

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 6 March 2018
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership: Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Butler, Ells (Vice-Chairman), Fort, Hastie, Mrs Hinder, Lewins, Pickett (Chairman) and Mrs Wilson

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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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 Monday 26 February 2018

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

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In order to speak at this meeting, please contact Democratic Services using the contact details above, by 5 p.m. one clear working day before the meeting. If asking a question, you will need to provide the full text in writing. If making a statement, you will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on. Please note that slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk.

Should you wish to refer any decisions contained in these minutes to the Policy and Resources Committee, please submit a Decision Referral Form, signed by three Councillors, to the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance by: **12 February 2018**

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 30 JANUARY 2018

Present: Councillor Pickett (Chairman) and Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Butler, Ells, Fort, Hastie, Mrs Hinder, Lewins and Mrs Wilson

Also Present: Councillor Newton

96. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies.

97. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

There were no Substitute Members.

98. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

99. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Newton was present as a Visiting Member and indicated his wish to speak on Agenda Item 13 – Biodiversity Action Plan Update.

100. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

101. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

102. EXEMPT ITEMS

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

103. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 18 DECEMBER 2017

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 December 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed.

104. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

105. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

106. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Work Programme for 2017/18.

The Chairman assured the Committee that the Museum Future Governance Options would be presented to the Committee in March 2018.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme 2017/18 be noted.

107. STRATEGIC PLAN 2015-20, 2018-19 REFRESH

Mrs Angela Woodhouse, the Head of Policy, Communications and Governance, presented the Strategic Plan 2015-20, 2018-19 Refresh to the Committee.

It was noted that:

- The Policy and Resources Committee had approved the plan for circulation to each of the Service Committees in December;
- The top three priority areas would remain the same for 2018-19; and
- The two priority areas within this Committee's remit were:
 - Respecting the Character and Heritage of our Borough; and
 - Ensuring there are Good Leisure and Cultural Attractions.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mrs Woodhouse agreed to include the delivery of the biodiversity action plan under the priority area 'Providing a Safe and Clean Environment' as well as under the priority area 'Respecting the Character and Heritage of our Borough'.

The Committee agreed that the word 'Green' should be added into the title of the priority area 'Providing a Safe and Clean Environment' as it would demonstrate to residents that the Council was committed to creating a green environment in the Borough.

RESOLVED:

1. That the refreshed Strategic Plan attached at Appendix A be noted.

2. That the following amendment to the Strategic Plan 2015-20, 2018-19 Refresh be recommended to Policy and Resources Committee:
 - a. The word 'Green' be inserted into the title of the priority area 'Providing a Clean and Safe Environment'.

Voting: Unanimous

108. BIODIVERSITY ACTION PLAN UPDATE

Mrs Jennifer Shepherd, the Head of Environment and Public Realm, presented the Biodiversity Action Plan Update to the Committee.

Mrs Shepherd highlighted to the Committee that:

- Maidstone's Local Biodiversity Action Plan (LBAP) was adopted in 2011 to collate knowledge on priority species and habitats and to provide an action plan to conserve and protect them for the future.
- The LBAP had not been updated since 2014 and as the Maidstone Borough Local Plan and the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan were adopted in 2017, it was appropriate to complete a refresh of the LBAP.
- Refreshing the LBAP would show the Council's future intentions and the importance it placed on biodiversity in the Borough.
- The cost implication of approximately £25,000 would be funded from the underspend from the Parks and Open Spaces 2017/18 budget.

Councillor Newton addressed the Committee on this item.

The Committee raised concerns about the cost of the LBAP refresh, in a time when budgets on frontline services were being cut.

The Committee noted that in order to impose stringent conditions on planning applications, to prevent the loss of ancient woodland for example, there needed to be robust policies in place and the LBAP would provide this.

In response to a question from the Committee, Mrs Shepherd confirmed that by refreshing the LBAP and finding out ways to encourage biodiversity, the cost to the Council of maintaining areas of land could decrease.

RESOLVED:

That a refresh of Maidstone's Biodiversity Action plan funded from the underspend from the Parks and Opens Spaces 2017/18 budget be agreed.

Voting: For – 8 Against – 1 Abstentions - 0

109. FEES & CHARGES

Miss Ellie Dunnet, the Head of Finance, presented the proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 for the services within the Committee's remit.

In response to questions from the Committee, Ms Dawn Hudd, the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development, replied that:

- The cost to hire the Museum was being reduced because it was difficult to compete with venues in the Town Centre who were offering the service for free.
- The take up of school visits to the Museum had been affected by the closures of the galleries, but now the Museum was fully booked through to March.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed discretionary fees and charges set out in Appendix 1 to this report be agreed.

Voting: Unanimous

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

Miss Ellie Dunnet, the Head of Finance, presented the Medium Term Financial Strategy & Budget Proposals 2018/19 to the Committee.

It was noted that:

- The market operated by the Council at Lockmeadow had consistently under-performed on its income targets. It was considered that a reduction of £40,000 on an ongoing basis should be incorporated into the strategic revenue projections.
- Provision had been made in the budget for 2017/18 for a loss of budgeted income from the Mote Park Café of £96,000, following the poor performance of the Café in 2016/17. The operation of the Café had been contracted out and an additional income of £56,000 had been reinstated in the budget. This was in line with the additional amount expected to be received under the new contract.

The Committee noted that the Council would still be providing Christmas lights for the Town Centre in 2018.

RESOLVED:

1. That the revenue budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee as set out in Appendix C be agreed for submission to Policy and Resources Committee.

2. That the capital budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee as set out in Appendix E be agreed for submission to Policy and Resources Committee.

Voting: Unanimous

111. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 7.40 p.m.

Agenda Item 12

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

6 March 2018

Third Quarter Budget Monitoring 2017/18

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee
Lead Director	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Mark Green – Director of Finance & Business Improvement (Lead Officer) Paul Holland – Senior Finance Manager Client Accountancy (Report Author)
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report provides the committee with an overview of the revenue and capital budgets and outturn for the third quarter of 2017/18, and highlights financial matters which may have a material impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy or the Balance Sheet. It also includes an update on the capital programme for this committee.

As at the 31 December 2017, this Committee was showing an overall positive variance of £183,035. The individual variances for each service area are detailed within **Appendix 1**.

The position for the Council as a whole at the end of the third quarter shows that there is currently an underspend but that the forecast for the end of the year shows this figure reducing. However there are still a number of underlying pressures across all the Committees that need to be addressed to ensure that this position is sustained to the end of the year.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

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 be noted.
2. That the capital position at the end of the third quarter is noted.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Policy and Resources Committee	14 February 2018
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	6 March 2018

Third Quarter Budget Monitoring 2017/18

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Director of Finance & Business Improvement is the Responsible Financial Officer, and has overall responsibility for budgetary control and financial management. However in practice, day to day budgetary control is delegated to service managers, with assistance and advice from their director and the finance section.
 - 1.2 The Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2017/18 onwards was agreed by full Council on 1 March 2017. This report advises and updates the Committee on the current position with regards to revenue and capital expenditure against the approved budgets within its remit.
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2. REVENUE BUDGET

- 2.1 Attached at **Appendix 1** is a table detailing the current budget and expenditure position for this Committee's services in relation to the third quarter of 2017/18, to December 2017. The appendix details the net budget per cost centre for this Committee. Actual expenditure is shown to the end of December 2017 and includes accruals for goods and services received but not yet paid for.
- 2.2 The columns of the table in the Appendix show the following detail:
 - a) The cost centre description;
 - b) The value of the total budget for the year;
 - c) The amount of the budget expected to be spent by the end of December 2017;
 - d) The actual spend to that date;
 - e) The variance between expected and actual spend;
 - f) The forecast spend to year end; and
 - g) The expected significant variances at 31 March 2018.
- 2.3 **Appendix 1** shows that of a net annual expenditure budget of £5,024,900 it was expected that £2,693,416 would be spent up until the end of December. These totals include internal recharges. At this point in time the budget is reporting an under spend of £183,085, and the current forecast indicates that the year-end position for this committee will decrease to an under spend of £48,000.
- 2.4 Explanations for variances within individual cost centres which exceed or are expected to exceed £30,000 have been provided in accordance with the Council's constitution.

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	Positive Variance Q3 £000	Adverse Variance Q3 £000	Year End Forecast Variance £000
Leisure Centre – The budget includes utility costs savings from installation of solar panels that have not yet been realised. It is hoped that this issue will be resolved for 2018/19.		-21	-30
Parks & Open Spaces - Following a restructure this budget area now includes the grounds maintenance team. The variance is a combination of staff vacancies, an underspend on running costs and additional income above the budget.	98		90
Playground Maintenance & Improvements – This variance is a consequence of reduced maintenance costs following the recent programme of play area capital works.	49		39
Bereavement Services - Income is currently ahead of budget, but the current surplus income is earmarked to fund the refurbishment of the toilets at the crematorium and to undertake some other minor works, so it is anticipated that the service will be on budget by the end of the financial year.	37		0
Market - The adverse variance has arisen from unachieved income in this area, with the most notable shortfall arising from the Tuesday market. This is a continuation of the trend observed in previous years and nationally, which indicates this to be a declining sector. Officers are looking at alternative revenue generating opportunities. The other contributor to the increased adverse variance is the service charge for 2017-18 which has increased by 25%.		-19	-51

3. CAPITAL PROGRAMME

- 3.1 Service committees will now receive an update on their capital programme schemes. Policy and Resources Committee will continue to receive an overarching report for the whole programme.

- 3.2 The capital programme was approved by Council on 1 March 2017. Funding for the programme remains consistent with previous decisions of Council in that the majority of resources come from New Homes Bonus along with a small grants budget.
 - 3.3 The current programme for this Committee is set out in **Appendix 2** and shows the current budget and actual expenditure to the end of December. The current budget includes the approved budget plus any unused resources brought forward from 2016/17.
 - 3.4 The budget for Play Area Improvements will need to be re-profiled with budget brought forward from 2018/19 as the level of spend this year is higher than was initially forecast, but in overall terms the project remains within budget.
 - 3.5 The Mote Park Play Area and Improvement schemes are both being progressed, but the significant expenditure is now likely to be incurred in 2018/19.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 In considering the current position on the revenue budget and the capital programme at the end of December 2017 the committee can choose to note those actions or it could choose to take further action.
 - 4.2 The committee is requested to note the content of the report and agree on any necessary action to be taken in relation to the budget position.
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5. RISK

- 5.1 This report is presented for information only and has no risk management implications.
 - 5.2 The Council has produced a balanced budget for both capital and revenue expenditure and income for 2017/18. This budget is set against a backdrop of limited resources and a difficult economic climate. Regular and comprehensive monitoring of the type included in this report ensures early warning of significant issues that may place the Council at financial risk. This gives this committee the best opportunity to take actions to mitigate such risks.
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6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 This report is not expected to lead to any consultation.
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 The third quarter budget monitoring reports are being considered by the relevant Service Committees in February and March 2018, including a full report to Policy and Resources committee on 14 February 2018.
- 7.2 Details of the actions taken by service committees to manage the pressures in their budgets will be reported to Policy and Resources Committee if appropriate.

8. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	This report monitors actual activity against the revenue budget and other financial matters set by Council for the financial year. The budget is set in accordance with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy which is linked to the strategic plan and corporate priorities.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Risk Management	This has been addressed in section 5 of the report.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Financial	Financial implications are the focus of this report through high level budget monitoring. The process of budget monitoring ensures that services can react quickly to potential resource problems. The process ensures that the Council is not faced by corporate financial problems that may prejudice the delivery of strategic priorities.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Staffing	The budget for staffing represents approximately 50% of the direct spend of the council and is carefully monitored. Any issues in relation to employee costs will be raised in this and future monitoring reports.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

Legal	The Council has a statutory obligation to maintain a balanced budget and this monitoring process enables the committee to remain aware of issues and the process to be taken to maintain a balanced budget for the year.	Keith Trowell, Interim Team Leader (Corporate Governance)
Privacy and Data Protection	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Equalities	The budget ensures the focus of resources into areas of need as identified in the Council's strategic priorities. This monitoring report ensures that the budget is delivering services to meet those needs.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Crime and Disorder	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Procurement	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

9. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix 1: Third Quarter 2017/18 Revenue Monitoring – Heritage, Culture & Leisure
- Appendix 2: Capital Programme – Heritage, Culture & Leisure

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee
APPENDIX 1 - Third Quarter Budget Monitoring - Full Summary to December 2017

Cost Centre	Budget for Year	Budget to December	Actual	Variance	Forecast	Year End Variance	Explanation
Cultural Development Arts	£20,670	£16,878	£15,688	£1,189	£20,670	£0	
Museum	£1,494,160	£661,933	£666,053	-£4,120	£1,494,160	£0	
Carriage Museum	£79,970	£44,603	£43,530	£1,072	£79,970	£0	
Museum-Grant Funded Activities	£89,720	£73,093	£57,602	£15,491	£89,720	£0	
Museum Cafe	-£790	£925	£9,505	-£8,579	-£790	£0	
Hazlitt Arts Centre	£377,630	£222,205	£217,100	£5,105	£377,630	£0	
Festivals and Events	£28,950	£31,148	£16,639	£14,509	£28,950	£0	
Lettable Halls	£15,440	£5,393	£1,849	£3,544	£15,440	£0	
Community Halls	£201,270	£45,526	£40,111	£5,415	£201,270	£0	
Cultural Development Sports	£100	£75	£75	£0	£100	£0	
Leisure Centre	£435,370	£317,723	£339,442	-£21,719	£465,370	-£30,000	The budget includes utility costs savings from installation of solar panels that have not yet been realised. It is hoped that this issue will be resolved for 2018/19.
Cobtree Golf Course	-£29,320	-£108,165	-£113,036	£4,871	-£29,320	£0	
Parks & Open Spaces	£1,430,350	£968,363	£869,912	£98,452	£1,340,350	£90,000	Following a restructure this budget area now includes the grounds maintenance team. The variance is a combination of staff vacancies, an underspend on running costs and additional income above the budget.
Playground Maintenance & Improvements	£430,190	£129,968	£80,997	£48,971	£391,190	£39,000	This variance is a consequence of reduced maintenance costs following the recent programme of play area capital works.
Parks Pavilions	£51,070	£27,613	£26,127	£1,486	£51,070	£0	
Mote Park	£331,330	£232,018	£254,408	-£22,390	£331,330	£0	
Mote Park Cafe	£78,670	£31,408	£34,101	-£2,694	£78,670	£0	
Allotments	£13,180	£12,645	£1,605	£11,040	£13,180	£0	
Tourism	£119,580	£91,885	£95,427	-£3,542	£119,580	£0	
Museum Shop	£54,030	£40,418	£48,064	-£7,647	£54,030	£0	
Leisure Services Other Activities	£36,400	£35,653	£30,219	£5,434	£36,400	£0	
Cemetery	£176,480	£147,005	£108,537	£38,468	£176,480	£0	Income is currently ahead of budget, but the current surplus income is earmarked to fund the refurbishment of the toilets at the crematorium and to undertake some other minor works, so it is anticipated that the service will be on budget by the end of the financial year.
National Assistance Act	£840	£630	-£1,338	£1,968	£840	£0	
Crematorium	-£421,590	-£307,852	-£304,724	-£3,127	-£421,590	£0	
Maintenance of Closed Churchyards	£3,830	£2,873	£2,997	-£125	£3,830	£0	

Cost Centre	Budget for Year	Budget to December	Actual	Variance	Forecast	Year End Variance	Explanation
Market	£7,380	-£27,761	-£8,766	-£18,995	£58,380	-£51,000	The adverse variance has arisen from unachieved income in this area, with the most notable shortfall arising from the Tuesday market. This is a continuation of the trend observed in previous years and nationally, which indicates this to be a declining sector. Officers are looking at alternative revenue generating opportunities. The other contributor to the increased adverse variance is the service charge for 2017-18 which has increased by 25%.
Leisure Services Section	£580	£710	£14,736	-£14,026	£580	£0	
Cultural Services Section	£40	-£2,970	-£28,371	£25,401	£40	£0	
Visitor Economy Section	£20	£15	£1,687	-£1,672	£20	£0	
Bereavement Services Section	£0	£250	-£8,167	£8,417	£0	£0	
Market Section	-£650	-£788	-£1,627	£840	-£650	£0	
	£5,024,900	£2,693,416	£2,510,381	£183,035	£4,976,900	£48,000	

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
HERITAGE, CULTURE & LEISURE COMMITTEE
BUDGET MONITORING - 3RD QUARTER 2017/18**

Capital Programme 2017/18 by Service Committee to 31st December 2017

Capital Programme Heading	Adjusted Estimate 2017/18 £	Actual to December 2017 £	Budget remaining before slippage £	Q4 Profile £	Projected Total Expenditure £
Continued Improvements to Play Areas	468,800	639,839	-171,039	100,000	739,839
Commercial Projects - Crematorium Projects	264,000	68,783	195,217	195,217	264,000
Commercial Projects - Mote Park Adventure Zone	881,840	104,917	776,923	300,000	404,917
Mote Park Play Area	300,000	0	300,000	0	0
Mote Park Improvements	285,760	19,651	266,109	30,000	49,651
Mote Park Visitor Centre	74,470	42,639	31,831	31,831	74,470
Museum Development Plan	145,370	125,022	20,348	20,348	145,370
Total	2,420,240	1,000,851	1,419,389	677,396	1,678,247

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

6 March 2018

Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 3 17/18

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy, Communications, and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Anna Collier, Policy and Information Manager and Ashley Sabo, Performance and Business Information Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee is asked to review the progress of Key Performance Indicators that relate to the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The Committee is also asked to consider the comments and actions against performance to ensure they are robust.

This report makes the following recommendations to Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee:

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

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	6 March 2018

Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 3 17/18

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Having a comprehensive set of actions and performance indicators ensures that the Council delivers against the priorities and actions set in the Strategic Plan.
- 1.2 Following the refresh of the Strategic Plan for 2017/18 the Committees agreed 28 Key Performance Indicators in April 2017.
- 1.3 Performance indicators are judged in two ways. Firstly on whether performance has improved, sustained or declined, compared to the same period in the previous year. This is known as direction. Where there is no previous data, no assessment of direction can be made.
- 1.4 The second way is to look at whether an indicator has achieved the target set and is known as PI status. If an indicator has achieved or exceeded the annual target they are rated green. If the target has been missed but is within 10% of the target it will be rated amber, and if the target has been missed by more than 10% it will be rated red.
- 1.5 Some indicators will show an asterisk (*) after the figure. These are provisional values that are awaiting confirmation. Data for some of the indicators were not available at the time of reporting. In these cases a date has been provided for when the information is expected.
- 1.6 Contextual indicators are not targeted but are given a direction. Indicators that are not due for reporting or where there is delay in data collection are not rated against targets or given a direction.

2. Quarter 3 Performance Summary

- 2.1 There are 28 key performance indicators (KPIs) which were developed with Heads of Service and unit managers, and agreed by the four Service Committees for 2017/18. 5 are reported to the Committee for this quarter.
- 2.2 Overall, 80% (4) of targeted KPIs reported this quarter achieved their target for quarter 3. For 33% of indicators, performance improved compared to the same quarter last year (where previous data is available for comparison).

RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	4	0	1	0	5
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Last Year	1	0	2	2	5
Last Quarter	3	0	2	0	5

3. Performance by Priority

Priority 1: Keeping Maidstone borough an attractive place for all, & Priority 2: Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

- 3.1 The Hazlitt Theatre sold 69.5% of all available tickets during quarter 3, against a target of 50%. This represents the sale of 25,550 tickets, out of a possible 36,766. The third quarter of the year is the pantomime season which is always very popular. There has been increased competition with another pantomime opening within the town this year, but the percentage of seats sold has remained high.
- 3.2 The number of students benefitting from the museum's educational service was 2,113 against a target of 2,085. This is up 28.7% from the previous quarter. October and November were fully booked for visits to the museum and outreach and several loans boxes were borrowed. Several schools who traditionally booked our main workshop and a separate craft activity have opted to only do the main workshop because of their own budget cuts. A large number of the workshops were for Egyptians, prompted by the new Ancient Lives gallery. December saw a swing from visits to the museum towards sessions delivered in school and we would anticipate this continuing as schools save on transport costs.
- 3.3 Footfall at the Museum and Visitor Information Centre was 11,548 against a target of 11,000. This quarter's visitor figures are roughly 1,500 higher than this time last year and can be linked to both the opening of the new Ancient Lives gallery and our Christmas events which saw us host Father Christmas for the first time. Ancient Lives has, so far, had consistently high feedback from visitors and has, in particular, been praised for the sensitive and respectful display of Ta-Kush, the mummified woman at the heart of the gallery.
- 3.4 The number of contacts to the Visitor Information Centre (VIC) was 533 during this period. This was a new KPI for 2017/18 with the new visitor information point in the museum opening on 20 November 2017 towards the end of quarter 3. Although the figure this quarter is well below target, it does reflect similar usage this time last year and highlights the need to reflect the seasonal nature of the Visitor Information Centre's work in the targets for 2018/19. The new dedicated space allows more information to be displayed, staff to attend to tourism enquiries and to promote local events via our free noticeboards and we hope to see an improvement as a result. Changes will be made to this indicator's targets and methodology for 2018/19 using the baseline from this year and reflecting the seasonality and mindful that the values for quarter 1 and quarter 2 in 2018/19 may be affected as a result of the new VIC point.
- 3.5 There were 175,142 users at the leisure centre during quarter 3. This has exceeded the target of 166,606 by 8,536 users. The Leisure Centre Management has been working hard to increase usage of the centre, especially in pool based areas. This new focus has resulted in increased centre visitor numbers in the third quarter of the year.

