AMENDED AGENDA

MAIDSTONE JOINT TRANSPORTATION BOARD MEETING

Date: Monday 7 December 2015
Time: 5.00 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Ash, Bird, Brown, Carter, Chittenden, Clark, Cooke, Cuming, Daley, English, Fort, Hotson, T Sams, Mrs Stockell, Vizzard, Mrs Whittle, Willis and J.A. Wilson

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Page No.

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Notification of Substitute Members
3. Notification of Visiting Members
4. Disclosures by Members and Officers

Continued Over/:

Issued on 1 December 2015

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact Poppy Collier on 01622 602242**. To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council, Maidstone House, King Street, Maidstone, Kent ME15 6JQ

5. Disclosures of lobbying

6. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 4 November 2015

7. Petitions

Notice has been given pursuant to Council Procedure rule 11 of the intention to present a petition in the following terms:

We the undersigned residents and ratepayers of Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council petition these Councils against the closure of access to and from Cranbourne Avenue via the Wheatsheaf junction within the Borough of Maidstone.

Notice has been given pursuant to Council Procedure rule 11 of the intention to present a petition in the following terms:

We, the undersigned residents, note the dangerous nature of the Old Tovil Road junction with Postley and Hayle Road and the difficulty that residents have crossing it including the high number of school children. We call upon Kent County Council Highways to install a pedestrian crossing at the aforementioned junction.

Notice has been given pursuant to Council Procedure rule 11 of the intention to present a petition in the following terms:

We the undersigned petition the council to collaborate with Maidstone Borough Council to provide and build a Leeds-Langley relief road as a matter of urgency.

Maidstone South and South East including Leeds, Langley, Otham, Broomfield, Kingswood and Sutton Valence are suffering from high traffic volumes and gridlock. This problem is already destined to become worse by virtue of existing and future development being earmarked for this part of Maidstone through the local planning process.

A Leeds-Langley relief road has been long promised but is now essential to accommodate not only the current traffic volumes but also the huge increase that any further housing will impose.

Kent County Council must give priority to the relief road and work with local partners to find the external funding necessary to build it.

Notice has been given pursuant to Council Procedure rule 11 of the intention to present a petition in the following terms:

I the undersigned wish to express my objection to Kent County Council's proposal to close the Cranbourne Avenue arm of the A229/A274 Wheatsheaf Junction to exiting road users. This exit provides valuable traffic signal controlled access to the A229

with no equivalent alternative in the vicinity. Closure will have a serious impact on travel times for residents and local road users in the Shepway North area to the east of the A229.

8. Questions/Statements by members of the public

9. Further detail on the results of VISUM modelling on DS4

10. **Draft Integrated Transport Strategy** **17 - 104**

Registering for Public Speaking
In order to book a slot to speak at this meeting of the Joint Transportation Board please contact Poppy Brewer on 01622 602242 by 3.30pm on the day of the meeting. You will also need to inform us of the topic you wish to speak on. Please note that slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis up to a maximum of ten speakers.

Maidstone Joint Transportation Board	**7 December 2015**
Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?	**No**

Integrated Transport Strategy

Final Decision-Maker	Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transportation Committee
Lead Head of Service	Rob Jarman: Head of Planning & Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Steve Clarke, Principal Planning Officer; Chris Berry, Interim Team Leader, Spatial Policy
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the draft Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy (attached as Appendix A) be noted.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all -
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough -

Timetable	
Meeting	***Date***
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	14/12/2015
Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee	12/01/2016
Council	25/01/2016

Integrated Transport Strategy

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 This report considers a draft Integrated Transport Strategy ("ITS") that will sit alongside and inform the policies of the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan. The draft ITS promotes sustainable transport policies and interventions to support the development proposed in the Local Plan.

1.2 An initial ITS was prepared for public consultation in 2012 to support the Maidstone Core Strategy but this has been superseded following the preparation for the Maidstone Local Plan. This draft ITS takes account of present conditions and has been prepared in cooperation with Kent County Council as a local highway authority and will guide the provision of transport infrastructure in all modes throughout the Borough area.

1.3 The draft ITS is presented as Appendix 1 for information at this stage.

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2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

2.1 Section 80 of the Local Transport Act 2008 gives local authorities, acting jointly, the power to review the effectiveness and efficiency of transport within their area and to propose their own arrangements to support more coherent planning and delivery of local transport. Kent County Council and Maidstone Borough Council cooperated to prepare a document for public consultation for local transport provision in 2012.

2.2 The Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy was first published for public consultation in August 2012. It aimed to set out the future for transport in Maidstone until 2026 and described the policy context, the existing transport networks and the challenges they face.

2.3 Objectives for transport provision were identified and an action plan proposed to address the requirements for the new development proposed by the Maidstone Core Strategy at that stage.

2.4 Following public consultation and as a result of the publication of the NPPF in March 2012, the Borough Council decided to proceed with the preparation of a Local Plan to replace the Core Strategy and this necessitated a major review of supporting documents and policies. This revised draft Integrated Transport Strategy has been prepared to inform and guide transport policies and proposals in the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

Draft Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy

2.5 At present, Maidstone Borough faces acute transport challenges, from managing increasing traffic congestion to mitigating the environmental issues associated with transportation, including poor air quality in the urban area. In peak periods, parts of the road network operate at or near capacity and, especially to the south of the Borough, people find it difficult

to access the services they need due to the lack of transport options available to them.

2.6 The draft ITS comprises eleven main sections as follows:

- Transport Vision
- The Wider Picture
- Strategic Priorities
- Roles and Responsibilities
- Policy Context
- Strategic Objectives
- Current Issues
- Achieving the Strategy
- Developing the Modelling Context
- Funding, Delivery and Review
- Action Plans

2.5 This draft ITS is needed to provide a framework for transport planning and decision making in the Borough, which places an emphasis on addressing these issues through long term sustainable development of the transport network. The draft ITS seeks to address these issues through a range of policies and actions for the Borough Council and its partners, including KCC to implement.

2.6 The ITS will provide a policy framework and programme of schemes and interventions to support the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan, taking account of the committed and predicted levels of growth in homes and jobs and detailing the transport infrastructure and services necessary to deliver this growth. It will provide a detailed programme of transport interventions for Maidstone Borough, addressing existing and future challenges and consistent with national and local transport and planning policies.

2.7 The draft ITS is guided by analysis which includes both strategic and more detailed junction modelling which seeks to assess the impacts of new development on the transport network. Initially VISUM strategic modelling was used to provide a high level picture of the implications of major network changes, but increasingly specific junction modelling is providing guidance won where mitigation should take place.

2.8 This draft ITS is subject to further refinement in cooperation with Kent County Council as the highways authority and specific projects and proposals are identified for implementation within the Borough's Infrastructure Development Plan which will form a supporting document to the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan. It recommends actions for all modes of transport in the Borough, and key issues may be summarised as follows

Walking and Cycling

2.9 An agreed strategy with KCC has been developed for new and improved walking and cycling networks and facilities. These are related to development proposed in the Local Plan and for the improvement of existing provision throughout the Borough.

Public Transport

2.10 The primary actions recommended are the provision of a new bus route in north-west Maidstone and the major enhancement of the route between Maidstone, M20 Junction7 and Faversham/Sittingbourne/Sheerness. Local enhancement of existing services, such as to the rural service centres, will aim to improve links to the town centre and its railway stations.

2.11 Complementary and appropriate measures will be introduced to improve the quality and reliability of bus services. Recent initiatives with Arriva and KCC are leading to the promotion and introduction of a range of access improvements, including online ticketing and information, and mobile apps. Improvements may also include MBC involvement in the refurbishment or provision of a major new bus facility associated with the regeneration of the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre.

Park and Ride

2.12 Park and Ride has made a successful contribution to reducing car trips into Maidstone town centre, and changed conditions necessitate a comprehensive review of the service and its delivery. Recommended actions include the initiation of discussion with land-owners and providers with a view to identifying the potential for new provision. Parking

2.13 The key action is to manage parking in the urban area to promote the use of public transport and reduce long stay parking and the effective use of space. This forms part of a coordinated approach to encourage modal shift. Highways

2.14 MBC will work with KCC to deliver a package of highway improvements throughout the Borough which will add capacity at key junctions to the benefit of both public transport and car users. Detailed junction modelling is continuing to demonstrate the improvements that can be made to the existing network throughout the Local Plan period, and approximately half of the objectively assessed for housing has already been consented.

2.15 Potential strategic highway improvements may form part of the first review of the Local Plan, but would be expected to be delivered post 2031 if required. Such projects may include a Leeds – Langley Relief Road.

3. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

3.1 The ITS sets the direction for transport in the Borough, in line with the emerging Local Plan period which runs until 2031. It assesses the existing and emerging local policy and networks and outlines transport issues that arise from the development implications of the emerging Maidstone Local Plan and sets out the detail, in objectives and actions plans, of how these issues will be addressed.

3.2 The ITS aims to deliver transport infrastructure and wider reaching transport measures in a way that supports new development as well as supporting the residents and stakeholders that already live and work in the

Borough. The ITS aims to introduce sustainable transport measures and policies to reduce congestion, promote a shift to public transport, walking and cycling and improve road safety, air quality and the public realm.

3.3 The ITS forms part of the evidence base for the emerging Maidstone Local Plan in that it sets out the main priorities and elements of policies for sustainable transport provision in the Borough, and the requirements for developers and agencies with regard to transport infrastructure to support planned development.

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4. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

4.1 Following Members consideration of the draft ITS, further work will be undertaken with KCC to refine the proposals and establish the priorities for interventions and actions.

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5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The adoption of the ITS will assist in the delivery of the Council's corporate priorities	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Risk Management	A key risk to the local Plan programme relates to the Council's ability to provide a package of sustainable transport measures alongside the infrastructure necessary to support planned growth	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Financial	The cost of VISUM modelling to-date has been funded jointly by MBC and KCC. The cost has been met from the existing budget.	Section 151 Officer & Head of Finance and Resources
Staffing	N/A	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Legal	The draft ITS has been produced as part of the robust evidence base for the emerging Local Plan.	Team Leader (Planning) Mid Kent Legal

		Services
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	An integrated transport strategy that tackles transport challenges through a combination of modes will take into account the needs of all groups including those without access to a car. An alternative strategy reliant on highway improvements will not promote equal access to employment, services and social opportunities and is likely to lead to increased social exclusion amongst lower income groups in particular.	Policy & Information Manager Anna Collier
Environmental/Sustainable Development	The implementation of an integrated transport strategy to promote sustainable travel where possible will encourage a reduction in single occupancy care travel and in turn a reduction in congestion and carbon emissions relative to a 'do minimum' situation. An alternative strategy reliant on highway improvements is likely to generate more traffic than the additional capacity provided. Increasing congestion and carbon emissions.	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Community Safety	N/A	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Human Rights Act	N/A	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman
Procurement	Consultants are used to prepare specialist or technical evidence to support the local plan and are appointed in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman & Section 151 Officer]
Asset Management	N/A	Head of Planning & Development Rob Jarman

6. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix 1: Draft Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy
- Appendix 2: Draft Walking and Cycling Strategy
- Appendix 3: Integrated Transport Strategy – Park and Ride

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7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Maidstone Borough Council
Integrated Transport Strategy
2011-2031

1. Executive Summary

[to follow]

2. Transport Future for Maidstone

2.1 In the future, Maidstone and its surrounding area will be well known for its efficient, sustainable and accessible transport system which will support a thriving and attractive county town, and provide efficient and effective links with the surrounding villages, countryside and beyond. More and more people will walk, cycle and use public transport and this will help reduce car traffic on radial routes from the town and support the continued growth of the area while protecting its distinctive character and environment.

2.2 New routes will be developed for walking, cycling and public transport which will link up communities, employment, services and facilities and alternatives to the private car will be promoted. Information about sustainable transport options will be readily available and new technology will make this easy to access.

2.3 New high quality bus routes will link Maidstone town centre with community and local transport hubs and these will be supplemented with high speed broadband and local enterprise centres. Enhanced railway services will link the Borough with the capital and surrounding urban areas, offering a wide range of employment, commercial and leisure opportunities for residents, businesses and visitors.

3. Transport: Part of the Wider Picture

3.1 At present, Maidstone Borough faces acute transport challenges, from managing increasing traffic congestion to mitigating the environmental issues associated with transportation, including poor air quality in the urban area. In peak periods, parts of the road network operate at or near capacity and, especially to the south of the Borough, people find it difficult to access the services they need due to the lack of transport options available to them.

3.2 This Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) is needed to provide a framework for transport planning and decision making in the Borough,

which places an emphasis on addressing these issues through long term sustainable development of our transport network. The strategy seeks to address these issues through a range of policies and actions for the Borough Council and its partners to implement.

3.3 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan will meet in full the identified Objectively Assessed Need of 18,560 dwellings in the plan period from 2011 -2031. The ITS will provide a policy framework and programme of schemes and interventions to support the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, taking account of the committed and predicted levels of growth in homes[1] and jobs and detailing the transport infrastructure and services necessary to support and deliver this growth. It will provide a detailed programme of transport interventions for Maidstone Borough, addressing existing and future challenges and is consistent with national and local transport and planning policies.

3.4 The ITS provides the overview and justification for the detailed transport infrastructure requirements for the Local Plan which are identified in the MBC Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP). The strategy also draws on national, regional and local policy to promote sustainable transport policies and programmes, in-line with best practice elsewhere and should ensure that future development can be accommodated without detriment to existing conditions and seeking to enhance economic social and environmental well-being.

3.5 Many of the measures in this strategy are intended to facilitate and support new development and these will be financed through a variety of public and other funding sources. Also, developers will be expected to contribute to the delivery of the strategy by way of contributions through the appropriate channels and these include Section 106 agreements and eventually the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

Scope of the ITS

3.6 The ITS covers the area of Maidstone Borough Council which includes the urban area of the county town and neighbouring villages. It considers all modes of transport used for local trips, on main roads and the motorway network, and the rail network. It identifies interventions to address current problems on the network, takes account of jobs and housing growth, and recognises that the populations of the urban area and dispersed villages bring different challenges and solutions.

4. Strategic Priorities

[1] As of 30 September 2015 some 8,941 dwellings have already been completed or permitted since 1 April 2011.

4.1 This strategy adopts an integrated approach which recognises that transport issues are inherently linked to one another, but that they are also part of the wider planning challenge. In doing so the ITS seeks to achieve its vision of "realising Maidstone's sustainable future; connecting communities and supporting a growing economy".

4.2 The ITS promotes a number of key priorities which will lead to specific interventions in all modes of transport and these may be identified as the overall aims of the strategy.

Reduce demand for travel

4.3 A key priority for the strategy is to reduce the demand for travel, especially by private vehicle. The creation of sustainable communities, where people can live, work and access facilities without needing to travel long distances, is an overarching aim of the strategy and this will be pursued through the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and land use planning policies.

4.4 Significant advances in technology mean that the opportunities to work from home are increasing so that people may not need to travel to a workplace on a regular basis in the future with benefits in reducing congestion.

4.5 Home working on a regular basis may be encouraged by the provision of superfast broadband, especially to rural communities and this should be a priority for partnerships between public agencies, providers and local businesses. This provision may be supplemented by the establishment of local enterprise hubs which offer the opportunity for local small businesses to support each other and provide complementary activities and services.

Changing behaviour

4.6 The inexorable increase in car usage leading to congestion and the further deterioration in environmental conditions are not sustainable and require changes in behaviour by individuals and institutions. An holistic approach is needed to promote alternatives to private car usage and the encouragement of walking, cycling and the use of public transport.

4.7 Experience elsewhere has demonstrated that significant changes to behaviour can be achieved where bus and rail services are enhanced by additional routes, real time information and new and improved interchange facilities.

In **Poole**, the number of journeys by bus has almost doubled from 5.3 million in 2004/2005 to 10.2 million in 2014/2015[2]. The key to this success has been the Quality Bus Partnership comprising the major operators and the authorities of Poole, Bournemouth and Dorset. The authorities have, with Department for Transport funding, invested in infrastructure (high quality shelters, real-time passenger information and bus priority) whilst the bus operators have increased frequencies and invested £2.7 million in new low floor buses with luxury seating, CCTV and smartcard ticketing. These improvements have attracted new passengers for whom the bus is a mode of choice, and has led to a flourishing commercial bus network.

Similar changes to travel behaviour have been seen in **Brighton & Hove**, where a package of measures including flexible multi-trip ticketing, network simplification/branding, extensive bus priority, increased frequencies on busy routes and improvements to passenger facilities saw bus patronage increase from 30.2 million journeys in 2001 to 41.1million in 2009/10.

