

# ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 16 March 2021

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Remote Meeting: The public proceedings of the meeting will be broadcast live and recorded for playback on the Maidstone Borough Council Website

Membership:

Councillors Cox, Fort, Mrs Gooch, Harper (Chairman), Hinder, Lewins, Purle, Round and Webb

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

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## **AGENDA**

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| 5. Disclosures by Members and Officers  |        |
| 6. Disclosures of Lobbying  |        |
| 7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information. |        |
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**Issued on Monday 8 March 2021**

**Continued Over/:**

*Alison Broom*

**Alison Broom, Chief Executive**

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## **INFORMATION FOR THE PUBLIC**

In order to ask a question at this remote meeting, please call **01622 602899** or email [committee@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:committee@maidstone.gov.uk) by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 5 p.m. on Friday 12 March 2021). You will need to provide the full text in writing.

If your question is accepted, you will be provided with instructions as to how you can access the meeting.

In order to make a statement in relation to an item on the agenda, please call **01622 602899** or email [committee@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:committee@maidstone.gov.uk) by 5p.m. one clear working day before the meeting (i.e. by 5p.m. on Friday 12 March 2021). You will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on.

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

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

Should you wish to refer any decisions contained in these minutes to the **Policy and Resources Committee**, please submit a Decision Referral Form, signed by **three** Councillors, to the **Head of Policy, Communications and Governance** by: **Monday 8 March 2021**.

## **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND LEISURE COMMITTEE**

#### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2021**

**Present:** Councillors Cox, Fort, Mrs Gooch, Harper (Chairman), Hinder, Lewins, Purle, Round and Webb

**Also Present:** Councillors McKay, Naghi, Perry and M Rose

222. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

223. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

There were no Substitute Members.

224. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

225. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillors McKay, Naghi, Perry and M Rose were present as Visiting Members, and registered to speak on Item 15 – Further development of the Lockmeadow Leisure Complex.

226. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

227. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

Councillors Gooch, Harper and Round had been lobbied on Item 15 – Further development of the Lockmeadow Leisure Complex.

228. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

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

229. **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 26 JANUARY 2021**

**RESOLVED:** That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 January 2021 be approved as a correct record and signed at a later date.

230. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

231. QUESTION AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There was one question from a member of the public.

The Democratic Services Officer read out the question on behalf of Ms Maggie Lack.

*'We would like to ask the Committee to give serious consideration to how to deal with the decimation of the town centre following the demise of so many high street brands.*

*Welcoming residents back to our town centre will be crucial in re-establishing a sense of community and pride in our town. There is a fantastic opportunity to reshape our urban environment for the better and contribute to MBC achieving its goal of net zero carbon emissions.*

*We believe that MBC should support the establishment under one roof (possibly the House of Frazer site), of uses such as –*

- *Repair Café*
- *Refill Stations*
- *Local craft stalls*
- *Pre - loved clothes*
- *Farmers market goods*
- *Classes and workshops of various sorts, with an emphasis on arts and culture*
- *Youth hang-out and support hub, with art, music and performance encouraged*

*As establishments that have community benefit at their heart, they should be given an initial free period to become established, followed by preferential business rates.*

*Will you agree to support and encourage such innovative changes of use, which could revitalise vacant commercial premises and help to regenerate our town centre?'*

The Chairman responded to the question.

The full responses were recorded on the webcast and made available to view on the Maidstone Borough Council website.

To access the recording, please use the link below:  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a0UjOALsLyk>

232. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS TO THE CHAIRMAN

There were no questions from Members to the Chairman.

233. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Head of Regeneration and Economic Development requested that a report be added regarding the Additional Restrictions Grant to raise awareness of the policy and the progress made. A request was also made for the Capital Expenditure Proposals - Maidstone Museum to be delayed until 20 April 2021 to allow for further consultation with stakeholders.

An item to inform the Committee about the proposed use of arts and cultural activities in encouraging residents back to the town centre would be added to the work programme.

It was requested that a briefing on the progress of Making Maidstone More Active be arranged, and all Council Members invited.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

234. REPORTS OF OUTSIDE BODIES

There were no reports of Outside Bodies.

235. 3RD QUARTER FINANCIAL UPDATE & PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2020/21

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement introduced the Financial Update report and explained that the impact of Covid-19 on the Council's finances was £7.568 million. Services reporting to the committee had an overspend with a notable negative variance forecast for the Maidstone Leisure Centre, as a result of both the missed income usually provided and the contractor's expectation for the Council to underwrite their costs. The main activity within the Capital budget was the Mote Park lake dam works, which had been successfully completed.

The Senior Business Analyst introduced the Performance Monitoring update of the report and explained that four of the five Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) had missed their target due to the Covid-19 restrictions imposed. It was noted that, as there had been a lockdown during quarter four, it was expected that further targets would also be missed.

It was highlighted however that the fifth KPI, number of visits per month to Visit-Maidstone.com, had surpassed its target, having achieved almost double the target number.

**RESOLVED:** That

1. The Revenue position as at the end of Quarter 3 for 2020/21, including the actions that had been taken or proposed to improve

the position, where significant variances had been identified, be noted;

2. The Capital position at the end of Quarter 3 be noted; and
3. The Performance position as at Quarter 3 for 2020/21, including the actions that had been taken or proposed to improve the position, where significant issues have been identified, be noted.

236. FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE LOCKMEADOW LEISURE COMPLEX

The Leisure Property Manager introduced the report, and explained that Phase I of the improvement works to the Lockmeadow leisure complex had been completed in December 2020. The Phase II developments had been presented to the Policy and Resources Committee on 10 February 2021 and consisted of three parts: create a food hall; expand the existing outside terrace; and install a children's play area.

The Committee were informed that Kent County Council, as highways Authority, had received funding for an investigation into the traffic flows and to examine the possibility of a one-way system, on the surrounding roads. A timetable for the works would be shared with the Committee, when available.

In response to questions, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement explained that the Phase II proposals had previously been endorsed by the Committee during its October 2020 meeting, with the plans having been presented to the Policy and Resources Committee meeting for budget approval. The Committee were then presented with the developments again for their comments.

Concerns were raised regarding the amount of traffic in the local area with particular reference to Hart Street, and the road improvements necessary to the area. The speed at which the Section 106 (S106) monies had been used by the Highways Authority to carry out road improvements was questioned. It was felt that the use of S106 monies should be further considered by the Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee.

The Leisure Property Manager confirmed that all applicants currently being considered for the food hall were local and provided a variety of food options. A further three companies had contacted the Council, in response to an article promoting the food hall in the local press. It was proposed that the Council would choose any new tenants to the complex, to then be managed by the existing management agent.

It was explained that the results of a consultation regarding improvements to the pedestrian journey from the town centre to Archbishops Palace and the Lockmeadow complex were expected imminently and would be fed back to the Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That

1. The proposals for the improvement works be noted alongside the comments provided;
2. Officers request that Kent County Council, as highways authority, prioritise the proposed works at Hart Street and request that the item be considered during the next meeting of the Maidstone Joint Transportation Board;
3. Additional improvements to the riverside landscape between the Lockmeadow complex and Maidstone Bridge and the underpass, be considered; and
4. The Strategic Planning and Infrastructure Committee be requested to review the slowness and reluctance in dealing with the Section 106 monies associated with McDonalds planning approval.

237. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.59 p.m.

## 2020/21 WORK PROGRAMME

	Committee	Month	Origin	CLT to clear	Lead	Report Author
Parkwood Leisure Contract Variation	ERL	20-Apr-21	Officer Update	Yes	John Foster	Mike Evans
Capital Expenditure Proposals - Maidstone Museum (title tbc)	ERL	20-Apr-21	Officer Update	Yes	William Cornall	Victoria Barlow
Draft Economic Development Strategy	ERL	20-Apr-21	Officer Update	Yes	John Foster	Chris Inwood
Re-opening of Maidstone Town Centre (title TBC)	ERL	20-Apr-21	Member Request		John Foster	Ann Marie Langley
Economic Development Strategy	ERL	15-Jun-21	Officer Update	Yes	John Foster	Chris Inwood
Tour of the Business Terrace	ERL	TBC	Briefing		John Foster	John Foster
Town Centre Opportunity Sites Delivery Strategies	ERL	TBC	Officer Update	Yes	William Cornall	John Foster

**ECONOMIC REGENERATION  
AND LEISURE COMMITTEE**

**16 March 2021**

**Guide to Event Management during COVID-19**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development – John Foster
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Visitor Economy & Events Development Manager - Laura Dickson
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

**Executive Summary**

Event organisers face new challenges due to COVID-19 which will affect outdoor events in the future. The council has existing processes that make sure that events are delivered safely, reacting to changes in the conditions for events as laid out in government guidance.

**Purpose of Report**

To inform committee of the council’s procedure for managing events during COVID and beyond

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

1. To note the contents of this report.

**Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee	16 March 2021

# Guide to Event Management during COVID-19

## 1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	<i>A Thriving Place</i> The re-opening of events safely will contribute to economic recovery for many businesses, and establish Maidstone as the place for great events for residents and visitors.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Cross Cutting Objectives</b>	No implications – information report	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Risk Management</b>	No implications. The Safety Advisory Group is already set up.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Financial</b>	No implications – information report	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Staffing</b>	No implications – information report	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Legal</b>	No implications – information report	Legal Team
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	No implications – information report	Policy and Information Team
<b>Equalities</b>	No implications – information report	Policy & Information Manager
<b>Public Health</b>	No implications – information report.	Public Health Officer
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	No implications – information report	Head of Service or Manager
<b>Procurement</b>	No implications - information report	Head of Service & Section 151 Officer

## **2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

2.1 Maidstone is widely recognised as the events capital of Kent, an industry that supports the visitor economy and provides jobs. All event organisers face new challenges due to COVID-19 which will affect outdoor events going forward.

