

# Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee

14 July 2015

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

## Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee – recommendations arising from the review of Transport in Maidstone – alternatives to using a car

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	SPS&T Committee
<b>Lead Director or Head of Service</b>	Rob Jarman, Head of Planning and Development
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Tessa Mallett, Democratic Services Officer
<b>Classification</b>	Non-exempt
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

### This report makes the following recommendations to the final decision-maker:

1. That the Committee agree to review the recommendations made in the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review report on "Transport in Maidstone – alternatives to using the car".
2. That the Committee agree to plan into the Committee's Work Programme officer update reports on the recommendations.
3. That the Committee nominate Members to the outside bodies, as recommended in the review report, and refer these nominations to the Democracy Committee.

### This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Great People
- Great Place
- Great Opportunity

### Timetable

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Policy and Resources Committee	N/A
Council	N/A
Other Committee	Decision - Democracy Committee – meeting date to be arranged

# Planning Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee – recommendations arising from the review of Transport in Maidstone – alternatives to using the car

## 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 To consider the recommendations arising from the Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee's (PT&D OSC) review of "Transport in Maidstone – alternatives to using the car", published in May 2015 and decide how to take these recommendations forward.
  - 1.2 To consider nominations to outside bodies suggested in the recommendations of PT&D OSC. The nominations to these outside bodies to be referred to the Democracy Committee for appointment.
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## 2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 During the 2014-2015 Municipal year the PT&D OSC carried out an extensive review of transport provision in Maidstone to explore alternatives to using the car to get into Maidstone and reduce congestion. A copy of the final published report is attached as **Appendix A**.
- 2.2 Congestion has been considered to be a serious problem in the centre of Maidstone for some time. With an objectively assessed housing need figure (for between 2011 and 2031) of 18,560 new homes, (as agreed by the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee on 9 June 2015), there is a risk this problem will only get worse unless strategic steps are taken to mitigate the effects of this increase in development on traffic. Permissions are being granted for new development on an on-going basis (some 7500+ dwellings have already been permitted or constructed since 2011) and these are subject, as appropriate, to specific measures when determined. Nevertheless, adopting sustainable transport measures and encouraging modal shift to reduce the reliance on the use of the private car when travelling around and through the Borough, will be a key element of the Council's policies going forward.
- 2.3 The emerging draft Local Plan will include policies to mitigate the effect of increased development on the Borough's roads, alongside an Integrated Transport Strategy being prepared by the Council in conjunction with Kent County Council who are the Highways Authority. This is an opportunity to look at alternative methods of transport infrastructure to support this.
- 2.4 The PT&D OSC has made recommendations regarding the promotion of walking and cycling as an alternative to using a car which will need considerable investment.

2.5 The Planning, Transport and Development Overview and Scrutiny Committee (PTD OSC) found there were issues with the services provided by public transport providers. Issues raised included:

#### **Bus services**

- 'erratic' notification of road closures to bus service provider;
- Buses arriving and leaving earlier than scheduled;
- Lack of real time service updates;
- Lack of suitable services in many parishes;
- Cost of using public transport

#### **Rail services**

- Cost;
- Station parking and 'rail heading';
- Convenience and reliability;
- Safety at stations and on trains.

2.6 There also appears to be a lack of opportunity for service users to discuss their issues with providers or a lack of awareness of the opportunities that are available. The PT&D OSC believe these matters need to be addressed if public transport is to be an attractive alternative to using a car and have made recommendations accordingly.

2.7 From the review a total of 23 (A to W) recommendations were made.

2.8 Recommendations A, G, J, R and S relate to the appointment of Councillors to external bodies.

2.9 At their meeting on 14 April 2015 the Cabinet made the following decisions:

- (1) That the Scrutiny Committee Recommendation and Implementation Plan (SCRAIP) relating to the review of 'Transport in Maidstone – alternatives to using a car' be referred to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee from May 2015 to consider in line with the emerging Integrated Transport Strategy; and
- (2) That the outside body appointments are referred to the Democracy Committee from May 2015.

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### **3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

3.1 The Committee could decide not to consider the recommendations in relation to the "Transport in Maidstone – alternatives to using a Car" report. However, the recommendations are based on evidence from a wide range of sources and support the Council's objectives with regard to Maidstone being a decent place to live and having a growing economy.

- 3.2 The Committee could decide to plan officer updates into the Committee’s Work Programme for the coming year (some updates may be integrated into reports already planned for 2015-2016) and to nominate Councillors to the external bodies identified by PT&D OSC.
- 3.3 The Committee could decide to prioritise and focus their resources on some of the recommendations and nominate Councillors to the external bodies identified by PT&D OSC.
- 3.4 The Committee could decide to just nominate Councillors to the external bodies identified by PT&D OSC.

#### **4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 4.1 Option 3.2 is the preferred option as it will ensure the recommendations from the PT&D OSC are followed through and reliable methods of transport into Maidstone are available and are a viable alternative to travelling into the town by car.

#### **5. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 5.1 Should the Committee decide on option 3.2, some of the recommendations could be considered in detail to plan the next step, i.e. officer report, officer action, member action, referral to other Committee/organisation.
- 5.2 The Committee may decide the planning work is carried out outside of the Committee meeting and the outcomes reported back to the full Committee at their meeting on 18 August 2015.

#### **6. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>		[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Risk Management</b>		[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Financial</b>	There are no direct financial implications arising from this report. Financial implications relating to measures agreed as part of the council’s Integrated Transport Strategy will be assessed as part of the council’s Medium Term Financial Strategy.	[Section 151 Officer & Finance Team]

<b>Staffing</b>		[Head of Service]
<b>Legal</b>	The legal implications of maintaining and submitting a sound draft Local Plan relate to the capability of third parties to challenge it, but that will be dealt with by way of the Examination in Public process	Team Leader (Planning), Mid Kent Legal Services
<b>Equality Impact Needs Assessment</b>		[Policy & Information Manager]
<b>Environmental/Sustainable Development</b>		[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Community Safety</b>		[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Human Rights Act</b>		[Head of Service or Manager]
<b>Procurement</b>		[Head of Service & Section 151 Officer]
<b>Asset Management</b>		[Head of Service & Manager]

## 7. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix A: a Review of Transport in Maidstone Borough – alternatives to using a car.
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