

AGENDA

PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING



Date: Tuesday 21 January 2014
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone



Overview and Scrutiny

Membership:

Councillors: Chittenden, Collins, McLoughlin, Munford, Ross,
Springett, Watson, de Wiggondene and
Mrs Wilson (Vice-Chairman)

Page No.

- 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/Witnesses**
- 5. Election of Chairman**
- 6. Disclosures by Members and Officers**
- 7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information**
- 8. Minutes of the meetings held on 2 December 2013 and 17 December 2013** **1 - 25**
- 9. Maidstone Integrated Transport Strategy** **26 - 36**
Interviews with Paul Lulham, Kent County Council Highways and Jon Bunney, JMP Transport Consultants.
- 10. Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft - Group 3 Policies** **37 - 71**
Interview with Michael Murphy, Principal Planning Officer, Spatial Planning
- 11. Maidstone Borough Local Plan Draft Spatial Strategy** **72 - 92**
Interview with Sue Whiteside, Team Leader, Spatial Planning
- 12. Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13** **93 - 155**

Continued Over/:

Issued on 13 January 2014

Alison Broom

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

13. Future Work Programme

156 - 183

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 Orla Sweeney on 01622 602524**. To find out more about the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk/osc

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Special Planning, Transport and Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 2 DECEMBER 2013

Present: Councillor Collins (Chairman), and
Councillors Burton, Chittenden, Mrs Gooch,
McLoughlin, B Mortimer, Springett and Mrs Wilson

Also Present: Councillors Paterson and Paine.

57. THE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER WHETHER ALL ITEMS ON THE AGENDA SHOULD BE WEB-CAST

RESOLVED: That all items on the agenda be web-cast.

58. APOLOGIES

It was noted that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Munford, Watson and De Wiggondene.

59. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor Mrs Gooch, B Mortimer and Mortimer substituted for Councillors Munford, Watson and De Wiggondene respectively.

60. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS/WITNESSES

Councillor Paterson was in attendance as a Visiting Member. The Cabinet Member for planning, Transport and Development was also present.

61. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures.

62. TO CONSIDER WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

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

63. DEFERRED: MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT – GROUP 2 POLICIES

An urgent update was circulated to the Committee. The Committee agreed that it should adjourn the meeting for 10 minutes to consider the update (at Appendix A).

64. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned from 6.45 p.m. to 6.55 p.m. to allow the Committee time to consider the urgent update circulated.

65. DEFERRED: MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT – GROUP 2 POLICIES

Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development, Sue Whiteside, Team Leader, Spatial Policy, Michael Murphy, Principal Planning Officer, Spatial Policy and Sarah Anderton, Principal Planning Officer, Spatial Planning.

Members were informed that the first group of draft local plan policies had been agreed in August 2013 by the Committee. It was explained that the second group of draft policies would go out for regulation 18 public consultation in March 2014 following their approval by the Committee and Cabinet. The second group of policies consisted of overarching spatial policies for the borough and detailed development management policies, particularly for the countryside. Part of the retail and mixed use allocation policy (addressing Maidstone East Station/Royal Mail Sorting Office and Newnham Park) was also included.

Mr Murphy highlighted the broad themes of the policies:

1. Commitment to a vibrant and vital Town Centre which reaffirmed the NPPF and Government Commitment to a Town Centre first approach;
2. A dispersal strategy for the distribution of development which would include Coxheath and Yalding as additional Rural Service Centres and the addition of 3 new 'Larger Villages' in the settlement hierarchy, namely Boughton Monchelsea, Hollingbourne (Eythorne Street) and Sutton Valence; and
3. Countryside protection – the importance of protecting the landscape and being selective on development allowed.

Members raised concerns regarding the lack of consultation with those affected on the following policies: SP3 and SP4 which related to the inclusion of two new villages as Rural Service Centres (RSCs) and the three new larger villages. It was explained that consultation with parish councils had been undertaken in 2009 in the form of a services and facilities audit and a workshop, after which 5 rural service centres (Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden, Staplehurst) were designated, and that the rural service centres were the subject of public consultation on the then Core Strategy in 2011. The approach to designating the additional rural service centres and larger villages centred on a recent audit of services and facilities in the rural villages. This audit had informed the policies and resulted in the amended policy SP3 and new policy SP4. It was emphasised that the policies were draft policies, however, with

hindsight, further consultation should have been undertaken with those affected.

The logic behind the inclusion of these key facilities was explained. It was not just about land allocation, particularly with the RSCs; they had a role in the settlement hierarchy in the borough, providing a wider function which included employment, services and transport. Officers informed the Committee that there was no prescriptive guidance on this type of consultation.

The Committee felt that because of the lack of dialogue with the affected RSCs and larger villages, the policies should be withdrawn. It recommended that discussions take place between officers, members and those affected as soon as possible. And that these policies be brought back to this Committee in January. The Committee all voted in favour of this recommendation.

The Committee were conscious of the Local Plan timetable and emphasised that meetings with Parishes and Villages affected should take as soon as possible. Councillor Parr from Coxheath Parish Council was invited to address the Committee. He told Members that Coxheath Parish Council would support this motion.

Geraldine Brown, Chairman of Kent Association of Local Councils and Cliff Thurlow, Town Planning Consultancy Ltd, were also invited to address the Committee. Mr Thurlow read from a prepared statement specifically in response to Policy DM8, Historic and Natural Environment. Members felt that the statement should be passed to officers for consideration and comment.

The Committee considered the proposed allocations for the Maidstone East Station/Royal Mail Sorting Office site and Newnham Park. Members expressed their support for the Maidstone East Station/Royal Mail Sorting Office site but expressed their disappointment that it had come forward without discussion or consultation with relevant ward Councillors.

Mr Jarman informed the Committee that the Maidstone East Station site was an existing allocation in the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan and further that Members were being asked to approve the policy in draft for public consultation. Members felt that a meeting should be urgently called with officers and all relevant Ward, Borough and County Councillors on the proposals for Maidstone East Station and the meeting should be open to all interested members.

The Committee considered the proposals for Newnham Park. It was clarified that the restrictions would apply to the additional floor space, i.e. additional development rather than what already existing at the site. It was explained that the fashion retailers were considered the anchors of the Town Centre's retail offer and it was important that development at Newnham Court should not undermine their role.

Concerns were raised about the wording in paragraph 1.6, page 87 of the agenda in the document relating to proposals for Newnham Court which read: 'conversely, subject to restrictions on the type of goods sold, retail premises that have a unique and recognised "out of town format" such as 'homeware' offers, are likely to be acceptable on the allocated site because conflict with town centre uses would be unlikely.'

Mr Jarman explained that in accordance to NPPF guidance positive planning was employed by the Council and policies had to therefore be worded in a reasonable and positive way. In addition to this planning conditions could be used to limit the percentage of floorspace dedicated to, for example, fashion retailing.

Members questioned what would happen if in two to three years time the retailer came back to the Council and proposed that, in order to make the business viable, the percentage of floor space needed to be increased.

Ms Anderton informed the Committee that goods restrictions proposed in the draft policy were evidence based. If a developer was to subsequently propose a variation to a condition based on the example given, an impact assessment on the Town Centre would be requested and, subject to its findings, it could result in the variation to condition being refused.

Members proposed that the wording of paragraph 1.6 on page 87 of the agenda be revised to read as follows: "Subject to restrictions on the type of goods sold, retail premises that have a unique and recognised "out of town" format such as 'homeware' offers could be acceptable on the allocated site provided conflict with town centre uses would be unlikely."

The Committee considered Appendix D: Proposed Primary Shopping Area (page 97 of the agenda). It was concerned that some parts of the Town Centre, parts of King Street, Week Street and Gabriel's Hill were missing. It was explained that the appendix reflected work undertaken by DTZ Development Consultancy which was to evidence the Town's Primary Shopping Areas for the application of sequential test. Members felt that the title of the document should be changed to reflect its purpose.

Members considered the Town Centre Vision on page 21 of the document which included 'key components in realising this vision'. It was felt that information was missing and a bullet point could be added to this section which should read 'Tackling vehicular, cycling and pedestrian issues of acute congestion and poor air quality'.

A Member felt that it would be helpful if the document contained a complete list of all documents that it had links to or should be read in conjunction with.

The Committee considered the officers recommendations on page 6 of the agenda. Members felt that the wording for recommendation at 1.2.3 (b) should be amended to read 'adopted for development management purposes for use as interim guidance'.

The Committee voted in favour (with one abstention) of all the officers recommendations set out on page 6, paragraph 1.2 of the agenda subject to the revised wording of 1.2.3 (b) and its own further recommendations.

RESOLVED: That

- a) The Committee approves the recommendations made in the report (as follows) subject to the additional wording added in bold and its further recommendations listed below:

That Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the proposed policies and associated plans of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (attached at Appendix A, C, D and E), and recommends to Cabinet that they are approved for public consultation purposes.

That Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the proposed site allocation policy for Maidstone East **Station** and the Royal Mail Sorting Office site attached at Appendix B and recommends to Cabinet that it be approved for public consultation purposes.

That Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the proposed site allocation policy for Newnham Park attached at Appendix B and recommends to Cabinet that it be: (a) approved for public consultation purposes, and (b) adopted for development management purposes **for use as interim guidance.**

- b) The policies SP3 and SP4 be withdrawn by Cabinet from the draft plan. That discussion takes place between officers, members and the affected Parishes as soon as possible. And that these policies be brought back to this Committee in January.
- c) A meeting is urgently called with all relevant Ward Borough and County Councillors on proposals for Maidstone East Station. The meeting should be open to all interested members.
- d) The statement made to the Committee this evening by Cliff Thurlow, Town Planning consultancy Ltd, be provided to officers for comment.
- e) The wording on page 87, paragraph 1.6 of Proposed allocations – Newnham Park be amended to read as follows: 'Subject to restrictions on the types of goods sold, retail premises that have a unique and recognised "out of town" format, such as 'homeware' offers could be acceptable on the allocated site provided conflict with town

centre uses would be unlikely.'

- f) That the title of Appendix D: Proposed Primary Shopping Area be amended to include an explanation to reflect its use in relation to sequential test criteria.
- g) An additional bullet point be added to the 'Town Centre Vision, Key Components in Realising this Vision are' on page 21. This should read: 'Tackling vehicular, cycling and pedestrian issues of acute congestion and poor air quality'.
- h) A complete list of all documents that the Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft – Group 2 Policies document links to or should be read in conjunction with be added to the document for information.

66. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned from 9.45p.m. to 9.50 p.m. to allow the Committee, witnesses and the public a comfort break.

67. DEFERRED: GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development, Sue Whiteside, Team Leader, Spatial Policy and Darren Bridgett, Principle Planning Officer, Spatial Policy were invited to introduce the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy (GBI).

The Committee was informed that the Strategy was in Draft form. It was a Strategic Level Document that would inform the production of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan. It was not solely for use by Planning, it would be interpreted by other departments, for example, Parks and Open Spaces.

It was explained that GBI was the following:

- Natural and semi-natural green spaces
- Green and blue corridors
- Outdoor sports space
- Parks and gardens
- Amenity green space
- Provision for children and teenagers
- Allotments and community gardens
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Accessible countryside and nature reserves

The benefits of green and blue infrastructure could bring were highlighted to the Committee:

- Maintaining and enhancing biodiversity, water and air quality

- Promoting a distinctive townscape and landscape
- Achieving a quality environment for investment and development
- Providing opportunities for sport, recreation, quiet enjoyment and health
- Integrating sustainable movement and access for all
- Providing community involvement and opportunities for education
- Mitigating and adapting to climate change

The Committee was informed that Parks and Open spaces would be undertaking an audit of all open spaces in the borough. The consultation was due to finish on 22 January 2014; the results would be reported back to the Committee in February, combined with the results of the audit. This would then provide the 'teeth' for the strategy's action plan.

The next steps, following the Committee meeting was speak to key stakeholders and undertake a public consultation. The stakeholder event would be taking place on 16 December.

On page 108 of the agenda, paragraph 1.3.16 of the covering report, there was a list of Key Stakeholders. Members noted that this did not explicitly include Ward, Borough, County and Parish Councillors or Neighbourhood Groups. The Committee requested that they be added to the list of Key Stakeholders.

In the previous paragraph, 1.3.15, the following statement was made "The results of the open space audit will inform an iterative process where officers will be able to determine new provision standards." A Member requested that the wording be changed to "officers will be able to recommend" to reflect the Council's decision making process.

A Member commented on the documents that were referred to throughout the Strategy. It was recommended that an appendix be added to the Strategy listing these documents. It was also requested that the Council's Air Quality Action Plan be cross-referenced, where applicable, within the section 'Key Issues'.

RESOLVED: That

- a) The Committee approves the recommendation made in the report (as follows) subject to its further recommendations listed below: That the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommend to Cabinet that the draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy is approved for targeted stakeholder engagement.
- b) The list of key stakeholders is amended to include the following: Maidstone Borough Councillors, County Councillors, Parish Councillors and Resident's Associations (in the absence of Parish Councils).
- c) The wording of paragraph 1.3.15 in the covering report be amended to read "...officers will be able to recommend" instead of

"...officers will be able to determine" to reflect the Council's decision making process.

- d) An appendix be added to the strategy listing, in their entirety, the documents that relate to and are referred to throughout the strategy.
- e) The Council's Air Quality Action Plan be cross-referenced, where applicable, within the section 'Key Issues' in the strategy.

68. DURATION OF MEETING.

6.30pm to 10.20pm

Planning, Transport and Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

19th November 2013.

Update

Newnham Park Policy (Appendix B, pages 86 to 91)

1. Amend criterion 1 of the policy to read “ phased provision of a maximum of ~~150,000sqm~~ 100,000sqm of specialist medical facilities set within an enhanced landscape structure of which 25,000sqm will provide for associated offices and research and development;
2. Amend paragraph 1.5 of the supporting text to read “The medical campus will deliver up to ~~150,000sqm~~ 100,000sqm of specialist medical facilities and associated uses, of which 25,000sqm will provide for related offices and research and development.”
3. Replace criterion 5(iv) of the policy which states “The control of building heights across the whole site in response to the site’s topography with no building to exceed 4 storeys in height” with the following;

“The restriction of building heights across the whole site to a maximum of two storeys. Exceptionally, a building of up to 4 storeys could be accommodated on the land adjacent to the existing KIMS (phase 1) development to the immediate west of the stream and buildings of up to 3 storeys could be accommodated at the entrance to the site.”

4. Add the following paragraph after paragraph 1.4 of the supporting text

Building heights will be restricted across the whole site to two storeys. Exceptionally there are two locations within the site where modestly higher buildings may be achievable. The first of these lies towards the north of the site, immediately west of the stream and south of the KIMS phase 1 development where the site topography would enable a building of up to 4 storeys to be achieved. The second location is at the entrance to the site where buildings of up to 3 storeys would be acceptable. In all cases buildings should be designed and sited to respond to the site’s undulating topography and should avoid any significant site levelling in the creation of development platforms for example by the use of terracing.

Maidstone East/Sorting Office Policy (Appendix B pages 92-95)

Amend the policy with the insertion of an additional criterion (9) under the Design and Layout subsection (page 93) to read:

9. *The incorporation of landscaped elements within the overall scheme design including the retention of existing landscape features where possible.*

Policy SP4 – Larger Villages

Amend paragraphs 6.51 – 6.53 on page 32 as follows:

Boughton Monchelsea

- 6.51 *Boughton Monchelsea lies to the southeast of Maidstone's urban edge adjacent to the scarp face of the Greensand Ridge. The village* performs well in the audit in terms of education and childcare, with a primary school, playgroup, nursery and nearby secondary school. It performs poorly in terms of healthcare, with no GP surgery or other health care service. The village has a local shop, post office, village hall and recreation areas. Although the village is close to the urban area, public transport connections to Maidstone town centre are infrequent, and this is not helped by the fact that residential areas within the village are quite dispersed. Local employment opportunities in the village are also limited.

Hollingbourne (Eyhorne Street)

- 6.52 Hollingbourne (Eyhorne Street) is a linear settlement *which lies to the northeast of Maidstone's urban area in the setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.* ~~The larger residential area (Eyhorne Street) is removed from~~ The primary school, pre-school and one of the local playing fields are approximately 0.5km ~~from the village centre. is removed from the primary school, pre-school, and one of the local playing fields by approximately 0.5km. It performs poorly in terms of healthcare, with no GP surgery or other health care service.~~ The village does not have a GP surgery or healthcare facilities apart from an osteopath clinic, but does has some good key facilities, including a village hall, local shop, post office, pubs and a restaurant. Rail connections to Maidstone town centre and other retail and employment destinations are good, and the village also has a regular bus service to the town centre.

Sutton Valence

- 6.53 ~~Sutton Valence performs~~ *lies to the southeast of Maidstone's urban area on the scarp face of the Greensand Ridge. The village performs well* in the audit in terms of education facilities. There is a pre-school, primary school and the Sutton Valence boarding school, which caters for children from the age of 3 to 18. In terms of services and community facilities there are pubs, a church, a village hall, mobile library service and good playing pitches. The village has a medical practice but no dentist or pharmacy. Public transport connections to Maidstone town centre and Headcorn are good due to a regular bus service. The village does not have a train station.

Policy SP5: Countryside

Amend the supporting text to the Countryside Policy SP5 from paragraph 6.55 to 6.58 on pages 33 & 34 as follows:

The countryside

- 6.55 Maidstone borough is predominantly rural with a large proportion of the population living in villages as well as on the fringes of the urban area. Much of the The rural landscapes are of high quality with valuable agricultural and ecological resources ~~as are the agricultural~~ within the borough. The countryside areas are highly accessible to those living and working in the urban areas, complemented by a wide and well-used public rights of way network. They also act as a major asset to attract new investment into the borough. However this proximity to the urban area brings with it pressures arising from an increased level of demand for houses, recreation and jobs in the countryside.
- 6.56 The countryside is defined as all those parts of the plan area outside the settlement boundaries of the Maidstone urban area, rural service centres and larger villages with defined settlement boundaries and is depicted on the policies map. The countryside has an intrinsic value that should be conserved and protected for its own sake. However there is also a need to ensure a level of flexibility for certain forms of development in the countryside in order to support farming and other aspects of the countryside economy and to maintain mixed communities. This needs to be mitigated ~~done~~ in a way that maintains and enhances the distinctive character of the more rural part of the borough.

Rural economy

- 6.57 Maidstone's rural economic character is diverse and complex in nature. The number of rural and agricultural businesses found within villages and rural service centres and the wider countryside account for a significant proportion of all firms in the borough. Small businesses are a particular feature of rural areas, as is homeworking, home-based businesses and live-work units.
- 6.58 Agriculture remains an important influence, fulfilling a number of important and varied roles in the countryside, contributing to the local economy, and managing and maintaining much of the valued landscapes. It benefits from the fact that much of the soil within the borough comprises the most high grade and versatile agricultural land. However, in line with other businesses agriculture needs to be able to react to new and changing markets and developments in technology. A more recent trend in agriculture is the response to demand for produce to be available on a year round basis. This leads to land being put under intense pressure for almost industrial scale development that can have an adverse impact on the wider landscape and natural assets, such as wildlife, soil and water resources, that require protection within the landscape. Another trend is the increasing interest in smaller-scale renewable energy installations. Further advice and guidance on the landscape implications of these activities will be given in the Landscape Character Guidelines supplementary planning document.

Amend paragraphs 6.66 to 6.70 on pages 35 & 36 as follows:

Design

- 6.66 The countryside is a sensitive location within which to integrate new development and the borough council will expect ~~high quality designs~~ proposals to respect the high quality and distinctive landscapes of the borough in accordance with policy DM28.

Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting

- 6.67 A large part of the northern part of the borough lies within the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). This is a visually prominent landscape that contributes significantly to the borough's high quality of life. It is an important amenity and recreation resource for both Maidstone residents and visitors and forms an attractive backdrop to settlements along the base of the Kent Downs scarp. It also contains a wide range of natural habitats and biodiversity. Designation as an AONB confers the highest level of landscape protection and one which the council has a statutory duty to conserve and enhance. Within the AONB the Management Plan provides a framework for objectives to conserve and enhance the natural beauty of the area. The council has adopted the updated reviewed Management Plan and will support its implementation. Open countryside to the immediate south of the AONB forms the setting for this designation. In Maidstone this is a sensitive landscape that is coming under threat from inappropriate development and is viewed as a resource that requires conservation and enhancement where this supports the purposes of the AONB.
- 6.68 The council will ensure proposals conserve and enhance the natural beauty, ~~and~~ distinctive character, biodiversity and setting of the AONB, taking into account the economic and social well-being of the area. Rural diversification and land-based businesses in the Kent Downs AONB will only be acceptable where they help improve the special character of the AONB and are in accordance with the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan, supporting guidance and position statements. Economic development within the AONB should be located in existing traditional buildings of historic or vernacular merit in smaller settlements, farmsteads or within in groups of buildings in sustainable locations.
- 6.69 New development in the AONB needs to respect the vernacular architecture, settlement character and the natural beauty of the local landscape. This will require high quality designs as set out in Policy DM28. To help developers produce designs of a suitably high quality, the council will continue to encourage the use of the Kent Downs AONB Unit's design guidance and publications.

~~Quality~~ Landscapes of local value

- 6.70 The council will protect its most versatile and sensitive landscapes. In addition to the Kent Downs AONB and sites of European and national importance, the borough includes ~~vast~~ significant tracts of quality landscape, including parts of the Greensand Ridge together with the Medway, Loose and Len river valleys. These landscapes were highlighted as areas of local value by the public through previous consultation. ~~The council will protect its most versatile and sensitive landscapes.~~

Add an additional paragraph 6.71 on page 36 as follows:

- 6.71 The Greensand Ridge lies to the south of Maidstone and is defined by the scarp face of the Ridge with extensive views across the Low Weald to the south. It is characterised by frequent small blocks of coppice and deciduous woodland, extensive orchards and frequent oasts, with ragstone being a predominant material in walls and buildings. The Medway Valley is characterised by the wide River

Medway and steep valley sides where the valley incises the Greensand and is crossed by distinctive ragstone bridges. The area lends itself to much recreational land use including the Medway Valley Walk, although some sections are more wooded and remote in character. The Loose Valley lies to the west of Maidstone and is characterised by the Loose Stream, mill ponds and springs with steep wooded valley sides, mature native woodland and traditional mill buildings and cottages. The Len Valley lies to the east of Maidstone and is bordered by Bearsted to the west. It is characterised by the River Len, historic mills and a network of pools with remnant orchards.

Policy SP5

Amend the Countryside policy on page 37 as follows:

The countryside is defined as all those parts of the plan area outside the settlement boundaries of the Maidstone urban area, rural service centres and larger villages defined on the policies map. ~~With defined settlement boundaries. This is depicted on the policies map.~~

1. Provided there is no significant harm to the character or appearance of an area, the following types of development will be permitted in the countryside:
 - i. Small-scale economic development, including development related to tourism and open-air recreation, through:
 - a. The re-use or extension of existing buildings except in isolated locations;
 - b. The expansion of existing businesses; or
 - c. Farm diversification schemes;
 - ii. Small-scale residential development necessary to:
 - a. Meet a proven essential need for a rural worker to live permanently at or near their place of work;
 - b. Meet a proven need for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation; or
 - c. Meet local housing needs;
 - iii. The winning of minerals; and
 - iv. Development demonstrated to be necessary for agriculture or forestry.
2. Where proposals meet criterion 1, development in the countryside will only be permitted ~~where~~ if:
 - i. The type, design and scale of development and the level of activity maintains, or where possible, enhances local distinctiveness; and
 - ii. Impacts on the appearance and character of the landscape can be appropriately mitigated.

- ~~iii. It meets such other exceptions as defined elsewhere in the plan~~
3. The loss of local shops and community facilities which serve small villages will be resisted. In all cases, another beneficial community use should be sought before permission is granted for the removal of these facilities;
 4. Proposals will be supported which facilitate the efficient use of the borough's significant agricultural land and soil resource provided any adverse impacts on the appearance and character of the landscape can be appropriately mitigated;
 5. The distinctive character of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting, and the extent and openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt will be rigorously protected and maintained; ~~Landscapes of good condition and high sensitivity will be conserved.~~
 6. The Greensand Ridge, Medway Valley, Len Valley and Loose Valley, as defined on the policies map, will be protected and maintained as landscapes of local value;
 7. Development in the countryside will retain the setting of and separation of individual settlements;

Account should be taken of the Kent Downs AONB Management Plan and the Maidstone Borough Landscape Character Guidelines supplementary planning document; and
 8. Natural assets, including characteristic landscape features, wildlife and water resources, will be protected from damage with any unavoidable impacts mitigated.

Policy DM9: Historic and Natural Environment

Amend the supporting text in paragraphs 12.45 and 12.46 on page 42 as follows: as follows:

Landscape

- 12.45 ~~The Local Plan will adopt a character approach to landscape. The borough can be broadly divided into 7 distinct landscape types, namely the Dry Valleys and Downs, Chalk Scarp Landscapes, Gault Clay Vale, Greensand Orchards and Mixed Farmlands, Greensand Ridge, Low Weald and Valleys, each of which has a strong visual identity and sense of place. The visual character of Maidstone's landscape is highly valued by those living, working and visiting here. A significant proportion of the borough benefits from high quality landscapes. A large area of the borough lies within the Kent Downs AONB, a nationally important landscape designation and a strong level of protection will be given to this designation and its setting, set out in Policy SP5. However, all of the landscapes play an important role in contributing to the borough's environmental, economic and social values. Therefore all landscapes, rather than just those that are designated, will be viewed as a natural asset. This is in line with the European Landscape Convention.~~
- 12.46 The National Planning Policy Framework encourages the protection of valued landscapes. Whilst the Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment 2012 identifies the various landscape types and characters. ~~The proposed Landscape Character Guidelines supplementary planning document will provide further detail on how these landscapes are to be protected.~~ For Maidstone, these valued landscapes are identified as the Greensand Ridge, Medway River Valley, Len River Valley and Loose River Valley, which are afforded protection in Policy SP5.

Amend paragraph 12.47 to read:

- 12.47 ~~The landscape character approach represents the best way to conserve and enhance valued landscape characteristics, and improve or reinstate positive features where they have been eroded. At the same time, it can also address social, cultural and economic issues. It is not always possible to retain the landscape in exactly the same form that is currently valued. Climate change for instance will lead to small but continuous changes in biodiversity. Some landscape change is inevitable and Local Plan policies for a living landscape allow for certain forms of development to take place.~~
- 12.47 Landscape Character Assessment is part of the evidence base and should be used to inform development and land management proposals. It is a descriptive tool which identifies and describes variation of landscape character, distinguishing the features that give a locality its 'sense of place' and pinpointing what makes it distinctive, setting out information on landscape character, condition and sensitivity in a comprehensive and objective way. It identifies the positive attributes of a landscape which need protecting or enhancing as well as the negative aspects, which can be restored or otherwise improved upon. In cases where development is proposed on sensitive sites more detailed landscape and visual assessments will be required.

Delete paragraph 12.48.

- ~~12.48 Development proposals will be expected to be informed by the emerging guidance provided in the Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment 2012 and the proposed Landscape Character Guidelines~~

~~supplementary planning document. New development should be well designed and sympathetic to the character of the landscape types identified within the borough. Policy DM9 sets out the broad policy framework for the local landscape approach being taken by the council.~~

Policy DM9: Historic and Natural Environment

Amend Policy criterion 3 on page 45 as follows:

3. Where appropriate, development proposals will be expected to appraise the value of the borough's historic and natural environment through the provision of the following:
 - i. An ecological evaluation of development sites and any additional land put forward for mitigation purposes to take full account of the biodiversity present; and
 - ii. Heritage and arboricultural assessments to take full account of any past or present heritage and natural assets connected with the development and associated sites.
 - iii. A landscape and visual impact assessment to take full account of the significance of, and potential effects of change on, the landscape as an environmental resource together with views and visual amenity.

DM22: Affordable Housing

Amend Policy criterion 3 on page 60 to recognise that tenure split site by site needs to be negotiated, while still recognising that as a whole, the council is seeking to achieve an indicative tenure split across all affordable housing delivered in the borough. The amended criterion will read as follows:

3. The council will seek a general tenure split in the borough of not less than 50% affordable rented housing, social rented housing or a mixture of the two. The balance of up to 50% of the affordable dwellings will be a mixture of shared ownership and intermediate rented housing, split 80%/20% respectively. Site factors will influence the tenure split of each development, so the council requires developers to enter negotiations with registered providers at the earliest stage of the application process, to be able to determine what is achievable.

Policy DM35: Expansion of existing businesses in rural areas.

Amend the first paragraph of Policy DM35 on page 74 by the addition of the following underlined, italic text:

In the first instance, rural businesses requiring expanded premises should look to relocate to one of the Economic Development Areas identified in Policy DM16 or to a site within Maidstone Urban Area or one of the RSCs. Where it is demonstrated that relocation cannot be achieved, the expansion of existing industrial or business enterprises which are currently located outside of the settlement boundaries as defined on the policies map will be permitted where;

Policy ID1: Infrastructure Delivery

Amend Policy criterion 3 on page 83 to read:

3. Where developers consider that providing or contributing towards the infrastructure requirement would have serious implications for the viability of a development, the council will ~~encourage~~ require an “open book” approach and, where necessary, will operate the policy flexibly.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Planning, Transport and Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 17 DECEMBER 2013

Present: Councillor Collins (Chairman), and
Councillors McLoughlin, B Mortimer, Munford, Ross,
Springett, Watson, de Wiggondene and Mrs Wilson

69. THE COMMITTEE TO CONSIDER WHETHER ALL ITEMS ON THE AGENDA SHOULD BE WEBCAST

RESOLVED: That all items on the agenda be web-cast.

70. APOLOGIES

It was noted that apologies for absence were received from Councillors Chittenden and Mrs Watson.

71. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor B Mortimer and Mortimer substituted for Councillor Chittenden.

72. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS/WITNESSES

There were no Visiting Members.

73. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures.

74. TO CONSIDER WHETHER ANY ITEMS SHOULD BE TAKEN IN PRIVATE BECAUSE OF THE POSSIBLE DISCLOSURE OF EXEMPT INFORMATION

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

75. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 19 NOVEMBER 2013

The following amendment to the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2013 was proposed. The amended wording related to Item 54, Five Year Supply Mid-Year Update, Page 2, paragraph 3:

"In response to Members questions it was confirmed that completions and non-completion figures (for planning permissions) were included in the supply calculations presented, but that the number of dwellings in the planning permissions category could not be moved to the completions category until a survey had been undertaken. No dwellings were unaccounted for."

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November, subject to the amendment highlighted, be agreed as a correct record of the meeting and duly signed.

76. SOLAR ENERGY ADVICE NOTES

Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development and Sue Whiteside, Team Leader, Spatial Policy outlined the purpose of the Solar Energy Advice Notes to the Committee.

The Committee was asked to consider the advice notes for Domestic and medium scale solar PV arrays (up to 50kW) and solar thermal, and Large scale (>50kW) solar PV arrays and recommend that they be adopted as planning policy advice notes that would advise decision making when determining planning applications.

Members considered the following as part of their discussion and evaluation of the Solar Energy Advice notes:

- The negative impact on natural habitats of reflective arrays from large scale solar PV;
- The usefulness of an appendix containing website addresses for organisations that relate to and compliment the information contained in the advice notes such as www.buglife.org.uk;
- The possible, incorrect assumption, that once planning permission had been granted for a solar farm the classification of the land would change from Greenfield to Brownfield;
- The need for the advice notes to be referenced in the relevant policies contained within the Local Plan to ensure that they are purposeful;
- The issue of solar farms being granted planning permission and the capability of the local grid being able to take the energy output generated;
- The long term responsibility for returning land to its original use after the term granted for the planning permission for the solar farm expires or in the eventuality that the solar farm is abandoned before the end of its planning permission.

The Committee's concerns resulted in the following recommendations being proposed during the course of the discussion:

- That the following paragraph be added after paragraph 3.50 on page 23 of the document, The Planning Policy Advice Note for Large Scale Solar PV Arrays:
 - "Polarising light from reflective arrays is understood to have a significant negative impact on invertebrates, especially aquatic species that mistake glare from the arrays for water. Design can help to overcome these impacts. The use of agricultural sheeting and large areas of solar panelling in sensitive areas, particularly near water-bodies, should be

limited, or sources of polarized light should be broken up by adding non-polarizing patterns, areas or grids that block horizontal light.”

- That an appendix be added to the Solar Farm Advice Notes containing helpful websites to assist Officers, Councillors and the Public (for example the Invertebrate Conservation Trust, www.buglife.org.uk);
- That additional wording be added to the Solar Farms Advice Notes to clarify that granting planning permission for Solar Farms does not change the land classification from Greenfield to Brownfield;
- That further emphasis be placed in the Local Plan on the Solar Farm Advice Notes and the requirement for it to be read in conjunction with the applicable policies it relates to;
- That in order to ensure the local grid is capable of receiving additional inputs from Solar Farms and the energy required, there is early engagement with energy companies for proposed Solar Farm planning applications. Further emphasis should be placed on this required in the advice notes (Electricity generating capacity, page 29); and
- That additional wording be added to the Solar Farm Advice Notes that clearly states that the cost and responsibility for returning land to its original use at the end of its permitted term or when usage ceases remains with the landowners (Duration of planning permission and potential conditions, page 29). This responsibility should be made clear, in writing, as part of every planning application made.

