

# POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Wednesday 13 December 2017  
Time: 7.30 pm  
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership: Councillors Barned, Mrs Blackmore, Boughton, Brice, Cox, Fermor, Garland, Mrs Gooch, Harper (Vice-Chairman), Harvey, Harwood, Hastie, McLoughlin, Perry and Mrs Wilson (Chairman)

---

<u>AGENDA</u>	<u>Page No.</u>
1. Apologies for Absence	
2. Notification of Substitute Members	
3. Urgent Items	
4. Notification of Visiting Members	
5. Disclosures by Members and Officers	
6. Disclosures of Lobbying	
7. To consider whether any items should be taken in private because of the possible disclosure of exempt information.	
8. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 30 October 2017	1 - 6
9. Minutes of the Meeting Held on 22 November 2017	7 - 13
10. Presentation of Petitions (if any)	
11. Questions and answer session for members of the public (if any)	
12. Committee Work Programme	14
13. Strategic Plan 2015-20, 2018-19 Refresh	15 - 55
14. Thames Gateway Kent Partnership	56 - 68
15. Council Tax Base & Collection Fund Adjustment 2018-19	69 - 82

---

**Issued on Tuesday 5 December 2017**

**Continued Over/:**

*Alison Broom*

**Alison Broom, Chief Executive**

**PART II**

**To move that the public be excluded for the items set out in Part II of the Agenda because of the likely disclosure of exempt information for the reasons specified having applied the Public Interest Test.**

	<b>Head of Schedule 12 A and Brief Description</b>	
17. Minutes (Part II) of the Meeting Held on 30 October 2017	<b>3 – Information re finance and business affairs</b>	94
18. Minutes (Part II) of the Meeting Held on 22 November 2017	<b>3 – Information re finance and business affairs</b>	95 - 96

**PUBLIC SPEAKING**

In order to book a slot to speak at this meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee, please contact Sam Bailey on 01622 602263 or by email on [committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk) by 5 pm one clear working day before the meeting. If asking a question, you will need to provide the full text in writing. If making a statement, you will need to tell us which agenda item you wish to speak on. Please note that slots will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

**ALTERNATIVE FORMATS**

The reports included in Part I of this agenda can be available in **alternative formats**. For further information about this service, or to arrange for special facilities to be provided at the meeting, **please contact Democratic Services on [committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk](mailto:committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk) or 01622 602263**. To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit [www.maidstone.gov.uk](http://www.maidstone.gov.uk)

## **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **Policy and Resources Committee**

#### **MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 30 OCTOBER 2017**

**Present:** Councillors Adkinson, Barned, Mrs Blackmore, Boughton, D Burton, Butler, Cox, English, Garten, Mrs Gooch, Harvey, Harwood, Hastie, McLoughlin and Mrs Wilson (Chairman)

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

It was noted that apologies were received by Councillors Brice, Fermor, Garland, Harper and Perry.

2. **NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS**

It was noted that the following Members were present as substitutes:-

Councillor Adkinson for Councillor Harper  
Councillor D Burton for Councillor Garland  
Councillor English for Councillor Fermor  
Councillor Garten for Councillor Brice

Councillor Round was substituting for Councillor Mrs Blackmore until she arrived.

3. **URGENT ITEMS**

There were no urgent items.

4. **NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS**

Councillor Round indicated that he was substituting for Councillor Blackmore until she arrived and would then remain as a Visiting Member.

5. **DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS**

There were no disclosures by Members or Officers.

6. **DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING**

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

7. **EXEMPT ITEMS**

**RESOLVED:** That Agenda Item 15 which related to a Property Acquisition be taken in private due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

8. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 SEPTEMBER 2017

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the meeting held on 20 September 2017 be agreed as an accurate record of the meeting and signed.

In response to a question from a Member on the minute which related to the 100% Business Rates Retention Pilot, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement advised that a Business Rates Pilot application had been submitted for all of the Kent Authorities, which included Medway, Sevenoaks and Dover Councils. However, it also stated that if the Pilot were to be unsuccessful then the Councils would revert back to the existing arrangements which would then exclude Sevenoaks and Dover.

9. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

10. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

11. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Committee Work Programme and were advised of a few updates which were:-

- The Property Strategy report would be presented to the Committee in December 2017
- A report on the Mote Park Lake Dam would be presented to the Committee in January 2018

In response to questions from Members, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement advised that:-

- The Office Accommodation Strategy Working Group was still meeting and the Leader of the Conservative Group had indicated that he would be nominating a representative from his party shortly.
- Work was being progressed on a way forward to capture action points from the minutes that were not picked up in decisions.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

12. CORPORATE RISK UPDATE AND RISK APPETITE STATEMENT

The Deputy Head of Audit Partnership presented a report on the risk management processes and the subsequent outcomes of existing risk work. This included the identification of new risks at a corporate level.

In response to questions from Members, the Deputy Head of Audit Partnership advised that:-

- Those risks in the higher category were monitored more closely by the Corporate Leadership Team. There were two ways in which issues could be accelerated for Members' attention which could be through the Urgency Committee or by way of a briefing to Policy and Resources Committee. An example given was the briefing following the Grenfell Tower Fire incident. Members asked that this procedure be codified in the risk management practices and policies.
- The following wording would be added to the Risk entitled 'Poor Partner Relationships' in Appendix 1 – **Continued horizon scanning in respect of devolution.**
- The risks associated with political change were included as it was recognised that changes to the political environment could have an impact on the way the Council delivered its services. This could slow down processes where there was a requirement to realign spending and other associated issues.
- Those Members who were concerned about the cyber threats to the Council speak to the Head of Mid Kent ICT Services to satisfy themselves that measures were in place to adequately protect the Council and that Officers would provide more information with regards to the ICT risk.

Councillors Boughton and M Burton asked for their dissent to be noted in regard to the cyber threat to the Council and that it should be monitored by the Corporate Leadership Team on a continual basis rather than on a quarterly basis.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the risk appetite statement as set out in Appendix 1 be agreed and adopted into the risk management framework.

Voting: Unanimous

2. That the Corporate risks as set out in Appendix 2 be noted with the additional wording added to the risk under Poor Partner Relationships which reads '**Continued horizon scanning in respect of devolution**'.

Voting: For - 13 Against - 0 Abstentions - 2

Note: Councillor Blackmore arrived at 6.50 p.m. during the consideration of this item and did not participate in the voting for Recommendation 1.

13. DEBT RECOVERY SERVICE

The Head of Revenues and Benefits presented a report on the Debt Recovery Service which gave an update on the successful implementation and operation of a shared debt recovery service with Swale and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils.

The Committee noted that there was an opportunity to expand the service to deliver on behalf of other local authorities. Discussions had already been held with Gravesham Borough Council to undertake a 6 month trial of the service for the enforcement of Council Tax, Business Rates and parking debt.

In response to questions from Members, the Head of Revenues and Benefits advised that:-

- The investments, benefits and risks would be shared equally by the Mid Kent Services partners (Maidstone, Swale and Tunbridge Wells Borough Councils).
- The objectives quoted in the report were set out in the business case and at present the number of warrants enforced had surpassed the medium term goal.

**RESOLVED:** That

1. The progress that had been made in the implementation and delivery of the Debt Recovery Service be noted.
2. Delegated authority be given to the Mid Kent Services Director to negotiate and enter into such agreements as are necessary to expand the Debt Recovery Service in order to provide services for other Councils.

Voting: Unanimous

#### 14. COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME

The Head of Revenues and Benefits presented a report on how the Council Tax Reduction Scheme for 2018-19 would be taken forward following the gradual roll out of Universal Credit.

At its meeting in July 2017 the Committee agreed that a consultation on the updated Council Tax Reduction Scheme would be undertaken with option 1 being the preferred option.

In response to Members' concerns, the Head of Revenues and Benefits advised:-

- Over 3,200 members of the public who were in receipt of Council Tax reduction were consulted by email.

- There would be an opportunity to review the changes next year.
- If option 1 is agreed then this could be carried out within existing resources.
- If option 2 is agreed then the Council would need more resources.

**RESOLVED:** That

1. The outcome of the public consultation be noted.
2. The **Committee Recommends to Council** that Option 1 is adopted and the Council Tax Reduction Scheme be amended to incorporate the changes summarised in Section 3 to the report of the Head of Revenues and Benefits.

Voting: For - 14 Against - 0 Abstentions - 1

15. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

**RESOLVED:** That the press and public be excluded from the meeting due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

16. PROPERTY ACQUISITION

The Corporate Property Manager presented a report on a proposed acquisition to acquire the leasehold of commercial/industrial units as detailed in the exempt report.

