

# AGENDA

## ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING



Overview and Scrutiny

Date: Tuesday 25 November 2014  
Time: 6.30 pm  
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors: Butler (Vice-Chairman), Cuming, Fissenden, Harper,  
Mrs Hinder, Hogg, Paterson (Chairman), Powell  
and Vizzard

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Page No.

1. **The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be webcast**
2. **Apologies**
3. **Notification of Substitute Members**
4. **Notification of Visiting Members**
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 21 October 2014** 1 - 7
8. **Minutes of the Meeting held on 28 October 2014** 8 - 13
9. **Twilight Economy Review** 14 - 20

Interviews with:

- Bill Moss, Town Centre Manager;
- Natalie Price, General Manager of the Hazlitt Arts Centre;  
and
- Georgie Grassom, Marketing Manager of the Hazlitt Arts Centre.

**Continued Over/:**

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**Issued on 17 November 2014**

*Alison Broom*

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

Discussion of Twilight Economy visit in Maidstone, due to take place before the committee meeting.

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|--|----------------|
| <b>10. Skills and Employability Update</b>                           | <b>21 - 34</b> |
| Interview with Abi Lewis, Economic Development Officer.              |                |
| <b>11. Enterprise Hub</b>  | <b>35 - 36</b> |
| Interview with Karen Franek, Principal Economic Development Officer. |                |
| <b>12. Review of Business Cases</b>                                  | <b>37 - 41</b> |
| Interview with Marcus Lawler, Commercial Projects Manager.           |                |
| <b>13. Future Work Programme</b>                                     | <b>42 - 54</b> |

#### **PART II**

**To move that the public be excluded for the items set out in Part II of the Agenda because of the likely disclosure of exempt information for the reasons specified having applied the Public Interest Test.**

	<b>Head of Schedule 12A and Brief Description</b>	
<b>14.</b> Exempt Appendix: Enterprise Hub	3 – Financial/Business Affairs	55 - 113
<b>15.</b> Exempt Appendix: Review of Business Cases (Animal Cremation)	3 – Financial/Business Affairs	114 - 137
<b>16.</b> Exempt Appendix: Review of Business Cases (A Sustainable Future for Mote Park)	3 – Financial/Business Affairs	138 - 159
<b>17.</b> Exempt Appendix: Review of Business Cases (Investment in Local Business)	3 – Financial/Business Affairs	160 - 169
<b>18.</b> Exempt Appendix: Review of Business Cases (Brunswick Street Regeneration)	3 – Financial/Business Affairs	170 - 207

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be made available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact Sam Bailey on 01622 602263**. To find out more about the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees, please visit [www.maidstone.gov.uk/osc](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk/osc)

## MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Economic and Commercial Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

#### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 21 OCTOBER 2014

**Present:** Councillor Paterson (Chairman), and  
Councillors Butler, Fissenden, Harper, Mrs Hinder,  
Hogg, Powell and Vizzard

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

**RESOLVED:** That all items on the agenda be webcast.

46. APOLOGIES

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

Councillor Harper had notified the Chairman he was running late.

47. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no substitute members present.

48. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillors Greer and Naghi were in attendance for items 7, 8 and 9.

Councillor Burton was in attendance as Cabinet Member for items 7, 8 and 9.

49. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by members or officers.

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

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

51. PRESENTATION OF THE ISSUES TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER ITEMS 8 AND 9

The Chairman opened the meeting and explained it was a co-located simultaneous meeting with the Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee (ECD OSC). The meeting took this format because of the overlap of the terms of reference/agenda items. The Chairman went on to explain the structure of the meeting:

- The main part of the meeting were Chaired by Councillor Springett;
- Each committee followed their own agenda for items 1 to 6, Chaired by their own Chairman;
- Both committees heard the same presentations for item 7 and had a joint question and answer session;
- Each committee agreed their own recommendations for items 8 and 9;
- Separate sets of minutes were produced for each committee;
- When voting on recommendations each committee did so separately by standing and raising their hand.

The Chairman welcomed Sarah Anderton, Principal Planning Officer, Spatial Planning to the meeting to present her report, Local Plan: Approach to Employment Land.

Ms Anderton explained the Qualitative Employment Site Assessment had recently been completed as part of the evidence base for the emerging Local Plan. The assessment built on the first stream of work regarding capacity for growth with respect to the quality of employment land (was it fit for the identified needs), not just quantity. The assessment focussed on office, industrial and warehousing space.

Ms Anderton emphasised the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), (which sets the overarching national planning policy) stated authorities should look at the needs of the borough in terms of space, type, location and quality and should look to meet the needs through the local plan.

Ms Anderton introduced Martyn Saunders, Associate from GVA who carried out the assessment. She went on to explain the methodology used.

It was noted on site surveys of all 46 existing employment sites (for example 20/20 business park, Eclipse Park) had been carried out. Of the 46 sites, 28 had been assessed as fit for purpose and recommended to be protected and kept in employment use for the term of the Local Plan (2011-2031).

The existing supply of employment land included new sites built or granted planning permission since 2011 (the base date of the Local Plan) as well as usable vacant premises. This figure was set against the identified need for employment land for the period of the Local Plan to establish the balance required (illustrated in the table on page 6 of the agenda).

Mr Saunders advised the committees that the assessment highlighted the borough had a qualitative lack of supply of employment land in terms of large mixed use sites that were well connected to the highway network.

Mr Saunders informed the committee the Local Plan that went out to consultation from March until May 2014 included a list of employment sites. These sites did not meet the qualitative gap identified in the latest assessment. This selection of sites also did not meet the quantitative need for additional office floorspace.

The challenge, for the Local Plan, going forward was to consider the need and respond to it.

Mr Saunders explained the qualitative assessment concludes that the demand would be best met by a single, large allocation of land close to the highway network that comprised of small office units, warehousing space and bespoke industrial units. This had to be different to what was already on offer in order to attract new business. Junction 8 of the M20 motorway was considered, by officers, to be the only location suitable to meet the need.

The Chairman welcomed John Foster, Economic Development Manager and Katharine Harvey, Programme Director, Shared Intelligence to the meeting. Mr Foster presented the draft Economic Development Strategy and explained the last strategy had been developed in 2008, when the economy was stronger. The new strategy had been developed with consultants, Shared Intelligence, and sat alongside the Local Plan with an action plan that should help deliver the Local Plan and the Economic Development Strategy.

The main points of Mr Foster's presentation were:

- The views of business community and stakeholders had been taken into consideration;
- 1,900 jobs in Maidstone had been lost since 2009 largely in the public sector;
- Maidstone had a low share of industries such as high tech manufacturing, ICT and creative industries which were higher skilled and higher paid;
- Commuting patterns had changed with more residents working outside of the borough – this was expected to worsen over the next 15 years;
- Less than a third of residents had higher level qualifications;
- Earnings for Maidstone residents had been declining since 2010 and were below the GB and Kent average.

The five priorities for the strategy were:

- Retaining and attracting investment – high value, high wage businesses, create 14,400 new jobs;
- Stimulating entrepreneurship – support local residents, business start-up courses;
- Enhancing the town centre – a new vision for the town centre;
- Meeting the skills needs – work with training providers and colleges;

- Improving the infrastructure – bid for additional funding to ease congestion.

During lengthy discussion the committees raised the following points:

Draft Economic Development Strategy

- I. The Economic Development Strategy would address a lot of the issues regarding declining jobs and businesses in the borough. Maidstone would be able to compete for new businesses and was fundamentally a good location for businesses to grow. The constraint was not the geography of the borough but the economy. Delivery of 14,400 new jobs would rely partly on the expansion of the Maidstone Medical Campus.
- II. Concern was raised about the focus on motorway links and not rural businesses. It was agreed rural industries were equally important and the draft Local Plan included plans to expand successful rural trading estates such as Barrowdale Farm, Lodge Wood, Staplehurst and Marden. The rural economy was also picked up in the draft Economic Development Strategy by emphasising the need for broadband connection and bidding for grant funding for rural business development.
- III. Incentives to attract businesses to the borough – work had been carried out with Kent County Council (KCC) to bid for Growing Places funding for West Kent. The Escalate Fund was available to businesses in Maidstone and the west Kent area and some local businesses had already benefited from it.
- IV. An enterprise hub was being developed to provide small flexible business space with support.
- V. The method to reduce the number of residents commuting to other areas to work was to allocate more employment land to encourage more businesses into the borough.
- VI. The draft Economic Development Strategy did emphasise the importance of tourism to the economy. A Destination Management Plan would be developed to promote what was great about the borough and attract new investment, workers and visitors. This document would be ready by summer 2015.
- VII. Clusters of new businesses would include health care, life sciences with the development of the Maidstone Medical Campus and businesses that would benefit from the Green Economy. Small micro IT based businesses, were already in existence but were not clustered in any particular part of the borough.
- VIII. The rural economy was acknowledged as making a large contribution to the economy of the borough. The priorities of the Economic Development Strategy; retaining, attracting investment; stimulating

enterprise; meeting skills needs, applied as much to the rural economy as the urban economy.

