

Paragraph number	Original	Changed to
Contents	<i>Added</i>	8 Monitoring Indicators 9 Employers and Stakeholders 10 Appendix Glossary
Executive Summary	and the town centre has slipped down the retail rankings . It has not been all bad news though the population	and Maidstone town centre has slipped down the retail rankings ¹ . –On the other hand the population
	Enhancing the town centre	Enhancing Maidstone Town Centre
	Meeting the skills needs – <i>deleted</i>	By working closely with our partners we will ensure that residents are equipped with the skills for work and that skills needs of business are being met.
	Improving the infrastructure – We will invest in infrastructure to drive economic growth – including the transport network and digital infrastructure.	Improving the infrastructure - “We will invest in infrastructure by working closely with our partners, in particular Kent County Council. A priority being the need for digital accessibility and an adequate transport network across the Borough.”
1.4	The council commissioned Shared Intelligence (Si), to help prepare this economic development strategy.	The council commissioned Shared Intelligence (Si), who are experienced economic development professionals, to help prepare this economic development strategy.
1.7	Added	A consultation draft Strategy was published between the 15th December and the 23rd January. The consultation involved the following: 1. An online form,

¹ P29 Paragraph 5.33 of this Strategy

		<p>together with the relevant documents, was put on the consultation page of Maidstone Borough Council's website.</p> <p>2. A press release was issued to the media and the KM newspaper ran a half page story on it. Social media was used to raise awareness of the consultation. The KM Paper also had a significant feature in their newspaper on the 19th December 2014.</p> <p>3. The same on-line form was sent to around 1900 businesses across Maidstone borough and three prompts were sent to encourage their participation.</p> <p>4. Two consultation events were also held, on 13 January 2015. A Parish and Communities event was attended by 33 people, and a business event was attended by 60 people. These events enabled attendees to ask direct questions of officers and members and to engage in a workshop style discussion to offer views and opinions on the Strategy and their own views on what needs to be done to make Maidstone more prosperous. All these views were captured and have been used to inform the final Economic Development Strategy.</p> <p>5. A telephone survey was used to engage residents. This structured approach enabled the views of a large number of Maidstone residents to be gathered within a short timeframe – 1,518 interviews were conducted between</p>
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		<p>January 5th and January 20th 2015 – and also allowed interviews to be targeted so the opinions of those participating would be as representative as possible across all residents in the Borough. Quotas were set to ensure fair representation by age, gender and employment status. To allow results to be analysed at a ward level, at least 50 interviews were undertaken in each ward, with larger wards receiving more interviews. The survey lasted 10 minutes on average and consisted of 19 questions, including both multiple choice/ scale questions and those allowing an open /free response.</p>
1.8	<i>Added</i>	<p>The consultation process resulted in the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 25 submissions received from the online survey 2. 25 submissions received from the business survey 3. 60 people attended the business event 4. 33 people attended the Parish and Communities event 5. 14 detailed submissions received from residents, agents, developers and local businesses.
1.9	<i>Added</i>	<p>The findings of the consultation process were considered by the Council and informed the final</p>

		version of this Strategy presented to Policy and Resources Committee on 24 th June 2015.
1.14	Ambition Statement	Vision Statement
	Our 2013 Ambition Statement	Our 2013 Vision Statement
	In 2013, Maidstone is a model '21 st century county town'	In 2013, Maidstone is home to a model '21 st century county town'
	The town centre	Maidstone town centre
2.1	<i>Added</i>	The Strategic context of this document will be kept under review and the monitoring indicators set out in Appendix X will be used to inform when a review of the Strategy is required to meet the changing national economic picture.
2.14	the town centre	Maidstone town centre
2.15	In the town centre	In Maidstone town centre
2.16	This scheme is a high quality dedicated cycle and pedestrian route from residential development sites on the outskirts of Maidstone into the town centre.	This scheme is a high quality dedicated cycle and pedestrian route from residential development sites on the outskirts of Maidstone's urban areas into Maidstone Town Centre.
	West Kent LSTF	West Kent LSTF (Local Sustainable Transport Fund)
2.18	<i>What Makes a Successful Local Economy?</i> There is a long history of	<i>deleted</i>

