

AGENDA

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING



Date: Tuesday 3 September 2013
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone



Overview and Scrutiny

Membership:

Councillors: Black, Butler, Mrs Gooch (Chairman), Mrs Grigg (Vice-Chairman), Hotson, D Mortimer, Nelson-Gracie, Pickett and Yates

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1. **The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast.**
2. **Apologies.**
3. **Notification of Substitute Members**
4. **Notification of Visiting Members/Witnesses.**
5. **Disclosures by Members and Officers**
6. **To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.**
7. **Minutes of the Meeting Held on 6 August 2013.** 1 - 9
8. **Quarter 1 Performance Report 2013/14.** 10 - 41
Interviews with: Clare Wood, Policy and Performance Officer, Dena Smart, Head of HR Shared Service, Bal Sandher, HR Shared Services Manager, Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development and Peter Hockney, Principle Planning Officer.
9. **Quarter 1 2013/2014 Complaints Report.** 42 - 58
Interviews with: Councillor Moss, Cabinet member for Corporate Services and Sam Bailey, Research and Performance Officer.
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11. **Future Work Programme.** 71 - 79

Continued Over/:

Issued on 22 August 2013

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

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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 AUGUST 2013

Present: Councillor Mrs Gooch (Chairman) and
Councillors Black, Butler, Cuming, Mrs Grigg, Hotson,
D Mortimer, Nelson-Gracie and Pickett

Also Present: Councillors English, Garland and Moss

24. WEBCASTING

RESOLVED: That all items on the agenda be webcast.

25. APOLOGIES

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Yates.

26. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Cuming was substituting for Councillor Yates.

27. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS/WITNESSES

Councillor English attended as a Visiting Member in relation to agenda items 9 and 10.

Councillor Garland attended as a witness in relation to agenda item 10.

Councillor Moss attended as a witness in relation to agenda items 8 and 9.

28. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor D Mortimer disclosed an Other Significant Interest in the report of the Head of Finance and Resources relating to the use of the 2012/13 revenue underspend and the balance of the unused underspend from 2011/12. He explained that he was a Trustee of the Maidstone YMCA which was working in partnership with Golding Homes to build a new community centre for the residents of Tovil, and one of the proposals for the use of the resources was for the Council to make a contribution of £167,000 towards the construction costs.

The Chairman and Councillors Nelson-Gracie and Pickett also disclosed Other Significant Interests in the report of the Head of Finance and Resources by virtue of being members of Maidstone Town Team and, in the case of Councillor Nelson-Gracie, a Director of Maidstone Town Centre

Management Board. One of the proposals was for funding of £50,000 to ensure the sustainability of the Town Team for future years. Another bid was for funding of £10,000 for a Christmas lights switch on event and marketing campaign in conjunction with partners expected to include Maidstone Town Centre Management.

Having disclosed these interests, the Chairman and Councillors D Mortimer, Pickett and Nelson-Gracie indicated that they would leave the room when the report of the Head of Finance and Resources was discussed.

Councillors D Mortimer and Pickett requested that their concern about the fairness of the requirement to disclose these interests and to leave the room when the report was discussed, resulting in the remaining membership being non-politically balanced, be recorded.

29. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

30. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9 JULY 2013

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 9 July 2013 be approved as a correct record and signed.

31. QUARTER 4 COMPLAINTS REPORT AND REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS 2012-2013

Councillor Moss, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, and Sam Bailey, Research and Performance Officer, presented the complaints report to the Committee. The report also included details of compliments received by the Council during the last quarter.

Councillor Moss commended the report to the Committee. The figures for the last quarter were very good with 97% of Stage 1 complaints responded to in time. The services which had dealt with the highest number of complaints during the last year were as might be expected given the level of customer contact, and included Waste Collection, Housing and Parking Services.

In response to questions by Members, the Research and Performance Officer explained that:

- The complaints management system provided a useful tool to inform/improve service provision.
- The number of complaints to the Council had increased year on year since 2009/10, and making it easier for people to complain did drive up the figures. However, some services had faced particular issues resulting in large numbers of complaints during the past year. For example, Economic Development had received a large

number of complaints as a result of the High Street regeneration work, and if these were excluded there would be a reduction in the overall number of complaints compared to the previous year.

- Whilst it had been thought that Benefits might see an increase in complaints for quarter 1 of 2013/14 as changes to Council Tax Benefit came into effect, the complaints seemed to be directed more towards Revenues with some people having to pay Council Tax for the first time.

The Research and Performance Officer also undertook to provide the following information in the quarter 1 report for 2013/14:

- An update on the action taken in relation to dissatisfied complainants.
- A definition of an "unreasonable or unreasonably persistent complainant".

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the Council's performance in relation to complaints be noted;
- (b) That the compliments received by teams and individual Officers within the Council be noted;
- (c) That the various teams and Officers be thanked for their performance in dealing with complaints during the last quarter, and, in particular, for the reduction in the overall number of complaints received compared to quarter 3; and
- (d) That the following information be provided for the Committee in the quarter 1 report for 2013/14:
 - (i) An update on the action taken in relation to dissatisfied complainants; and
 - (ii) A definition of an "unreasonable or unreasonably persistent complainant".

32. ADJOURNMENT OF MEETING

The meeting was adjourned from 7.00 p.m. to 7.05 p.m. to enable the Officers to check that the webcasting equipment was working properly.

33. COMMISSIONING & PROCUREMENT STRATEGY 2013-16.

Councillor Moss, Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, David Tibbit, Property and Procurement Manager, and Stephen Trigg, Procurement Manager, presented the Commissioning and Procurement Strategy 2013-2016. The proposals had been discussed with the Committee at the formative stage earlier in the year.

It was noted that:

- Previous procurement strategies had supported the Council's strategic plans and visions by focusing on achieving value for money, supporting the local economy, developing best practice in procurement, introducing shared services, incorporating environmental considerations and ensuring compliance with legislation.
- The aim of the new strategy was to continue to develop these practices and policies alongside the introduction of a commissioning approach to the delivery of services. This was in line with the emphasis on the commissioning of services in the Strategic Plan and the requirements of the Social Value and Localism Acts.

During the ensuing discussion, reference was made to the following:

- The need for the Committee to be involved in the discussions regarding the methodology to be used to assess social value and the definition of social value to be used in the community benefit clauses of the procurement documentation.
- The need to keep the Committee fully informed of the assessment methodology to be used to balance the risks associated with engaging smaller local businesses with the requirement to ensure equality of opportunity.
- The potential conflict between the priority of supporting local or smaller businesses and the priority of reducing our carbon footprint where larger firms may have advantages through economies of scale.
- The possibility of linking the action plan to specific items in the Strategic Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy, and of a note being included in the Strategy to confirm that the savings achieved through the projects listed in section 5 of the document could be substantiated by reference to the accounts of the participating authorities.
- The need to make reference in the action plan to third sector organisations, including social enterprises, given the emphasis now placed on the promotion of social value.
- The need to keep Members informed of the impact of the revised EU Procurement Directives and the action taken by the Procurement Team in response.
- The need to keep Members informed of any difficulties experienced in engaging local suppliers although it was acknowledged that the raising of the threshold for contracts to be let by tender to £75,000 had given the Officers greater scope to use local suppliers subject to them seeking quotations and recording value for money.

- The responsibility of Service Managers for the delivery of services, including monitoring the performance of contactors/providers, taking corrective measures where appropriate and using the experience gained to inform plans for the future.
- The possibility of including a statement in the strategy to the effect that the Council will use lessons learned from past experience to inform its approach to commissioning and procurement in future.
- The difference between project management and contract management, with the project manager being responsible for the delivery of a project and the contract manager being responsible for the delivery of services.
- The Council spent around £19m-£20m per annum on the delivery of services (first sentence of the final paragraph of section 8 of the strategy).

RESOLVED: That the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services be recommended to approve the Commissioning and Procurement Strategy subject to the following:

- (a) The Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee (the Committee) being involved in the discussions regarding the methodology to be used to assess social value and the definition of social value to be used in the community benefit clauses of the procurement documentation;
- (b) The Committee being kept fully informed of the assessment methodology to be used to balance the risks associated with engaging smaller local businesses with the requirement to ensure equality of opportunity;
- (c) Regard being had to the potential conflict between the priority of supporting local or smaller businesses and the priority of reducing our carbon footprint where larger firms may have advantages through economies of scale;
- (d) The action plan being linked to specific items in the Strategic Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy, and a note being included in the Strategy to confirm that the savings achieved through the projects listed in section 5 of the document can be substantiated by reference to the accounts of the participating authorities;
- (e) Reference being made in the action plan to third sector organisations, including social enterprises, given the emphasis now placed on the promotion of social value;
- (f) Members being kept informed of the impact of the revised EU Procurement Directives and the action taken by the Procurement Team in response;

- (g) Members being kept informed of any difficulties experienced in engaging local suppliers although it is acknowledged that the raising of the threshold for contracts to be let by tender to £75,000 has given the Officers greater scope to use local suppliers subject to them seeking quotations and recording value for money; and
- (h) The inclusion of a statement in the strategy to the effect that the Council will use lessons learned from past experience to inform its approach to commissioning and procurement in future.

34. USE OF 2012/13 REVENUE UNDERSPEND

Having disclosed Other Significant Interests, the Chairman and Councillors D Mortimer, Nelson-Gracie and Pickett left the room when this item was discussed.

The Vice-Chairman, Councillor Mrs Grigg, took the chair.

Councillors Black and Cuming said that whilst they had put forward proposals for the use of the resources, they did not have disclosable interests in the projects (items 12 - Gatland Park Skateboard Area and 40 - Support for the River Festival). The Head of Finance and Resources advised the Committee that item 40 could be deleted as the event had taken place.

Councillor Garland, the Leader of the Council, said that he shared the concerns expressed about the requirements in relation to the disclosure of interests as the Committee was not a decision making body. The intention had been to involve as many Members as possible in the debate. He suggested that the Committee consider including a review of this aspect of the ethical standards regime in its work programme.

Councillor Garland then introduced the report of the Head of Finance and Resources setting out details of proposals submitted by Members and Officers for the use of the 2012/13 revenue underspend and the balance of the un-used underspend from 2011/12 with a view to the Committee making recommendations to him as to the use of these resources. He said that it was very difficult to plan for either an underspend or an overspend. The resources could remain in balances, but it was considered that they should be put to good use to benefit the community.

The Head of Finance and Resources advised the Committee that a revenue underspend of £0.275m had been reported for 2012/13 which combined with the balance unused from 2011/12 (£0.283m) had resulted in £0.558m being available for use whilst leaving an adequate level of balances. Proposals totalling £2.3m had been received and these had been evaluated against specific criteria intended to support the decent place to live priority, demonstrate community/neighbourhood level involvement and engagement and provide a sustainable local environmental benefit or improvement.

The Committee considered the bids page by page. During the discussion, reference was made to the following:

- Lobbying material had been received in support of the provision of skateboard ramps at Gatland Park.
- A report would be considered by the Planning Committee regarding the proposed Heads of Terms of a S106 agreement to secure contributions to mitigate the impact of application MA/12/2314 on the town centre with the monies being used towards public realm improvement projects in the town centre and to fund the programme of the Maidstone Town Team. The outcome would affect the view taken on items 16 (Environmental Improvements at Gabriels Hill) and 17 (Maidstone Town Team - Ongoing Funding for 24 Months).
- There was a possibility that a S106 contribution had been secured to fund improvements to the River Medway towpath (item 34).

It was suggested that:

- With regard to item 15 (Crematorium Access Gates), there should be a further assessment of the need taking into account increased income from the facility.
- With regard to item 23 (Christmas Light Improvements), a view should be taken on the preferred option having regard to the differential in the technical costs of options 1 and 2 and the potential availability of additional resources contingent on the completion of the S106 agreement relating to MA/12/2314.
- In the event of item 17 going forward, the Leader of the Council should take a view on the inclusion of taxi marshalling at an additional cost of £10,000, in the interests of safety.
- If, following investigation, it is found that item 12 (Gatland Park Skateboard Area) is not to be funded from the Play Area Capital Programme, the Leader of the Council should take a view on this project going forward with funding from the underspends.
- Given its importance, the Leader of the Council should take a view on item 36 (Private Sector Housing - Stock Modelling) going forward with funding from the underspends.
- When considering the proposals, the Leader of the Council should have regard to the fact that the land referred to in item 27 (Land Acquisition - Loose Valley Conservation Society) may not be available in future.
- When considering the proposals, the Leader of the Council should have regard to the ongoing commitment to the projects and possible exit arrangements.

- The Head of Finance and Resources should group connected proposals in future reports.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That all proposed awards in column L of Appendix A to the report of the Head of Finance and Resources be recommended to the Leader of the Council for funding from the revenue underspend 2012/13 and the balance of the unused underspend from 2011/12 subject to the following:
 - (i) Item 15 (Crematorium Access Gates) - A further assessment of the need taking into account increased income from the facility;
 - (ii) Items 16 (Environmental Improvements at Gabriels Hill) and 17 (Maidstone Town Team - Ongoing Funding for 24 Months) - The deletion of these items if funding is secured through the completion of a S106 agreement to mitigate the impact of application MA/12/2314 on the town centre with the monies being used towards public realm improvement projects in the town centre and to fund the programme of the Maidstone Town Team;
 - (iii) Item 23 (Christmas Light Improvements) - A view being taken on the preferred option having regard to the differential in the technical costs of options 1 and 2 and the potential availability of additional resources contingent on the completion of the S106 agreement referred to above; and
 - (iv) Item 34 (River Medway Towpath Improvements) - The deletion of this item if it is found that a S106 contribution has been secured for this work.
- (c) That in the event of item 17 going forward, the Leader of the Council be recommended to take a view on the inclusion of taxi marshalling at an additional cost of £10,000, in the interests of safety;
- (d) That if, following investigation, it is found that item 12 (Gatland Park Skateboard Area) is not to be funded from the Play Area Capital Programme, the Leader of the Council be recommended to take a view on this project going forward with funding from the underspends;
- (e) That given its importance, the Leader of the Council be recommended to take a view on item 36 (Private Sector Housing - Stock Modelling) going forward with funding from the underspends;
- (f) That when considering the proposals, the Leader of the Council be recommended to have regard to the fact that the land referred to in

item 27 (Land Acquisition - Loose Valley Conservation Society) may not be available in future;

- (g) That when considering the proposals, the Leader of the Council be recommended to have regard to the ongoing commitment to the projects and possible exit arrangements; and
- (h) That the Head of Finance and Resources be recommended to group connected proposals in future reports.

35. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman and Councillors D Mortimer, Nelson-Gracie and Pickett returned to the meeting for consideration of this item.

The Committee considered its future work programme. It was noted that the training on questioning skills was in hand.

The Chairman said that she would raise Members' concerns regarding the requirements in relation to the disclosure of interests with the Officers.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That no changes need to be made to the Committee's work programme at present; and
- (b) That the Chairman should raise Members' concerns regarding the requirements in relation to the disclosure of interests with the Officers.

36. DURATION OF MEETING

6.32 p.m. to 8.40 p.m.

Agenda Item 8

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP & CORPORATE SERVICES

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 03 SEPTEMBER 2013

REPORT OF HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

Report prepared by Clare Wood

1. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE REPORT 2013/14

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee are asked to consider progress made in the first quarter for the Council's key performance indicators (KPIs) at Appendix A.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Policy and Communications

1.2.1 It is recommended that the Committee:

- a) Note the progress and out-turns of the KPIs (appendix A), definitions are included for reference at Appendix B;
- b) Note the areas where performance is strong and on track to achieve annual targets;
- c) Note the areas where performance has declined and performance requires further monitoring, the committee is recommended to consider the following indicators that have been rated red and consider if further monitoring or action is required:
 - DCV 003 – Percentage of residential planning applications processed within statutory timescales;
 - BIM 003a - Percentage of customer contacts made in the Gateway;
 - BIM 004 – Reduction in the number of outgoing post items; and
 - HRO 001- Working days lost to sickness absence (rolling year).

- d) Note the Action Plan at Appendix C to address the decline in the overall employment rate which is key to the achievement of the priority 'For Maidstone to have a growing economy (reported in the Strategic Plan Annual Performance Report, June 2013); and
- e) Agree any other areas where actions to improve performance would be appropriate.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.3.1 The Council has set 72 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), as part of the Strategic Plan 2011-15; there are 40 indicators that can be monitored on a quarterly basis to ensure the Council is on track to meet its annual performance targets.
- 1.3.2 The Council's quarterly performance reporting cycle is aligned with financial reporting to enable it to effectively oversee financial performance against corporate priorities and assess whether value for money is being achieved in the delivery of services. The financial monitoring reports for the first quarter shows an under spend of £21,972, with 106 out of 218 cost centres under spending. Within the net under spend £0.13m relates to employee costs, due to continuing vacancy levels.

1.4 Context

- 1.4.1 The Council uses a range of information to manage performance, including performance indicators. The Council's top-level indicators are referred to as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). The Key Performance Indicators are set out in the Strategic Plan. These were reviewed in April 2013 with new targets and indicators agreed by Cabinet in June 2013. These will continue to be reviewed annually to ensure that they are aligned with the Council's priorities.
- 1.4.2 Maidstone Borough is Kent's County Town, it has a population of 155,200 and benefits from a high overall employment rate with relatively high wage levels, although some will commute out of the borough to achieve these. There are small areas of deprivation in the urban area, however Maidstone has a lower than average number of people claiming out of work benefits compared to other Kent authorities.

1.5 Performance Summary

- 1.5.1 Appendix A shows out-turn data for all indicators that can be collected quarterly. Some indicators are collected bi-annually or annually, these indicators have not been included in this report.
- 1.5.2 Where an indicator is new and there is no quarterly 2012/13 data, no direction can be given. The direction where available, compares the out-turn for quarter 1 with the 2012/13 quarter 1 out-turn.
- 1.5.3 The following tables show the status of the key performance indicators in relation to target and direction of travel.

	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
A Growing Economy	2 (33%)	3 (50%)	1 (17%)	0	6
A Decent Place to Live	7 (47%)	5 (33%)	3 (20%)	2	17
Corporate & Customer Excellence	6 (35%)	5 (30%)	6 (35%)	0	17
Overall	15 (40%)	13 (34%)	10 (26%)	2	40

	Up	Down	N/A	Total
A Growing Economy	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	2	6
A Decent Place to Live	3 (30%)	7 (70%)	7	10
Corporate & Customer Excellence	7 (54%)	6 (46%)	4	17
Overall	12 (44%)	15 (55%)	13	40

- 1.5.4 Overall, 40% (15 of performance indicators have been rated green (currently on target), compared to 48% (13) at the same point in 2012/13. Of the 27 KPIs where direction can be assessed, 44% (12) have improved when comparing 2012/13 quarter 1 with that of 2013/14. The table below shows a comparison of the indicator rating and direction for quarter 1 2013/14 and 2012/13.

Quarter 1	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
2012/13	13	10	4	0	27
2013/14	15	13	10	2	40

Quarter 1	Up	Across	Down	N/A	Total
2012/13	13	2	11	1	27
2013/14	12	0	15	13	40

- 1.5.5 It should be noted that at the end of 2012/13, 60.5% of all KPIs achieved their annual targets and 43% of out-turns had improved since the previous year. Each year all targets are reviewed and where possible a continuous improvement approach is used to ensure that targets are challenging. At the mid-year report Managers will be asked to assess their indicators to identify if any are likely to underperform.
- 1.5.6 Of the 13 indicators that have been rated amber, five indicators were within 2% of target and eight were within 5% of the target.

For Maidstone to have a growing economy

Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
2 (33%)	3 (50%)	1 (17%)	0	6
Up	Down	Across	N/A	Total
2 (50%)	2 (50%)	0	2	6

- 1.5.7 There are six indicators that can be rated, of which two are rated green, three amber and one red. Of these, performance for two has improved, for two has declined and two cannot be rated as they are new indicators.
- 1.5.8 The number of people claiming job seekers allowance (LVE 002) has fallen to just 2.2%, with a drop of 198 claimants compared to the same period in 2012/13, achieving the quarterly target. The Council is also contributing directly to lowering the figures around worklessness by providing work experience placements (E&S 001), for the current financial year there have already been 21 placements within the council, nine have been tracked into jobs.
- 1.5.9 There has been 42% increase in the number of commercial planning applications for the quarter when compared to last year. Considering an increase in workload the planning department has maintained performance in completing these within the statutory timeframe (DCV 001) when compared to the same period last year. It should be noted that quarter one is generally the weakest in terms of performance and that last year the annual out-turn was over 90%.
- 1.5.10 Both indicators relating to the objective on transport have been rated amber. The income from pay and display car parks (PKG 002) is less than £5.00 from achieving target however it is expected at this stage that the annual target will be achieved.
- 1.5.11 Park & Ride on-board transactions have continued to decline (PKG 007). Recently the tariff for long stay parking has been increased and it is hoped that this will have a positive impact on the Park and

Ride service. In the meantime the Parking Manager is investigating ways to limit the impact on the income target including looking at the overall parking offer in Maidstone and how it links to the transport network through work on the Integrated Transport Strategy.

For Maidstone to be a decent place to live

Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
7 (47%)	5 (33%)	3 (20%)	2	17
Up	Down	Across	N/A	Total
3 (30%)	7 (70%)	0	7	10

- 1.5.12 There are 17 indicators that relate to the priority for Maidstone to be a decent place to live that can be reported at quarter 1, 15 of these can be given a rating. There are seven KPIs that have been rated green, five that have been rated amber and 3 that have been rated red. There are two indicators in this priority that are new for 2013/14, here baselines will be set this year to inform targets for future years.
- 1.5.13 The percentage of residential planning applications processed within statutory timescales (DCV 003) has not achieved the quarterly target and performance has declined compared to the same period last year. Historically the first quarter's out-turn is the lowest and it is expected that performance will improve during quarters two and three. There were 37 residential applications processed in quarter 1, including six major applications. Fourteen were processed out of the statutory timescales, reasons cited for the delay in these applications were section 106 agreement negotiations (three of the six major applications were out of time), clearance of two cases dating back to 2010 and prioritisation of the the Local Plan.
- 1.5.14 Housing has made good progress in the delivery of affordable homes with 70 being delivered during the first quarter. In addition private sector housing has made 65 improvements to homes that have positively impacted on the resident's health, welfare or wellbeing.
- 1.5.15 Both of the waste (WCN 005) and recycling (WCN 001) indicators have been rated amber. The new contract in partnership with Swale and Ashford, to be launched in Maidstone from August 2013, is expected to increase the amount of waste recycled and it is predicted that the annual targets will be achieved.
- 1.5.16 There are two indicators that relate to the outcome 'Residents in Maidstone are not disadvantaged because of where they live or

who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced' that have been rated red, both of which come under housing. The introduction of the new Allocations Policy has impacted on average time to process and notify applications on the housing register (HSG 004). This is because the service effectively closed the register during March, and no new applications were processed during this time, so that they could be assessed under the new policy which came into effect in April. The Housing team is also continuing to face high volumes of people presenting as homeless, past the time that intervention could have taken place. Actions are being devised to improve performance in this area with more self-help solutions and further guidance being investigated.

- 1.5.17 The Maidstone Families Matter project has started positively and 76 families have been accepted onto the programme (MFM 001a). However engagement is proving an issue. At present 17 families have been engaged with (MFM 001b) but it should be noted that this element of the programme involves a lot of information gathering to ensure that the right person engages with the family. This is currently being addressed at county level.

Corporate & Customer Excellence

Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
6 (35%)	5 (30%)	6 (35%)	0	17
Up	Down	Across	N/A	Total
7 (54%)	6 (46%)	0	4	17

- 1.5.18 There are 17 KPIs relating to the priority Corporate & Customer excellence that can be reported quarterly. Six have been rated green, five amber and six red.
- 1.5.19 Four of the indicators rated red relate to customer contact (BIM 003a, BIM 004, CTC 001 and CTC 004). Avoidable contact (CTC 004) was impacted on by the failure to process a benefits file on time which led to customer calling in about their benefit payments. This combined with the calls about the new housing allocations policy has extended the average wait time for calls into the contact centre (CTC 001) to 221 seconds for quarter 1. This is also considered to have been the reason that there were more customer contacts in the Gateway (BIM 003a).
- 1.5.20 There was a reduction of 4.26% in outgoing post items (BIM 004) against the target of an 11% reduction. This is because the majority of work relating to this area is in the early stages. A print/post solution is due to be introduced later this year which is expected to have the greatest impact on this indicator.

- 1.5.21 There were more customer transactions in the Gateway than expected and it is therefore positive that the percentage of visitors to the Gateway responded to by a customer services advisor within 20 minutes (CTC 002) not only achieved the quarterly target but also improved when compared to last year.
- 1.5.22 Both the percentage of council tax collection and percentage of non-domestic rates collected have marginally missed the quarterly target. Recovery programmes are in place however a similar profile of performance is being reported by other districts.
- 1.5.23 The rate of Missed bins per 100,000 collections (WCN 006) has achieved the quarterly target. However with the changes to residents' collection days happening in August it is expected to go up during quarter 2.
- 1.5.24 Performance has improved compared to last year for the percentage of planning decisions taken under delegation. Coupled with a 7% rise in decisions taken under delegation. This is positive as the quarter 1 out-turn is usually the lowest for the year.
- 1.6 Alternative Action and why not Recommended
- 1.6.1 KPIs reflect local priorities and measure progress towards the Council's key objectives. They are the Council's top level indicators and are linked to the Council's Strategic Plan.
- 1.6.2 Not monitoring progress against the KPIs could mean that the Council fails to deliver its priorities and would also mean that action could not be taken effectively to address performance during the year.
- 1.7 Impact on Corporate Objectives
- 1.7.1 The Key Performance Indicators are part of the Council's overarching Strategic Plan 2011-15 and play an important role in the achievement of our corporate objectives as well as covering a wide range of service and priority areas; for example, waste and recycling.
- 1.8 Risk Management
- 1.8.1 The production of robust performance reports contributes to ensuring that the view of the authority's approach to the management of risk and use of resources is not undermined and allows early action to be taken in order to mitigate the risk of not achieving targets and outcomes.

1.9 Other Implications

1.9.1

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

Financial

1.9.2 Performance indicators and targets are closely linked to the allocation of resources and determining good value for money.

1.9.3 The financial implications of any proposed changes are also identified and taken into account in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and associated annual budget setting process with performance issues highlighted as part of the budget monitoring reporting process.

Staffing

1.9.4 Having a clear set of targets enables staff outcomes/objectives to be set and effective action plans to be put in place.