- IX. It was noted, on page 38 of the draft Economic Development Strategy point 6.9, that the Bluebell Railway was not in Tenterden and Tenterden was not part of the Maidstone Borough.
- X. Investment in Maidstone Medical Campus was dependent on the completion of the on-site and off-site infrastructure, for example Bearsted Road improvements. A funding bid for Single Local Growth Fund money, with the South East Enterprise Partnership, to support this work had been submitted to central Government for consideration. Officers were confident this funding would be granted.
- XI. All investment decisions would always go through a due diligence process to identify the return on investment and ensure it was viable and delivered financial benefits to the council.
- XII. Some concern was raised regarding the wording and strength of the delivery mechanisms for the action plan for the draft Economic Development Strategy. It was agreed there was a need for a higher priority and profile for tourism, leisure and the visitor economy and renewable and green energy in the strategy and it was felt the action plan needed to be written in more positive language.

#### Local Plan: approach to employment land

- I. The Local Plan would have a policy safeguarding employment sites in the borough.
- II. The list of employment sites identified as sites to retain and protect for employment use, in Appendix B on page 95 of the agenda, should include Pattenden Lane, Marden.
- III. The draft Local Plan allowed for poor quality business premises to be put to other uses, for example housing or redevelopment into a combination of housing and business premises. Sites in the town centre where this could happen would mean some businesses relocating to alternative sites. Alternative sites were needed and the Local Plan was the mechanism to deliver them. Mote Road was one site identified in the Local Plan for this purpose.
- IV. There was no viable alternative to Junction 8 of the M20. The call for sites at the beginning of 2013, revealed the availability of sites at Junction 8 was the only site location with the best connections to the highway network.
- V. Past applications for development of land at Junction 8 had been developer led. It was agreed, to achieve the ambitions of the council, Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) needed to take control of how the land was developed by setting out a clear policy of physical constraints

with parameters that provided a balance between protecting the area and providing development land.

- VI. There was a duty to co-operate with neighbouring local authorities. A number of meetings had taken place with Tonbridge and Malling, Ashford and Swale Borough Councils and Medway Council.
- VII. It was confirmed that 14,400 jobs created in the borough would not inflate the housing need figure and still fell short of the projected increase in the working age population of the borough.
- VIII. The NPPF guidelines allowed for boroughs, such as Maidstone, to develop in a way that was suitable for the area, provided Maidstone specific evidence was included in the Local Plan.
- IX. 19% of existing office floor space was vacant, the majority of which was of poor quality. Some of this poorer quality stock could be redeveloped as housing.
- X. It was confirmed that the town centre vision would minimise organic conversion of poor quality office blocks into housing in favour of redevelopment of these sites.
- XI. It was suggested there was a need for a fundamental vision for the borough with broad principles for its development and the highways to support it. When a change was proposed this would be reference with the principles to establish it if fitted with the overall vision.
- XII. Transport modelling was integral to the successful delivery of the Local Plan and the Economic Development Strategy delivering a town centre that is fit for purpose.
- XIII. The James Whatman site was not included as a protected employment site because it was identified in the draft Local Plan for housing development.

## 52. LONG MEETING

Prior to 10:30pm, during consideration of Local Plan; approach to employment land, the Committee considered whether to adjourn the meeting at 10:30pm or continue until 11:00pm if necessary.

**RESOLVED:** That the meeting continue until 11:00pm, if necessary.

## 53. LOCAL PLAN: APPROACH TO EMPLOYMENT LAND

**RESOLVED:**

That:



- 1) The committee supports development for employment use at Junction 8 of the M20 subject to the development of a planning policy by the Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development to mitigate damage and to ensure appropriate constraints. This policy should be considered by the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee in January 2015.
- 2) The Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development be recommended to acknowledge the importance of retaining the employment sites outside of the town centre detailed in Appendix B of the report (list of existing industrial sites/estates for inclusion in Policy DM18).

Councillor Paterson requested that her dissent be noted in relation to recommendation 1.

54. DRAFT ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2014

That subject to point XII regarding the Draft Economic Development Strategy, under minute number 51, being considered by the Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development, the Committee recommend the Draft Economic Development Strategy be approved by Cabinet for consultation.

55. DURATION OF MEETING

18:30 to 22:55

# Agenda Item 8

## **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Economic and Commercial Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee**

#### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 28 OCTOBER 2014**

**Present:** Councillor Paterson (Chairman), and Councillors Butler, Cuming, Fissenden, Harper, Paine, Powell, Round and Mrs Wilson

**Also Present:** Councillor Mrs Grigg

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

**RESOLVED:** That all items on the agenda be webcast.

57. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted from Councillors Hinder, Hogg and Vizzard.

58. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Paine was a substitute for Councillor Mrs Hinder, Councillor Round was a substitute for Councillor Hogg and Councillor Fran Wilson was a substitute for Councillor Vizzard.

59. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

Councillor Susan Grigg was present for item 8: Maidstone Culture and Leisure Business Plan 2014-2018.

60. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by members and officers.

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

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

62. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 29 SEPTEMBER 2014

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup> July 2014 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed.

63. AMENDMENT TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

**RESOLVED:** That Item 9: Twilight Economy Review be considered before Item 8: Maidstone Culture and Leisure Business Plan 2014-2018.

64. TWILIGHT ECONOMY REVIEW

The Chairman invited Dawn Hudd, Head of Economic and Commercial Development, Laura Case, Cultural Services Manager, and John Barnes, Manager of Wonderland Nightclub to speak on item 9: Twilight Economy Review.

The Chairman relayed to the committee information that had been gathered from Bill Moss, Town Centre Manager, in a meeting earlier in the day. The main points raised by Mr Moss were:

- There seemed to be little demand from consumers for late night shopping, other than at Christmas time;
- Maidstone was very strong in terms of the choice of restaurants, especially on and around Earl Street. On a typical Saturday, 3500 meals would be served at 81 venues across the town centre;
- Lack of free parking didn't seem to be an issue, as it doesn't cost much to park in the town centre in the evening (£1.50 in council car parks);
- Using public assets in the evening may be helpful- for example opening the museum up later in the evening; and
- Mr Moss felt that Maidstone should concentrate on improving on its strength in the restaurant sector.

Dawn Hudd gave evidence to the committee on the Twilight Economy and made the following points:

- The problem of the town centre being quiet in the early part of the Twilight Economy period was common to many towns;
- Canterbury have made efforts in this area, however it could still be a struggle to attract people to stay in the town centre after shops and businesses closed;
- What was needed to improve on any success in the Twilight Economy was a 'champion' who was a business owner or operator from this sector of the economy;
- There were two key pieces of work that would feed in to the future of the Twilight Economy that were in their early stages:
  - Town Centre Vision- this was a piece of work that was being carried out as part of the local plan process. This piece of work would set out the future of the Town Centre, including where various activities would take place.
  - Destination Management Plan- this piece of work would develop how the council wanted Maidstone to look as a destination. It would focus on telling the story of Maidstone and would involve local stakeholders, including from the private sector.

Laura Case outlined some of the initiatives to help the Twilight Economy from her business area, which included:

- Museum Lates- opening the museum in the evening for one Thursday a month; and

- Jazz at the Museum in the evening.

Mrs Case also suggested to the committee that cross promoting events that were happening around the Town Centre could go some way to improving the Twilight Economy.

John Barnes gave evidence to the committee and focused on the following topics:

- The car park for the Lockmeadow complex was not being used to its full potential. Mr Barnes suggested that events such as a Drive in Cinema or a Winter Wonderland might be a success there, and these would help improve the Twilight Economy;
- The customers for the Night Time Economy and the Twilight Economy were from different demographics;
- Maidstone should capitalise on seasonal events to improve the Twilight Economy. Mr Barnes gave the example of bonfire night, where a series of events could be put on throughout the evening using this theme to draw people into the town centre;
- Street lighting was an issue for the Twilight Economy in the winter. Mr Barnes felt that the river could be better lit up to make it more inviting;
- Jubilee Square would be an ideal location for restaurants, as this is the sort of area other towns would locate their restaurants. Mr Barnes was surprised there were currently no restaurants located in Jubilee Square.

The committee asked the witnesses whether they felt the geography of the town, especially how spread out many activities critical to the Twilight Economy are, was a problem for the Twilight Economy.

Mrs Hudd responded that this was a potential problem. However this problem would be addressed through the Town Centre Vision and the Destination Management Plan. Local businesses would be involved in drafting these documents.

The committee felt that Maidstone, as the County Town of Kent, had lots of unique selling points that could be capitalised on. One particular idea that the committee felt would be helpful to promote was that Maidstone was the 'musical capital of Kent'. The committee felt this could help improve the Twilight Economy. Mr Barnes agreed with this assertion, stating that those who frequent the Night Time Economy in Maidstone expected very high standards for the music in clubs.

The committee felt it was important to include culture and heritage in any plans for improving the Twilight Economy.

**RESOLVED:** That

- 1) A visit be organised by the Research and Performance Officer, before the next committee meeting, to Canterbury to see what twilight economy initiatives had been successful there; and

- 2) A visit be organised by the Research and Performance Officer, before the next committee meeting, to Earl Street to see the current state of the Twilight Economy in Maidstone.

#### 65. MAIDSTONE CULTURE AND LEISURE BUSINESS PLAN 2014-2018

The Chairman invited Dawn Hudd, Head of Economic and Commercial Development, Marcus Lawler, Commercial Projects Manager and Laura Case, Cultural Services Manager to speak on item 8: Maidstone Culture and Leisure Business Plan 2014-2018.

