

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Wednesday 22 January 2020
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Mrs Blackmore, M Burton, Chappell-Tay, Clark, Cox (Chairman), English, Mrs Gooch, Harvey, McKay, Mortimer, Newton, Perry (Vice-Chairman), Purle, Round and Springett

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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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.	
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9. Presentation of Petitions (if any)	
10. Questions from Members to the Chairman (if any)	
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Issued on Tuesday 14 January 2020

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

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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.

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 Monday 20 January 2020). 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.

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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 20 NOVEMBER 2019

Present: Councillors Mrs Blackmore, M Burton, Chappell-Tay, Clark, Cox (Chairman), English, Mrs Gooch, Harvey, McKay, Mortimer, Powell, Purle, D Rose and Springett

99. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies were received from Councillors Newton, Perry and Round.

100. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that the following members were present as substitute members:

- Councillor Powell for Councillor Newton
- Councillor D Rose for Councillor Round

101. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items and it was noted that item 15. – Reference on Whole Council Elections on the agenda had been withdrawn as there was no reference from Democracy and General Purposes.

102. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members.

103. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

104. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

105. TO CONSIDER WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION.

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

106. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 23 OCTOBER 2019

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2019 be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.

107. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 11 NOVEMBER 2019

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2019 be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.

108. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

109. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)

There were no questions from members of the public.

110. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement presented the Work Programme and informed the Committee that due to the large number of items on the agenda for 22 January 2020 the items on Asset Management Strategy and Equalities Update would be moved to 12 February 2020. There would be an additional item on Weaving Heath for 22 January 2020.

RESOLVED: That the amended Committee Work Programme is noted.

111. 2ND QUARTER PERFORMANCE AND BUDGET MONITORING

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement presented the 2nd Quarter Performance and Budget monitoring report. The biggest adverse variance for Policy and Resources was income from commercial property. There was currently a commercial deal going through that if completed would mean that four months of income would be received and the variance would be reversed. The fall back position in the event of the commercial deal not being completed would be to freeze discretionary spending.

Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee's budgets were showing adverse variances in parking and planning income. The drop in income was primarily from major planning application income reducing. Officers workloads had not reduced commensurately as they had been working on the local plan review. It was therefore possible to cover some of the deficit through using monies set aside to fund the local plan review. The Director was confident that there were measures to address the remaining overspend.

For performance monitoring Policy and Resources were receiving highlight indicators only.

The Committee noted the update, but raised concerns over discretionary spending being frozen if it meant a freeze on recruitment.

RESOLVED: That

1. The revenue position at the end of the Quarter 2 and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant variances have been identified, be noted;
2. The Capital position at the end of Quarter 2 be noted; and
3. The Summary of Performance for Quarter 2 for Key Performance Indicators is noted.

112. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2020/21-2024/25

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement presented the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25 and circulated an update from the service committee considerations of the same item for Policy and Resources to consider. The update showed that Economic Development and Leisure Committee had considered allocating funds to relocate Maidstone Mela to Mote Park but would consider alternative approaches to funding such as external sponsorship and Members' devolved budgets. Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee had raised their concerns regarding the Planning overspend, due to reduced major applications income, and that they questioned whether a 5% increase in parking fees would automatically lead to a 5% increase in revenue.

The Medium Term Financial Strategy had no major changes due to the recently adopted Strategic Plan and the roll forward of the Local Government spending settlement. This meant that a standstill budget could be set as long as the committed savings were made and Council Tax was increased by the rate of inflation. Inflation had also been factored into costs within the Strategy.

Questions were raised over a proposed highways scheme, a red route along Bishop's Corridor and how that would get into the capital programme if the Borough were to contribute to it. It was noted that officers had to make bids into the capital programme in November and certainly no later than December.

Concerns were raised over the potential impact of the General Election and changes to the Local Government Financial Settlement. An additional diary date of 8 January 2020 for an urgent Policy and Resources had been put in, if it was required. Regardless of what emerged the Council had to set a balanced budget so it might have to draw on reserves, but this was a contingency plan and the money could only be spent once.

RESOLVED: That

1. Council is recommended to adopt the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 – 2024/25 as set out in Appendix A;
2. Council endorses the financial assumptions underlying the Medium Term Financial Strategy;
3. Council agrees the Council Tax setting principle set out in paragraph 2.12 of the report.

113. REFERENCE ON WHOLE COUNCIL ELECTIONS FROM THE DEMOCRACY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON 13 NOVEMBER 2019 (IF ANY)

This item was withdrawn as there was no reference from Democracy and General Purposes Committee.

114. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.05 p.m.

2019/20 WORK PROGRAMME

	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Risk Management Update	P&R	12-Feb-20	Rich Clarke	
Debt Recovery Policy	P&R	12-Feb-20	Sheila Coburn	
Final Budget Proposals 2020/21	P&R	12-Feb-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Q3 Budget and Performance Monitoring	P&R	12-Feb-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Annual Reports of Outside Bodies and Consideration of Outside Bodies for the Next Municipal Year	P&R	12-Feb-20	Angela Woodhouse	Mike Nash
Update on Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan	P&R	12-Feb-20	Angela Woodhouse	Helen Miller
KPIs for 2020-21	P&R	25-Mar-20	Angela Woodhouse	Angela Woodhouse
Risk Management Update	P&R	25-Mar-20	Rich Clarke	Rich Clarke
Business Rates Retention Projects - quarterly update	P&R	22-Apr-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Property Asset Review - quarterly update	P&R	22-Apr-20	Mark Green	Deborah Turner
Biodiversity and Climate Change Action Plan	P&R	22-Apr-20	Biodiversity and Climate Change Working Group	Angela Woodhouse
Commissioning and Procurement Strategy	P&R	TBC	Mark Green	Georgia Hawkes
Kent Medical Campus Innovation Centre	P&R	TBC	John Foster	Abi Lewis

Agenda Item 13

Policy and Resources Committee

22 JANUARY 2020

Becoming Compassionate Maidstone

Final Decision-Maker	Policy and Resources Committee
Lead Head of Service	Angela Woodhouse Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Anna Collier Policy and Information Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

The Council has been invited to support Heart of Kent hospice in achieving Compassionate City status by adopting the 13 principles of the Compassionate City Charter.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Council endorse the ambition to become 'Compassionate Maidstone',
2. That Officers and Members will provide support in the delivery of the action plan leading to the adoption of the 13 principles of the Compassionate City Charter.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	22 January 2020

Becoming Compassionate Maidstone

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<p>Impact on Corporate Priorities</p>	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure. • Safe, Clean and Green. • Homes and Communities. • A Thriving Place. <p>Accepting the recommendations will support the Council's Vision:</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><i>"Maidstone: a vibrant, prosperous, urban and rural community at the heart of Kent where everyone can realise their potential."</i></p> <p>It will materially improve the Council's ability to achieve the following priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Homes and Communities. 	<p>Policy and Information Manager</p>
<p>Cross Cutting Objectives</p>	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected. • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced. • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved. • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected. <p>The report recommendations support the achievements of the cross-cutting objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced. • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved. <p>As achievement of the Compassionate Cities Charter demonstrates that the borough is fostering organisations and communities that facilitate, support and care for one another</p>	<p>Policy and Information Manager</p>

	especially those with or supporting those with life-threatening and life-limiting illness, chronic disability, frail, ageing and dementia, grief and bereavement, and the trials and burdens of long term care. It's also a borough that recognises that these people in the community have lifestyles that are commonly socially hidden and disenfranchised from the wider society.	
Risk Management	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. That consideration is shown in this report at 4.4. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.	Policy and Information Manger
Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Policy and Information Manager
Legal	Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011 gives local authorities in England a general power of competence to do anything that individuals may do. The general power applies to things that an individual may do even though they are in nature, extent or otherwise unlike anything the Council may do apart from Section 1. The proposed adoption of the Compassionate City Charter principles is in exercise of the general power. Although Section 2 of the Act sets boundaries to the general power, the proposal falls within those boundaries.	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Privacy and Data Protection	Accepting the recommendations may increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	Accepting the recommendations will have a positive impact on those often more marginalised communities within Maidstone.	Policy & Information Manager
Public	We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or	Public Health

Health	that of individuals.	Officer
Crime and Disorder	No Impact	Policy and Information Manager
Procurement	No Impact	Policy and Information Manager

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Compassionate Cities are communities that publicly encourage, facilitate, support and celebrate care for one another during life’s most testing moments and experiences, especially those pertaining to life-threatening and life-limiting illness, chronic disability, frail ageing and dementia, grief and bereavement, and the trials and burdens of long term care. Its communities care for one another at times of crisis and loss and recognise it is not simply a task solely for health and social services but is everyone’s responsibility. The Compassionate City Charter was developed by Professor Alan Kellehear and Dr Julian Abel.
- 2.2 People who live with life-threatening or life limiting illness, their caregivers, and the bereaved are segmented social groups, forced to experience lifestyles that are commonly socially hidden and disenfranchised from the wider society. Outside of the health services that deal specifically with their immediate problems, these populations suffer from a range of other troubles that are separate but linked to their health conditions or social circumstances.
- 2.3 Compassionate Cities are communities that publicly recognise these populations, and these needs and troubles, and seek to enlist all the major sectors of a community to help support them and reduce the negative social, psychological and medical impact of serious illness, caregiving, and bereavement.
- 2.4 Compassionate communities do not take the place of social care. Rather, they have three components.
 - a) Through making the most of the supportive networks of family, friends and neighbours; people build care and connectedness, love and laughter, sharing companionship and values. Some of this task is related to caring and some is increasing a sense of belonging in communities.
 - b) Building networks of support for the routine matters of life, shopping, cooking, cleaning, looking after the garden and pets, providing lifts.
 - c) Linking to community activity, such as choir, walking groups, men’s sheds, talking cafes and other interest groups where people can make friendships and share life’s events.

- 2.5 Together, compassionate communities help to reduce isolation and loneliness and bring a sense of belonging into what is sometimes a disconnected society.
- 2.6 In September 2019 the Council was approached by the Chief Executive of the Heart of Kent Hospice to partner with them on a project to lead Maidstone to become the first town or city in the South East of England recognised as having official Compassionate status.
- 2.7 Areas with current Compassionate City status and those that are in progress are listed below.

Committed:

- Frome, Somerset, UK (pop. 25,000).
- Plymouth, UK (pop. 235,000).
- Limerick, Republic of Ireland (pop. 100,000).
- Londonderry (NI) UK (pop. 230,000).
- Inverclyde, Scotland (pop. 82,000).
- Vic, Spain (pop. 42,000).
- Seville, Spain (pop. 750,000).
- Burlington, Toronto, Canada (pop. 175,000).
- New Washington, Vancouver, Canada.
- Kozhikode aka Calicut, India (pop. 400,000).

In progress (UK):

- Medway (enquiries).
- Birmingham (being lobbied).
- Edinburgh (enquiries).
- Sheffield (Mayor and DPH agreed pending further talks).

- 2.8 Maidstone has the size, ambition and organisational networks to become a Compassionate Borough. As the County Town of Kent, Maidstone would be pledging its support for everyone in its community affected by illness, long term health issues, dying, death, bereavement and loss.
- 2.9 In the Summer this year, Elmer's Big Heart of Kent Parade will reach schools, workplaces and the wider community through the delivery of a major public art trail in Maidstone led by Heart of Kent Hospice. The trail will raise awareness and open conversations about dying, death, bereavement and loss. The trail will create an excellent window of opportunity from which to launch Maidstone as a 'Compassionate Maidstone' in 2021.
- 2.10 At the same time, Heart of Kent Hospice is rolling out a Compassionate Neighbours project in Maidstone in 2020 which will further support the profile of Maidstone as a Compassionate Borough.
- 2.11 To be recognised as a Compassionate Borough, Maidstone would need to formally adopt the 13 principles in the Compassionate "City" Charter. It is worth noting when reviewing it that the Charter was written to be used worldwide. It can be seen at appendix one.

- 2.12 To adopt these principles an action plan will need to be delivered by partner organisations across the borough. Some work has already been started by Heart of Kent Hospice on this and it can be seen at appendix two.
- 2.13 This will require support and commitment from across the Council to ensure that the actions are embedded throughout the organisation, the services we deliver and the relationships we have with partners. It is not envisaged that any extra support will be required. A majority of the support will come from the Policy and Information team, but this will be absorbed by current posts.
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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee approves the recommendations to support the ambition to become 'Compassionate Maidstone'. That Officers and Members will provide support in the delivery of the action plan leading to the adoption of the 13 principles of the Compassionate City Charter.
- 3.2 The Committee may choose to approve the recommendation to support the ambition to become a 'Compassionate Maidstone'; however, they may want to limit the support of Officers and Members to the project. This is not recommended however as the Compassionate project relies on leading organisations such as the Council embedding a compassionate approach within its own organisation and utilising all of its networks to achieve Compassionate Borough Status.
- 3.3 The Committee could reject the recommendations to support the ambition to adopt the Compassionate City Charter and become 'Compassionate Maidstone'. This is not recommended as adopting Compassionate status aligns and supports the Council in delivering its vision, priorities and cross cutting objectives.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 That the Committee approves the recommendations to support the ambition to become 'Compassionate Maidstone' and that Officers and Members will provide support in the delivery of the action plan leading to the adoption of the 13 principles of the Compassionate City Charter.
- 4.2 Achieving Compassionate status aligns and supports the Council's Vision:
- "Maidstone: a vibrant, prosperous, urban and rural community at the heart of Kent where everyone can realise their potential."*
- 4.3 Particular links can be drawn with the following priority:
- Homes and Communities

And the cross-cutting objectives

- Health inequalities are addressed and reduced.
 - Deprivation is reduced and social mobility is improved.
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5. RISK

- 5.1 There is no significant risk attached to this recommendation but there is the risk that officer and Member time will be invested but Compassionate status is not achieved. This can be mitigated by all representatives of the Council giving their full commitment and resources available to the project and maintaining strong communication throughout the project.
- 5.2 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.
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6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 If Policy and Resources Committee agree the recommendation to support the ambition to become a 'Compassionate Maidstone', the Policy and Information team will work with the Heart of Kent Hospice to identify key actions the Council will own and other support it can provide.
- 6.2 Heart of Kent Hospice would apply to Public Health Palliative Care International for Maidstone to become listed a committed Compassionate Borough on its website.
- 6.3 Heart of Kent Hospice would host a conference in Maidstone in 2020 for schools, places of worship, GP surgeries, solicitors and charities and many other organisations and groups from across the community to unite work towards Maidstone having an End of Life Compassionate Network. That network would sign up to work towards the key objectives of the Compassionate City Charter formally adopted by Maidstone Borough Council.
- 6.4 A web page would be developed by Heart of Kent Hospice to provide a focal point for information on aspirations, activities and actions towards the aims of the charter.
- 6.5 A Maidstone-wide steering group including the Council will be responsible for monitoring progress and supporting delivery of the work.
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7. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- *Appendix 1: Compassionate Cities Charter.*
 - *Appendix 2: Maidstone a Compassionate City Objectives.*
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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

THE COMPASSIONATE CITY

- CHARTER -

People who live with life-threatening or life limiting illness, their caregivers, and the bereaved are segmented social groups, forced to experience lifestyles that are commonly socially hidden and disenfranchised from the wider society. Outside of the health services that deal specifically with their immediate problems, these populations suffer from a range of other troubles that are separate but linked to their health conditions or social circumstances – loneliness, isolation, job loss, stigma, depression, anxiety and fear, or even suicide. These populations also suffer from a range of other debilitating health problems often caused by their social and psychological troubles - insomnia, cardiac arrhythmias, chronic fatigue and headaches, hypertension, and gastric-intestinal disorders.

Compassionate Cities are communities that publicly recognize these populations, and these needs and troubles, and seek to enlist all the major sectors of a community to help support them and reduce the negative social, psychological and medical impact of serious illness, caregiving, and bereavement. A compassionate city is a community that recognizes that care for one another at times of health crisis and personal loss is not simply a task solely for health and social services but is everyone's responsibility.

Compassionate Cities are communities that publicly encourages, facilitates, supports and celebrates care for one another during life's most testing moments and experiences, especially those pertaining to life-threatening and life-limiting illness, chronic disability, frail ageing and dementia, grief and bereavement, and the trials and burdens of long term care. Though local government strives to maintain and strengthen quality services for the most fragile and vulnerable in our midst, those persons are not the limits of our experience of fragility and vulnerability. Serious personal crises of illness, dying, death and loss may visit any us, at any time during the normal course our lives. A compassionate city is a community that squarely recognizes and addresses this social fact.

Through auspices of the Mayor's office a compassionate city will - by public marketing and advertising, by use of the cities network and influences, by dint of collaboration and co-operation, in partnership with social media and its own offices – develop and support the following 13 social changes to the cities key institutions and activities.

- Our **schools** will have annually reviewed policies or guidance documents for dying, death, loss and care
- Our **workplaces** will have annually reviewed policies or guidance documents for dying, death, loss and care

- Our [trade unions](#) will have annually reviewed policies or guidance documents for dying, death, loss and care
- Our [churches and temples](#) will have at least one dedicated group for end of life care support
- Our city's [hospices](#) and [nursing homes](#) will have a community development program involving local area citizens in end of life care activities and programs
- Our city's major [museums and art galleries](#) will hold annual exhibitions on the experiences of ageing, dying, death, loss or care
- Our city will host [an annual peacetime memorial parade](#) representing the major sectors of human loss outside military campaigns – cancer, motor neuron disease, AIDS, child loss, suicide survivors, animal companion loss, widowhood, industrial and vehicle accidents, the loss of emergency workers and all end of life care personnel, etc.
- Our city will create [an incentives scheme](#) to celebrate and highlight the most creative compassionate organization, event, and individual/s. The scheme will take the form of an annual award administered by a committee drawn from the end of life care sector. A 'Mayors Prize' will recognize individual/s for that year those who most exemplify the city's values of compassionate care.
- Our city will publicly showcase, in print and in social media, our [local government policies](#), services, funding opportunities, partnerships, and public events that address 'our compassionate concerns' with living with ageing, life-threatening and life-limiting illness, loss and bereavement, and long term caring. All end of life care-related services within the city limits will be encouraged to distribute this material or these web links including veterinarians and funeral organizations
- Our city will work with local social or print media to encourage an [annual city-wide short story or art competition](#) that helps raise awareness of ageing, dying, death, loss, or caring.
- All our compassionate policies and services, and in the policies and practices of our official compassionate partners and alliances, will demonstrate an understanding of how [diversity](#) shapes the experience of ageing, dying, death, loss and care – through ethnic, religious, gendered, and sexual identity and through the social experiences of poverty, inequality, and disenfranchisement.
- We will seek to encourage and to invite evidence that institutions for the [homeless and the imprisoned](#) have support plans in place for end of life care and loss and bereavement.

- Our city will establish and review these targets and goals in the first two years and thereafter will **add one more sector annually** to our action plans for a compassionate city – e.g. hospitals, further & higher education, charities, community & voluntary organizations, police & emergency services, and so on.

This charter represents a commitment by the city to embrace a view of health and wellbeing that embraces community empathy, directly supporting its inhabitants to address the negative health impacts of social inequality and marginalization attributable to dying, death and loss.

A city is not merely a place to work and access services but equally a place to enjoy support in the safety and protection of each other's company, in schools, workplaces, places of worship and recreation, in cultural forums and social networks anywhere within the city's influence, even to the end of our days.



Maidstone, a Compassionate Borough

OBJECTIVE		WHO	ACTIONS
Schools/Colleges			
<i>Our schools/colleges and nurseries will have annually reviewed policies or guidance documents for dying, death, loss and care.</i>			
Schools will develop a policy position that sets out the school's ethos towards death and dying and have procedures in place for staff to follow.		KCC HOKH	Speak to KCC Education Team Education subgroup as part of End of Life Network Steering Group Identify what already exists Draft policy
Death and loss will not be a taboo subject in schools and settings. Through a whole school approach, including teaching and learning opportunities, children will become more resilient to the impact of death and dying and develop into emotionally mature adults.		KCC HOKH	Continue to build on Elmer Learning Programme Develop schools pack Recruit school ambassadors HOKH Assemblies
Staff Staff will have access to training and can demonstrate an understanding of the school's policy on how to inform and support pupils and/or colleagues about a death or disclosure of a terminal illness.		KCC HOKH	Training programme for schools
PSHE (Personal, Social, Health and Economic) and Citizenship curriculum provides teaching and learning opportunities that enable pupils to build resilience and develop an understanding of bereavement, death and dying.		Schools	Continue to build on Elmer Learning Programme Develop schools pack
Schools will have a compassionate buddies, friends and champions scheme that will enable participants to recognise signs and behaviours associated with grief; understand what support can be offered to staff/students if they have been bereaved; understand supportive literature and recognise safe places to talk; recognise how and where to signpost for support, especially in school holidays; know what do in the case of a crisis or disaster situation and know how to deal with media interest surrounding a death and designating two/three members of staff to act as media co-ordinators.		Schools	As part of school's pack

OBJECTIVE		WHO	ACTIONS
Children will have access to bereavement 'time out cards' and stickers which alert teachers to the fact that the student's work may be affected as they try to cope with their situation.		Schools	As part of school's pack
Monitoring and evaluation: schools identify a member of SLT to oversee quality assurance procedures and practice.		Schools	Schools pack outlines how to carry out evaluation
Workplaces and trade unions <i>Our workplaces will have annually reviewed policies or guidance documents. There will be a city-wide award for compassionate organisations.</i>			
Training and having compassionate champions in the organisation that feel confident in talking to those who are experiencing death, loss and bereavement, so the person affected does not feel alone and feels they have someone to talk to.		MBC HOKH	Target companies – event Workplace subgroup as part of End of Life Network Steering Group Training champions
The organisation will have policies and procedures that compassionately support employees affected by death, loss and bereavement e.g. flexible working, individual tailored compassionate leave policies that take into account the person's circumstances rather than blanket policies.		MBC HOKH Company	Employee pack – potentially use Hospice UK pack
Have a support pack made available to an employee that offers practical advice and support about their options and available support.		Company	Employee pack – potentially use Hospice UK pack
Customer facing organisations should review and ensure their policies and services meet the needs of customers that are affected by death, loss and bereavement to ensure they deliver a compassionate response that meets the aims and values of this charter.		Company	Employee pack – potentially use Hospice UK pack
Places of worship <i>Our places of worship will have at least one dedicated group for end of life care support.</i>			

OBJECTIVE		WHO	ACTIONS
Have a compassionate network and co-ordinator that can practically support those who are dying and those who are experiencing loss, death and bereavement in their community.		HOKH AC team	Anna Chaplaincy Need a spiritual lead Faith subgroup as part of End of Life Network Steering Group
Have faith members and volunteers who receive compassionate champions training, so they feel more confident in talking about death, loss and bereavement.		HOKH AC team	Anna Chaplains for Christian faith Develop ideas for other faiths
Hold regular events and activities that support those who are experiencing loss, death and bereavement e.g. holding 'compassionate coffee' events where people can come and seek support, so they feel less isolated and lonely.		Faith inst. HOKH	Develop pack for faith institution
Hold events that are open to the public which provide an open forum where people can come and talk or receive advice about any aspect of death, bereavement and loss, including making future plans.		Faith inst.	
Offering support for school children who are affected by death, loss and bereavement during school holidays.		Faith inst.	
Volunteer their venue for compassionate champions/neighbours training and use these spaces to promote the charter's aims.		Faith inst.	
Hospices and nursing homes <i>Our city's hospices and nursing homes will have a community development program involving local area citizens in end of life care activities and programmes.</i>			
Sign up to the hospice's practical training and quality improvement programme that ensures the home has end of life champions who can support others in the home to have the confidence skills to care for people at end of life.		HOKH	Secure funding for ECHO Network for nursing homes Ongoing training programme

