

AGENDA

COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING



Overview and Scrutiny

Date: Tuesday 6 December 2011

Time: 6.30 pm

Venue: Town Hall, High Street,
Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors: Ash, Mrs Blackmore (Chairman), Field,
FitzGerald (Vice-Chairman),
D Mortimer, Mrs Parvin, Paterson,
Mrs Stockell and Yates

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1. **The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.**
2. **Apologies.**
3. **Notification of Substitute Members.**
4. **Notification of Visiting Members.**

Continued Over/:

Issued on 28 November 2011

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Alison Broom

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

5. Disclosures by Members and Officers:	
a) Disclosures of interest.	
b) Disclosures of lobbying.	
c) Disclosures of whipping.	
6. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.	
7. Minutes of the meeting held on 8 November 2011	1 - 4
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Interviews with:	
Jim O'Connor, Chief Executive NOAH enterprise;	
Steve Gill, Director NOAH enterprise; and	
Jennifer Gosling, Waste Collections Manager.	
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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 8 NOVEMBER 2011

PRESENT: Councillor Mrs Blackmore (Chairman)
Councillors Field, FitzGerald, D Mortimer, Mrs Parvin,
Paterson, Mrs Stockell and Yates

77. The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.

The Committee discussed Item 10, Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2011. Members agreed that there were no changes to be made so the item could be taken in Part I with item 7, Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2011 which would enable the meeting to remain in Part I.

Resolved: That all items should be web-cast

78. Apologies.

Apologies were received from Councillor Ash.

79. Notification of Substitute Members.

There were no Substitute Members.

80. Notification of Visiting Members.

There were no Visiting Members.

81. Disclosures by Members and Officers:

There were no disclosures.

82. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.

It was resolved that all items should be taken in public as proposed.

83. Amendment to order of Business

It was resolved that that Item 10, Part II minutes of the meeting held on 11 October should be taken in Part I to following item 7, Part I minutes of the meeting held on as their were no amendments to be made.

84. Part I Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2011

Resolved: That the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2011 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

85. Part II Minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2011

Resolved: That the Part II minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2011 be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed by the Chairman.

86. Amendment to Order of Business

It was resolved that item 9, Future Work programme and Scrutiny Officer Update should be taken before item 8, 'Making Waste Work for Maidstone' Review, as the witness had not yet arrived.

87. Future Work Programme and Scrutiny Officer Update

The Committee considered the Forward Plan and their Future Work Programme. Members agreed that they did not require a future update on the Local Strategic Partnership which now formed part of the Locality Boards. Members discussed their next meeting which was to focus on NOAH enterprise and the provision of the Bulky Collection and Freighter Service as part of the new Waste Contract. Members discussed the Freighter Service and the review that had taken place of the service recently as well as a number of years ago by the previous Waste Manager. It was agreed that there would be enormous benefit in inviting the Waste Manager, Jennifer Gosling, to the next meeting to discuss the figures collated on the Freighter Service usage by her and to compare these with the usage figures collated by her predecessor.

Members were reminded that the next review topic, agreed at the beginning of the Municipal Year, was Neighbourhood Action Planning. A preliminary meeting had been arranged with the Chairman and Jim Boot, Community Development Manager to explore the topic to gain an understanding of what had already been achieved by the authority.

The Committee were reminded about their visit to Aylesford Newsprint, which had been arranged with Councillor Yates. It was to take place on Friday 2 December from 10.30 a.m. to 12.30 p.m. and would assist the Committee's understanding of paper recycling which was an important part of the new waste contract and the Committee's current review topic.

The Scrutiny Officer provided Members with all the Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP) responses so far in relation to the review. The Chairman asked the Committee to consider the responses given by Officers and suggest any additional action to be taken.

Members felt that some of the responses given could be addressed in more detail. The Committee's desire to consider alternatives to the current Bulky Collection and Freighter Services were part of the Best Value Review in 2009 and whilst the Officer's response answered their question it did not offer any indication as to what would be done to continue with this action. Members agreed that they would like to be updated further by the Waste Manager, Jennifer Gosling, and this could be addressed at the next meeting. It was felt action plans and timescales would be needed to fully address many of the recommendations made.

The Committee discussed the British Legion Village and 'The Beacon' at Shepway and suggested that these two organisations should be investigated in terms of the recycling and reuse of bulky items.

The Gateway was discussed as a collection point and the collection of plastic bottle tops which was an initiative of LUSH Fresh Handmade Cosmetics. Members felt that there could be improvements made in the provisions available to families for the collection of small recyclable items such as electronic goods, batteries, ink cartridges, energy saving light bulbs (which contained mercury) and plastic bottle tops.

It was recommended that:

- a) The reuse of items collected by the Freighter Services by the British Legion and the Beacon at Shepway should be investigated by the Scrutiny Officer and reported back to the Committee; and
- b) The use of the Gateway as a collection point for other small items such as batteries, ink cartridges, energy saving light bulbs (containing mercury) small electrical items and plastic bottle tops should be investigated by the Scrutiny Officer as a means of improving recycling provisions for families.

88. 'Making Waste Work for Maidstone' Review

Unfortunately the witness scheduled to attend the meeting, Carolyn Gomez, Environmental Systems Manager at LUSH Handmade Cosmetics was unable to make the meeting.

Members discussed initiatives that LUSH had advertised such as recycling the plastic bottle tops used to make their black pots used to sell their products. This was because the type of plastic in the bottle top differed from the type the bottle was made from and was not recycled with other plastic recycling. This tied in with the company's aim to have 100% of their packaging easily recyclable, compostable or biodegradable. Reference was also made to the company's targets for recycling in their shops and factories which was set at 85%.

The Committee discussed the best course of action to take and decided to put forward questions to the Scrutiny Officer and seek a written response from the absent witness.

