

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Wednesday 28 March 2018
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership: Councillors Barned, Mrs Blackmore, Boughton, Brice, Cox, Fermor, Garland, Mrs Gooch, Harper (Vice-Chairman), Harvey, Harwood, Hastie, McLoughlin, Perry and Mrs Wilson (Chairman)

The Chairman will assume that all Members will read the reports before attending the meeting. Officers are asked to assume the same when introducing reports.

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2. Notification of Substitute Members	
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7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.	
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Issued on Tuesday 20 March 2018

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

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MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Policy and Resources Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 14 FEBRUARY 2018

Present: Councillors Barned, Mrs Blackmore, Boughton, Brice, Cox, English, Fermor, Garland, Mrs Gooch, Harper, Harvey, Hastie, McLoughlin, Perry and Mrs Wilson

145. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies were received by Councillor Harwood.

146. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

Councillor English was present as a substitute for Councillor Harwood.

147. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman informed the Committee that there was an urgent update relating to the Medium Term Financial Strategy & Budget Proposals 2018/19. The Chairman explained the reason for urgency was that this additional item was required to recommend a full budget to Council.

148. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members.

149. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

150. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

151. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That item 18. Brunswick and Union Street Developments be taken in private due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

152. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 24 JANUARY 2018

RESOLVED: That the minutes be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.

153. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

154. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)

There were no questions from members of the public.

155. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

Mr Mark Green, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement, updated the Committee on its Work Programme.

It was noted that the Sky Lantern Ban was to be considered by the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee rather than the Policy and Resources Committee and that there was a Special Policy and Resources Committee meeting scheduled on 8 March 2018 to consider funding of the Phase 3 Public Realm Improvements.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme is noted.

156. COUNTER FRAUD & CORRUPTION POLICY

Mr Rich Clarke, the Head of Audit Partnership, presented the Counter Fraud & Corruption Policy to the Committee. It was noted that this policy had already been considered by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee and it had recommended changes, which had been incorporated into the document presented to the Policy and Resources Committee for approval.

The Chairman of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee, who was also a member of this Committee, spoke on this item and confirmed that the changes requested by the Committee had been made.

RESOLVED:

That the Counter Fraud & Corruption Policy is approved.

Voting: Unanimous

157. POLICY AND RESOURCES QUARTER 3 PERFORMANCE REPORT

Mrs Angela Woodhouse, the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance, introduced the Policy and Resources Quarter 3 Performance Report to the Committee.

Mrs Woodhouse outlined that performance had been positive overall, with 67% of indicators achieving their target. However there were several indicators which had missed their target, one of them being the number of affordable homes delivered (gross).

In response to a question from the Committee Mr William Cornall, the Director of Regeneration and Place, confirmed that the Council had

committed to drafting a new Supplementary Planning Document which aimed to increase the supply of affordable housing in the borough.

The Committee requested the methodology used for the indicator 'percentage of land and highways with acceptable levels of litter' be circulated to the Committee after the meeting, as it felt that no amount of litter was an acceptable level of litter.

Mrs Woodhouse confirmed that she would investigate the reasons for the decrease in litter reports attended to, and whether it was linked to the volume of reports that had been made online. Mrs Woodhouse confirmed an update would be circulated to the Committee by email.

RESOLVED:

That the summary of performance for Quarter 3 of 2017/18 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be noted.

Note: Councillor Garland arrived during consideration of this item.

158. STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-2020 (2018/19 - REFRESH)

Mrs Angela Woodhouse, the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance, presented the Strategic Plan 2015-20, 2018-19 Update to the Committee. It was noted that this document had been considered by each of the Service Committees and the document presented to the Committee had incorporated the changes suggested by the Service Committees.

The Committee debated the proposed amendment by the Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee, which proposed the insertion of the word 'Green' to the 'Safe & Clean' priority, and this amendment was accepted.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Strategic Plan 2015-20, 2018-19 Update is recommended to Full Council for approval, subject to the addition of the word 'Green' to the Safe & Clean priority so that it reads 'Safe, Clean & Green'.
2. That delegated authority is given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, to amend the final version of the Strategic Plan to reflect the amendment of the 'Safe & Clean' priority to 'Safe, Clean & Green'.

Voting: For - 10 Against - 2 Abstentions - 3

159. COUNCIL TAX PENALTY POLICY

The Committee received a presentation from Mrs Sheila Coburn, the Head of Revenues and Benefits Shared Service, outlining the proposed Council Tax Penalty Policy.

Mrs Coburn explained:

- Many other Councils in Kent already had a Council Tax Penalty Policy.
- The purpose of the policy was to ensure that the Council sent out a clear message that it was not acceptable for customers to not inform the Council of changes in circumstances that would affect their entitlement to Council Tax discounts, Council Tax support and Housing Benefit.
- The Council had the power to withdraw any penalties if a customer issued with a penalty was found to be vulnerable.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mrs Coburn confirmed that the Penalty Policy could be introduced without having to increase resources or staffing in the team.

RESOLVED:

1. That civil penalties for Council Tax, Council Tax Support and Housing Benefit are introduced.
2. That the policy in Appendix 1 is approved.

Voting: For - 14 Against - 0 Abstentions - 1

160. THIRD QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Mr Mark Green, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement, introduced the Third Quarter Budget Monitoring Report to the Committee.

Mr Green outlined the areas with the greatest overspends and underspends:

- Overspends had occurred in cash investments, Temporary Accommodation and CCTV. However the overspend on Temporary Accommodation had reduced since the previous quarter.
- Underspends had occurred in Grounds Maintenance due to the success of the commercial service being offered, Commercial Property due to investments performing well and Parking Services.
- Overall this meant there was a projected underspend of £505,000 for 2017/18.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mr Green confirmed that it was difficult to ensure a high return from cash investments as the returns

needed to be balanced against the security of the investment. Mr Green confirmed that the budget for this item would be adjusted for 2018/19 to reflect the lower than expected returns in 2017/18.

The Committee noted the staff turnover rate of 11%, as well as comments made in other budget lines regarding vacant posts and staff sickness and requested that Employment Committee investigate this issue further. Mrs Alison Broom, the Chief Executive, confirmed that the Employment Committee already considered a regular report regarding the workforce which contained more information about these issues and this report would be circulated to any member of the Committee that requested it.

RESOLVED:

1. That the revenue position at the end of the third quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position where significant variances have been identified, as set out in table 1, paragraph 2.6 are noted.
2. That the capital position at the end of the third quarter is noted.
3. That the performance of the Collection Fund and the estimated level of balances at the year-end is noted.
4. That the write-off of unpaid business rates as set out in Appendix 3 is approved.
5. That the performance in relation to the Treasury Management Strategy for the third quarter of 2017/18 is noted.

