

2016/17

Quarter 4 Strategic Plan Action Plan Update



For further information about
Performance Management at Maidstone
Council, please contact Alex Munden,
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Priority 1: Keeping Maidstone an attractive place for all

Crematorium Development Project

Commence implementation of Phase One

A refocussing of Bereavement Services development plans is envisaged and will be reported to Heritage, Culture, and Leisure Committee in June 2017.

Respecting the Character of our Borough

Maidstone is the County town of Kent. In terms of its geography, it is largely rural and the countryside offers high quality landscape and biodiversity. Approximately 50% of the borough population live in a parished area. We are focused on achieving economic prosperity, whilst at the same time balancing protecting the environment and landscape that makes the borough of Maidstone a great place to live, work in and visit.

Culture and Heritage

Public realm/public art guidelines produced for Maidstone Town Centre

Public Realm Design Guide for Maidstone Town Centre and Public Art Policy for the Borough both developed and adopted by Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee in November 2016.

The Public Art Policy will be taken to Strategic Planning Sustainability and Transport Committee before the summer to consider its adoption as a material consideration for planning purposes.

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

Ensuring there are good Leisure and Cultural Attractions

There is always something to see or do in Maidstone, with the river, two museums and a theatre in the town centre, four green flag parks, a well-used Leisure Centre, a castle, various markets and a variety of festivals and events held across the Borough and throughout the year.

A sustainable future for Mote Park

Construction of Adventure Zone complete

A second procurement process has had to be undertaken. This has now taken place and a framework agreement has now been entered into.

Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Development Plan

Consider the future operational models for parks and open spaces

New operational models will emerge from the 10 Year Plan for Parks and Open Spaces.

Museum Development Plan

Capital programme board established to oversee further capital projects

The Capital Programme Board continues to monitor progress on individual capital projects. Damp works in the cloisters gallery and old chapel started in March as anticipated, and have now been completed. The 6-week drying out period has nearly completed. After advice from MBC Planners, a revised scheme to provide a two storey, self-supporting glass lift shaft was submitted for planning approval and Listed Building Consent. This was considered by Planning Committee in May and approved. It is anticipated that the refurbished gallery and new lift will open to the public in September.

Work to the Visitor Information point has taken longer than expected, partly due to contractor work schedules. It has now been held back by a few additional weeks to allow for decorative works to be combined with those necessary for the gallery works, thus benefitting from economies of scale and staff capacity to oversee the work. The point will be open by the end of June and school summer holidays. In the meantime we continue to offer the complete service from the old desk.

Consult with key stakeholders on the draft Museums 20 year development

Members were given an update report on Museum Development at the April meeting of the Heritage Leisure and Culture Committee. The museums governance report is underway and the appointed consultant has met with Corporate Leadership Team and members of the Bently and Queens Own Royal West Kent Trusts. A meeting with the Brenchley Trust and MMF is planned for the start of May.

Enhancing the Appeal of the Town Centre

Maidstone has had a historically thriving town centre. However, we need to ensure that we keep pace with the changing economic environment and continue to meet the demands of businesses and consumers. Investment in Maidstone town centre is needed if it is to continue to be a popular place for leisure, to live, shop and work.

Town Centre Development Plan

Plan, design, and implement phase 1 redevelopment of Maidstone East Station

Demolition of the Victoria pub has been delayed by Network Rail. The demolition will now be added to the main tender for the Station building works which has been issued to NR's framework contractors. The tender period will be up to 8 weeks and once a Principal Contractor is appointed NR will share with partners a programme for the demolition works and main works.

Agree 5 year programme of public and private investment

The Holding Strategy will be implemented in phases. The building refurbishment work has been delayed by 4 weeks. Caxtons has been appointed as facilities management and lettings agents. Occupier interest exists for the office block. A sifting exercise has been carried out through the HCA Property Panel to identify a short list of lead consultants for a mini competition to take forward redevelopment plans for the site.

Deliver bridge gyratory widening scheme

Since the completion of the new highways configuration, work has continued to the pedestrian areas in the lower High Street. Paving work outside Seekers has been completed, but has been delayed outside Allianz due to theft of granite materials. Work on this section is anticipated to be completed mid-July owing to lead in times.

Crowning of the trees on the tow path from High Level Bridge to Medway Street subway was completed in advance of the nesting season, with paving works to this stretch now underway. The cost of the tow path work has come in higher than anticipated, meaning that at present the resurfacing of Earl Street will not be completed. However, conversations are ongoing with KCC Resurfacing team to assess whether it can be undertaken as part of their programme given that coring and other surveys have been completed. Resurfacing of Old Fairmeadow will be completed as anticipated.

MBC grounds maintenance will be completing the soft landscaping works associated with the project, paid for through the scheme budget.

Drainage design for the Broadway subway is ongoing, with work delivery anticipated in July/August. Ward Members have been consulted on aesthetic design for the subway – this work will commence in September.

KCC's ITS team have assessed and altered the traffic light timings through the gyratory and in the junctions leading into the system w/c 24 April.