### **Events on MBC Land**

2.2 MBC manages the hire of MBC parks and open spaces for a variety of events from charity runs to large music festivals. There are existing processes in place to make sure these events are safely run. These processes also include checks to make sure they are planned in line with the relevant Covid secure guidance. This guidance is regularly changed and updated, and the team responds to these changes and discusses with the various event organisers. A summary of the roadmap as it relates to events can be found in Appendix 1.

2.3 Decisions on event applications are made on a case-by-case basis with both the risks and the mitigations in place. Organised outdoor events will be permitted provided they follow all the relevant guidance and adhere to all legal requirements. A condition for all events taking place on council owned land is that they must submit their event safety plans to the Safety Advisory Group. The earliest date for events on council land is in Step 3, no earlier than 17 May 2021. However all events due to take place before 21 June 2021 have been postponed or cancelled.

2.4 In 2020 a few socially distanced events were able to take place, using the Covid secure guidance as the basis for the event safety management plan. All the event management plans were submitted to the Safety Advisory Group, who provided further advice on managing the event safely. These events were an excellent example of how it could be achieved.

2.5 This year many events have been cancelled or have moved to dates later in the year. There are only a limited number of weekends (included event build days) in this shortened events season, and there are no more dates left to move events should the dates for re-opening fall back. Although some events could run with socially distancing measures such as the 6 person pods once again, for many it is not financially viable, and the feedback is there is only a limited appeal from attendees for these types of events.

2.6 Event organisers are aware that there is a risk that the government guidance could change, the road map dates for re-opening delayed. There will be at least 5 weeks between the steps ( i.e. if one is delayed those thereafter will also be delayed). Some organisers cannot afford to take that risk, whilst others have contingencies in place.

2.7 Changes might occur because of a local outbreak. There is no guarantee that additional local restrictions will not happen in the future. The

government states it will continue to protect the public by ensuring local outbreaks are managed quickly and effectively and that we combat new dangerous variants, both within the UK and at the border.

### **Event Guidance Information**

- 2.8 The Event Industry Forum in collaboration with DCMS and Public Health England produced detailed guidance in 2020 'Keeping workers and Audiences safe during COVID-19 ( England). It is updated regularly, the last update in December. The next update will be released soon. The guidance includes an Annex 'Guidance for Local Authorities – Assessing applications for outdoor events.
- 2.9 Over the spring the Government is running a scientific Events Research Programme. This includes a series of pilots to examine how large events can take place without the need for social distancing using other mitigations such as testing. Subject to the outcome, this will allow large events without the capacity restrictions that are in place from Step 3 to start in Step 4. The public can then make informed decisions and consider the risks for themselves.
- 2.10 Once the updated guidance has been published, the event planning information on the council website will be updated including all the necessary links.

### **Role of the Safety Advisory Group**

- 2.11 The Safety Advisory Group (SAG) is there to help event organisers make sure their event is as safe as possible. It is an advisory body and cannot prevent an event from taking place. However if an organiser ignores the advice given by SAG, then further action can be taken by the member agencies acting within their own legal jurisdiction.
- 2.12 Events on council land are required to submit all their event management plans to SAG as a condition of their contract. Should SAG advise against an event, the council has the right to stop that event from taking place.
- 2.13 Events that take place in other venues or locations in the borough should submit their event to SAG if it requires a license for the sale of alcohol, music or requires road closures. It should also be submitted to SAG if it will attract large crowds of people or contains an element of risk. Currently all events contain an element of risk, the spread of Covid, and therefore all event organisers should make their event known to SAG. However this is a voluntary action as there is no legal requirement to do so.

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

- 3.1 This report is for information only.

## **4. RISK**

4.1 This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.

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## **5. REPORT APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Summary of the Government Roadmap to Events in 2021

Appendix 2: Government Material Explaining the Steps

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## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-response-spring-2021/covid-19-response-spring-2021>

<https://www.eventsindustryforum.co.uk/index.php/11-features/14-keeping-workers-and-audiences-safe-during-covid-19>

## **Summary of the Government Roadmap to Events in 2021**

### **When Events can Resume**

#### **Step 1: no earlier than 8 March and 29 March**

- Rules around Funerals will not change. Funerals of up to 30 people are permitted and Wakes of up to 6 people in a Covid-secure venue. If in a private home, including grounds or gardens, only members of the household and support bubble can attend. Weddings are permitted up to 6 people.

#### **Step 2 : no earlier than 12 April**

- Drive-in Cinemas and Drive-in performances permitted.
- The rules on social contact will apply in this setting. Outdoor gathering must be limited to 6 people or 2 households and no indoor mixing. Previous guidance stated included rules for inside vehicles, for example at drive-in cinemas, where only single household or linked households could mix. This is yet to be confirmed for Step 2.
- Events Research Programme - Pilots begin

#### **Step 3: no earlier than 17 May**

- Remaining indoor and outdoor entertainment (including performances), including theatre and cinema.
- Some large events including conferences, theatre and concert performances and sport events.
  - Indoor events: 1000, or 50% of a venue's capacity, whichever is lower
  - Outdoor other event: 4000 or 50% of the capacity whichever is lower
  - Outdoor seated events: 10,000 or 25% of the venue capacity whichever is lower
- Weddings, reception, funerals and commemorative events including wakes for up to 30 attendees. A broader range of standalone life events such as christenings and bar mitzvahs are permitted
- Guidance on social distancing will be updated but people should still keep their distance from anyone not in their household or bubble. It is expected that the limits on social contact will be eased but gatherings of more than 30 people will remain illegal
- Events Research programme pilots – capacity limits apply

#### **Step 4: no earlier than 21 June**

Subject to the outcome of the Events Research programme:

- Larger events can take place
- Nightclubs and theatres
- No limit on life events or social contact

Some measures may be required even after all adults have been offered a vaccine. Guidance will be issued in due course.

### **Events Research programme**

DCMS and the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy have been working with representatives from industry and civil society to explore when and how events with larger crowd sizes, less social distancing or in settings where transmission is more likely (i.e. indoors), will be able to return safely. This includes sports events, music festivals and large weddings and conferences.

This will include a series of pilots using enhanced testing approaches and other measures to run events with larger crowd sizes and reduced social distancing to evaluate the outcomes.

The Government will bring the findings from across different sectors and different settings to determine a consistent approach to lifting restrictions on these events. Depending on the outcome of this work, the Government hopes to be able to lift restrictions on these events and sectors as part of Step 4.

## STEP 1: 8 March



Schools and colleges are open for all students. Practical Higher Education Courses.



Exercise and recreation with your household or one other person in a public outdoor place. Household only indoors.



Wraparound care, including sport, for all children, to enable parents to work.



Stay at home. No domestic or international holidays.



Funerals (30 people). Weddings and Wakes (6 people).

## 29 March



Rule of 6 or two households outdoors. No household mixing indoors.



Outdoor sport and leisure facilities.



Organised outdoor sport (children and adults).



Minimise travel. No domestic or international holidays.



Outdoor parent & child groups (up to 15 people, excluding under 5s).

## STEP 2

At least five weeks after Step 1, no earlier than 12 April.



Indoor leisure inc. gyms  
(individual or household  
use only).



Rule of 6 or two  
households outdoors.  
No household mixing indoors.



Outdoor attractions,  
such as zoos, theme parks  
and drive-in cinemas.



Libraries and  
community centres.



Personal care  
premises.



All retail.



Outdoor  
hospitality.



Indoor parent and child  
groups (up to 15 people,  
excluding under 5s).



Domestic overnight stays  
(household only).



Self-contained  
accommodation  
(household only).



Funerals (30 people).  
Weddings, wakes,  
receptions (15 people).



Minimise travel.  
No international  
holidays.



Event pilots.

## STEP 3

At least five weeks after Step 2, no earlier than 17 May.



Indoor entertainment and attractions.



30 person limit outdoors.  
Rule of 6 or two households indoors (subject to review).



Domestic overnight stays.



Organised indoor adult sport.



Indoor hospitality.



Most significant life events (30).



Remaining outdoor entertainment (including performances).



Remaining accommodation.



Most significant life events (30 people).

Indoor events:  
1,000 people or 50% capacity.

Outdoor events:  
4,000 people or 50% capacity.

Large seated outdoor venues:  
10,000 people or 25% capacity.

Pilots continue.



Domestic overnight stays.

International travel (subject to review).

## STEP 4

At least five weeks after Step 3, no earlier than 21 June.  
By Step 4, the Government hopes to be able to introduce the following:



No legal limit  
(subject to review).



Remaining businesses,  
including nightclubs  
(subject to review).



Larger events  
(subject to review).



International travel  
(subject to review).



No legal limit on life events  
(subject to review).

