

AGENDA

COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING



Overview and Scrutiny

Date: Tuesday 9 September 2014
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors: Mrs Joy, D Mortimer (Vice-Chairman), Munford,
Mrs Parvin, Round, Sargeant, Mrs Stockell, B Watson
and J.A. Wilson (Chairman)

Page No.

1. **The Committee to consider whether all items on the agenda should be web-cast**
2. **Apologies**
3. **Notification of Substitute Members**
4. **Notification of Visiting Members/Witnesses**
5. **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 12 August 2014** 1 - 8
8. **Accessing Mental Health Services Before the Point of Crisis (Update)** 9 - 22
Interview with Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager
9. **Review of the Empty Homes Plan 2013-15** 23 - 52
Interview with Neil Coles, Housing Services Manager

Continued Over/:

Issued on 1 September 2014

Alison Broom

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

10. Future Work Programme and SCRAIP Update

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Report attached for consideration

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

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Community, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 12 AUGUST 2014

Present: Councillor J.A. Wilson (Chairman), and
Councillors Mrs Grigg, Munford, Naghi, Mrs Parvin,
Round, Sargeant, Mrs Stockell and Vizzard

Also Present: Councillor Perry

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

RESOLVED: That all items on the agenda be webcast.

2. **APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from:

- Councillor Joy;
- Councillor Mortimer;
- Councillor B Watson, and;
- Alison Broom, Chief Executive, Maidstone Borough Council (MBC).

3. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

- Councillor Grigg was present as substitute for Councillor Joy;
- Councillor Vizzard was present as substitute for Councillor Mortimer, and;
- Councillor Naghi was present as substitute for Councillor Watson.

4. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS/WITNESSES**

It was noted that Councillor Perry was present as Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services to observe.

5. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures.

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

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

7. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JULY 2014

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 15 July 2014 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

8. UPDATE ON THE WEST KENT HEALTH AND WELLBEING BOARD - WHAT DIFFERENCE ARE THEY MAKING TO MAIDSTONE?

The Chairman welcomed Dr Bob Bowes, Chairman of the West Kent Health and Wellbeing Board (WKHWB) and Dr Jones, GP from Maidstone and member of the WKHWB and thanked them for attending.

Dr Bowes delivered his presentation explaining it was focused on the issues faced by the HWB. He began by explaining where the WKHWB sat in the structure.

The Kent HWB (KHWB) was established as a result of the Health and Social Care Act 2012. However, it was explained the structure of HWBs best suited a unitary authority system and not a county the size of Kent with a mixture of unitary, district and borough councils. As a result KHWB created local HWBs in Kent as sub-committees co-terminus with the local Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCG). This allowed for local say and local steer on strategy at CCG level.

Dr Bowes went on to explain:

- The Children's Health and Wellbeing group was yet to be formed, but would provide reports to WKHWB;
- No reports, as yet, had been received from local authorities with a health and wellbeing remit. This was something that needed to be done to ensure there was alignment with the services provided;
- The WKHWB had no budget, no authority and no staff to help with administration etc.
- The major influence in the delivery of services sat with the providers of the service because this was what mattered to the public. Dr Bowes suggested, as resources were so scarce, strategic bodies such as the CCGs and HWBs, should have a higher public profile and public awareness of what they do.
- The WKHWB had difficulties in receiving a population needs assessment data set that was credible, comprehensive and made sense of the needs of the local community.

Questions raised by Dr Bowes presentation included:

- How much influence should providers have on the services they delivered?
- Are providers delivering on WKHWB's strategy?

- How aligned were the providers and local authorities strategies with the WKHWB's strategy?
- How did the WKHWB focus its instructions to the providers given the enormity of the needs?

Dr Bowes' outlined the responsibilities of the WKHWB. These included:

- Bringing democratic legitimacy to the commissioning of health and social care. It was explained that having elected members sitting on the WKHWB was extremely powerful and brought a sense of public ownership and accountability;
- Preventing ill health by promoting good health to reduce inequalities. This had the lowest spend but resulted in the highest savings. However, preserving services meant continuous fire fighting. Better engagement and joining up with district and borough councils, who provided preventative services, was needed;
- Integrating health and social care commissioning, ensuring commissioners achieved integrated delivery. Also that, commissioners' strategies were aligned with the Kent County Council (KCC) Health and Wellbeing Strategy. This was an important role and one only the WKHWB could carry out.

The last slide of Dr Bowes' presentation showed a graph of the causes of death by Maidstone Ward. The graph showed Park Wood was in the top quintile for deaths through circulatory disease, cancer and other diseases. This information was from the Population Needs Assessment.

Dr Bowes pointed out that some of the more affluent Wards showed inequalities in how young people died. He felt that by addressing some of the issues that caused this would be a success for the borough.

The Chairman welcomed Dr Tony Jones, Maidstone GP to the meeting and asked him to make comment.

Dr Jones explained he had been involved in health and wellbeing for a number of years and represented the local voice of the residents on the WKHWB.

Dr Jones felt in his experience the work of WKHWB and Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) was closely aligned. He also stated that KCCs decision to constitute local HWB with CCGs was a good decision for local service provision.

Dr Jones stated he would like to explore practical opportunities to work with MBC on health promotion and inequalities at an informal, local level that would make a difference to residents of the borough.

Dr Bowes reported WKHWB had Task and Finish Groups working on specific issues in the borough, such as:

- Mental Health and Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service
- Child Obesity
- Alcohol misuse – including licencing, accident and emergency and ambulance services
- Drug and tobacco control

Sarah Robson, Community Partnership Manager, MBC reported that information from the WKHWB was filtered down to her team and regular update meetings were held with Alison Broom, Chief Executive, MBC. The MBC Health Inequalities Action Plan had been developed picking up on the priorities of the Task and Finish Groups and MBC action plans and wider plans (ie Community Safety Unit Plans) were aligned accordingly.

During further discussion the following points were made:

- There was scope for joined up working with the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee (PTDOSOC) who were looking at developing a walking and cycling strategy. It was agreed the PTDOSC could link with the doctors surgeries in Maidstone committed to the health benefits of cycling.
- Youth obesity was acknowledged as an issue, as was youth malnutrition in not only deprived areas but affluent areas too.
- Sport and play needed more work as the knock on effects of this encouraged greater health and wellbeing.
- More help was needed for working on youth access to alcohol, tobacco and other substances including so called 'legal highs'. It was agreed there was potential for synergy for the HWB and licencing to work together on this.
- Resident input at Ward member level, where Councillors got to hear from residents where service levels were not being met, may facilitate a missing tier of monitoring health services.
- Working together at Primary Care level worked best around a core team, such as local medical practices, although a means of joining other activities around this would be needed. Areas missing that would be of benefit to residents included:
 - Nursing capability for multiple, long term, complex conditions;
 - Integration between GPs and mental health services at practice level;
 - Co-ordination of health and social care at practice level.
- Development of a federation of GP practices with multi-disciplinary teams in Maidstone was underway working on town wide health agendas.
- Patient self-care, encouraging peer support and connecting people with similar conditions and life experiences could create a sense of

community. This was an area where the voluntary sector could assist.

- Concern was raised that the WKHWB had no power or money. Dr Bowes explained the Commissioners held the budgets. The HWB could ask the Commissioners to focus on a particular area of health and wellbeing, for example if an area was identified as having a particularly high rate of cardio vascular health issues. If the Commissioners failed to take action, the Health and Social Care Act stated the HWB could report it to the Secretary of State for Health. However, although any such recommendations to Commissioners would make a difference, it was difficult to get the HWB in a position where it could make them. The difficulty lay in; identifying a need because the subject was so large; focusing on what could be delivered, and then; developing an expertise and instruction set that made sense to the Commissioners.
- The issue of Maidstone residents having to travel to Pembury Hospital for treatment, for example head injuries, and maternity services, raised concerns. Dr Bowes explained, Maidstone and Tunbridge Wells NHS Trust had two hospitals (Maidstone and Pembury). Services had become increasingly specialised and there was a need to provide these at scale by experts working together. Two hospitals were not able to do this. Pembury Hospital was successful in developing quality services that delivered good care. Services had been centred for patient safety above convenience.
- Dr Jones explained that both Maidstone and Pembury Hospitals had the capability of dealing with significant head injuries. However, the ambulance trust were told to take significant injuries to Pembury. Not all head injuries would be classed as significant and could be treated at Maidstone. This demonstrated a communication issue that needed to be addressed to ensure the right patients were taken to the right hospital.
- Information from patients gathered during the Mapping the Future project, demonstrated patients would be prepared to travel any distance for elective, non-emergency, treatment in order to get the best care.
- Cases where emergency treatment was required would be taken to the nearest service competent to deal with the emergency, which was not necessarily Pembury.
- Concern was raised regarding the accessibility of HWB documents and minutes. Councillors were made aware that the WKHWB was currently administered by MBC (this would change to another local member authority at the end of the year) and all minutes and related documents were available on the MBC website.
- It was pointed out there was work being done that promoted health and wellbeing with support from parish councils and MBC, including

running clubs, skate parks, youth clubs, all supporting health and wellbeing.

- Suggestions going forward included working with residents and businesses on:
 - A 'quality mark' for businesses who refused to sell legal highs and alcohol to underage customers;
 - Promotion of competitive sports;
 - Joined up planning of public transport;
 - Providing the Public Needs Statistics in a format residents could understand easily;
 - Establishing referral methods for walking groups, fire, ambulance and other services to feedback observed concerns to medical professionals.

RESOLVED:

- a) That contact details for doctors surgeries in Maidstone who promote cycling and walking be passed on to the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee for inclusion in their Cycling and Walking review;
- b) That access details for the Population Needs Assessment for the Maidstone Borough and other Health and Wellbeing statistics be made available to Councillors¹;
- c) That access details to the WKHWB agendas and minutes be made available to Councillors², and;
- d) That the Joint Kent Health and Wellbeing Strategy be made available to Councillors³.

9. **ADULTS AND OLDER PEOPLES SERVICES - REVIEW OF LONELINESS AND ISOLATION**

The Committee discussed the draft scoping document for the review of loneliness and how to reduce it.

¹ <http://www.kmpho.nhs.uk/geographical-areas/local-authorities/maidstone-local-authority/?p=1>

² <http://meetings.maidstone.gov.uk/ieListMeetings.aspx?CId=568&Year=0>

³ <http://www.kent.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/health/health-and-public-health-policies/joint-health-and-wellbeing-strategy>

The Committee agreed the issue of loneliness and isolation affected many different groups within communities. It was suggested the issues were less prevalent in rural areas where there was a greater sense of community and the review could therefore focus on rural and urban areas as the needs were different.

