaken by GIS (Geographical Information Systems) team to plot Access to Nature deficit – considering ANGSt (Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards)	2019
Local Nature Reserve - review	2019
Biodiversity /Community Engagement (Go Green Go Wild)	2019-2020

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## 2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

2.1 This report is presented for information only.

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## 3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 None

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## 4. RISK

4.1 This report is presented for information only, committees, managers and heads of service can use the information to identify service performance, progress and understand risk.

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## 5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 This report is presented to inform Members on progress made during 2018 on Maidstone's Parks and Open Spaces 10 year Strategic Plan 2017-2027 that was adopted by HCL Committee on 4<sup>th</sup> July 2017.

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## 6 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 None

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## 7 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	As outlined in the Plan, this work contributes to a number of the priorities within the Strategic Plan, both directly and indirectly.	Head of Environment & Public Realm
<b>Risk Management</b>	Already covered in the risk section	Head of Environment & Public Realm
<b>Financial</b>	The projects described in this report are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]
<b>Staffing</b>	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Head of Environment & Public Realm
<b>Legal</b>	There are no specific legal implications at present as this report is presented for information only.	Team Leader (Corporate Governance) MKLS
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	Not applicable There are no specific privacy or data protection issues to address.	Team Leader (Corporate Governance) MKLS
<b>Equalities</b>	This report is for noting and does not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	[Policy & Information Manager]
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	Not applicable	[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Procurement</b>	Not applicable.	[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]

## **8 REPORT APPENDICES**

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

Appendix 1 – Maidstone’s Parks and Open Spaces 10 year Strategic Plan 2017-2027

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## **9 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

# Maidstone's Parks & Open Spaces

## *10 Year Strategic Plan*

*2017 - 2027*

*Final June 2017*

## Foreword

*Maidstone is proud of its parks and open spaces. They provide a sense of place, an attractive environment for those living and working in the borough, play a vital role in supporting health and well-being and provide a haven for wildlife. As the population of the borough grows it is more important than ever to protect these important open spaces.*

*The borough council is responsible for a unique heritage; with exemplars of municipal parks from the 19<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, from the historic Mote Park and Brenchley Gardens to the Millennium Whatman Park. The borough's parks and open spaces also play a vital role in supporting and conserving our natural heritage. With its urban and rural network of open spaces, churchyards, allotments, riverside areas and highway verges, the borough can play its part in reversing the wider decline in our native flora and fauna.*

*This Parks and Open Spaces Strategic Plan recognises the benefits our parks and open spaces bring to local communities, for healthier living, play and recreation, but also for the benefits they bring to our local economy.*

*This Plan sets out the Council's intention for the future of our parks and open spaces, as part of an interconnected network of high quality open spaces, cycle paths, green ways and footpaths. This plan recognises the different needs of communities across the borough, the valuable role of local people in managing their open spaces, and the Council's responsibility to protect our unique heritage not only for current residents, but to pass on to our children and those that come after them.*

*This bold and strategic approach is being taken to ensure that Maidstone Borough Council's Parks and Open Spaces continue to provide benefits for residents, visitors and wildlife, despite increased pressure on the resources available to deliver this service.*

**Cllr David Pickett**

**Chair of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee**

## Part 1 – Setting the Scene

### About this Plan

A number of very significant challenges lie ahead for all local authorities.

Housing growth places further pressure on public services if not planned for. Every part of Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) must consider carefully how its services are delivered; and this is particularly important for non-statutory services, including Parks and Leisure.

Despite these challenges MBC is ambitious in its aspirations for the borough. MBC's Strategic Plan recognises the importance of heritage, cultural and natural assets in ensuring Maidstone continues to be a thriving and attractive place to live, work and visit. Parks and open spaces are essential in supporting this, but we need to find different ways of working in order to continue to provide the service residents expect.

This plan deals with how MBC will manage the parks and open spaces that are under its control. There are a number of other documents, explained further in Part 2 of this plan, which deal with borough wide issues such as Green and Blue Infrastructure, Biodiversity, Landscape Character, Air Quality, Heritage and Tourism. Whilst the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan may contribute towards the actions in these documents, it will not repeat existing borough wide targets.

This plan sets out how we will face the challenges ahead, founded on the evidence base produced by Parks and Leisure for the Local Plan, alongside the results of the Residents' Survey. The plan sets out a route map for the short, medium and longer term so that MBC is well-prepared. Some changes will take time to implement and it is

imperative we start now to ensure a smooth transition to new ways of working.

We need this plan to:<sup>1</sup>

- Ensure high quality, attractive parks and open spaces are provided to serve a range of needs for our current and future residents and visitors, as Maidstone continues to grow;
- Ensure that the provision and management of open spaces is sustainable in a future with less public sector funding;
- Address the difficult issues we are facing and provide a sound basis for decision-making;
- Ensure that parks and open spaces effectively support the delivery of Maidstone's Strategic Plan;
- Provide a clear direction which MBC and its partners can unite around.

The plan is in three parts:

- **Part 1** – provides background about Maidstone's open spaces and states why they are so important;
- **Part 2** – sets out the challenges ahead;
- **Part 3** – sets out the way forward, our service's Priorities and Principles and the actions needed.

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<sup>1</sup> This plan covers parks, nature reserves, amenity space, play areas and allotments owned by Maidstone Borough Council. Other spaces owned or managed by other organisations also make a valuable contribution, but this plan cannot prescribe actions for these. However, in reviewing greenspace provision, this plan takes these other spaces into account.