	<p>academic thinking in economic geography, regional economics and urban studies that has attempted to explain why some local economies perform better than others, and to identify the key success factors. The concept of ‘agglomeration economies’ has been popular in recent discourse and has informed latest government policy with respect to local economic growth.²</p> <p>Agglomeration theory suggests that concentrations of economic activity generate economic benefits for businesses located within them, including easier access to skilled labour, specialist inputs and suppliers, and the creation of knowledge spillovers. Agglomeration benefits are believed to raise productivity, income and living standards.</p>	
2.19	<p>The concept of ‘resilience’ has also gained traction within the field following the recession. The Centre for Local Economic Strategies (CLES), and the Institute of Public Policy³ (IPPR) have both emphasised the importance of local economies being able to adapt both to shocks and to long-term changes. The concept of</p>	<i>deleted</i>

⁴ Bilfinger GVA (2014) 'Economic Sensitivity Testing & Employment Land Forecast for Maidstone Borough Council'

⁴ Bilfinger GVA (2014) 'Economic Sensitivity Testing & Employment Land Forecast for Maidstone Borough Council'

	<p>resilience is tied to a broader debate about what constitutes 'good growth', placing greater emphasis on the importance of environmental sustainability, responsible business practices, engagement and accountability and a responsive public sector.</p>	
2.20	<p>Some common threads emerge from these different theories. Successful towns and cities tend to be those that are competitive, productive and innovative. They have the ability to continually upgrade their business environment, skills base, and physical, social and cultural infrastructures, to attract the most profitable firms and the most talented people. Success factors include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Innovation, creativity and enterprise - entrepreneurial activity and the exploitation of new ideas through innovation are important drivers of economic growth. How easily new ideas are diffused between firms and sectors in a locality will influence their take-up and ultimately how productive the local economy will be. ● Risk investment and capital - investment and capital is required 	<i>deleted</i>

	<p>for businesses to develop new innovations and for investment in the place. Therefore, the ability of a place to attract this will influence its performance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">● High quality labour - the availability of human capital to turn ideas into new innovations worth funding with venture capital is important for achieving successful knowledge driven economies.● Exports – successful local economies tend to be those that export goods and services beyond their immediate boundaries serving wider markets.● Connectivity - having an efficient transport, electronic telecommunications and business networks are critically important to how the economy of a place functions and good systems are needed to support successful economies.● Quality of life - this is hard to define objectively and can relate to the social, environmental and	
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	<p>place factors. Evidence suggests that a good quality of life is an indirect rather than a direct driver of urban economic competitiveness, but it is nevertheless important for attracting new investment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision making – strategic decision making by urban authorities is a key driver of competitiveness when effective governance arrangements are in place. 	
2.21	<p>Maidstone has many features of a successful economy. Our aim is to build on these strengths through this economic development strategy so that our residents can benefit from a stronger economy.</p>	<i>Deleted</i>
3.10	<p>One of the main reasons why the Maidstone economy has performed poorly over recent years is its reliance on the public sector for employment at a time when austerity has meant cuts to the public sector nationally.</p>	<p>One of the main reasons why the Maidstone economy has performed poorly over recent years is the level of its reliance on the public sector for employment at a time when austerity has meant cuts to the public sector nationally.</p>

3.41	An abundance of low quality secondary office space in the town centre	An abundance of low quality secondary office space in Maidstone town centre
3.41	<i>Added</i>	Lack of available land close to the motorway corridor to meet the market demand for larger businesses premises in this location.
	Availability of employment sites for development at Junction 7 To increase the attractiveness of the town centre and enhance retail and leisure offer the through proposed developments	Availability of employment sites for development at Junction 7 To increase the attractiveness of Maidstone town centre and enhance retail and leisure offer the through proposed developments
	Use of PDR to convert low quality vacant offices to town centre housing and therefore improve the vitality of the office market	Use of new PDR (Permitted Development Rights) to convert low quality vacant offices to Maidstone town centre housing and thereby improve the vitality of the office market
	<i>Added</i>	Use of new Permitted Development Rights to convert commercial premises to residential uses leading to uncertainty and displacement for businesses and loss of employment sites to residential through the planning process.