It was suggested, with an ageing population there was already a considerable amount of support and activities for the elderly.

The Committee agreed the review needed to focus on identifying where there were gaps in provision for lonely and isolated people and that these people be included in deciding what was provided.

Sarah Robson, Community Partnership Manager, explained data was not being captured for those aged 80 plus, disabled people and older carers and suggested one of these areas could be the focus of the review. Ms Robson also suggested there needed to be clarity of the definition of 'loneliness' and 'isolation' to help focus the review.

RESOLVED:

- a) That Jo Tonkin, Public Health Specialist, Kent Public Health be asked to provide a report on Loneliness and Isolation in Maidstone to the review Working Group prior to the meeting of 11 November 2014. The report to identify the profile of lonely and isolated adults and older people in the Borough and what support was provided for them to help the review Working Group identify the focus for the review and the relevant witnesses to invite to the meeting of 11 November 2014.
- b) That the meeting of 11 November 2014 be used to interview Jo Tonkin and the relevant witnesses identified by the review Working Group.

10. **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES TERMS OF REFERENCE - REVIEW**

RESOLVED:

- a) That the revisions to Article 6 of the Council's Constitution as set out in Appendix A of the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Officer, be noted.
- b) That the change to the Committee's name from Community, Leisure Services and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee to Community, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee, be noted.

11. **FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME**

RESOLVED: That the future work programme, as set out in appendix a to the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Officer, be endorsed subject to the following changes:

- The meeting of 11 November 2014 be used to interview witnesses for the review of Isolation and Loneliness in Older People;
- The Maternity Services – are they working? Item be moved from 11 November 2014 to 13 January 2015;
- The Young Carers item be moved from 9 December 2014 to 10 February 2015;
- The draft report on Overview of Health Services in Maidstone Borough be programmed in for 10 March 2015.
- The Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services review be included as part of the update of the recommendations from the Accessing Mental Health Services Before the Point of Crisis programmed in for the meeting of 9 September 2014.

12. DURATION OF MEETING

18:30 to 20:10pm

Maidstone Borough Council

Community, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 9 September 2014

Accessing Mental Health Services Before the Point of Crisis (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:

-
-
-
-
-

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Tuesday 9 September 2014

Report prepared by Sarah Shearsmith

Accessing Mental Health Services Before the Point of Crisis (Update)

1.1. Issue for consideration

- 1.1.1 The Committee to consider an update on the recommendations of the Accessing Mental Health Services Before the Point of Crisis review attached at **Appendix A**.

1.2. Recommendation

- 1.2.1 That the Committee notes the current position with regard to the recommendations of the Accessing Mental Health Services Before the Point of Crisis review.

1.3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.3.1 Mental health needs of Maidstone residents has been the focus of scrutiny since 2012. A number of significant changes to the NHS took effect in April 2013 affecting how decisions about NHS services were made and how services were commissioned. Local Primary Care Trusts (PCTs) and Strategic Health Authorities (SHAs) were replaced by Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) giving local authorities a more influential role in respect of mental health services. Local authorities were expected to work more closely with other health care providers to tackle the challenges.
- 1.3.2 The review report and recommendations were agreed at the Community, Leisure Services and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 11 March 2014. **Appendix A** provides an update on the work completed so far and highlights areas where further work is required.

1.4 Alternative Action and Why Not Recommended

- 1.4.1 The Committee could decide not to consider the updates on the recommendations which could prevent further work from being completed to help bridge the gap in services available to Maidstone residents.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 1.5.1 There Council's Strategic Plan 2011-2015 lists 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live' as a key priority, under which sites the outcomes 'Developing sustainable communities' and 'Increasing choice and improving the quality of life for vulnerable people'. The recommendations within the report are considers to contribute to the fulfillment of this outcomes.

1.6 Relevant Documents

Appendix A – SCRAIP¹ Update (August 2014)

Appendix B – Original SCRAIP (March 2014)

1.7 Background Documents

Accessing Mental Health Services Before the Point of Crisis – Review Report (March 2014)

¹ Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan

Appendix A

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (SCRAIP)

Committee: Community, Leisure Services and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date: 11 March 2014

Minute Nº: 112

Topic: Accessing Mental Health Services Before the Point of Crisis

Update Report

Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager and Sarah Shearsmith, Community Development Team Leader
August 2014

Note: The lead officer is Sarah Shearsmith, who is acting for Katie Latchford during her maternity leave.

Recommendation 1: That from July 2014 a joint mental health services meeting be held on a six monthly basis between Maidstone Borough Council, Kent County Council, Mental Health Trust, MTW and the West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group to communicate and share information to ensure mental health and mental health services remain an on-going priority. This group to develop an action plan to include the following;

- a. That a single point of access to mental health services is developed providing access to all cases of mental health and not just the more severe cases;
- b. That the Maidstone Borough Council Community Development Team ensure there is continued engagement between the West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group, Kent County Council Public Health and the Community, Charitable and Voluntary sectors and Maidstone Borough Council to ensure mental health services are commissioned on a well-informed basis;
- c. That the plausibility of a central county self-assessment team or unit for mental health be investigated with a view to providing a cost effective and viable service for Kent;
- d. Building on the success of the Street Triage Pilot, that the above group work with Kent Police and NHS Mental Health Teams to provide access to a 24 hour mental health service advice line for all police officers;
- e. That the Community Development Team promote the Live it Well website as a priority via its communication channels to ensure its profile is raised and maintained

Actions: Regular meetings have already been set up led by Kent Public health and involving West Kent local authorities and CCG. This meeting will develop an action plan focused on developing a prevention and commissioning approach, with current priorities identified as dementia, children (in particular, the need for more timely access to services) and mental health.

Appendix A

- 1a. This recommendation requires substantial investment by both Kent County Council and CCGs within the County - the recommendation will be raised with both KCC and WKCCG for their consideration.
- 1b. This work will form part of the meeting above and will ensure involvement of all parties across West Kent.
- 1c. This recommendation requires substantial investment by both Kent County Council and CCGs within the County – the recommendation will be raised with both KCC and WKCCG for their consideration.
- 1d. Locally a pilot project is being scoped out with Kent Police, CRI, Mental Health Teams and trainee GPs, led by housing to support work with our street population. The roll out of the street triage pilot is being considered at county level.
- 1e. The Community Development Team is being trained on the live it well website and its core message of 6 ways to well-being. The team will promote the Live It Well website through all its' communication channels and embed the principles in delivery of projects and commissioning through the team.

Timetable: First meeting to be set up by July 2014

Update:

1a. A single point of access to mental health services requires substantial investment. It is suggested that this is raised by the Borough Council representative (Alison Broom) at the West Kent Health and Wellbeing Board.

1b. In June 2014, a Task and Finish Group for Mental Health was formed by West Kent CCG Health and Wellbeing Board. The aim of the Group is to understand:

- Mental health improvement opportunities funded by Section 256,
- Opportunities for supporting employers and schools in prevention
- The need for a communications strategy to make sure that everyone who might need the service finds it easy to access.
- How can we build community resilience? What would districts/ boroughs, the various sectors of the NHS need to do to enhance this?

The Task and Finish Group is chaired by Ivan Rudd, Mental Health Specialist and Kent Public Health and is attended by the West Kent Districts. Maidstone Borough Council is represented by Katie Latchford/Sarah Shearsmith.

1c. A central county self-assessment team or unit for mental health requires substantial investment. Eligibility and an agreed assessment criteria will be key if the team will cover both children/adolescents and adults/older people services. It is suggested that this is raised by the Borough Council representative (Alison Broom) at the West Kent Health and Wellbeing Board.

Appendix A

- 1d. Locally a pilot project is being scoped out with Kent Police, CRI, Mental Health Teams and trainee GPs, led by housing to support work with our street population. The roll out of the street triage pilot is being considered at county level.

Maidstone Borough Council established a multi-agency project to tackle its street population in Maidstone town centre last year. The project has focused on key areas of the town centre including Week Street, High Street, Brenchley Gardens and the Archbishops Palace. The issues are complex and there are many reasons why people are on the street including homelessness, substance misuse issues or professional begging.

Together, the multi-agency group, which includes support from Maidstone Borough Council, Kent Police, Maidstone Mind, Urban Blue Bus, Maidstone Day Centre, CRI and Porchlight has worked together to provide an Assertive Outreach Service, which has successfully engaged some people off the streets into housing or other support services.

The assertive outreach work undertaken over the past few months has established the true size and scale of the problem. Since May 2014, 45 people have been successfully housed or relocated through the Assertive Outreach programme. Maidstone's street population has a small number of clients, approximately 15, who repeatedly revolve through the support available often aggravated by the current economic climate, benefit sanctions, alongside their own entrenched complex needs and chaotic lifestyles. The Assertive Outreach team will continue to work with and support those individuals recently housed or relocated, alongside those that are hard to reach individuals or sustain engagement.

The pilot has been extended to October 2014. At this stage, the pilot has not been considered at county level.

1e. KCC Public Health will be support work the development of a Communication strategy and action plan that seeks to close the gap in the population's understanding of mental health services in West Kent. The West Kent CCG Health and Wellbeing Board has supported the West Kent districts and other front line staff across to actively participate in presentations of Six Ways to Wellbeing campaign. Maidstone Borough Council has promoted the Six Ways to Wellbeing through the Council's website and community days in Park Wood, High Street and Shepway North wards. Over the next 12 months, a programme of health and wellbeing activities will be held in Jubilee Square to promote the Six Ways to Wellbeing.

Recommendation 2: That Maidstone Borough Council's Community Development Team ensure professionals and the community can access information on child and adolescent mental health services provided by NHS Kent and Sussex via the Council's website 'In the Stone' and the borough update;

Action: Information on the mental health services available to children and adolescents in Maidstone will be made available through MBC website, the youth focused 'in the stone' website and the Borough update. This will include information on services provided by the Sussex Partnership, but also by local VCS providers who can offer support.

Appendix A

Note: Further work still needs to be undertaken to support the transition of care from child and adolescent mental health services to adult mental health services, when young people often get lost in the system when they reach 16. Young people who need help and support from mental health services can find themselves with no help and support at a time when they really need it. Through no fault of their own, when they reach 16 or 17 they can find themselves without any support because CAMHS (Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services) ends, and they are too young or not ill enough for AMHS (Adult Mental Health Services) which does not start till they reach 18.