Darlington, **Peterborough** and **Worcester** were designated by the Department for Transport as **Sustainable Travel Towns** where a programme of measures was implemented between 2004 and 2009, intended to reduce car use. These are medium-sized (all with populations of 140,000 or smaller), free-standing towns, comparable with Maidstone. Detailed before/after travel surveys of over 4,000 residents in each town gave the following key results[3]:

- Car driver trips fell by 9% per person, and car driver distance by 5-7%, compared with a fall of about 1% in medium-sized urban areas nationally during the same period;
- Bus trips per person grew by 10% to 22%, compared with a national fall of 0.5% in medium-sized towns;
- Cycling trips per person grew by 26% to 30% in the three towns, compared to a decline elsewhere; and
- Walking trips per person grew by 10% to 13% compared to a national decline.

During the same period, six **Cycling Demonstration Towns** were also designated (Aylesbury, Brighton & Hove, Darlington, Derby, Exeter and

[2] Eurotransport Magazine, Volume 13, Issue 5 (2015), *Increasing bus patronage through partnership working and RTPI*

[3] Sloman, L. et al (2010), The Effects of Smarter Choice Programmes in the Sustainable Travel Towns: Summary Report for Department for Transport.

Lancaster with Morecambe). Evaluation indicated a 27% increase in cycling across all six towns between 2005 and 2009. The proportion of adults doing any cycling increased by 14%. In schools involved in the Bike It programme, the proportion of pupils cycling to school on a regular basis increased by 126%[4].

Promote modal shift

4.8 The implications of changing behaviour are that people shift from using the private car for the majority of towards using more sustainable modes of transport where possible and appropriate. The private car continues to be the primary means of transport in the rural areas but relatively minor shifts in mode can make a significant difference in terms of congestion particularly with regard to trips to the urban area for work and leisure.

Improve network efficiency

4.9 As part of the holistic approach promoted by the ITS, improvements should also be made to the existing road network, including major new investment on links where appropriate. The strategy incorporates a programme of road and junction improvements.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

5.1 Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) is the Local Planning Authority for the borough and also has delegated responsibility for Civil Parking Enforcement under the Traffic Management Act 2004, Park and Ride services, street cleaning, the licensing of taxis and private hire vehicles, the provision of bus shelters and the monitoring of air quality.

5.2 Kent County Council (KCC) is the local highway authority for Kent and is responsible for the management and maintenance of all adopted roads in the county other than motorways and trunk roads. KCC is also the local transport authority for Kent and actively promotes alternatives to car-based travel to improve the accessibility, sustainability and efficiency of the highway network. Motorways and trunk roads in England are the responsibility of the Highways England (formerly the Highways Agency).

5.3 Approximately 80% of bus services in Kent are operated on a wholly commercial basis by local operators and neither the Borough nor the County Council plays a direct role in their provision. However, MBC and

[4] Department for Transport/Cycling England (2010). Lift Off for Cycling: Headline Results. http://webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110407094607/http://www.dft.gov.uk/cyclingengland/cycling-cities-towns/results/

KCC have signed a Quality Bus Partnership Agreement with the borough's principal commercial bus operator, Arriva, which commits all parties to invest jointly in local bus services and supporting infrastructure. The remaining 20% of services are classified as 'socially necessary' and are procured by KCC to provide access to essential services.

5.4 Maidstone's rail services are operated as part of the Integrated Kent Franchise, which is specified and led by the Department for Transport (DfT). The franchise is currently held by Southeastern, and this was recently extended until 2018.

6. Policy Context

National and local policy context

6.1 This section briefly outlines the current policy context within which the ITS has been developed and identifies how it can contribute to the delivery of their key objectives.

National Planning Policy Framework 2012[5] and National Planning Practice Guidance 2014[6]

6.2 The Department for Transport (DfT)'s stated vision is for:

"A transport system that is an engine for economic growth, but one that is also greener and safer and improves quality of life in our communities."[7]

6.3 The Department is working towards delivering a number of priorities in line with this vision, which includes the following;

"Encourage sustainable local travel. Encourage sustainable local travel and economic growth by making public transport (including light rail) and cycling and walking more attractive and effective, promoting lower carbon transport and tackling local road congestion."

6.4 This vision has been carried forward into the Government's National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012, which replaced the previous suite of Planning Policy Statements, Planning Policy Guidance notes and certain Circular Guidance. The NPPF emphasises the importance of rebalancing the transport system in favour of sustainable

[5] Department for Communities and Local Government (2012), *National Planning Policy Framework*

[6] Department for Communities and Local Government (2014), National Planning Practice Guidance

[7] http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/ges/assistant/what-we-do/dft (accessed 16th Oct 2015)

transport modes, whilst encouraging local authorities to plan proactively for the transport infrastructure necessary to support the growth of ports, airports and other major generators of travel demand.

6.5 The NPPF recommends that Transport Assessments and Travel Plans should accompany applications for developments that generate significant amounts of movement, although it recognises that the opportunities to maximise sustainable transport solutions will vary from urban to rural areas.

6.6 This advice is reinforced in the National Planning Practice Guidance published in 2014, which gives more detailed guidance on how to approach the assessment of the transport implications in the preparation of new local plans.

How the ITS contributes:

- Implementing strategies to rebalance the transport system in favour of sustainable transport modes
- Clear transport requirements to be considered to support growth

Vision for Kent 2012-2022 (2012)[8]

6.7 The Vision for Kent is a countywide strategy for the social, economic and environmental wellbeing of Kent's communities. It has been written around three major ambitions, which are to:-

1) Grow the economy by supporting businesses to be successful, including improvements to the transport network and the provision of high-speed broadband;

2) Tackle disadvantage by fostering aspiration rather than dependency, including the provision of comprehensive, reliable and affordable public transport services providing access to education and employment opportunities; and

3) Put the citizen in control by involving people in making decisions and working with them to design services that meet their needs and suit them, including the continued provision of KCC's Member Highway Fund and support for community bus and rail schemes.

How the ITS contributes:

- Implementing strategies to rebalance the transport system in favour of sustainable transport modes
- Clear transport requirements to be considered to support growth

[8] Kent Forum (2012), *Vision for Kent 2012-2022*

Maidstone Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2020 (2013)[9]

6.8 MBC's Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) sets the overall strategic direction and long-term vision for Maidstone in a way which respects the need for sustainable development. The SCS acknowledges that congestion in the borough has become an increasing problem and that the overriding aim of an integrated transport strategy must be to provide genuine transport choice to the area's residents, businesses and visitors. These driving principles are reflected in the three priorities for Maidstone outlined in the SCS:-

a) For Maidstone to have a growing economy;
b) For Maidstone to be a decent place to live; and
c) Corporate and customer excellence.

These are supported by the 2015-2020 Strategic Plan:

PRIORITY 1 - Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all

PRIORITY 2 - Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

How the ITS contributes:

- All the actions of the ITS support the priorities outlined above through improvements to the transport network

Kent County Council

Growth without Gridlock: a Transport Delivery Plan for Kent 2010[10]

6.9 *Growth without Gridlock* outlines KCC's high level vision for the transport network needed in Kent to support planned growth in housing and employment over the next 20 years. It responds to the economic and regeneration pressures outlined in the County Council's Framework for Regeneration and identifies how transport interventions can contribute to their alleviation. The strategy requests greater transport funding and delivery powers for local transport authorities and calls upon the Government to progress those schemes of regional and national importance, including a Lower Thames Crossing, a long-term solution to Operation Stack and a scheme of Foreign Lorry Road User Charging.

How the ITS contributes:

[9] MBC (2009; Refreshed July 2013), *The Sustainable Community Strategy for Maidstone Borough 2009-2020*

[10] KCC (2010), *Growth without Gridlock – A Transport Delivery Plan for Kent*

- Implementing strategies to address congestion on the network
- Supporting the need for to find a long term solution to Operation Stack

Local Transport Plan for Kent 2011-2016 (2011)[11]

6.10 KCC's strategic approach for Kent's third Local Transport Plan (LTP3), covering the period 2011 to 2016, was to develop five LTP3 themes aligned to the previous government's national transport goals. These themes are:-

a) Growth Without Gridlock
b) A Safer and Healthier County
c) Supporting Independence
d) Tackling a Changing Climate
e) Enjoying Life in Kent

How the ITS contributes:

- Implementing strategies to address congestion on the network, improve safety, improve air quality and encourage sustainable transport; all of which can contribute to a better, healthier lifestyles for the Borough's population

Other Plans and Policies

6.11 The ITS is also aligned to a number of other local plans and policies including:

Neighbourhood Plans; developed by the parish councils in working partnership with MBC. These set out planning policies for development and the use of land in a local area. Once adopted, a neighbourhood plan becomes part of the development plan for the area. This means that the plan has weight when decisions are made on planning applications. Transport usually forms a feature of these plans.

- KCC's Countryside Access Improvement Plan[12];
- Rail Action Plan for Kent[13];
- MBC's Air Quality Action Plan[14].

[11] KCC (2011), *Local Transport Plan for Kent 2011-16*

[12] KCC (2007), *Countryside Access Improvement Plan 2007-2017*

[13] KCC (2011), *Rail Action Plan for Kent*

[14] MBC (2010), *Maidstone Town Air Quality Action Plan*

6.12 The Council is also currently preparing a Low Emissions Strategy (LES) which is currently subject to initial public consultation[15] on the areas which it will address. The ITS will contribute towards this document in terms of the promotion of sustainable transport intervention measures. Similarly the future LES, is likely to link to the ITS in areas such as the possible introduction of emission control standards for public transport vehicles and taxis and the promotion of low emission vehicles and infrastructure.

6.13 The ITS will also contribute to the future preparation of an Active Travel Plan for the Borough. The Active Travel Plan will seek to promote active travel (walking, cycling and the use of Public Transport) as a means of increasing physical activity across the life-course and to achieve the positive health benefits that will accrue. KCC is coordinating and promoting Active Travel initiatives across the County as part of its work-stream.

[15] MBC (2015) *Low Emissions Strategy* http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/council/have-your-say/current-consultations/draft-low-emission-strategy-2015

7. Strategic Objectives

7.1 The key priorities and policy context described above provide the basis for five objectives which seek to deliver in line with a vision which may be summarised as:

'Realising Maidstone's sustainable future; connecting communities and supporting a growing economy'

Objective 1: Enhancing and Encouraging sustainable travel choices including:

A: The development, maintenance and enhancement of walking and cycling provision, through network improvements and encouraging uptake amongst the population;

B: The development, maintenance and enhancement of public transport provision, including Park and Ride, encouraging uptake amongst the population;

C: Promotion and education regarding walking, cycling and public transport travel options;

D: Ensuring that the provision of parking is fair and proportionate, considering the needs of all users, whilst also encouraging sustainable travel choices; and

E: Place sustainable travel options at the heart of all new developments within Maidstone, to ensure a fully integrated network that puts pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users at the centre of any transport proposals.

Objective 2: The enhancement of strategic transport links to, from and within Maidstone.

Objective 3: Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local Plan.

Objective 4: Reducing the air quality impacts of transport.

Objective 5: Ensure the transport network considers the needs of all users, providing equal accessibility by removing barriers to use.

8. Current Issues

Challenges to be addressed by the ITS

8.1 Maidstone is a dynamic borough, set within both an urban and a rural context, which has a vital role to play in the significant growth expected in the South East over the next two decades. The borough currently has a population of 155,143[16], which is evenly split between the County Town and its rural hinterland, including the five Rural Service Centres (RSCs) of Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst. Whilst the town's main function is as a centre for business, retail and administration; the rural economy is characterised by pockets of manufacturing, horticulture and farming.

8.2 Maidstone has been identified as a regionally important transport hub; however its transport network has come under increasing strain in recent years, principally on account of the configuration of its road and rail networks and the growing demand for travel generally. In order for the borough to have an emphasis on sustainable transport access in line with national priorities and to accommodate the level of housing and employment growth envisaged by the Local Plan, a comprehensive and deliverable transport strategy must be in place to address these challenges.

8.3 As noted above, the transport challenges faced by Maidstone are not uncommon across the UK and include:

Increasing congestion as a result of population growth and an over reliance on the private car present a cost to the economy in terms of lost time, environmental degradation and associated health costs resulting from poor air quality and inactivity. Congestion is a problem of road traffic outgrowing capacity. However it is widely acknowledged across the industry that this problem cannot be solved by simply providing more road capacity as in the absence of demand restricting measures, traffic is expected to always outgrow capacity.[17] Hence the need for an ***integrated*** transport strategy that tackles the transport challenge through a combination of modes, placing emphasis on sustainable alternatives to single occupancy car use.

The geography of the borough means that sustainable modes are a more feasible option in some locations and for some journeys than for others. The benefits of shifting trips from single occupancy car use to

[16] Usual resident population as per 2011 Census

[17] Goodwin, P (2004) *The Economic Costs of Road Traffic Congestion.* A Discussion Paper Published by the Rail Freight Group. ESRC Transport Studies Unit, University College London

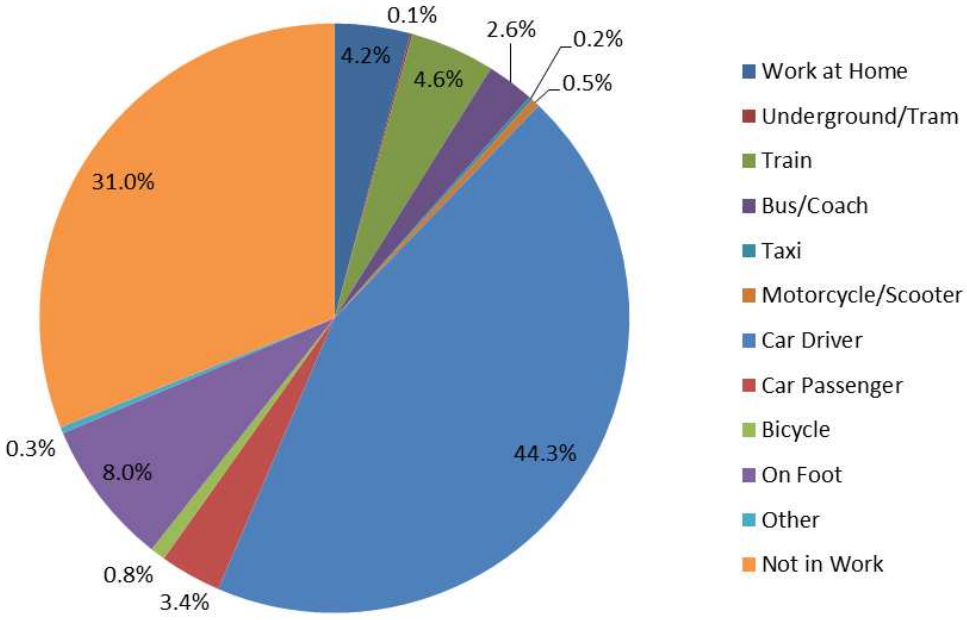
sustainable modes are manifold and recognised and promoted by Central Government. Examples of these include improved air quality; a healthier population and attractive, safe and secure public spaces.

Maidstone's proposed Local Plan provides for 18,560 new homes together with employment growth within the Borough by 2031. The impact on the transport network of these developments needs careful and considered management ensuring the transport systems in place are appropriate, and additional mitigation measures are implemented where required.

Current travel patterns in Maidstone

8.4 The latest Census (2011) asked the people of Maidstone how they travelled to work. This information provides a valuable data set from which to understanding the background position, and from which to develop the Borough's targets and objectives going forward. A summary of **Journey to Work Census** data is shown below.

MODE	COUNT	%
Work at Home	**4,705**	**4.2%**
Underground/Tram	**120**	**0.1%**
Train	**5,257**	**4.6%**
Bus/Coach	**2,945**	**2.6%**
Taxi	**222**	**0.2%**
Motorcycle/Scooter	**538**	**0.5%**
Car Driver	**50,131**	**44.3%**
Car Passenger	**3,819**	**3.4%**
Bicycle	**935**	**0.8%**
On Foot	**9,023**	**8.0%**
Other	**395**	**0.3%**
Not in Work	**35,141**	**31.0%**



8.5 Specific issues for action may be identified for each mode and topic.

Highways

8.6 Maidstone has an extensive highway network which provides direct links both within the borough and to neighbouring areas including Ashford, the Medway Towns, Tunbridge Wells and London. Four north-south and east-west 'A' roads pass through the town centre and numerous 'B' roads run in concentric rings around the town, providing local links to the rural parts of the Borough. Maidstone also enjoys good connections to the motorway network, including direct access to four junctions of the M20, (junctions 5, 6, 7 & 8).