RESOLVED:

- a) That the following paragraph be added after paragraph 3.50 on page 23 of the document, The Planning Policy Advice Note for Large Scale Solar PV Arrays:

“Polarising light from reflective arrays is understood to have a significant negative impact on invertebrates, especially aquatic species that mistake glare from the arrays for water. Design can help to overcome these impacts. The use of agricultural sheeting and large areas of solar panelling in sensitive areas, particularly near water-bodies, should be limited, or sources of polarized light should be broken up by adding non-polarizing patterns, areas or grids that block horizontal light.”

- b) That an appendix be added to the Solar Farm Advice Notes containing helpful websites to assist Officers, Councillors and the Public (for example the Invertebrate Conservation Trust, www.buglife.org.uk);
- c) That additional wording be added to the Solar Farms Advice Notes to clarify that granting planning permission for Solar Farms does not change the land classification from Greenfield to Brownfield;

- d) That further emphasis be placed in the Local Plan on the Solar Farm Advice Notes and the requirement for it to be read in conjunctions with the applicable policies it relates to;
- e) That in order to ensure the local grid is capable of receiving additional inputs from Solar Farms and the energy is required, there is early engagement with energy companies for proposed Solar Farm planning applications. Further emphasis should be placed on this required in the advice notes (Electricity generating capacity, page 29); and
- f) That additional wording be added to the Solar Farm Advice Notes that clearly states that the cost and responsibility for returning land to its original use at the end of its permitted term or when usage ceases remains with the landowners (Duration of planning permission and potential conditions, page 29). This responsibility should be made clear, in writing, as part of every planning application made.

77. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered its Future Work Programme. It requested that it receive a hard copy of the agenda for the meetings in January and February 2014 as far in advance of the meeting as possible.

Sue Whiteside, Team Leader, Spatial Policy confirmed that her team would ensure that this request was fulfilled.

RESOLVED: that the agenda papers for the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee's January and February 2014 meetings are received in hard copy as far in advance of the meetings as possible.

78. DURATION OF MEETING.

6.30pm to 7.45pm

PTD OSC 17 December 2013 – Urgent Update

The Planning Policy Advice Note for Large Scale Solar PV Arrays does not currently make reference to the ecological impact of polarised light pollution on biodiversity. This omission should be rectified and it is recommended that the following paragraph be inserted after paragraph 3.50 on page 87 of the agenda:

“Polarising light from reflective arrays is understood to have a significant negative impact on invertebrates, especially aquatic species that mistake glare from the arrays for water. Design can help to overcome these impacts by, for example, locating arrays away from water bodies and incorporating non-polarising patterns and borders into designs that block horizontal light.”

Agenda Item 9

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2014

REPORT OF HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Report prepared by Tim Hapgood

1. MAIDSTONE INTEGRATED TRANSPORT STRATEGY

1.1 Issue for Consideration

- 1.1.1 To consider the refined vision and objectives of the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) and consider the work programme for developing the ITS in to a full draft document.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Planning and Development

- 1.2.1 That the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends that Cabinet approves the refined vision and objectives for the ITS.
- 1.2.2 That the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends that Cabinet approves the work programme for developing the ITS in to a full draft document.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.3.1 This section provides the background and context to show how the ITS has developed since the previous draft ITS went out for public consultation in August 2012. Information is provided on the actions taken to review the ITS and refine the direction of the transport strategy and produce a new vision and objectives. It also identifies a programme of further work now required to develop a full draft ITS.

The ITS is a joint document, prepared by both Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council. The existing traffic situation in Maidstone is one of significant congestion on our roads. It is accepted that traffic congestion will increase as the borough grows, so the ITS is designed to minimise this increase and to mitigate the associated impacts on the local economy and air quality. The ITS is also directed towards improving road user safety and education.

1.3.2 Transport Strategy Development

- 1.3.3 The previous draft ITS was based on the results of multi-modal transport modelling commissioned by Kent County Council (KCC) and Maidstone Borough Council (MBC). The model was used in 2011 and early 2012 to test the impact of planned housing and employment growth, together with background traffic growth, on the local transport network. The previous local plan housing target of 10,080 (to 2026) was used. The baseline data that informed the model was collected in 2007 at inner and outer cordon points around the Maidstone urban area. The data showed that the vast majority of vehicular traffic crossing the outer cordon in the morning peak hour was heading to destinations within the town itself, usually passing through the town centre to destinations including the secondary schools and the hospital. On this basis, the modelling strongly indicated that the provision of strategic highway capacity around the town (for example, the South East Maidstone Strategic Link scheme) would not represent a cost-effective solution to existing and forecast traffic congestion in and around the town centre.
- 1.3.4 These considerations, together with the significant peak period congestion and poor air quality across the urban area, require the ITS to complement one of the core principles in the NPPF, which is to make the fullest possible use of public transport, walking and cycling. The ITS therefore focuses primarily on demand management measures (such as park and ride services, bus priority measures and enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure), combined with targeted highway capacity improvements at strategic junctions. This will enable people to make informed choices about how and when they travel to and from the town centre and other destinations in the borough.
- 1.3.5 KCC and MBC jointly identified three transport strategy options to address the impact of forecast trip growth over the local plan period; namely, Option 1: 'Do Minimum', Option 2: 'Radial P&R Sites' and Option 3: 'North / South P&R Spine'.

Transport Strategy Options		
Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Thameslink rail services to London;• M20 traffic signals;• Increased bus frequencies on all main radial routes into the town centre to	Option 1 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A229 and A274 inbound bus / high occupancy vehicle lane;• Bus priority measures;• Bluebell Hill park and ride site;	Option 1 plus: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Park and ride facilities and services along a north / south spine corridor;• Inbound bus / high occupancy vehicle lanes to support park

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> at least every 10 minutes; • Romney Place bus lane; • Bus priority measures; • Upgrade existing park and ride site facilities; • Walking and cycling infrastructure; and • Travel plans for new development sites. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sutton Road park and ride site; • Linton Corner park and ride site; • Newnham Court park and ride site; • Improved through bus services to key destinations; • Reduction in town centre car parking supply; and • Increase in long-stay parking charges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> and ride; • Bus priority measures; • New north west express loop bus service; • Improved through bus services to key destinations; • Reduction in town centre car parking supply; and • Increase in long-stay parking charges.
---	---	---

1.3.6 Each of the options was modelled and subject to cost benefit analysis. Option 3 was found to have the most beneficial impact on traffic flows and to represent the greatest value for money. However, concerns over the existing subsidy requirement for park and ride and the capital cost of options 2 and 3 resulted in a modified option 1 being selected for public consultation in the summer of 2012.

1.3.7 Responses to the public consultation exercise on the ITS were collated to help inform its development. Responses ranged from those related to specific development sites and areas linked to the local plan, which will be considered through the planning process, to general comments regarding the overall strategy and specific comments regarding particular measures and actions. In terms of the issues raised, these varied from the need to tackle traffic congestion (approximately 12% of respondents), whilst not forgetting the needs of motorists, improving public transport provision including park and ride (approximately 23% of respondents), carefully considering town centre parking and enhancing walking and cycling infrastructure (approximately 12% of respondents). The need to ensure the strategy is deliverable and funding sources are identified was also raised.

1.3.8 In October 2012, the Joint Transportation Board (JTB) resolved that the level of forecast journey time increase on arterial routes associated with option 1 was not acceptable. In order to progress the ITS, it has therefore been necessary for officers to review and redefine the available options. At the meeting of the JTB in January 2013, an

Informal Member Group (IMG) was established to progress the ITS and address the JTB's concerns.

1.3.9 Transport Strategy Review

1.3.10 The technical studies completed to date, together with the outcome of the public consultation exercise and the resolution of the JTB, demonstrate that any 'Do Minimum' option would not satisfactorily address existing or forecast congestion. They also provide a strong indication that deliverable and cost-effective demand management measures, such as a north/south park and ride spine with bus priority measures on routes serving the sites, should continue to form the basis of the ITS.

1.3.11 These principles were accepted by the IMG, which agreed to recommend that new and /or enhanced park and ride services should feature in the revised ITS, alongside measures to increase highway capacity at strategic junctions in and around Maidstone. The IMG also expressed a clear view that any measures to increase the attractiveness of non-car modes should not disadvantage car or freight traffic.

1.3.12 On the advice of the IMG, KCC and MBC officers visited colleagues at Essex County Council and Chelmsford City Council to view the city's new park and ride service and associated bus priority measures, and to discuss the critical success factors which could be applied in Maidstone. The meeting strengthened the findings of the earlier modelling exercise that a small number of large, purpose-built park and ride sites serving distinct catchment areas offer the strongest prospect of becoming commercially viable in the medium term. The park and ride service would also need to include bus priority measures along the route to provide journey time savings.

1.3.13 Alongside the enhanced park and ride facilities, highway capacity and pedestrian accessibility improvements at the Maidstone bridges gyratory are also proposed. The preferred option, which was endorsed by the JTB in October 2013, is to progress the previous 'A229 Through Link' scheme, involving the provision of two northbound lanes on the eastern side of the River Medway.

1.3.14 Defining the Transport Strategy Framework

1.3.15 It is considered that the ITS review exercise provides a sound basis on which to progress and develop a transport strategy framework. There are a number of essential elements to the strategy, which are then supported by discretionary elements.

1.3.16 The essential elements include:-

- A more targeted park and ride service, with new and / or improved sites in the vicinity of M20 junction 7 and at Linton Crossroads on the A229 corridor to the south of the town, aimed at long-stay commuters into the town centre;
- Bus priority measures in tandem with the enhanced park and ride service;
- Highway capacity improvements at the bridges gyratory and at other key junctions in and around the strategic development areas of north west Maidstone, south east Maidstone and M20 junction 7, to improve journey time reliability and air quality;
- Increased bus service frequencies (to at least every 7 minutes) on radial routes serving Maidstone town centre;
- Walking and cycling infrastructure, focusing on improved wayfinding, safer crossing points at the town centre gyratory, and improvements to the River Medway towpath;
- A car sharing initiative in partnership with local employers; and
- A refreshed town centre parking strategy, which will look to increase long-stay car parking charges and reduce car parking supply to promote the use of park and ride, and a reduction in short-stay car parking to prioritise shoppers and visitors.

1.3.17 The discretionary elements include:-

- A reduced town centre long-stay parking supply;
- A Maidstone public transport smartcard, similar to London's oyster card;
- A new park and ride service on the A229 corridor linked to the route 101 bus service, in partnership with Medway Council;
- Inbound bus and / or High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on the A229 Royal Engineers Road and / or A229 Loose Road corridors; and
- Greater use of the River Medway as a transport corridor.

1.3.18 The development of the transport strategy framework as shown above allowed the vision and objectives for the ITS to be redefined with the aim of making them more concise and targeted.

1.3.19 **A Transport Vision for Maidstone**

1.3.20 The transport vision for Maidstone set out in the draft local plan states that "by 2031, Maidstone will have a transport network that supports a prosperous economy and provides genuine transport choices to help

people make more journeys by sustainable modes such as public transport, walking and cycling. The transport network will promote Maidstone town centre as a regionally important transport hub and will have sufficient people and goods-moving capacity to support the growth projected by the local plan to 2031. The borough will have a safe environment for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists and its air quality will be better with more low carbon vehicles travelling on our roads. Both the rural service centres and Maidstone town centre will be better connected to facilities and employment within the borough. Strategic links to locations outside of the borough will be improved, and destinations such as London will be more accessible. Overall, Maidstone will be a better place to live with an enhanced quality of life supported by an improved transport network”.

1.3.21 **Transport Objectives**

1.3.22 The transport objectives for the borough and how these will be achieved are as follows:

1.3.23 **Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone’s local plan and facilitates economic prosperity**

1.3.24 This will be achieved by:

- Integrating transport and land use planning to support sustainable development, particularly in the growth areas identified in the local plan;
- Securing travel plans and appropriate developer contributions to ensure that the impacts of new development are adequately mitigated;
- Securing construction environmental management plans to minimise the impacts from new developments during construction;
- Investing in better public transport provision, in partnership with commercial bus and rail operators;
- Improving walking and cycling infrastructure, focusing on routes across the River Medway and the town centre gyratory;
- Enhancing the accessibility and safety of the borough’s transport network;
- Highway capacity improvements at the Maidstone bridges gyratory and at other key junctions in and around the strategic development areas of north west Maidstone, south east Maidstone and M20 junction 7; and
- Facilitating the safe and efficient movement of goods and servicing trips across the borough.

1.3.25Manage demand on the transport network through enhanced public transport and park and ride services and walking and cycling improvements

1.3.26This will be achieved by:

- An enhanced park and ride service, with new and / or improved sites in the vicinity of M20 junction 7 and on the A229 corridor to the south of the town, aimed at long-stay commuters into the town centre;
- Bus priority measures on park and ride routes in tandem with the enhanced service;
- Increased bus service frequencies (to at least every 7 minutes) on radial routes serving Maidstone town centre;
- Inbound bus and / or High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes on the A229 Royal Engineers Road and / or A229 Loose Road corridors;
- Improved walking and cycling infrastructure, focusing on routes across the River Medway and the town centre gyratory; and
- Securing travel plans and appropriate developer contributions to ensure that the impacts of new development are adequately mitigated.

1.3.27Improve highway network capacity and function at key locations and junctions across the borough

1.3.28This will be achieved by:

- Highway capacity improvements at the Maidstone bridges gyratory and at other key junctions in and around the strategic development areas of north west Maidstone, south east Maidstone and M20 junction 7.

1.3.29Manage parking provision in the town centre and the wider borough to ensure it is fair and proportionate and supports demand management

1.3.30This will be achieved by:

- A refreshed town centre parking strategy, prioritising shoppers and visitors;
- Giving consideration to a reduction in town centre long-stay parking supply;
- Utilising town centre parking tariffs to encourage a shift to sustainable modes of transport such as park and ride; and

- Reviewing the residents' parking zones to ensure they are fair, simple and meet the needs of all road users.

1.3.31 Improve transport choice across the borough and seek to influence travel behaviour

1.3.32 This will be achieved by:

- Implementing an Influencing Travel Behaviour (ITB) programme;
- Securing travel plans for new development in order to influence their associated travel behaviour patterns;
- Improved walking and cycling infrastructure, focusing on routes across the River Medway and the town centre gyratory;
- A high-profile car sharing initiative in partnership with local employers;
- Introducing a Maidstone public transport smartcard, similar to London's oyster card; and
- Greater use of the River Medway as a transport corridor.

1.3.33 Improving strategic links to Maidstone across the county and to wider destinations such as London

1.3.34 This will be achieved by:

- Investigating the feasibility of a new park and ride service on the A229 corridor linked to the route 101 bus service, in partnership with Medway Council;
- Improved train service frequency and capacity to London through working with central government and the train operating companies; and
- Working with the Highways Agency to continue to enhance Maidstone's strategic road network connections.

1.3.35 Ensure the transport network provides inclusive access for all users

1.3.36 This will be achieved by:

- Reducing traffic dominance and severance;
- Improving road safety across all modes;
- Encouraging modes of transport that are affordable and easily available to everyone, such as walking, cycling and public transport;
- Improving the provision of transport information; and

- Removing physical barriers and ensuring transport modes are accessible to all users.

1.3.37 **Address the air quality impact of transport**

1.3.38 This will be achieved by:

- Implementing the Maidstone Air Quality Action Plan and Low Emission Strategy;
- Encouraging the take up of low carbon vehicle technology; and
- Providing the necessary supporting infrastructure to enable the use of low carbon vehicle technology.

1.3.39 **Next Steps and Timetable**

1.3.40 It is considered that the data derived from existing strategic transport modelling is now out of date. The previous modeling work was based on a housing figure of 10,080 and a future year of 2026. The housing figure is set to change significantly and in order to ensure the local plan is supported by a robust and sound transport evidence base it is considered necessary to undertake a new strategic transport modeling exercise once a new housing target and distribution strategy has been agreed.

1.3.41 The new modeling will factor in the trips generated by any housing and employment sites allocates in the draft local plan, and will cover the plan period 2011-2031. However, notwithstanding the fact that new modeling will be undertaken, the results of the previous modeling exercise combined with recent data obtained from transport modeling undertaken for the strategic sites in the south east and north west of the urban area, is considered robust enough.

1.3.42 On this basis, a number of steps need to be taken to develop the ITS further and to gain agreement to undertake a new public consultation exercise. The actions to be taken and approximate timings are as follows:

- **Action:** Agree a brief for carrying out the strategic transport modeling work based on a new agreed housing target, distribution strategy and package of transport mitigation measures.
- **When:** Spring 2014.
- **Action:** Undertake strategic transport modeling work to understand the transport impact of the proposed local plan growth. Test the package of transport mitigation measures in order to identify the measures required to manage the identified transport impact.
- **When:** Spring 2014.

- **Action:** Based on the outcomes of the modeling work, refine the ITS and develop an action plan. Produce a full draft ITS document and bring it to Scrutiny and Cabinet for agreement to go out to public consultation.
- **When:** Spring / Summer 2014.
- **Action:** Carry out public consultation of the draft ITS.
- **When:** Summer 2014.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 Not progressing the ITS would undermine the robustness and soundness of the evidence base of the emerging local plan.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 **For Maidstone to have a growing economy** – the ITS, in support of the local plan, will allow the council to have more certainty over the transport network and its function and capability to support growth. This in turn will foster confidence that the borough is a more attractive place to locate for residents and business.

1.5.2 **For Maidstone to be a decent place to live** – the ITS and local plan are in essence tools to allow Maidstone borough to continue to be a decent place to live.

1.6 Other Implications

1.6.1

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

X
X

1.6.2 Financial – progressing the ITS will have financial implications. The transport modelling work proposed will be accommodated by the local plan budget.

1.6.3 Environmental / sustainable development – the ITS will support the delivery of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan aims and objectives. The plan is written to deliver environmental / sustainable development as a key aspect.

1.7 Relevant Documents

1.8 None

1.8.1 Appendices

1.8.2 None

1.8.3 Background Documents

1.8.4 None

<u>IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?</u>		<u>THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED</u>	
Yes	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, this is a Key Decision because: It affects all wards and parishes.			
Wards/Parishes affected: All wards and parishes.			

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2014

REPORT OF HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Report prepared by Michael Murphy

1. MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT – GROUP 3 POLICIES

1.1 Issue for Decision

- 1.1.1** To consider the third group of draft local plan policies for Maidstone Borough (attached at Appendix A). The policies will be incorporated in a full draft of the local plan to be published for Regulation 18 (Preparation) public consultation. This group of policies comprises two spatial policies which were withdrawn from the agenda at Cabinet in December 2013, a number of transport based development management policies, two park and ride site allocation policies and new policies addressing air quality and development on previously developed land.
 - 1.1.2** The spatial policies SP3 (Rural Service Centres) and SP4 (Larger Villages – now called Larger Settlements) were considered by Scrutiny Committee in December 2013 where the Committee recommended that the policies should be withdrawn from the Cabinet agenda pending discussions with the parish councils on the methodology used in determining the designations.
 - 1.1.3** Development management Policy DM12 (Sustainable Transport) was approved by Cabinet in March 2013 as an interim local plan policy but has been amended to ensure consistency with changes to the Integrated Transport Strategy. Development management policies DM14 (Public Transport) and DM15 (Park and Ride) were considered at Scrutiny Committee in August 2013. The park and ride allocations and development management policies addressing air quality and brownfield development have not been seen by Members previously.
- 1.2 Recommendation of Head of Planning and Development**

- 1.2.1 That Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the proposed policies and associated plans of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan (attached at Appendix A), and recommends to Cabinet that they are approved for public consultation purposes.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.3.1 The Cabinet report of 4 December 2013 explains that development management and spatial policies are being taken to Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet in three groups because of the number of policies that comprise the new local plan. The first and second groups of policies were approved by Cabinet on 22 October and 4 December 2013 respectively.
- 1.3.2 This report focuses on a third and final group of local plan policies being put forward for consideration by Scrutiny Committee before the local plan as a whole is brought to the Committee in February 2014. The list of Group 3 policies is included in the table below.

Group 3 Policies	
Spatial Policies	
SP3	Rural Service Centres (<i>previously CS4</i>)
SP4	Larger Settlements
Development Management Policies (borough wide)	
DM1	Development on Brownfield Land
DM13	Sustainable Transport (<i>previously CS7</i>)
DM14	Public Transport
DM15	Park and Ride
DM16	Air Quality
Park and Ride Land Allocations	
PKR1(1)	Linton Crossroads
PKR1(2)	Old Sittingbourne Road

- 1.3.3 The group of policies above includes a mixture of Core Strategy policies which have been seen by Members before, some of which have since been amended for inclusion in the local plan, and a number of new local plan policies. The following paragraphs add some detail on the amendments made to existing policies, where relevant, and the content of the new policies.
- 1.3.4 SP3 & SP4 Rural Service Centre and Larger Settlements
The Cabinet decision to withdraw spatial policies SP3 and SP4 from the draft plan followed a recommendation from Scrutiny Committee (2 December 2013) that officers meet with the parish councils and Ward Members for the settlements not previously designated in the

settlement hierarchy for the borough, namely; Coxheath, Yalding, Boughton Monchelsea, Eythorne Street (Hollingbourne) and Sutton Valence. The purpose of the meetings was to discuss the methodology used in making the designations and to hear any concerns that the parish councils may have with the policies going forward.

- 1.3.5 The settlement hierarchy for Maidstone establishes the most sustainable locations in the borough. The town centre and urban area sit at the top of the hierarchy because this is where the infrastructure is best and where the majority of the borough's population is situated in closest proximity to a wide range of services and facilities. The edge of the urban area is considered the next most sustainable location because any additional population in these areas can easily access services and facilities in the urban area and can make best use of existing infrastructure, e.g. public transport.
- 1.3.6 Outside of the urban and edge of urban areas, the rural service centres (RSC) are considered the next most sustainable locations in the borough. The RSCs have more services and facilities, larger populations and better infrastructure than any other settlements in the borough. They serve their local communities and surrounding hinterland and are therefore considered more sustainable than the larger settlements, which are smaller in population and range of services, and tend to provide for the day-to-day needs of their local populations, therefore sitting below the RSCs in the settlement hierarchy.
- 1.3.7 Meetings have now taken place with the parish councils (and Ward Members) with respect to the Cabinet decision to withdraw policies SP3 and SP4, where officers have had the opportunity to better explain the need for a settlement hierarchy and the reasons why certain settlements are included in the hierarchy. Concerns were expressed by a number of the parish councils, which mainly focused on slight inaccuracies in the audit of services and facilities supporting the policies, and the perceived role the respective settlements play in the hierarchy.
- 1.3.8 Officers have given further consideration to the policies following the recent meetings and have decided to retain the designations as set out in the Scrutiny report of 2 December 2013. The settlements of Coxheath and Yalding are still considered suitable as rural service centres based on population, range of services and facilities, role of the settlement in serving a wider hinterland and potential to improve the range of services, facilities and infrastructure with respect to any future new development. However, Policy SP3 has been amended with respect to both settlements based on information received at the meetings. The amendments to the supporting text have focused on improving the accuracy of reporting on healthcare provision in

Coxheath and highlighting the importance of flood mitigation in Yalding, particularly for the Syngenta site. The policy itself has been strengthened to provide more clarity on the fact that new development will only be approved within the settlement boundaries once they are redrawn in the new local plan. This will ensure that coalescence of settlements cannot occur.

- 1.3.9 Policy SP4 remains unchanged. Boughton Monchelsea, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne) and Sutton Valence are considered suitable to include in the settlement hierarchy for the borough because each settlement has enough key services and facilities to support the day-to-day needs of its local population, and the population of these settlements is greater than a number of others with a similar level of services.

- 1.3.10 DM13 – Sustainable Transport (previously CS7 (2013))
Policy DM13 was approved as an interim local plan development management policy by Cabinet in March 2013. The policy is linked to the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS), which supports the local plan with the aim of improving accessibility across the borough and to the town centre, in order to promote Maidstone as a regionally important transport hub. The supporting text and the policy have been further improved since Cabinet in March to add greater detail on air quality mitigation measures and adding a commitment to an enhanced public transport system which focuses on linkages to and from the town centre and to the rural service centres.

- 1.3.11 DM15 – Park and Ride Sites
Policy DM15 was approved by Cabinet for public consultation in August 2013 and sets the range of criteria that must be met if a new or replacement park and ride site is proposed. The only amendment to this policy is the inclusion of Linton Crossroads (to serve the A229 corridor) as a designated bus park and ride site along with the existing sites at Old Sittingbourne Road, Willington Street and London Road.

- 1.3.12 Linton Crossroads has been included in this policy based on transport modelling undertaken in 2011 and 2012, which has been used to support the ITS, part of the local plan evidence base. The evidence base shows that a site near Linton Crossroads is the most suitable location for park and ride to the south of the borough because it is at an appropriate distance from the town centre to intercept traffic movements early enough along the A229 corridor, and because the site would provide easy access to the identified catchment area, and particularly long stay commuters travelling to the town centre from the south of the borough. The ITS is the subject of a separate report on this Committee agenda.

- 1.3.13 The park and ride sites policy DM15 is supported by two park and ride site allocation policies, namely; the new site allocation at Linton

Crossroads and an improved policy for the existing park and ride site at Old Sittingbourne Road (Eclipse Business Park) near the M20 junction 7. The "Eclipse" site is still considered the most appropriate site for park and ride to the north of the town based on the transport modelling and the fact that the site is already established and well integrated into the landscape in this location near the North Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The policies include detailed criteria to mitigate for any adverse impacts the sites may have on the landscape or the surrounding highways network and to ensure that any proposals for these sites are designed to a high standard to make them as attractive as possible for commuters. Both park and ride site allocation policies are included as in Appendix A to this report.

1.3.14 Policy DM16 - Air Quality

This is a new policy that has been developed to address growing air quality issues in the borough and to complement the National Planning Policy Framework requirement for councils to sustain compliance with EU limit values and national objectives for pollutants. The council has a responsibility to work towards achieving these targets and does this through the Local Air Quality Management regime. Through this function the council has identified 6 areas currently exceeding EU guideline values and has an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) in place in order to identify measures aimed at reducing air pollution at these locations.

- 1.3.15 The supporting text to the Air Quality policy gives examples of appropriate mitigation measures for proposals that will affect air quality, and links the evaluation of air quality impacts to the principles set out in the AQAP. This is taken forward into the policy where mitigation measures are required which are locationally specific and proportionate to the likely impacts of any new development proposals.

1.3.16 Policy DM1 – Development on Brownfield Land

The council has been very successful in recent years in delivering development on brownfield land. A large proportion of brownfield sites in the urban area have been developed at high densities for housing, particularly in and adjacent to the town centre along the River Medway. This new policy sets to build on this success and responds to one of the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework, which encourages the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed, provided it is not of high environmental value.

- 1.3.17 Policies in the new Maidstone Borough Local Plan have been designed to avoid repetition, so the local plan should be read as a whole when determining planning applications. A table of all local plan policies is included at Appendix B. Once this group of policies has been considered by Scrutiny Committee and presented to Cabinet, the local

plan as a whole (including site allocations) will be presented to Cabinet, via Scrutiny Committee, in February 2014. This will give Members the opportunity to see the local plan as a single document and to see how a number of the policies are interconnected. It is hoped that the document will be approved by Cabinet to go forward for Regulation 18 public consultation, which is currently scheduled to commence in March 2014.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

- 1.4.1 The policies (attached at Appendix A as Group 3) could have been presented to the Committee for consideration as part of the new Maidstone Borough Local Plan as a whole. However, deliberation of these policies, some of which have not been seen by Members since October 2011, at this point offers the opportunity for early debate, and the chance to identify new local issues that have not been addressed through these and/or other policies that will be carried forward to the local plan. This is the final batch of policies that will be brought to Scrutiny committee in advance of the whole local plan being brought for consideration by the Committee in February 2014.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 1.5.1 The new Maidstone Borough Local Plan covers the period 2011-2031 and will assist in delivering the spatial objectives of the Community Strategy and the Strategic Plan over the plan period. The local plan is linked to objectives set out in other Council documents, such as the Economic Development Strategy and the Housing Strategy. The local plan will support the council's priorities for Maidstone to have a growing economy and to be a decent place to live, and the consultation processes will strive to meet corporate and customer excellence.

1.6 Risk Management

- 1.6.1 The council still has a local planning policy framework that comprises adopted development plan documents and supplementary planning documents, endorsed guidance, and saved policies from the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000. These policies are still relevant and carry weight in the decision making processes provided there is no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).
- 1.6.2 However, the council has a duty to maintain an up-to-date policy framework, and current policies are increasingly becoming outdated or are in conflict with the NPPF. The policies that are the subject of this report, together with other policies of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan, will provide a robust framework for the development

management process and will reduce the risk of inappropriate development.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

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

1.7.2 Legal: Legal services offer advice on document content and processes to ensure the Maidstone Borough Local Plan is found sound at examination. A number of meetings have been held with Counsel and the Head of Legal Services. These services can be managed within the existing budget for local plan production.

1.7.3 Environmental/Sustainable Development: A sustainability appraisal, incorporating a strategic environmental assessment is required for all local plan policies¹, including site allocations. Consultants have been appointed to undertake this technical exercise, and costs can be managed within the existing budget for local plan production. The sustainability appraisal is an iterative process, and the policies that are the subject of this report have undergone initial appraisal and have been amendment as a result.

1.8 Relevant Documents

None.

1.8.1 Appendices

¹ **SEA Directive:** European Directive 2001/42/EC 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment'. Transposed into UK law via The Environmental Assessment of Plans and Programmes Regulations 2004.

Appendix A: Draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan Policies 2013 – Group 3.

Appendix B: List of All Local Plan Policies

1.8.2 Background Documents

None.

<u>IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?</u>		<u>THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED</u>	
Yes	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
This is a Key Decision because it affects all wards and parishes.			
Wards/Parishes affected: All.			

Policy SP3 - Rural service centres

Rural service centres (RSC)

5.36 Outside of the town centre and urban area, rural service centres are considered the most sustainable settlements in Maidstone's settlement hierarchy. The planned development and maintenance of sustainable communities underpins the council's approach to rural areas where the primary aim is to direct development towards rural settlements that can best act as service centres for their local population and surrounding rural communities. Rural service centres play a key part in the economic and social fabric of the borough and contribute towards its character and built form. They act as a focal point for trade and services by providing a concentration of public transport networks, employment opportunities and community facilities that minimise car journeys.

5.37 An assessment of population and the services and facilities available in each settlement in the borough forms part of the basis for determining the villages that can be designated as RSC. Other factors like the accessibility of the villages, their potential to accommodate additional growth, and the role each village plays as a service centre for its surrounding hinterland are also important. The following villages have been designated as rural service centres based on the above:

- Coxheath
- Harrietsham
- Headcorn
- Lenham
- Marden
- Staplehurst
- Yalding

5.38 The rural service centres are difficult to compare because they do not all share the same level of key services and facilities. However, all of the service centres have a good range of services and facilities and serve a wider community. They will continue to be focal points where improved infrastructure and the strategic location of new development will reduce the need to travel and will help to maintain and improve on the range of essential local services and facilities. It is important that the RSCs remain sustainable settlements with the services and facilities necessary to support a growing population. The following text provides a summary of the distinctive character of each RSC.

Coxheath

5.39 Coxheath has the advantage of a compact urban form and a good offering of key services and facilities to support a growing population. Healthcare services in the village are particularly strong and include two GP surgeries, a dentist, community trust clinic, chiropractic clinic and a pharmacy. However, the GP surgeries are currently at capacity and any further development in Coxheath will be expected to contribute towards ensuring healthcare facilities can meet the demands of future growth. Unlike the other RSCs Coxheath does not have a train station but it has a regular bus service which connects the village to Maidstone town centre. Coxheath also has the advantage of being in close proximity to the town centre in comparison to other RSCs, which affords good access to a number of secondary schools and other facilities.

Harrietsham

5.40 Harrietsham has the population to support key services. Provision of, and access to, schools and community facilities in the village are adequate but will require improvement with any increase in population. The village has good public transport connections to Maidstone and other retail and employment centres. There is a local aspiration for replacement almshouses to support the local elderly population and for additional retail and play facilities, which are limited.