OBJECTIVE		WHO	ACTIONS
Hold annual events during Dying Matters week in which residents and their families can openly talk about their future care wishes and be given advice and support.		HOKH MBC	Develop pack for organisations for nursing homes
Have community connectors, who with the home's activity co-ordinators get to know residents' personal life stories so they can re-engage the resident with their interests and past networks e.g. reconnecting veterans, bringing pets into the home and helping someone paint.		HOKH MBC	Compassionate Neighbours
Hold events that enable the home to engage with its local community, examples are inviting local schools and choirs into the home.		Nursing Home	Ideas as part of resource pack
Access care home chaplains and other faith leaders who have received compassionate training to provide faith-based support.		HOKH Nursing Home	Anna Chaplains to establish links
Museums and art galleries <i>Our city's major museums and art galleries will hold annual exhibitions on the experiences of ageing, dying, death, loss or care. Our city will work with local social or print media to encourage an annual city-wide short story or art competition that helps raise awareness of ageing, dying, death, loss, or caring.</i>			
Create and support artistic events that get people talking about death, dying, loss and bereavement.		HOKH	Support others to run events
Work with schools on activities to raise awareness of end of life issues and helping them to meet their compassionate schools award.		HOKH	Elmer pack already starting those activities Develop compassionate schools award
Create an annual Maidstone-wide short story or art competition that helps raise awareness of ageing, dying, death, loss, or caring.		HOKH MBC (Museum)	Maidstone Museums event
Support displays/exhibitions around death, dying and loss in Dying Matters Week.		HOKH MBC	As above Pack for Dying Matters
City Wide Memorial Event			

OBJECTIVE		WHO	ACTIONS
<i>Our city will host an annual peace time memorial parade representing the major sectors of human loss outside military campaigns – cancer, motor neuron disease, AIDS, child loss, suicide survivors, animal companion loss, widowhood, industrial and vehicle accidents, the loss of emergency workers and all end of life care personnel, etc.</i>			
Creation of a memorial walk that is open to all.		HOKH MBC	Run event or Bluebell Walk?
Promoting and supporting events that are memorial events that are held for certain communities.		HOKH	Ongoing support
Encouraging the public to attend services of remembrance or undertake individual acts of remembrance.		HOKH	Hospice series of events – but none in MBC
Incentive Schemes and Awards <i>Our city will create an incentives scheme to celebrate and highlight the most creative compassionate organisation, event, and individual/s. The scheme will take the form of an annual award administered by a committee drawn from the end of life care sector. A ‘Mayors Prize’ will recognise individual/s for that year who most exemplify the city’s values of compassionate care.</i>			
21			
Creating new categories for end of life compassionate awards in existing award ceremonies.		HOKH MBC KCC/KM Media	Maidstone Business Awards Schools awards
Creating end of life compassionate awards in organisations and sectors e.g. schools, crematoriums, funeral directors, hospitals and care homes.		HOKH MBC	Review options using End of Life steering group
Recognise and nominate those individuals, organisations who are making a difference to those affected by death, loss and bereavement and who are fulfilling the charter’s aims.		HOKH	Hospice Care Week/Dying Matters awards
Sponsor an end of life compassionate event or award.		HOKH MBC Other partners	Look at options
Promoting and Celebrating a Compassionate Borough			

OBJECTIVE		WHO	ACTIONS
<i>Our city will publicly showcase, in print and in digital media, our local government policies, services, funding opportunities, partnerships, and public events that address 'our compassionate concerns' with living with ageing, life-threatening and life-limiting illness, loss, bereavement and long-term caring. All end of life care-related services within the city limits will be encouraged to distribute this material in print or digitally, including veterinarians and funeral organisations.</i>			
Encouraging the public to attend a Compassionate Neighbours information session.		HOKH	In progress
Encouraging the public to make and share a pledge to make a difference, and to share personal stories.		HOKH MBC Other partners	Use website
Local libraries promoting end of life activities in their area.		KCC	Ongoing support
<p>Promoting Inclusive Policies and Practices <i>Our end of life services and policies will be inclusive and will address inequalities of access to end of life care. This includes those individuals who are homeless, in prison, live in rural locations or who are from BME, LGBTQ and Traveller communities; and those with cognitive, frailty and sensory issues.</i></p>			
 Look at their service provision and profile service users to ensure they are meeting the needs of the whole population and identify any gaps.		HOKH MBC	End of Life steering group As part of information packs for organisations
Engage and listen to the needs of marginalised groups that are not accessing the services they need. Listen to their personal stories and find out about any barriers, invite them to work in partnership to address any barriers to make services more accessible.		HOKH MBC	As part of information packs for organisations
Ensure their service is aware of the needs of those with a disability or sensory impairment and be mindful of their communication needs and make information accessible.		HOKH MBC	As part of information packs for organisations
Ensure organisational policies, literature, images and online presence are inclusive, to ensure that all sections of the population can identify with the service and know it is a service for them.		HOKH MBC	As part of information packs for organisations

OBJECTIVE		WHO	ACTIONS
Ensure their workforce is aware of the end of life needs of various groups.		HOKH MBC	As part of information packs for organisations
Promote the use of equality, diversity and inclusive champions in their organisation.		HOKH MBC	As part of information packs for organisations
Ensure that there is good end of life care for all, regardless of diagnosis.		HOKH MBC	As part of information packs for organisations
Homeless and Prison Community <i>The homeless and the imprisoned have support plans in place for end of life care and loss and bereavement.</i>			
Having a compassionate response to those who are homeless and those who are imprisoned at end of life.		HOKH MBC	Projects already in progress
²³ Ensure that Heart of Kent Hospice and other services work closely with the prison and the services that support the homeless, to ensure end of life care needs are understood and the staff who care for these individuals feel supported.		HOKH	Projects already in progress
Support Maidstone Prison and East Sutton Park to become a compassionate prison and share best practice with other prisons.		HOKH	Update training Sharing of best practice
Ensure those services who work with the homeless community feel supported and have access appropriate end of life training.		HOKH MBC	Project already in progress
Deliver a Compassionate Network <i>Our city will establish and review these targets and goals in the first two year and thereafter will add one more sector annually.</i>			
Raise public awareness of the issues around death and dying including those from diverse communities so every can make better-informed		MBC HOKH	Identify key members of End of Life Steering Group Establish and manage End of Life Steering Group Compassionate Borough Action Plan

OBJECTIVE		WHO	ACTIONS
decisions on what can be done to help each other and themselves nearing the end of their lives.			
Build emotional resilience in our communities by developing and encouraging our community's ability to talk about death, dying and bereavement giving everyone the best chance to die well and have a normal grieving process reducing the risk of negative long term impacts on mental and physical health due to isolation, anxiety for those who are experiencing loss and bereavement.		HOKH	Compassionate Neighbours scheme being piloted 2019-20 HOKH comms – Hospice Care Week and Dying Matters
Increase compassion at end of life through developing self-sustaining voluntary compassionate networks so people, colleagues, families and communities are better supported in practical, emotional and empathetic ways. To support those who are dying in our communities so they can die in a place of their choosing.		HOKH MBC	Compassionate Neighbours scheme being piloted 2019-20

**Policy and Resources
Committee**

22 January 2020

Request for Village Green application

Final Decision-Maker	Policy & Resources Committee
Lead Head of Service	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Corporate Property Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	Boxley

Executive Summary

On 18 June 2019 a petition was presented to the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee requesting that the Council apply to Kent County Council (the Commons Registration Authority) for Weaving Heath to be registered as a Village Green. The Committee resolved at its meeting on 12 November 2019 that the petitioners' request be referred to the Policy and Resources Committee, which is responsible for making decisions regarding land and property.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. To endorse the petitioners' aspirations for Weaving Heath.
2. To leave it to any other person that wishes to do so to apply for registration of Weaving Heath as a Village Green.
3. To refer the decision on how to respond to an application to a meeting of this Committee at the relevant time.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	12 November 2019
Policy and Resources Committee	22 January 2020

Request for Village Green application

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Safe, Clean and Green corporate priority is relevant but there is no incremental impact as Weaving Heath would continue to be held as public open space.	Corporate Property Manager
Cross Cutting Objectives	As for corporate priorities.	Corporate Property Manager
Risk Management	Covered in the risk section of the report.	Corporate Property Manager
Financial	If the Council were to apply for Village Green registration there would be an opportunity cost in terms of officer time being devoted to this project at the expense of other work.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	If the Council were to apply for Village Green registration staffing resources would be required, which would be at the expense of other work.	Corporate Property Manager
Legal	The council has a discretion as owner of the land to apply to register the land as a village green under s15 (8) of the Commons Act 2006. It is a discretion not a duty and the decision will be made by Policy and Resources Committee having considered relevant factors.	Legal Team
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications.	Corporate Property Manager
Equalities	No implications.	Corporate Property Manager
Public Health	Open Space contributes to health and wellbeing. There is no incremental change arising from this report as Weaving Heath would continue to be held as public open space.	Corporate Property Manager
Crime and Disorder	No implications.	Corporate Property Manager

Procurement	No implications.	Corporate Property Manager
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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 As part of the development of Grove Green, a section 52 Planning Agreement (equivalent to the current section 106 Planning Agreements), was made between the Council and Ward Homes on 30 March 1982. As part of that agreement the land now known as Weaving Heath was transferred to Maidstone Borough Council, subject to necessary easements and rights and a covenant in favour of the owners that the land be used by the Council as a public space. This has continued from 1982 to date and is required by the transfer covenant to continue until 30 March 2062.
- 2.2 On 18 June 2019 a petition was presented to the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee requesting that the Council approach Kent County Council to register Weaving Heath as a Village Green. Registration would have the effect of protecting Weaving Heath as public open space in perpetuity. Notwithstanding the covenant referred to above, the petitioners were concerned about what might happen to the land after 2062.
- 2.3 The Communities, Housing and Environment Committee resolved that a full report on the options available be prepared for the appropriate Committee. Under the Council's Constitution, the Policy and Resources Committee is responsible for making decisions regarding land and property. Accordingly, the Communities Housing and Environment Committee subsequently agreed at its meeting on 12 November 2019 to refer the matter to the Policy and Resources Committee.

Rationale for registration as a Village Green

- 2.4 In presenting the petition to the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee in June 2019, the following points were made:
- The area was used by the community for walking trails, dog walking, a street picnic, fitness classes and boot camps. The area also provided a much needed wildlife haven.
 - The area was much used by the community and had a recognised voluntary group which provided assistance with de-littering and general upkeep.
 - Local people are best placed to help decide on what is best for their area.
 - There was no protection for this area in the Council's Local Plan.

- After 80 years the Council could choose to change the use of the land, so to safeguard it, the residents would like to ensure that the area is fully protected.
- The residents wanted to improve their community amid traffic chaos and over-development.

Criteria for registration as a Village Green

2.5 The Commons Act 2006 section 15 covers the registration of land as village greens. There is a power under section 15 (1) that may be used by any person to apply to the Commons Registration Authority (Kent County Council) to make a registration, providing evidence that the criteria for registration are met. In summary, the criteria are that the land has been used:

- 'as of right' (i.e. without secrecy, permission or force);
- for a period of at least 20 years;
- for the purposes of lawful sports and pastimes;
- by a significant number of the inhabitants of any locality, or of any neighbourhood within a locality; and
- use has continued up until the date of application or, if this is not the case, use ceased to be 'as of right' no more than one year prior to the date of application.

There is extensive case law that may be used by the registration authority to interpret the criteria. The criteria need to be met before a registration process can be commenced.

2.6 In this case the registration authority may consider that the use of the land by local inhabitants is not "as of right" because the covenant requiring use as a public space means that Maidstone Borough Council as owner is permitting its use.

2.7 Should the registration authority believe the criteria to be met for an application to be accepted, it would then advertise the application and serve notice on the landowner. Six weeks would be allowed for objections to be made to the application.

2.8 The application and any objections would be considered by the registration authority and a report submitted for decision to the relevant member or committee of the registration authority.

Landowner power to apply for registration

2.9 There is a discretionary power under section 15 (8) for the owner of the land, in this case Maidstone Borough Council, to apply for the land to be registered as a village green. Consent has to be sought from the holders of any relevant charge over the land. There are many rights and easements subsisting over Weaving Heath but legal officers consider that none meet the definition of relevant charge for the consent requirement, so this would pose no obstacle.

2.10 As set out in paragraph 2.4, it is open to any person to make an application for registration. However, petitioners have requested that Maidstone Borough Council make the application. It is understood that this route has been chosen because:

- an application from the landowner is considered to carry greater authority
- the Council is believed to have more capacity, in terms of knowledge, contacts and expertise, to undertake the necessary work.

Policy considerations

2.11 The Council's Local Plan and its Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan set out its commitment to maintaining existing open spaces, including Weaving Heath. No allocations have been made for development on Weaving Heath.

2.12 The Council has no plans for an alternative use of Weaving Heath and supports its continued use as open space. As the land is in the Council's ownership, any decision about alternative uses would be for the Council to make and would be subject to the democratic process, and would include public consultation.

2.13 It is not the policy of the Council to constrain or restrict how its assets may be used in the future. It is for the Council to determine at the relevant time what is the most appropriate use for the benefit of the whole Borough's residents.

3 AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 Option 1 – The Council applies as landowner to register Weaving Heath as a Village Green as requested by the petitioners.

3.2 Option 2 – To endorse the petitioners' aspirations for Weaving Heath, and to leave it to any other person that wishes to do so, to apply for registration.

4 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Option 2 – To endorse the petitioners' aspirations for Weaving Heath and to leave it to any other person that wishes to do so to apply for registration.

4.2 This approach is consistent with the Council's support for open spaces but leaves the initiative with the local community to pursue the matter. From the Council's viewpoint, devoting resource to registering Weaving Heath as a Village Green contributes nothing further to its existing commitment to

maintaining it as open space, so would not be a productive use of officer time.

- 4.3 Members may request that the matter be brought back to this Committee, if and when the registration authority requests comments on any application, so that they may decide whether or not to object to the registration at the relevant time.
-

5 RISK

- 5.1 The risk about which the petitioners are concerned is that development takes place on Weaving Heath, so that its value to the local community as open space for walking, leisure and a haven for wildlife is lost.
- 5.2 As indicated in paragraphs 2.11 to 2.13, this risk is minimal. Weaving Heath is protected by covenant as open space for the next forty years. The Council owns the land and is therefore able to fulfil its commitment to keeping it as public open space. Any future application for development of the site would be subject to public consultation.
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6 CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 This matter arose following a local petition.
-

7 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 If option 2 is chosen there are no further steps to be taken until the registration authority consults on any application.
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8 REPORT APPENDICES

None.

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

**POLICY AND RESOURCES
COMMITTEE**

22 January 2020

Property Asset Review Update

Final Decision-Maker	Policy and Resources Committee
Lead Head of Service	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Lucy Stroud, Corporate Property Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report provides a further update on the progress of the 'Next Steps' work stream of the Property Asset Review that was resolved to be progressed at Policy and Resources Committee on 23 January 2019.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the progress made on the effective use of the Council's property assets over the last three months and in response to the Property Asset Review report be noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	22 January 2020

Property Asset Review Update

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Property Asset Review will help the Council deliver its corporate priorities by giving a clearer understanding of its existing property assets.	Corporate Property Manager
Cross Cutting Objectives	The Property Asset Review supports the achievement of the four cross-cutting objectives by ensuring that they are taken into account in any initiatives relating to the Council's own property portfolio.	Corporate Property Manager
Risk Management	This has been addressed in the report.	Corporate Property Manager
Financial	The availability of resources to address specific projects arising from the Property Asset Review will be addressed as part of the budget process.	Paul Holland – Senior Finance Manager
Staffing	Strategic property management is handled by the existing in-house team. Staffing requirements arising from any recommendations of the Property Asset Review will be identified on a project by project basis.	Head of Commissioning & Business Improvement
Legal	<p>Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires councils to put in place proper processes for the management of their finances, including their assets. The Property Asset Review demonstrates the Council's commitment to fulfilling its duties under the Act.</p> <p>The Local Government Act 1972, section 111(1) empowers a local authority to do anything (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the discharge of any of their functions. This enables the Council as part of its asset management strategy to acquire and/or dispose of assets in compliance with the statutory requirements.</p> <p>In particular, section 120(1)(2) of the 1972 Act enables the Council to acquire land to be used for the benefit, improvement or</p>	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS

	<p>development of their area; or for the purpose of discharging the Council's functions.</p> <p>Section 123(2) of the 1972 of the 1972 Act enables the Council to dispose of land or property for the best consideration reasonably obtainable, otherwise the consent of the Secretary of State will be required subject to certain conditions.</p> <p>Acting on the recommendations is within the Council's powers as set out in the above statutory provisions.</p> <p>Specific legal implications arising from any recommendations of the Property Asset Review will be identified on a project by project basis.</p>	
Privacy and Data Protection	Individual property projects may have privacy and data protection implications, which will be considered as part of the project planning process.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	There are no equalities implications as a result of this update report, however an impact assessment may be required for individual projects going forward.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Public Health	We recognise, dependent on the recommendations agreed, each project will have varying impacts on the health of the population or individuals within Maidstone.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	Not applicable	Corporate Property Manager
Procurement	Procurement implications arising from any recommendations of the Property Asset Review will be identified on a project by project basis.	Head of Commissioning & Business Improvement & Section 151 Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Property Asset Review was completed by external consultants Gen2 in January 2019 and the recommendations from that report were summarised in a report to this Committee on 23 January 2019. It was resolved that officers would consider the recommendations in the light of the Council's own corporate priorities and assess whether to adopt any of the recommendations. Officers have reported back to Policy and Resources Committee on a quarterly basis on progress with this work.

2.2 The Corporate Property team continues to implement the recommendations of the Gen2 review. In addition to the specific Property Asset Review recommendations, several property transactions have or are due to complete in fulfilment of other Council corporate strategies. These transactions include:

- Lease of land at Farleigh Hill to HPNR Ltd for use as a nature reserve
- Disposal of land at Farleigh Hill to PJ Burke Executive Pension Scheme to help facilitate a housing development
- Transfer of land at Yeoman Lane to MBC for use as a car park
- Lease renewals of plots 1 and 2 Bircholt Road, Parkwood Industrial Estate to Vanwise Group Limited

The above is not an exhaustive list and is simply intended to give an indication of how property transactions support the Council's work. Progress to date on the Property Asset Review recommendations is set out below.

More estates work needed to maximise value

- 2.3 Canoe Club/Sub Aqua Club – after the sub aqua club building became vacant a new lease was negotiated with the Canoe Club who occupy the same site. The building is being brought up to a modern standard and as a result the annual rent will increase by around £8,000pa.
- 2.4 Units 4 and 9-12 Boxmend – the tenant in these units at Parkwood was planning to vacate, but we were able to negotiate for them to remain for a short term extension resulting in a rent increase of £5,000 over the next two years.
- 2.5 Archbishop's Palace – an initial options appraisal has been prepared by the architectural consultant and financial and market evidence is being obtained to support the proposals put forward in the appraisal. A member briefing on the options will be held in February 2020 before bringing the matter to the Committee for a decision.
- 2.6 Lockmeadow – the purchase of Lockmeadow has now completed and the Council has full management control of the asset. A managing agent has been appointed to ensure the asset is effectively managed, and the existing site manager has been retained to deal with day-to day management of the entertainment complex. A position is currently being advertised for a Leisure Property Manager to manage the complex for the Council. A report on the Council's strategy for Lockmeadow will be brought to Policy and Resources Committee in February / March 2020.

Management Intervention required

- 2.7 Asset Management Plan - Preparation of the Asset Management Strategy continues to make good progress and the strategic approach to each category of assets, and the recommended actions, are being formed.

- 2.8 Property Management Systems - The Property team are now using a system called FixFlo to manage Health and Safety compliance, and the capability of FixFlo to provide additional property management solutions is being explored. The IT team have also been commissioned to identify alternative software solutions for a complete asset management system.
- 2.9 Lease of Mooring - Legal action continues against the tenant leasing the mooring on the River Medway. The Council and the tenant are due back in Court shortly so that the tenant can produce evidence of the measures taken to remedy the breaches of the lease. Forfeiture of the lease will then be sought if the tenant has failed to successfully remedy the breaches.

Dispose/Develop

- 2.10 Land at Redhill Stables, Headcorn – a meeting with the Council’s Bereavement team confirmed that the site could be suitable for a Natural Burial Ground without competition to existing cremation and burial services. The site could be managed and run in partnership with an existing provider. In view of the interest in the site from several providers of burial and cremation services the Council are considering the options. The next steps would be for site investigation works to take place and to confirm approval from the Environment Agency. This would then form basis for seeking planning consent.
- 2.11 Land at Frogmore Walk – an area of grass verge is being explored as a potential disposal to an adjacent homeowner. The land has been assessed as suitable for disposal by the Parks and Open Spaces Team.

Conclusion

- 2.12 The focus of the asset management work will be informed by the recommendations in the Asset Management Strategy and the feedback from this Committee. Asset management work will continue with the same day to day focus, improving the return from individual properties and general improvements in the area of property management.

3 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that Committee note the progress made on delivering the recommendations of the Property Asset Review. The focus for the management of the Council’s property portfolio is to obtain the best possible financial and community value. Continuing to review, monitor and undertake feasibility work will ensure this is achieved.

4 RISK

- 4.1 There are a range of risks associated with adopting some or all of the recommendations in the Property Asset Review – including political,

financial, environmental and operational risks. These need to be balanced against the risks (opportunity costs) of doing nothing.

- 4.2 Risk assessments will be carried out in relation to all specific projects arising from the review, in keeping with the Council's usual policy. Risk assessments will be provided with any specific property recommendation presented to Committee.

5 CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Property Asset Review report was submitted to Policy and Resources Committee on 23 January 2019. Members resolved that officers should proceed with the recommended next steps and provide regular updates. However, any sites that had been identified as having potential for redevelopment or disposal would require further engagement with members before decisions were taken.
- 5.2 Consultation with all relevant stakeholders will take place in relation to any specific recommendations that are taken forward, in addition to the public engagement that would take place in any case with respect to any site identified for change of use, in accordance with the Council's normal practice.
- 5.3 Quarterly Property Asset Review Updates have been provided since the 23 January 2019 report, the last being October 2019.

6 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The next significant step for the Property Asset Review will be the completion of the Property Asset Strategy, for Property & Resources Committee later this year. The Strategy will set out the Council's own preferred actions to actively manage the portfolio. In the meantime, work will continue on the existing ongoing projects that have been reported on to date in the quarterly review reports.

7 REPORT APPENDICES

None.

8 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Fees and Charges 2020/21

Final Decision-Maker	Policy & Resources Committee
Lead Head of Service	Mark Green, Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Chris Hartgrove, Interim Head of Finance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

The report sets out the proposed fees and charges for 2020/21 for the services within the remit of the Policy & Resources (P&R) Committee.

The estimated overall value of fees and charges within the remit of the P&R Committee is £1,167,810 in 2019/20 and break down into two categories:

- Discretionary Fees and Charges (Table 1, Section 3) (£56,410) – the budget proposal for 2020/21 entails an average price increase of 1.8%, which will yield estimated additional income of £1,000 compared to 2019/20. Further income of £4,000 is also anticipated from Legal Services based on 2019/20 activity levels compared to current budget provision; and
- Statutory Fees and Charges (Table 2, Section 4) (£1,111,400) – the Council has no discretion to amend statutory fees and charges. Fees are expected to remain unchanged in 2020/21.

Full details on proposed/set P&R 2020/21 fees and charges are set out in Appendix 1.