In response to questions from Members, the Corporate Property Manager advised:-

- That there would be 7.5% return on the investment.
- The buildings were in good condition.
- The leases were currently on short term so the Council would be in a good position to negotiate improved rates.
- The Council was cautious about making investments of this type but it felt that the potential benefits outweighed the risks.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the purchase price as detailed in the exempt report be agreed.

2. That the Director of Finance and Business Improvement be given delegated authority to conclude negotiations with the leaseholder.
3. That the Head of Mid Kent Legal Services be authorised to complete the purchase on the terms as agreed by the Director of Finance and Business Improvement.

Voting: For: unanimous

17. DURATION OF MEETING

6.30 p.m. to 8.10 p.m.

## MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

### Policy and Resources Committee

#### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2017

**Present:** Councillors Barned, Mrs Blackmore, Boughton, D Burton, Butler, English, Fermor, Mrs Gooch, Harper, Harvey, Harwood, Hastie, McLoughlin, Mrs Ring and Mrs Wilson (Chairman)

**Also Present:** Councillors Adkinson, M Burton, Joy, D Mortimer and Naghi

18. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received by Councillors Brice, Cox, Garland and Perry.

19. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following members were present as substitute members:

- Councillor Burton for Councillor Perry
- Councillor Butler for Councillor Garland
- Councillor English for Councillor Cox
- Councillor Ring for Councillor Brice

20. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman informed the Committee that there was an urgent update to Item 16. Call in of Decision of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee - Disposal of Land Adjacent to Gallagher Stadium. The reason for urgency was that the information was not available at the time of agenda publication. It was noted that this information was commercially sensitive and would only be circulated in closed session.

21. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

It was noted that the following members were present as visiting members and indicated their intention to speak on Item 16. Call in of Decision of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee - Disposal of Land Adjacent to Gallagher Stadium:

- Councillor Adkinson;
- Councillor M Burton; and
- Councillor Naghi.

Councillors Mortimer and Joy were present as visiting members but did not indicate their intention to speak on any items on the agenda.

22. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

Councillor Wilson disclosed, in relation to Item 16. Call in of Decision of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee - Disposal of Land Adjacent to Gallagher Stadium, that she had met with Maidstone United on two occasions prior to this meeting. However no opinion was given either way on this topic at the meetings.

23. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

All members of the Committee had been lobbied on Item 16. Call in of Decision of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee - Disposal of Land Adjacent to Gallagher Stadium.

Councillors Barned and Gooch had been lobbied on Item 15. Mid Kent Services (MKS) Board Appointment – options.

24. EXEMPT ITEMS

**RESOLVED:** That Item 17. Payroll Services be taken in private due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

25. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 30 OCTOBER 2017

It was noted that the wrong minutes had been attached to the Committee agenda. Therefore the minutes of the meeting held on 30 October 2017 would be considered at the next meeting of this Committee.

26. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS (IF ANY)

There were no petitions.

27. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (IF ANY)

There were no questions from members of the public.

28. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement updated the Committee on its Work Programme. It was noted that:

- The item on Office Accommodation would be considered by the Committee in January instead of December;
- David Tibbit had retired therefore other officers had taken on his projects – the work programme would be updated to reflect this for the next meeting; and

- The Chairman had asked for the columns to be numbered on the Work Programme for the next meeting, so that items could be referenced easier during meetings.

**RESOLVED:** That the Committee Work Programme is noted.

29. AMENDMENT TO THE ORDER OF BUSINESS

**RESOLVED:** That Item 16. Call in of Decision of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee - Disposal of Land Adjacent to Gallagher Stadium be considered before Item 12. Key Performance Indicator Update Quarter 2.

30. CALL IN OF DECISION OF HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE - DISPOSAL OF LAND ADJACENT TO GALLAGHER STADIUM

Councillors Boughton, M Burton and Naghi presented their referral of decision from the Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee held on 31 October 2017. The presentation covered the following:

- The referral of the decision was because the Councillors felt that the club's position on a leasehold disposal was misrepresented during the debate, and this may have affected the decision the Councillors made at that meeting.
- Maidstone United Football Club was an asset to the community, and the Council should offer maximum support to the Club.
- Fans of the football club were an important part of the community in Maidstone, and their voices should be heard when making this decision.

Terry Casey spoke on this item.

Councillor Adkinson spoke on this item as a Visiting Member.

Following the presentation by the members that referred the decision, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement spoke on this item. The Director of Finance and Business Improvement explained that the Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee supported the idea of the land being used in the way the Club wanted, and they had therefore agreed at their meeting on 31 October to dispose of the land to the football club. The only issue was whether the disposal should be on a freehold or a leasehold basis. The report to the Committee had made clear the Club's preference for a freehold disposal.