Headcorn

5.41 Headcorn has a diverse range of services and community facilities which are easily accessible on foot or by cycle due to the compact form of the village. There are local employment opportunities and there is a local wish to ensure that existing employment sites are kept in active employment use. A regular bus service runs between Headcorn and Maidstone and the village has good rail linkages to other retail and employment centres, including London. Flooding is an issue in Headcorn as the village is surrounded on three sides by the functional

floodplain of the River Beult and its tributaries. The Strategic Flood Risk Assessment advises strict controls on the location of development within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

Lenham

5.42 Lenham has the key services and community facilities expected of a rural service centre. The village performs the best in terms of education facilities, with a primary school and nursery school located on the same site, and as the only village to have a secondary school within the village boundary. Transport links to Maidstone and other retail and employment centres by bus and rail are good. There is a local aspiration for housing development in the village to sustain the thriving village centre and local businesses in general. The need for housing is centred on young people to ensure long term sustainability.

Marden

5.43 Marden is a successful service centre, particularly in terms of employment opportunities, and also has strong key community facilities such as a medical centre, library and village hall. Marden has frequent rail connections to London and other retail and employment centres, which has created a demand for new development. This has to be balanced with the desire to ensure local people have access to affordable housing. Public transport connections to Maidstone are less frequent and require improvement. Flooding is an issue in Marden and the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment advises strict controls on the location of development within Flood Zones 2 and 3.

Staplehurst

5.44 Staplehurst is the largest of the rural service centres in terms of population and size, and has a number of the key community services and facilities one would expect, including good health care services consisting of a health centre, pharmacy, optician and chiropractic clinic. The village also has more employment providers than most of the other service centres with the exception of Marden. Current transport infrastructure in Staplehurst is good but improvements are essential to cope with high levels of demand at peak times. Local aspirations for Staplehurst express a need for improvement to highways infrastructure in line with any new large scale housing developments.

Yalding

5.45 Yalding has a number of the key services and facilities expected of a rural service centre. Retail and healthcare opportunities in the village are not as strong as in some RSCs but the village does have a local shop, post office and GP surgery. The village is served by a nearby train station and has connections by bus to Maidstone town centre, which is essential in terms of access to secondary education. Yalding also has sustainable connections to nearby Paddock Wood, which also has a range of services and facilities, including a secondary school.

5.46 The Syngenta site to the west of Yalding village is the primary site proposed for development and is a potential mixed use development site for housing and employment which affords an opportunity to improve the range of services and facilities in the service centre. It is important to ensure that safe

and sustainable linkages between the Syngenta site and the village are provided if this development comes forward. Flood mitigation measures will have to form an essential part of any development proposal in the settlement. The size of the Syngenta site offers an opportunity for a sustainable drainage mitigation approach to flood prevention.

5.47 The Water Cycle Study indicates that a number of the rural service centre catchment areas have at least some known problems with surface water and sewer flooding. It is therefore important that surface water run-off from new development does not make this problem worse. Future developments in the rural service centres should include the implementation of sustainable urban drainage systems (SuDS) that reduce surface water run-off. To ensure consistency across each rural service centre with respect to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, a detailed flood risk assessment is required prior to any development with the obvious intention of ensuring new development is located outside areas liable to flooding.

5.48 Whilst Maidstone town will be the focus for most new development, development in the rural service centres with associated infrastructure improvements is considered far more sustainable than the ad hoc growth of smaller settlements. New sites are allocated at all rural service centres for housing development.

Policy SP 3

Rural service centres

At the designated rural service centres of Coxheath, Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden, Staplehurst and Yalding defined on the policies map the council will:

1. Focus new housing and employment development within the settlement boundaries when it is:
 - i. An allocated site in the local plan;
 - ii. Minor development such as infilling; or
 - iii. The redevelopment of previously developed land that is of a scale appropriate to the size of the village.
2. Retain and improve existing employment sites and encourage new employment opportunities provided the site is in an appropriate location for, and suited to, the use; and
3. Resist the loss of local shops and community facilities, whilst supporting new retail development and community services to meet local need.

Policy SP4 - Larger settlements

5.49 Maidstone borough contains a number of settlements that have a more limited range of services than the rural service centres but still offer some services that meet the day-to-day needs of their local communities. The overall amount of development that will be acceptable in these settlements will be less than in the rural service centres as they are less sustainable locations for meeting the development needs of the borough as a whole.

5.50 The assessment of population, village services and facilities identifies three villages that can be designated as larger settlements, namely:

- Boughton Monchelsea
- Eythorne Street (Hollingbourne)
- Sutton Valence

5.51 Similar to the rural service centres, all three villages have different characteristics and there is variation in the limited range of services and facilities they provide. The following text provides a summary of the distinctive character of each larger settlement.

Boughton Monchelsea

5.52 Boughton Monchelsea lies to the southeast of Maidstone's urban edge adjacent to the scarp face of the Greensand Ridge. The settlement performs well in the audit in terms of education and childcare, with a primary school, playgroup, nursery and nearby secondary school. It performs poorly in terms of healthcare, with no GP surgery or other health care service. The village has a local shop, post office, village hall and recreation areas. Although the settlement is close to the urban area, public transport connections to Maidstone town centre are infrequent, and this is not helped by the fact that residential areas within the settlement are quite dispersed. Local employment opportunities in the settlement are also limited.

Eythorne Street (Hollingbourne)

5.53 Hollingbourne (Eythorne Street) is a linear settlement which lies to the northeast of Maidstone's urban area in the setting of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The primary school, pre-school and one of the local playing fields are approximately 0.5km from the village centre. The village does not have a GP surgery or healthcare facilities apart from an osteopath clinic, but does have some good key facilities, including a village hall, local shop, post office, pubs and a restaurant. Rail connections to Maidstone town centre and other retail and employment destinations are good, and the village also has a regular bus service to the town centre.

Sutton Valence

5.54 Sutton Valence lies to the southeast of Maidstone's urban area on a plateau above the Greensand Ridge. The settlement performs well in the audit in terms of education facilities. There is a pre-school, primary school and the Sutton Valence boarding school, which caters for children from the age of 3 to

18. In terms of services and community facilities there are pubs, a church, a village hall, mobile library service and good playing pitches. The village has a medical practice but no dentist or pharmacy. Public transport connections to Maidstone town centre and Headcorn are good due to a regular bus service. The settlement does not have a train station.

5.55 Based on the analysis of population, services and facilities, all three settlements are considered sustainable locations for limited new housing development provided that it is of a scale in keeping with their role, character and scale. An appropriate increase in population would help to support village services and facilities. The continued sustainability of these settlements as places to live and work is dependent on the retention of local services that meet community needs coupled with the retention of adequate transport services to enable access to larger centres for those services that are not available locally.

Policy SP 4

Larger settlements

At the designated larger settlements of Boughton Monchelsea, Eythorne Street (Hollingbourne) and Sutton Valence defined on the policies map the council will:

1. Focus new development within the settlement boundaries, when it is:
 - i. An allocated site in the local plan;
 - ii. Minor development such as infilling; or
 - iii. The redevelopment of previously developed land that is of a size appropriate to the role, character and scale of the village.
2. Resist the loss of local shops and community facilities, whilst supporting new retail and community services to meet local need.

Policy DM1 - Development on brownfield land

Development on brownfield land

11.1 One of the core principles of the National Planning Policy Framework encourages the effective use of land by re-using land that has been previously developed, provided it is not of high environmental value. This is known as brownfield land and, in Maidstone, a large proportion of brownfield sites in the urban area have been developed at high densities for housing in recent years, particularly in and adjacent to the town centre along the River Medway. Making the best use of previously developed land will continue to be encouraged throughout the lifetime of this plan.

11.2 Development of brownfield land is favoured ahead of greenfield development because in most cases it is more sustainable. It is important to ensure that brownfield land is not underused and that the most is made of vacant and derelict land and buildings in order to reduce the need for greenfield land, which is a finite resource and often of higher quality in terms of landscape and biodiversity.

11.3 Brownfield development is essential for urban regeneration and if done to a high design standard it brings homes, jobs and services closer together; reduces dependency on the car; and strengthens communities.

Policy DM 1

Development on brownfield land

Proposals for development on previously developed land (brownfield land) that make effective and efficient use of land and which meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. The site is not of high environmental value; and
2. If the proposal is for residential development, the density of new housing proposals reflects the character and appearance of individual localities, and is consistent with policy H2 unless there are justifiable planning reasons for lower density development.

Policy DM13 - Sustainable transport

Transport

11.58 Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local transport authority), the Highways Agency, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS), prepared by the council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to the town centre, in order to promote Maidstone as a regionally important transport hub. The ITS needs to address a number of transport challenges as set out below.

Highway network

11.59 Maidstone has an extensive highway network which provides direct links both within the borough and to neighbouring areas including Ashford, Tonbridge and Malling, the Medway Towns, Tunbridge Wells and London. Four north-south and east-west primary routes pass through the town centre and numerous secondary routes 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.

11.60 The principal constraint on the borough's urban road network is the single crossing point of the River Medway at the town centre bridges gyratory, where the A20, A26 and A229 meet. From this point, congestion spreads along the main radial approaches to Maidstone during the morning and evening peaks, leading drivers to seek alternative routes for longer journeys around the periphery of the town.

11.61 Modelling conducted in 2012 indicates that by 2026, a combination of background traffic growth and planned housing and employment development will increase the number of person trips in Maidstone during the morning peak hour by 42%. Significantly however, background growth associated with increased economic activity and greater car ownership is expected to have over one-and-a-half times the impact on trip generation of new housing and employment, demonstrating that robust solutions to Maidstone's transport challenges are required regardless of the development proposed in the Local Plan.

11.62 Maidstone has an average vehicle occupancy of approximately 1.23 persons per car, which is significantly lower than the UK average of 1.6 persons per car. This represents an inefficient use of road space and contributes to greater traffic congestion and air pollution. Whilst it is recognised that the private car will continue to provide the primary means of access in areas where alternative travel choices are not viable, the traffic data suggests that the ITS should focus on demand management measures that enable a higher people-moving capacity over the existing road network. Specifically, the strategy should aim for a reduction in the number of single-occupancy car trips into Maidstone town centre by long-stay commuters – particularly during peak periods – which can be achieved through interventions such as enhanced Park and Ride and walking and cycling infrastructure. This approach, combined with targeted capacity improvements to strategic junctions such as the bridges gyratory, would improve the reliability and hence attractiveness of public transport, as well as providing businesses and freight operators with greater journey time reliability.

Car Parking

11.63 The provision of an adequate supply of well-located and reasonably priced car parking is essential to support the borough's retail economy, to facilitate 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.

11.64 The ITS will seek address parking issues by producing a refreshed Town Centre Parking Strategy, prioritising shoppers and visitors; giving consideration to a reduction in town centre long-stay parking supply; utilising town centre parking tariffs to encourage a shift to sustainable modes of transport such as Park and Ride and reviewing the Residents' Parking Zones to ensure they are fair, simple and meet the needs of all road users.

Park and Ride

11.65 MBC has been operating Park and Ride services in Maidstone since the early 1980s and was one of the first local authorities in the UK to introduce the concept. The service aims to address the growing peak time congestion in the town centre and has met with varying levels of success to date. Three sites are currently in operation at London Road, Sittingbourne Road, and Willington Street, which in total comprise some 1,450 parking spaces.

11.66 During the 2012/13 financial year some 400,000 transactions were recorded on Park and Ride bus services, which equates to a fall of 7% from the previous year. The Park and Ride services are also available for use by concessionary pass holders, and indeed approximately half of the trips recorded in 2012/13 were made by this group.

11.67 The reduction in patronage can be partially explained by the recession and suppressed economic activity in the town centre. Usage of the Park and Ride service should also be considered in the context of the supply of town centre car parking (both public and private) and the associated parking tariffs. The Park and Ride service is used by both commuters and shoppers; however it accounts for just 2% of all person trips into the town centre during peak periods (excluding walking and cycling), compared to 12% for bus and 77% for private car. The service currently requires a significant annual subsidy and therefore the ITS is seeking to take a targeted approach to address this situation.

11.68 The ITS is targeting the provision of an enhanced Park and Ride service, with an improved site on Old Sittingbourne Road in the vicinity of M20 Junction 7 and on the A229 corridor at Linton Crossroads to the south of the town, aimed at long-stay commuters into the town centre. Bus priority measures will also be provided on Park and Ride routes in tandem with the enhanced service.

Bus services

11.69 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 areas with longer distance services providing connections to many of the outlying villages and neighbouring towns, including Ashford, Sittingbourne, Tonbridge, Tunbridge Wells and the Medway Towns.

11.70 Although KCC and the council do not directly influence the provision of commercial bus services, both authorities work closely with the operators to improve the quality of services and to ensure that the highway network is planned and managed in a way that facilitates the efficient operation of buses. This relationship has been formalised through the signing of a voluntary Quality Bus Partnership (QBP) agreement, which includes commitments by Arriva, KCC and MBC to work collectively to improve all aspects of bus travel and to increase passenger numbers.

11.71 A number of services cannot be provided commercially and are classed as socially necessary services that require subsidy from KCC. These primarily consist of school, rural, evening and weekend services, which provide access to education, employment, healthcare, or essential food shopping. KCC also completed the countywide roll out of the Kent Freedom Pass during 2009. The County Council now provides free travel on almost all public bus services in Kent for an annual fee of £100 for young people living in the county and in academic years 7 to 11. The County Council also assumed responsibility from MBC for the administration and funding of the statutory Kent and Medway Concessionary Travel Scheme for disabled people, their companions and those aged over 60, in April 2011. As the Local Education Authority, KCC also provides free or subsidised home-to-school transport to children who meet the criteria.

11.72 Through the ITS bus service frequencies will look to be increased (to at least every 7 minutes) on radial routes serving Maidstone town centre. Bus priority measures will be provided in order to encourage the use of public transport and services will continue to be made more accessible to all users.

Rail services

11.73 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 east franchise holder, Southeastern.

11.74 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. The average journey time between Maidstone East and London Victoria is an hour and runs half-hourly. The London Charing Cross / Cannon Street to Dover Priory / Ramsgate line passes through the south of the borough, with stations at Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn. Charing Cross and Cannon Street stations are located in close proximity to the City of London and hence services on this line are heavily used by commuters, which places pressure on the limited station car park capacity in these villages.

11.75 The Medway Valley Line, connecting Strood and Paddock Wood, runs from north to south across the borough, with stations at Maidstone Barracks, Maidstone West, East Farleigh, Watlington, Yalding and Beltring. The line operates as part of the Kent Community Rail Partnership, which has delivered improvements to the stations and promoted the service widely. In May 2011, Southeastern commenced the operation of direct peak-time services between London St Pancras and Maidstone West via Strood and High Speed 1 on a trial basis. This has reduced rail journey times between Maidstone and London to 48

minutes and provided commuters from the town with the option of travelling to an alternative London terminus closer to the City. Collectively, these enhancements have contributed to a 25% increase in passenger numbers on the Medway Valley Line since 2007, putting it in the top 10 lines nationally for ridership growth according to the Association of Train Operating Companies.

11.76 KCC published its Rail Action Plan for Kent in 2011, which sets out the County Council's objectives for the new South Eastern Franchise. The reinstatement of services between Maidstone and the City of London is the plan's top priority. It also recognises the need for the level of rail fares charged in Kent to offer better value for money and for the roll out of Smartcard ticketing offering combined bus and rail travel, similar to Transport for London's Oyster card.

Air quality

11.77 Vehicle emissions are a major contributor to poor air quality at both the local level and on a wider global scale. Indeed the entire Maidstone Urban Area has been declared an Air Quality Management Area, primarily due to the level of traffic congestion at peak times. The ITS will therefore support the delivery of the measures identified in the Maidstone Air Quality Action Plan to deliver an improvement in the air quality of the urban area and to reduce pollutant levels below the Air Quality Objective Levels set out by European legislation.

11.78 Development in or affecting Air Quality Management Areas should where necessary incorporate mitigation measures which are locationally specific and proportionate to the likely impact. Examples of mitigation measures include:

- Using green infrastructure to absorb dust and other pollutants;
- Promoting infrastructure to encourage the use of modes of transport with low impact on air quality
- Contributing funding to measures, including those identified in the air quality action plans and low emissions strategies, designed to offset the impact on air quality arising from new development

Influencing travel behaviour

11.79 Through the ITS the council, together with KCC, will seek to promote and support a range of initiatives to influence travel behaviour in the borough. This can be achieved through the use of Travel Plans, behaviour change programmes and introducing improvements to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling and the use of transport, car sharing and car clubs.

11.80 The council, together with KCC, will continue to promote and support the use of Travel Plans as a way of influencing travel behaviour away from journeys by private car to more sustainable modes. Maidstone Borough Council and Kent County Council will continue to implement and monitor their own corporate Travel Plans as well as securing Travel Plans for new development as part of the planning process. Workplace and School Travel Plans will also continue to be developed, implemented and monitored through partnership working across the borough where appropriate.

Cycling and walking

11.81 Both KCC and MBC are therefore committed to the provision of a comprehensive cycle network for residents and visitors to Maidstone.

11.82 The borough currently has a number of cycle routes that link the town centre to the suburban areas; however connections within the town and further afield are limited and there is a lack of cycle parking at key destinations. Consequently, cycle use in Maidstone is very low, the 2011 Census travel to work data indicated that 1% of work trips were undertaken by bike. However 12% of journeys to work were made on foot.

11.83 The provision of attractive and safe walking and cycling routes with adequate cycle parking will be incorporated within the ITS. The borough's walking environment, its walking routes and its public realm will be developed and improved through local plan policies, the ITS, the IDP, and through the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy. The Maidstone Cycling Strategy will be developed through the ITS. These strategies and documents will have the aim of increasing the proportion of trips made by walking and cycling in the borough by 2031.

Assessing the transport needs of development

11.84 New developments have the potential to generate a considerable number of vehicular and pedestrian trips which in turn has both a direct and cumulative impact on the transport network. Improvements to public transport, walking, cycling and highway infrastructure to mitigate these impacts need to be in place to ensure the increase in trips generated will not lead to an unacceptable level of transport impact. To further minimise these impacts, measures and initiatives must be incorporated into the design of development to minimise vehicular trip generation. Transport Assessments and Travel Plans, developed in accordance with KCC guidance will be expected to accompany all planning applications for new developments that reach the required threshold. New development proposals will also be expected to enter into legal agreements to mitigate both their direct and cumulative impact on the transport network. The council will also seek to secure Construction Management Plans to minimise impacts from new developments during construction.

Policy DM 13

Sustainable transport

1. Working in partnership with Kent County Council (the local transport authority), the Highways Agency, infrastructure providers and public transport operators, the borough council will facilitate the delivery of transport improvements to support the growth proposed by the local plan. An Integrated Transport Strategy, prepared by the council and its partners, will have the aim of facilitating economic prosperity and improving accessibility across the borough and to the town centre, in order to promote Maidstone as a regionally important transport hub.
2. In doing so, the council and its partners will:
 - i. Ensure the transport system supports the growth projected by Maidstone's Local Plan and facilitates economic prosperity;
 - ii. Manage demand on the transport network through enhanced public transport and Park and Ride services and walking and cycling improvements;
 - iii. Improve highway network capacity and function at key locations and junctions across the borough;
 - iv. Manage parking provision in the town centre and the wider borough to ensure it is fair and proportionate and supports demand management;
 - v. Improve transport choice across the borough and seek to influence travel behaviour;
 - vi. Develop the strategic and public transport links to and from Maidstone, and connections to the rural service centres;
 - vii. Improve strategic links to Maidstone across the county and to wider destinations such as London;
 - viii. Ensure the transport network provides inclusive access for all users; and
 - ix. Address the air quality impact of transport.
3. Development proposals must:
 - i. Demonstrate that the impacts of trips generated to and from the development are remedied or mitigated;
 - ii. Provide a satisfactory Transport Assessment and a satisfactory Travel Plan in accordance with the threshold levels set by Kent County Council's Guidance on Transport Assessments and Travel Plans; and
 - iii. Demonstrate that development in, or likely to adversely affect, Air Quality Management Areas incorporates mitigation measures to reduce impact to an acceptable level.

A parking standards supplementary planning document will be produced to provide greater detail in support of the policy.

Policy DM14 - Public transport

Policy DM 14

Public transport

1. Within the bus and hackney carriage corridors, as defined on the policies map, the council and the highway authority will develop preference measures to improve journey times and reliability and make public transport more attractive, particularly on park and ride routes. Such measures may include:
 - i. Dedicated bus lanes, including contraflow lanes where appropriate;
 - ii. Bus priority measures at junctions;
 - iii. Prioritisation within traffic management schemes; and/or
 - iv. Enhanced waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities.
2. Proposals for major development will be permitted if adequate provision is made, where necessary and appropriate, within the overall design and site layout for the following facilities for public transport secured through legal agreements:
 - i. Priority or exclusive provision for public service vehicle access to or through the proposed development area;
 - ii. Safe and convenient passenger waiting facilities, information systems and signed pedestrian access routes;
 - iii. Suitable provision for disabled access to the waiting facilities from all parts of the development area; and
 - iv. Suitable provision for disabled access onto buses from the waiting facilities.

Policy DM15 - Park and ride sites

Policy DM 15

Park and ride

1. The following sites, as defined on the policies map, are designated bus park and ride sites:
 - i. Old Sittingbourne Road (to serve the A249 corridor);
 - ii. London Road (to serve the A20 west corridor);
 - iii. Willington Street (to serve the A20 east corridor); and
 - iv. Linton Crossroads (to serve the A229 corridor).
2. The provision of new or replacement park and ride facilities should meet the following criteria:
 - i. Satisfactory access, layout, design, screening and landscaping;
 - ii. Provision of suitable waiting and access facilities and information systems for passengers, including people with disabilities; and
 - iii. The implementation of complementary public transport priority measures both to access the site and moreover along the route. Measures will include dedicated bus lanes (including contraflow lanes where appropriate), together with bus priority measures at junctions.

Policy DM16 - Air quality

Air Quality

11.85 Pollution due to dust and poor air quality, resulting from either existing sites or proposed developments, has the potential to adversely affect human health and the environment in Maidstone. It is therefore essential that these issues are adequately assessed through the development management process.

11.86 The National Planning Policy Framework requires planning policies to sustain compliance with EU limit values or national objectives for pollutants and the cumulative impacts on air quality from individual sites in local areas. The council has a responsibility to work towards achieving these targets and does this through the Local Air Quality Management (LAQM) regime. Through this function the council has identified 6 areas currently exceeding EU guideline values and has an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) in place in order to identify measures aimed at reducing air pollution at these locations.

11.87 The hotspots are located at key transport junctions but the AQAP covers the wider Maidstone Urban Area designated by the Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) in recognition of the nature of road networks and traffic movements. This action plan contributes to the delivery of the national air quality strategy.

11.88 The air quality action plan identifies key partners and their responsibility for delivering measures to improve air quality in the exceedance areas. The primary focus is placed on achieving modal shift to walking, cycling and public transport and low emission transport. The council's Integrated Transport Strategy is in place to address this objective. This policy will support the ITS and AQAP by:

- Promoting infrastructure that encourages the use of modes of transport with low impact on air quality;
- Locating development close to transport infrastructure and community services and facilities to minimise trip generation;
- Installing charging points to facilitate expected increases in electric vehicle ownership;
- Requiring developers to mitigate more effectively against emissions from new developments through soft measures such as landscaping and tree planting; and
- Requiring developers to contribute to funding measures, including those identified in the air quality action plans and low emissions strategies, designed to offset the impact on air quality arising from new development

11.89 The Council will review the significance of the air quality impacts from new proposals in line with national guidance. Evaluation of air quality impacts will take into account factors such as the number of people affected, the absolute levels and the predicted magnitude of the changes in pollutant concentrations, the scale and kind of the proposed mitigation. The evaluation will also take into account how the impacts from the development relate to the principles contained within the council's air quality action plan and other relevant strategic guidance documents.

11.90 It is recognised that planning can play an important role in improving air quality and reducing individuals' exposure to air pollutants. Whilst planning cannot solve immediate air quality issues, it has a role to play so any likely scheme impacts are reasonably mitigated. It is also important to ensure cumulative impacts of developments are responded to in a fair and proportionate way. In order to achieve this, a Low Emission Strategy will be developed going forward.

11.91 The Low Emission Strategy will outline the principles behind defining the scale of a development and its likely impact depending on its location and proximity to exceedance areas and the public. It will be developed in line with emerging best practice and national guidelines and be developed to support the Air Quality Action Plan.

Policy DM 16

Air Quality

Proposals that have an impact on air quality that meet the following criteria will be permitted:

1. Proposals located close to identified air quality exceedance areas as defined through the Local Air Quality management process will require a full Air Quality Impact Assessment in line with national and local guidance;
2. Proposals within or adjacent to Air Quality Management Areas that are likely to have a negative impact on air quality should identify sources of emissions to air from the development and an Emissions Statement identifying how these emissions will be minimised and mitigated against must be provided; and
3. Proposals in or affecting Air Quality Management Areas or of a sufficient scale to impact local communities should, where necessary, incorporate mitigation measures which are locationally specific and proportionate to the likely impact.

Policy PKR1 - Park and ride allocations

10.1 Park and ride is an important part of the council's transport vision for Maidstone and the rest of the borough. The existing park and ride service accommodates demand for access from the A249/M20 transport corridor and from east and west on the A20 transport corridor. The Integrated Transport Strategy sets out how the service can help to accommodate journeys from new housing and employment developments in the borough. The A229 transport corridor from the south of the borough into Maidstone (Staplehurst, Marden, Linton, Coxheath, Boughton Monchelsea and Loose) is an area of strong demand, which is currently not served.

10.2 The A229/B2163 Linton crossroads is allocated for a new park and ride facility. This location is at an appropriate distance from the town centre to intercept traffic movements early enough along the A229 corridor and provide easy access to the identified catchment area. Along the length of the A229 corridor bus priority measures will help provide faster access to and from the town centre in peak times than an equivalent private vehicle journey could achieve.

10.3 Landscape mitigation is key to the delivery of the site due to its prominent location at the top of the Greensand Ridge. The site will be designed to mitigate the impact of long range views, incorporating structural landscaping to lessen any visual impact. The site is also in close proximity to the Linton conservation area, which lies to the south of the site, at a lower level on the scarp slope. The development of this site will need to be such that there are no incompatible impacts on the setting of the conservation area.

10.4 The existing park and ride site at the A249, Old Sittingbourne Road, near junction 7 of the M20 will be retained and improved. The suitability of this site for park and ride will be enhanced by the addition of a single deck of car parking spaces, which will increase the capacity of the site without increasing the site's footprint. Public transport priority measures on the Bearsted Road and Sittingbourne Road will also make the site a more attractive travel mode for commuters.

10.5 Landscape mitigation will be key to the delivery of an expanded site in this location, and any design will need to be sensitively incorporated into the surrounding landscape with consideration of long distance views from the Kent Downs AONB.

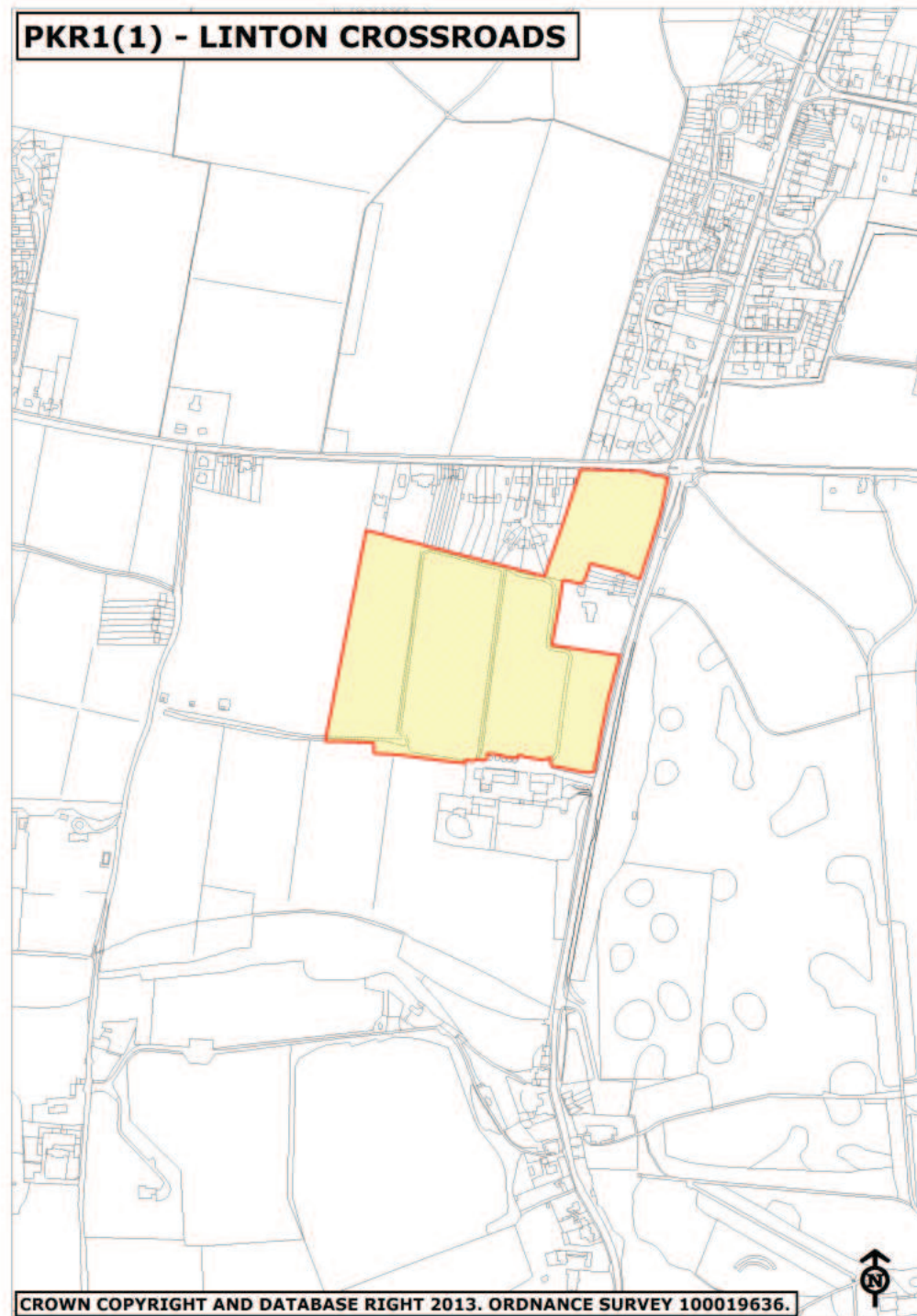
Policy PKR 1

Park and ride allocation

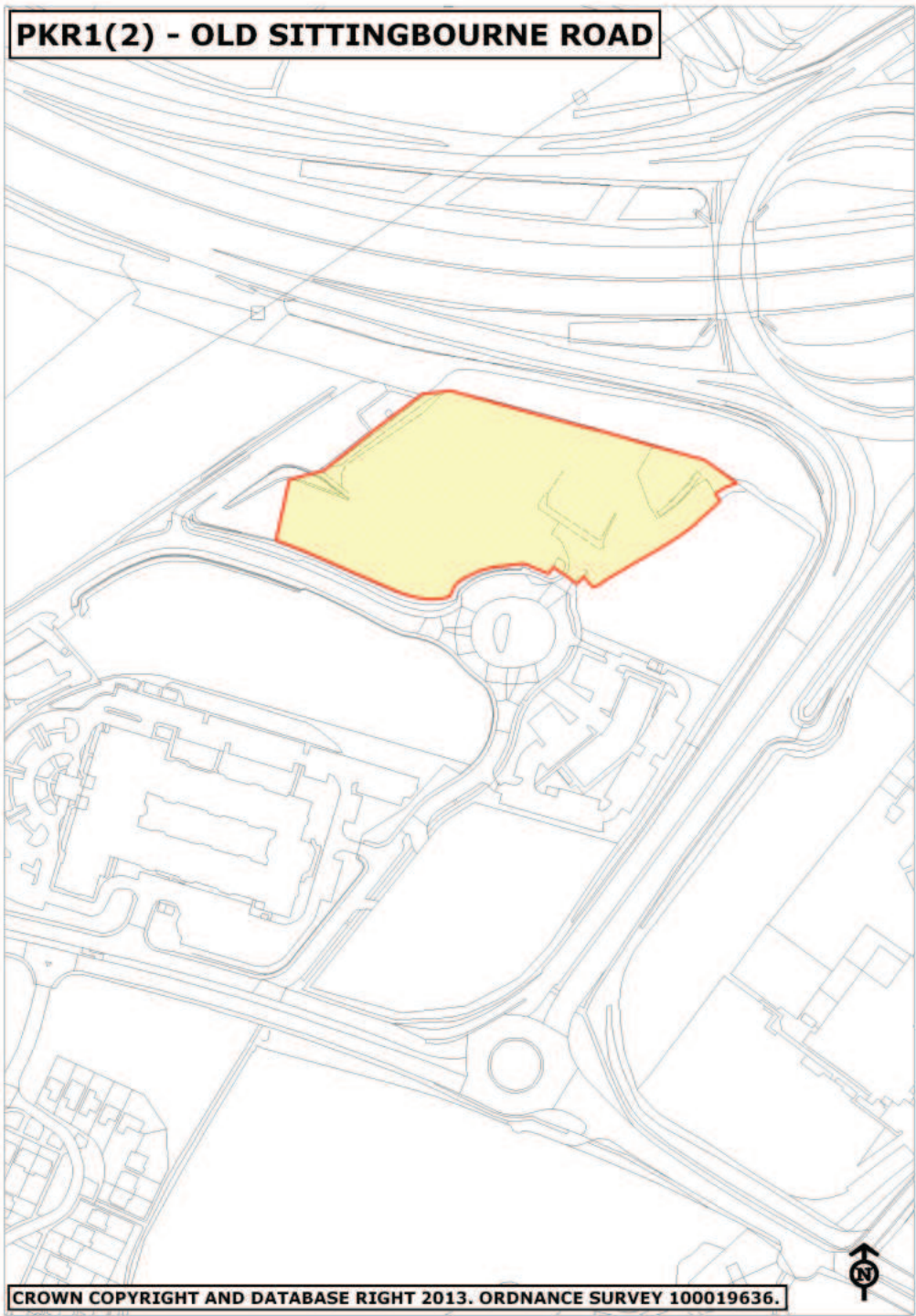
The following sites are identified on the policies map for park and ride:

Policy reference	Site name, address
(1)	Linton crossroads (A229/B2163). Capacity of 1000 car parking spaces
(2)	Old Sittingbourne Road (A249) at M20 junction 7. Capacity of 1000 car parking spaces

Site name, address	PKR1(1) - Linton crossroads		
Ward	Coxheath and Hunton	Parish	Linton
Current use	Agricultural land		
Linton crossroads development criteria			
Linton Crossroads is allocated for a car park with capacity for up to 1000 spaces together with bus priority measures as defined on the policies map. Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met:			
On site			
<div>1. The proposed facility is designed in accordance with the results and recommendations of a phase one ecological survey;</div> <div>2. Primary access is taken from the A229 Linton Hill;</div> <div>3. Secondary access is taken, if required, from the B2163 Heath Road;</div> <div>4. A structural landscape buffer (minimum of 10m) is planted on the eastern boundary of the site, to provide screening from Linton Hill;</div> <div>5. A structural landscape buffer (minimum of 10m) is planted on the western boundary of the site, to provide screening from long distance views;</div> <div>6. A significant structural landscape buffer (minimum of 10m) is planted along the southern boundary of the site, to help provide screening of views from the slope of the Greensand Ridge and the Linton conservation area;</div> <div>7. The terminal facility is designed to a high standard, incorporating necessary personal safety features and providing a comfortable environment for service users, including toilets and a passenger information display;</div> <div>8. Directional lighting is incorporated in the car park to minimise light pollution during the hours of darkness;</div> <div>9. Covered bicycle parking is provided in an appropriate location to improve the choice of travel modes for commuters;</div> <div>10. Planting measures are incorporated throughout the site, to be agreed with the council, to provide breaks in an urbanising feature of the countryside; and</div> <div>11. Sustainable drainage measures to minimise the impact of hardstanding on the natural hydrology of the local area.</div>			
Off site			
<div>10. Appropriate bus priority measures to be delivered northbound on the A229 Loose Road, prior to the junction with the A274 Sutton Road, to be approved by the council and Kent County Council.</div>			
Gross area (ha)	6.8	Net area (ha)	6.0 (approx)



Site name, address	PKR1(2) - Old Sittingbourne Road		
Ward	Boxley	Parish	Boxley
Current use	Park and ride		
Old Sittingbourne Road development criteria			
Land at Old Sittingbourne Road is allocated for a decked car park with a capacity for 1000 spaces together with bus priority measures as defined on the policies map. Planning permission will be granted if the following criteria are met:			
On site			
<div>1. A structural landscape buffer (minimum of 10m) is planted on the northern boundary of the site, to provide screening from long distance views from the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty;</div> <div>2. Mitigation measures such as green walls are used to reduce the visual impact of the upper level of the car park, particularly from long distance views from the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty</div> <div>3. The terminal facility is designed to a high standard, incorporating necessary personal safety features and providing a comfortable environment for service users, including toilets and a passenger information display;</div> <div>4. Covered bicycle parking is provided in an appropriate location to improve the choice of travel modes for commuters;</div> <div>5. Directional lighting is incorporated in the car park to minimise light pollution during the hours of darkness; and</div> <div>6. Planting measures are incorporated throughout the site, to be agreed by council.</div>			
Off site			
<div>10. Appropriate bus priority measures to be delivered southbound on the A249 Sittingbourne Road to be approved by the council and Kent County Council.</div>			
Gross area (ha)	1.7ha	Net area (ha)	?