8.7 The Issues:

- Maidstone has very high levels of car ownership and usage. 84% of households in the borough have at least 1 car, compared with 80% across Kent and 74% in England
- Heavy reliance on a small number of key junctions; in particular the singular river crossing point in Maidstone's town centre where the A20, A26 and A229 all meet
- Congestion on the network
- The vulnerability of the M20 Motorway during cross-Channel disruption ("Operation Stack")
- Low average vehicle occupancy figures
- High-demand schools with very large catchment areas resulting in high car use for the 'school-run'

Walking

8.8 The benefits of walking are numerous, but often under-appreciated – increased physical activity, improved health, livelier town centres, a more vibrant economy are just some of the varied benefits active lifestyles can bring. Above all a shift to walking has the potential of addressing (peak hour) congestion in the borough. The 2011 Census shows that 15% of trips to work in Maidstone are 2km or less in distance, and yet walking as a mode share is less than 8%, which offers great potential for increasing walking, provided the environment is right.

8.9 The Issues:

- Relatively low levels of walking trips with 8% of travel to work trips on foot

- Busy roads act as barriers around the town centre, segregating the residential areas from the core (known as severance). The current gyratory system to cross the River Medway is complicated for pedestrians to navigate, acting as a barrier for walking trips. Furthermore, the subways provided are unpleasant and poorly maintained.

- Provision of safe pedestrian routes given the dominance of the car in most of the Borough.

Cycling

8.10 Undertaking a four mile commute to and from work by bicycle rather than by car reduces congestion, brings numerous health benefits and saves half a tonne of Carbon Dioxide a year. The borough currently has a number of cycle routes that link the town centre to the suburban areas including National Cycle Network Route (NCR17) which provides an 11 mile commuter link between Maidstone and the Medway towns; however connections within the town and further afield are limited and there is a lack of cycle parking at key destinations.

8.11 <u>The Issues</u>:

- Low cycle mode share - 0.8% of Maidstone residents cycle to work according to the Office for National Statistics

- Limited and disjointed cycle routes into the town centre, with very few off-road options.

- Limited cycle parking at key locations

- Provision of safe cycle routes to schools, colleges, employment and retail areas.

Public Transport

8.12 Experience across the UK has shown that bus services of sufficient quality and frequency have the potential to capture a significant proportion of short- and medium-distance trips and to make a strong contribution to the alleviation of peak-time congestion in urban areas. Maidstone has a well-established bus network provided principally by Arriva, together with a number of smaller independent operators. The network is centred on Maidstone town centre and combines high frequency routes serving the suburban estates and longer distance services providing connections to many of the outlying villages and neighbouring towns.

8.13 Three railway lines cross Maidstone Borough, serving a total of 14 stations. The operator of the vast majority of rail services in the area is

the South Eastern Franchise holder, Southeastern. The franchise was let by the Department for Transport in 2006 for an initial six year period, which has subsequently been extended to 2018. The principal rail route serving Maidstone town is the London Victoria to Ashford International line (also referred to as the Maidstone East Line), which includes stations at Maidstone East, Bearsted, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham and Lenham, with an average journey time to London of an hour.

8.14 The Issues:

- Maidstone has three town centre rail stations, but poor inter-urban connections, especially compared with nearby towns in Kent.
- The town's rail stations and bus station are not generally well connected to each other, making for a poor interchange experience.
- Very bus few priority measures – such as bus lanes – exist within the Borough, providing no advantage for bus journeys.
- Lack of payment options. Most buses only accept cash payment, and in some cases it is not possible to buy a return before 9am.
- Lack of live departure board information at most bus stops, and limited use of effective smartphone applications including ticket purchasing.
- Service frequencies beyond the urban core are not convenient for most users.
- The town's main bus interchange located at the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre is neither fit-for purpose nor user-friendly. It is not well lit or ventilated and is threatening in character being essentially a tunnel under the Centre linking King Street and Romney Place.

Park and Ride

8.15 Park and Ride can form a successful component of an integrated transport strategy, and provide an important measure for tackling congestion. The most important characteristic is a shortage of town centre or workplace parking – or more generally a shortage of parking at the final trip destination. Other characteristics include a limited amount of capacity on the radial routes to the town centre, good quality public transport provision for the 'ride' part of the journey, and an integration of Park and Ride into a wider programme of demand management.

8.16 MBC has been operating Park and Ride services in Maidstone since the early 1980s to address the growing peak time congestion in the town centre and these have met with varying levels of success to date. Three

sites are currently in operation at London Road (500 spaces), Sittingbourne Road (600 spaces) and Willington Street (400 spaces). However, the Sittingbourne Road site will close in February 2016. A fourth site, Coombe Quarry, was closed in 2007 due to falling patronage.

8.17 At present there are 3 park and ride sides all located within 2 miles of the town centre. Research to understand the key markets for these sites, who is using them and why, is needed to consider if these sites are in the correct location. This is all the more important with the likely closure of the Eclipse Park, Sittingbourne Road, Park & Ride site in early 2016.

Key requirements

8.18 Park and Ride is accessible from all key radial routes into town

8.19 Park and Ride ticket prices must be better value for money than town centre parking

- Pricing Strategy: At present passengers pay on-board the service, with the parking element of the journey being free. This means that passengers travelling in groups will have to pay multiple times. In other locations where P&R users pay to park their cars, groups benefit from just one payment. In Maidstone, for a group of 2 or more it will likely be cheaper to park in the town centre than use the P&R service. Consideration should be given to the merits of a pay per car pricing strategy, examples of which are successful in Canterbury, Chelmsford, Oxford and elsewhere.

8.20 Passengers must be provided with an option for returning to their vehicles after 6pm

- Enhanced timetabling – At present the park and ride services finish at around 6pm with car parks being locked shortly after. This can be prohibitive for commuters requiring more flexibility regarding their journey home, and is not conducive to encouraging leisure usage in the evenings, particularly on Thursdays when many shops offer extended opening hours.

8.21 Bus Priority measures on park and ride routes will be implemented where possible

- Bus Priority Measures – At present park and ride services have none or limited priorities on their route into and out of town. Reducing the journey time in comparison to private car times will act as an incentive for Park and Ride use.

8.22 Park and Ride routes must be the fastest route into the town centre, serving the High Street as a minimum

- Routing – The bus routes from the allocated park and ride sites to the town centre should be the fastest route possible, taking into account the location of key destinations in the town centre that passengers wish to be dropped off / picked up at.

Parking

8.23 The provision of an adequate supply of well-located and reasonably priced car parking is essential to support the borough's retail economy, to provide a means of access to areas where alternative travel modes are limited or unavailable, and to ensure that mobility impaired persons are able to access key education, employment and leisure opportunities. However, the supply of car parking also drives demand for limited road space and can therefore contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality, as well as making more sustainable modes of travel less attractive. Therefore it is crucial that MBC and its partners avoid an overprovision of parking, particularly in and around Maidstone town centre.

8.24 <u>The Issues:</u>

- Only a very small portion of parking available in Maidstone is under direct Council control. As a consequence, it is difficult to apply a uniform parking policy when the vast majority of spaces are under private ownership.

- Parking is relatively cheap and plentiful compared with similar sized towns elsewhere.

- Lots of the town's parking consists of small allocations of spaces (50 or less), meaning that they fill up quickly and create additional circulatory traffic of vehicles searching for alternative spaces.

9. Achieving the Strategy

9.1 Key to improving transport conditions in Maidstone Borough is the full involvement of all the stakeholders in providing and utilising transport modes and services. As well as the highway authority (KCC) and the Borough Council, key players are the bus operators, the rail company, interest groups promoting walking and cycling, Parish Councils and community groups.

9.2 Discussions with the significant bus operators in Maidstone are identifying future service enhancements, new routes and operating improvements which will increase the attractiveness of bus travel in both the urban and rural areas. The strategy anticipates the rail service improvements which are planned for Maidstone, including Thameslink, and the introduction of policies in the Local Plan to promote walking and cycling and alternatives to the use of the private car.

9.3 Necessary improvements to the road network will include town centre and other junction projects to accommodate future development and provision within the road network to assist public transport provision. Major road network projects may be considered at the first review of the Local Plan for implementation post 2031, which may include village relief and other road works taking account of the implementation of sustainable transport policies.

9.4 9.4 The County Council who would be charged with establishing the justification for and delivery of such projects, but are not yet in a position to take projects forward. The Borough Council will therefore review the position when the Maidstone Borough Local Plan is first reviewed and determine then whether the project should move forward as a specific Local Plan policy including potential timescales for delivery post 2031.

9.5 The Council will also need to assess at the first review of the Local Plan whether there are any implications for the Borough arising from the potential Lower Thames Crossing project. This is still at a relatively early stage. Highways England is, however, currently evaluating two potential route corridors (the area adjacent to the existing Dartford crossings and to the east of Gravesend). Formal public consultation on the potential route options will take place in early 2016. If accepted as a scheme, subject to funding and the necessary consents (as a significant piece of National Infrastructure), works may commence in 2020/2021 with a potential opening in 2025.

The Action Plan

9.6 The strategy leads to an action plan for all modes of transport which will be reviewed and rolled forward on a regular basis. It is important that the interventions are aligned with the sequence of development proposed in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

9.7 The Action Plan is presented in Section 12.

10. Developing the Modelling Context

10.1 The implications of the ITS on the Borough's highway network have been tested by using the Maidstone VISUM strategic highway network model to assess alternative transport infrastructure scenarios and their impacts in terms of travel time and distance.

10.2 However, the VISUM model is a strategic highways model in which increases in walking and cycling can only be reflected in an estimation of the number of car trips which may be removed from the road network due to changes in modal share across these areas. Although VISUM can model bus service changes, in assessing the attractiveness of these services it does not take into account bus capacity issues, nor can it model bus priority measures. Furthermore, as a strategic model it is unsuited to assessing individual junction capacity, or to assess the impacts of proposed infrastructure improvements at those junctions.

Modelling scenarios

10.3 The VISUM model was first developed in 2007/8 to help assess the impact of the Kent International Gateway proposal and the a previous Core Strategy preferred option for new development. It was updated in 2012 and again in 2014 to take account of revised proposals for the Local Plan and to update baseline conditions. .

10.4 ITS actions were then tested in various Do Something (DS) scenarios which identified the changes in impact on the highway network which may be achieved if the Actions are implemented during the plan-period. The final DS scenario may be divided into two variants (DSa) and (DSb) to reflect the inclusion of a potential Leeds-Langley By-pass and the impacts tested with and without this additional provision.

10.5 Both scenarios incorporate the provision of the housing, commercial and retail activity proposed in the local plan for the plan-period to 2031 as follows:

- 18,560 residential units
- 151,000 m² of employment space
- 12,100 m² of retail space

<u>2031 Do Minimum (DM)</u>

10.6 This base case provides the benchmark for understanding the predicted impact of the ITS on travel demand and network conditions in Maidstone in the future without any significant highways interventions except the proposed bridge gyratory scheme in Maidstone town centre or other transport interventions.

<u>2031 Do Something (DS)</u>

10.7 The DS alternatives model a range of highway improvements and the sustainable transport initiatives in the ITS, although it was not possible to model all of these initiatives in VISUM. The key modelling assumptions were:

- typical 10 minute bus frequency on radial corridors;
- discounting of walk/cycle trips to be based on a distance threshold of 5km within the town centre; and
- 50% increase in long-stay parking charges.

10.8 The results of modelling identify the implications of the actions promoted in the ITS, ensuring that the Borough's aspirations for sustainable transport are achieved and that the impact of demand growth on the future transport network can be mitigated.

Strategic modelling results

10.9 KCC has provided a summary of the VISUM model results based on two network performance indicators for the AM peak period:

- Travel distance (vehicle km)
- Travel time (vehicle hours)

10.10 However, it must be stressed that these indicators are insufficient to obtain a full understanding of the modelling results for the DS alternatives. Other indicators, including the number of person trips and vehicle trips as well as traffic flows and travel times on individual links, must be considered also. It is understood that further details on the model outputs will be forthcoming, but the following paragraphs summarise the information made available to date.

10.11 The results for the DM scenario indicate an increase in network travel time during the AM peak of 38% in 2031 relative to the 2014 baseline, from 8,300 to 11,400 hours. However, the DM scenario was based on the original housing allocation of 17,381 units. With an allocation of 18,560 housing units, a slightly larger increase than 38% could be expected.

10.12 For scenario DSa (with the Leeds - Langley By-pass), the network travel time during the AM peak is increased to 9,300 hours in 2031. This represents an increase of 6% relative to the 2014 baseline, but a reduction of 18% relative to the 2031 DS scenario.

10.13 For scenario DSb (without the Leeds-Langley By-pass), the network travel time during the AM peak is increased to 9,800 hours in 2031, a reduction of 14% relative to the 2031 DS scenario.

Localised junction modelling

10.14 As noted above, VISUM is a strategic highway model and as such is unsuited to the assessment of individual junction capacity. Accordingly, additional junction capacity assessments have been undertaken using the Linsig, ARCADY and PICADY modelling software packages for specific locations around the Borough which have been identified as being potentially sensitive to future traffic flow changes.

A274 Sutton Road

10.15 The A274 Sutton Road and A229 Loose Road already experience traffic congestion, particularly at peak times, largely due to the capacity of the signalised junctions. Linsig models have been built for the four signalised junctions on the A274/A229 corridor, namely:

- A229/Armstrong Road/Park Way;
- A229/A274/Cranborne Avenue;
- A274/St Saviour's Road; and
- A274/Wallis Avenue/Willington Street.

10.16 With no changes to the existing highway infrastructure, background growth in traffic flows combined with additional traffic associated with new developments on the corridor will make congestion worse, both in duration and intensity (i.e. longer periods of queuing and much longer queues).

10.17 A package of highway capacity improvements has therefore been developed to mitigate the impacts of increased traffic flows. To complement these capacity improvements for general traffic, bus priority proposals have been developed (described in paragraph 11.25) which will protect buses from residual queues and delays, contributing to quick and reliable bus services toward Maidstone town centre, with largely continuous bus priority between Wallis Avenue and Armstrong Road.

10.18 The impacts of the highway capacity improvements, together with the bus priority proposals, have been tested using the Linsig models. The model outputs confirm that the bus priority proposals will not affect capacity for general traffic, nor increase queues or delays for other road users.

RSC junction modelling

[to follow…]

11. Funding, Delivery and Review

Funding Sources

11.1 A key challenge for the ITS will be to ensure that its actions are achievable within the funding that is likely to be available over time. Anticipated funding sources include:

- **Funding from development** – the ITS supports committed and planned growth (paragraphs 11.2 and 11.3) and so funding from development will be critically important to help deliver the strategy. Section 106 funding will be used to deliver site specific infrastructure and to improve and mitigate the impacts of growth proposals. In the medium to longer term, the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) will be used to fund more generally the key infrastructure related to growth.

- **Single Local Growth Fund (SLGF)** – established in 2015/16, transport funding for the SLGF has been top sliced from central government Local Transport Plan funding for small schemes and from local major scheme funding. Local Enterprise Partnerships are required to submit bids for SLGF funding for schemes across all areas related to growth, including education and skills, community infrastructure and drainage, in addition to transport.

- **Local Transport Plan (LTP) funding** – KCC receives LTP funding for small scale transport improvements. However, the level of funding has reduced as money has been top sliced into the SLGF. For 2015/16 to 2017/18, the available Integrated Transport block funding will total £6.8 million per annum for the entire county.

Prioritisation and Delivery

11.2 The Local Plan seeks to deliver 18,560 homes. Transport interventions should be scheduled in line with the anticipated development of the Local Plan. Current work on junction improvements serves to evidence that with some 9000 homes delivered or in the pipeline, the impacts can and will be mitigated, and that MBC and KCC are already working together and delivering schemes.

11.3 Coupled with some 3000 units planned for broad locations in the Borough at the end of the plan period, and potentially 1000 units as 'windfalls', this leaves a total of approximately 5000 remaining units to serve with infrastructure in the early part of the plan period.

Monitoring and Review

11.4 The purpose of any strategy is to have a means of achieving desired results. However, given the complexities and scale of the issues this strategy deals with it is often difficult to identify if the desired results are being achieved. The table identifies targets to monitor the progress of the ITS in achieving its objective. In setting these targets, every effort has been made to ensure they are both realistic but also ambitious, ensuring the best possible level of service is provided to those living within the borough with the indicative funding levels.

