

# Maidstone Borough Council's Strategic Plan 2015-2020



# Foreword from the Leader, Councillor Fran



Foreword to be re-written for 2018-19

I am writing this foreword as an update to our strategic plan during a period of severe financial constraints as we continue to focus on delivering a full range of services with all revenue support from central government removed. Despite this challenge the council remains ambitious for this year and has identified three areas for action:

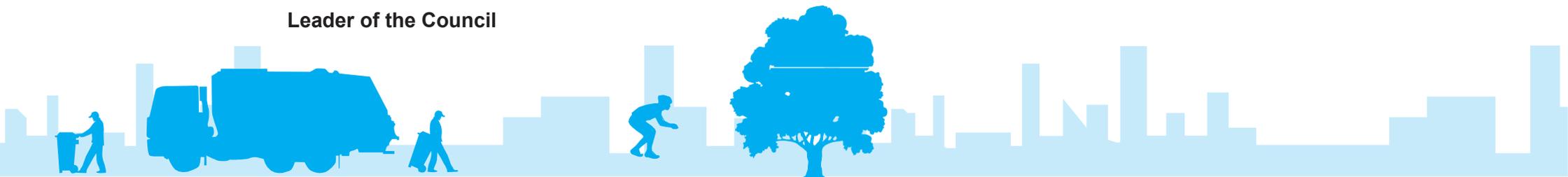
- A home for everyone
- A clean and safe environment and;
- Regenerating the town centre

As a council our mission is to put people first. The three areas of focus will see action to ensure we have an attractive borough that respects our heritage and environment. This year we will deliver a new housing and regeneration strategy which will focus on providing much needed sustainable housing for our residents across the borough and further investment in Maidstone town centre. The importance of maintaining clarity of communication between us and all our interested parties cannot be over emphasised if we are going to achieve our priorities and ensure we are all working towards a common goal. I want our residents to be proud of where they live, our businesses to be enabled to thrive and our visitors to enjoy our offer to the extent that they would come back to Maidstone over and over

again.

**Fran Wilson**

**Leader of the Council**



# Our Mission



# Our Vision

## Our Vision

That our residents live in decent homes, enjoy good health and a pleasant environment, with a successful economy that is supported by reliable transport networks.



This will be updated with the priority areas for 2018-19

## Providing a Clean and Safe Environment

Maidstone Borough Council is committed to creating an attractive environment which is safe, well maintained and clean. Our borough does not experience high levels of crime and through the Community Safety Partnership, we aim to protect the most vulnerable people in our community.

Our recycling levels have reached 49.9%. Maidstone has areas of poor air quality due to high concentrations of nitrogen dioxide associated with road traffic and has designated the urban area of the borough as an Air Quality Management Zone.

### **We want:**

People to feel safe in the borough and experience an attractive, clean and safe environment.

### **We will commit to:**

- Investing to improve street infrastructure and the efficiency of cleansing services in accordance with our medium term financial strategy
- Delivering the Waste and Recycling Strategy
- Delivering the Community Safety Plan 2017-18
- Delivering the Low Emissions Strategy
- Adopting and Delivering an Air Quality DPD

## Encouraging Good Health and Wellbeing

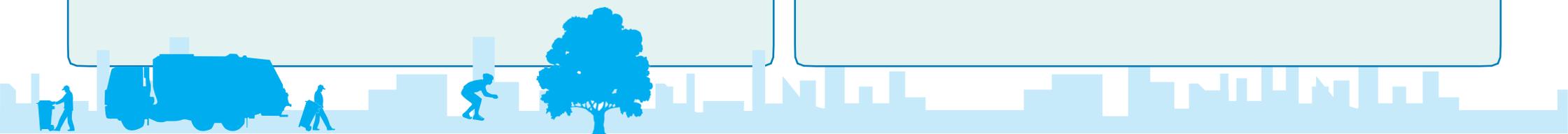
Deprivation in the borough is lower than average, however 14.8% of children (under 16 years old) in Maidstone live in poverty. There is a difference in life expectancy of men and women; women are expected to live 3 years longer than men and there is a 11 year gap between the ward with the highest life expectancy and the one with the lowest life expectancy

### **We want:**

- To address the social determinants of health through our role in services like Housing, Environmental Health and Community Development and our provider role in terms of leisure activities
- To improve health outcomes for residents and reduce health inequality

### **We will commit to:**

- Delivering our Housing Strategy
- Delivering our Health and Wellbeing Action Plan
- Delivering our Parks and Open spaces 10 year strategic plan



## Respecting the Character and Heritage of our Borough

Maidstone is a largely rural borough with high quality landscapes, countryside and urban green spaces and associated rich bio-diversity. Our borough has many attractive and protected buildings and we want these to remain in place for future generations. Our focus on economic prosperity embraces the need to protect and enhance these features so that the borough remains a great place to live, work and visit.