# Agenda Item 15

## **ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND LEISURE COMMITTEE**

**16 March 2021**

### **Update on the MedTech Innovation Programme**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	John Foster - Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Sean Henry - Compliance and Projects Manager
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

#### **Executive Summary**

*This report updates the Committee on the Maidstone Innovation Centre*

#### **Purpose of Report**

To update the Committee on progress of the Maidstone Innovation Centre construction, promotion and business support programme.

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

The committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

#### **Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee	16 March 2021

# Update on the MedTech Innovation Programme

## 1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	<p><i>The relevant Strategic Plan objectives are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure</i></li> <li>• <i>A Thriving Place</i></li> </ul>	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Cross Cutting Objectives</b>	<p><i>The cross-cutting objectives are:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Deprivation is reduced and Social Mobility is Improved</i></li> <li>• <i>Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected</i></li> </ul> <p><i>The report recommendation supports the achievement of the 'Deprivation is reduced and Social Mobility is Improved' cross cutting objectives by holding workshops in areas with high levels of deprivation once able.</i></p> <p><i>It also supports the achievement of Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected by ensuring the Maidstone Innovation Centre is classed as BREAAAM "very good".</i></p>	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Risk Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Already covered in the risk section.</i></li> </ul>	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Financial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.</i></li> </ul>	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We will deliver the recommendation with our current staffing.</i></li> </ul>	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

<b>Legal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>All necessary contracts for the delivery of the programme are in place.</i></li> </ul>	Legal Team
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Accepting the recommendations will increase the volume of data held by the Council. All ERDF funded programmes require documentation retention of 25 years. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.</i></li> </ul>	Policy and Information Team
<b>Equalities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An equalities impact assessment has been carried out on the project.</li> </ul>	Policy & Information Manager
<b>Public Health</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.</i></li> </ul>	Public Health Officer
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Not applicable</i></li> </ul>	Head of Service or Manager
<b>Procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Procurement for the design and build, MedTech Innovation Programme and Tenant acquisition has been completed.</i></li> </ul>	Head of Service & Section 151 Officer

## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Policy and Resources Committee approved entering into a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) Funding Agreement on 19 September 2019, providing £5.7m in grant funding for the creation of an Innovation Centre based on Kent Medical Campus to provide space for SMEs in the sectors of MedTech, Health and Lifescience.
- 2.2 It is anticipated that the Innovation Centre will support 270 jobs and generate a further £120m of additional gross value added (GVA) to the local economy over the next decade.
- 2.3 The land was secured January 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020 with the ground-breaking and commencement of build by the Council's contractor Rydon Construction following on March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020.
- 2.4 The amount budgeted for the project was £13.3m of which £7.6m has so far been spent. £5.7m of this amount is being contributed by the European Regional Development Fund.

## **1. CONSTRUCTION PROGRAMME**

- 3.1 The build is currently 67% complete and 4.6 weeks behind schedule. The cost of variations to the contract is 2.29% over budget, £226,229. These have been reported to and agreed by the Project Board which includes the Director of Finance and Business Improvement. These additional costs are reflected in the new Capital Programme and ERDF grant funding will meet over 43% of these costs. Also the additional revenue benefits created below will more than service the additional net borrowing.
- 3.2 During 2020 the build remained largely unaffected by Covid-19 bar some extra health and safety measures. However, an outbreak in January caused a site closure and a large amount of self-isolation of contractors causing a potential delay. They have enhanced their health and safety requirements to avoid a repeat outbreak.
- 3.3 The construction has made considerable progress in a year with the Contractors commencing painting the interior of the building, beginning the completions and finishes phase.
- 3.4 Regarding the environmentally friendly policies being adhered to, we are on track to reach Very Good BREAAAM status measuring the Innovation Centre's sustainability status. Photovoltaic panels have been installed on the roof, the green wall will be installed within 3 months and the capacity for electric vehicle charging points in the car park has been more than doubled from 8 to 20 spaces.

## **2. REVENUE SAVINGS AND INCOME GENERATION**

- 4.1 Revenue savings have been found by reducing the amount of staff to be recruited for the project. The role of Technical Planning and Compliance Officer was removed and the number of staff managing the Centre have reduced from 3.2 to 3 full time staff.
- 4.2 Further revenue savings continue to be identified, such as the security solution which will cost 90% less than budgeted per annum.
- 4.3 MBC has also opened another income stream due to the inclusion of custom-made virtual receptionist software with integrated AI and facial recognition. The designer wishes to roll it out as a product for others to use and have agreed a profit share arrangement.
- 4.4 Job descriptions have been created for the Innovation Centre Staff with recruitment to commence soon to ensure they are fully able to run the centre and welcome tenants without issue on opening in July.

## **5. ERDF GRANT FUNDING**

- 5.1 Grant claims are made quarterly to MHCLG and to date £2,578,021 has been claimed and paid.

## **6. TENANT ACQUISITION AND PROMOTION**

- 6.1 Promotion of the Centre has continued throughout the build. In December, a press release highlighting the progress of the build alongside launching the website and brochure.

6.2 Interest is continuing to grow via our property agent, Harrisons, who are seeing a significant increase in demand from businesses looking to move out of London. The target sectors have not only survived but thrived in spite of the pandemic. This indicates that income during the early years of operation is likely to be higher than previously anticipated.

## **7. THE MEDTECH INNOVATION PROGRAMME**

7.1 The MedTech Innovation Programme has engaged 45 SMEs, 30 have continued onto the programme and 10 have reached completion. Of these two have been led to securing Series A investments of \$6m and £1.5m with a further 3 are on the verge of significant funding announcements and one has begun to engage with MBC's Public Health Team in the field of pre-habilitation.

7.2 NCL Technology Ventures which runs the M-IP on behalf of MBC are seeking to rebrand the programme as though it is supposed to target SMEs in Health, MedTech and Lifescience, only referring to "MedTech" may put off many eligible businesses.

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## **8. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

8.1 *The Committee is requested to note the contents of this report.*

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## **9. RISK**

9.1 This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.

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

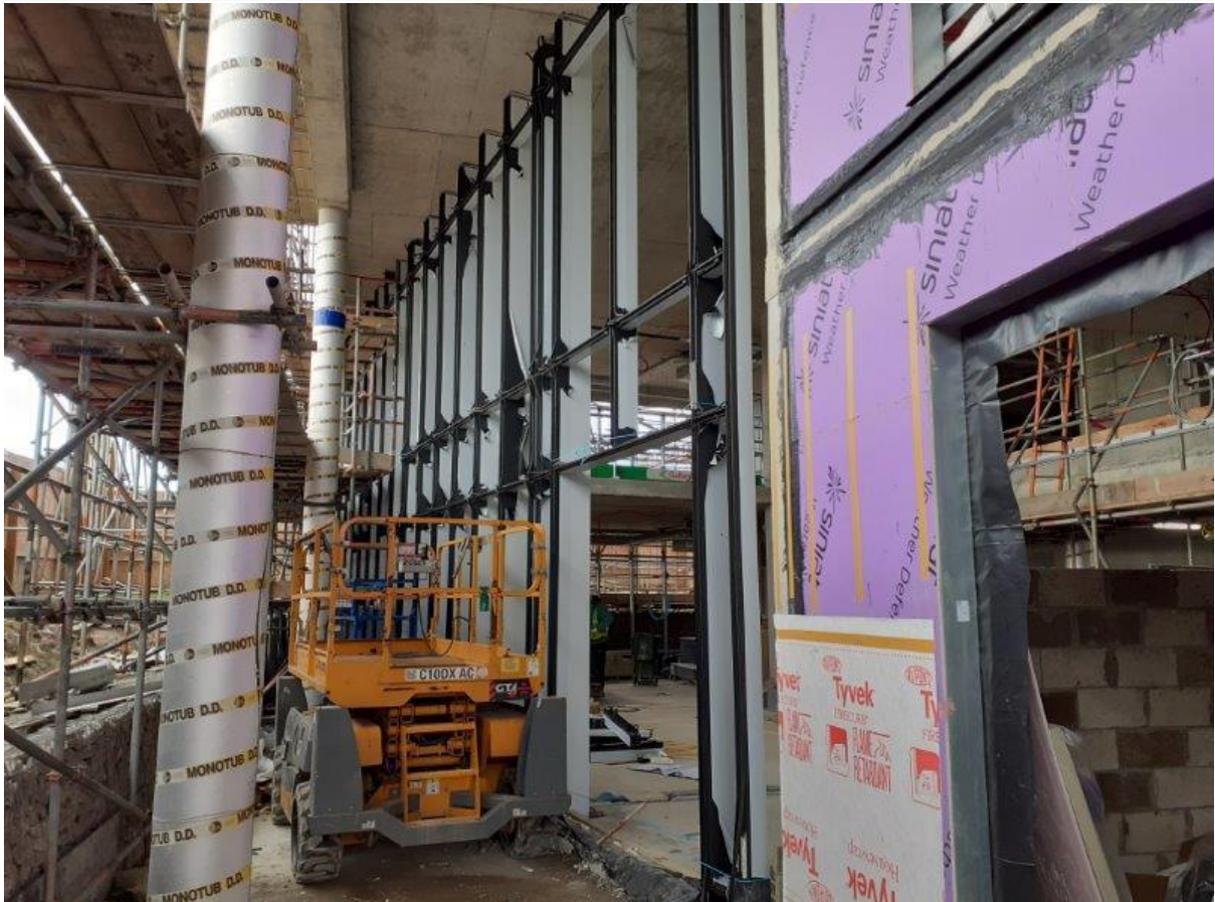
10.1 This report follows the previous approval of the Policy and Resources Committee to proceed with the project in September 2019.