Appendix B – Local Plan Policies

NPPF Model Policy	
NPPF1	Presumption in Favour of Sustainable Development
Spatial Vision/Objectives & Spatial Policies	
SS1	Maidstone Borough Spatial Strategy
SP1	Maidstone Town Centre
SP2	Maidstone Urban Area
SP3	Rural Service Centres
SP4	Larger Settlements
SP5	Countryside
Land Allocations	
H1	Housing Allocations
H2	Housing Densities
RMX1	Retail and Mixed Use Allocations
EMP1	Employment Allocations
GT1	Gypsy and Traveller Allocations
PKR1	Park and Ride Allocations
Development Management Policies for Maidstone Borough	
DM1	Development on Brownfield Land
DM2	Sustainable design and development (CS6)
DM3	Renewable and low carbon energy schemes
DM4	Principles of good design
DM5	Residential garden land
DM6	External Lighting
DM7	Signage and shop fronts
DM8	Residential extensions, conversions and redevelopment
DM9	Non-conforming uses
DM10	Historic and Natural Environment
DM11	Open Space and Recreation

Appendix B – Local Plan Policies

DM12	Community Facilities
DM13	Sustainable Transport
DM14	Public Transport
DM15	Park and Ride
DM16	Air Quality
DM17	Economic Development
DM18	Retention of Employment Sites
DM19	Town centre uses
DM20	District centres, local centres and local shops and facilities
DM21	Residential premises above shops and businesses
DM22	Mooring facilities and boat yards
DM23	Housing Mix
DM24	Affordable Housing
DM25	Local Needs Housing
DM26	Gypsy, Traveller and Travelling Showpeople Accommodation
Development Management Policies for the Town Centre	
DM27	Primary shopping frontages
DM28	Secondary shopping frontages
DM29	Leisure and community uses in the town centre
Development Management Policies for the Countryside	
DM30	Design Principles in the Countryside
DM31	New Agricultural Buildings and Structures
DM32	Conversion of Rural Buildings
DM33	Rebuilding and Extending Dwellings in the Countryside
DM34	Change of Use of Agricultural Land to Domestic Garden Land
DM35	Accommodation for Agricultural and Forestry Workers
DM36	Live/Work Units
DM37	Expansion of Existing Businesses in Rural Areas

Appendix B – Local Plan Policies

DM38	Holiday Caravan and Camp Sites
DM39	Caravan Storage in the Countryside
DM40	Retail Units in the Countryside
DM41	Equestrian Development
Delivery Framework	
ID1	Infrastructure Delivery
ID2	Electronic Communications

Agenda Item 11

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2014

REPORT OF HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Report prepared by Sue Whiteside

**1. MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN DRAFT SPATIAL
STRATEGY: AN UPDATED EVIDENCE BASE, KEY ISSUES, AND
THE SPATIAL VISION AND OBJECTIVES**

1.1 Issue for Decision

- 1.1.1 To consider the borough's objectively assessed need of 19,600 dwellings for the plan period 2011 to 2031 (980 dwellings per annum). Members received a presentation on the outputs of the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) on 9 December 2013 following a series of training sessions on the SHMA. Agreement of the arising objectively assessed need as the basis for determining the borough's housing target is sought.
- 1.1.2 To note the potential to provide for up to 17,100 dwellings against objectively assessed need of 19,600 dwellings. The Committee will be in a position to fully consider the draft provisions when recommended site allocations are presented to its February meeting.
- 1.1.3 To note the borough's objectively assessed need of 37 hectares for office, industry and warehousing based sectors and at the Maidstone medical campus during the plan period 2011 to 2031. The draft provisions for employment floorspace (offices 39,830m²; industry 20,290m²; warehousing 49,911m²; medical 98,000m²) will be given full consideration at the Committee's February meeting when site allocations will be recommended.
- 1.1.4 To consider the key local issues to be addressed by the Maidstone Borough Local Plan together with the plan's spatial vision and objectives. These sections of the local plan have been updated (using track changes for ease of reference) to ensure conformity with changing government policy and the publication of the National Planning Policy Framework 2012 and subsequent practice guidance, and to reflect any changes in local circumstances.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Planning and Development

1.2.1 That Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommends that Cabinet:

- i. Agrees the borough's objectively assessed housing need of 19,600 dwellings for the local plan period 2011 to 2031 as the basis for determining the housing provision for the borough;
- ii. Notes the currently identified potential to make provision for 17,100 dwellings, subject to full consideration of proposed housing site allocations in February 2014;
- iii. Notes the borough's objectively assessed need of 37 hectares for office, industry and warehousing based sectors and at the Maidstone medical campus for the plan period 2011 to 2031, and the draft provisions for employment floorspace (offices 39,830m²; industry 20,290m²; warehousing 49,911m²; medical 98,000m²);
- iv. Approves the key local issues, as amended, set out in paragraph 1.3.46 of this report; and
- v. Approves the spatial vision and objectives, as amended, set out in paragraph 1.3.48 of this report.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

Introduction

1.3.1 Since the Cabinet decision¹ to prepare a single Maidstone Borough Local Plan, Members of this Committee and Cabinet have received several reports on groups of local plan policies. Members have given consideration to spatial policies for urban and rural areas together with more detailed development management policies.

1.3.2 The spatial strategy and development targets were initially set out in the Core Strategy, which was subject to public consultation in September/October 2011. However, new government guidance, namely the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in 2012 (and subsequent draft National Planning Practice Guidance 2013), required the evidence base supporting the spatial strategy to be updated. Consequently, the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA), the Economic Sensitivity Testing and Employment Land Forecast report, Strategic Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA and SEDLAA), and the Town Centre

¹ Cabinet 13 March 2013

Assessment and Retail Capacity Study have been prepared as part of the local plan evidence base. In addition, a consultation draft Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy has been produced.

- 1.3.3 In 2011 the council sought the public's views on a housing target of 10,080 for the period 2006 to 2026, using a dispersed distribution of development. The main issues raised by respondents were reported to Cabinet on 25 July 2012. There were mixed responses to the Council's 10,080 dwelling target whereby some respondents supported the target (22 respondents or 5%) while others believed it was too high or too low (42 respondents or 9%). A proportion of the development industry proposed a higher target, while residents sought a reduction.
- 1.3.4 There was a consensus of support from both the development industry and residents for a dispersed distribution pattern of development that delivers housing at the urban fringe and at rural service centres, although a minority of respondents did object in part or as a whole.
- 1.3.5 There was support for the principle of identifying a strategic housing development location to the north west of the urban area in the vicinity of Allington, although some objections focused on reducing the amount of housing proposed. A number of residents and the adjoining local authority unconditionally objected to development in this location (47 respondents or 10%) on the grounds of increased traffic congestion, the impact on the landscape, and maintenance of the strategic gap between conurbations.
- 1.3.6 There was general support for the south east strategic housing development location around Park Wood and Otham (6 respondents or 1%). In the main, objections were from a minority section of the development industry who objected to a move away from a strategic development area that would accommodate 3,000 or 5,000 dwellings supported by a strategic link road.
- 1.3.7 There was a call for the inclusion of specific targets for rural service centres, as opposed to a single target to be distributed amongst the 5 villages² (27 respondents or 6%). Part of the development industry wished to see detailed strategic development site allocations, as opposed to the strategic development locations identified on the key diagram of the consultation document. Site allocations within strategic development locations together with specific housing targets for rural service centres were the subject of a further public consultation in 2012: Core Strategy Strategic Site Allocations. Representations on strategic site allocations were considered when the allocations were confirmed at the Cabinet meeting of 13 March 2013. Respondents to the 2012 consultation sought site specific allocations at the rural

² Originally included Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst

service centres as opposed to overall village targets. The move to prepare a single local plan overcomes this objection.

1.3.8 In December 2012, Kent County Council issued revised demographic and labour supply forecasts for Maidstone borough, which took account of the latest CLG household projections. The forecasts were based on the new local plan period 2011 to 2031 and revealed an interim housing provision of 14,800 dwellings³. Consideration was given to the findings of the forecasts at the Cabinet meeting of 13 March 2013. This interim figure was never tested through public consultation but superseded the 10,080 dwelling target for the former plan period (2006/26). The new SHMA, which has been prepared in accordance with national guidance using the latest data from CLG and the Office for National Statistics, will supersede all former demographic forecasts for housing provisions.

1.3.9 This report focuses on the outputs from updated evidence documents for housing and economic development and, also taking into account previous consultation representations together with changes to national planning policy, sets out the consequential revisions to the local plan spatial vision and objectives and the implications for the borough's development targets.

1.3.10 A further report bringing together all of the policies of the draft Maidstone Borough Local Plan, including the spatial strategy, development targets and site allocations, will be presented to Members of this Committee on 18 February 2014. At the same meeting, Members will receive supporting reports on the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA)

1.3.11 A Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for the borough has been undertaken as a further piece of evidence to support the preparation of the local plan. The SHMA has been prepared in partnership with Ashford and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Councils which were at a similar plan making stage to Maidstone. Medway Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Swale Borough Council were invited to take part in the exercise but declined due the stage their local plans had reached. GL Hearn, a firm of expert consultants in this field, has undertaken the work for the three authorities.

1.3.12 A number of briefings and training sessions that included time for questions have been held, to assist Members in understanding the complexities of the SHMA. These sessions were well attended by Members.

³ Based on 10-year trend-based projections 2011 to 2031.

- 28 August 2013 – Presentation on the methodologies validating the SHMA (and SHLAA/SEDLAA)
- 4 & 11 November 2013 – Presentations/Workshops on the NPPF/NPPG and the importance of objectively assessed needs
- 22 November 2013 – Presentation/Q&A by Planning Advisory Service representative (Jo Lee of Peter Brett Associates) on Meeting Objectively Assessed Need: The SHMA – context and practice examples
- 9 December 2013 – Presentation/Q&A by GL Hearn (Nick Ireland and Justin Gardner) on the findings of the SHMA and housing provisions.

1.3.13 A principal purpose of the SHMA is to assess the overall need for additional housing in the borough for the plan period (2011-31). The NPPF directs that Local Plans should meet “the full, objectively assessed needs” for both market and affordable housing within housing market areas as far as this is consistent with other policies in the NPPF (NPPF paragraph 47). The housing market area reflects key functional linkages between places where people live and work.

1.3.14 The draft National Planning Practice Guidance 2013 (NPPG) sets out how a SHMA should be undertaken⁴. The guidance specifies that the basis for calculating the future overall need for housing must be the latest national household projections published by CLG. The SHMA has used the interim 2011 based household projections released by CLG in 2013. These are trend based projections that are an indication of the number of households that would form if recent demographic trends continued. They are interim projections, rather than official statistics, because they are based on the 2011 interim sub-national population projections (SNPP) which only project population growth to 2021. These population projections are based on the 2011 mid-year population estimates rolled forward from the Census 2011 data and applying the demographic trends used for the previous 2010-based SNPP. New SNPP data is expected in spring 2014, and updated CLG household projections are expected towards the end of 2014. This base information has then been further refined in the SHMA by examining the key local inputs that fed into the SNPP, and undertaking a critical assessment of more recent migration data, household formation rates and housing vacancy rates.

1.3.15 The conclusion of this analysis is that the SHMA predicts that some 19,600 new homes would need to be built over the 20 year plan period (2011-2031) for the full objective need for housing in Maidstone

⁴ There is further advice on how to prepare a SHMA. PAS published “10 key principles for owning your own housing number – finding your objectively assessed needs”, and there is an online tool “What Homes Where” which is a website set up by professional bodies, charities and trade association professionals with an interest in planning for housing.

borough to be met, i.e. 980 dwellings per annum.

- 1.3.16 Importantly the methodology and key assumptions which underpin the assessment are common to the reports for each of the three authorities. This helps add to the rigour of the reports and means that there has been a consistent approach to the assessment of housing needs across the whole of the Maidstone housing market area which encompasses parts of Tonbridge & Malling Borough, namely Aylesford, East & West Malling, Larkfield and Snodland. The housing market areas have been based on CLG research of 2010 (The Geography of Housing Market Areas in England – CURDS). The administrative boundary of Maidstone falls within two housing market areas: Maidstone and Ashford (Harrietsham & Lenham and Headcorn wards), although the objectively assessed needs have been disaggregated by district.
- 1.3.17 The extent of the Maidstone housing market area is an important consideration and the degree of integration with the Medway Towns to the north has been assessed. The labour market and migration move in both directions between Maidstone and Medway. However, the SHMA has analysed other factors, in particular the housing “offer” (house type, size and tenure), the London influence and housing costs, and concluded that there is justification to distinguish Maidstone from Medway in market terms.
- 1.3.18 The objectively assessed housing need for Maidstone has also been benchmarked against five and ten year migration trend projections. These provide a useful sensitivity test, but they do not take account of the impact of population age profile on migration (both in Maidstone borough and other areas from which people typically move to Maidstone). Further sensitivity testing of the objectively assessed housing need was undertaken through the modelling of two economic scenarios. This confirms that the scale of household growth necessary to generate sufficient working age people to support the expected growth in the economy over the same period (2011 to 2031)⁵ will not exceed the objectively housing assessed need of 19,600 dwellings.
- 1.3.19 The SHMA also considers the need for affordable housing over the plan period. The methodology draws together analysis of the number of households currently in housing need with estimates of how many additional households will require affordable housing in future years to 2031. The supply of affordable housing from existing stock re-lets, vacancies and developments in the pipeline is then derived to establish what the net requirement for new affordable housing will be. The SHMA concludes that of the total annual requirement of 980 dwellings needed over the local plan period (2011 to 2031), 324 new affordable

⁵ Between 15,783 dwellings and 18,560 dwellings

homes will be needed annually between 2013 and 2031. This finding assumes that households will spend up to 30% of income on housing costs although, in fact, some households will be willing to spend a greater proportion than this. The private rented sector will also continue to have some role in providing affordable accommodation.

1.3.20 The SHMA is a technical document and is a pivotal piece of the local plan evidence base. Hence an independent demographer was appointed to review Maidstone's objectively assessed need. The demographer has concluded that the objectively assessed need of 19,600 dwellings set out in the SHMA is the best scenario of the alternatives tested, and that the results for population, households and new homes are robust.

1.3.21 Representatives from local authorities, house-builders, planning agents, estate agents and registered providers attended a stakeholder presentation and workshop for the SHMA, which was held on 26 July 2013. The workshop covered the three local authority areas but also drew comparisons with wider trends in Kent and other parts of the country. The key points arising from the event were:

- Some recovery from the bottom of the market in 2007.
- Recovery has been variable across different segments of the market and in different areas:
 - Recovery in demand for family homes stronger (particularly small family homes) whilst flats remain muted
 - More established, affluent buyers returned to the market more quickly, first time buyer activity less so
 - Higher value rural locations and areas traditionally linked with the London market recovering more strongly.
- Future recovery is likely to be gradual, but in higher value areas demand and pricing pressures could return to the market more rapidly.
- Improving access to mortgage availability will be critical to the market recovery. Help-to-Buy is greatly assisting with this, but what happens after will be important. More certainty in the employment market and increases in earnings will also be needed to sustain recovery.
- Greater choice in the supply of sites (particularly more small sites) would help to improve housing delivery and provide an alternative to large scale allocations.
- The private rented sector continues to grow apace, but there is a need to ensure it is aligned with need and that standards are maintained. Demand for older persons housing and retirement accommodation is also strong.

1.3.22 Following the Members' presentation on 9 December 2013, the draft SHMA was published on 9 January 2014 and is available to view or

download from the local plan webpage. At this point in time the SHMA should remain in draft because new national data on household projections is expected to be released in 2014. Officers will monitor the implications that may arise from new releases and will report resultant actions needed to Members.

1.3.23 Meanwhile, subject to this Committee's recommendations and Cabinet decisions in February when land allocations will be recommended, there is currently potential capacity to make provision for up to 17,100 dwellings over the plan period 2011-2031. This figure includes a yield of 8,210 dwellings from potential new SHLAA sites (in addition to the approved strategic housing sites), based on the dispersed distribution strategy formerly approved by Cabinet⁶ and the borough's environmental and infrastructure constraints.

1.3.24 The NPPF directs local authorities to identify deliverable housing sites for the first 5 years (it is implied this starts from the date of adoption of a local plan). Deliverable sites, including integral infrastructure, must be available, offer a suitable location, be achievable (with a realistic prospect of being delivered within those 5 years), and be viable. For years 6 to 10 and, where possible, years 11 to 15 following adoption (i.e. the last 10 years of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan period), sites should be developable. Developable sites must be suitably located, and available and viable at the point of release. The greater the number of dwellings on sites that are specifically identified as deliverable/developable, the more robust the local plan will be. However, the NPPF also allows for the identification of broad locations for housing in this latter period. Three broad development locations yielding a potential 3,000 dwellings will be presented to Members in February.

1.3.25 This appraisal would currently result in an unmet need of 2,500 dwellings which represents 13% of the objectively assessed need. The council will need to be in a position to robustly defend any constraints to development, and to demonstrate what measures have been taken to fully meet the objectively assessed need. These measures will be discussed in more detail in the February reports when development targets are considered, but are likely to include a further call for sites as part of the public consultation process, a reappraisal of the reasons why sites previously submitted have been rejected, and ultimately whether (under the duty to cooperate) unmet need can be satisfied by neighbouring authorities.

⁶ Cabinet reports 9 February 2011, 10 August 2011 and 25 July 2012

Objectively Assessed Need and Housing Land Supply	Dwellings	Totals
Objectively assessed housing need		19,600
Completed dwellings 2011/12 and 2012/13	1,503	
Planning permissions at 1 April 2013	1,850	
Planning permissions 1 April to 1 October 2013	246	
Planning permissions – outstanding Section106 Agreements at 1 October 2013	107	
Land allocations – approved strategic sites	2,140	
Land allocations – potential SHLAA sites	8,210	
Total potential housing land supply (approx.)		14,100
Potential broad locations for housing development	3,000	
Total potential housing land supply including broad locations		17,100
Unmet housing need (19,600 less 17,100)		(2,500)

Constraints to Development

1.3.26 The NPPF makes distinctions between the hierarchy of international, national and locally designated sites, so that protection is commensurate with their status. Whilst the NPPF gives weight to the protection of international and national designations, this does not downgrade local designations for landscape or wildlife sites in plan making, and such sites are not suitable for development but a strong case for their protection must be made. Another important and common theme that runs through the NPPF is the need for viable infrastructure to support new development. The local plan must ensure that new and expanded infrastructure requirements generated by land allocations can be met.

1.3.27 Of international importance in Maidstone is the North Downs Woodlands Special Area of Conservation (SAC). The borough includes 23 nationally important Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI); and 63 Local Wildlife Sites (LWS) and 2 Local Nature Reserves (LNR) which are locally important. A large area of the borough lies within the Kent Downs AONB, a nationally important landscape designation where a strong level of protection is given. A strong level of protection is also given to the small section of the Metropolitan Green Belt that lies to the west of the borough. These areas are protected but they are not sacrosanct.

1.3.28 All landscapes have some value, but they cannot all be protected, so at the local level the focus must be on protecting the borough's best landscapes. Of particular local significance are the borough's river valleys (the Medway, Loose and Len) and the scarp face of the

Greensand Ridge. Local plan policies identify and safeguard such areas, although there are currently no major pressures for housing development in these locations.

- 1.3.29 In other parts of the borough where sites have been submitted for consideration through the call for sites, local constraints have been examined through the site assessment pro forma⁷. The pro forma has been used to assess each potential development site submitted through the SHLAA call for sites (and the SEDLAA) in order to achieve a consistent and transparent approach. The mitigation of constraints - local landscape, ecology, highways, services, flooding and so on - has formed part of the assessments. In accordance with the requirements of the NPPF, the availability, locational suitability, deliverability and viability of each potential development site has been examined, and the results will be available to assist Member decision making in February.
- 1.3.30 There are often solutions to overcoming infrastructure constraints. A new school or community centre can be built; open space or play equipment can be provided; and increased traffic congestion can be addressed through new public transport schemes and highway improvements.
- 1.3.31 So if the council cannot fully meet its objectively assessed housing need, it must establish a strong case of constraint to development within the borough, and demonstrate that neighbouring authorities have fewer constraints.

Sustainability Appraisal and Testing of Development Options

- 1.3.32 Consultants URS have been commissioned to prepare the sustainability appraisal (SA) for the local plan. The production of an SA is required under EU regulations and planning law, and it is an appraisal of the economic, environmental, and social effects of a plan (and its policies) from the outset of the plan preparation process. An SA is an iterative process that allows decisions to be made that accord with sustainable development.
- 1.3.33 A key purpose of the SA is to appraise development options for the local plan. The emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan has a strategy of directing development to the most sustainable locations, in particular making best use of previously developed land (brownfield sites). Brownfield sites within an urban area have access to existing infrastructure and can generally be developed at higher densities, thus reducing the need to release greenfield sites for development. This

⁷ Approved by Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development, via Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 22 March 2013

approach accords with the principles of the NPPF and the aims of this council. Regeneration of the town centre is one of the key objectives of the local plan, and every effort has been made to identify potential redevelopment sites over and above those that were submitted through the SHLAA call for sites in December 2013/January 2014. Local plan policies encourage a regeneration approach through the allocation of brownfield sites for redevelopment and by requiring a lower affordable housing contribution on brownfield sites within the urban area in order to encourage regeneration.

1.3.34 In the past 10 years, a high percentage of development has been built on brownfield sites (between 85% and 96% annually). This was a result of introducing a moratorium on the release of greenfield land allocated in the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan (2000) following the publication of an urban capacity study in 2002. This trend cannot be sustained and the moratorium has been lifted to enable the council to meet short and long term housing provisions. The need for greenfield sites is compounded by national policies that are leading to considerably higher annual housing targets than previously experienced. New homes are needed because of a growing population, people are living longer and there are more elderly people in smaller households, new jobs are being created and, over the past decade, there has generally been a level of net in-migration into the borough (both internal migration from other parts of the Country and international migration).

1.3.35 There is a clear hierarchy in determining which locations are the most sustainable for allocating new development sites. Following the redevelopment of brownfield sites within settlement boundaries, the most sustainable location for greenfield development is adjacent to the currently defined⁸ urban boundary, where access to services is greatest and best use can be made of existing infrastructure. However, not all development needs can be accommodated here because of environmental and infrastructure constraints. Seven rural service centres form the second tier in Maidstone's settlement hierarchy. These centres act as a focal point for trade and services for wider communities, providing a concentration of public transport, employment and community facilities. Rural service centres are Maidstone's most sustainable villages and are able to accommodate further development. Three larger settlements form the third tier of the settlement hierarchy. These villages have a smaller range of services than rural service centres, but still meet the day-to-day needs of local communities. Where appropriate, larger settlements can accommodate some limited development.

⁸ Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000

- 1.3.36 The SA is appraising various options that follow the settlement hierarchy, and is also assessing the impact of the Golding Homes' proposal for a new settlement⁹, which was submitted during the call for sites. The SA will appraise three targets for housing: 19,600 dwellings (objectively assessed need), 17,100 dwellings (draft capacity to date including broad locations for development), and 14,100 dwellings (draft capacity to date excluding broad locations for development). The SA will also appraise these targets against the various distribution options for development: a dispersed pattern of development, with and without broad locations for development and/or the new settlement. This will compare a strategy of development dispersal with one of a new settlement together with a reduced dispersal of development. These options will be tested against their ability to deliver the objectively assessed need for housing, but will be balanced by sustainability indicators including flooding, health, poverty, education, congestion, climate change, biodiversity, countryside, heritage, waste, energy and economy.

Sustainability Appraisal: Housing development options		
1	19,600	Dispersed and broad locations
2	19,600	Dispersed, broad locations and a new settlement
3	17,100	Dispersed and broad locations
4	17,100	Dispersed and new settlement
5	14,100	Dispersed only
6	14,100	Dispersed and a new settlement

- 1.3.37 The results of the appraisal will be available prior to the February reports when Members will consider the housing target and distribution pattern of development.

Employment Land Forecast

- 1.3.38 An updated employment land forecast has been prepared as evidence for the local plan, which will replace the employment forecast published in 2013 that was based on housing provisions of 14,800 dwellings. The new forecast uses a different methodology than previous for a number of reasons, not least to enable economic growth opportunities to be assessed objectively and then used to inform the housing growth discussion. The forecast has been produced by the consultancy firm GVA which has undertaken such forecasting work for the council in the past.
- 1.3.39 The approach used in this forecast looks first at the different sectors in the local economy and establishes which sectors are projected to grow or contract (in terms of jobs), and by what percentage, over the

⁹ Proposal for a freestanding garden suburb, accommodating 4,500 new homes on greenfield sites located to the south east of the urban area.

lifetime of the plan. The basis for this assessment is the nationally recognised Experian forecast for the borough. This has then been refined where more detailed local factors support a higher or lower growth rate than is predicted by Experian, which provides a more strategic analysis of the economy. In particular, the forecast has taken account of potential employment growth at the medical campus proposed at junction 7 of the M20; an allowance has been made for market "churn", calculated from the average annual construction rate of space within the borough; and the impact of changing working practices by sectoral activity in the borough has been appraised. The output of this sectoral analysis is an employment (jobs) forecast for all of the sectors in the local economy.

- 1.3.40 This jobs forecast is then converted into a land requirement for those sectors which will need new office, industrial or distribution/warehousing floorspace for the full local plan period 2011 to 2031 (i.e. the B use classes). The creation of a total of 14,394 jobs between 2011 and 2031 are forecast across all employment sectors, of which 7,933 will be in the office, industrial and warehousing based sectors and at the Maidstone medical campus, including KIMS¹⁰. Total figures in the table below vary due to rounding.

2011-2031	Job creation	Floorspace (m²)	Land (hectares)
Office	3,053	39,830	2.7
Industrial	226	20,290	5.1
Warehouse	453	49,911	10.0
General requirement	3,733	110,030	17.7
Medical	4,200	98,000	19.0
Total (incl. medical)	7,933	208,030	37.0

- 1.3.41 The council's ability to meet its employment provisions through new land allocations, together with the distribution of development, will be given consideration by Members through the February reports.

Retail Capacity Study

- 1.3.42 Members have received a presentation on the Maidstone Town Centre Assessment and the Retail Capacity Study, produced by consultants DTZ, and both documents have been published on the local plan webpage. At its meeting on 4 December 2014, Cabinet approved the retail provisions set out in the appended policies to that report. Two retail allocations at Maidstone East/Royal Mail Sorting Office and Newnham Park were approved, and the Mall was identified as a future broad location for retail growth.

¹⁰ Kent Institute for Medicine and Surgery

1.3.43 The Maidstone Retail Capacity Study assessed the quantitative needs for retail development to 2031. The RECAP model was used in forecasting: an empirical step-by-step model based on the results of the 2012 Maidstone Household Survey of shopping patterns as its method of allocating retail expenditure from catchment zones to shopping destinations. The model is therefore based on consumer responses about actual shopping patterns.

1.3.44 The Retail Capacity Study was based on an interim provision of 14,800 dwellings. The consultants have considered the outputs in the context of increased provisions, and concluded that the population forecasts used for the purpose of the Maidstone Retail Capacity Study are consistent with a provision for 17,100 dwellings. For information and completeness, the retail provisions are reproduced below. The provisions are cumulative for each year.

Retail provisions	2016	2021	2026	2031
Comparison (m ²)	5,500	12,400	18,800	23,700
Convenience (m ²)	3,700	4,400	5,250	6,100

Key Local issues, Spatial Vision and Spatial Objectives

1.3.45 The challenge for the local plan is to manage the potential impacts of future housing and employment growth, together with supporting infrastructure, to ensure that development takes place in a sustainable manner that supports the local economy whilst safeguarding valuable natural and built assets. The borough's key local issues were initially identified in the Core Strategy¹¹, and the same document set out the council's spatial vision and spatial objectives for the borough. These have been updated to ensure conformity with changing government policy and the publication of the NPPF and subsequent guidance, and to reflect any changes in local circumstances.

1.3.46 Revisions to the key local issues set out in the Core Strategy 2011 are set out below (deletions are shown in strike through text and additions in italic text). The revisions will be carried forward to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan for further public consultation (Regulation 18) following Member decisions on the plan in February.