Target	Description
1	To increase walking mode share in Maidstone from 8% of all work trips to more than 10% of all work trips by 2021 and 12% by 2031.
2	To increase cycling mode share in Maidstone from 0.8% to more than 2% of all work trips by 2021 and 3% by 2031.
3	To increase public transport mode share in Maidstone from 7.3% to more than 10% of all work trips by 2021 and 12% by 2031.
4	To decrease car driver mode share in Maidstone from 44.3% of all work trips to below 40% by 2021 and below 37% by 2031.
5	To undertake a full and independent review of Maidstone's Park and Ride Provision, issue and act upon recommendations by 2017.
6	To double the number of electric charging points in Maidstone by 2021 and to double again by 2031.

Data to monitor the above will be sourced from traffic management updates; school and workplace travel plans; future census data; and bus patronage data from bus operators. Future footfall and traffic surveys conducted by KCC will also provide important interim data to monitor how progress is being made towards the general aims and objectives of the ITS.

12. Action Plans

12.1 The chart below outlines the actions to be taken in order to deliver the objectives of this strategy. These actions have been categorised by mode, but an integrated approach is required to tackle Maidstone's transport issues with success reliant on the actions being implemented in conjunction with each other.

12.2 Actions will be phased so that they will be implemented either over the short, medium or long term. These actions will be crucial to ensuring that Maidstone functions effectively both as the County Town of Kent and as a regionally important transport hub.

12.3 The ITS actions are summarised below, followed by full details of each action:

No.	Area	Action description
W1	Walking	Provision of accessible pedestrian routes for all users.
W2	Walking	Improve pedestrian accessibility across the River Medway in Maidstone town centre.
W3	Walking	Implement public realm improvement schemes within the town centre, such that pedestrian access is the primary mode within the central core of Maidstone.
W4	Walking	Identify priority areas for implementation of safety improvements to reduce road traffic collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists.
W5	Walking	Actively encourage and promote walk-to-school initiatives.
W6	Walking	Improve street signage with better pedestrian wayfinding and a reduction in footway clutter.
C1	Cycling	Maintain and further develop a strategic cycle network, connecting the town centre to key facilities and residential areas.
C2	Cycling	Maintain and further develop cycle routes in rural service centres, connecting local amenities and transport hubs (rail stations and bus stops) to housing.
C3	Cycling	MBC and KCC to work with partners to ensure the regular maintenance of all cycle tracks within the Borough.
C4	Cycling	(a) All Year 6 children will have access to Level 1 and 2 Bikeability training, and children in Year 6 will have access to Level 3 training. (b) Adult cycle training will continue to be offered, through initiatives including workplace travel planning.
C5	Cycling	Support the Maidstone Cycling Forum as a group to promote the cycling cause in the Borough.
C6	Cycling	Improve cycle security and parking at all key transport hubs and public amenities (including schools, healthcare facilities and retail

		locations).
C7	Cycling	Encourage employers to incorporate cycling into Workplace Travel Plans.
C8	Cycling	Promote cycling in schools through School Travel Plans.
C9	Cycling	Ensure all cycle routes are fully advertised and signposted within the Borough.
C10	Cycling	Revise and update the "Explore Maidstone Walking and Cycling Map" to extend coverage to the wider Borough and indicate destinations in neighbouring local authorities. Map to be available both electronically and in paper format.
C11	Cycling	Standardise and clarify the requirements of planning applications with respect to the provision of walking and cycling facilities, to promote the use of these active travel modes.
C12	Cycling	MBC, KCC and the Maidstone Cycle Forum to identify opportunities to establish local cycling events.
C13	Cycling	MBC and KCC to identify locations throughout the cycle network where new automatic cycle counters should be installed to enable a detailed analysis of usage. Installation to proceed as resources allow, but each new cycle infrastructure proposal will be assessed to see if an additional counter should be added to augment the data gathering process.
PT1	Public Transport	Provide bus priority measures on strategic routes linking the town centre to residential developments and key local amenities.
PT2	Public Transport	Facilitate an improvement of bus services to ensure a good frequency of service is provided on all radial routes to the ton centre within the Maidstone Urban Area.
PT3	Public Transport	Increase the proportion of schoolchildren using the bus to get to school.
PT4	Public Transport	Continue to engage with and facilitate Statutory Quality Bus Partnership Schemes in Maidstone.
PT5	Public Transport	Improve rail station access for pedestrians and cyclists.
PT6	Public Transport	Improve the frequency and quality of bus services between Maidstone town centre, M20 Junction 7 and Sittingbourne/Faversham
PT7	Public Transport	Provision of a North West Maidstone Bus Loop
PT8	Public Transport	Promote the provision of high quality bus services from the rural service centres
PT9	Public Transport	Lobby Government and train operating companies (TOCs) for improved rail services to Maidstone.
PT10	Public Transport	Improve bus facilities at Maidstone East and Maidstone West train stations to maximise interchange capabilities.
PT11	Public Transport	Work towards an improved bus station in Maidstone town centre.

PT12	Public Transport	Better Public Transport Information/Marketing including on-line/mobile ticketing and journey planning apps.
PR1	Park & Ride	Comprehensive review of Park and Ride in Maidstone.
PR2	Park & Ride	Initiate discussions with land-owners for park and ride facilities and coordinate with provision of high quality long distance bus services to maximise customer usage
P1	Parking	Introduce and adhere to Parking Standards.
P2	Parking	Optimise long stay parking charges to extract maximum value from parking charges, whilst controlling demand.
P3	Parking	Maintain the current level of parking space provision in the town centre.
H1	Highways	Targeted implementation of highway improvements at key strategic locations to relieve congestion and to aid public transport.
H2	Highways	Maintain and develop Maidstone's Intelligent Transport Systems and the proactive sharing of real time traffic and transport information with road users to manage congestion.
H3	Highways	Facilitate and promote the expansion of the County Hall CarClub service to meet any identified increase in demand on an annual basis.
H4	Highways	Actively promote and encourage car sharing initiatives
H5	Highways	Ensure road safety education continues to be provided for across the borough.
H6	Highways	Installation of additional electric charging points to promote electric car use.
H7	Highways	Working with Kent County Council in assessing the need and justification for a Leeds-Langley Bypass with a view to identifying the potential and possible timescales for such a scheme at the first review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

Walking

The Actions:

More detailed treatment of the walking and cycling actions are presented in the Walking and Cycling Strategy at Appendix 1.

Action W1: Provision of accessible pedestrian routes for all users

12.4 The pedestrian network should provide equal access for all users. Achieving this outcome will require the removal of physical obstacles and the introduction of more accessible elements to the pedestrian environment including dropped kerbs, tactile paving and wide footways. Step free access should be provided for all key routes, making use of ramps and lifts as appropriate.

Action W2: Improve pedestrian access across the River Medway in Maidstone town centre

12.5 The provision of better pedestrian routes across the Medway would encourage walking between the different areas of the town centre and local housing developments. Enhancing the ability for pedestrians to easily traverse the river improves the connectivity of the town centre, not only encouraging walking but contributing to economic benefits through better accessibility between businesses and retail outlets on either side of the river. The Council is working with KCC on the Bridges Gyratory scheme to ensure that pedestrian (and cycle) access across the river is not compromised.

12.6 The pedestrian bridge connecting Maidstone East and Maidstone Barracks Station has recently undergone refurbishment to improve the pedestrian environment. Further areas for improvement include:

- continuing to develop the River Medway towpath to improve both the pedestrian and cyclist experience; and
- investigation of the benefits of building a pedestrian bridge to improve connectivity over the River Medway between Earl Street and St Peter's Street.

Action W3: Implement public realm improvement schemes within the town centre, such that pedestrian access is the primary mode within the central core of Maidstone

12.7 One of the most important ways of making streets more attractive is to reduce the dominance of vehicles. This can be achieved by restricting traffic, slowing it down and making drivers more aware of other road users by changing the carriageway/pavement distinction to a 'shared space', where no user has priority. Ideally, people should be able to

walk wherever they want to, by the most direct route, with as little conflict with traffic as possible.

12.8 Accessible and attractive town centre streets not only enhance the pedestrian experience, but through encouraging pedestrian movement, public realm improvements can make a vital contribution to the regeneration of the commercial centre. MBC has recently successfully completed its High Street Public Realm Scheme, which has revitalised the High Street and now supports future growth in nearby businesses. Building on this success, MBC also has aspirations to upgrade the upper half of Week Street (further towards Maidstone East Station) and Gabriel's Hill.

Action W4: Identify priority areas for implementation of safety improvements to reduce traffic collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists

12.9 Personal injury collision data will be reviewed to identify significant clusters of collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists and to analyse the main causes of these collisions. This review will be used to develop a priority list of locations (e.g. road junctions, pedestrian crossing locations) where the upgrading of pedestrian facilities is required.

Action W5: Actively encourage and promote walk to school initiatives

12.10 MBC is a sponsor of the KM Charity Group 'Walk to School' which seeks to encourage more parents and children to walk to school. Across the County since its inception, the Charity has resulted in:

- 40,000 children and families being involved;
- 600,000 green journeys annually; and
- 250,000 school run car journeys removed.

12.11 As school induced traffic has a significant impact on the road network during peak times, schemes such as these contribute greatly to managing traffic congestion.

12.12 MBC will appoint a school travel plan champion to work with schools in reducing car trips undertaking the "school run".

Action W6: Improve street signage with better pedestrian wayfinding and a reduction in footway clutter

12.13 Numerous columns for street signs and street furniture can prevent the free flow of pedestrian movement and create hazards and unnecessary barriers. There is scope to rationalise street signage and street

furniture to reduce the number of columns and general street clutter to provide more footway space.

12.14 Efficient wayfinding can encourage walking and cycling through providing people with the information they need to navigate the town successfully, and understand the journey times between locations. Having clearly branded, consistent, wayfinding throughout the town not only provides information and reassurance to those less familiar with the area, but also adds to the overall experience of the public realm.

Cycling

The Actions:

12.15 More detailed treatment of the walking and cycling actions are presented in the Walking and Cycling Strategy at Appendix 1.

Action C1: Maintain and further develop a strategic cycle network, connecting the town centre to key facilities and residential areas

12.16 Maidstone should have a comprehensive, safe, cycle network in order to facilitate and encourage cycle journeys. At present the borough has a number of cycle routes focused on the urban area, however these are often disjointed with limited off road options. Delivering a strong strategic cycle network requires:

- Maintenance and enhancement of existing cycle infrastructure. Reviewing cycle routes and links already in place ensuring:
- Existing gaps in the network are addressed, providing safe and continuous linkages to known destinations e.g. The Oakwood Park Education Campus.
- Routes are unimpeded by street furniture, pavement parking and other obstructions
- Routes are maintained clearing cycle ways of hazardous defects and overgrown vegetation
- Appropriate signage is in place to clearly identify cycle routes
- Development of new strategic cycle routes to and from the town centre from key residential and employment sites encouraging cycling as a commuting option. Key strategic links required to further enhance Maidstone's cycle network include:
    - The South East Cycle Link, developing a route into Maidstone from Langley along the Loose valley to connect with the Loose Greenway Scheme that is being progressed.

- The River Medway Towpath Scheme from Barming Bridge to Allington (together with links at key points along this route form either side of the River Medway)
- B2246 Hermitage Lane Cycle Lane.
- A route linking Kings Hill to Maidstone Town Centre along North Pole Road, North Street, South Street Barming, through to Rectory Lane and Fant Farm to Upper Fant Road Maidstone.
- Reviewing Traffic Regulation Orders to examine whether cycles can be better accommodated on parts of the existing highway network; e.g. across Barming and Tovil footbridges and along Week Street (out of shopping hours).

- Enhancement of leisure cycle facilities and routes, to further encourage cycling as a leisure pursuit. Providing appropriate cycle facilities at key recreation areas, including Mote Park, with a specific focus on improving the riverside paths and routes along the Medway. Longer term possibilities include;
  - extension of the Medway Towpath Scheme from Barming Bridge to Yalding;
  - a signposted route from Lenham to Headcorn, Staplehurst, Marden, Laddingford and Yalding across the southern part of the Borough;
  - a signposted route across the North Downs from the Stockbury valley/Hucking to Wichling/Otterden with connections to Swale and Lenham.

Action C2: <u>Maintain and further develop cycle routes in rural service centres, connecting local amenities and transport hubs (rail stations and bus stops) to housing</u>

12.17 The borough has a number of rural service centres, and cycling facilities within these are variable. Local communities should have the following facilities in place to encourage cycling for short localised trips;

- Cycle routes to schools
- Cycle routes to railway stations
- Cycle parking provision at schools, railway stations and bus stops (where frequent interurban services are available/planned)
- Cycle parking provision at key local amenities (eg. Health care, retail and recreation sites)

12.18 The following specific local cycle improvements have been identified to be addressed:

- Harrietsham: implementation of a cycle route between the primary school and rail station;
- Staplehurst: implementation of a cycle route connecting the rail station to the residential area to the south of the Lodge Road Industrial Estate;
- Staplehurst: provision of cycle parking at the village shops;
- Headcorn: shelter for cycle parking provided at the railway station;
- Hollingbourne: provision of cycle parking at the station;
- Marden: additional cycle parking provision at the railway station;
- Bearsted: additional cycle parking provision at the railway station;
- Maidstone Hospital: additional cycle parking; and
- Maidstone West: additional cycle parking provision at the railway station.

Action C3: MBC and KCC to work with partners to ensure the regular maintenance of all cycle tracks within the Borough.

Action C4**:** (a) All Year 6 children will have access to Level 1 and 2 Bikeability training, and children in Year 6 will have access to Level 3 training. (b) Adult cycle training will continue to be offered, through initiatives including workplace travel planning.

Action C5: Support the Maidstone Cycling Forum as a group to promote the cycling cause in the Borough.

12.19 In January 2015 the Maidstone Cycling Forum was re-launched providing an arena to discuss local cycling issues. Continued support and involvement in the forum provides valuable insight into local cyclist's perspectives and issues, which can feed into making informed decisions regarding the development of Maidstone's cycle infrastructure.

12.20 The forum also actively promotes cycling through building a strong cycling community hosting regular events that encourage cycling across the borough, and raising awareness of the existing and emerging cycle facilities.

Action C6: Improved cycle security and parking at all key transport hubs and public amenities (including schools, healthcare facilities and retail locations)

12.21 Sufficient secure cycle parking is essential if people are to be motivated to cycle. The type of parking provided should be considered in relation to the user profiles; in short stay locations simple Sheffield stands can provide a convenient means for cyclist to park up, however in locations where it is likely cycles will be left for long time periods more sheltered parking or lockers can be more appropriate.

Action C7: Encourage employers to incorporate cycling into Workplace Travel Plans

12.22 Currently 0.8% of Maidstone residents cycle to work according to the Office for National Statistics. Travel plans provide an opportunity to improve levels of cycling by improving cycling facilities at employment locations. KCC currently offers advice and support to business, schools and other organisations on travel planning advocating, not just the wider transportation, but also the business benefits of implementing travel plans. Such plans are encouraged as they can include commitment to improving cycling facilities including secure parking, bike lockers and shower facilities; all of which help make cycling a realistic commuting option for employees.

Action C8: Promote Cycling in Schools through School Travel Plans.

12.23 Getting children involved in cycling and providing education on safe cycling is important in developing a longer term cycling culture within the borough.

12.24 The council will look to encourage and promote cycle education in schools including, Bikeability, a national cycle training course provided at a local level by KCC at primary and secondary schools across Kent. Aimed at children in year 6 and above, the courses give children the skills to make safer choices when cycling and to enjoy the freedom of riding a bike. Bikeability courses are also available for adults. Nationally, over 1.7million people have benefited from the training.

Action C9: Ensure all cycle routes are fully advertised and signposted within the Borough.

Action C10: Revise and update the "Explore Maidstone Walking and Cycling Map" to extend coverage to the wider Borough and indicate destinations in neighbouring local authorities. Map to be available both electronically and in paper format.

Action C11: Standardise and clarify the requirements of planning applications with respect to the provision of walking and cycling facilities, to promote the use of these active travel modes

Action C12: MBC, KCC and the Maidstone Cycle Forum to identify opportunities to establish local cycling events

Action C13: MBC and KCC to identify locations throughout the cycle network where new automatic cycle counters should be installed to enable a detailed analysis of usage. Installation to proceed as resources allow, but each new cycle infrastructure proposal will be assessed to see if an additional counter should be added to augment the data gathering process.