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## **11. REPORT APPENDICES**

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

- *Appendix 1: Latest site pictures*
- *Appendix 2: Maidstone Innovation Centre Brochure*









**MAIDSTONE  
INNOVATION  
CENTRE**



# NURTURING AMBITION INSPIRING SUCCESS



CGI of building

### CHOOSE A PARTNER AS DRIVEN AS YOU ARE.

We're focused on start-ups and developing businesses, with a desire to provide the very best environment to motivate their employees, impress their clients and drive their future.

Maidstone Innovation Centre offers the unique opportunity to locate to one of the country's most prestigious Academic Health Science Network environments - Kent Medical Campus. Our state-of-the-art building provides inspirational surroundings as well as flexible accommodation to suit your exact requirements, with room for growth.

Located in the North Kent Enterprise Zone and situated just 1 minute from Junction 7 of the M20 and 6 minutes from Maidstone town centre, this is an ideal place to do business.

- High-quality inspiring environment
- Central Kent location
- Unique business support
- Flexible office solutions.

Maidstone Innovation Centre is part funded by the European Union Regional Development Fund 2014 - 2020.

**OUR STATE-OF-THE-ART BUILDING PROVIDES INSPIRATIONAL SURROUNDINGS AS WELL AS FLEXIBLE ACCOMMODATION TO SUIT YOUR EXACT REQUIREMENTS, WITH ROOM FOR GROWTH.**



## INVEST IN YOUR FUTURE WITH MAIDSTONE INNOVATION CENTRE.

A positive work culture inspires pride, energy, creativity, collaboration and increased output as well as being regarded as essential to a business's success.

Your physical working environment will have a significant impact on your ability to achieve this. Therefore providing a space where people can work in comfort and safety with everything they need will ensure that your business is given every chance to succeed.

29



Created to be a vibrant environment for business, Maidstone Innovation Centre comes with an enviable specification, combined with attention to detail as a workplace with well-being in mind.

- Two main entrances with 24/7 access
- Double height atrium reception\*
- Roof top terrace
- On-site management team
- Prestigious campus environment
- Large conference room with folding partition\*
- 6 meeting rooms\*
- Multiple break-out areas
- Kitchen and catering supplies on each floor
- Disabled toilets on each floor
- Showers
- 75 car parking spaces with another 42 to be added in 2022
- Bicycle parking
- Electric car charging

\*Hearing loop enabled

INSPIRING PRIDE, ENERGY,  
CREATIVITY, COLLABORATION  
AND INCREASED OUTPUT.

THINK OF US AS THE PERFECT  
CONSTANT IN YOUR BUSINESS LIFE.

**CHANGE YOUR REQUIREMENTS, NOT YOUR ADDRESS.**

We offer fully serviced offices, co-working space and virtual offices meaning wherever you are in your business journey we can accommodate you.

And when you need to change in the future, we'll accommodate that as well. Think of us as the perfect constant in your business life with the ability to develop with you, whilst still providing a permanent home for your company.

## SERVICED OFFICES.

Suitable for businesses who require quality office space without the obligations of a long term lease. Our serviced offices offer everything you'd expect to run your business efficiently and successfully.

### BENEFITS:



**FLEXIBLE TENANCY**  
OPTIONS OR FLEXIBLE  
LEASE/LICENCE  
OPTIONS



**UPDATE YOUR SPACE**  
AS YOUR  
BUSINESS  
DEVELOPS



**EASY SET UP**  
YOU CAN BE UP  
AND RUNNING  
STRAIGHTAWAY



**PRESTIGIOUS**  
CAMPUS  
ENVIRONMENT

### FEATURES:

Simple monthly payments

On-site management team

Receptionist services

Flexibility - up or downsizing your requirements

Administrative support

Hi-spec IT network

Fast reliable broadband

Meeting room/ conference facilities (hourly charge)

Kitchen and catering

On-site business support from NCL Technology Ventures\*

Enterprise zone status including business rates discounts for 5 years\*

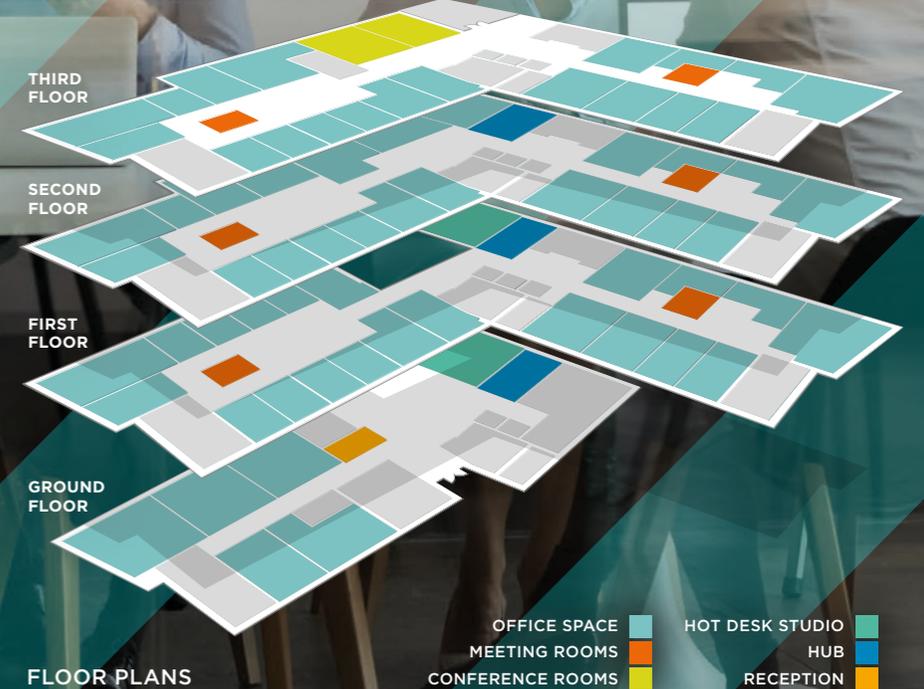
24-hour access

**OFFICES CAN BE COMBINED ON A SINGLE LET TO CREATE A LARGER WORKING ENVIRONMENT.**

TRADITIONAL LEASE OPTIONS ALSO AVAILABLE

\*Information further on in brochure.

EVERYTHING YOU'D EXPECT TO RUN YOUR BUSINESS EFFICIENTLY AND SUCCESSFULLY.



Not to scale. For indicative purposes.

### CO-WORKING SPACE.

If you are not ready to rent an office, then working in our shared office or with a dedicated desk is a great option and gives you access to all of our facilities. Hire the number of desks you need for the time you need. Co-working is also available by the hour.

#### BENEFITS:



HOURLY/WEEKLY/  
MONTHLY CONTRACT  
MEANS NO LONG-TERM  
COMMITMENT



EASY SET UP  
YOU CAN BE UP  
AND RUNNING  
STRAIGHTAWAY



PRESTIGIOUS  
CAMPUS  
ENVIRONMENT

A GREAT OPTION AND  
GIVES YOU ACCESS TO  
ALL OF OUR FACILITIES

#### FEATURES:

Simple monthly  
payments

Fully furnished  
shared space

On-site  
management team

Receptionist  
services

Administrative  
support

Hi-spec  
IT network

Fast reliable  
broadband

Meeting room/  
conference facilities  
(hourly charge)

Tea and coffee  
making facilities

Kitchen and shower  
facilities

24-hour access for  
dedicated desks



### VIRTUAL OFFICES.

Not ready for an office? Our virtual office services give you a professional image with a prestigious business address and full reception services including mail forwarding and scanning.

#### BENEFITS:



PROFESSIONAL  
BUSINESS ADDRESS  
AT LOW COST



EASY SET UP  
YOU CAN BE UP  
AND RUNNING  
STRAIGHTAWAY

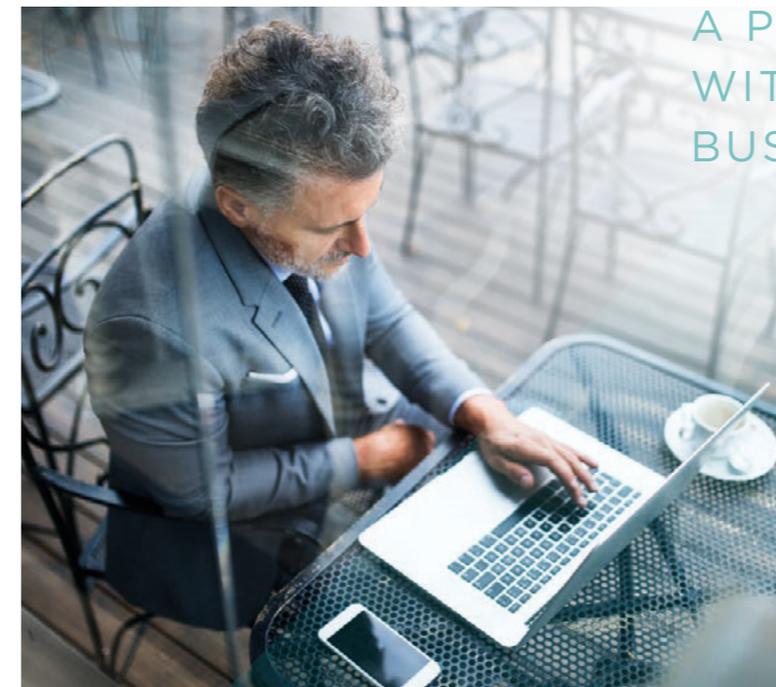
A PROFESSIONAL IMAGE  
WITH A PRESTIGIOUS  
BUSINESS ADDRESS.