Mrs Hudd made a presentation that covered the following points:

- The formation of the Maidstone Culture and Leisure (MCL) service was decided on by Cabinet on the 28 June 2013. MCL consisted of the Parks and Leisure team and the Cultural Services team which included museums, visitor economy and festivals and events.
- The Business Plan was not something that required a formal decision- it was an operational document for MCL to refer to.
- The core functions of MCL were:
  - Museum management;
  - Managing the Leisure Centre and Hazlitt contracts;
  - Parks and Open Spaces;
  - Management of the Cobtree Estate;
  - Festivals and Events;
  - Visitor Economy; and
  - Commercial projects for the service- including those listed in the business plan.
- The commercial projects listed in the business plan were not fully formed business cases- they were ideas at differing stages of development;

A visiting member was invited to question the witnesses. The visiting member was concerned that projects listed in the list of commercial projects would be going ahead, regardless of member or officer input.

Mrs Hudd stressed to the committee that none of the commercial projects listed in the report had been decided on, and reminded the committee that cabinet had reserved full decision making powers for all commercial projects. This meant that, in keeping with the principle of pre-decision Scrutiny, each project would be considered by the Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee before any decision was made on these projects.

The visiting member enquired about the monitoring arrangements for the Hazlitt contract.

Mrs Case responded that there was a contract monitoring officer for the Hazlitt. Mrs Case confirmed that both herself and the Cabinet Member were satisfied with the current performance of the Hazlitt.

The committee enquired whether there were any plans to re-launch a leisure card.

Mrs Hudd confirmed there were no plans to re-launch a leisure card. However Mrs Hudd informed the committee that Canterbury had a 'My Canterbury' app that operated as a more high-tech version of a leisure card. Mrs Hudd believed this option was worth exploring in more detail for Maidstone instead of a leisure card.

The committee were concerned that, as the County Town, Maidstone should have a better market. The committee asked Mrs Hudd what plans there were for improving the market offer in the town.

Mrs Hudd replied that she had the ambition of improving the market offer in Maidstone, particularly farmers markets. However at the moment there were no firm plans for this and other commercial projects were a higher priority.

The committee requested clarification over the scale of the retail outlet in Mote Park that was mentioned in the report. Mrs Hudd explained that the concept was a visitor centre, café and gift shop; but that further development of this idea would take place in January 2015.

The committee raised concerns around three areas of the report:

- The business plan had very few mentions of members within it;
- There seemed to have been a lack of member engagement around the commercial projects; and
- The plan appeared to focus purely on making a profit.

In response to these concerns, officers explained that the plan was currently being used as an operational document, hence the lack of reference to members. However it was accepted that a renewed focus on member engagement would be beneficial for commercial projects. Officers also confirmed that generating income was not an end in itself for MCL- it was a way to protect non statutory services from budget cuts and to expand and improve the culture and leisure offer for the residents of, and visitors to, Maidstone.

The committee asked Mr Lawler whether any of these projects may affect local businesses. Mr Lawler explained to the committee that some of these projects had potential to affect local businesses, mostly in a positive way by bringing more visitors into the borough, and due to this the decision whether to go ahead with such projects should be left to members.

Mrs Case also highlighted that the projects were not just about competition, and that a lot of mutual benefits could be gained through collaboration with local businesses.

**RESOLVED:** That

- 1) The Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee be asked to decide on the constitution of a group of members to give early input for commercial projects;

- 2) The Head of Economic and Commercial Development be recommended to refine the language in the Maidstone Culture and Leisure Business Plan to make it clear that the formation of Maidstone Culture and Leisure is not purely a profit making exercise; and
- 3) The Head of Economic and Commercial Development, at the earliest opportunity, be asked to give all councillors access to the full list of commercial projects for their positive input.

66. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

Sam Bailey, Research and Performance Officer, provided an update on the Future Work Programme.

Mr Bailey drew the committee's attention to the list of forthcoming decisions. It was noted that on this list was the Enterprise Hub decision, which was scheduled for Wednesday 12 November. Mr Bailey reminded the committee that at the meeting of 29 September 2014 the committee had asked Karen Franek to see the full proposal before the decision was taken.

The committee agreed that due to their support for the principle of the project they would not call it in. However the committee asked for a copy of the cabinet agenda to be sent to all committee members so that they could see the full proposal, and ask questions of the cabinet member if necessary. The committee agreed that if the decision was postponed until December 2014 the committee would still like to see the full proposal at their November 2014 meeting.

Mr Bailey asked the committee to check their diaries to ensure the committee would be quorate for its meeting on the 23 December 2014, and to report back to the committee on their availability at the meeting of 25 November 2014.

**RESOLVED:**

That if a cabinet member decision is to be taken on the Enterprise Hub on 12 November 2014 a copy of the cabinet agenda should be sent to all committee members. However if the decision is postponed until December 2014, the full proposal should be considered by the Committee at the November 2014 meeting.

67. DURATION OF MEETING

18:30 until 21:16

# Agenda Item 9

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

### **Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**25<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

#### **Twilight Economy Review**

While reading the following report you may want to think about:

- What you want to know from the report;
- What questions you would like answered.

Make a note of your questions in the box below.

As you read the report you may think of other questions.

Questions I would like to ask regarding this report:

- 
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**Guidance note - Making Quality Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations**

Scrutiny recommendations should seek to make a real difference to local people and the services provided. Recommendations that note a change or request further information fail to resolve problems or make changes. The scrutiny team have identified the following criteria for quality recommendations, they:

- affect and make a difference to local people;
- result in a change in policy that improves services;
- identify savings and maintain/improve service quality; or
- objectively identify a solution.

One way of checking the usefulness of recommendations is to evaluate them against the 'six Ws' set out below:

Good recommendations should answer these questions:

<b>Why does it need to be done?</b>	This will help ensure the outcome is relevant and in the right context – if a meeting is being requested it will ensure the correct people are invited to attend
<b>Who is being asked to do it?</b>	Without this nothing will get done (no one will take ownership)
<b>What needs to be done?</b>	Needs to be clear and specific
<b>HoW will it be done?</b>	Again, needs to be clear and specific, what is the expected output- for example a report to be written or a meeting to be arranged
<b>Where does it need to be done/go?</b>	If it's a meeting – where is it needed If it's a report – where is it to go, who needs to see it
<b>When does it need to be done?</b>	Crucial to have a timescale – without a deadline it will never get done

Thinking about these points will help ensure the outcomes of scrutiny are effective and will aid monitoring.

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW AND  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2014**

**REPORT OF RESEARCH AND PERFORMANCE OFFICER**

**Report prepared by Sam Bailey**

**1. TWILIGHT ECONOMY REVIEW**

**1.1 Issue for Consideration**

1.1.1 At the meeting of 26 August 2014, the Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee decided to undertake a review of the twilight economy in Maidstone.

**1.2 Recommendation of the Research and Performance Officer**

1.2.1 It is recommended that the Committee interview the witnesses to gather evidence for the review.

**1.3 Reasons for Recommendation**

1.3.1 At the meeting of 26 August 2014, the committee agreed that the twilight economy should be defined as:

*Economic activity that occurs in the town centre after ordinary shop and workplace closing times (around 5.30pm) but before the usual pub closing times (around 11.30 pm)*

1.3.2 The scoping document for the review (Appendix A), which was agreed by the committee at the meeting of 26 August 2014, outlined that the second set of witnesses could include:

- Town centre stakeholders in the twilight economy, including Hazlitt Arts Centre management and local business owners/managers from the sector;
- Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Youth Forum

1.3.3 Bill Moss, Town Centre Manager; Natalie Price, Manager of the Hazlitt Arts Centre; and Georgie Grassom, Marketing Manager of the Hazlitt

Arts Centre will be present to give evidence on this subject. The committee may wish to ask the following questions:

- What is the current state of the twilight economy in Maidstone?
- Do witnesses feel there is a need for a more vibrant twilight economy in Maidstone?
- Do witnesses feel there is a desire from town centre stakeholders to improve the twilight economy offering in Maidstone?
- What are Maidstone's strengths in the twilight economy?
- Are there any obvious opportunities for further developing the Twilight Economy in Maidstone?
- Are there any weaknesses in the twilight economy that need addressing urgently?
- What can the council do to improve the twilight economy?
- Will the proposed redevelopment of Earl Street benefit the twilight economy?

1.3.4 The consultation documents for the phase 3 public realm improvements are attached as Appendix B. These were sent out in March and April of 2014. The sketch of the proposed improvements for Earl Street may be of particular interest for the twilight economy. The committee may want to ask the witnesses what the impact on the twilight economy may be of the proposed improvements.

#### 1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Committee could choose not to interview the witnesses, but this would make it difficult to carry out the review of the twilight economy.

#### 1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 This review has an impact on the following corporate objectives:

- For Maidstone to have a growing economy; and
- For Maidstone to be a decent place to live.

#### 1.6 Relevant Documents

##### 1.6.1 Appendices

Appendix A: Twilight Economy Review Scoping Document

##### 1.6.2 Background Documents

None

**IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?**

**THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED**

Yes

No

If yes, this is a Key Decision because: .....

.....

Wards/Parishes affected: .....

.....

**Name of Review: Maidstone's Twilight Economy**

**What are the objectives and desired outcomes of the review**

The following definition of the Twilight Economy was agreed by the committee:

*Economic activity that occurs in the town centre after ordinary shop and workplace closing times (around 5.30pm) but before the usual pub closing times (around 11.30 pm)*

- To assess whether there is a need for a more vibrant twilight economy;
- To investigate whether there is a will for town centre stakeholders to provide for a more vibrant twilight economy; and
- If the answer to both of the above is yes, what can be done to improve the twilight economy in Maidstone.

