

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
10 SEPTEMBER 2008

PRESENT: Councillor Garland (Leader) and
Councillors Ash, Greer, Moss and Ring

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Chittenden, Mrs Marshall, Mortimer, Warner
and Mrs Wilson

66. **URGENT ITEM**

The Leader agreed to take an urgent report from the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the submission to the Communities and Local Government Parliamentary Select Committee on the Balance of Power between Central and Local Government as this document required consideration before going to Council on 24 September 2008.

67. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor Chittenden indicated his wish to speak on Item 8. Councillor Mrs Marshall indicated her wish to speak on Item 6. Councillor Mortimer indicated his wish to speak on Item 7 and Councillor Mrs Wilson indicated her wish to speak on the urgent item.

68. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures.

69. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

70. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

RESOLVED: That the items be taken in public as proposed.

71. **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 August 2008 be approved as a correct record and signed.

72. **IMPLEMENTATION 2007 BEST VALUE REVIEWS**

The Cabinet considered the Report of Management Team regarding the progress made to date on the implementation plans of the three Best Value Reviews undertaken in 2007 on CCTV, Concessionary Fares and Grants.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the progress to date on the implementation of the actions in all three Best Value review implementation plans (shown in Appendices A, B and C of the Report of Management Team) be noted;
- b) That a further report assessing whether the objectives of the Best Value reviews have been achieved be brought to Cabinet in April 2009; and
- c) That a new options report on CCTV implementation is being prepared and that all the relevant action points will be incorporated into the subsequent implementation plan be noted.

73. RE-PRIORITISATION OF GROWTH POINT FUNDED EXPENDITURE

See Record of Decision of the Cabinet (copy attached as Appendix A).

74. VERIFICATION OF THE 'SUSTAINABLE CONSTRUCTION OPTIONS FOR THE NEW DEPOT' REPORT

The Cabinet considered the Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan ("SCRAIP") from the Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee asking for a number of sustainable construction options to be included in the new depot building.

The Cabinet agreed the recommendation of the Officers that the solar hot water panels, condensing gas boiler, rainwater harvesting and zoned PIR lighting are included in the scheme as tendered by Gallaghers. The other options will need to be considered subject to affordability, payback within fifteen years and that they will not compromise the planning application process or the overall programme.

RESOLVED: That the agreed response as set out on the attached Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan ("SCRAIP") (Appendix B) be passed to the Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

75. DRAFT BUDGET STRATEGY 2008/09 ONWARDS

The Cabinet considered the reference from the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding their comments on the draft Budget Strategy 2008/09 onwards.

RESOLVED: That the reference be noted.

76. SUBMISSION TO COMMUNITIES AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT PARLIAMENTARY SELECT COMMITTEE ON THE BALANCE OF POWER BETWEEN CENTRAL AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee regarding the Council's submission to the Communities

and Local Government Parliamentary Select Committee on the Balance of power between Central and Local Government.

The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee set-up a cross party working group to consider the balance of power between Central and Local Government. The deadline for submission of responses is 29 September 2008.

RESOLVED: That the proposed submission be endorsed and recommended to full Council.

77. FORWARD PLAN

The Cabinet considered the Report of the Leader of the Council detailing the contents of the Forward Plan for the period 1 October 2008 – 31 January 2009.

RESOLVED: That, subject to the following amendments, the Forward Plan for the period 1 October 2008 – 31 January 2009 be noted

Cabinet

Park and Ride Tenders and Service delayed until 12 November 2008.
Park and Ride Bus Fare Increase delayed until 10 December 2008

78. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.15 p.m.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION OF THE CABINET

Decision Made: 10 September 2008

RE-PRIORITISATION OF GROWTH POINT FUNDED EXPENDITURE

Issue for Decision

To consider projects that should be funded using the Council's New Growth Point grant from Communities and Local Government (CLG).

Decision Made

1. That Cabinet endorse the projects included in the current Programme of Development listed in Appendix 1 of the Report of the Assistant Director of Development and Community Services.
2. That delegated authority be given to the Deputy Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Regeneration, to update the Programme of Delivery including reflecting any amended prioritization arising from other decisions made and resubmit it to Communities and Local Government by the 1st October 2008.
3. That the revised project list detailed in Table 3 and Table 4 below be approved to receive funding from the 2008/09 Growth Point allocation, with future funding requirements being considered in the light of confirmation of further Growth Point allocations and as part of the budget strategy.

