

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

**REGENERATION & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

23 JULY 2012

**REPORT OF DIRECTOR OF CHANGE, PLANNING AND THE
ENVIRONMENT**

Report prepared by Michael Murphy

1. INFRASTRUCTURE DELIVERY PLAN UPDATE

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider the progress of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan in order to inform the Core Strategy strategic site allocations and the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) which are the subject of separate reports on this agenda.

1.2 Recommendation of Director of Change, Planning and the Environment

1.2.1 That Cabinet notes the progress of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan and the indicative cost estimates.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The purpose of the Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) is to identify the infrastructure required to meet the spatial objectives and growth anticipated in the Council's Core Strategy; show that the required infrastructure is deliverable; and identify where additional investment may be required.

1.3.2 The IDP includes not only infrastructure schemes that will be provided by the council but also those for which other bodies (public and private) are responsible. As such, it is closely linked to objectives set out in the ITS and takes account of Kent County Council's infrastructure and investment finance model for education, community learning and adult social services. Affordable housing and contributions towards the Code for Sustainable Homes are not included as IDP schemes.

1.3.3 The IDP enables the Council to identify possible mechanisms for reducing funding gaps (e.g. New Homes Bonus) and provides the basis

for the development of local thresholds under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). Deliverability of sites will be a key issue in determining an appropriate levy or levies for Maidstone and research is currently underway to test the viability of sites that comprise the council's housing and employment target.

1.3.4 It is unlikely that all the infrastructure schemes outlined in the IDP can be delivered while still ensuring the viability of sites. Therefore, it may be necessary for Members to prioritise the infrastructure schemes considered essential to delivery of the Core Strategy.

1.3.5 The IDP must demonstrate that the Core Strategy is both realistic and deliverable, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, and can therefore be successfully implemented. It identifies:

1. **What** and **where** infrastructure is required to deliver the Core Strategy;
2. **Who** is responsible for delivery;
3. **How** the infrastructure will be delivered through the identification of delivery mechanisms and funding sources;
4. **When** infrastructure will be delivered, with phasing and costs in broad terms; and
5. An effective monitoring and review process.

1.3.6 The National Planning Policy Framework requires councils to work together to address strategic priorities across boundaries and to consider development requirements which cannot be wholly met within their own areas. In recent months the Council has exercised its duty to co-operate by working in partnership with Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Kent County Council and a number of other infrastructure service providers and public bodies to update and amend the previous draft IDP that went out for public consultation with the Core Strategy in August/September 2011.

1.3.7 The updated IDP (attached as Appendix 1) has taken account of a range of programmes which impact on spatial planning and includes revised infrastructure schemes and costs for the areas of transport, education and adult social services. Further amendments to the IDP are inevitable as it is an evolving document and requires input from numerous bodies. As such, the IDP will be reviewed and monitored regularly to ensure that it includes the most up to date information.

1.3.8 Any identified costs in the IDP are based on the best available information at this time and will be subject to change during the plan period. A number of further revisions to costs are pending as the council is in continued negotiations with KCC on transport and education matters.

1.3.9 As is reflected in the number of transport schemes included in the IDP, congestion is a major issue in the borough and represents one of the Council's greatest challenges in ensuring a deliverable Core Strategy goes forward for consultation in December 2012. It is likely that the full transport package will total approximately £35m. However, it is expected that development contributions (S.106/CIL) from strategic sites, asset sales, KCC Local Transport Plan funding, New Homes Bonus and the infrastructure providers' investment in Maidstone will go a long way towards covering the cost of the prioritised transport package.

1.3.10 The IDP will go forward for Regulation 19 (Publication) consultation¹ with the Core Strategy in December 2012. In the interim, further amendments will take place pending negotiations with service providers and viability testing in the context of work on strategic sites and the Community Infrastructure Levy.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Council has a duty to produce an infrastructure delivery plan.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The overarching purpose of the IDP is to identify what infrastructure is needed to support anticipated growth set out in the Core Strategy. The IDP is key in ensuring that the Core Strategy is deliverable, and that Maidstone grows in a sustainable way, providing not just homes and jobs, but all the other elements that collectively make decent places to live, work and spend time.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 Good practice for infrastructure planning requires the identification of risk of non-delivery of proposed critical infrastructure, in order to ensure that the Core Strategy is deliverable. If the IDP is not robust and is considered inadequate with regard to supporting anticipated growth in Maidstone, the Secretary of State could reject the submitted Core Strategy and find the document unsound during Independent Examination.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

1. Financial

X

¹ Town and Country Planning (Local Planning) (England) Regulations 2012

5.	Staffing	
6.	Legal	X
7.	Equality Impact Needs Assessment	
8.	Environmental/Sustainable Development	X
9.	Community Safety	
10.	Human Rights Act	
11.	Procurement	
12.	Asset Management	

1.7.2 The total cost estimate for unprioritised infrastructure schemes in the IDP currently stands at £79.4m for the Plan period; however, this figure will change as more discussions take place with Kent County Council and other service providers. It is accepted that developer contributions alone will not cover this cost. It is inevitable that the Council will have to prioritise certain infrastructure schemes over others to finance any identified funding gap.

1.7.3 The IDP provides the basis for the development of local thresholds under the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL). The decision to develop and charge a CIL means that specific regulations will apply to developer contributions within the Borough. This is to ensure that infrastructure is only delivered through a single charge. In addition the Localism Act 2011 and some as yet unspecified statutory instruments will continue to change the legislation relating to CIL and officers will need to remain abreast of these changes as the charging schedule is developed.

1.7.4 The IDP lists the physical, community and green infrastructure requirements necessary for Maidstone to grow in a sustainable way and is key in ensuring that the Core Strategy is deliverable.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

1.8.2 Appendix 1 – Revised Infrastructure Delivery Plan – July 2012

1.8.2 Background Documents

None

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

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This is a Key Decision because:

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Wards/Parishes affected:

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