## Why we Need Parks and Open Spaces

**Our vision is for a greener, healthier Maidstone – valued, enjoyed and cared for by local people.**

**At a time of reducing public resources, this ten year plan for Parks & Open Spaces will provide the strategic direction for the Parks service to ensure that this vision is attained.**

Parks and open spaces are vital parts of the fabric of communities; they are places where people relax, play sport, socialise and exercise. They also underpin MBC's priorities and, as important components of the green infrastructure network, are essential to the successful delivery of Maidstone's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.

A theme throughout this plan is the need to ensure all the benefits<sup>2</sup> provided by Maidstone's open spaces are fully maximised. This requires good planning, prioritisation and cross-sector working; working 'smarter' to deliver the most possible with the resources available.

### Economic Growth

Investing in greenspaces can be a catalyst to regeneration. There is good evidence that when open space projects are integrated with regeneration and economic development projects they provide more benefits, faster. Improved attractiveness of an area also increases visitor numbers and visitor spend. Open spaces can be attractions in

<sup>2</sup> This is termed 'multi-functionality' in green infrastructure planning. It requires that each site provides as many benefits as possible.

themselves as venues for events, attracting new spend to the area.

*"Investments in greenspace have been shown to improve a region's image; helping to attract and retain high value industries, new business start-ups, entrepreneurs and workers."*

*Natural Economy North West (2008)*

Being physically active is strongly linked to better health and well-being, with lack of exercise shown to increase at least 20 chronic health conditions, including heart disease, stroke, cancer, type 2 diabetes and mental health problems.<sup>3</sup> Evidence shows that providing open spaces helps raise physical activity levels and can have a positive impact on low level mental health issues.<sup>4</sup> Visits are influenced by distance from home, ease of access, the amenities on offer and the absence of vandalism and graffiti. These are important considerations in attracting more people to open spaces to improve their health.

### Quality Environment

#### Open Spaces are Important to Maidstone's Residents:

- More than half of residents use an amenity greenspace regularly (at least once a week);
- The most popular activities are walking and exercising;
- Areas for children and young people are regularly used by over a third of residents (at least once a fortnight)

*(Residents Phone Survey 2015)*

<sup>3</sup> Department of Health (2011), Start Active, Stay Active: A report on physical activity from the four home countries', Chief Medical Officers.

<sup>4</sup> Masterclass Briefing - Evidence Review: Spatial Determinants of Health in Urban Settings, Building Health; Planning and designing for health and happiness; 22 January 2010 University of the West of England.

All parks and open spaces, not just nature reserves, can contribute to better biodiversity. They can also help to improve the environment in other ways, such as reducing air pollution or helping to control flooding. In line with the ambition to provide multiple benefits, environmental improvements will be sought in as many open spaces as possible, in a way that also supports the needs of communities.

### *About Maidstone's Parks and Open Spaces*

Parks and open spaces are part of the character of Maidstone. There are many unique and historic greenspaces, including The Archbishop's Palace Gardens, Penenden Heath and Brenchley Gardens, several large parks including Cobtree and Mote Park and many other open spaces providing local play areas, sports pitches, wildlife havens and spaces for festivals and events.

#### **Maidstone Borough Council's Parks and Open Spaces:**

- 425 hectares of greenspace
- 30 large parks
- 80 Neighbourhood greenspaces
- 68 play areas
- 700 Allotments plots across 12 sites
- 4 Green Flag parks

To make sure all residents have sufficient access to greenspace the Council has set out quantity standards for publicly accessible open space in its 2016 Local Plan. These standards indicate the minimum size for greenspace types and the area to be provided per thousand residents, as well as the maximum distance that any resident should have to travel to a greenspace.

The standards were devised to ensure that adequate greenspaces are provided on new housing developments; but they have also been applied across the rest of the borough to help ensure that all residents have access to a range of different types of open space. As well as addressing the quantity of open space, the quality of Maidstone's open spaces was also evaluated recently. The Council's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy considered the quantity and quality of publicly accessible open spaces, alongside the location and size of planned housing developments, and it has identified those areas of the borough where there is currently a deficit or over-provision of open space (or will be in future).

The Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy identified the following current public accessible open space deficiencies across the borough:

- Amenity Greenspace - Current deficits in Fant, High Street, Bearsted, Allington and North Wards;
- Children's Play Space - Fair in most of the borough with slight deficiency in urban Maidstone. There is also a shortage of youth play in Marden, Staplehurst, Headcorn and Sutton Valance;
- Natural/Semi-natural Greenspace – Generally good but deficient in urban Maidstone, Staplehurst, Headcorn and Marden and slight deficiencies in Lenham, Coxheath and Sutton Valence.
- Allotments - Deficient in most of the Maidstone urban area and Staplehurst.

## How our Parks and Open Spaces are Managed

Managing Maidstone's open spaces includes strategic service planning and budgeting, from management planning for individual sites, liaison with site teams, contractors and local community groups, to the day-to-day operation of sites including maintenance and repairs.

### What Maidstone's residents say ...

- 75% of residents rate the quality of open spaces in Maidstone as good or very good
- Natural open spaces are important to 60% of residents
- 90% of residents visit one of Maidstone's parks every year  
(Resident's Phone Survey 2015)

The Parks Team is responsible for overall managerial oversight, with site maintenance carried out by in-house teams.