Environmental



1.9.5 The performance indicators cover and are used to monitor a number of priority areas.





1.9.6 Appendices

- Appendix A – Quarter 1 KPI Out-turns
- Appendix B – KPI 2013-16 Definitions
- Appendix C – Action Plan 'By 2015 Maidstone will have the highest overall employment rate in Kent'

Quarter 1 KPI Report 2013/14

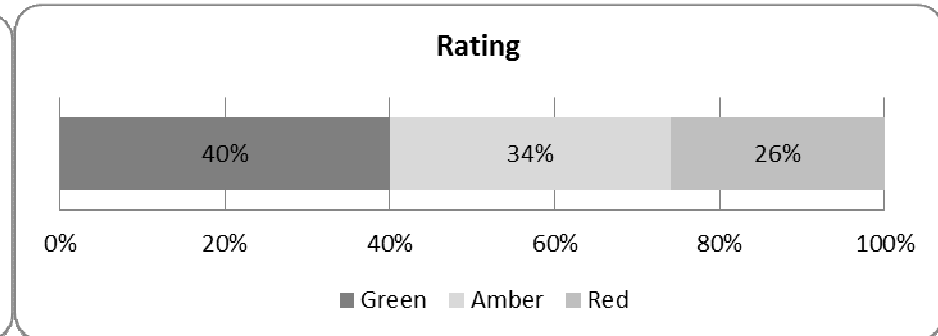
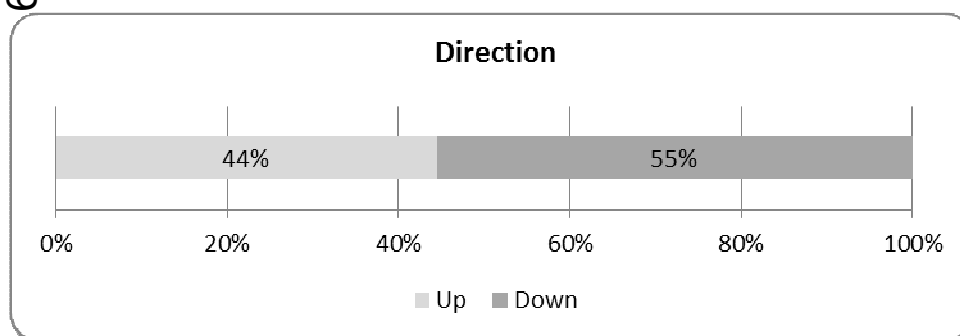
Key to performance ratings

PI Status	
RED	Target not achieved
AMBER	Target missed (within 10%)
GREEN	Target met
	No data to measure performance against
	Data Only

Direction of Travel	
	Performance has improved
	Performance has not changed / been sustained
	Performance has declined
	No previous performance to judge against

Performance Summary Graphs

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Quarter 1 KPI Report 2013/14

Priority 1. For Maidstone to be a growing economy
Objective 1. A transport network that supports the local economy

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
PKG 002	Income from pay and display car parks per parking space (£)	£277.14	£228.05	£232.74				£228.05	£970.00	Jeff Kitson	↓	AMBER
	The quarterly target was missed by less than £5. However, the Parking Manager believes this is good performance considering the economic climate and therefore it is anticipated that income levels will remain stable and achieve target in quarter 2.											
PKG 007	Number of on board Park & Ride bus transactions	94,034	90,246	96,000				90,246	400,000	Jeff Kitson	↓	AMBER
	Park & Ride transactions have continued to decline and the target has not been achieved. Long Stay parking tariffs have recently increased and it is hoped that this will have a positive impact on the Park and Ride figures. The Parking Manager is investigating the potential of reducing the impact on income through alternative savings within the service.											

Priority 1. For Maidstone to be a growing economy
Objective 2. A growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of the skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
DCV 001	Percentage of commercial planning applications completed within statutory timescales	83.33%	83.87%	90.00%				83.87%	90.00%	Rob Jarman	↑	AMBER
	There has been a 42% increase in the number of commercial planning applications received during quarter 1 compared to the same period last year. The target has been marginally missed as many of these applications needed to be reported to Planning Committee. Although there has been an increase in volume performance has improved slightly when compared to quarter 1 in 2012/13. It is expected that performance will follow the same profile as last year in which quarter 1 was the weakest in terms of performance.											






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PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
E&S 001	Work experience placements delivered (by the Council) across the borough (NEW)	N/A	21	13				21	50	Ellie Kershaw		GREEN
E&S 002	Number of employers that have engaged with NEETs (not in education, employment or training) through MBC (NEW)	N/A	0	25				0	100	Ellie Kershaw		RED
	Initial work has been focussed on how MBC can help to get young people into work by offering work experience and engaging with Job Centre Plus. We have attended business breakfast to start talking to employers about how they can help young people in the borough. Across the next quarter, contact will be made with targeted businesses, and visits made with the portfolio holder. We are also investigating Inspiring the future, a programme to encourage employers to give work experience talks in schools.											
LVE 002	Percentage of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance	2.4%	2.2%	2.7%				2.4%	2.7%	John Foster		GREEN

Priority 2. For Maidstone to be a decent place to live
Objective 3. Decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures





PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
DCV 003	Percentage of residential planning applications processed within statutory timescales	84.85%	62.16%	75.00%				62.16%	75.00%	Rob Jarman		RED
	50% of the major residential buildings determined were over the statutory time period and this was due to the Section 106 negotiation. The minor applications that were out of time were due to either clearance of backlogs, being reported to planning committee or delays to the publicity/registration.											

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PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
DCV 014 a	Average time taken (weeks) to process planning applications (Majors) (NEW)	N/A	22.70	24.00				22.70	24.00	Rob Jarman		GREEN
	Median: 13.00 weeks											
DCV 014 b	Average time taken (weeks) to process minor planning applications (NEW)	N/A	15.65	15.00				15.65	15.00	Rob Jarman		AMBER
	The target has been marginally missed (by 0.65 weeks). This partly due to the clearance of 2 backlog applications from 2010. It is expected that performance will be on track to meet the annual; target at the end of quarter 2. Median: 7.71 weeks											
DCV 014 c	Average time taken (weeks) to process other planning applications (NEW)	N/A	8.81	11.00				8.81	11.00	Rob Jarman		GREEN
	Median: 7.57 weeks											
HSG 001	Number of affordable homes delivered (gross)	100	70	28				70	200	John Littlemore		GREEN
HSG PS 003	Number of private sector homes improved (NEW)	N/A	65	45				65	180	John Littlemore		GREEN
	This indicator replace the old 'Decent homes' measure. The new measure includes all improvements to private sector homes that have a positive impact on the residents health, welfare or wellbeing.											

Quarter 1 KPI Report 2013/14

Priority 2. For Maidstone to be a decent place to live
Objective 4. Continue to be a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the borough




PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
DEP 001	The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having deposits of litter that fall below an acceptable level (NI 195a)	1.66%	1.10%	1.70%				1.10%	1.70%	Jonathan Scott		GREEN
DEP 007	Percentage of fly-tipping reports responded to within one working day	99.69%	97.24%	99.00%				97.24%	99.00%	Jonathan Scott		AMBER
	The target has been marginally missed and there has been a 23% increase in the number fly-tipping reports compared to the same period last year. During quarter 1 cleansing staff were diverted from their normal duties for a short period to clear the backlog of waste bins for delivery. This is being monitored to identify if there are any trends in location or type of fly-tip.											
WC N 001	Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)	47.40%	46.26%	48.00%				46.26%	48.00%	Jennifer Shepherd		AMBER
	This figure is higher than the previous quarter due to seasonal peak in garden waste. However there has been a decrease in the amount of food waste collected, this could be interpreted as positive with less food being wasted. Mixed recycling levels have remained constant, but are expected to increase from August 2013 due to the addition of other recyclables in the recycling collection. Figures are continuing to be monitored and following the communications campaign to advise residents of service changes due to the new contract, additional communications campaigns will be carried out to increase participation in the recycling service.											
WC N 005	Residual household waste per household (NI 191)	110.61	116.47	109.20				116.47	420.00	Jennifer Shepherd		AMBER
	Although performance is higher than the target for the first quarter based on previous figures for the past 2 years is at a realistic level as the target is profiled to take into account seasonal variations. The changes to be introduced in August 2013 as part of the new waste collection contract are projected to significantly decrease the level of waste per household. Therefore performance is still on track to achieve the annual target.											

Quarter 1 KPI Report 2013/14

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
DCE 001	Percentage of planning enforcement cases signed off within 21 days	81.82%	95.1%	90%				95.1%	90%	Rob Jarman		GREEN

Priority 2. For Maidstone to be a decent place to live

Objective 5. Residents in Maidstone are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
HSG 004 24	Average time taken to process and notify applicants on the housing register (days)	1.5	25.6	3.5				25.6	3.5	John Littlemore		RED
	Owing to the new Allocations Policy at the start of April this year applications from the 27 February until 31 March were not processed until after April 01 2013 in order to process in accordance with the new policy. This has led to a waiting list of applications to process in the first quarter of this year. It is unlikely that the annual target will be achieved.											
HSG 005	Number of households prevented from becoming homeless through the intervention of housing advice	110	87	113				87	450	John Littlemore		RED
	Performance has not met the target due to the high levels of homeless applicants presenting as homeless after the point in time where their homelessness can be averted. New Home Guide software is due to be introduced during quarter 3 to provide early intervention advice and guidance to assist customers with self-help solutions.											
MFM 001 a	Number of families accepted on the Maidstone Families Matter programme (NEW)	N/A	76	21				76	81	Ellie Kershaw		GREEN




Quarter 1 KPI Report 2013/14

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
MFM 001 b	Percentage of those accepted to the Maidstone Families Matter programme that have been engaged with (NEW)	N/A	0.22%	Set baseline				0.22%	Set baseline	Ellie Kershaw		N/A
	Families for year one have been identified. Further information is being gathered about them from partners to ensure that we find the right person to engage with them and bring them on to the programme. As MFM is a voluntary programme and participation is not compulsory it is important that initial engagement is effective and therefore a lot of effort is being put into research before engagement commences. In addition to this, some agencies have been reluctant to volunteer to take this role- this is currently being addressed at County level as it is a Kent wide issue.											
E&S 003	Number of NEETs tracked to employment	N/A	9	Set baseline				9	Set baseline	Ellie Kershaw		N/A
R&B 004	Time taken to process Housing Benefit/Council Tax Benefit new claims and change events (NI 181)	11.17	10.91	10.00				10.91	10.00	Steve McGinnes		AMBER
	Whilst the service experienced an increase in workload as a result of welfare reform which impacted on performance in the first quarter, customer satisfaction remains high and the service expects to achieve target going forward.											


Priority 3. Corporate & customer excellence; 3. Corporate and customer excellence
Objective 6. Services are customer focused and residents are satisfied with them

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
			Value	Value				Target	Value			
C&S 001	Percentage of complaints resolved within the specified timescale	94.25%	95.70%	95%				95.70%	95%	Angela Woodhouse		GREEN





Quarter 1 KPI Report 2013/14

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
		Value	Value	Target	Value	Value	Value	Value	Target			
	Four complaints were responded to out of time. Of these four, two were directed at Environmental Enforcement, one for parking and one for revenues . One of the Environmental Enforcement complaints was delayed due to a request for further information from the complainant. Parking missed a complaint as this was originally allocated to finance incorrectly.											
C&S 002	Satisfaction with complaint handling	45%	20.00%	45.00%				20.00%	45.00%	Angela Woodhouse		RED
	Only ten responses were received for the complaints satisfaction survey. There were over 90 complaints received during quarter 1 and all that were closed were sent a survey. At present there can be a significant delay between the customer receiving a response to their complaint and when the survey is sent out. The Policy & Performance team are looking at changing this process so that customers receive the survey a week after they have had a response to their complaint and a new electronic survey for those who raise their complaint via email. It is hoped that this will improve the response rate. If the response rate is still low telephone surveys will be conducted. The responses to the survey have been assessed and it appears that the majority of those that were not satisfied with the way their complaint was handled could not separate the outcome of their complaint and how it was processed. Most were not satisfied as they did not get their desired outcome for example littering penalty notice to be cancelled or compensation requests rejected.											
R&B 009	Overall satisfaction with the benefits service	84.87%	88.57%	80%				88.57%	80%	Steve McGinnes		GREEN
CTC 001	The average wait time for calls into the Contact Centre	79	221	70				221	70	Sandra Marchant		RED
	Average wait times for calls into the Contact Centre reached an all-time high during the last quarter. Although there was a 5% drop in the number of calls answered in the last quarter compared to the same quarter last year, there was a 13% increase in the overall number of calls offered. This presumably was a result of long wait times and customers redialling. During the last quarter there was a 45% increase in the number of emails coming in to Customer Services that are also dealt with by the Contact Centre compared to the same quarter last year. This is good news for channel shift and more enquiries are coming through from the website. During April, call numbers increased due to the new Housing Allocations scheme as a large number of customers had been removed from the register, the impact of Welfare Reform changes especially with the new Local Council Tax Support Scheme and a benefits payment file had not been processed resulting in lots of calls from irate benefit customers. The Contact Centre has again lost a lot of experienced Advisors during the quarter and emphasis has been placed on training all Advisors in more of the complex services in order that adequate cover can be provided in the future. Five new Advisors were appointed during April and their training programme has commenced. In addition another seven Advisors have been offered positions and will be starting during July to cover the remaining vacant posts and forthcoming maternity cover. This number of new staff, around 40%, has had a huge effect on performance of the team.											