#### FEATURES:

Simple monthly payments

Receptionist services

Meeting room hire





WHERE BETTER TO  
HOLD ANY EVENT THAN  
AT THE INNOVATIVE  
HEART OF KENT.

## CONFERENCE AND MEETING FACILITIES.

Training days, team building, board meetings or exclusive meetings, when it's time to collaborate and share ideas, let us help. Where better to hold any event, large or small, than at the innovative heart of Kent.

### BENEFITS:



CENTRAL  
LOCATION  
IN KENT



PRESTIGIOUS  
CAMPUS  
ENVIRONMENT



### FEATURES:

6 fully equipped  
meeting rooms

Large conference  
room with folding  
partition

Breakout areas

Hearing loop

AV support

On-site  
management team

On-site business  
support

Fast reliable  
broadband

Simple packages

Residential package  
for tenants

Tea and coffee  
making facilities

Catering

## BUSINESS SUPPORT WITH POSITIVE BENEFITS.

Maidstone Innovation Centre provides easy access to business support programmes and will give you the potential to develop further than you might have thought possible, with a history of providing valuable assistance.



### NORTH KENT ENTERPRISE ZONE

Kent Medical Campus is a member of the North Kent Enterprise Zone.

Looking to attract companies and investors in key sectors including medical & healthcare research, training & practice, advanced manufacturing, engineering and digital technologies, Enterprise Zones are Government-designated areas in England.

The principal incentive to occupiers of the Maidstone Innovation Centre are business rates discounts worth up to £55,000 annually for five years.



### NCL TECHNOLOGY VENTURES

Available on-site, NCL Technology Ventures invests transformational equity capital in entrepreneurs who have truly innovative technologies.

They provide a package of human and capital resources over the life of their investments including:

- Strong scientific knowledge and frontline healthcare experience
- Developmental and leadership building experience
- A carefully built local and global network of healthcare specialists
- An overriding ambition to succeed in bringing new innovation in healthcare to benefit global recipients.

TENANTS HAVE ACCESS TO THE MEDTECH INNOVATION PROGRAMME AT NO EXTRA COST.



THE POTENTIAL TO DEVELOP FURTHER THAN YOU MIGHT HAVE THOUGHT POSSIBLE.



### MEDTECH INNOVATION PROGRAMME

M-IP is a package of support for people with an early stage business idea that they want to evaluate and develop into a business plan. Guided by NCL Technology Ventures and driven by the business founder, the programme aims to support 150+ businesses over 3 years to develop an investible plan, raise finance and commence trading.

If you are looking for fully funded support, please contact us at [mip@ncltv.co.uk](mailto:mip@ncltv.co.uk).

### FURTHER FUNDS

There are currently multiple funds for businesses who locate in Kent including:

- Kent Life Science Fund
- The Kent & Medway Business Fund
- LoCase
- SEBB.



## AN ENVIABLE LOCATION FOR YOUR BUSINESS AND YOUR TEAM.

### KENT MEDICAL CAMPUS

Establishing itself as a fully integrated centre of excellence for health, science and education in the South East, Kent Medical Campus is located within 30 acres of landscaped grounds, surrounded by ancient woodland.

Occupiers KIMS Hospital, Cygnet Healthcare and Care UK have already established a presence on the campus.

Maidstone Innovation Centre sits within the heart of the campus.

#### Current occupiers:

- KIMS Hospital
- Cygnet Healthcare
- Care UK.



CGI of Kent Medical Campus

## MAIDSTONE, KENT.

Maidstone is the business capital of Kent, surrounded by rolling countryside, offering an abundance of green space and an historic river flowing through its centre. A pleasant environment, Maidstone has been ranked in the top 50 places to live in the UK.

A superb amenity for your team, the town centre is only a 6-minute drive from the campus and is a major shopping centre with a wide variety of cafés, restaurants, pubs and entertainment.

Kent is an economically diverse county and has close links to London and European markets as well as being only a short distance from enterprising regions including Cambridge and Oxford.

Providing excellent educational opportunities Kent has exceptional secondary and grammar schools including the School of Science and Technology in Maidstone, colleges, universities and the Kent and Medway Medical School.

Kent is home to more than 45,000 businesses including larger organisations such as Pfizer, Michaelson Diagnostics, Bedford Scientific, Abbott Laboratories, Mylan, Novartis, Aesica and BAE Systems.



Within a 5 minute walk:

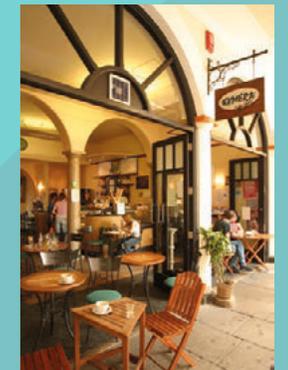
- Newnham Court Inn, The Bell and The Early Bird Public Houses
- Nursery
- Cafés
- Restaurants
- Hairdressers
- Tesco Superstore, cashpoint and petrol forecourt service station
- M&S, Next Home & Fashion store including Costa Coffee
- Pharmacy
- Hilton Hotel with spa and fitness suite.



Within a 5 minute drive:

- Fitness/leisure centres
- Hotels
- High Street services
- Fremlin Walk and The Mall shopping centres
- Restaurants including Bills, Prezzo and Wildwood
- Odeon Cinema Complex and bowling.

## HOME TO MORE THAN 45,000 BUSINESSES.



**COMMUNICATIONS.**

Maidstone Innovation Centre offers excellent access to the UK's extensive motorway network, being located on Junction 7 of the M20, which in turn leads to the M25, M2 and the rest of the UK.

London is within easy reach by rail with main-line and high-speed rail services close by and, being less than 45 miles away by car, putting the likes of the Francis Crick Institute on the doorstep.

Major airports including London Gatwick, London Heathrow, London City and London Stansted are all within an easy drive as is access to Europe via car.

For directions to Maidstone Innovation Centre use ME14 5FY



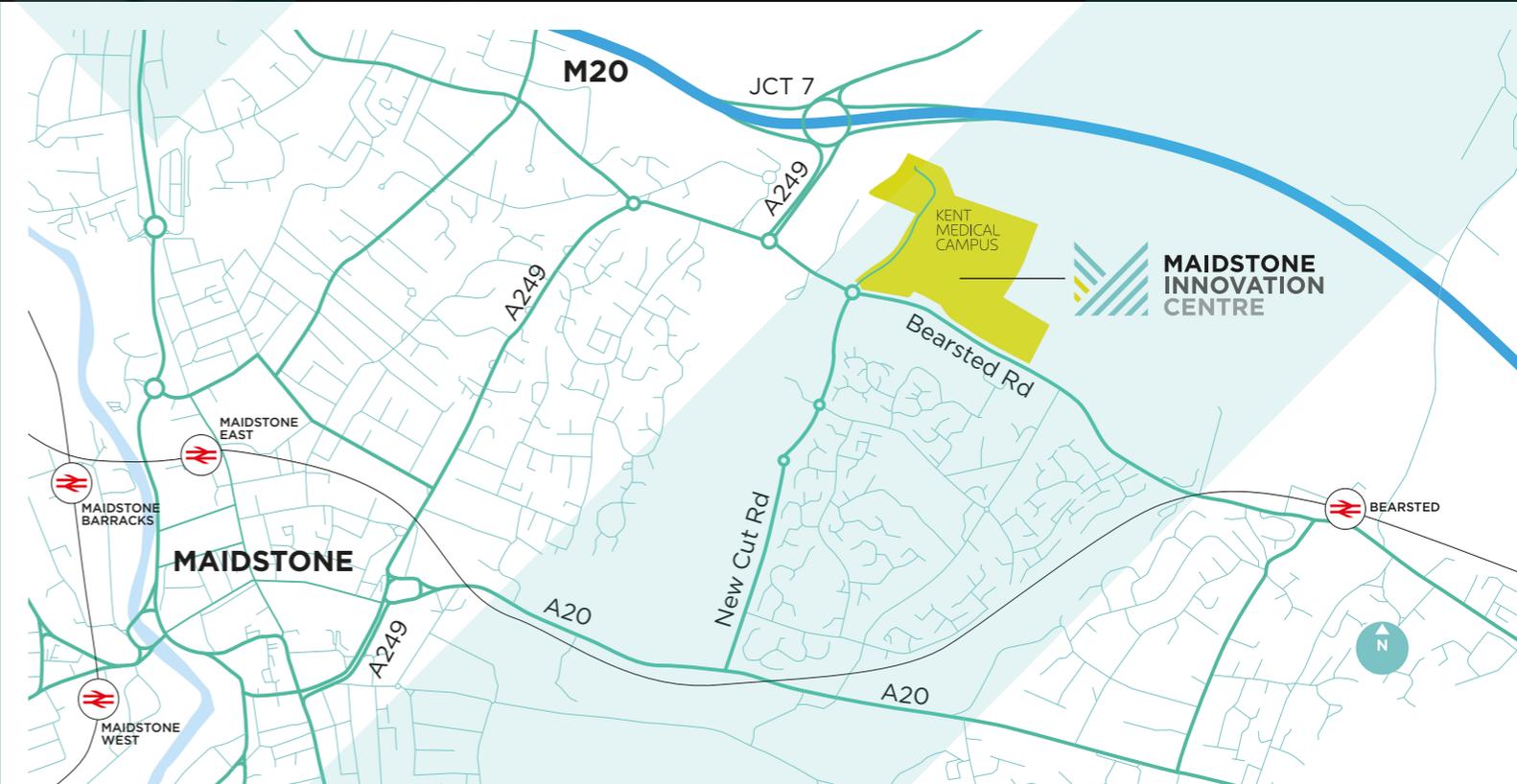
Maidstone town centre.....	2.5 miles
Ashford.....	20 miles
London.....	42 miles
Cambridge.....	85 miles
Oxford.....	107 miles
Ebbsfleet International.....	19 miles
Ashford International.....	20 miles
Channel Tunnel.....	30 miles
Dover Port.....	40 miles
London Gatwick.....	40 miles
London City.....	37 miles
London Stansted.....	63 miles
London Heathrow.....	66 miles

