

# **Maidstone Borough Council**

## **Leisure and Prosperity Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Tuesday 22 February 2011**

### **Demographic & Transport Data Check**

**Report of:** Overview and Scrutiny Officer

#### **1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In December 2010 the Committee considered the future work programme, and in connection to the Local Development Framework (LDF) the Committee requested clarity on the data and the processes being used to collect, analyse and draw conclusions. It was agreed that issues around transport itself should be excluded from discussion. Details such as where the data came from, what was the proposed method for conclusion and what were the practicalities of the outcomes, are required to be presented to the Committee for consideration. Demographic and labour projections for Maidstone Core Strategy are shown in **Appendix A**.

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to interview the Officers with regard to the processes used to collect data and any assumptions that have been made and make recommendations as appropriate.
- 2.2 Areas of questioning could include but are not limited to:
- What systems (manually or technically) were used to collect the data;
  - How did this affect the time taken to collate the information;
  - What were your alternative methods to collect the data;
  - How has the information gathered been interpreted to reach your conclusions;
  - What can we as a Council learn from how it was analysed; and
  - Are there specific areas that you would recommend changed in the future as part of the quality and process of the data collection.

#### **3. Local Development Framework**

- 3.1 The local development framework (LDF) is the set of policies that determines where and how development takes place in Maidstone. The LDF has taken over from the local plan system, and policies developed through the LDF will eventually replace the Maidstone Borough-Wide Local Plan 2000 entirely.
- 3.2 The LDF contains Development Plan Documents (DPD), which hold policies and strategies which are important when deciding planning

applications. The Land Allocations DPD will allocate the specific sites for residential and non-residential development, as well as dealing with landscape designations and village boundaries. Work on this DPD will follow the adoption of the Core Strategy, which is intended for mid-2012.

- 3.3 The LDF also includes Supplementary Planning Documents, which expand policies set out in DPDs or provide additional detail; a Statement of Community Involvement; the Local Development Scheme (which sets out the programme for the production of documents) and the Annual Monitoring Report.
- 3.4 Within the Local Planning Authority's LDF, DPDs must be 'sound' (section 20 of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004) both in terms of their content and the process by which they are produced. They must also be founded on a robust and credible evidence base. In terms of assessing policy implementation and their effects on sustainability, the Council will need to develop an analytical approach so that they can understand and explain as far as is practicable how the complex interactions work.
- 3.5 As part of the assessment, the Council will need to; set the context and establish baselines, analyse and report upon output indicators, analyse and report upon significant effects indicators, establish and monitor performance trajectories, use qualitative and quantitative information, consider how the nature of analysis may change over time, compare broader contextual trends against changes in the output indicators and significant effects indicators, and prepare interpretative commentaries.
- 3.4 The LDF is important to the residents of Maidstone as planning shapes the places where people live and work. Planning plays a key role in supporting the Government's wider social, environmental and economic objectives and for sustainable communities.
- 3.4 Information on the next stage of the Core Strategy consultation went to Cabinet on 9th February 2011. The report to Cabinet proposed a preferred development target and distribution. Consultation on the Core Strategy will take place in due course.

#### **4. Impact on Corporate Objectives**

- 4.1 The Strategic Plan 2009-12 states that the Council wants Maidstone to be "a place to achieve, prosper and thrive; and a place to live and enjoy with efficient and effective public services".