Key Local Issues

1. Where, when and how much development will be distributed throughout the borough;
2. Maintenance of the distinct character and identity of villages and the urban area;

¹¹ Core Strategy Public Consultation Draft 2011 (Regulation 18 consultation)

3. Protection of the built and natural heritage, including the Kent Downs AONB and its setting *and areas of local landscape value*;
4. Provision of strategic and local infrastructure to support new development and growth including a sustainable integrated transport strategy, adequate water supply, sustainable waste management, energy infrastructure and social infrastructure such as health, schools and other educational facilities;
5. Improvements to quality of air within the air quality management area (AQMA);
6. Regeneration of the town centre and areas of social and environmental deprivation;
7. Redressing the low wage economy by expanding the employment skills base *to target employment opportunities* ~~and improving higher and further education opportunities to target employment opportunities in green technologies including low carbon energy production~~;
8. Meeting housing needs *by delivering of vulnerable groups including young people*, affordable housing, local needs housing, accommodation for the elderly, accommodation to meet Gypsy and Traveller needs and accommodation to meet rural housing needs;
9. Promotion of the multi-functional nature of the borough's open spaces, rivers and other watercourses;
10. Ensuring that all new development is built to a high standard of sustainable design and construction; and
11. Ensuring that applications for development adequately address the impact of climate change, especially the issues of flooding and water supply.

1.3.47 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan is the spatial interpretation of the vision and priorities set out in the Maidstone Community Strategy¹². The local plan also has regard to other corporate documents, in particular the Strategic Plan 2011-2015 (2013-2014 Refresh), the emerging Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy and the Housing Strategy 2011/12 to 2014/15. Spatial Policy officers work closely with colleagues in these departments and also with other departments such as Development Management, Economic Development, and Environmental Health. The policies of the local plan aim to deliver the plan's vision and objectives.

1.3.48 Revisions to the spatial vision and objectives set out in the Core Strategy 2011 are set out below (deletions are shown in strike through text and additions in italic text). The revisions will be carried forward to the Maidstone Borough Local Plan for further public consultation (Regulation 18) following Member decisions on the plan in February.

¹² Maidstone Community Strategy 2009-2020 (refreshed July 2013)

Spatial Vision

By ~~2026~~ 2031:

- The ~~Core Strategy~~ *Maidstone Borough Local Plan* will deliver sustainable growth and regeneration whilst protecting and enhancing the borough's natural and built assets;
- Development will be guided by ~~a sustainable and~~ *the delivery of the* integrated transport strategy together with the timely provision of appropriate strategic and local infrastructure;
- *Maidstone town* will be ~~a~~ *an enhanced* vibrant, prosperous and sustainable community benefiting from ~~its~~ *an* exceptional urban and rural environment with a vital and viable ~~Maidstone~~ town centre
- ~~The character and identity of rural settlements will be maintained~~ *roles of the rural service centres will be reinforced* by directing suitable development and supporting infrastructure to ~~the rural service centres of Coxheath, Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden, and Staplehurst and Yalding;~~
- *The roles of the larger rural settlements of Boughton Monchelsea, Eyhorne Street (Hollingbourne) and Sutton Valence will be maintained through the delivery of limited development, where appropriate, together with supporting infrastructure;*
- *The distinctive character of the Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and its setting, together with the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt, will be rigorously protected and maintained;*
- Employment skills will be expanded to meet an improved and varied range of local jobs;
- There will be a better balanced housing market to meet the needs of the community across the whole borough; and
- Development will be of high quality sustainable design and construction to respond to climate change and to protect the environment.

Spatial Objectives

1. To provide for ~~10,080 new homes and 10,000 new jobs~~ *a balance of new homes and related retail and employment opportunities*, with an emphasis on increasing skilled employment opportunities in the borough alongside developing learning opportunities.

2. To focus new development ~~mainly within the Maidstone urban area~~ with:

i. ~~80% of new housing built within and adjacent to the urban area of Maidstone with appropriate sustainable greenfield development being well located in relation to existing services in the urban area~~ *Principally*

within¹³ the Maidstone urban area and at the strategic development locations at the edge of town, including junction 7 of the M20 motorway;

ii. ~~The aim of providing 60% of new housing across the plan period on previously developed land and through the conversion of existing buildings~~

ii. ~~New employment land allocations to be exploited in Maidstone Town Centre first co-ordinated with opportunities on the most suitable greenfield sites to provide for a suitable mix of employment opportunities~~ To a lesser extent at the seven rural service centres of Coxheath, Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden, Staplehurst and Yalding¹⁴ consistent with their range of services and role; and

iii. ~~The creation of opportunities to provide for local power generation~~ Limited development at the three larger settlements of Boughton Monchelsea, Eythorne Street (Hollingbourne) and Sutton Valence where appropriate.

3. To transform the offer, vitality and viability of the Maidstone town centre including *its* office, retail, residential, ~~further and higher education~~, leisure, cultural and tourism functions together with significant enhancement of *its public realm and to the* natural and built environment ~~particularly in respect of including the riverside environment.~~

4. To ~~consolidate~~ reinforce the roles of the rural service centres *through the retention of existing services, the addition of new infrastructure where possible, and the regeneration of employment sites at Harrietsham, Headcorn, Lenham, Marden and Staplehurst as the focus of the network of rural settlements with retained existing services and regenerated employment sites* including the expansion of existing employment sites where appropriate.

5. To support new housing in the smaller villages that meet local needs and is of a design, scale, character and location appropriate to the settlement and which supports the retention of existing services and facilities.

6. To safeguard and maintain the character of the ~~district's~~ borough's landscapes including the Kent Downs AONB and other distinctive ~~local~~ landscapes of *local value* whilst facilitating the economic and social

¹³ Land allocations will be made within and adjacent to the boundaries of the urban area, rural service centres and larger settlements as defined in the Maidstone Borough Local Plan 2000. A consequence of allocating land is the amendment of boundaries so that new sites become part of those settlements. To state that allocations will be made "adjacent" to settlements implies further development would be acceptable outside settlement boundaries following adoption of the local plan.

¹⁴ The primary development site at Yalding is the former Syngenta works, where flood mitigation measures will be an essential part of new development proposals.

well-being of these areas, including the diversification of the rural economy.

7. To retain and enhance the character of the existing green and blue infrastructure and to promote linkages between areas of environmental value.

8. To ensure that new development takes account of the need to mitigate the impacts of climate change, *implementing sustainable construction standards for both residential and non-residential schemes*. ~~and adapt to climate change and also to improve air quality by locating development to minimise the use of resources, to promote sustainable travel patterns, to develop a greater choice of transport measures, to support water and energy efficiency measures and to encourage renewable energy sources and sustainable drainage solutions.~~

9. To ensure that new development is of high quality design, making a positive contribution to the area including protection of built and natural heritage and biodiversity.

10. To provide for future housing that meets the changing needs of the borough's population including provision for an increasingly ageing population and family housing, an appropriate tenure mix, affordable housing, and accommodation to meet the needs of the ~~local~~ Gypsy and Traveller community.

11. To ensure that key infrastructure and service improvements needed to support delivery of the ~~Core Strategy~~ *Maidstone Borough Local Plan* ~~objectives and policies~~ are brought forward in a coordinated and timely manner, and that new development makes an appropriate contribution towards the infrastructure needs arising as a result of such new development.

1.3.49 The need (or otherwise) for junction 8 of the M20 motorway to assist in delivering the borough's employment requirements will be given consideration by Members in February. This may result in an amendment to objective 2(i).

Conclusion

1.3.50 This report seeks Members' approval of the amendments to the key local issues, the spatial vision and spatial objectives of the emerging Maidstone Borough Local Plan; and seeks agreement of the objectively assessed housing need of 19,600 dwellings. Members are requested to note the current draft housing provision of 17,100 dwellings; and the draft provisions for employment floorspace (offices 39,830m²; industry 20,290m²; warehousing 49,911m²; medical 98,000m²).

Targets for housing, employment and retail will be given consideration by Members in February, together with site allocations.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

- 1.4.1 The key decision arising from this report is the agreement of the borough's objectively assessed need of 19,600 dwellings. The NPPF aims to significantly boost the supply of housing land and the basis for calculating a borough's housing need is the most up-to-date Office for National Statistics data releases and CLG trend based population and household projections. The SHMA takes account of the latest national demographic data and has examined local factors such as migration patterns, household formation and vacancy rates. The next step is for the local authority to use its evidence base to demonstrate how (and if) it can fully meet objectively assessed need through the SHLAA, constraints mapping, infrastructure assessments and sustainability appraisal. To reject the objectively assessed need of 19,600 dwellings would result in the local plan being found unsound at examination.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 1.5.1 The Maidstone Borough Local Plan will assist in delivering the spatial objectives of the Maidstone Community Strategy and the Strategic Plan. It will also have regard to objectives set out in other corporate documents, in particular the Housing Strategy. The local plan will support the council's priorities for Maidstone to have a growing economy and to be a decent place to live, through the policy framework against which planning applications are judged and through the allocation of land for development. The consultation processes will strive to meet corporate and customer excellence.

1.6 Risk Management

- 1.6.1 The council still has a local planning policy framework that comprises adopted development plan documents and supplementary planning documents, endorsed guidance, and saved policies from the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000. These policies are still relevant and carry weight in the decision making processes provided there is no conflict with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). However, the council has a duty to maintain an up-to-date policy framework, and current policies are increasingly becoming outdated or are in conflict with the NPPF. It is important to maintain the momentum for the preparation of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and to reach a consensus that the local plan is fit for public consultation. Establishing objectively assessed housing need is part of that process.
- 1.6.2 The borough's objectively assessed need has been determined through the SHMA using expert consultants in this field. To give greater

confidence that the SHMA, as a critical part of the local plan's evidence base, will be found sound at examination, an independent demographer has reviewed the assumptions behind the figures and concluded they are robust.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

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

1.7.2 Financial: A dedicated budget has been identified to undertake the work relating to the preparation of the local plan. The commissioning of consultants and legal advice can be accommodated within that budget.

1.7.3 Legal: Legal services have been retained to offer advice on document content and processes to ensure the Maidstone Borough Local Plan is found sound at examination. A number of meetings have been held with Counsel and the Head of Legal Services. These services can be managed within the existing budget for local plan production.

1.7.4 Procurement: Although additional evidence base work is being prepared in-house where possible, it is necessary to employ consultants on short term contracts to undertake specialist pieces of work. Appointments are in accordance with the Council's procurement procedures and the costs can be managed within the existing budget for local plan production.

1.8 Relevant Documents

Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2013

http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0007/44656/Strategic-Housing-Market-Assessment-2014.pdf

Retail Capacity Study 2013

http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0013/34150/Retail-Capacity-Study-2013.pdf

1.8.1 Appendices

None

1.8.2 Background Documents

None

<u>IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?</u>		<u>THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED</u>	
Yes	<input checked="checked" type="checkbox"/>	No	<input type="checkbox"/>
If yes, this is a Key Decision because: the report affects local plan policies, plans and strategies			
Wards/Parishes affected: all wards and parishes			

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

PLANNING, TRANSPORT AND DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 21 JANUARY 2014

REPORT OF HEAD OF PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Report prepared by Louise Taylor

1. ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT 31 March 2012 to 1 April 2013

1.1 Issue for Consideration

- 1.1.1 To consider the findings of the Annual Monitoring Report 31 March 2012 to 1 April 13, and to approve the document attached at Appendix A to this report for publication on the Council's website.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Planning and Development

- 1.2.1 That the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee considers the Annual Monitoring Report 31 March 2012 to 1 April 13, and recommends that the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development approves the document (attached at Appendix A) and it be published on the Council's website.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.3.1 The Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) is prepared in accordance with Regulation 34 of the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012. It is also a corporate document that is not exclusive to planning.
- 1.3.2 Maidstone's AMR focuses on monitoring those indicators that help to illustrate the key features of the borough and those that are essential for the monitoring of policies in the local plan. Thus, the AMR comprises:
- An introduction to the Annual Monitoring Report;
 - A Maidstone Profile, which demonstrates the wider demographic, social, economic and environmental characteristics of the borough;
 - Key Monitoring Indicators, which monitor policies set out in the local plan and they address local issues. A series of indicators monitor the success of the policies in the local plan. The key

indicators monitored in the AMR focus on housing, economic development, the built and natural heritage and transport. The progress of neighbourhood planning in the borough is also monitored. Green Flag Awards and development management statistics have been introduced into the section this year.

- Local plan progress, which includes a review of the Local Development Scheme (LDS) to assess the progress of the timetable for the production of the local plan and identifies any changes required, and a list showing actions taken by the Council under the duty to cooperate;
- A Glossary of Terms to assist the reader with the acronyms used throughout the document.

1.3.3 The AMR draws on a wide range of data from the following sources:

- The 2011 Census, which has become available over the last year
- The Strategic Housing Market Assessment 2014
- Kent County Council demography
- The Office for National Statistics (ONS) and the Government's Neighbourhood statistics website
- The Environment Agency
- Statistics relating to housing, Gypsy and Traveller and economic development planning permissions are collected, monitored, surveyed and reported by the Spatial Policy department.
- Statistics and information are also compiled by the wider planning department and different departments throughout the council.

1.3.4 The AMR collates and describes statistics for a wide range of topic areas. The key findings from each section of the document are summarised below:

Maidstone profile summary

1.3.5 Maidstone Borough's population was recorded as 155,143 in the 2011 Census, made up of 51% females and 49% males. The largest population group is aged 40-49. Over the past ten years the average level of net migration has been an in-migration of 1,271 people per annum.

1.3.6 The ONS has changed the way crime statistics are presented and recategorised offence types. These categories have been defined within the document. In Maidstone Borough the number of violent crimes without an injury increased by 16% and the number of violent

crimes with an injury fell by nearly 9%. In Park Wood is that levels of antisocial behaviour have fallen by 30% and violent crime has reduced by 40%.

- 1.3.7 The number of people claiming job seekers allowance fell by 16.7% between 2012 and 2013 and the percentage of residents claiming job seekers allowance in Maidstone remains lower than in Kent and Great Britain. Maidstone Borough has a youth unemployment rate of 4.4% which is lower than the national average of 5.8%
- 1.3.8 The average earnings of residents in Maidstone is higher than Kent and similar to the South East, but the income of people who work in Maidstone is about £5,000 lower than residents who commute to work elsewhere. Commuting flows are highest between Maidstone and Tonbridge and Malling and Maidstone and Medway.
- 1.3.9 GCSE results have improved, and show a greater achievement in students gaining 5 or more subjects at grades A* to C. The highest level of qualification of all residents aged 16 and over was recorded in the Census 2011. In Maidstone, a quarter of residents have at least a degree level of qualification.
- 1.3.10 Maidstone's urban wards contain areas with high levels of deprivation. Evaluation of the Neighbourhood Area Action Plan work carried out in Park Wood and a residents' perception survey revealed positive results. A number of recommendations have been made for the continuation of work in Park Wood and the roll out of Neighbourhood Action Planning across the borough, starting with Shepway North and South wards, this commenced in April 2013.
- 1.3.11 During 2012/13 house prices have increased but the price of flats has remained constant. House sales have decrease from 2,096 in 2012/13 to 1,987 in 2012/13. An income of £40,600 is required to buy a low priced property in Maidstone town and an income of between £57,100 and £67,100 is required to buy a low price property in the rural areas of the Borough. In contrast an income of £14,800 is required for a social rent property anywhere in the Borough. The mean household income in the Borough is £42,000.
- 1.3.12 The Len Valley has been recently designated as a new Local Nature Reserve.

Key monitoring indicators summary

- 1.3.13 The most revealing key housing indicator this year is the fact that Maidstone Borough does not have a 5 year housing land supply. The South East Plan (2009) set a target for Maidstone Borough of 11,080 dwellings for 2006/07 to 2025/26. A recent Court of Appeal case (St

Albans v Hunston Properties, 20 November 2013) has clarified that it is not acceptable to use the South East Plan housing target for assessing five year housing land supply. Housing requirements for the purpose of calculating a five year supply should be the full, objectively assessed needs for housing which is an unconstrained figure. Recently the Strategic Housing Market Assessment has found that the borough's objectively assessed need for is 19,600 new dwellings between 2012/13 to 2030/31 (although this has not been approved yet by the Cabinet). The borough council is now working in cooperation with other local authorities to assess whether the housing need can be met before setting a housing target to cover the plan period 2011/12 to 2030/31. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has identified possible sites for housing and employment and these sites will be subject to public consultation with the local plan as a whole in 2014. It is important to allocate new housing land as soon as possible to minimise the risk of inappropriate development.

1.3.14 On 1 April 2013, the Council has a 4.2 year housing land supply when assessed against the South East Plan target of 11,080 dwellings for the period 2006/07 to 2025/26. The Council has a 2 year housing land supply when assessed against the objectively assessed need of 19,600 dwellings between 2011/12 to 2030/31.

1.3.15 85% of dwellings were completed on previously developed land during 2012/13, the high levels of housing completions on previously developed land are not expected to continue. As a result of the moratorium on the release of greenfield housing sites allocated in the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 being revoked in March 2013, the number of planning applications for dwellings on greenfield sites has increased. Maidstone Borough is also vulnerable to inappropriate development on greenfield sites being approved at appeal because of the lack of a 5 year housing supply. It is therefore important to establish a 5 year housing land supply and to adopt a local plan with housing land allocations, in suitable locations, as soon as possible.

1.3.16 Maidstone continues to make best use of its available land, 80% of dwellings were constructed at densities in excess of 30 units per hectare. Of all planning permissions granted in 2012/13, only 34% of dwellings were affordable units, below the 40% target specified on policy AH1. The decrease in affordable housing permissions and completions indicates a decline in the viability of affordable housing in current market conditions. 79% of affordable units completed fell into the social rent category, against the policy target of a minimum of 60% of all affordable housing units built. Eight local needs affordable dwellings were granted planning permission during 2012/13.

- 1.3.17 There has been a net gain of employment floorspace in the borough overall. 63% of employment floorspace was completed on previously developed land, this compares to 72% in 2011/12 and 88% in 2010/11. This downward trend is a cause for concern as it shows that regeneration is not occurring at the rate it has done previously. Overall, there has been a net loss in the total amount of completed floorspace for town centre uses during 2012/13, within the defined town centre boundary and throughout the borough.
- 1.3.18 During 2012/13 the Environment Agency objected to 10 planning applications on flood defence grounds and only one of these was granted. The approval was subject to conditions to ensure that flood risk is minimised.
- 1.3.19 Mote Park has received a Green Flag award for the first time, as well as being voted third in the country in the Green Flag People's Choice Awards 2013.
- 1.3.20 This year Loose and Headcorn parish councils have begun work on their neighbourhood plans and Harrietsham parish council has consulted on their draft plan. The Council has a dedicated web page to keep the public informed of the progress of all neighbourhood plans.
- 1.3.21 Development Management statistics revealed that 88% of applications were dealt with within statutory timescales. The Council had a success rate of 76% in defending refusals at appeal, the highest success rate in the last 5 years.

Local plan progress summary

- 1.3.22 The local plan progress section highlights the large amount of work that has been carried out on the local plan and its evidence base over the last year. The Local Development Scheme indicates that Regulation 18 (Preparation) public consultation on the Maidstone Borough local plan would take place in October/November 2013. This consultation did not take place as scheduled because two key workstreams were highlighted as critical to ensuring a robust evidence base to support the local plan at public consultation, namely the Strategic Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA/SEDLAA) and Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA). Once analysis of this work is complete the council will be in a position to finalise the local plan in draft form for public consultation in Spring 2014.
- 1.3.23 Under the Council's duty to cooperate (set out in the Localism Act 2011), discussions have been held with partner organisations to consider joint approaches to plan making and to communicate on cross-boundary and county-wide issues, including but not limited to

adjoining authorities, infrastructure providers, the development industry and Kent County Council.

- 1.3.24 Overall the AMR has proved to be an invaluable tool, used to monitor local planning policies but also to record historic indicators that assist the public in understanding the profile and achievements of the borough. It is a compendium of statistics and information for Maidstone.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

- 1.4.1 Although guidance on preparing Annual Monitoring Reports has been withdrawn by the government and the duty to submit the document to the Secretary of State has been removed, under the Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012 the Council is still required to produce a monitoring report for local people on locally determined key issues.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 1.6 The AMR monitors the success of a range of policies that impact on corporate objectives set out in the Maidstone Community Strategy 2009 – 2020 Your community, Our priority refreshed July in 2013 and the Strategic Plan.

1.7 Risk Management

- 1.7.1 There are no risks arising directly from this report. The AMR describes the risks associated with not having a 5 year housing land supply and an up to date local plan. It conveys how risks to delays in the local plan timetable can be mitigated.

1.8 Other Implications

1.8.1

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

X
X

- 8. Procurement
- 9. Asset Management

1.8.2 Financial and staffing – there are general costs involved in the production of the AMR, such as printing, but these can be accommodated within the LDF budget. The AMR has been produced within the existing staff structure.

1.9 Relevant Documents

None

1.9.1 Appendices

Appendix A: Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13

1.9.2 Background Documents

None

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:

.....

Wards/Parishes affected:

.....

**This document is produced by
Maidstone Borough Council**

All enquiries should be addressed to:

**Louise Taylor
Spatial Policy Team
Maidstone Borough Council
Maidstone House
King Street
Maidstone
Kent ME15 6JQ**

**Telephone: 01622 602000
Email: LDF@maidstone.gov.uk**

1 Introduction	1
2 Maidstone Profile	2
Demographic Structure	2
Social and Economic Profile	4
Built and Natural Environment	13
3 Key Monitoring Indicators	21
Housing	21
Economic Development	30
Built and Natural Heritage	33
Transport	34
Neighbourhood Planning	35
Development Management Statistics	36
4 Local Plan Process	37
Local Development Scheme	37
Risk Analysis	38
Duty to Cooperate	38
5 Glossary	40
6 Appendix 1	43

Introduction

1.1 Maidstone's Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) provides a framework with which to monitor and review the effectiveness of local plan policies that address local issues over the monitoring period 1st April 2012 to 31st March 2013. This is Maidstone's 9th AMR.

1.2 Since the last AMR the draft National Planning Practice Guidance (NPPG) has been published. It states that local planning authorities should publish information at least annually that shows progress with local plan preparation, reports any activity relating to the duty to cooperate and shows how the implementation of policies in the local plan is progressing. This AMR includes a commentary of key demographic data from the 2011 Census which has become available over the last year and key data from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) 2014. Local planning authorities can also use the Monitoring Report to provide up-to-date information on the implementation of any neighbourhood plans that have been made, and to determine whether there is a need to undertake a partial or full review of the local plan.

1.3 The AMR comprises of two main sections: A Maidstone Profile and Key Monitoring Indicators. The Maidstone Profile includes demographic, social, economic and environmental data compared to Kent and the South East (where possible), which focuses on the broader and more descriptive character of the borough, often illustrating historic trends. The Key Monitoring Indicators monitor policies set out in local development documents and address local issues. They focus on housing targets, economic development, the borough's built and natural heritage and the progress of the Council's Integrated Transport Strategy. This year Development Management Statistics and Green Flag achievements have been included.

1.4 In addition, the AMR includes sections on the Local Development Scheme, neighbourhood planning and the duty to cooperate.

Maidstone Profile

2.1 The Maidstone profile indicators establish the broader descriptive character of the borough in terms of the demographic, social, economic and environmental characteristics of Maidstone. The following section includes statistics and commentary used to analyse each indicator, illustrating historic trends where possible. The profile indicators focus on the key characteristics of the area and local issues, setting the scene for planning the future growth of the borough.

Demographic Structure

Maidstone's population

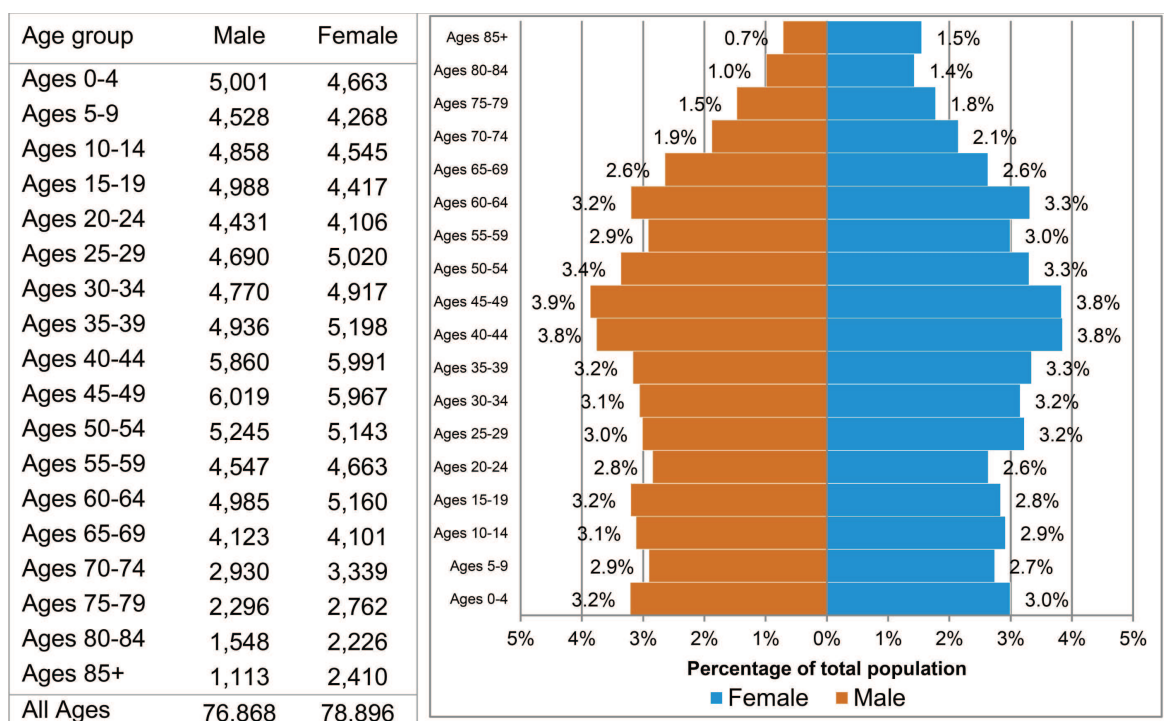


Figure 2.1 Population of Maidstone Borough (5 year age bands) (2011) Source: SHMA (2014, p185, fig 58) using ONS Mid-Year Population Estimates

2.2 Maidstone's population in the 2011 Census was recorded as 155,143, this compares to 138,948 in 2001. Between 2001 and 2011 the population of Maidstone Borough has increased by 16,195 people or 12%. In 2011 the population was made up of 51% females and 49% males. The largest age groups are 40-44 and 45-49 which make up 15% of the total population. The percentages of males and females are generally equally split up to the age of 70, and the proportion of males decreases to 41% at the age of 80-84.

Migration

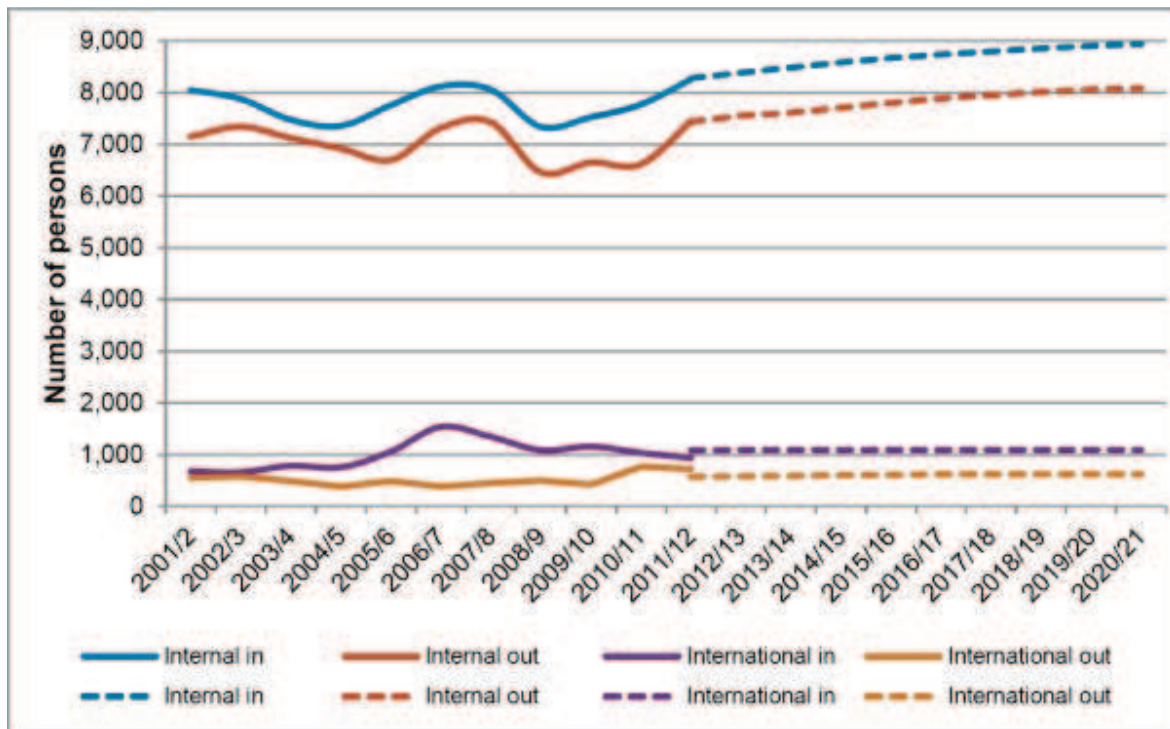


Figure 2.2 Past and Projected Trends in Migration (Updated) – Maidstone Borough Source: SHMA (2014, p95, fig 33) Derived from ONS data

2.3 Over the past ten years the average level of net migration has been an in-migration of 1,271 people per annum with an average of 1,408 being seen over the past five years. The Strategic Housing Market Assessment (2014) includes more detailed analysis of migration flows between local authorities.

Number of households and size

	Maidstone	Kent (including Medway)	South East	England
Number of households	63,447	711,847	3,555,463	22,063,368
Average household size	2.39	2.38	2.38	2.36

Table 2.1 Number of households and average size 2011 (source: KCC demography)

2.4 In 2011, Maidstone had 63,447 households with an average household size of 2.39 people. 2.39 people is only slightly higher than the average household size for Kent (2.38 people), the South East (2.38 people) and England (2.36 people).

Social and Economic Profile

Crime

Offence type	Maidstone Borough			Kent (including Medway)	South East
	2011/12	2012/13	% change	% change	% change
Domestic burglary	431	438	1.62	22.12	-4.74
Robbery	46	47	2.17	-6.30	-19.11
Vehicle offences	795	794	-0.13	6.66	-8.03
Violence with injury	881	802	-8.97	1.76	-7.53
Violence without injury	661	768	16.19	13.79	-4.13

Table 2.2 Crime statistics 2011/12 to 2012/13 (source: ONS) Note: Kent and South East figures totalled from individual districts statistics

2.5 The ONS have changed the way they present crime statistics and recategorised offence types since previous AMRs. Data for the whole of England and Wales has not been included because it was incomplete.

2.6 The definition of each type of offence is shown below:

- Domestic burglaries include burglaries in all inhabited dwellings, including inhabited caravans, houseboats and holiday homes, as well as sheds and garages connected to the main dwelling (for example, by a connecting door).
- A robbery is an incident or offence in which force or the threat of force is used either during or immediately prior to a theft or attempted theft.
- Vehicle offences cover private and commercial vehicles and comprises theft or unauthorised taking of a motor vehicle, aggravated vehicle taking, theft from a vehicle and interfering with a motor vehicle.
- Violence with injury includes all incidents of wounding, assault with injury and robbery which resulted in injury.
- Violence without injury includes all incidents of assault without injury.

2.7 Between 2011/12 and 2012/13 there was a fall in the number of crimes for all offences shown in table 2.2 above for the South East as a whole. Maidstone and Kent do not follow this regional trend. In Maidstone the largest increase was in violence without injury and the largest fall was for violence with injury.

The number of vehicle offences only fell very slightly and the number of domestic burglaries and robberies increased marginally. In Kent the number of domestic burglaries increased far more significantly than in Maidstone.

2.8 The Council addresses local crime and disorder through the Safer Maidstone Partnership. The Maidstone Community Safety Plan 2013-18 is a rolling five year document, which highlights how to tackle community safety issues that matter to the local community.

Unemployment

	Maidstone Borough	Kent (including Medway)	South East	Great Britain
No. Claiming Jobseekers Allowance September 2013	2,005	29,021	108,277	1,262,739
% Rate Claiming Jobseekers Allowance (Residential)	2.0	2.7	2.0	3.2
No. Change since 2012	-401	-6,016	-25,859	-226,001
% Change since 2012	-16.7	-17.2	-19.3	-15.2

Table 2.3 Unemployment statistics 2013 (source: KCC, figures taken from the Jobseekers Allowance Claimant Count)

2.9 The number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance has fallen in Maidstone borough between 2012 and 2013, by 16.7%, reflecting the trend in Kent, the South East and Great Britain. Maidstone has a youth unemployment rate of 4.4% which is lower than the national average of 5.8%. Whilst the reduction in the number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance is not quite as significant as the figure for Kent and the South East, the percentage of residents in Maidstone claiming Jobseekers Allowance remains lower than that in Kent and Great Britain and the same as the South East.