### We want:

- Thriving and resilient urban and rural communities
- To continue to listen to our communities
- To continue to respect our heritage and natural environment
- To continue to devolve services where we can and work with Kent County Council to do the same

### We will commit to:

- Delivering the Local Plan
- Delivering the Green and Blue Infrastructure Strategy
- Delivering our Parks and Open Spaces 10 year strategic plan
- Delivering and honouring our Parish Charter
- Working with our Parishes and Communities on the design of their neighbourhoods

## Ensuring there are Good Leisure and Cultural Attractions

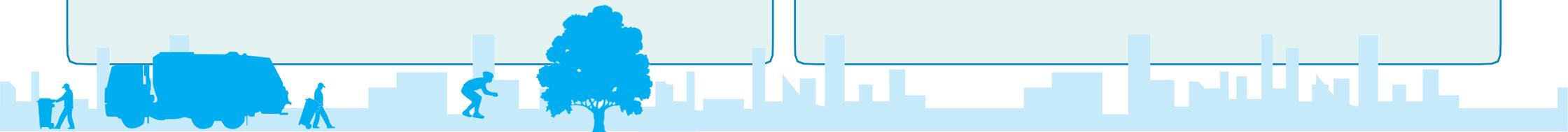
There is always something to see or do in our borough reflecting the wide variety of venues, facilities and good quality public spaces. This not only enhances quality of life for Maidstone residents but also contributes significantly to the local economy. Our population is increasing at the highest rate in Kent. We are also growing as a destination for visitors and so our leisure and culture offer has continued importance for those living in and visiting the borough.

### We want:

Maidstone to have a leisure and cultural offer which attracts visitors and meets the needs of our residents.

### We will commit to:

- Delivering the Destination Management Plan
- Delivering the Festival and Events Strategy
- Delivering the Museum's 20 year plan
- Delivering the Parks and Open Spaces 10 year Strategic Plan



## Regenerating the Town Centre

Maidstone has a thriving town centre benefiting from its role as the county town and has a diverse mix of residential, business, retail, cultural uses and public services. The changing economic environment has created challenges and the need for further investment in the town centre to meet the expectations of residents, businesses and visitors.

### **We want:**

To ensure we have a thriving and attractive town centre that values our heritage and is fit for the future.

### **We will commit to:**

- Delivering the Local Plan
- Delivering the Housing and Regeneration Strategy
- Delivering the Destination Management Plan
- Delivering Phase 3 of the Public Realm

## Securing Improvements to the Transport Infrastructure for our Borough

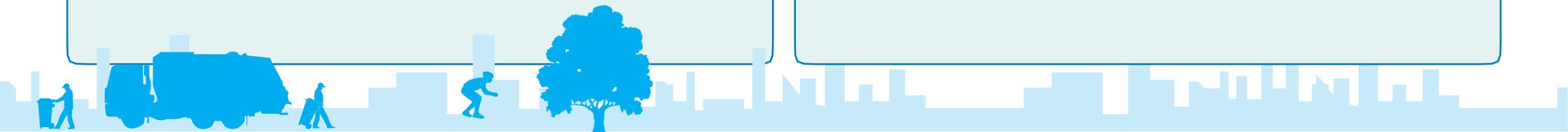
Maidstone is strategically situated between London and the channel ports and is serviced by two motorway networks, the M20 and the M2, with rail connections to central London. We do however recognise that travelling in and around the borough by car during peak periods can be difficult due to congestion. The bus transport network serving Maidstone town is relatively strong whilst rural transport presents distinct challenges

### **We want:**

A sustainable transport network that meets the needs of residents, businesses and visitors.

### **We will commit to:**

- Delivering the Integrated Transport Strategy
- Delivering the Walking and Cycling Strategy



## A Home for Everyone

The supply of new affordable housing within the borough has been greater than in neighbouring authorities, although still less than historical levels. 303 new affordable homes were built in the borough in 2016/17.

13% of Maidstone households live in socially rented accommodation which is comparable to the rest of Kent.

### **We want:**

To have enough homes to meet our residents' long term needs, to include homes for affordable rent and affordable home ownership. These must be economically sustainable for all our residents.

### **We will commit to:**

- Delivering the Local Plan
- Delivering the Housing and Regeneration Strategy
- Delivering the Housing Strategy
- Delivering the Temporary Accommodation Strategy

## Range of Employment Skills and Opportunities Across the Borough

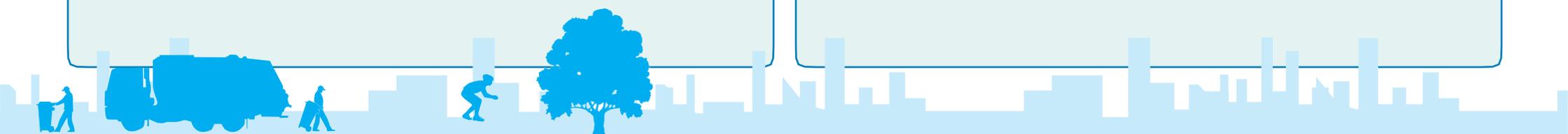
There were 77,500 people employed in the Maidstone economy in 2016/17 with a high proportion in the public sector, reflecting the town's status as Kent's County Town and administrative capital. There were 7,195 registered businesses in Maidstone in 2017.