**What equality issues will need to be considered as part of the review – giving consideration to the 9 protected characteristics:**

Members will consider whether the twilight economy is accessible to those with any of the protected characteristics. It is not anticipated that this subject will have any impact, however any recommendations that are made as a result of the review will be made with due consideration to the protected characteristics.

**Which witnesses are required?**

First set of witnesses:

- Cabinet Member
- An officer from Economic Development
- A representative from Town Centre Management

Second set of witnesses:

- Town centre stakeholders in the twilight economy including Hazlitt Theatre management, local business owners/managers from the sector etc.
- Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
- Federation of Small Businesses
- Youth Forum

**Other ways to seek evidence? E.g. site visits, involving members of the public, consultation.**

- If possible, the Town Centre Regeneration Phase 3 consultation document;
- Site visits of Maidstone, and other places (perhaps one aspirational, one that we don't want to be like)
- Some form of public consultation on demand for the twilight economy
- Any previous work carried out on this subject by MBC, Town Centre Management or any other organisation

**Suggested time for review and report completion date:**

- Draft scoping document presented to the committee at the meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> August;
- First set of witnesses to be interviewed/evidence to be presented at the meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> October;
- Second set of witnesses to be interviewed/evidence to be presented at the meeting of 25<sup>th</sup> November
- Draft report presented for sign off for the meeting of 23<sup>rd</sup> December or 27<sup>th</sup> January (depending on whether December meeting goes ahead)

**How does the review link to council priorities?**

This review will help contribute to the following priorities:

- For Maidstone to have a growing economy- by encouraging the twilight economy to grow, providing a benefit to business owners and to increase quality of life for residents which attracts inward investment; and
- For Maidstone to be a decent place to live- by increasing quality of life for residents

**How does this item deliver CfPS effective scrutiny principles?**

- **Provides 'critical friend' challenge to executive policy-makers and decision-makers**
- **Enables the voice and concerns of the public**
- **Is carried out by 'independent minded governors' who lead and own the scrutiny role**
- **Drives improvement in public services**

**Any co-optees or expert witnesses?**

None

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

### **Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**25<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

#### **Skills and Employability Update**

While reading the following report you may want to think about:

- What you want to know from the report;
- What questions you would like answered.

Make a note of your questions in the box below.

As you read the report you may think of other questions.

Questions I would like to ask regarding this report:

- 
- 
- 
- 
-

**Guidance note - Making Quality Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations**

Scrutiny recommendations should seek to make a real difference to local people and the services provided. Recommendations that note a change or request further information fail to resolve problems or make changes. The scrutiny team have identified the following criteria for quality recommendations, they:

- affect and make a difference to local people;
- result in a change in policy that improves services;
- identify savings and maintain/improve service quality; or
- objectively identify a solution.

One way of checking the usefulness of recommendations is to evaluate them against the 'six Ws' set out below:

Good recommendations should answer these questions:

<b>Why does it need to be done?</b>	This will help ensure the outcome is relevant and in the right context – if a meeting is being requested it will ensure the correct people are invited to attend
<b>Who is being asked to do it?</b>	Without this nothing will get done (no one will take ownership)
<b>What needs to be done?</b>	Needs to be clear and specific
<b>HoW will it be done?</b>	Again, needs to be clear and specific, what is the expected output- for example a report to be written or a meeting to be arranged
<b>Where does it need to be done/go?</b>	If it's a meeting – where is it needed If it's a report – where is it to go, who needs to see it
<b>When does it need to be done?</b>	Crucial to have a timescale – without a deadline it will never get done

Thinking about these points will help ensure the outcomes of scrutiny are effective and will aid monitoring.



**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW &  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 25 NOVEMBER 2014**

**REPORT OF HEAD OF COMMERCIAL AND ECONOMIC  
DEVELOPMENT**

**Report prepared by Abi Lewis**

**1. SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY UPDATE**

**1.1 Issue for Consideration**

1.1.1 To consider the update for skills and employability projects the Council and its partners are currently undertaking, as well as those to be pursued in the future.

**1.2 Recommendation of Head of Commercial and Economic Development**

1.2.1 That the committee notes the skills and employability update and makes recommendations as appropriate.

**1.3 Reasons for Recommendation**

1.3.1 At the meeting on 22 April 2014 the Committee requested an update in six months' time on the skills and employability projects the Council are undertaking.

**1.4 Background**

1.4.1 Prior to December 2013, the skills and employability agenda was delivered by the Employability and Worklessness Project Officer, and projects delivered predominantly from a resident perspective, utilising small-scale grassroots projects.

1.4.2 The remit of skills and employability was transferred to the Economic Development department in March 2014, with an Economic Development Officer recruited to support the delivery of this work. Since this transition, the agenda has been re-aligned with a greater focus on business needs and business engagement.

1.4.3 This report sets out the direction that this work is now taking following its transfer to the Economic Development team to:

- Ensure that Maidstone's business community are supported in the recruitment of local labour with the skills required to enable growth; and,
- Ensure that Maidstone's unemployed residents receive interventions that support them into work.

1.4.4 Progress to date

Under previous work streams, the following skills and employability priorities have continued, as detailed below:

1.4.5 Business visits and engagement

The Council continues to work with local businesses to identify their current and future skills needs. Acting as a facilitator, the Economic Development team coordinates tailored support through organisations such as Jobcentre Plus, MidKent College and other training providers to ensure that the support they offer is relevant and applicable to the needs of local businesses.

1.4.6 Support is also provided to companies to help them understand the broader Government agenda on skills to identify suitable initiatives to enable the up-skilling of their current workforce.

1.4.7 Work experience

Working in conjunction with Jobcentre Plus, the Council continues to offer work experience placements across a range of departments. Since April 2014, 22 placements have been completed, with opportunities extended to jobseekers outside of the original 18-24 year old cohort. Economic Development is looking to replicate the coffee morning concept at Maidstone Studios, as a precursor to wider business engagement on work experience.

1.4.8 Jobs fairs

Two jobs fairs have been delivered in partnership with Golding Homes and Jobcentre Plus this year, with over 1,900 customers attending. There has been an increased focus on securing exhibitors with live vacancies, as opposed to training providers.

1.4.9 Jobs Fairs are increasingly becoming an out-dated, resource intensive means of recruitment, which are not necessarily the most effective way of supporting unemployed individuals in finding a job (particularly given the shift to online jobs advertising and applications). The Council is leading discussions with Jobcentre Plus and Golding Homes to consider the delivery of small outreach sessions focussing on CV and job application advice, as well as offering information sessions with companies recruiting in a specific sector.

1.4.10 Evolving work streams

The development of the Council's Draft Economic Development Strategy has prompted a refocusing of the skills and employability agenda towards supporting indigenous business growth in the borough. An extract of the draft action plan is attached as *Appendix 1*.

1.4.11 Total unemployment across all age groups in Maidstone continues to fall month on month, with numbers in September 2014 at 1,257 (1.3%), equaling the average unemployment rate in the South East. However, proportionately unemployment rates of 18-24 year olds within the borough remain higher than the South East average (2.2%), measuring 2.5%.

1.4.12 Under this new, strategic and business driven direction, work is underpinned by two key enabling projects: a survey to understand the skills needs of businesses; and a survey of training companies and courses to identify gaps and duplication in provision. These projects will inform and facilitate conversations between education providers and business.

1.4.13 Business skills survey

Economic Development will continue with proactive engagement with local businesses, utilising the new Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system, to understand their in-depth skills requirements now and in the future. Initially this will focus on sectors identified as having growth potential. The information gained from this will be used to help inform education and training providers to ensure course delivery reflects the local economic need.

1.4.14 Training provider mapping

Work has commenced on 'mapping' the wide variety of provision delivered by the numerous training providers operating within the borough to better understand the range of courses available and to

identify both gaps and over provision based on the survey of business skills' needs.

1.4.15 Education provider and business discussions

The Council continues to be represented on the MidKent College Advisory Committee, ensuring that information pertaining to skills and qualifications demanded by industry are translated into the College's curriculum offer. The Economic Development team will be increasing communication with other local education providers to ensure that courses and careers advice and guidance delivered at Secondary, Further and Higher Education levels of local need.

1.4.16 Communications campaign

A comprehensive communication and engagement strategy to dispel myths amongst businesses and young people about the range of opportunities in the borough is also required:

1.4.17 Initial work has been done through collaboration with Downs Mail Publications to promote the range of opportunities available to young people in the borough (*Appendix 2*). To date, editions have covered work experience, apprenticeships and starting a business, and will later profile jobs in Maidstone's key growth sectors.

1.4.18 Skills Exchange Hub

The Economic Development team is also developing a mechanism to maintain or support individuals into employment, and help businesses retain the correct labour required to grow:

1.4.19 Prior to the responsibility for skills and employability shifting to Economic Development, the Community Development team developed a bid to the Department for Communities and Local Government's Transformation Challenge Award. The Council has since been awarded £100,000 for the implementation of a 'Skills Exchange Hub' - a business to business online portal aiming to prevent skills wastage in the labour market. It will also incorporate an existing website aiding young people in finding suitable training opportunities.

1.4.20 Support for individuals

Work has been undertaken to engage with a company in the borough that is relocating abroad to support workers facing redundancy, linking them with companies facing skills shortages and dealing with broader

recruitment issues. This work has highlighted the need for this type of support for both businesses and employees.