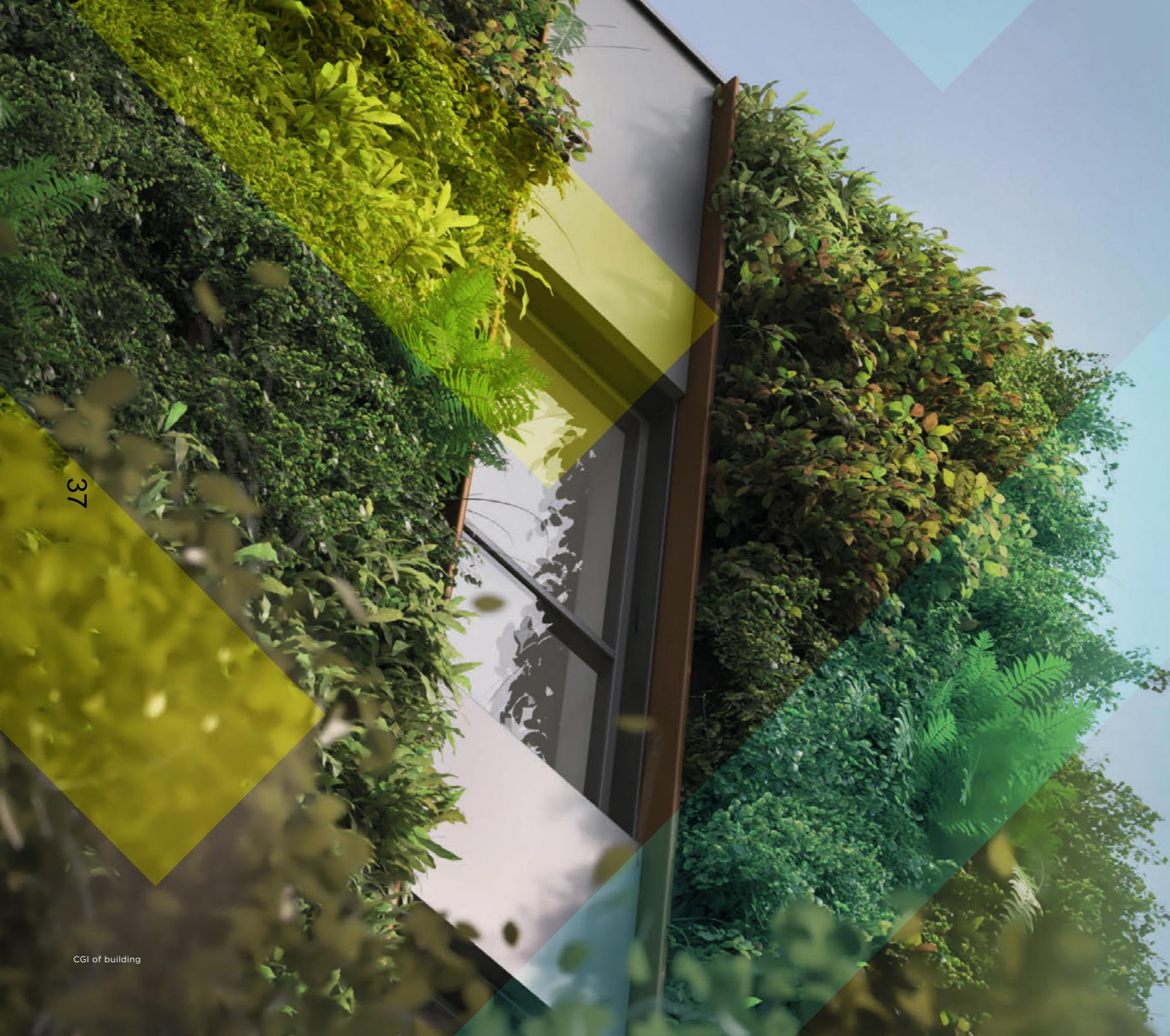


Kent is currently the only County with high-speed rail

Maidstone West to Ebbsfleet International.....	25 mins
Ebbsfleet International to London St Pancras.....	21 mins
Maidstone West to Stratford International.....	53 mins
Maidstone West to London St Pancras.....	63 mins
Maidstone East to London Victoria.....	57 mins

Source: National Rail Enquiries, Eurostar & The AA. Distances and times approximate.





[MAIDSTONEINNOVATIONCENTRE.CO.UK](http://MAIDSTONEINNOVATIONCENTRE.CO.UK)

MAIDSTONE INNOVATION CENTRE  
GIDDS POND WAY  
KENT MEDICAL CAMPUS  
MAIDSTONE  
KENT  
ME14 5FY

For our Covid 19 policy refer to our website.



IMPORTANT NOTICE: The agents for themselves and for the vendor of this property for whom they act give notice that:  
(i) the particulars are set out as a general guide only and do not constitute any part of an offer or contract;  
(ii) all descriptions, dimensions, distances, references to condition and other details are given without responsibility and should not be relied upon as statements or representations of fact; (iii) no person in the employment of the agents has any authority to make or give any representation or warranty whatsoever in relation to this property.  
Publication date: November 2020.

impact, 01732 897799 | [propertywithimpact.com](http://propertywithimpact.com) (E8001/WH)



**Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee**

**16 March 2021**

**Making Maidstone More Active Update**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	John Foster, Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Mike Evans, Leisure Manager
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All wards

**Executive Summary**

An update report on the Making Maidstone More Active report, with information on how the project will be restarted following a pause for the duration of the Covid-19 pandemic.

**Purpose of Report**

Noting

**This report makes the following recommendation to this Committee:**

That the report be noted.

**Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Economic Regeneration and Leisure Committee	16 March 2021

# Making Maidstone More Active Update

## 1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embracing Growth and Enabling Infrastructure</li> <li>• Safe, Clean and Green</li> <li>• Homes and Communities</li> <li>• A Thriving Place</li> </ul> <p>The Making Maidstone More Active project materially improves the Council's ability to achieve A Thriving Place.</p>	Leisure Manager
<b>Cross Cutting Objectives</b>	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Heritage is Respected</li> <li>• Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced</li> <li>• Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved</li> <li>• Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected</li> </ul> <p>The Making Maidstone More Active project supports the achievement of the Health Inequalities being Addressed and Reduced by further tailoring the leisure service to the needs of residents.</p>	Leisure Manager
<b>Risk Management</b>	Refer to paragraph 5.1 of the report	Leisure Manager
<b>Financial</b>	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Senior Finance Manager (Client)
<b>Staffing</b>	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

<b>Legal</b>	There are no legal implications from this update report.	Team Leader, Contracts and Commissioning
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	Project data is held by the Council in line with our retention schedules.	Policy and Information Team
<b>Equalities</b>	We recognise the project may have varying impacts on different communities within Maidstone. Therefore we will complete a separate equalities impact assessment as described at paragraph 2.15.	Policy & Information Manager
<b>Public Health</b>	We recognise that the project outcomes will have a positive impact on population health or that of individuals.	Senior Public Health Officer
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	The project will not have a negative impact on Crime and Disorder.	Leisure Manager
<b>Procurement</b>	The Council will continue to follow procurement exercises and will complete those exercises in line with financial procedure rules.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

**2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

2.1 Making Maidstone More Active (MMA) is the name given to the Council’s sport and leisure review. It seeks to ensure:

- Physical activity and participation are used as drivers towards improved health outcomes
- The future of Maidstone Leisure Centre is maximised, from development, participation and financial points of view
- The Council’s leisure service meets the needs, wishes and behaviours of residents
- The leisure service is attractive to visitors
- The needs of Maidstone’s growing and ageing population are met
- Future infrastructure options aligned to the future population forecasts are explored

2.2 In March 2019 this committee agreed that the project could recruit a dedicated project officer. In September 2019 the committee agreed the delivery timeline for the project, which ran from September 2019 to April 2021. Work was progressing along this timeline when it was disrupted and eventually halted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **2019/2020 progress**

- 2.3 A part-time project officer was recruited and they led on the delivery of the project as per the delivery timeline.
- 2.4 The MMMA survey was launched in autumn 2019 and it achieved 1,250 responses from across the borough. The results gave a good starting point for project planning and work continued on the design of project workshops, which were aimed at collecting qualitative data and responses from representative forums across the borough.