Voting: Unanimous

6. That the Employment Committee:
 - a. Reviews the Maidstone Borough Council sickness policy to ensure it follows best practice
 - b. Considers the support provided by the Council for staff with Mental Health issues
 - c. Considers the causes of Mental Health Issues in the workplace

Voting: For - 11 Against - 3 Abstentions - 1

161. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY & BUDGET PROPOSALS 2018/19

Mr Mark Green, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement, introduced the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Proposals to the Committee. Mr Green explained that:

- The Capital Programme had already been agreed by this Committee, and the Treasury Management Strategy had been agreed for recommendation to Council by the Audit Governance and Standards Committee.
- The revised estimates for 2017/18 and budget estimates for 2018/19 in Appendix D reflected the savings proposals and the Strategic Revenue Projection.
- The proposed savings had not changed and had all been considered by the Service Committees.
- The Committee had agreed to become part of the Kent Business Rates Retention Pilot, and the proposed projects funded by this pilot were contained in Appendix C.
- The Strategic Revenue Projection had been updated since the last time it was considered by this Committee in December. The effect of this update was that the surplus for 2017/18 had reduced from £320,000 to £97,000.
- The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government had confirmed that the threshold Council Tax could rise before a referendum was required was 3%, however the Council had anticipated a 2% increase. If a 3% increase was agreed it would provide the Council with an increased £142,000 in 2018/19 enabling the Council to balance its budget.

In response to questions from the Committee, Mr Green confirmed that:

- If the Council chose to raise Council tax by 2% instead of 3%, there would be a deficit of £45,000 instead of a surplus of £97,000 for 2018/19.
- The proposed 2% pay award had not been anticipated, but a 2% pay increase had been offered by employers during the national pay negotiations. Although the Council was not part of the national pay negotiations it was felt that a 2% pay increase was needed in order to attract and retain staff. The 2% applied to increments as well as base salaries.

The Chairman of the Cobtree Manor Estate Trust Committee, also a member of this Committee, requested that the proposals relating to the Cobtree Manor Estate Trust be considered by the Cobtree Manor Estate Trust Committee.

The Committee requested further information on the projects outlined in the Business Rates retention pilot projects before they made a decision on whether to fund them.

A proposal to reallocate £20,000 from Communications to Environmental Enforcement was debated. The Committee felt that Environmental

Enforcement should be more of a priority for the Council than Communications and therefore the Council should allocate some resource from one area to the other.

RESOLVED:

1. The outcomes of consideration of budget proposals by the Service Committees are noted.
2. The updated Strategic Revenue Projection set out in Appendix A is agreed.

Voting: Unanimous

3. The Budget Savings Proposals set out in Appendix B are agreed.

Voting: For - 8 Against - 1 Abstentions - 6

4. The projects to be funded from proceeds of the Business Rates Retention Pilot set out in Appendix C are given further consideration regarding their priority and scope by this committee.

Voting: Unanimous

5. The Revised Estimates for 2017/18 and the Budget Estimates for 2018/19 set out in Appendix D for recommendation to Council are agreed.

Voting: Unanimous

6. The Capital Programme, set out at Appendix E, is agreed for recommendation to Council.

Voting: For - 14 Against - 1 Abstentions - 0

7. The Treasury Management Strategy, set out in Appendix F, is agreed for recommendation to Council.

Voting: Unanimous

8. A £7.29 increase in Council Tax for 2018/19 is agreed for recommendation to Council.

Voting: For - 8 Against - 4 Abstentions - 3

9. The Medium Term Financial Strategy set out in Appendix H is agreed.

Voting: For - 9 Against - 0 Abstentions - 6

10. The appropriate matters for decision to set a balanced budget for 2018/19 and the necessary level of Council Tax in accordance with

the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and the Localism Act 2011 including the decisions made above are recommended to Council.

Voting: Unanimous

11. That £20,000 is moved from the Communications budget to the Environmental Enforcement budget.

Voting: For - 8 Against - 7 Abstentions - 0

162. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the press and public are excluded from the meeting due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

163. BRUNSWICK AND UNION STREET CAR PARK DEVELOPMENTS

Mr William Cornall, the Director of Regeneration & Place, presented a joint venture proposal to the Committee regarding the redevelopment of the Brunswick Street and Union Street car parks.

RESOLVED:

1. That the financial returns and joint venture proposal for both schemes shown at Appendix 1 and Appendix 2, which support the Housing Development and Regeneration Investment Plan, are approved.
2. That the Director of Finance and Business Improvement is granted delegated authority to appoint and enter into a building contract and a joint venture agreement with the preferred contractor Purelake New Homes Ltd.
3. That the Director of Finance and Business Improvement is granted delegated authority to appoint and enter into a development agreement with the preferred affordable housing provider MHS Homes Group, together with any related legal actions and agreements which may be required to facilitate the development.
4. That the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services is authorised to appoint the Solicitors required to complete the necessary contract documentation and agreements associated with the developments on the terms as agreed by the Director of Finance & Business Improvement.
5. That the Director of Finance and Business Improvement is granted delegated authority to appoint an estates and facilities management organisation to manage the market rental apartments on both schemes.

Voting: Unanimous

164. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 9.17 p.m.

Agenda Item 9

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

Policy and Resources Committee

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 8 MARCH 2018

Present: Councillors Adkinson, Mrs Blackmore, Boughton, Cox, Garland, Harvey, Harwood, Hastie, Joy, McLoughlin, Munford, Perry, Round and Mrs Wilson (Chairman)

165. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies were received by Councillors Barned, Brice, Harper, Gooch and Fermor.

166. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that the following members were present as substitute members:

- Councillor Round for Councillor Brice
- Councillor Joy for Councillor Fermor
- Councillor Adkinson for Councillor Harper
- Councillor Munford for Councillor Gooch

167. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman informed the Committee that there were two urgent updates for Item 10 - Phase 3 Public Realm. The reason for urgency was that the updates gave the Committee an additional legal option for carrying out the work outlined in the report.

168. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no visiting members.

169. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

170. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

171. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That Item 11 – Brunswick and Union Street Car Park Development Update be taken in private due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

172. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

173. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)

There were no questions from members of the public.

174. PHASE 3 PUBLIC REALM

Mrs Fran Wallis, the Local Economy Project Officer, presented a report proposing to enter into a Section 278 agreement with Kent Highways in order to carry out Phase 3 of the Public Realm regeneration scheme.

Mrs Wallis confirmed that since the report had last been taken to the Committee, six tenders had been received and there was no shortfall in funding due to the value of the tenders received.

The two options that Mrs Wallis presented to the Committee were that the Committee could instruct the Monitoring Officer to enter into a Section 278 agreement or do nothing. The do nothing option would result in the scheme not progressing as a Section 278 agreement was required for the scheme to progress.

RESOLVED:

That delegated authority is given to the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services to enter into a s278 agreement with Kent County Council for the Phase 3 Public Realm Highway Works.

Voting: Unanimous

175. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED: That the press and public are excluded from the meeting due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

176. BRUNSWICK AND UNION STREET CAR PARK DEVELOPMENTS UPDATE

Mr William Cornall, the Director for Regeneration & Place, presented an update on the Brunswick and Union Street Developments.

The Committee noted that the following changes had occurred to the viability of the scheme, which had meant that overall financial viability had improved:

- The Council had been awarded £658,000 from the government's Land Release Fund to help fund the development; and
- A payment was required to be made to an existing tenant on the site to incentivise them to give up their lease early. This decision

was contained in the existing delegation already granted by the Committee.