It was resolved that Members should put their questions forward and the Scrutiny Officer would seek a response to them.

The following questions were posed by Members:

- The products used by LUSH are predominantly for use in the bathroom. Given the company's impressive green ethos, what consideration has been given to the impact of the products on the waste water supply?
- What relationship do LUSH have with the company Closed Loop?
- What experience do LUSH have in the tendering of Waste contracts and what advice could they offer Maidstone Borough Council as they enter into a ten year contract in partnership with three neighbouring authorities?
- LUSH's admirable packaging and recycling target of 85% in their shops and factories has been noted by the Committee, what update can be given on the progress of this target?
- Five LUSH shops have been tasked with reducing the waste they send to landfill to less than 5%, equivalent to zero waste. How successful has this been so far?
- How successful are the in store initiatives to reduce and reuse packaging such as returning five black pots in exchange for a free face mask?
- A lot of items are sold without packaging in branches, how do the raw ingredients reach the factories, are suppliers sought with a similar approach?
- With branches situated on the high street, what relationship do LUSH have with other retailers, restaurants and bars and are there any waste and recycling initiatives being developed with other businesses?
- Have branches experienced any resistance from customers with regard to the 'no packaging' approach, has there been an impact on sales?
- What demographic/age group are predisposed to LUSH's ethos and are therefore the company's target market?

89. Duration of Meeting

6.32 p.m. to 7.19 p.m.

Maidstone Borough Council

Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 6 December 2011

'Making Waste Work for Maidstone' Review

Report of: Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee chose Waste as their major review topic for the 2011/12 municipal year. Waste reduction and the Tendering Strategy are the overarching elements of the review with a focus on the following three main areas:
- waste reduction;
 - the freighter services and bulky waste collections; and
 - plastics.
- 1.2 The review seeks to ensure the new waste contract delivers the most comprehensive, cost effective and efficient service possible for residents and will therefore concentrate on:
- Identify how to unlock the economic value of waste in Maidstone;
 - Examine best practice in established commercial waste services in terms of collection, reuse and recycling;
 - Investigate possible partnership or subcontracting arrangements;
 - Investigate Community Projects which could benefit from the reuse of waste materials (and other not for profit organisations) i.e. terra cycle <http://www.terracycle.co.uk/brigades>, YMCA, charities and the Prison (include Bulky collections);
 - To make recommendations as appropriate to the Best Value Review of Waste which remains a 'live' document ;and

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Committee interview Jim O'Connor and Steve Gill, Chief Executive and Director respectively at New Opportunities and Horizons (NOAH) Enterprise to gain an understanding of how Maidstone Borough Council could work to reduce waste by enabling a Social Enterprise to collect bulky items and waste materials which would be reused.
- 2.2 Members are also recommended to interview Jennifer Gosling, Waste Collections Manager to gain an understanding of the

operations of the Freighter Service and any initiatives that have been or are currently being explored.

2.3 Members are recommended to consider the statements of Mr O'Connor, Mr Gill and Ms Gosling and ask questions with regard to the Waste Review as they feel appropriate. Areas of questioning could include, but are not limited to:

- The Freighter Service and Bulky Collection being provided by someone other than the local authority, possibly a social enterprise;
- The issue of 'cherry picking' valuable waste material and not collecting the excess as part of the contract arrangement;
- The overall value of reuse and recycling in reducing waste;
- The intrinsic value of enabling a Social Enterprise where profit would benefit the underprivileged within the community;
- Successful initiatives which encourage the reduction, reuse and recycling of waste;
- Ways in which to develop a broader, more inclusive relationship with residents by working with charitable organisations, social enterprises and the Prison; and
- Maidstone Borough Council's relationship with Closed Loop Recycling and ways in which this could be developed in partnership with the Council.

3. NOAH Enterprise

3.1 NOAH is a homeless charity based in Luton, Bedfordshire established in 1987 by Sister Eileen O'Mahony, a Daughter of Charity of St Vincent de Paul who was asked to come to Luton to work in support of young immigrants.

3.2 NOAH takes a holistic approach and the support offered ranges from a hot meal and medical care to NVQ accredited training. The training offered includes:

- Woodwork and furniture restoration
- White goods refurbishment
- Warehousing
- IT skills
- Life skills

3.3 The Social Enterprise activities raise money to support NOAH's charitable works and provide support and work experience to many NOAH clients. The Social Enterprises include:

- Three Luton-based retail outlets located in High Town, Power Court and the Arndale Shopping Centre selling a variety of new and used furniture, kitchen appliances, clothing and household goods;

- Furniture and appliance restoration and repair at our Power Court and Portland Road warehouses; and
- A second hand furniture and kitchen appliance collection and reuse service.

3.4 NOAH's Social Enterprises have received support from the Big Lottery Fund's Community Recycling and Economic Development Programme (CRED) and the European Regional Development Fund.

4. The Freighter Service

4.1 Jennifer Gosling, Waste Collections Manager, conducted a review of the Freighter Service in 2010. The attached summary report (**Appendix A**) accompanied the 2010 Fees and Charges report.

4.2 Over a six week period which commenced on 20 March 2010, information was recorded at each site which included the items disposed of, the origin of waste (household or commercial) and the method of travel to the site.

4.3 At each site the number of visitors and the time spent at each site by the Freighter was recorded. This information was used to calculate the average usage of each site which is shown in the main table in appendix A. Those sites with particularly low usage are highlighted in yellow. Overall 17 sites demonstrated low visitor numbers.

4.4 Graph 2, in Appendix A, shows the different types of waste disposed of. Since this information was collated in 2010, garden waste is no longer collected by the Freighter Service.

4.5 The decision not to collect garden waste is one of the conclusions made in the summary report:

'Garden waste should not be accepted at the sites – every effort should be made to encourage residents to compost at home, to use the garden waste collection service or to take the waste to Tovil Household Waste Recycling Centre.'