### **Covid-19 impact**

- 2.5 The first block of workshops were planned for March 2020 but had to be cancelled because of the Covid-19 pandemic. The team were optimistic that the disruption would be short and the workshops could resume later in 2020.
- 2.6 In April 2020 The MMMA project officer was redeployed to the Community Hub and in May 2020 they left their post at the Council to begin employment elsewhere.
- 2.7 Covid-19 impacted on all areas of Council work, including Maidstone Leisure Centre. As the complexities of leisure centre closures were understood at a national level, Sport England made consultancy help available to local authorities; their role being to support authorities in their contract discussions with leisure trusts and leisure operators.
- 2.8 The Council was appointed Strategic Leisure Limited who have been working with the Council, Maidstone Leisure Trust and Serco Leisure on the resumption of services at the leisure centre. Through these discussions council officers shared the detail of MMMA with the consultants, who in turn shared news of the project with executives at Sport England.
- 2.9 Through a project meeting with Sport England representatives, officers shared further details of MMMA and Sport England were happy to support the project with funding for further consultancy support. Via this funding Strategic Leisure have completed a Strategic Outcomes Planning Guidance Diagnostic for Maidstone. This is a review of where Maidstone currently sits with its sport and leisure provision, as a local authority and as a borough, and it recommends what further analysis is required before the authority commissions any changes to service delivery. The diagnostic provides a gap analysis of the Council's current strategic evidence base against Sport England's best practice guidance, and presents the information in a way that aligns to Sport England's strategic guidelines.

### **SOPG report findings**

- 2.10 The draft SOPG report for Maidstone, still to be reviewed by Sport England, finds that:
  - A lot of work has taken place over the last four years working towards the Council's overall strategic vision to be desirable and

attractive place to live, work, learn and visit. Sport and leisure plays a key role in this concept.

- Maidstone has some strong policies and strategies surrounding health and wellbeing. It is clear on how important this is to residents and there is a joined-up approach across the authority
- The MMMA survey is a useful insight into behaviours, interests and influences pre-Covid and is a good basis for future consultation workshops involving cross-sections of residents
- The Local Plan Review is yet to be completed and the make-up and likely locations of the future population is not yet known.
- The most-recent analysis of the leisure centre's members and users has some gaps in terms of understanding customer behaviours and insight
- Technical aspects of Maidstone Leisure Centre, its remaining lifespan and architectural possibilities needs to be understood in more detail
- Maidstone has great potential in developing opportunities in the active environment

2.11 The diagnostic analysis is currently being reviewed by Sport England. Council officers are due to meet with Sport England representatives before the 16 March ERL meeting and can include further feedback on 16 March.

### **Project restart**

2.12 One of Making Maidstone More Active's key questions centres on the future of Maidstone Leisure Centre. As mentioned in paragraph 2.10 the technical aspects of the asset and the plant and the potential redevelopment opportunities of the building are unknown. This is a key part of the project as it will determine the majority of the financial considerations that the Council has, and it will also determine the scope of any future procurement work.

2.13 Officers will soon be working with Sport England's technical team to understand in more detail the technical capabilities and shortcomings of the Maidstone Leisure Centre building.

2.14 In parallel with this work are the community consultation work which looks at the current population, and the Local Plan Review work that looks at the future population. A successful MMMA will blend all three aspects. Officers plan to work on progressing these three aspects, in collaboration with Sport England, leisure centre partners and planning colleagues.

2.15 The consultation workshops will be developed for online audiences. This work was not done in 2020 because officers had to prioritise other projects and there was also an aspiration that pre-Covid normalities would resume. Twelve months on, an online workshop will complement the project and add an additional engagement mechanism to the face-to-face workshops that will still be delivered. Residents will be able to engage via a face-to-face workshop or an online workshop, which will widen reach and give greater accessibility. The equalities impact assessment will be updated to include the online workshops, to ensure that they are delivered in a way that ensures Making Maidstone More Active workshops are as inclusive as possible.

2.16 The Local Plan Review and the new Local Plan is the third key aspect of the project. Officers are working together to ensure that the future service plans for leisure are tailored to the needs of the future borough. Officers will also be collaborating with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council, who are working on a similar review of their leisure centre provision. It is important for Maidstone that our plans complement the plans of neighbouring districts and opportunities for collaboration are maximised.

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### **3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

3.1 This report is presented as an update report for noting.

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

4.1 Paragraphs 2.11 to 2.16 detail the next steps for officers and the way in which the project will be amended in response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

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### **5. RISK**

5.1 Having paused MMMA for 12 months, the main risk of not progressing the project now is that future opportunities for the sport and leisure provision in the borough are not maximised. The current leisure contract for Maidstone Leisure Centre ends in 2024 and the Council risks entering the next phase of leisure provision without a clear idea of what service it wants and needs to provide.

5.2 The risks have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

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

6.1 No consultation has taken place since the last report to committee.

6.2 Officers have increased dialogue with Sport England executives and are factoring their guidance into the project development.

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

7.1 Officers will recommence the project using existing resources and staffing.

7.2 An all-Members briefing is scheduled for Thursday 8 April.

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## **8. REPORT APPENDICES**

- None
- 

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- *Future of Leisure Provision in Maidstone* Report – Economic, Regeneration and Leisure Committee, 5 March 2019
- *Delivery Programme for the Sports/Leisure Review* Report – Economic, Regeneration and Leisure Committee, 3 September 2019

# Agenda Item 17

## Economic, Regeneration and Leisure Committee

16 March 2021

### Covid-19 Business Grants

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Economic, Regeneration and Leisure Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service</b>	Stephen McGinnes, Mid Kent Services Director
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	John Foster, Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

#### Executive Summary

The report provides a summary of progress to date in the administration of business support grants through the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### Purpose of Report

For noting.

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

1. That the committee notes the progress to date in the administration of business support grants through the Covid-19 pandemic.

#### Timetable

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Economic, Regeneration and Leisure Committee	16 March 2021

## Covid-19 Business Grants

### 1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Cross Cutting Objectives</b>	The report recommendation supports the achievement of the Deprivation and Social Mobility cross cutting objectives by supporting local businesses and jobs.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Risk Management</b>	Refer to section 5 of the report.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Financial</b>	Funding for each of element of the Business Grant Scheme has been provided by Government, with the cost of administration supported through a new burden assessment.	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Staffing</b>	The council has employed 4 additional staff on temporary contracts to assist with delivery of the grant schemes. The cost of which is met through Covid-19 related grants.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Legal</b>	The report is for noting and not decision, therefore there are no legal implications arising from the recommendation set out in the report. The administration of the Grants Scheme by the Council falls within the general power of competence granted to local authorities under Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011.	Corporate Governance Team Leader
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	Accepting the recommendations will increase the volume of data held by the Council. We will hold that data in line with our retention schedules.	Policy and Information Team
<b>Equalities</b>	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require	Head of Regeneration

	an equalities impact assessment	and Economic Development
<b>Public Health</b>	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on Crime and Disorder.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
<b>Procurement</b>	No impact.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development

**2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

2.1 The Covid-19 pandemic has had significant impact on our communities and local economy. To help support business through the period of local and national restrictions a series of grants have continued to be introduced and delivered by the Council on behalf of Government.

2.2 The changing nature and impact of the pandemic has meant that the Council has had to be quick to respond to ensure that essential support is made available to businesses at the earliest opportunity. Decisions have therefore been made under delegation which enables the Chief Executive to take any action necessary in connection with any civil emergency or disaster including response, recovery and business continuity as may be required from time to time.

2.3 Decisions have been taken in consultation with the Leader of the Council and Chair of Economic, Regeneration and Leisure Committee. All decisions have been published and regular reports on progress made alongside other Covid-19 impacts to the Members Consultative Recovery Board.

2.4 To administer the scheme the Council created a project team with representatives from Economic Development, Revenues and Benefits, Digital, Finance, Audit and Communications with oversight provided by the Mid Kent Services Director.

2.5 The Council’s approach has been to use business rates data and intelligence gathered through the initial lockdown (March 2020) to identify and promote the scheme to these businesses through direct email, along with wider awareness raising through press releases, social media campaigns and radio coverage.

2.6 The Council continues to target those businesses which it believes may qualify and are yet to apply with outbound calling to engage the business and address any concerns or barriers to making an application.

- 2.7 The application process has primarily been online with support for those unable to access the online process made available through the Council's contact centre.
- 2.8 To date the Council has made 7170 grant awards totalling £40 million. Appendix 1 details the grant allocation for each scheme.
- 2.9 The grants fall into four categories:
- Local Restrictions Support Grant (mandatory grants)
  - Local Restrictions Support Grant (open)
  - Additional Restrictions Grant (discretionary grants)
  - One off Grants (wet led pubs & closed business lockdown grant)

#### Local Restrictions Support Grant

2.10 The grant is targeted at businesses registered for business rates that have been mandated to close either as part of local or national Covid-19 restrictions. This primarily relates to non-essential retail, hospitality, and leisure sector businesses.