4. RISK

- 4.1 This report is presented for information only, managers and heads of service can use performance data to identify service performance and this data can contribute to risk management.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The Key Performance Indicator Update will be reported quarterly to the Service Committees: Communities Housing and Environment Committee, Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee, and Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee. Each Committee will receive a report on the relevant priority action areas. The report will also go to Policy & Resources Committee, reporting only on the priority areas of: A clean and safe environment, regenerating the Town Centre, and a home for everyone.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The Council could choose not to monitor the Strategic Plan and/or make alternative performance management arrangements, such as frequency of reporting. This is not recommended as it could lead to action not being taken against performance during the year, and the Council failing to deliver its priorities.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The key performance indicators and strategic actions are part of the Council's overarching Strategic Plan 2015-20 and play an important role in the achievement of corporate objectives. They also cover a wide range of services and priority areas, for example waste and recycling.	Head of Policy, Communications & Governance
Risk Management	The production of robust performance reports ensures that the view of the Council's approach to the management of risk and use of resources is not undermined and allows early action to be taken in order to mitigate the risk of not achieving targets and outcomes.	Head of Policy, Communications & Governance
Financial	Performance indicators and targets are closely linked to the allocation of resources and	Senior Finance Officer (Client)

	determining good value for money. The financial implications of any proposed changes are also identified and taken into account in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and associated annual budget setting process. Performance issues are highlighted as part of the budget monitoring reporting process.	
Staffing	Having a clear set of targets enables staff outcomes/objectives to be set and effective action plans to be put in place	Head of Policy, Communications & Governance
Legal	There is no statutory duty to report regularly on the Council's performance. However, under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended) a best value authority has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. One of the purposes of the Key Performance Indicators is to facilitate the improvement of the economy, efficiency and effectiveness of Council Services. Regular reports on the Council's performance assist in demonstrating best value and compliance with the statutory duty.	Keith Trowell, Interim Team Leader (Corporate Governance)
Privacy and Data Protection	We will hold data in line with the Data Quality Policy, which sets out the requirement for ensuring data quality. There is a program for undertaking data quality audits of performance indicators.	Keith Trowell, Interim Team Leader (Corporate Governance)
Equalities	The Performance Indicators reported on in this quarterly update measure the ongoing performance of the strategies in place. If there has been a change to the way in which a service delivers a strategy, i.e. a policy	Equalities & Corporate Policy Officer

	change, an Equalities Impact Assessment is undertaken to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on individuals with a protected characteristic.	
Crime and Disorder	None Identified	Policy & Information Manager
Procurement	Performance Indicators and Strategic Milestones monitor any procurement needed to achieve the outcomes of the Strategic Plan.	Head of Policy, Communications & Governance, & Section 151 Officer

8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix 1: Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 3 17/18

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

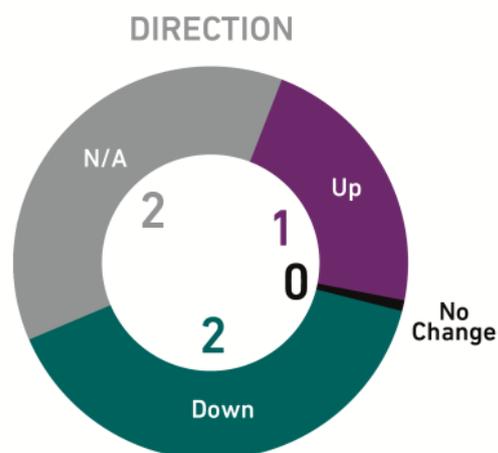
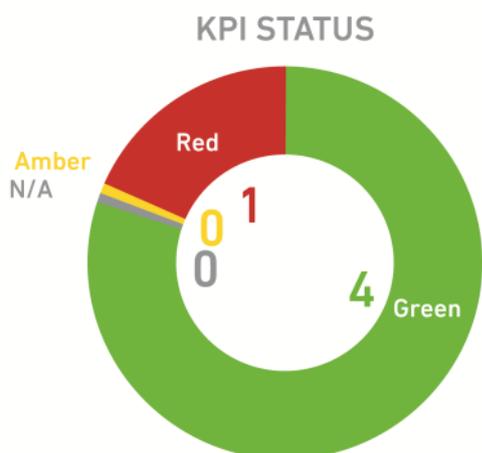
Performance Summary

This is the quarter 3 performance update on Maidstone Borough Council’s Strategic Plan 2015-20. It sets out how we are performing against Key Performance Indicators that directly contribute to the achievement of our priorities. Performance indicators are judged in two ways; firstly, whether an indicator has achieved the target set, known as PI status. Secondly, we assess whether performance has improved, been sustained or declined, compared to the same period in the previous year, known as direction.

Key to performance ratings

RAG Rating	
	Target not achieved
	Target slightly missed (within 10%)
	Target met
	Data Only

Direction	
	Performance has improved
	Performance has been sustained
	Performance has declined
N/A	No previous data to compare



RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	4	0	1	0	5
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Last Year	1	0	2	2	5
Last Quarter	3	0	2	0	5

**Priority 1: Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all,
& Priority 2: Securing a successful economy for Maidstone
Borough**

Ensuring there are good leisure and culture attractions

Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Status	Last Year	Last Quarter
Percentage of all available tickets sold at the Hazlitt	69.49%	50%		N/A	
Number of students benefiting from the museums educational service	2,113	2,085			
Footfall at the Museum and Visitor Information Centre	11,548	11,000			
Contacts to the Visitor Information Centre	533	1,500		N/A	
Number of users at the Leisure Centre	175,142	166,606			

**HERITAGE, CULTURE AND
LEISURE COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday 6 March
2018**

**Destination Management Plan – Action Plan Progress
Update**

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	Dawn Hudd - Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Laura Dickson - Visitor Economy Development Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report provides an update on the progress made against the three year Action Plan relating to Maidstone Borough’s Tourism Destination Management Plan.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the report be noted

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	6 March 2018

Destination Management Plan – Action Plan Progress Update

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Tourism Destination Management Plan (DMP) was adopted by Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee in July 2015 and the accompanying three year Action Plan was endorsed by the Committee.
- 1.2 There are no dedicated DMP staff, as this is a plan for the whole of the borough and for all of the stakeholders to deliver.
- 1.3 Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) has always been committed to delivering a tourism development service for the borough and the DMP provides the tourism strategy that focusses and supports the day to day work of the Visitor Economy Development team (formerly the Maidstone Culture and Leisure Marketing and Sales team).
- 1.4 The Visitor Economy Development team delivers the marketing of the borough as a destination for visitors, supporting and advising businesses and working in partnership with county, regional and national tourism organisations.
- 1.5 The first update report was presented to committee in February 2016, a second in November 2016 and a third in September 2017.
- 1.6 The DMP Board is chaired by an MBC officer and Cllr David Pickett has been appointed to the DMP Board to represent Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee. The Board consists of partners from within the tourism and visitor economy who review the progress action plan quarterly.

Update

- 1.7 The full 3 year DMP Action Plan Update can be found in Appendix 1. The full 3 year DMP Action Plan Update can be found in Appendix 1.
- 1.8 Stakeholder engagement event 'Maidstone is Great', held on 20th November 2017. The morning consisted of a tourism team update and workshop presentations specifically geared to tourism businesses. This was followed by the official launch by the Mayor of the new Visitor Information desk at the museum. The afternoon consisted of presentations for the wider stakeholder group and over 50 people representing a variety of tourism businesses attended the event.
- 1.9 Development of the Visit Maidstone website to introduce a new polling tool to allow integration of Online Travel Agents (OTA) such as accommodation availability and online booking e.g. via Booking.com. Trip Advisor reviews have also integrated with the accommodation and attractions listings.

- 1.10 Re-design of the Visit Maidstone guide to provide sections covering town, North Downs and Weald and Medway valley. The guide is supported by advertising, with an extensive distribution campaign with 30,000 copies printed and a Take One Media campaign agreed. In addition local distribution is arranged to Maidstone's guest accommodation and attractions, with attendance at leaflet exchange fairs for the south east provide an additional outlet.
- 1.11 Participation at travel trade shows to increase awareness of Maidstone as a visitor destination. Over 4,000 group travel visitors including tour and coach operators attended Excursions at Alexandra Palace in January. Maidstone attractions Kentish Lady and Kent Life partner with Visit Maidstone to increase presence at these and other exhibitions such as Go Travel, and the South East England Group Visits Fair.
- 1.12 An new investor agreement with Visit Kent ensuring that Maidstone is well-represented in marketing campaigns and projects throughout the year.
- 1.13 Campaign partner in Tourism South East's Meet Beyond London campaign aimed at London's corporate market for business tourism. A familiarisation visit for top corporate clients has been arranged as a result of the campaign at Leeds Castle on the 9th March.
- 1.14 Participation at International Confex at Olympia on 28th February – 1st March. This is in partnership with Leeds Castle, Marriott Tudor Park Hotel and Mercure Maidstone Great Danes Hotel to promote Maidstone to the MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions) market. The Kent Event Centre is also due to present at the show.