In addition, Appendix 2 summarises the overall 2020/21 fees and charges position proposed/agreed for the Council as a whole. It should be noted that the fees and charges position presented for the Economic Regeneration and Leisure (ERL) Committee are subject to the approval of the ERL Committee at its meeting on 28th January 2020.

Purpose of Report

This report requires a decision from the Committee on the fees and charges within its remit.

Externally agreed fees and charges and those within the remit of the three service committees are for noting only.

This report makes the following recommendations to Committee:

1. That the proposed discretionary fees and charges set out in Appendix 1 are agreed
2. That the externally agreed fees and charges set out in Appendix 1 be noted; and
3. That the overall fees and charges position presented in Appendix 2 be noted.

Timetable

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Committee	7 January 2020
Communities, Housing & Environment Committee	14 January 2020
Policy & Resources Committee	22 January 2020
Economic Regeneration & Leisure Committee	28 January 2020

Fees and Charges 2020/21

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	An updated Charging Policy was adopted in November 2017. It is a key document that underpins the Council's Strategic Plan 2019 – 2045, recognising that fees and charges are an important source of income to support the delivery of corporate priorities.	Interim Head of Finance
Cross Cutting Objectives	As noted above, the recommendations will help underpin the achievement of corporate priorities; this includes the cross-cutting objectives contained therein.	Interim Head of Finance
Risk Management	Refer to Section 7 below.	Interim Head of Finance
Financial	The financial implications are set out in the report at Sections 3 – 4. If the fees and charges proposals are agreed, the forecast income yield will be incorporated into the budget for 2020/21 and beyond as part of the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.	Interim Head of Finance
Staffing	There are no staffing issues to note.	Interim Head of Finance

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Legal	<p>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.</p> <p>A number of fees and charges for Council services are set on a cost recovery basis only, with trading accounts used 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 statutory fee.</p> <p>In both cases the proposals in this report meet the Council's legal obligations.</p> <p>Where a customer defaults on the fee or charge for a service, the fee or charge must be defensible, in order to recover it through legal action. Adherence to the MBC Charging Policy on setting fees and charges provides some assurance that appropriate factors have been considered in setting such fees and charges.</p>	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Privacy and Data Protection	No Privacy and Data Protection issues have been identified from the matters covered in the report.	Equalities & Corporate Policy Officer
Equalities	The fees and charges proposals in the report do not represent a change in service. Consequently and Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required.	Interim Head of Finance
Public Health	There are no Public Health issues to note.	Interim Head of Finance
Crime and Disorder	There are no Crime and Disorder issues to note.	Interim Head of Finance
Procurement	There are no Procurement issues to note.	Interim Head of Finance

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 The purpose of the MBC Charging Policy is to establish a framework within which fees and charges levied by the Council are agreed and reviewed and unless there is a conflict with strategic priorities, other policies, contracts or the law then the Council should aim to maximise net income from fees and charges.

2.2 The Policy aims to ensure that:

- Fees and charges are reviewed regularly, and that reviews cover both existing charges and services for which there is potential to charge in future
- Budget managers are equipped with guidance on the factors which should be considered when reviewing charges
- Charges are fair, transparent and understandable, and a consistent and sensible approach is taken to setting the criteria for applying concessions or discounted charges; and
- 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.

2.3 The Charging Policy covers fees and charges set at the discretion of the Council and does not apply to services where charging is prohibited (e.g. household waste collection). Charges set by Government (e.g. planning application fees) are also excluded. However, consideration of any known changes to such fees and charges and any consequence to the Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) are included in this report for information.

2.4 Managers are asked to consider a range of factors when reviewing fees and charges, including:

- 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 Council objectives
- g) Financial constraints, including inflationary pressure and service budgets
- h) The implications of developments such as service investment
- i) The corporate impact on other service areas of Council-wide pressure to increase fees and charges
- j) Alternative charging structures that could be more effective; and

- k) Proposals for targeting promotions during the year, and the evaluation of any that took place in previous periods.

3. DISCRETIONARY FEES AND CHARGES 2020/21

3.1 Discretionary fees and charges falling within the remit of the Policy & Resources (P&R) Committee have been reviewed by budget managers in line with the Charging Policy, as part of the developing the 2020/21 Budget and MTFs (2020/21 to 2024/25). The results of the review are presented in Appendix 1 and Committee approval is sought for the proposed 2020/21 fees and charges contained therein.

3.2 Table 1 below summarises the 2018/19 outturn and 2019/20 estimate for income from the discretionary fees and charges which fall within the remit of the P&R Committee.

Table 1: Discretionary Fees and Charges (P&R Committee)				
Service Area	2018-19 Outturn	2019-20 Estimate	Proposed Income Change	2020-21 Estimate
	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s
Legal Services	148,058	50,000	5,000	55,000
Town Hall	1,145	1,500	0	1,500
Maidstone House (Staff Parking)	6,214	4,910	0	4,910
Total Discretionary Fees and Charges	155,417	56,410	5,000	61,410

3.3 The overall increase in income from discretionary fees and charges for 2020/21 compared to 2019/20 – if the proposals are adopted – is expected to be £5,000 (8.86%). This includes (approximately) £1,000 (1.8%) attributable to price increases.

3.4 The detailed fees and charges position for each of the service areas is presented in Appendix 1. In summary:

- Legal Services – a 1.84% (£4.00) inflationary increase in hourly rates for is proposed. In addition, income from Legal services has been exceeding expectations in 2019/20, which allows the budget to be increased by a further £4,000 in 2020/21
- Town Hall – no price increases are proposed for 2020/21 primarily due to the low level of bookings currently being received from commercial customers, although pricing and the wider Town Hall 'offer' is something that is to be actively considered in the year ahead to ensure that usage of the facility is optimised, including achieving a satisfactory balance between the Council's operational requirements and the income generation objective; and

- Maidstone House (Staff Parking) – a small number of staff pay for car parking at Maidstone House. There are no proposals to increase the price of permits for 2020/21. This will be re-considered for 2021/22 or when the Staff Parking Policy is next reviewed, whichever is sooner.

4. STATUTORY FEES AND CHARGES 2020/21

- 4.1 Table 2 below summarises the income due from statutory fees and charges. The fees relate exclusively to debt recovery and are levied by Mid-Kent Enforcement Service (MKES).

Table 2: Statutory Fees and Charges (P&R Committee)				
Service Area	2018-19 Outturn	2019-20 Estimate	Proposed Income Change	2020-21 Estimate
	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s
Mid-Kent Enforcement Service (MKES)	907,104	1,111,400	0	1,111,400
Total Statutory Fees and Charges	907,104	1,111,400	0	1,111,400

- 4.2 No changes to debt recovery fees – either Compliance or Enforcement – are anticipated in 2020/21.

5. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 5.1 Option 1 (recommended) – the Committee could choose to approve the report recommendation, thus adopting the fees and charges presented in Appendix 1. The proposals have been developed in line with the Council's adopted Charging Policy and are balanced in terms of maximising revenue and their impact on service delivery.
- 5.2 Option 2 (not recommended) – the Committee could choose to increase the fees and charges presented in Appendix 1. However, there is a risk that such an approach could contravene the Charging Policy. Additional increases would also place an additional burden on service users and could fail to deliver the income levels assumed within the 2020/21 balanced budget proposals through creating a negative impact on service demand.
- 5.3 Option 3 (not recommended) – the Committee could choose to decrease the fees and charges presented in Appendix 1. However, this would fail to deliver the income levels assumed within the 2020/21 balanced budget proposals and could have a negative impact on the Council's ability to achieve its corporate priorities.

6. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 The preferred option is Option 1. The proposed fees and charges:

- Are consistent with the Council's Charging Policy
 - Can be managed at a service level
 - Maximise revenue and are therefore expected to deliver the income levels assumed within the 2020/21 balanced budget proposals; and in so doing
 - Maximise the Council's ability to deliver its corporate priorities.
-

7. RISK

7.1 A range of risks have been considered by service managers in developing the fees and charges proposals in this report including the impacts on service users and delivery and, importantly, the potential risk of increased fees and charges having a detrimental impact on demand (e.g. leading to a net reduction in income).

8. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

8.1 The Council is committed to consulting with residents and other stakeholders to help inform the budget setting process, including the fees and charges proposals contained therein. It is an iterative process, with a variety of techniques and approaches used.

8.2 The consultation process for 2019/20 asked consultees to rank their preferred approach to achieving a balanced budget; raising fees and charges was the second most popular choice amongst respondents (providing fewer discretionary services was the most popular choice). The 2020/21 consultation further confirmed a general reluctance to Council Tax increases; with 59.9% of respondents opposed to a Council Tax increase in 2020/21. Increasing fees and charges helps to reduce the pressure on Council Tax, thus enabling increases to be minimised.

9. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

9.1 Fees and charges proposals for 2020/21 are being considered by the three service committees during January 2020, with an overarching report to the Policy & Resources Committee on 22 January 2020.

10. REPORT APPENDICES

10.1 The following document is to be published with this report and forms part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Proposed Fees and Charges 2020/21 (Policy & Resources Committee)
 - Appendix 2: MBC Fees and Charges Summary 2020/21
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11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 The Council's adopted Charging Policy can be viewed via the following link <http://aluminum:9080/documents/g2805/Public%20reports%20pack%2022nd%20nov2017%2019.00%20Policy%20and%20Resources%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

Policy & Resources Proposed Fees and Charges 2020-21

Appendix 1

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee	Statutory Fee	Actuals	Current Estimate	Current Charges	Proposed Charges	% Change	+ / - Income	Estimate
				2018-2019	2019-2020	2019-2020	2020-2021		2020-21	2020 -2021
				£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Legal Services										
Business Tenancies and Leases				148,058	50,000				5,000	55,000
Hourly Rate	x					217.00	221.00	1.84%		
Council Land										
Hourly Rate	x					217.00	221.00	1.84%		
Easement										
Hourly Rate	x					217.00	221.00	1.84%		
Completion of Section 106 Planning Agreements										
Hourly rate	x					217.00	221.00	1.84%		
Variation (per hour)						217.00	221.00	1.84%		
Other Legal work (not covered by the above)										
External hourly rate	x					217.00	221.00	1.84%		
Administrative Fees (plus postage where applicable)										
A4 Documents Single Sided per page						0.50	0.50	0.00%		
A4 Documents Double Sided per page						1.00	1.00	0.00%		
Colour A4 Documents Single Sided per page						1.00	1.00	0.00%		
Copies of Legal Agreements/Deeds etc						5.00 to 40.00	5.00 to 40.00	0.00%		
Legal Services Total				148,058	50,000				5,000	55,000

Policy & Resources Proposed Fees and Charges 2020-21

Appendix 1

Fees and Charges	* Includes VAT	Discretionary Fee	Statutory Fee	Actuals	Current Estimate	Current Charges	Proposed Charges	% Change	+ / - Income	Estimate
				2018-2019	2019-2020	2019-2020	2020-2021	%	2020-21	2020 -2021
				£	£	£	£	%	£	£
Town Hall										
Town Hall Lettings		x		1,145	1,500					1,500
Council Chamber										
Chamber Day (Commercial) - per hour						30.00	30.00			
Chamber Day (Non-Commercial) - per half day						65.00	65.00			
Chamber Evening (Commercial)						120.00	120.00			
Chamber Evening (Non-Commercial)						85.00	85.00			
Beauvais Room										
Beauvais Day (Commercial) - per hour						20.00	20.00			
Beauvais Day (Non-Commercial) - per half day						30.00	30.00			
Beauvais Evening (Commercial)						80.00	80.00			
Beauvais Evening (Non-Commercial)						60.00	60.00			
Refreshments										
Tea - per pot						2.00	2.00			
Coffee - per pot						4.00	4.00			
Town Hall Total				1,145	1,500				0	1,500
Maidstone House (Parking at MBC)										
Maidstone House (Staff Parking at MBC) Total	*	x		6,214	4,910	480.00	480.00	0.00%	0	4,910
				6,214	4,910				0	4,910
Mid Kent Enforcement Service (MKES)										
				907,104	1,111,400				0	1,111,400
Compliance Fees - statutory charge		x				75.00	75.00	0.00%		
Enforcement Fees - statutory charge		x				235.00	235.00	0.00%		
Shared MKES Total				907,104	1,111,400				0	1,111,400

MBC Fees & Charges Summary 2020/21

Service Area	2018-19 Outturn £'s	2019-20 Estimate £'s	Proposed Income Change £'s	2020-21 Estimate £'s
Communities, Housing & Environment (CHE)				
<i>Discretionary Fees & Charges</i>				
Parks and Open Spaces	35,295	60,040	0	60,040
Cemetery and Crematorium	1,545,780	1,429,830	25,905	1,455,735
Environmental Enforcement & Community Protection	10,304	3,900	0	3,900
Environmental Health	3,771	3,620	400	4,020
Recycling & Refuse Collection	811,244	1,250,330	0	1,250,330
HMO Licensing	46,074	20,380	0	20,380
Gypsy & Traveller Sites	60,471	68,200	2,140	70,340
Sub-Total	2,512,940	2,836,300	28,445	2,864,745
<i>Statutory Fees & Charges</i>				
Environmental Enforcement & Community Protection	41,072	64,380	0	64,380
Environmental Health	16,500	13,670	330	14,000
Sub-Total	57,572	78,050	330	78,380
CHE Committee Totals	2,570,512	2,914,350	28,775	2,943,125
Economic Regeneration & Leisure Committee (ERL)				
<i>Discretionary Fees & Charges</i>				
Business Terrace	68,013	84,980	0	84,980
Business Terrace (Expansion)	109,811	184,220	1,108	185,328
Economic Development (Jubilee Square)	4,340	3,500	0	3,500
Market	135,671	139,840	4,000	143,840
Museum	62,795	64,600	0	64,600
ERL Committee Totals	380,630	477,140	5,108	482,248

MBC Fees & Charges Summary 2020/21

Service Area	2018-19 Outturn	2019-20 Estimate	Proposed Income Change	2020-21 Estimate
	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s
Strategic Planning & Infrastructure (SPI)				
<i>Discretionary Fees & Charges</i>				
Parking Services	2,873,279	3,017,720	55,000	3,072,720
Sandling Road Car Park	217,029	151,000	0	151,000
Street Naming and Numbering	131,224	69,000	12,500	81,500
Development and Conservation Control (Discretionary)	222,806	241,320	77,310	318,630
Sub-Total	3,444,338	3,479,040	144,810	3,623,850
<i>Breakeven Fees & Charges</i>				
Building Control Fees	364,211	331,850	60,000	391,850
Land Charges	254,261	319,550	0	319,550
Sub-Total	618,472	651,400	60,000	711,400
<i>Statutory Fees & Charges</i>				
Development Control – Planning & Conservation	1,318,395	1,559,060	(250,380)	1,308,680
Parking Services - PCNs	831,537	864,660	0	864,660
Sub-Total	2,149,932	2,423,720	(250,380)	2,173,340
SPI Committee Totals	6,212,742	6,554,160	(45,570)	6,508,590

MBC Fees & Charges Summary 2020/21

Service Area	2018-19 Outturn	2019-20 Estimate	Proposed Income Change	2020-21 Estimate
	£'s	£'s	£'s	£'s
Policy & Resources (P&R)				
<i>Discretionary Fees & Charges</i>				
Legal Services	148,058	50,000	5,000	55,000
Town Hall	1,145	1,500	0	1,500
Maidstone House (Staff Parking)	6,214	4,910	0	4,910
Sub-Total	155,417	56,410	5,000	61,410
<i>Statutory Fees & Charges</i>				
Mid-Kent Enforcement Service (MKES)	907,104	1,111,400	0	1,111,400
Sub-Total	907,104	1,111,400	0	1,111,400
P&R Committee Total	1,062,521	1,167,810	5,000	1,172,810

MBC GRAND TOTAL	10,226,405	11,113,460	(6,687)	11,106,733
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POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

22 January 2020

Medium Term Financial Strategy - Revenue Budget Proposals

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

Executive Summary

This report forms part of the process of agreeing a budget for 2020/21 and setting next year's Council Tax. Following agreement by Council of an updated Medium Term Finance Strategy at its meeting on 18 December 2019, this report sets out revenue budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee and the other Service Committees. This Committee will then consider at its meeting on 12 February 2020 comments from other Service Committees and will finalise the budget proposals 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.
2. That the revenue budget proposals for services within the remit of the other Service Committees, as set out in Appendix B, be noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	7 January 2020
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	14 January 2020
Policy and Resources Committee	22 January 2020
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	28 January 2020
Policy and Resources Committee	12 February 2020
Council	26 February 2020

Medium Term Financial Strategy - Revenue Budget Proposals

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	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
Cross Cutting Objectives	The MTFS supports the cross-cutting objectives in the same way that it supports the Council's other strategic priorities.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Risk Management	This has been addressed in section 5 of the report.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Financial	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
Staffing	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
Legal	<p>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.</p> <p>The Council is required to set a council tax by the 11 March in any year and has a statutory obligation to set a balanced budget. The budget requirements and basic amount of Council Tax must be calculated in accordance with the requirements of sections 31A and</p>	Legal Services

	<p>31B to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by sections 73-79 of the Localism Act 2011).</p> <p>The Council is required to determine whether the basic amount of council tax is excessive as prescribed in regulations - section 52ZB of the 1992 Act as inserted under Schedule 5 to the Localism Act 2011. The Council is required to hold a referendum of all registered electors in the borough if the prescribed requirements regarding whether the increase is excessive are met.</p> <p>Approval of the budget is a matter reserved for full Council upon recommendation by Policy and Resources Committee on budget and policy matters.</p>	
Privacy and Data Protection	Privacy and Data Protection is considered as part of the development of new budget proposals. There are no specific implications arising from this report.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	The MFTS report scopes the possible impact of the Council's future financial position on service delivery. When a policy, service or function is developed, changed or reviewed, an evidence based equalities impact assessment will be undertaken. Should an impact be identified appropriate mitigations will be identified.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Public Health	The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Procurement	The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 2.1 At its meeting on 18 December 2019, Council agreed an updated 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.
- 2.2 The MTFS builds on the previous year's MTFS, which was developed in parallel with the Council's new Strategic Plan. There were relatively few new developments to be incorporated in the updated MTFS, given the recent adoption of a Strategic Plan and the delay in the introduction of a new local government funding regime from 2020/21 to 2021/22. This means that, broadly speaking, a real terms 'stand-still' budget could be set for 2020/21. Members have agreed that the principle of maintaining the level of Council Tax in real terms be adopted.
- 2.3 The financial projections underlying the MTFS were prepared under three different scenarios – adverse, neutral and favourable. All three scenarios assumed that budget proposals for future years which have already been agreed by Council will be delivered, and that Council Tax is increased by 2% in 2020/21. Existing budget savings proposals are shown in Appendices A and B and total £3.4 million over the MTFS period.
- 2.4 The Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement for 2020/21 was announced on 20 December 2019. This confirmed the key assumptions incorporated in the MTFS:
- Retained business rates income will be £3.260 million (the MTFS projection was £3.269 million)
 - New Homes Bonus has been retained for another year, giving £4.472 million to help fund our capital programme
 - The Council Tax referendum limit will be 2%
 - There will be no negative Revenue Support Grant.
- 2.5 The outcomes for the Council's budget gap, before allowing for any further growth or savings, are set out below.

	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000

Scenario 1 – Favourable					
Budget gap / (surplus)	-179	774	1,121	1,385	1,177

Scenario 2 – Neutral					
Budget gap / (surplus)	-96	946	1,568	2,119	2,212

Scenario 3 – Adverse					
Budget gap / (surplus)	400	1,923	3,276	4,604	5,525

- 2.6 It can be seen that next year's budget showed a small surplus in the neutral scenario, given the various assumptions underlying the projections. However, in 2021/22 the budget gap will be significant under all three scenarios. It is essential that the Council starts planning now for 2021/22, taking account of announcements from central government about the likely shape of future local government funding.

Revenue Budget Proposals

- 2.7 As the MTFS 'neutral' revenue projections indicate a broadly balanced position for 2020/21, no specific targets were set for savings or increased income generation in this year. Service pressures, or new initiatives with revenue expenditure implications, will have to be funded from within the overall budget envelope, meaning savings or additional income growth to offset the expenditure growth.
- 2.8 In subsequent years, the projections indicate a likely requirement either to make savings or generate increased income. The MTFS strategic revenue projections include a contingency for future pressures of £1.6 million that can potentially be released in 2021/22 to avoid a cliff-edge where savings need to be made at short notice.
- 2.9 Amended and new budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee are set out in Appendix A. As indicated above, they are confined to changes required to address new initiatives or budget pressures that cannot be accommodated.

Income from new investments

- The budget for 2020/21 will incorporate net projected income from the Lockmeadow acquisition.
- Income from housing and regeneration initiatives has been reprofiled. Although schemes are currently under way at Brunswick Street and Union Street, with completion scheduled for next year, further schemes have taken longer than originally anticipated to be realised.
- These items were included in the MTFS so do not represent new incremental changes.

New income generation

- We expect to be able to generate additional income from sub-letting space at Maidstone House.

Mid Kent Services

- A review of savings opportunities in Mid Kent Services has identified a number of savings both across MKS as a whole and in the ICT and HR services. These savings are shared with our partners in MKS and the savings shown here represent Maidstone Council's share.

Electoral Services

- It was originally expected that changes to the electoral registration process would lead to a reduction in costs as there is no longer a requirement for a full canvass of all households. However, in practice this saving has been cancelled out by additional postage costs and higher ongoing costs arising from the requirement for rolling registration of voters.
- 2.10 Budget amendments have been developed, following the same principles, for services within the remit of the other Service Committees. These savings are set out in Appendix B and are being considered in the January cycle at these Committees' meetings.
- 2.11 Whilst the net effect of the budget changes is positive for the Policy and Resources Committee, this is offset by adverse changes within the services covered by the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee and a growth item for the creation of a climate change officer and related costs in Communities Housing and Environment Committee. See below.

	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000

Scenario 2 – Neutral					
Budget gap / (surplus)	-96	946	1,568	2,119	2,212
Amendments and new budget proposals:					
Policy and Resources	-115	-115	-115	-115	-115
Communities, Housing and Environment	30	60	60	60	60
Economic Regeneration and Leisure	0	0	0	0	0
Strategic Planning and Infrastructure	174	194	214	214	214
Revised Budget gap / (surplus)	-7	1,085	1,727	2,278	2,371

- 2.12 The net effect of these budget proposals is that the budget under the neutral scenario remains just in balance for 2020/21 but the budget gap has increased somewhat in subsequent years.

Capital Programme Proposals

- 2.13 The capital budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee are set out in a separate report on this evening's agenda.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Agree the budget proposals relating to this Committee as set out in Appendix A.
 - 3.2 Propose changes to the budget proposals.
 - 3.3 Make no comment on the budget proposals.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Policy and Resources Committee must recommend to Council at its meeting on 12 February 2020 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 Appendix A.
-

5. RISK

- 5.1 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.
-

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 Policy and Resources Committee received an initial report on the MTFS at its meeting on 23 July 2019 and it agreed the approach set out in that report to development of an MTFS for 2020/21 - 2024/25 and a budget for 2020/21.
- 6.2 Service Committees and Policy and Resources Committee then considered a draft MTFS at their meetings in November 2019, and this was agreed for submission to Council. Council agreed the MTFS at its meeting on 18 December 2019.
- 6.3 Public consultation on the budget has been carried out. Details are set out in Appendix C. It can be seen that slightly more residents agreed that the Council's budget provides value for money than disagreed.
- 6.4 There was resistance to the idea of Council Tax increases; this is an understandable stance to take, but if applied in practice would risk cuts to services, given that Council input costs continue to increase in line with inflation. The Council's position is that we will maintain a constant level of

Council Tax in real terms, in other words it will increase by no more than the projected rate of inflation.