4.3	In their report <i>Economic Sensitivity Testing and Employment Land Forecast</i> ⁴ , consultants GVA present a number of different forecasts of future employment growth in the Maidstone economy.	In their report <i>Economic Sensitivity Testing and Employment Land Forecast</i> ⁵ , consultants Bilfinger GVA present a number of different forecasts of future employment growth in the Maidstone economy.
4.4	Building from the base scenario, GVA consider the locally relevant factors that could drive economic growth, considering where the base scenario under- or over-plays the potential for growth in some of Maidstone's existing key sectors	Building from the base scenario, Bilfinger GVA consider the locally relevant factors that could drive economic growth, considering where the base scenario under- or over-plays the potential for growth in some of Maidstone's existing key sectors
4.5	Based on this analysis, GVA conclude that it is reasonable to anticipate that employment growth will, in certain sectors, grow beyond what 'business as usual' or historic trends would suggest.	Based on this analysis, Bilfinger GVA conclude that it is reasonable to anticipate that employment growth will, in certain sectors, grow beyond what 'business as usual' or historic trends would suggest.
4.6	GVA conclude that while there are risks, on balance it is appropriate to plan for growth in line with the enhanced growth scenario to maximise economic potential. The high growth scenario, which has been accepted by the council, will require a proactive approach to promoting economic growth, making land available in attractive locations for business, taking forward the regeneration of the town centre and implementing other actions outlined in this strategy.	Bilfinger GVA conclude that while there are risks, on balance it is appropriate to plan for growth in line with the enhanced growth scenario to maximise economic potential. The high growth scenario, which has been accepted by the council, will require a proactive approach to promoting economic growth, making land available in attractive locations for business, taking forward the regeneration of Maidstone

⁴ Bilfinger GVA (2014) 'Economic Sensitivity Testing & Employment Land Forecast for Maidstone Borough Council'

⁵ Bilfinger GVA (2014) 'Economic Sensitivity Testing & Employment Land Forecast for Maidstone Borough Council'

		town centre and implementing other actions outlined in this strategy.
4.7	A breakdown by sector of the 14,400 jobs forecast in Maidstone over the next 20 years is provided by GVA in their report. As the forecasts are derived from standard industrial classifications, it is helpful to group some of these activities together for the purposes of strategy and policy making. The commentary below is focused on those sectors, and sub-sectors, with the largest growth potential in Maidstone. It is drawn from analysis by Shared Intelligence in the State of the Economy report and from the GVA report.	A breakdown by sector of the 14,400 jobs forecast in Maidstone over the next 20 years is provided by Bilfinger GVA in their report. As the forecasts are derived from standard industrial classifications, it is helpful to group some of these activities together for the purposes of strategy and policy making. The commentary below is focused on those sectors, and sub-sectors, with the largest growth potential in Maidstone. It is drawn from analysis by Shared Intelligence in the State of the Economy report and from the Bilfinger GVA report.
4.11	The scale of housing growth in Maidstone, nearby parts of Kent and the South East should support long-term growth.	The scale of housing growth in Maidstone, nearby parts of Kent and the South East should support long-term growth, as should the development of new employment sites, notably the proposal for the Paramount Theme Park in North Kent.