DMP Budget

- 1.15 There is no additional budget for the DMP 2017-18 or 2018-19. The annual tourism service marketing budget will be used to support the DMP work. The marketing budget is £31,000 and is dependent on a £15,000 income target for advertising revenue on the website and publications.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 That the report be noted.
-

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the report be noted. This is an information report with no recommendations or decisions
-

4. RISK

- 4.1 None

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 None

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 None

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The DMP contributes to Priority 1 of the Strategic Plan – Keeping Maidstone and attractive place for all: Ensuring there are good leisure and cultural attractions.	[Head of Service or Manager]
Risk Management	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 4]. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council’s risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
Financial	There is no DMP budget. The action plan is delivered through a combination of existing related budgets, funding from the Kent Business Rates Pool, collaboration	[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]

	with the sector and bids for funding to appropriate sources.	
Staffing	There are no dedicated DMP staff. This project is being delivered by the Visitor Economy Development team	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
Legal	Each local authority has a statutory duty to "make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness". The Tourism Destination Management Plan demonstrates compliance with that duty.	Keith Trowell, Team Leader (Corporate Governance)
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no specific privacy or data protection issues to address.	Keith Trowell, Team Leader (Corporate Governance)
Equalities	None	[Policy & Information Manager]
Crime and Disorder	None	[Head of Service or Manager]
Procurement	None	[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]

8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix 1: Maidstone DMP – Update Action Plan 2015-2018
-

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

DMP - [https://www.visitmaidstone.com/dbimings/Maidstone%20DMP%20-%20FINAL%20030915\(1\).pdf](https://www.visitmaidstone.com/dbimings/Maidstone%20DMP%20-%20FINAL%20030915(1).pdf)

MAIDSTONE TOURISM DESTINATION MANAGEMENT PLAN ACTION PLANS

Actions	Who is involved	Time-scale	Status	2015	20 16	2017	2018
<p>Run Workshop sessions for tourism and other businesses and organisations involved in tourism, to familiarise them with the Story and to help them think creatively about how they might use it to develop and differentiate their own offer, service or business and help to deliver the Action Plans.</p>	<p>MBC Visit Kent (VK) Tourism South East (TSE)</p>	S	Completed	Several events ran 2015	One Year on Event – November 2016	‘Maidstone is Great’ tourism business workshops and Stakeholder event	Planned Business support visits
<p>Develop an Online Shared Story Toolkit for tourism stakeholders to use, comprising Story-inspired product development ideas plus downloadable marketing copy (tailored for use in different markets) and images based on the Shared Story – so that people in the place are “singing from the same song sheet”.</p>	<p>MBC Visitor attractions / businesses</p>	S	Completed	Toolkit available on line at visitmaidstone.com/dmp	<p>Image library set up. New photography and video commissioned and delivered. W was added to image library end of 2016</p>	More photography and images added 2017	Library maintenance

1. RIVER

Actions	Who is involved	Time-scale	Status	2015	20 16	2017	2018
<p>1.1 Programme of enhancements and improvements to make the river more accessible and appealing to visitors: signing and entrance points to the river from the town centre</p> <p>footpath investment – signing to include distances to key points, accessibility for cyclists</p> <p>investment in moorings</p> <p>parking for river visitors</p>	<p>MBC KCC EA One Maidstone Maidstone River Park partnership (MRPP) Cobtree Estate</p>	M-L	Some activities complete. Others will be ongoing	<p>£2m of Single Local Growth Funding has been allocated to create a cycle path along the river from Allington to East Farleigh. MBC £500,000 subject to final decision on funding.</p> <p>MBC Funding has been confirmed. KCC currently writing brief for detailed design. DMP group will be kept updated with opportunity for input. Tonbridge and Malling BC are not contributing to the scheme. However they <i>may</i> be some scope to extend a footpath up to Aylesford.</p> <p>Signage as part of Gyrotory is for vehicular signage only. Potential for pedestrian signage as part of cycle route project.</p>	<p>Signage and entrance points to the river being identified by group, with particular emphasis on what is stopping people accessing the river.</p> <p>The new gyrotory and river cycle path will include signage, it is important that signage is combined with one brand (RIVER PARK?) and that we do not have a number of different styles of signs saying the same thing all next to one another. It is also important that these signs extend into the town centre.</p> <p>Foot path investment taking place as part of the river cycle path and new gyrotory system. Group to look at any gaps in town centre and further along river path.</p> <p>Investment in moorings – group to identify issues with current moorings and additional moorings.</p> <p>Parking to be investigated.</p>	<p>Completion of the Medway Towpath between Aylesford and Barming, which included a sustainable all-weather surface along the river bank, as well as ecological restoration.</p> <p>Maidstone River Park signage along the route of the Medway Towpath.</p> <p>Refurbishment of Fairmeadow towpath, between High Level Bridge and St Peters Bridge, which had been badly damaged by tree roots over many years. This project included new lighting, rubbish bins and seating.</p> <p>Additional parking for river in town centre at new Sandling Road pay & display.</p> <p>Major refurbishment of East Farleigh Lock</p> <p>Restoration of Elemental lights on Maidstone Bridge and St Peters Bridge.</p> <p>Cobtree Management Estate Trust has agreed to</p>	<p>Additional Interpretation and signage required depending on funding.</p> <p>Two thirds of all the issues around the riverside improvements and maintenance have been done.</p> <p>Amphitheatre cleared and now visible from Lockmeadow</p> <p>Buddleia cleared from riverside at Archbishops' Palace area.</p> <p>Riverside area by Thai Orchid has been cleared.</p> <p>Area between St. Peters and Maidstone Bridges – all flower beds have been cleared of weeds.</p> <p>High level bridge to Whatman Bridge – cleared so that river can be seen from Whatman park</p> <p>Cycle Path extension and pelican crossing work still y to be confirmed.</p>

						<p>finance a new Toucan crossing for £30,000k to enable the cycle path to be extended across Forstall Field to Cobtree Manor Estate Park. Date for this work to be confirmed.</p> <p>Fairmeadow 'mushrooms' removed and 16 permanent mooring rings installed.</p> <p>Signage to and from town centre to be audited following public realm improvement scheme for Week Street and Gabriel's Hill.</p>	<p>Issue with the Unicomes Lane beyond Tovil and residential structures being put up. People by buying cheap land from River Medway land.com and putting up structures and mobile homes</p>
<p>1.2 Focus on strengthening visitor hubs on the river: Improve access, facilities, activities and interpretation</p> <p>Explore opportunities for more camping cabins/pods (luxury camping huts – alternative to camping in the open) to enable long distance walking, canoeing etc</p> <p>Priority hubs : Church of All Saints/amphitheatre Cobtree by Kent Life Lockmeadow</p>	<p>MBC MRPP New barge café Kentish Lady</p>	<p>M-L</p>	<p>Some activities completed . Others will be ongoing</p>	<p>Formation of 'Friends of Maidstone River Park' Group to improve promotion of the river, current facilities and attractions. More people visiting and aware of the 'River Park' will make future events more attractive to event organisers. Opportunities for event organisers need to be better promoted. This could be done through the River Park Website (see below)</p> <p>Opportunities for camping, etc. will follow from this work.</p>	<p>It was proposed at the DMP River meeting that a friends group is established. Ian Tucker has done a considerable amount of work on this and has produced a draft website.</p> <p>The group discussed at the meeting how much of the river work DMP actions would be taken on by the Friends of the river group.</p> <p>It was agreed that work would be done to help the friends group to establish. JT agreed to pass over a model of how other friends group operate. Ian Tucker is currently working on the structure of the group.</p>	<p>Volunteer-led committee progressing plans to set up a Community Interest Company and preparing a five to ten year action plan.</p> <p>New Barge café between Maidstone Bridge and St. Peters Bridge given planning permission. To open on a mooring at Fairmeadow for 2018 season. Owners will open and maintain Fairmeadow toilets for season.</p> <p>Opening of the Lodge Coffee kiosk at Teston Country Park</p> <p>Open day at Maidstone Crown</p>	<p>Barge Café owner been give Tenacy at Will of the toilets at fairmeadow</p> <p>Working on CIC set up for Maidstone River Park Partnership (MRPP) to enable them to bid for funding</p>

					Maidstone River Park partnership has been created to bring together private, public and voluntary sector.	Refurbishment of Lockmeadow Centre and opening of Gourmet Burger Kitchen		
32	<p>1.3 Create river-based events & activities that will appeal to visitors, animate the river, provide a reason to come today, contribute to extending the visitor day into the early evening. Opportunities could include – dragon boat racing, rowing events, festival of lights, regattas etc</p>	MBC MRPP Comm. Mela group	S-M	<p>Some activities completed . Others will be ongoing</p>	<p>River Park website is being produced by Ian Tucker. This will be a single place to identify all of the attractions and events along the river to be promoted. This will be aimed at both residents and visitors.</p> <p>Future events will then be more attractive to event organisers.</p> <p>Potential events and organisers to be identified.</p>	<p>Draft Website and promotional information produced by IT. This could be adopted as the single place for anything to do with the river.</p> <p>River Park website to identify all of the attractions and events along the river to be promoted. This will be aimed at both residents and visitors.</p> <p>An audit of everything available to visitors has been completed and included in the draft website.</p>	<p>New River Event for August Bank holiday 2018 in development</p> <p>Maidstone Community Mela at Whatman Park in 2017</p> <p>Proms in Whatman Park 2017/2018</p> <p>Teddy Bears Picnic staged at Whatman Park</p>	<p>Proms in the park will take place 26th May.</p> <p>MRRP Planning event for August Bank holiday 2018. Will be to encourage walking 12k along the river, taking in activities and attractions.</p>
	<p>1.4 Build up marketing activity over time linking to countryside theme. Develop marketing collateral – maps, trails, leaflets</p>	MBC KCC- Explore Kent MRPP	S-M	<p>Some activities completed . Others will be ongoing</p>	<p>Maidstone River Park website created.</p> <p>Leaflets of canoe trail being shared on websites, and websites now linking to each other.</p> <p>An audit of everything available to visitors has been completed and included in the website.</p>	<p>Gaps and further information and trails could be produced in the future, and/or incorporated in the cycle path/ gyratory information.</p>	<p>Explore Kent has produced Cycle path map and leaflet. At print.</p>	<p>Leaflets can now be download form Visit Maidstone website</p>
	<p>1.5 Prioritise river management – litter, dredging, landscaping, lighting, policing, anti-social behaviour, mooring, illegal camping</p>	EA MBC MRRP	S-M	<p>Some activities completed and others will be ongoing</p>	<p>Ian Tucker has been nominated to Chair a 'Friends of Maidstone River Park'. This organisation (once formalised) will undertake to identify 'grot spots' and help co-ordinate clean-ups</p>	<p>Maidstone River Park Partnership leading to coordinate volunteering, act as a voice for the river, etc</p> <p>30-40 volunteers from McDonalds took part in clearing overgrown areas.</p>	<p><i>Love Where You Live</i> riverside clean-up with McDonald's Maidstone and MBC. Team of 24 from McDonalds to spend 6 hours clearing from Lockmeadow to Maidstone Bridge.</p>	<p>Clearance of riverside area and amphitheatre is improving the issues of anti-social behaviour.</p>

etc. EA has offered use of boats to assist in litter and vegetation clearance.