Quarter 1 KPI Report 2013/14

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	Status
		Value	Value	Target	Value	Value	Value	Value	Target			
CTC 002	Percentage of Visitors to the Gateway responded to by a CSA within 20 minutes	72.12%	79.93%	75%				79.93%	75%	Sandra Marchant		GREEN

Priority 3. Corporate & customer excellence
Objective 7. Effective, cost efficient services are delivered across the borough

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	2013/14 Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
BIM 003 a	Percentage of customer contacts made in person in the Gateway (NEW)	N/A	7.82%	7.00%				7.82%	7.00%	Georgia Hawkes		RED
BIM 003 b	Percentage of customer contacts made online by visiting the councils website (NEW)	N/A	75.99%	77.00%				75.99%	77.00%	Georgia Hawkes		AMBER
BIM 003 c	Percentage of customer contacts made by phone through the contact centre (NEW)	N/A	16.20%	16.00%				16.20%	16.00%	Georgia Hawkes		AMBER
	<p>We have seen nearly a 1% decrease in transactions compared to the same quarter last year (8.68% Q1 12-13) and this is usually our busiest quarter for face to face transactions. It is disappointing that we have seen a slight increase in visits to the Gateway compared to the previous quarter (7.28% Q4 12-13) but it is only slight and this is against the back drop of continued falling contact numbers for both face to face and telephone (-4450) with a considerable increase (15678) in website visits.</p>											
BIM 004	Reduction in number of out-going post items (NEW)	N/A	-4.26%	-11.00%				-4.26%	-11.00%	Georgia Hawkes		RED

Quarter 1 KPI Report 2013/14

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	2013/14 Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
	Work to deliver a reduction in outgoing post items is in its early stages. This reduction will be achieved in part by the managed print/post solution, to be introduced later in the year, which includes a sending more post items to Corporate Support to be managed through a comprehensive software package that controls the process from creation of letter or document through to its presentation to the Royal mail for delivery. The other main way that post will be reduced will be through the service efficiency reviews as part of the Customer Service Improvement programme. Reviews have started in Parking and Housing and implementation of the recommendations from these reviews is due to complete by December. Reviews of Depot Services and Finance are also due to start this year.											
CTC 004	Avoidable contact: the proportion of customer contact that is of low or no value to the customer (NI 14)	6.2%	5.0%	4.3%				5.0%	4.3%	Sandra Marchant	↑	RED
	This is the first time since this indicator was introduced, as part of the national indicator set in 2009, that the target has not been achieved. During quarter 1 a lot of cases were logged as unavoidable under the category of service failure due to benefit calls received as a result of a benefits payment file not being processed in April.											
28 R&B 007	Value of fraud identified by the fraud partnership	£169,899.79	£281,969.76	£187,500.00				£281,969.76	£750,000.00	Steve McGinnes	↑	GREEN
BIM 002	Percentage of financial transactions not carried out on-line or by direct debit/standing order	10.35%	10.69%	10%				10.69%	10%	Paul Riley	↓	AMBER
	There has been a 4.6% (8799) increase in the overall volume of financial transactions during quarter 1 compared the same period last year. There has also been an increase of 8% of transactions that are not carried out online, by DD or SO. Quarter 1 historically is the busiest year for payments and therefore performance is expected to recover by year end. It is thought that this increase is due to increased card payments in the Gateway most likely in relation to Council Tax payments and changes to the Council tax discount scheme which has meant that some people now have to pay council tax whereas previously they did not.											

Quarter 1 KPI Report 2013/14

PI Ref	Indicator Description	Q1 2012/13	Q1 2013/14		Q2 2013/14	Q3 2013/14	Q4 2013/14	2013/14		Responsible Officer	D	2013/14 Status
			Value	Target				Value	Target			
DCV 009	Percentage of planning decisions taken under delegation	88.31%	92.84%	92.50%				92.84%	92.50%	Rob Jarman	↑	GREEN
HRO 001 /BV 12	Working Days Lost Due to Sickness Absence (rolling year) (BV 12)	8.19 days	9.39 days	8.50 days				9.39 days	8.50 days	Dena Smart	↓	RED
<p>The sickness relates to long term absence as this is currently at 6.24 days and short term sickness is 3.15 days. We are managing the sickness by obtaining occupational health advice but due to the type of sickness it has not been possible for the individuals to return to work earlier as they need further medical treatment. This has overall increased the number of days sickness at the council. The Council's Human Resources department runs wellbeing activities throughout the year and there is an employee assistance programme where staff can get advice and support.</p>												
WC 006	Missed bins	20.62	20.51	25				20.51	25	Jennifer Shepherd	↑	GREEN
R&B 005	Percentage of Non-domestic Rates Collected (BV 010)	34.32%	33.48%	34.32%				33.48%	97.70%	Steve McGinnes	↓	AMBER
<p>We are continuing to keep to our recovery timetable with the sending of reminders, finals and summonses. Local benchmarking demonstrates the out-turn level to be a consistent picture across the county with authorities reporting collection down compared to this time last year.</p>												
R&B 006	Percentage of Council Tax collected (BV 009)	30.10%	29.90%	30.10%				29.90%	98.30%	Steve McGinnes	↓	AMBER
<p>We are only 0.2% down on this time last year, and are continuing with recovery as per our timetable. The former 100% benefit cases will be having an impact on collection, although given the small amount we are down on collection has not had such an impact so far.</p>												

For Maidstone to have a growing economy

Outcomes by 2015:

1. A growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy.

Element	Indicator	Frequency	Good Performance	Responsible Officer	Rationale
Customer (attraction)	LVE 003 Percentage of vacant retail units within the town centre	Annual	Aim to minimise	John Foster	Maidstone is a shopping centre of regional significance. Its continued attractiveness for businesses, visitors and shoppers is important to the prosperity of the Borough.
Customer (Service)	DCV 001 Percentage of commercial planning applications completed within statutory timescales	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Rob Jarman	To ensure that the Council determines commercial planning applications in a timely manner.
Process	LVE 002 Percentage of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	John Foster	JSA claimant count records the number of people claiming Jobseekers Allowance (JSA) and National Insurance credits at Jobcentre Plus local offices. People claiming JSA must declare that they are out of work, capable of, available for and actively seeking work during the week in which the claim is made. Measures the health of the jobs economy.
	DCV 002 a) Percentage of major business planning applications take-up of pre-applications advice b) Percentage of those taking pre-application advice where the applications were approved	Bi-annual	Aim to maximise	Rob Jarman	These indicators measure the take-up and quality of pre-application advice. Pre-application advice is being promoted by the team to ensure that developments are high quality and well designed.
Finance	R&B 002 Value of business rateable floor space	Annual	Aim to maximise	Steve McGinnes/ John Foster	The rateable value represents the open market annual rental value of a business/non-domestic property. This means the rent the property would let for on the valuation date, if it was being offered on the open market.
Learning & Development	KCC 003 Number of 16-18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEETS)	Annual	Aim to minimise	Sarah Robson	Non-participation in education, employment or training between the ages of 16 and 18 is a major predictor of later unemployment, low income, depression, involvement in crime and poor mental health.

KPI Explanations

Appendix B

Learning & Development	KCC 004 Working age people educated to NVQ level 4 of higher	Annual	Aim to maximise	Sarah Robson	This indicator is needed because of the important role local authorities have with regard to economic development and the key part that skills and qualifications play in supporting economic development.
Learning & Development	E&S 001 Work experience placements delivered across the borough (NEW)	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Ellie Kershaw	To monitor the council’s programme of getting people back into work and the engagement work undertaken with businesses around NEETs and raising skill levels.
	E&S 002 Number of employers that have engaged with NEETs (NEW)	Quarterly			
Learning & Development	OUT 002.01 Local Development Framework and Core Strategy	Bi-annual	N/A	Rob Jarman	Create and deliver a Local Development Framework documents including a Core Strategy with the policies and land allocations that will create the right conditions for economic development.
Learning & Development	OUT 002.02 Review Economic Development Strategy	Bi-annual	N/A	John Foster	Review the Council’s Economic Strategy to support the preferred options set out in the Local Development Framework and Core Strategy and identify the Council’s approach to supporting green business initiatives.

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2. A transport network that supports the local economy.

Element	Indicator	Frequency	Good Performance	Responsible Officer	Rationale
Customer	PKG 008 Percentage change in bus usage on services from Maidstone depot	Annual	Aim to maximise	Jeff Kitson	To assess the change in bus usage as part of the monitoring of the outcome ‘a transport network to support the local economy’. This indicator shows if more or less journeys are being made by buses. The source data is provided by Arriva and are global figures for their Maidstone depot –and cover sections of route beyond the boundary however they give a good indication of what is happening in the area.
Process	PKG 007 Number of Park and Ride transactions	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Jeff Kitson	The Indicator compares the on bus transaction figure (these are the cash sales to passengers boarding buses) on Park and Ride with the one for the same period of the previous year therefore, assessing fluctuations in the service usage.
Finance	PKG 002 Income from pay and display car parks per parking space	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Jeff Kitson	Pay and Display income is monitored closely - data collated daily will be used to calculate the income per parking space at each quarter of the financial year. Demonstrating income efficiency and usage in monetary terms.
Learning &	OUT 001.01 Delivery of Integrated	Bi-Annual	N/A	Rob Jarman	Deliver an integrated transport strategy (alongside the Core

KPI Explanations

Development	Transport Strategy				Strategy) in partnership with the transport authorities and operators which will result in joint working to improve and develop an effective and integrated transport network to meet future needs.
Learning & Development	Infrastructure Delivery Plan	Bi-Annual	N/A	Rob Jarman	The Infrastructure Delivery Plan sets out the requirements for infrastructure in the borough and sets priorities for delivery in order to support development.

For Maidstone to be a decent place to live

3. Decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures.

Element	Indicator	Frequency	Good Performance	Responsible Officer	Rationale
Customer	DCV 014 Average time taken to process planning applications (majors, minors, other)	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	Rob Jarman	To ensure local planning authorities determine planning applications in a timely manner. This indicator measures the percentage of planning applications dealt with in a timely manner.
	DCV 003 Percentage of residential planning applications processed within statutory timescales	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Rob Jarman	
Process	HSG 001 Number of affordable homes delivered	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	John Littlemore	To promote an increase in the supply of affordable housing. This indicator shows how many affordable homes have been delivered.
	HSG 002 Number of homes occupied by vulnerable people made decent	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	John Littlemore	This is the number of homes occupied by vulnerable persons that have been made decent by various means throughout the year. The means include: Home Repair Grants, the National Warmfront Scheme, Energy Efficiency Grants (administered through CEN) and through enforcement recommendations.
Finance	DCV 007 Average cost of planning service per application	Annual	Aim to minimise	Rob Jarman	This indicator is to assess value for money in the planning processing expressed per application. Costs will exclude enforcement work.
Finance	HSG 003 Average grant per MCB funded affordable home unit	Annual	N/A	John Littlemore	Total supply of all affordable dwelling completions built or acquired by RSLs (or other bodies) with financial support

KPI Explanations

Appendix B

					(grant) directly from the Council, i.e. all affordable homes delivered via schemes which MBC has contributed to, divided by the total grant paid. This will include any renovations or conversions (resulting in the provision of additional affordable dwellings).
Learning & Development	SPT 004 Percentage of new homes built on previously developed land	Annual	Aim to maximise	Rob Jarman	To encourage the provision of additional housing on previously developed land and through conversions of existing buildings in order to minimise development on green fields.
Learning & Development	OUT 003.03 Homelessness & vulnerable groups	Bi-annual	N/A	John Littlemore	Commission and provide services with partners that meet identified needs, reduce inequalities, are responsive and timely, promote stable, strong communities, self-reliance and encourage positive aspirations.

4. Continues to be a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the Borough.

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Element	Indicator	Frequency	Good Performance	Responsible Officer	Rationale
Customer	DEP 004 Satisfaction with street cleaning (residents survey)	Biennial	Aim to maximise	Jonathan Scott	MBC recognises that the quality of place remains a priority to residents and drives how satisfied people are with their local area as a place to live. These indicators will provide MBC with a baseline of local satisfaction which will help us identify and address the sorts of issues affecting how residents feel about their local area.
Customer	PKS 002 Satisfaction with Parks & Open Spaces (residents survey)	Biennial	Aim to maximise	Jason Taylor	
Customer	DEP 007 Time taken to respond to reports of fly-tipping (clean environment)	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	Jonathan Scott	Fly-tipping is the common term used to describe waste illegally deposited on land as described under Section 33 of the Environment Protection Act 1990. This indicator is to monitor the timely removal of illegal dumping of waste on relevant land and highways.
Process	DCE 001 Percentage of planning enforcement cases signed off within 21 days	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Rob Jarman	To ensure a timely response to planning enforcement.
Process	DEP 002 Local Street & Environmental Cleanliness a) Litter, b) Detritus (NI 195ab)	Annual	Aim to minimise	Jonathan Scott	The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having deposits of litter or detritus that fall below an acceptable level.

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Process	WCN 001 Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting (NI 192)	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Jonathan Scott	The indicator measures percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the Authority for reuse, recycling, composting or anaerobic digestion. This is a key measure of local authorities' progress in moving management of household waste up the hierarchy, consistent with the Government's national strategy for waste management.
Finance	PKS 001 Cost of maintaining the borough's parks and open spaces per head of population	Annual	Aim to minimise	Jason Taylor	To monitor the cost of maintaining the borough's parks and open spaces
Finance	WCN 002 Cost of waste collection per household	Annual	Aim to minimise	Jonathan Scott	To monitor cost of municipal waste disposal, to ensure that good value for money is achieved while delivering a high quality service.
Finance	DEP 003 Cost of street cleansing per head of population	Annual	Aim to minimise	Jonathan Scott	The cost of street cleansing per head of the residents of Maidstone is an indicator to show any changes in the cost of street cleansing.
Learning & Development	WCN 005 Residual Waste per household (kg) (NI 191) (NEW)	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	Jonathan Scott	In line with the position of waste reduction at the top of the waste hierarchy, the Council wishes to see a year on year reduction in the amount of residual waste (through a combination of less overall waste and more reuse, recycling and composting of the waste that households produce). Local authorities have an important role to play in assisting their residents to reduce waste (as well as encouraging sorting of waste for recycling, re-use, home composting and other forms of home treatment of waste).
Learning & Development	CMP 001 Percentage CO2 reduction from local authority operations	Annual	Aim to maximise	Jennifer Hunt	The public sector is in a key position to lead on CO2 emissions reduction by setting a behavioural and strategic example to the private sector and the communities they serve. The aim of this indicator is to measure the progress made by MBC to reduce CO2 emissions from the relevant buildings and transport used to deliver its functions and to encourage them to demonstrate leadership on tackling climate change.

Learning & Development	OUT 004.04 Carbon Management Plan	Bi-annual	N/A	Jennifer Hunt	Deliver the Carbon Management Plan to ensure that the Council reduces it's carbon footprint by 3% per annum. Reduce the Council's carbon footprint and improve the use of other natural resources whilst ensuring the Council is planning to adapt to Climate Change.
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5. Residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced.