A number of other MBC teams are also involved in site management, including cleaning, waste removal, parking, events bookings and general enquiries. Some sites are managed by other organisations on behalf of MBC and allotments are managed through The Maidstone Allotment Management Committee.

As finances reduce, it will become increasingly difficult to continue to manage all sites to a high quality and to respond to the demands of visitors.

It is not MBC's intention to dispose of any of our parks and open spaces. However, there may be occasions where disposal of a small piece of land or open space will be considered where doing so could facilitate the achievement of broader objectives. It is also becoming increasingly necessary, as other local authorities have found, to consider alternative options for the management of existing stock and new stock emerging through the Local Plan process.

Several local community groups also support managing some parks, varying from running small events to operating the site day-to-day. The input of local communities is vital to the smooth running of our sites and is to be particularly welcomed as public funding becomes more constrained. It is also a good way for local communities to get involved in the management of their local park. Through the delivery of this strategy, 'Friends Of' groups will be encouraged and local people will be supported in taking on more formalised management roles of some sites.



## Profile of Mote Park - "The Jewel in Maidstone's Crown"



Formerly a country estate, Mote Park was purchased by the Council in 1929. It is the biggest of Maidstone's parks at 186 hectares (450 acres). Mote Park is one of the UK's ten favourite parks (People's Choice Awards) and receives over 1 million visitors each year.

Mote Park has a very active 'Friends' group - 'The Mote Park Fellowship'. The group meets regularly with MBC officers to provide feedback and find ways to improve the park. The group run the Mote Park website, have weekly volunteering sessions, run a tree sponsorship scheme, assist with large events as well as organising their own, apply for funding toward Mote Park Projects and carry out conservation activities such as sowing meadows, planting trees, clearing unwanted growth and assisting the grounds maintenance team in the park.

Mote Park is also an important venue for events and festivals, annually hosting the Ramblin' Man festival, Race for Life and hosting The Radio 1 Big Weekend in 2009. A multitude of other regular events take place in the park, including fun fairs, low key walks and runs, open air theatre, dragon boat racing, "It's a knock out" and history and wildlife walks and talks.

### Fact File

- ✿ Grassland, woodland, 30 acre lake and river
- ✿ 4 play areas
- ✿ 6 mile of paths
- ✿ 5 Football and Rugby pitches
- ✿ 5k walking/running track
- ✿ Dementia walk with interactive signage
- ✿ BMX track
- ✿ Model railway
- ✿ Café
- ✿ Model boat and fishing clubs
- ✿ Watersports – sailing, windsurfing, canoeing and rowing boat hire
- ✿ Picnic Area
- ✿ 3 car parks
- ✿ Over 35 events expected in 2017
- ✿ 100 veteran trees, 9 of the UK's 17 bat species and at least 28 different mammal species
- ✿ Arboretum in excess of 150 trees species.
- ✿ 90 benches and 91 bins

## Part 2 – Preparing for the Future

### Delivering Maidstone's Strategic Priorities

MBC's Strategic Plan (2015-2020) sets out the direction that the Council will take to deliver services and improve the borough, set against a backdrop of reduced finances. Open spaces support the delivery of the Strategic Plan and directly contribute to many of the Action Areas.

The Strategic Plan is supported through a range of other strategies, each setting the direction for specific areas of work. An overview of how greenspaces and this plan contribute to delivering the Strategic Plan and several of the additional strategic documents is shown below (Strategic Plan) and on the following page.

### Contribution to Delivering Maidstone's Strategic Plan

#### Maidstone Borough Council Strategic Plan 2015 -2020 - Vision

That our residents live in decent homes, enjoy good health and a pleasant environment, with a successful economy that is supported by reliable transport networks.

**Priority 1:** Keeping Maidstone borough an attractive place for all

**Priority 2 :** Securing a successful economy for Maidstone borough

#### ACTION AREAS

##### Providing a clean and safe environment

*High quality open spaces contribute to Maidstone being a pleasant and attractive place to live and work.*

##### Encouraging good health and wellbeing

*Open spaces provide places for healthy exercise and support efforts to improve health inequality.*

##### Respecting the character and heritage of our borough

*Many of Maidstone's open spaces have high environmental, heritage and biodiversity value.*

##### Ensuring there are good leisure and cultural attractions

*Parks host major events, as well as being attractions in themselves.*

##### Regenerating the town centre

*Urban parks add to the setting of the town, and an enhanced riverside route will contribute to regeneration.*