4.23	<p>Tourism is an important sector in Maidstone; visitors come to the area for a variety of different reasons and from a variety of places, bringing an injection of expenditure which helps to raise income and employment both directly and through multiplier effects. Nationally, the tourism sector continues to expand; according to ONS figures 2013 was a record year for overseas visitor numbers to Maidstone with a large increase in the number of Chinese visitors.</p>	<p>Tourism is an important sector in Maidstone; visitors come to the area for a variety of different reasons, both for leisure and business visits and from a variety of places, bringing an injection of expenditure which helps to raise income and employment both directly and through multiplier effects. Nationally, the tourism sector continues to expand; according to ONS figures 2013 was a record year for overseas visitor numbers to Maidstone with a large increase in the number of Chinese visitors.</p>
4.24	<p>Leeds Castle is the most high profile of Maidstone's tourist attractions with over 500,000 visitors per annum. Other key attractions include Maidstone Museum, Kent Showground & Bentrif Art Gallery - one of the most important regional museums in the South East, Kent Life – an open air museum about Kent's rural heritage, the Hazlitt Arts Centre and the Hazlitt Theatre.</p>	<p>Leeds Castle is the most high profile of Maidstone's tourist attractions with over 500,000 visitors per annum. Other key attractions include Kent Showground, Maidstone Museum & Bentrif Art Gallery, one of the most important regional museums in the South East, Kent Life – an open air visitor attraction about Kent's rural heritage, and the Hazlitt Theatre.</p>
4.25	<i>Added</i>	<p>Maidstone town centre has also seen a growing restaurant, café and coffee shop offer from national chains and independents, many of which are clustered around Earl Street.</p>

4.26	<p>The parks and open spaces in Maidstone, especially Mote Park and Whatman Park, mean it is well placed to host major events and festivals, and has a track record of doing so.</p> <p>Maidstone is also a popular location for conferences, with a number of different venues across the borough which are promoted by Kent Conference Bureau (KCB), a not for profit organisation promoting Kent as a conference and event destination, that was originally established in Maidstone.</p>	<p>The parks and open spaces in Maidstone, especially Mote Park and Whatman Park, mean it is well placed to host major events and festivals, and has a track record of doing so. Large scale events at the Kent Showground, Leeds Castle, Brands Hatch, the Hop Farm and in the venues of the Medway towns, bring large numbers of staying visitors to Maidstone. Maidstone is also a popular location for conferences, with a number of different venues across the borough which are promoted by Kent Conference Bureau (KCB), a public/private sector run marketing consortium promoting Kent as a conference and event destination, that was originally established in Maidstone.</p>
4.27	<p>Analysis of the visitor economy in Maidstone has been undertaken using the industry-standard Cambridge model. The most recent assessment found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Spend</i> - around £176.8 million was spent on trips to Maidstone in 2009 by overnight and day visitors, up by 2% 	<p>Analysis of the visitor economy in Maidstone has been undertaken using the industry-standard Cambridge model. The most recent assessment based on 2013 data found:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Spend</i> - around £186.8 million was spent on trips to Maidstone in 2013 by overnight and

	<p>compared to 2009. It is estimated that a further £53 million was added through multiplier effects. Drawing together direct business turnover, supplier and income induced expenditure, and related expenditure, the total value of tourism activity is estimated to have been around £249.9 million – an increase of 4% compared to 2009.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Trips</i> – an estimated 3.3 million tourism day trips were made to Maidstone in 2011, down 1% compared to 2009. In addition, around 393,000 overnight tourism trips were made. • <i>Origin of spend and trips</i> – domestic visitors made up 83% of overnight trips (327,000) and overseas visitors made 17% of trips (66,000). By comparison, 26% of expenditure was made by domestic staying visitors; 11% by overseas staying visitors and 63% by day visitors. <p><i>Jobs</i> – an estimated 3,700 full-time equivalent jobs were created by the sector, or 5,000 including seasonal and part-time workers - around 7% of total employment.</p>	<p>day visitors, down by 0.2% compared to 2011. It is estimated that a further £59 million was added through multiplier effects. Drawing together direct business turnover, supplier and income induced expenditure, and related expenditure, the total value of tourism activity is estimated to have been around £251.6million – an increase of 4% compared to 2011.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Trips</i> – an estimated 3.7 million tourism day trips were made to Maidstone in 2013, up 1% compared to 2011. In addition, around 367,000 overnight tourism trips were made. • <i>Origin of spend and trips</i> – domestic visitors made up 80% of overnight trips (291,000) and overseas visitors made 20% of trips (66,000). By comparison, 21% of expenditure was made by domestic staying visitors; 14% by overseas staying visitors and 65% by day visitors. • <i>Jobs</i> – an estimated 3,762 full-time equivalent jobs were created by the sector, or 5,190 including seasonal and part-time workers - around 8% of total employment.
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4.28	<p>The fundamental challenge for Maidstone is to capture a greater share of South East tourism and build on the borough's heritage, urban and rural strengths. Destinations that are well managed are more likely to excel in attracting new investment, talented workers and ultimately more visitors. The council is commissioning a Destination Management Plan - a shared statement of intent between public and private partners to manage, develop and promote Maidstone as a tourist destination.</p>	<p>The fundamental challenge for Maidstone is to capture a greater share of South East tourism and build on the borough's heritage, urban and rural strengths. Destinations that are well managed are more likely to excel in attracting new investment, talented workers and ultimately more visitors. The council has commissioned a Destination Management Plan - a shared statement of intent between public and private partners to manage, develop and promote Maidstone as a tourist destination with a publication date of July 2015.</p>
4.29	<p><i>Added</i></p>	<p>Aligned to this work will be the production of a Cultural Strategy which will provide a shared direction and actions around the following themes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Heritage – understanding and interpreting Maidstone's past in order to shape its future • Cultural Assets - maintenance, usage and development

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Festivals and Events – overview and opportunities for enhancement • Supporting and Developing Maidstone’s Creative Economy – artists, cultural organisations, Creative Industries – fulfilling the growth potential • Building Social Capital, Health and Wellbeing through Culture – encouraging and developing cultural participation • Cultural Place Making: Maidstone town / rural areas; connectivity; twilight economy; future opportunities; identity.
4.30	<i>Added</i>	<p><i>The Rural Economy</i></p> <p>A large part of the borough has a vibrant rural economy that also offers opportunities for growth, with its diverse range of industries including the land-based sector, such as farming and horticulture, rural tourism-based businesses and others in sectors including construction, manufacturing and distribution.</p>

4.31	<i>Added</i>	<p>Many of the priorities identified in this strategy - retaining and attracting investment, stimulating enterprise, meeting the skills needs of employers and investing in infrastructure - apply as much to rural areas as they do to the urban economy. However, growth in rural areas needs to be planned sensitively and sustainably in order to retain the appeal of the countryside as a place to live, visit and do business. We recognise that there are some specific opportunities and challenges facing the rural economy and we will work with local communities, businesses and parishes to develop initiatives around the priorities in this Strategy .</p> <p>Agriculture, Horticulture and Forestry</p> <p>Agriculture and food manufacturing is an important part of the national economy recognised in the national Agri-Tech Strategy, not least for its role in feeding the rapidly expanding global population. The strategy puts considerable emphasis on research and development, innovation and skills that will be needed to raise productivity and support sustainable intensification of agriculture. More locally Kent has a proud history of producing some of the finest produce in England, which is promoted under the brand 'Produced in Kent'.</p> <p>The Agri-tech sector has some potential for the Borough as identified by GVA in the</p>
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		<p>Economic Sensitivity Testing report. There is still a significant land based sector in the Borough. Opportunities for businesses could present themselves in the form of adoption and development of new techniques and as a test centre. Hadlow College and East Malling Research Centres in neighbouring Boroughs could enable private sector/research collaborations and technology transfer. East Malling has recently benefited from Government funding through the Agri-tech Catalyst to established centres of agricultural innovation.</p>
4.32	<i>Added</i>	<p>The land based sector shares many of the issues other industry sectors have including skills shortages, planning, access to markets, business support and broadband connectivity. Other issues are more specific around the way agriculture is funded and the countryside stewardship role they perform. The industry is represented on The Maidstone Economic Business Partnership and work is under way to identify how the Borough Council can add value and support the sector. Discussions are ongoing with farmers and the National Farmers Union (NFU). We need to continue to promote the development and diversification of agriculture and other land-based rural businesses in Maidstone and the growth opportunities that</p>

		are emerging in this sector. The expansion of the Leader Rural Development Programme to all of rural Maidstone will provide grant finance to support diversification.
4.33	Added	<p>Home-working and home-based businesses</p> <p>More businesses than ever are being started from home in home offices, studios or workshops, as technology has enabled entrepreneurs to reach a wide marketplace via the internet from anywhere in the world. Research by KCC suggests that Maidstone has one of the highest concentrations of home-based businesses in Kent.</p>
4.34		<p>The quality of life on offer in Maidstone is one of its key competitive advantages and attracts a talented pool of people to the area to live and work. In the modern economy, greater flexibility of working conditions means that an increasing number of people are able to work from home. This offers an opportunity for Maidstone to attract more people looking for a better work-life balance by setting up a home-based business or working from home. To support this growth, planning policies need to be sufficiently flexible to allow home working, and to permit workspace such as live-</p>

		<p>work units, to be built. Fast, reliable, telecommunications infrastructure is also a prerequisite for many home workers and home-based businesses.</p>
4.35		<p>ICT infrastructure</p> <p>High-speed broadband is increasingly recognised as the 'fourth utility', being as important as gas, electricity and water to homes and businesses alike. Broadband and mobile telecommunications coverage in rural areas can be patchy and act as a barrier to businesses needing high bandwidth. "Making Kent Quicker" is a county-wide Kent County Council programme with BT and the government's broadband agency, Broadband Delivery UK (BDUK), to bring better broadband to Kent. By the end of 2015, at least 95% of all properties in Kent will have access to higher-speed fibre-based broadband infrastructure and every property in the project area will be able to access a broadband service of at least 2Mbps. A minimum of 91% of premises will get superfast broadband of at least 24Mbps. We need to continue to support efforts to extend the reach of high speed broadband in Maidstone's rural areas enabling more people to receive 24Mbps or higher.</p>

4.36		<p>Tourism-related businesses</p> <p>The beautiful natural landscape of Maidstone's rural areas and its array of visitor attractions, such as Leeds Castle, offer potential for rural tourism-related business growth. The Destination Management Plan will be the vehicle through which the specific opportunities presented by Maidstone's rural offer will be developed.</p>
5.6	We will achieve this through focusing on the following five priorities.	We will achieve this through focusing on the following five priorities and the actions required to deliver them.
5.8	<i>Added</i>	This is an industry led business partnership facilitated by Maidstone Borough Council. There is a clear desire from MEBP members to make things happen and demonstrate that Maidstone is "open for business".

5.23	Actions	Retaining and Attracting Investment - Actions
	A1. Implement the Council's new Business Customer Relationship Management system. Local businesses will be targeted to receive support that enables them to grow. This will be done in partnership with others including High Growth Kent, Manufacturing Advisory Services, UKTI, etc.	A1. Implement the Council's new Business Customer Relationship Management system. The information held on each business enables relevant targeted information to be sent to them on subjects such as available finance, export support, innovation initiatives etc. The objective is to hold a single business database of all registered businesses in the Borough, available corporately within MBC but also with our external partners. Local businesses will be targeted to receive support that enables them to grow. This will be done in partnership with others such as Manufacturing Advisory Services (now part of the national Business Growth Service), UKTI, Kent International Business etc..
5.32	Actions	Stimulating Entrepreneurship - Actions

5.38	<i>Added</i>	<p>National trends in retailing include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The reduction in multiple retailer representation across the UK, with a focus by brands on a smaller number of larger locations. Tied into this is the growth of internet shopping. •The increased importance of restaurants/ eateries and leisure uses in terms of anchoring town centres and major new shopping centres. •Changing store formats such as the growth in “pop up” stores. •The importance of providing a high quality of experience (through the quality of the retail and leisure offer through to the quality of environment and accessibility) to shoppers in order to attract and retain their custom. •The importance of achieving an appropriate balance between independent and multiple retailers.
5.39	<i>Added</i>	<p>The impact of these trends on Maidstone Town Centre needs to be properly understood and action taken to ensure its vitality and viability.</p>

5.48	<i>Deleted</i>	Network Rail is in advanced negotiations to buy the Sorting Office.
5.52	Actions	C Enhancing Maidstone Town Centre - Actions
	C1. To develop a vision for the town centre and translate this into a spatial land use plan for the future development of the town.	C1. To develop a vision for the town centre and translate this into a spatial land use plan “masterplan” for the future development of the town, with a programme of activity to deliver short, medium and long term actions.
	<p><i>D. Meeting the Skills Needs</i></p> <p>By working with our partners we will ensure that residents are equipped with the skills for work and that skills needs of business are being met. By working closely with our partners we will ensure that residents are equipped with the skills for work and that skills needs of business are being met. We will encourage better careers advice in schools and promote</p>	<p><i>D. Meeting the Skills Needs</i></p> <p>By working closely with our partners we will ensure that residents are equipped with the skills for work and that skills needs of business are being met. We will encourage better careers advice in schools and promote apprenticeships and work experience placements in the Council and with businesses</p>

	apprenticeships and work experience placements in the Council and with businesses	
5.53	<i>Added</i>	The council supports the redevelopment and expansion of Newnham Court Shopping Village but with a focus on complementary rather than competing High Street uses as set out in paragraph 7.8 of the draft Local Plan regulation 18 consultation.
5.56	<p>For school leavers that attain only a Level 1 qualification (fewer than 5 GCSEs Grade A-C) there is a reported lack of provision. Kent County Council has recently introduced a new initiative to address this – the 2-1-2 programme. This brings together schools, FE colleges and employers to provide programmes that combine Level 2 academic training in schools with vocational training at FE colleges and work placements with employers. There has been some take up of this initiative in the borough and the County Council is promoting this over the coming year with the hope that there is both greater provision and take-up of this offer across the borough, as well as more widely across the county.</p>	<p>Work is ongoing to improve pupils understanding of the career opportunities available to them, the skills required by employers and the different pathways they could take to meet their aspirations. Ofsted’s report 'Going in the right direction?', published in September 2013, found that the majority of schools across the country needed to do more to ensure that all of their pupils had information on the full range of training and education options and career pathways to help them make informed choices about their future so that they could reach their potential. Encouraging employer engagement with schools, such as initiatives like “Inspiring the Future,” which links business people and schools together to give career insight talks to young people, and arranging work experience</p>

		which highlight employability skills is a key action in this Strategy.
5.63	<i>Deleted</i>	Construction of the Maidstone Medical Campus is due to commence in April 2015 with completion in 2017/18. It is looking to attract 150-300 students with the intake commencing as soon as the work is completed. There is currently no school of medicine at any of the universities in Kent.
5.67	Actions	D Meeting the Skills Needs - Actions

5.77	Actions	E Improving the Infrastructure - Actions
6.22	<p>The strategic case for a new employment site at Junction 8 has been established and, subject to a satisfactory policy being approved by the Council, is a key component of this Strategy.</p>	<p>The strategic case for a new employment site at Junction 8 has been established and its development is critical to ensuring that the principle aim of the Strategy is achieved i.e. the creation of 14,400 jobs by 2031 in a range of sectors and occupations. With a growing population, the realisation of key employment opportunities including the Town Centre Masterplan, Eclipse Business Park, Kent Medical Campus and Junction 8 are essential if the Council and its partners are to minimise unsustainable out commuting and reduce the likelihood of Maidstone becoming a “dormitory town”.</p>
6.23	<i>Added</i>	<p>The detail of a new planning policy, setting out the criteria in which development at Junction 8 will be acceptable, will be considered by Maidstone Borough Council’s Spatial Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee in August 2015.</p>

	<i>Added</i>	Economic Development Strategy – Action Plan Pages 47-60 Monitoring Indicators Pages 61-62 Employers and Stakeholders Pages 63-64 Appendix Glossary Pages 65-67
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