

**MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**11 JUNE 2014**

**REPORT OF THE STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP AND CORPORATE SERVICES  
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Report prepared by Christian Scade

**ACCOMMODATION PROJECT (SCRAIP)**

1. Issue for Decision

1.1 To consider and respond to the recommendations made by the Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Council's accommodation project.

1.2 Recommendation of the Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

That Cabinet considers and responds to the following recommendations:

- (a) That, in view of the significant costs involved in leasing and running Maidstone House consideration is given to appointing a project manager, at the earliest opportunity, to ensure all accommodation options (build, buy, lease) are investigated and reported back on without delay;
- (b) That the informal, cross-party, Accommodation Working Group, continues to meet during the 2014/15 municipal year.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.4 On 4 March 2014 the Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that an update on the future of Maidstone House should be considered by scrutiny before the end of the 2013/14 municipal year.

1.5 Following this request, the Director of Environment and Shared Services attended Committee on 6 May 2014, with the following issues discussed:

- Options and next steps for the Gateway and Maidstone House;

- The programme reviews being carried out by Kent County Council (KCC) across Kent including those assessing the offer at each gateway and the value of the gateways to KCC;
- The work carried out via the cross-party Accommodation Working Group;
- Future strategy options including the pros and cons of "building", "buying" and "leasing";
- Options to appoint a project manager.

1.6 The recommendations at 1.2 have been put forward based on the evidence provided during the question and answer session with the Director of Environment and Shared Services, the significant costs involved in leasing / running Maidstone House, and to ensure all the options (build, buy, lease) are looked at when developing an accommodation blueprint for the future.

#### 1.7 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.8 Cabinet could decide not to endorse the recommendations made by the Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee. However, the recommendations are based on evidence provided by the Director of Environment and Shared Services and support the Council's objectives with regard to Corporate and Customer Excellence.

#### 1.9 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.10 The Council's Strategic Plan 2011-15 lists "Corporate and Customer Excellence" as a key priority, under which sits the outcome "*Effective, cost efficient services are delivered across the borough*". The recommendations made by Overview and Scrutiny contribute to the fulfilment of this outcome.

#### 1.11 Risk Management

1.12 The recommendations contained within this report will need to be risk assessed as part of reviewing whether they should be accepted or not.

#### 1.13 Other Implications

1.14 Depending on the acceptance of the recommendations within this report there could be financial, staffing, procurement and asset management implications.

1.15 Relevant Documents

Appendices:

Appendix A – Scrutiny Committee Response Action Implementation Plan (SCRAIP)

Background Documents: None

<b><u>IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?</u></b>		<b><u>THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED</u></b>	
Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>	No	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If yes, this is a Key Decision because: .....			
.....			
Wards/Parishes affected: .....			
.....			