Public Transport

The Actions:

Action PT1**:** Provide bus priority measures on strategic routes linking the town centre to residential developments and key local amenities

12.25 Bus priority measures are vital to delivering a network that encourages public transport use, through ensuring journey times can compete with private car use. Allowing buses to bypass key areas of congestion through the use of bus lanes and/or junction priority measures, provides passengers with a clear advantage, while also contributing to improved air quality through less congested bus journey times. Key areas identified for bus priorities measure include:

- **Sutton Road, Northbound, between Willington Street and Wheatsheaf Junction:** This would make a significant contribution to improving the speed and reliability of buses operating on this busy corridor and would directly serve the South East Maidstone strategic housing allocation proposed in the Local Plan. Proposals include:

- The incorporation of bus priority measures into the capacity improvement schemes for the junction of Willington Street/Wallis Avenue and the A274 Sutton Road

- Limited widening at the St Saviours Road junction by lengthening the left turn flare lane and a relocation of the bus stop and making it left turn only with an exception for buses going straight ahead

- The addition of a length of bus lane (or widened road) between Wallis Avenue and St Saviours Road

- Provision of a bus lane (or widened road) from St Saviours Road to Mangravet Avenue.

- Relocation of the bus stops at the end of Mangravet Avenue as these are not well related to pedestrian crossing movements or the existing population at Grove/Road Mangravet Avenue.

- Provision of a bus lane from Mangravet Avenue to the end of the existing bus lane on Sutton Road, which would be widened and a pinch-point removed outside Maidstone Cemetery

- Bus pre-signal on the in-bound approach to the Wheatsheaf junction on Sutton Road.

- **Loose Road between Wheatsheaf and Sheals Crescent:** The provision of northbound and southbound bus-lanes where possible. This would make a significant contribution to improving the speed and reliability of buses operating on this busy corridor.

- **Romney Place bus lane:** Romney Place is not designed as a major through route and its heavy use during peak periods causes significant congestion on Lower Stone Street delaying buses seeking to access The Mall Chequers Bus Station. It also causes hazards to pedestrians seeking to cross Romney Place at its junction with Lower Stone Street. The implementation of an eastbound bus lane, in place of the existing carriageway lane, will ease congestion and improve access times for buses routing along this road to the bus station, while also positively impacting on air quality.

Action PT2**:** Facilitate an improvement of bus services to ensure a good frequency of service provided by high quality buses is provided on all radial routes to the town centre within the Maidstone Urban Area

12.26 Ensuring a frequent bus service encourages public transport use, improving passenger perceptions of the convenience and robustness of using buses, through essentially allowing more flexibility in their use of the service. The frequency needs to be regular enough to prevent the timetabling acting as a deterrent to passenger use. The improvements in passenger numbers driven through frequency improvements has been seen on existing bus routes in Maidstone which have seen patronage increase with frequency enhancements. The following routes and frequencies should be provided (at a minimum in the peak hours):

- A20 London Road – 7-8 minute frequency (Currently at this frequency).

- A274 Sutton Road – 6-7 minute frequency; Currently 8 minutes on part; to be expanded when housing schemes progress and to be combined with the bus priority measures outlined in PT1.

- A229 Royal Engineers Way (to and from the Medway Towns) - 10 minute frequency (currently Service 101 (Sapphire standard) is on a 12 minute frequency).

- A26 Tonbridge Road – 7-8 minute frequency (currently 10 minutes. Work with service providers to upgrade service to Sapphire standard (or equivalent).

- A229 Loose Road – 10 minute frequency Potential to increase frequency of 89 service from Coxheath from every 20 to every 15 mins. Potential to increase service 5 from Staplehurst to a half-hour frequency.

- A249 Sittingbourne Road (to and from Sittingbourne/Faversham) – 15 minute frequency coupled with the promotion and an increase in frequency of services 333 and 334 from Sittingbourne and Faversham. Work with the service providers to upgrade service to Sapphire standard (or equivalent).

- A20 Ashford Road – 20 minute frequency

Action PT3**:** Increase the proportion of schoolchildren using the bus to get to school

12.27 Travel to and from schools creates significant pressure on the highway network, which requires intervention to encourage alternative travel arrangements to car drop-off and pick-up. KCC currently provides the following bus passes, to encourage and promote bus travel among young people:

- Young Persons Travel Pass - provides travel on almost all public bus services in Kent for an annual fee of up to £250 for young people living in the county who are in academic years 7 to 11.

- 16+ Travel Card - provides subsidised bus travel for 16-19 year olds continuing with education or vocational training. The card costs up to £400 per annum.

These need to remain in place to continue to manage school travel patterns, reducing the congestion caused by travel to and from schools.

Action PT4**:** Continue to engage with and facilitate Statutory Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) schemes in Maidstone

12.28 The QBP was set up to improve and facilitate communication and decision making regarding bus service provision in the Maidstone area. Attendance by representatives from KCC, HE, MBC and Bus operators

allows collaborative discussion of any bus related matters and MBC will continue to engage with this group.

Action PT5**:** Improve rail station access for pedestrians and cyclists

12.29 Rail stations need to be accessible by all modes of transport, including suitable walking and cycling routes between local housing and local stations. The stations themselves require sufficient parking to meet demand without actively encouraging car access over more sustainable modes. Basic cycle parking should be provided as a minimum, with significant secure provision at key strategic rail stations. The following locations have been identified as priorities for station access improvements:

- Barming Station – Enhanced Pedestrian and Cycle access required to inter link with station with existing and proposed development in the local area and hospital. In particular the provision of the pedestrian crossing near the station is required to ensure a safe pedestrian route across the busy Hermitage Lane to the station.
- Staplehurst - A new pedestrian and cycling link between the railway station and the residential area to the south of the Lodge Road Industrial Estate, with improvements to the ease and quality of bus/rail interchange within the vicinity of the railway station.
- Harrietsham Station - New pedestrian and cycling link between Harrietsham Primary School and Harrietsham railway station.

Action PT6: Improve the frequency and quality of bus services between Maidstone town centre, M20 Junction 7 and Sittingbourne/Faversham

12.30 The Council will seek through appropriate s106 obligations to secure improved frequency and quality of bus services between Maidstone Town Centre and M20 Junction 7 area and to Sittingbourne/Faversham and vice versa. This will require the provision of three additional buses/drivers to ensure a minimum 15 minute service frequency between the M20 junction 7 area and the Town Centre thus increasing frequency of service to Faversham and Sittingbourne to every 30min respectively.

12.31 Funding for the enhancement should be provided for five years. The Council will work with and encourage the bus operator to upgrade the service between Sittingbourne and Faversham to a 'Sapphire' standard of service or equivalent (which should include dedicated drivers, upgraded seating, the availability of free wi-fi and at-seat charging

facilities). Improvement to the existing signalised junctions at New Cut Road/A20 Ashford Road and A20 Ashford Road/Square Hill by upgrading signals and/or their control systems will also be secured.

Action PT7**:** Provision of a North West Maidstone Bus Loop

12.32 The Council will seek through appropriate s106 obligations to secure funding for 5 years for the operation of a 'bus-loop' service in north west Maidstone connecting Maidstone Hospital and the new housing sites on or adjacent to Hermitage Lane and London Road to Maidstone Town Centre along London Road via a bus gate on Howard Drive Allington. This is likely to be achieved by the extension of existing service 79 from London Road/Allington westwards and/or service 85 northwards beyond Maidstone Hospital where it currently terminates or the re-routing of service 60 which currently runs along London Road to Hermitage Lane via Coldharbour.

Action PT8**:** Promote the provision of high quality bus services from the rural service centres

12.33 A key objective for the strategy is the promotion of alternatives to private vehicle commuting into Maidstone through the provision of high quality fast bus services from the rural service centres and major villages. Opportunities for bus facilities should be provided at village railway stations to increase interchange capability.

Action PT9**:** Lobby Government and train operating companies (TOCs) for improved rail services to Maidstone

12.34 South-eastern operates train services in the Kent region including Maidstone. At the end of 2014 South-eastern had their existing rail franchise extended to June 2018. This extension included the provision of better services to Maidstone by the addition of direct Maidstone East to London Blackfriars services. Whilst a small improvement, previous connections to Cannon Street and London Bridge have still been lost, and the frequency of service to Blackfriars is poor.

12.35 High Speed 1, where Southeastern serves many Kent towns into and out of St Pancras via Ebbsfleet in most cases does not benefit Maidstone. It is now possible to travel from Ashford to London in less than 40 minutes, whereas MDE to Victoria still takes more than 50 – even though Ashford is many miles further from London than Maidstone. To correct this imbalance, in the run up to the refranchising MBC will review rail services and lobby the government for enhancements to Maidstone services in the new franchise timetable. The extensive upgrade work, as part of the Thameslink programme, also provides an opportunity to

lobby for improved connections to the capital via Blackfriars and St Pancras.

Action PT10**:** Improve bus facilities at Maidstone East and Maidstone West train stations to maximise interchange capabilities.

12.36 Improvements are necessary to improve the bus interchange capabilities at both Maidstone East and Maidstone West stations to provide for new or enhanced bus services from outside the Maidstone urban area can terminate. Bus facilities should be incorporated into redevelopment plans for these major town centre locations.

Action PT11: Work towards an improved bus station in Maidstone town centre

12.37 In the short term (1-2years), the Council will work with the landowners of the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre and service providers to secure significant improvements to the existing bus station to improve its attractiveness and ease of use.

12.38 In the medium term, the Mall Chequers Shopping Centre and adjoining land, where the current bus interchange facility is located is earmarked for potential redevelopment towards the latter end of the Local Plan period. As part of the regeneration of the site and area, the Council will work with the Centre's owners (and other land owners that may be affected) together with the public transport operators to secure the provision of a new bus interchange facility that is more accessible, user-friendly and fit-for purpose in the light of the desire for improved bus service provision and patronage across the Borough.

Action PT12**:** Better information and marketing of public transport options

12.39 Work with KCC, neighbouring authorities and bus operators to implement an integrated, cohesive approach to the provision of information and mobile ticketing, including:

- Real time bus information
- Journey planning apps
- Maintaining informative, up to date websites

Improving the availability and ease of use of on-line/mobile app ticket purchasing.

Park and Ride

The Actions

Action PR1: Comprehensive review of Park and Ride in Maidstone

12.40 Maidstone is committed to making Park and Ride a successful part of the towns transport network and in order to do this a full review of the existing service is required to understand the reasons behind the current limited patronage, and decide upon the optimum measures that will be implemented to enhance the service. The review will include the following possible interventions.

Action PR2: Initiate discussions with land-owners for park and ride facilities and coordinate with provision of high quality long distance bus services to maximise customer usage

12.41 Discussions should be initiated with appropriate land-owners for the provision of park and rail facilities as part of major commercial and other developments in the Maidstone urban area. This could include potential provision at M20 Junction 7 which would be served by a high quality bus service between Maidstone and Sittingbourne/Faversham.

Parking

The Actions:

Action P1: Introduce Parking Standards to ensure a means by which development can ensure an appropriate amount of parking is provided and reduce the overall demand for car parking

12.42 The new Parking Standards will ensure that the needs of car users are adequately met but also that the agreed level of provision does not undermine more sustainable modes of travel where these are readily available. However, where there is no alternative to use of the private car, the Standards will enable a fair and appropriate amount of parking to be provided. The Standards will also provide for developments' cycle parking requirements, as well as ensuring that they incorporate electric vehicle charging infrastructure where appropriate. Interim parking standards (the KCC produced SPG4 2006 and the Kent Design Guide Review Interim Guidance Note 3) were adopted in 2015 pending a review of the standards following adoption of the Local Plan.

Action P2: Optimise long stay parking charges to extract maximum value from parking charges, whilst controlling demand

12.43 This action will look to increase long stay parking tariffs (4+ hours) and season ticket tariffs for Council owned car parks by 50% (excluding inflation) by 2031. This will contribute towards the management of demand for private vehicle trips into the town centre and is directed at

encouraging car commuters to consider walking, cycling or using public transport as an alternative. This will have the effect of better managing traffic congestion and related problems in the town centre during peak periods.

Action P3**:** Maintain the current level of parking space provision in the town centre.

12.44 There is currently a very high level of parking provision within Maidstone. It is proposed that there should be no net increase in the quantum of parking available in the town over the period of this strategy as a means of discouraging car use from current and new developments.

Highways

The Actions:

Action H1**:** Targeted implementation of highway improvements at key strategic locations to relieve congestion

12.45 Through the identification and enhancement of key strategic junctions, congestion on the road network can be reduced. Regardless of development a number of the town's junctions are subject to high levels of congestion in the morning and evening peaks.

12.46 The key junctions and proposed interventions are set out in the table below. The funding sources are also referenced in the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council will work together to secure the early delivery of these improvements within the next three years, primarily through S106 agreements and potential Growth Fund applications.

Junction	**Aim**	**Intervention**	**IDP ref:**
Maidstone Town Centre			
Town Centre Bridges Gyratory A229/A20/A26	Capacity improvements.	New northbound link to bypass the gyratory.	LEP Local Growth Fund and MBC Contribution (New Homes Bonus)
Maidstone Urban Area – M20 Junction 7 Strategic Area			
A249 Bearsted Road roundabout and Bearsted Road/New Cut Junction	Capacity improvements.	Signalisation of New Cut roundabout. Provision of a new signal pedestrian crossing and combined foot/cycle way between New Cut & Bearsted roundabouts.	Provided under 13/1163.
Dual carriageway between A249 and New Cut Junctions	Capacity improvements.	Additional carriageway/revised junction arrangements.	Provided in connection with Newnham Court.
M20/Junction7	Capacity improvements.	Signalisation of roundabout, widening of coast bound off-slip and creation of new signal controlled pedestrian route through junction.	Provided under 13/1163.
M2 Junction 5 Improvement	Capacity improvements.		13/1163 - £44.7k

Maidstone Urban Area – South East Maidstone Strategic Area			
A229/A274 Wheatsheaf junction	Capacity improvements.	Close exit to Cranbourne Avenue and potential widening to two lanes of northbound approach on A229 Loose Road.	14/503167 - Proportion of £108k also split between Loose Rd/Boughton Lane & approaches to TC.
A229/Armstrong Road	Capacity improvements.	Works on the approaches to the Town Centre between the Wheatsheaf junction and the bridge gyratory traffic signal junctions.	14/503167 - Proportion of £108k also split between Loose Rd/Boughton Lane & approaches to TC.
A274 Willington Street junction	Junction capacity improvements.		13/1149 - £180k 13/1523 - £30k 13/0951 - £55.8k
A274 Wallis Avenue junction	Junction capacity improvements.		
A274 Corridor	Bus journey time reliability.	Bus priority measures: Widening of the inbound carriageway of the A274 Sutton Road between the junctions of Wallis Avenue and Loose Road, incorporating bus prioritisation measures from the Willington Street junction to the Wheatsheaf junction, together with bus infrastructure improvements	13/1149 - £1.8m 13/1523 - £300k 13/0951 - £558k
Maidstone Urban Area – North West Strategic Area			
A20/Coldharbour Lane junction	Capacity improvements.	Junction capacity and signals/left hand turn lane off A20 to M20 junction 5 link road.	13/1702 - £338K split between A20/Coldharbour & A26/Fountain Lane. 13/1749 - £676K. 14/501209 - £189k 14/500412 - £29.4k split between A26/Fountain Lane &

			Coldharbour
A20/M20 Junction 5	Junction capacity and signals		14/501209 £12k (Towards J5 improvements on the M20)
A20/M20 Junction 5	Capacity improvements.	Interim improvement to M20 J5 roundabout including white lining scheme	13/1702 - £21.5k 13/1749 - £43K
A20/B2246 Hermitage Lane junction	Junction capacity improvements		
A26/Fountain Lane /Hermitage Lane junctions	Capacity improvements.	Changes to accommodate right turn vehicles within the junction introduction of MOVA and pedestrian sensing.	13/1702 - £338K split between A20/Coldharbour & A26/Fountain Lane. 13/1702 - £96.2k 13/1749 - £200k 14/500412 - £29.4k split between A26/Fountain Lane & Coldharbour
Rural Areas			
A229 Linton Crossroads	Capacity improvements.	Works on junction approaches.	14/0566 - £108k
A20 Harrietsham	Works to improve safety and pedestrian/cycle access		14/0828 - £399k
A274 North Street/Kings Road Headcorn	Capacity improvements.	Signalisation	
Junction of Oak Lane and Wheeler Street Headcorn	Safety improvements.		S278 under 13/1943
Highway schemes associated with Lenham area	Capacity/safety improvements.	TBC	
A229 Station Road/High St/Headcorn Rd and Marden Rd Staplehurst	Junction capacity improvements.		
Hampstead Lane/Maidstone Rd Junction	Capacity improvements.	Provision of right turn lane on Hampstead Lane.	