RESOLVED: That the report is noted.

177. DURATION OF MEETING

6.31 pm to 6.47 pm

Report Title	Work Stream	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Digital Strategy	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Apr-18	Gary Hunter	Georgia Hawkes
Kent Medical Campus Innovation Centre	Changes to Services & Commissioning	P&R	Apr-18	Dawn Hudd	Abi Lewis
Commissioning & Procurement Strategy	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Apr-18	Mark Green	Steve Trigg/Georgia Hawkes
Housing Delivery Partnership	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Apr-18	William Cornall	
Mote Park Lake Dam	Capital projects	P&R	Apr-18	Mark Green	Lucy Stroud
Risk Update Report	Corporate Planning	P&R	Apr-18	Rich Clarke	Alison Blake
Maidstone Town Centre Business Improvement District	Regeneration and Commercialisation	P&R	Apr-18	Dawn Hudd	
Commercial Investment Strategy	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Jun-18	Mark Green	Lucy Stroud
Debt Recovery Policy	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Sep-18	Sheila Coburn	Sheila Coburn
King Street	Regeneration and Commercialisation	P&R	TBC	William Cornall	Alison Elliott

Agenda Item 13

POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE

28th March 2018

Update on The Business Terrace

Final Decision-Maker	POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Sean Henry, Business Centre Coordinator Abi Lewis, Economic Development Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the performance of The Business Terrace, outlining both the financial performance and the extensive business support offer provided through the facility. The Business Terrace continues to perform well, with 100% occupancy of the start-up and grow-on office accommodation and increased income levels over the past two years. There continues to be a lack of "next-stage" move-on office accommodation for businesses graduating from The Business Terrace and officers are exploring options to address this challenge.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the update on the performance of the Business Terrace be noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	28 March 2018

Update on The Business Terrace

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Business Terrace opened in September 2015 to provide start-up businesses with affordable workspace and wrap-around business support, addressing a critical element of the Council's adopted Economic Development Strategy.
- 1.2 The initial phase of the development comprising 6 offices, seminar room, meeting room and 15 desk spaces was operated as a pilot to test the concept and demand, utilising redundant space to which the Council had a long term rental – and therefore financial – commitment until 2023. The cost of conversion was £250,000. The facility has been expected to deliver a financial contribution to help cover the unavoidable costs only.
- 1.3 Since opening in 2015, The Business Terrace has seen two expansions to address demand for additional office accommodation and grow-on space:
- Phase 2: In December 2015 the old Members' area on the first floor was transformed to create 6 new offices;
 - Phase 3: In October 2017 a further expansion on Floor 1 created an additional 5 offices as grow on space for businesses.
- 1.4 In order to reduce the financial costs of the expansion into Phase 3 in October 2017, the Council secured £52,582 funding and a six month rent free period from Capital and Regional - the landlord of Maidstone House – to deliver the capital works required to bring the space up to the required standards.

OCCUPANCY RATES

- 1.5 Following these two expansion phases The Business Terrace now consists of 17 offices, alongside hot-desking, with the number of businesses based in the facility as follows:

Table 1

Date	No. businesses in offices *	No. people working in offices	Hot desk users
Dec 16	18	26	4
Dec 17	29	58	11
March 18	29	60	11

*Note that some offices are multi-tenanted

- 1.6 Target occupancy rates for the offices in The Business Terrace are as follows:

Table 2

<u>Period</u>	<u>Target</u>	<u>Actual</u>
End of Year 1	30% occupancy	100%
End of Year 2	60% occupancy	100%
End of Year 3	85%	100%

- 1.7 Virtual Offices were introduced in March 2017, providing the option for homebased businesses to have a mailing address at The Business Terrace, providing increased privacy for the business owner and greater consumer confidence in the company's authenticity. The service is charged at £29 per month (inclusive of VAT) and there are currently 19 in use out of 33, demonstrating scope for further income generation.

BUSINESS SUPPORT

- 1.8 A fundamental component of The Business Terrace offer is the availability of free business support for pre-start, start-up and small established businesses, both for those renting space in the facility and across the whole borough, to assist business formation, survival and growth. The Council has contracts with Let's Do Business Group and Kent Foundation to provide onsite 1-2-1 advice three days per week and a rolling programme of one-to-many workshops throughout the course of the year. For 2017/18 this cost was £22,200 which is funded from the core Economic Development budget.
- 1.9 This is complemented by an extensive offering of specialist, pro-bono 1-2-1 advice and workshops from Terrace tenants, local private companies and other organisations. Partners this year have included: Innovate UK & University of Greenwich, Kent Business School, Cripps, MHA MacIntyre Hudson, Business Doctors and Outset UK. Appendix A highlights some of the recent events organised and held at The Business Terrace.
- 1.10 Between 1st September 2015 and 15th March 2017, 515 individuals have received support from an advisor on a 1-2-1 or from an expert at a free workshop. 211 of these are at the pre-start stage, 159 start-up and 145 established businesses.
- 1.11 In addition, The Business in Maidstone website hosts an online resource to provide businesses with detailed information, news, blogs and assistance in topics such as tax, employment law and general business planning.

BUDGET

- 1.12 The Business Terrace continues to perform financially, with a number of opportunities for income generation harnessed, along with the identification of long-term savings. The budgets for Phases 1& 2 and Phase 3 are held separately for accounting purposes, as shown below. When combined the facility as a whole meets its budget targets for 2017/18, returning a £3,830 surplus.

Phase 1 & 2

Table 3

	2016/17	2016/17	2017/18	2017/18	2018/19
	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual	Forecasted Budget
Unavoidable Costs*	£134,330	£119,580	£133,790	£132,950	£137,150
Operational Costs**	£28,720	£33,870	£30,360	£37,510	£29,240
Business Terrace Staff Management Costs	£12,355	£12,355	£27,640	£27,640	£29,030
Rent Income	-£74,680	-£59,000	-£89,680	-£64,800	-£89,680
Services Income	-£4,670	-£5,650	-£4,670	-£13,280	-£4,690
Net contribution to unavoidable costs	-£38,275	-£18,425	-£36,350	-£12,930	-£36,100

*Rent to Capital and Regional, rates and other premises costs which are unavoidable and not incurred as a direct result of The Business Terrace.

** Includes all day to day operational costs. Does not include central or departmental recharges or depreciation.

1.13 It is worth noting that rents in Phase 1 and 2 areas were increased in 2016/17 by an average of 20% and now reflects relative local market rental values.

1.14 Variable income is also included within the rent budget line, generated through the rental of hot desks, meeting space and virtual offices, which has increased significantly over the 2017/18 financial year:

Table 4

	16/17	17/18	2018/19 forecast
Meeting rooms & hot-desks	-£9,220	-£12,335	-£16,000
Virtual Offices	-£145	-£3,120	-£7,320

1.15 'Services income' relates to recharges to tenants for services such as parking, telephones, printing and post.