##### Securing improvements to the transport infrastructure of our borough

*Open spaces provide safe off-road transport routes.*

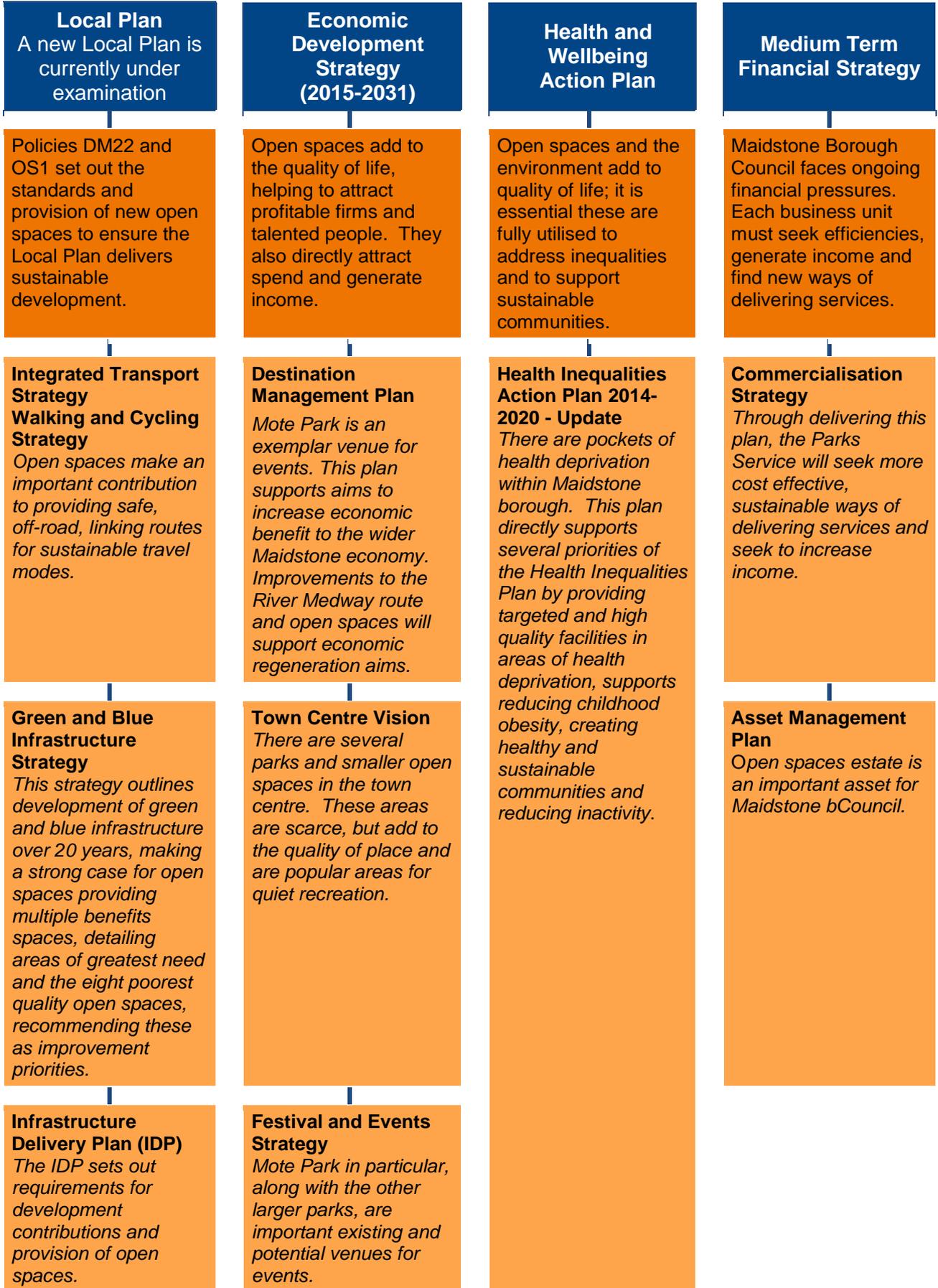
##### Promoting a range of employment opportunities and skills required across our borough

*Open spaces provide opportunities for apprenticeships and volunteers to gain skills.*

##### A home for everyone

*It is important that Maidstone creates attractive new communities; open spaces are essential in doing this.*

**Contribution to Delivering Maidstone's Supporting Strategies**



## *Important Documents that link closely with the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan*

Below is a summary of the other MBC strategies and plans that are most closely linked to the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan.

All of these documents have their own aims, objectives and targets. The Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan deliberately does not repeat the aims and objectives of these other documents, but it is important that the relationship between them is understood:

### **Maidstone Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2009- 2014**

The Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) provides the opportunity to review current activities and issues, identify aims and set specific objectives and targets for action by a wide range of internal and external partners.

It provides a much-needed overarching strategy for everyone involved in safeguarding and enhancing Maidstone's natural environment.

The Maidstone LBAP fits into a framework which consists of the UK BAP, The South-East Biodiversity Strategy, Kent Biodiversity Action Plan (Kent BAP).

The LBAP provides targets for a number of biodiversity opportunity areas across the borough regardless of ownership.

It is planned that a light touch review will be carried out of the Maidstone LBAP as an action in the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan.

### **Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy**

This document was produced by Planners and provides the green spaces and rivers input into the Local Plan. In the production of this document an audit was carried out to identify the type, size and quality of all of the publicly accessible green space in the borough.

The information from this audit was used to agree new green space standards for the whole of the borough, and sets out a vision for the borough's green and blue infrastructure for the next 20 years.

An action plan is currently being produced to implement this vision.

### **Health Inequalities Action Plan 2016**

This Plan sets out plans to tackle health inequalities across the borough. This report highlights how living in areas of low income, poor employment and poor infrastructure increases the risk of ill health. Currently there is a 9 year difference in life expectancy depending on where you live in the borough. This report highlights how health inequality including inactivity will be dealt with.

### **Maidstone Play Area Strategy 2017 (DRAFT)**

This deals with the play element of the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Strategy by setting quality and accessibility standards for play across the borough going forward. It describes how the borough will ensure that quality play areas are provided across the borough.

This document will be adopted in the later part of 2017.

**Maidstone Playing Pitch Strategy and Sports Facilities Strategy (DRAFT)**

This is currently being produced by the Planning Team as part of a wider assessment of sport and leisure provision in the borough which also includes playing pitches. It will direct the Local Plan as to the future playing pitch and sports facility need of the borough.

**Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment 2012 (Amended 2013)**

This document identifies all of the landscape types and landscape character areas that occur in the rural part of the borough (i.e. outside of the main urban area of Maidstone). This then guides the type of development that would be acceptable in these areas.

**Maidstone Low Emission Strategy 2017 (DRAFT)**

This document aims to achieve a higher standard of air quality across Maidstone in a number of ways including reductions in vehicle emissions through the promotion and uptake of low and ultra-low emission vehicles.

## *The Challenges Ahead*

Parks and open spaces are facing significant challenges. The greatest of these is how to continue to deliver a quality parks and open spaces service with significantly reduced resources.

Budgetary pressures are ongoing, with Government funding having ended.

Park maintenance budgets have not increased for a number of years and are currently being reduced; however the net cost of managing the parks estate increases every year. MBC has already introduced management efficiencies and has worked hard to maximise income streams e.g. through concessions and events in parks. Current funding projections indicate that in the near future the costs of managing our greenspaces will exceed budget.

MBC are committed, however, to continue to provide quality spaces where they are needed and to be ambitious and forward-looking. We believe that through committed and steadfast delivery of this plan, not only will open spaces continue to provide their current benefits to Maidstone residents, but these benefits can be increased.

Maidstone is also set to grow, with 17,000 new homes planned from 2011 to 2031; increasing the population of Maidstone by 42,000. Additional greenspaces are being

provided on some new housing developments, but not all.

The long-term management of these new greenspaces is an important issue and one for which an agreed way forward is required between MBC and developers to ensure that these spaces do not place additional burdens on the Council.

It is vital that the actions set out in this plan begin now. Many of them are inter-connected requiring action across many areas. Several of them are challenging. Many also need other MBC services and local communities to take a stake in delivery. To delay in taking forward these actions now will create further problems in the future, will make the challenges more difficult to address and will lead to a reduction in the quality of open spaces.

Providing and managing open spaces represents just 5.6% of MBC's gross annual expenditure

## *Consider a range of Options*

Innovative approaches and non-traditional thinking will be needed in moving towards a secure future for our open spaces. This Plan will support a strategy for MBC in gearing-up for potential changes. As other authorities face similar pressures and difficult funding choices, some of the approaches they are adopting may provide useful learning for MBC.

*The service faces multiple and inter-connected challenges*



### Rethinking Parks

'Rethinking Parks' was a 2016 £1 million Big Lottery Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund and Nesta programme designed to find, support and test new business models to sustain the UK's public parks. 'Rethinking Parks' developed ideas for the future resourcing of public parks, ran pilot projects and produced the 'Learning to Rethink Parks' report.

The report suggestions included:

- Consider a ring-fenced revenue budget planned for the medium term and investigate other sources, including income from assets, concessions and events, as well as capital receipts, dowries, endowments and trusts, donations and sponsorship;
- Deploy different funding models to help parks focus on sustainability, exploring ways to build alternative long-term income streams such as setting up endowments for parks;
- The key messages from the work included ideas for future funding of open spaces, the value of involving partners and local people and the importance of encouraging innovation and sharing good practice;
- The programme recognised that public parks need to diversify their funding sources to meet the size of cuts, but cautioned against looking to one answer to solve everything, favouring the approach of diversifying income sources and finding new ways to maintain open spaces at lower cost.

Recognising the issues facing local authorities in securing the future of public parks and open spaces, the Government held an inquiry into the future funding of public parks. The report of the findings has just been published <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/inquiries/parliament-2015/public-parks-16-17/>

The report recognises the challenges being faced by the parks sector and the need for a sustainable future to be secured. It also recognises the importance and value of parks and highlights particular benefits, including parks' role in public health and well-being, in social cohesion, as vital green corridors for nature, in ameliorating the local effects of climate change and in supporting local economies and growth.

Assessing the value of parks in terms of health and other benefits may be helpful in identifying and accessing funding from other sources including health, flood prevention or water quality. This wider contribution of parks and open spaces may be helpful in local authority funding decisions regarding their open spaces.

Of particular interest to MBC, the report supports the concept of cross-sectoral funding e.g. accessing funds available under public health strategies such as the Obesity Strategy, and of Parks teams working with Health and Well-Being Boards; of accessing developer contribution funds to cover parks' revenue requirements; the importance of understanding parks as part of wider networks of green infrastructure and the sharing of learning and good practice.  
(*Department for Communities and Local Government Committee Public Parks report 2017*)

## Part 3 – The Way Forward

### Our Priorities and Principles

The Priorities and Principles are all necessary and mutually supporting (detailed on following page). If delivery in one of these is lacking, then delivery in the others will be compromised. All of the actions in this strategic plan contribute directly to delivering these Priorities and Principles.

#### ***Focused Decision-Making means Effective Delivery***

As this 10 year plan progresses, many individual decisions will be taken. These will each be measured against the Priorities and Principles to ensure that the vision and financial viability is achieved. ‘Smarter’ ways of working will be found, which will include questioning the ways we do things.

Underpinning this are the ways of working which we will integrate into all service areas:

- **Targeted and focused on outcomes:** we will apply actions to the areas of greatest need as identified, as part of this Plan;
- **Evidence based:** we will seek the best available evidence to support our decisions;
- **Forward planned:** we will produce forward plans and assess progress;
- **Effective:** we will question whether each decision and action provides the greatest benefit for the resources employed;
- **Efficient:** We will consistently seek to reduce resource input, while retaining quality and delivering the Priorities and Principles.