Action H2: Maintain and develop Maidstone's Intelligent Transport Systems and the proactive sharing of real time traffic and transport information with road users to manage congestion

12.47 KCC is committed to building on the success of the Maidstone Urban Traffic Management and Control (UTMC) system to continue enabling the County and Borough Councils to maximise the capacity of the existing road network and to respond proactively to incidents. In doing so, both Councils will seek to make use of new and emerging technology to share real-time traffic and travel information with road users and facilitate informed journey choices. KCC will also continue to work closely with Highways England to ensure that the management of the strategic and local road networks is fully integrated.

Action H3**:** Facilitate and promote the expansion of the County Hall Car Club service to encourage an increase in demand on an annual basis

12.48 MBC currently includes two pool cars and two pool bikes – which can be reserved for use by any member of staff. Usage of these vehicles is low relative to similar schemes elsewhere in the UK. However, utilisation of Zipcar amongst KCC staff is encouraging, and recent acquisition of electric vehicles has proven popular. KCC are looking to procure additional contract services to enhance this scheme in due course.

Action H4: Actively promote and encourage car sharing initiatives

12.49 Maidstone has one of the highest rates of single occupancy car use in the county with 52% of vehicle trips having only single occupants. In order to lower this rate and to incentivise higher car occupancy KCC manages 'kentjourneyshare'; a free web-based service which links drivers, passengers, walkers, cyclists and taxi users who make similar journeys and encourages them to share their trip.

12.50 Additionally, KCC manages the 'New Ways 2 Work' scheme (of which MBC is a founding member) which is a collaborative partnership of Kent businesses, local authorities, transport providers and other organisations for encouraging sustainable travel choices. This scheme essentially promotes sensible and efficient use of vehicles and road space to enable traffic to keep moving. This will be maintained indefinitely and can be accessed at http://newways2work.org.uk

Action H5: Ensure road safety education continues to be provided for across the borough

12.51 Improving road user behaviour continues to be the main priority within KCC's approach to further reducing road accident casualties. The priority concerns and challenges that have been identified through the analysis

of crash and casualty data and wider research findings are: speed, road user impairment, and anti-social values.

12.52 For the period 2010-2020, KCC has therefore committed to preparing a three-year rolling programme of activities that uses the individual and combined effects of education, training and publicity in an intelligence-led manner. Accident data and research findings will be used to guide priorities, to identify key target groups and to determine the most effective ways of communicating with them.

12.53 Kent County Council will lead collective partnership working through the Kent and Medway Casualty Reduction Group (CaRe Group) to improve road user behaviour through public education activities including publicity campaigns, public engagement projects and public relations strategies.

Action H6: Installation of additional electric charging points to promote electronic car use

12.54 There are 2 units currently installed outside Sessions House (one is serving the car club, one is available for public use), 2 units in Invicta House car park available to the public at weekends, one unit at Maidstone Leisure Centre and two units have been installed in the MBC car park. In addition, there is also one charging point installed at the KCC Aylesford Highway Depot, although this is mainly for use by KCC employees.

12.55 There are also several additional points on or close to the motorway network (including a model specific fast-charge facility at Eclipse Park close to M20 Junction 7) and at some local hotels, but KCC/MBC have not been involved in these installations. MBC will work closely with KCC to expand the number of electric charging points across the Borough through the life of this Strategy.

Action H7: Leeds Langley By-pass

12.56 With regard to a potential Leeds-Langley Bypass road scheme, Kent County Council will establish the justification for and delivery of such a project and it is considered, that although further assessment is required, delivery of such a project may be feasible post 2031. The Borough Council will work with the County Council in identifying the potential as well as possible timescales for such a scheme at the first review of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and determine then whether the project should move forward as a specific Local Plan policy.

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Walking and Cycling Strategy

DRAFT WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY

November 2015

Contents

NB Photos/illustrations to be added to report

1.0 Introduction

1.1 This Walking and Cycling Strategy provides the evidence base for walking actions W1 to W6 and cycling actions C1 to C12 in the Transport Action Plan set out in the Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy 2011 – 2031 (hereafter referred to as the ITS). It brings together policies and related actions to promote walking and cycling and the delivery of related infrastructure in Maidstone Borough, with the aim of increasing the proportion of journeys made by these active travel modes. Furthermore, the Strategy provides a basis for making bids for improvements to walking and cycling infrastructure in Maidstone through the Local Enterprise Partnership (Local Sustainable Transport Fund) and other transport funding awarded to Kent County Council (KCC) by the Department for Transport.

1.2 The emphasis of the Strategy has been on identifying the improvements required to deliver a comprehensive and well-connected cycle network (rather than focusing in detail on pedestrian-only facilities), which will help to make both cycling and walking more attractive alternatives for journeys within the Borough. The Strategy has been drafted by Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) with support from the Maidstone Cycle Forum and KCC. The document will act as a tool to assist in the delivery of the Transport Vision for Maidstone and the following ITS objectives in particular:

- **Objective 1**: Enhancing and encouraging sustainable travel choices including:

  A: The development, maintenance and enhancement of walking and cycling provision, through network improvements and encouraging uptake amongst the population;

  C: Promotion and education regarding walking, cycling and public transport travel options;

  E: Place sustainable travel options at the heart of all new developments within Maidstone, to ensure a fully integrated network that puts pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users at the centre of any transport proposals.

- **Objective 3**: Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local Plan.

- **Objective 4**: Reducing the air quality impacts of transport.

- **Objective 5**: Ensure the transport network considers the needs of all users, providing equal accessibility by removing barriers to use.

1.3 The overarching aim of the Walking and Cycling Strategy is, in addition to supporting the Transport Vision for Maidstone, to provide a framework for delivery of the Department for

Transport's Cycling Delivery Plan[1] (draft published October 2014) at the local level. Our local vision supports the national vision, i.e. that:

Walking and cycling become the natural choices for shorter journeys in Maidstone Borough – or as part of a longer journey – regardless of age, gender, fitness level or income.

1.4 The Strategy is aligned with the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan and is supported by the Draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy which promotes the use of urban green space and Public Rights of Way for active travel. In facilitating the use of non-motorised transport it also contributes to the objectives of the Sustainable Community Strategy, Air Quality Action Plan, Draft Neighbourhood Plans and KCC Environmental Strategy.

1.5 The Walking and Cycling Strategy encourages active travel and identifies the shared commitment of MBC and KCC to provide an enhanced network for these modes. It acknowledges that, in particular, levels of cycling in Maidstone are low at present and that whilst the Borough has some cycle routes which link Maidstone town centre with the surrounding suburban areas; these are often incomplete or require upgrading. In the rural areas of the Borough there are very few designated safer routes for cyclists. There is a lack of cycle parking facilities at some key destinations.

1.6 The benefits which can be derived from promoting walking and cycling as low cost, efficient, healthy and environmentally friendly modes of transport for people of a variety of ages and abilities are wide ranging. These include not just their contribution towards improved mental and physical wellbeing amongst local residents, but also their positive impact on the efficient and reliable operation of the local highway network, and helping to realise a better environment for everyone through reduced air pollution and carbon dioxide emissions. The Strategy identifies a range of measures and interventions to make cycling a more attractive proposition in all areas of the Borough, and especially for shorter journeys.

1.7 It is recognised that the Strategy's focus is on the Maidstone area. This is where most people live, where most new development will take place in the coming years and where the infilling of gaps in cycle facilities will make the greatest contribution towards achieving modal shift from private car journeys. However, there is also merit in developing longer distance cycle routes to encourage inter-urban travel and cycle tourism and so the identification of opportunities for improving cycle linkages into neighbouring authorities has been another focus of this Strategy. It is intended to complement the measures and interventions identified in the cycle strategies prepared by neighbouring authorities in conjunction with KCC.

[1] Department for Transport, Draft Cycling Delivery Plan, October 2014, https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/cycling-delivery-plan-informal-consultation

2.0 National and Local Policy Overview

2.1 This Strategy is informed by a range of national and local policies and strategies. This chapter briefly outlines the current policy context within which the Strategy has been prepared.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

2.2 The NPPF[2] sets out in broad terms the approach that local authorities should follow in preparing land use and transport plans, to which this Walking and Cycling Strategy is aligned. In particular, para 17 of the NPPF states that a core principle is that planning should actively manage patterns of growth to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling. Developments should be located where the need to travel will be minimised (para 34) and designed so that 'priority is given to pedestrian and cycle movements', with 'safe and secure layouts which minimise conflicts between traffic and cyclists or pedestrians'.

National Walking and Cycling Policy Overview

2.3 The All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group published the Get Britain Cycling[3] report in 2013. This marked the outcome of an inquiry which was informed by Members from both Houses of Parliament. The report aims to enable more people across the UK to take up cycling, to cycle more often and to cycle more safely. It seeks to identify the obstacles that must be overcome to achieve these objectives and suggests measures to be undertaken by central and local government, as well as the wider business and third sectors. Recommendations are numerous and divided into five broad topics:-

- A new priority for investing public funds - including the creation of a cycling budget of at least £10 per person per year, increasing to £20.
- Redesigning our roads, streets and communities - including a statutory requirement for developments to be designed for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Safe driving and safe speed limits - including the extension of locally determined speed limits.
- Training and education - including the provision of cycle training for people of all ages and backgrounds.
- Political leadership - including the provision of a cross-departmental Cycling Action Plan.

[2] Department for Communities and Local Government, National Planning Policy Framework, March 2012, https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-planning-policy-framework--2
[3] All Parliamentary Cycling Group, Get Britain Cycling, April 2013, http://allpartycycling.files.wordpress.com/2013/04/get-britain-cycling1.pdf

2.4 The DfT published a draft Cycling Delivery Plan in 2014. The document identifies the ambition of Government to do more to encourage people across England to cycle. The Government wants to see hundreds of thousands more people taking advantage of the benefits of cycling and walking. The Cycling Delivery Plan is a 10 year plan for England and recognises that a step change in cycling cannot be achieved overnight; this requires strong leadership, commitment and long term planning for incremental change that develops an environment in which cycling is the norm. A subsequent commitment has been set in the Infrastructure Act (2015) which requires Government to prepare a national Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy.

2.5 The National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) produced guidance in November 2012 (PHG41)[4]; on Local Measures to Promote Walking and Cycling as Forms of Travel or Recreation which has been taken into account within this strategy.

Local Walking and Cycling Policy Overview

2.4 The third Local Transport Plan for Kent (2011-16) sets out Kent County Council (KCC)'s policies and delivery plans for the management and improvement of the local transport network. It has five principal themes, all of which include walking and cycling as an aspect; 'Growth Without Gridlock', 'A Safer and Healthier County', 'Supporting Independence', 'Tackling a Changing Climate' and 'Enjoying Life in Kent'. The Plan seeks to support housing and employment growth whilst managing the County's highways and Public Rights of Way, many of which include cycle routes. The Plan supports active travel and the development of cycling as a transport mode.

2.5 The Countryside and Coastal Access Improvement Plan (2013-2017) is KCC's strategy to increase usage and enjoyment of Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and improve access to green spaces in Kent. The County's extensive network of paths is a great asset which can be developed further to provide infrastructure for cyclists as well as pedestrians in both urban and rural areas.

2.6 The Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS), for which this Walking and Cycling Strategy provides the evidence base for measures supporting active travel modes, sets out the vision for transport in the Borough between 2011 and 2031. The ITS seeks to achieve this vision through addressing existing transport problems in a holistic manner, encouraging a modal shift from the private car and identifying the transport solutions necessary to support the development aspirations of the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan over the same period. The enhancement of cycling and walking provision is one of the key ITS priorities.

[4] National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, Walking and Cycling: Local Measures to Promote Walking and Cycling as Forms of Travel or Recreation, November 2012, http://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ph41

2.7 This Strategy is also supported by the draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (December 2013) which promotes the use of urban green space and Public Rights of Way for active travel. In facilitating the use of non-motorised transport it also contributes to the objectives of the following strategies/action plans:

- Maidstone Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-2020 (July 2013)
- Maidstone Air Quality Action Plan (2010)
- Climate Change Framework 2011-2016 (year???)
- Draft Neighbourhood Plans for Boughton Monchelsea, Boxley, Broomfield and Kingswood, Coxheath, Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Loose Parish, Marden, North Loose, Staplehurst and Sutton Valence
- Kent Environment Strategy – A Strategy for Environment, Health & Economy: Consultation Draft (July 2015)

3.0 The Benefits of Walking and Cycling

3.1 Walking and cycling are low cost, efficient, healthy and environmentally friendly modes of travel. The benefits which can be derived from promoting these modes for people of a variety of ages and abilities are wide ranging. These can be broadly grouped into economic, health and social benefits. This chapter discusses each of these in turn.

Economic Benefits

3.2 Active travel modes benefit the economy through encouraging local trade, due to the increasing number of people travelling on local streets and routes. In urban areas they can improve the efficiency of the transport network through reducing congestion, and in turn the air pollution that is generated by vehicular traffic. In short active travel modes have the potential to make a major contribution to supporting the Borough's high streets, making them quieter, cleaner, more liveable and more prosperous.

3.3 Kent's visitor economy is reported to be worth £3.4bn according to research commissioned by Visit Kent, with 57 million visitors per year. Over 5 million of these visitors are estimated to be attracted to the County's cycling offer. Maidstone Borough itself attracts over 4 million visitors per year, spending more than £250 million in the local economy. A Destination Management Plan was produced for the Borough Council in 2015[5]. One of its priorities is to make the River Medway an attraction in its own right and promote its use as a green corridor for cyclists and walkers, alongside the development of other themed cycling/walking trails in Maidstone Borough.

3.4 Existing leisure cycling opportunities in the Borough include Mote Park, which is a short distance from Maidstone town centre via National Cycle Route 17 (NCR17). NCR17 provides a signed cycle route between Rochester and Ashford via Maidstone along a mixture of quiet lanes and traffic-free sections. From Mote Park, cyclists can cycle northeast to meet the Pilgrims Cycle Trail which connects Rochester Cathedral to Canterbury Cathedral through the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. North of Maidstone town centre, NCR17 climbs Blue Bell Hill before cutting across the countryside to arrive in Rochester by the River Medway and Cathedral. Further information about these opportunities is available from the Explore Kent website.

3.5 There are a number of local cycling clubs, including the San Fairy Ann Cycling Club (with more than 500 members) and MCC Offroad which organise and participate in numerous cycling events in the Maidstone area and further afield.

[5] Maidstone Destination Management Plan, July 2015. http://services.maidstone.gov.uk/meetings/documents/s43200/Destination%20Management%20Plan%20-%20Appendix%20I%20-%20Draft%20Destination%20Management%20Plan.pdf

3.6 Cycling is reported to be worth £2.9bn per annum to the UK economy, with the average cyclist contributing £230 per annum through activities including bicycle retail and related employment[6].

Health Benefits

3.7 The role of active travel modes in helping to create liveable towns and cities and promoting improved health/social inclusion is now becoming widely recognised by all tiers of government and health authorities. The link between transport, physical activity and health has been highlighted by the British Medical Assocation (BMA)[7] and warnings about the health consequences of an increasingly sedentary society are widely reported. It has been estimated that the cost of transport-related physical inactivity in England totals £9.8 billion per year. This is in addition to the estimated £2.5 billion annual healthcare cost of treating obesity[5].

3.8 The National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) identifies that the health benefits associated with active travel, include:-

- improved mental health and wellbeing;
- improved physical fitness; and
- the prevention of chronic diseases and health conditions, which include coronary heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, cancer and obesity.

3.9 Both cycling and walking are effective ways of increasing and integrating levels of physical activity into everyday life. Many people have yet to experience the benefits of regular cycling, especially for local journeys. In the UK 67% of trips by all modes are less than five miles (well within an hour's cycle ride in an urban area), and 38% are less than two miles[8], or within 40 minutes on foot. Therefore cycling is a potential mode for many of these trips.

[Walking and cycling isochrones from PTDOSC "alternatives to using a car" report to be inserted.]

3.10 A recent study by the DfT into the value for money of the Cycle City Ambition Grant and the Cycling in National Parks Grant found that the combined Benefit to Cost Ratio (BCR) of each of these funding streams was 5.5:1, which was considered to represent very high value for

[6] London School of Economics, The British Cycling Economy: 'Gross Cycling Product' Report, August 2011, http://eprints.lse.ac.uk/38063/1/BritishCyclingEconomy.pdf
[7] British Medical Association, Healthy Transport = Healthy Lives, July 2012, http://bma.org.uk/transport
[8] Department for Transport, National Travel Survey 2013, https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/national-travel-survey-2013

money. Around 60% of these benefits were accounted for by improved physical fitness, with much of the remainder being associated with journey quality and congestion relief[9].