2. CREATING A DISTINCTIVE COUNTY TOWN

<p>2.1 Develop local markets and fairs – food (including a farmer’s market), arts & crafts etc: Review existing provision Develop and deliver new markets in different town centre locations and develop a calendar of markets throughout the year Use County Town Market Charter and history as part of the positioning for street markets Introduce street food Develop local market management plan – litter/cleaning, selection of stall traders, access</p>	<p>MBC KCC</p>	<p>S-M</p>	<p>Some activities completed . Others will be ongoing</p>	<p>MBC progressing with fortnightly Farmers Market on Jubilee Square. Other locations considered for other markets are Brenchley gardens and in front of County Hall. However issues with space/access and low footfall. Work with PinK to investigate Street Food</p>	<p>MBC have delivered 3 successful Farmers Markets – on a monthly basis so far. May increase to 2 per month MBC hold a 12-day street trading consent for market – therefore unlikely to go fortnightly until Jun 17 at earliest Considering moving Sat general market to Jubilee Square New market manager will be considering how guest markets can fit in with MBC’s own markets Once Farmers’ market established, can build up reputation for food fair.</p>	<p>Work underway to extend planning permission and obtain an annual street trading licence for MBC to facilitate new markets and street food. Looking to increase frequency of Farmers market. Food market to run for 12 days prior to Christmas 2017.</p>	<p>Extended planning permission was granted for extended market on Jubilee Square. Aim is to set up market under the Markets Act - benefits include getting traders at short notice which cannot be done at the moment.</p>
<p>2.1 Use themed trails and quarters to help make the town more legible for visitors and encourage exploration: Identify trail themes and quarters Develop a programme of animation and interpretation including: Making use of green spaces Pavement trails/digital trails</p>	<p>MBC KCC One Maid-stone</p>	<p>S-M</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Town Team already looking at themed trails for schools. Need to be mindful DMP relates to visitors – how can the Town Team’s trail be modified for tourists? Town Team installed lighting on Town Hall with a view to establishing it in policy to be expanded elsewhere. Need to identify which buildings</p>	<p>A themed trail is proposed in the HLF bid for Gabriels’ Hill – for visitors as well as residents. The bid was unsuccessful. FrancisKnight produced: A Public Realm Design Guide which sets out the council’s intention to create a cohesive town centre with an integrated approach to achieving high quality public realm. It complements and</p>	<p>History trail updated and leaflet completed. Public Realm Phase 3 improvements to Week Street and Gabriels Hill will include a history timeline; public art; signage to key attractions and themed squares.</p>	<p>Public realm – Tenders to be scored this week and contractor appointed. A lot of pre-work already in place. Probably start after Easter. Must be finished before Christmas</p>

<p>using app</p> <p>Distinctive lighting</p> <p>Mark the quarters e.g. with sculpture, distinctive street sign branding, lighting etc.</p>				<p>could be lit, and funding.</p>	<p>builds on the improvements to date, such as Jubilee Square and the High Street, as well as the forthcoming programme of improvements and redevelopments of major sites due to be delivered between now and 2031.</p> <p>A Public Art Policy for borough which will become a material consideration for planning purposes. This policy has been produced for Maidstone Borough Council officers and developers. It has a borough wide remit that looks at the commissioning of public art as part of a development or regeneration scheme.</p> <p>A Street Furniture Guidelines to ensure a consistent, coordinated and high quality approach to street furniture in Maidstone town centre.</p> <p>New Historic Interpretation panels are located throughout town.</p>		
<p>2.3 Shopfront improvements including: Shop front design and window displays (produce toolkit)</p> <p>Maintenance to frontages e.g. redecoration, brand signs</p>	<p>One Maidstone</p>	<p>S-M</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Ken Scott and volunteers have done audit of shop fronts in North end of Week Street. Need to discuss next steps, and funding.</p>	<p>Shop front improvements are incorporated in the HLF bid for <i>some</i> of the properties on Gabriels' Hill. Bid unsuccessful.</p> <p>Unlikely to be funding available for other streets incl Week St. Public Realm is being improved so this could</p>	<p>One Maidstone are campaigning to reduce A Board clutter.</p>	

					raise profile of area and incentivise owners to improve their buildings.		
<p>2.4 Strengthen town's association with the countryside through celebrating and promoting local food</p> <p>Encourage local restaurants to source local produce and promote it</p> <p>Explore potential for a new local produce centre</p>	<p>Explore Kent MBC PiK Event umbrella</p>	<p>S-M-L and Ongoing</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>What is Produce in Kent already doing re promoting local food in restaurants? How can Maidstone promote?</p> <p>Need to identify suitable location for possible local produce centre, and funding</p>	<p>MBC could liaise with Pink and One Maidstone to promote local produce</p> <p>Could be scope to use Granada House for local produce however would need to incorporate with C&R's plans.</p>	<p>Local produce and markets section on Visit Maidstone website.</p> <p>Business encouraged to work with Produced in Kent.</p> <p>Monthly Farmers market with local producers in Jubilee Square.</p> <p>New 3 day food Festival - Shemomedjamo in Mote park in September 2017.</p> <p>Second food fair in Mote Park in June.</p> <p>Event organisers given list of local food traders for events.</p>	<p>See event section re 2019 – Marketing campaign around food.</p>

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3. ACCESS AND VISITOR MANAGEMENT

<p>3.1 Agree a strategy for improved access by car and coach into the town centre and support with:</p> <p>Clear uncluttered road signing</p> <p>Signing to car parks/coach park</p> <p>Visitor orientation in the car/coach parks</p> <p>Pedestrian signing from car parks to the town centre</p>	<p>MBC KCC Fremlin The Mall Lock-meadow</p>	<p>M-L</p>	<p>ongoing</p>	<p>How can signage into town be improved?</p> <p>Need an audit of pedestrian signing from car parks into town – is it logical to visitors who are unfamiliar with town?</p> <p>Integrated transport strategy will address some of these issues.</p>	<p>New Visitor Information poster sites and What's On poster sites with maps installed or replaced by car parks</p>	<p>An audit of town centre signage will be undertaken after the public realm improvements are complete.</p> <p>Work being undertaken on car parking, P&R and buses. All Member workshop to consider early options November (mid). SPST Committee to consider report January 2018.</p>	
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and main attractions.							
3.2 Review coach parking provision – volume, location and facilities – to reflect needs of international coach parties for shopping, and take account of potential growth	MBC The Mall Fremlin Walk Lock-meadow	M	Ongoing	Coach park currently at Sittingbourne Road – not ideal location. Maidstone East possible alternative. If Maidstone has good facilities for drivers, more coaches will visit.	Discussion with parking now regarding Lockmeadow as Sittingbourne road getting too full with cars.	Developing coach driver offer with Visitor Information. Coach parking has not been included in the parking review.	New offer form Fremlin/House of Fraser for pre-booked coach parties. New offer from the museum for pre-booked coach visits Both offers launched at excursions exhibition in January 2018
3.3.Improve welcome and visitor facilities at the rail stations: Welcome sign and town map on board Clear signing to drop-off/pick-up points Longer term, a need to deliver new development at Maidstone East station to improve first impressions and provide additional welcome & visitor facilities.	MBC KCC Net-work Rail South-eastern trains	S-M-L	Ongoing	Redevelopment proposals exist for Maidstone East Station and these improvements could be incorporated. £1m of Single Local Growth Fund is available in 2016/17 for the redevelopment of the Ticket Office buildings. Network Rail investing in Maidstone East –(Maps to go on temp hoardings) North end of Week Street due to have public realm improvements. Required good maps and information	SE Trains added Maidstone destination information to website and supplied poster sites in London.	Station improvement programme at Maidstone East to link to Phase 3 public realm improvements, create a sense of arrival on new concourse with signage. New Thameslink service to run from Maidstone East from 2018.	Thameslink service now delayed until December 2019
4.Events							
4.1 Create an Events Experts Group that brings together senior decision makers from the main venues & MBC to “join the dots” when it comes to	MBC private sector venues Event promot-	s	Completed	First meeting took place November 215. Events Working groups comprises required decision makers and will invite others as they become apparent.	This group is now the Maidstone Events Group. Additional venues have been identified and will be asked to join. Group will meet 2-3 times per year.	Event Forum - met at start of year and potential members identified	Met 20 February and projects identified. Online collaboration tool to be used to communicate.

planning & infrastructure, programming & marketing	ers				Next meeting February 2017.		
4.2 Carry out an Audit & Gap Analysis – looking at infrastructure & resources (physical & people), including venue capacities, transport links, traffic management, parking, signing, policing & crowd management. Must take into account potential negative impact on local communities & environment. Should include analysis of processes (licensing, highways, planning etc) too. Gap Analysis will then identify if new infrastructure/processes needed - & specific actions should then be developed.	MBC Parishes Venues	s	Completed	List of questions for venue audit to be prepared by Jo and Barbara from an event organisers perspective and Natalie from a venue perspective. Now been circulated to group members for comment. Survey questionnaire being prepared to go out early January. Additional questions added and questionnaire sent to group for approval. To be sent out once countryside survey returned.	Survey sent and venues chased for response. Spreadsheet of the results has been compiled. Members of event group have been emailed to ask how best to show information and to ask for volunteer.	Group decided the best location for Event venue information would be in the Conference Maidstone website. Information now added to new events section on Conference Maidstone	Economic impact of events – project by Events Forum so that as many events as possible be measure using Event impact toolkit. Visitor survey to be created and used. Needs to be suitable for non-ticketed and free events to get best measurement.
4.3 Develop an Event Organisers’ Toolkit – to make it easier to hold an event in the borough. (We understand this is already under way – but it will need to be updated once the above Audit & Gap Analysis is completed)	MBC	M-L	Ongoing	This will be added to the website as above.	Once audit complete this will be done. Work is not underway as per the action comment.	Online events application process being developed by MBC	Work in progress with web team to make online events notification and applications for use of council parks and venues.
4.4 Set up a “No Clash Diary” – for venues to enter information on provisional as well as firm bookings. This is an “internal” tool for venues, organisers, accommodation providers and public agencies within the Borough (and	MBC Venues Organisers	S	Completed	This has been set up using google calendar and is being tested by the group before making available to external organisers. It sits on DMP pages on visitmaidstone.com/dmp It has been tested. No	It will move to the Conference Maidstone website along with the new events pages and required to fill in as part of the events notification. Regular reminder to event planners. SAG	Push for organisers to populate no clash diary for 2018 and beyond as number of events is increasing.	Will investigate how it can be integrated into the online event notification on MBC website.