4.6 Members may wish to consider the other conclusions of the report as they evaluate the Freighter Service and possible solutions and alternatives to delivering an efficient service to residents.

5. Impact on Corporate Objectives

5.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following Council priorities:

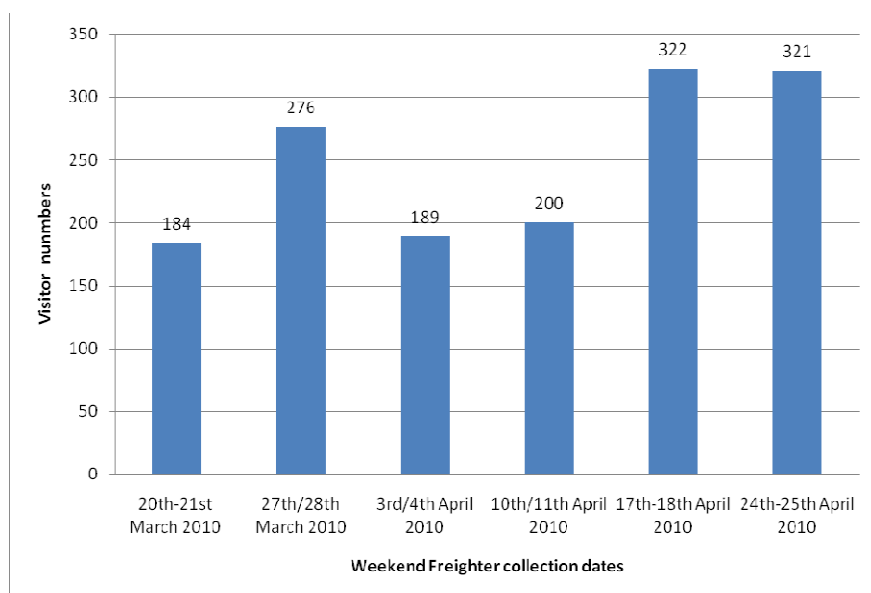
- 'Corporate and Customer Excellence' and 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live.'

5.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. The Committee's work will contribute to the delivery of these key objectives over the next year.

Weekend Freighter Monitoring – Results summary

The weekend freighter service was monitored over a six week period from Saturday 20th March 2010. Postcodes, items disposed off, method of travel to the site and origin of waste i.e. domestic or commercial, were recorded at each of the sites.

Graph 1 shows the total number of residents visiting the weekend freighter sites each weekend. This peaked at 322 visitors over a time period of 10.5 hours; averaging a visitor every 2 minutes.



Graph 1: Total number of visitors

Over the 6 weeks of monitoring, there was an average of one visitor every 2.5 minutes. However results from some sites indicated poor usage of the site, as marked in yellow in the table below:

Date	Weekend Freighter Service Site	Number of visitors	Time at WF (mins)	Minutes per visit
20th-21st March 2010	Anglesey Avenue	16	30	1.88
	Chantry Road Marden	24	75	3.13
	Church Street Staplehurst	15	45	3.00
	Church Green Loose	14	30	2.14
	Corrance Green Loose	11	30	2.73
	Dean Street	4	45	11.25
	Gandys Lane	12	30	2.50
	Hubbards Lane	7	30	4.29
	North Down Staplehurst	24	60	2.50
	Old Loose Hill	3	45	15.00
	Poyntell Road Staplehurst	15	60	4.00
	Stanley Road Marden	21	45	2.14
Total		166	555	3.34
Date	Weekend Freighter Service	Number of	Time at WF	Minutes per

Appendix A

	Site	visitors	(mins)	visit
27th/28th March 2010	Bearsted Ashford Road	31	45	1.45
	Bearsted Village Green	30	60	2.00
	Bicknor Road	13	30	2.31
	Essex Road	36	40	1.11
	Harrietsham	21	60	2.86
	Highland Road	7	45	6.43
	Hollingbourne	17	60	3.53
	Lockham Farm	20	60	3.00
	Otham	19	45	2.37
	Morrisons Queen Elizabeth Sq	13	45	3.46
	Vinters Park Marston Drive	33	60	1.82
	Westmorland Rd by the Green	12	30	2.50
	Woolley Road	24	60	2.50
Total		276	635	2.30
3rd/4th April 2010	Amber Lane Chart Sutton	3	30	10.00
	Brogden Crescent Leeds	10	45	4.50
	Buckland Hill	15	60	4.00
	Court Broomes East Sutton	7	30	4.29
	Grasslands Langley	19	30	1.58
	Greenways Cherry Orchard Estate	15	60	4.00
	Kingswood Village Hall	23	60	2.61
	Queens Road	17	45	2.65
	Shepherds Way Langley	18	45	2.50
	Springwood Road Barming	8	75	9.38
	The Harbour Sutton Valence	21	30	1.43
	South Lane Sutton Valence	11	30	2.73
	Trevor Drive Allington	22	60	2.73
Total		189	600	3.17
10th/11th April 2010	Bishops Close Nettlestead	25	60	2.40
	Brenchley Road Tovil	8	30	3.75
	Camp Way Mangravet	11	60	5.45
	Cleveland Close Laddingford	10	60	6.00
	Collier Street - Church Farm	11	75	6.82
	Courtenay Road Tovil	10	30	3.00
	Livesey Street Teston	15	60	4.00
	Lower Road Mote Park	17	45	2.65
	Provender Way North	14	45	3.21
	Provender Way South	31	60	1.94
	Teston - by the green	13	30	2.31
	West Farleigh - by the green	13	75	5.77
	Woodside Road Mangravet	22	45	2.05
Total		200	675	3.38
Date	Weekend Freighter Service	Number of	Time at WF	Minutes per