*Brenchley Gardens*

<b>Priority 1</b>	<b>Priority 2</b>	<b>Priority 3</b>
<b>Open Spaces supporting Vibrant and Healthy Communities</b>	<b>Open Spaces Fit for the Future</b>	<b>Quality Spaces - Quality Service</b>
<b>Principle 1A</b>	<b>Principle 2A</b>	<b>Principle 3A</b>
<b>Open spaces will be accessible to all residents</b>	<b>The open space needs of future populations will be met</b>	<b>Quality open spaces will serve community needs</b>
<p>All communities will have access to a range of facilities. These will include spaces where they can play, participate in sport, find quiet recreation and access nature.</p> <p>Our open spaces will be accessible for all abilities and will provide facilities to serve the needs of the local population.</p> <p>The Open Space Standards will provide a basis for this. Achieving this principle also links to Principle 1B and the need to provide a range of facilities on all sites to bring maximum benefits.</p>	<p>We will strive to ensure that all communities – future and existing – will have access to greenspaces.</p> <p>The Local Plan requires that new greenspaces are provided in housing developments or for contributions to be made to improve existing sites.</p> <p>We will ensure that new greenspaces are secured for the future and existing sites enhanced to provide good quality facilities. This principle closely links with Principles 1A and 1B and the need to provide multiple benefits for communities.</p>	<p>Providing quality sites supports Principles 1A and 1B. However, with reduced resources it may not be possible to continue current levels of management for all sites.</p> <p>Open Space Management Standards will be developed to ensure that quality meets the needs of communities.</p>
<b>Principle 1B</b>	<b>Principle 2B</b>	<b>Principle 3B</b>
<b>Social, environmental and economic benefits will be maximised</b>	<b>The long-term management of Parks and Open Spaces will be secured</b>	<b>The Service will seek continual improvement - invest and enhance</b>
<p>The need for greenspaces to provide multiple benefits is a thread throughout this plan. All spaces will provide multiple benefits to contribute to the social, environmental and economic needs of the communities which they serve.</p> <p><b>Social:</b> increasing use of open spaces, supporting health and well-being and deprivation improvement and reducing ASB and vandalism;</p> <p><b>Environmental:</b> Enhancing biodiversity and incorporating nature in our sites – and ensuring people can experience nature;</p> <p><b>Economic:</b> Spaces will contribute to ‘quality of life’ and inward investment through place shaping as well as (where possible) generating income.</p>	<p>Sustainable service delivery models will be required to adjust to reduced resources.</p> <p>This will require both income generation and reduction in expenditure.</p> <p>It will also require changes in delivery structures and different delivery models.</p> <p>It will require communities to increase their involvement in open spaces.</p>	<p>The Service will continue to be ambitious in delivering quality open spaces for Maidstone.</p> <p>Forward planning will enable a programme of continuous improvement.</p> <p>We will seek external funding and work with other partners to secure this (links to Principle 2B).</p> <p>We will invest in those sites identified as being of greatest ‘value’ or with the greatest potential to increase income (Principle 3A) to maximise this potential.</p>

## *Delivering this Plan*

Actions are needed across a number of areas to deliver the Priorities and Principles of this Plan. Many of these actions are interconnected, meaning that several actions need to progress at the same time. These actions and interconnections are shown in Appendix 1 of this report.

The high level actions will be delivered on the ground through more detailed Annual Forward Plans which will set annual targets and review progress year on year.

The diagram on the following page – ‘from strategy to delivery’ shows how the priorities and principles will be delivered through the Action Areas and annual plans.

These annual plans will be agreed every year. The initial meeting could take place as a workshop to set short medium and long term objectives, which will then be broken down into annual achievable objectives. Progress on the previous year will be reviewed prior to agreeing the new objectives each year.

These objectives will then filter down to the individual parks and open space management plans.

### **Working with Partners**

MBC cannot deliver all these actions alone and we will need the support of a range of people and organisations to be successful. These partners will include other local authorities, parish councils, friends and community groups. In order to build productive relationships with partners it is essential that the appropriate resources are available.

In meeting the open space demands of a changing population, it is important for MBC to be clear about its Priorities and Principles, and that specific position statements provide clarity on the future direction of the service.

### From strategy to delivery



## Position Statements

### 1. Adoption of Open Space

MBC will ensure that housing development provides a high quality environment with sufficient, high quality open spaces where needed for local people to enjoy. These open spaces, though welcomed as assets for the borough, cannot place additional financial burdens on the Council. It will therefore be the responsibility of the Developer to make arrangements for the long term management of these open spaces.

### 2. S106 Developer Contributions

The Maidstone Borough Local Plan (2011 – 2031) Policies DM19 and OS1 together set out the Council's requirements for the delivery of new and improved open space to support development within the Borough. The Council's preference is that the needs for open space generated by new development should be accommodated within a development site to increase the overall quantity of provision. Where these needs cannot however be met in full on site, or in an off-site location, the Council will require financial contributions through planning obligations to ensure that necessary improvements to the quality of existing open space provision can be delivered. This Plan and its subsequent Action Plans, together with other relevant evidence, will be used by the Council to inform decisions about where contributions can be allocated most effectively.