1.5 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.5.1 An alternative action could be not to engage in activities relating to skills and employability. However this would have implications for the overall economic prosperity of the borough, including inadequate labour in industry and increased rates of unemployment.

1.6 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.6.1 The work undertaken on the skills and employability agenda support the Council's priority: 'For Maidstone to have a growing economy'.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

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	

1.7.2 Financial and staffing: The projects detailed in this report are incorporated into the existing Economic Development financial allocation.

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

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

Appendix 1 Economic Development Strategy Actions detailed under the priority of 'Meeting Skills Needs'

Appendix 2 Downs Mail 'Working for the future' project articles

1.8.2 Background Documents

None

**Appendix 1: Economic Development Strategy Actions detailed under the priority of 'Meeting Skills Needs'**

		<b>Action / Milestones</b>	<b>S / M / L</b>	<b>Resource</b>	<b>Lead</b>	<b>Partners</b>
D1	Work closely with Mid Kent College and other relevant education and training providers to forge closer links with business to help ensure that the skills needs of employers are met.	Engage with local businesses to gauge their awareness of the existing training provision available to them and the relevance and quality.	Short	Existing	MBC	All training providers All businesses
		Undertake a baseline survey to determine the skills needs of our local businesses.	Short	Existing		
		Develop a comprehensive web based application incorporating the principles behind the big exchange, access to skills for young people, a business to business skills exchange portal and an ability to aggregate business training needs.	Medium	Transforming Local Government Fund (secured £100k) and ESF bid		
D2	Increase the number of businesses in Maidstone that take on apprenticeships.	Link with programme of business engagement see A5	Medium			
		Use social media, website, e-newsletters, editorial, case-studies and other to promote apprentice opportunities to businesses.	Short			
D3	Increase awareness of the sector growth opportunities in Maidstone to training providers so that they can gear their provision to meet the future needs of	Provide regular briefing notes, information and newsletters to training providers to give them a wider understanding of the boroughs business composition and likely trends to enable them to gear provision accordingly.				

	employers.					
D4	Work with KCC to encourage greater take up of the 2-1-2 programme which addresses the education and training needs of school leavers qualified at below level 2.	Support KCC to identify businesses willing to provide the work experience element of this project	Short	Existing resources	KCC	MBC, Education Business Partnership
D5	Support KIMS in their discussions with universities to expand the HE offer on the MMS site.	Establish working group Identify drivers for HE investment Any barriers Consider funding options	Medium	Unknown at this stage	KIMS	MBC, Canterbury Christchurch University
D6	Support discussions between UCA and KIMS on looking to enhance the overall student experience for HE students at Maidstone Studios and at Maidstone Medical Campus.	Evolve the joint working group with KIMS to include UCA	Long	Unknown at this stage	MBC	UCA , KIMS, Maidstone Studios
D7	Work with UCA to further develop the business case for their proposed new facilities at Maidstone Studio.	Support the Studios bid to create a Media Village to SLGF	Long	Existing	Maidstone Studios	UCA



# How to get Maidstone's young

THE Downs Mail has joined with Maidstone Council to promote work opportunities for the town's young people.

During the next six months we will be featuring articles to help the future of Maidstone find out which education, employment and training opportunities are available in the borough.

There will also be information for businesses who might be interested in offering opportunities to young people.

We will let you know about work experience, apprenticeships

and starting your own business. Through case studies we will show you what it's like working in those jobs and the responsibilities you can expect. You will also find out more about developing a

career in certain industries.

If you own or manage a business, we will highlight the support available to you to offer opportunities to young people – and why you might want to take it up.

## The benefits of work experience

HAVE you ever wondered what it is like to do a particular job or work in a specific industry?

A work experience placement is a great way to find out. You can gain practical experience in the industry, get used to working in a team, develop your skills and improve your chances of getting a job.

### Advice for young people

So you've decided that a work experience placement might be a good idea to help you find employment or boost your skill set, but how

do you organise one?

There are various ways you can search – online through company websites or recruitment companies; by writing directly to the business; through family or friends; or through the job centre. Whichever method you choose, the same principles still apply:

Make sure that your CV demonstrates what skills you've developed through your studies, extracurricular activities or previous work. Tailor your CV to reflect the work of the company you are applying to.

If you are making a speculative application, explain why you want to work for the company and the skills and experience you can offer.

Find out the specifics of your role, what the manager is looking for and whether this fits with your expectations. Ask whether there are any training opportunities and the support that might be available.

It can sometimes take a while to arrange a placement so think ahead and speak with the company well in advance of when you'd like to start the work.

If you don't get a response to your letter or email, why not give them a phone call to make sure that they've received it?

Remember, the placement does not have to be working in your dream job.

Think about the skills you'll gain, and how they can help you apply for that dream job. You might learn about team working, communication skills or how to use a particular computer programme. Look at the placement as a step on to the career ladder.



## Case study: learning the ropes at Maidstone Council

### Hannah McKay, customer services advisor

"I came to a work experience coffee morning at Maidstone Council hoping to find a placement in an admin or customer service role to help with future employment. I met lots of managers and had a thorough chat about the types of roles and departments available.

"A week after the coffee morning I was offered an eight-week placement with the customer services team, with hours to work around my daughter's school times.

"When I started in the contact centre I was paired with a customer services advisor to start learning about the different services. It wasn't like you expect work experience to be – with the 'boring' jobs like filing and printing. Instead I started training straight away. I

picked it up quite quickly, and as soon as I felt confident I was allowed on the phones.

"While I was doing my work experience placement, a job came up, so I'm now employed in the contact centre. I really enjoy my role and everyone's really friendly. It's given me a great opportunity and there's room for progression too."

### A manager's perspective: Louise Wenzel, contact centre team manager

"It's important to support work experience schemes – most employers ask for experience, so people need to be given the opportunity. Hannah joined our team for eight weeks and really impressed me, so when we had some vacant hours that suited her, she joined us on a 12-month contract.



Louise Wenzel

"In the contact centre we have to spend a lot of time training the person so that they get the most out of the experience. We're very flexible with hours, but obviously the more someone is able to work, the more they'll get out of the experience.

"I work closely with the team, so I regularly caught up with Hannah

to see how she was doing.

"Having someone else organise the work experience placement once I had picked the candidate made it much easier, and overall it has been a great support to our team. Our last two work experience placements have been very dedicated and keen to learn and get involved, which has made it all worthwhile."

●TO find out what is available, the Information Hub on the Downs Mail website has a list of employment and training openings offered by local companies and organisations.

If you would like to apply for a role or want to advertise a work opportunity for free, go to [www.downsmail.co.uk/information\\_hub/](http://www.downsmail.co.uk/information_hub/)

# people ready for employment

## Employers can make it happen

OFFERING work experience has many benefits that far outweigh any perceived "hassles".

- Gives you more options when it comes to recruiting new staff.
- Raises your community profile – recognition in the local community as a company investing in the future of local residents by providing a meaningful experience.
- Provides additional resources to help with a project or increase in workload.
- Influences the quality of future employees, while providing an opportunity for current staff to develop their management skills.

Maidstone Council and Jobcentre Plus want to make it as easy as

possible for businesses to offer work experience. They will help with organising informal interviews to make sure that the candidates have the right skills and competencies for the placement you're offering. This also gives you a chance to find out what they're hoping to gain from the placement, so that both of your expectations are clear.

They will also cover travel expenses and provide you with support for the duration of the work experience placement.

Think you could offer a placement or want to know more? Contact the economic development team at Maidstone Council on



01622 602344 or email: [economicdevelopment@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:economicdevelopment@maidstone.gov.uk)

starting point for you to check out: [www.work-experience.org](http://www.work-experience.org)  
[www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk](http://www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk)

### Find out more online

THERE are lots of websites with information about work experience. These should be a good

● Follow National Work Experience week from October 13 to 17 on Twitter, using the #weweek2014 hashtag

### In next month's edition:

THINK you know about apprenticeships? Think again. We will give you all the information you need to make a decision about starting an apprenticeship, plus help for businesses.

## Downs Mail Online

### COMMUNITY INFORMATION AT YOUR FINGERTIPS

The Downs Mail information hub is a community facility, which can be found on our website, for local residents and organisations to use.

Search for information or promote your organisation and its services absolutely free.

You can find your favourite charity, local authority services, clubs, societies, groups and recreational facilities, events, employment and training opportunities, advice on health and well being and lots more besides.

- Employment & Training openings
- Events
- Charities
- Schools & Colleges
- Local Authority Services
- Health & Wellbeing
- Support Groups & Helplines
- Clubs & Organisations
- Groups & Societies



PROMOTE YOUR EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING OPENINGS  
**FREE**

Visit the information hub at: [www.downsmail.co.uk](http://www.downsmail.co.uk)

# Have the best of both worlds!

IN the latest of our features, in conjunction with Maidstone Council, to help young people discover education, employment and training opportunities in the borough, we look at **apprenticeships**.

ARE you thinking of heading off to university or going straight into work? There is another way to start your career that could offer the best of both worlds.

An apprenticeship is a real, paid job with both on and off-the-job training. This means you achieve nationally-recognised qualifications at the same time as getting valuable work experience.

Apprenticeships last between one and four years, giving you time to develop your skills and knowledge and get practical experience.

