

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Wednesday 26 June 2019
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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Issued on Tuesday 18 June 2019

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

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PART II

To move that the public be excluded for the items set out in Part II of the Agenda because of the likely disclosure of exempt information for the reasons specified having applied the Public Interest Test.

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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. 5pm on 24 July 2019). If asking a question, you will need to provide the full text in writing. If making a statement, you will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on. Please note that slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk.

Should you wish to refer any decisions contained in these minutes to the **Policy and Resources Council**, please submit a Decision Referral Form, signed by **five** Councillors, to **the Mayor** by: **Thursday 9 May 2019**

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 24 APRIL 2019

Present: Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Clark, Cox (Chairman), Field, Garten, Mrs Gooch, Harvey, McKay, McLoughlin, D Mortimer, Newton, Perry and Purle

200. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies had been received from Councillors Boughton, M Burton and Springett.

201. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

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

- Councillor Purle for Councillor Boughton
- Councillor Garten for Councillor Springett

202. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman informed the Committee that he had decided to accept the items on the amended agenda, Minutes of the Meeting Held on 21 November 2018, and Minutes of the Meeting Held on 28 November 2018 so that they could be signed off within the municipal year.

Note: Cllr Newton arrived during consideration of this item.

203. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members.

204. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

205. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

206. 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, with Item 17 – Minutes (Part II) of the Meeting Held on Wednesday 27 March 2019 to be taken together with Item 8 – Minutes (Part I) of the Meeting Held on 27 March 2019 with no discussion.

207. MINUTES (PART I AND PART II) OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 MARCH 2019

RESOLVED: That the Minutes (Part I and Part II) be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.

208. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

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

There were no questions from members of the public.

210. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

211. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS 2019-20

Mrs Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy Communications and Governance presented the report and drew Members' attention to the urgent update which included the comments from service committees on the KPIs in their areas. It was noted that Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee had not considered their KPIs.

The Committee suggested a number of possible amendments to how KPI reporting was carried out, including decreasing the number of indicators, adding additional indicators, reporting by exception, weighting indicators by impact, and taking a strategic view of indicators important to the Committee recognising that each service Committee could raise concerns with their own indicators if they wished.

Concerns were raised around the prevalence of graffiti and the Committee recommended that Communities, Housing and Environment Committee consider a suitable performance indicator for monitoring the Council's effectiveness in dealing with graffiti.

RESOLVED: That

1. Officers bring forward recommendations on a small number of Strategic KPIs to June meeting of the Committee, and other

KPIs that have been identified by other service committees by exception; and

2. The Communities, Housing and Environment Committee be requested to consider whether a performance indicator for graffiti was appropriate

Voting: Unanimous

Note: Cllr Mrs Blackmore arrived during consideration of the item.

212. CORPORATE RISK UPDATE

Mr Rich Clarke, Head of Audit Partnership, presented the report. The report set out an updated risk management framework which had arisen out of the recent risk workshop.

The Committee raised concerns regarding the mitigated risk score for no deal Brexit. The concerns were not related to the actions that were taken or the quality of the planning, but rather that significant elements of the risk were out of the Council's control. The Committee requested that the score remain at its reported level, however it was noted that the risk owner, Mr Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement was carrying out actions to mitigate the risk.

Concerns were also raised regarding the risk of building incomplete communities arising out of a failure in implementing the local plan. It was noted that the risk was a natural consequence of delivering a complex plan at the speed and volume required.

RESOLVED: That

1. The risk relating to short term Brexit impacts remain at its reported rating, noting that the risk is owned by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement;
2. The other revised Corporate Risks set out in Appendix 1 to the report be noted; and
3. The revised Risk Framework set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved.

Voting: Unanimous

213. 100% BUSINESS RATES RETENTION PILOT - UPDATE

Mr Chris Hartgrove, Interim Head of Finance, presented the report. The Committee considered the summary of progress against the agreed projects and were informed that the final figures for the amount of funding being available exceeded initial expectations. There was a workshop planned for 13 June 2019 in order to identify how to allocate the additional funding.

The Committee were disappointed that the bus station had not secured firm funding commitments from Capital and Regional and Arriva to date, but it was reported that the project was at the initial design stages and would be adapted to fit the amount of funding available.

The Members' Community Grant funding had worked well but the Committee were concerned that £14k of the funding had not been spent and would be reallocated. They requested that further help and reminders were given to Members in 2019/20 to ensure the full allocation was spent next year.

Consideration was given to using the underspend of £19K on electric vehicle charging points and it was noted that this would be included in the funding under consideration at 13 June 2019 workshop.

RESOLVED: That the progress with the Business Rates Retention pilot projects be noted.

214. PROPERTY ASSET REVIEW UPDATE

Mr Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement, presented the report. It was noted that the past 3 months' work had been focussed on estates work and management intervention as set out in the report.

The Committee sought clarification regarding the disposal of land alongside Gallagher stadium. It was noted that it was a freehold disposal with an overage clause of at least 20 years.

Questions were raised regarding the transfer of residential property management to the Housing Management Team in relation to the Cobtree Estate. The Director undertook to respond in more detail directly to the Member concerned.

RESOLVED: That the progress made on the effective use of the Council's property assets since the property asset review report was completed in January 2019 be noted.

215. NOMINATIONS TO OUTSIDE BODY - ROCHESTER BRIDGE TRUST

RESOLVED: That Mr Derek Butler be appointed to the Rochester Bridge Trust as the Council's representative with effect from 1 June 2019, and a letter of appointment be sent to Mr Butler to include the Committee's thanks for his work so far and continued work in the future.

Voting: For – 12 Abstentions - 1

216. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 NOVEMBER 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.

217. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 28 NOVEMBER 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.

218. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30pm to 7.58pm

Agenda Item 9

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 MAY 2019

Present: Councillor Cox (Chairman) and Councillors M Burton, Chappell-Tay, Clark, English, Garten, Gooch, Harvey, McKay, Mortimer, Perry, Powell, Purle, Round and Springett

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Mrs Blackmore and Newton.

2. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following Substitute Members were noted:

Councillor Garten for Councillor Mrs Blackmore
Councillor Powell for Councillor Newton

3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

RESOLVED: That Councillor Perry be appointed as Vice-Chairman of the Committee for the Municipal Year 2019/20.

4. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 6.33 p.m.

Should you wish to refer any decisions contained in these minutes to Council, please submit a Decision Referral Form, signed by five Councillors, to the Mayor by: 6 June 2019.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

MINUTES (PART I) OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 MAY 2019

Present: Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Chappell-Tay, Cox (Chairman), English, Garten, Mrs Gooch, Harvey, Joy, McKay, Newton, Perry, Purle, Round, Springett and Vizzard

Also Present: Councillors Clark, Kimmance, M Rose, J Sams and T Sams

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Councillor Mortimer
- Councillor Clark
- Councillor M Burton

2. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that the following Members were present as Substitute Members:

- Councillor Joy for Councillor Mortimer
- Councillor Vizzard for Councillor Clark
- Councillor Garten for Councillor M Burton

3. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

4. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

It was noted that the following Councillors were present as a Visiting Member for Item 10. Call for Sites:

- Councillor Clark
- Councillor Kimmance

- Councillor J Sams
- Councillor T Sams
- Councillor M Rose

5. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Purle said that, with regard to Item 10. Call for Sites, he owned and occupied property on St Peter's Street, but intended to speak and vote when the item was considered.

Councillor Clark said that, with regard to Item 10. Call for Sites, he was a trustee on the Hayle Park Nature Reserve, but intended to speak as a Visiting Member when the item was considered.

6. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

Councillor Gooch stated that she had been lobbied on Item 10. Call for Sites.

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

The Committee considered whether to take Item 10. Call for Sites in public. Advice was provided by Officers, and the Committee decided that it was not possible to consider the report in public as non-disclosure agreements had been signed with some landowners impacted by sites in the report.

RESOLVED: That Item 10. Call for Sites be taken in private as proposed.

Voting: For – 11 Against – 3 Abstentions – 1

Note: Councillors Purle and Garten requested that their dissent be noted.

8. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

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

There were no questions from members of the public.

10. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING

RESOLVED: That the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business because of the likely disclosure of exempt information for the reason specified having applied the Public Interest Test:

Head of Schedule 12 A and Brief Description

Call for Sites

Paragraph 3 – Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

11. CALL FOR SITES

The Director of Regeneration and Place outlined that the report proposed the submission of land holdings into the “call for sites” exercise that closed on 24 May 2019.

Councillors Clark, T Sams and J Sams addressed the Committee as Visiting Members.

The Committee considered the proposed submissions and provided feedback on the sites.

RESOLVED: That:

1. Officers submit proposals for the site listed in paragraph 1.7 of the report into the “call for sites” exercise that closes on 24 May 2019.

Voting: For – 14 Against – 1 Abstentions – 0

2. Officers submit proposals for the site listed in paragraph 1.8 of the report into the “call for sites” exercise that closes on 24 May 2019.

Voting: Unanimous

3. Officers remove proposals for the site listed in paragraph 1.9 of the report.

Voting: For – 10 Against – 3 Abstentions – 2

4. Officers remove proposals for the site listed in paragraph 1.10 of the report.

Voting: For – 12 Against – 3 Abstentions – 0

5. Officers submit proposals for the site listed in paragraph 1.11 of the report into the “call for sites” exercise that closes on 24 May 2019.

Voting: For – 14 Against – 0 Abstentions – 1

6. Officers submit proposals for the site listed in paragraph 1.12 of the report into the "call for sites" exercise that closes on 24 May 2019.

Voting: For – 13 Against – 2 Abstentions – 0

7. Officers submit proposals for the sites listed in paragraphs 1.17, 1.18, 1.19, 1.20 and 1.26 of the report into the "call for sites" exercise that closes on 24 May 2019.

Voting: For – 10 Against – 4 Abstentions – 1

Note: Councillors Purle and Garten requested that their dissent be noted.

8. Officers submit proposals for the site listed in paragraph 1.37(c) of the report into the "call for sites" exercise that closes on 24 May 2019.

Voting: For – 9 Against – 4 Abstentions – 2

Note: The meeting was adjourned from 7:49 p.m. to 7:54 p.m.

12. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 9.29 p.m.

2019/20 WORK PROGRAMME

	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Business Rates Retention Projects	P&R	Jun-19	Mark Green	Mark Green
Climate Change Reference from Council	P&R	Jun-19	Angela Woodhouse	Angela Woodhouse
Outturn Report	P&R	Jun-19	Mark Green	Mark Green
Business Rates Retention Projects - quarterly update	P&R	Jul-19	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Corporate Planning Timetable	P&R	Jul-19	Angela Woodhouse	Angela Woodhouse
Debt Recovery Policy	P&R	Jul-19	Alison Broom	Sheila Coburn
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 - 2024/25 - Initial scop	P&R	Jul-19	Mark Green	Mark Green
Outside Bodies 2019/20	P&R	Jul-19	Angela Woodhouse	Caroline Matthews/ Mike Nash
Property Asset Review - quarterly update	P&R	Jul-19	Mark Green	Deborah Turner
Updated Capital Strategy 2019/20 - 2023/24	P&R	Jul-19	Mark Green	Mark Green
Communication and Engagement Strategy Action Plan 2019/20	P&R	Sep-19	Angela Woodhouse	Angela Woodhouse
Q1 Budget and Performance Monitoring 2019/20	P&R	Sep-19	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Business Rates Retention Projects - quarterly update	P&R	Oct-19	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Medium Term Financial Strategy 2020/21 - 2024/25 - Final	P&R	Oct-19	Mark Green	Mark Green

2019/20 WORK PROGRAMME

	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Property Asset Review - quarterly update	P&R	Oct-19	Mark Green	Deborah Turner
Risk Management Update	P&R	Oct-19	Rich Clarke	Rich Clarke
Asset Management Strategy	P&R	Nov-19	Mark Green	Georgia Hawkes
Q2 Budget and Performance Monitoring 2019/20	P&R	Nov-19	Ellie Dunnet	Paul Holland
Collection Fund adjustment 2018/19 and Council Tax base 2019/20	P&R	Dec-19	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Draft Budget Proposals 2020/21	P&R	Dec-19	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Business Rates Retention Projects - quarterly update	P&R	Jan-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
 Fees & Charges 2019/20	P&R	Jan-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Medium Term Financial Strategy - Capital Programme 2020/21 -	P&R	Jan-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Property Asset Review - quarterly update	P&R	Jan-20	Mark Green	Deborah Turner
Final Budget Proposals 2020/21	P&R	Feb-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Q3 Budget and Performance Monitoring 2019/20	P&R	Feb-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
KPIs for 2020-21	P&R	Mar-20	Angela Woodhouse	Angela Woodhouse
Risk Management Update	P&R	Mar-20	Rich Clarke	Rich Clarke

2019/20 WORK PROGRAMME

	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Business Rates Retention Projects - quarterly update	P&R	Apr-20	Mark Green	Chris Hartgrove
Property Asset Review - quarterly update	P&R	Apr-20	Mark Green	Deborah Turner
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 14

POLICY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

25 June 2019

Key Performance Indicators Quarter 4 Update – 2018/19

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

Executive Summary

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

This report makes the following recommendations to Wider Leadership Team:

1. That the summary of performance for Quarter 4 of 2018/19 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be noted.
2. Agree the draft strategic indicators for 2019/20 shown at 4.5 of this report.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Corporate Leadership Team	21/05/2019
Economic Regeneration & Leisure Committee	04/06/2019
Communities, Housing and the Environment	18/06/2019
Strategic, Planning & Infrastructure Committee	25/06/2019
Policy & Resources Committee	26/06/2019

Key Performance Indicators Quarter 4 Update – 2018/19

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

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

2. Quarter 4 Performance Summary

- 2.1 There are 27 key performance indicators (KPIs) which were developed with Heads of Service and unit managers and agreed by the four Service Committees for 2018/19. 16 are reported to the Committee for this quarter.
- 2.2 Overall, 69% (9) of targeted KPIs reported this quarter achieved their target comparable to quarter 3 at 69% (9) and 67% (8) in the same quarter last year.
- 2.3 There are 3 contextual indicators (indicators without targets) represented in the chart below as N/A, these indicators were requested for inclusion as they are important to assessing how the council is performing by examining the outcomes. These indicators are; the percentage of littering reports attended to, the number of households living in temporary accommodation at the last night of the month and the number of households living in nightly paid temporary accommodation on the last night of the month.

RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	9	1	3	3	16
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Last Year	5	0	8	3	16
Last Quarter	9	0	7	0	16

3. Performance by priority

Priority 1: Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all

- 3.1 The performance indicators concerned with the proportion of land that has acceptable levels of litter and detritus both exceeded the quarterly target. During quarter 4 Detling & Thurnham, Coxheath, Boughton Monchelsea, Marden & Yalding and Shepway South were inspected. Coxheath and Marden & Yalding had the greatest proportion of litter across these areas with the Cleaning Manager commenting that rural roads still present a challenge due to traffic management plans and additional safety considerations.
- 3.2 The percentage of reports of littering attended is calculated by taking the number of reports received from residents about littering divided by the number of these that required additional action (for example litter picking or a mechanical sweep). The objective for the team is to reduce the amount of responsive work required due to the schedules being sufficient to deliver a clean borough. During quarter 4, 37.2% of reports were attended to, this performance indicator has seen continuous improvement throughout the year.
- 3.3 The addition of the dedicated fly tipping hit squad directed by the Waste Crime Team has increased the Council's ability to deal with fly-tipping in the borough. During quarter 4 the percentage of fly tips resulting in enforcement action was 81.5% against a target of 50%. The waste crime team have been working on identifying those responsible for fly tipping waste where there is some evidence. This has included use of covert CCTV in fly tipping hotspots, witness reports and evidence within the waste. Overall, there has been an 18% improvement in the performance of this indicator since quarter 4 in 2017/18.
- 3.4 Due to the presence of hazardous waste or the volume of material present, some fly tips require greater resource or different equipment to clear it, which can result in a slight delay. They can sometimes also require pre-approval from Kent County Council, as the disposal authority. This can take a couple of days, whilst a full description of the waste is compiled, and an appropriate disposal facility is identified. During quarter 4 there were 601 reports of fly-tipping, and the team cleared or assessed 99% (593) of these within four working days and 94% (569) were addressed within two working days.
- 3.5 At present the data on household waste recycling is incomplete, with the tonnage information for February and March has not been received yet from Kent County Council. The data currently held shows a quarter 4 out-turn of 48.04% against a target of 52.50%, this is an improvement on the previous quarter and compared to the quarter 4 out-turn for 2017/18.

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

- 3.6 Footfall on the High Street had a value of 2,556,547 against a target of 3,000,000. Quarter 4 footfall continues to follow the trend of previous years. There has been a drop of 249,465 from the same quarter last year however the team are uncertain if the data collector was impacted by construction on the High Street.

Priority 2: Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

- 3.7 The indicators measuring the processing of planning applications within statutory timescales have all exceeded the quarterly targets and all three show that performance has improved compared to quarter 4 in 2017/18.
- 3.8 53 affordable homes have been delivered against a target of 45. This was made up of 17 social rented homes and 36 shared ownership homes. This quarters performance is an improvement compared to the previous quarter and quarter 4 in 2017/18.
- 3.9 The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 was enacted in April 2018 and marked a significant change in approach to tackling homelessness and resulting in major changes to housing team. The number of applications where Prevention Duty has ended, as applicant has suitable accommodation for at least 6 months, has not achieved the quarterly target. The Changes to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 mean that comparisons to previous years cannot be made. The baseline data collected this financial year will be used to inform targets going forward.
- 3.10 The Council are taking steps to address the difficulty in housing people through the housing register through new Affordable Housing Strategic Planning guidance and through the Council's own Housing Delivery Partnership. At the end of quarter 4 there were 113 households living in temporary accommodation (TA), this is 12 less than at the end of quarter 3 but a 14% increase on the figure for quarter 4 in 2017/18. Of the 113 households in TA, 58 were living in nightly paid temporary accommodation this is a 20% increase compared to quarter 4 in 2017/18.
- 3.11 During quarter 4 there were 128 households that were housed through the housing register against a target of 150, this is a slight improvement on the quarter 3 out-turn. The lower quarterly figure is due to fewer vacant properties coming available through registered providers

4. New Strategic Key Performance Indicators

- 4.1 The new set of KPIs for 2019/20 were presented to Committee in April.
- 4.2 The Committee agreed that instead of a long list of indicators a short list of Strategic Indicators, should be developed and presented quarterly along with any indicators from other committees by exception only.
- 4.3 It was resolved that Officers would bring forward a recommended list of the small number of Strategic KPIs to the June meeting of the Committee.
- 4.4 The requested indicators are set out below for the Committees consideration.

4.5

Strategic Link	Proposed Indicators
The Vision	Satisfaction with Maidstone as a place to live
Priority – Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure	Net additional homes provided
Priority – Safe, Clean and Green	The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having acceptable levels of litter
Priority – Homes and Communities	Percentage of successful housing prevention and relief cases
Priority – A Thriving Place	New Businesses Started in the borough
How we do things	Council Investment in long term assets

4.6 Members could choose to increase, reduce, amend or suggest new indicators, to the draft set that has been provided.

5. RISK

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

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

6.1 The Key Performance Indicator Update is reported quarterly to the Service Committees: Communities Housing and Environment Committee, Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee, and Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee. Each Committee will receive a report on the relevant priority action areas. The report is also presented to Policy & Resources Committee, reporting only on the priority areas of: A Clean and Safe Environment, Regenerating the Town Centre, and a Home for Everyone.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

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

8. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The key performance indicators and strategic actions were part of the Council's overarching Strategic Plan 2015-20 and play an important role in the achievement of corporate objectives. They also cover a wide range of services and priority areas, for example waste and recycling.	Policy & Information Manager
Risk Management	The production of robust performance reports ensures that the view of the Council's approach to the management of risk and use of resources is not undermined and allows early action to be taken in order to mitigate the risk of not achieving targets and outcomes.	Policy & Information Manager
Financial	Performance indicators and targets are closely linked to the allocation of resources and determining good value for money. The financial implications of any proposed changes are also identified and taken into account in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and associated annual budget setting process. Performance issues are highlighted as part of the budget monitoring reporting process.	
Staffing	Having a clear set of targets enables staff outcomes/objectives to be set and effective action plans to be put in place	Policy & Information Manager
Legal	There is no statutory duty to report regularly on the Council's performance. However, under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended) a best value authority has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. One of the purposes of the Key Performance Indicators is to facilitate the improvement of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of Council Services. Regular reports on the Council's performance assist in demonstrating best value and compliance with the statutory duty.	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Privacy and Data Protection	The data will be held and processed in accordance with the data protection principles contained in the Data Protection Act 2018 and in line with the Data Quality	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS

	Policy, which sets out the requirement for ensuring data quality. There is a program for undertaking data quality audits of performance indicators.	
Equalities	The Performance Indicators reported on in this quarterly update measure the ongoing performance of the strategies in place. If there has been a change to the way in which a service delivers a strategy, i.e. a policy change, an Equalities Impact Assessment is undertaken to identify the impact on individuals with a protected characteristic and where required, put in place mitigations	Equalities & Corporate Policy Officer
Crime and Disorder	None Identified	Policy & Information Manager
Procurement	Performance Indicators and Strategic Milestones monitor any procurement needed to achieve the outcomes of the Strategic Plan.	

9. REPORT APPENDICES

- Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 4 – 2018/19

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Key Performance Indicators 2019/20 – April 2019

Performance Summary

This is the quarter 4 performance update on indicators set against Maidstone Borough Council's Strategic Plan 2015-20. It sets out how we are performing against Key Performance Indicators that directly contribute to the achievement of those priorities. Performance indicators are judged in two ways; firstly, whether an indicator has achieved the target set, known as PI status. Secondly, we assess whether performance has improved, been sustained or declined, compared to the same period in the previous year, known as direction.

Key to performance ratings

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

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

RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	9	1	3	3	16
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Last Year	5	0	8	3	16
Last Quarter	9	0	7	0	16

Providing a Clean, Safe and Green Environment

Performance Indicator	Q4 2018/19				
	Value	Target	Status	Last Year	Last Quarter
The percentage of land and highways with acceptable levels of litter	98.17%	94.00%			
The percentage of land and highways with acceptable levels of detritus	95.25%	94.00%			
Percentage of reports of littering attended to	37.2%			N/A	
Percentage of fly tips resulting in enforcement action	81.5%	50.0%			
Percentage of fly-tips cleared or assessed within 2 working days	94.68%	89.00%			
Percentage of fly-tips clear or assessed within 4 working days	99%	94%		N/A	
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)	48.04%*	52.50%			

* Awaiting tonnage data for February & March 2019

Regenerating the Town Centre

Performance Indicator	Q4 2018/19				
	Value	Target	Status	Long Year	Last Quarter
Footfall on the High Street	2,556,547	3,000,000			

A Home for Everyone

Performance Indicator	Q4 2018/19				
	Value	Target	Status	Long Year	Last Quarter
Processing of planning applications: Major applications (NI 157a)	95.45%	88.00%			
Processing of planning applications: Minor applications (NI 157b)	91.89%	80.00%			
Processing of planning applications: Other applications (NI 157c)	99.58%	90.00%			
Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	53	45			

Performance Indicator	Q4 2018/19				
	Value	Target	Status	Long Year	Last Quarter
Number of households living in temporary accommodation last night of the month (NI 156 & SDL 009-00)	113				
Number of households living in nightly paid temporary accommodation last night of the month	58				
Number of applications where Prevention Duty has ended as applicant has suitable accommodation for at least 6 months	54	75		N/A	
Number of households housed through housing register	128	150			

Agenda Item 15

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

26 June 2019

Biodiversity and Climate Change Review

Final Decision-Maker	Policy and Resource Committee
Lead Director	Chief Executive
Lead Officer and Report Author	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

On 10 April 2019 Council approved a motion requesting that Policy and Resources committee undertake a review considering progress taken to address the twin threats to biodiversity and climate change. Council also requested that this review consider a target date of 2030 for the Borough to be carbon neutral and strengthen work on the protection and enhancement of habitats, species and ecosystems. The report recommends an approach to undertaking the review to achieve the request from Council.

Purpose of Report

To decide how to progress the recent motion regarding biodiversity and climate change approved at full council on 10 April 2019.

This report makes the following recommendation to this Committee:

To agree to a member-led task and finish review group to fulfil the request from Council on 10 April regarding biodiversity and climate change, with the aim to produce a report and action plan for approval by the meeting of Policy and Resources on 22 April 2020.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	26 June 2019

Biodiversity and Climate Change Review

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The Council's priority of Safe, Clean and Green sets an outcome by 2045 to have a Borough that is recognised as clean and well cared for by everyone. This includes an action to improve air quality under this priority.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Cross Cutting Objectives	A review would support the achievement of the cross cutting objective of Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Risk Management	Refer to section 5	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Financial	Accepting the recommendations will demand estimated new spending of £40,000. We plan to fund that spending through a bid to the business rates retention pilot which is included for consideration later on the agenda.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Staffing	We will need access to extra expertise to deliver a review as requested by Council.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Legal	Acting on the recommendations is within the Council's powers as set out in the constitution.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Privacy and Data Protection	If the review requires additional collection of personal data this will be managed in accordance with the data protection act and any recommendations that require a change to systems or procedures in relation to the processing of personal data will require a data privacy impact assessment to be completed prior to approval.	Policy and Information Team
Equalities	The recommendations of the review could have varying impacts on different communities within Maidstone if approved. A separate equalities impact assessment will need to be completed alongside any recommendations.	Policy & Information Manager

Public Health	The recommendations of the review could have an impact on the health of the population or individuals within Maidstone. A separate health impact assessment would need to be completed for consideration alongside any recommendations.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Crime and Disorder	Crime and disorder is not within the scope of the review	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Procurement	No implications at this point in the process	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance

2. . INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 At Council on 10 April the following motion was agreed:

RESOLVED: *That this Council notes with concern the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on global climate change impacts and the recent Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) reports on global species and habitat loss.*

Further to this, Council:

(1) Declares its recognition of global climate and biodiversity emergencies;

(2) Requests the Policy & Resources Committee to:

- undertake a short review of MBC governance policies and progress aimed at addressing locally these twin threats and to report on findings. This would include, inter alia, a review of the current provision of electric charging points throughout the Borough and bring forward an ambitious plan to make Maidstone Borough the friendliest place in the country for driving electric or hybrid vehicles.*
- consider a target date of 2030 for the whole of the Borough of Maidstone to be carbon neutral;*
- consider how the Council can strengthen local protection and enhancement of species, habitats and ecosystems services under available powers;*

(3) Requests the Chief Executive to (a) write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer stating the concern of the Council with respect to the above, the likely national impact on the economy and on the wellbeing of citizens, and requesting government funding be made available to implement swift appropriate actions in response and (b) include at the beginning of the proposed letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer the following additional sentence:

"This Council welcomes the Chancellor's recent announcement that a "future homes standard" will mandate the end of fossil-fuel heating systems so as to "lower carbon and lower fuel bills too."