- 6.5 The most popular area for new investment was infrastructure. This will be addressed as part of the updated capital programme, which is a separate item on this evening's agenda.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

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

<i>Date</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Action</i>
January 2020	All Service Committees	Consider 20/21 budget proposals
12 February 2020	Policy and Resources Committee	Agree 20/21 budget proposals for recommendation to Council
26 February 2020	Council	Approve 20/21 budget

8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix A: Budget Proposals 2020/21 – 2024/25 – Policy & Resources Committee
- Appendix B: Budget Proposals 2020/21 – 2024/25 – Other Committees
- Appendix C: Residents' Survey

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers.

Revenue Budget Proposals 2020/21 - 2024/25

Service	Proposal	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
New commercial investments	Income from new acquisitions	-143	-143	-143			-429
Elections	Spread elections cost over 4 years		-28				-28
Housing & Regeneration	Income from new developments	-542	-598	-400	-200		-1,740
Communications	Review of communications	-30					-30
Elections	Change in legislation for annual canvas 2020	-25					-25
Maidstone House	Rental income from sub-letting space	-20					-20
Maidstone House	General facilities review	-5					-5
Debt recovery	Increased profit share	-25					-25
Internal Audit	Increased income generation	-20					-20
Asset management	Implement recommendations of Gen2 review	-25	-25				-50
Total Existing Savings		-835	-794	-543	-200	0	-2,372

Service	Proposal	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
		£000					
New commercial investments	Lockmeadow acquisition	-1,096					-1,096
New commercial investments	Income from other new acquisitions				143	143	286
Housing & Regeneration	Reprofiling of income from new developments	423	122	400	-140	-355	450
Income from New Investments		-673	122	400	3	-212	-360

Service	Proposal	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
		£000					
Maidstone House	Additional rental income	-80					-80
Mid Kent Services	Reduction in MKS-wide spend	-42					-42
ICT	Review of licence agreements	-11					-11
Human Resources	Release of contingency not required	-7					-7
Elections	Changes to electoral registration process have not delivered expected savings	25					25
Total Amendments and New Savings		-115	0	0	0	0	-115

OVERALL CHANGE IN		-1,623	-672	-143	-197	-212	-2,847
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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.

Revenue Budget Proposals 2020/21 - 2024/25

Service	Proposal	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
CCTV	Commissioning review	-25				0	-25
Voluntary Sector Grants	Phased reduction of grants	-11	-11				-22
CCTV	Cease monitoring of cameras	-155				0	-155
Depot/Grounds Maintenance	Commercial Income Growth	-50				0	-50
Community Services	Review of Community Services	-50				0	-50
Gypsy & Caravan Sites	Transfer of sites to KCC		-25			0	-25
Total Existing Savings		-291	-36	0	0	0	-327

Service	Proposal	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
		£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
CCTV	Ongoing costs of CCTV service	15					15
Licensing	Legal contingency not required	-15					-15
Climate Change	Permanent appointment of a climate change officer	30	30				60
Total Amendments and New Savings		30	30	0	0	0	60

OVERALL CHANGE IN BUDGET (£000)	-261	-6	0	0	0	-267
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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.

Revenue Budget Proposals 2020/21 - 2024/25

Service	Proposal	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
		£000					
Festivals & Events	Cease direct delivery of festivals and events	-10					-10
Mote Park Centre	Income from new Café	-40					-40
Economic Development	Business Terrace Phase 4	-20					-20
Museum	Reprofile NNDR saving	-119					-119
Bereavement Services	Income from investment in chapel	-15	-15				-30
Total Existing Savings		-204	-15	0	0	0	-219

Service	Proposal	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
		£000					
Mote Park Centre	New Café construction deferred	40	-40				0
Museum	NNDR saving currently subject to appeal	119	-119				
Bereavement Services	Delay in investment in chapel	15		-15			0
	Shortfall funded from service reserves	-174	159	15			0
							0
							0
							0
							0
							0
							0
Total Amendments and New Savings		0	0	0	0	0	0

OVERALL CHANGE IN BUDGET (£000)	-204	-15	0	0	0	-219
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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.

**Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee
Revenue Budget Proposals 2020/21 - 2024/25**

Appendix B

Service	Proposal	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
		£000					
Development Management	Cost reduction following adoption of 2017 Local Plan	-40				0	-40
Pay & Display Car Parks	5% increase in income	-100				0	-100
Grants to outside bodies	Phased reduction of grants	-16	-15				-31
Parking Services	Increase income budget	-50	-50	-50			-150
Planning Policy	Offset staff costs with CIL	-15	-15	-15			-45
Planning	Adoption of commercial business	-30	-15	-15		0	-60
Planning	Income generation from PPAs and Pre-application fees	-15				0	-15
Building Control	Increase income budget	-15				0	-15
Total Existing Savings		-281	-95	-80	0	0	-456

Service	Proposal	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	24/25	Total
		£000					
Planning Support	Reduction in management costs	-21					-21
Planning Fees	Re-appraisal of Income Budget	100					100
Parking Services	Re-appraisal of scope for increased charges	95	20	20			135
Total Amendments and New Savings		174	20	20	0	0	214

OVERALL CHANGE IN BUDGET (£000)	-107	-75	-60	0	0	-242
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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.

Budget Survey

2019



Policy & Information Team
CONSULTATION@MAIDSTONE.GOV.UK

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Methodology

The survey was open between 6th September and 3rd November 2019. 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.

There was a total of 1,465 responses to the survey, including 431 partial responses (this is where the respondent has abandoned the survey part way through).

As an online survey is a self-selection methodology, with residents free to choose whether to participate or not, it was anticipated that returned responses would not necessarily be fully representative of the wider adult population. This report discusses the weighted results to overall responses by demographic questions and by geographical area to ensure that it more accurately matches the known profile of Maidstone Boroughs population by these characteristics.

The results have been weighted by age and gender based on the population in the ONS mid-year population estimates 2018. 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 under-represented at 3.1% compared 5.9% in the local area. The results for this group should also be treated with caution.

There was a total of 999 weighted responses to the survey based on Maidstone's population aged 18 years and over this means overall results are accurate to $\pm 2.59\%$ at the 90% confidence level. This means that if we repeated the same survey 100 times, 90 times out of 100 the results would be between $\pm 2.59\%$ of the calculated response, so the 'true' response could be 2.59% above or below the figures reported (i.e. a 50% agreement rate could in reality lie within the range of 47.41% to 52.59%).

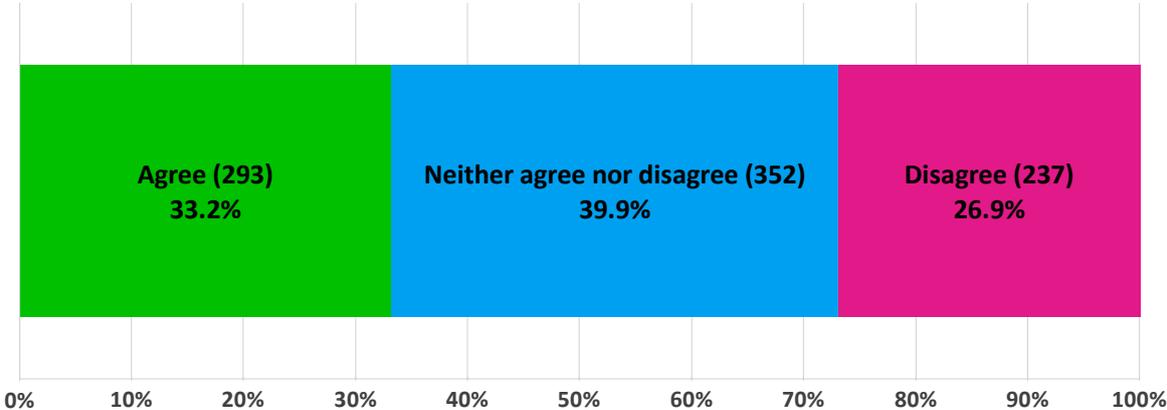
Please note not every respondent answered every question, therefore the total number of respondents refers to the number of respondents for the question being discussed not to the survey overall.

Findings

- Over time the proportion of respondents agreeing the Council provides good value for money has remained consistent and the proportion of people responding negatively has declined.
- 60% of respondents didn't agree that the Council should increase Council Tax for 2020/21.
- Infrastructure including flood preventions and street scene was rated as being the most important investment programme with more than half of all respondents placing this programme as their top priority. All demographic groups placed new homes as their lowest priority.

Value for Money

The survey asked respondents 'to what extent do you agree or disagree that Maidstone Council provides value for money?' and gave the five options for response ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A total of 881 people responded to this this question.

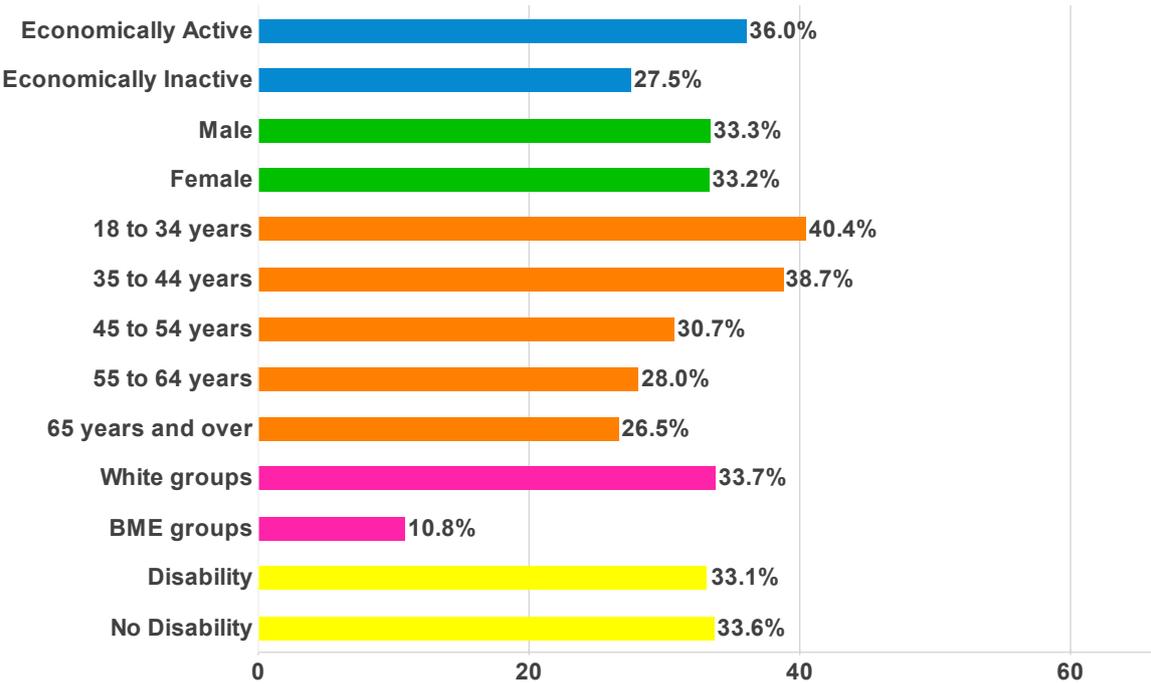


Overall, 33.2% responded strongly agree or agree. Across the range of responses, the most common was Neutral with 39.9% responding this way.

We previously asked residents this question in the 2018 Budget Survey and 33.4% responded Strongly Agree or Agree. Prior to that this question was asked in the 2017 resident survey and 30.2% of respondents agreed. Although over this time the proportion of respondents agreeing as remained broadly consistent, the proportion of people responding negatively to this question has declined from 28.6% in 2017 to 26.9%.

Demographic Differences

The chart below shows the proportion of people responding 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree' to the question across the different demographic groups.



The data shows a significant difference between the way respondents that are economically active and those that are economically inactive have answered this question. The most common response for those that are economically active was 'Agree', while the most common response for those economically inactive was 'Neither agree nor disagree' with 50.4% of this group responding this way.

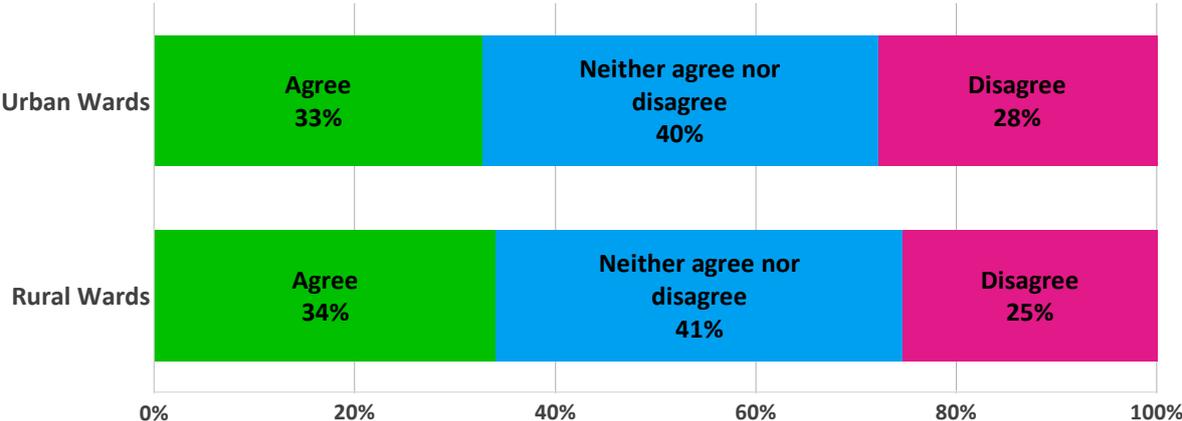
There was no significant difference in the proportion of male and female respondents agreeing with the question.

Looking at the age groups the data suggests that as age increases the proportion of respondents agreeing that the Council provides value for money decreases.

Geographical Differences

There was a total of 729 responding to this question and also providing their postcode.

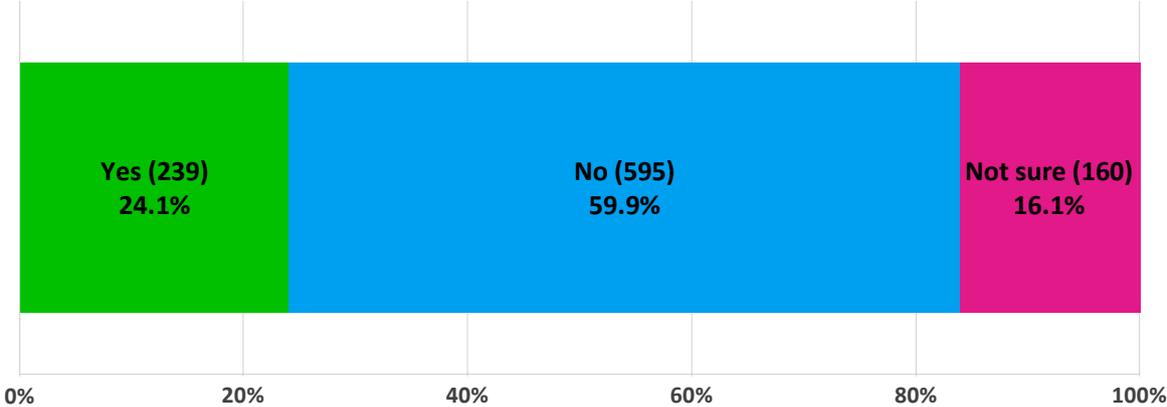
There were no significant differences between Urban and Rural wards in response to the question 'to what extent do you agree or disagree that Maidstone Council provides value for money?'



Council Tax

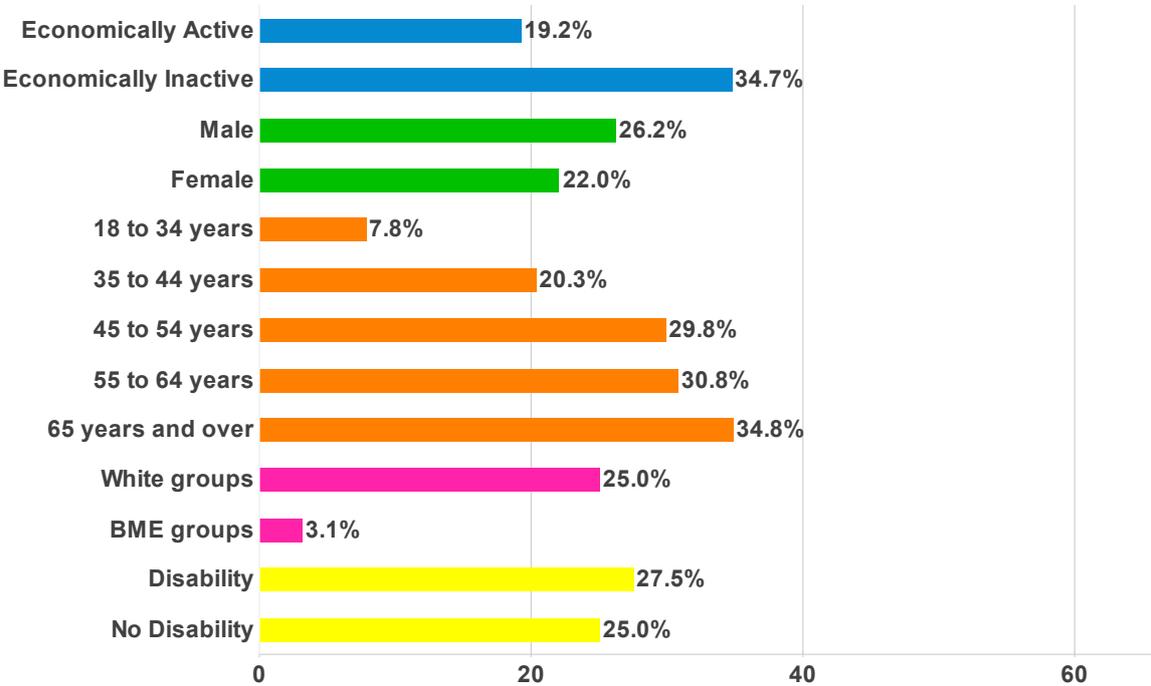
Council Tax Increases

Respondents were asked 'Do you agree that the Council should increase Council Tax for 2020/21?'. A total of 994 respondents answered this question. The majority of respondents said No.



Demographic Differences

The chart below shows the proportion of people responding 'yes' to the question across the different demographic groups.



Economically inactive respondents had the greatest proportion across all demographic groups who said they were in favour of a council tax increase, at 34.7% (±4.4%). This is significantly different from the response from people who are economically active where just 19.2% (±2.5%) answered the same way.

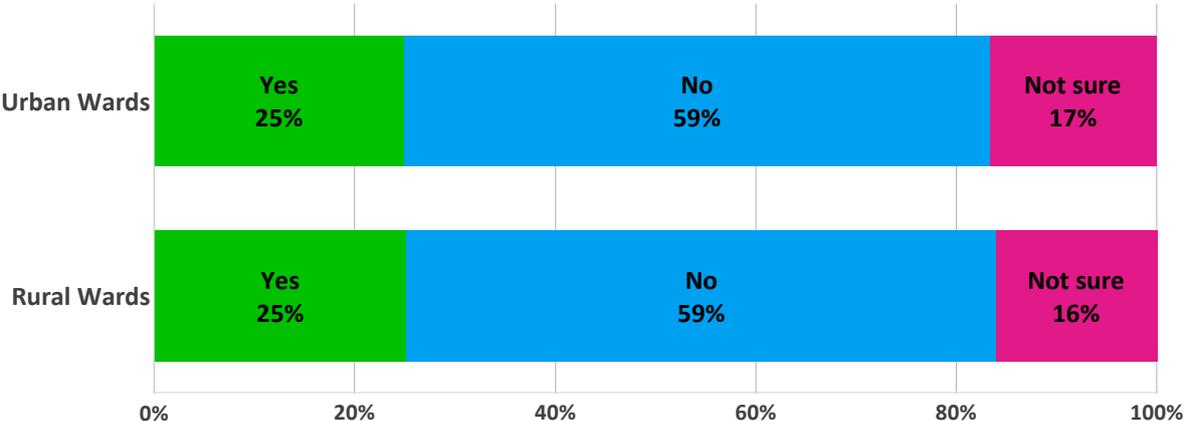
The proportion of respondents answering 'Yes' increases with age, and the proportion responding 'No' decreases with age. The proportion of respondents answering 'Not sure' is broadly consistent across the age groups.

The difference in the proportion of people from BME and White backgrounds responding 'Yes' is significant, but should be treated with caution due to the low number of responses from people with BME backgrounds.

Geographical Differences

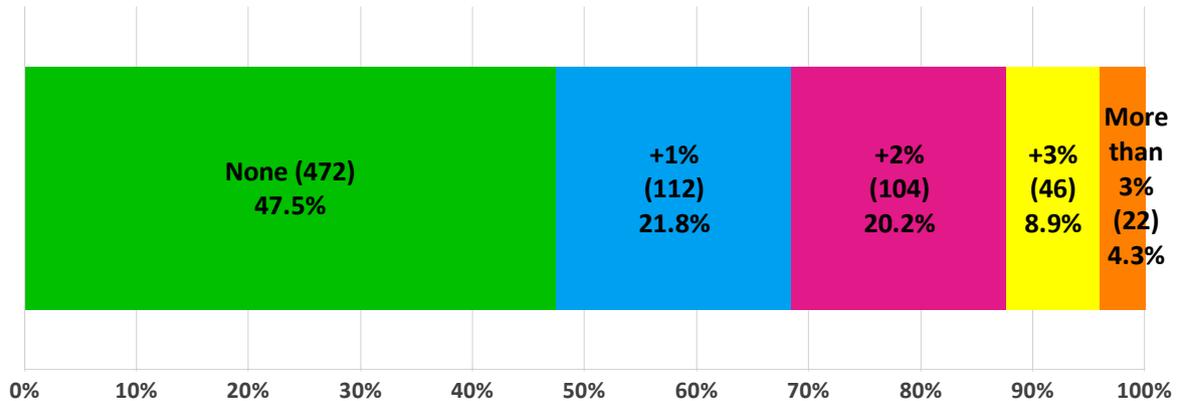
There was a total of 814 respondents who gave a response to this question and also provided their postcode.

There were no significant differences between Urban and Rural wards in response to the question 'Do you agree that the Council should increase Council Tax for 2020/21'?