Phase 3

1.16 The six month rent free period on the Phase 3 area concludes at the end of this financial year, reflected in the forecast expenditure. The forecast shows a surplus of £18,810 in 2018/19 to be used as a sinking fund for reinvestment back into the wider facility.

Table 5

	October 2017 – March 2018	October 2017 – March 2018	2018/19
	Budget	Actual	Forecast
*Total Expenditure	£35,970	£8,140	£53,140
Rental income	-£30,240	-£30,240	-£60,480
Services income	-£5,730	-£5,150	-£11,470
Net contribution	£0	-£27,250	-£18,810

*Includes expenditure on rent to Capital and Regional, rates and other premises costs. No staff management time is allocated to Phase 3 as it is so little.

1.17 As an aside, it is worth noting that prior to The Business Terrace coming into operation, the Council was liable for £25,700 business rates per annum on the Phase 1 area. Under the new space configuration each of the offices is viewed as a single hereditament and eligible for Small Business Rate Relief, with the Council's rate liability now reduced to £6,000 covering the communal areas. Over the remaining term of the lease, the Council has saved almost £157,000 in business rates relating to this space as a result of The Business Terrace.

ADDRESSING CONTINUING DEMAND

1.18 The Business Terrace continues to receive significant numbers of enquiries from businesses seeking a modern, collaborative and supportive office environment in Maidstone. Given that the facility is at full occupancy, officers are looking at the viability of a further phase of accommodation in undeveloped space on Floor 1 of Maidstone House. It is envisaged that this would provide a mix of additional move-on accommodation for existing Terrace tenants, as well as addressing the needs of external companies seeking to remain in Maidstone, for example those in office accommodation being converted for residential purposes. This will be considered within the context of the Council's wider lease commitments to Maidstone House.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

2.1 This report is to note only.

3. RISK

3.1 This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.

4. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

4.1 Members received an update report on the facility in December 2016. This report is being presented as a result of a formal question that was asked by a Member at Policy and Resources Committee in February 2018.

5. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, they will support the Council's overall achievement of its aims to "secure a successful economy for Maidstone borough and enhance the town centre"	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section above.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Financial	Financial implications are set out in the body of the report. The Business Terrace makes a positive contribution to the fixed costs of occupying its premises.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Legal	We have worked with the client department to agree and finalise relevant construction contracts required to facilitate the project. Generally, there are no wider legal implications.	Legal Team
Privacy and Data Protection	No implications	Legal Team
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Policy & Information Manager
Crime and Disorder	No implications	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Procurement	No implications	Head of Service &

		Section 151 Officer
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6. REPORT APPENDICES

Appendix A: Snapshot of recent and planned events at The Business Terrace

7. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

APPENDIX A

Snapshot of recent and planned events at The Business Terrace

October

04/10	Developing a new product or service	Innovate UK & University of Greenwich
11/10	How to Build a Powerful Business Plan That Works	Pro Actions
12/10	Innovation Culture	Innovate UK & University of Greenwich
	After Hours Club	Kent Invicta Chamber of Commerce
19/10	GDPR Compliance & Cyber Security	1Stop Insurance & Harlequin CDIS

November

01/11	Introduction to Lean & 5S	Innovate UK & University of Greenwich
09/11	Building a Sustainable Business	Business Doctors
10/11	Start Up Workshop Week 1 (of 4)	Kent Foundation
16/11	Fighting Fit for Business	The Business Terrace networker
21/11	Disputes: Avoidance and Resolution	Cripps LLP

December

07/12	2 nd annual Dragon's Den event	12 companies based at the Terrace pitched to 'Dragons' including Alison Broom, Duncan Simmons (Area Director for Metro Bank) and Lesley Bennet (Head of Regional Relationships – South for IOD)
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January

<u>18/01</u>	Timeless Principles of Exceptional Businesses	The Alternative Board
<u>19/01</u>	Introduction to Lean & 5S	Innovate UK & University of Greenwich

February

<u>22/02</u>	Breaking Big	Business Doctors (1 st of 4 part series into the summer)
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March

07/03	The Right Model for Your Business (1 st of 4 part scale-up series into April)	Smart Support
16/03	Start up workshop part 1	Kent Foundation
19/03	Kent Investors Network judgement panel	Kent Investors' Network
	Time Management	Business Doctors

23/03	Start-up workshop part 2	Kent Foundation
27/03	Marketing for Growth	Pro-actions

April

10/04	Protecting & Growing Your Business	Peninsula
16/04	HR: Getting on with it	Outset UK
17/04	The Magic of Social Media	The Business Terrace networker
23/04	Making a Success of Brexit in Kent & Medway: The Role of the SME	Canterbury Christchurch University

Photographs of The Business Terrace, events and office-space



Start-up workshops with Kent Foundation



November 2016 – The Entrepreneur's Journey



July 2017 – 2nd Anniversary Celebrations



New Accelerator space – 5 new offices for growing tenants, opened October 1st 2017





November 2017 – Fighting Fit For Your Business



2018 Snow – The Terrace remained open for Business every day.

**Policy and Resources
Committee**

28 March 2018

**Draft Key Performance Indicators for Policy and Resources
Committee 2018-19**

Final Decision-Maker	Policy and Resources
Lead Head of Service	Angela Woodhouse Head of Policy Communications and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Anna Collier Policy and Information Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

Committees have recently reviewed a refresh of the Strategic Plan for 2018-19 which sets out the action areas that deliver the identified priorities. Each Service Committee was asked to consider and agree key performance indicators relevant to the services within its remit so as to measure achievement of our priorities for 2018-19.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. To agree the key performance indicators to be reported to this Committee in 2018-19 which cover the three action areas prioritised in the refreshed Strategic Plan.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	28 March 2018

Draft Key Performance Indicators for Policy and Resources Committee 2018-19

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council has refreshed the Strategic Plan for 2018-19. Each Service Committee is asked to consider and agree key performance indicators relevant to the services within its remit so as to measure achievement of our priorities for 2018-19.
- 1.2 The Committee agreed in December 2016 to focus performance reporting on the three action areas prioritised in the refreshed Strategic Plan for 2017-18:
 - Providing a Clean and Safe Environment
 - Regenerating the Town Centre
 - A Home for Everyone
- 1.3 At the Councillor workshops and the committee meetings to consider the refresh of the Strategic Plan it was identified that where there are strategies and plans in place to deliver the action areas we will use measures set out in those documents.
- 1.4 As the Strategic Plan priorities and action areas have not changed other than the amendment to the clean and safe priority to: Providing a Safe, Clean and Green Environment it is proposed that the same approach is adopted for 2018-19.
- 1.5 Indicators have been reviewed with Heads of Service and the table at Appendix A; shows the draft indicators by action area, current targets for 2017-18 and proposed targets for 2018-19.
- 1.6 Where the target for 2018-19 is to be confirmed (TBC), this is either because, the indicator is annual and the final outturn is needed before the target can be assessed or performance is varied or unexpected and a full year's data is needed to ensure that the target is based on an educated assessment.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the draft set of indicators at Appendix A and could choose to increase, reduce or change any presented.
- 2.2 Members could also choose not to have any performance reported to this committee. This is not recommended as monitoring performance ensures oversight and challenge to the delivery of the Council's priority action areas and mitigates risk of the Council not delivering its priorities.