- 2.2 The Chief Executive wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer as agreed and the response is included at Appendix A for information. The letter sets out the actions that have been taken and are proposed to tackle climate change including a commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050 relative to 1990 levels.
 - 2.3 Kent County Council on 23 May agreed a commitment of net zero emissions by 2050 and Canterbury City Council has agreed to reduce carbon emissions and become carbon neutral by 2050.
 - 2.4 The Council has recently adopted a new Strategic Plan which sets an outcome to have an environmentally attractive and sustainable Borough, with a cross cutting objective that biodiversity and environmental sustainability is respected. It does not go as far as setting out that the Borough will be carbon neutral by 2030.
 - 2.5 This report sets out a proposed approach to part 2 of the motion above.
-

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Policy and Resources Committee has a number of options open to it to address the three points made in part two of the above motion, all of which would incur resource implications unless no further action was agreed.
- 3.2 As set out in the constitution all Committees may hold inquiries and investigate the available options for future direction in policy development. The Committee has the power to set up working groups to conduct scrutiny type reviews. The actions above could be considered by a working group and findings reported to the Committee. The nature of the subject and its ambition are such that extra resource and expertise are required in order to deliver a meaningful review, with realistic scope, objectives, timescales, risks and action plan. A bid has been made for this from the Business rates retention pilot fund at a later agenda item.
- 3.3 The Committee could request officers to carry out research and report back to a future committee meeting with proposals in relation to the three areas identified in the motion. Currently there is no staffing capacity to carry out this work, so if this option were agreed resource would need to be identified, probably of a similar level to that set out in 3.2.
- 3.4 Another option would be for the Committee to undertake an inquiry and review as part of its usual meetings and business with activities planned throughout the year to complete the review. As this is a complex subject it would be difficult to undertake a review in an in-depth fashion alongside the usual business of the committee. This approach is not therefore recommended.

- 3.5 The Committee could agree to take no further action although this would go against the request agreed at full Council to undertake a review.
-

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 It is proposed that a task and finish review group is formed to undertake the review. The group would consist of 9 Councillors and would be subject to the rules of political balance, with group leaders being requested to nominate members onto the group. As the subject matter is complex and cross-cutting it is recommended that the review group report back with conclusions by the last meeting of the municipal year 22 April 2020. The Committee could agree a different deadline and may also want to include on its agenda updates from the review group as the review progresses. A different number of councillors on the review group could also be considered by the Committee as well.
- 4.2 The review group with officer support will set a scope for the review to include the proposals from full council, objectives and milestones. The review, on reaching conclusion, should propose actions to be agreed by Policy and Resources Committee. The constitution sets out that committees may go on site visits, conduct public surveys, hold public meetings, commission research and do all other things that they reasonably consider necessary to inform their deliberations. The review has not been allocated a budget other than the bid for staffing resource so any additional expenditure required would require approval from the Committee.
- 4.3 The benefits of a Councillor review will be the ability to call expert witnesses to give evidence, a clear dedicated resource to support and it will ensure member led policy development on this complex and cross-cutting topic.
-

5. RISK

- 5.1 The project risks are to be determined and the requested resource is required to determine them. However, the risk on the investment is that an appointment is made to support the delivery of the project and it is then abandoned. Given this is based on a motion agreed by full Council this is deemed to be unlikely.
- 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.
-

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 As part of the review it is likely that some consultation will be undertaken and this will need to be determined in the scope for the project. Previous consultations relating to the subject matter will also need to be taken into account as well. It is likely that as part of the review expert witnesses will be called upon to give evidence. The review report and recommended actions will be submitted to Policy and Resources Committee.
-

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 If a scrutiny type review is agreed a member working group will be appointed, meetings will be publicised and regular reports on progress can be given to this Committee.
-

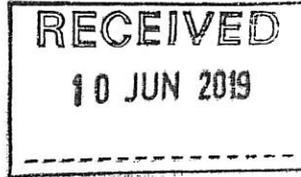
8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix A: Response from the Minister of State for Universities, Science, Research and Innovation.
-



Department
for Education



Department for
Business, Energy
& Industrial Strategy

Alison Broom
Chief Executive
Maidstone Borough Council
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King Street
Maidstone
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Chris Skidmore MP
Minister of State for Universities, Science,
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Our ref: MCSL2019/10428

6 June 2019

Dear Alison,

Thank you for your letter dated 21 May to the Rt Hon Philip Hammond MP, regarding the recent motion passed by Maidstone Borough Council in relation to climate change. Your letter has been passed to my Department, and I am replying as this matter falls within my Ministerial portfolio.

I welcome the Council's commitment to tackling climate change as there is no doubt that it is one of the most profound global challenges we face. The decisions we make today will affect the future of our planet for generations to come, and the Government fully recognises that action is urgently needed in our own country and across the world. However, we must look to the challenge ahead with hope rather than fear. We should be proud of the UK's leadership in tackling climate change and the real progress we have made in reducing our emissions whilst driving cleaner economic growth. Our achievements should be celebrated – not to imply that we are complacent, but to demonstrate that with ambitious domestic policy and concerted international action, solving the challenge of climate change is possible.

Our Climate Change Act 2008 was the first of its kind in the world and set a legally binding target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by at least 80% by 2050 relative to 1990 levels. We are already making strong progress towards that target - between 1990 and 2017, the UK reduced its emissions by over 40% while growing the economy by more than two thirds – on latest available data across countries to 2016, the best performance in the G7 on a per person basis.

We recognise the need to go further and the Clean Growth Strategy sets out our plans to build on our progress in decarbonising the power sector, while looking further across the whole of the economy and the country, through to 2032. It includes ambitious proposals on housing, business, transport, the natural environment and green finance. More details about the Clean Growth Strategy can be found at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/clean-growth-strategy.

We are convinced of the need for urgent action on climate change, which is why we asked our independent advisors - the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) - for advice last October on the implications of the Paris Agreement for the UK's long-term emissions reduction targets, including on setting a net zero target. The CCC published their advice to the Government on 2 May 2019. It sets out a path for the UK to become the first major economy to legislate to end our contribution to global warming entirely. We are now considering this comprehensive, ground-breaking report, and have committed to responding in a timeframe which reflects the urgency of this crucial issue.

Achieving clean growth and tackling climate change has to be a shared endeavour between the Government, devolved nations, Local Authorities, business, civil society and the British people – as well as the rest of the world. That is why we held the first Green GB Week last year - an incredible example of us coming together to raise awareness of clean growth and the pressing challenges we face in addressing climate change, while demonstrating the opportunities that action on these issues would bring. Green GB Week this year will be taking place between 4 and 8 November, as part of the Government's Year of Green Action, and I would be delighted if Maidstone Borough Council could participate. Further information will be available on our website (greengb.campaign.gov.uk/) shortly.

As a Local Authority, you may be interested to note that we continue to enable greenhouse gas emission reductions through the Public Sector Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme. The capital pot for England is currently £262 million and is planned to increase each year to a total of £385 million by 2020/21. This funding, managed by Salix Finance, has delivered over 17,000 projects, significantly improving energy performance in the public sector. It has generated estimated bill savings in the wider public sector of around £55 million in 2017/18, with projected bill savings of £72 million in 2018/19.

More broadly at the local level, there is almost £20 million allocated to the Local Energy Programme which is designed to maximise the local contribution to clean growth. The programme works with Local Enterprise Partnerships, Local Authorities and communities in England to drive the development of clean growth as a core plank of local industrial strategies and, critically, to support local clean growth investment. The key focus is the mobilisation of green finance to support projects at the local level that would not otherwise happen. The Local Energy Programme aims to start to address local barriers to clean growth activity, and to equip local areas to drive private sector investment into clean growth across a pipeline of local projects. If you would like any further information, I would encourage you to contact my officials in the Local Energy Team here at: localenergy@beis.gov.uk.

Thank you again for taking the time to write. In addition to this letter, I have also enclosed a summary of 'Ten Climate Actions to Celebrate' that may be of interest. I hope you find this information and letter useful.



CHRIS SKIDMORE MP

TEN CLIMATE ACTIONS TO CELEBRATE

1. The UK passed the world's first Climate Change Act over a decade ago with cross-party support. This gave us both a framework to set statutory carbon budgets and set up the independent Committee on Climate Change.
2. Since 2000, independent analysis shows that no other major industrialised country has done more than the UK to cut CO₂ intensity (the measure of carbon for each pound of GDP). We have seen reductions of an average of 3.7 per cent a year, compared to the EU average of 2.3 per cent and a G7 average of 2.2 per cent. The last time emissions in the UK were this low was in 1888 when Queen Victoria was on the throne, and our progress is accelerating; between 2010 and 2018, we reduced UK greenhouse gas emissions by approximately a quarter overall.
3. Ending coal use in our electricity generation through a huge shift to renewables and gas driven by decisive policy action: a UK carbon floor price (in addition to the European ETS). We have seen coal use on the grid tumble from almost 40 per cent in 2012 to our first "coal free" generation day last April and our first coal-free week since the Industrial Revolution in May 2019. By 2025 the UK will have no coal powered electricity generation.
4. We've used this achievement to establish the global Powering Past Coal Alliance with Canada – a coalition of 80 national and sub-national governments, businesses and organizations committed to phasing out unabated coal generation by no later than 2030.
5. Renewable electricity generation has quadrupled since 2010 and clean electricity now gives us over 50 per cent of our total.
6. Our renewables mix is diverse but we are rapidly developing the incredible potential for offshore wind around our coastlines, with the world's largest offshore wind capacity (8GW) and a launch last month of new £250 million sector deal to provide at least 30 per cent of our electricity from offshore wind by 2030 (and a requirement that at least 60 per cent of the supply chain is UK sourced by 2030).
7. The low carbon sector and its supply chain is now providing almost 400,000 green collar jobs in the UK (more than aerospace) and is growing much faster than the main economy – with estimated potential exports of more than £60 billion by 2030.
8. The Government is investing more than £2.5 billion in low carbon technology over this parliament – the largest ever public R&D investment in clean growth.
9. We want to go further and faster and the UK was the first major industrial economy to ask for independent advice (from the Committee on Climate Change) on how to reach a Net Zero economy after the publication of the IPCC report last year.
10. We have consistently been in the vanguard of international action, helping to lead the Paris 2015 Climate conference, delivering £6 billion in International Climate Finance over this Parliament and bidding to host the crucial 2020 UN climate negotiations here in the UK.

Policy & Resources Committee

26 June 2019

Revenue and Capital Outturn 2018/19

Final Decision-Maker	Policy & Resources Committee
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	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

This report provides the Committee with an overview of the revenue and capital budgets and outturn at the end of 2018/19. The figures included within the report are still subject to external audit so should be considered provisional at this stage. The report also includes an update on other matters which may have a material impact on the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Balance Sheet.

The Council has ended 2018/19 with an overall positive variance of £154,000 against its revenue budget, after deducting resources to be carried forward.

The Council spent £15.9 million against the planned capital programme during 2018/19, compared with a revised estimate of £23.9 million. Unspent resources required in subsequent years will be carried forward.

The balance on the general fund at 31 March 2019 has increased by £2.5 million mainly due to additional resources from Business Rates.

Collection Rates were narrowly missed for both Council Tax and Business Rates.

The overall growth in Business Rates compared measured against the Council's baseline was £3.041 million, with an overall Pooling/Pilot benefit for Maidstone of £3.086 million achieved.

The Council held investments totalling £15.014 million at 31 March 2019.

The report also updates the Committee on Maidstone Property Holdings Limited.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the revenue position of the Council at the end of 2018/19 as set out within the Revenue and Capital Outturn report at **Appendix 1** is noted.
2. That the Committee agree to the earmarking of reserves as set out on page 17 of **Appendix 1**.
3. That the outturn and slippage within the capital programme in 2018/19, detailed in **Appendix 1** is noted.
4. That the performance of the Collection Fund and the level of balances at the 31st March 2019 is noted.
5. That the performance in relation to the Treasury Management Strategy for the year is noted.
6. That the report detailing the performance of Maidstone Property Holdings Ltd is noted.
7. That £150,000 of the capital slippage for Communities Housing & Environment Committee is allocated for the upgrade and relocation of CCTV equipment as proposed in paragraph 1.5 of the report.
8. That the write-off of non-domestic rates as set out at **Appendix 2** is approved.

Timetable

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Economic Regeneration & Leisure Committee	4 June 2018
Communities, Housing & Environment Committee	18 June 2018
Strategic Planning & Infrastructure Committee	25 June 2018
Policy & Resources Committee	26 June 2018

Revenue and Capital Outturn 2018/19

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2018/19 onwards was agreed by full Council on 7 March 2018. This report provides the Committee with an overview of the capital and revenue budget and outturn for the fourth quarter of 2018/19 and highlights other financial matters that may have a material impact on the Medium-Term Financial Strategy or the balance sheet.
- 1.2 The Director of Finance & Business Improvement is the Responsible Financial Officer, and has overall responsibility for budgetary control and financial management. However in practice, day to day budgetary control is delegated to service managers, with assistance and advice from their director and the finance section.
- 1.3 Attached at **Appendix 1** is a report detailing the position for the revenue and capital budgets at the end of the 2018/19 financial year, along with updates on a number of the relevant areas. The report is based on the committee structure that was in place for 2018/19, although outturn reports are going to the relevant new committees.
- 1.4 In addition to considering the financial out-turn, the Committee has been asked to consider a request from the Communities Housing & Environment Committee. The CHE Committee received a report at their meeting of 19 April 2019 setting out the requirement to upgrade public realm CCTV cameras, and to relocate CCTV recording equipment from the Town Hall, where flooding had led to a degradation of the service. The required investment amounted to £150,000, which would pay for itself through reduced running costs over a five year period.
- 1.5 CHE Committee agreed with the proposal to upgrade and relocate CCTV equipment and have asked that Policy and Resources Committee agree the necessary expenditure. The expenditure can be funded from within the underspend on the CHE Committee's capital programme, which is reported as part of the 2018/19 capital out-turn. A recommendation to this effect is accordingly included within this report.

2. IRRECOVERABLE NON-DOMESTIC RATES

- 2.1 The committee are asked to approve the write-off of £358,042.44 non-domestic rates identified in **Appendix 2**.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

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

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 In considering the strategic position on the revenue budget and the capital programme at the end of 2018/19 the committee can choose to note this information or it could choose to take further action.
- 4.2 The committee is requested to note the content of the report and agree on any necessary action to be taken in relation to the budget position.

5. RISK

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

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 No consultation has been undertaken in relation to this report.

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 The overall outturn for the year ended 31 March 2019 will be reported as part of the Council's Statement of Accounts, which will be presented to the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee for approval at its meeting on 30 July 2019. The Statement will be audited and is due to be approved by 31 July 2019 at the latest.

8. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	This report monitors actual activity against the revenue budget and other financial matters set by Council for the financial year. The budget is set in accordance with the Council's Medium Term	Interim Head of Finance

	Financial Strategy which is linked to the strategic plan and corporate priorities.	
Risk Management	This has been addressed in section 4 of the report.	Interim Head of Finance
Financial	Financial implications are the focus of this report through high level budget monitoring. The process of budget monitoring ensures that services can react quickly to potential resource problems. The process ensures that the Council is not faced by corporate financial problems that may prejudice the delivery of strategic priorities.	Interim Head of Finance
Staffing	The budget for staffing represents a significant proportion of the direct spend of the council and is carefully monitored. Any issues in relation to employee costs will be raised in this and future monitoring reports.	Interim Head of Finance
Legal	The Council has a statutory obligation to maintain a balanced budget and this monitoring process enables the committee to remain aware of issues and the process to be taken to maintain a balanced budget for the year.	Team Leader (Corporate Governance), MKLS
Privacy and Data Protection	No specific issues arise.	Interim Head of Finance
Equalities	No impact identified as a result of this report. Equalities Impact Assessments are undertaken for specific projects, where appropriate.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Crime and Disorder	No specific issues arise.	Interim Head of Finance
Procurement	No specific issues arise.	Interim Head of Finance

9. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix 1: Fourth Quarter 2018/19 Revenue and Capital Monitoring – Policy and Resources
 - Appendix 2: Written-off Non-Domestic Rates
-

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Revenue and Capital Outturn 2018/19



Policy & Resources Committee
26 June 2019
Lead Officer: Mark Green
Report Authors: Chris Hartgrove/Paul Holland

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Executive Summary

This report is intended to provide Members with an overview of performance against revenue and capital budgets and outturn at the end of the 2018/19 financial year. It also includes an update on other matters which may have a material impact on the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy and Balance Sheet.

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

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

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

Headline messages for the year are as follows:

- There has been an underspend of £0.154m against the revenue budget.
- Capital expenditure totalling £15.943m was incurred for the year.
- The balance on the general fund has increased to £14.437m.
- Collection Rates were narrowly missed for both Council Tax and Business Rates.
- The overall growth in Business Rates compared measured against the Council's baseline was £3.041 million, with an overall Pooling/Pilot benefit for Maidstone of £3.086 million achieved.
- The Council held investments totaling £15.014m at 31 March 2019.

Revenue Budget 2018/19

Revenue Spending

At the end of 2018/19, there is an overall positive variance of £0.154m against the Council's revenue budget.

The three tables on page 6 set out the summary position, analysed in three ways:

Table 1: by Committee

Table 2: by Priority

Table 3: by Expenditure Type

The figures are presented on an accruals basis i.e. they include expenditure for goods and services which we have received but not yet paid for.

The budgets for each service committee now include a figure for assumed salary slippage to reflect the forecast level of vacant posts across the year. This was previously shown as a figure for the whole Council as part of the budget monitoring report for this Committee.

As illustrated by the chart below all committees stayed within their expenditure budgets with the exception of this Committee although this is offset by income in excess of the budget figure. With the exception of Heritage Culture & Leisure Committee the remaining committees have all underachieved on their income budgets.

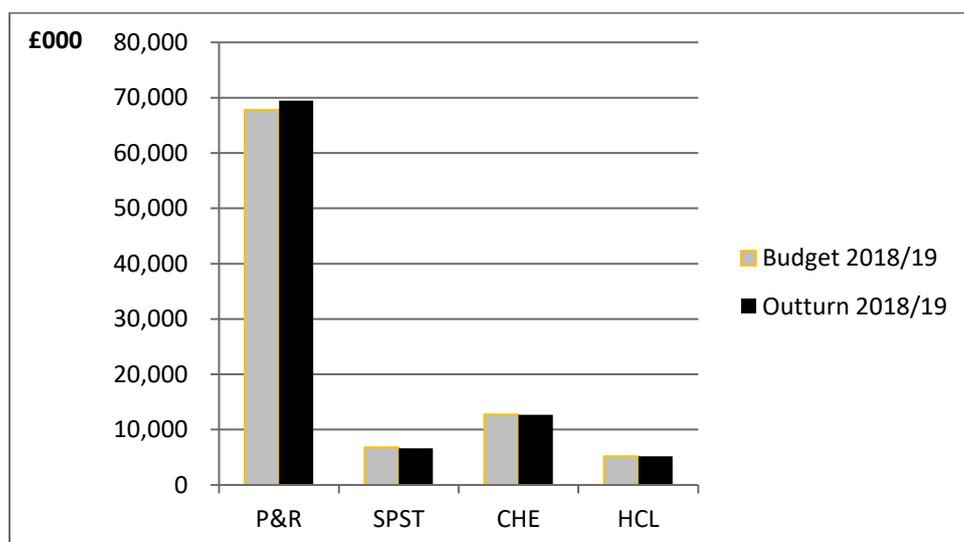


Chart 1 Performance against budget analysed by service committee (Expenditure)

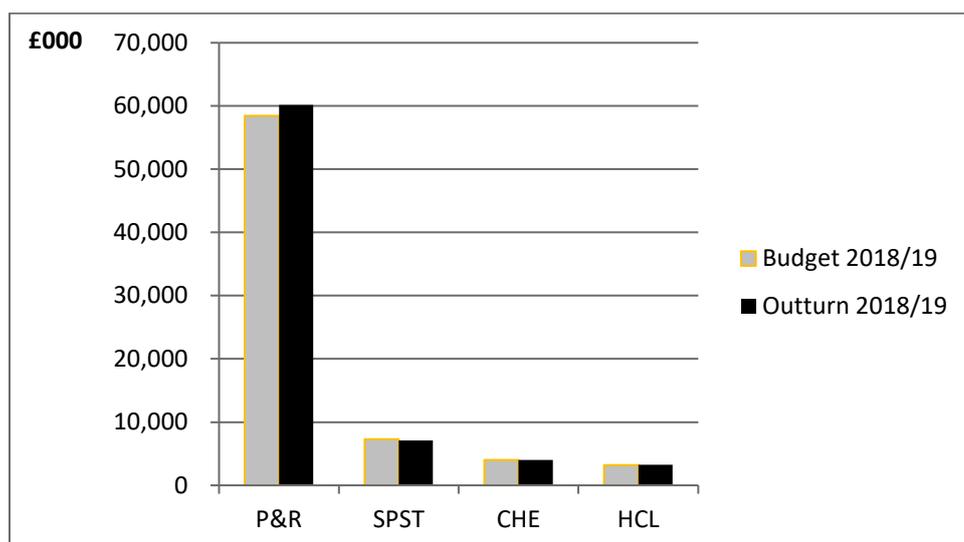


Chart 2 Performance against budget analysed by service committee (Income)

Within these headline figures, there are a number of adverse and favourable variances for individual service areas. This report draws attention to the most significant variances, i.e. those exceeding £30,000 or expected to do so by the end of the year. Pages 7-11 provide further detail regarding these variances, and the actions being taken to address them.

The variances are grouped by service committee, and each committee has been given an opportunity to consider and respond to the matters arising within their respective areas. Where applicable, the response of the committee has been provided. The individual figures for each Committee are shown net of amounts due to be carried forward, such as grants not utilised, so will differ from the gross figures reported to the Committees concerned.

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

Revenue Budget Summary 2018/19

ANALYSIS BY COMMITTEE

Committee	Full Year Budget £000	Actual £000	Variance £000
Policy & Resources	9,557	9,188	369
Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation	-648	-471	-177
Communities, Housing & Environment	8,688	8,627	61
Heritage, Culture & Leisure	1,852	1,951	-99
Net Revenue Expenditure	19,449	19,294	154

Table 1 - Analysis by Committee

ANALYSIS BY PRIORITY

Priority	Full Year Budget £000	Actual £000	Variance £000
Character	742	735	8
Health & Wellbeing	2,540	2,244	296
Clean & Safe	4,880	5,167	-287
Leisure & Culture	2,866	2,822	44
Town Centre	86	64	22
Employment & Skills	605	595	10
Homes	1,705	1,762	-57
Infrastructure	452	590	-138
Trading	-5,068	-5,132	64
Central & Democratic	10,640	10,449	192
Net Revenue Expenditure	19,449	19,294	154

Table 2 - Analysis by Priority

ANALYSIS BY SUBJECTIVE SPEND

Subjective	Full Year Budget £000	Actual £000	Variance £000
Employees	20,615	20,696	-81
Premises	4,784	4,636	148
Transport	1,283	1,217	66
Supplies & Services	11,228	10,879	349
Agency	6,035	6,163	-128
Transfer Payments	47,655	48,884	-1,229
Asset Rents	1,050	1,051	-1
Income	-73,201	-74,232	1,031
Net Revenue Expenditure	19,449	19,294	154

Table 3 - Analysis by Subjective Spend

¹A positive figure represents a favourable variance. A negative figure (ie -£X,XXX) represents an adverse variance.

Significant Variances

	Positive Variance Q3	Adverse Variance Q3
Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	£000	£000
Museum – This variance has arisen from an underspend on running costs, with the most significant element being repair and maintenance costs. These costs fluctuate between years and it is expected that they will even out over time.	41	
Mote Park Adventure Zone – The facility did not open during 2018/19 as planned, however it has now opened.		-57
Parks & Open Spaces – A budget saving was planned in this area which is being achieved through increased income from the Grounds Maintenance service. This income is accounted for within the remit of the Communities, Housing & Environment Committee but the saving is accounted for here and therefore appears as an overspend.		-57
Playground Maintenance & Improvements – Funding had been set aside for spare/replacement equipment. However resources were available in the capital budget for this expenditure.	43	
Mote Park – This variance covers several areas, the most significant of which were insurance claim excesses, additional sewage costs following the leak in the park and a shortfall in income from fairs and circuses.		-51
Crematorium – There was significant additional income achieved, particularly from memorial subscriptions and renewals and cremation fees.	101	
Market – This variance is a combination of additional running costs from increased trade refuse collection charges and additional service charge costs, and a shortfall in income from the markets.		-39
Cultural Services Section - This variance is mainly due to staff vacancies. Underspends of this nature were anticipated when setting the budget and are reflected in the line 'salary slippage' (see below)	43	
Salary Slippage - Assumed saving from normal level of turnover in staff. The actual savings are reflected in individual cost centres.		-50

Table 4 Significant Variances – Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

	Positive Variance Q4	Adverse Variance Q4
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	£000	£000
Building Regulations Chargeable - Income has performed ahead of budget for the whole year, and the year-end surplus will be transferred to earmarked reserves.	38	
Street Naming and Numbering - Income has exceeded the budgeted figure as a result of the number of new developments in the borough.	82	
Development Control Advice - There has been significant additional income from both pre-application advice and the new Planning Performance Agreements.	145	
Development Control Majors - As has been forecast in previous reports this area has shown a significant fall in income due to the reduced number of planning applications received.		-294
Development Management Section - This variance is due to high agency staff costs. Unfortunately the costs have not declined as planned due to agency cover for the Major Projects Manager who left in September and also another staff member on maternity leave.		-137
Development Management Enforcement Section - This variance represents unused budgets for appeals costs.	77	
Salary Slippage - Assumed saving from normal level of turnover in staff. The actual savings are reflected in individual cost centres.		-74
Residents Parking - The overspend in this area is entirely due to under-achieved Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) income in residents areas. This is partly due to lower contraventions having to be issued due to an adjudicator ruling. This however is offset by the over-achieved PCN income in Off Street Parking.		-48
Pay & Display Car Parks - Income was £0.146m below budget at year end. However this has been offset by a favourable £43,000 from Season tickets and the parking reserve budget which is £0.165m, thus leaving a favourable variance overall.	110	
Off Street Parking – Enforcement - PCN income in car parks is above expectation, this is however offset by a reduction of income for PCN's in resident areas.	72	
Park & Ride - The introduction of pay to park has not generated the income that was expected from the reports that were carried out. Income was £0.104m below expectation at year end. The Park and Ride model will change again for 19/20.		-118

Table 5 Significant Variances – Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

	Positive Variance Q4	Adverse Variance Q4
Communities, Housing & Environment Committee	£000	£000
CCTV – This variance is a combination of a budget strategy savings target that has not been realised along with a shortfall in income.		-72
Waste Crime – This variance was mainly caused by unspent running costs budgets.	42	
Occupational Health & Safety – This was due to an unspent professional services budget. Costs in this area fluctuate depending on whether there are Health & Safety cases requiring investigation.	57	
Household Waste Collection – Additional wheeled bins were purchased during the year and this has led to the overspend in this area.		-42
Recycling Collection – The overspend in this area was caused by a one-off adjustment of £0.341m to move from a cash basis of accounting, where all income is taken when money is received, to an accruals basis, where it is attributed to the period when it is earned. This was necessary to comply with the requirements of a new accounting standard.		-239
Strategic Housing Role - There is an unused grant of £36,000 that will be carried forward to 2019/20.	42	
HMO Licensing – This variance is a result of licences paid in advance which has led to excess income being received.	32	
Homelessness Prevention – There has been an underspend in the homefinder scheme and the deposit bond scheme budgets. There are also unused grants of £260,000 that will be carried forward to 2019/20.	187	
Community Partnerships & Resilience Section – This variance was mainly down to vacant staff posts, along with an underspend in the standby payment budget.	70	
Fleet Workshop & Management – The workshop service has now been outsourced but delays in the start date meant work had to be undertaken by local garages at a greater expense. There is also an unrealised budget strategy saving of £50,000.		-72
Grounds Maintenance – Commercial – Additional income has been generated in this area from section 106 funded works, capital projects and other external works.	102	
Salary Slippage - Assumed saving from normal level of turnover in staff. The actual savings are reflected in individual cost centres.		-93