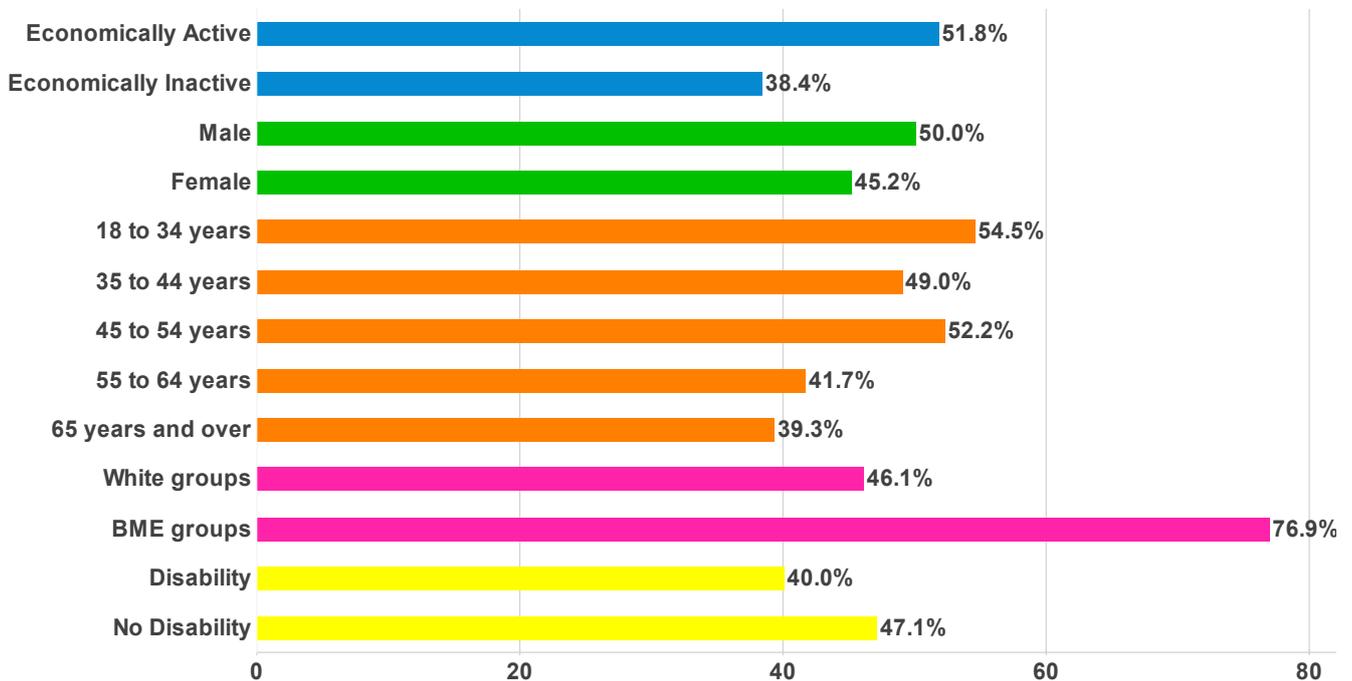
Council Tax Increase – How much?

Respondents were also asked 'How much more, if any, would you be willing to pay in council tax to protect services?'. There were 994 weighted responses to this question. The most common response was None.



Demographic Differences

The chart below shows the proportion of people responding 'None' to the question across the different demographic groups. This was the most common response for each demographic group.



The difference between the proportion of economically active and economically inactive respondents answering 'None' is significant, with a greater proportion of those that are economically active against a Council Tax increase. This aligns with the responses to the previous question.

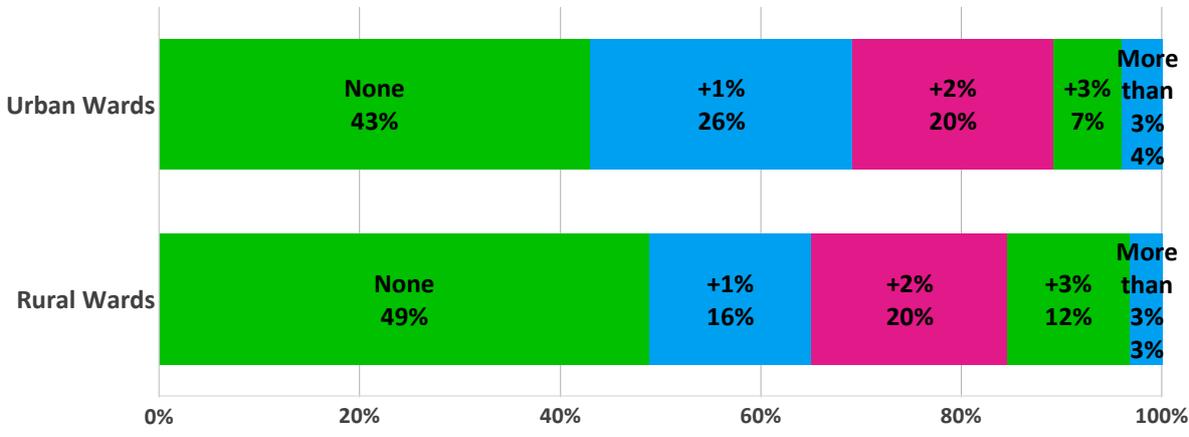
As with the previous question, it appears that willingness to pay more Council Tax increases with age.

The difference in the proportion of people from BME and White backgrounds responding 'None' is significant, but should be treated with caution due to the number of responses from people with BME backgrounds.

Geographical Differences

There was a total of 813 responses to this question where a postcode was also given.

There are significant differences between Urban and Rural wards in the proportions responding '+1%' and '+3%'. The Rural ward respondents had a greater proportion stating they would be willing to increase Council Tax by 3%. The difference between the proportions responding 'None' is not significant.

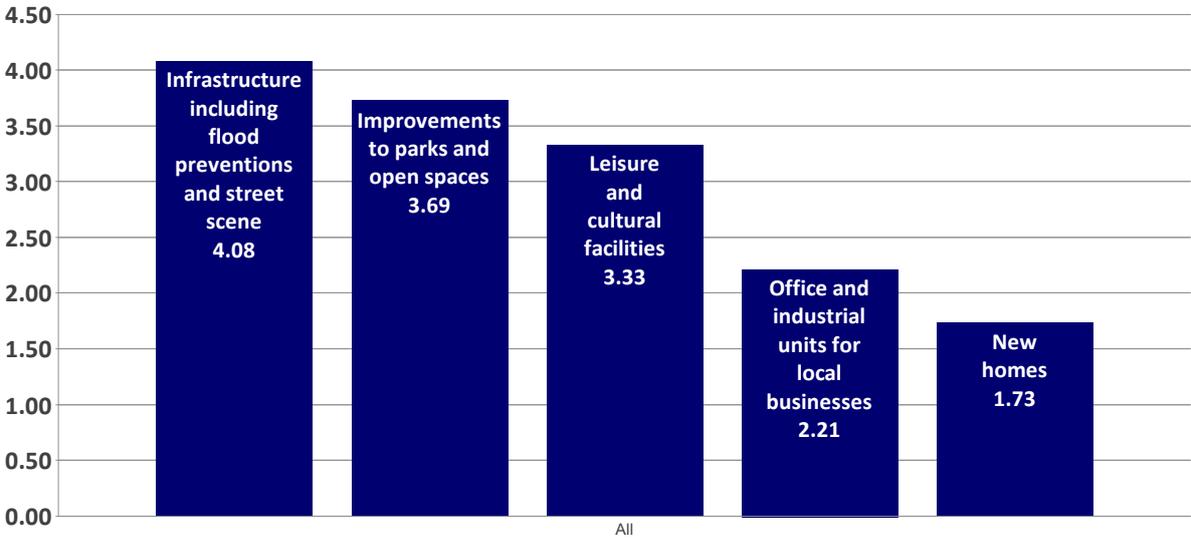


Investing in the future

The survey asked people to place five investment programmes in order of importance to them. A total of 937 respondents (weighted) provided an answer to this question.

In order to assess this data a weighted average has been used, with the programmes placed as first receiving five points and the programmes ranked last given one point. These are then added together and divided by the number of respondents to give a weighted average.

Overall, 52.2% placed Infrastructure, including flood prevention and street scene, as being the most important investment programme. 64.3% placed new homes as their least important investment programme.



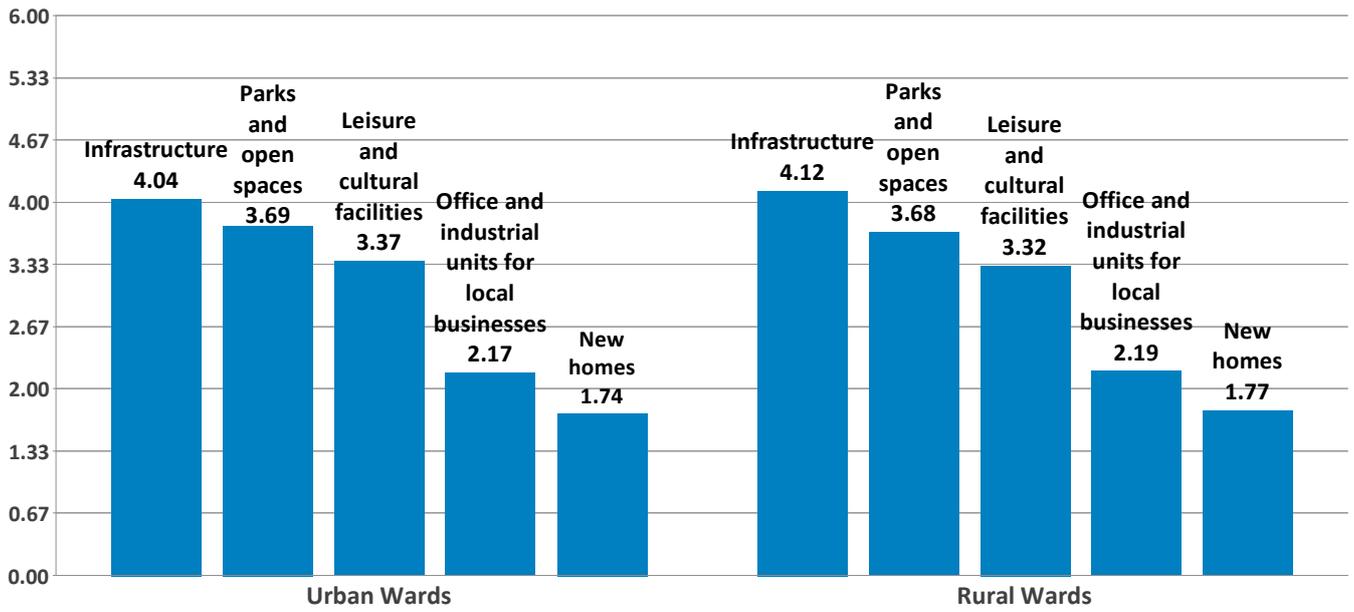
Demographic Differences

There were two groups that did not place Infrastructure as their top priority. These were the 18 to 34 years and the 35 to 44 years who placed Improvement to parks and open space as their top priority.

Every demographic group placed Leisure & cultural facilities as third, Office and industrial units for local businesses as fourth and New homes as fifth.

Geographical Differences

Residents from both Rural and Urban wards placed the investment programmes in the same order.



Narrative Comments

A total of 458 narrative comments were received. Respondents used these as an opportunity to comment on issues about council services generally, rather than simply budget issues.

A total of 222 comments mentioned house building, with 106 of these also mentioning issues with road infrastructure or congestion. The general feeling derived from these comments is that residents feel that there are too many new homes being built or that new homes are being built in the wrong locations. There were a few mentions of offices being turned into housing being inappropriate. Many of the comments on this theme stated they do not feel that the Council listens to them, with some believing some new developments that have been agreed are contrary to the Local Plan.

There were 136 comments relating to environmental services. There were 23 comments that mentioned waste collection services with several making comments about missed or late bin collections (during the survey period there were a number of roadworks being undertaken in the borough which impacted on the Council's ability to make some collections according to schedule). There were also several comments about the streets being in more of a mess after refuse collection than they were before collection, a few comments about returning to weekly waste collections and a couple of comments that were positive about this service. There were 66 comments that referenced street cleansing services with comments about streets being unclean or that cleaning standards are good enough with some stating that bins are overflowing or not emptied frequently enough. There were also several comments about the paving work in the town centre, with some saying that these are already stained and dirty or that they don't feel they are good value for money.

There were 25 comments that raised the issues about the environment. Here people were mostly concerned with pollution and the reducing amount of greenspaces and building on greenfield sites. There were also two comments on this theme that felt the council should be doing more for biodiversity. 21 people raised issues with grass verges and hedgerows being overgrown, with some mentioning the blocking of road signed due to overhanging vegetation. Also under environmental services theme several comments mentioned the need to bring back the freighter service. Several expressed annoyance over proposed charges at Tovil Tip (a KCC service) and there were a few requests for more tree planting.

Overall, there were 134 comments with mentions of traffic, parking or roads. As outlined above the majority of these related to traffic and road infrastructure with comments about the town being 'gridlocked' or having insufficient infrastructure for new housing. Several people commented that it seems that the Council are not doing anything about these issues and 12 people specifically mentioned the need for a bypass or relief road. There were 30 comments that related to parking. Here people were concerned with perceived high parking charges in the town centre, development being built without parking provision and abuse/unfairness/over subscription of residential permit schemes.

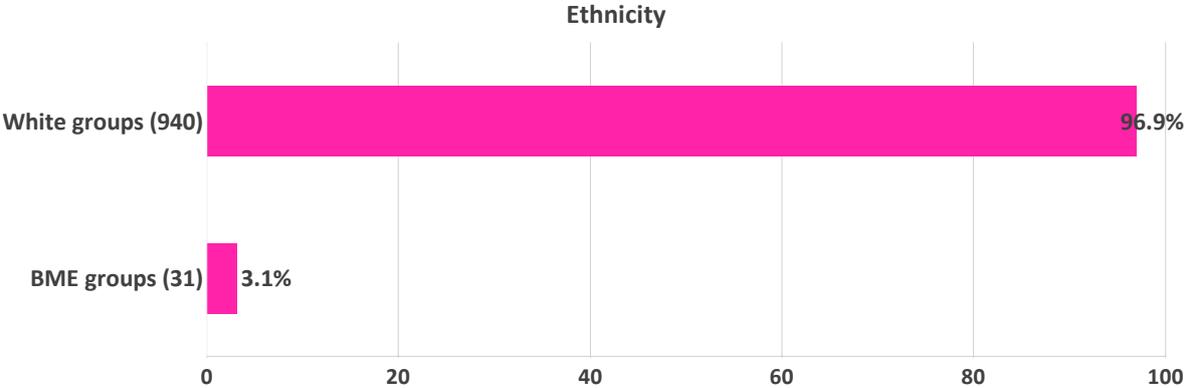
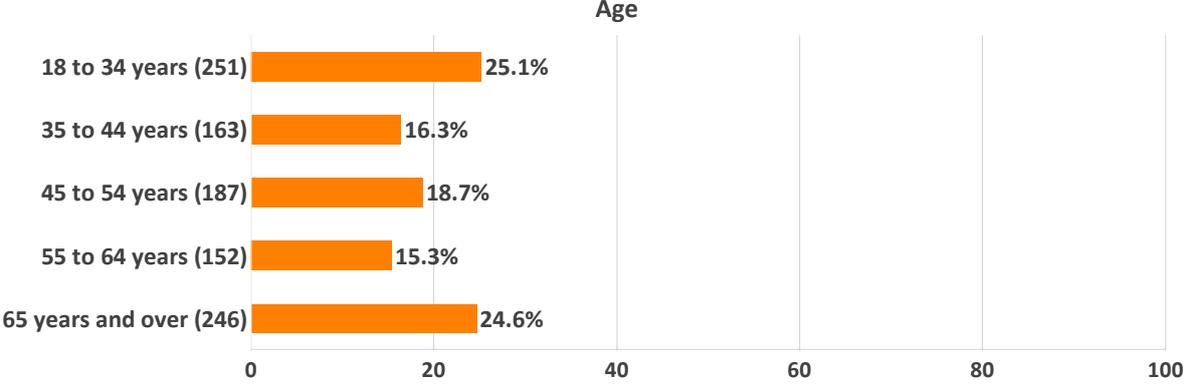
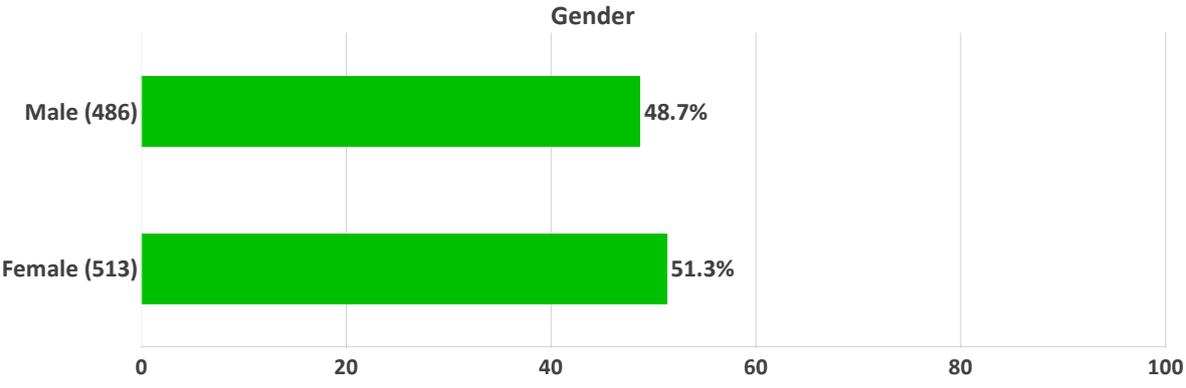
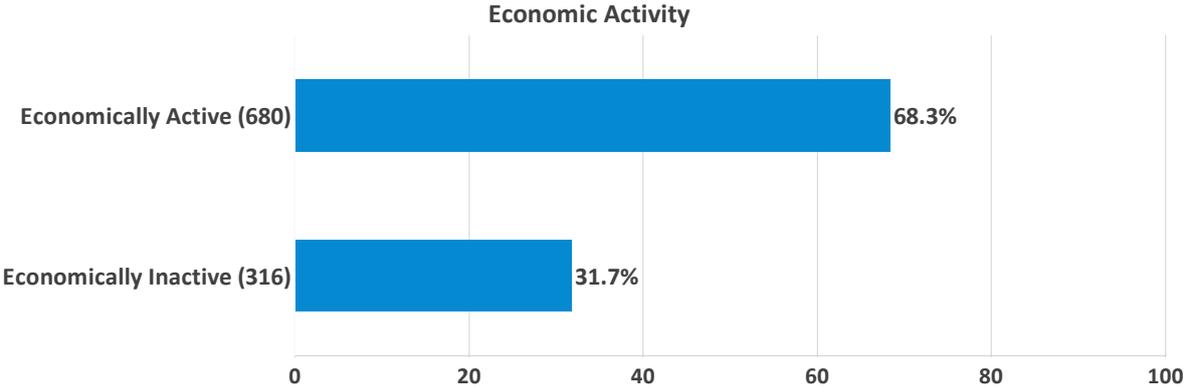
There were 90 comments that have been categorised as relating to Council Administration, Councillors or staff. 32 comments stated they do not feel the Council listens or cares or is too political, with several making allegations of corrupt behaviour and a couple urging for transparency and openness. The majority of these seem to relate to development in the borough. 19 people mentioned issues around contact and communication with several stating they have raised issues but never got a response. There were 15 comments about staff salaries and allowances with several stating that the number of officers on £50k or more should be reduced. Six mentioned the amount of funding Maidstone Council receives from the Council tax with some stating Maidstone's cut should be bigger. Other comments relating to Council administration mentioned wasting money and high council tax levels.

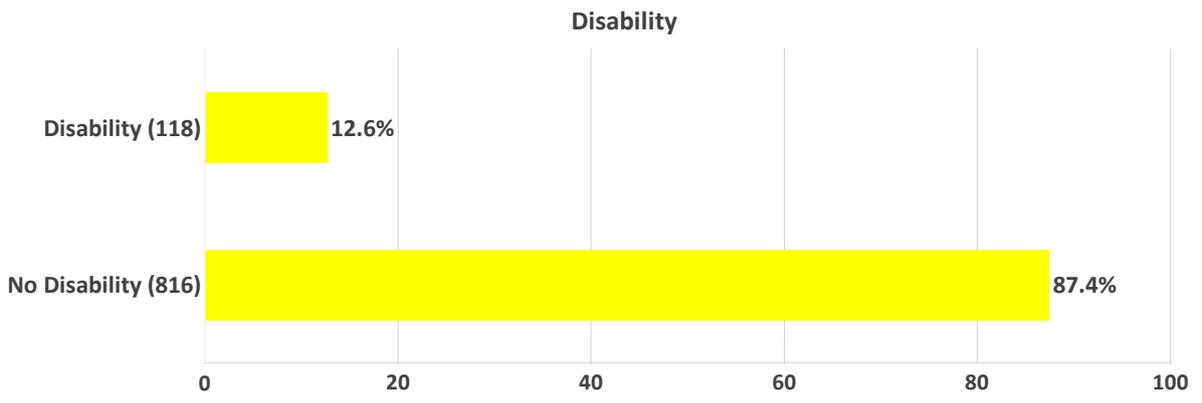
There were 50 comments that referred to crime or policing in the borough. Here people requested more police on the streets and there was some reference to a recent stabbing in the town centre with concerns raised over the licensing of the establishment concerned. A few people made comment on the night-time economy causing problematic behaviours and there were several comments about drug use and dealing happening in the borough with Shepway Park, Brenchley Gardens and outside KFC being mentioned specifically. There were also a few people that commented they do not feel safe and a couple of comments about youths and anti-social behaviour.

There were 40 comments that have been assigned to the theme Leisure Services & Parks. In terms of the leisure centre people mentioned the need for investment and refurbishment with the changing areas specifically mentioned as needing work. One person stated they may use the centre more but doesn't see information about what's on. For Mote Park there were some comments that expressed annoyance about parking charges but also comments about the improvements to the play area and café: stating it being in disrepair and that it is now too busy and is focused on income generation. There was also a request for an outdoor swimming pool at Mote Park. The Hazlitt was mentioned by several comments. Generally people were positive about the Hazlitt but recognise that it is too small to attract major touring shows, several people said that there should be another venue/theatre that is bigger. Other comments in this theme mentioned lack of public transport from villages to leisure facilities and requests for more investment in these areas.

There were 144 comments that referred to services that are not provided by Maidstone Council, the most common of these included requests for more investment into adult social care and complaints about road surfaces and potholes.

Survey Demographics





Agenda Item 18

Policy and Resources Committee

22 January 2020

Medium Term Financial Strategy – Capital Programme

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

Executive Summary

This report forms part of the process of agreeing a budget for 2020/21 and setting next year's Council Tax. It develops the outline of the capital programme that was set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy, agreed by Council on 18 December 2019. It reconfirms the principles behind the Council's capital strategy, explains how the capital programme will be funded, and describes the individual projects that comprise the programme.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Agrees the capital strategy principles set out in paragraph 2.6;
2. Agrees the capital funding projection set out in Appendix B to this report;
3. Agrees the capital programme 2020/21 onwards as set out in Appendix C to this report;
4. Notes that in agreeing recommendations 2 and 3 above the Committee will set a prudential borrowing limit of £81.418 million over the period of the programme which will be recommended to Council as part of the Treasury Management Strategy 2020/21.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	22 January 2020
Council	26 February 2020

Medium Term Financial Strategy – Capital Programme

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the budget are a re-statement in financial terms of the priorities set out in the strategic plan. Specifically, the capital programme allows for investment in long term projects that support the strategic plan objectives.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Cross Cutting Objectives	The MTFS supports the cross-cutting objectives in the same way that it supports the Council's other strategic priorities.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Risk Management	This has been addressed in section 5 of the report.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Financial	Set out in the report.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	Staffing implications are taken into account when developing individual capital schemes.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Legal	<p>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.</p> <p>The Council is required to set a council tax by the 11 March in any year and has a statutory obligation to set a balanced budget. The budget requirements and basic amount of Council Tax must be calculated in accordance with the requirements of sections 31A and 31B to the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (as amended by sections 73-79 of the Localism Act 2011).</p> <p>The Council is required to determine whether the basic amount of council tax is excessive as</p>	Mid Kent Legal Services

	<p>prescribed in regulations - section 52ZB of the 1992 Act as inserted under Schedule 5 to the Localism Act 2011. The Council is required to hold a referendum of all registered electors in the borough if the prescribed requirements regarding whether the increase is excessive are met.</p> <p>Approval of the budget is a matter reserved for full Council upon recommendation by Policy and Resources Committee on budget and policy matters.</p>	
Privacy and Data Protection	<p>Privacy and Data Protection is considered as part of the development of new capital schemes. There are no specific implications arising from this report.</p>	<p>Policy and Information Team</p>
Equalities	<p>This report sets out the overall capital programme. When an individual capital scheme is developed, changed or reviewed, an evidence based equalities impact assessment will be undertaken. Should an impact be identified appropriate mitigations will be identified.</p>	<p>Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer</p>
Public Health	<p>The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy which sets the overall priorities for the capital programme.</p>	<p>Public Health Officer</p>
Crime and Disorder	<p>The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium Term Financial Strategy which sets the overall priorities for the capital programme.</p>	<p>Section 151 Officer & Finance Team</p>
Procurement	<p>Procurement of the capital schemes described in section 2 of this report will be in accordance with the procurement provisions within the Council's constitution.</p>	<p>Section 151 Officer & Finance Team</p>

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Background

- 1.1 The capital programme plays a vital part in the Council's Strategic Plan, since long term investment is required to deliver many of the objectives of the plan. The capital programme is a rolling five year programme, so sets out over the medium term how the Council will invest its capital resources.
- 1.2 The current capital programme 2019/20 – 2023/24 was approved by Council at its meeting on 25th September 2019 and totals £109 million over five years. Details are set out in Appendix A.
- 1.3 The largest elements of the capital programme by value comprise (a) housing development and regeneration and (b) commercial property investment, and support respectively the strategic priorities 'Homes and Communities' and 'A Thriving Place'.