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Element	Indicator	Frequency	Good Performance	Responsible Officer	Rationale
Customer	HSG 004 Average time taken to process and notify applicants on housing register	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	John Littlemore	Average time taken to process and notify housing register applicants per month, is measured using the date the application is processed, minus the date the application is received. A letter of notification is automatically sent on date of processing the production of which is included in this indicator. Only working days are counted.
Customer	INT 001 Percentage of the Borough covered by Broadband	Annual	Aim to maximise	Dave Lindsay	A broadband internet connection is increasingly viewed as a vital utility at work and home – the electricity of the 21st century. A largely deregulated market means that broadband services are competitively priced. However, it also makes the provision of these services a commercial decision by Internet Service Providers (ISPs), often favouring the denser urban areas.
Process	R&B 004 Average time taken to process new benefit claims and changes of circumstances	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	Steve McGinnes	HB/CTB of £19bn is paid to over 5 million low income households. Delays in the administration of these benefits can impact on some of the most vulnerable people in our society by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leading to rent arrears and evictions • Preventing access to housing because landlords are reluctant to rent to HB customers

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					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acting as a deterrent to people moving off benefits into work because of the disruption to their claim
Process	HSG 005 Number of households presented from becoming homeless through intervention	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	John Littlemore	To measure the effectiveness of housing advice in preventing homelessness or the threat of homelessness. Under section 179(1) of the Housing Act 1996 part VII, as amended by the Housing Act 2002, housing authorities have a duty to ensure that advice and information about homelessness and prevention of homelessness are available free of charge to anyone in their district.
Process	MFM 001a Number of families accepted onto the Maidstone Families Matter programme b) Percentage of those accepted engaged with (NEW)	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Ellie Kershaw	Troubled families are those that have problems and cause problems to the community around them, putting high costs on the public sector. The government is committed to working with local authorities and their partners to help 120,000 troubled families in England turn their lives around by 2015.
Finance	LVE 007 Gap between median wage of employee (residents) and the median wage of employees (workplace) (salary differences)	Annual	Aim to minimise	John Foster	Proxy indicator measure for increases in standard of living but also a measure of economic competitiveness with knowledge driven industries requiring higher skilled labour force and able to pay higher wages. Resident based wage levels in Maidstone are higher than the workplace based levels suggesting lower skilled and lower wage level local economy.
Learning & Development	CDP 003 Percentage of residents participating in neighbourhood planning as a percentage of the ward population	Annual	Aim to maximise	Sarah Robson	Resident participation is important for successful neighbourhood planning. This indicator assesses what percentage of the ward population have been involved and participated in the process.
Learning & Development	KCC 002 Number of 16-18 year old who are not in education, employment or training	Annual	Aim to maximise	Ellie Kershaw	Non- participation in education, employment or training is a major predictor of later unemployment, low income, depression, involvement in crime and poor mental health.
Learning & Development	E&S 003 Number of NEETs tracked to employment	Quarterly	Aim to maximise		
Learning & Development	Community Development Strategy	Bi-annual	N/A	Sarah Robson	Establish a social return on investment model for the delivery of the Community Development Strategy to identify how and ensure that our community development services add value.

Corporate and Customer Excellence

Outcomes by 2015:

6. Services are customer focused and residents are satisfied with them. (Customer & Resident Scorecard)

Element	Indicator	Frequency	Good Performance	Responsible Officer	Rationale
Customer	COM 001 Percentage of residents satisfied with the way the Council runs it's services	Biennial	Aim to maximise	Roger Adley	MBC recognises that the quality of place remains a priority to residents and can influence how satisfied people are with their local area as a place to live. These indicators will provide MBC with an indication of local satisfaction which will help them identify and make improvements to the borough and to how services are delivered.
Customer	Percentage of residents satisfied with key services: WCN 003 Doorstep recycling WCN 004 Refuse collection PKS 003 Maidstone Leisure Centre PKS 002 Parks and open spaces DEP 004 Street cleanliness	Biennial	Aim to maximise	Jonathan Scott & Jason Taylor	
Customer	R&B 009 Percentage of customers satisfied with benefits service	Annual	Aim to maximise	Steve McGinnes	The indicator is intended to gage the level of customer satisfaction with how the benefit service operates.
Process	COM 007 Percentage of residents that feel that the Council keeps them well informed about the services and benefits it provides.	Biennial	Aim to maximise	Roger Adley	One of MBC's key roles is to provide advice, therefore it is important to ensure that residents and customers can easily access and understand the information that we provide. These indicators demonstrate the levels of satisfaction with of our communications.
Process	CTC 001 Average wait time for calls (against a target of 50 seconds)	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	Sandra Marchant	This indicator is the average wait time a customer telephoning the Contact Centre has to wait before being answered by a Customer Service Advisor.
Process	CTC 002 Percentage of customers to the Gateway seen within 20 minutes	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Sandra Marchant	This indicator is the percentage of visitors to the Gateway responded to within 20 minutes by a Customer Service Advisor. The aim is to keep customers wait times to a minimum and to improve access to Council services.
Finance	Percentage of residents agreeing that the Council provides value for money (Residents Survey) (NEW)	Biennial	Aim to maximise	Paul Riley & Roger Adley	This indicator measures the extent to which resident is feel that the Council is providing value for money. The Council has a duty provide services that are cost efficient.
Learning &	C&S 002 Percentage of those making	Quarterly	Aim to	Angela	These indicators monitor how timely we respond to

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Element	Indicator	Frequency	Good Performance	Responsible Officer	Rationale
Development	complaints satisfied with how their complaint was handled		maximise	Woodhouse	complaint and to gage the level of customer satisfaction with the complaints process.
	C&S 001 Percentage of complaints responded to within timeframe (NEW)	Quarterly	Aim to maximise		

7. Effective, cost efficient services are delivered across the borough.

Element	Indicator	Frequency	Good Performance	Responsible Officer	Rationale
Customer	WCN 006 Number of missed bins per 100,000 collections	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	Jonathan Scott	This indicator monitors the performance of the contractor and ensures that the service delivers quality and that changes are communicated properly to residents.
Customer	DCV 009 Percentage of decisions taken under delegation	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Rob Jarman	This is the percentage of planning decision that have been undertaken by Officers without going through Planning Committee.
Process	R&B 006 Percentage of Council tax collected	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Steve McGinnes	These two indicators monitor the collection of Council Tax and NDNR against the target, the collection of which is a key local authority function.
Process	R&B 005 Percentage of business rates collected	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Steve McGinnes	
Process	BIM 003 Percentage of customer contacts made a) In person in Gateway b) by visiting the councils website c) by phone through contact centre (NEW)	Quarterly	Aim to maximise web and minimise gateway and phone	Georgia Hawkes	Measuring contacts to the council via all channels is an important part of understanding how residents like to contact us and whether these preferences are changing. Analysis of these figures will also show any increased use of the contact channels that provide best value for money.
Process	BIM 004 Reduction in the number of out-going post items (NEW)	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Georgia Hawkes	This indicator relates to the customer service improvement programme.
Finance	R&B 007 Value of fraud identified (Housing benefits) (Efficiency)	Quarterly	Aim to maximise	Steve McGinnes	To demonstrate the efficiency of the Revenues and Benefits team in identifying fraud.

KPI Explanations

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Finance	BIM 002 Percentage of financial transactions not carried out on-line or by direct debit/standing order	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	Georgia Hawkes	This is a test of value for money. Payments made on-line or by direct debit, standing order or direct credit cost the Council much less to process than payments made over the phone or cash or cheques sent in the post or deposited at the payment kiosks.
Learning & Development	CTC 004 Percentage of customer contact that is avoidable (NI 14).	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	Sandra Marchant	This indicator measures the percentage of contact with the Council that is deemed avoidable i.e could be obtained through another channel, for example phone calls regarding information that is available on the website.
Learning & Development	HRO 001 Working Days Lost Due to Sickness Absence (rolling year) (BV 12)	Quarterly	Aim to minimise	Dena Smart	To monitor the level of sickness absence in local authorities.
Learning & Development	Corporate Improvement Plan	Biannual	N/A	Georgia Hawkes	Deliver the actions set out in the Corporate Improvement Plan. Actions are derived from various sources including external and efficiency reviews.

Action Plan Objective: To increase the overall employment rate in the borough

Updates on these actions will be reported with the Quarterly Key Performance Indicator Reports

Activities	Details	Allocated to Officer	Start date	Deadline
Deliver work experience scheme	This is already running internally the next phase is to extend the scheme to the wider business community. A coffee morning is due to be held in October.	Jennifer Sibley	November 2013	Ongoing Review March 2013
Steps to Employment mentoring programme	There are 5 young people currently on the mentoring programme.	Jennifer Sibley	January 2013	Ongoing Review March 2013
Hold Maidstone Employment & Skills Forum Jobs fair	In collaboration with Golding Homes and Job Centre Plus	Jennifer Sibley	1 st held April 2013	Next due 12 th September 2013
Youth Radio at Switch Cafe	Young people to run radio with links to the media and communications industry for work placements. Provides broadcasting experience.	Jennifer Sibley	Started	March 2014
Training providers database	Bespoke matching service for people looking for work with organisations offering something suitable.	Jennifer Sibley	April 2013	In place by October 2013
Skills Exchange Hub Investigation	Promotes skills recycling between businesses. Short term vacancies with aim of up skilling staff.	Jennifer Sibley	Started	October 2013
Exploration of routes into Health and Social Care	To address future shortages, identifying whether a sector based route work academy is feasible.	Jennifer Sibley	November 2013	March 2015
Inspiring the future	100 day campaign to get businesses to sign up to give one hour a year to provide careers advice to school children. Campaign will run from 9 th September until Christmas	Jennifer Sibley	July 2013	December 2013
KICK - Entrepreneurship and Social Enterprise (Enhance business start-up)	In Partnership with Ashford Council, KCC and the Chamber of Commerce. Launched on 17 th July	John Foster	June 2013	June 2014
Enterprise Hub	In partnership with KCC. Consultant	John Foster	May 2013	Ongoing until

Activities	Details	Allocated to Officer	Start date	Deadline
	commissioned to write funding bid for submission by 19 August. Decision would be expected in December			funding confirmed

Agenda Item 9

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND CORPORATE SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

3RD SEPTEMBER 2013

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF POLICY AND COMMUNICATIONS

Report prepared by Sam Bailey

1. REVIEW OF COMPLAINTS APRIL-JUNE 2013

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider the Council's performance in dealing with complaints during April-June 2013.

1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Change and Scrutiny

1.2.1 It is recommended that

a) the Committee notes the performance in relation to complaints and agrees action as appropriate; and

b) the Committee note the compliments received by teams and individual officers within the Council.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 In order to ensure that complaints are being dealt with effectively and within corporate timescales it is important that a monitoring mechanism is in place.

1.3.2 Details of the complaints received broken down by service area, timeliness and category can be found at Appendix A. Complaints have been categorised, but many complaints will be about more than one element (e.g. both policy and staff attitude).

1.4 Quarter 1 Performance

1.4.1 During the period April-June 2013, 94 **Stage 1** complaints were closed, of which 90 (95.70%) were responded to in time. In terms of complaints closed on time, performance increased by 1% this quarter compared to Q4 of 2012-2013. There has also been a 62% increase in number of complaints compared to last quarter.

However compared to quarter 1 of 2012/2013 this represents a decrease in complaints of 32%.

1.4.2 Of the complaints responded to outside the target time:

- Two were about Environmental Enforcement
- One was about Parking Services
- One was about Revenues

1.4.3 The reasons for these complaints being responded to out of time were:

- Of the two Environmental Enforcement complaints responded to late:
 - One was responded to late due to an scheduling error by an Officer
 - One was closed late because further information was being sought from the complainant in order to fully investigate allegations made, however this information was not provided
- The complaint responded to late by Parking Services was because the complaint was originally allocated to the wrong department
- The complaint responded to late by Revenues was actually a complaint about several departments, requiring a co-ordinated response. This resulted in the response being sent out a day late

1.5 Trends Identified and Action Taken

1.5.1 The services which dealt with the most number of complaints were:

- Waste Services (17)
- Revenues (16)
- Housing Services (13)
- Development Management (11)
- Parking Services (10)
- Environmental Enforcement (7)

1.5.2 It should be noted that all of these services, except environmental enforcement, saw an increase in complaints compared to quarter 4 of 2012-2013. However there has been a 62% increase in complaints overall across the council compared to quarter 4 of 2012-2013.

1.5.3 There were no services with particularly high numbers of complaints this quarter; however there are a number of trends that

can be noticed quarter to quarter.

- 1.5.4 Waste Services had the highest number of complaints this quarter with 17. Of these complaints nine were about service, four were about waste and recycling policies, one was about time taken, two were about lack of contact and one was about discrimination. There were no clear trends within these complaints. Although Waste Services received the highest number of complaints, they made nearly 2,000,000 waste collections this quarter. This means only 0.0009% of collections resulted in a complaint.
- 1.5.5 Revenues received sixteen complaints this quarter. Of these complaints, eleven were about service, four were about policy and one was about lack of contact. Of the four policy complaints, two were about the new rules around council tax exemptions for empty properties, one was complaining various services and asking whether we were going to reduce council tax and the final complaint was about not being able to claim single person discount in a property when actually the property was empty. The number of complaints received by Revenues is a significant increase compared to quarter 4 of 2012-2013, when only five were received; and quarter 1 of 2012-2013 when nine complaints were received. The reason for this increase in complaints is the localisation of the council tax benefit scheme. This has meant many people have become liable to pay council tax who have never had to pay before. For example, there are 941 summonses for court in August for people who were previously on full Council Tax Benefit, but have not paid council tax now they are liable for it. A correction was made following a complaint to revenues- a customer spotted that an incorrect bank account number was printed on the back of the council tax bill. This error has now been rectified.
- 1.5.6 Of the 13 complaints Housing Services received, six of them were about the new allocation scheme. This spike in complaints was forecast in the Q4 report. Other than this there were no trends with complaints for Housing Services. One complaint about administrative issues with a temporary accommodation provider led to Housing Options working with the temporary accommodation provider to prevent the error happening again.
- 1.5.7 Development Management received eleven complaints this quarter. Of these complaints, three were about service, four were about policy and four were about lack of contact. Of the four complaints about lack of contact, three were justified. Development Management received the most complaints about lack of contact this quarter. There were two complaints about the pre application advice service, both of which resulted in refunds:

- One complaint was about a lack of contact from the pre application advice service, along with delays in processing the advice application. This resulted in the complainant losing the listed building they were considering buying. The fees were refunded in this case.
- One complainant was not happy with the advice given as pre application advice; which was to make a full planning application; because we had not requested further information to give a full assessment. The fee was refunded to the customer at stage 2. This stage 2 was carried out in Q2 of 2013-2014 and will be reported in the complaints report for that quarter.