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Committee is asked to consider which indicators will best measure and track progress against the action areas that are relevant to its terms of reference. Agreement is sought on the indicators and targets for 2018-19 and a list of recommended indicators has been given for the Committee to review.

4. RISK

4.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. That consideration is shown in this report at paragraph 2.2. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 The Committee has previously considered performance measures when it reviewed the strategic plan in December 2016 and January 2017. As well as the earlier workshop with Service Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs an evening workshop was also held to which all Councillors were invited to ascertain views on indicators for each action area in March. This report reflects those meetings.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 The Committee's agreed set of indicators will be reported and added to its work programme for 2018-19.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Performance management is focussed on identifying whether the Council is achieving the strategic priorities and action identified in the Council's Strategic Plan.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Risk Management	Managing performance effectively should act as both risk mitigation and identification	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance

Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	The indicators will be used by staff as part of performance managing our services and assessing progress against our priorities. They will not require additional staffing resource	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Legal	N/A	[Legal Team
Privacy and Data Protection	N/A	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Equalities	N/A	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Crime and Disorder	N/A	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Procurement	N/A	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Draft Key Performance Indicators for Policy and Resources Committee 2018-19

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Council's Refreshed Strategic Plan for 2018-19,
<http://aluminum:9080/documents/s59658/Appendix%20A%20-%20Strategic%20Plan%20Refresh.pdf>

Draft Key Performance Indicators Policy and Resources Committee 2018-19

Providing a Clean Safe and Green Environment			
Indicator	2017-18 Target	2018-19 Target	Notes
The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having acceptable levels of litter	93.5%	94%	
The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having acceptable levels of detritus	84%	94%	
Percentage of fly tips cleared within 2 working days	88%	88%	
Percentage of fly tips with evidential value which result in enforcement action	20%	50%	
Number of litter reports attended to	Information Only	Information Only	
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling , composting	52.5%	52.5%	
A Home for Everyone			
Indicator	2017-18 Target	2018-19 Target	
Processing of Major planning applications in 13 weeks	85%	85%	
Processing of Minor planning applications in 8 weeks	85%	85%	
Processing of Other planning applications in 8 weeks	85%	80%	Target has been lowered to reflect performance throughout 2017-18
Number of affordable homes delivered	50 ¹ (200)	TBC	
Number of households prevented from becoming homeless through	75 (300)	150	Target has been increased significantly to reflect the

¹ The figure in brackets represents the annual target,

the intervention of housing advice			positive performance throughout 2017-18, changes in resources and legislative requirements
Households living in temporary accommodation last night of the month (Council owned and Nightly Paid)	Information only	Information only	
Households living in nightly paid temporary accommodation last night of the month	Information only	Information only	
Regenerating The Town Centre			
Indicator	2017-18 Target	2018-19 Target	
Percentage of vacant retail units	11%	TBC	Annual indicator awaiting final data
Footfall in the High Street	10,600,000	TBC	Due to unexpected positive performance in 2017-18, awaiting final quarters data to make a more educated assessment of predicated performance for 2018-19
Business Rates Income in the town centre	Information Only	TBC	Annual indicator awaiting final data

**Policy and Resources
Committee**

28 March 2018

Business Rates Retention Pilot 2018/19

Final Decision-Maker	Policy and Resources Committee
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

The Council is due to receive additional business rates income, initially estimated as £640,000, for one year only in 2018/19 as a result of its participation in the Kent and Medway 100% Business Rates Retention pilot. Policy and Resources Committee agreed parameters for allocation of the funding at its meeting on 24 January 2018. This report describes the individual projects that it is now proposed to fund.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Agrees the projects to be funded from proceeds of the Business Rates Retention Pilot set out in Appendix A.
2. Delegates authority to the Director of Finance and Business Improvement, in consultation with the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, to release funds for individual projects.

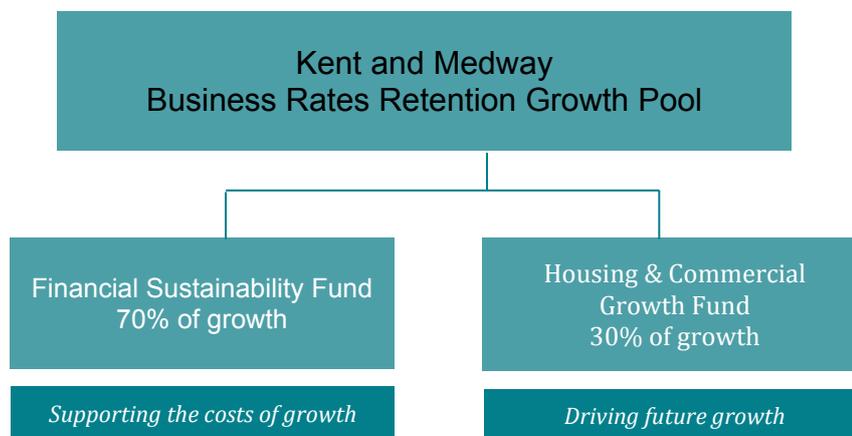
Timetable

Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	28 March 2018

Business Rates Retention Pilot 2018/19

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Kent County Council, Medway Council, and all twelve districts within the Kent county area successfully applied last year to become a 100% Business Rates Retention pilot. This means that the Government will allow 100% of business rates growth to be retained within the local area. The consequent financial gain across the whole area was estimated to be £24.7 million in 2018/19, to be split between a Financial Sustainability Fund and a Housing and Commercial Growth Fund.



- 1.2 A report to the meeting of Policy and Resources Committee on 24 January set out proposals for how Maidstone's share of the Financial Sustainability Fund(FSF), estimated as being £640,000, be allocated. The report noted that the money is a one-off sum: it is possible that the Business Rates Retention pilot will be extended to 2019/20, but the Government has made no commitment to doing this. Accordingly, whilst the funds are intended to support the costs of growth, they will not be available on a recurring annual basis, and it would be inappropriate for them to be used to support regular annual outgoings. Instead, it was suggested that a more appropriate use would be to identify projects where an initial investment from the FSF will equip the Council to manage growth on a self-sustaining basis in the future.
- 1.3 The Committee agreed the following criteria for allocation of the fund.

Optimising impact of FSF expenditure

In order to achieve maximum impact from the FSF, it is proposed that it is focused on a small number of discrete projects, distinct from existing agreed revenue and capital expenditure. A greater number of projects would risk spreading management input into individual projects too thinly, and would lead to relatively small budgets for each project, thus limiting their potential to make an impact.

Alignment with strategic objectives

The projects will respond to the Council's corporate priorities. In general, therefore, they will promote social, economic and environmental wellbeing. They are likely to relate to one or more of the three action areas – A Home for Everyone, Town Centre Regeneration and Clean, Safe and Green. They must also be consistent with relevant Council strategies such as the Economic Development Strategy. Performance against corporate priorities is evaluated regularly through public engagement, eg through Resident Surveys, so it would be appropriate to consider projects that residents are likely to see as improving their quality of life.