2.10 The SHMA (2014, p86) states that current levels of overall unemployment in Maidstone are 6.3%, significantly above levels seen in 2004/05 (3.6%). However, unemployment in the borough still compares favourably to Kent (7.2%) and national levels (7.9%) .

Earnings

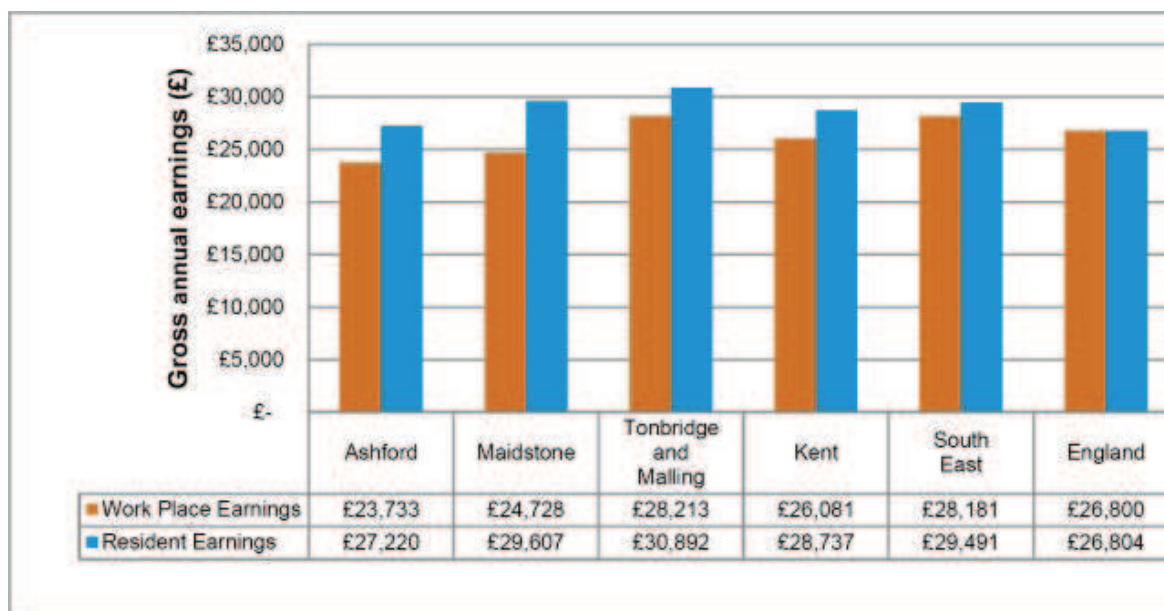


Figure 2.3 Workplace and Residence-Based Earnings (2012) Source: SHMA (2014, fig 31, p87) derived from NOMIS/Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings

2.11 The average earnings of residents in Maidstone Borough is higher than than Kent and similar to the South East. There is a disparity in earnings between those who work in Maidstone and those who commute to London or elsewhere.

2.12 The SHMA 2014 (p87) explains that at around £24,700, the median income of Maidstone "workers" is about £5,000 lower than the median income of Maidstone "residents". The "gap" between resident and workplace earnings in Maidstone Borough is also significantly larger than that experienced across Kent (£2,700) and nearby Tonbridge & Malling (£2,700) and Ashford (£3,500).

2.13 The overall average (median) income of all households in the Borough was estimated to be around £31,600 with a mean income of £42,000 (SHMA, 2014, p120). In Maidstone the SHMA (2014, p26) found that 63% of those living in the District work in it; and 60% of those working in the District also live in it.

Commuting

2.14 The SHMA 2014 analyses commuting patterns in detail using 2001 and 2011 Census data. To summarise, the highest commuting flows are between Tonbridge & Malling and Maidstone (13,900 people daily) which is likely to be partly influenced by the concentration of employment at Kings Hill in West Malling and at Aylesford. There are also see very high commuting flows (12,770 people daily) between Maidstone and Medway. 7,670 people commute daily between Maidstone and Swale and 4,610 people commute daily between Maidstone and Tunbride Wells. There is a weak commuting relationship between Ashford and Maidstone with daily flows of only 2,620 people. 7,132 people from Maidstone commute to London daily. Maidstone borough's direct rail links to London and the proximity of the capital are factors in shaping the local economy, house prices and travel.

GCSE results

	Maidstone Borough		Kent (including Medway)		South East		England	
	Excl.	Incl.	Excl.	Incl.	Excl.	Incl.	Excl.	Incl.
Including or Excluding Mathematics and English								
September 2011 to August 2012	89.8%	66.4%	86.5%	60.9%	82.0%	60.2%	83.0%	58.8%
September 2010 to August 2011	88.1%	63.2%	82.6%	58.8%	79.3%	59.6%	80.5%	58.2%
September 2009 to August 2010	85.6%	61.1%	79.0%	56.2%	75.8%	57.5%	76.1%	55.1%
September 2008 to August 2009	78.7%	57.0%	72.4%	51.5%	70.2%	53.7%	69.8%	50.7%
September 2007 to August 2008	70.1%	52.8%	67.3%	49.5%	66.1%	51.8%	65.6%	47.8%

Table 2.4 GCSE and equivalent results for young people achieving 5+ A* - C (excluding and including Mathematics and English) (source: Government Neighbourhood Statistics)

2.15 Maidstone's GCSE results overall show a greater achievement in gaining 5 or more subjects at grades A* to C when compared to Kent, the South East and England statistics. The results also demonstrate an upward trend in achievements.

A Level results and degree qualifications

	Maidstone Borough	South East	England
September 2011 to August 2012	94.4%	93.2%	93.1%
September 2010 to August 2011	95.6%	93.8%	93.6%
September 2009 to August 2010	96.2%	95.1%	94.4%
September 2008 to August 2009	92.9%	95.3%	94.7%

Table 2.5 GCE/Applied GCE A/AS and equivalent examination results - students achieving 2 or more passes of A Level (referenced by location of student residence) (source: Government Neighbourhood Statistics)

2.16 The percentage of students in Maidstone achieving 2 or more passes at A Level is higher than the percentage for the South East and England. The results generally demonstrate an upward trend in achievements until 2009/10. 2010/11 and 2011/12 results show that A Level standards have slipped across the board. It is important to note that these statistics are based on the results of students

2 . Maidstone Profile



residing in Maidstone, rather than the results of the educational institutions in Maidstone. Degree qualifications data is not available on a year by year basis but the highest level of qualification of all residents aged 16 and over was recorded in the Census 2011. Table 2.6 shows that a quarter of residents in Maidstone have a degree level qualification (defined as level 4 in the Census) or above, this is a lower proportion than the South East and England. In comparison the number of Maidstone Borough residents with GCSEs or A levels (total of levels 1, 2 and 3) as their highest qualification totals 44.4%.

Residents aged 16 and over with a level 4 qualification and above	Maidstone	South East	England
Count	32,154	2,093,693	11,769,361
Percentage	25.5%	29.9%	27.3%

Table 2.6 Residents with a Level 4 and above qualifications, these cover: Degree (BA, BSc), Higher Degree (MA, PhD, PGCE), NVQ Level 4-5, HNC, HND, RSA Higher Diploma, BTEC Higher level, Professional Qualifications (Teaching, Nursing, Accountancy). (source: Government Neighbourhood Statistics, Census 2011)

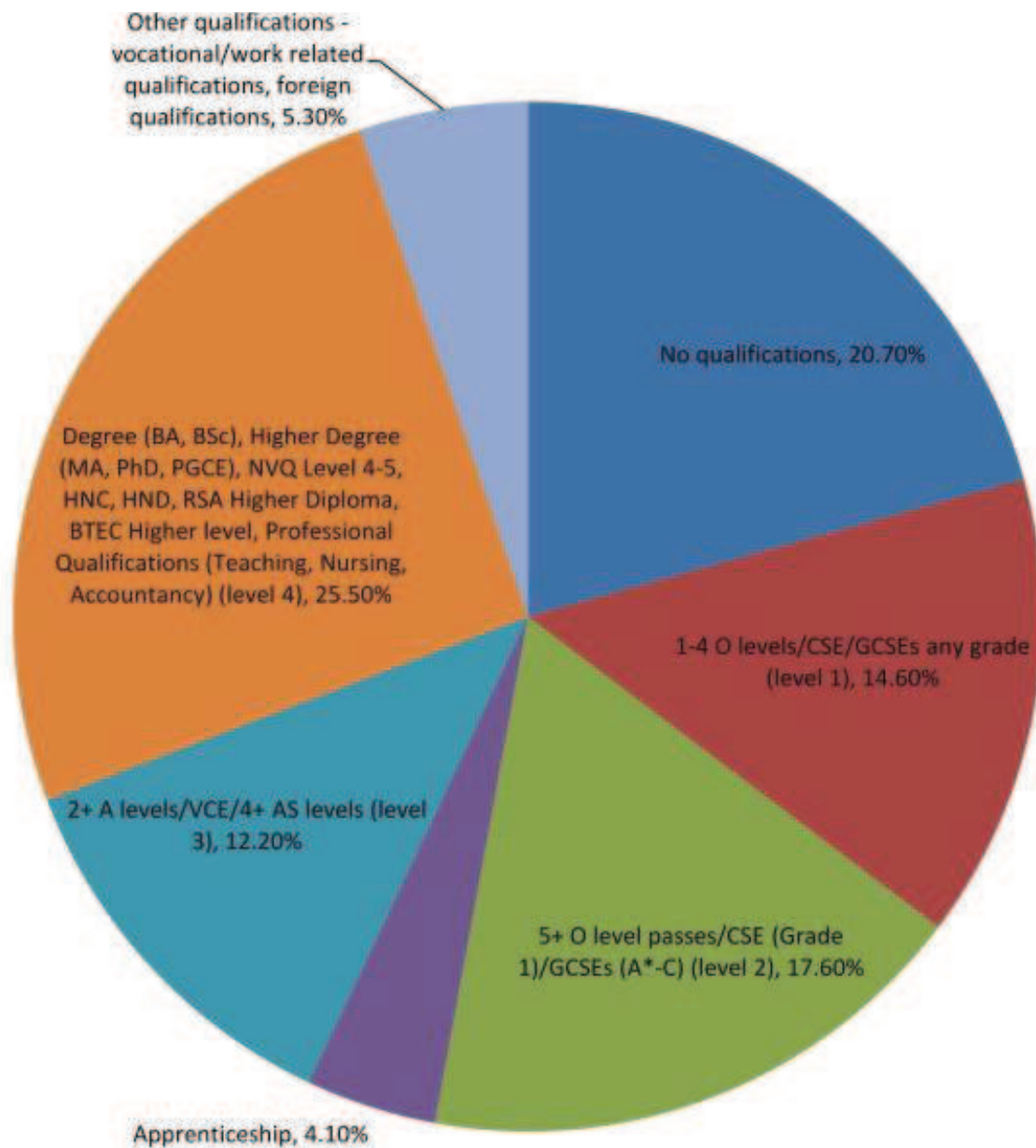


Figure 2.4 Highest qualifications of Maidstone Borough residents (source: Government Neighbourhood Statistics, Census 2011)

Multiple deprivation

2.17 Maidstone's urban wards contain the highest levels of deprivation in the borough. The most deprived lower super output areas are located in North, High Street, Shepway North, Shepway South and Park Wood wards. However, North ward and Shepway North ward also contain lower super output areas of least deprivation.

2.18 The Maidstone Community Strategy 2009 - 2020 *Your community, our priority* was refreshed in July 2013 agreeing three new priorities and seven outcomes as follows:

2.19 Priorities:

- Troubled Families (Community Budgets)
- Tackling worklessness and poverty
- Local environmental improvements

2.20 Seven long-term outcomes that the borough council aspires to achieve through a partnership approach in Maidstone:

- Maidstone is a great place to do business with higher levels of investment and business growth
- Greater wellbeing for households through higher numbers of residents in employment
- Even more children and young people are on the path to success through the provision of good quality education, training and jobs which reduces the risk of exclusion and offending
- Safe and cohesive places where people are empowered and have the confidence to play active roles in their communities
- Improved health and wellbeing of people which enables them to live active and independent lives
- Lower levels of poverty and social exclusion in Maidstone by helping more of our socially excluded adults into employment, education and training
- Mixed and sustainable communities with an increased supply of new homes, improved existing dwellings and a high quality physical environment

2.21 The priorities of the community strategy initiated Neighbourhood Action Plan work in deprived wards. The central lower super output area in Park Wood is within the 2% most deprived in England. In Park Wood residents have taken a lead in facilitating 'Planning for Real' community involvement exercises which has informed a Neighbourhood Action Plan, which was developed with local residents and adopted by the borough council in November 2010. £50,000 funding was provided by partners towards new paving and grassed areas by the parade of shops, CCTV, community notice boards, dog bins and new fencing. The project was completed and evaluated in January 2013.

2.22 In November 2011, the borough council's Environmental Services carried out a residents' perception survey regarding street cleaning, litter and rubbish collection in Park Wood. Since the start of the Neighbourhood Action Plan, street cleaning satisfaction has risen from 34% to 60% in 3 years. In December 2012, the Community Development team carried out a perception survey at the Mobile

Gateway, in which 33 Park Wood residents participated. Over the range of residents' top priorities in the action plan 37% said things had got better, 36% said things had stayed the same and 16% said things had got worse. Perceptions of 'young people hanging around' and 'drinking at the parade' had improved, and 64% of residents felt that 'visible police presence' was better. Perceptions of dog mess in Park Wood appear to be the most difficult to change. Between December 2010 and November 2012, Kent Police performance data shows that at the Park Wood ward level, incidents of ASB (antisocial behaviour) have fallen by 30%, violent crime has reduced by 40%, whilst burglary statistics remain unchanged.

2.23 A number of recommendations have been made for both the continuation of the Park Wood Neighbourhood Action Plan (PNAP) and the roll out of Neighbourhood Action Planning across the Maidstone borough, starting with Shepway North and South wards, which commenced in April 2013.

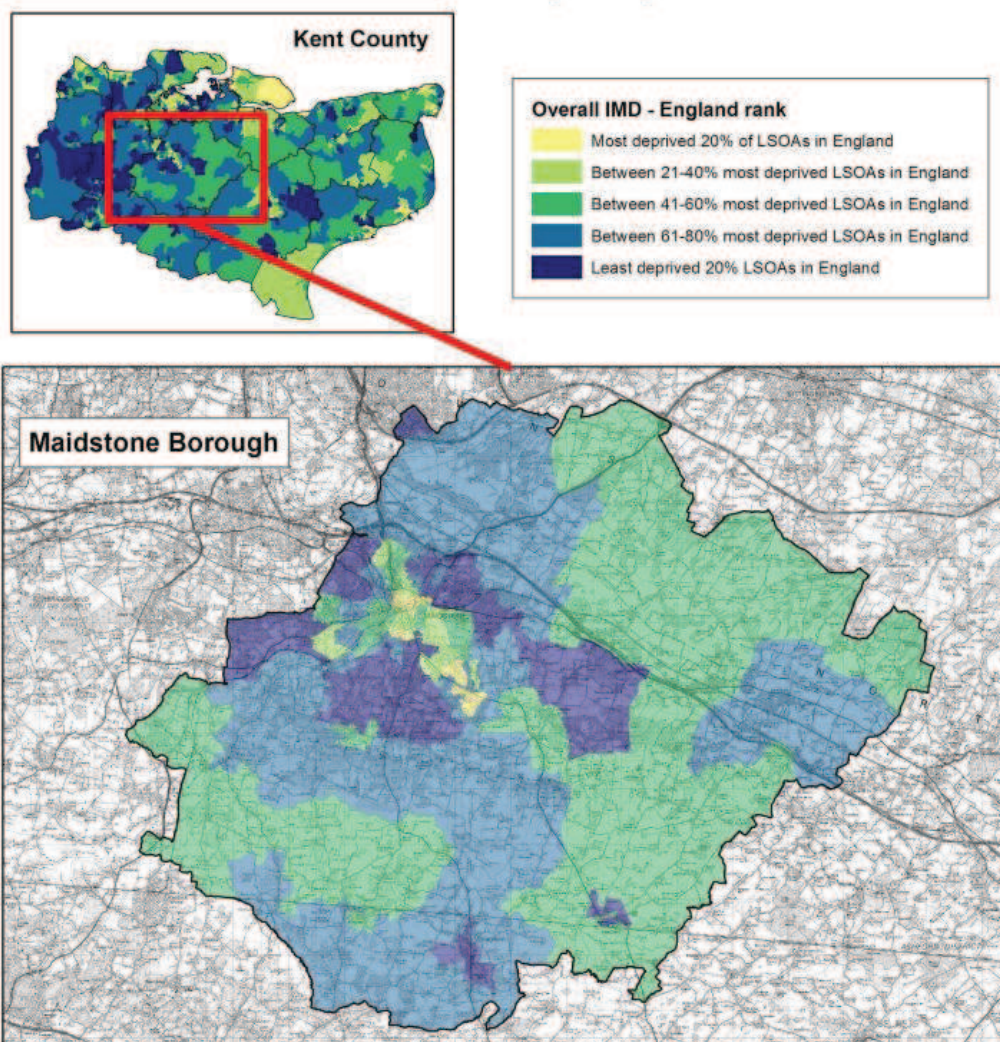
Free school meals

	Maidstone Borough		Kent (excluding Medway)		England	
	2012	2013	2012	2013	2012	2013
Primary	12.9%	13.6%	15.6%	16.2%	18.0%	18.1%
Secondary	7.8%	7.9%	10.6%	11.9%	14.6%	14.8%
Special Needs	34.0%	37.1%	29.2%	31.5%	34.8%	35.8%
Overall	10.7%	11.2%	13.5%	14.4%	16.7%	16.9%

Table 2.7 Percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals at January 2012 and January 2013 (source: KCC)

2.24 Free school meals are an indicator of deprivation, as pupils who are eligible for them come from low income families. The percentage of pupils in Maidstone qualifying for free school meals in primary and secondary education is lower than in Kent and England, but higher than the Kent average in special needs schools. Overall in Maidstone there is a lower percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals compared to Kent and England. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals has increased between 2012 and 2013 for each category of pupil across each geographical area.

National rank of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) in Maidstone based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010



Maidstone is ranked 217th out of 326 authorities in England. A rank of 1 is the most deprived. This places Maidstone in England's least deprived half of authorities.

Park Wood has the highest level of deprivation in Maidstone, followed by High Street and Shepway South.

Maidstone LSOAs	Number	%
Within England's top 20% most deprived	6	6.5%
Within South East's top 20% most deprived	15	16.3%
Within Kent's top 20% most deprived	10	10.9%

Out of a total of 92 LSOAs

Source: Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010, Communities and Local Government (CLG)
Produced by Research & Intelligence, Kent County Council
(C) Crown Copyright. All rights reserved 100019238, 2011



Figure 2.5 County rank (excluding Medway) of lower super output areas in Maidstone borough based on the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 (source: KCC) It is anticipated that this information will be updated in 2015.

Built and Natural Environment

House prices and sales

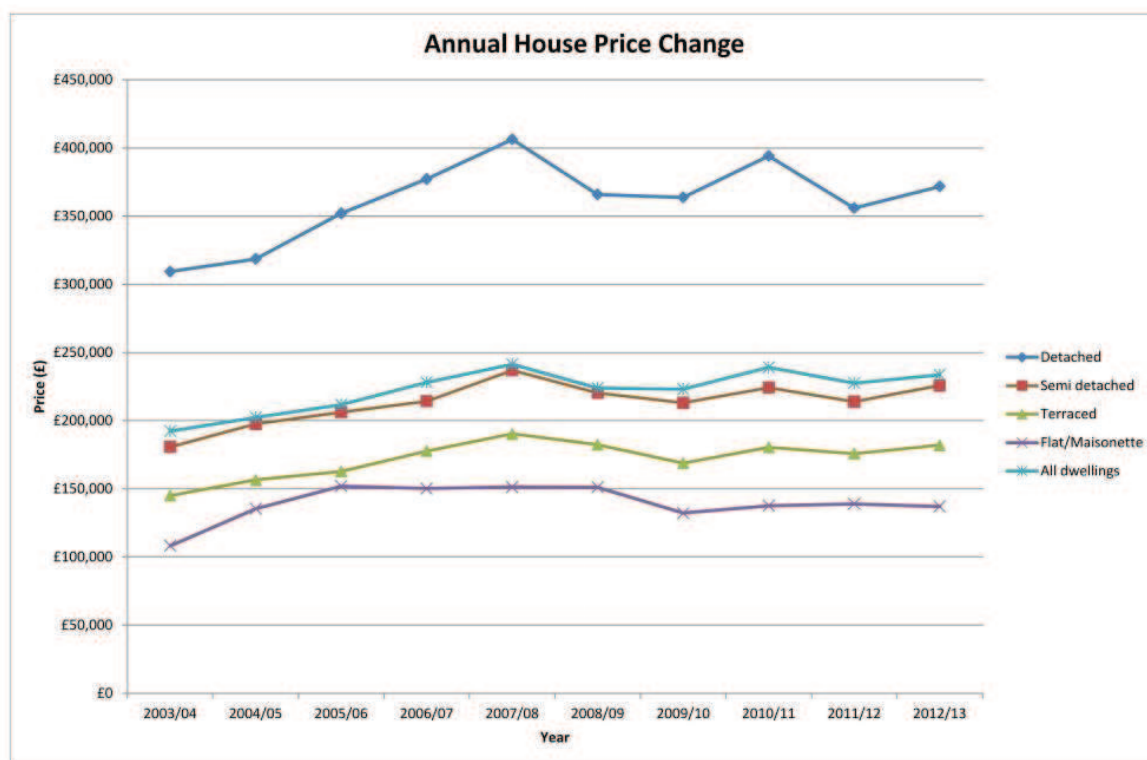


Figure 2.6 Maidstone annual house price change (source: KCC)

2.25 House prices rose steeply in Maidstone until 2007/08, particularly for detached dwellings. Since then, prices have fluctuated. In 2010/11 there were signs that house prices were rising again but the statistics for 2011/12 showed that they have since fallen, except for flats/maisonettes where prices have remained constant. During 2012/13 prices for flats/maisonettes have remained constant again but the price of all other dwelling types have increased. Prices have not yet recovered to 2007/08 levels. The fluctuation in house prices has affected detached dwellings the most over the last ten years, and flats/maisonettes the least.

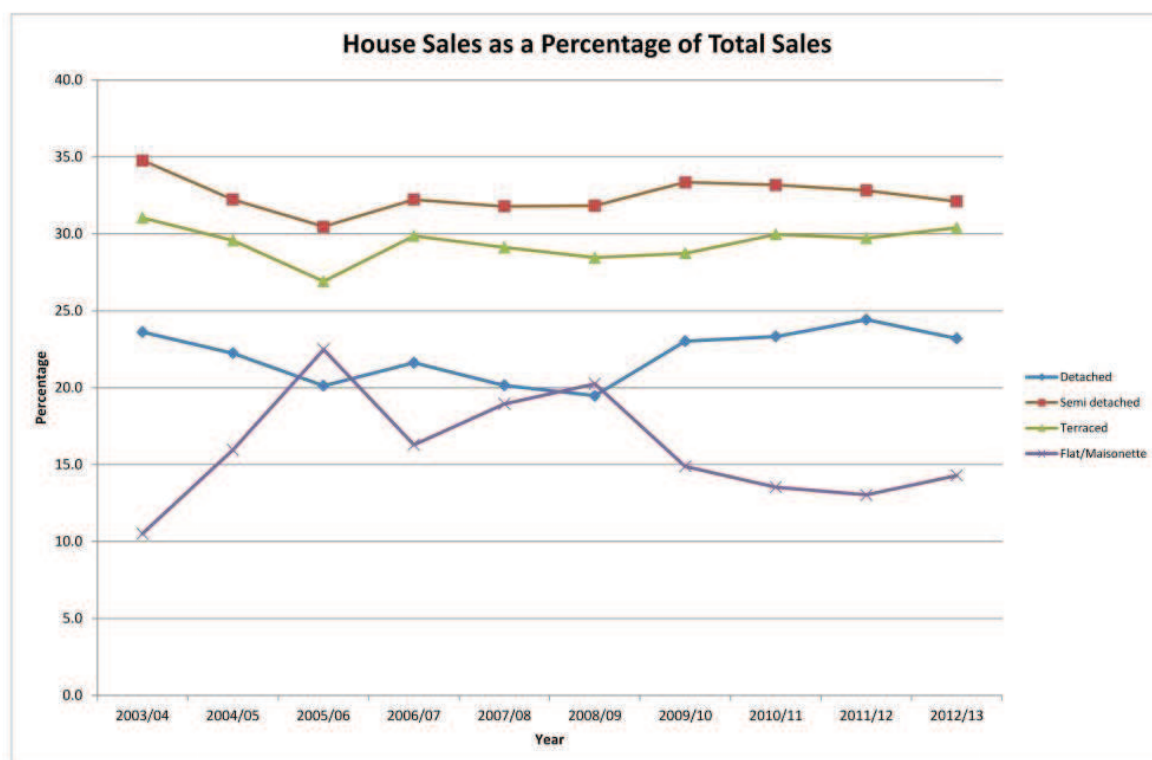


Figure 2.7 Maidstone house sales as a percentage of total sales by type of property (source: KCC)

2.26 The total number of house sales has decreased in the last monitoring year from 2,096 in 2012/13 to 1,987 in 2012/13. During 2012/13, flats/maisonettes accounted for only 14% of sales. During 2012/13 sales of detached and semi detached properties have decreased but sales of terraced and flats/maisonettes have increased.

2.27 The SHMA (2014, p113) explains that buyers require at least a 10% deposit for the most attractive mortgage deals and a household is considered to be able to afford to buy a home if it costs 3.5 times the gross household income. The SHMA (2014, p119) indicates that in August 2013 an income of £40,600 is required to buy a low priced property in Maidstone town and an income of between £57,100 and £67,100 is required to buy a low priced property in the rural areas of the borough. In contrast, an income of £14,800 is required for a social rent property throughout the borough. The SHMA (2014, p122) found that 43% of households in August 2013 were unable to afford market housing. The provision of affordable housing is a key priority for the council.

Vacant property

2.28 There were 509 vacant private sector properties in 2010, which had been empty for six months or more. This figure remained the same at April 2011. There were a total of 1,192 empty properties at April 2010, most of which were unsold flats, and the number of empty properties increased to 1,652 at April 2011. The government has recently set targets for local authorities to bring empty properties back into use. Between April 2013 and November 2013, 95 properties were brought back into use. The 2011 Census indicates that there are

just over 2,200 vacant properties or second homes in the borough, this is equivalent to 3.4% of the dwelling stock. This compares to 4% of the dwelling stock in the South East and 4.3% of the dwelling stock in England.

Number of households on the housing register (waiting list)

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Maidstone	2,863	3,222	3,442	3,674	3,151
Kent (including Medway)	38,722	40,093	45,102	49,126	53,015
South East	205,371	215,373	225,250	N/A	N/A

Table 2.8 Number of households on the housing register (waiting list) (source: Maidstone Borough Council and KCC)

2.29 The number of households on the housing register in Maidstone has decreased by 523 since 2012, a fall of 14.2%. In contrast, the number of households on the housing register has increased by 7.9% in Kent since 2012.

Homeless households

	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Maidstone	37	7	27	189	198
Kent (not including Medway)	973	795	1,006	965	1,076
South East	4,730	3,870	4,520	5,320	N/A

Table 2.9 Homeless households (source: KCC)

2.30 The number of homeless households has increased by 9 since 2011/12. The number of homeless households has increased within Kent. On 1 April 2013 4 households on the waiting list were occupying insanitary or overcrowded housing or otherwise living in unsatisfactory housing conditions.

Built environment assets

Built Environment Assets	Numbers
Conservation Areas	41
Listed Buildings	2,022
Grade I	42
Grade II*	103
Grade II	1,881
Scheduled Ancient Monuments	28
117	

2 . Maidstone Profile

16

Built Environment Assets	Numbers
Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest	6
Important Historic Parks and Gardens	9

Table 2.10 Assets of the built environment (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

2.31 The quality and protection of the built environment are important considerations for the Council. The borough has a range of designated heritage assets, including a large number of historically listed buildings and 41 Conservation Areas, of which 6 are located in or adjacent to the urban area.

2.32 Since April 2012, the following buildings and structures have been listed at Grade II:

- Hollingbourne War Memorial
- Signal Box at Maidstone West
- Signal Box at Watlington Station

Natural environment assets and floodplain constraints

Natural Environment Assets	km ²	%	Number
Total Area of Borough	393.40		
Metropolitan Green Belt	5.29	1.34	
Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty	107.19	27.25	
Indicative Floodplain ⁽¹⁾	54.47	13.85	
Ancient Woodland (semi-natural and replanted)	28.28	7.19	387
Special Area of Conservation	1.37	0.35	1
Sites of Special Scientific Interest	4.92	1.25	23
Local Wildlife Sites (formerly Sites of Nature Conservation Interest)	27.76	7.06	63
Roadside Verges of Nature Conservation Interest			34
Local Nature Reserves			2

Table 2.11 Key assets of the natural environment (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

¹ Flood mapping is a complex, detailed and extensive process which can never be completely accurate, the indicative floodplain figure is based on the best currently available information.

2.33 Much of Maidstone's rural area benefits from a high quality landscape, as well as being rich in biodiversity. The borough's environmental assets, together with the constraints of the floodplain, are illustrated in figure 2.9. In the draft local plan the Greensand Ridge, Medway Valley, Len Valley and Loose Valley are considered landscapes of local value.

2.34 Flood mapping is a complex, detailed and extensive process which can never be completely accurate, the indicative floodplain figure is based on the best currently available information.

2 . Maidstone Profile

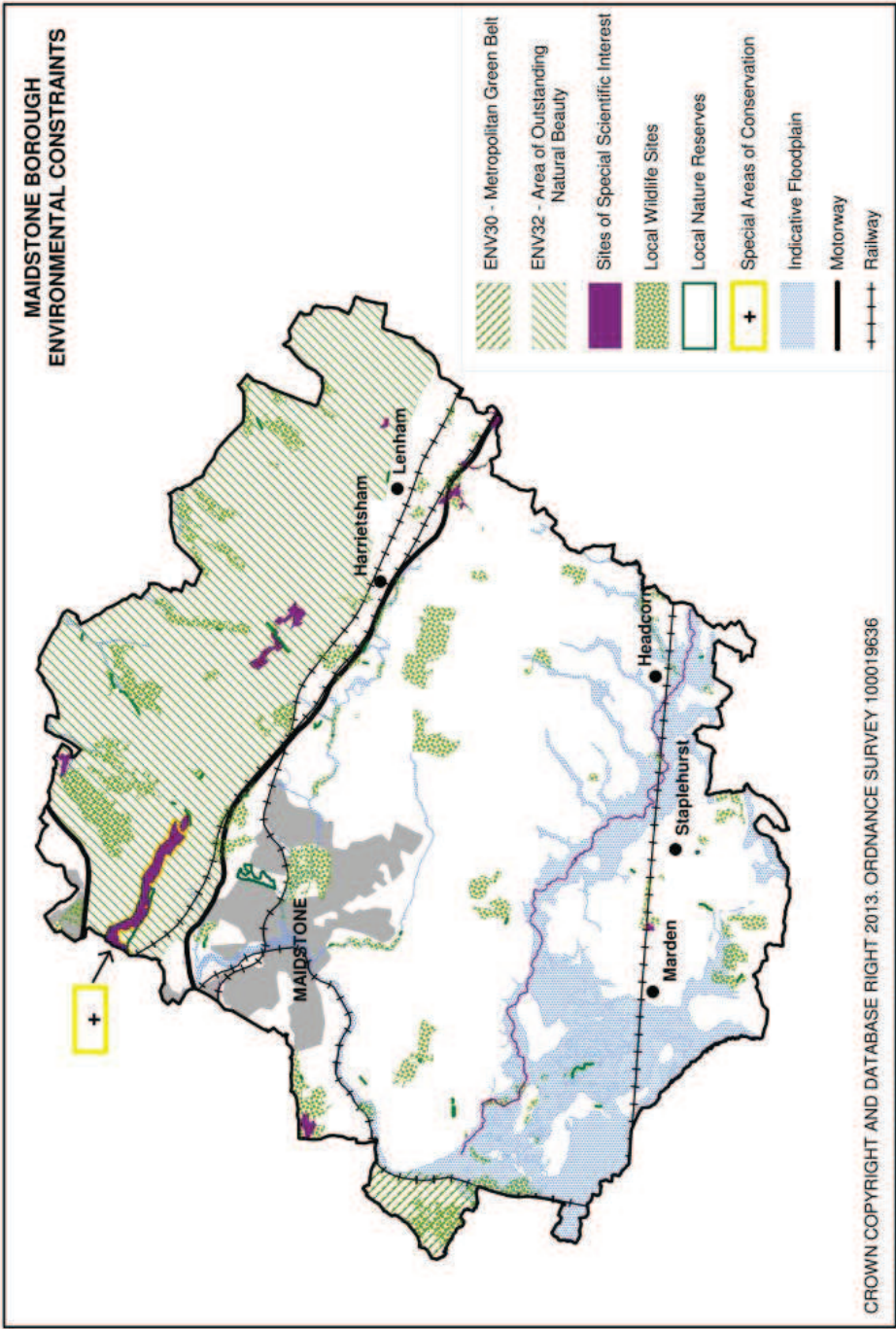


Figure 2.8 Maidstone environmental assets and floodplain constraints (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

Local nature reserves

ADOPTED Local Nature Reserves	Location
Vinters Valley Park	Maidstone
Boxley Warren	Boxley
Len Valley	Maidstone

Table 2.12 Adopted local nature reserves (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

2.35 There are three formally designated local nature reserves (LNRs) in the borough. The LNR at the Len Valley was adopted in January 2014.