Reasons for decision

Background

In December 2007 CLG announced grant awards to all New Growth Points and Growth Areas. Maidstone's allocation is set out in Table 1 below.

Table 1

	Allocation	Indicative Allocation	
	2008/09	2009/10 & 2010/11	Total
Capital	£1,616,144	£2,985,914	£4,602,059
Revenue	£192,391	£285,947	£478,337
Total	£1,808,535	£3,271,861	£5,080,396

CLG advise that Growth Point funding should be focused on delivering physical, social and cultural infrastructure projects to support the early delivery of housing as the main priority but also the creation of sustainable communities.

The grant does not have to be spent in the year it is allocated. Moreover CLG have stated that the grant is not ring fenced and not project specific. Which projects are funded is a matter to be decided locally. However it is necessary for the Council to submit a Programme of Development (POD) to CLG each year. This technical document sets out the vision and context for delivering growth, and includes a housing trajectory, investment plan, and a list of projects which are seen as key to implementing growth point aspirations and is significant in CLG funding decisions. A revised POD has to be submitted by the 1st October. Few changes are proposed since the POD was submitted a year ago and mainly feature updating project costs and timing. These projects, which have yet to be amended, are set out in Appendix 1 of the Report of the Assistant Director of Development and Community Services.

On the 13th February 2008 Cabinet agreed a list of projects to receive Growth Point funding from the first year allocation, and these are listed in Table 2.

Table 2

Priority No.	Project Name	2008/9 capital	2008/9 revenue
1	Town Centre pedestrianisation and street scene enhancement	£70,000	
2	Langley Park Farm Park and Ride Site	£1,546,144	
3	Maidstone Integrated Water Strategy		£40,000
4	Green Infrastructure Strategy		£60,000
	Economic Development Officer and staff to support infrastructure provision		£92,391
Total		£1,616,144	192,391

However, since that decision the Cabinet has reconsidered these spending priorities, both capital and revenue.

Whilst Town Centre improvements and Park and Ride continue to be seen as key projects, the emphasis was changed to give greater priority to early implementation of some town centre enhancements, with Councils' approach to Park and Ride being subject to a medium term review to ensure greater certainty on cost effective operation.

Moreover there is now a commitment to positively move forward key infrastructure projects which will allow implementation of the Core Strategy and realization of housing, environmental and regeneration ideals. Hence, in partnership with KCC, funding is committed to progressing preparatory work on All Saints Link Road and the South East Maidstone Strategic Link.

It is proposed that the £70,000 of design and consultation work already allocated to the Town Centre should lead immediately to implementation with a focus on the High Street. Consequently a capital allocation of £2 million has been added to this project. Clearly this is an estimate at this stage and actual costs will be clarified as the project develops through the design stages. It is estimated that £4million will be needed to complete the High Street and other sources of funding

will need to be considered as part of the Council's medium term financial strategy. New Growth Point funding previously allocated to fund the construction of the Langley Park Farm Park and Ride site will now be allocated to the Town Centre public realm improvement project. Following the review of Park and Ride any funding required for the development of the new site will be also considered as part of the medium term financial strategy. The Assistant Director of Development and Community Services confirmed at the meeting that design work already committed is continuing, funded by KCC, and , if need be, the revenue growth point funding to support delivery.

New planning policy guidance has emphasized the need to produce a Green Infrastructure Strategy. However a great deal of work is already being carried out in this area within the Council. It is proposed therefore that only £10,000 needs to be allocated to this area of work.

Further to discussions with the Environment Agency, the water companies and building upon best practice elsewhere, it is still considered necessary to carrying out the Integrated Water Strategy. The Borough Council has been strongly advised by the Environment Agency to undertake this piece of work and this Agency reports to CLG on Maidstone's New Growth Point progress.

A new staff structure is required to deliver growth. A decision on the number of staff required and skills needed is currently being considered.

It is also proposed this year to commission the design of the All Saints Link Road at a cost of approximately £200,000. £65,000 of which will be funded from existing MBC budgets and £25,000 from Kent County Council. When the implementation and costs are known and if there remains a business case for this project, it is the Council's intention to progress with implementation. Estimated project costs at this stage exceed the available New Growth Point grant and therefore other sources of funding again will have to be identified and considered as part of the Council's medium term Financial Strategy.