You will be in good company. Al-

## What's in it for you?

- **Progress in your career:** surveys show that employers recognise and value apprenticeships so with hard work you could move up quickly in your chosen career.
- **Qualifications:** apprenticeships lead to nationally recognised, sought after qualifications.
- **Job-specific skills and training:** on-the-job experience means you will learn important skills from experienced staff, while off-the-job training teaches you essential knowledge.
- **Earn a salary:** the average wage for an apprentice is £170 per week.

most 320,000 people started apprenticeships in the first nine months of last year in a wide range

of industries, from retail and hospitality, to engineering and manufacturing, to animal management

and accountancy. The majority of apprentices (85%) will stay in work, with two-thirds (64%) staying with the same employer.

So how do you go about becoming an apprentice?

Start by thinking about the kind of job you would like in the future, and in which area you want to work, and go from there.

The National Apprenticeship Service has a list of available apprenticeship courses and vacancies. Go to their website at [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk) for more information.



In April MEP apprentices David Sutton and Alex Grindley attended a parliamentary reception along with Jay Cheema, MEP quality manager at the House of Commons. The event was hosted by ADS, the national trade association for all companies operating in the UK aerospace, defence, security and space industries.

## An apprentice's story: Experience is so valuable

**Apprentice:** Alex Grindley (20) Level 3 apprenticeship in engineering

**Employer:** MEP Ltd, specialists in moulding, precision machining and fabrication solutions for the industrial and aerospace sectors

● **What made you do an apprenticeship?** I knew I wanted a career that was hands-on and with great career prospects. This ticked all the boxes. The first-hand industry experience, qualifications and the opportunities that come with the apprenticeship are phenomenal. Also, apprenticeships are well recognised and valued within industries which open pathways for success.

● **How did you hear about apprenticeships?** Through a friend.

● **What were the stages in securing your apprenticeship?** I applied for the position at [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk). Then I was invited to an assessment day to see if I had the academic skills for the role. I was interviewed to see if I had the right personality and accepted the offer of employment.

● **What does a working day involve?** It varies. One day I might be inspecting components, another day might be office-based dealing with

supplier issues and another day could be a visit to a supplier or customer to help resolve an issue.

● **What's the best bit about being an apprentice?** The experience I wouldn't get if I was at college.

● **What's not so good about being an apprentice?** I could enhance my skills further by getting an insight into other parts of the business such as the machine shop.

● **What opportunities have you gained from being an apprentice?** Education (putting theoretical knowledge into practice); trips out (engineering exhibition at the NEC, Farnborough Air Show, Houses of Parliament and customer/supplier visits); knowledge of industry (how customers and suppliers work, awards, standards and products); developing my career (having the real-life experience and qualifications to further my career).

● **What kind of support have you had from your employer?** I have received exceptional support. My training in the company and academic qualifications have been designed to help me become an asset to my employer. They have also been supportive with any queries, concerns or worries I have had.

## Employer's benefits

THERE are many myths surrounding apprenticeships, from the way they operate to the level of input required from an employer.

However, modern apprenticeships are quite different to their 1960s counterparts, giving businesses far greater flexibility.

There are now more than 100,000 employers in England offering apprenticeships in more than 200,000 locations, covering 170 industries and 1,500 different job roles.

What are the advantages to your business of taking on an apprentice?

- A pipeline of fresh recruits.
- The right skills and knowledge for the job; apprentices are an asset to your workforce.
- Apprentices are highly motivated, keen to learn and progress within your business.
- Apprenticeships enable you to pass skills and experience through

your workforce, giving you the edge over your competitors.

● Apprenticeships can help your company give something back to the community you work in.

There are also cash incentives for employers:

● **Apprenticeship grant for employers of 16 to 24-year-olds:** up to £1,500 for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) who are new to apprenticeships or have not had an apprentice in the past 12 months.

● **Kent Employment Programme:** a grant of £2,000 is available to SMEs that take on an apprentice aged 18-24 who has been claiming job-seeker's allowance for at least three months.

Do you want support in developing the skills of your workforce? Call the economic development team on 01622 602344 or email [economicdevelopment@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:economicdevelopment@maidstone.gov.uk)

## Find out more online

- Most apprenticeship vacancies are advertised online by the National Apprenticeship Service: [www.apprenticeships.org.uk](http://www.apprenticeships.org.uk).
- Want to tell us about your experience of taking on an apprentice? Contact Downs Mail on [stephen@downsmail.co.uk](mailto:stephen@downsmail.co.uk)
- Dates for your diary: National Apprenticeship week will take place on March 9-13 2015, with a range of activities taking place to showcase the achievements and benefits of apprenticeships

## In next month's edition:

Ever thought about starting your own business or becoming self-employed? Find out how to get in touch, get advice and get started.

# Get some advice, get started

IN the latest of our features, in conjunction with Maidstone Council, to help young people discover education, employment and training opportunities in the borough, we focus on **self-employment**.

TAKING the plunge to start your own business can be a daunting prospect; even more so given statistics show that many aspiring entrepreneurs fail to turn their vision into a functional company.

However, statistics also suggest that seeking and taking advice early enough increases your chances of success and survival.

The message, then, is clear: get in touch, get advice and in the words of Walt Disney: "The way to get started is to quit talking and begin

doing."

Do this and you will be in good company because Maidstone has one of the highest start-up rates in the county. Last year more than 1,000 people registered new businesses across the borough; this is in

## Here to help you

•01622 602 392

•Getstarted@maidstone.gov.uk

•www.getstartedmaidstone.co.uk

addition to those who took the self-employment route and didn't formerly register as a company.

So, you think you have what it takes to start your own business? Your market research and business plan will have to support your belief it can work and you might like the idea of being your own boss. This was one of the many things that attracted self-made Checkatrade.com millionaire Kevin Byrne: "I liked the thought of working half a day for myself – the other 12

hours I ate and slept!" he said.

Still interested? Maidstone Council supports people with great business ideas. You can access free advice from local, regional and national experts on a wide range of issues, from laying the groundwork through to setting the whole thing up, to bringing it all together!

Here's another light bulb thought, by Thomas A Edison: "I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that don't work."

## How I started my own business

We talk to **Matt Parkinson**, who set up VooServers Ltd, an IT services provider based in New Cut Road, at the age of 16.

### What made you want to start your own business?

From a very early age I always had an interest in being able to make my own way in life and before I started secondary school I had already made some attempts at putting ideas into practice.

When I was a teenager I developed a keen interest in IT and the two naturally came together, in 2005, to form VooServers although in a very different form to what it is today. At the time it was a hobby alongside my sixth form studies designed to make a bit of money.

The idea grew and grew over the years to where we are today: employing seven (soon to be eight) people and with locations in Maidstone, Frankfurt and New York with an ever increasing thirst to grow bigger.

### What was the most challenging part of getting off the ground?

Started the company when I was still at school often became a barrier to the company's development in the early years, not only due to time constraints but the perception of me by potential customers.

In the first few years I tried to steer clear of making my age known to anyone and most business was performed purely by phone or email but even now, having just turned 25, customers are often surprised at how long I have been running VooServers.

In the past year I have actually found this has been advantage because people like to introduce me to some high profile figures who



are keen to hear the story of how and when I started the company and the journey I have taken.

### What's the best part about running your own business and what drives you on?

I like being able to do something I have a great passion for and knowing that every minute that I spend at work will benefit myself in the long run. A lot of people I know can't wait for the weekend to come by midday on a Monday. I am the opposite and can't wait to get back to work, although it doesn't seem like work which is just as well as I spend a lot of time there!

### What are your hopes for the company during the next 5 years?

VooServers is currently in the early stages of becoming a globally recognised brand in our industry, with us having launched locations in Frankfurt and New York in the past 18 months.

We have seen significant growth since this expansion alongside continued year-on-year growth from our primary location in Maidstone.

We are continually looking for ways to grow, with our sights set on launching new locations in the Asian, Pacific and African (APAC) region as well as setting up a dedicated website and internet marketing team at our head office in Maidstone.

### Matt's pizza inspiration

"Never think your idea is too small or too basic. Even the most basic of ideas can become a global product.

"I always like to make reference to the 'package saver' or, as most people know it, the 'pizza saver', which is the plastic support inside a pizza box.

"What most people would see as a relatively insignificant part of their Saturday night take-away was patented in 1985 and millions are now used every day."

## Geo Media celebrates fifth birthday

ONE start-up company which has seen a soar-away success is graphic design agency GEO Media.



Based in the Royal Star Arcade, it is celebrating its fifth birthday, after attracting clients such as Costa Coffee, Vodafone and KC C.

Founded by graphic design graduate Andrew Dicker (pictured) in 2009, the company maximises social media to promote its services, which include photography, logo, business card, brochure, flyer and website design.

Named "creative business of the year" in the 2013/14 Kent Independent Trader Awards (KITA), the company works closely with Maidstone Town Team as well as globally-recognised local and international brands.

The company began life in Kent House.

### Diary dates

•Global Entrepreneurship Week – November 17-23. The world's largest festival of entrepreneurship. Get connected and turn your ideas into something amazing. Go to Twitter @GEWUK

•Small Business Saturday – December 6. Support, inspire and promote small businesses. Go to Twitter @SmallBizSatUK

### In next month's edition:

A spotlight on residential and social care. What kind of jobs can you do in the care sector and what's involved in the job on a day to day basis? We'll be dispelling some common misconceptions.

## **Maidstone Borough Council**

### **Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**25<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

#### **Enterprise Hub**

While reading the following report you may want to think about:

- What you want to know from the report;
- What questions you would like answered.

Make a note of your questions in the box below.

As you read the report you may think of other questions.