2.36 The Council is considering the designation of further LNRs as set out below, although no formal decisions on future designations have yet been made.

- Admiral and Gorham Wood, Bicknor
- Bell Lane Nature Area, Staplehurst
- Bredhurst Wood, Bredhurst
- Cuckoo Wood, Sandling
- Dove Hill Wood, Boxley
- Fant Wildlife Area, Maidstone
- Five Acre/Wents Wood/Weaving Heath, Maidstone/Boxley
- Four Oaks Wood, Sutton Valence
- Hayle Place Stud Farm, Maidstone
- Horish Wood, Boxley/Detling
- Lime Trees Open Space Ponds, Staplehurst
- Palace Wood, Maidstone
- Poyntell Ponds, Staplehurst
- River Len Reserve, Downswood
- Sandling Park, Maidstone
- Senacre Wood, Maidstone

2.37 It is expected that the designation of Cuckoo Wood, Sandling and Sandling Park as LNRs will take place in 2014. The local parish council and officers are progressing in their work to officially designate The River Len Reserve in Downwood (a different location to the Len Valley LNR).

2.38 Achieving LNR status is not a straight forward process, as demonstrated by Bredhurst Wood. Here progress is slower because the site has over a hundred landowners. An action group has now started to purchase the land, in order consolidate the site and progress work towards achieving LNR status in the longer term.

Key monitoring indicators

3.1 Key Monitoring Indicators monitor policies set out in the local plan and they address local issues. A series of monitoring indicators measure the success of the policies the local plan. A number of these indicators are monitored through the AMR, whilst others can be monitored through alternative documents or surveys. The key indicators in the AMR focus on housing, economic development, the built and natural heritage and transport. Key Development Management statistics appear in the AMR this year and the progress of neighbourhood planning in the borough is also indicated in this section.

Housing

Number of new dwellings built

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Number of new dwellings built (gross)	1,159	550	639	702	892	673
Number of new dwellings built (net of losses)	992	441	581	649	873	630

Table 3.1 Number of new dwellings built (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.2 The 2007/08 monitoring period had the highest ever housing completion figure at 992, due to the high volume of flats completed in that year. Whilst the economic downturn most likely contributed to a reduction in completions in 2008/09, a change to the methodology for recording completed dwellings also had an impact. There were signs of a recovery when 873 new homes were built in 2011/12 but in 2012/13 this number decreased to 630 new homes.

5 year housing land supply

3.3 The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) requires that Council should identify and update annually a five year housing land supply.

5 year housing land supply target

3.4 The South East Plan (2009) which was the regional spatial strategy for the south east, set a target for Maidstone Borough of 11,080 dwellings for 2006/07 to 2025/26. A recent Court of Appeal case (St Albans v Hunston Properties, 20 November 2013) has clarified that it is not acceptable to use the South East Plan housing target for assessing five year housing land supply. Housing requirements for the purpose of calculating a five year supply should be the full, objectively assessed needs for housing which is an unconstrained figure.

3.5 The NPPF requires that local authorities have a clear understanding of housing needs in their area. They should prepare a Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) to assess their full needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries. Maidstone has undertaken this process with Ashford Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. The SHMA should identify the scale and mix of housing and the range of tenures that the local population is likely to need over the plan period which meets household and population projections, addresses the need for all types of housing including affordable housing and caters for housing demand and the scale of housing supply necessary to meet this demand.

3.6 The SHMA (2014) has found that the borough's objectively assessed need is 19,600 new dwellings between 2011/12 and 2030/31. The borough council is now working in cooperation with other local authorities to assess whether the need can be met before setting a housing target from 2011/12 to 2030/31. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) will establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitability of location, and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period.

5 year housing land supply calculation

3.7 In April 2013 the Council has a 4.2 year housing land supply when assessed against the South East Plan target of 11,080 dwellings for the period 2006/07 to 2025/26 (table 3.2). The supply of housing is likely to be lower given the SHMA (2014) figures and the requirement to use an unconstrained figure. The Council has a 2 year housing land supply when assessed against the objectively assessed need of 19,600 dwellings between 2011/12 to 2030/31 (table 3.3).

3.8 The housing land supply calculation consists of the following deliverable⁽²⁾ elements of supply when assessed against the South East Plan target of 11,080 dwellings for the period 2006/07 to 2025/26 (table 3.2):

- Past completions from 2006/07 to 2012/13.
- Outstanding planning permissions that have yet to be completed at 1 April 2013.
- Existing Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 greenfield allocations where there is strong evidence to support early delivery.
- Greenfield sites at locations identified in the emerging local plan where there is strong evidence to support early delivery.

3.9 Housing land supply consists of the following deliverable⁽²⁾ elements of supply when assessed against the objectively assessed need of 19,600 dwellings between 2011/12 to 2030/31:

- Past completions from 2011/12 to 2011/13.
- Outstanding planning permissions that have yet to be completed at 1 April 2013.

2 The NPPF states that 'To be considered deliverable, sites should be available now, offer a suitable location for development now, and be achievable with a realistic prospect that housing will be delivered on the site within five years and in particular that development of the site is viable.'

- Existing Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 greenfield allocations where there is strong evidence to support early delivery.
- Greenfield sites at locations identified in the emerging local plan where there is strong evidence to support early delivery.

3.10 In accordance with paragraph 47 of the NPPF the 5 year supply calculation includes a 5% additional buffer, rather than a 20% buffer because Maidstone Borough does not have a record of persistent under delivery of housing.

3.11 In March 2013 the moratorium on the release of greenfield housing sites allocated in the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 was revoked because the reasons for the moratorium no longer apply. Greenfield allocations have only been included in the 5 year supply calculation if there is strong evidence to suggest that the dwellings on these sites will be built within 5 years.

3.12 The 5 year housing land supply calculation methodology was scrutinised by the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee and full council during 2013. The Council endorsed the existing methodology, which excludes a windfall allowance, because we monitor in a robust way, down to one dwelling.

	Requirement	Number of dwellings
1	Interim housing requirement 2006/07 to 2025/26	11,080
2	Less completed dwellings 2006/07 to 2012/13	-4,880
3	Requirement 2013/14 to 2025/26	6,200
4	Annual target (6,200÷13 years to end of plan period)	477
5	Add 5% buffer per NPPF requirement (477x5%)	24
6	Annual target including 5% buffer	501
7	5 year dwelling target 2013/14 to 2017/18 (501x5 years)	2,505
	Supply	
8	5-year housing land supply 2013/14 to 2017/18	2,135
	5-year housing land supply position at 1 April 2013	125

3 . Key Monitoring Indicators

24

	Requirement	Number of dwellings
9	Shortfall in housing land supply	-370
10	Percentage housing land supply (2,135 as a % of 2,505)	85.20%
11	Number of years housing land supply (2,135÷501)	4.2 years

Table 3.2 Calculating 5 year housing land supply for the South East Plan housing target of 11,080 dwellings between 2006/07 and 2025/26

	Requirement	Number of dwellings
1	Objectively assessed need 2011/12 to 2030/31 (this is not the target)	19,600
2	Less completed dwellings 2011/12 to 2012/13	-1,503
3	Requirement 2013/14 to 2030/31	18,097
4	Annual target (18,097÷18 years to end of plan period)	1,005
5	Add 5% buffer per NPPF requirement (1005x5%)	50
6	Annual target including 5% buffer	1,056
7	5 year dwelling target 2013/14 to 2017/18 (1,056x5 years)	5,278
	Supply	
8	5-year housing land supply 2013/14 to 2017/18	2,135
	5-year housing land supply position at 1 April 2013	
9	Shortfall in housing land supply	-3,143
10	Percentage housing land supply (2,135 as a % of 5,278)	40.45%

	Requirement	Number of dwellings
11	Number of years housing land supply (2,135÷1,056)	2.0 years

Table 3.3 Calculating 5 year housing land supply for the objectively assessed need of 19,600 dwellings between 2011/12 and 2030/31

Housing trajectory

3.13 The housing trajectory shows past annual dwelling completions and projected annual completions against a housing target. It examines how many additional dwellings will be needed at any one point in time to meet the housing requirements remaining over the period of the plan. The trajectory will be included in next year's AMR when the borough's housing target will be agreed.

New and converted dwellings on previously developed land (PDL)

	% Brownfield	% Greenfield
2012/13	85.0	15.0
2011/12	92.4	7.6
2010/11	79.2	20.8
2009/10	86.2	13.8
2008/09	88.9	11.1
2008/09 to 2012/13	86.3	13.7

Table 3.4 Percentage of completed dwellings on previously developed land (brownfield sites) (source: Maidstone Borough Council) based on the relevant PPS3 definition or NPPF definition

3.14 Table 3.4 demonstrates that a consistently high proportion of dwellings in the borough has been completed on previously developed land (brownfield sites) over the past 5 years. During 2012/13 the percentage of completed units on brownfield fell to 85.0%. In Maidstone, the high levels of housing completions on previously developed land are not expected to continue. As a result of the moratorium on the release of greenfield housing sites allocated in the Maidstone Borough Wide Local Plan 2000 being revoked in March 2013, the number of planning applications for dwellings on greenfield sites has increased. Maidstone Borough is also vulnerable to inappropriate development on greenfield sites being approved at appeal because of the lack of a 5 year housing supply. It is therefore important to establish a 5 year housing land supply and to adopt a local plan with housing land allocations, in suitable locations, as soon as possible.

3 . Key Monitoring Indicators

26

Net additional gypsy and traveller pitches

	2011/12	2012/13
Pitches with permanent consent	17	17
Pitches with permanent consent and personal condition	9	1
Total	26	18

Table 3.5 Net additional gypsy and traveller pitches (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.15 Cabinet approved amended targets for Gypsy and Traveller accommodation of 187 pitches and Travelling Showpeople accommodation of 11 plots, to reflect the extension of the revised local plan period up to 2031. A total of 18 permanent pitches have been granted permission in this last monitoring year therefore leaving a residual figure of 143 pitches. The Council has secured funding to provide 15 pitches on a public site(s) and is in the process of finding appropriate land.

Affordable housing completions

3.16 The SHMA (2014) shows an overall need for affordable housing of 5,800 units over the next 18-years from 2013 to 2031 (322 per annum).

3.17 Adopted policy AH1 seeks 40% affordable housing on sites yielding 15 units or more, or of 0.5 hectare or greater. It further seeks 60% of the total affordable housing requirement for each site to provide for socially rented units, the balance providing for intermediate housing.

Social rent homes provided	New Build Homebuy homes provided	Affordable homes Total
145	38	183
79%	21%	

Table 3.6 Gross affordable housing completions 2011/12 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

	All dwellings completed (net)	Affordable dwellings completed (net)	Percentage of affordable dwellings completed
2012/13	630	183	29%
2011/12	873	380	44%
2010/11	649	254	39%
2009/10	581	273	47%

	All dwellings completed (net)	Affordable dwellings completed (net)	Percentage of affordable dwellings completed
2008/09	441	204	46%

Table 3.7 Affordable dwellings completed as a percentage of all completed units (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

	No. all units (net) secured through new planning consents for sites of 15+ units	No. affordable housing units (net) secured on new planning consents for sites of 15+ units	Percentage of affordable housing units secured
2012/13	193	65	34%
2011/12	25	10	40%
2010/11	168	71	42%
2009/10	267	153	57%
2008/09	509	202	40%

Table 3.8 Affordable dwellings secured as a percentage of new planning consents determined according to policy AH1 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.18 A total of 183 affordable dwellings were completed during 2012/13. This figure includes New Build Homebuy/shared ownership properties in accordance with the adopted Affordable Housing DPD definition of intermediate housing. During 2011/12, 80% of the affordable units completed fell into the social rent category. Table 3.6 shows that this percentage remained consistent at 79% in 2012/13 (against the policy target of a minimum of 60% socially rented units of all affordable housing units built).

3.19 Completion rates fluctuate according to market conditions and construction rates for property types. Often the affordable housing element of a larger site is associated with a particular phase of the development, so affordable units are not built evenly over the construction period. Consequently, to measure the success of the Council's affordable housing policy, the number of affordable housing units secured through new planning permissions are monitored (as opposed to completion rates that fluctuate). On sites of 15+ units or 0.5+ hectare, only 65 affordable dwellings were secured in 2012/13. This is only 34% which is below the 40% threshold required by policy AH1. The decrease in affordable housing permissions and completions indicates a decline in the viability of affordable housing in current market conditions.

3.20 Eight Local Needs affordable dwellings were granted planning permission in Stockbury during 2012/13. The total number of affordable dwellings with planning permission at 1 April 2013 was 129 net.

3 . Key Monitoring Indicators

28

Number of planning applications granted in the urban/rural area

	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Urban (net)	86	65	52
Rural (net)	48	43	44

Table 3.9 Residential planning applications granted in the urban and rural areas - Net
(source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.21 In 2012/13 a total of 52 residential planning applications on new sites were granted in the urban area, and 44 in the rural area. This shows that just over 50% of permissions were within the urban area. Whilst the split is not as significant as the previous year, it still demonstrates that more development activity is occurring in the urban area.

Dwelling density

	Year	Large Sites (5+ dwellings)	Small Sites (1-4 dwellings)	All Sites
Less than 30 dwellings per hectare	2012/13	11.99%	50.36%	19.91%
	2011/12	7.72%	65.63%	16.03%
	2010/11	10.29%	62.22%	16.95%
	2009/10	2.99%	55.34%	11.42%
	2008/09	8.15%	46.97%	17.64%
Between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare	2012/13	53.56%	9.35%	44.43%
	2011/12	43.06%	14.06%	38.90%
	2010/11	41.67%	16.67%	38.46%
	2009/10	42.72%	13.59%	38.03%
	2008/09	31.89%	12.88%	27.27%
Above 50 dwellings per hectare	2012/13	34.46%	40.29%	35.66%
	2011/12	49.21%	20.31%	45.07%
	2010/11	48.04%	21.11%	44.59%
	2009/10	54.29%	31.07%	50.55%
	2008/09	59.95%	40.15%	55.09%

Table 3.10 Percentage of new dwellings completed at less than 30 dph, 30-50 dph and above 50 dph (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.22 Overall, 80.09% of dwellings completed on all sites in 2012/13 were constructed at a density greater than 30 dwellings per hectare (44.43% between 30 and 50 units and 35.66% at greater than 50 units), which demonstrates that Maidstone is making best use of available land. As expected, the majority of dwellings built at less than 30 units per hectare are on small sites of less than 5 dwellings. In 2012/13, 88.02% of dwellings on large sites (>4 units) were constructed at a density of greater than 30 units per hectare (53.56% + 34.46%). 50.36% of dwellings on small sites (<5 units) were built at a density of less than 30 dwellings per hectare, which is a reflection of the nature of small site development in rural areas, for example the conversion of rural buildings. These figures relate to the average density of each development site, rather than individual applications where there may be several applications for a single site at varying densities. Densities are calculated using net site areas, i.e. after subtracting hectare for other land uses associated with the planning permission.

Code for sustainable homes certificates

	Design Stage Certificates	Post Construction Stage Certificates	Total
2012/13	301	436	737
2011/12	625	313	983

Table 3.11 Number of code for sustainable homes certificates Issued (source: www.gov.uk/government/collections/code-for-sustainable-homes-statistics)

3.23 During 2012/13 a total of 737 Code for Sustainable Homes certificates were issued in Maidstone, with the majority being presented at the post construction stage. Certificates are issued when dwellings have been completed to the standards set out in the Code Technical Guide. The decline in certificates since 2011/12 relates to the fall in completions over the same period.

3 . Key Monitoring Indicators

30

Economic Development

3.24 Maidstone Borough Council's number 1 priority is to have a growing economy. The statistics below describe what has happened in terms of commercial planning permissions in the borough between 2012/13.

Total amount of completed floorspace by use class

	B1a (offices not within A2) m ²	B1b (research & development, studios, laboratories, hi-tech) m ²	B1c (light industry) m ²	B2 (general industry) m ²	B8 (storage or distribution) m ²	Total m ²
Gross	1,715	0	742	1,999	9,734	14,190
Net	-9,220	0	-549	1,744	9,581	1,556

Table 3.12 Total amount of completed floorspace 2012/13 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.25 During 2012/13 there was a net gain in employment floorspace of 1,556m² compared to a loss of -5,076m² during 2011/12. The majority of the net loss has been in use class B1a (offices). One particular permission which contributed significantly to the net loss of B1a floorspace was the formal loss of Maidstone Borough Council's former offices at 13 Tonbridge Road and London House. The replacement of commercial works with 6 dwellings in Detling contributed towards the loss of light industry (B1c) floorspace.

3.26 The erection of warehouse buildings, in the open countryside, on a greenfield site outside of Marden village boundary, contributed 2,716m² towards the gain of B8 floorspace. This planning permission was granted because it allowed an existing business (Claygate Distribution) to expand and secure its future in Marden, retaining and creating employment in the area. The resulting loss of countryside was not deemed to be harmful to the character or appearance of the area. Compensatory habitats were created and landscaping was used to mitigate the ecological and visual effects of the development. In contrast, the construction of a new Royal Mail delivery office (B8) on a brownfield site in Park Wood industrial estate created a gain of 1,822m² during 2012/13.

3.27 The quantity and quality of employment land throughout the borough is subject to analysis as part of the evidence base for Maidstone's local plan.

Total amount of completed floorspace on PDL by use class

	B1a (offices not within A2) m ²	B1b (research & development, studios, laboratories, hi-tech) m ²	B1c (light industry) m ²	B2 (general industry) m ²	B8 (storage or distribution) m ²	Total m ²
Gross	1,715	0	325	1,899	5,014	8,953

	B1a (offices not within A2) m ²	B1b (research & development, studios, laboratories, hi-tech) m ²	B1c (light industry) m ²	B2 (general industry) m ²	B8 (storage or distribution) m ²	Total m ²
% gross on PDL	100%	0%	44%	95%	52%	63%

Table 3.13 Total amount of completed floorspace on previously developed land 2012/13 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.28 63% of employment floorspace was completed on previously developed land in 2012/13. This compares to 72% in 2011/12 and 88% in 2010/11. There has been less development on brownfield sites this year and this downward trend is mainly due to a greater amount of employment floorspace on agricultural land coming forward. This a cause for concern as it shows that regeneration is not occurring at the rate it has done previously.

3.29 Even so, all office development and most general industry development was built on previously developed land in 2012/13.

Outstanding permissions for commercial development

	B1a (offices not within A2) m ²	B1b (research & development, studios, laboratories, hi-tech) m ²	B1c (light industry) m ²	B2 (general industry) m ²	B8 (storage or distribution) m ²	Total m ²
Sites for which planning permission has been granted (net)	22,830	859	14,739	3,900	9,087	51,415

Table 3.14 Outstanding permissions for commercial development 2012/13 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.30 Table 3.14 shows the number of planning permissions for commercial development which were not started or under construction, and had not expired during 2012/13. The greatest proportion of planning permissions granted were for B1a offices, making up nearly half of the total planning permissions for employment uses. B1b research & development uses make up the smallest proportion of commercial uses with permission. The Council is addressing the need for suitable employment sites through Maidstone's local plan.

3 . Key Monitoring Indicators

32

Total amount of completed floorspace for 'town centre' uses

3.31 Main town centre uses include shops, financial and professional services, restaurants and cafes, pubs, take aways, offices, assembly and leisure uses. These uses are usually, but not always located within the town centre. The amount of completed floorspace, for town centre uses, within the Maidstone town centre boundary (as amended in December 2013) are shown in table 3.15. The amount of completed floorspace, for town centre uses, within the whole of the local authority boundary are shown in table 3.16.

	A1 (shops) m ²	A1 (shops) m ²	A2 (financial and professional services) m ²	A3 (restaurants and cafés) m ²	A4 (drinking establishments) m ²	A5 (hot food takeaways) m ²	B1a (offices not within A2) m ²	D2 (assembly and leisure) m ²	Total (Gross) m ²
	Net tradeable floorspace:	Gross internal floorspace:							
Gross	191	191	234	478	1,727	41	296	588	3,746
Net	-2683	-2,697	234	402	1,693	41	-54	230	-2,834

Table 3.15 Completed floorspace for town centre uses 2012/13 within the draft town centre boundary (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

	A1 (shops) m ²	A1 (shops) m ²	A2 (financial and professional services) m ²	A3 (restaurants and cafés) m ²	A4 (drinking establishments) m ²	A5 (hot food takeaways) m ²	B1a (offices not within A2) m ²	D2 (assembly and leisure) m ²	Total (Gross) m ²
	Net tradeable floorspace:	Gross internal floorspace:							
Gross	798	1,114	234	783	1,830	139	1,715	8,981	14,806
Net	-2,767	-2,465	120	417	1,029	139	-9,220	8,623	-1,357

Table 3.16 Completed floorspace for town centre uses in Maidstone borough 2012/13 (source: Maidstone Borough Council)

3.32 Overall, there has been a net loss in the total amount of completed floorspace, for town centre uses, during 2012/13, within the defined town centre boundary and throughout the borough.

3.33 In the current economy shops are struggling and this is reflected in the net loss of A1 floorspace. The conversion of a shop along Brewer Street into a dance academy and another shop along Bank Street into a pub contributed to the net loss of shop floorspace but a gain in D2 and A4 floorspace.

3.34 Only -54m² of office space was lost within the town centre boundary compared to -9,220m² throughout the whole of the borough. The loss of Maidstone Borough Council's former offices, outside the town centre boundary, at 13 Tonbridge Road and London House was formally recorded during 2012/13 and therefore contributed significantly towards the loss of office space in the borough as a whole.

3.35 The large gain of assembly and leisure floorspace (D2) is mainly due to the completion of the Gallagher football stadium located just outside of the town centre boundary.

Built and Natural Heritage

Conversion of rural buildings for residential purposes

3.36 During 2012/13, 14 dwellings have gained permission from the conversion of rural buildings. Three supersede previous applications granted for the conversion of rural buildings for residential use and five were Certificates of Lawful Development as the rural buildings had been in use as dwellings for more than four years. One permission related to the conversion of an oast and Grade II listed barn to five dwellings and another permission for the conversion of a stable to a single dwelling.

Number of Environment Agency objections to planning applications on either water quality or flood defence grounds

3.37 The Environment Agency objected to 10 planning applications during 2012/13 on flood defence grounds. 3 applications were refused, grounds for refusal on two of these applications included flood risk. 4 of the applications remain undetermined and 2 were withdrawn.

3.38 One outline application at Grigg Lane, Headcorn was granted at committee in August 2013, subject to the completion of a Section 106 agreement. The permission was for the demolition of buildings at Kent Cottage and Chance Holding to enable the construction of residential development (for 25 dwellings inclusive of 10 affordable dwellings). The permission included a condition for a sustainable surface water drainage scheme to minimise flood risk and detailed drainage design, including details of how the scheme shall be maintained and managed after completion. The drainage strategy should demonstrate the surface water run-off generated will not exceed the run-off from the undeveloped site, so not increase the risk of flooding both on or off site.

3.39 The Environment Agency did not object to any planning applications on water quality grounds during 2012/13.

3.40 The Council will continue to monitor the number of Environment Agency objections to planning applications on either flood defence grounds or water quality, and will include conditions in the interest of flood defence where appropriate.

Green Flag Awards

3.41 The Green Flag Award® Scheme recognises and rewards the best green spaces in the country. Maidstone Borough now has three parks with Green Flag awards. In addition to Whatman Park and Clare Park, Mote Park was awarded a Green Flag for the first time this year. Mote Park was voted in third country in the Green Flag People's Choice Awards 2013.

Transport

Integrated transport strategy

3.42 A draft Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) is being prepared in partnership with Kent County Council (KCC). The aim of the ITS is to support the development growth projected for the borough by the Local Plan and to ensure the transport network supports a prosperous economy and provides genuine transport choices to help people make more journeys by modes such as public transport, walking and cycling.

3.43 It is acknowledged that Maidstone suffers from peak time congestion and has air quality issues across the urban area. This indicates that the ITS should focus on demand management measures such as Park and Ride, bus priority measures and cycling and walking infrastructure. However it is also recognised that targeted highway capacity improvements at strategic junctions are needed to help alleviate bottlenecks and improve road safety.

3.44 Further work is required to refine the ITS and inform the development of the overall strategy and action plan. Once this work is completed it is anticipated that the ITS will be ready for public consultation in late summer 2014.

Neighbourhood Planning

3.45 Neighbourhood planning was introduced through the Localism Act 2011 to enable greater community involvement in the planning process, so that people can shape their local areas and have a greater say in planning decisions.

3.46 The following neighbourhood areas have been designated:

- Boughton Monchelsea
- Boxley
- Broomfield and Kingswood
- Coxheath
- Harrietsham
- Headcorn
- Lenham
- Loose
- North Loose (Neighbourhood Forum)
- Marden
- Staplehurst

3.47 In this monitoring year Boxley, Loose and Headcorn parish councils have also begun work on their plans. No neighbourhood plan has been formally submitted to the borough council to date but Harrietsham parish council has consulted on a draft neighbourhood plan (Regulation 14 - Pre-Submission). The council is expecting a number of plans to come forward in the next 12 months.

Development Management Statistics

3.48 In the year 2012/13 the Council determined 1,595 planning applications with 88% of applications being dealt with in the statutory timescales.

3.49 There were 64 major planning applications determined in the year from 1 April 2012 and over 70% of these were determined within the 13 week target.

3.50 Forty six appeals against the Council's refusal of applications were determined by the Planning Inspectorate in the year 2012/2013. The Council had a success rate of 76% in defending these refusals, the highest success rate in the last 5 years.

Local Development Scheme

Review of the Local Development Scheme

4.1 The Maidstone Borough Council Local Development Scheme (LDS) identifies the range of local plan documents the Council will produce between 2013 and 2015, together with a work programme for the various stages of document preparation. The latest revision to the Local Development Scheme approved by Cabinet came into effect on 13 March 2013, and a copy of the Scheme can be viewed and downloaded from the local plan page of the Council's website. The LDS explains how the council will manage the preparation of documents, the timescale within which they will be produced, how documents are resourced, and the main risks to the production timetable including how those risks will be addressed. The LDS ensures that the local planning policy framework is kept up-to-date and that the community is actively involved in the process. Delivery of the programme is monitored through the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR), which highlights the need to review the LDS if required.

4.2 Whereas the monitoring period for reviewing policies in the AMR covers the period 1 April to 31 March, the review of the LDS relates to the calendar year January to December. The approved LDS sets out the timetable for the production of the Maidstone Borough Local Plan.

4.3 On 13 March 2013, a number of local plan policies were approved by Cabinet, including policies for the strategic sites to the north west and south east of the urban area. These policies have been amended following public consultation in 2011 and 2012, and have been the subject of a sustainability appraisal. The policies will go through a further round of public consultation in 2014, along with new policies and the balance of land allocations, together comprising the Maidstone Borough Local Plan. Cabinet also adopted the strategic housing and employment site allocation policies for development management decisions. These policies are now a material planning consideration in the determination of any planning applications.

4.4 The Local Development Scheme indicates that Regulation 18 (Preparation) public consultation on the Maidstone Borough local plan would take place in October/November 2013. This consultation did not take place as scheduled because two key workstreams were highlighted as critical to ensuring a robust evidence base to support the local plan at public consultation, namely the Strategic Housing and Economic Development Land Availability Assessments (SHLAA/SED LAA) and Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).

4.5 The SHLAA and SED LAA assess the supply of land for housing and employment, development, respectively in the borough and determine the most sustainable and deliverable sites to take forward for consideration as land allocations. This project is nearing completion and can be finalised now that the SHMA, which informs the council of its housing needs has been completed. Once this analysis is complete the council will be in a position to finalise the local plan in draft form for public consultation in Spring 2014.

4.6 A review of the LDS will be required as a consequence and will be amended once the date of the Regulation 18 public consultation is confirmed.

4.7 A new Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) was published in 2013.

Risk Analysis

4.8 Each year local authorities must demonstrate a 5 year supply of deliverable housing sites. The council does not currently have a 5 year housing land supply and is now in the process of allocating land to minimise the risk of inappropriate development and appeals. Developments allowed at appeal can result in an unbalanced and piecemeal distribution of development on sites considered unsuitable by the council, a lower level of funding for affordable housing, community facilities and service infrastructure and additional costs to be borne by the council. The absence of a five year housing land supply does not provide a carte blanche for housing development on any site in the countryside but it holds very significant weight when considered with other material considerations. It is therefore critical to establish a 5 year housing land supply and to adopt a local plan at the soonest opportunity.

4.9 If the council is to keep on track with the revised programme, it is imperative that any risks to the programme are identified and addressed as far as practicable.

4.10 The evidence base for the MBLP is, in some cases, reliant on the expertise of various consultants. Whilst the evidence is nearing completion, the Council is mindful that deliverability of evidence within set time scales is a risk. This risk has been and will continue to be mitigated by the appointment of a range of consultants to carry out a variety of tasks as opposed to one or two major contributors. The consultants are closely managed and monitored by officers to make sure that agreed programmes are met. An independent demographer was appointed to verify data in the SHMA, legal counsel is sought and advice from the Planning Inspectorate is requested when appropriate.

4.11 Since the introduction of the new plan making system in 2004, government requirements for the production of local plan evidence bases have expanded and have proved to be onerous for local authorities in terms of financial and staff resources. Maidstone Borough Council sets an annual budget for the production of local plans. The recruitment and retention of staff is critical in reducing the risk to the planned programme for preparing documents. Budgetary and staff resources, such as vacant posts, sickness and maternity leave are closely monitored to minimise risks to the programme. These resources impact on the capacity of the team to prepare the local plan and evidence base.

4.12 There are also risks associated with changes in national policy that need to be managed. In autumn 2013, the Chancellor announced that there would be further planning reform. One of the measures is to consult on how to improve plan making, including a statutory requirement to put a local plan in place.

Duty to Cooperate

4.13 The 'duty to cooperate' as set out in the Localism Act (2011) requires local planning authorities, county councils and other public organisations to engage with one another and consider joint approaches to plan making. Maidstone has undertaken a joint SHMA with Ashford Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council. It is important for the Council to communicate with its

partner organisations, particularly regarding cross-boundary and county-wide issues. Maidstone Borough has overlapping housing market areas with neighbouring local authorities, so communication here is vital.

4.14 The new draft National Planning Practice Guidance published during 2013 gives further guidance on how to implement and monitor the duty to cooperate. Inspectors recommendations are also being analysed to establish best practise, to ensure that Maidstone Borough Council fulfils legal requirements. In the future, the council will publish information on how it is meeting the duty to cooperate on the Maidstone Borough Council webpage as well as in the AMR.

4.15 The diagram set out in figure 4.1 shows the organisations that the Council has held discussions with. The specific meeting details for the 2013 calendar year can be found at Appendix 1.



Figure 4.1 Maidstone's duty to cooperate

Glossary

Acronym	Term	Description
-	Affordable Housing	Affordable housing: Social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision. (Source: NPPF glossary)
AMR	Annual Monitoring Report	The Monitoring Report provides a framework with which to monitor and review the effectiveness of local plans and policies.
DCLG	Department for Communities and Local Government	The Department of Communities and Local Government work to move decision-making power from central government to local councils. This helps put communities in charge of planning, increases accountability and helps citizens to see how their money is being spent. They work on housing, the UK economy, local government, planning and building, public safety and emergencies, community and society.
-	Development Plan	In accordance with legislation all planning applications should normally be determined in accordance with Development Plan policies. This includes adopted local plans and neighbourhood plans and is defined in section 38 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004.
DPD	Development Plan Document	A DPD is a spatial planning document that is subject to independent examination. Under new regulations, DPDs are now known as local plans.
EA	Environment Agency	The Environment Agency is the leading public body for protecting and improving the environment in England and Wales, with particular responsibilities for river, flooding and pollution (www.environment-agency.gov.uk).
-	Gross Internal Floorspace	The entire area inside the external walls of a building and includes corridors, lifts, plant rooms, mezzanines, services accommodation e.g. toilets but excludes internal walls.
-	Index of Multiple Deprivation	The Index of Multiple Deprivation 2010 provides a relative measure of deprivation at small area level across England. Areas are ranked from least deprived to most deprived on seven different dimensions of deprivation and an overall composite measure of multiple deprivation. The domains used in the indices of deprivation 2010 are: income deprivation; employment deprivation; health deprivation and disability; education deprivation; crime deprivation; barriers to housing and services deprivation; and living environment deprivation.