Leveraging benefit of expenditure

The FSF provides a relatively limited sum of money, and is only available on a one-off basis. Accordingly, it is important that any investment of the FSF exploits the opportunities for leveraging additional income, either by creating a future income stream or by attracting a matching contribution in cash or through partnership working, eg with external organisations like central government or Kent County Council.

- 1.4 Officers developed proposals for a number of discrete projects which would meet the criteria set out above. These twelve projects were included amongst the budget proposals considered by Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting on 14th February 2018.
- 1.5 At their meeting on 14th February, Members asked for more information on the projects and requested that the Committee be given a further opportunity to consider their prioritisation and scope. Accordingly, more details are included at Appendix A of this report and an informal briefing was held on 8th March, to which all councillors were invited, at which project sponsors described their projects and answered questions on them.
- 1.6 An additional project has been included that focuses on air quality, which was specifically mentioned as a top priority at the meeting on 14th February. This has been funded by reducing the financial allocations for a number of the other projects. It is considered that the other projects can still be delivered within the reduced allocations.
- 1.7 To give an indication of prioritisation, the projects have been divided into three tranches, as follows.

	£000
<u>Tranche 1</u>	
Housing First and Rough Sleepers	80
Regeneration Opportunity Areas	80
Property Asset Review	55
Members' Community Grant	60

Tranche 2

Predictive analytics and preventing homelessness	80
Housing Delivery Partnership	40
Community Environmental Engagement Initiative	90
Maidstone Business capital of Kent – marketing strategy	35
Staplehurst Village Centre Masterplan	15

Tranche 3

Maidstone Housing Design Guide	40
Electric vehicle charging points	20
Bus Station improvement - feasibility study	10
Data analytics for Inclusive Growth	35

TOTAL

640

- 1.8 Taken together, these projects will allow the Council to progress a number of important initiatives that support its core strategies, and will help it respond to growth in a way that benefits the borough and quality of life for its residents.
- 1.9 The Council has robust project management processes that will be applied with these projects. Progress with each project will be monitored and financial controls will be in place to ensure that expenditure is contained within the authorised amounts.
- 1.10 It is expected that business rates income monitoring will allow an ongoing assessment to be made as to the availability of funding for these projects from business rates growth. Funding will be released for each tranche as and when it is appropriate to do so. In order not to delay projects unnecessarily, funding will be released as soon as it is considered prudent to do so. A recommendation is accordingly included in this report to delegate authority to the Director of Finance and Business Improvement, in consultation with the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee, to release funding as appropriate during the course of the year.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 **Option 1:** To agree the projects set out in Appendix A.
- 2.2 **Option 2:** To propose changes to the projects and/or the prioritisation set out in Appendix A.

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Option 1 is the preferred option. The projects listed meet the criteria agreed by the Committee at its meeting on 24 January 2018. They help to

further the Council's corporate objectives and are likely to generate benefits over the longer term.

4. RISKS

- 4.1 As with any projects, those described in this report could fail to be delivered, or could be delivered but exceed their budget allocations. This risk is mitigated in several ways. There is a strong project management culture in the Council. Monitoring arrangements will be put in place for all the projects, to ensure that they deliver within budget and to the agreed timetable. Finally, post project reviews will be carried out to evaluate the outcomes and to derive any lessons learned from the projects.
-

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 Policy and Resources Committee received an initial report on Business Rates Retention pilot projects at its meeting on 24 January 2018. A draft set of projects was included within the budget proposals considered by the Committee at its meeting on 14 February 2018. The Committee requested that further consideration be given to the priority and scope of the projects. All Members were therefore invited to a briefing on 8 March 2018 at which project sponsors discussed their proposals and responded to questions. The feedback received has been reflected in the current report.
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6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The projects described in this report will be delivered in tranches during 2018/19 as set out above.
-

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The projects described in this report support the Council's strategic plan objectives.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Risk Management	See section 4 above.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

Financial	Set out in report.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	None.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Legal	The Council has a statutory obligation to set a balanced budget. Allocation of resources in the way set out in this report supports achievement of a balanced budget.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Privacy and Data Protection	None.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Equalities	Where appropriate, Equalities Impact Assessments will be carried out for specific projects.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Crime and Disorder	None.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Procurement	Procurement of services in the course of delivering the projects will be in accordance with the procurement provisions within the Council's constitution.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Projects to be funded by Business Rates Retention Pilot.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers.

BUSINESS RATES RETENTION PILOT PROJECTS

	£000
<u>Tranche 1</u>	
Housing First and Rough Sleepers	80
Regeneration Opportunity Areas	80
Property Asset Review	55
Members' Community Grant	60
 <u>Tranche 2</u>	
Predictive analytics and preventing homelessness	80
Housing Delivery Partnership	40
Community Environmental Engagement Initiative	90
Maidstone Business capital of Kent - marketing campaign	35
Staplehurst Village Centre Masterplan	15
 <u>Tranche 3</u>	
Maidstone Housing Design Guide	40
Electric vehicle charging points	20
Bus Station improvement - feasibility study	10
Data analytics for Inclusive Growth	35
 Total	 640

Housing First and Rough Sleepers

Background

Maidstone has traditionally had an active street population which includes both rough sleepers and beggars. Our annual street count in 2017 was 41, which was a rise of 17% on the previous year 2016, and is slightly above the national average of 15%. This figure represents the largest cohort across the districts in Kent.

The current support model within Maidstone is fair but can be limited by minimal effective options for these complex individuals. We need to create an environment of change and challenge the current situation.

Project Objectives

- 1. Deep dive into the reasons and experiences why people are living on the streets in Maidstone**, including looking at the barriers to moving away from the lifestyle and what creates a positive outcome for those chronically excluded. We aim to use the model created by World Habitat European Campaign to End Street Homelessness which is based on engaging the community in resolution of the issues. To date six UK local authorities have undertaken this piece of work including Westminster, Brighton and Torbay.
- 2. Development of a Housing First model within Maidstone in partnership with Porchlight.** Housing First (HF) is an evidence- based approach to supporting homeless people with high needs and complex issues to live in their own homes. The overall philosophy of Housing First is to provide a stable, independent home and intensive personalised support and case management to homeless people with multiple and complex needs. This in turn brings positive outcomes including a reduction on the cost to the public purse in terms of community safety

We would look to rent seven flats for initially a period of 12 months.
- 3. Creation of a Challenge Group Partnership.** This will be a group whose membership will be compiled of influencers and budget holders across our organisation and key stakeholders including the Community Safety, Police, Treatment services, Social Care and Health services. The meeting will be chaired by John Littlemore and will work through this pilot looking to challenge the status quo of those most high profile and problematic of the street population including beggars. We would hope to use both a supportive and enforcement approach which is flexible and can respond to the individual issues of those on the agenda.