Capital Strategy

- 1.4 Under CIPFA's updated Prudential Code, the Council is now required to produce a Capital Strategy, which is intended to give an overview of how capital expenditure, capital financing and treasury management activity contribute to the provision of local public services, along with an overview of how associated risk is managed and the implications for future financial sustainability.
- 1.5 A Capital Strategy was approved by Council at its meeting on 25 September 2019. The Strategy describes how the Capital Programme is developed and the key points are set out below.
- 1.6 The Council has defined certain core principles for the inclusion of schemes within the capital programme. Schemes may be included in the capital programme if they fall within one of the four following categories:
 - (i) Required for statutory reasons, eg to ensure that Council property meets health and safety requirements;
 - (ii) Self-funding schemes focused on Strategic Plan priority outcomes;
 - (iii) Other schemes focused on Strategic Plan priority outcomes; and
 - (iv) Other priority schemes which will attract significant external funding.
- 1.7 All schemes within the capital programme are subject to appropriate option appraisal. Any appraisal must comply with the requirements of the Prudential Code and the following locally set principles:
 - (a) Where schemes fit within a specific strategy and resources are available within the capital programme for that strategy, such as the Asset Management Plan, the schemes would also be subject to appraisal and

prioritisation against the objectives of that strategy. These schemes must be individually considered and approved by the relevant service committee.

b) Where schemes can be demonstrated to be commercial in nature and require the use of prudential borrowing, a business case must first be prepared.

- 1.8 Where schemes do not fit within the criteria above but an appropriate option appraisal has been completed, they may still be included within the programme if they fall within one of the four categories set out above.
- 1.9 If, following all considerations, there are a number of approved schemes that cannot be accommodated within the current programme, a prioritised list of schemes that can be added to the programme as future resources permit will be created and approved by Policy and Resources Committee, thus allowing officers to focus funding efforts on delivering schemes that are next in priority order.
- 1.10 The MTFs requires the Council to identify actual funding before commencement of schemes. Accordingly, while schemes may be prioritised for the programme, ultimately commencement of any individual scheme can only occur once all the necessary resources have been identified and secured.
- 1.11 The MTFs principles require that the Council will maximise the resources available to finance capital expenditure, in line with the requirements of the Prudential Code, through:
 - a) The use of external grants and contributions, subject to maintaining a focus on the priority outcomes of its own strategies;
 - b) Opportunities to obtain receipts from asset sales as identified in the asset management plan and approved for sale by Policy and Resources Committee;
 - c) The approval of prudential borrowing when the following criteria also apply to the schemes funded by this method:
 - i. they are commercial in nature;
 - ii. the outcome returns a financial benefit at least equal to the cost incurred by borrowing to fund the schemes;
 - iii. after covering the cost of funding, a further financial or non-financial benefit accrues to the Council that directly or indirectly supports the objectives of the strategic plan or the medium term financial strategy.
 - d) The use of New Homes Bonus for capital purposes in line with the Council's strategic plan priorities;

e) The implementation of a community infrastructure levy (CIL) and the management of its use, along with other developer contributions (S106), to deliver the objectives of the infrastructure delivery plan.

- 1.12 Service managers submit proposals to include projects in the Council's capital programme. Bids are collated by Corporate Finance who calculate the financing cost (which can be nil if the project is fully externally financed). Each Committee appraises the proposals based on a comparison with corporate priorities. Policy & Resources Committee recommends the capital programme which is then presented to Council in February each year.
- 1.13 Prior to any capital commitment being entered into, a detailed report setting out a full project appraisal and detailed financial projections is considered by the relevant service committee.

Funding the Capital Programme

- 1.14 All capital expenditure must be financed, either from external sources (grant funding and other contributions), the Council's own resources (revenue contributions, earmarked reserves, internal borrowing and capital receipts) or debt (external borrowing and other forms of corporate finance).
- 1.15 In the past, local authorities have principally relied on prudential borrowing, usually through the Public Works Loan Board, to fund capital expenditure. However, it was announced in October 2019 that the cost of borrowing from the PWLB would be increased by 100 basis points across the board, with the clear intention of dampening demand for funds. This meant, for example, that the annual interest on a 50 year loan, repayable on maturity, increased from 1.8% to 2.8%. Given that borrowing costs in the market generally remain very low, it is considered likely that local authorities will be able to continue to borrow cheaply from other lenders, if not from the PWLB.
- 1.16 Until recently, Maidstone Borough Council had not borrowed to fund its capital programme, instead relying primarily on revenue contributions from the New Homes Bonus. Nevertheless, the Council had approved the use of prudential borrowing, provided that it meets the criteria set out in the principles described above, in anticipation of future borrowing requirements. Accordingly, £7 million of borrowing was undertaken when completing the purchase of Lockmeadow in November 2019. Further borrowing is likely to be required in subsequent years. The cost of any borrowing is factored into the MTFS financial projections.
- 1.17 To the extent that New Homes Bonus continues to be available, the Council will continue to use it to fund capital expenditure. There has been a reduction of the period for which New Homes Bonus would be paid from six years to five in 2017/18 and then to four in 2018/19 and 2019/20. The government announced allocations of New Homes Bonus for 2020/21 as part of the Provisional Local Government Funding Settlement in December 2019, but the allocations were for one year only with no ongoing legacy payments. Under the new Local Government funding regime, to be implemented from 2021/22, a new, unspecified mechanism for incentivising housebuilding is envisaged.

- 1.18 External funding is sought wherever possible and the Council has been successful in obtaining Government Land Release Funding for its housing developments and ERDF funding for the Kent Medical Campus Innovation Centre.
- 1.19 Funding is also available through developer contributions (S 106) and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The Community Infrastructure Levy was introduced in Maidstone in October 2018.
- 1.20 The resource available for the capital programme, based on the detail above, is given in Appendix B. The appendix shows total resources expected in the period 2020/21 to 2024/5 as £XXXXX.

Capital Programme Proposals

- 1.21 Capital Programme proposals have been developed based on the principles set out above and reflect the strategic priorities agreed by Council when it set a new Strategic Plan in December 2018.
- 1.22 Appendix C to this report sets out the recommended programme. This includes schemes that already form part of the existing capital programme together with new schemes that it is now proposed to include within the capital programme. Further details are set out below.

Communities, Housing and Environment

- 1.23 Affordable Housing Programme - £30.9 million

In 2018 the Communities Housing and Environment Committee endorsed a plan to set up a Housing Delivery Partnership with a registered social housing provider. Following market testing, the Committee agreed to modify the plan by establishing a 'Council Affordable Housing Programme', under which the Council itself would deliver 200 affordable homes over a five year period. A separate line in the capital programme envisages the recruitment of an Acquisitions Officer to ensure delivery of these homes, with the costs of the post and ancillary costs capitalised and charged to the programme. Grants or direct investment to enable housing improvements will be made as part of this programme, building on the Council's existing housing incentive scheme and in accordance with its Housing Assistance Policy.

- 1.24 Housing Development and Regeneration Investment Plan - £25.3 million

Under the Housing Development and Regeneration Investment Plan agreed by Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 25 July 2017, developments are under way at Brunswick Street and Union Street. In addition, Lenworth House was acquired in 2018/19, the purchase of a new development of 14 flats at Springfield Mill was agreed by this Committee in January 2019, and finally in October 2019 it was agreed to add a roof top extension to Granada House, which would create additional residential units for market rent. Further developments are envisaged and these are included under the heading 'indicative schemes' in the capital programme.

1.25 Disabled Facilities Grants - £4.0 million

The Council works with Kent County Council Social Services to deliver adaptations and facilities to enable disabled people to remain at home. This element of the capital programme therefore has a directly beneficial impact for individual local residents. Assistance under this budget is not funded by the Council but is funded from the Department of Health Better Care Fund (BCF) as a specific capital grant.

1.26 Temporary Accommodation - £2.2 million

The Council has a programme to acquire housing on the open market for temporary accommodation, as it is more cost-effective to use our own property for this purpose. It is proposed to buy a further 7 units in 2020/21, being 6 three bedroom houses and one large property to support the Rough Sleeper initiative.

1.27 Flood Action Plan - £900,000

The Medway Flood Partnership, which includes the Environment Agency and Kent County Council as well as Maidstone Borough Council, plans to spend at least £19 million over the next five years in the Medway catchment area on schemes to manage and reduce flood risk. A major element of the programme is a project to increase the capacity of the Leigh Flood Storage Area, as reported to this Committee in September 2019. This Council has contributed £1.1 million to the Flood Action Plan, of which £100,000 has been allocated to date for a number of natural flood management schemes. Priorities for the balance of the funding are being reviewed in the light of the floods at Christmas 2019 and a report on the outcomes will be brought to this Committee as soon as possible.

1.28 Crematorium and Cemetery Development Plan - £130,000

The Crematorium Car Park was expanded in 2018 as part of this Development Plan. The residual capital funding is being used to carry out improvement works at the Cemetery.

1.29 Electric Operational Vehicles - £100,000

The existing vehicle replacement programme does not provide sufficient funding to cover the higher cost of electric vehicles. It is proposed to expand the vehicle replacement programme by £100,000 to enable the purchase of five electric vehicles for environmental services and infrastructure.

1.30 Housing Rent Management IT System - £50,000

The current rent and housing management IT system, provided by Capita, will no longer be supported from September 2020 and a proposal has therefore been made for capital funding for a replacement system.

1.31 Street Scene Investment - £25,000

This capital programme item allows for items such as the provision of new bins.

1.32 Installation of Public Water Fountains - £15,000

A capital budget is proposed for the installation of three water fountains – two in the Town Centre and one at Mote Park – as part of an initiative to reduce plastic waste within the borough, Water Refill. The scheme involves providing free tap water and the installation of three water fountains for refilling bottles.

1.33 Gypsy Site Improvement Works - £42,000

The Council plans to transfer the two Gypsy and Caravan sites that we operate to Kent County Council. The one-off costs to be incurred at the sites prior to transfer are recognised by the inclusion of this item in the capital budget proposals, although the likely actual cost has still to be determined.

Economic Regeneration & Leisure

1.34 Mote Park Visitor Centre and Estate Services Building - £2.7 million

Planning permission has recently been obtained for the new Visitor Centre at Mote Park and work is expected to get under way in 2020/21. The scope of the work has been expanded to include toilet facilities that meet 'Changing Places' standards.

1.35 Mote Park Dam Works - £1.8 million

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. This work therefore comes under the first heading set out in paragraph 2.6, 'required for statutory reasons'. Consultants have designed a suitable scheme and planning permission has been obtained. Preliminary work is currently under way, with most of the work taking place in Summer 2020.

1.36 Museum Development Plan - £389,000

This amount represents the balance of funding set aside for development projects at Maidstone Museum. It will be used to complement funding sought via a Heritage Lottery Fund bid which was submitted in November 2019.

Policy & Resources

1.37 Acquisition of Commercial Assets - £12.5 million

It is envisaged that the Council will continue to seek further suitable opportunities to acquire commercial assets, following the acquisition of the

Lockmeadow Leisure Complex in November 2019. These acquisitions both generate a return that helps to support the revenue budget and supports the Council's strategic priorities. The capital programme includes a fund of £12.5 million which is intended to give the capacity to pursue investment opportunities in line with the Commercial Investment Strategy. The Council continues to work with selected agents to identify suitable opportunities and these will be brought forward for member approval when identified.

1.38 Kent Medical Campus - Innovation Centre - £9.8 million

Policy and Resources Committee agreed in October 2018 to the development of an Innovation Centre at the Kent Medical Campus. ERDF grant funding for £4.84 million of the capital cost was confirmed in November 2019, a contractor has been appointed and work will start in 2020.

1.39 Lockmeadow ongoing investment - £5.0 million

It was noted when Policy and Resources Committee approved the acquisition of the Lockmeadow Leisure Complex that retaining Odeon as an anchor tenant, paying a suitable rent, would involve conversion of the cinema to the 'Luxe' format, with the Council as landlord contributing to the cost of the conversion. This cost was factored into the financial modelling that supported the business case for the acquisition. It was also recognised that further investment in the building and surroundings would be needed to realise the Council's objectives for the site. An allowance of £5 million is therefore included in the capital programme for ongoing investment at Lockmeadow.

1.40 Garden Community - £3.3 million

This project was agreed in principle by Policy and Resources Committee in September 2019. The capital investment comprises capitalised staffing and consultancy costs, plus option fees payable to landowners if the Council takes on responsibility for site assembly. The capital investment and a financial return would be recovered when the land is transferred to a development partner. The Council will be seeking a contribution to these costs when the next opportunity arises to bid from funds from Homes England and / or MHCLG.

1.41 Infrastructure Delivery - £3.0 million

It is expected that infrastructure schemes as outlined in the Local Plan will be funded directly from the benefits gained from the development. However, in some cases, viability assessments of expected developments may indicate a funding gap, whether temporary or ongoing. The Council is therefore prepared to meet this funding gap in appropriate circumstances in order to deliver its strategic priorities. £3 million has been set aside within the capital programme for this purpose. At this stage the only allocation from this funding stream has been a contribution of £500,000 to Kent County Council's works to improve Newcut and Bearsted Roundabouts, as agreed by Policy and Resources Committee in June 2017. This amount will be repaid by the landowner when certain trigger points are reached.

1.42 Asset Management / Corporate Property - £2.1 million

The Property Services section carries out a 5 year cycle of condition surveys of Council property which provide a costed programme of essential replacement or refurbishment of building elements to ensure the proper, compliant and efficient operation of the buildings in accordance with the Asset Management Plan. There is no financial return from the projects, but they do eliminate the accumulation of a backlog of maintenance, reduce the risk of failure and interruption of service and the cost of reactive maintenance.

1.43 Biodiversity and Climate Change funding - £1.0 million

In April 2019 the Council declared twin emergencies in Biodiversity and Climate Change. P&R then set up a Member led working group to produce an action plan for agreement in April 2020. In order to fund that action plan directly and to provide pump prime funding and funds for embedding biodiversity and climate change actions across the authority, a pot of funding is required. This pot will fund the action plan items directly, each of which will be costed where relevant, and will provide a reserve pot for other initiatives to bid into. A revenue proposal has also been put forward for an officer to support this work.

1.44 Feasibility Studies - £250,000

An allowance has been included in the capital programme for feasibility works on schemes that are not yet ready to be included in the main programme.

1.45 Digital Projects - £100,000

This programme is for hardware and software development carried out in-house by the Digital team, such as website re-design, new webcasting facilities, and investment to streamline ways of working.

Strategic Planning & Infrastructure

1.46 Mall Bus Station Redevelopment - £750,000

It has long been recognised that the bus station requires upgrading in order to improve its efficiency and attractiveness to customers, and to encourage greater bus patronage. The majority of the project costs will be funded through a contribution from the 2018/19 Business Rates Retention Pilot.

1.47 Bridges Gyratory Scheme - £121,000

Residual funding from the Bridges Gyratory Scheme, which was completed in 2017, will be used to build a barrier to prevent flood water entering the lower end of Medway Street through the A229 underpass.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Agree the capital strategy principles, funding arrangements and detailed proposals as set out in section 2 above.
 - 2.2 Amend or delete some or all of the proposals, and agree alternative proposals.
 - 2.3 Defer a decision on the proposals to this Committee's meeting on 12 February 2020.
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3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 The preferred option is that the Committee agrees the proposals set out in section 2. Whilst a final decision is not required until Council sets a budget on 26 February 2020, an early decision by this Committee will allow advance planning to commence and will potentially allow the benefits of investment to be realised more quickly.
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4. RISKS

- 4.1 From now on, the capital programme will primarily be funded through prudential borrowing. Many of the schemes outlined above are projected to be self-funding. However, this assumes that the income assumptions on which they are based are reliable. In an uncertain economic environment, there is a significant risk that the cost of borrowing and the requirement to make provision for repayment will not be covered.
 - 4.2 The scale of the capital programme – over £100 million - will require considerable capacity for delivery and project management.
 - 4.3 At present it is anticipated that funding will be available for the capital programme. In the past, local authorities have relied for funding on the Public Works Loan Board. PWLB borrowing has recently become more expensive, and whilst alternative sources of finance are currently available at lower rates, there is a risk that funding could become more expensive generally, thus putting at risk the viability of more marginal schemes.
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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 23 July 2019 and has subsequently received further reports on the development of the budget for 2020/21.
- 5.2 Consultation is currently being carried out on the broader budget proposals for 2020/21. Individual Service Committees are considering the budget proposals relating to capital schemes within their areas of responsibility.

There will be an opportunity for Policy and Resources Committee to consider the outcomes of consultation at its meeting on 12th February 2020, before submitting final budget proposals to Council.

- 5.3 Public consultation on the budget has been carried out, as described in the report on revenue budget proposals elsewhere on the Committee's agenda. This identified that the most popular area amongst respondents for new investment was infrastructure, with flood prevention and the street scene cited as examples in the survey to illustrate what 'infrastructure' means.
- 5.4 As can be seen, the capital programme includes a significant sum for flood prevention. So far as the street scene is concerned, the Council has just completed a £2.8 million project to upgrade Week Street and Gabriels Hill. In general, the capital programme will make a significant contribution to the borough's infrastructure in its own right, as well as unlocking further investment in infrastructure from partners.
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6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The timetable for setting the budget for 2020/21 is set out below.

<i>Date</i>	<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Action</i>
January 2020	All Service Committees	Consider 20/21 budget proposals
12 February	Policy and Resources Committee	Agree 20/21 budget proposals for recommendation to Council
26 February 2020	Council	Approve 20/21 budget

7. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix A: Existing Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2023/24
 - Appendix B: Estimated Capital Resources 2020/21 to 2024/25
 - Appendix C: Proposed Capital Programme 2020/21 to 2024/25
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8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers.

Existing Capital Programme 2019/20 to 2023/24

	19/20	20/21	21/22	22/23	23/24	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Brunswick Street - Net Cost	3,441	-100				3,341
Union Street - Net Cost	2,085	-1,843				242
Indicative Schemes	4,124	5,426	3,750	3,750		17,050
Council Affordable Housing			3,750	3,750	7,500	15,000
Disabled Facilities Grants	1,570	800	800	800	800	4,770
Temporary Accommodation	3,236					3,236
Housing Incentives	1,040	175	175	175	175	1,740
Gypsy Site Improvement Works	42					42
CCTV Upgrade and Relocation	150					150
Commercial Waste	180					180
Street Scene Investment	147	25				172
Flood Action Plan	1,000	63				1,063
Communities, Housing & Environment Total	17,015	4,546	8,475	8,475	8,475	46,986
Improvements to Play Areas	422					422
Crematorium and Cemetery Projects	140	130				270
Mote Park Improvements	374					374
Mote Park Visitor Centre	2,122					2,122
Mote Park Lake - Dam Works	267	1,650	100			2,017
Other Parks Improvements	100					100
Museum Development Plan	11	125	200	64		401
Economic Regeneration & Leisure Total	3,437	1,905	300	64		5,706
High Street Regeneration	547					547
Asset Management / Corporate Property	1,417	467	175	175	175	2,409
Feasibility Studies	113	50	50	50	50	313
Infrastructure Delivery	1,200	600	600	600	600	3,600
Software / PC Replacement	124	287				411
Digital Projects	20	20	20	20	20	100
Acquisition of Commercial Assets	24,850	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	34,850
Kent Medical Campus-Innovation Centre	649	8,250	1,500			10,399
Maidstone East	520					520
Policy & Resources Total	29,440	12,174	4,845	3,345	3,345	53,149
Mall Bus Station Redevelopment	1,540					1,540
Bridges Gyrotory Scheme	121					121
Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Total	1,661					1,661
Sub-Total	51,553	18,625	13,620	11,884	11,820	107,502
Section 106 Contributions / CIL	201	280	63	754	60	1,358
Total	51,754	18,905	13,683	12,638	11,880	108,860

ESTIMATED CAPITAL PROGRAMME RESOURCES 2020/21 - 2024/25

Source of Funding	Estimate					Total £000
	20/21 £000	21/22 £000	22/23 £000	23/24 £000	24/25 £000	
New Homes Bonus	3,881	4,472	2,601	1,373	1,373	13,700
Capital Grants (Disabled Facilities)	800	800	800	800	800	4,000
External Capital Grants	0	4,840	0	0	0	4,840
S 106	57	63	480	59	69	728
Internal Borrowing	530	517	537	568	580	2,732
Prudential Borrowing	32,997	11,604	13,262	12,284	12,272	82,418
TOTAL	38,265	22,296	17,680	15,084	15,094	108,418

Proposed Capital Programme 2020/21 to 2024/25

	19/20	Five Year Plan					Total
	Projected £000	20/21 £000	21/22 £000	22/23 £000	23/24 £000	24/25 £000	£000
Brunswick Street - Net Cost	2,514	-230	-579				-809
Union Street - Net Cost	975	-550	-2,141				-2,691
Springfield Mill	2,275	1,077	36				1,112
Granada House extension	0	1,664					1,664
Indicative Schemes	0	8,042	11,212	6,796			26,050
<i>Sub-total Housing Development and Regeneration</i>	<i>5,765</i>	<i>10,002</i>	<i>8,528</i>	<i>6,796</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>0</i>	<i>25,326</i>
Affordable Housing Programme	1,040	275	5,075	5,175	10,175	10,175	30,875
Acquisitions Officer	0	80	80	80	80	80	400
Disabled Facilities Grant	1,570	800	800	800	800	800	4,000
Temporary Accommodation	3,236	2,190					2,190
Flood Action Plan	100	300	300	300			900
Crematorium and Cemetery Development Plan	140	130					130
Electric Operational Vehicles		100					100
Housing IT System		50					50
Street Scene Investment	147	25					25
Installation of Public Water Fountains		15					15
Gypsy Site Improvement Works	42						0
CCTV Upgrade and Relocation	150						0
Commercial Waste	180						0
Sub-total Communities, Housing & Environment	12,371	13,967	14,783	13,151	11,055	11,055	64,011
Mote Park Visitor Centre and Estate Services Building	156	2,000	740				2,740
Mote Park Dam Works	267	1,650	100				1,750
Improvements to Play Areas	422						0
Other Parks Improvements	100						0
Museum Development Plan	11	125	225	39			389
Sub-total Economic Regeneration and Leisure	957	3,775	1,065	39	0	0	4,879
Acquisition of Commercial Assets	24,850	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	2,500	12,500
Kent Medical Campus - Innovation Centre	649	8,250	1,500				9,750
Lockmeadow Ongoing Investment	0	4,000	1,000				5,000
Garden Community	200	1,665	340	465	425	425	3,320
Infrastructure Delivery	1,200	600	600	600	600	600	3,000
Asset Management / Corp Property	1,017	1,430	175	175	175	175	2,130
Biodiversity and Climate Change	0	1,000					1,000
Software / PC Replacement	124	200	200	200	200	200	1,000
Feasibility Studies	113	50	50	50	50	50	250
Digital Projects	20	20	20	20	20	20	100
High Street Regeneration	547						0
Sub-total Policy & Resources	28,720	19,715	6,385	4,010	3,970	3,970	38,050
Mall Bus Station Redevelopment	250	750					750
Bridges Gyatory Scheme	121						0
Sub-total Strategic Planning & Infrastructure	371	750	0	0	0	0	750
Sub-Total	42,419	38,208	22,233	17,200	15,025	15,025	107,690
Section 106 Contributions	28	57	63	480	59	69	728
TOTAL	42,447	38,265	22,296	17,680	15,084	15,094	108,418

**Policy and Resources
Committee**

22 January 2020

Council Tax Base and Collection Fund Distribution 2020/21

Final Decision-Maker	Policy & Resources Committee
Lead Head of Service	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Chris Hartgrove, Interim Head of Finance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

The Council has a statutory duty to:

- Annually determine its Council Tax Base during the period 1st December to 31st January preceding the financial year, and notify major precepting authorities; and
- Annually estimate the Council Tax element of its year-end Collection Fund balance by the 15th January preceding the financial year, including determining a recommended distribution of the overall surplus or deficit in accordance with the prescribed methodology.