Questions I would like to ask regarding this report:

- 
- 
- 
- 
-

**Guidance note - Making Quality Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations**

Scrutiny recommendations should seek to make a real difference to local people and the services provided. Recommendations that note a change or request further information fail to resolve problems or make changes. The scrutiny team have identified the following criteria for quality recommendations, they:

- affect and make a difference to local people;
- result in a change in policy that improves services;
- identify savings and maintain/improve service quality; or
- objectively identify a solution.

One way of checking the usefulness of recommendations is to evaluate them against the 'six Ws' set out below:

Good recommendations should answer these questions:

<b>Why does it need to be done?</b>	This will help ensure the outcome is relevant and in the right context – if a meeting is being requested it will ensure the correct people are invited to attend
<b>Who is being asked to do it?</b>	Without this nothing will get done (no one will take ownership)
<b>What needs to be done?</b>	Needs to be clear and specific
<b>HoW will it be done?</b>	Again, needs to be clear and specific, what is the expected output- for example a report to be written or a meeting to be arranged
<b>Where does it need to be done/go?</b>	If it's a meeting – where is it needed If it's a report – where is it to go, who needs to see it
<b>When does it need to be done?</b>	Crucial to have a timescale – without a deadline it will never get done

Thinking about these points will help ensure the outcomes of scrutiny are effective and will aid monitoring.

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**ECONOMIC AND COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OVERVIEW &  
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**TUESDAY 25<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2014**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SHARED  
SERVICES**

**Report prepared by Karen Franek**

**1. MAIDSTONE ENTERPRISE HUB**

**1.1 Issue for Consideration**

1.1.1 To note the progress on establishing an Enterprise Hub in Maidstone and discuss the option being considered as on the exempt appendix.

**1.2 Background**

1.3.1 There is a continuing need for a project to emphasise and action the Council's commitment to stimulating indigenous growth and job creation by increasing start up and survival rates, safeguarding existing jobs and helping improve the skills, innovation and competitiveness of businesses across the Borough.

1.3.2 To achieve this, the strategic need and demand for an Enterprise Hub has long been established being first included in the 2008 Economic Development Strategy. This is reinforced strongly by evidence underpinning the emerging Economic Development Strategy 2012-2031 and new Local Plan:

1.3.3 It was not until 2013 that an opportunity to finance the hub project arose through Kent County Council's Flexible Workspaces Programme Fund. Maidstone's bid was not followed through to final approval after KCC withdrew the grant element from the Programme.

1.3.4 Maidstone Council then looked at both financing the grant shortfall and proceeding with the KCC bid and funding the project in full through the Capital Loans Board. While acknowledging the need for an Enterprise Hub, the perceived level of risk was considered too significant due to high capital start up costs and potential ongoing revenue liability if the hub was not successful. It was therefore decided not to pursue the former Post Office site in King Street which had been the basis of the KCC bid.

- 1.3.5 In the above context a report was subsequently presented to Corporate Leadership Team in July 2014 with short, medium and long term options for establishing an Enterprise Hub and how they could achieve borough-wide Economic Development outcomes
- 1.3.7 As a result officers were asked to look into possible solutions which included revisiting previous plans for an Enterprise Hub within the Council's own property portfolio. This work has been undertaken in tandem with the proposed strategy for future office accommodation as reported to Cabinet 13 August 2014.
- 1.3.8 It is the result of the above work which now forms the basis of the draft report attached as an exempt appendix for the committee's consideration.



## **Maidstone Borough Council**

### **Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**25<sup>th</sup> November 2014**

#### **Review of Business Cases**

While reading the following report you may want to think about:

- What you want to know from the report;
- What questions you would like answered.

Make a note of your questions in the box below.

As you read the report you may think of other questions.

Questions I would like to ask regarding this report:

- 
- 
- 
- 
-

**Guidance note - Making Quality Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations**

Scrutiny recommendations should seek to make a real difference to local people and the services provided. Recommendations that note a change or request further information fail to resolve problems or make changes. The scrutiny team have identified the following criteria for quality recommendations, they:

- affect and make a difference to local people;
- result in a change in policy that improves services;
- identify savings and maintain/improve service quality; or
- objectively identify a solution.

One way of checking the usefulness of recommendations is to evaluate them against the 'six Ws' set out below:

Good recommendations should answer these questions:

<b>Why does it need to be done?</b>	This will help ensure the outcome is relevant and in the right context – if a meeting is being requested it will ensure the correct people are invited to attend
<b>Who is being asked to do it?</b>	Without this nothing will get done (no one will take ownership)
<b>What needs to be done?</b>	Needs to be clear and specific
<b>HoW will it be done?</b>	Again, needs to be clear and specific, what is the expected output- for example a report to be written or a meeting to be arranged
<b>Where does it need to be done/go?</b>	If it's a meeting – where is it needed If it's a report – where is it to go, who needs to see it
<b>When does it need to be done?</b>	Crucial to have a timescale – without a deadline it will never get done

Thinking about these points will help ensure the outcomes of scrutiny are effective and will aid monitoring.

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CORPORATE LEADERSHIP TEAM**

**FRIDAY 14 NOVEMBER 2014**

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF REGENERATION AND  
COMMUNITIES**

**Report prepared by Marcus Lawler**

**1. REVIEW OF BUSINESS CASES**

1.1 Issue for Consideration

- 1.1.1 The Committee is requested to scrutinise four draft business cases and provide feedback on their development. A summary of the business cases is as follows:

A Sustainable Future for Mote Park Due to a large rise in visits to Mote Park since 2009 the budgets to maintain it are under severe pressure. The business case considers a range of revenue generating measures to help fund all the borough's open spaces.

Brunswick Street Regeneration: Potentially develop part of the Council's car park in Brunswick Street with residential units. The business case considers the positive impact this will have on the borough's housing situation and aims to deliver an improved public realm for this part of the town and its residents.

Investment in Local Business: The draft Economic Development Strategy calls for the promotion of certain business sectors and locations to achieve its aims and support growth. The business case considers an opportunity to invest in one of the identified sectors with a view to achieving the strategic aims of the Economic Development Strategy.

Animal Crematorium: The business case examines why Bereavement Services could offer a more complete service to residents by handling animal cremation services.

1.2 Recommendation of Director of Regeneration and Communities

- 1.2.1 That the Committee considers the business cases contained in the exempt appendices and make recommendations as appropriate for

Cabinet consideration.

1.3 Background

1.3.1 At the previous Committee the development of the Commercialisation Strategy was discussed, with particular reference to the list of potential projects under development. The annexes to this report contain the four most advanced businesses cases under development..

1.4 Reasons for Recommendation

1.4.1 To ensure the Committee has the opportunity to consider and review the draft business cases in the exempt appendices whilst they are still in development.

1.5 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.5.1 The Committee could choose not to consider the business cases in the exempt appendices but this is not recommended as the Committee's views should be taken into account.

1.6 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.6.1 The business cases set out in the exempt appendices will contribute to the Council's corporate objectives in relation to:

- Maidstone having a growing economy;
- Maidstone being a decent place to live; and
- Corporate and Customer Excellence

1.6.2

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

9. Asset Management



- 1.6.3 Financial - The business cases outlined in the exempt appendices will require funding and will contribute to the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy through the Commercialisation Strategy.
- 1.6.4 Staffing – The business cases outlined in the exempt appendices will have staffing implications that will need to be addressed as part of the implementation if approved.
- 1.6.5 Legal – Mid Kent Legal Services will need to provide advice and input to the development and implementation of the business cases.
- 1.6.6 Environmental – The implications are contained in the body of the report.
- 1.6.7 Procurement – The business cases will be subject to the relevant procurement rules if approved.
- 1.6.8 Asset Management – The business case for Brunswick Street car park will have asset management implications that will be addressed as part of the project implementation if approved..

1.7 Relevant Documents

1.7.1 Appendices

Business cases as follows:

- A Sustainable Future for Mote Park.
- Brunswick Street Regeneration.
- Investment in Local Business.
- Animal Cremation.

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

# Agenda Item 13

## Maidstone Borough Council

### Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 25 November 2014

#### Future Work Programme and SCRAIP update

**Report of:** Sam Bailey, Research and Performance Officer

#### 1. Introduction

- 1.1 To consider the Committee's future work programme (FWP).
- 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**. Items on the draft programme were agreed at the meeting of 28 October 2014.
- 2.2 That the Committee considers the sections of the List of Forthcoming Decisions relevant to the Committee at **Appendix B** and whether these are items require further investigation or monitoring.
- 2.3 That the Committee notes the update in the SCRAIP from 26 August 2014 attached as **Appendix C**.
- 2.4 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 Following agreement from the committee at the meeting of 26 August, the possible item on 'The Council as a Business? Review SCRAIP Update' has been removed from the FWP as the Committee felt it had been superseded by the Commercialisation Strategy.
- 3.3 The Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee has agreed that 'Using the River Medway' can be considered by this Committee. The Committee needs to decide whether they wish to take this as an

item.

- 3.4 The Committee is reminded that the Constitution states under Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules number 9: Agenda items that 'Any Member shall be entitled to give notice to the proper officer that he wishes an item relevant to the functions of the Committee or Sub-Committee to be included on the agenda for the next available meeting of the Committee or Sub-Committee. On receipt of such a request the proper officer will ensure that it is included on the next available agenda, the Member must attend the meeting and speak on the item put forward.'