Other than this there were no clear trends in the complaints for Development Management.

1.5.8 Parking Services received ten complaints this quarter. Of these, two were about service, four were about policy, three were about staff and one was about time taken. There were no overall trends for this quarter, but several complaints resulted in actions taken:

- A complainant complained that Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) were not checking rear windows for pay and display tickets. As a result the Parking Services manager reminded CEOs in person to check rear windows for tickets; and two Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) were rescinded.
- A complainant was not happy that their daughter was being charged a full year's fee for a residents parking permit when it was only valid for two months. The process for administering resident permits is currently being reviewed. A system of virtual permits is being considered which would prevent this problem from occurring.
- There were two complaints relating to PCNs issued to building contractors leaving vehicles behind hoardings on St Faith's street. In both cases disciplinary action was taken against CEOs who issued these PCNs as the PCNs were wrongly issued and entering the hoardings breached building site health and safety rules.

1.5.9 Environmental Enforcement received seven complaints this quarter. All of these were about staff conduct. This represents a decrease in complaints compared to quarter 4 of 2012-2013, when they received eight complaints. Of the complaints about staff conduct relating to CEOs:

- In five cases CCTV bodycam footage was reviewed by an Environmental Enforcement Officer, and the CEOs were found to have behaved correctly.
- In one case, a CEO entered a training centre to pursue an offender who had run away from the CEO. The CEO did not follow the correct procedures for entering premises in this case. The Environmental Enforcement manager has spoken to the CEO involved and has ensured they are clear on their responsibilities during similar situations in the future.

The remaining complaint about staff conduct was a complaint alleging the Environmental Enforcement Manager hung up the phone on the complainant, however this complaint was not upheld as the Environmental Enforcement Manager was found to have been in a meeting at the time.

- 1.5.10 A complaint received by Environmental Services led to the consideration of a service improvement. A complainant complained that the council did not have the equipment or process in place to scan dead animals for ID chips in order to inform owners. As a result of this complaint the process was reviewed, a scanner has now been purchased and a new process has been put into place when dealing with dead domestic animals. The complaint was then informed of how their complaint had resulted in a service improvement. The complainant has since sent a letter of thanks back that is covered in more detail in paragraph 1.9.1.

1.6 Stage 2 Complaints

- 1.6.1 There were 23 stage 2 complaints processed this quarter. Of these complaints, 22 were closed within 20 working days, which is the corporate timescale for responding to stage 2 complaints. The reason that one stage 2 complaint was closed out of time was because the complaints system generated the wrong deadline for this complaint. A breakdown of Stage 2 complaints can be found at Appendix C.
- 1.6.2 Of these stage 2 complaints, eleven were justified. Of the eleven justified complaints, six resulted in refunds or payments to the complainant.
- 1.6.3 The number of Stage 2 complaints has increased sharply compared to quarter 4 of 2012-2013. Twelve stage 2 complaints were received during quarter 4 of 2012-2013; which means this quarter's result represents a 92% increase. However it must be noted that during quarter 4 of 2012/2013 the Council received an extremely low overall number of complaints. 54 Stage 2 complaints were received in total last year, however 20 of these

complaints were received in the first quarter. The number of Stage 2s will be monitored by the Policy and Performance team to assess whether this is a cyclical trend or a genuine increase.

1.7 Complaint Handling Satisfaction

1.7.1 A breakdown of complaints satisfaction surveys can be found at Appendix B. For April-June 2013 80 surveys were sent out, and ten were returned, representing a 13% response rate.

1.7.2 The Performance team have introduced a new process for sending out and reporting on complaints satisfaction surveys. Satisfaction surveys will now be sent out weekly. As part of this new process there is a cut off date for complaints surveys to be counted in the quarterly report. Although some satisfaction surveys for June were received back in July and August, they were received past the cut off date and they will now be counted in the quarter 2 report. This will be highlighted in the quarter 2 report.

1.7.3 70% of respondents were dissatisfied or very dissatisfied, 10% of respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied and 20% of respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the handling of their complaint.

1.7.4 Some complainants made comments on their satisfaction surveys:

- One complainant requested a Stage 2 complaint, which was duly carried out.
- One complainant who was complaining about a missed bin claimed their complaint was not resolved as they had to wait for the next collection. The complaint response had asked the complainant to contact Waste Services if their bin was full. However no subsequent contact was had with the complainant until the complaints satisfaction survey was received.
- One complainant who complained about lack of contact from the planning department and time taken to decide a planning application said they felt their complaint was not answered and that they were disappointed that there was no 'offer of redress'. The application's decision was a month overdue, however had been determined by the time the complaint had been received. There was no evidence that the complainant was put in a detrimental position because of this case so was not entitled to compensation. The response addressed all issues and apologised for the length of time taken to respond to the complainant and the lack of contact from officers.

- One complainant said that they found the process to be dismissive however; this complainant was complaining on behalf of her sister and we were not able to discuss the matter with the complainant without her sister's written permission.

1.8 Safety, Discrimination and Vexatious Complainants

1.8.1 Three complaints received this quarter were about **safety**:

- One complaint was about a CEO from Parking Services entering a hoarding to issue a PCN. This contravened site health and safety rules as the area within the hoarding was classed as a building site. Disciplinary action was taken against the CEO.
- One complaint was about a footpath on Mote Park that had been damaged due to tree roots, resulting in the complainant's daughter falling over and injuring herself. An inspection was carried out but it was not deemed necessary for remedial work to be carried out.
- One complaint was about a faulty roundabout within a council play area resulting in the complainant having an accident while supervising their child. The complainant also raised health and safety concerns over the way workmen repaired the roundabout and concerns that sufficient checks were not being carried out regularly enough to recognise when play equipment is faulty. The complainant was assured that play equipment is inspected regularly by council officers and independently by the council's insurers; and that the correct procedures were followed when repairing the roundabout. The risk assessment for this piece of equipment was reviewed in light of this complaint, but it was not deemed necessary to inspect the item more regularly.

1.8.2 Two complaints were *primarily* about **alleged discrimination** or about unfair disadvantage for people with protected characteristics:

- One complaint claimed that the council's garden waste bin policy discriminated against those on low incomes because of the cost. The complainant was assured that this was not the case, and that if cost was an issue there were options to lower the costs such as sharing a bin with a neighbour or disposing of the waste themselves at facilities where it is free of charge to do so.
- One complaint was that the needs of blind and partially sighted people were not taken into account when designing the regeneration of the High Street due to the poor provision

of crossing points. The complainant was assured that disabled people, including those who were blind and partially sighted, were included in the focus groups when consulting on the scheme. This complaint was logged as a policy complaint, but was actually a complaint about alleged discrimination.

1.8.3 Three complaints had claims within them comments regarding **alleged discrimination** or about unfair disadvantage for people with protected characteristics, but discrimination was not the primary issue:

- One complaint was about Parking Services. The complainant alleged that a CEO was intimidating and aggressive toward her. Later in the complaint the complainant claimed that she was discriminated against because she is disabled. The CEO was interviewed and it was found that the complainant had verbally abused the CEO during the incident, and the Parking Services manager was satisfied that the CEO conducted themselves properly during this incident. However the Officer's conduct is being monitored. The complainant's parking ticket was upheld because the complainant had contravened parking regulations.
- One complaint was about Benefits. However the complainant also raised the issue that they felt discriminated against because despite being born in Maidstone and having previous generations of his family from the borough; people from outside the borough were able to get housing and not him. Despite the fact we have a new housing allocation system that requires a local connection this point was not addressed in the response.
- One complaint was about a CEO from Environmental Enforcement. The complainant was unhappy that whilst being issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice, the CEO did not move on passers by who were making discriminatory comments about her. However CCTV bodycam footage of the incident was reviewed and the Officer was found to have conducted themselves in a cordial and professional manner throughout the incident and fulfilled their responsibilities.

1.8.4 There were two complaints received from **unreasonably persistent complainants** this quarter. One was about Planning Enforcement and one was about Housing Services. Both complaints were received from the same persistent complainant. Neither complaint was justified.

1.9 Compliments

1.9.1 Many **compliments** have also been received by the Council this quarter:

- Waste Services received eight compliments this quarter. The compliments were about:
 - Quick service delivering garden waste bins and picking up missed bins.
 - Thanking the waste collection crews for a friendly, efficient service and going beyond their remit to help people.
 - Excellent service provided when ordering a bulky item collection.
- Bereavement Services received on compliment, thanking them for helping out with information on a friend's funeral.
- Communications received a compliment about an Officer within the department, thanking for all their help in organising the Spring Market.
- Customer services received three compliments:
 - One was thanking an Officer in the contact centre for how helpful, polite and professional they were in dealing the customer's enquiry.
 - One was thanking customer services in general as every time the customer has had contact it has been dealt with really well.
 - One was thanking everyone in Housing Services and Customer Services, as they have helped the customer get re-housed.
- Revenues received two compliments:
 - One was thanking an Officer for a swift service in dealing with a council tax enquiry.
 - One was thanking the revenues team for a quick reply to an enquiry.
- Parking Services received a compliment saying that each time they have had to call they have received lots of help.
- Parks and Leisure received two compliments:
 - One compliment was about how great the customer thought the new play area at Cobtree park is.
 - One compliment was thanking an Officer for their assistance in helping to locate a missing child.
- A compliment was received from a customer wishing to thank everyone in Building Control and the Conservation Officer who were involved in the building of their dream home.
- Benefits received a compliment thanking them for being really helpful and understanding whilst dealing with their benefit claim.

- A compliment was received via twitter for Environmental Enforcement, thanking them for a quick response to a noise complaint.
- Depot Operations received a compliment about how well they carried out a litter pick, commenting that the area was sparkling after they had finished.
- Depot Operations received a thank you letter due to a service improvement as the result of complaint (detailed in paragraph 1.5.10). The letter stated 'I wanted to thank you for taking my concerns seriously and for updating me with regards to the changes in your procedures for the removal of dead domestic animals...I am sure this will be welcome news to all pet owners within the borough'.

1.9.2 The contact centre received one complaint and three compliments, giving it a 3:1 ratio of compliments to complaints.

1.9.3 Bereavement Services received one compliment this quarter, but received no complaints.

1.10 Methods of Contact

1.10.1 Five complaint records did not have a method of contact filled in. A briefing will be sent out to staff who use the complaints system, reminding them to fill in this part of the complaints form. Of the complaints with method of contact information provided:

- 32 (34%) were made by email
- 11 (12%) were made face to face
- 18 (19%) were made by post
- 28 (30%) were made by telephone

1.11 Payments

1.11.1 The details of payments, compensation, refunds and cancelled charges as a result of complaints in April-June 2013 are set out in Appendix D

1.12 Answers to questions raised at the Strategic Services and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6th August 2013

1.12.1 The committee asked for a definition of an unreasonable or unreasonably persistent complainant. The draft unreasonable and unreasonably persistent complainants policy came to this committee on 9th April 2013. The policy defined unreasonable or unreasonably persistent complainants as:

'Those complainants who, because of the nature or frequency of their contacts with an organisation, hinder the organisation's consideration of their, or other people's, complaints.'

This definition is the same as the Local Government Ombudsman's definition in their guidance note to managing unreasonable complainant behaviour.

It is also important to note that unreasonable or unreasonably persistent complainants could have a negative impact on service delivery due to using a disproportionate amount of resources to deal with their complaints.

1.12.2 The committee asked what follow up actions are taken when a complainant returns a complaint handling satisfaction survey stating that they are 'very dissatisfied'. The Performance team only follow up 'very dissatisfied' complainants if the complainant has left a reason why they are very dissatisfied with the handling of their complaint in the comment box on the survey. If there are issues to be addressed then they are followed up.

1.12.3 It is important, however, to separate the handling of the complaint with the outcome of the complaint. The survey is asking the complainant if they were satisfied with the way their complaint was handled, not whether they are satisfied with the outcome of their complaint. Often, respondents that return surveys that are 'very dissatisfied' are actually dissatisfied with the outcome of their complaint, not the complaints process itself. In these cases the Performance team offer the complainant a stage 2 investigation of their complaint.

1.13 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.13.1 The Council could choose not to monitor complaints handling but this would impact severely on the Council's ability to use complaints as a business improvement tool.

1.14 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.14.1 Customer service is a core value and one of the Council's priorities is Corporate and Customer Excellence. Management of complaints is critical to the success of this objective.

1.15 Risk Management

1.15.1 Failure to manage complaints in a robust fashion represents a service, financial and reputational risk to the Council. Regular

reports are produced for CLT and also presented to the Corporate Services and Strategic Leadership Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Monitoring is carried out by the Research and Performance Officer.

1.16 Other Implications

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

1.16.1 Financial Implications

All financial implications are set out in Appendix D

Staffing Implications

Complaints this quarter have led to staffing implications, including disciplinary action against staff.

1.17 Appendices

Appendix A – Quarter 1 2013-2014 Complaints Categorisation and Timeliness

Appendix B – Quarter 1 2013-2014 Complaints Satisfaction Surveys

Appendix C- Quarter 1 2013-2014 Stage 2 Complaints

Appendix D- Quarter 1 2013-2014 Payments

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:

.....