Table 6 Significant Variances – Communities, Housing & Environment Committee

	Positive Variance Q4	Adverse Variance Q4
Policy & Resources Committee	£000	£000
Unapportionable Central Overheads - Pension payments to Kent County Council are lower than was anticipated when the budget was set.	72	
Elections – The overspend relates to the 2018 Borough Elections. It was mainly caused by postage costs of £33,000 for sending out polling cards and one-off equipment purchase costs of £12,000. An ongoing higher level of costs on this cost centre is considered to be unavoidable and is now reflected in the budget for 2019/20.		-58
Interest & Investment Income - Interest rates are higher than what was assumed in the budget, and additionally the slippage in the capital programme has meant more surplus funds are available for investment.	120	
Sundry Corporate Properties - The budget assumed income from the purchase of further commercial properties, but to date the only one has been the Boxmend Industrial Estate, so the income target has not been realised this year.		-73
Granada House – Commercial - This area has benefited from the receipt of £48,000 additional income relating to 2017/18. This was not accrued for as there was uncertainty around whether or not we would receive it.	38	
Granada House – Residential – This variance is mainly a result of a £23,000 income budget that will not be realised and will be removed from the budgets in 2019/20. Residential units at Granada House nevertheless achieve a high level of occupancy and generate a return in line with the market.		-33
Fraud Section - This variance is caused by staff vacancies.	41	
Accountancy Section - This variance is caused by staff vacancies.	67	
Legal Services Section – This variance is a combination of an increase in the forecast cost of the shared service contract and a shortfall in income generated by the service.		-35
Mid Kent ICT Services - This variance is caused by staff vacancies.	30	
Mid Kent HR Services Section - This variance is caused by staff vacancies.	49	
The Link - This is due to a combination of reduced utility recharges from the Mall and a reduction in building maintenance costs.	71	
Maidstone House – This variance is a combination of reduced utility costs and additional rental income received.	64	
IT Operational Services - A saving of £100,000 was due to be made in this service, but delays in implementing a restructure and the associated one-off costs meant that it was not realised in 2018/19. This has been partially offset by an underspend on the equipment purchase budget.		-69
Central Telephones - This variance has arisen following the introduction of the Skype service.	45	

Youth Development Programme - The budget is for two apprentices posts, but these are both currently vacant.	32	
Salary Slippage - Assumed saving from normal level of turnover in staff. The actual savings are reflected in individual cost centres.		-221

Table 7 Significant Variances – Policy & Resources Committee

Reportable Virements

In accordance with best practice, and in order to be transparent about alterations made to the agreed budget during the course of the year, virements are reported to Policy and Resources committee as part of the budget monitoring process. A virement represents the transfer of a budget between objectives that occurs after the budget for the year has been formally approved by Council. Generally this will be linked to decisions with a financial impact which have been taken outside of the budget setting process, or for projects where funding spans more than one financial year.

Virements may be temporary, meaning that there has been a one-off transfer of budget to fund a discrete project or purchase, or permanent, meaning that the base budget has been altered and the change will continue to be reflected in the budget for subsequent years.

The table below details the reportable virements which were made during the fourth quarter of 2018/19:

Reason	Value £	Temp/Perm*
Remove depreciation budget for Park & Ride buses	182,000	Permanent
Fund invoice payments for business rates list reviews	86,500	Permanent
Budget transferred to fund public conveniences spend	10,300	Permanent
Fund Maidstone East project from business rates growth monies	316,070	Temporary
Set up budgets for Cobtree Estate Trust recharges	64,860	Temporary
Internal printing income target offset from pre-delivered savings	52,460	Temporary
Fund Judicial Review from Balances	45,000	Temporary
Funding for various schemes from Business Rates Pilot as agreed by Policy & Resources Committee 28 March 2018	114,170	Temporary

Table 8 Reportable Virements, Q4 2018/19

Capital Budget 2018/19

Capital Spending

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

The outturn position for 2018/19 is set out in the table on the following page. Expenditure totaling £15.943m has been incurred against a budget of £23.986m. This means there is slippage of £8.042m which will be carried forward to 2019/20. Further detail relating to the areas for which slippage has been identified has been provided below.

Capital Budget Summary Q4 2018/19

Capital Programme Heading	Revised Estimate 2018/19 £000	Outturn 2018/19 £000	Budget Remaining £000	Budget Not Required £000
Communities, Housing & Environment				
Housing Incentives	1,041	26	1,015	
Housing - Disabled Facilities Grants Funding	1,348	578	770	
Housing Investments	4,683	4,446	236	
Purchase of Lenworth House	2,228	2,415	-187	
Brunswick Street - Costs of Scheme	1,642	980	661	
Union Street - Costs of Scheme	917	720	197	
Commercial Waste	180		180	
Street Scene Investment	151	29	122	
Total	12,189	9,196	2,994	
Heritage, Culture & Leisure				
Continued Improvements to Play Areas	574	152	422	
Commercial Projects - Crematorium Projects	416	536	-120	
Commercial Projects - Mote Park Adventure Zone	1,957	2,233	-276	
Mote Park Improvements	391	17	374	
Mote Park Visitor Centre	150	118	32	
Mote Park Lake - Dam Works	200	133	67	
Other Parks Improvements	100		100	
Museum Development Plan	25	14	11	
Total	3,814	3,203	611	

(Table continued below)

Capital Programme Heading	Revised Estimate 2018/19 £000	Outturn 2018/19 £000	Budget Remaining £000	Budget Not Required £000
Policy & Resources				
High Street Regeneration	2,830	2,283	547	
Asset Management / Corporate Property	844	542	302	
Feasibility Studies	74	11	63	
Infrastructure Delivery	600		600	
Software / PC Replacement	159	163	-4	
Acquisition of Commercial Assets	2,354	5	2,350	
Kent Medical Campus - Innovation Scheme	150	251	-101	
Maidstone East/Sessions Square	552	32	520	
Total	7,564	3,287	4,277	
Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation				
Riverside Towpath	40		40	
Bridges Gyrotory Scheme	188	67	121	260
Total	228	67	161	260
Sub-Total	23,795	15,752	8,042	260
Section 106 Contributions	191	191		
TOTAL	23,986	15,943	8,042	260

Table 9 Capital Expenditure, Q4 2018/19

Capital Budget Variances 2018/19

Communities, Housing & Environment Committee

- The Housing Incentives budget has historically been under-utilised and is being reviewed to reset it to a more realistic level.
- The unused Disabled Facilities Grant budget will be rolled forward for use in 2019/20.
- The second phase of the Housing Investments for temporary accommodation project is complete and the unused budget will be carried forward to be included within the budget for phase 3.
- The purchase of Lenworth House was completed in the fourth quarter, however additional works were required to complete the project as well as professional fees that were not allowed for in the initial project budget.
- The construction phase of the Brunswick Street and Union Street developments is now under way.
- The Commercial Waste budget is for the purchase of a new vehicle. The purchase date has slipped to 2019/20.

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

- The overspend at the Crematorium has arisen due to greater than forecast costs for the new car park element of the project. The background to this and the future funding of the project was the subject of a report to the HCL Committee on 2 April 2019.
- Members will be aware from previous reports to the HCL Committee that substantial additional costs were incurred as a result of the sewage leak that occurred in the park. These costs are included above but it is hoped that some or all of them may be recovered via a claim that the Council has made against Southern Water.

Policy & Resources Committee

- The Town Centre Regeneration scheme is scheduled for completion in early 2019 so final contract payments will fall into the early part of 2019/20.
- The unused balance for Asset Management/Corporate Property will be carried forward to 2019/20 where it has been included in a plan of works going forward.
- No projects have been identified this year for the Infrastructure Delivery or Acquisition of Commercial Assets budgets and so these will be carried forward into 2019/20.
- The Maidstone East/Sessions Square budget line represents funding available for the partnership with Kent County Council to facilitate the ongoing development of this site. Income generated on the car park at this site is being used as the primary source of funding for this work. At this stage there is sufficient funding available to proceed with the development work so it is anticipated that there will be budget carried forward at the year end.

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

- The remaining budget for the Bridges Gyrotory Scheme is for residual costs around the landscaping elements of the scheme and flood defence works that will be undertaken.

Reserves & Balances 2018/19

Reserves & Balances

The total of earmarked reserves and general fund balances as at 31st March 2019 was £14.4 million. The makeup of this balance is set out in the table below.

It is proposed that, within the overall reserves, the following new earmarked reserves are established.

1. Planning Appeals

It was agreed by Council when setting the budget for 2018/19 that £400,000 would be set aside for potential costs arising from planning appeals. A review of outstanding appeals as at 31 March 2019 has concluded that a specific provision of £100,000 is required in relation to a number of cases. The balance of £300,000 has been retained as an earmarked reserve.

2. Future Capital Expenditure

The Medium Term Financial Strategy incorporates a capital programme worth £80 million over five years. It was assumed in the budget for 2018/19 that the Council would have to start borrowing during the year, and budgetary provision was made for the necessary financing costs. In the event, borrowing has not been required, owing partly to slippage in the capital programme. Accordingly, the budgetary provision is being carried forward to fund borrowing costs when they arise, which will be the case later in 2019/20.

3. Housing Prevention and Temporary Accommodation

The Housing Service has benefited from government grants for Flexible Homelessness Support, Homelessness Prevention and New Burdens. There is therefore capacity to establish an earmarked reserve for Homelessness Prevention and Temporary Accommodation which will be used to fund homelessness prevention initiatives and a sinking fund for temporary accommodation repairs and maintenance.

After establishing these earmarked reserves, the projected closing balance continues to allow for the minimum level of unallocated general balances of £2m, as agreed by Council in March 2018, to be maintained.

	1st April 2018	Contributions to/from Balances	31st March 2019
	£000	£000	£000
New Homes Bonus funding for Capital	1,404	-1,404	0
Local Plan Review *	200		200
Neighbourhood Planning	70	-6	64
Planning Appeals	0	300	300
Trading Accounts	51	-20	31
Civil Parking Enforcement	481	-63	418
Future Capital Expenditure	0	431	431
Housing Prevention & Temporary Accommodation	0	700	700
Business Rates Growth	692	3,005	3,697
Total Earmarked Reserves	2,898	2,943	5,841
Unallocated Balances	9,022	-426	8,596
Total General Fund Balance	11,920	2,517	14,437

Table 10 Reserves & Balances 2018/19

* In the Q1 monitoring report, this table indicated that £31,000 would be spent from the Local Plan reserve during 2018/19. It has since been identified that funding for this spend had been allocated from the business rates pilot financial sustainability fund, and the above figures therefore reflect this adjustment.

The movement on unallocated balances reflects utilisation of amounts brought forward from 2017/18 such as grants, less the outturn surplus of £154,000.

Council Tax & Business Rates 2018/19

Collection Fund

The Council is increasingly reliant on income generated through local taxation (Council Tax and Business Rates), which is accounted for through the Collection Fund.

Due to the risk in this area, including the risk of non-collection and the pooling/pilot arrangements in place for Business Rates growth, the Council monitors the Collection Fund very carefully.

Collection Rates

The collection rates achieved for local taxation are reported in the table below, alongside the target for the year, and the actual amount collected.

2018/19 Local Taxation Collection Rates			
Description	Target	Actual	Amount Collected
	%	%	£
Council Tax	98.20	97.78	106,785,973
Business Rates	98.70	97.36	59,418,154

Although collection targets were narrowly missed, collection rates for both Council Tax and Business Rates were just 0.1% down compared to 2017/18.

All billing and recovery timetables were followed throughout 2018/19 and a review of the appropriateness of 2019/20 targets will therefore be undertaken.

The recovery timetable and action will continue to be taken after the year end, with officers continuing to pursue payment of any developing arrears, along with any arrears from prior years.

Business Rates Retention (BRR)

Income retained from the growth in Business Rates has exceeded previous expectations with substantial benefits emerging from the Council's participation in the 2018/19 (100%) BRR Pilot in partnership with the other Kent authorities.

The overall growth in Business Rates compared measured against the Council's baseline was £3.041 million, with an overall Pooling/Pilot benefit for Maidstone of £3.086 million achieved as summarised in the table below. The first three lines replicate the benefits that were gained under the former Business Rates Pool arrangements; the Financial Sustainability Fund and the Housing and Commercial Growth Fund have been established using the additional proceeds from membership of the 100% BRR Pilot.

MBC Business Rates Pooling/Pilot Benefit 2018/19		
Description	Amount	Allocation of Pooling / Pilot Benefit
	£	
Billing Authority Basic Share of Pool benefits	420,024	Allocated to Economic Development
Billing Authority Pool Growth Fund	420,024	Allocated to joint Maidstone East project with Kent County Council
Pool Safety Net Redistribution	25,373	Carried forward to 19/20
Financial Sustainability Fund	1,130,000	See separate report on this agenda
Housing & Commercial Growth Fund	1,090,252	Allocated by North Kent Leaders
Total Benefit	3,085,673	

Write-Offs

The Committee is asked to approve the write off of £358,042.44 in unpaid Business Rates debt identified in **Appendix 2**. Please note that information relating to individuals is restricted under the Data Protection Act and has therefore been redacted from this appendix.

As noted above, the Council takes a robust approach to recovery of Business Rates. This involves progressive action which would typically include:

- Reminder for non-payment
- Final notice for non-payment
- Summons for non-payment
- Application to Magistrates Court for a Liability Order
- Instruction of Enforcement Agent to recover
- Bankruptcy or liquidation, where appropriate
- Proceeding to seek committal to prison (individuals).

However, throughout the process the Council actively encourages contact from any business experiencing difficulty in order to negotiate arrangement for payment.

The Council could continue to hold these debts as outstanding, but this option is not recommended as there is no prospect of recovery and this would distort the financial position of the Council.

For the businesses listed in **Appendix 2**, the Council has exhausted all of the recovery processes in trying to collect the unpaid amounts. It is therefore suggested that these amounts are written off and the Council's accounts are amended to reflect the fact that the payments identified are not expected to be recovered.

The Council maintains a provision for bad debts, and there is sufficient resource available within this balance to cover the value of the proposed write offs.