Acronym	Term	Description
KCC	Kent County Council	The county planning authority, responsible for producing the Kent Minerals and Waste Local Plans and the County's local planning policy framework.
LDS	Local Development Scheme	The LDS is a business programme or timetable listing the documents the Council will produce under the local planning policy framework, and explaining how documents will be prepared and when they will be published.
LNR	Local Nature Reserves	Local nature reserves are formally designated areas for both people and wildlife. They are places with wildlife or geological features that are of special interest locally. They offer people special opportunities to study or learn about nature or simply to enjoy it (www.naturalengland.org.uk).
	Local Plan	The plan for the future development of the local area, drawn up by a local authority in consultation with the community. The local plan for Maidstone includes DPDs adopted under the Act and saved policies. These will be superseded by the the Maidstone Borough Local Plan once it is adopted in 2015. The local plan does not include SPDs or supplementary guidance, although these documents are material considerations in development management decisions.
LSOA	Lower Super Output Area	This is the name for Lower Layer Super Output Areas used for census outputs. In England and Wales Super Output Areas (SOAs) are a geographical hierarchy designed to improve the reporting of small area statistics. Unlike electoral wards, the SOA layers are of consistent size across the country and will not be subject to regular boundary change. Lower Layer SOAs have a minimum population of 1,000 and are used as the building blocks for Middle Layer SOAs (www.ons.gov.uk).
MBC	Maidstone Borough Council	The local planning authority responsible for producing the local planning policy framework.
-	Net Tradeable Floorspace	Sales space which customers have access to (excluding areas such as storage).
ONS	Office for National Statistics	The Office for National Statistics (ONS) is the executive office of the UK Statistics Authority, a non-ministerial department which reports directly to Parliament. ONS is the UK Government's single largest statistical producer and is responsible for the production of a wide range of economic and social statistics (www.ons.gov.uk).
SCI	Statement of Community Involvement	The SCI specifies how the community and stakeholders will be involved in the process of preparing local planning policy documents.
SHLAA	Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment	The purpose of a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment is to establish realistic assumptions about the availability, suitable

Acronym	Term	Description
		location and the likely economic viability of land to meet the identified need for housing over the plan period. (Source: NPPF)
SHMA	Strategic Housing Market Assessment	A Strategic Housing Market Assessment to assesses the local planning authority's full objectively assessed housing needs and affordable housing needs, working with neighbouring authorities where housing market areas cross administrative boundaries.
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document	An SPD provides further detail to policies set out in local plans. SPDs are a material consideration in planning decisions but are not part of the development plan or the local plan.
	Community Strategy	The Community Strategy is produced by a partnership of the local public, private, voluntary and community sector with the aim of improving the social, environmental and economic well being of their areas. The Maidstone Borough Local Plan is the strategic, spatial representation of the Community Strategy 2009 - 2020 <i>Your community, our priority</i> , refreshed in 2013.
-	Unidentified Sites or Windfall Sites	Sites which have not been specifically identified as available in the local plan process. They normally comprise previously-developed sites that have unexpectedly become available. (Source: NPPF glossary)

List of engagements held between Maidstone and other organisations during 2013

43

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
North Loose Residents Association	Neighbourhood Planning Group	23 January 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Headcorn, Harrietsham, Lenham, Marden & Staplehurst Parish Councils	Rural Service Centre parish councils (RSCs)	28 January 2013	Meeting – presentation by officers followed by Q&A	To debate the housing targets and distribution of development at RSCs
Ashford Borough Council, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Swale Borough Council	Adjacent Local Authority	29 January 2013	Meeting	SHMA brief preparation. Outcome – agreed to prepare brief for SHMA, based on local circumstances and SHMA guidance. Brief would incorporate and seek to address areas of cross boundary policy issues. Swale agreed not to take part in project.
East Farleigh Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	6 February 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	13 February 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Kent Downs AONB Unit	Stakeholder	13 February 2013	Meeting	To discuss the Unit's views on potential development at junctions 7 and 8 of the M20 motorway.
Staplehurst Parish Council	Parish Council	1 March 2013	Discussion about SHLAA sites that came forward in Staplehurst and merits of the sites	Gaining a better understanding of local opinion on the SHLAA sites
Headcorn, Harrietsham, Lenham, Marden	Rural Service Centre parish councils (RSCs)	4 March 2013	Workshop	Input to pro forma to be used for assessment of

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
& Staplehurst Parish Councils				potential development sites.
Kent County Council	County authority	11 March 2013	Meeting	CIL update meeting. Outcome – knowledge shared, CIL would continue to be prepared by MBC officers.
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	Adjacent local authority - political engagement	11 March 2013	Meeting	To find out where both authorities are at with their local plans, explore the opportunity for joint working and sharing resources, to see if we agree a common market area and get a taste for spatial distribution and constraints / issues
Kent County Council	Education Authority	26 March 2013	Discussing educational requirements at RSCs as result of call for sites	Early progression of infrastructure work – general overview rather than detailed information
Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	1 April 2013	Walk	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Broomfield and Kingswood Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	16 April 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Essex County Council / Chelmsford City Council	Local authorities	16 April 2013	Workshop	Park and Ride best practice sharing to influence development of Integrated Transport Strategy.
Various	Development Industry	22 April 2013	Workshop	Update on local plan progress, exchange of information, and input to five year housing land supply.
RSC Parish Councils (Lenham and Harrietsham)	Parish Councils	8 May 2013	SHLAA Update and issues with integrating	Update on SHLAA progress

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
- separate meeting for each)			neighbourhood planning and local plan processes	Getting PC view on SHLAA sites in their village Q & A session with parish council re neighbourhood planning
RSC Parish Council - Staplehurst	Parish Council	15 May 2013	SHLAA Update. Discussion re SHLAA sites in the village and what sites may be considered acceptable and issues with integrating neighbourhood planning and local plan processes	Update on SHLAA progress Getting PC view on SHLAA sites in their village Q & A session with parish council re neighbourhood planning
Ashford Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Adjacent Local Authority	15 May 2013	Meeting	SHMA interviews pre-meeting. Outcome – agreement of what was being sought from potential SHMA consultants.
Ashford Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Adjacent Local Authority	15 May 2013	Interview	SHMA interview with GL Hearn. Outcome – following both interviews, it was agreed by all officers across the three authorities to appoint GL Hearn to produce the SHMA.
Ashford Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Adjacent Local Authority	15 May 2013	Interview	SHMA interview with GVA. Outcome – following both interviews, it was agreed by all officers across the three authorities to appoint GL Hearn to produce the SHMA.
RSC Parish Council - Marden	Parish Council	17 May 2013	SHLAA Update. Discussion re SHLAA sites in the village	Update on SHLAA progress

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
			and what sites may be considered acceptable and issues with integrating neighbourhood planning and local plan processes	Getting PC view on SHLAA sites in their village Q & A session with parish council re neighbourhood planning
RSC Parish Council - Headcorn	Parish Council	20 May 2013	SHLAA Update. Discussion re SHLAA sites in the village and what sites may be considered acceptable and issues with integrating neighbourhood planning and local plan processes	Update on SHLAA progress Getting PC view on SHLAA sites in their village Q & A session with parish council re neighbourhood planning
All Parish Councils	Parish Councils	21 May 2013	Drop in session to discuss sites that came forward in each parish through the call for sites – additional local information was gathered on all sites	Helped with assessment of SHLAA sites – e.g. officer proformas
Ashford Borough Council and Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council and GL Hearn	Adjacent Local Authorities and consultant	23 May 2013	Meeting	SHMA inception meeting. Outcome – GL Hearn agreed to prioritise Maidstone aspect of SHMA due to tight deadlines. Maidstone and other authorities to provide information to consultants.
Various	Development Industry	23 May 2013	Developers/agents or anyone who submitted a SHLAA site were given the opportunity to discuss their site(s) with officers and provide additional information on the sites	Helped with assessment of SHLAA sites – e.g. officer proformas

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
Various	Development Industry	10 June 2013	Workshop	Update on local plan progress, exchange of information, and input to five year housing land supply.
Coxheath Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	11 June 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Broomsfield and Kingswood Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	11 June 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Medway Council	Adjacent Local Authority	18 June 2013	Met with planning officer to discuss local plan/neighbourhood planning and how they integrate	Offered assistance to Medway as they were about to begin NP process in Medway
Ashford Borough Council, Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, and GL Hearn	Adjacent local authorities and consultant appointed to undertake the SHMA	12 July 2013	Meeting – presentation by consultant followed by Q&A	SHMA progress/outputs.
Environment Agency, Highways Agency, Kent County Council, KCC Education, SE Water, Southern Water	Infrastructure service providers	Email circulated on 12/07/13 and responses received subsequently	Email	Draft growth options circulated with spatial distribution for housing and employment.
Kent County Council	County authority	15 July 2013	Meeting	To discuss the local plan housing and employment strategies.
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, and Kent County Council Highways	Adjacent local authority and county authority	17 July 2013	Meeting	To identify cross-boundary issues and discuss.
Kent County Council	County authority	19 July 2013	Met with officers to discuss SHLAA sites and Strategic infrastructure requirements	Progress on determining infrastructure capacity with respect to SHLAA sites at RSCs/urban area

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
Various	Local authorities, development industry, planning agents, estate agents, and registered housing providers.	26 July 2013	Meeting – presentation by consultant followed by Q&A, and workshop	Stakeholder workshop to inform the SHMA.
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	Adjacent local authority	29 July 2013	Email	Information exchange on employment land position.
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	Adjacent local authority	31 July 2013	Meeting	SHMA progress/outputs.
Tovil Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	5 August 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, and GL Hearn	Adjacent local authority and consultant appointed to undertake the SHMA	7 August 2013	Meeting	SHMA progress/outputs.
Environment Agency	Statutory Consultee	8 August 2013	Met with EA to discuss flooding/drainage issues relating to SHLAA Sites and possible mitigation measures	Progress in assessing SHLAA sites and strategic look at RSCs etc to determine if strategic approach to drainage required
Swale Borough Council, Medway Council, Tunbridge Wells Borough Council and Ashford Borough Council	Adjacent local authorities	12 August 2013	Emails	Information exchange on employment land position.
Headcorn Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	13 August 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Swale Borough Council	Adjacent local authority	15 August 2013	Email	Information exchange on employment land position.

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
Otham and Downswood Parish Councils	Parish councils	15 August 2013	Meeting	Local perspective on South East Maidstone strategic housing allocations and related access strategy.
North Loose Residents Association	Neighbourhood Planning Group	22 August 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Tunbridge Wells Borough Council	Adjacent local authority	28 August 2013	Email	Information exchange on employment land position.
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council, and GL Hearn representative	Adjacent local authority and consultant appointed to undertake the SHMA	4 September 2013	Meeting	SHMA progress/outputs.
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	Adjacent local authority - political engagement	4 September 2013	Meeting	To discuss housing market areas, the timing of local plans, need for gypsy and traveller sites, constraints, and possible joint working / sharing of expertise, common infrastructure requirements around J5
Broomsfield and Kingswood Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	18 September 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Harrietsham Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	25 September 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Highways Agency	Strategic highway authority	25 September 2013	Workshop	Stakeholder input to emerging Route Based Strategy for M20 corridor.
Kent County Council	County Authority	27 September 2013	Meeting	CIL/infrastructure meeting. Information shared, it was agreed that KCC would provide further help in the

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
				preparation and analysis of the Maidstone CIL and infrastructure work.
Harrietsham Parish Council	Neighbourhood Planning Group	2 October 2013	Meeting	To discuss neighbourhood plan.
Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council	Adjacent local authority - Political Engagement	14 October 2013	Email	To review discussions between respective leaders and confirm a common timetable for SHMA work
Medway Council	Adjacent local authority	7 November 2013	Meeting	To identify cross-boundary issues and discuss.
Harrietsham Parish Council	Parish council	12 November 2013	Meeting	Parish council input to scope of proposed A20 environmental improvements to support Local Plan growth.
Southern Water	Statutory Consultee	15 November 2013	Met with Southern Water to discuss potential cumulative impact of development at RSCs in infrastructure terms	Helped in understanding Southern Water's approach to assessing infrastructure need and how to mitigate for effects of new development
Ashford Borough Council	Adjacent local authority	18 November 2013	Email	Information exchange on employment land position.
Marden Parish Council	Parish Council	21 November 2013	Meeting	To discuss infrastructure.
Ashford Borough Council, and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	Adjacent local authorities	2 December 2013	Meeting	SHMA progress/outputs.
Kent County Council	County Authority	9 December 2013	Meeting	To share the objectively assessed needs figure resulting from the

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
				SHMA and to discuss future information inputs from KCC regarding infrastructure requirements.
Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council	Adjacent local authority	9 December 2013	Telephone call	It was confirmed that the Metropolitan Green Belt (MGB) boundary of Maidstone Borough and Tonbridge and Malling align. Tonbridge and Malling BC adopted their Core Strategy in 2007 and at this time there was no change to the MGB boundary. Sites promoted by developers around Watlingbury were rejected and there were also no changes at East Peckham. Tonbridge and Malling are in the early stages of writing their new local plan and will be carrying out a review of their MGB as part of this process.
Parish Council – Sutton Valence and Yalding (separate meetings)	Parish Councils	10 December 2013	Following withdrawal of draft local plan policies SP3 and SP4, met with the Parish Council to discuss why Sutton Valence was designated as a larger village or RSC and hear their concerns	Helped in progressing the development of the policy
Coxheath Parish Council	Parish Council	12 December 2013	Following withdrawal of draft local plan policies SP3 and SP4, met with the	Helped in progressing the development of the policy

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
			Parish Council to discuss why Coxheath was designated as a RSC and hear their concerns	
Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council	Parish Council	12 December 2013	Following withdrawal of draft local plan policies SP3 and SP4, met with the Parish Council to discuss why Boughton Monchelsea was designated as a larger village and hear their concerns	Helped in progressing the development of the policy
Various	Adjacent local authorities, parish councillors, resident groups, environment groups,	16 December 2013	Presentation by consultant followed by Q&A, and workshop	Stakeholder workshop to inform the Green & Blue Infrastructure Strategy.
Hollingbourne Parish Council	Parish Council	18 December 2013	Following withdrawal of draft local plan policies SP3 and SP4, met with the Parish Council to discuss why Hollingbourne was designated as a larger village and hear their concerns	Helped in progressing the development of the policy
Swale Borough Council and Ashford Borough Council	Adjacent local authorities	17 December 2013	Meeting	To inform of local plan progress and to identify cross-boundary issues and discuss.
There were 6 KPOG (Kent Planning Officers Group) meetings in 2013, attended by all Kent LPAs and KCC.	Heads of Planning from all Kent Local Authorities	6 meetings held during 2013	Meeting	The group meets to discuss planning (and wider) issues in Kent and the south east, to share best practice for example, and often invites guest speakers to the

Organisation(s) engaged with	Type of organisation	Date of engagement	Type of engagement	Purpose/outcome of engagement
				meetings. KPOG oversees several other Kent-wide groups, namely KPPF (Kent Planning Policy Forum) and KDMOG (Kent Development Management Officers Group), who report to KPOG on an annual basis.
Arriva	Bus operator	30/01/2013 10/04/2013 31/07/2013 30/10/2013	Quality Bus Partnership meeting	Commercial bus operator input to development of Integrated Transport Strategy.
Network Rail	Rail infrastructure provider	05/03/2013 19/06/2013 21/08/2013 17/09/2013	Liaison meeting	Rail asset owner (track and stations) input to development of Integrated Transport Strategy.

Agenda Item 13

Maidstone Borough Council

Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 21 January 2014

Future Work Programme

Report of: Orla Sweeney, Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 To consider the Committee's future work programme.
- 1.2 To consider the information update given by the Chairman.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Committee considers the draft 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. Any items on the draft future work programme, highlighted in bold, are provisional items for the Committee to approve.
- 2.2 That the Committee considers the sections of the List of Forthcoming Decisions relevant to the Committee at **Appendix B** and whether these are items that require further investigation or monitoring.
- 2.3 That the Committee considers its continuous professional development needs and recommends possible training or development sessions it would like to undertake.

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 it 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 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 of the Committee or Sub-Committee. On receipt of such a request the proper officer will ensure that it

is included on the next available agenda, the Member must attend the meeting and speak on the item put forward.'

4 List of Forthcoming Decisions

- 4.1 The List of Forthcoming Decisions (**Appendix B**) is a live document containing all key and non-key decisions.
- 4.2 Due to the nature of the List of Forthcoming Decisions, and to ensure the information provided to the Committee is up to date, a verbal update will be given at the meeting by the Chairman. The Committee can view the live document online at:
<http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/mgListPlans.aspx?RPId=443&RD=0>

5. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 5.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following Council priorities:
 - 'For Maidstone to have a growing economy' 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.

Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013-14

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Details and desired outcome
18 June 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman • Leader & Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year • Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment • Work Programming Workshop 2013-14 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appoint Chairman and Vice-Chairman for 2013-14 • Ascertain work plan for the year and strategic direction for the Council & Select and develop review topics focusing on achievable outcomes.
23 July 2013	CANCELLED	CANCELLED
20 August 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development Management Policies for Local Plan • Public Consultation Approach for the Maidstone Local Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the reports and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
TRAINING 28 August 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PowerPoint presentation to explain the methodologies behind the SHMA/SLAA/SEDLAA and how the Sustainability Appraisal fits into the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Background and preparation for the September and October meetings
17 September 2013	SPECIAL MEETING to act on the instruction of the extraordinary Council meeting on 2 September 2013 to the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Committee to update Council on 18 September
26 September 2013	EXTRAORDINARY MEETING. A second, follow up meeting to hear further evidence from Boughton Monchelsea Parish Council and Maidstone to enable the committee to make a recommendation in response to Council's instruction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To respond to Council's instruction.
15 October 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure Delivery Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the reports and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
19 November 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy • Mid-Year Five Year Housing Land Supply • Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft - Group 2 Policies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the reports and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
2 December 2013	SPECIAL MEETING – DEFERRED ITEMS:	

Appendix A

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft - Group 2 Policies • Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the reports and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
17 December 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solar Farms 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the report and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
21 January 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Integrated Transport Strategy – Vision and Objective • Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft – Group 3 Policies • Maidstone Borough Local Plan Draft Spatial Strategy • Annual Monitoring Report 2012/13 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the reports and information presented and make recommendations as appropriate.
18 February 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft (Regulation 18) • Infrastructure Delivery Plan • Community Infrastructure Levy Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule (<i>Training to be scheduled before the meeting</i>) 	
18 March 2014		
15 April 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluations of Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year • Planning Enforcement (TBC) 	



LIST OF FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

Democratic Services Team
E: democraticservices@maidstone.gov.uk

Publication Date: **3 December 2013**

List of Forthcoming Decisions

INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the decisions to be taken by the Executive and various Committees of Maidstone Borough Council on a rolling basis. This document will be published as updated with new decisions required to be made.

KEY DECISIONS

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.

At Maidstone Borough Council, decisions which we regard as “Key Decisions” because they are likely to have a “significant” effect either in financial terms or on the community include:

- (1) Decisions about expenditure or savings which equal or are more than £250,000.
- (2) Budget reports.
- (3) Policy framework reports.
- (4) Adoption of new policies plans, strategies or changes to established policies, plans or strategies.
- (5) Approval of portfolio plans.
- (6) Decisions that involve significant service developments, significant service reductions, or significant changes in the way that services are delivered, whether Borough-wide or in a particular locality.
- (7) Changes in fees and charges.
- (8) Proposals relating to changes in staff structure affecting more than one section.

Each entry identifies, for that “key decision” –

- the decision maker
- the date on which the decision is due to be taken
- the subject matter of the decision and a brief summary
- the reason it is a key decision
- to whom representations (about the decision) can be made

List of Forthcoming Decisions

- whether the decision will be taken in public or private
- what reports/papers are, or will be, available for public inspection

EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

The Cabinet collectively makes its decisions at a meeting and individual portfolio holders make decisions independently. In addition, Officers can make key decisions and an entry for each of these will be included in this list.

DECISIONS WHICH THE CABINET INTENDS TO MAKE IN PRIVATE

The Cabinet hereby gives notice that it intends to meet in private after its public meeting to consider reports and/or appendices which contain exempt information under Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). The private meeting of the Cabinet is open only to Members of the Cabinet, other Councillors and Council officers.

Reports and/or appendices to decisions which the Cabinet will take at its private meeting are indicated in the list below, with the reasons for the decision being made in private. Any person is able to make representations to the Cabinet if he/she believes the decision should instead be made in the public Cabinet meeting. If you want to make such representations, please email janetbarnes@maidstone.gov.uk. You will then be sent a response in reply to your representations. Both your representations and the Executive's response will be published on the Council's website at least 5 working days before the Cabinet meeting.

ACCESS TO CABINET REPORTS

Reports to be considered at the Cabinet's public meeting will be available on the Council's website (www.maidstone.gov.uk) a minimum of 5 working days before the meeting.

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

The Council actively encourages people to express their views on decisions it plans to make. This can be done by writing directly to the appropriate Officer or Cabinet Member (details of whom are shown in the list below).

Alternatively, the Cabinet are contactable via our website (www.maidstone.gov.uk) 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.

List of Forthcoming Decisions

WHO ARE THE CABINET?



© 2011 Kent Messenger

Councillor Christopher Garland

Leader of the Council

christophergarland@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 07903 113571



© 2011 Kent Messenger

Councillor Stephen Paine

Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development

stephenpaine@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 07906 271325



Councillor Malcolm Greer

Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development (also Deputy Leader)

malcolmgreer@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 01634 862876



© 2011 Kent Messenger

Councillor Marion Ring

Cabinet Member for Environment

marionring@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 01622 686492



Councillor Brian Moss

Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

brianmoss@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 01622 761998



© 2011 Kent Messenger

Councillor John A Wilson

Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services

johnawilson@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 01622 720989

List of Forthcoming Decisions

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary:	Key Decision and reason (if applicable):	Contact Officer:	Public or Private (if Private the reason why)	Documents to be submitted (other relevant documents may be submitted)
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 4 Dec 2013	Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy Approval of Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy for public consultation (to be undertaken at the same time as the Maidstone Borough Local Plan).	KEY Reason: Policies, Plans, Strategies	Rob Jarman, Head of Development Management Robjarman@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Green spaces for Maidstone strategy, 2005. Maidstone Open Space DPD, 2006. Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 4 Dec 2013	MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT – GROUP 2 POLICIES 2nd group of local plan policies for approval by Cabinet	KEY Reason: Affects more than 1 ward	Rob Jarman, Head of Development Management Robjarman@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	MAIDSTONE BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN PUBLIC CONSULTATION DRAFT – GROUP 2 POLICIES
Licensing Committee Due Date: Wednesday 4 Dec 2013	Street Trading Application for Jubilee Square, Christmas Market Street Trading Application for Jubilee Square, Christmas Market		Lorraine Neale lorraineneale@maidstone.gov.uk	Private - Paragraph 3 – because of the financial and business affairs of the applicant	Street Trading Application for Jubilee Square, Christmas Market

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services Due Date: Tuesday 10 Dec 2013	Transfer of former Oakwood Cemetery To consider agreeing to the freehold transfer to the Council of the land known as the former Oakwood Cemetery site, Oakapple Lane, Maidstone		Zena Cooke zenacooke@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Transfer of former Oakwood Cemetery Enc. 1 for Transfer of former Oakwood Cemetery Enc. 2 for Transfer of former Oakwood Cemetery
General Purposes Group  Due Date: Wednesday 11 Dec 2013	Nominations to Outside Bodies To consider nominations received for Outside Bodies.		Caroline Matthews carolinematthews@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Nominations to Outside Bodies

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
General Purposes Group Due Date: Wednesday 11 Dec 2013 167	Council Tax Tax Base 2014 15 This report advises Members of the information currently available on the Tax Base for 2014/15 for Council Tax purposes. It identifies potential changes to that Tax Base, particularly those that are brought about by the Localisation of Council Tax Support Scheme for 2014/15. It also recommends the Tax Base for 2014/15.		Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Council Tax Tax Base 2014 15
Council Due Date: Wednesday 11 Dec 2013	Local Council Tax Discount Scheme Decision on the local council tax discount scheme to be applied for 2014/2015.		Stephen McGinnes stephenmcginnes@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Local Council Tax Discount Scheme

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Council Due Date: Wednesday 11 Dec 2013	Committee Membership To consider changes to committee membership		Janet Barnes janetbarnes@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Committee Membership
Council Due Date: Wednesday 11 Dec 2013	Visiting Members at Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings Amendment to the Constitution		Christian Scade christianscade@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Visiting Members at Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings
Council Due Date: Wednesday 11 Dec 2013	Calendar of Meetings To consider an amendment to the Calendar of Meetings for 2013/14 and the new calendar of Meetings for 2014/15.		Janet Barnes janetbarnes@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Calendar of Meetings
Council Due Date: Wednesday 11 Dec 2013	Urgent Decisions Taken by the Executive To note the urgent decisions taken by the Executive.		Janet Barnes janetbarnes@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Urgent Decisions Taken by the Executive Urgent Decisions Taken by the Executive

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Council Due Date: Wednesday 11 Dec 2013	Exempt Appendix to Urgent Decisions Taken by the Executive Exempt Appendix to report		Janet Barnes janetbarnes@maidstone.gov.uk	Private - 3 - Financial Info/Business Affairs - contains commercially sensitive information	Exempt Appendix to Urgent Decisions Taken by the Executive
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services Due Date: Friday 13 Dec 2013	Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefits Overpayments write offs Approval of write offs for irrecoverable debts of Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefit Overpayments		Sheila Coburn sheilacoburn@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Council Tax, Business Rates and Housing Benefits Overpayments write offs
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services Due Date: Friday 13 Dec 2013	Discretionary Housing Payment Future policy for the award of discretionary housing payments.		Stephen McGinnes stephenmcginnes@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Discretionary Housing Payment

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 18 Dec 2013	Budget Strategy 2014 15 Onwards Capital To determine the strategy for developing the future Capital Programme, for 2014/15 onwards, as part of the consideration of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS).	KEY Reason: Budget Reports	Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Budget Strategy 2014 15 Onwards Capital

Forthcoming Decisions

December 2013 - June 2014

[illegible]

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 18 Dec 2013	Maidstone Enterprise Hub To consider allocating £700,000 to progress the project at the former Crown Post Office, King Street.	KEY Reason: Expenditure > £250,000	Karen Franek karenfrank@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Maidstone Enterprise Hub
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 18 Dec 2013 172	Exempt Appendix - Maidstone Enterprise Hub Consider proposal to allocate £700,000 to progress the Enterprise Hub Project at the former Post Office building, King Street		Karen Franek karenfrank@maidstone.gov.uk	Private - contains commercially sensitive information	Maidstone Enterprise Hub
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 18 Dec 2013	Maidstone Partnership Board Changes to the Maidstone Locality Board and proposals for the establishment of a Maidstone Partnership Board	KEY Reason: Policies, Plans, Strategies	Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager, sarahrobson@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Maidstone Partnership Board

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014


Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 18 Dec 2013	Budget Strategy 2014/15 Onwards To agree a draft Council Tax and Budget Strategy for 2014/15 onwards.	KEY Reason: Budget Reports	Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Budget Strategy 2014/15 Onwards

Forthcoming Decisions

December 2013 - June 2014

[illegible]

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services Due Date: Friday 20 Dec 2013	Lease of Giddyhorn Lane Tennis Courts Lease renewal to Maidstone Lawn Tennis Club of the tennis courts at Giddyhorn Lane Playing Fields		Lucy Stroud lucystroud@maidstone.gov.uk	Private because of commercially sensitive information.	Lease of Giddyhorn Lane Tennis Courts
 Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services Due Date: Tuesday 31 Dec 2013	Warm Homes Eco Pilot Review Describes progress, upcoming issues and seeks decision on next steps for the Warm Homes scheme in Maidstone	KEY Reason: Affects more than 1 ward	Helen Miller helenmiller@maidstone.gov.uk	public	Warm Homes Eco Pilot Review
Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services Due Date: Before Tuesday 31 Dec 2013	Cabinet Report Heather House Future Options Future options for Heather House community hall, Park Wood, Maidstone		John Littlemore, Head of Housing & Community Services johnlittlemore@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Cabinet Report Heather House Future Options

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services Due Date: Friday 3 Jan 2014	Health Inequalities Action Plan Action plan detailing work on reducing health inequalities in Maidstone	KEY Reason: Affects more than 1 ward		Public	Health Inequalities Action Plan
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 15 Jan 2014 176	Licensing Peer Challenge Findings and Next Steps		John Littlemore, Head of Housing & Community Services johnlittlemore@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Licensing Peer Challenge
Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development Due Date: Wednesday 15 Jan 2014	Solar energy advice notes To consider two planning policy advice notes to be used as guidance in determining solar energy applications.	KEY Reason: Policies, Plans, Strategies	Rob Jarman, Head of Development Management Robjarman@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Solar energy advice notes

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services Due Date: Friday 24 Jan 2014 177	Bankruptcy Policy for Council Tax and Business Rates Debt The approach to be adopted by the council in collecting unpaid council tax and business rates through the use of bankruptcy proceedings.	KEY Reason: Policies, Plans, Strategies	Sheila Coburn sheilacoburn@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Bankruptcy Policy for Council Tax and Business Rates Debt
Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development Due Date: Friday 24 Jan 2014	Maidstone Museums' Collections Development Policy 2013 - 2018 To consider the approval of a revised Collections Development Policy for the Council's museums	KEY Reason: Policies, Plans, Strategies	Dawn Hudd, Head of Commercial and Economic Development, dawnhudd@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Maidstone Museums' Collections Development Policy 2013-2018 Maidstone Museums' Collections Development Policy 2013-2018

Forthcoming Decisions

December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private if <i>Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted (<i>other relevant documents may be submitted</i>)
Cabinet Due Date: Monday 27 Jan 2014 <div style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg); position: absolute; left: -60px; top: 50%; font-weight: bold;">178</div>	<p>Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)</p> <p>The purpose of the IDP is to identify the infrastructure required to meet the spatial objectives and growth anticipated in the Local Plan and thus demonstrate that the Plan is both realistic and deliverable.</p>	<p>KEY Reason: Affects more than 1 ward</p>	<p>Rob Jarman, Head of Development Management Robjarman@maidstone.gov.uk</p>	<p>Public</p>	<p>Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP)</p>

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014


Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Cabinet Due Date: Monday 27 Jan 2014 179	Maidstone Borough Local Plan Draft Spatial Strategy The report will consider the borough's objectively assessed needs arising from the Strategic Housing Market Assessment. It will seek Member approval of the draft local plan spatial strategy for public consultation, including the targets for new dwellings and employment/retail floorspace.	KEY Reason: Policies, Plans, Strategies	Sue Whiteside suewhiteside@maids tone.gov.uk	Public	Maidstone Borough Local Plan Draft Spatial Strategy
Cabinet Due Date: Monday 27 Jan 2014	Integrated Transport Strategy 2011-31 To consider the Integrated Transport Strategy 2011-31 for public consultation	KEY Reason: Affects more than 1 ward	Rob Jarman, Head of Development Management Robjarman@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Integrated Transport Strategy 2011-31

Forthcoming Decisions

December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Cabinet Due Date: Monday 27 Jan 2014 180	Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft - Group 3 Policies This final group of local plan policies will comprise the housing target and spatial distribution of development for the borough, and a number of transport based policies.	KEY Reason: Affects more than 1 ward	Rob Jarman, Head of Development Management Robjarman@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation Draft - Group 3 Policies
Cabinet Member for Environment Due Date: Before Friday 31 Jan 2014	Review and Progress Update of Waste Strategy To review the progress which has been made towards the objectives of the Council's 5 year Waste Strategy in preparation for a new Waste Strategy for 2015-2020.		Steve Goulette Stevegoulette@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Waste Strategy 2010-2015 Review and Progress Update of Waste Strategy

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services Due Date: Friday 31 Jan 2014	Play Area Improvements Programme 2013/14 A report to consider the allocation for the Play Area Improvements Programme for 2013/14		Amanda Scott amandascott@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Play Area Improvements Programme 2013/14
 Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 12 Feb 2014	Budget Monitoring - Third Quarter 2013/14 Revenue and capital budget monitoring		Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Budget Monitoring - Third Quarter 2013/14

Forthcoming Decisions

December 2013 - June 2014

[illegible]

Forthcoming Decisions
December 2013 - June 2014

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
Council Due Date: Wednesday 26 Feb 2014	Strategic Plan Refresh 2014-15 update for the final year of the strategic plan	KEY Reason: Policy Framework Document	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy and Communications angelawoodhouse@maidstone.gov.uk	public	Strategic Plan Refresh 2014-15