Appendix A: Quarter 1 2013-2014 Complaints Categorisation and Timeliness

Service	Number	On time	Late	% on time (rounded to no decimal places)	Service	Policy	Staff	Time taken	Lack of contact	Discrimination
Benefits*	5	5	0	100%	3	0	1	1	0	0
Building Control	1	1	0	100%	0	1	0	0	0	0
Communications	1	1	0	100%	1	0	0	0	0	0
Contact Centre	1	1	0	100%	0	0	1	0	0	0
Corporate Property	1	1	0	100%	0	0	0	0	1	0
Depot	2	2	0	100%	1	0	0	1	0	0
Development Management	11	11	0	100%	3	4	0	0	4	0
Economic Development**	1	1	0	100%	0	1	0	0	0	0
Environmental Enforcement	7	5	2	71%	0	0	7	0	0	0
Environmental Services	1	1	0	100%	0	0	0	1	0	0
Grounds Maintenance	1	1	0	100%	1	0	0	0	0	0
Housing Services	13	13	0	85%	1	6	3	1	2	0
Parking Services	10	9	1	90%	2	4	3	1	0	0
Parks and Leisure	4	4	0	100%	1	1	1	1	0	0
Planning Enforcement	2	2	0	100%	1	0	0	0	1	0
Revenues	16	15	1	94%	11	4	0	1	0	0
Waste Services	17	17	0	100%	9	4	0	1	2	1
TOTAL	94	90	4	96%	34	25	16	8	10	1

* Two complaints were responded to on time for this service over the telephone, however official responses were sent out late and the complaints were recorded as closed out of time on the system

**Although this complaint was about policy and was logged as a policy complaint, the complaint was primarily that a policy was discriminatory

Appendix B: Quarter 1 2013-2014 Complaints satisfaction survey responses

Service	Total	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Benefits	1	0	0	0	1	0
Corporate Property	1	0	0	0	0	1
Development Management	2	0	1	0	0	1
Environmental Enforcement	1	0	0	0	0	1
Housing	2	0	1	0	0	1
Waste Collection	2	0	0	1	0	1
Revenues	1	0	0	0	0	1
TOTAL	10	0	2	1	1	6

Appendix C: Quarter 1 2013-2014 Stage 2 Complaints

Service	Number of S2s	Number Justified	Number Unjustified	Number resulting in payments	Sum of payments given
Benefits	2	1	1	1	£40
Building Control	1	0	1	0	-
Customer Services	1	0	1	0	-
Development Management	4	2	2	2	£180
Economic Development	2	1	1	0	-
Environmental Services	1	1	0	0	-
Environmental Health	1	0	1	0	-
Housing	3	0	3	0	-
Parking Services	2	1	1	0	-
Planning Enforcement	1	1	0	0	-
Revenues	4	4	0	3	£200
Waste Services	1	0	1	0	-
TOTAL	23	11	12	6	£420

Appendix D: Quarter 1 2013-2014 Complaints Payments

Service	Stage	Amount	Reason
Benefits	2	£40	Time and trouble payment due to length of time it took to resolve case
Development Management	1	£180	Refund of pre-application fee as advice was given too late and complainant unable to purchase property
Parking Services	1	2x£50	2 PCNs waived as CEOs did not check rear window of complainants care where valid pay and display ticket was displayed
Revenues	2	£50	Time and trouble payment due to being misadvised of responsibilities for registration of new property for council tax account
Development Management	2	£60	Refund of fee for pre-application enquiry as payment was lost and service not given
Development Management	2	£120	Refund of pre-application advice fee as the council did not seek enough information from applicant to give informed advice
Revenues	2	£50	Time and trouble payment due to length of time taken to resolve the case
Revenues	2	£100	Court fees removed from Council Tax account due to court fees being wrongly allocated
Total		£700	

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 3 September 2013

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012-13

Report prepared by Orla Sweeney, Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012-13

- 1.1 The Maidstone Borough Council Constitution states "Overview and Scrutiny Committees may report annually to the full Council on their workings and make recommendations for future work programmes and amended working methods if appropriate" (Part One, Article 6:03(d)).
- 1.2 In the 2012-2013 Municipal Year there were three Overview and Scrutiny Committees; Corporate Services, Communities, and Regeneration and Economic Development.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to agree the report subject to recommendations as appropriate to enable the report to be seen by full Council for approval.
- 2.2 In light of the recent Governance Review the Committee may wish to consider the structure and presentation of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report and makes recommendations to enable the document to be refreshed. Members may wish to consider:
 - The length of the report;
 - The way in which topics and areas of investigation are currently presented;
 - Who the report should be written for? and
 - What information should be included?

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The attached report (**Appendix A**) summarises the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees during 2012-13 and highlights key issues for 2013-14 and beyond.
- 3.2 Successful Scrutiny outcomes are governed by four principles:
 - Ensures scrutiny provides 'critical friend' challenge to executive policy-makers;
 - Enables the voice and concerns of the public and its communities;
 - Makes an impact on the delivery of public services; and

- Is carried out by independent minded governors who take the lead and own the scrutiny process.

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

4.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the Council's priorities. The terms of reference of each Scrutiny Committee in 2012-13 were aligned to a priority and this structure has remained for the Municipal Year.

- Regeneration and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny - 'For Maidstone to have a growing economy';
- Communities Overview and Scrutiny - 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live'; and
- Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny - 'Corporate and Customer Excellence'.



Keeping an eye on
Maidstone

Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012-13

Foreword from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Chairmen

The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees this year has been against the backdrop of the Governance Review which concerns itself with the very essence of how best to involve as many Councillors as possible in both policy development and investigation. The RED Committee chose, as its main topic, to consider the location of Maidstone's Visitor Information Centre and this subject became implicitly intertwined with considerations about the future of the Town Hall. Such a subject roused Members to participate in such numbers that are rarely seen! There must be a lesson here somewhere about choosing topics that really matter?

The regular meeting were held bi-monthly this year and although we did hold interim meetings as required I am sure that this schedule meant momentum was lost and I sincerely hope that next year will return to the certainty of regular monthly slots.

We also spent a significant part of our year assisting with discussions to help shape the Core Strategy and associated ingredients including Transport Strategy.

On behalf of the RED Committee I would like to thank the O & S support team for

all of their hard work and assistance over the last year.



Councillor David Burton, Chairman Regeneration and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2012-13

During 2012/3 the Communities and Overview Committee have made contributions to a variety of health consultations. The Committee provided feedback to the Kent Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and the Kent Community Health NHS Trust. The impact of these changes will be felt across the borough and should provide better integration of health services for all residents.

Following the move of the CCTV control room to Medway a six month review was undertaken. It was pleasing to learn that there were no problems relating to the transfer and all operations were running effectively.

The impact of the anticipated Welfare Reform was considered by the committee. This will need to be reviewed again as further changes relating to benefit payments come into effect.

I would like to express my sincere thanks to all members and substitute members of the committee for their input and energy.

Our scrutiny officer Orla Sweeney deserves particular thanks for arranging additional meetings, ensuring agendas are produced in a timely fashion and making sure all recommendations are followed up.



Councillor Annabelle Blackmore, Chairman Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee 2012-13

(To be included: foreword from Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Chairman)

Introduction

Overview and Scrutiny
Annual Report 2012/13

What is Scrutiny?

All local authorities operating a Cabinet and Scrutiny model have a Cabinet made up of the Leader of the Council and up to nine members of his Group. All executive decisions (i.e. those needed to implement the Policy Framework and Budget approved by the County Council) are taken by the Cabinet.

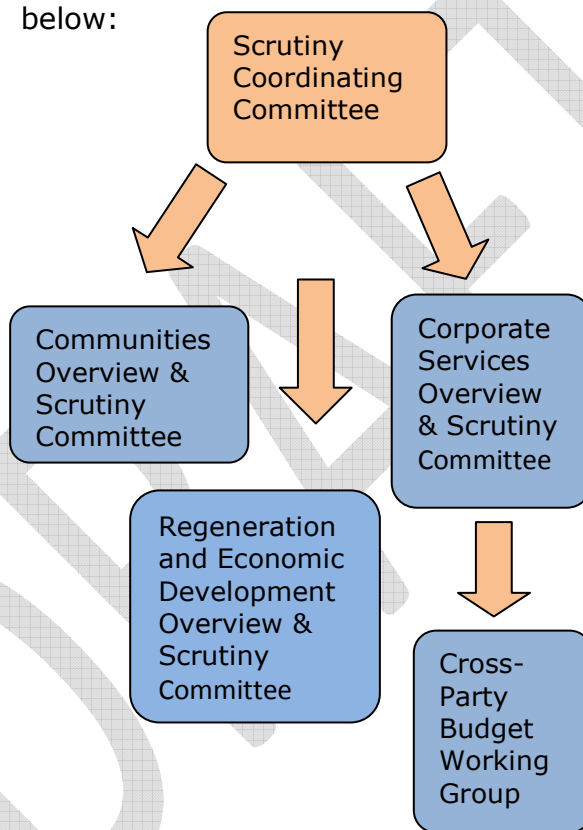
Overview and Scrutiny bodies are not "decision making" bodies but are bodies which monitor and influence those that are. The Overview and Scrutiny role, carried out by non-Cabinet members, is designed to support the work of the Council in the following ways:

- Reviewing and scrutinising decisions taken by the Cabinet (sometimes known as acting as a "critical friend");
- Considering aspects of the Council's performance;
- Assisting in research, policy review and development;
- Involving itself with external organisations operating in the borough to ensure that the interests of local people are

enhanced by collaborative working; and

- Providing a means of involving the community in the Council's work.

The Structure of the Overview and Scrutiny system in Maidstone is set out below:



The Corporate Services, Communities and Regeneration and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committees scrutinise the Council's functions in relation to the relevant departments, as appropriate to the

Committee's term of reference which are each aligned to one of the Council's three corporate priorities. The Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee also scrutinises the activities of NHS bodies which has responsibility for commissioning and providing health care services.

The Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee comprises of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of all three Overview and Scrutiny Committees. It has overall responsibility for overview and scrutiny including terms of reference, budget and progress of reviews. It is also responsible for addressing cross-cutting issues and to prevent duplication in the work of individual committees.

The Budget Working Group was a recommendation of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 'the Council as a business?' review undertaken during the 2011/12 Municipal Year. It was felt that a cross-party Budget Working Group, appointed from the membership of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee would help improve the Committee's understanding of ongoing budgetary issues and allow the Committee opportunity for greater input in developing the budget strategy and the budget setting process looking in depth at certain aspects.

Key Outcomes from work undertaken during the past year

Governance Review

The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee at the end of the 2011/12 Municipal Year considered a review of the overview and scrutiny structure. In light of the wider implications of the Localism Act, some members view of backbench member engagement in decision making and a motion to council to review returning to the committee system, it was agreed that there should be a review of the governance model for the council.

The Coordinating Committee considered whether there should be a scrutiny led review of governance and set up a joint working group to carry this out.

The review included in depth research and evaluation of alternative governance arrangements at other local authorities as well as interviews with Cabinet Members Senior Officers and a broad, cross section of Members.

In February 2013 the working group gave a presentation at Council with four options to consider. It was agreed that option C, Retain Cabinet System with enhanced Scrutiny be taken forward. Furthermore it was requested that the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee develop the model and proposals for implementation to be considered at the April Council meeting.

In developing an enhanced scrutiny model the Coordinating considered and investigated the following areas:

- The Overview and Scrutiny Model;
- Vision for Scrutiny;
- Cabinet Member Accountability;
- The role of Scrutiny Chairmen;
- Pre and Post decision Scrutiny;
- Continuous Professional Development;
- Approach to the Work Programme; and
- Support for Scrutiny.

It considered different options for an enhanced scrutiny secure but resoled that an extra Committee should be created so that each Cabinet Portfolios could be aligned to a Scrutiny Committee, providing its terms of reference. A key recommendation made

by the Coordinating Committee in its proposal was that the Spatial Planning Advisory Group and the Housing Consultative Board be subsumed into scrutiny to avoid duplication and strengthen the scrutiny process. Looking ahead to the 2013-14 Municipal Year it has been agreed that there will be four new Overview and scrutiny Committees and the Spatial Planning Advisory Group and the Housing Consultative Board will cease to exist.

Scrutiny of Health Bodies

In April 2013 the structure of the NHS changed dramatically. The Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee identified Health as a key area to look at during the 2012/13 Municipal Year. From April 2013 Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) would commission health services including General Practitioner (GPs) and community and hospital services. These services had historically been commissioned by Primary Care Trusts (PCTs).

The Committee invited key representatives from the West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group to update it on key changes.

The Committee felt it was important that

organisations worked together with the Council to determine local priorities and recommended that Maidstone Borough Council take the lead on this by engaging with all GPs as early as possible.

The Committee responded to two key consultations; the Kent Community health NHS Trust's Consultation on becoming an NHS Foundation Trust and the Draft Kent Health and Well-being Strategy. The Committee's response to the Kent Community Health NHS Trust Consultation was included as part of its application to the Secretary of State in support of its application to become a Foundation Trust.

The Committee's response to the draft Health and Wellbeing Strategy Consultation was submitted, in full, in the consultation engagement report to the Health and Wellbeing Board in January 2013.

Capital Programme Review

The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook a review of the Council's Capital Programme.

Its starting point was to establish what the Council's policy was for developing a Capital Programme and how it contributed to delivering on the outcomes of its strategic priorities.

The Working Group sought to establish a means by which the Council could continue to deliver an ambitious Capital Programme, exploring borrowing options and innovative ways of utilising the Council's available finances and assets.

Its investigations naturally progressed to considering the Council's involvement in development which contribute to and promote economic growth. These included Woking Borough Council's ventures as Woking Borough Homes Ltd and Wolsley Place Shopping Centre. The Trafford Centre and Maidstone's Fremlin Walk Shopping Centre were also evaluated.

The Working Group explored the concept of land assembly and acquisition in relationship to Maidstone so that it could establish whether or not Maidstone Borough Council should have a future role in shaping Maidstone, seeking expert advice from Smiths Gore.

Having considered the evidence, the Committee approved a wide range of recommendations that would help enable transparency, continuity and forward planning in the Council's Capital Programme. There was a definite focus on making efficient and effective use of the Council's and Maidstone's assets which includes land and property and the knowledge and innovation of both staff and residents. The recommendations embodied a sense of belonging and

community that would shape the future of Maidstone with the people of Maidstone for the people of Maidstone.