Treasury Management 2018/19

Treasury Management

The Council has adopted and incorporated into its Financial Regulations, the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code). This CIPFA Code covers the principles and guidelines relating to borrowing and investment operations. In March 2018, the Council approved a Treasury Management Strategy for 2018/19 that was based on this code. The strategy requires that Policy & Resources Committee should formally be informed of Treasury Management activities quarterly as part of budget monitoring.

During the Quarter ended 31st March 2019:

- The annual growth in Q4 came in at 1.4% year on year confirming that the UK was the third fastest growing individual country in the G7 in quarter 4.
- CPI inflation has been on a falling trend since peaking at 3.1% in November 2017, reaching a new low of 1.8% in January 2019 before rising marginally to 1.9% in February. However, in the February 2019 Bank of England Inflation Report, the latest forecast for inflation over both the two and three year time horizons remained marginally above the MPC's target of 2%.
- Bank of England Bank Rate is currently at 0.75%. The Council's advisors, Link Asset Services, have revised the forecast on the UK Bank Rate believing there will not be another rise until 2020 due to their belief that it will be unlikely the MPC would take any further actions until the uncertainties of Brexit are clear. If there were a disorderly exit from the EU, it is likely that Bank Rate would be cut to support growth.

The council held investments totalling £15.014m. A full list of investments held at this time is shown in the table below. All investments at year end are fixed term deposits with other Local Authorities which are deemed to be secure investments with the exception of some short-term cash in notices accounts.

Investment income for this period is £0.220m against a budget of £0.100m with an average rate of 0.78%. This is due to higher than anticipated investment rates due to a bank rate rise in August 2018 and larger sums to invest.

Investments

Counterparty	Type of Investment	Principal £	Start Date	Maturity Date	Rate of Return	Arlingclose Credit Limits	
						Suggested Term	Maximum Deposit
Thurrock Borough Council	Fixed Term Deposit	2,000,000	15/11/2018	15/04/2019	0.87%	5 Years	£5,000,000
Lancashire County Council	Fixed Term Deposit	1,000,000	17/04/2018	16/04/2019	1.00%	5 Years	£5,000,000
Thurrock Borough Council	Fixed Term Deposit	2,000,000	27/09/2018	26/04/2019	0.92%	5 Years	£5,000,000
Suffolk County Council	Fixed Term Deposit	2,000,000	22/03/2019	28/05/2019	0.85%	5 Years	£5,000,000
Wirral MBC	Fixed Term Deposit	4,000,000	29/03/2019	29/05/2019	0.80%	5 Years	£5,000,000
Cherwell District Council	Fixed Term Deposit	2,000,000	15/10/2018	15/07/2019	1.05%	5 Years	£5,000,000
London Borough of Croydon	Fixed Term Deposit	2,000,000	01/05/2018	01/05/2020	1.05%	5 Years	£5,000,000
Lloyds Bank Plc	Notice Account Deposit	13,997			0.95%	6 months	£3,000,000
Svenska Handelsbanken	Notice Account Deposit	377			0.85%	13 months	£3,000,000

15,014,374

Table 13 Short Term Investments, 4th Quarter 2018/19

Borrowing

There have been no borrowing requirements in the last quarter.

Maidstone Property Holdings Ltd 2018/19



Maidstone Property Holdings

Maidstone Property Holdings Ltd. was incorporated on 30th September 2016 and is used by the Council as a vehicle for letting residential properties on assured short hold tenancies. The company, which is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Council, currently holds two properties, one of which consists of 20 flats on a 22 year lease from the Council, the other consists of 14 flats on a 25 year lease from the Council.

An internal audit review identified that there should be a mechanism in place to enable the company to formally report to the Council. Given that the current level of activity within the company is relatively low, it was decided that this would be done via the quarterly budget monitoring process. This section of the report intends to provide the committee with an overview of the activity and performance of the company for the year to date.

The company's financial year end has been changed to 31st March, in order to align with the Council's financial reporting period. The 2018/19 accounts are being audited by the company's external auditors, UHY Hacker Young. A board meeting will be convened shortly in order to formally approve the accounts, and the Company Secretary will ensure that these are filed with Companies House by the deadline of 31st December 2019.

At the end of 2018/19, the net rental income totalled £80,377. This compares with £76,105 for 2017/18 and represents rent charged to tenants, less costs recharged by the managing agent. As at 31st March 2019 there were no rent arrears. At this point in time both properties are fully let.

The Council generates income from the company through charges made for the services provided, and the property lease. For the 2018/19 financial year these charges totaled £74,664, compared to £71,675 for 2017/18. After these charges have been taken into account, it is anticipated that the company will end 2018/19 in a break-even position.

As the activity of the company increases over time, we will keep the governance and reporting arrangements under review to ensure that they remain appropriate and commensurate with the scope of activity and associated risks.

APPENDIX 2 – WRITE-OFF OF NON-DOMESTIC RATES

Property Address	Outstanding Debt	Total to be written off	Reason for write off	Action taken
Gourmet Burger Kitchen, Lockmeadow, Barker Road, ME16 8RG	£36,858.99	£36,858.99	Liquidation	Various methods of recovery taken, company in liquidation 29.07.2016, confirmation no dividend will be paid now received.
87-97 Upper Stone Street, Maidstone, ME15 6HE	£12,179.84	£12,179.84	Ceased trading/dissolved	Lease received May 18 confirming liability from August 17 to March 18. Company dissolved 18.09.18.
301 (unit 304) Dukes Walk, Chequers Centre, Maidstone, ME15 6AS	£13,421.33	£13,421.33	Liquidation	Company in liquidation 27.10.17 and notice of no dividend now received
61 High Street Maidstone Kent ME14 1SR	£57,230.73	£57,230.73	Liquidation	Company in liquidation 30/4/18 account only set up in March 2018 so no recovery action taken
93 Week Street ME14 1QX	£22,186.53	£22,186.53	Dissolved	Debt was with the Enforcement Agents, dissolved on 22.01.2019 as per Companies House
304-306 (unit 307-310) Dukes Walk Chequers Centre Maidstone ME15 6AS	£36,095.35	£36,095.35	liquidation	Liability only commenced April 2018, and company went into liquidation 28.08.2018. No chance of recovery action being taken. Notice of no dividend received
D9 Dukes Walk Maidstone ME15 6AS	£57,204.80	£57,204.80	CVA	In CVA from 13/4/2018 have been advised no dividends.
Bst & Gnd Flr 22-23 High Street, Maidstone, ME14 1JF	£14,938.68	£14,938.68	ceased trading/dissolved	Debt has been with Enforcement Agents, returned as unable to collect. Winding up letter has been sent, no response. Companies House now shows dissolved on 27.11.18
29 High Street, Maidstone, ME14 1JF	£20,865.23	£20,865.23	ceased trading/dissolved	Debt has been with Enforcement agents, returned as unable to collect. Company dissolved on 30.10.2018
304-306 (Unit 307-310) Dukes Walk, Chequers Centre, ME15 6AS	£33,253.62	£33,253.62	Liquidation	Recovery action commenced, company in liquidation 12.04.2018 and notice of notice of no dividend received.
Unit 6 Harrietsham Depot, Station Road, Harrietsham, ME17 1JA	£15,969.60	£15,969.60	Liquidation	Debt was with Enforcement Agents, Notice of liquidation received, in Liquidation on 20.03.2019. No dividends to be paid.
Unit 7D at 56 King Street, Maidstone, ME14 1BW	£37,837.74	£37,837.74	Liquidation	Liability orders obtained and arrangements agreed. Company went into liquidation 23.03.2018, final dividend received and notice of no further dividend to be paid.
Total to be written-off	£358,042.44	£358,042.44		

Agenda Item 17

**Policy and Resources
Committee**

26 June 2019

Business Rates Retention (Pilot) Additional Projects

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 level of income generated from Business Rates growth and retained locally as part of the Business Rates Retention pilot in 2018/19 has exceeded initial projections, with total funding of £1,130,000 accumulating in the "Financial Sustainability Fund" (FSF) compared to £640,000 anticipated at the start of the financial year, which has been used to fund a number of projects aimed at furthering the Council's corporate objectives (the "2018/19 projects").

After allowing for a small underspend anticipated on the 2018/19 projects, additional resources of £509,000 are now available to fund further projects and – following development work by senior officers, and consultation with councillors – this report presents a new tranche of projects for the Committee's consideration.

The total value of the proposals is £667,950 (i.e. £158,950 higher than the additional funds in the FSF), so the Committee will need to make a balanced choice as to the projects to fund (and to what extent) if an optimal decision is to be reached in the further pursuit of the Council's corporate priorities.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That it agrees funding for the projects set out in Appendix 1.
2. To the extent that there is a shortfall in resources from the Financial Sustainability Fund, that it delegates authority to the Director of Finance and Business Improvement, in consultation with the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, to identify funds from within unallocated resources for the agreed projects.

Timetable

<i>Meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Member Briefing	13 June 2019
Policy & Resources Committee	26 June 2019

Business Rates Retention (Pilot) Additional Projects

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Accepting the recommendations will materially 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 report recommendations 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	None.	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
Privacy and Data Protection	None.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

Equalities	Where appropriate, Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out for specific projects.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Crime and Disorder	None.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Procurement	Procurement of services in the course of delivering the projects will be in accordance with the Council's Procurement Procedure Rules.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 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

- 1.3 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.
- 1.4 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. The projects (including forecast spending presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on 24th April 2019) are summarised in the table below.

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

2.5 The level of Business Rates retained in 2018/19 consistently exceeded expectations throughout the year. The MBC share eventually reached £1,130,000 (subject to external audit) by year end, rather than the original assumption of £640,000, as the FSF shares for all Pool members have been bolstered by the savings realised as a consequence of the 'nil Levy' requirement for 100% Pilot schemes.

Financial Sustainability Fund (FSF): Additional Allocation

1.5 The enhanced FSF allocation for MBC provides 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.

1.6 Estimated additional resources available from the FSF are as follows:

- Original FSF allocation £640,000
- Original Projects (*13); forecast outturn (£621,000)
- Additional FSF allocation (£1.13m - £640k) £490,000
- Net Additional Resources (2019/20) £509,000

Financial Sustainability Fund (FSF): New Project Bids

- 1.7 Senior officers have considered up to 30 different projects with a total value approaching £1.5 million, all of which could potentially further enhance the Council's strategic objectives.
- 1.8 A shortlist of 15 projects (total value of circa £700,000) was drawn up by the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) and considered by councillors at a Workshop held on 13 June 2019.
- 1.9 A positive consensus emerged from the Workshop with all projects receiving at least some support from councillors. Consequently it was agreed that, acting on feedback from the Workshop, 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.
- 1.10 The project list has now been reviewed and re-prioritised as requested by councillors. Significant changes to note since the Workshop on 13 June 2019 include the following:
 - Inward Facing Projects/Alternative Funding – following a review of potential alternative funding sources, the three 'inward facing' projects ("Smart Meeting Rooms", "Enhanced Technology for Customer Transactions" and "Digital Working for Building Control") have been removed from the Financial Sustainability Fund proposals, with a total funding requirement of £98,000 now planned to be met through the "Transition Grant" and similar resources; and
 - Climate Change Initiatives – acting on feedback from the Workshop, officers have now developed two additional project proposals aimed at tackling the Council's priorities on Climate Change ("Climate Change Commission" £40,000 and "Urban Trees" £50,000).
- 1.11 The updated project list now comprises 13 project bids with a total value of £667,950 and is summarised in Appendix 1 (with further detail included in Appendix 2).

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 **Option 1:** Choosing from the projects listed in Appendix 1, decide how the additional funding of £509,000 from the Financial Sustainability Fund is to be applied (containing that choice within allocated resources); or
- 3.2 **Option 2:** Approve all 13 projects, and, to the extent that there is a shortfall in resources from the Financial Sustainability Fund, delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Business Improvement, in consultation with the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, to identify funds from within unallocated resources for the agreed projects. The total shortfall amounts to £158,950, most of which could for example be met from the revenue underspend for 2018/19 (as reported elsewhere on this agenda).

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The preferred option is Option 2, as all the projects are considered to have merit and have been subject to scrutiny by Officers and Members.

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 28 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 24 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 13 June 2019 to consider a short-list of project bids for additional resources of £509,000. Feedback from that Workshop has been used to inform the content of this report.
-

7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 If agreed, the projects described in this report will be delivered during 2019/20 with regular reports back to the Committee on progress.
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- **Appendix 1:** *Financial Sustainability Fund (Additional Resources): Summary of Project Bids (June 2019)*
 - **Appendix 2:** *Project Bids: Background and Objectives*
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 9.1 There are no background papers.

**Financial Sustainability Fund (Additional Resources):
Summary of Project Bids (June 2019)**

MBC Financial Sustainability Fund Additional Project Bids		
Ref.	Project	Budget Requirement
		£'s
1	Arterial Route Improvements (A20)	128,250
2	CCTV Live Monitoring (Waste Collection)	30,000
3	Go Green Go Wild (Community Fund)	20,000
4	Lower High Street Master Plan	80,000
5	Archbishop's Palace Options Appraisal	60,000
6	Phoenix Park Regeneration	75,000
7	Invicta Park Planning Guidance	15,000
8	Inclusion Through Enterprise	67,500
9	Cycle Parking Infrastructure	60,000
10	Floodlighting for Jubilee Field, Staplehurst	36,000
11	Domestic Abuse Awareness	6,200
12	Climate Change Commission	40,000
13	Urban Trees	50,000
Total		667,950

Project Bids: Background and Objectives

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
1	Arterial Route Improvements (A20)	128,250
Background		
<p>Whilst individually some work has been undertaken by the Grounds Maintenance, Parks and Street Cleansing Teams to improve the arterial routes into and through the Town Centre, there is a need for a more joint up approach which encompasses key stakeholders and landowners, such as KCC and Network Rail.</p> <p>The arterial routes have historically been problematic due to their heavy traffic flow and high-speed health and safety restrictions. However as major routes across the Borough they are fundamental in many visitors' first impressions of the Borough and Town. In isolation the improvements already made, such as the gyratory planting, welcome signage and enhanced cleansing, have less of an impact than a more focused effort to tackle 'grot-spots', improve the green spaces and introduce new features. It is therefore recommended that a few improvements are focused on one of the main routes – the A20 from Willington Street into the Town.</p> <p>This particular location is identified as there are specific opportunities relating to green spaces along the route and existing features which could be enhanced, such as the railway bridge, Art Deco railings and Mote Park wall.</p> <p>The intention is to declutter where possible, enhance and improve street furniture, introduce colourful planting, improve maintenance of open spaces and deep clean. However, it is important that areas of natural habitat are still retained on the route as there are a number of "wild" areas that need to be retained and celebrated. It is important that visitors to the Borough understand the importance of these areas and they are not consider neglected.</p> <p>Some of the areas on the A20 are owned and maintained by Kent County Council and therefore in order to deliver this project there will need to be a level of cooperation and support from the County Council.</p>		

Project Objectives

The key objectives for the project are:

- To improve the visual appearance of an arterial route into and through the Town Centre
- To create a more welcoming and vibrant environment when entering the Town Centre
- To enhance biodiversity through considered species selection and habitat management
- To declutter through the removal of unnecessary signage and street furniture
- To deep clean the route including jet washing signage and removal of detritus on back lines

The project will consider all factors that affect the visual appearance of the route and identify opportunities to remove, replace or enhance them to improve the overall perception of the area rather than piecemeal changes.