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement explained that his response to a specific question that had been asked about the Club's position on accepting a freehold disposal was based on two separate meetings that had been held with the club. Therefore there was no intention to mislead Councillors as he had given an honest opinion.

The Committee debated the proposal to dispose of the land on a leasehold basis. It was noted that the Council's policy was to usually dispose of surplus land using a leasehold. However the Committee felt that the benefits that the football club brought to the local community, and the footfall it brought to the town centre, meant that a freehold disposal would be appropriate in this case. Members noted that the Council had an obligation to achieve the best price reasonably obtainable for the disposal and confirmed that the disposal should be handled on a commercial basis.

**RESOLVED:** That

1. A freehold disposal of the Land Adjacent to Gallagher Stadium is agreed.

Voting: Unanimous

2. The freehold disposal should be at the valuation price and subject to an overage clause.
3. Authority is delegated to the Director of Finance and Business Improvement to conclude negotiations based on the Overage Clause and Valuation Price specified.

Voting: For - 14 Against - 1 Abstentions - 0

Note: Councillor Burton left the meeting after the consideration of this item.

31. EXCLUSION AND RE-ADMITTANCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

During consideration of Item 16. Call in of Decision of Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee - Disposal of Land Adjacent to Gallagher Stadium, the Chairman explained to the Committee that in order to consider the item fully, commercially sensitive information would need to be considered and this could only be considered in closed session.

**RESOLVED:** That the press and public are excluded from the meeting due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

Once the commercially sensitive information had been discussed, the Committee -

**RESOLVED:** That the press and public are re-admitted to the meeting.

32. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATOR UPDATE QUARTER 2

The Head of Policy, Communications and Governance introduced this item. It was noted that overall, 75% of all the Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) achieved their target. The one KPI that had missed its target and was at 'red' status was fly tips cleared within two working days.

The Head of Environment and Public Realm was present to answer questions from the Committee about the indicator that was at 'red' status. The Head of Environment and Public Realm explained the reason this indicator had performed so poorly was because of a software issue. The software issue meant that although the fly tips had been cleared, the system did not allow them to close the report down.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Head of Environment and Public Realm confirmed that the majority of the fly tips that were showing as cleared outside of two working days target had been cleared within target time.

**RESOLVED:**

That the summary of performance for Quarter 2 of 2017/18 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) is noted.

33. 2ND QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement presented the 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Budget Monitoring Report to the Committee.

It was noted that overall, the position at the end of the second quarter was that there was an underspend. This overall underspend was made up of overspends in some areas and underspends in others.

In response to questions from members of the Committee, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement clarified:

- There were no updates in the position for Development Control Appeals since the last meeting, as no significant appeals had concluded.
- The backlog in dealing with Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) appeals, which affected PCN income, in Parking Services was being addressed.
- The slippage in the Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee Capital Programme was due to projects being delayed, but that spend would pick up once projects had been progressed during the year.
- The apparent underspend on Rent Allowances would not be an underspend at the end of the year, as it arose from the timing of government subsidy payments. These payments would ensure a neutral position by year end.

**RESOLVED:** That

1. The revenue position at the end of the second quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position where significant variances have been identified, as set out in table 1, paragraph 2.6 are

noted.

2. The capital position at the end of the second quarter is noted.
3. The performance of the Collection Fund and the estimated level of balances at the year-end is noted.
4. The write-off of unpaid business rates as set out in Appendix 3 is approved.
5. The performance in relation to the Treasury Management Strategy for the second quarter of 2017/18 is noted.

Voting: Unanimous

34. CHARGING POLICY

The Director of Finance and Business Improvement introduced the updated Charging Policy to the Committee.

The Committee noted that the refreshed policy replaced one that had been produced five years previously. The renewed policy was simpler, and reflected the councils renewed focus on commercialism.

**RESOLVED:**

That the updated Charging Policy, attached as Appendix 1, is approved.

Voting: Unanimous

35. MID KENT SERVICES (MKS) BOARD APPOINTMENT- OPTIONS

The Mid Kent Services Support Officer presented a report to the Committee which outlined the options for appointing an additional member on the Mid Kent Services (MKS) Board.

**RESOLVED:**

1. The recommendation of the MKS Board to expand the board by one additional member drawn from each of the partnership authorities is agreed.
2. The additional member on the MKS Board will be the Deputy Leader of the Council, with the Vice Chairman of Policy and Resources Committee acting as a substitute for both board members.