The report and recommendations were considered by Cabinet in June 2013. The Cabinet Member is scheduled to update the Committee on the progress of its recommendations in December 2013.

Brunswick Street Call-in 2011 Update

The Economic and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee held an important follow-up meeting on a call-in from the previous Municipal Year in order to establish what progress had been made on the recommendations made by Overview and Scrutiny.

The suspension of the original decision still stood and the car park remained operational. The original intention had been to declare the site surplus and release it for regeneration but since the decision was suspended the tenant in the adjacent building had vacated and subsequently the Council had lost the income from this site. The Committee agreed that the Council should seek to find another tenant, if only short term, due to the loss of income.

The Committee made a number of recommendations to help improve

residents parking options in the area which was identified as an issue and

resolved that the original decision to declare Brunswick Street Car Park surplus be revoked and the process restarted.

Visitor Information Centre Review

The Economic and Regeneration Overview and Scrutiny Committee undertook a review on the Visitor Information Centre. The Visitor information Centre, once housed in the foyer of the Town Hall, moved to Maidstone Museum in 2011 following the East Wing extension.

The foyer of the Town hall empty the space was offered to Volunteer Action Maidstone (VAM) as a customer point.

Since the moving of the Visitor Information Centre (ViC), Jubilee Square, part of the High street regeneration project has been completed and while VAM have played a valuable role in keeping the Town Hall open and in use there was evidence that visitors were confused about where to go for visitor information.

The Committee visited Visitor Information Centres in Rochester and Bexley as well as the ViC in the Museum. It considered the role of the Gateway and the future

use of the Town Hall and the Maidstone's approach to tourism as whole.

Whilst the review found no conclusive evidence to support returning the ViC in full to the Town Hall, it made a number of recommendations to support a more holistic approach to 'Visitor Information'.

Public Gypsy & Traveller Site: site selection

The Communities and Joint Regeneration and Economic Development Overview and Scrutiny Committees formed a Joint Committee to consider this cross-cutting topic.

The report considered by the Joint Committee was an exempt report and therefore considered under Part II. The Joint Committee recommended that it was in support of the recommendation outlined in the report.

Local Council Tax Discount Scheme & Welfare Reform

The Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the Council's Local Council Tax Discount Scheme prior to a decision by Cabinet and its public consultation.

The Committee recommended that Cabinet supported Option 6 in the Localisation of Council Tax Support report: Local variation within the framework for scheme in Kent which recommends that the Council applies a standard deduction of 13% on all non-pensioner claimants, removes the 10% discount currently applicable to second homes and reduces the exemption on Class C empty properties from 6 months to 1 month;

It also recommended that actively assisted vulnerable groups affected by the Local Council Tax Discount Scheme and the wider impacts of Welfare Reforms through continued engagement with stakeholders and the voluntary and charity sector.

The Committee went on to examine the impact of Welfare Reforms in more depth with registered social landlord, Golding Homes, who own and manage approximately 6,500 properties in Maidstone and Tunbridge and Malling.

As well as the impact of Welfare Reform the Committee explored whether or not this, combined with the Department of Communities and Local Government's (DCLG) Social Housing Fraud consultation (published in January 2012) provided an increased impetus for change within social housing with regards to unlawful occupation including subletting and the

ability to introduce flexible tenancies under new legislation in the Localism Act 2011.

The Committee saw the introduction of flexible tenancies as a way forward for making social housing available to those with a genuine need and offered its support and input into Golding Homes' review of this in a year's time.

Housing Allocation Scheme

The Communities Overview and Scrutiny considered the Council's new Housing Allocation Scheme, pre-decision.

The Committee examined the Council's draft Housing Allocation Scheme to determine whether or not it supported the message of Welfare Reform 'better off in work' and was clearly aligned to the Council's strategic priorities with the ability to deliver.

The Committee made a number of key recommendations including the following:

- That Section 14 of the Allocation Scheme, Bedroom Allocation, be brought into line with the guidance and specifications given under Welfare Reform; and
- That clarity be given within the document on Community Contributions; whether or not

contributions must be made locally.

A Member of the Committee also volunteered to undertake some follow up work with officers on the scheme to ensure concerns regarding the inclusion of fostering under Community Contributions and the possibility that this could encourage applicants to foster children for the wrong reasons could be addressed and appropriate changes made.

Policy Framework documents

Policy development was undertaken by the Corporate Services by the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in its consideration of the following Budget and Policy Framework documents:

- Budget Strategy;
- Refresh of the Strategic Plan; and
- Asset Management Plan.

Overview and Scrutiny Committees are constitutionally bound to consider a number of plans and strategies, some of these are mandatory, other have been chosen by the Council to form part of its policy framework.

The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee act as the 'critical

friend', holding the Council to account in its quarterly monitoring of the Council's Performance and Complaints.

Customer Focused Services Review & Customer Services Improvement Strategy

The Customer Services Improvement Strategy was the outcome of the Customer Focused Services review undertaken by the Business Transformation team. The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee were involved in its development, undertaking pre-decision scrutiny on the outcomes of the review at its meeting in February 2013.

The Committee agreed a set of principles that would underpin the development of the customer service delivery model which were that it should:

- Enable as many customers as possible to be self sufficient ;
- Be affordable;
- Ensure services are accessible to the most vulnerable;
- Have high quality service standards consistently applied; and
- Be sustainable and adaptable for the future.

7

When presented with the Strategy in April 2013 the Committee had one main concern which was ensuring that vulnerable people were not disadvantaged by more ICT focused services. It recommended that A list of partner organisations (including the private sector) offering support and training in ICT be compiled, including organisations with the ability to support individuals with low literacy, learning difficulties and mental illness. It specified that the information should be specific to the type of support on offer i.e. 1 to 1 and be used to signpost residents to these services

transfer of the CCTV service and its continued ongoing operation.'

the constitution relating to scrutiny were amended during 2012/13:

- The Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules, section 9, Agenda Items and section 20 procedure at Overview and Scrutiny Committee Meetings; and
- Councillor Call for Action Protocol.

It was on this basis that Committee resolved that a review of the implementation of the CCTV monitoring service at the Medway Control Centre should be included in its work programme for the 2012/13 Municipal Year. A meeting was held in October 2011 and the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee acting as the Crime and Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee interviewed key witnesses from Kent Police, the Community Safety Unit alongside with Vikram Sahdev, Head of Business Development at Medway Council and Lynne Goodwin, Operations Manager, Medway Council.

The Committee were satisfied with the services being provided at Medway and that contract specifications had been deliver. Recommendations were made to ensure continuous improvement of the service.

Legislative and Constitutional Changes

The Coordinating considered amendments that were required to the Constitution in relation to Overview and Scrutiny. It agreed that as a consequence of the Localism Act, the following parts of

CCTV Update

The decision to move CCTV monitoring from Maidstone to a central monitoring centre in Medway was a contentious one.

Maidstone Borough Council took the decision in November 2011 to award the contract for the CCTV monitoring service to Medway Council Control Centre.

This decision was called in and considered by the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee resolved that the decision should stand but recommended that 'both the Cabinet and officers ensure that stakeholders are fully engaged throughout all stages of the

The Future...?

As the local government landscape continues to change at a rapid pace, Scrutiny will need to be more adaptable than ever before in order to maintain a robust check and balance on service delivery. We have encountered a number of challenges this year.

With the election of the new Police and Crime Commissioner in November 2012 came entirely new arrangements for Police accountability at a County Level.

In April 2013 public health were transferred to functions the County Council. There will be new opportunities to ensure that the Council's activities reflect the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and its aim to improve the quality of residents' lives.

The Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has endeavoured to stay abreast of changes in both health and crime.

There are existing scrutiny protocols in place in crime and health which help ensure that at a district level there is an input. However these will need to be refreshed in light of recent changes in order for scrutiny to continue to have a meaningful impact.

The Kent Police Crime Commissioner is scheduled to attend Scrutiny in October 2013 which will be almost a year in to her term of office, providing a timely opportunity to evaluate the past year.

Maidstone Borough Council has representation on the Local Health and Well Being Board from a long serving Overview and Scrutiny Member which will provide an opportunity for future engagement.

Social Media...a tool for public engagement?

How do we ensure that scrutiny is examining the issues that matter most to our residents, are we adapting a methods of communications appropriately.

Our Overview and Scrutiny Committee continue to explore the challenges of finding new ways to engage with residents and have implemented a variety of social media tools which can be utilised and developed by Scrutiny Members. Twitter is used to communicate when Overview and Scrutiny meetings will take place and engage with residents.

Pinterest and Instagram are both useful, visual tools for sharing information. Pinterest could be a useful tool for reviews as information and articles can be 'pinned' on a virtual notice board. Advocated include 10 Downing Street and

a number of Government departments including the Department for Communities and Local Government . We were complimented by leading a Scrutiny authority, who are affiliated with Birmingham University, in our innovative use of Pinterest for Scrutiny. See below:



These tools are in place and Members are most welcome to come and learn about the possibilities from the team who would be happy to offer training or advice.

Training

Continued member training and development is organised by the Council's Learning and Development team. The Scrutiny team organised training in Performance Management and the Budget for members of the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee to prepare them for their role as the year commenced.

Members began the new municipal year with a Member led workshop on making 'Quality Recommendations'. Quality recommendations fulfil the following criteria:



Chairman of the Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Annabelle

Blackmore, led the workshop, facilitated by the scrutiny team. Members looked at recommendations from recent and past reviews and identified 'good' and 'bad' recommendations that had been made.

The impact of a bad recommendation was quickly realised. If the recommendation was unclear and non specific in what it was asking, and of whom, it was unlikely that it would have any impact and therefore would not achieve an outcome. It was also found that a recommendation needed to be evidence based; the report should provide the background and investigation to support the recommendation being made and therefore enable the person being asked to deliver it.

Gypsies and Travellers, National Awareness Training Programme

In November 2012 a training session was offered on Gypsy and Traveller awareness. The programme was devised by the Local Government Association (LGA) and Planning Advisory Service (PAS) with direct support from Communities and Local Government (CLG). It explored the challenging issues surrounding Gypsies and Travellers in the UK and looked at the potential solutions that councillors, their officers and local partners can put into practice in their area.

The training covered the following:

- The current Government's position and policies particularly on planning and enforcement;
- The history of Gypsies and Travellers in the UK;
- Discussion on inappropriate encampments and unauthorised developments;
- The issues in the light of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Localism Act 2011 and the abolition of Regional Spatial Strategies (RSS);
- The cultural, equalities, education and health issues;
- The highly contentious issue of community opposition;
- Funding availability for provision; and
- The options available for making provision and the financial

consequences of both action and inaction.

Continued Professional Development

An outcome of the Governance review was that each individual Committee should consider its 'Continuous Professional Development' at each meeting so that appropriate training sessions can be arranged. This will be taken forward during the 2013-14 Municipal Year.

Get in Touch!

The following Officers are available to discuss your Overview and Scrutiny issues:

Officer	Contact Details
Angela Woodhouse Head of Policy and Communication.	t: 01622 602620 f: 01622 692974 e: angelawoodhouse@maidstone.gov.uk
Clare Wood Policy and Performance Officer	t: 01622 602491 f: 01622 692974 e: clarewood@maidstone.gov.uk
Orla Sweeney Overview and Scrutiny Officer	t: 01622 602524 f: 01622 692974 e: orlasweeney@maidstone.gov.uk

Maidstone Borough Council

Strategic Leadership & Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 3 September 2013

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 discuss whether these are items require further investigation or monitoring by the Committee.
- 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 of an Overview and Scrutiny Committee or Sub-Committee shall be entitled to give notice to the proper officer that he wishes an item relevant to the functions of the Committee or Sub-Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting. On receipt of such a request the proper officer will ensure that it is included on the next available agenda.'

4 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 priority:
- 'Corporate and Customer Excellence'.
- 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.

Strategic Leadership & Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2013-14

Meeting Date	Agenda Items	Details and desired outcome
4 June 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman • Work programming workshop • Leader & Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year 	<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
9 July 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposals for use of 2012/13 Underspend • Annual Performance Plan • 4th Quarter Complaints Reports and End of Year Review 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the proposals and make recommendations as appropriate • To consider the reports and make recommendations as appropriate
6 August 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commissioning and Procurement Strategy • 4th Quarter Complaints Reports and End of Year Review • Proposals for use of 2012/13 Underspend 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the strategy and agree to going forward for decision • To consider the report and make recommendations as appropriate • To consider the proposals and make recommendations as appropriate
3 September 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1st quarter performance monitoring report • 1st quarter Complaints monitoring report • Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2012/13 • Mid Kent Improvement Partnership (MKIP) TBC 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider the reports and make recommendations as appropriate • To consider the annual report making recommendations as appropriate for it to be seen by Council • POSTPONED
1 October 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Strategy • 2nd quarter Complaints monitoring report 	
5 November 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Strategy 	
3 December 2013	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mid-year Strategic Plan Performance Report 	
7 January 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic Plan • Budget Strategy • (Budget, policy framework documents) 	

4 February 2014		
4 March 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equalities Policy• 3rd quarter Complaints monitoring report• 3rd quarter performance monitoring report	
1 April 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Evaluations of Leader & Cabinet Member Priorities for 2013/14 Municipal Year	



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LIST OF FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

Democratic Services Team
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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

- 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.

77 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

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: 11 Sep 2013	Regeneration and Economic Development Plan Consultation To consider the draft Regeneration and Economic Development Plan for the Borough and agree its release for public consultation.	KEY Reason: Affects more than 1 ward	John Foster, johnfoster@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Regeneration and Economic Development Plan Consultation
Cabinet Due Date: 11 Sep 2013	Maidstone Enterprise Hub To allocate £500,000 from the Capital Fund as match funding to support the Council's bid to Kent County Council for Regeneration Funding to establish an Enterprise Hub in Maidstone town centre.	KEY Reason: Expenditure > £250,000	Karen Franek, karenfranek@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Maidstone Enterprise Hub