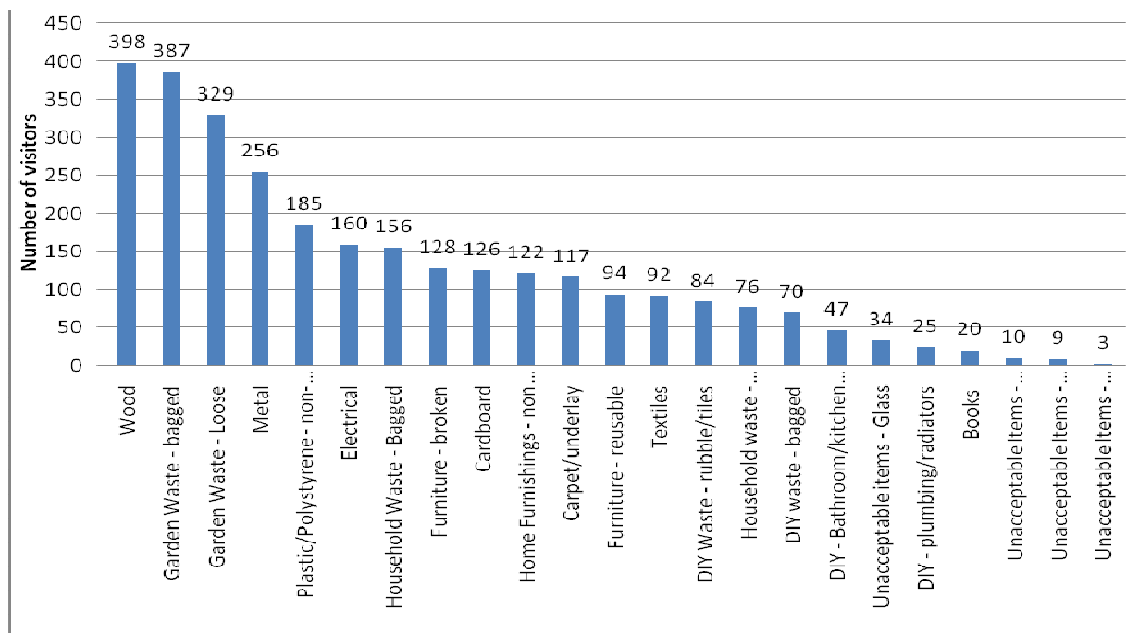
Appendix A

	Site	visitors	(mins)	visit
17th-18th April 2010	Anglesey Ave Loose	32	60	1.88
	Betsham Road Senacre	18	60	3.33
	Broad oak Ave Loose	33	45	1.36
	Church Road Grafty Green	29	45	1.55
	Green Lane Platts Heath	32	60	1.88
	Honywood Road	34	60	1.76
	Lodge Gardens Ulcombe	39	45	1.15
	Northumberland Road	10	30	3.00
	Oak Lane Headcorn	38	45	1.18
	Orchard Glade Headcorn	36	60	1.67
	Parkwood Parade - behind shops	4	30	7.50
	Wallis Ave/Bicknor Road	4	60	15.00
	York Road/South Park Road	13	30	2.31
Total		322	630	1.96
24th-25th April 2010	Coxheath Village Hall	12	60	5.00
	Gallants Lane, East Farleigh	13	60	4.62
	Hampton Road	53	75	1.42
	Hatherall Road Penenden Heath	30	60	2.00
	Huntington Road Coxheath	26	45	1.73
	Hunton Village Hall	7	45	6.43
	Lyngs Close Yalding	20	60	3.00
	Merton Road Madginford	63	45	0.71
	Provender Way Grove Green	40	60	1.50
	Snowdon Avenue Vinters Park	44	45	1.02
	Yalding Village Hall	13	45	3.46
Total		321	570	570
Total		1492	3665	2.5

Seventeen sites from those monitored demonstrated low visitor numbers and with the exception of Parkwood Parade, Wallis Avenue, Springwood Road (Barming) and Camp Way (Mangravel), the majority of these were in the rural areas.

The five urban sites which has poor attendance were surprising, however each of these sites are in close proximity of other sites which are more heavily used.

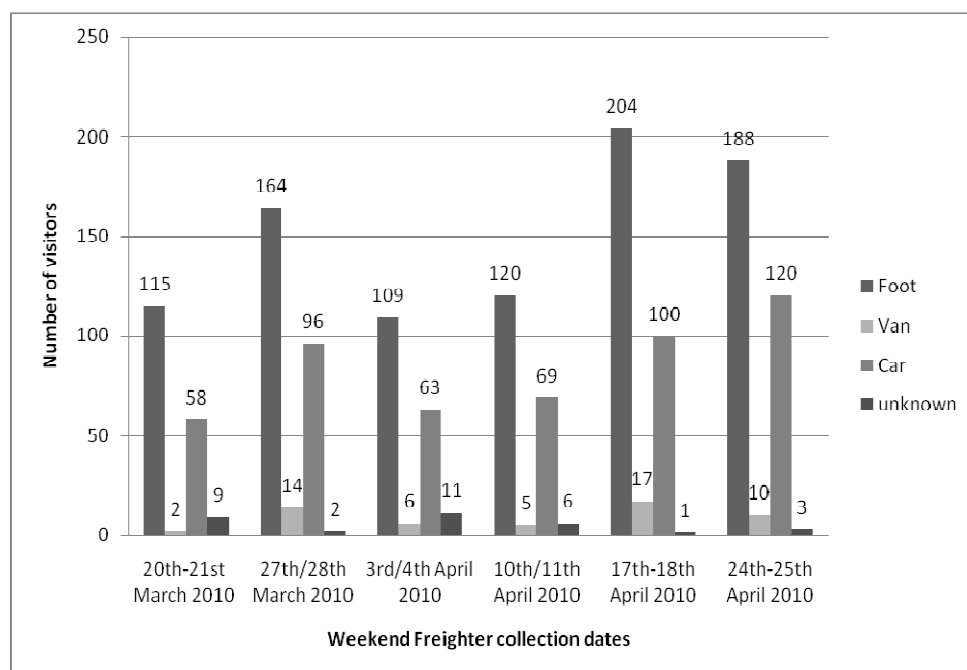
Appendix A



Graph 2: Total number of visitors disposing of each type of waste item

Graph 2 shows the different types of waste disposed of through the weekend freighter. Garden waste (716 visitors), wood (398 visitors) and metal (256 visitors) appear to be the main items disposed of, however all are recyclable.