These are both functions of the Policy and Resources Committee.

Utilising the information held on the Council's Revenues systems, and supported by an underlying set of assumptions based on professional and local experience, the following outcomes are highlighted:

- A Council Tax Base for 2020/21 of 63,319.8 is proposed (covered in Section 2 of the report, including Appendices 1 and 2); and
- A year-end (Council Tax) Collection Fund balance (@ 31st March 2020) of £130,428 has been estimated, with the Maidstone Borough Council share being £20,431 (covered in Section 3 of the report, including Appendix 3).

In accordance with statute, and established protocol, the resulting Committee decision(s) will be reported to the major preceptors and the Maidstone parish councils. This information is essential to the budget preparation and financial planning processes of the billing authority (Maidstone Borough Council) and its preceptors.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

- 1) In accordance with the Local Authority (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012:
 - The amount calculated by Maidstone Borough Council as its Council Tax Base for the year 2020/21 shall be 63,319.8 (as presented in Paragraph 2.7); and
 - The amount calculated by Maidstone Borough Council as the Council Tax Base for each parish area for the year 2020/21 shall be as identified in **Appendix 2**.
- 2) That the 2019/20 Council Tax projection and proposed distribution summarised in Paragraphs 3.7 to 3.8 (and detailed in **Appendix 3**) is approved.

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Policy & Resources Committee	22 January 2020

Council Tax Base and Collection Fund Distribution 2020/21

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	In helping to establish the Council's baseline funding from Council Tax, the recommendations will help underpin the achievement of corporate priorities.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Cross Cutting Objectives	As noted above, the recommendations will help underpin the achievement of corporate priorities; this includes the cross-cutting objectives contained therein.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Risk Management	See Section 5 below.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Financial	The financial implications are the subject of this report.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Staffing	None.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Legal	<p>Local Authority (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012. Failure to accept the recommendations without agreeing suitable alternatives may place the Council in breach this Act.</p> <p>Billing authorities are required by the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) Regulations 1992 to estimate any surplus/deficit on their Collection Fund for the year. Accepting the recommended projection in <i>Appendix 3</i> will enable the Council to meet this requirement.</p>	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no specific privacy or data protection issues to address.	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Equalities	No impact identified.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Public Health	None.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Crime and Disorder	None.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Procurement	None.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

2. COUNCIL TAX BASE

Introduction

- 2.1 The Council Tax Base is the measure of the taxable capacity of an area, for the purposes of calculating the Council Tax. It represents the estimated number of Band D equivalent chargeable dwellings for the year, after allowing for discounts, exemptions, premiums and the Council Tax Support scheme. It also takes into account an estimated Council Tax collection rate to allow for bad debts. The level of Council Tax subsequently set must be determined using the Council Tax Base figure.

Council Tax Base: the legal requirements

- 2.2 The Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012 make arrangements for the setting of the Council Tax. The arrangements include the determination of the Council Tax Base, which requires the approval of the Policy and Resources Committee. The decision must be notified to the major precepting authorities.
- 2.3 The major precepting authorities in the Maidstone billing area for 2020/21 are Kent County Council, Kent Police and Kent Fire & Rescue Service. Precepts are also levied by 41 parish councils.
- 2.4 The Regulations require the Council to determine its Council Tax base for 2020/21 during the period 1st December 2019 to 31st January 2020.

Council Tax Base: the 2020/21 calculation

- 2.5 The starting point in determining the Council Tax Base for 2020/21 is the valuation information supplied by the Valuation Office Agency (VOA) on 9th September 2019 and the latest available information on discounts, premiums and the Council Tax Support scheme available as at 1st October 2019. This is the basis of producing the "CTB1" (Government) return, which is a mandatory requirement for all billing authorities. The Maidstone Borough Council CTB1 return for October 2019 is attached at **Appendix 1**, and shows a net Council Tax Base of 63,237.5.
- 2.6 For the purposes of determining the Council Tax Base for 2020/21, the CTB1 figure is adjusted to reflect anticipated movements in the tax base in the forthcoming year. The most notable factor – especially in a housing growth area such as Maidstone – is anticipated housing development. Based on intelligence supplied by the Council's Revenues Department, an estimate has therefore been made, on a parish by parish basis, of anticipated movements in the number of dwellings, including their assumed bandings.
- 2.7 Adjustments are then made for anticipated allowances and non-collection (assumed at 1% based on established collection patterns in Maidstone), which results in a proposed Council Tax Base of 63,319.8. The calculation is summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Council Tax Base Calculation 2020/21

Description	
Tax Base ("CTB1" – Appendix 1)	63,237.5
New Dwellings (Average: Band D and time)	799.9
Adjustment for potential allowances	(80.0)
Adjustment for non-collection (1%)	(637.6)
Proposed Tax Base 2020/21	63,319.8

2.8 The proposed Council Tax Base for the parish councils in Maidstone is analysed at **Appendix 2**. Each parish will be notified of their tax base, which will enable them to set their individual precepts for 2020/21.

3. COLLECTION FUND DISTRIBUTION: COUNCIL TAX

Introduction

- 3.1 Section 89(1) Local Government Finance Act 1988 requires Maidstone Borough Council (as a "billing authority") to establish and maintain a Collection Fund.
- 3.2 The purpose of the Collection Fund is to isolate the income and expenditure relating to Council Tax and Business Rates.
- 3.3 The detailed arrangements for the administration of Council Tax and Business Rates funds between the billing authority and its major preceptors are contained in the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) Regulations 1992. Separate funds are maintained for Council Tax and Business Rates. This report focuses exclusively on Council Tax.
- 3.4 Specifically (in accordance with Regulation 10), by 15th January each year, the Council is required to make an estimate of the anticipated surplus or deficit on its Collection Fund as at 31st March. The resulting balance (whether a surplus or deficit) must then be taken into account the following financial year. In estimating the balance, as well as considering in-year Council Tax receipts and payments, account also needs to be taken of any difference between the estimate for the previous year and the actual outturn.
- 3.5 The estimated balance (whether a surplus or deficit) is required to be distributed between the billing authority and its major preceptors (in Maidstone these are Kent County Council, Kent Police and Kent Fire & Rescue Service) in proportion to the individual precepts applicable to the estimate (i.e. any distributions in 2020/21 will be in proportion to the 2019/20 precepts).

(Council Tax) Collection Fund Distribution: the 2020/21 calculation

- 3.6 The surplus/deficit available for distribution comprises two key elements as follows:
- Projected surplus/deficit 2019/20; added to
 - Balance to Carry Forward (net of anticipated surplus/deficit distribution for 2018/19).
- 3.7 The detailed calculations for the surplus/deficit distribution are attached at **Appendix 3**. The outcome is a projected surplus of £130,428 as summarised in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Estimated Council Tax Surplus as @ 31st March 2020

Description	Value
	£'s
Council Tax Requirement 2019/20	(115,506,203)
Projected Council Tax Income 2019/20	115,855,521
Projected Surplus for 2019/20	349,318
Balance to Carry Forward – Surplus/(Deficit)	(218,890)
Projected Surplus for 2019/20	349,318
Projected Surplus as @ 31st March 2020	130,428

- 3.8 The detailed distribution of the surplus between the preceptors is presented in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Distribution of Council Tax Surplus 2020/21

Preceptor	Amount	Proportion
	£'s	%
Maidstone Borough Council	20,431	15.66
Kent County Council	91,021	69.79
Kent Police	13,530	10.37
Kent Fire & Rescue Service	5,447	4.18
Totals	130,428	100.0

3 AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 **Option 1:** Do nothing. *Not recommended*. Determining a Council Tax Base and the estimated Collection Fund balance (including an appropriate basis for distribution) are statutory requirements.
- 3.2 **Option 2:** Approve the recommended Council Tax Base and Council Tax projection and distribution. ***Recommended***. As well as achieving statutory compliance, the recommendations are based on information extracted from the Council's established Revenues systems and supported by a robust set of assumptions (e.g. a 1% allowance for non-collection is based on many years' experience of Council Tax collection in Maidstone).
- 3.3 **Option 3:** Approve either the recommended Council Tax Base or the Council Tax projection and distribution. *Not recommended*. This approach would result in the Council failing to meet at least one statutory obligation.
- 3.4 **Option 4:** Do not approve the recommended Council Tax Base and Council Tax projection and distribution; instead proposing and approving an alternative set of figures and/or assumptions. *Not recommended*. The figures and underlying assumptions supporting the recommendations (as well as being robust as described in Option 2) are consistent with, and support, the Council's adopted Medium-Term Financial Strategy (key to setting and maintaining a balanced budget).
- 3.5 **Option 5:** Do not approve either the recommended Council Tax Base or the Council Tax projection and distribution; instead proposing and approving an alternative set of figures and/or assumptions. *Not recommended*. As explained in Option 4, this would potentially compromise the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
-

4 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is **Option 2** for the following reasons:
- Statutory compliance would be achieved
 - The recommendations are based on information extracted from the Council's established Revenues systems and supported by a robust set of assumptions; and
 - The approach is consistent with, and supports, the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy.
-

5 RISK

5.1 The two most significant risks are as follows:

- '*Over-estimation*' – the risk that either (or both) of the Council Tax Base or the estimated (Council Tax) Collection Fund balance could overstated. Although any over-estimation on the Council Tax balance could be recouped in subsequent years, there would be a reduction in the Council's cash flow in the medium-term (leading to loss of interest receipts etc.); or alternatively
- '*Under-estimation*' – the risk that either (or both) of the Council Tax Base or the estimated (Council Tax) Collection Fund balance could understated. This would lead to an increased balance on the Collection Fund. Although good for the Council's cash flow, there are potentially some negative consequences. In particular, the strategic and financial planning decisions of both the billing authority and its preceptors could be erroneously influenced, leading to sub-optimal decision-making (e.g. cuts to public services could be introduced based on false assumptions about future funding levels).

5.2 Both major risks noted above have been mitigated based on the financial information and supporting assumptions embedded in the recommendations. In addition, Members can be assured that the statutory processes, and approach taken, has been established over many years.

6 CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 Direct consultation on the issues contained in this report is not required, although the annual statutory public consultation on the Budget concluded in November 2019 (with the results set to inform the eventual Budget recommendation to full Council in February 2020).

7 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

7.1 The approved Council Tax Bases will be used to:

- Notify relevant preceptors to inform their own financial planning processes; and
- Form a basis for setting the 2020/21 budget for Maidstone Borough Council, and for setting the Council Tax.

7.2 An updated estimated surplus/deficit on the Council Tax element of the Collection Fund as at 31st March 2020, will be notified to the preceptors on 23rd January 2020 (a provisional estimate has already been notified in accordance with the 15th January 2020 deadline).

8 REPORT APPENDICES

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

- **Appendix 1:** *Council Tax Base Calculation 2020/21 ("CTB1" October 2019)*
 - **Appendix 2:** *Parish Tax Bases 2020/21*
 - **Appendix 3:** *Council Tax Balance Forecast/Distribution (@ 31 March 2020)*
-

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 There are no background papers.

Council Tax Base Calculation 2020/21 ("CTB1" October 2019)

CTB(October 2019)

Calculation of Council Tax Base

Please e-mail to : ctb.sats@communities.gov.uk
Please enter your details after checking that you have selected the correct local authority name

Ver 1.0

Please select your local authority's name from this list

Maldstone
Maldon
Mabern Hills
Manchester
Mansfield
Medway

Check that this is your authority : **Maldstone**
E-code : **E2237**
Local authority contact name : **Stephen Smith**
Local authority contact telephone number : **01622 602493**
Local authority contact e-mail address : stephan.smith@malden.gov.uk

CTB(October 2019) form for **Maldstone**

Completed forms should be received by MHCLG by Friday 11 October 2019

Dwellings shown on the Valuation List for the authority on Monday 9 September 2019	Band A entitled to disabled relief reduction COLUMN 1	Band A COLUMN 2	Band B COLUMN 3	Band C COLUMN 4	Band D COLUMN 5	Band E COLUMN 6	Band F COLUMN 7	Band G COLUMN 8	Band H COLUMN 9	TOTAL COLUMN 10
Part 1										
1. Total number of dwellings on the Valuation List		4,301	9,053	19,647	18,828	9,911	5,651	4,154	372	71,917.0
2. Number of dwellings on valuation list exempt on 7 October 2019 (Class B & D to W exemptions)		206	151	411	233	93	38	24	3	1,159.0
3. Number of demolished dwellings and dwellings outside area of authority on 7 October 2019 (please see notes)		0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	2.0
4. Number of chargeable dwellings on 7 October 2019 (treating demolished dwellings etc as exempt) (lines 1-2-3)		4,095	8,902	19,236	18,593	9,818	5,613	4,130	369	70,756.0
5. Number of chargeable dwellings in line 4 subject to disabled reduction on 7 October 2019	0	3	14	63	103	77	47	37	18	362.0
6. Number of dwellings effectively subject to council tax for this band by virtue of disabled relief (line 5 after reduction)	3	14	63	103	77	47	37	18		362.0
7. Number of chargeable dwellings adjusted in accordance with lines 5 and 6 (lines 4-5+6 or in the case of column 1, line 6)	3	4,106	8,951	19,276	18,567	9,788	5,603	4,111	351	70,756.0
8. Number of dwellings in line 7 entitled to a single adult household 25% discount on 7 October 2019	1	2,453	4,199	6,613	4,847	2,030	850	546	36	21,575.0
9. Number of dwellings in line 7 entitled to a 25% discount on 7 October 2019 due to all but one resident being disregarded for council tax purposes	0	17	47	180	222	124	45	34	0	669.0
10. Number of dwellings in line 7 entitled to a 50% discount on 7 October 2019 due to all residents being disregarded for council tax purposes	0	1	2	11	16	6	10	21	10	77.0
11. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as second homes on 7 October 2019 (b/fwd from Flex Empty tab)		21	16	33	39	21	18	28	8	184.0
12. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty and receiving a zero% discount on 7 October 2019 (b/fwd from Flex Empty tab)		86	147	215	165	80	30	24	6	753.0
13. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty and receiving a discount on 7 October 2019 and not shown in line 12 (b/fwd from Flex Empty tab)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
14. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty and being charged the Empty Homes Premium on 7 October 2019 (b/fwd from Flex Empty tab)		15	27	36	22	13	7	5	0	125.0
15. Total number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty on 7 October 2019 (lines 12, 13 & 14).		101	174	251	187	93	37	29	6	878.0
16. Number of dwellings that are classed as empty on 7 October 2019 and have been for more than 6 months. NB These properties should have already been included in line 15 above.		60	91	92	85	52	26	23	4	433.0
16a. The number of dwellings included in line 16 above which are empty on 7 October 2019 because of the flooding that occurred between 1 December 2013 and 31 March 2014 and are only empty because of the flooding.		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
16b. The number of dwellings included in line 16 above which are empty on 7 October 2019 because of the flooding that occurred between 1 December 2015 and 31 March 2016 and are only empty because of the flooding.		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
17. Number of dwellings that are classed as empty on 7 October 2019 and have been for more than 6 months and fall to be treated under empty homes discount class D (formerly Class A exemptions). NB These properties should have already been included in line 15 above. Do NOT include any dwellings included in line 16a and 16b above.		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
18 Line 16 - line 16a - line 16b - line 17. This is the equivalent of line 18 on the CTB(October 2018) and will be used in the calculation of the New Homes Bonus.		60	91	92	85	52	26	23	4	433.0

Appendix 1

19. Number of dwellings in line 7 where there is liability to pay 100% council tax before Family Annexe discount	2	1,620	4,676	12,435	13,460	7,615	4,691	3,505	305	48,309.0
20. Number of dwellings in line 7 that are assumed to be subject to a discount or a premium before Family Annexe discount	1	2,486	4,275	6,841	5,107	2,173	912	606	46	22,447.0
21. Reduction in taxbase as a result of the Family Annexe discount (b/fwd from Family Annexe tab)	0.0	18.5	5.0	4.0	1.5	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	30.5
22. Number of dwellings equivalents after applying discounts and premiums to calculate taxbase	2.8	3,484.5	7,910.5	17,603.8	17,312.3	9,258.0	5,381.3	3,960.5	337.0	65,250.5
23. Ratio to band D	5/9	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9	
24. Total number of band D equivalents (to 1 decimal place) (line 22 x line 23)	1.5	2,323.0	6,152.6	15,647.8	17,312.3	11,315.3	7,772.9	6,600.8	674.0	67,800.2
25. Number of band D equivalents of contributions in lieu (in respect of Class O exempt dwellings) in 2019-20 (to 1 decimal place)										196.0
26. Tax base (to 1 decimal place) (line 24 col 10 + line 25)										67,996.2
Part 2										
27. Number of dwellings equivalents after applying discounts and premiums to calculate tax base (Line 22)	2.75	3,484.50	7,910.50	17,603.75	17,312.25	9,258.00	5,381.25	3,960.50	337.00	65,250.5
28. Reduction in taxbase as a result of local council tax support (b/fwd from CT Support tab)	0.74	896.63	1,473.72	1,945.43	868.53	237.96	63.14	19.50	0.96	5,506.6
29. Number of dwellings equivalents after applying discounts, premiums and local tax support to calculate taxbase	2.0	2,587.9	6,436.8	15,658.3	16,443.7	9,020.0	5,318.1	3,941.0	336.0	59,743.9
30. Ratio to band D	5/9	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9	
31. Total number of band D equivalents after allowance for council tax support (to 1 decimal place) (line 29 x line 30)	1.1	1,725.2	5,006.4	13,918.5	16,443.7	11,024.5	7,681.7	6,568.3	672.1	63,041.5
32. Number of band D equivalents of contributions in lieu (in respect of Class O exempt dwellings) in 2019-20 (to 1 decimal place) (line 25)										196.0
33. Tax base after allowance for council tax support (to 1 decimal place) (line 31 col 10 + line 32)										63,237.5
<p>Certificate of Chief Financial Officer</p> <p>I certify that the information provided on this form is based on the dwellings shown in the Valuation List for my authority on 9 September 2019 and that it accurately reflects information available to me about exemptions, demolished dwellings, disabled relief, discounts and premiums applicable on 7 October 2019 and, where appropriate, has been completed in a manner consistent with the form for 2018.</p> <p>Chief Financial Officer : Date :</p>										

Appendix 2

Parish Tax Bases 2020/21

Parish	Tax Base (Band D Unadjusted)	Adjustment (Net Changes)	Non Collection	Net Tax Base 2020/21
Barming	754.0	4.8	-7.5	751.3
Bearsted	3652.9	3.1	-36.5	3,619.5
Bicknor	42.2	0.0	-0.4	41.8
Boughton Malherbe	226.1	8.6	-2.2	232.6
Boughton Monchelsea	1,652.1	36.5	-16.2	1,672.4
Boxley	3956.7	17.9	-39.4	3,935.2
Bredhurst	185.0	8.6	-1.8	191.9
Broomfield & Kingswood	727.2	3.1	-7.2	723.0
Chart Sutton	417.2	1.2	-4.2	414.3
Collier Street	368.2	8.7	-3.6	373.3
Coxheath	1,717.8	51.0	-16.7	1,752.1
Detling	387.1	1.8	-3.9	385.1
Downswood	861.2	0.0	-8.6	852.6
East Sutton	147.4	0.0	-1.5	145.9
Farleigh East	668.4	3.0	-6.7	664.8
Farleigh West	232	2.5	-2.3	232.2
Frinted	69.4	0.0	-0.7	68.7
Harrietsham	1325.7	29.7	-13.0	1,342.4
Headcorn	1,676.3	55.4	-16.2	1,715.5
Hollingbourne	473.6	8.0	-4.7	477.0
Hucking	34.4	0.0	-0.3	34.1
Hunton	314.4	0.6	-3.1	311.9
Langley	504.2	0.6	-5.0	499.8
Leeds	339.9	1.8	-3.4	338.4
Lenham	1,421.8	24.9	-14.0	1,432.7
Linton	93.2	1.2	-0.9	93.5
Loose	1,145.7	4.3	-11.4	1,138.6
Marden	1942.2	32.1	-19.1	1,955.2
Nettlestead	305.0	1.7	-3.0	303.6
Otham	329.6	11.2	-3.2	337.6
Otterden	93.2	0.0	-0.9	92.3
Staplehurst	2442.6	61.1	-23.8	2,479.9
Stockbury	314.8	0.0	-3.1	311.7
Sutton Valence	732.7	8.5	-7.2	734.0
Teston	314.5	0.6	-3.1	312.0
Thurnham	573.3	1.9	-5.7	569.5
Tovil	1,479.8	3.0	-14.8	1,468.0
Ulcombe	400.5	4.2	-4.0	400.8
Wichling	58.8	0.0	-0.6	58.2
Wormshill	99.8	0.0	-1.0	98.8
Yalding	984.3	14.1	-9.7	988.7
	33,465.22	416.04	- 330.49	33,550.77

Council Tax Balance Forecast/Distribution (@ 31 March 2020)

Appendix 3

	£	%
Demands on the fund (2018/19)		
Maidstone Borough Council budget requirement	18,093,294	15.66%
Kent County Council (including adult social care charge)	80,607,441	69.79%
Kent Police	11,981,751	10.37%
Kent Fire & Rescue	4,823,717	4.18%
Council Tax Requirement	115,506,203	100.00%
Debit raised		
Charges raised	138,017,856	
Less:		
Council Tax Support	-8,747,901	
Single Persons Discount	-9,481,502	
Disabled Relief	-136,152	
Empty Relief	-44,191	
Other exemptions and disregards	-2,728,345	
Other Local Discounts	-60,511	
Plus:		
Second Home Premium	206,525	
	117,025,779	
Less allowance for bad and doubtful debts	-1,170,258	
Projected Council Tax Income for 2019/20	115,855,521	
Projected Surplus for the Year	349,318	
Utilisation of fund balance		
	£	
Actual Surplus at 31 March 2019	2,340,195	
Less anticipated surplus distributed to preceptors:		
Maidstone Borough Council	-409,792	
Kent County Council	-1,794,553	
Kent Police	-245,256	
Kent Fire & Rescue	-109,484	
Total surplus distributed to preceptors during 2018/19	<u>-2,559,085</u>	
Balance to Carry Forward	-218,890	
Projected Surplus for 2018/19	349,318	
Cumulative surplus as at 31 March 2020	130,428	
Distribution of surplus		
Maidstone Borough Council	20,431	15.66%
Kent County Council	91,021	69.79%
Kent Police	13,530	10.37%
Kent Fire & Rescue	5,447	4.18%
Total projected surplus as at 31 March 2019	130,428	100.00%

Business Rates Retention (Pilot) – Update (31/12/19)

Final Decision-Maker	Policy & Resources Committee
Lead Head of Service	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Chris Hartgrove, Interim Head of Finance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

Income generated from Business Rates growth and retained locally as part of the Business Rates Retention (BRR) pilot in 2018/19 exceeded original expectations with the “Financial Sustainability Fund” (FSF) eventually accumulating total funding of £1,130,000 compared to the £640,000 initially anticipated.