neighbouring areas) to use – to help them avoid clashes, to spread events across the year, and also facilitate identification of potential “clusters” for joint development & marketing (see next action).				needs to have more explanation added and then send to event organisers, SAG administration and our venues to ask organisers to add to. They must email activation request to add on events	administration to be informed so this becomes part of the process.		
<p>4.5 Develop themed seasons/festivals, inspired by the Shared Story and by major events. May need a DMP Group sub-group – an “Events Development Taskforce”. Members of the Taskforce to be selected for their specific skills (marketing, events management, programming, fundraising).</p> <p>38</p>	MBC Events venues and organisers One Maidstone	M-L	Ongoing	<p>TCM leading. Group looking at themes from 2016 onwards i.e. sporting, comedy and come with idea for next meeting.</p> <p>Food fair already being organised by Barbara</p>	<p>One Maidstone leading. Group looking at themes from 2017 onwards i.e. sporting, comedy and come with idea for next meeting.</p> <p>Apparent from 2016 that there is a strong music theme from Spring to Autumn. Group to develop Summer of Music brand for season and produce brand, leaflet, editorial pages to promote. Production to start Feb 2017. (No resources available, delayed until 2018).</p>	<p>Along with River Partnership early discussion on event taking Place in 2018</p> <p>One Maidstone delivering a Harvest Festival, Live Nativity and Easter Egg Hunt.</p> <p>Looking at branding for Maidstone Summer of Music 2018.</p> <p>New events in 2017 – Oktoberfest, Madness at the Kent Event Centre, Community Mela, Shemomedjamo, Multicultural Food festival</p>	<p>Summer of Music for 2018 campaign to be developed.</p> <p>The Event group have decided that then Summer of... brand will be used each year.</p> <p>2018 ,.. Music – ties in the with the 40th Anniversary of Leeds Castle Classical concerts</p> <p>2019 – will be Summer of Food & Drink (many foodie events and local producers. Ties in with 90th anniversary of the County Show)</p> <p>2020 – Summer of Sport – this will tie in with the Olympics</p> <p>Potential to apply for Arts council funding for event to be delivered.</p>
4.6 Develop a consumer-facing “Events for Visitors Calendar” – comprising an online real time database of confirmed events for consumer marketing (website content, emarketing, social media & traditional media relations work), linked to the Culture	MBC Event organ-sers	M	Completed	<p>Consumer events calendar available on visit Maidstone.com/whats-on. List and images can be enhanced and linked to social media. Event organiser can add their events on directly.</p> <p>Widget to pool</p>	<p>Consumer events calendar available on visit Maidstone.com/whats-on. List and images can be enhanced and linked to social media. Event organiser can add their events on directly.</p> <p>Widget has been created</p>	Widget for websites to be demonstrated at 2017 investor/stakeholder event.	What’s On pages are the most viewed on the website. Accounts for 31% of all page views. – 227,494 views Jan-Dec 2017

<p>Kent data pool. Evolution of current online events calendar on Visit Maidstone. Related to “No Clash Diary” – but serves different purpose. Drives events information on Visit Maidstone & Visit Kent websites, but also for tourism industry’s own marketing (could incorporate a “widget” for tourism providers to use on their own websites, providing a live feed). Will need to be promoted to visitor-facing businesses as well as consumers. Needs tight criteria & market focus so only features events with clear visitor-appeal, and presents them in a way that motivates visits (e.g. clustering them, using Shared Story themes etc).</p>				<p>information for other providers is being investigated.</p>	<p>and information circulated to accommodation providers, attractions and event organisers. Three widgets created what’s on, accommodation and Things to Do.</p>		
5. Countryside							
<p>5.1 Product audit – map & gap current provision of trails, walks and countryside & river experiences</p>	<p>MBC Parishes Explore Kent Visitor Attractions</p>	<p>S</p>	<p>Completed</p>	<p>As discussed in the Countryside meeting a Survey Monkey survey has been created and sent out to Parish Council’s and Visitor Attractions to collate the information across the Borough. This includes where they do their marketing and what they market and how they reach their audiences. Responses deadline is 14/2/16 and we can collate and chase missing</p>	<p>Survey has gone out to Parish Council at the beginning of January 2016 with 6 weeks to return it. Brown sign audit from Parish Councils returned a very poor result, so we completed in house.</p> <p>Redundant brown signs have been removed.</p> <p>Some parish councils have been keener than others to encourage visitors.</p>		

				data hopefully before next meeting on 3/3/16 2pm.			
5.2 Marketing audit – understand who currently markets the countryside experiences, where and how. Find best digital solution to make sure that online information for visitors from various sources is easily found. Consider how best to use/work with existing brands and sub-brands e.g. Garden of England, Heart of Kent, Our Land	MBC Parishes Attractions Explore Kent	S	Completed	In conjunction with above	We have had an excellent result from this and have found potential new partners to develop products with.		
5.3 Develop themed experiences and trails that use Shared Story for inspiration, include key attractions, pubs etc along trail to drive more spend 40 Develop marketing collateral – digital and offline. Rich online content.	MBC Explore Kent	M-L	Completed Completed	As above	Developed marketing collateral and themed experiences. Videos produced. Video will be used to promote the Borough on social media and at Bluewater. Videos loaded on Visit Maidstone Site.	Cycle routes and walking routes produced by Explore Kent and National Cycle Trail (River). Will be available online on VisitMaidstone and Explore Kent shortly. Leaflets in production.	W
5.4 Audit walks and trails selected for promotion to visitors to ensure they are easy to use and attractive – safe and easy to find car parks at start points, good facilities along the way, e.g. picnic sites, interpretation, benches, viewpoints etc. Ensure the routes are consistently signed and that refreshment stops and attractions along the route provide appropriate facilities for walkers and cyclists, e.g. cycle lock ups .	MBC UK Elector Bikes KCC	M	Completed		Still in assessment process and waiting returns. Some very useful information was returned to us in relation to North Downs walks and River Medway walks, with maps and info. This will prevent us doubling up on work. Meeting on 7th September to take forward ideas and areas.	UK electric bikes have developed 4 new cycle rides around the Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn area taking in attractions and Produced in Kent sites. Will be available this Autumn as downloadable pdf on Visit Maidstone. North Downs Trail Officer and Explore Kent are checking and developing trails from train stations onto the North Downs around the Hollingbourne	

Develop a plan for investment to plug gaps in provision.						area. However currently not progressing due to South Eastern contract for the service due to end soon, and they are not willing to develop this until new contract in place. A driving tour for the North of the Borough has been researched. And will be developed over the winter ready for 2018.	
5.5 Develop rural Visitor Information Points – “i” branded. 41	MBC Private sector venues	M	Ongoing with revised action	Work has started on Leader funding bid and potentially there will be new electronic visitor activity data as well, possibly using Scout.	Work has started on Leader funding bid and potentially there will be new electronic visitor activity data as well, possibly using Scout.	VIP points has been shelved due to match funding not being available. Visitor information website stickers to be produced and given to rural tourism related businesses	Work in progress
5.6 Work towards becoming Kent’s first “Walker Friendly” destination using the Cyclist Welcome and Walkers Welcome Identify key towns/villages and support Walkers Welcome accreditation (prioritise villages with direct train links into Maidstone) Promotional activity	SE Train MBC	M	Revised - not possible action	Will have to be the 4 th Walker Friendly destination but it would seem that this could be a great place for walking without the car. North Downs Way and Stations are working together and have potential to join in.		See above work on walking routes and SE trains situation. 15 old walking route leaflets found for Staplehurst are to be investigated and reproduced in a downloadable format.	Work on walking routes in progress

Agenda Item 15

Heritage, Culture and Leisure

6 March 2018

Maidstone Museums Governance Review

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture and Leisure
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	Dawn Hudd, Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Victoria Barlow, Museums Director
Classification	Public
Wards affected	ALL

Executive Summary

In April 2017, consultant Julie Cole was commissioned to carry out an options appraisal of governance models for our two museums; Maidstone Museum and Maidstone Carriage Museum, with the objective of recommending a model which could incorporate a minimum 20% revenue savings for Maidstone Borough Council (MBC).

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the current governance arrangements for the Museum be retained.
2. That the Museum's future governance arrangements be reviewed in three years.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	06/03/18

Maidstone Museums Governance Review

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This work has been carried out in parallel with a development of a Museums 20 Year Plan working with the Museums Strategic Board, which sets out our mission:

"Maidstone Museums inspires, educates and challenges its visitors and users through the use of its collections, staff and buildings. We do this by telling the story of Maidstone, its people, their natural environment and the wider world in which they live, through the artefacts and specimens we collect and interpret."

- 1.2 In October 2017, the Mendoza Report, commissioned by the Department for Culture Media and Sport following the 2016 Culture White Paper, outlined key recommendations for how government can support the museums sector in England. The report looked at those museums funded by central or local government. Among its recommendations were that DCMS would:

"...facilitate the development of a Museums Action Plan with ACE (Arts Council England) and HLF (Heritage Lottery Fund) to deliver on [nine] priorities by September 2018."

"...work closely and through the Local Government Association to support Local Authorities in their work with museums. This includes producing and disseminating best practice guidance on Independent (Museum) Trusts. This guidance should be complete by September 2018."