The intention is for this project to act as a potential 'blueprint' for the other routes into the Town.

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
2	CCTV Live Monitoring (Waste Collection)	30,000
Background		
<p>Maidstone as part of the Mid Kent Joint Waste Contract works with Biffa Municipal Ltd to deliver a waste and recycling service which meets the needs of our residents. Customer satisfaction levels for the services have always been high, however given 7.5 million collections are made every year, errors inevitably occur. Although as a proportion of the collections made, complaints are very low – the actual number which have to be investigated and responded to is high and therefore requires significant resource.</p> <p>Within the contract, Biffa are required to record collections on their PDAs (on board computers). This includes confirming collections and recording 'lockouts' where collections could not be made due to bins being contaminated, not out for collection or access issues. Where a 'lockout' is recorded there is no contractual requirement for the contractor to return if the resident reports a missed collection. However, these issues can sometimes escalate to formal complaints or Member involvement where the resident disputes the issue. With contamination this is usually easy to resolve by a visit from the Monitoring Officer however proving a bin is not out for collection is difficult.</p> <p>In 2018/19, the customer insight information shows over 30k calls recorded and over 7% of these related to complaints or queries about missed collections where the contractor would not be returning. These have the potential for significant customer dissatisfaction and the possibility of being escalated to official complaints requiring significant officer time to investigate. Biffa have also suggested that if they are then required to return for collections where a 'lockout' has been recorded there may be a charge as they have complied with the contract.</p> <p>In addition to the requirement to resolve residents' complaints there is a legal obligation for the Council to monitor the contractor to ensure they are complying with health and safety requirements and carrying out their work in line with the specification and safe working procedures. This is currently covered by a full-time monitoring officer who carries out crew checks to identify any non-compliance which is then raised with the contractor.</p> <p>A couple of Biffa's vehicles used in Maidstone are fitted with 360-degree CCTV which has successfully been used to resolve problems on that round and in one instance was used to investigate a vehicle which was involved in a serious accident.</p>		

Project Objectives

The objective for this project is to support Biffa with the installation of 360-degree live CCTV cameras on the 13 frontline vehicles to enable real-time monitoring of their performance, H&S compliance and to resolve complaints quickly and with certainty.

The cameras will also improve monitoring for contamination by enabling officers to view recycling as it is tipped into the vehicle and evidence of black sacks or heavy contamination could be identified. This would enable targeting of communications campaigns to areas where contaminated recycling was evident.

The Council would have access to the footage and can therefore save time and potential resource investigating and monitoring the contract. There will also undoubtedly be a benefit to Biffa for the investment and they have estimated a benefit of £4,500 saving per year in Maidstone from the cameras. The intention would be to share the cost of the installation.

It is proposed 13 new 360 Live DVR Systems are installed as there are 4 vehicles with the cameras already installed. The cost is £3,600 per vehicle and therefore the total cost would be £46,800. Therefore £30,000 funding is requested to fund half of the cost for the 17 systems in Maidstone.

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
3	Go Green Go Wild (Community Fund)	20,000
Background		
<p>As part of the first tranche of the Business Rates Retention Pilot funding, the Go Green Go Wild initiative was launched. The funding was used to provide a 'Community Partnership Officer' to work with existing community groups and support the initiation of new ones to enhance biodiversity in the Borough, improve open spaces and create a website which records work to encourage wildlife and habitat creation.</p> <p>This project is already working well with a number of groups now actively engaging and carrying out work to get more residents interested in their environment. The Community Partnership Officer has already started working with key local stakeholders and groups including Kent Wildlife Trust, Maidstone Community Support, Maidstone River Park Group, Friends of Whatman Park, Friends of Weaving Heath and Wents Wood, Medway Valley Countryside Partnership (MVCP) and Golding Homes.</p> <p>The Go Green Go Wild project is gaining traction with residents and volunteering sector as people understand the support on offer and the forum for likeminded people sharing good practice and resources.</p> <p>The website is now being developed to be able to record actions being taken by groups and individuals and to act as a directory for Project Partners who run Maidstone based groups.</p> <p>It has now been identified that being able to provide a small grant to some of these groups would enable them to reach a wider audience and deliver more small projects on the ground. A small amount of the initial Go Green Go Wild funding is going to be diverted into a grant scheme however further funding would enable the project to grow through greater community support, which was the original intention of the initiative.</p>		

Project Objectives

Project Objective 1

Enable 10 local environment groups to achieve their ambitions for the natural environment during 2019 and 2020. This could include :

- Habitat improvements
- Monitoring & recording biodiversity
- Community engagement & education events
- Communicate biodiversity message to residents
- Volunteer workdays.

Project Objective 2

We project that 1500 volunteer hours of work will be undertaken through the Go Green Go Wild Grant Scheme.

Project Objective 3

Capacity Building - increasing the skills, confidence and ambitions for local groups to undertake practical projects benefitting the environment. Grant funding will be utilised to provide access to training, health and safety advice, insurances and improving skills.

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
4	Lower High Street Master Plan	80,000
Background		
<p>Maidstone Borough Council own Medway Street Public Car Park, an adjacent parking area to the rear of the lower High Street, let to local business and 4 adjoining commercial properties, two of which front the High Street.</p> <p>The Medway Street site is currently allocated in the Local Plan for residential development.</p> <p>The buildings known as 32B, 34a and 34 are let on short term leases, are not particularly well maintained and are not producing significant rental revenue. 35 High Street is listed and is let on secure tenancy. The properties include fast food outlet and a barber and this area of the lower High Street is a little run down, has lacked investment and does not attract high quality tenants or rents.</p> <p>The Lower High Street area requires investment to become more attractive to both prospective occupiers and passing trade and as part of the town centre regeneration.</p> <p>The public realm requires additional investment, being the main pedestrian route from town centre to the River and to the Lockmeadow development.</p> <p>Whilst the existing public car park produces revenue for the Council, it is close to other town centre parking facilities.</p> <p>Although the car park has already been allocated in the Local Plan for residential development, the redevelopment project requires a joined up strategy with the adjoining High Street buildings and the public realm area, to avoid future ransom strip issues, to maximise value from the Council's property assets and create an attractive and improved lower High Street environment.</p> <p>As a significant land owner in this vicinity, the Council have an opportunity to improve this area, invest in the public realm and create the 'Thriving Place' in line with the Strategic Plan.</p>		

Project Objectives

The Local Plan allocates Medway Street for residential development. Over the next 3 years the Council can obtain possession of the adjoining High Street frontage buildings, therefore widening the development opportunity from a residential scheme to more of a mixed development scheme which could incorporate some mixed use retail/cafe uses and the re-provision of some parking. By being able to identify possible development opportunities in this location now, there is an opportunity for the Council to extend its Town Centre improvement programme over the next few years.

The lower High Street provides the main pedestrian corridor from the town centre to the River and the Lockmeadow area. However the area is unattractive and has lacked targeted investment.

The Council want to maximise value from its own property assets and at the same time create new opportunities and encourage investment to an area of the town centre which at present lacks interest and attention.

The Council have identified the five Town Centre Opportunity sites and the Lower High Street leads directly onto the Riverside area and these prime sites.

The Council's investment and development of its own town centre assets in the Lower High Street area demonstrates the commitment to the Council's Strategic Plan for creating Homes and Communities, Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure and Creating a Thriving Place.

The Council wish to commission a Feasibility Study and Master Plan for the Lower High Street, incorporating both the land the Council own and the existing public realm areas.

The Council will appoint a planning consultant/urban designer to undertake initially:

Development Appraisal, Initial Design and Masterplan

The output of this project would be a document setting out the viable options for the Council's assets at Medway Street/High Street, fully costed with planning guidance and development options advice.

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
5	Archbishop's Palace Options Appraisal	60,000
Background		
<p>The Archbishop's Palace is owned by Maidstone Borough Council and is currently let to Kent County Council as their Registry Office for Maidstone area. The Lease to KCC expires October 2020 and subject to an agreed short term extension, Maidstone Borough Council are likely to gain full possession March 2021. The property is Grade II listed with gardens to the front, adjacent to the River Medway and has rooms on the ground and first floors.</p> <p>The Carriage Museum was originally part of the Archbishop's Palace but now sits on the opposite side of Mill Street but is also owned by the Council and is currently run by Maidstone Museum. It houses approximately 60 vehicles.</p> <p>It has limited opening hours, offers free entry and Maidstone Borough Council currently carry our regular and planned repairs and maintenance to the building.</p> <p>Given the 5 Town Centre Opportunity Sites and the close proximity of these two historic buildings to those sites, in particular Len House, Maidstone Borough Council have an opportunity to consider the future of these buildings in conjunction with the wider Town Centre Development opportunity, in particular to create a 'Thriving Place' whilst ensuring Heritage is respected.</p>		

Project Objectives

Given the historic nature of the two properties and their key town centre location the Council have the opportunity to review the current use and condition of the buildings and to consider future uses and ensuring their future preservation.

An Options Appraisal would be the first step to identify options that the Council could consider when it takes possession of the Archbishops Palace in 2021.

The Options Appraisal would include:

- Review of the existing uses of both buildings
- Assessment of the current condition of both buildings
- Future costs of repair and maintenance of the buildings
- Demand for the existing use
- Possible alternative uses
- Any adaptations required for alternative uses and the possible costs of such adaptations.
- Possible income generation from alternative uses
- Possible alternative locations for Carriages
- Recommendations and costs of preserving the historic nature of the buildings
- Impact of the two buildings on the Town Centre Development Opportunity Sites
- Advantages/Disadvantages of including the sites within the wider Town Centre Development strategy.
- Any possible joint uses/collaborations with third parties for uses of the buildings.

The Appraisal Plan to the Council should include detailed recommendations based on findings, next steps, advice on how best to take forward the recommendations and an implementation programme.

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
6	Phoenix Park Regeneration	75,000
Background		
<p>Phoenix Park is 11 commercial business units on the Parkwood Industrial Estate that the Council owns the freehold for. The units were built in the early 1980's and are of steel frame construction with a mix of brick and profiled steel sheet cladded elevations. The units are arranged in three terraces, varying in size from 800 square foot to 5000 square foot.</p> <p>In 2015 an opportunity arose to purchase the leasehold interest in the site and regain control of the units and therefore benefit from the full rental income. The units were purchased with tenants in situ and a net rental income of £219,535pa.</p> <p>Since 2015 there has been a steady churn in tenants and rent levels haven't reached the 2015 level again. Recently we have found it difficult to secure good quality tenants and reach good rental levels, and as the market for commercial units is very strong there is clearly another reason why the Phoenix Park units aren't attractive to potential tenants.</p> <p>The Council hasn't invested in the Estate since purchasing it, and the units are looking tired, worn and dated. Improving the appearance and quality of the Estate will make the units more appealing to prospective tenants, help achieve current market rents and improve the revenue return from the investment.</p>		
Project Objectives		
<p>The improvements that will make the biggest impact on the Estate are;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • external repairs and redecoration of the metal sheet cladding • replacement and improved signage • improved external security arrangements • resurfacing of the Estate road • improvement of the fire escape paths • replacement of damaged doors and glazing; and • maintenance of landscaped areas. 		

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
7	Invicta Park Planning Guidance	15,000
Background		
<p>Invicta Park Barracks occupies a site of 41 hectares to the north of Maidstone Town Centre. It is the base of 36 Engineer Regiment, which incorporates the Queen's Gurkha Engineers. The Ministry of Defence announced in November 2017 that it would dispose of the site as part of its Better Defence Estate programme, with a scheduled disposal date of 2027.</p> <p>Anticipating closure of the site, Invicta Park was included in the draft Maidstone Local Plan published in July 2016 as a site for 1,300 new homes. Initial discussions have taken place with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation, the MoD's property arm, about their disposal plans. The DIO state that their preferred approach with disposals of this scale is to engage actively with local authorities and other key stakeholders to secure the best outcomes both for the MoD and for the local community.</p> <p>This project would set out planning guidance for the site in order to ensure that the Council's aspirations for the site are addressed at an early stage by the MoD, other stakeholders and potential developers.</p>		
Project Objectives		
<p>The objective of the project is to provide a Planning Guidance document for the Invicta Park Barracks site by the end of 2019.</p> <p>Successful delivery of the project will help to secure achievement of the following related objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A consensus amongst stakeholders and the local community about the future use of the site • Delivery of Local Plan housing targets • Economic development along the M20 corridor. 		