The Policy and Resources Committee (the Committee) opted to fund 13 (one-off) projects aimed at enhancing the Council’s strategic objectives from the originally assumed FSF funding of £640,000.

The surplus in the FSF – supplemented by a 2018/19 budget surplus – has subsequently allowed the Committee (at its June 2019 meeting) to approve an additional 16 (one-off) projects aimed at further enhancing the Council’s strategic objectives.

The Committee has received a series of updates on the original 13 projects and the purpose of this report is to provide a further update on the original (“2018/19”) projects as well as informing the Committee of progress on the additional (“2019/20”) projects.

Paragraph 2.5 shows that positive progress continues with the 2018/19 projects. As at 31st December 2019, spending of £417,500 had been incurred against the original budget of £640,000. Final expenditure of £621,000 is forecast, resulting in a surplus of £19,000 (anticipated in funding the 2019/20 projects). Updated detail is included at **Appendix 1**.

Paragraph 2.14 shows that – as expected (with projects receiving approval 26th June 2019) – as at 31st December 2019, spending on the 2019/20 projects has been relatively limited (at £75,300). Nevertheless positive progress is being made across all 16 projects (which is summarised in **Appendix 2**).

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee notes the further progress with the 2018/19 BRR pilot projects (Paragraph 2.5, including **Appendix 1**).
2. That the Committee notes the progress with the 2019/20 BRR pilot projects (Paragraph 2.14, including **Appendix 2**).

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Policy & Resources Committee	24 January 2018
Policy & Resources Committee	28 March 2018 (approval of 2018/19 projects)
Policy & Resources Committee	24 July 2018 (update)
Policy & Resources Committee	23 January 2019 (update)
Policy & Resources Committee	24 April 2019 (update)
Member Briefing	13 June 2019
Policy & Resources Committee	26 June 2019 (approval of 2019/20 additional projects)
Policy & Resources Committee	23 July 2019 (update)
Policy & Resources Committee	23 October 2019
Policy & Resources Committee	22 January 2020

Business Rates Retention (Pilot) – Update (31/12/19)

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Accepting the recommendations will continue to improve the Council's ability to achieve its corporate priorities (with each individual project tailored and focussed on a minimum of at least one of the Strategic Plan's four objectives).	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Cross Cutting Objectives	The projects in the report support the achievement of the Council's cross-cutting objectives (e.g. the "Go Green, Go Wild" project will help to ensure that "Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected").	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Risk Management	See Section 5 below.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Financial	The subject of the report.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Staffing	The delivery of some of the projects in the report requires the recruitment or procurement of additional staff resources. In recognising that the funding source does not form part of the Council's core funding and is 'one-off' in nature, the financial risk is being balanced through the recruitment of temporary posts and/or alternative ways of procuring additional staff resources (e.g. through flexible working by existing members of staff).	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Legal	The Council has a statutory obligation to set a balanced budget. Allocation of resources in the way set out in this report supports achievement of a balanced budget.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Privacy and Data Protection	None.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Equalities	Where appropriate, Equalities Impact Assessments (EIAs) have been carried out.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Public Health	A number of Business Rates Retention Pilot projects are having a positive impact on the population's health or that of individuals.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Crime and Disorder	A range of projects could have an indirect impact on crime and disorder (e.g. community and development-related initiatives often include 'in-built' positive crime and disorder 'spin offs'). More directly, the Domestic Abuse Awareness project is directly aimed at reducing a specific area of crime.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Procurement	The procurement of services in the course of delivering the projects will continue to be undertaken in accordance with the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

2. BACKGROUND AND INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 Members of the Committee will recall that the Kent Business Rates Pool (joined by Medway, Dover and Sevenoaks) was successful in a bid to become a 100% Business Rate Retention (BRR) pilot for 2018/19, meaning that 100% of Business Rates growth could be retained in the area, with the Government Levy requirement removed completely.
- 2.2 Locally it was decided that additional income generated from Business Rates growth was to be split 70:30 between a "Financial Sustainability Fund" (FSF) and a "Housing and Commercial Growth Fund" (HCGF). This report covers the FSF.

Financial Sustainability Fund (FSF): Original Allocation

- 2.3 The overall FSF is shared between Pool/Pilot members (to spend as they wish) comprising a basic allocation, enhanced by relative population and historic Business Rates growth.

- 2.4 The original Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) share of the FSF assumed for 2018/19 was £640,000. Consequently – in March 2018 – the Policy and Resources Committee agreed to fund 13 (one-off) projects aimed at enhancing the Council’s strategic objectives.
- 2.5 The projects were divided into tranches and funding for each tranche was released as soon as it was considered prudent to do so (as the level of Business Rates retained met or exceeded original forecasts) with regular updates provided to this Committee throughout 2018/19. The table below summarises the latest (financial) position (as at 31st December 2019) on those original projects (further detail is provided at Appendix 1).

MBC Business Rates Retention/FSF Projects 2018/19 (@ 31st December 2019)					
Ref.	Project	Budget	Spend	Forecast	Variance
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
1	Housing First and Rough Sleepers	80	5.7	80	0
2	Regeneration Opportunity Areas	80	80	80	0
3	Property Asset Review	55	55	55	0
4	Members' Community Grant	60	46	46	14
5	Predictive Analytics and Preventing Homelessness	80	80	80	0
6	Housing Delivery Partnership	40	23.5	40	0
7	Go Green, Go Wild	90	40	90	0
8	Maidstone Business Capital of Kent – marketing strategy	35	35	35	0
9	Staplehurst Village Centre Masterplan	15	0.4	15	0
10	Maidstone Housing Design Guide	40	18.3	40	0
11	Electric Vehicle Charging Points	20	20	20	0
12	Bus Station Improvement – feasibility study	10	10	10	0
13	Data analytics for Inclusive Growth	35	3.6	30	5
Totals		640	417.5	621	19

- 2.6 The table shows continued progress in delivering the initial (2018/19) projects, with a projected saving of £19,000 against the original budget of £640,000. Further detail on progress is summarised in **Appendix 1**.

Financial Sustainability Fund (FSF): Additional Projects

- 2.7 As previously reported to this Committee, the level of Business Rates retained in 2018/19 consistently exceeded expectations throughout the year, with the MBC share of the FSF eventually reaching £1,130,000 by year end, rather than the original assumption of £640,000. The FSF shares for all Pool members was bolstered by the savings realised as a consequence of the 'nil Levy' requirement for 100% Pilot schemes.

- 2.8 The enhanced FSF allocation for MBC provided an opportunity to fund additional (one-off) projects in further support of the Council's strategic priorities, including potentially new priorities contained within the updated Strategic Plan (2019-2045) adopted in February 2019.
- 2.9 Based on April 2019 projections, net additional resources of £509,000 were made available from the FSF to fund additional projects and senior officers considered up to 30 different projects, with a shortlist of 15 projects (total value of circa £700,000) eventually drawn up by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and considered by councillors at a Briefing held on 13th June 2019.
- 2.10 A positive consensus emerged from the Briefing with all projects receiving at least some support from councillors. Consequently it was agreed that officers would further develop and prioritise the short-listed proposals, including giving consideration as to how the potential funding gap (due to a resource requirement in excess of £509,000) might be bridged.
- 2.11 The project list was reviewed and re-prioritised as requested by councillors with 'inward facing' projects removed from the FSF proposals and funded from other sources.
- 2.12 The Policy and Resources Committee – at its meeting on 26th June 2019 – subsequently considered proposals to fund up to 13 projects (total value £667,950), including the option to draw on additional funds to meet any potential shortfall in resources in the FSF (e.g. from the anticipated budget surplus for 2018/19). The Committee approved funding for all 13 projects (subject to reduced funding for one project – "Arterial Route Improvements/A20"), along with three further projects, that were proposed and debated during the meeting.
- 2.13 The 16 finally approved projects entailed a total budget requirement of £676,700 (£167,700 in excess of the FSF surplus); as reported to the Policy and Resources Committee on 23rd July 2019, the necessary additional funding was identified by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement from the 2018/19 Budget Surplus and the unused Business Rates Pool Safety Net.

2.14 The table below summarises the latest (financial) position (as at 31st December 2019) on the additional (2019/20) projects.

MBC Business Rates Retention/FSF Projects 2019/20 (@ 31st December 2019)					
Ref.	Project	Budget	Spend	Forecast	Variance
		£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
1	Arterial Route Improvements (A20)	74	40	74	0
2	CCTV Live Monitoring (Waste Collection)	30	0	30	0
3	Go Green Go Wild (Community Fund)	20	0	20	0
4	Lower High Street Master Plan	80	0	80	0
5	Archbishop's Palace Options Appraisal	60	10	60	0
6	Phoenix Park Regeneration	75	0	75	0
7	Invicta Park Planning Guidance	15	0	15	0
8	Inclusion Through Enterprise	67.5	10.5	67.5	0
9	Cycle Parking Infrastructure	60	4	60	0
10	Floodlighting for Jubilee Field, Staplehurst	36	0	36	0
11	Domestic Abuse Awareness	6.2	1.6	6.2	0
12	Climate Change Commission	40	6.2	40	0
13	Urban Trees	50	0	50	0
14	St Philips Community Centre	17	0	17	0
15	Conservation Area Plans	24	3	24	0
16	'A Sense of Place'	22	0	22	0
Totals		676.7	75.3	676.7	0

2.15 The table above shows that project expenditure to date has been relatively limited, which reflects that approval to proceed was given by the Policy and Resources on 26th June 2019. Nevertheless there has been significant progress in developing the approved projects, which is summarised in **Appendix 2.**

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 This report is for noting only.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 This report is for noting only.

5. RISK

5.1 As with any projects, those described in this report could fail to be delivered, or could be delivered but exceed their budget allocations. This risk is mitigated in several ways:

- There is a strong project management culture in the Council
- Monitoring arrangements will be put in place for all the projects, to ensure that they deliver within budget and to the agreed timetable; and
- Post project reviews will be carried out to evaluate the outcomes and to derive any lessons learned from the projects.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 Following the conclusion of a member consultation exercise – on 28th March 2018 – the Policy and Resources Committee approved the original funding of 13 (one-off) BRR projects with a total value of £640,000 from the Financial Sustainability Fund.

6.2 The Policy and Resources Committee received an update report on progress on the BRR initiative on 24th April 2019, which indicated that Business Rates growth had exceeded expectations and that additional resources would be available to fund additional projects in 2019/20.

6.3 All councillors were invited to attend a Briefing on 13th June 2019 to consider a short-list of project bids for additional resources of £509,000. Feedback from that Briefing was used to inform the content of a further report (recommending a further 13 projects) to the Policy and Resources Committee on 26th June 2019.

6.4 The Policy & Resources Committee held on 26th June 2019, approved funding for all 13 projects (subject to reduced funding for one project – “Arterial Route Improvements/A20”), along with three further projects, that were proposed and debated during the meeting.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

7.1 The projects described in this report will continue to be delivered during 2019/20 with regular reports back to the Committee on progress.

8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- **Appendix 1:** *Business Rates Retention (BRR) Pilot Projects 2018/19: Progress Commentary (@ 31st December 2019)*
 - **Appendix 2:** *Business Rates Retention (BRR) Pilot Projects 2019/20: Progress Commentary (projects approved 26th June 2019)*
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 There are no background papers.

**Business Rates Retention (BRR) Pilot Projects 2018/19
Progress Commentary (@ 31st December 2019)**

Ref.	Project	Commentary
1	Housing First and Rough Sleepers	<p>The project successfully delivered eight tenancies providing a Housing First approach during 2019/20 with Golding Homes and MHS.</p> <p>The project was the winner for this year's 'Excellence in Partnership Award' by Kent Housing Group.</p> <p>The project is looking to expand over the coming year by taking on more rough sleepers into social and private rented tenancies – including looking</p> <p>Project effectively completed (residual funding available to cover potential landlord losses at the end of current tenancies).</p> <p>PROJECT COMPLETED</p>
2	Regeneration Opportunity Areas	<p>Draft planning briefs have been drawn up for the five opportunity area sites identified as having potential for regeneration. The briefs were considered by the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee (SPI) at its meeting in September 2019 and a further report was brought to SPI in November 2019, addressing points raised and were agreed subject to modifications. The finished documents will be published by the end of January 2020.</p>
3	Property Asset Review	<p>The Gen2 Property Asset Review was carried out last year, with progress regularly reported to members on the implementation of the recommendations. The balance of the funding has been used to implement the findings and to develop an Asset Management Strategy (AMS) that will guide the management of the Council's asset portfolio going forwards and will be brought to Policy and Resources Committee in February / March 2020.</p> <p>PROJECT COMPLETED</p>
4	Members' Community Grant	<p>2018/19 initiative concluded. Underspend (£14,000) utilised to fund additional FSF projects.</p> <p>2019/20 allocation (£60,000) funded from base budget.</p> <p>PROJECT COMPLETED</p>

Ref.	Project	Commentary
5	Predictive Analytics and Preventing Homelessness	<p>The project delivered on the targets, with the predictive analytics module becoming live during 2019/20.</p> <p>The toolkit is now providing information to the Housing Team to enhance their ability to assist homeless clients and to enable contact to be made with those most at risk of becoming homeless.</p> <p>PROJECT COMPLETED</p>
6	Housing Partnership Delivery	<p>The exploratory phase of this work stream ended when the Communities, Housing and Environment (CHE) Committee on 17th September 2019, opted to stall the creation of the HDP for the time being, but instead seek a Secretary of State direction to develop / acquire up to 200 new social rented homes on smaller developments (at a value of not more than £30m over the 5-year MTFS period). This financial commitment is now being formally proposed in the revised MBC Capital Programme, and the Regeneration and Economic Development department are mobilising to roll out the delivery of the programme. As such, no further exploratory work will be undertaken on this element of the project.</p> <p>However, the second element of the project remains ongoing, that of the production and adoption of the Affordable Housing and Local Needs Supplementary Planning Guidance document, that is now approximately 75% complete, and being undertaken by Adams Integra. This work stream should reach its conclusion during Q2 (June – September 2019) of the next financial year.</p>
7	Go Green, Go Wild	<p>Wide ranging activity has already taken place across the borough at sites including Mangravet Recreation Ground, Senacre Wood and Weaving Heath, in partnership with a number of community groups.</p> <p>The Community Partnership Officer has supported and enabled tree planting events including 600 trees in Mangravet & 600 trees in South Park. The first community group networking event was held at Maidstone Museum.</p> <p>Ten local groups have been supported with funding.</p> <p>The wildflower meadow project won the DEFRA Award for Pollinator Project – ‘Bees Needs’.</p>

Ref.	Project	Commentary
8	Maidstone Business Capital of Kent – marketing strategy	<p>The Council sponsored and exhibited at a series of property industry expos in October 2019 – including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kent Construction Expo on the 4th October – where the Council sponsored the events breakfast giving the opportunity to deliver a ‘Welcome to Maidstone: Development opportunities in the business capital of Kent’ presentation to regional property and construction leaders; and • “MIPIM UK” on 13th and 14th October 2019 (the UK’s premier Property Conference) sponsored and delivered a workshop on Maidstone’s development opportunities – including the Innovation Centre – to national and international investors , and property leaders. <p>The Inward Investment video has been completed.</p> <p>A planned Business Forum for the 28th November 2019 has been rescheduled to the 27th January 2020, due to Purdah.</p>
9	Staplehurst Village Centre Masterplan	<p>Sainsbury’s have confirmed that they will be progressing with the development of the identified site. Communication has gone out to village residents.</p> <p>Chancery Gate have confirmed that they are not interested in progressing commercial space development unless the price is very small to make it viable, given the size of the potential market.</p> <p>The EDO is still progressing contacting the land-owners and Network Rail regarding station improvement.</p>
10	Maidstone Housing Design Guide	<p>The Maidstone Design Guide is a collection of documents. The first (“Maidstone Building for Life 12”) was completed and adopted in 2018/19. Work is now set to commence on the other design documents and a member design tour (along with Medway Council) of developments in south London and Ebbsfleet has recently taken place.</p>
11	Electric Vehicle Charging Points	<p>Survey work by UK Power Networks was completed following procurement where PodPoint were identified as the preferred supplier.</p> <p>Electric Vehicle (EV) unit installations commenced in July 2019 and all EV units have now been installed at key car park locations throughout Maidstone Town Centre.</p> <p>PROJECT COMPLETED</p>

Ref.	Project	Commentary
12	Bus Station Improvement – feasibility study	<p>Permission from Capital and Regional to carry out asbestos and M&E surveys received at the end of December 2019. This has to delays as designs cannot be progressed until the surveys are complete. Surveys now anticipated to take place in January 2020.</p> <p>Stakeholder design review is due in February 2020, and is to be presented to the ERL Committee at the end of March 2020. Public information sessions are planned after this, with submission to Planning expected in mid-May, with a decision expected in July 2020.</p> <p>PROJECTED COMPLETED (FEASIBILITY STAGE)</p>
13	Data analytics for Inclusive Growth	<p>This project is part of the “Borough that works for Everyone” initiative which has a Project Plan and Project Board in place.</p> <p>A Data Analytics Officer (DAO) was originally appointed and created a Central Data Repository, as well as compiling detailed thematic reports and case studies to identify particular themes/problems to be addressed in the borough relating to inclusive growth. Findings have been presented to the Project Board and Wider Leadership Team (WLT)</p> <p>The DAO also completed a data mapping exercise as well and has begun the development of metrics to measure project progress.</p> <p>It was reported at the Quarter 2 stage that the DAO was recruited to the role on a permanent basis. However, the new appointee subsequently left the Council at the start of Quarter 3.</p> <p>A new DAO – scheduled to start in January 2020 – has been recruited, and is responsible for continuing to develop the metrics to measure project progress alongside the development of an action plan.</p>

Business Rates Retention (BRR) Pilot Projects 2019/20
Progress Commentary (*projects approved 26th June 2019*)

Ref.	Project	Early Progress
1	Arterial Route Improvements (A20) (renamed "Maidstone Approach Improvements" project).	<p>The project is now called the "Maidstone Approach Improvements".</p> <p>The cleansing and new planting has now been completed. Painting of utility boxes and street-light columns is due to be carried out in dry weather over the next month or two. The Communities, Housing and Environment (CHE) Committee has agreed the installation of heritage features including new welcome signage, a dinosaur sculpture and tree carvings. This work is due to be completed in the next few months with the launch in May / June 2020.</p>
2	CCTV Live Monitoring (Waste Collection)	The commitment has been given to Biffa and they have placed the order for the equipment. There is a 6-8 week lead time on the cameras so the cameras are now due to be installed at the end of January 2020.
3	Go Green Go Wild (Community Fund)	New "Go Wilder" grant scheme launched at an event in November 2019 investing up to £20k in groups to improve biodiversity and community engagement.
4	Lower High Street Master Plan	Specification still under development. Work on the Archbishop's Palace project (see below) and the acquisition of Lockmeadow have highlighted the importance of developing good links between the Town Centre and these locations, so that they can be better integrated with the rest of Maidstone. The Lower High Street area is critical to this, so developing these links will inform the specification for the Master Plan.
5	Archbishop's Palace Options Appraisal	An initial options appraisal has been prepared and market research is underway to gauge market demand and financial viability of each option.
6	Phoenix Park Regeneration	The tender is scheduled to be out by April 2020 and a planning application is being submitted for new signage.
7	Invicta Park Planning Guidance	We plan to use BRR funding to develop a planning brief for this site during the course of 2020. The Ministry of Defence has appointed consultants and we will liaise with them to ensure that their work is in alignment with the evolving planning brief.

Ref.	Project	Early Progress
8	Inclusion Through Enterprise	<p>Negotiations are progressing well to identify a suitable venue for the project which we hope will be an MBC commercial property. We have also engaged support of Mid-Kent legal to help progress the aspiration of becoming a charity organisation thus being able to apply for grants in the future.</p> <p>Discussions continue to take place with the client group to explore options for the scheme.</p> <p>An officer has been appointed to lead the project and is now in post. This will help to stimulate the initiative and provide the capacity to rapidly make progress.</p>
9	Cycle Infrastructure Parking	<p>A scoping has been arranged “Sustrans” (a sustainable transport charity) to identify the appropriate elements to include within the survey of locations.</p> <p>Alongside this, initial meetings have been held with bike hire companies to understand costs and different approaches, as well as employers such as Maidstone Hospital, to understand the potential uptake of bike hire at these locations.</p> <p>KCC and others due to contribute to the scheme on top of the BRR grant.</p>
10	Floodlighting for Jubilee Field, Staplehurst	<p>The football club’s bid to the Football Foundation was delayed in October 2019 but was submitted in January 2020 and a decision is imminent. Match funding of £13k from a local Section 106 agreement has also been assigned to the project.</p> <p>The £36,000 match funding from MBC has been released to Staplehurst Parish Council to facilitate the smooth payment of invoices. The overall project of floodlights, fencing and standing area involves a number of contractors. To project manage those works and ensure an efficient process the parish council is going to manage the payments to contractors. MBC officers are monitoring these payments to ensure the funding is used in accordance with the Financial Sustainability Fund bid.</p>

Ref.	Project	Early Progress
11	Domestic Abuse Awareness	<p>Despite an intense marketing campaign – including Twitter, Facebook, Parish websites, one to one visits and other methods – for the “Cut It Out” Hairdresser event scheduled for 28th October, it was cancelled due a lack of attendees; it would not have achieved the original aims. Moving forward it has been decided to deliver presentations to Mid Kent Hair and Beauty School, Saks Hair Academy and to visit hairdressers individually and discuss the DA Awareness Campaigns; approximately 300 hairdressers will be reached this way.</p> <p>Research indicates that Community Champions have proven the most effective in other areas, most notably the ‘Dragonfly’ project in Dorset. Training members of the community to recognise the signs of DA and the help available to victims of DA, will be the approach moving forwards.</p>
12	Climate Change Commission	<p>A Councillor Working Group has been set up to lead the project and work is underway. An additional officer (on a one-year fixed-term contract) was appointed in November 2019 to manage the project.</p> <p>An update report on the Climate Change initiative will be presented to the Policy & Resources Committee in February 2020.</p>
13	Urban Trees	<p>The Urban Tree Challenge Fund (UTCF) is available for two years (2019/20 and 2020/21). Year 1 funding is only available for ‘block bids’ for which Maidstone does not qualify. Year 2 applications are aimed at local authority and community group applications.</p> <p>An Expression of Interest form was submitted to the Forestry Commission on 25th July 2019. Confirmation of receipt has been received. The Council is now waiting for further clarification on the fund for individual bids.</p>
14	St Philips Community Centre	<p>Work is under way developing plans for the Community Centre.</p>
15	Conservation Area Plans	<p>Work on the project commenced early October 2019 and is being resourced through extending the working hours of a (temporary) Conservation Officer.</p>

Ref.	Project	Early Progress
16	'A Sense of Place'	<p>The project is a key action in the updated Arts and Cultural Strategy, which was approved by the Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee (ERL) in November 2019.</p> <p>A Culture & Arts Officer has been allocated lead responsibility for project delivery and the ('Sense of Place') report is expected to be commissioned circa January 2020.</p> <p>Quotes are currently being obtained from agencies with potential to deliver the project.</p>