Financial position

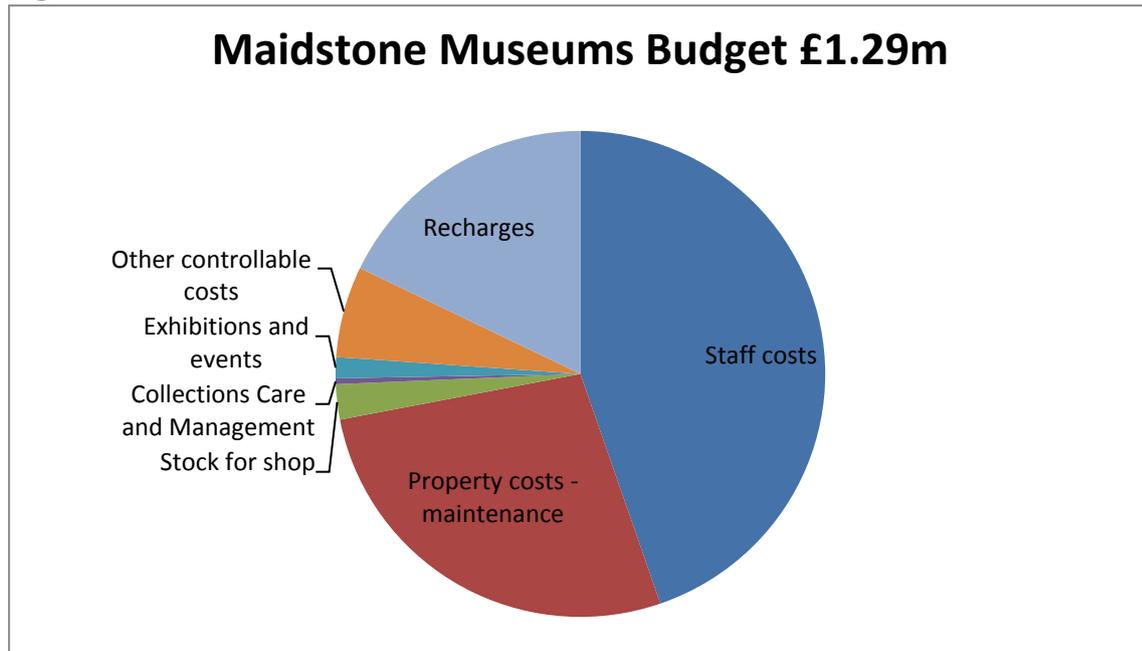
- 1.3 Although the purpose of this review was first and foremost to decide the most sustainable and effective governance model for the museums, the financial context can not be ignored.

- 1.4 The current budget for Maidstone Museums (not including depreciation) is £1,076,930; this includes £229,710 of recharges. Recharges, and the mandatory use of internal support services, was identified in the Mendoza Report as a barrier to best practice in museums:

"Financial constraints reduce the incentive to generate commercial income, low pay scales hamper recruitment and the controls placed on communications and marketing can limit museums' ability to engage audiences and engage in their commercial activity... LA museums report particular constraints on their digital activities [including] the requirements to use in-house services rather than external experts..."

- 1.5 The Chart below (Figure 1.) shows the breakdown of the current budget into areas of operation.

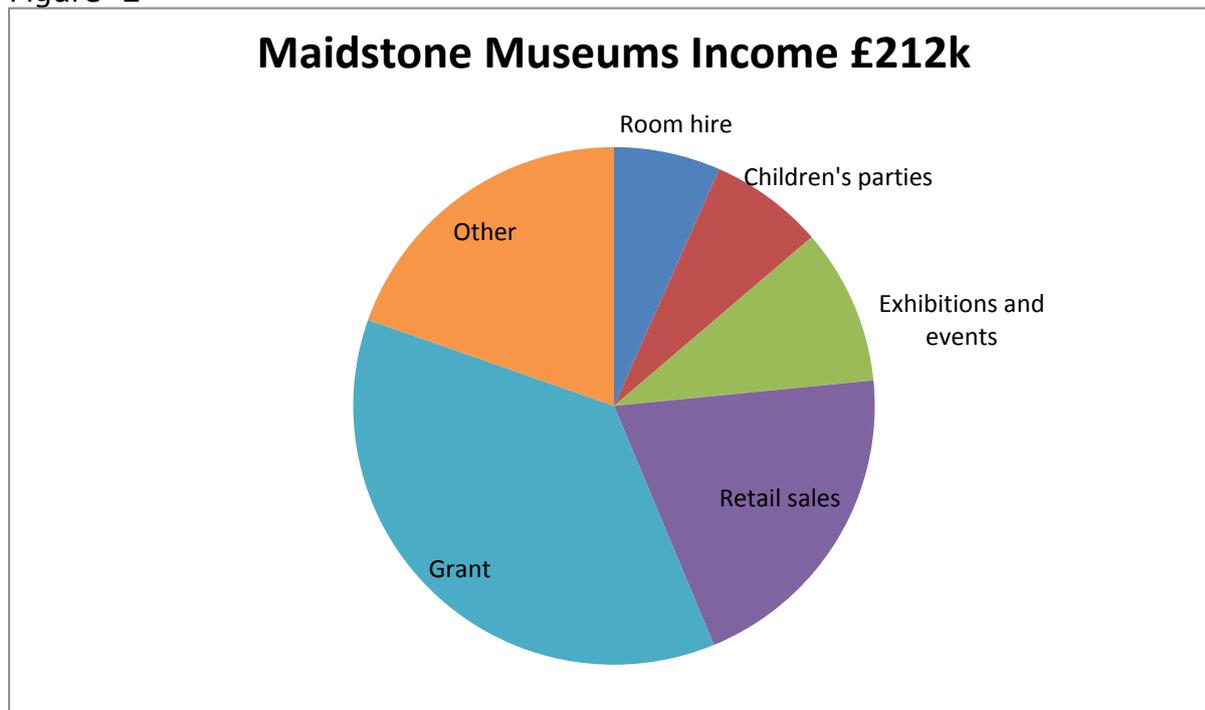
Figure 1.



- 1.6 The largest single area of expenditure is staffing. At 45% of the total budget this is slightly higher than a cross-industry standard of 40% but this not only reflects the number of people required to safely operate two complex buildings but to offer a satisfactory level of customer service. In addition, museum collections require professional knowledge to catalogue, care for and make accessible through a variety of methods such as exhibitions and events. This means a higher proportion of the team than might be expected in other areas, earn scale 9 or above i.e. the national average wage. In order to make savings here, a charitable trust would have to delete posts and/or offer vacant posts at a lower rate of salary and benefits. TUPE regulations would effectively prevent them doing this to current staff although a review of staff structures and service delivery may be possible.
- 1.7 27% of revenue is taken up with just maintaining the current fabric of the two museum buildings. Works to provide greater physical access to the building have been carried out with a combination of external grant funding and the museum capital fund. Maidstone Museum is a Grade 2* listed building with elements dating from the 1560s, late 1600s, 19th, 20th and 21stcenturies. The Grade 1 listed Carriage Museum dates to the 1300s. Under a move to trust status, ownership of these buildings would remain with Maidstone Borough Council but maintenance would become the responsibility of the trust. Short of failing to maintain them, there are few ways a trust could save money in this area. One possible area of interest is in the museums' combined NNDR charge of £120,000. A Trust would be able to apply for discretionary rate relief of 80%. However, MBC has lodged an appeal against the current listing based on a recent case by York Museum which reduced its rateable value to £1 per year in the first case of its kind.

1.8 The museums have increased income generation in the last five years with every department now generating earned income. As shown in the chart (Figure 2.), the largest part of this comes from grant funding for project based work and especially the Museums and Schools programme which currently provides for the museum learning service, including staff. This funding has now been confirmed until 2020.

Figure 2



1.9 What is clear from projections is that there are no opportunities to make immediate significant savings from the transfer to charitable trust apart from an NNDR discount. In fact, for the first two years of the process, there would be additional costs associated with the work of setting up, recruiting to and creating operational procedures for the trust.

1.10 However, over a five to ten year period, there would be significant opportunities to increase income and thus decrease the necessary subsidy. These include:

- Restructure and change of terms and conditions of employment
- Greater ability to generate philanthropic giving
- Greater access to grant schemes
- Ability to access external services and negotiate deals
- Greater commercial freedom
- Greater access to partnership and sponsorship opportunities
- Removal of barriers to enterprise such as inability to retain generated surpluses.

Existing Trusts

1.11 The Trusts that currently exist in connection with the museum are the Bentliff, Brenchley, Queens Own Royal and Maidstone Museums Foundation (MMF). These Trusts are the subject of a second review for

which a report will be brought to this committee later this year. MMF is primarily a friends of the museum organisation and currently carry out fund raising activities to support projects in the museum such as the Ancient's Lives Gallery.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

2.1 Julie Cole's report examined 4 governance options:

- i. Status quo.
- ii. Create a new charitable trust and transfer full management & operational responsibility. The museum collections and buildings would remain in the ownership of Maidstone Council so they could not be disposed of by the Trust without the permission of MBC. Staff and operations would be the responsibility of the Trust and defined through a SLA.
- iii. Partner with existing charity already managing a museum and transfer full management and operational responsibility- *This option was rejected as there is no potential partner able or willing to enter such an agreement.*
- iv. Create a new charitable trust and transfer partial management & operational responsibility. *This option was rejected as it would create a two tier staffing structure with current staff remaining as MBC employees. This offered the Council no benefits but considerable liabilities.*

2.2 In order to make a recommendation, the first two options were judged against their ability to best deliver business as usual and the programme for the Museums 20 Year Plan as set out on page 17 of that plan (Figure 3.).