Voting: Unanimous

36. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

**RESOLVED:** That the press and public are excluded from the meeting due to the possible disclosure of exempt information.

37. PAYROLL SERVICES

The Head of Human Resources Shared Service presented a report to the Committee which informed the Committee that another Local Authority had chosen the Shared Payroll Service between Maidstone and Swale Borough Councils as a preferred bidder to supply their Payroll Services.

In response to a question from the Committee, the Head of Human Resources Shared Service confirmed that the new partner would mean an approximately 30% increase in the number of payslips processed by the team.

**RESOLVED:**

That delegation is given to the Mid Kent Services Director to negotiate and enter into such agreements as necessary to expand the HR/Payroll Service in order to provide services for other Councils.

Voting: Unanimous

38. DURATION OF MEETING

7.01 p.m. to 9.31 p.m.

	Report Title	Work Stream	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
1	Property Strategy	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Jan-17	Mark Green	Lucy Stroud
2	New Ways of Working - Maidstone House Office Accomodation	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Jan-18	Mark Green	Georgia Hawkes
3	Council Tax Penalty Policy	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Jan-18	Steve McGinnes	Sheila Coburn
4	Debt Recovery Policy	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Jan-18	Sheila Coburn	Sheila Coburn
5	Phase 3 Public Realm - Funding	Regeneration and Commercialisation	P&R	Jan-18	Dawn Hudd	Fran Wallis
6	Digital Strategy	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Jan-18	Georgia Hawkes	Georgia Hawkes
7	Fees & Charges	Corporate Finance and Budgets	P&R	Jan-18	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
8	Medium Term Financial Strategy & Budget Proposals 2018/19	Corporate Finance and Budgets	P&R	Jan-18	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
9	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 Onwards - Capital Programme	Corporate Finance and Budgets	P&R	Jan-18	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
10	Strategic Plan Action Plan 2018/19	Corporate Planning	P&R	Jan-18	Angela Woodhouse	Angela Woodhouse
11	Union Street Housing Development	Regeneration and Commercialisation	P&R	Jan-18		
12	Brunswick Street Housing Development	Regeneration and Commercialisation	P&R	Jan-18		
13	Kent Medical Campus Innovation Centre	Changes to Services & Commissioning	P&R	Feb-18	Dawn Hudd	Abi Lewis
14	Medium Term Financial Strategy 2018/19 Onwards	Corporate Finance and Budgets	P&R	Feb-18		
15	Setting new Key Performance Indicators (please note that there will be workshops with each committee prior to the report in January/February)	Corporate Planning	P&R	Feb-18	Angela Woodhouse	Anna Collier
16	Commissioning & Procurement Strategy	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	P&R	Feb-18	Mark Green	Steve Trigg/Georgia Hawkes
17	Q3 Performance Report 2017/18	Updates, Monitoring Reports and Reviews	P&R	Feb-18	Angela Woodhouse	Anna Collier
18	King Street	Regeneration and Commercialisation	P&R	TBC	William Cornall	Alison Elliott
19	Mote Park Lake Dam	Capital projects	P&R	TBC	Mark Green	David Tibbit

**POLICY AND RESOURCES  
COMMITTEE**

**13 December 2017**

**Strategic Plan 2015-20, 2018-19 Refresh**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Council
<b>Lead Director</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy and Communications
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

**Executive Summary**

Policy and Resources Committee agreed that the Strategic Plan would be refreshed for 2018-19. The draft refreshed plan is attached at Appendix A. At a workshop with Group Leaders and the Wider Leadership Team it was identified that the current three priority action areas should remain as priorities for 2018-19.

**This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. Approve the refreshed Strategic Plan for consideration by the Service Committees, prior to approval in February before submission to full Council
2. Approve retaining the three prioritised action areas for 2018-19 and the performance reporting arrangements.

**Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Policy and Resources Committee	13 December 2017
Strategic Planning and Sustainable Transportation Committee	9 January 2018
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	16 January 2018
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	30 January 2018
Policy and Resources Committee	14 February 2018
Council	28 February 2018

# Strategic Plan 2015-20, 2018-19 Refresh

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Maidstone Council's Strategic Plan 2015-20 sets out the Council's priorities and the actions that we need to take to achieve these. Last municipal year the Service Committees had extensive input into the wording of all the action areas within the Strategic Plan. Policy and Resources Committee subsequently agreed at its meeting on 25 July 2017 that the current plan be refreshed to ensure contextual information is up to date and areas of focus in relation to the action areas for 2018-19 are agreed. The plan attached at Appendix A includes updated statistics (where available) and changes to the "we will commit to" sections.
- 1.2 A Resident Survey was conducted over the summer which included postal and online submissions as well as a roadshow in various locations. A summary report of those areas relevant to the strategic plan is provided at Appendix B.

