

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**ECONOMIC REGENERATION AND LEISURE
POLICY ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**(DRAFT) EXCERPT OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 5
JULY 2022**

30. UK SHARED PROSPERITY FUND, LOCAL INVESTMENT PLAN

The Leader of the Council introduced a report setting out a proposed list of priority projects for inclusion in the Local Investment Plan to be submitted to the Department of Levelling Up Housing and Communities for approval prior to release of the funding allocated to the Council from the UK Shared Prosperity Fund (£1,199,253). The Leader of the Council advised the Committee that:

- The deadline for submission of Local Investment Plans was 1 August 2022 and failure to meet the deadline might result in the loss of the funding.
- It was important to choose projects carefully to maximise the impact and benefits for residents. It was proposed that the Local Investment Plan should focus on Maidstone Town Centre with an emphasis on:
 - A. Building Pride in Place through promotion of the Town Centre and Events.
 - B. A Safe and Attractive Town Centre achieved through Greening and Lighting.
 - C. A Community Arts Hub and Maker Space.
 - D. Links from the Town Centre to Lockmeadow – Activity/Outdoor Gym - Callisthenics
- The funding had been profiled to be spent over the next three years.
- Meetings had been held with Helen Grant MP and Helen Whatley MP who had both indicated support for the Local Investment Plan and the ideas put forward.

Councillor Jeffery (Visiting Member) addressed the Committee identifying (a) other issues that the Council could help mitigate (the cost-of-living crisis, fuel resources, pollution, waste, climate change and biodiversity etc.) and (b) other areas that might be addressed including safety and the night-time economy with a move potentially to an evening economy, promotion of fifteen-minute neighbourhoods, greening initiatives at Lockmeadow, promoting locally owned businesses and access to the town centre from west Maidstone for pedestrians and cyclists.

The Leader of the Council wished to emphasise that delivery of the projects would run alongside bids for Safer Streets funding and Town Centre Strategy work.

The Committee supported the proposed list of priority projects for inclusion in the Local Investment Plan and identified issues that it would like the Executive to consider taking forward in future.

RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND TO THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL:

1. That the planned projects and actions set out in Appendix 4 to the report be approved as the Local Investment Plan for Maidstone.
2. That the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance be delegated responsibility to submit the Local Investment Plan to Government by 1 August 2022.

FURTHER RESOLVED: That the Executive be requested to consider taking forward the following issues in future:

Enhancement/improvement of the night-time/evening economies
Town centre access from the west
Recognition of the riverside as part of the town centre
Riverside lighting including maintenance of existing
Promotion of events
Involving local people in town centre arts and events