#### **4 List of Forthcoming Decisions**

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

#### **5 SCRAIP update**

- 5.1 An update on the recommendations from the meeting of 29 July 2014 is attached as **Appendix C**.
- 5.2 Only one of the three SCRAIPs has a response. The two missing SCRAIP responses are available in draft form but had not been signed off by the Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development at the time of agenda publication. These SCRAIP responses will be reported to the Committee at the meeting of 25 November.

#### **6. Impact on Corporate Objectives**

- 6.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following Council priorities:
- 'For Maidstone to have a growing economy' and 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live'.
- 6.2 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.

## Appendix A: Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee Draft Future Work Programme

Meeting Date	Agenda Deadline	Agenda Items	Details and Desired Outcomes	Witnesses and Report Authors
29 <sup>th</sup> July	16 <sup>th</sup> July	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet member priorities-written report</li> <li>• Draft Commercialisation Strategy</li> </ul>	<p>Members would like cabinet member to provide a report highlighting priorities, and then to question him on this report.</p> <p>Meeting will begin at 7.30pm.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cabinet member</li> <li>• Marcus Lawler</li> </ul>
26 <sup>th</sup> August	13 <sup>th</sup> August	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Events and festivals strategy</li> <li>• Events review SCRAIP follow up</li> <li>• Draft Scoping Document for Twilight Economy Review</li> </ul>	<p>These items will come together as requested by the committee during the work programming workshop at the meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> July because it was felt they were related.</p> <p>Scoping document for Twilight Economy review for members to comment on.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laura Case</li> </ul>
29 <sup>th</sup> September (re-arranged from the meeting of the 23 <sup>rd</sup> September)	17 <sup>th</sup> September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enterprise Hub proposals</li> </ul>	<p>Meeting re-arranged in order to provide an update on the proposals for the Enterprise Hub</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Karen Franek</li> </ul>
21 <sup>st</sup> October	8 <sup>th</sup> October	<p>Joint Meeting with Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider the Employment Land Qualitative Report and the Economic Development Strategy.</p>	<p>Implications for the local plan, hence the joint meeting. Needs to take place before the Economic Development Strategy cabinet member decision is taken.</p>	
28 <sup>th</sup> October	15 <sup>th</sup> October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First set of Witnesses</li> </ul>	<p>First set of witnesses for</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First witnesses for</li> </ul>



## Appendix A: Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee Draft Future Work Programme

Meeting Date	Agenda Deadline	Agenda Items	Details and Desired Outcomes	Witnesses and Report Authors
		for Twilight Economy review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Formation of Maidstone Culture and Leisure</li> </ul>	Twilight Economy Review.	Twilight Economy Review, as specified in scoping document <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Laura Case</li> <li>• Dawn Hudd</li> </ul>
25 <sup>th</sup> November	12 <sup>th</sup> November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Second set of witnesses for Twilight Economy Review</li> <li>• Skills and Employability Update</li> <li>• Commercial projects</li> </ul>	Following the update on skills and employability projects the committee will consider whether it wishes to conduct a review on skills and employability.  Second set of witnesses for the Twilight Economy Review.  Business cases for commercial projects due for a cabinet member decision in January.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Second set of witnesses for Twilight Economy Review</li> <li>• Abi Lewis</li> <li>• Karen Franek</li> <li>• Marcus Lawler</li> </ul>
23 <sup>rd</sup> December	10 <sup>th</sup> December	Draft Twilight Economy Report ready for sign off by the Committee		
27 <sup>th</sup> January	14 <sup>th</sup> January			
24 <sup>th</sup> February	11 <sup>th</sup> February			
24 <sup>th</sup> March	11 <sup>th</sup> March			
28 <sup>th</sup> April	15 <sup>th</sup> April			

Suggestions TBC

**Appendix A: Economic and Commercial Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee Draft Future Work Programme**

<b>Suggestion</b>	<b>Reason</b>
Using the River Medway	This item has been considered by the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee and has agreed that this can be considered by this Committee. The Committee needs to decide whether to take this as an item.
Policy for Discretionary Business Rates Relief	Only if MBC can have an influence on business rates. Meeting with Chair/Vice Chair and relevant Officers will determine whether this is the case. Due in August/September.
South East Local Enterprise Partnership	Only if MBC can have an influence on any of this. Meeting with Chair/Vice Chair and relevant Officers will determine whether this is the case.
Barriers and opportunities for rural business/IT infrastructure in offices (broadband)	These will be considered following scrutiny of the employment implications of the local plan in October.

## ECD OSC SCRAIP Report



Meeting, Minute & Date	Recommendation	Due Date	Executive Decision Maker	Response	Lead Officer
ECD.14092 9.42.1  49	The Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development be recommended to consider the Maidstone East site as a possible location for the Enterprise Hub, prior to the decision being taken, as this may help to encourage development in this area.	29-Oct-2014	Cabinet Member for Economic & Commercial Development	The need for an Enterprise Hub is immediate. Any redevelopment of the Maidstone East site would take several years. Further, an outline planning application is currently under consideration for a 10,000m <sup>2</sup> mixed development. Any development of the site is reliant on securing a major anchor store. The site is allocated for retail (not employment).	Karen Franek
ECD.14092 9.42.2	The Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development be recommended to consider the following options: a. starting off with a smaller scale Enterprise Hub located on council premises; and b. a short term leasehold property for the Enterprise Hub; As the committee recognises the urgent need for such a facility to support business start-ups in the borough.	29-Oct-2014	Cabinet Member for Economic & Commercial Development	Officers are continuing to look at a smaller scale business centre as part of the overall office accommodation project and future use of the gateway. A report will be brought forward before the end of the financial year with proposals.	Karen Franek
ECD.14092 9.42.3	The Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development bring the full Cabinet Member Decision to the Committee before	29-Oct-2014	Cabinet Member for Economic & Commercial Development	It is planned to take the report to the 12th November meeting. As agreed by the Chairman of O&S the report will be circulated to members of O&S for them to ask questions either prior to the Cabinet meeting on 12th	Karen Franek

Meeting, Minute & Date	Recommendation	Due Date	Executive Decision Maker	Response	Lead Officer
	the decision is taken.			November and/or to attend the meeting.	



# LIST OF FORTHCOMING DECISIONS

# List of Forthcoming Decisions

## INTRODUCTION

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

## KEY DECISIONS

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

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

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

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

Each entry identifies, for that “key decision” –

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

## List of Forthcoming Decisions

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

### EXECUTIVE DECISIONS

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

### DECISIONS WHICH THE CABINET INTENDS TO MAKE IN PRIVATE

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

53 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 [committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@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](http://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](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk)) where you can submit a question to the Leader of the Council. There is also the opportunity to invite the Leader of the Council to speak at a function you may be organising.

## List of Forthcoming Decisions

### WHO ARE THE CABINET?



**Councillor Annabelle Blackmore**  
Leader of the Council  
[annabelleblackmore@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:annabelleblackmore@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 07854 684207



**Councillor David Burton**  
Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and  
Development  
[davidburton@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:davidburton@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 07590 229910



**Councillor Malcolm Greer**  
Cabinet Member for Economic and  
Commercial Development (also Deputy  
Leader)  
[malcolmgreer@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:malcolmgreer@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01634 862876



**Councillor Marion Ring**  
Cabinet Member for Environment & Housing  
[marionring@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:marionring@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01622 686492



**Councillor Steve McLoughlin**  
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services  
[stevemcloughlin@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:stevemcloughlin@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01622 761998



**Councillor John Perry**  
Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure  
Services  
[johnperry@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:johnperry@maidstone.gov.uk)  
Tel: 07770 734741



### 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)
<b>Cabinet</b> Due Date: Wednesday 17 Dec 2014	Enterprise Hub  Proposal to establish an Enterprise Hub on the Terrace of Maidstone House.	KEY Reason: Expenditure > £250,000	Karen Franek <a href="mailto:karenfrank@maidstone.gov.uk">karenfrank@maidstone.gov.uk</a>	Private: Paragraph 3 of Local Government Act 1972 (Commercial sensitivity).	Enterprise Hub
<b>Cabinet</b> Due Date: Wednesday 14 Jan 2015 55	Exempt Appendix - A Sustainable Future for Mote Park  Business case	KEY Reason: Expenditure > £250,000	Marcus Lawler <a href="mailto:MarcusLawler@maidstone.gov.uk">MarcusLawler@maidstone.gov.uk</a>	Private. Local Government Act 1972 paragraph 3 (commercial sensitivity)	Exempt Appenix - A Sustainable Future for Mote Park

Forthcoming Decisions  
November 2014 - March 2015

Decision Maker and Date of When Decision is Due to be Made:	Title of Report and Brief Summary	Key Decision and reason (if applicable)	Contact Officer:	Public or Private <i>if Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted <i>(other relevant documents may be submitted)</i>
<p><b>Cabinet</b></p> <p>Due Date: Wednesday 14 Jan 2015</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: 2em;">56</p>	<p>Review of Business Cases</p> <p>Submission of four business cases for early scrutiny. The business cases include: A Sustainable Future for Mote Park; Regeneragtion of Brunswick Street; Widening Crematorium Services; and Investment In Support Of The Economic Development Strategy.</p>	<p>KEY Reason: Expenditure &gt; £250,000</p>	<p>Marcus Lawler <a href="mailto:MarcusLawler@maidstone.gov.uk">MarcusLawler@maidstone.gov.uk</a></p>	<p>Public</p>	<p>Review of Business Cases</p>

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