Garden waste can already be recycled easily within the borough either by using the garden waste service, taking it to Tovil Household Waste Recycling Centre or by composting at home. Accepting garden waste at the weekend freighter conflicts with the waste reduction and recycling message that the Council promotes. It provides an easy route for residents to dispose of their garden waste rather than recycle it.



Graph 3: Method of travel

Appendix A

Graph 3 highlights visitors' method of travel each weekend during the six week monitoring period. Overall 60% of visitors travelled on foot to the weekend freighter sites compared with 34% by car.

Over 98% of waste collected was confirmed domestic waste, therefore it does not appear that commercial premises are using the freighter service as a free method of disposal.

Conclusions

- Garden waste should not be accepted at the sites – every effort should be made to encourage residents to compost at home, to use the garden waste collection service or to take the waste to Tovil Household Waste Recycling Centre
- The weekend freighter should be sited at areas of need in order to improve the efficiency of the service
- Sites with low performance should be removed from the schedule and other sites consolidated to reduce the service to one day per week
- Metal and wood recycling should be pursued
- Further training is required for the operatives to ensure that better information is provided to residents using the service about unacceptable items and how these should be disposed of
- Over the 6 week monitoring period, only 1492 visitors attended the sites, which represents less than 2.5% of Maidstone households
- The weekend freighter is perceived as a popular service, however the usage fluctuates substantially. With the rejection of garden waste, the weekend freighter sites can be shortened slightly to maximise the amount of sites and visitors per day, increasing the efficiency of the service.

Agenda Item 9

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

06 DECEMBER 2011

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Report prepared by Ryan O'Connell and Ellie Kershaw

1. MAIDSTONE'S BIGGER SOCIETY

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To recommend Maidstone Borough Council's proposed approach to the Bigger Society to Cabinet.

1.2 Recommendation of the Chief Executive

1.2.1 That the objective at 1.3.3 is agreed.

1.2.2 That the recommended approach to creating the bigger society is agreed.

1.2.3 That the bidding process for the bigger society fund is agreed.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The Government defines the Big Society as "what happens whenever people work for the common good. It is about achieving our goals in ways that are more diverse, more local and more personal"

The three core components of the Big Society agenda have been defined as;

- Empowering communities: giving local councils and neighbourhoods more power to take decisions and shape their area;
- Opening up public services: enabling charities, social enterprises, private companies and employee owned co-operatives to compete to offer people high quality services; and
- Promoting social action: encouraging and enabling people from all walks of life to play a more active part in society, and promoting more volunteering and philanthropy.

- 1.3.2 Localism is seen as the means by which we create the big society. The following themes for localism have been identified by the Government:
- “Lift the burden of bureaucracy** – by removing the cost and control of unnecessary red tape and regulation, whose effect is to restrict local action; and
 - Empower communities to do things their way** – by creating rights for people to get involved with, and direct the development of, their communities.
 - Increase local control of public finance** – so that more of the decisions over how public money is spent and raised can be taken within communities; and
 - Diversify the supply of public services** – by ending public sector monopolies, ensuring a level playing field for all suppliers, giving people more choice and a better standard of service.
 - Open up government to public scrutiny** – by releasing government information into the public domain, so that people can know how their money is spent, how it is used and to what effect; and
 - Strengthen accountability to local people** – by giving every citizen the power to change the services provided to them through participation, choice or the ballot box.

1.3.3 Objective and aims

In order to ensure that the best possible value is gained for the borough it is important that the Council is clear on what it hopes to achieve through the Bigger Society fund.

The suggested objective is “That communities or groups in Maidstone are empowered and enabled to meet their own needs in a way that suits them, particularly where service provision does not exist or has been reduced.”

A community need not be defined geographically; it could be a group of people with a common requirement, for example, people living in different rural areas or elderly people.

1.4 Maidstone’s Approach

- 1.4.1 Cuts to local government budgets has meant decisions being taken about which services should be prioritised and where spending should be reduced. In order to inform this decision, Cabinet carried out a pairwise analysis of the services that the Council provides. The results are in the table on the next page.

REVENUE	High	Medium	Low
Invest	Economic Development		
Maintain	Parking and Transport Housing		Environmental Health
Reduce	Planning and Building Control	Community Safety Waste Collection and Recycling Community Development Recreation, Sport and Open Spaces	Culture and Heritage Tourism Street Cleansing

The public were consulted about the budget for discretionary services in October of last year and a similar exercise is currently being undertaken to help determine budgets for next year. The Council has also identified in its strategic plan service design principles which include the following two principles relevant to localism:

- Residents and businesses are the starting point for services; every service must be considered from the perspective of the citizen and delivered at the lowest possible level – a bottom-up approach.
- We will enable service delivery and seek to commission services rather than deliver them ourselves wherever appropriate.