### 3. Biodiversity

MBC's commitment to encouraging and promoting biodiversity has always been strong and will continue to be so in the future. Wherever possible we will set aside areas for biodiversity, these could be large sites such as woodland and meadows, or on smaller well used sites where it could be incorporated as part of the overall management. MBC will continue to work with partner organisations to provide maximum benefits from our open spaces for wildlife and residents

### 4. MBC Nature Reserves

MBC will plan to ensure that the management of its open spaces supports and enhances biodiversity and addresses fragmentation of wildlife habitats. This will be achieved through the review of Maidstone's Local Biodiversity Action Plan and the management of existing sites. Any opportunities to create new nature reserves will be considered on their individual merits with regard to relevant national guidelines and their sustainability.

### 5. Ownership of MBC open spaces

MBC has a strong commitment to its parks and open spaces and the value that they provide to residents, visitors and wildlife. We are not seeking to reduce the amount of parks and open spaces we have or outsource the wholesale management of them at this time. However, it is important to regularly review the way in which we manage these assets and we will be receptive to alternative management arrangements such as working with Parishes and community groups.



Cobtree Manor Park Adventure Zone

## Actions

Four high-level Action Areas are identified which will deliver the Priorities and Principles of this Plan.

### *Action Area 1: An Open Spaces Estate which best serves Maidstone's needs*

#### Why do we need this Action Area?

- To prioritise resources to where they are most needed;
- To reduce our resources on areas which don't best serve the needs of Maidstone's residents;
- To deliver more benefits (e.g. health and environment) where they are needed, despite reduced resources;
- To generate increased income.

#### How will we achieve this?

- To ensure we target our resources fairly and effectively a **Strategy for Maintenance and Development** has been developed. This will identify the needs of our communities - social, economic and environmental – and determine where there is sufficient or not enough provision of each type of open space;
- We will evaluate whether these needs are currently provided for. The Strategy is described below, and includes a **Quality: Value Matrix** which measures the value (or benefits) provided by each open space (or its potential to provide them) against its current level of quality.

As resources reduce, decisions will need to be made as to how we manage our open spaces. An ongoing process of gradually reducing budgets and reducing standards for all open spaces is not acceptable. A rational, objective approach is therefore needed to decide on:

- The levels of maintenance at each site;
- The range of facilities to be provided;
- Management arrangements;
- Targeting of improvements and investment.

The framework for decision-making is complex and needs to take into account a range of factors. These include:

- The need to support MBC's priorities, existing strategies and wider agendas (social, environmental, health inequality and economic development);
- Current levels of need for and provision of open space;
- Future levels of need for and provision of open space with an increasing population.

### The Quality/Value Matrix

A matrix will be used to reach decisions about our open spaces, which fully incorporates the wider factors necessary to make decisions on a future strategy for individual open spaces. These decisions need to be transparent, rational and defensible, and the use of the matrix will support this.

There are two elements to the matrix approach:

- 1 Quality Rating – the quality survey data for each site will be used to represent the current quality of the site;
- 2 Value Rating – each site will be assessed against a range of wider social, economic and environmental criteria to arrive at a value rating.



### Value Rating

In rating each greenspace for Value, the potential of the site should be borne in mind, and not simply the extent to which it is currently fulfilling its potential. The interaction between 'quality' and 'value' is important in this regard; e.g. a site may not be fulfilling its potential value due to the current low quality.

### Economic

The economic benefits of open spaces in contributing to the economy of a local area are well recognised and supported with a substantial body of research. The 'intensity' of this varies; from an open space providing an attractive setting to new development which boosts house prices to an open space asset which itself directly attracts spend into the local economy through, for

example, being a tourist attraction. It is also important that those assets which can directly generate income to support the parks service do these most effectively.

Two measures are proposed, which encompass the ability of the greenspace to directly contribute to the economic growth and development of Maidstone borough and to generate income for the sustainability of the service.

- 1 *Ability or potential ability of open space to promote economic development/ regeneration in the locality and/or support tourism.*
- 2 *Ability or potential ability of open space to generate income for the parks service and/or Maidstone Borough Council.*

### Social

Open spaces support health, well-being and quality of life, and are important spaces and places which support community cohesion. They may be valued by communities for their heritage or for creating a more attractive place in which to live. This parameter captures the wider social benefits of open spaces.

Three measures are proposed:

- 3 *The open space serves the population in one of the four Wards with levels of deprivation, contributing to (or with the potential to contribute to) improving health deprivation (Shepway North and South, High Street and Park Wood) and/or is identified as a key priority for improvement in Maidstone's Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy.*
- 4 *The open space makes an essential contribution in reaching the open space standards set out in the Local Plan (draft), or is in an area for which the open space standards are not being met (an area of deficiency) or will not be met in the future due to increased housing.*
- 5 *The open space has inherent social value by virtue of, for example, having historic or landscape value, being an attractive setting for the community, being a site with high levels of community interest or a site for educational activity or through providing other demonstrable social benefits.*

### Environmental

Open spaces obviously provide a range of environmental benefits. This not only includes biodiversity on the site itself, but can also include the site's role in providing wider connectivity of ecological networks, in improving air quality, helping to regulate water flow and assist with flood management and other benefits; for example in providing pollination sources or protecting ground water quality. As a principle, the maximum range of environmental benefits will be sought from sites managed by MBC, in line with the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. This approach is termed 'multi-functionality'; which in essence means that each site should contribute to a wide range of needs of the community and the environment.