3.11 Walking and cycling in urban areas can improve air quality through reducing congestion, and the air pollution that is generated by motor traffic, which represents the majority of air pollutants in Maidstone Borough. An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) was designated in 2001 which covers the entire urban conurbation of Maidstone. Within the AQMA, the automatic air quality monitoring station at the A229 Bridge Gyratory recorded a mean concentration of nitrogen dioxide (NO2) of 43.2µg/m^3 in the year 2012[10], above the maximum annual mean of 40µg/m^3 as required by national air quality regulations. Of the 65 other (non-automatic) monitoring sites across the Borough, nine sites exceeded the maximum annual mean in the year 2012, including Pilgrims Way, Detling which is outside the AQMA.

3.12 The above results highlight air quality concerns in the vicinity of main roads in the Borough. Poor air quality affects health, contributing towards cardiovascular disease and respiratory illness, adding further to NHS costs. It has been reported that air pollution reduces life expectancy by 7-8 months, which has the equivalent UK economic impact of £20 billion per year.[11] The potential for walking and cycling in Maidstone Borough to help increase life expectancy and decrease the economic impact of air pollution generated by vehicular traffic is therefore evident.

Social Benefits

3.13 Both walking and cycling are activities which can be fun and provide an opportunity for social interaction, unlike single occupancy car journeys. They enable a better appreciation of the Borough's urban and rural environment. Cycling provides access to routes and locations which are often too far for many to walk. Bicycles can coexist well with other users in residential streets and town centres, unlike the severance effect which can be caused by busy motor traffic routes.

3.14 As well as enabling exercise and recreation, cycling can also be a faster option for short journeys in congested urban environments. It is also a low cost transport option and therefore accessible to most people, promoting social inclusion. By reducing or removing

[9] Department for Transport, Value for Money Assessment for Cycling Grants, August 2014, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/348943/vfm-assessment-ofcycling-grants.pdf

[10] Bureau Veritas, Maidstone Borough Council LAQM Progress Report, October 2013, http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/9661/Maidstone-Town-Air-Quality-Action-Plan-April-2013.pdf

[11] Department for Food, Environment and Rural Affairs, Air Quality Strategy for England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, July 2007, https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/69336/pb12654-air-quality-strategy-vol1-070712.pdf

the costs of car ownership, cycling has the potential to be an attractive option for young people in particular, giving them independence and increasing their ability to access education, employment, shopping, healthcare and (longer distance) public transport opportunities.

4.0 Walking and Cycling in Maidstone Borough Today

Existing Cycle Network

4.1 The Borough's existing cycle network links the town centre to most suburban areas and community facilities, including several schools, Maidstone East railway station and Mote Park. National Cycle Network Route 17 (NCR17) provides an 11 mile leisure/commuter link (approximately half off-carriageway) between Maidstone and Rochester. Via Mote Park, Weavering Street and Hockers Lane, NCR17 connects to the Pilgrims Cycle Trail at Detling in the North Downs. At present, NCR17 connects with NCR1 (Inverness to Dover) in Rochester and ends in Ashford, but KCC has plans to extend the network by connecting to NCR2 (Dover to St Austell) on the South Coast.

4.2 Maidstone also has a Regional Route 12 (RR12) which originates in the town centre and extends along the A20 London Road into Tonbridge and Malling. A section of the route within Maidstone Borough is traffic free and provides good linkages to local schools in the residential area of Allington.

4.3 Limited cycle parking facilities are provided at locations within the Maidstone town centre shopping area, as well as cycle stands at Maidstone East and West railway stations and at KCC Sessions House and Invicta House. In addition, cycle lockers are available at Maidstone East railway station. Outside the town centre, some neighbourhood shopping areas are provided with cycle stands and Bearsted, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst railway stations have well-used cycle parking facilities.

4.4 Existing walking and cycling routes and facilities within the Maidstone urban area are illustrated in the Maidstone Walking and Cycling Map published by Explore Kent in 2012. This map is not available electronically although hard copies are available.

4.5 There are a number of issues which currently constrain the attractiveness of walking and cycling within Maidstone Borough:

- **Accessibility** – in many areas the pedestrian network does not currently provide equal access for all users. Dropped kerbs and tactile paving to assist the mobility and visually impaired may be unavailable, and the width of footways may in some cases be too narrow (whether in terms of their actual width, or their usable width due to the presence of sign columns or street furniture) to enable their use by wheelchairs and mobility scooters for example. Some routes are stepped without having a ramped alternative.
- **Connectivity** – Linkages from west to east Maidstone via the town centre are limited, although the situation has recently improved with the refurbishment of the pedestrian

bridge connecting Maidstone East and Maidstone Barracks railway stations. Subways are often flooded due to inadequate drainage systems and maintenance. There are currently no designated cycle routes in Tovil and Loose, to the south of the town centre, and to the west in Fant. Safer routes for cyclists to Maidstone West railway station and from the east to the schools and college at Oakwood Park are currently absent.

- **Safety** – safety concerns are frequently a barrier to people choosing to walk or cycle for some journeys. There are few traffic free cycle paths in the Borough and new cyclists may lack the confidence to share road space with motor traffic. Where walking and cycling routes lack lighting and natural surveillance, this may be another deterrent to the use of these modes. In winter, walking and cycling routes outside of the main shopping and pedestrian areas may not be gritted and this is another deterrent to the habitual use of active modes.

- **Secure cycle parking** – although considerable progress has been made in recent years, the availability of secure cycle parking at key locations such as shopping areas and railway stations can be limited.

Existing Cycling Activity

4.6 KCC provides year on year monitoring of cycling trips across Kent from inner urban cordons and automatic traffic counts. There are currently only two fixed cycle counters for Maidstone, one on the A20 outside the Kent Police traffic headquarters, and the other in Mote Park, on NCR17. More counters are needed at strategic locations in the urban area to monitor trip data. This will help gauge the success of future improvements to the cycling network.

4.7 In Maidstone, the monitoring of inner cordon cycle counters reveals the rate of cycling….[data awaited from KCC.]

[DfT Annual Average Daily Flow data for key radial routes to be analyses and appended.]

5.0 Improving the Walking and Cycling Network

5.1 As outlined in chapter xx of the ITS, the Council's targets for active modes are to:

- Increase the cycling mode share of all work trips made by Borough residents from 0.8% in 2011 to more than 2% of all work trips by 2021 and more than 3% by 2031.
- Increase the walking mode share of all work trips made by Borough residents from 8% in 2011 to more than 10% of all work trips by 2021 and more than 12% by 2031.

5.2 This Walking and Cycling Strategy identifies four main objectives to achieve these targets:

1. *Creating new links* – seeking new opportunities to extend routes to more people;
2. *Maintenance of the cycle route network* – looking after what we already have, and improving it;
3. *Creating a safer environment for walkers and cyclists* – designing safer routes and providing road safety education for motorists and non-motorised users alike; and
4. *Spreading the word* – raising awareness of existing and emerging facilities available to walkers and cyclists.

5.3 In terms of creating new cycling links within the Borough, which will also benefit walkers, proposals will be developed with the following strategic long-term aims in mind:

- "Filling in of the gaps" to create a **fully integrated urban cycle network**, with radial routes joined across the town centre. Key destinations (e.g. schools, colleges, hospitals, shopping centres, visitor attractions) and new housing and employment sites will be integrated into the cycle network.
- The creation of an **orbital walking and cycling route** around the Maidstone urban area, linking to the town centre via radial routes. This would be delivered through the upgrading of existing footpath networks where possible to provide cycle linkages, or alternatively along quiet lanes, within the following areas in particular:
    - To the southeast of the town, between Langley and Loose, incorporating Boughton Monchelsea;
    - To the south, within the Loose Valley Conservation Area and Hayle Park;
    - To the west, within the Medway Valley and on Hermitage Lane (linking with Barming railway station);
    - To the north, from Hermitage Lane to Sandling via Allington Lock; and
    - To the east, via the Len Valley north of Otham.

- The creation of **cycle routes from rural service centres and smaller settlements to transport hubs** (where new/improved cycle parking will be provided), along a mixture of quiet lanes and segregated shared use footways, such as:
    - To rural railway stations (Headcorn, Staplehurst, Marden, Yalding, East Farleigh, Hollingbourne, Harrietsham, Lenham); and
    - To bus stops on corridors where frequent interurban services are available or are planned as part of the ITS (e.g. A26 Tonbridge Road, A249 Sittingbourne Road).
- The creation of a **themed rural circular cycle route** (perhaps "Maidstone Ring" or similar) to encourage leisure cycling and exploration of the Borough's rural attractions. This would complement the existing NCR17/Pilgrims Cycle Trail and improve connectivity between rural service centres by cycle.

5.4 The above principles, and the guidance gratefully received from the Maidstone Cycle Forum, have informed the development of the detailed Action Plan presented in section 10. These detailed actions feed into the high level Transport Action Plan presented in chapter XX of the ITS. In respect of the cycle network the ITS actions are:

Action W1: Provision of accessible pedestrian routes for all users.

Action W2: Improve pedestrian accessibility across the River Medway in Maidstone town centre.

Action W3: Implement public realm improvement schemes within the town centre, such that pedestrian access is the primary mode within the central core of Maidstone.

Action C1: Maintain and further develop a strategic cycle network, connecting the town centre to key facilities and residential areas.

Action C2: Maintain and further develop cycle routes in rural service centres, connecting local amenities and transport hubs (rail stations and bus stops) to housing.

5.5 The objectives of network maintenance, creating a safer cycling environment and spreading the word are explored further in Sections 6, 7 and 8 respectively.

6.0 Maintenance of the Walking and Cycling Network

6.1 Unless new and existing walking and cycling facilities are maintained to an appropriate standard they will quickly fall into disrepair and will not be used. In residential areas, regular street cleaning may keep footways running parallel to motor traffic routes clear of debris, and surface defects may be promptly identified and repaired. However, the maintenance regime for off-carriageway routes is likely to be more limited.

6.2 Cycle routes require specific maintenance, including the regular cleansing of gullies and kerb lines as well as the cutting back of vegetation to preserve available width and sight lines. Surface defects should be repaired before they become a hazard. Road accident debris such as glass and overgrown vegetation can present hazards to cyclists, resulting in punctured tyres, compromised route alignments or obstacles, all of which could risk the safety of a cyclist and put them in conflict with other road users.

6.3 KCC has primary responsibility for the co-ordination of highways and Public Rights of Way maintenance. It works with third party landowners including MBC, where required, to achieve maintenance objectives. KCC's maintenance programme is determined on the basis of information from regular inspections, annual surveys using specialist equipment, and reports from councillors, parish councils, community groups and residents. Road surfaces are surveyed by KCC Highway Inspectors in a manner which takes into account the needs of cyclists; for example, by giving appropriate attention to the two metre strip alongside the kerb line where most cyclists ride. In constructing and maintaining cycle routes, the County Council refers to guidance outlined in TRL Application Guide AG26 (Version 2)[12].

6.4 It is KCC's intention to produce a cycle route maintenance schedule for off road cycle routes, subject to funding. This will include the use of volunteers, such as Sustrans Rangers, as well as dedicated contractors. Sustrans Rangers help to maintain the cycle network in a number of ways, including placing temporary signs, reporting faults, undertaking small-scale vegetation clearance and organising work days for more ambitious maintenance projects.

Action C3: MBC and KCC to work with partners to ensure the regular maintenance of all cycle tracks within the Borough.

[12] TRL, Footways and Cycle Route Design: Construction and Maintenance Guide, 2003, http://trl.co.uk/reportspublications/trl-reports/report/?reportid=6180

7.0 Safer Walking and Cycling

Cycle Training

7.1 National Standard Cycle Training (Bikeability) is provided across Kent by KCC and local School Games Partnerships. The training courses are structured for primary and secondary age school children in Years 4 to 9. The courses give children the skills to make safer choices when cycling and to enjoy the freedom of riding a bike. Bikeability courses are booked directly by schools.

7.2 Bikeability comprises three levels of competency-based cycle training. Level 1 is aimed at the basic bicycle control skills that are required to cycle safely in any environment. Level 2 is delivered on quiet roads and teaches participants the skills necessary to take a basic on-road journey and includes a variety of junctions. Level 3 tackles busy traffic situations and complex junctions. Importantly, participants must demonstrate competence at each level before they progress to the next.

7.3 Adult cycle training courses are also available. Corporate, group and individual training courses can be arranged and further information is available on KCC's website[13].

Action C4(a): All Year 6 children will have access to Level 1 and 2 Bikeability training, and children in Years 7 to 9 will have access to Level 3 training.

Action C4(b): Adult cycle training will continue to be offered, through initiatives including work place travel planning.

Road Safety

7.4 A key barrier to the use of active travel modes are people's concerns about road safety. Traffic free, segregated cycle routes are not available in all parts of the Borough. Footways can be narrow or absent and lighting is not always available which can make walking an intimidating experience after dark.

7.5 KCC undertake regular road safety campaigns targeted at different road user groups…[recent examples to be cited.]

7.6 Plots of Personal Injury Collisions (PICs) involving pedestrians and cyclists are included.

7.7 These data plots will be reviewed in detail to identify significant clusters of PICs involving non-motorised users and to analyse the main causes of these collisions. This review will be

[13] http://www.kent.gov.uk/roads-and-travel/road-safety/road-safety-training/cycle-training

used to develop a priority list of locations (e.g. road junctions, pedestrian crossing locations) where the upgrading of pedestrian and cycle facilities is required.

Action W4: Identify priority areas for implementation of safety improvements to reduce road traffic collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists.

8.0 Promoting Walking and Cycling in Maidstone Borough

8.1 The Council recognises that providing new walking and cycling routes alone will not dramatically increase the use of active travel modes in the Borough. Action to create a pro-active travel culture is needed in a range of areas which include land use and transport planning, regeneration, leisure, health and education. Promotion of walking and cycling will not only involve improved engineering measures and safety but also training, publicity and raising awareness amongst a range of different audiences.

8.2 First and foremost, KCC and MBC's websites need to be kept updated to enable local residents and visitors to access the latest information on walking and cycling routes and facilities. The Maidstone walking and cycling map should be updated and made available both electronically and in paper format, with copies distributed to the visitor information centre, tourist attractions, hotels, large employers and schools.

8.3 Efficient wayfinding can encourage walking and cycling through providing people with the information they need to navigate the town successfully, and understand the journey times between locations. Having clearly branded, consistent, wayfinding throughout the Maidstone central area not only provides information and reassurance to those less familiar with the area, but also adds to the overall experience of the public realm. All cycle routes throughout the Borough should be fully signposted for the benefit of new cyclists and those who are unfamiliar with the area.

8.4 As well as walking, cycling should form a key component of school and workplace Travel Plans and local clubs and cycle shops could help to promote cycling within the borough through active promotion and use of the local network. Travel Plans will be encouraged as they can include commitment to improving cycling facilities like secure parking, bicycle lockers or the provision of shower facilities for large employers. In 2011 Kent County Council produced new best practice guidance on travel plans.[14] Link is broken, KCC (Tay Arnold) to confirm.

8.5 With respect to school travel planning specifically, MBC is a sponsor of the KM Charity Group 'Walk to School' which seeks to encourage more parents and children to walk to school. Across the County since its inception, the Charity has resulted in:

- 40,000 children and families being involved;
- 600,000 green journeys annually; and
- 250,000 school run car journeys removed.

[14] New Ways to Work – Best practice guide for preparing travel plans in Kent 2011 https://shareweb.kent.gov.uk/Documents/roads-and-transport/getting-around/Travel%20Plan%202010.pdf

8.6 Schemes such as the above contribute greatly to reducing traffic congestion and these achievements will be built on through the appointment of a "school travel plan champion" within MBC to work with schools and KCC to further reduce car trips undertaking the "school run".

8.7 KCC will continue to develop and maintain a range of publications that will cover both the local and county cycle network and successful recent initiatives, such as Sky Ride Local. during National Bike Week, will be repeated wherever possible.

8.8 It is important that the requirements of planning applications are standardised and clarified so that cycling can be promoted through the development control process. In particular it is essential that new residential properties and other developments (such as employment, retail, healthcare and educational uses) provide secure cycle parking/storage areas close to the building entrance/exit. In respect of residential properties, for example, although a cycle locked in a shed at the end of a garden is stored within the curtilage of the property as required by the *Kent & Medway Structure Plan 2006: SPG4 Vehicle Parking Standards*[15], it is less likely to be used than one stored close to the front door. The provision of secure cycle storage should be managed via the development control process in the same way as car parking is managed. Equally important is the provision of attractive pedestrian and cycle routes within new developments, with good natural surveillance and crossing facilities to integrate with the surrounding neighbourhood.