Figure 3

Item	Preferred option	Comment
Potential for income generation inc donations, sponsorship and grant funding	Trust	More ability to apply for grants and other external funding for items which contribute to core functions and which a local authority is expected to provide to its own museums, whether this is feasible or not. E.g.: staffing and other running costs.
Procurement of support services and expert advice	Trust	This not relate to the quality of support services but merely the flexibility and savings that could be achieved by the museum being able to negotiate individual contracts, even without the economies of scale delivered by central procurement.
Recruiting volunteers	Trust	Traditionally volunteers have been more

		willing to volunteer for charities rather than council services which they perceive as already taxpayer funded.
Ability to achieve 20% savings for MBC	Status Quo	The removal of recharges from the museums would create savings in the area of £200,000 for the museum/new trust but these could not be counted as savings to MBC as a whole unless restructure of support services led to in reduction of staffing.
Carriage Museum project	Trust	Greater potential for grant funding and other external income
Gallery redisplay framework created and phase 1 agreed	Status Quo	This work can be undertaken immediately without the need to divert staff hours to the setting up of the new trust
Learning Service funding secured	Trust	Greater potential for grant funding and other external income
Capital programme completed	Status Quo	The current programme is funded
Storage improvement plan created	Status Quo	No uncertainty about which spaces may be available
Programme of in-house-only exhibitions launched	N/A	Not affected by governance
Raised awareness and resident satisfaction	Trust	While MBC recognition is undeniably helpful, there is a perception that museums are already tax-payer funded and of lower priority than other MBC services. Charities, largely, have a positive image among residents.
Gallery redisplay phase 2	Trust	Greater potential for grant funding and other external income
Japanese gallery move	Trust	Greater potential for grant funding and other external income
Community Action plan in operation	Trust	Greater flexibility for planning and funding activities over an extended period
Advisory panels operational	Trust	People more willing to give time to independent organisations and better understanding of their constraints
Address parking issues	Status Quo	Easier to consult and work with colleagues to find a solution that benefits the council a whole.
National award such as Kids in Museums or Museum of the Year	N/A	Not a criterion for awards.
Resilient governance and funding achieved		See conclusion
Review success of advisory panels	N/A	Not affected by governance
Gallery reviews	N/A	Not affected by governance
National Non Domestic Rates	Trust	A Trust would be able to apply for an

		80% reduction on the business rates bill from MBC. However, MBC has lodged an appeal against the NNDR based on the recent York Museums case.
VAT	Quo	A trust would be unable to recover all of the VAT which MBC is able to do.

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is clear that both Charitable Trusts and Local Authorities have aspects which provide benefit to the museum and the community of Maidstone.
- 3.2 The local authority, in one form or another, has run the museum for over a century. The relationship between the ethos of museums and public service, education and entertainment for local residents is clear. However, museums are not statutory services and there is a danger that, however much MBC values the two museums in the town, central funding cuts combined with the cost of running two listed buildings means that the authority is not best placed to provide the management and operation of the museum.
- 3.3 Charitable Trusts have been used by many local authorities to ensure the long term survival of their museums. Greater flexibility in financial and operational procedures means that independent museums are generally more agile and able to react to entrepreneurial opportunities. They are able to apply for grants not available to local authorities and offer more to sponsors or external funders than would be appropriate for the local authority, e.g. naming rights for galleries etc.
- 3.4 However, it must be stressed that Trusts are not fool-proof and like any other business may fail. Museums cannot pay for themselves from shop and café sales or admission tickets. In order to be sustainable, trusts rely on a significant level of grant funding over a sustained period; at least a decade (usually from the local authority where they are the original parent organisation) or 'dowry' in the form of assets such as property to collect rental. Even with a reduction of 20% to the current budget, MBC would need to agree a funding commitment of £862,000 per year. The first ten years alone would cost £8.6million without any of the set up costs for the trust added. In her report, Julie Cole advised that these would be in the area of £69,200 in the transition year taking into account charges for legal and financial services, staff and newly incurred VAT expenditure.
- 3.5 In addition, there have been a number of failures among trusts (Bexley Museum and Bede's world in Jarrow being two of the better known) and in this situation, MBC would still be responsible for the protection and preservation of collections and buildings. Maidstone Borough Council would need to be satisfied that any such move would meet acceptable levels of risk. The completion of several improvement projects in the next two financial years, including the possible relocation of the museum café to a more advantageous spot near reception, the conclusion of the NNDR

appeal and completion of the masterplan for improvements laid out in the 20 Year Plan, would be of significant benefit in reducing uncertainty and risk before a final decision was made.

- 3.6 In summary, it would be beneficial to the museum and for the services it provides to transfer governance to a charitable trust in order to release it from the constraints of local authority regulation and processes. As recognised in the Mendoza Report, the ability to negotiate individual contracts and manage its finances over a number of years, able to keep surpluses for reinvestment etc would allow the museums to operate as a business. However, the risk of financial failure is not negligible and this would cause more financial and operational issues for the authority. It is also clear that transfer to Trust would not achieve the savings of 20% sought by MBC within a short to medium timescale although it would deliver this over the longer term of perhaps 5-7 years.

Recommendation

- 3.7 Bearing in mind the work being carried out in response to the Mendoza Report, to review best practice and the ability of Local Authorities to free museums from some regulations, the recommendation of officers is to retain the status quo for three years and then review the options again. This will allow for both a clearer national picture to emerge and also for the initial phases of the Twenty Year Plan to commence without disruption.
-

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 Figure 3. 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 A review of the Museum's governance options if included in the Museums 20 Year Plan which was adopted by HCL committee in 2017. The Museum's Strategic Board has been consulted and is supportive of the recommendation in this report.
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6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 Stakeholders will be advised of the outcome of the review and a reassessment of the situation will be planned for three years time.
-

7. 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 ensure there are good leisure and cultural attractions.	Head of Regeneration & Economic Development.
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section.	Head of Regeneration & Economic Development.
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	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Head of Regeneration & Economic Development.
Legal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>Under Section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999 (as amended) the Council as a best value authority has a statutory duty to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The options appraisal and this report assist in demonstrating best value and compliance with the statutory duty.</u> 	Keith Trowell, Interim Team Leader (Corporate Governance)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If, at any stage, the charitable trust option is pursued further advice should be sought from the Head of Legal Partnership. 	
Privacy and Data Protection	There are no specific privacy or data protection issues to address	Keith Trowell, Interim Team Leader (Corporate Governance)
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	[Policy & Information Manager]
Crime and Disorder	N/A	
Procurement	N/A	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

None.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

Agenda Item 16

Heritage, Culture & Leisure

6 March 2018

The banning of Sky Lanterns at any event or activity held on Council owned land

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture & Leisure
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	William Cornall – Director of Regeneration and Place
Lead Officer and Report Author	Dawn Hudd – Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

Sky Lanterns have become increasingly popular in recent times and there is evidence to suggest that the debris from these items can cause harm to animals and property. This report proposes a ban on the use of Sky Lanterns on Council owned land and property.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the use and release of Sky Lanterns is banned from land and property owned or managed by Maidstone Borough Council at all activities and events organised, supported, funded by (fully or partially) and/or licensed by this authority.
2. That an information campaign is launched to discourage the use of Sky Lanterns by residents and visitors.
3. That Parish Councils within the Borough are contacted to encourage them to introduce a similar ban on their own land and property.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture & Leisure	6 March 2018

The banning of Sky Lanterns from Council owned land

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Sky lanterns (known as Chinese lanterns) are novelty items and consist of a candle or a fuel cell filled with paraffin wax suspended inside a frame of wire or bamboo covered in paper. When lit, they float gently upwards and drift away, landing when the fuel has run out. They can reach up to 1,000m in height and drift for several miles in the breeze. When the lantern has burnt out, it falls on to land or in the sea
- 1.2 The lanterns have become an increasingly popular way to mark special events and fundraisers and are seen at weddings, Halloween celebrations, music festivals and even funerals, with an estimated 200,000 being sold in the UK every year.
- 1.3 Farmers' groups and animal charities have long pushed for the lanterns to be withdrawn from sale, arguing that animals can eat parts after they have landed. There are already bans or restrictions on the lanterns in a number of countries because of the hazards they can cause.
- 1.4 The burnt out remains from the lanterns can endanger the lives of animals who find them. Problems they can cause for animals and property include:
 - Ingestion – can tear and puncture animals throats, stomach, and organs causing an internal bleed resulting in a slow and painful death.
 - Entrapment – can lead to stress, injury and death.
 - Splinters and Embedment – cause wounds into animals skin that can become infected leading to illness and death.
 - Fires to farm buildings or animals natural habitat.
- 1.5 Even though some retailers claim 'biodegradable' lanterns are a safe alternative, bamboo can take decades to degrade and falling lantern debris still poses the risk of ingestion, entrapment, embedment and fires which can cause or kill animals.
- 1.6 Councils across the UK are being urged to introduce bans by the farming community. The RSPCA and many other organisations including the Marine Conservation Society, Women's Food & Farming Union (WFU), Soil Association and National Farmers Union (NFU) all support a ban on sky lanterns.
- 1.7 Alternative suggestions to Chinese Lanterns include:
 - Fun & Cosy Atmosphere: stationary candles, nightlights, static lanterns, outdoor lights, bunting, flags, banners and ribbons.
 - Symbolic wish or memorial: plant a tree, indoor candles,

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Do nothing. This is not the preferred option as this would not send out a message to our residents, visitors and event organisers about the dangers that Sky Lanterns can cause to the natural environment.
 - 2.2 Ban the use of Sky Lanterns at events on Council owned property and land. This is the preferred option as it would set out the Council's position on this issue and formalise the existing exclusion of their use from activities and events held on Council land.
-

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Option 2.2 above is preferred as Maidstone Borough Council is aware of the potential threat sky lanterns can pose to the natural environment. We should therefore not condone their use at any events or activities organised, supported, funded by (fully or partially) and/or licensed by this authority on any Maidstone Borough Council land.
 - 3.2 It is recommended that the MBC contact Parish Councils in the Borough asking them to introduce a similar policy on their land and property.
 - 3.3 It is also recommended that an information campaign be conducted setting out the dangers of sky lanterns on the natural environment to encourage our residents and visitors to generally refrain from their use.
-

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. 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 There has been no previous consultation on this matter although it is understood that the Council has received communications from residents outlining their concerns about Sky Lanterns and the danger to the natural environment.
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6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 If the recommended approach is taken then a clause will be inserted into all hire agreements relating to council owned property and land banning the use of Sky lanterns.
- 6.2 A communication will be sent to Parish Councils in the Borough encouraging them to introduce a similar ban on their own land and property.

- 6.3 An information campaign will be undertaken to inform residents, members of the public and events organisers and the dangers of Sky Lanterns on the natural environment. This will take the form of an article in Borough Insight and posts on social media.

7. 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 corporate priority to have a clean and safe environment.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
Risk Management	Already covered in the risk section.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
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	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
Legal	As owners of the land, Maidstone Borough Council are entitled to enforce reasonable restrictions on any party seeking to host activities or events on that land	Legal Team
Privacy and Data Protection	N/A	
Equalities	No detrimental impact identified as a result of the proposed change of policy.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
Crime and Disorder	N/A	

Procurement	N/A	
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.