1.4.2 Bigger society will need to compensate for smaller government. The Council will need to redefine its relationship with government and other parts of the public sector, engage with the private and third sectors and refresh its approach to community leadership. This will require taking on a new role within the borough to help facilitate communities to receive services in the way they want them provided, taking on a variety of roles as creative commissioner, supporter, catalyst, connector and safety net depending what is needed in each case. The Council will work to bring together Maidstone's communities, businesses, voluntary groups, local authorities, partners and individuals to deliver the objective of the Bigger Society. Several actions have been already been identified and are set out in Appendix A. This action list is not exhaustive and will evolve over time as additional actions are identified and explored.

- 1.4.3 Research has been carried out with officers, local business and voluntary groups to determine how the sectors can work together to create a bigger society in Maidstone. The next step in this exercise is to create a contact website that will help the sectors to co-ordinate their volunteering efforts. The Council will continue to undertake research, looking for innovation and best practice and learning lessons from initiatives that have been undertaken elsewhere in the country.
- 1.4.4 A bigger society fund of £100,000 has been identified by the Council as part of the proposed Medium Term Financial Strategy. This could be used for initiatives with a cost to the Council such as setting up the 'dating' website. It could also be used to help community groups launch initiatives where an initial investment is needed. In order to ensure that any funds given to community groups are fairly distributed a panel should be created to decide which applications are accepted. The applications should be assessed against a strict set of criteria. Proposals can be found at Appendix B. It is further suggested that there is no limit on how much of the pot a bid can be for or how many bids can be made as there is a risk that good ideas could be missed by applying these conditions.
- 1.4.5 A planning for real exercise has been carried out in Park Wood which has resulted in a Neighbourhood Action Plan being produced for the area. This has identified a number of areas of improvement that local residents would like to see. The Council will now need to decide which of those actions to carry out and how to enable the community to find ways to complete the remainder. A similar exercise is planned to take place in Shepway in 2012.
- 1.4.6 The Open Public Services White paper talks about decentralizing power to the lowest possible level, wherever possible, "giving people direct control over the services they use. And where it is not possible to give people direct control, elected representatives should also have more choice about who provides services and how." Elected members will need to take a role in pushing for increased quality and greater choice in service provision. Local authorities and members will act as a champion for their local communities regardless of who is providing the services. Where Neighbourhood Action Plans are in place it is likely that Councillors will be asked to take a liaison role not only with the Local Authority but with all stakeholders who are in a position to deliver services to or offer help in their community. This will include holding providers to account, irrespective of which sector they are from. This new role will require varying levels of training to be provided. Where possible this will be provided in house or free opportunities will be sought. However, this should be considered when allocating the Member training budget for future years.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 Maidstone Borough Council should ensure that the bigger society helps to deliver the priorities and outcomes identified in the Strategic Plan. Residents were consulted on and agreed these priorities.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 There is a reputational risk to the Council which can be managed through positive communications and clear processes. There is also a financial risk with regards to the bigger society fund which can be mitigated through a transparent bidding process.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

1. Financial	X
2. Staffing	
3. Legal	X
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment	X
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development	X
6. Community Safety	
7. Human Rights Act	
8. Procurement	
9. Asset Management	

1.7.2 These implications have been discussed in the report above.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

- Appendix A Bigger society action plan
- Appendix B Proposed bidding process

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

.....

This is a Key Decision because: it could potentially affect all wards within the borough.

Wards/Parishes affected: All wards could be affected depending on the input communities make to the Bigger Society.

Action No.	Topic/Action	Detail	Direct Cost	Internal Resources	Timescale	Lead Officer	Next stage
1	Create a website for Maidstone's Bigger Society	Website that pulls together advice and links for community groups and individuals who want to take action in their local area. Could also contain example success stories, allow interaction and suggestions to be posted and will provide links to sources of funding (Council and external).	Need for consultancy to be evaluated	Brief to be produced internally. Need for consultancy for site production to be evaluated	Mar-12	ROC	Produce brief and scope action plan
2	Business and Voluntary Sector contact website with VAM	Website that acts as a 'dating service' between volunteer and community groups and local businesses so that they can reduce costs and meet each others needs.	Need for consultancy to be evaluated	Brief to be produced internally. Need for consultancy for site production to be evaluated	Dec-11	EK & ROC	Produce brief and scope action plan
3	Community Right to Buy	Government are putting together a Community Right to Buy scheme that we will need to respond to. Essentially it involves maintaining a community asset register and ensuring the legislation is followed when a community asset is sold.	Potential costs of publicity and enforcement yet to be determined and will depend on legislative requirements	Staff required to maintain register, carry out enforcement etc. May be possible from existing resources	Reliant on guidance and localism bill being passed	DT	Await legislation
4	Member Training - Community Leadership	Members will have key role, that of community leader, in delivering the Bigger Society approach in Maidstone. A training session or programme will be put in place to deliver this important element of Member involvement in the Bigger Society.	Training cost, to be met from existing budgets if possible	Training resources	Mar-12	TE	Scope, set objectives, book training
5	Neighbourhood Plans	Neighbourhood planning arises from the localism bill. Consultation on the proposals is underway (commenced 13 October 2011). Neighbourhood planning is community led, with the planning authority only getting involved at key stages.	None identified	Respond to consultation, await guidance for local authority involvement	Jan-12	RJ/SR	Respond to consultation
6	Establish bidding process for £100k Bigger Society Fund	£100k fund to allocate towards projects that support the objectives of the bigger society. Application, decision and allocation processes need to be determined as well as publicising the pot.	£100k fund already set aside	Support and administration of scheme and bids. Need to determine responsible department	Mar-12	EK & ROC	Produce a detailed Action plan
7	Community asset transfer and use	Consideration needs to be given to how Council owned assets can be used to support community groups and individuals who meet the objectives of Bigger Society.	Will need to be considered for each asset	Existing resources	Mar-12	SR	Scope
8	Neighbourhood Action Planning	See Neighbourhood Action Planning.	Currently underway, see plan for NAP	Currently underway, see plan for NAP	Currently underway, see plan for NAP	SR	Monitor outcomes
9	Community Right to Challenge	Government are putting together a Community Right to Challenge scheme that we will need to respond to. The aim is to make our services open to smaller, local providers to bid for. We can consider how we do this without the legislation as it is possible to action this now	None identified	As part of procurement processes	Internal: March 2012. External reliant on guidance and localism bill being passed	DT	Scope and await legislation