Two measures are proposed:

- 6 *The open space has high biodiversity value (or potential to improve biodiversity value) – demonstrated through being designated for its interest, being highlighted in the Maidstone Biodiversity Action Plan for its habitats or species or being identified in the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy as an important site.*
- 7 *The open space provides (or has greater potential in providing) wider environmental benefits, for example contributing to water management including flooding, as a connecting wildlife corridor or ‘stepping stone’ site or through contributing to improving air quality or climate change adaptation.*

### **Implementing the Matrix**

After assessment, each open space will fall into one of the four quadrants of the matrix. This will help to indicate a possible course of action for each open space, but the final decision will require consideration by experienced staff and elected representatives. The matrix provides a tool to help decision making by MBC in the context of wider MBC strategies and the Parks & Open Spaces 10 year Plan. Fundamentally it supports decision-making on the targeting of resources.

In summary, the actions going forward could be:

**High Value – High Quality:** These open spaces are performing strongly; they fulfil an identified need to a high quality. It is important that this standard is maintained to ensure that these functions continue to be provided. Although these sites perform well there may also be areas in which the site could be improved. Plans should be produced to identify areas of improvement and to ensure that the sites continue to maintain high quality.

**High Value – Low Quality:** These open spaces have a high value/serve a strong need but this not being delivered to its full potential due to low quality or inadequate facilities. These open spaces should be a priority for investment. Investment plans should be drawn up to quantify the improvements required and to develop a business case. Funding could then be sought through s106, CIL or internal or external funding sources.

**Low Value – High Quality:** These open spaces are being maintained to a high quality but do not score highly across the value criteria. This may be, for example, that they are in an area where there is a good supply of open space. The future of these open spaces needs careful consideration on a case-by-case basis and taking into account the wider community. In these cases the matrix should be used to provoke a more in-depth consideration of the open space and its role and not for making the final decision on the future of the site. Even though the value score for the open spaces may be low, they may be highly valued by the local community. Options for these open spaces may include reducing management input, seeking ways to manage with less input (e.g. reducing bedding or planting) or divesting to a more community based management structure in the medium term.

**Low Quality – Low Value:** These open spaces do not provide high value or serve a high level of need. Although low quality, investment in these open spaces would not improve the value which the sites bring. MBC therefore needs to consider future management of these open spaces. Options may include reducing management input, seeking ways to manage with less input (e.g. reducing bedding or planting) or divesting to a more community based management structure in the medium term.

## Action Area 2: Providing Open Spaces for a Changing Population

### Why do we need this Action Area?

- Maidstone is growing: new housing and population change will increase the demand for open space, and we need to make sure it is provided and supports vibrant communities;
- We need to make sure new open spaces provided by developers continue to be maintained to a high standard in the long term; and that the Council does not pay the cost of failure;
- We need to make sure that existing open spaces are invested in so that more demand from an increased population does not degrade them;
- We need to work smarter to deliver more health and well-being improvements for a changing population.

### How will we achieve this?

- By understanding the supply of and need for open spaces, and forward-planning to ensure provision is made;
- By setting up robust agreements with developers to ensure sustainable management;
- By ensuring new spaces are well-designed;
- Through seeking developer contributions to improve existing spaces to meet the identified need.



### Action Area 3: Connected Delivery – Multiple Benefits

#### Why do we need this Action Area?

- Because many organisations and groups, as well as MBC, manage the open spaces which residents enjoy;
- Because we understand that parks and open spaces need to deliver social, environmental and economic benefits better, and to do this means we need to work in partnership more effectively;
- Because it will help us secure external funding;
- Because there is a need for communities to take a more active stake in managing open spaces.

#### How will we achieve this?

- MBC will set up two external groups to plan strategically for the open spaces that Maidstone will need into the future, to progress ambitious projects and to seek funding:
  - ✓ Parks and open spaces are key elements of Maidstone's 'green infrastructure'. MBC will lead an action-focused partnership to plan and deliver Maidstone's Green and Blue Infrastructure network and larger strategic projects, with the objectives of maximising the social, environmental and economic benefits of open spaces and to champion open spaces and wider green infrastructure at a senior level. This partnership will draw in other organisations at a senior level to collaborate in developing strategic projects, raise funding and support delivery.
  - ✓ A Maidstone Parks and Open Spaces Stakeholder Group, led by the Parks and Open Spaces team, to include other organisations who manage public open spaces to work together in addressing practical management issues, improve communications and to seek funding.
- We will also support capacity-building, skills-development and independence in community groups.

## Action Area 4: Working Smarter

### Why do we need this Action Area?

- We need to be more effective, efficient and targeted to continue to deliver a good service with fewer resources;
- We need to continually review our service to find better ways of working;
- We need to increase external income and increase commercialisation opportunities;
- Because different parts of MBC have a stake in making sure open spaces serve residents – we need to work as a whole council and not as disconnected units to ensure we work smarter and more collaboratively and maximise resources; to deliver high quality spaces which fully support communities.

### How will we achieve this?

- The Parks Team will set up and lead an internal MBC working group to better coordinate activities in our open space sites; to ensure accountability and responsibility; to implement streamlining, remove duplication and increase effectiveness;
- We will assess the income generation potential of sites;
- We will increase external funding, particularly utilising the new external grouping established under Action Area 3;
- We will consider all options of providing and managing our public open spaces in the future, including alternative non-MBC arrangements;
- We will produce annual plans which will set ambitious targets and review implementation of this plan.



Appendix1 – Detailed Action Plan.