8.9 With the support of KCC's Cycling Officer, the Maidstone Cycling Forum was re-established in 2015. The Forum brings together Members and officers from the Council, representatives of organisations with an interest in cycling and interested members of the public. Its goal is to *"help create a cycle-friendly culture in Maidstone, where residents and visitors of all ages and abilities choose to cycle regularly for those shorter journeys they do not make on foot."*

8.10 The Forum has completed a number of cycle related research tasks since its original establishment, and has recently provided assistance with the assessment of existing cycling routes in the Borough, highlighting missing links, as well as identifying potential new strategic routes.

Action W5: Actively encourage and promote walk to school initiatives.

Action W6: Improve street signage with better pedestrian wayfinding and a reduction in footway clutter.

Action C5: Support the Maidstone Cycling Forum as a group to promote the cycling cause in the Borough.

Action C6: Improve cycle security and parking at all key transport hubs and public amenities (including schools, healthcare facilities and retail locations).

Action C7: Encourage employers to incorporate cycling into Workplace Travel

[15] htt -
SPG4-

9.0 Monitoring the Cycling Strategy

9.1 This Strategy will be regularly monitored alongside the ITS.

9.2 Monitoring should take several forms including continuous automatic counters on cycle tracks and detailed route user surveys. This will enable a detailed database to be established which in turn can inform economic appraisals and health impact assessments in the borough.

9.3 Details of the walking and cycling modal share targets are presented in Chapter XX of the ITS. Progress against the ITS targets will be monitored using future census data, but cycle usage will be analysed on a more regular basis using the above data sources. It is envisaged that the Walking and Cycling Strategy itself will be updated every five years, with the first update scheduled in 2021.

Action C13: MBC and KCC to identify locations throughout the cycle network where new automatic cycle counters should be installed to enable a detailed analysis of usage. Installation to proceed as resources allow, but each new cycle infrastructure proposal will be assessed to see if an additional counter should be added to augment the data gathering process.

10.0 Proposed Development of the Walking and Cycling Network

10.1 If we are to achieve the aims set out in this strategy then the schemes chosen must create a network that appeals to both existing and potential pedestrians and cyclists.

10.2 Planning and prioritisation of the development of the walking and cycling network in Maidstone Borough has been undertaken with input from the Maidstone Cycle Forum. Proposals have been sifted on the grounds of likely technical and political deliverability. Recommendations have been prepared and are split into the following geographical areas:

- Maidstone Town Centre
- North West Maidstone
- South West Maidstone
- North East Maidstone
- South East Maidstone
- Rural

For each of the above areas a map is provided which illustrates the recommended interventions. These are described in the accompanying table, together with an indicative timetable for their implementation, potential funding sources and delivery partners. [Maps to be completed]

10.3 As this is a strategy, it should be noted that the proposals are indicative only and that their implementation will be dependent upon securing the necessary funding and the completion of satisfactory feasibility design, detailed design and public consultation exercises at the appropriate stage.

Maidstone Town Centre

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
MTC1	Widening of existing Wat Tyler Way shared use footway.	Footway widening on east side of Wat Tyler Way between Ashford Road and Chancery Lane, amended carriageway markings (reduced lane widths).				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	• KCC • MBC
MTC2	Upgraded crossing facilities on A249 Sittingbourne Road at Union Street/Vintners Road junction.	Signage, upgrading of controlled crossing to toucan standard, widening of footway alongside Sittingbourne Road, surfacing.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	• KCC • MBC
MTC3	Improved cycle connectivity between High Street and Lockmeadow.	Package of measures to improve cycle facilities between High Street and Barker Road. Signage, upgrading of Bishops Way controlled crossing to toucan standard, expansion of cycle/pedestrian waiting areas, relocation of lamp columns/street furniture, cycle facilities on Barker Road, surfacing.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• KCC • MBC
MTC4	Enable cycling between College Road and Brunswick Street.	Upgrade existing footpath link between A229 Hayle Road and Brunswick Street. Install toucan crossing on A229 Hayle Road to facilitate cycle access to and from College Road. Amended Right of Way Order required, signage, surfacing.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	• KCC • MBC
MTC5	Package of measures to improve pedestrian environment and public realm along Week Street, incorporating appropriate access for cyclists.	Allow cycle access to Week Street: 1) at all times between Station Road and Union Street (contraflow required); 2) from 8pm to 8am between Union Street and High Street. Cycle parking facilities to be provided within improved public realm. Amended Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) required, signage on entries to pedestrian priority zone, contraflow road markings, surfacing (to indicate cycle route).				CIL	• KCC • MBC • Town Centre Partnership
MTC6	Package of measures to improve linkages between River Medway and Week Street, including pedestrianisation of Earl Street.	Pedestrianisation of Earl Street between Pudding Lane and Week Street to ensure cycle access is maintained. Cycle parking facilities to be provided within improved public realm.					• KCC • MBC • Town Centre Partnership
MTC7	New cycle route between Week Street (NCN17) and Medway Valley towpath, serving Kent History & Library Centre.	Signage, footway widening Stacey Street and Fairmeadow, new direct shared use footway from James Whatman Way to Fairmeadow, upgrade existing crossing facilities to south of A229/James Whatman Way roundabout to toucan standard.				CIL S106	• KCC • MBC
MTC8	Upgrade existing footway across River Medway between Maidstone Barracks (Buckland Hill) and Maidstone East (Station Road) for shared pedestrian/cycle use.	Signage (shared use, priority to pedestrians).				CIL S106 Integrated Transport block funding	• KCC • MBC

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
MTC8	Medway Valley Towpath	Towpath improvements and making of Cycle Tracks Order to create a cycle route between Allington Lock and East Farleigh.				Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF) MBC (New Homes Bonus)	• KCC • MBC
MTC9	Scotney Gardens – Whatman Park Towpath	On west side of River Medway, new section of towpath and improvements to existing towpath.				S106	• KCC • MBC
MTC10	Wayfinding Strategy – package of measures to introduce themed trails and quarters in the town centre to improve legibility.	Additional signage to benefit pedestrians and cyclists within town centre. Monoliths and finger posts at key locations: • Barracks, East, West rail stations • Outside shopping centres/main shopping streets • Outside major attractions (e.g. museum, theatre)				CIL	• KCC • MBC • Town Centre Partnership • South Eastern Rail Franchisee • Network Rail • Bus Operators
MTC11	Public realm improvements on King Street between Wyke Manor Road and existing bus station access.	Footpath improvements, cycle facilities. Upgraded crossing facilities at junction with Church Street.				CIL S106 (Church Street crossing improvements)	•
MTC12	New River Medway pedestrian/cycle crossing	Provision of shared use pedestrian/cycle footbridge linking St Peter's Street and Earl Street.				CIL	• KCC • MBC
MTC13	New cycle parking facilities at Maidstone West railway station.	Install five cycle stands with shelter.				Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• MBC • South Eastern Rail Franchisee • KCC

North West Maidstone

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
NWM1	Footway widening on north side of A20 London Road between Castle Road and Grace Avenue to create two-way cycle path.	Signage, surfacing, reconfiguration of Grace Avenue eastbound bus stop layby.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	• KCC • MBC
NWM2	Upgraded crossing facilities at Castle Road/London Road junction.	Install controlled crossing facilities on all arms. Dropped kerbs, tactile paving, signage.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	• KCC • MBC
NWM3	Create new cycle route between Newbury Avenue and Sandling via Allington Lock, providing low traffic route to Museum of Kent Life.	Signage, footway improvements (widening, dropped kerbs, tactile paving) between Forstal Road and Sandling.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• KCC • MBC

South West Maidstone

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
SWM1	Cycle route on east side of Hermitage Lane, linking Barming rail station (TMBC) with traffic free cycle path to Queen's Road (Cherry Orchard).	Footway widening, signage, dropped kerbs, tactile paving.				S106	• KCC • TMBC • MBC • South Eastern Rail Franchisee
SWM2	Cycle route between Giddyhorn Lane and Hermitage Lane (1.0km).	Surface existing footpath and upgrade to bridleway status, signage, lighting (?)				S106 CIL	• KCC • MBC
SWM3	Closure of North Pole Road to through motor traffic to facilitate creation of cycle route from Barming to Kingshill.	Stopping Up Order, bollards, signage.				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	• TMBC • KCC • MBC
SWM4	Creation of cycle route from Medway Valley towpath (Unicumes Lane) to Hackney Road and westwards to South Street. This would provide an alternative cycle route during floods at East Farleigh.	Signage, upgrade existing footpaths to bridleway status, vegetation clearance (e.g. east of Farleigh Lane).				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	• KCC • MBC

North East Maidstone

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
NEM1	Package of highway improvements between Bearsted and New Cut Roundabouts.	Provision of new toucan crossing and combined foot/cycle way between the roundabouts as part of dual carriageway works.				S106	• KCC • MBC
NEM2	Package of highway improvements at M20 Junction 7.	As part of Junction 7 signalisation, creation of a new signal controlled pedestrian route through the gyratory.				S106	• Highways England • KCC • MBC
NEM3	Cycle friendly traffic management measures on Sandling Lane/ Penenden Heath Road	Feasibility study required but potential measures include: • Reduction in speed limit from 40mph to 30mph • Vertical/horizontal traffic calming • Footway widening to facilitate shared pedestrian/cycle use				CIL Integrated Transport block funding	• KCC • MBC
NEM4	New cycle parking facilities at Bearsted railway station	Installation of four cycle stands accommodating eight cycles.				Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• MBC • South Eastern Rail Franchisee • KCC
NEM5	Package of improvement measures on the A20 Ashford Road between Bearsted and Woodcut Farm	In conjunction with pedestrian refuges and bus stops outside site EMP1(5), improvements to north side footway to facilitate shared use by pedestrians and cyclists, to connect with existing advisory cycle routes in Bearsted				S106/S278 CIL Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• MBC • KCC

South East Maidstone

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
SEM1	Creation of a cycle route from Sutton Road to The Quarries (3.0km), south of Local Plan site H1(10) and Langley Loch. This would connect with an existing advisory cycle route to Loose and the proposed Loose "Greenway".	Signage, surfacing, existing footpaths upgraded to bridleway status.				S106	• Developers • KCC • MBC
SEM2	Loose "Greenway" – cycle route from Kirkdale to Old Drive and northwards to Cripple Street TBC	Signage, surfacing, widening, existing footpaths upgraded to bridleway status.					• KCC • MBC • Loose Parish Council
SEM3	Eastwards extension of Sutton Road cycle routes to provide sustainable transport access to housing sites H1(7), (8), (9) and (10).	Signage, surfacing, lighting, toucan crossing(s) on A274 to connect housing sites to north and south of road and to connect with existing cycle routes through Shepway/Park Wood.				S106	• S106 • KCC • MBC
SEM4	Crossing facilities on A274 near Horseshoes Lane junction to provide sustainable transport access to amenities on housing site H1(10) for residents of Langley/Langley Heath.	Dropped kerbs, tactile paving. Pedestrian refuge or controlled puffin/toucan crossing – details TBC.				S106	• S106 • KCC • MBC

Rural Maidstone Borough

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5-10 years	Long term >10 years		
RMB1	Creation of cycle route from Maidstone to Headcorn (and beyond to Biddenden)	Signage, quiet unclassified roads, some on-street cycle lanes/segregated cycle track (A274).				CIL S106	• KCC • MBC • Wealden DC • Sustrans
RMB2	Creation of cycle route from Maidstone to Staplehurst (and beyond to Cranbrook)	Signage, quiet unclassified roads, some on-street cycle lanes/segregated cycle track (A229).				CIL S106	• KCC • MBC • Wealden DC • Sustrans
RMB3	Creation of cycle route from Maidstone to Marden via Coxheath	Signage, quiet unclassified roads, some on-street cycle lanes/segregated cycle track.				CIL S106	• KCC • MBC • Sustrans

Walking and Cycling	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
RMB4	Creation of cycle route from Medway Valley towpath to Paddock Wood via Laddingford	Signage, quiet unclassified roads.				CIL S106	• KCC • MBC • TWDC • Sustrans
RMB5	Creation of cycle route from Maidstone to Sittingbourne via A249 and quiet lanes	Signage, segregated shared use footways, possible toucan crossings.				CIL Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• KCC • Highways England • MBC • Swale BC • Sustrans
RMB6	Creation of cycle route from Maidstone to Harrietsham/Lenham via A20.	Signage, segregated shared use footways, possible toucan crossings.				CIL S106 Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• KCC • MBC • Sustrans
RMB7	Creation of Maidstone – Tonbridge cycle route via Medway Valley	From Allington Lock northwards. Signage, anticipated mixture of riverside towpath, segregated cycle track and quiet unclassified roads.				CIL Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• KCC • MBC • TMBC • Medway Council • Sustrans • Medway Valley Countryside Partnership
RMB8	Creation of “Maidstone Ring” cycle route linking Rural Service Centres and other smaller settlements, e.g. Bredhurst, Wichling, Lenham (via Swale), Headcorn, Staplehurst (via TWDC), Marden, Yalding and via River Medway to Maidstone	Signage, some segregated cycle track, on-street cycle lanes.				CIL Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• KCC • MBC • TWDC • Sustrans
RMB9	Coxheath Sustainable Transport Package	TBC – check Neighbourhood Plan New footway link from site H1 (45) to Mill Lane, Coxheath				S106	• KCC • MBC • Coxheath Parish Council
RMB10	New cycle parking facilities at Marden railway station.	TBC				S106	• South Eastern Rail Franchisee • KCC • MBC

Walking and Cycling Strategy Action	Proposal	Type of Infrastructure Required	Timescale for Delivery			Potential Funding Sources	Delivery Partners
			Short term <5 years	Medium term 5 – 10 years	Long term > 10 years		
RMB11	Marden Sustainable Transport Package	• Upgrading of Goudhurst Road zebra crossing to pelican crossing • New pedestrian crossing on Church Green • Traffic calming measures				S106	• S106 • KCC • MBC
RMB12	Harrietsham Sustainable Transport Package	• Pedestrian crossing improvements/traffic calming on A20 • Cycle route between railway station and primary school • Additional cycle parking at railway station • Footway enhancements				S106 Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• KCC • MBC • South Eastern Rail Franchisee • Harrietsham Parish Council
RMB13	Cycle parking Hollingbourne	Five cycle stands and CCTV				Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• South Eastern Rail Franchisee • KCC • MBC
RMB14	Improved cycle parking at Headcorn railway station	Installation of shelter over existing cycle hoops.				Local Enterprise Partnership (LSTF)	• South Eastern Rail Franchisee • KCC • MBC
RMB15	Headcorn Sustainable Transport Package	• Crossing improvements at A274 Wheeler Street. • Footway link from EMP1(4) to A274, Headcorn				S106	• KCC • MBC • Headcorn Parish Council
RMB16	Lenham Sustainable Transport Package	Traffic calming, pedestrian crossing facilities on Ham Lane and Old Ashford Road				CIL	
RMB17	Staplehurst Rail Station Forecourt Improvements	• Footway/crossing improvements on Station Approach • Additional cycle parking				CIL S106 South Eastern Rail Franchisee	• South Eastern Rail Franchisee • Bus Operators
RMB18	Staplehurst Sustainable Transport Package	Package to improve sustainable transport infrastructure to include provision of pedestrian/cycle crossing on Headcorn Road, ped/cycle links to railway station as well as bus infrastructure, reduced speed limit, potential traffic calming				S106	• KCC • MBC
RMB19	Yalding Sustainable Transport Package	Further work required to determine specific interventions.				CIL South Eastern Rail Franchisee	• KCC • MBC • South

							• Eastern Rail Franchisee • Yalding Parish Council

Appendix 3

Maidstone Borough Council

Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee

Tuesday 1 December 2015

Urgent Update Report

Item 14 – Integrated Transport Strategy

Park and Ride

In the recent Regulation 18 consultation draft of the Local Plan, it is proposed to delete two park and ride site allocations at Linton Crossroads and Old Sittingbourne Rd (the latter due to the landowner indicating that the land is not available for this purpose).

No new park and ride sites have come forward as a result of this consultation. To compensate for not providing such facilities for intercepting commuter traffic from areas to the north and south of Maidstone, other sustainable transport interventions are proposed within the Integrated Transport Strategy (and the Infrastructure Delivery Plan). This includes interventions such as a, subsidised, new express bus service between Maidstone town centre and the A249 stopping at junction 7 of the M20 motorway and the return journey (the detail is set out on page 80 section 12.30-12.31).

Discussions are continuing with bus operators to increase the frequency of existing services on commuter routes.