Bigger Society Fund - Outline of Proposed Bidding Process

Assessment Team

1. Finance Officer
2. Community Development Officer
3. Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure
4. Opposition Member
5. Funding Officer

Bidding Period

3 months January – March 2012

Awards by end of April 2012

2nd Bidding Period (if funds remain)

3 months July – September 2012

Awards by end of October 2012

Criteria

Completed application form

Business Case included that will be scored on:

- a. Value for money
- b. Sustainability
- c. Impact (including number of residents)
- d. Alignment of outcome with MBC strategic outcomes
- e. Service gap (i.e. whether a service already exists that should provide this or whether it fills a need that is not provided for elsewhere)

Agenda Item 10

Maidstone Borough Council

Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 6 December 2011

Future Work Programme and Scrutiny Officer Update

Report of: Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 To consider the Committee's future work programme and the Forward Plan of Key Decisions.
- 1.2 To consider the information update given by the Overview and Scrutiny Officer.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Committee considers the evolving Future Work Programme, attached at **Appendix A**, to ensure that it is appropriate and covers all issues Members currently wish to consider within the Committee's remit.
- 2.2 That the Committee considers the sections of the Forward Plan of Key Decisions relevant to the Committee and discuss whether these are items requiring further investigation or monitoring by the Committee.

3 Future Work Programme

- 3.1 Throughout the course of the municipal year the Committee is asked to put forward work programme suggestions. These suggestions are planned into its annual work programme. Members are asked to consider the work programme at each meeting to ensure that remains appropriate and covers all issues Members currently wish to consider within the Committee's remit.
- 3.2 The Committee is reminded that the Constitution states under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules number 9: Agenda items that 'Any Member of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee shall be entitled to give notice to the proper officer that he wishes an item relevant to the functions of the Committee or Sub-Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting. On receipt of such a request the proper officer will ensure that it is included on the next available agenda.'

4 Forward Plan of Key Decision

4.1 The Forward Plan for December 2011 to March 2012 (**Appendix B**) contains the following decisions relevant to the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

- The Bigger Society in Maidstone;
- Parish Services Scheme;
- Kent Common Housing Assessment Framework;
- Community Development Strategy 2011 to 2016;
- Private Sector Housing: Review of Housing Assistance;
- Adoption of Dog Control Orders in Maidstone; and
- Implementation of Cobtree Master Plan.

5. Impact on Corporate Objectives

5.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following Council priorities:

- 'Corporate and Customer Excellence' and 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live.'

5.2 The Strategic Plan sets the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. Actions to deliver these key objectives may therefore include work that the Committee will consider over the next year.

Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Future Work Programme 2011-2012

Date	Items to be considered
25 May 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Election of Chairman and Vice-Chairman • Work Programming 2011/12
14 June 2011	<p>Housing Strategy 2011-2015</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interviews with John Littlemore and Ellie Kershaw • Waste Review Scoping Document • Appointment of Joint Health Sub Scrutiny Committee
12 July 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Draft Local Bio-Diversity Plan • Interviews with Jason Taylor and John A Wilson, Cabinet Member for Communities and Leisure • Appointment of Joint Health Sub Scrutiny Committee • Waste Review Scoping Document
09 August 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Making Waste Work for Maidstone' • Interviews with Paul Vanston, Kent Waste Partnership Manager and Steve Goulette, Assistant Director Environment & Regulatory
13 September 2011	<p>Meeting as the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update: New Operational Policing Model and the revised priorities of the Safer Maidstone Partnership <p>Interviews with:</p> <p>Chief Inspector Steve Griffiths, Borough Commander for Maidstone.</p> <p>Martin Adams, Chairman of the Safer Maidstone Partnership;</p> <p>Barry Weeks, Manager Central Kent Youth Offending Team; and</p> <p>Niki Luscombe, Chief Executive (Interim) Women's Support Services.</p>
11 October 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tendering Strategy – Waste and recycling contract from 2013 • Interview with Steve Goulette, Assistant Director Environment & Regulatory Services
08 November 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Making Waste Work for Maidstone' Review <p>Interviews with Jim O'Connor and Steve Gill, Chief Executive and</p>

	Director at NOAH Enterprise; and Carolyn Gomez, Environmental Systems Manager, Lush Fresh Handmade Cosmetics
06 December 2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making Waste Work for Maidstone' Review Interviews with • Jim O'Connor and Steve Gill, Chief Executive and Director at NOAH Enterprise and • Jennifer Gosling, Waste Collections Manager • Bigger Society • Interview with Ellie Kershaw, Policy and Performance Manager
17 January 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parks and Open Spaces – one off item • Locality Boards – Written Update • Draft Making Waste Work for Maidstone Review Report
14 February 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Action Planning Review • Agree Making Waste Work for Maidstone Review Report
13 March 2012	Meeting as the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Focus on Neighbourhood Action Planning Issues)
10 April 2012	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Neighbourhood Action Planning Review • Agree Neighbourhood Action Planning Report

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

FORWARD PLAN

26

**1 December 2011 to
31 March 2012**

**Councillor Christopher Garland
Leader of the Council**



Forward Plan December 2011 - March 2012

INTRODUCTION

This is the Forward Plan which the Leader of the Council is required to prepare. Its purpose is to give advance notice of all the "key decisions" which the Executive is likely to take over the next 4 month period. The Plan will be up-dated monthly.