Regeneration Opportunity Areas**Background**

The Council's Housing Development & Regeneration Investment Plan proposes a project focused on key regeneration opportunity areas. Five sites/areas in the town centre have been identified and recommended where it is recommended this project focuses. The selected sites are all considered to have genuine (re)development potential, capable of generating a significant regenerative boost for the town centre. This builds on studies prepared to support the council's Economic Development function and for the evidence base of the Local Plan. Conventionally, the redevelopment of brownfield sites is more difficult to deliver as they are less attractive for developers. There is a potential role for the council in promoting these brownfield opportunities, setting out clear information on what could be achieved on each site (and signalling what the council would welcome), providing practical information on matters such as the location and capacity of utilities thereby helping to reduce risk for developers and investors with the result that investment in Maidstone becomes more appealing. This would be further demonstration of the Council taking a pro-active approach to redevelopment in the town centre, including tackling some 'eyesore' sites.

Project Objectives

The outputs of the project will be a Maidstone Town Centre Opportunity Areas Brochure, and other associated collateral, which will promote investment in the town centre for residential-led mixed use schemes, which will be able to be used in a marketing campaign and which can be used in site-specific negotiations. The brochure will be pivotal in engaging with developers and promoting investment in the town centre more widely. The promotional material will be underpinned with site-specific planning guidance capable of being used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Ultimately the objective is to bring forward housing for development in the town centre broad locations (and other windfall sites) set out in the Local Plan. It is also for MBC to show vision and leadership in respect of a number of difficult sites that have proved difficult to deliver over years past.

Property Asset Review**Background**

The Property Investment Strategy forms part of the 2018 Capital Strategy and a key recommendation of that Strategy is for the existing Council Property Portfolio to be reviewed in line with asset management best practice.

The previous Asset Management Plan was completed in 2012 and although it recommended a review of a number of key assets, it was not a comprehensive review of the entire portfolio.

A Property Asset Review will ensure that the Council's property assets can respond to the Council's corporate priorities and more specifically will identify opportunities for the Council to optimise income or capital from Council owned property and to ensure that all Council services are provided through facilities which are fit for purpose and utilised effectively.

Project Objectives

The Property Asset Review is the first essential step of any effective Property Strategy. The Review will provide the basis for future recommendations of the Capital Strategy and Property Investment Strategy and result in key actions for how to produce additional capital and revenue from the existing portfolio.

The Review will include:

- Overview of the existing property portfolio as a whole rather than considering properties in isolation.
- Consideration of how property assets are currently used and why they are held
- If any increase in the benefit received could be achieved
- Any opportunities for increased revenue generation
- How properties could be more efficiently and effectively used/occupied

Upon completion the Review will ensure the Council are clear about the extent, value, condition and suitability of its property portfolio and thus will enable the Council to make strategic property decisions going forward.

Members' Community Grant**Background**

In order to assist with community development and cultural cohesion, a one off community development fund will be created. The rationale is that local councillors, as ward representatives, know their communities and their local (micro) needs.

Creating a series of ward funds based on £1,000 a councillor will provide the means to help local community groups and organisations with one off pump priming money. Some of the money could be allocated to small environmental improvements.

Examples of how the funding could be used include:

- one-off support for local voluntary groups to enable them to become more sustainable, e.g. purchase of computer equipment
- purchase or repair of public realm equipment or furniture, e.g. park benches
- contribution to the cost of non-political local events and activities that are consistent with the Council's values
- sports or health & well-being projects.

Project Objectives

The Community Fund will support local initiatives which:

- contribute to delivery of the Council's priorities
- are sustainable and do not create additional pressures on the Council's resources
- there is a tangible benefit to residents within the area represented by the councillor
- funding is not readily available from other sources
- expenditure is in accordance with the Council's constitution and the overall local authority legal framework.

Preference will be given to projects where funding is matched from other sources.

The administration of the fund will be kept as simple as possible, consistent with the requirements of good governance. This should ensure minimal overheads for operating the fund and the cost of these are estimated as being £5,000. Guidelines for use of the funds will be prepared to ensure that the projects meet the criteria set out above and that expenditure meets all the normal legal and constitutional requirements for Council expenditure. Details of all money spent will be published on the Council's website.

The Fund will be established on a one-off basis in 2018/19. Any unused money may be carried forward at the end of the year, but there is no further funding available at this stage to top up the Fund in 2019/20.

Predictive analytics and preventing homelessness

Background

Statutory homelessness is up 44% since 2010 and rough sleeping has more than doubled since this date. In April 2018 the Homelessness Reduction Act will be effective which places a greater emphasis and duties on Local Housing Authorities to prevent homelessness. Local Authorities will be legally obliged to provide more meaningful assistance to all people who are eligible and homeless or threatened with homelessness, irrespective of their priority need status. Local Authorities will have a duty to prevent the threat of homelessness, for any person who is in threat within 56 days.

Under the new statute Local Authorities are also required to ensure services are designed to meet the needs of particular groups who have been identified of being at increased risk of becoming homeless.

From October 2018 there will also be the duty on specified public bodies to refer, with client consent, any person homeless or in threat of being homeless.

This project would be identify at the earliest possible stage those persons at risk of future homelessness and provide early intervention and support. This early intervention cannot be met by the homelessness prevention activities being undertaken by the Housing Advice Team, as the focus will be on the statutory duties of to assist those persons in threat or homelessness within 56 days, or who are already in a homeless situation.

Project Objectives

- Develop a predictive model using local and national datasets to identify individuals with the key risk factors associated with future homelessness. By using predictive analytics to analyse various datasets held by the Council and other stakeholders, such as homelessness, housing benefits, council tax, anti-social behaviour, looked after children and children-in-need, we can link data to give a richer picture of people who are homeless or at risk of it.
- Develop a pathway to provide a smooth route into accessing housing support for the service users identified as at risk of future homelessness will be established. Service users will be triaged to the appropriate pathway i.e. housing support only or wider wraparound support.
- Promote a new approach, linking to the Homelessness Prevention Act, which will enable early housing and support intervention to be put in place, before any risk of homelessness develops.

Housing Delivery Partnership**Background**

As described in a workshop to Members in December 2017, delivered by the Director of Regeneration and Place and Trowers & Hamblins, there is a potential business case to forming a joint venture (a Housing Delivery Partnership in the form of an LLP) with a housing association and / or an institutional investor, to acquire S106 affordable housing from developers in the borough. The project would require capital investment from MBC to be funded from within the Capital Programme.

To achieve the project objectives an Affordable Housing Supplementary Planning Guidance would need to be commissioned and introduced. Considerable legal advice and procurement work would also be needed to develop the business case and to identify the right partner.

Project Objectives

- Simplified delivery of affordable housing.
- Improved local lettings and management arrangements.
- Improved affordability to the end user by controlling the transfer price payable to the developer.

Community Environmental Engagement Initiative

Background

Conserving and promoting biodiversity in the Borough is a key objective for the Council as set out in the Local Plan and the Parks and Open Spaces 10 year Plan. In order to deliver this it is essential to engage with residents, communities and key stakeholders and promote the environmental initiatives – both big and small – which take place across the Borough. The intention is to gain community momentum to drive forward new projects and make a cultural shift towards positive environmental improvement including reducing littering and fly tipping which can impact the appearance and quality of the environment.