Timetable: Website by May 2014, Borough update in first 6 months

Update: Unfortunately, due to changes in management at Switch, who oversee the In the Stone website, there has been a delay in updating the website. However, they have agreed to set up a new page dedicated mental health and support by providing links to www.kmpt.nhs.uk/CAMHS, www.youngminds.org.uk, www.liveitwell.org.uk and Maidstone Mind websites.

The Community development team will produce an article for the autumn/winter 2014 Borough Update to promote available mental health services and other support networks for children and young people in the borough.

Recommendation 3: That the Maidstone Borough Council Community Development Team continue to support the Suicide Awareness for Everyone (SAFE) project via funding and their various communication channels, for example 'In the Stone' website;

Action: Commissioning intentions for the commissioning for prevention fund from KCC Public Health have been set and continuation funding allocated to the SAFE project in Maidstone.

As part of the Service Level Agreement MBC has with Voluntary Action Within Kent who run the project, there is an expectation that they will increase their communications work and raise their profile in Maidstone. The Community Development Team will support them to identify channels and publications to fulfil this obligation.

Timetable: Complete by September 2014

Update: Safe is a youth led project working to raise awareness about mental health in young people. The aim is to breakdown the unnecessary stigma that surrounds mental health and help young people to know they are not alone and there is support to help them with a variety of mental health and wellbeing issues. The Safe project aims to make sure that young people are more aware of the danger signs of youth suicide and that they recognise the signs of mental health difficulties in themselves and their friends. The focus of the project has been to support local young people within schools to raise awareness of mental health issues and to deliver outreach support and activities.

Maidstone Borough Council has been working closely with VAWK to continue the delivery of SAFE within secondary schools within Maidstone. The programme is working alongside

Appendix A

students at Oakwood Park; Maplesden Noakes; New Line Learning; Invicta Grammar School; Maidstone Girls Grammar; and Maidstone Grammar School.

Since the funding was confirmed for April 2014, the following work has taken place:

- Weekly Community Safe Committee meetings taking place at Switch Youth Café, up to 10 young people attend these meetings from various schools. The group have been working on a promotional film with ITV Fixers to help raise awareness of Mental Health and are planning a community art awareness event.
- A basic mental health awareness assembly is due to be delivered to all Maidstone Secondary Schools (11 in total) by December 2014.
- A young person from the Maidstone committee completed 2 weeks work experience in June working alongside the SAFE project officer.

Going forward:

- SAFE are planning an awareness event for World Mental Health Day on 10th October 2014.
- Young people are being trained up as volunteers as training is taking place in Safeguarding, Mental Health Awareness and SAFETalk

SAFE has throughout the quarter used a variety of social media to signpost and raise awareness to include Facebook, Twitter, SAFE web pages and other local youth web pages.

The SAFE project was showcased at a county wide conference for Kent and Medway Grammar Schools on 30th June which was attended by 60+ Head Teachers and pastoral leads from across Kent.

Recommendation 4: That Maidstone Borough Council's Community Development team together with their partners encourage prevention and early intervention in mental health and well-being by developing a pilot project aimed at primary school children and their parents to develop coping strategies when moving to secondary school.

Action: Commissioning intentions for the commissioning for prevention fund from KCC Public Health have been set and funding set aside to develop a pilot project in primary schools that supports the development of strong mental health coping strategies to aid transition and development in to adolescence.

Timetable: Pilot commissioned by July 2014

Update: A pilot project has yet to be developed following the expansion of Secondary School Work. SAFE are working with Year 7's on entry to Secondary School to ask them to complete a monitoring questionnaire to find out what issues / fears they face. Work can then be developed based on the need of the young people.

Appendix A

Maidstone Borough Council is working alongside Kent County Council Public Health to develop an emotional resilience programme for young people. We hope to link these two programmes closely together.

Recommendation 5: That a letter of support from the Chairman of the Communities, Leisure Services and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee is sent to Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director of Education, Learning and Skills at Kent County Council supporting the 'Coping and Resilience Strategy' and 'Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy' being adapted to include children of primary school age and PSHE programmes raising awareness of mental health and well-being in schools.

Action: The Community Development Team will provide information to Tessa Mallet to aid in her drafting of the letter of support.

Update: Letter drafted by Community Development on behalf of Tessa Mallet. Tessa to liaise with the Chair of OSC to approve.

Appendix B

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION ACTION AND IMPLEMENTATION PLAN (SCRAIP)

Committee: Community, Leisure Services and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Meeting Date: 11 March 2014

Minute No: 112

Topic: Accessing Mental Health Services Before the Point of Crisis

Recommendation ⁱ	Cabinet Member ⁱⁱ	Response ⁱⁱⁱ	Timetable ^{iv}	Lead Officer ^v
<p>1. That from July 2014 a joint mental health services meeting be held on a six monthly basis between Maidstone Borough Council, Kent County Council, Mental Health Trust, MTW and the West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group to communicate and share information to ensure mental health and mental health services remain an on-going priority. This group to develop an action plan to include the following:</p> <p>a. That a single point of access to mental health services is developed providing access to all cases of mental health and not just the more severe cases;</p>	Cllr J Wilson	<p>Regular meetings have already been set up led by Kent Public health and involving West Kent local authorities and CCG.</p> <p>This meeting will develop an action plan focused on developing a prevention and commissioning approach, with current priorities identified as dementia, children (in particular, the need for more timely access to services) and mental health.</p> <p>1a: This recommendation requires substantial investment by both Kent County Council and CCGs within the County - the recommendation will be raised with both KCC and WKCCG for their consideration.</p>	First meeting to be set up by July 2014	Katie Latchford

Appendix B

<p>b. That the Maidstone Borough Council Community Development Team ensure there is continued engagement between the West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group, Kent County Council Public Health and the Community, Charitable and Voluntary sectors and Maidstone Borough Council to ensure mental health services are commissioned on a well-informed basis;</p> <p>c. That the plausibility of a central county self-assessment team or unit for mental health be investigated with a view to providing a cost effective and viable service for Kent;</p> <p>d. Building on the success of the Street Triage Pilot, that the above group work with Kent Police and NHS Mental Health Teams to provide access to a 24 hour mental health</p>		<p>1b: This work will form part of the meeting above and will ensure involvement of all parties across West Kent.</p> <p>1c: This recommendation requires substantial investment by both Kent County Council and CCGs within the County – the recommendation will be raised with both KCC and WKCCG for their consideration.</p> <p>1d: Locally a pilot project is being scoped out with Kent Police, CRI, Mental Health Teams and trainee GPs, led by housing to support work with our street population.</p> <p>The roll out of the street triage pilot is being considered at county level.</p>		
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Appendix B

<p>service advice line for all police officers;</p> <p>e. That the Community Development Team promote the Live it Well website as a priority via its communication channels to ensure its profile is raised and maintained.</p>		<p>1e: The Community Development Team is being trained on the live it well website and its core message of 6 ways to well-being. The team will promote the Live It Well website through all its' communication channels and embed the principles in delivery of projects and commissioning through the team.</p>		
<p>2. That Maidstone Borough Council's Community Development Team ensure professionals and the community can access information on child and adolescent mental health services provided by NHS Kent and Sussex via the Council's website 'In the Stone' and the borough update;</p>	<p>Cllr J Wilson</p>	<p>Information on the mental health services available to children and adolescents in Maidstone will be made available through MBC website, the youth focused 'in the stone' website and the Borough update. This will include information on services provided by the Sussex Partnership, but also by local VCS providers who can offer support.</p>	<p>Website by May 2014</p> <p>Borough update in first 6 months</p>	<p>Katie Latchford</p>
<p>3. That the Maidstone Borough Council Community Development Team continue to support the Suicide Awareness for Everyone (SAFE) project via funding and their various communication channels, for example 'In the Stone' website;</p>	<p>Cllr J Wilson</p>	<p>Commissioning intentions for the commissioning for prevention fund from KCC Public Health have been set and continuation funding allocated to the SAFE project in Maidstone.</p> <p>As part of the Service Level Agreement MBC has with Voluntary Action Within Kent who run the project, there is an expectation that they will increase their communications work and raise their profile in Maidstone. The Community Development Team will support them to</p>	<p>Complete by September 2014</p>	<p>Katie Latchford</p>

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		identify channels and publications to fulfil this obligation.		
4. That Maidstone Borough Council's Community Development team together with their partners encourage prevention and early intervention in mental health and well-being by developing a pilot project aimed at primary school children and their parents to develop coping strategies when moving to secondary school;	Cllr J Wilson	Commissioning intentions for the commissioning for prevention fund from KCC Public Health have been set and funding set aside to develop a pilot project in primary schools that supports the development of strong mental health coping strategies to aid transition and development in to adolescence.	Pilot commissioned by July 2014	Katie Latchford
5. That a letter of support from the Chairman of the Communities, Leisure Services and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee is sent to Patrick Leeson, Corporate Director of Education, Learning and Skills at Kent County Council supporting the 'Coping and Resilience Strategy' and 'Early Intervention and Prevention Strategy' being adapted to include children of primary school age and PSHE programmes raising awareness of mental health and well-being in schools.		The Community Development Team will provide information to Tessa Mallett to aid in her drafting of the letter of support.		Tessa Mallett/Cllr. Blackmore

Notes on the completion of SCRAIP

ⁱ Report recommendations are listed as found in the report.

ⁱⁱ Insert in this box the Cabinet Member whose portfolio the recommendation falls within.

Appendix B

iii The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box either the acceptance or rejection of the recommendation.

If the recommendation is rejected an explanation for its rejection should be provided. The 'timetable' and 'lead officer' boxes can be left blank

If the recommendation is accepted an explanation of the action to be taken to implement the recommendation should be recorded in this box. Please also complete the 'timetable' and 'lead officer' boxes.

iv The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box when the action in indicated in the previous box will be implemented.

v The Officer/Cabinet Member responsible for responding to the recommendation should indicate in this box the Officer responsible for the implementation of the action highlighted in the 'response' box.

Maidstone Borough Council

Community, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 9 September 2014

Review of the Empty Homes Plan 2013-15

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:

-
-
-
-
-

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITY, ENVIRONMENT AND HOUSING OVERVIEW AND
SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

TUESDAY 9 SEPTEMBER 2014

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF HOUSING AND COMMUNITY
SERVICES

Report prepared by Neil Coles

1. REVIEW OF THE EMPTY HOMES PLAN 2013-15

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 To note progress made in delivering the actions contained within the council's Empty Homes Plan 2013-15.

1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Housing and Community Services

1.2.1 That the Community, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the contents of the report.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

Background

1.3.1 Homes that are empty and unoccupied are a wasted resource, and this is especially the case in Maidstone given the high demand placed on the housing market in the borough.

1.3.2 The council's Empty Homes Plan was adopted in January 2013 and set out three priorities to support empty homes being brought back into use across the borough:

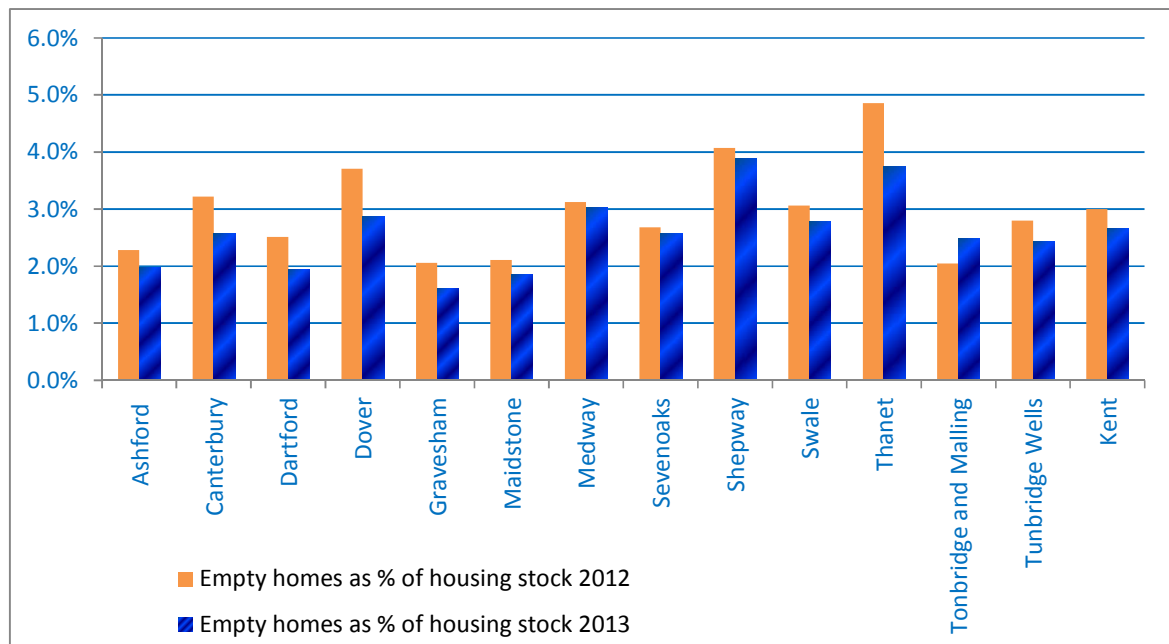
- § Priority 1 – Minimise the number of empty homes through the council's interventions;
- § Priority 2 – Maximise opportunities for returning homes back into use through initiatives and incentives, and;
- § Priority 3 - Maximise the effectiveness of enforcement action to bring empty homes back into use.

- 1.3.3 The Empty Homes Plan includes an action plan that details a range of actions that will be completed to return empty homes back into use and meet the three priorities of the plan.

Performance update

- 1.3.4 Between January 2013 and July 2014, 212 empty homes have been returned to use following the council's intervention. Of these, 60 (28%) had been empty for less than one year, 124 (59%) had been empty for between one and three years, and 28 (13%) had been empty for over three years.
- 1.3.5 This demonstrates that resources are being targeted to those properties that are long-term empty homes, rather than properties which are transactional empty homes that would return to use without the council's involvement, e.g. properties being marketed for sale.
- 1.3.6 Between November 2012 and October 2013, DCLG statistics show that the number of empty homes across Maidstone reduced by 11% from 1,401 to 1,239. The number of long-term empty homes (i.e. those empty for longer than 6 months) also reduced by 1.4% from 420 to 414.
- 1.3.7 The number of empty homes across Maidstone as a percentage of the totals dwelling stock has also fallen from 2.11% to 1.85%. Maidstone continues to have the second lowest percentage of empty homes in Kent and Medway as shown in Table 1.
- 1.3.8 Although this provides a useful snapshot of the position, the data can be misleading as the number of empty homes can be very fluid, with properties being brought back to use and becoming empty on a daily basis.

Table 1 – Empty homes as a percentage of housing stock – 2012 and 2013



Action Plan update

1.3.9 Since the inception of the Empty Homes Plan the following actions have been delivered as set out in the action plan:

- § EHP 1.1 – 212 empty homes returned to use during January 2013 – July 2014;
- § EHP1.2 – Online reporting form implemented;
- § EHP1.3 – Telephone reporting helpline re-launched;
- § EHP 1.4 – Website information reviewed and updated;
- § EHP 1.5 – Four empty homes returned to use through private sector leasing;
- § EHP 2.2 – Capital funding for empty homes assistance incorporated into the council's Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy;
- § EHP 2.4 – Maidstone Homefinder bond scheme continues to be promoted to empty home owners;
- § EHP 2.5 – Four properties returned to use through the HCA Empty Homes Scheme;
- § EHP 3.2 – Evaluation matrix for enforcement options implemented, and;

- § EHP 3.4 – Empty Homes Premium implemented for properties empty over two years.

1.3.10 The following actions have not been delivered within the agreed timeframe:

- § EHP 1.6 – The development of an innovative scheme to return empty homes back to use working with homeless households

This work has not been progressed following a lack of engagement from empty home owners which resulted in potential properties not being available for the scheme. Properties have also not been able to be sourced through the council's Commercialisation Project which has targeted strategic projects.

- § EHP 3.1 – Adoption of a Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy to include empty homes interventions

This work has not progressed as officers have experienced significant success in working collaboratively with empty home owners to return properties back into use.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 Not applicable

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The work to return empty homes back into use supports the council's priorities for Maidstone to be a decent place to live, and to have a growing economy.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 Not applicable

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

1. Financial
2. Staffing
3. Legal
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development

X
X

6. Community Safety
7. Human Rights Act
8. Procurement
9. Asset Management

1.8 Financial – The reduction in empty homes contributes towards maximizing tax income and the council may also receive New Homes Bonus for returning empty homes back into use. In addition the empty homes programme can help reduce the amount of temporary accommodation that is needed to meet the council’s statutory duties to homeless families. Returning empty homes back into use provides a cost avoidance opportunity when the average cost of providing households with B&B is £60 per night.

1.9 Staffing – The council has employed an Empty Homes Officer on a fixed term contract to support the work to promote bringing empty homes back into use and to work with homeowners over the past two years. The post is funded until March 2015 and given that the cost of the post is less than providing B&B for two households over a year, there is a financial case for extending the post, as the post holder has had a positive impact on bringing empty homes back into use.

1.10 Conclusions

1.10.1 Since the adoption of the council’s Empty Homes Plan in 2013, 212 properties have been brought back into use following the council’s intervention, exceeding the performance target set for the life of the policy.

1.10.2 Work is continuing to deliver the remaining actions contained within the Plan, and this will continue to deliver positive results in returning empty homes back into use.

1.11 Relevant Documents

1.11.1 Empty Homes Plan 2013-15

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

Empty Homes Plan 2013 – 2015

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Aims and priorities

Maidstone Borough Council's Strategic Plan identifies three key priorities – one of these being for Maidstone to be a decent place to live. To support this priority, the council aims to increase the supply of housing through reducing the number of empty homes within the borough. Empty homes have the potential to impact negatively on both the local neighbourhood but also on the wider housing market and by ensuring long-term empty homes are minimised the council will contribute to its priority for Maidstone to have a growing economy.

This Empty Homes Plan forms part of the Council's over-arching Housing Strategy and replaces the previous Empty Homes Strategy which was published in 2007 (and subsequently updated in 2010).

This plan sets out in greater detail our priorities and how we intend to accomplish them. It also details to local Councillors, local residents, and our stakeholders how we will work to prevent properties becoming 'long-term' empty and how we will bring back into use homes that have been previously left empty.

This plan also sets out 3 key priorities to support empty homes being brought back into use across the borough:

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Priority 1

- Minimise the number of empty homes through the council's interventions

Priority 2

- Maximise opportunities for returning homes back to use through initiatives and incentives

Priority 3

- Maximise the effectiveness of enforcement action to bring empty homes back into use

Why bring empty homes back into use?

Homes that lie empty and unoccupied are clearly a wasted resource. This is especially the case given the current high demand for all forms of housing and the impact on households who are unable to locate appropriate housing for their needs. Empty homes also detract from Maidstone being a decent place in which to live.

Empty homes can also place a burden on local neighbourhoods through:

- detracting from the visual amenity of the local area;
- encouraging vandalism, anti-social behaviour and other criminal activity;
- attracting vermin where gardens become unkempt and overgrown, or are subject to fly-tipping;
- providing harbourage for pigeons where windows and/or the roof structure is insecure;
- 33 ▪ creating concerns for immediate neighbours due to lack of general maintenance and disrepair, and;
- being targeted by squatters.

Empty homes can also be attributed to fuelling a 'spiral of decline' in a local area where a sense of neglect discourages inward investment and new households are dissuaded from moving into the neighbourhood, whether they are seeking to rent or own a home.

Why do homes become empty?

Homes become empty for a variety of reasons, with many routinely becoming empty as an inevitable consequence of being sold, and are soon re-occupied. Other homes however, become empty for a wide range of other reasons, including:

- the owner is unable to organise extensive building works that are required;
- the property is subject to probate;
- the property has been inherited and the beneficiary is unaware of their options;
- the owner has moved into a nursing home, residential care, or other supported housing;
- the property is subject to redevelopment proposals;
- the owner has moved away or abroad;
- the options for bringing the home back into use are not understood by the owner;
- the owner perceives that renting to tenants is not appropriate, and;
- 34 ▪ the owner is waiting for an increase in its capital value.

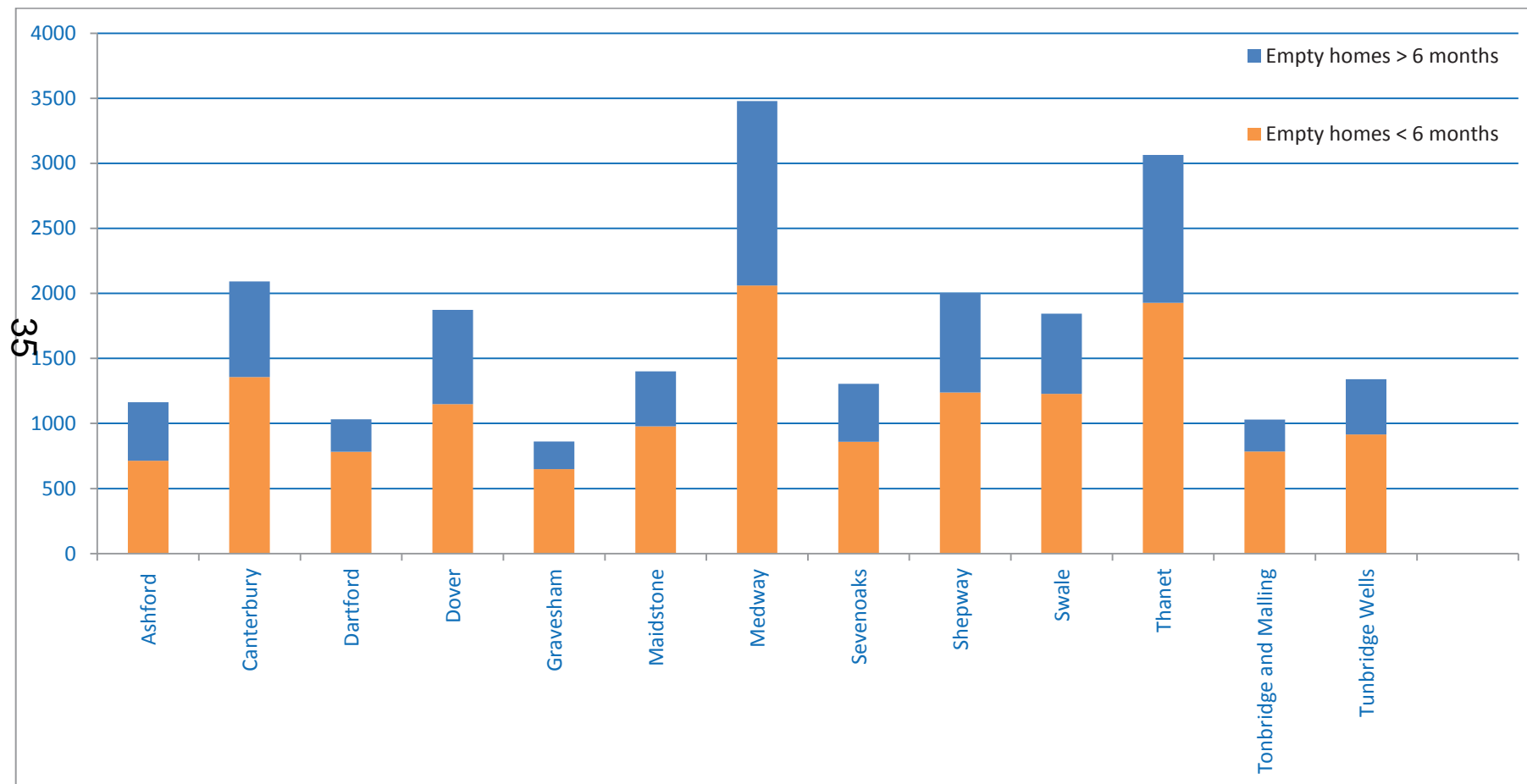
Due to the wide and varied issues that influence empty homes it is considered that those homes that are empty for longer than 6 months are considered 'long-term' empty homes that warrant additional support to bring back into use as these are the properties where the housing market will not, in itself, provide the impetus necessary to resolve the position.

The position in Maidstone

There are some 710,000 empty homes in England, of which around 259,000 have been empty for over 6 months (DCLG, November 2012) with almost 100,000 of the total number of empty homes being found in the South East region. Within Kent, there are around 22,500 empty homes, and almost 8,000 of these have been empty for more than 6 months (see Table 1).

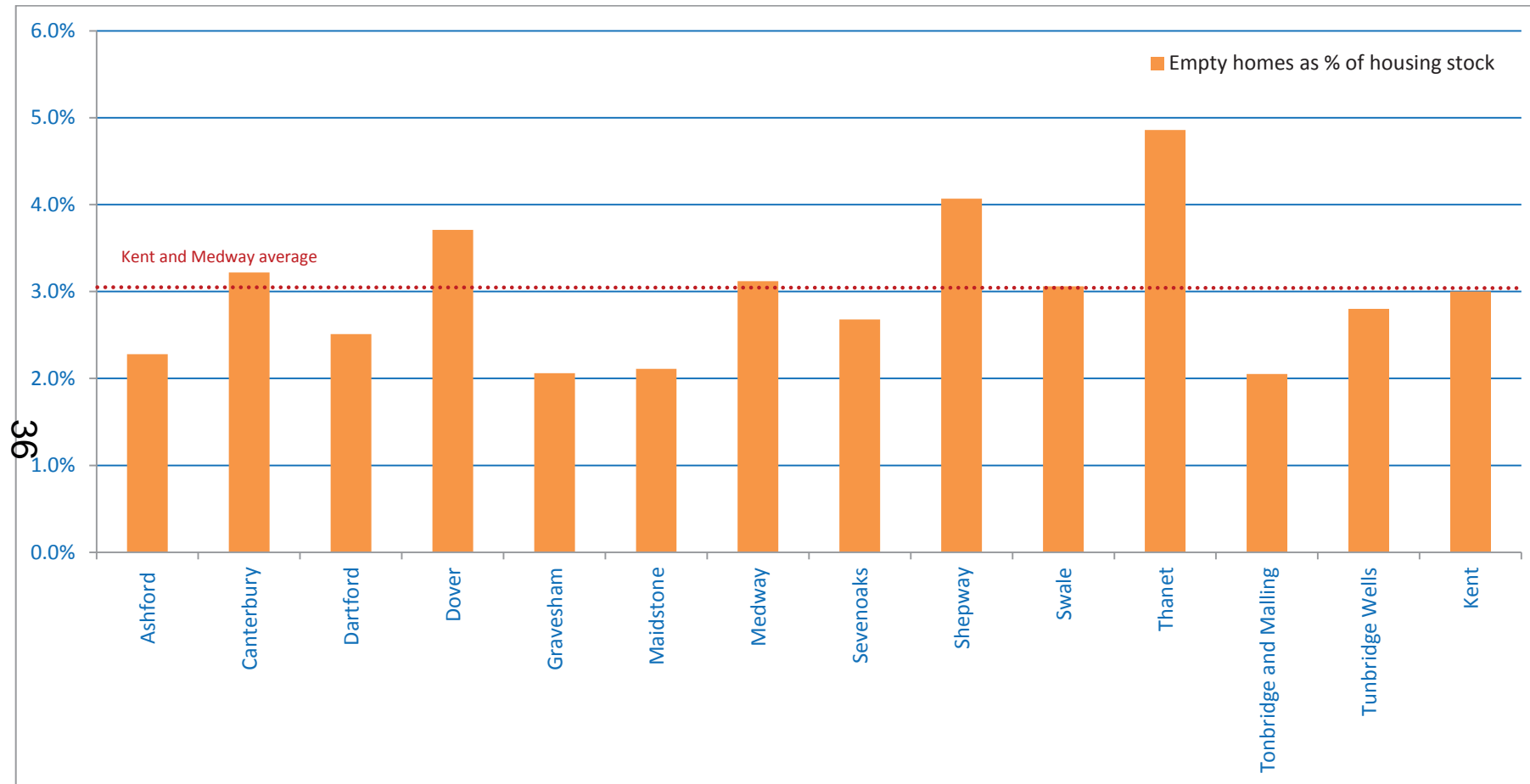
In Maidstone there are in the region of 1,420 empty homes in total which equates to 2.11% of the total housing stock within the borough, of which around 1,350 are within private ownership (i.e. not owned by housing associations or public bodies). Although the number fluctuates, there are around 420 long-term empty homes that have been empty for over 6 months.

Table 1: Distribution of empty homes within Kent and Medway



The statistics for empty homes across Kent and Medway as a whole, show an average of 3.14% of the total housing stock lying empty (see Table 2) across the region. At 2.42%, Maidstone has proportionately fewer empty homes than the Kent average.

Table 2: Empty homes as a percentage of the housing stock within Kent and Medway



Priority 1 – Minimise the number of empty homes through the council's interventions

The council has a wide range of formal and informal interventions available to help to resolve the many varied problems associated with empty homes, and the careful assessment of the most appropriate course of action for each case is essential to ensure that homes are brought back into use effectively. In some cases returning the property back into use is not appropriate, and demolition may be the best course of action to facilitate the re-development of the site.

Action 1.1 • Maximise the number of empty homes returned to use or demolished for redevelopment

Given the relatively low numbers of empty homes in Maidstone, and the distribution of those properties across the whole of the borough, it is essential that in addition to utilising desk-top records, local residents are able to easily report empty homes in their neighbourhoods, so that action can be instigated to return them back into use.

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Action 1.2 • Introduce an online reporting form for residents to report empty homes to council officers

Action 1.3 • Relaunch telephone reporting hotline for empty homes

Providing advice to empty home owners

In the first instance, working informally with property owners is often the most effective method for bringing empty homes back into use. There are a wide variety of reasons why a home is empty, and dialogue with the owner or person responsible will identify the specific reasons that home is empty and then officers can consider the opportunities available to bring the home back into use.

Action 1.4

- Review the information and advice available on the website to reduce the number of empty homes

Advice can be provided on the steps to becoming a private landlord, and we can provide guidance on any repairs or improvements required to meet the appropriate standards for private renting, as well as offering assistance with accessing our rent deposit bond scheme where we match prospective private tenants with private rented accommodation.

The council is also able to assist with advice regarding planning and building control matters to enable redevelopment or conversion of those homes that require significant works to bring them back into use.



Working with partners

The council has established working arrangements with a wide range of partners, including housing associations who are able to assist with development opportunities, or offer leasing schemes that can be offered to empty home owners to provide a stress-free rental option for inexperienced owners, or those who live outside of the Maidstone area.

Action 1.5

- Promote private sector leasing opportunities to owners of empty homes

The council also aims to develop innovative approaches to return empty homes back into use as well as responding to the current level of demand for housing across Maidstone. In particular we would like to work with homeless families and other disadvantaged households to work together to return empty homes back into use.

Action 1.6

- Develop an innovative scheme to return empty homes back to use working with homeless households

Priority 2 – Maximise the opportunities for returning empty homes back to use through initiatives and incentives

In many cases, homes either become empty or remain empty as a result of the owner's inability to finance repairs or maintenance issues. This can range from relatively small funding gaps through to the need to finance major structural repairs. It is often the case that the failure to resolve a relatively minor problem at an early stage can result in its impact threatening the continued occupation, especially where property owners do not appreciate the importance of investing in repairs.

In some cases, homes remain empty due to the owner's failure to market the property for sale. This is often due to an unrealistic expectation of the current market value (especially where the property is in poor condition) or concerns regarding the fees and costs associated with selling the property.

In some cases though, there are perceived barriers to selling the property due to either a fundamental mistrust of the property selling process, or a lack of knowledge and skills to be in a position to market the property. In these circumstances the council has an opportunity to seek to agree the acquisition of empty homes which would otherwise remain empty with a view to renovating and either disposing on the open market, or renting at affordable rents to those in housing need.

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Action 2.1

- Provide an alternative property selling option for empty home owners through the council's Commercialisation Project

The council currently does not offer financial assistance to owners to encourage empty homes being brought back into use. The introduction of financial assistance to empty home owners has the real potential to facilitate homes being returned to use that would otherwise remain unoccupied, and as a result provide positive neighbourhood improvements as well as increasing the supply of accommodation within Maidstone.

Action 2.2

- Dedicate capital funding for empty homes assistance within the council's Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy

Given the various financial circumstances associated with empty homes, it is important to consider the use of both grants and loans to maximise the opportunities for both returning homes back to use, whilst recycling capital funding where possible to support future homes being returned to use. Where financial assistance is offered to a property owner it will be conditional on the council nominating a homeless household to occupy the property. This ensures that the council's funding returns a home back into use, as well as providing a valuable home to a household in housing need which reduces the burden on the council's Housing Options service.

The council also intends to continue to work closely with 'No Use Empty' – Kent's empty property initiative and this will enable owners to access interest-free loans for returning empty homes back into use.

Action 2.3 • Endorse partnership agreement for working with 'No Use Empty'

The council has a long-established and successful rent deposit bond scheme which provides landlords with a guaranteed financial 'bond' in lieu of a cash deposit, which allows households, who are unable to fund a tenancy deposit, the opportunity of renting accommodation in the private rented sector. This scheme is of particular interest to investor landlords who are seeking to bring empty homes back into use.

Action 2.4 • Promote the rent deposit bond scheme to empty home owners and landlords

The council has also successfully bid for funding from the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA) to return long-term empty homes back into use. This funding is available to assist owners of empty homes where they agree to enter into a long lease with one of our partner housing associations who will then rent the property to households nominated by the council for the period of the lease.

Action 2.5 • Deliver Homes and Communities Agency funded empty homes scheme (minimum 10 units during the life of this plan)

Priority 3 - Maximise the effectiveness of enforcement action to bring empty homes back into use

In the first instance informal action is very often the most effective approach to bring empty homes back into use. Where informal action is sought, the council aims to provide transparency regarding the consequences to the property owner in the event that actions are not completed. However, in some cases, informal action is either ineffective or inappropriate, and the council has wide ranging powers to instigate enforcement action to secure improvements to empty homes. Action can range from serving notices requiring repairs to be carried out, (e.g. repairing a gutter that is leaking onto a neighbouring property) through to the council considering the use of compulsory purchase powers (see Table 3, below).

Action 3.1

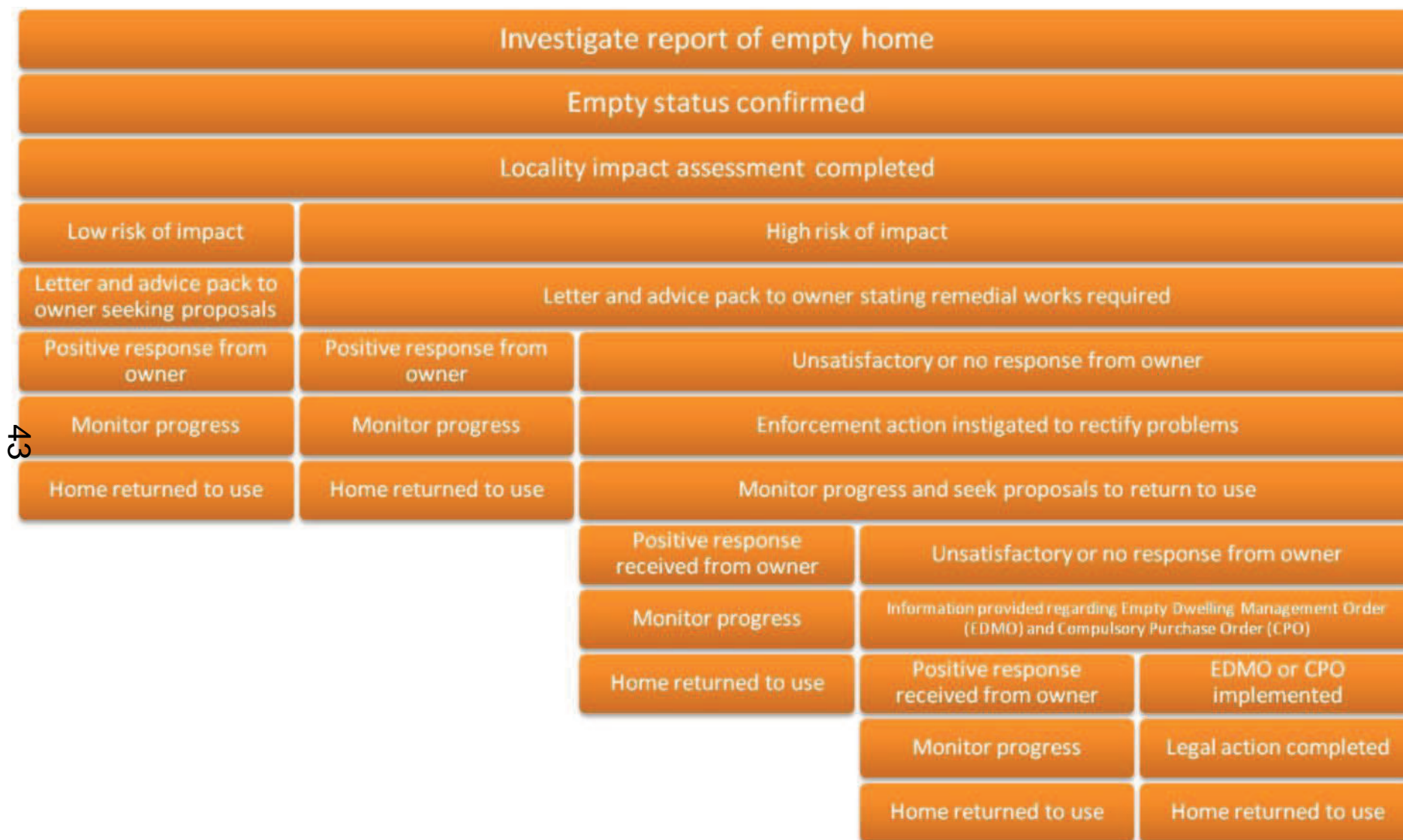
- Adopt a Private Sector Housing Enforcement Policy to include empty homes interventions

Instigating enforcement action

Where the council takes enforcement action it will be proportionate to the individual circumstances of the case, and will contribute to the overall aim of either returning the property back into use, or reducing the negative impact that the property poses to the locality. Action will be instigated using a risk assessment methodology that will assess the impact of individual empty homes on neighbouring homes, and the wider neighbourhood.

Action 3.2

- Introduce an evaluation matrix to ensure enforcement interventions are proportionate to the impact of the empty home

Table 3: Procedure for returning empty homes back into use in Maidstone

It is essential that where informal action is not completed by the property owner, that formal enforcement action is instigated to maximise the effectiveness of the council's intervention, and to reduce the negative impact that the empty home places in its neighbourhood.

Action 3.3

- Expedite the commencement of enforcement action following failed informal action

We will also aim to recover all reasonable costs incurred in taking the enforcement action, and this may result in a legal charge being placed on the property to recover costs and interest accrued since the action was taken. In cases where debts have accrued following enforcement action, the council may seek to enforce the sale of the property to settle those debts.

The council will also utilise opportunities within the local Council Tax charging regime to maximise the level of Council Tax payable for those homes that are left empty and this will further ensure that empty homes do not represent a drain on the council's resources.

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Action 3.4

- Introduce the Empty Homes Premium within the Council Tax charging policy

How will we return empty homes back into use?

To deliver the aims and priorities detailed within this plan, we will complete a range of actions during the life of this plan. These actions are detailed on the following pages as an action plan (see Table 4).

Table 4: Empty homes action plan

Ref	Action	Officer	Outcome	Performance Measures	Risk Management		Date
					Risk	Mitigation	
PRIORITY 1 – Minimise the number of empty homes through the council’s interventions							
HP1.1	Maximise the number of empty homes returned to use or demolished for redevelopment	PSHTL	Reduced number of long-term empty homes	162 homes returned to use or demolished during the life of this plan (Jan 2013 – Mar 2015)	Disengagement of empty home owners Staffing resources	Full range of incentives and enforcement interventions as set out in this plan Available resources will be monitored and reviewed depending on the level of enforcement action necessary	31/03/15

Ref	Action	Officer	Outcome	Performance Measures	Risk Management		Date
					Risk	Mitigation	
EHP1.2	Introduce an online reporting form for residents to report empty homes to council officers	PSHSSO	Online reporting form available for residents to report empty homes	50 reports of empty homes received through the online form each year	The online form is not well used	The online form will be widely promoted	30/09/13
EHP1.3	Re-launch telephone reporting helpline for empty homes	PSHTL/ PSHSSO	Reporting helpline available for residents to report empty homes to council officers	50 reports of empty homes received through the reporting helpline each year	The reporting helpline is not well used	The helpline number will be widely promoted	31/03/13
EHP1.4	Review the information and advice available on the website to reduce the number of empty homes	PSHSSO	Owners are better informed on the assistance available to return empty homes back into use	Web pages reviewed at least quarterly and updates implemented	Information is not kept up to date or accurate	The web pages will be reviewed and revised to reflect the latest position	Ongoing

Ref	Action	Officer	Outcome	Performance Measures	Risk Management		Date
					Risk	Mitigation	
EHP1.5	Promote private sector leasing opportunities to owners of empty homes	PSHTL	Increase the number of homes returned to use through private sector leasing schemes	Additional 15 empty homes returned to use through private sector leasing each year	Disengagement of empty home owners	Enforcement action will be implemented where owners disengage	31/03/15
47	Develop an innovative scheme to return empty homes back to use working with homeless households	HSM	Scheme developed	Scheme adopted	Failure to identify suitable properties for the project Lack of engagement from property owners	Properties will be sourced through the council's Commercialisation Project Increased levels of enforcement action will be implemented	31/06/13
		HSM	Homeless households housed in previously empty homes	3 homeless households provided with accommodation through the scheme during the life of this plan	Lack of engagement	Enforcement action will be implemented where owners disengage	31/03/15

Ref	Action	Officer	Outcome	Performance Measures	Risk Management		Date
					Risk	Mitigation	
PRIORITY 2 – Maximise opportunities for returning empty homes back to use through initiatives and incentives							
EHP2.1	Provide an alternative property selling option for empty home owners through the council’s Commercialisation Project	ADERS	Long term empty homes acquired for affordable rent or re-sale	10 long term empty homes acquired by 31/03/15	Disengagement of empty home owners to acquisition	Enforcement action will be implemented where owners disengage	31/03/15
48 EHP2.2	Dedicate capital funding for empty homes assistance within the council’s Private Sector Housing Assistance Policy	HSM	Increased funds that are available for empty homes’ initiatives	Recommend £200k capital funding in 2013/14 through redistribution of capital resources	Report recommendations not agreed reducing the number of empty homes returned to use Limitations on capital funding	Increased levels of enforcement action to maintain performance Housing Assistance Policy will be reviewed annually	31/03/13

Ref	Action	Officer	Outcome	Performance Measures	Risk Management		Date
					Risk	Mitigation	
EHP2.3	Endorse partnership agreement for working with 'No Use Empty'	HSM/ PSHTL	Provide access to projects under the 'No Use Empty' scheme	10 successful referrals to 'No Use Empty' each year	Disengagement of empty home owners	Increased levels of enforcement action to maintain performance	31/03/15
EHP2.4	Promote the rent deposit bond scheme to empty home owners and landlords	PSHTL	Investor landlords are better informed about the incentives available to return homes back into use	Landlords attracted to invest in empty homes and bring them back to use	Lack of interest from investor landlords	Bond Scheme to be reviewed annually to maintain interest from empty home owners	Ongoing
EHP2.5	Deliver HCA funded empty homes scheme (minimum 10 units during the life of this plan)	PSHTL/ PSHOs	Long-term empty homes are brought back into use	Minimum 10 units returned back into use	Failure to enter into HCA contract Disengagement of empty home owners Insufficient staffing resources	Negotiations with partners to influence outcome Increased levels of enforcement activity Resources redirected if required	31/03/15

Ref	Action	Officer	Outcome	Performance Measures	Risk Management		Date
					Risk	Mitigation	
PRIORITY 3 – Maximise the effectiveness of enforcement action to bring empty homes back into use							
EHP3.1 <							

Ref	Action	Officer	Outcome	Performance Measures	Risk Management		Date
					Risk	Mitigation	
EHP3.2	Introduce an evaluation matrix to ensure enforcement interventions are proportionate to the impact of the empty home	PSHTL	Enforcement action is proportionate to each situation	Risk assessment methodology and procedures implemented	Enforcement action instigated contrary to the matrix	Enforcement actions reviewed prior to instigation Enforcement notices subject to review prior to service	31/03/13
EHP3.3 51	Expedite the commencement of enforcement action following failed informal action	PSHTL	Enforcement action instigated where long-term empty home owners do not respond to informal action	5 successful enforcement interventions each year in respect of long-term empty homes	Staffing resources	Regular performance monitoring to identify where resources need to be redirected	31/03/15
EHP3.4	Introduce the Empty Homes Premium within the Council Tax charging policy	HoRB	Empty Homes Premium agreed and commencement date set	Cabinet report recommendation to introduce the Empty Homes Premium	Report recommendation not agreed	Consultation process to influence successful outcome	31/03/14

Table 4 key:

ADERS – Assistant Director of Environment and Regulatory Services

HoRB – Head of Revenues and Benefits

HSM – Housing Services Manager

PSHO – Private Sector Housing Officer

PSHSSO – Private Sector Housing System Support Officer

PSHTL – Private Sector Housing Team Leader

Maidstone Borough Council

Community, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 9 September 2014

Future Work Programme and SCRAIP 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:

-
-
-
-
-

Maidstone Borough Council

**Community, Environment and Housing
Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Tuesday 9 September 2014

Future Work Programme and SCRAIP Update

Report of: Tessa Mallett, Overview and Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Committee are asked to consider the future work programme, attached at **Appendix A**, to ensure it is appropriate and covers all issues Members currently wish to consider within the Committee's remit.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 That the Committee considers the future work programme, attached at **Appendix A**, and the update provided in section 7.1 (below).
- 2.2 That the Committee considers the List of Forthcoming Decisions, relevant to the Committee at **Appendix B**, and discuss whether any of these items require further investigation or monitoring.
- 2.3 That the Committee considers its continuous professional development needs and recommends possible training or development sessions it would like to undertake.

3 Future Work Programme

- 3.1 At the future work programme workshop on 17 June 2014 members agreed the topics they wanted programmed in for the 2014-15 Municipal Year. The topic suggestions were made by members of the public, Parish Councils, officers and local press.
- 3.2 Throughout the course of the municipal year the Committee is asked to put forward, and review, work programme suggestions.
- 3.3 The Committee's work programme is currently very full. Members are asked to consider the work programme to ensure it remains appropriate, realistic and covers issues Members currently wish to consider within the Committee's remit.
- 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>

6. Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP) Responses

- 6.1 The issue of making, and monitoring, recommendations is an important part of the scrutiny process. SCRAIPs set out recommendations following scrutiny meetings/reviews and information is sought on the plan as to whether recommendations are accepted, the action to be taken and by who.
- 6.2 There are no SCRAIP updates to report at this meeting.

7 Future Work Programme Update

- 7.1 Following discussions between the Chairman and officers the following item, originally scheduled for September 2014, will now need to be considered at a later date:
- Private Rented Sector Update
- 7.2 The Housing and Community Services Team are currently running a second collective switching campaign. If Committee are interested a report could come to the meeting of 13 January or 10 February 2015 providing an update/overview of the scheme.
- 7.3 The meeting of 14 October 2014 will be this Committee acting as the Crime and Disorder OSC. The agenda, outlined in the FWP, was agreed on 17 June 2014. At this meeting the Committee also discussed inviting the Kent Police and Crime Commissioner (Kent PCC) to this meeting to be interviewed. The Committee are asked to confirm this is something they would like to do. The Committee are also asked to confirm the focus of their interview with the Kent PCC.

8. Impact on Corporate Objectives

- 8.1 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.
- 8.2 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following priorities:
 - 'For Maidstone to have a growing economy' and 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live'.

9. Financial Implications

- 9.1 To assist O&S committees in their inquiries, a small budget is available for the purchase of necessary equipment and to cover the costs of training, site visits, meetings in locations other than the Town Hall, witness expenses, specialist advice, books and any other cost that might be legitimately incurred by the committees in the course of their activities.

10. Relevant Documents

- 10.1 Appendix A – Future Work Programme
Appendix B – List of Forthcoming Decisions

11. Background Documents

- 11.1 None

Community, Environment and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Committee Work Programme 2014-15

Meeting date	Report deadline	Agenda topics	Details and desired outcomes	Report Author and witnesses
17 June 2014		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Election of Chair and Vice Chair Future Work Programme for 2014/15 and SCRAIP updates 		
15 July 2014		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cabinet Member Priorities Review of Allocations Scheme Initial reports on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial Inclusion update Troubled Families Project 		Cllrs Ring and Perry Neil Coles Ellie Kershaw
12 August 2014	30 July 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and Wellbeing Board <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How is it working for Maidstone? Adults and Older People Review – the way forward looking at: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Isolation and Loneliness in Older People 		Interviews with Bob Bowes and Alison Broom
9 September 2014	27 August 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review of the Empty Homes Plan (2013-15) Update on recommendations from Accessing Mental Health Before the Point of Crisis – including CAHMS 	Update Update on recommendations made by CLS&E OSC 2013-14	Neil Coles Sarah Shearsmith/Sarah Robson
14 October 2014	1 October 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acting as the Crime & Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Street population Road safety update Night time economy – violent crime 		John Littlemore Sarah Robson Invite to go out to Ann Barnes PCC
11 November 2014	29 October 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review Isolation and Loneliness – Impact of the Welfare Reforms – initial report – follow up reports if required Update report – Families Matter and Financial Inclusion 	Interview witnesses to establish where gaps are, what can be provided and make recommendations.	Jo Tonkin, Kent Public Health Sarah Shearsmith/Sarah Robson Steve McGinnis to lead Ellie Kershaw

Appendix A

Meeting date	Report deadline	Agenda topics	Details and desired outcomes	Report Author and witnesses
9 December 2014	26 Nov 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAHMS) 	This item is subject to review following consideration of the update item in September 2014. If CAHMS is to be reviewed by Committee this item will need to be scoped. This includes the option to interview witnesses to establish what provision is being made and make recommendations.	Invite KCC CAMH Commission lead Interview with NHS rep (TBC)
13 January 2015		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maternity Services in the Borough – are they working? • Annual refresh of the Health Inequalities Action Plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview witnesses to review Maternity services in the borough since the move of the service to Pembury Hospital • Committee to see refresh of action plan and then decide if they want to look at a specific part in more detail 	TBA Sarah Robson
10 February 2015		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Carers • MBC Affordable Housing Development programme • Update report – Families Matter and Financial Inclusion 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do we identify them? • What is the impact on the carer? • How is it being delivered • Key challenges for supply 	Report from Sarah Robson Andrew Connors Ellie Kershaw
10 March 2015		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review of MKIP Shared Environmental Health Service • Housing Strategy Review • Draft report on Overview of Health Services in the Borough 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How is it performing one year on? 	John Littlemore/Cllr Ring Neil Coles
14 April 2015		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting as the Crime & Disorder Overview and Scrutiny Committee 	TBC	Sarah Robson John Littlemore

Future Items – with dates to be confirmed

- Private Rented Sector (Update) – Neil Coles
- Collective switching campaign – Ellie Kershaw



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.

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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. You will then be sent a response in reply to your representations. Both your representations and the Executive's response will be published on the Council's website at least 5 working days before the Cabinet meeting.

ACCESS TO CABINET REPORTS

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

HOW CAN I CONTRIBUTE TO THE DECISION-MAKING PROCESS?

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

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

List of Forthcoming Decisions

WHO ARE THE CABINET?



Councillor Annabelle Blackmore

Leader of the Council

annabelleblackmore@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 01622 833299



Councillor David Burton

Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development

davidburton@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 07590 229910



Councillor Malcolm Greer

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

malcolmgreer@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 01634 862876



Councillor Marion Ring

Cabinet Member for Environment and Housing

marionring@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 01622 686492



Councillor Steve McLoughlin

Cabinet Member for Corporate Services

stevemcloughlin@maidstone.gov.uk

Tel: 07711 565489



Councillor John Perry

Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services

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)
Leader of the Council Due Date: Friday 29 Aug 2014	Equality Objective Update 2013/14 Update on progress towards equality objectives		Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy and Communications angelawoodhouse@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Equality Objective Update 2013/14 Enc. 1 for Equality Objective Update 2013/14
Cabinet Member for Economic and Commercial Development Due Date: Friday 29 Aug 2014	Maidstone Museums' Collections Development Policy 2013 - 2018 To consider the approval of a revised Collections Development Policy for the Council's museums		Dawn Hudd dawnhudd@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Maidstone Museums' Collections Development Policy 2013-2018 Enc. 1 for Maidstone Museums' Collections Development Policy 2013-2018

Forthcoming Decisions

August 2014 - February 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>
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services Due Date: Monday 1 Sep 2014 64	Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals To consider proposed structural changes relating to Mid Kent Legal Services, the shared legal service for Maidstone, Swale and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils.		John Scarborough johnscarborough@maidstone.gov.uk	Public with private appendices under paras 1 & 3.	Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals_Exempt Appendix Covering Sheet Enc. 1 for Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals Enc. 2 for Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals Enc. 3 for Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals Enc. 4 for Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals

Forthcoming Decisions
August 2014 - February 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>
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services Due Date: Monday 1 Sep 2014 65	Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals To consider proposed structural changes relating to Mid Kent Legal Services, the shared legal service for Maidstone, Swale and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils.		John Scarborough johnscarborough@maidstone.gov.uk	Public with private appendices	Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals Enc. 1 for Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals Enc. 2 for Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals Enc. 3 for Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals Enc. 4 for Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team proposals Enc.5 for Mid Kent Legal Services - One Team Proposals
General Purposes Group Due Date: Tuesday 9 Sep 2014	Nominations to Outside Bodies To consider nominations received for Outside Bodies		Caroline Matthews carolinematthews@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Nominations to Outside Bodies


Forthcoming Decisions
August 2014 - February 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>
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 10 Sep 2014	Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update report seeking agreement to the key findings of the SHMA update	KEY Reason: Policies, Plans, Strategies	Sarah Anderton, Principal Planning Officer (Spatial Policy) sarahanderton@maidstone.gov.uk	public	Strategic Housing Market Assessment Update
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 10 Sep 2014	Corporate Planning Timetable report to set out the timetable for the development of the Strategic Plan and MTFS for 2015 onwards		Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy and Communications angelawoodhouse@maidstone.gov.uk	public	Corporate Planning Timetable
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 10 Sep 2014	Discretionary Housing Payment Future policy for the award of discretionary housing payments.		Stephen McGinnes stephenmcginnes@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Discretionary Housing Payment Appendix A - DHP Policy Appendix B - Equality Impact Assessment

Forthcoming Decisions
August 2014 - February 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>
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 10 Sep 2014	Key Performance Indicator Monitoring Quarter 1 Key Performance Indicator Monitoring Quarter 1		Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy and Communications angelawoodhouse@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Key Performance Indicator Monitoring Quarter 1
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 10 Sep 2014	Budget Strategy 2015 16 Onwards To give initial consideration to a Budget Strategy for 2015 16 and beyond.	KEY Reason: Budget Reports	Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Budget Strategy 2015 16 Onwards
Leader of the Council Due Date: Friday 12 Sep 2014	Irrecoverable Business Rates To consider the outstanding business rates debts that have been identified for write off.	KEY Reason: Expenditure > £250,000	Stephen McGinnes stephenmcginnes@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Irrecoverable Business Rates Appendix A - Irrecoverable Business Rates

Forthcoming Decisions
August 2014 - February 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>
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services Due Date: Friday 12 Sep 2014	Bankruptcy Policy for Council Tax and Business Rates Debt The approach to be adopted by the council in collecting unpaid council tax and business rates through the use of bankruptcy proceedings.	KEY Reason: Policies, Plans, Strategies	Stephen McGinnes stephenmcginnes@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Bankruptcy Policy for Council Tax and Business Rates Debt
 Audit Committee Due Date: Monday 15 Sep 2014	External Auditor's Audit Findings Report 2013/14 External Auditor's Audit Findings Report 2013/14		Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	External Auditor's Audit Findings Report 2013/14
Cabinet Member for Corporate Services Due Date: Friday 26 Sep 2014	Lease of Giddyhorn Lane Tennis Courts Lease renewal to Maidstone Lawn Tennis Club of the tennis courts at Giddyhorn Lane Playing Fields		Lucy Stroud lucystroud@maidstone.gov.uk	Private because of commercially sensitive information.	Lease of Giddyhorn Lane Tennis Courts

Forthcoming Decisions
August 2014 - February 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>
Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services Due Date: 26 Sep 2014 69	Maidstone Play Strategy - A Strategy for Outdoor Equipped Play Areas 2014-2024 To consider the adoption of the Maidstone Play Strategy – A Strategy for Outdoor Equipped Play Areas 2014-2024 and the actions within the document	KEY Reason: Expenditure > £250,000	Jason Taylor, Parks and Leisure Manager jasontaylor@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Maidstone Play Strategy - A Strategy for Outdoor Equipped Play Areas 2014-2024
Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee Due Date: Wednesday 8 Oct 2014	Accounts 2013/14 Cobtree Manor Trust Accounts 2013/14		Jason Taylor, Parks and Leisure Manager jasontaylor@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Accounts 2013/14
Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee Due Date: Wednesday 8 Oct 2014	Cobtree Visitor Centre A report into the final design and contractor appointment for the construction of the visitor centre at Cobtree Manor Park	KEY Reason: Expenditure > £250,000	Joanna Joyce joannajoyce@maidstone.gov.uk	Public with an exempt appendix	Cobtree Visitor Centre

Forthcoming Decisions
August 2014 - February 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>
Cobtree Manor Estate Charity Committee Due Date: Wednesday 8 Oct 2014	Cobtree Estate Progress Report An update on work accross the Cobtree Estate		Joanna Joyce joannajoyce@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Cobtree Estate Progress Reoprt Cobtree Estate Progress Reoprt
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 8 Oct 2014 70	Customer Service Improvement Strategy 2013-16: Progress and 2014/15 refresh To consider the progress made on implementing the Customer Service Improvement Strategy in 2013/14 and the refresh of the Strategy for 2014/15.	KEY Reason: Policies, Plans, Strategies	Georgia Hawkes, Head of Business Improvement georgiahawkes@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Customer Service Improvement Strategy 2013-16 Channel Shift Strategy 2011 Customer Service Improvement Strategy 2013-16: Progress and 2014/15 refresh
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 8 Oct 2014	Maidstone Enterprise Hub Consideration of financing options	KEY Reason: Expenditure > £250,000	Karen Franek karenfranek@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Maidstone Enterprise Hub

Forthcoming Decisions
August 2014 - February 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>
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 12 Nov 2014	Budget Monitoring 2nd Quarter 2014/15 Revenue and Capital budget monitoring update		Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Budget Monitoring 2nd Quarter 2014/15
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 12 Nov 2014 17	Council Tax 2015 16 Collection Fund Adjustments To agree the levels of Collection Fund adjustment	KEY Reason: Budget Reports	Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Council Tax 2015 16 Collection Fund Adjustments
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 12 Nov 2014	Council Tax Tax Base 2015 16 To advise Members of the information currently available on the Tax Base for 2015 16 for Council Tax purposes.		Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Council Tax Tax Base 2015 16

Forthcoming Decisions
August 2014 - February 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>
Audit Committee Due Date: Monday 24 Nov 2014 72	Treasury Management Strategy Mid Year Performance 2014 15 This report sets out the activities of the Treasury Management Function for 2014 15 financial year in accordance with CIPFA's Code of Practice on Treasury Management issued in November 2009.		Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Treasury Management Strategy Mid Year Performance 2014 15
Audit Committee Due Date: Monday 24 Nov 2014	Treasury Management Strategy 2015 16 To consider future Treasury Management Strategy for 2015 16		Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Treasury Management Strategy 2015 16

Forthcoming Decisions
August 2014 - February 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>
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 17 Dec 2014	Budget Strategy 2015 16 Onwards To agree a draft Council Tax and Budget Strategy for 2015 16 Onwards	KEY Reason: Budget Reports	Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Budget Strategy 2015 16 Onwards

Forthcoming Decisions

August 2014 - February 2015

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Forthcoming Decisions
August 2014 - February 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>
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 11 Feb 2015 <div>75</div>	Budget Strategy 2015 16 Onwards Agree proposed General Fund revenue and capital estimates for 2015 16 and revised figures for 2014 15 in accordance with the Budget Strategy and Medium Term Financial and Capital Strategies and Projections, and the consequent level of Council Tax for submission to Council.	KEY Reason: Expenditure > £250,000	Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Budget Strategy 2015 16 Onwards
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 11 Feb 2015	Budget Monitoring 3rd Quarter 2014/15 Revenue and capital budget monitoring update		Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Budget Monitoring 3rd Quarter 2014/15

Forthcoming Decisions

August 2014 - February 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 if <i>Private the reason why</i>	Documents to be submitted (<i>other relevant documents may be submitted</i>)
Cabinet Due Date: Wednesday 11 Feb 2015 <div style="position: absolute; left: -60px; top: 50%; transform: translateY(-50%); font-weight: bold;">76</div>	Treasury Management Strategy 2015 16 Review Treasury Management for 2014 15 and consider future Treasury Management Strategy for 2015 16. This will include Prudential Borrowing limits and a proposed Approved Investment Strategy. These matters will be submitted to Council.	KEY Reason: Expenditure > £250,000	Paul Riley, Head of Finance & Customer Services paulriley@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Treasury Management Strategy 2015 16
Council Due Date: Wednesday 25 Feb 2015	Strategic Plan 2015/2020 This document sets out what the council wants to achieve and how it will be achieved.	KEY Reason: Policy Framework Document	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy and Communications angelawoodhouse@maidstone.gov.uk	Public	Strategic Plan 2015/2020