Each "key decision" is the subject of a separate entry in the Plan. The entries are arranged in date order – i.e. the "key decisions" likely to be taken during the first month of the 4 month period covered by the Plan appear first.

Each entry identifies, for that "key decision" –

- the subject matter of the decision
- a brief explanation of why it will be a "key decision"
- the date on which the decision is due to be taken
- who will be consulted before the decision is taken and the method of the consultation
- how and to whom representations (about the decision) can be made
- what reports/papers are, or will be, available for public inspection
- the wards to be affected by this decision

DEFINITION OF A KEY DECISION

A key decision is an executive decision which is likely to:

- Result in the Maidstone Borough Council incurring expenditure or making savings which is equal to the value of £250,000 or more; or
- Have significant effect on communities living or working in an area comprising one or more wards in Maidstone.

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

The Council encourages and welcomes anyone wishing to express his or her views about decisions the Cabinet plans to make. This can be done by writing directly to the appropriate Officer or Cabinet Member (the details of which are shown for each decision to be made).

Alternatively, the Cabinet are contactable via our [website](#) where you can submit a question to the Leader of the Council. There is also the opportunity to invite the Leader of the Council to speak at a function you may be organising.

**Forward Plan
December 2011 - March 2012**

Decision Maker, Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made and, if delayed, reason for delay:	Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:	Consultees and Method:	Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:	Relevant Documents:
Cabinet Due Date: 21 Dec 2011	The Bigger Society in Maidstone To agree the Council's approach to supporting the Bigger Society in Maidstone	CLT, Communities O&S Committee. Discussed with Managers, taken to committee.	Ellie Kershaw elliekershaw@maidstone.gov.uk 09/12/11	Cabinet, Council or Committee Report for The Bigger Society in Maidstone
Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services Due Date: Dec 2011	Parish Services Scheme To consider the outcome of the concurrent functions review and agree the new Parish Services Scheme	All Parish Councils. The review began in January 2011 and has had consultation throughout including with parishes and KALC. The main consultation for the report will commence in August with a presentation and question and answer session for all parish councils, followed by a formal consultation document on the new scheme which is planned to close in November 2011	Ryan O'Connell ryanococonnell@maidstone.gov.uk 01/12/11	Cabinet Member Report for Parish Services Scheme

**Forward Plan
December 2011 - March 2012**

Decision Maker and Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:	Consultees and Method:	Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:	Relevant Documents:
<p>Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services</p> <p>Due Date: Jan 2012</p>	<p>Kent Common Housing Assessment Framework</p> <p>To consider adopting a revised scheme for the assessment of applicants for social rented housing.</p>	<p>Stakeholders and service users' representations to John Littlemore. Stakeholder and service user consultation to commence in January 2012 via meetings and internet.</p>	<p>John Littlemore, Head of Housing & Community Safety johnlittlemore@maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>28/12/11</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Report for Kent Common Housing Assessment Framework</p>

**Forward Plan
December 2011 - March 2012**

Decision Maker and Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:	Consultees and Method:	Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:	Relevant Documents:
<p>Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services</p> <p>Due Date: Feb 2012</p> <p>Original Date: Nov 2011</p>	<p>Community Development Strategy 2011 to 2016</p> <p>The Community Development Strategy for Maidstone Borough is a key strategic planning and delivery document for the Maidstone borough as set out in the council's new Strategic Plan 2011-2015.</p>	<p>Maidstone Local Strategic Partnership Voluntary Action Maidstone Kent County Council Kent Youth Service Kent Children's Service Arts Council England NHS West Kent Kent Children's Fund Local Network Urban and rural communities within Maidstone Borough Colleagues in other district councils within Kent Maidstone Youth Forum Switch Youth Café. Draft report will be made available to councillors and key partners to give their views.</p>	<p>Sarah Robson sarahrobson@maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>15/04/12</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Report for Community Development Strategy 2011 to 2016</p>

**Forward Plan
December 2011 - March 2012**

Decision Maker and Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:	Consultees and Method:	Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:	Relevant Documents:
<p>Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services</p> <p>Due Date: Feb 2012</p>	<p>Private Sector Housing: Review of Housing Assistance</p> <p>To seek agreement for proposals for the Council's private sector Housing Assistance programme for 2012/13</p>	<p>Cabinet Member and key stakeholders Email</p>	<p>Neil Coles neilcoles@maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>08/02/12</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Report for Private Sector Housing: Review of Housing Assistance</p>
<p>Cabinet Member for Environment</p> <p>Due Date: Jan 2012</p>	<p>Adoption of Dog Control Orders in Maidstone</p> <p>The Cabinet member will be asked to decide whether to proceed with a public consultation on the proposal to introduce up to 5 Dog Control Orders under Section 55(1) of The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005</p>	<p>Ward Councillor; Parish Council; Service Users; Local Residents; Stakeholders/Partners; Consultation will be through circulation of the report and also through parish meetings and individual meetings with residents and other stakeholders and through the circulation of consultation documentation.</p>	<p>Martyn Jeynes martynjeynes@maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>21/12/11</p>	<p>Cabinet Member Report for The adoption of Dog Control Orders in Maidstone</p>

**Forward Plan
December 2011 - March 2012**

Decision Maker and Date of Decision/Month in which decision will be made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary of Decision to be made:	Consultees and Method:	Contact Officer and deadline for submission of enquiries:	Relevant Documents:
<p>Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee</p> <p>Due Date: 8 Feb 2012</p> <p>Original Date: 7 Nov 2011</p>	<p>Implementation of Cobtree Master Plan</p> <p>To consider proceeding with and the allocation of funds towards the Cobtree Master Plan.</p>		<p>Jason Taylor, Parks and Leisure Manager jason.taylor@maidstone.gov.uk</p> <p>04/01/12</p>	