Whilst many individual initiatives take place within the Borough, a more coordinated approach which generates connections between individuals and communities will deliver more significant impacts towards the Council’s objective of Maidstone being an attractive environment which residents and visitors can enjoy.

The Council also has a significant amount of Section 106 funding to support improvements to publicly accessible open space. Whilst the Parks and Open Spaces 10 year Plan intends to create a more cohesive approach to the delivery of this, there is a greater need to connect the public with green spaces, whether they are Council parks, their own gardens or local nature reserves. This initiative looks to bridge this gap by engaging the public with the environment and generate pride in our Borough.

Project Objectives

The project centres on the creation of a website (or micro-site part of MBC website) which enables residents, community groups, partner organisations and Maidstone Borough Council to populate with environmental based projects.

The objectives of the project are:

- to deliver a website which captures the initiatives currently being undertaken across the Borough from the installation of bird or bat boxes to the creation of green corridors
- to raise awareness of local initiatives residents can be involved with
- to provide support and tools to facilitate new projects e.g. workshops / information material on building ponds
- to create a culture focused with respecting our environment and identifying opportunities to conserve it wherever possible
- to reduce waste crime including littering and fly tipping through increased civic pride and respect for environment
- to create community connections and reduce social isolation

Maidstone Business capital of Kent – marketing initiative

Background

With a newly adopted Local Plan, a local economy that is continuing to grow, and many exciting projects coming to fruition, this is the right time to demonstrate that Maidstone is 'open for business'. In order to promote Maidstone as the Business Capital of Kent and drive inward investment, the Council will run a positive PR campaign to raise the profile of Maidstone, and develop marketing collateral in the form of an interactive Town Centre map, a marketing toolkit and a microsite for inward investment.

Project Objectives

- Promote the advantages of the Borough as a place to invest, work, live and visit
- Dispel any negative perceptions arising from previous planning decisions, congestion and lack of suitable employment space
- Demonstrate that Maidstone is truly 'open for business'.

The project will comprise three areas of work, to be commissioned from a suitably qualified and experienced marketing / PR company:

- A positive PR campaign to raise the profile of Maidstone as a great place to invest, work, live and visit.
- Development of marketing collateral
- Inward investment marketing campaign

The third area is funded separately but is treated as part of the overall project.

The deliverables from the project will be:

- A planned and agreed PR campaign.
- Evidence of PR activity undertaken across all media and channels.
- An interactive web based digital map of the town centre showing key developments to date and future developments and opportunity areas.
- A marketing toolkit which will be available to all stakeholders.
- An inward investment micro site on the back of www.businessinmaidstone.co.uk
- A planned and agreed inward investment strategy and marketing campaign across all media channels.
- Evidence to demonstrate the raising of Maidstone's profile as a business location.
- A marketing brochure for the Maidstone town centre 'High Five'.
- A successful social media campaign.

Staplehurst Village Centre Masterplan

Background

The Staplehurst Neighbourhood Plan, supported by ward members, sets out an aspiration to regenerate the land around the train station to improve the quality and quantity of car parking provision, as well as to provide a mixed use development, to include retail so as to create a more vibrant village centre.

Project Objectives

To generate clarity and leadership, so that private and public sector land owners in the locality will work collaboratively so as to bring forward development that meets the aspirations of the local community. So the work will involve;

- An audit of local land ownerships.
- Pre-planning advice.
- The production of a masterplan that meets the aspirations of the local community.
- A business case for the proposed development.

Maidstone Housing Design Guide

Background

Given the housing growth in the borough, there is a need to raise the design standard of new housing be built in the borough. This guide would become a material planning consideration or Supplementary Planning Guidance, and help us succinctly set out our aspirations in terms of quality. It would take the form of a useful visual checklist approach rather than an all-encompassing lengthy written document, i.e. it would be more of a mood board type approach, palettes of materials and design cues, approaches to street scene, greening / bio diversity. It could also be flexed to work across the differ localities of the borough.

Project Objectives

To raise the design quality of new housing built in the borough over the medium to long term.

Benefits would include improved engagement and streamlining of the planning process, particularly through PPAs, so reducing abortive work from both developers and planning staff alike. I.e. we would be better able to articulate our design aspirations for the borough rather than negatively responding to what we don't like.

Install more Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points around the borough

Background

The Council recently adopted its Low Emission Strategy which has a detailed action plan appended to it. One of the actions is as per the above, especially on Council owned sites, and our car park portfolio in particular. This direction of travel was also signalled within the Council's Parking Innovation Strategy that was adopted by the Strategic Planning Sustainability & Transportation Committee (SPS&T) in Feb 2018.

In terms of the SPS&T decision, there will be sixteen such charging points in total installed in across eight car parks anyway, funded through Civil Parking Enforcement Fund (at a cost of around £20k).

The proposal therefore is, subject to usage of those first installations, to double the amount of new charging points to 32 at a cost of around £20k from the Business Rates Retention Pilot Fund. Should the take up be discouraging, the £20k would then instead be spent on other items listed in the action plan of the low emission strategy in consultation with the Chairman of SPS&T.

In terms of the parking portfolio, this would mean giving over an amount of spaces to purely EV's.

Project Objectives

- To improve air quality within Maidstone by encouraging the take of EV's.

Bus Station Improvement – feasibility study

Background

The work undertaken in the recent tri-study shows that there is a need for a bus station in Maidstone, and the current facility is the best location for it, but it is in drastic need of refurbishment.

The likely cost of refurbishment is £2.5. It is likely that three partners would contribute to the cost: MBC, Capital & Regional and Arriva. Other funding could come from grant funding available from the LEP for countywide transport infrastructure improvements.

In order to attract this grant funding, possibly by way of transferring it from other stalled transport projects that were earmarked for Maidstone, it is necessary to have a worked up and costed design and supporting narrative.

This work could be incorporated into a second iteration of the Maidstone Integrated Transport package.

Project Objectives

To improve public transport amenities and infrastructure within the borough.

Data Analytics for Inclusive Growth

Background

The data underpinning Council policies has a critical influence on how those policies developed. To take some obvious examples:

- data about number of households drives the Local Plan
- Council Tax income assumptions shape our Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Currently, much of the data we use is financial and/or biased towards what is relatively easy to measure – eg population, number of households. Less tangible data, which is potentially more difficult to gather, tends to be overlooked. This means, for example, that in developing the Local Plan, there is a strong emphasis on the quantitative (number of homes) at the expense of the qualitative.

The Council needs to look beyond the obvious measures, so that the factors such as the following are properly considered:

- Quality of infrastructure
- Travel patterns
- People’s skills and employability
- Incidence of deprivation
- Health
- Environmental sustainability.

This project would review the relevant information that is available. It would define a broader set of metrics, based on the available data, and would establish processes for extracting and presenting this data on a regular basis.

Project Objectives

- Obtain a better understanding of the data sets available to the Council in developing policy.
- Develop a wider set of metrics, enabling a more inclusive understanding of the factors shaping policy development.
- Establish processes for compiling measurement data such that it can be updated on a regular basis and used by the Council on a day-to-day basis.