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
8	Inclusion Through Enterprise	67,500
Background		
<p>The proposed project aims to provide a route into meaningful occupation, training and employment for those with a history of entrenched/problematic rough sleeping locally.</p> <p>The work will build upon and support the successes of the 'Rough Sleeper Initiative' funded outreach team which has radically reduced the actual numbers of those sleeping rough in the borough (down over 80% since September 18).</p> <p>While this project has been successful engaging rough sleepers and supporting into accommodation we recognise an ongoing need to challenge and overcome associated social exclusion for this service user group. Isolation and lack of opportunity both threaten the chances of tenancy sustainment and increase the risk of ongoing criminal and anti-social behaviours associated with street homeless culture.</p> <p>The project will seek to challenge prejudices and barriers faced by this service user group within the wider community and provide a link through which better communication and understanding can be engendered. The proposed project will thus provide a 'shopfront' community focal point through which business and the general public can contribute to and directly benefit from an innovative approach that supports ending repeat homelessness and associated social exclusion in the borough.</p>		

Project Objectives

The project aims to provide a platform through which former rough sleepers and homeless individuals can develop and deliver a business model which has a visible presence in and benefits the wider local community.

The concept has been formulated in partnership with Maidstone BIDS and The Mall Limited Partnership who have offered free use of a retail unit within the Mall and agreed hours of staff support. The business will be a 'co-production' initiative supported by the Maidstone Borough Councils Outreach service and the above, but importantly formulated and delivered by those who have experienced street homelessness and associated issues (substance misuse, offending behaviour, unemployment etc) in the district.

An initial group of known service users (ex-rough sleepers) will be supported in setting up as a social enterprise and achieving charitable status. The business model will be to formulate and deliver a retail enterprise from within this town centre shop premises that both showcases existing skills and provides accredited training and work experience for those rebuilding their lives following street homelessness. The key performance indicators will reflect the expected outcomes of – improved tenancy sustainment, a reduction in anti-social behaviour within the business district and measurable improvements in access to employment and formal training for the service user group.

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
9	Cycle Parking Infrastructure	60,000
Background		
<p>The Walking and Cycling Strategy (W&CS) identifies limited availability of secure and safe cycle parking at key locations as being a key constraint to the attractiveness of cycling within Maidstone Borough. Action C6 in the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) and W&CS is to: Improve cycle security and parking at all key transport hubs and public amenities (including schools, healthcare facilities and retail locations). In order to achieve this action, alongside increasing the overall uptake of cycling, it is necessary to undertake an audit of current provision and identify key locations requiring cycle parking, additional and or improved provision.</p> <p>This project also supports countywide strategies, such as Kent's Active Travel Strategy (ATS). Specifically, Action area 2 of the ATS is to "Provide and maintain appropriate routes for active travel." To quote the strategy document: "There is a need to provide facilities such as safe crossings along routes and secure cycle storage at destinations." Action area 3 is "Support active travel in the community", which would clearly be contributed towards by improvements to cycle parking provision.</p> <p>It should also be noted that any improvements to sustainable travel facilities (such as cycle parking) would support the Kent Environment Strategy, particularly on its 2nd Key Theme, to "Support sustainable access and connectivity for businesses and communities".</p>		
Project Objectives		
<p>To encourage more people in the borough to cycle, specifically at peak journey times, resulting in less vehicles on the road. Cycling is a low cost, efficient, healthy and environmentally friendly mode of transport. Benefits include improved mental and physical wellbeing amongst local residents, as well as a positive impact on the efficient and reliable operation of the highway network, and helping to realise a better environment for everyone through reduced air pollution.</p> <p>To achieve this:</p> <p>A complete audit of cycle parking provision and identified gaps for the borough. The audit will also provide an evidence base to support the revision of the W&CS as part of the Local Plan Review.</p> <p>Installed safe and secure parking at those locations identified in the audit as requiring work.</p> <p>Comprehensive promotion of the new and existing cycle parking infrastructure and associated cycling routes in collaboration with KCC. Including updates to the Maidstone Explore Kent map, poster maps and other associated marketing.</p>		

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
10	Floodlighting for Jubilee Field, Staplehurst	36,000
Background		
<p>Jubilee Field in Staplehurst provides well-needed open space to village residents. It has two adult football pitches, two junior pitches, accompanying changing room block, clubhouse building, a skate park and small car park.</p> <p>The field is owned by the Parish Council and used by villagers for formal and informal recreation, dog walking and informal gathering. It is also the home of Staplehurst Monarchs Football Club, which comprises 15 teams across multiple age groups and both genders.</p> <p>Jubilee Field lies on the edge of the village and despite being accessible on foot it is vastly underused in the winter months because of the lack of sufficient lighting across the field area. Despite the lack of winter access Staplehurst is the most active ward in the borough, proving there is the appetite for active lifestyles. This bid will help ensure that facilities are in place to meet that appetite.</p> <p>Residents avoid it during the winter because the vast, unlit landscape is not safe and welcoming for people. The football club are able to use it during the day on winter weekends but are unable to use it for evening training or midweek fixtures for approximately six months of the year during the bulk of the football season, because of the lack of floodlighting.</p> <p>Staplehurst Monarchs' Men's First Team are being refused promotion to a higher division, after a successful season, because of the lack of infrastructure at their Jubilee Field home ground.</p> <p>This bid seeks capital funds of £36,000 to provide 50% of the costs of floodlights, fencing and standing areas at the field:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making it accessible to village residents all year round • Improving its suitability as a venue for the Staplehurst Monarchs' many teams • Providing high-quality open space and recreation facilities for hundreds of young residents and their families. <p>Matched funding will be sought for the balance of the cost.</p>		

Project Objectives

This project will increase accessibility to public open space for all village residents in Staplehurst.

It will bring a public open space and its associated infrastructure in to use 12 months of the year, which will double the amount of usage from football players, runners, young skaters, dog walkers, families and individuals.

Usage is currently limited to approximately six months of the year because of the field's remote, dark, countryside location.

Providing lighting will enable sporting groups, who currently travel outside of the borough to access facilities in the winter, to use the field all year round.

It will also enable the Staplehurst running group, which uses dimly-lit streets in the winter for its running sessions, to use the field for its twice-weekly group running sessions. This will enable more people to take part in a much safer and more welcoming environment.

The Jubilee Field management team, comprising representatives from the Parish Council and the football club, will also advertise to other community groups and establish other regular community activities which will be able to take place all year round.

The project can report the increase in usage of the open space as a KPI.

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
11	Domestic Abuse Awareness	6,200
Background		
<p>Currently Maidstone Borough Council offers support to those of domestic abuse by facilitating a 'One Stop Shop' in which victims are able to access a number of services; these include support charities, social services and housing advice. However, the location of this service, which is situated in Maidstone town centre, means that some users are prohibited from utilising the service due to limitations in access to transport in order to attend.</p> <p>In order to support those who cannot travel to Maidstone, a more fluid and dynamic outreach service is required, i.e. a service that will be able to access the more rural areas of the borough. It is proposed to facilitate and run a number of 'open days' in rural towns and villages, this will allow those services that currently engage in the one stop shop sessions to present how they can assist and help a more isolated victims of domestic abuse.</p> <p>It is also proposed to facilitate a number of 'Domestic Abuse Awareness' workshops for hairdressers within the borough. A similar project has recently been facilitated in Norfolk with great success, over 250 hairdressers from the local area attended and gave extremely positive feedback.</p> <p>Coupled with the two awareness sessions the attendees will be given literature along with posters and stickers for use in their place of work. This material will identify the premises as a 'partner' in confronting and stopping domestic abuse, coupled with demonstrating to victims that they can seek assistance by way of information on these premises. Information will be displayed by way of a discreet counter display of key facts and useful contact numbers for victims.</p> <p>The aim of the project is to raise awareness amongst hairdressers of the signs of domestic abuses, what the law and guidance is relating victims and how to either report or suggest a service to a potential victim; as a result it is hoped victims will then be able to access the support that they require.</p> <p>In terms of the identification of need for this cohort of people in the borough, we know that domestic abuse through 2016/17 (latest available figures) rose by 15% and the attendance at the one stop shop through 2017/18 saw an increase of 19% as such this would indicate there is an increase within rural communities of both domestic abuse and the need for assistance, which may currently be unmet.</p>		

Project Objectives

Outreach Days

The project will deliver 8 outreach days (approximately 4 hours) in the following rural areas:

- Marden, Yalding, Staplehurst, Headcorn, Harrietsham, Hollingbourne, Stockbury and Boxley; and

Each event will consist of the attendance of the following services:

- Community Protection Team, KCC Wardens, Clarion, Choices, Housing Officers, Wardens and PCSOs.

Following the 'Outreach Days' Clarion will then operate a 2-hour surgery at each venue for four weeks after the event once a week; 4 x 2 hour surgery sessions. This will allow for follow up work with any identified service users and to give service coverage in at risk areas.

We propose to use the Village Halls in each of the areas outlined above, and engagement with the parish councils will be key to facilitate successful advertising of the event. Publicising the events will be critical to the success, and we are developing plans to use social media outlets including Twitter and Facebook along with local advertising by way of leaflets and posters.

Outreach Events

In addition, the project will deliver 2 outreach events (approx.2 hours) in two venues: Village Hotel, Maidstone (August) and Mercure Hotel, Maidstone (December).

However; in terms of monitoring the immediate outputs of the events, we would seek to record the amount of people accessing each event, and then the number of Sanctuary visits conducted by the Community Protection team will be compared to identify any increase in rural cases (18/19 to 19/20). In addition, partners will be asked to record any increase in cases as a result of this event and a survey will be given out exploring the effectiveness of the event for any attendees.

As with the outreach days, publicising the events will be critical to their success, and we are developing plans to use social media outlets including Twitter and Facebook along with local advertising by way of leaflets and posters. As part of this process local hairdressers will also be engaged in their premises by way of visits in order to generate interest and attendance.

Due to the nature of both types of project, specific key performance indicators used to measure effectiveness of the proposed activities against outcomes for individuals are difficult to monitor; it is suggested that a longer term approach which could involve a multi-year thematic analysis of agencies such as NHS, Police and Social Services is used to explore any impact of awareness sessions supported by metric results.

However; in terms of monitoring immediate outputs, we would seek to record the amount of people accessing each event, and then seek feedback from the participants by way of a survey exploring any potential increase in knowledge around domestic abuse and reporting functions. Key agency and charity partners will also be asked to record should any service users disclose that they have attended any 'One Stop Shops' (OSS) following information being provided a result of these events.

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
12	Climate Change Commission	40,000
Background		
<p>At its meeting on 10 April 2019 the Council agreed the following motion which will be further considered at Policy and Resources Committee on 26 June 2019 for approval as a review/project:</p> <p>“That this Council notes with concern the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report on global climate change impacts and the recent Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) reports on global species and habitat loss.</p> <p>Further to this, Council:</p> <p>(1) Declares its recognition of global climate and biodiversity emergencies;</p> <p>(2) Requests the Policy & Resources Committee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • undertake a short review of MBC governance policies and progress aimed at addressing locally these twin threats and to report on findings. This would include, inter alia, a review of the current provision of electric charging points throughout the Borough and bring forward an ambitious plan to make Maidstone Borough the friendliest place in the country for driving electric or hybrid vehicles. • consider a target date of 2030 for the whole of the Borough of Maidstone to be carbon neutral; • consider how the Council can strengthen local protection and enhancement of species, habitats and ecosystems services under available powers; <p>(3) Requests the Chief Executive to (a) write to the Chancellor of the Exchequer stating the concern of the Council with respect to the above, the likely national impact on the economy and on the wellbeing of citizens, and requesting government funding be made available to implement swift appropriate actions in response and (b) include at the beginning of the proposed letter to the Chancellor of the Exchequer the following additional sentence:</p> <p>“This Council welcomes the Chancellor’s recent announcement that a “future homes standard” will mandate the end of fossil-fuel heating systems so as to “lower carbon and lower fuel bills too.”</p> <p>The nature of the subject and its ambition are such that extra resource and expertise are required in order to deliver a meaningful review, with realistic scope, objectives, timescales, risks and action plan.</p> <p>Without the investment the project would need to be supported from within existing staffing structures, this would be a combination of Democratic and Policy resource as well as drawing from multiple services across the Council – this would be impractical and inefficient and ultimately lead to a disjointed effort by the Council in tackling an ambitious and difficult project.</p>		

Project Objectives

- To produce a meaningful action plan, which will enable the cultural change required to address the long term and ambitious objectives of the project;
- Specifically the purpose of the proposed resource (up to £40k for a review officer) is:
 - To support the Policy and Resources Committee/member working group to review and understand the issues and choices to be made on the subject;
 - To deliver the necessary project start-up documents to support the Council's actions on biodiversity and climate change;

To support the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance in bringing together multiple services across the authority who have the relevant expertise and will be responsible for contributing to and delivering the action plan.

Project Ref.	Description	Value (£'s)
13	Urban Trees	50,000
Background		
<p>In 2018 a report by the Friends of the Earth highlighted that many areas of the UK were experiencing high levels of air pollution which exceeded national limits and were considered dangerous to people's health. Outside of London, Maidstone – in particular Upper Stone Street - was ranked the 5th worst by annual average level of NO₂ (in ug/m³).</p> <p>In April 2019 the Council subsequently passed a motion that:</p> <p>1 Declared its recognition of global climate and biodiversity emergencies;</p> <p>(2) Requests the Policy & Resources Committee to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •undertake a short review of MBC governance policies and progress aimed at addressing locally these twin threats and to report on findings; •consider a target date of 2030 for the whole of the Borough of Maidstone to be carbon neutral; •consider how the Council can strengthen local protection and enhancement of species, habitats and ecosystems services under available powers. <p>According to DEFRA urban vegetation can directly and indirectly affect local and regional air quality by altering the urban atmospheric environment. The ways in which trees affect air quality are through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Temperature reduction and other microclimatic effects •Removal of air pollutants •Emission of Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) <p>According to ONS, in a report put together by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, an estimated 1.4 billion kg of air pollutants were removed by natural vegetation in 2015 – saving a potential £1 billion in avoided health costs.</p>		
Project Objectives		
<p>The objective is to improve air quality as set out above by planting more trees in the urban area of Maidstone, and particularly along the main road corridors through the town.</p>		

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted