

APPENDIX A – ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT ACTION PLAN 2019-20 UPDATE

Key improvement area	Lead Officer	To be delivered by	Update
<p>Ensuring sufficient resource to deliver the ambition for embracing growth and enabling infrastructure priority (link to Corporate Risk Register)</p>	<p>Director of Regeneration and Place</p>	<p>1 March 2020</p>	<p>The Regeneration and Economic Development service has been refocussed towards investment in / and delivery of the council's growth and infrastructure projects.</p> <p>The Council works in collaboration with Kent County Council to secure infrastructure monies above those sums collected via Section 106 and the Community Infrastructure Levy.</p> <p>Local Growth Fund monies were secured to part fund a programme of junction improvements to mitigate development in the current local plan. Whilst programmes such as this are complex to deliver, we understand that public consultation by Kent County Council will commence early in the new year for the detailed design proposals.</p> <p>Another example is the highways improvements outside of the Kent Medical Campus that are being accelerated by a successful bid to the National Infrastructure Productivity Fund, again with KCC. Monies secured exceeded £9m, to include a £0.5m loan from the Council, and this will fund improvements to two nearby roundabouts and provide the duelling of the road between them and works on site will commence next year.</p> <p>The Council and Kent County Council did also make a bid to the Housing Infrastructure Fund in respect of our joint landholdings at the Former Royal Mail Sorting Office site nearby to Maidstone East Station. Whilst this bid was unsuccessful, we were instead referred to Homes England to make a bid to their Small Sites Fund to unlock development, for which we have passed the first funding gateway.</p>

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			<p>Furthermore, the Council has two mixed tenure housing developments on site at Brunswick Street and Union Street, and again the Council secured in excess of £0.6m from the MHCLG Land Release Fund to unlock these complex brownfield sites. Furthermore, a further bid has been made for a further two schemes for which the outcome is awaited.</p> <p>The Council has also secured Local Enterprise Partnership Local Growth Fund monies of £1m to fund improvements to the Maidstone East Ticket Office, plus £1m of National Station Improvement Funds. The Project will complete in August 2020.</p>
Ensuring there is protection against bribery and corruption.	Monitoring Officer	As identified in Audit report	Online learning training modules have been made available to staff following a Team Talk in December on gifts and hospitality.
Capacity to deliver the investment and regeneration programme – (link to Corporate Risk Register)	<p>Director of Regeneration and Place</p> <p>Director of Finance and Business Improvement</p>	1 March 2020	<p>The Business Rates Retention Pilot monies were in part used to create planning guidelines documents for the five town centre opportunity sites, all five have now been adopted. Current successes include the expansion of the Maidstone Property Holdings Ltd market rent portfolio, improvements at Mote Park, the Innovation Centre Development and recent public realm improvements to the town centre. Staffing resource has increased as well as extensive training for them, as well as strong partnerships with a number of consultancy firms.</p> <p><u>Commercial Investment</u> As part of the commercial investment strategy, resources have been budgeted for ongoing maintenance and development of our new acquisition at Lockmeadow.</p>

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Property Maintenance, Health and Safety Compliance	Director of Finance and Business Improvement	1 March 2020	An asset management plan is under development. Ongoing compliance with our Health and Safety and other legal responsibilities in relation to the property portfolio is being monitored by the Corporate Leadership Team.
Governance for Maidstone Property Holdings	Chief Executive	1 March 2020	New Directors Appointed and trained. Ryan O’Connell has been appointed as company secretary. Furthermore, all the documents have been reviewed and refreshed by an external firm of specialist lawyers, and these were adopted by Full Council in December 2019, to include a new business plan for the company too.
Contract Management	Director of Finance and Business and Improvement	1 November 2019	A range of actions have been carried out to improve the standard of contract management, including publication of contract management guidance, officer training, improved liaison with MK Legal, and central monitoring of contracts.
Partner Relationships	Chief Executive	1 March 2020	<p>There is a very strong working partnership in place with KCC, underpinned by the new Maidstone Strategic Infrastructure Working Group comprised by a councillors and senior officers from both authorities.</p> <p>In terms of Transport partnership working with KCC, this has been evidenced by the two authorities co-funding a Maidstone Transport Planner, and the joint commissioning of a Maidstone Transport Model to support the Local Plan Review.</p> <p>We have also continued to work closely with our partners in health and community safety on a number of projects and initiatives.</p>