Maidstone Borough Council has been working with Kent County Council to create a traffic model for the Borough to enable the impact of growth to be understood on the road network. This work has recently been completed. The model has now made it clear that the South East Maidstone Strategic Link is essential if the South East Urban Extension proposed in the Core Strategy is to be deliverable. Ensuring that this road is deliverable requires design work to be carried out. A fee estimate of £300,000 has been supplied by Kent County Council to undertake a preliminary study to establish the feasibility of a proposed route, followed by a preliminary design to provide the necessary evidence base to support the Core Strategy. Growth Point will fund 50% of these costs spread over two years. Kent County Council has been asked to contribute the other 50%. Further costs will be incurred to achieve a detailed design and planning permission and can only be estimated at this stage. Estimated project costs at this stage exceed the available New Growth Point grant and therefore other sources of funding will have to be identified.

Tables 3 and 4 show a summary of the capital and revenue expenditure proposed.

Table 3 New Growth Point Capital Funding and Expenditure

Priority No.	Project Name	2008/9	2009-2011	Total Growth Point expenditure	Total estimated Project costs
1	Town Centre Public Realm project	£70,000	2,000,000	£2,070,000	£4,000,000
2	All Saints Link Road and environs	110,000	1,322,059	£1,432,059	£8,000,000
3	South East Maidstone Strategic Link (design and consultation element only)	100,000	1,000,000	£1,100,000	£2,500,000
Total		£280,000	£4,322,059	£4,602,059	£14,500,000
CLG funding profile		£1,616,144	£2,985,914	£4,602,059	

Table 4 New Growth Point Revenue funding and expenditure

Priority No.	Project Name	2008/9	2009 to 2011	Total all years
	Maidstone Integrated Water Strategy	£40,000	-	40,000
	Green Infrastructure Strategy	£10,000	-	10,000
	Staff to support growth and other delivery vehicle activity.	£25,000	Staff structure to be confirmed	428,337
Total		75,000	403,338	£478,337
CLG funding profile		£192,391	£285,947	£478,337

Alternatives considered and why rejected

The prioritisation of projects is necessary in the light of lower than expected grant award from CLG. Clear direction is needed to enable delivery of Council objectives and to demonstrate to CLG that Maidstone Borough Council has a coherent strategy for delivering growth. An alternative option could be to prioritise any of the other projects listed in Appendix 1 of the Report of the Assistant Director of Development and Community Services. However this would not reflect the view of Cabinet.

Background Papers

None

These documents are available at the Council offices.

Should you be concerned about this decision and wish to call it in, please submit a call in form signed by any two Non-Executive Members to the Scrutiny Manager by: **19 September 2008**.

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (SCRAIP)

Committee: Environment and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date: 26 August 2008

Minute N^o: 47

Topic: Verification of the 'Sustainable Construction Options for the New Depot' Report.

Recommendation ⁱ	Cabinet Member ⁱⁱ	Response ⁱⁱⁱ	Timetable ^{iv}	Lead Officer ^v
<p>That the Cabinet be recommended to include the following sustainable construction options for the new depot:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photo Voltaic Solar Cells subject to further investigations and partial grant funding; • Solar hot water panels and a thermal storage hot water buffer tank; • Condensing gas boiler; • Rainwater harvesting; • Local extract fans with heat recovery units to preheat any 'make up air'; • Zoned PIR controlled lighting • Air Leakage tests to achieve 	Cabinet	<p>Solar hot water panels, condensing gas boiler, rainwater harvesting and zoned PIR lighting are included in the scheme as tendered by Gallaghers.</p> <p>The other options will be considered subject to affordability, payback within fifteen years and that they will not compromise the planning application process or the overall programme.</p>	October	David Tibbit

<p>a rating of less than 5m³/hr/m²;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External door vestibules; and • Rapid opening and closing vehicle doors. 				
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Notes on the completion of SCRAIP

ⁱ Resolutions are listed as found in the minutes of the relevant meeting.

ⁱⁱ Insert in this box the Cabinet Member whose portfolio the recommendation falls within.

ⁱⁱⁱ The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box either the acceptance or rejection of the recommendation.

If the recommendation is rejected an explanation for its rejection should be provided. The 'timetable' and 'lead officer' boxes can be left blank

If the recommendation is accepted an explanation of the action to be taken to implement the recommendation should be recorded in this box. Please also complete the 'timetable' and 'lead officer' boxes.

^{iv} The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box when the action indicated in the previous box will be implemented.

^v The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box the Officer responsible for the implementation of the action highlighted in the 'response' box.