2.11 The level of award is set nationally and is based on the rateable value for premises occupied equivalent to:

Businesses occupying hereditaments with a rateable value of exactly £15,000 receive a payment of £667 per 14-day qualifying restriction period.

Businesses occupying hereditaments with a rateable value over £15,000 and less than £51,000 receive a payment of £1,000 per 14-day qualifying restriction period.

Businesses occupying hereditaments with a rateable value of exactly £51,000 receive a payment of £1,500 per 14-day qualifying restriction period.

2.12 Whilst the Council received an initial grant allocation the cost of the scheme is uncapped, meaning that additional funds will be made available from Government should the initial grant allocation be insufficient.

#### Local Restrictions Support Grant (open)

2.13 LSRG (Open) grant scheme was targeted at hospitality, hotel, accommodation, and leisure businesses that were still open but severely impacted by the Tier 3 restrictions from the 2 - 19 December into which Maidstone was placed following the national restrictions from 5 November to 2 December 2020.

2.14 The Council had the discretion to determine how to award LSRG (Open) grant funding but was only awarded £31,822.

2.15 With only limited funding available for the short period that the borough was in Tier 3, it was decided to share this award with visitor attractions that

have a wider bearing on the local economy and were permitted to remain open in Tier 3 for outdoor events and visits.

2.16 Those attractions experienced significantly reduced income with severe restrictions on visitor numbers permitted and facilities that could be used. Activities and events planned during this period were largely cancelled or re-engineered to suit small household groups. Mass gatherings were banned and events difficult to hold in a Covid-safe way. The Christmas period would normally have been one of the busiest times of the year for visitor attractions.

#### Additional Restrictions Grant

2.17 As a discretionary Scheme the Council has flexibility in terms of the type of businesses which it seeks to support and the level of support made available.

2.18 Funding was provided in the form of a fixed grant allocation totalling £3.4m for the period November 2020 to March 2022, to cover both discretionary businesses grants and wider business support activity.

2.19 The Councils approach has been to allocate 80% of the funding for distribution through businesses grants by June 2021, with 20% retained to provide a contingency and budget for wider business support activity.

2.20 The distribution of the grant funding has been released in a series of funding rounds, with the criteria for each round reviewed to take account of feedback from the business community and officers delivering the grants.

2.21 To date there have been three rounds of funding with the criteria for the last funding round summarised below.

- Non-essential retail, hospitality or and leisure that has been legally required to close; occupy a commercial workspace within the borough and are not the business ratepayer for the premises which they occupy
- Businesses must receive their primary source of income (over 50%) through the supply of goods or services to the sector (non-essential retail, hospitality or and leisure
- Business occupies commercial workspace within the Borough and is not legally required to close but has closed due to it not being possible to open in a Covid secure way either due to the nature of the business or premises occupied
- Small or micro business that has seen a significant reduction in income and have been unable to claim support through either the Self-Employed Income Support Scheme or any other Business Grant Schemes operated by the council.

2.22 A total of 613 discretionary grants have been paid to date, totalling £1.5m.

- 2.23 Awards levels have been set to be comparable to those under the mandatory scheme, except for businesses that have been able to remain open where the award has been set at 70% of the value.

#### One off Grants

- 2.24 A one-off payment of £1,000 was made to pubs who receive less than 50% of the income from the sale of food. A total of 77 pubs across the borough benefited from the grant with all pubs across the borough contacted with details of the scheme.
- 2.25 A one-off Closed Business Lockdown Grant was paid alongside the Local Restrictions Support Grant for the period ending 16<sup>th</sup> February. To date 775 businesses have benefited with awards ranging from £4,000 to £9,000 depending on the rateable value of the premises.

### **3. RISK**

- 3.1 Whilst this report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications, the administration of the Business Grants has some inherent risk.

Budget Allocated – the grant allocation for the Additional restrictions Grant is to cover an extended period and the Council therefore needs to balance both the current and potential future need for business support. The approach to profile spend through to Spring 2021 with a contingency of 20% retained is aimed at mitigating that risk, with demand and spend through the scheme reviewed on a regular basis.

Application Fraud – The risk is mitigated through the application process which aims to match details against the Council's existing business rates system, through the Government's 'spotlight' service which checks and validates applications against wider data including that held by Companies House and the requirement for applicants to provide supporting evidence e.g. bank statements to validate their identity and account for monies to be paid.

- 3.2 This process is supported by a pre- and post-payment assurance plan to ensure that systems and processes are secure and adequate checks are completed to identify and tackle any abuse of the system.

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#### **4. REPORT APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1: Grant allocation summary
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#### **5. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Officer decision (Additional Restrictions Grant)

[https://maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/council-and-democracy/primary-areas/your-councillors?sq\\_content\\_src=%2BdXJsPWh0dHBzJTnBJTJGJTJGbWVldGIuZ3MubWFpZHN0b25lLmdvdi51ayUyRmlIRGVjaXNpb25EZXRhaWxzLmFzcHglM0ZJRCUzRDEzMzImYWxsPTE%3D](https://maidstone.gov.uk/home/primary-services/council-and-democracy/primary-areas/your-councillors?sq_content_src=%2BdXJsPWh0dHBzJTnBJTJGJTJGbWVldGIuZ3MubWFpZHN0b25lLmdvdi51ayUyRmlIRGVjaXNpb25EZXRhaWxzLmFzcHglM0ZJRCUzRDEzMzImYWxsPTE%3D)

Lockdown 1 (March 2020)					
Scheme	Criteria	Award	No of claims	Budget	Spend
Retail, Hospitality and Leisure (RHL) Grant	RHL businesses liable for business rates and with a rateable value £15k-£51k	£25k	2247	£28.8m	£28.8m
Small Business Grant	All sectors liable for business rates and in receipt of small business rate relief	£10k			
Discretionary Grant	Open to all sectors occupying commercial premises and outside of the business rate system, with priority to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shared workspace</li> <li>• B&amp;B operators</li> <li>• markets</li> </ul>	>£10k	252	£1.4m	£1.4m
Lockdown 2 (5 <sup>th</sup> Nov-2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec)					
Scheme	Criteria	Award	No of claims	Budget	Spend
Local Restrictions Grant (closed)	Non-essential retail, hospitality and Leisure business mandated to close	£1334 - £3000	869	£2.4m	£1.4m
Additional Restrictions Grant (round 1)	Non-essential retail, hospitality and leisure businesses mandated to close, occupying commercial premises and outside of the business rate system  Primary source of income (over 50%) through the supply of goods or services to the non-essential retail, hospitality, and leisure	£1334 - £3000  £934 - £2,100	127	£3.4m budget for 2020/21 and 2021/22	£158,000

Tier 3 (2<sup>nd</sup> Dec to 19<sup>th</sup> Dec)

Scheme	Criteria	Award	No of claims	Budget	Spend
Local Restrictions Grant (closed)	Hospitality and leisure businesses required to close	£667 - £1500 Every 14-day period	320	£339,000	£312,000
Local Restrictions Grant (open) Discretionary scheme	Targeted at visitor attractions that receive their primary source of income through the sale of attraction or event tickets; and continued to open but experienced a significant reduction in income	Open	3	£31,000	£31,000
Additional Restrictions Grant (round 2)	<p>Hospitality and leisure businesses mandated to close, occupying commercial premises and outside of the business rate system</p> <p>Supply chain with primary source of income through supply of goods/services to the hospitality and leisure</p> <p>Closed due to it being impossible to open in a Covid secure way due nature of the business or premises occupied</p> <p>Micro businesses that have seen a significant reduction in income and have been unable to claim support through other schemes</p>	£934 - £3000	232	£3.4m budget for 2020/21 and 2021/22	£147,000

Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs (2 <sup>nd</sup> Dec to 29 <sup>th</sup> Dec)					
Scheme	Criteria	Award	No of claims	Budget	Spend
Wet Led Pubs	Allow drinking without requiring food to be consumed and derive less than 50% of their income from food sales	£1000	77	£70,400	£77,000
Tier 4 (20 Dec – 4 Jan)					
Scheme	Criteria	Award	No of claims	Budget	Spend
Local Restrictions Grant (closed) (addendum)	Non-essential retail, hospitality and Leisure business mandated to close	£667 - £1500 Every 14-day period	923	£1.5m	£626,000
Lockdown 3 (5 <sup>th</sup> Jan – 16 <sup>th</sup> Feb)					
Scheme	Criteria	Award	No of claims	Budget	Spend
Local Restrictions Grant (closed) (addendum)	Non-essential retail, hospitality and Leisure business mandated to close	£2001 - £4500 Every 42-day period	790	£10.8m	£5.9m
Closed Businesses Lockdown Grant	Non-essential retail, hospitality and Leisure business mandated to close	£4000 - £9000 One-off payment			
Local Restrictions Grant extension (16 <sup>th</sup> Feb – 31 March)	Non-essential retail, hospitality and Leisure business mandated to close	£2001 - £4500 Every 42-day period	615	£3.8m	£1.5m
Additional Restrictions Grant (round 3)	Proposed:  Carry forward scheme from round 2.  Additional one-off lock down payment.  Additional £10k payment for businesses with RV over £51,000	£934 - £3000	305	£3.4m budget for 2020/21 and 2021/22	£1.2m