### **We want:**

To meet the skills needs of our residents and employers, supporting existing businesses and attracting new ones.

### **We will commit to:**

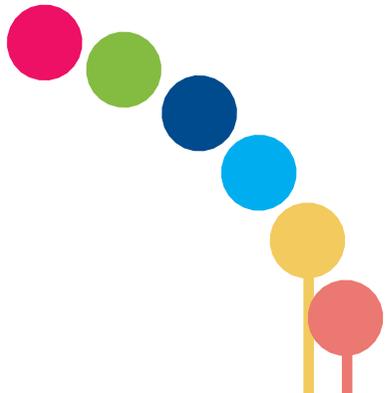
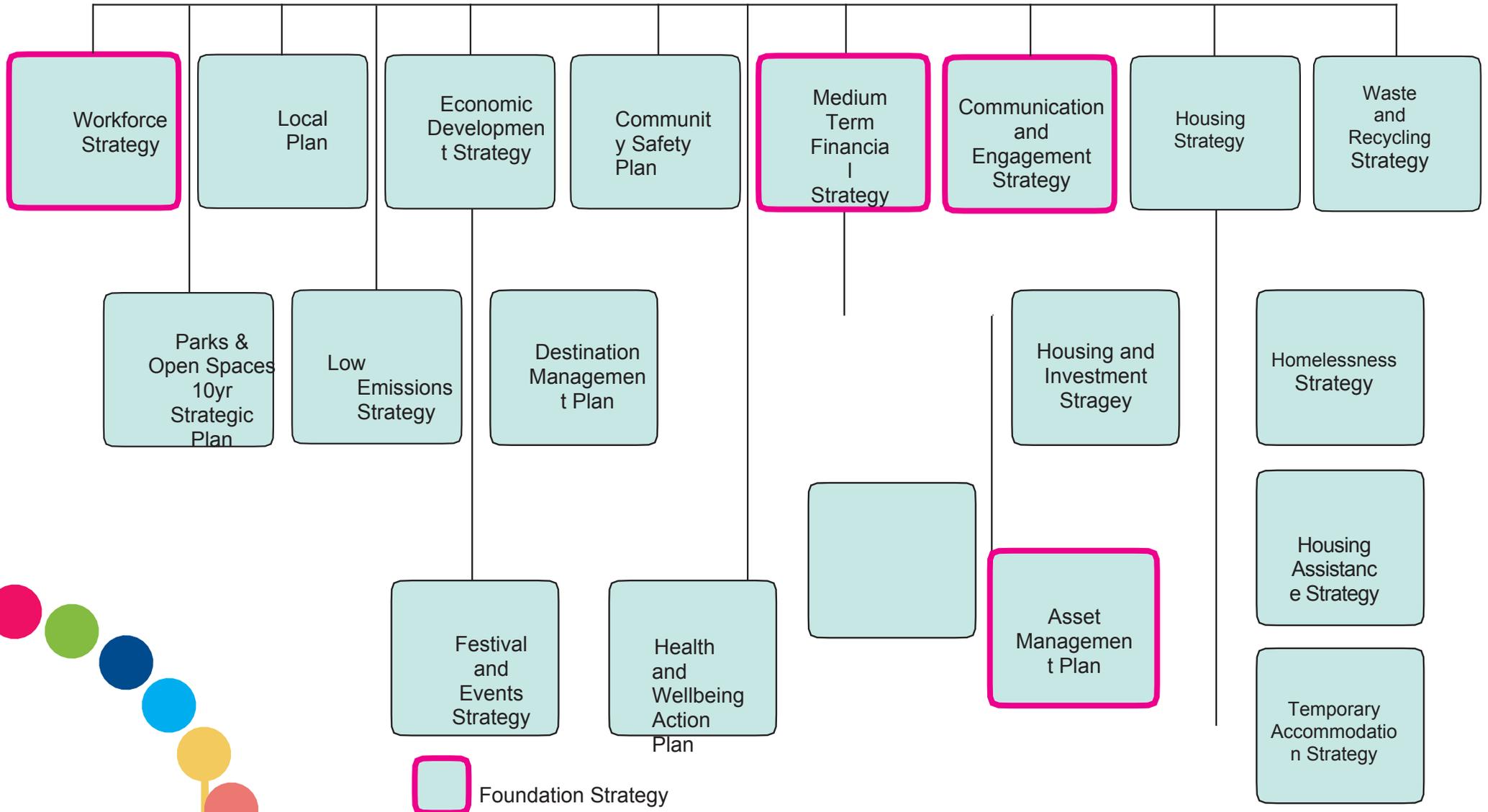
- Delivering our Economic Development Strategy
- Working with businesses to support them to grow and develop



# Strategy

## Strategic Plan 2015 - 2020

Plans to be updated and artwork re-done



# Maidstone Local Plan Flow Chart – page to be deleted