---

## 2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 At its meeting on 25 July 2017 Policy and Resources Committee agreed that the Strategic Plan would be refreshed and not re-written. Appendix A shows the refreshed Plan with tracked changes.
- 2.2 Every two years the Council conducts a Resident Survey. The survey carried out over the summer included consultation on our budget and corporate priorities. When asked to prioritise the three priority action areas by importance, the majority of respondents said that priority 2, 'A clean and safe environment' was the one most important to them. One in four respondents said that 'A home for everyone' was most important and less than one in ten said that 'Regenerating the town centre' was most important to them. With regard to spending on the priorities just over half of all respondents said that funding for the priority 'A home for everyone' should be maintained and almost one in three said spending should be increased. Over half of all respondents said that funding for 'A clean and safe environment' should be increased and 1.5% said funding should be reduced. Overall, 46.1% of respondents said that funding on 'Regenerating the town centre' should be maintained and 26.8% said that it should be reduced.
- 2.3 Group meetings have been offered briefing session on the results of the residents survey. The results have been given to service managers to inform decision making in their service areas. The Policy and Information Team will meet with managers in December and January to collate the actions that have been taken as a result of the survey. This will be feedback

to a member workshop in February and used to inform the communication and engagement strategy refresh.

2.4 Policy and Resources Committee at its meeting in July requested that a workshop be held to look at the priorities for 2018-19. The Group Leaders and Leadership Team held a workshop looking at the progress in the three priority areas and agreed that they should remain as priorities for 2018-19. The Committee is asked to consider whether this should be agreed as part of the updated Strategic Plan. The proposed three priority areas for 2018-19 are therefore:

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

2.5 The Strategic Plan will go to each Service Committee, as refreshed, for consideration prior to approval by Policy and Resources Committee for submission to full Council in February.

2.6 As is evident from the report of the Director of Finance and Business Improvement elsewhere on this agenda the Council faces significant financial challenges over the life of the plan. Despite the financial pressures the Medium Term Financial Strategy remains aligned to and underpins the delivery of the Strategic Plan priorities.

2.7 The Committee could amend the strategic plan further prior to it going to the Service Committees, approve the changes or reject them. This Committee has already agreed that it would refresh rather than write a new plan. This is the first step in that process.

2.8 The refresh includes:

- Identification of areas of focus for 2018-19; and
- Refresh of any contextual information in the document such as Statistics
- Updates to the “we will” sections under each priority area

The foreword will be updated prior to Policy and Resources Approval in February as will the artwork and strategies and plans sections of the plan at Appendix A.

---

### **3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

3.1 Policy and Resources Committee is asked to approve the refreshed Strategic Plan at Appendix A for consideration and further development by the Service Committees. This is in line with the process agreed by the Committee when considering the corporate planning timetable in July.

#### **4. RISK**

- 4.1 The Strategic Plan sets out our priorities and how they will be delivered, informing the Council's risk register and risk appetite. The Council has a corporate risk register which will pick up any actions from the Strategic Plan.
- 

#### **5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 Residents were asked to consider our priorities in the Resident Survey carried out in the summer - see Appendix B.
- 

#### **6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 6.1 The next stage in the process is to consult with the Service Committees prior to reporting to this committee in February.
- 6.2 Policy and Resources Committee will then consider the changes put forward by each Service Committee prior to approving the refreshed plan for submission to Council on 28 February 2018.
- 

#### **7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	The Strategic Plan sets the Council's priorities	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Risk Management</b>	Already covered in the risk section	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Financial</b>	The Strategic Plan sets the Council's priorities. The Medium Term Financial Strategy aligns with the Strategic Plan and sets out the priorities in financial terms.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Staffing</b>	The plan informs service plans and individual appraisals	Head of Service
<b>Legal</b>	No legal implications	Legal Team
<b>Privacy and Data</b>		Head of Policy,

<b>Protection</b>	No implications	Communications and Governance
<b>Equalities</b>	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	The Strategic Plan sets out the high level priorities for Community Safety	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
<b>Procurement</b>	No implications	Section 151 Officer

## **8. REPORT APPENDICES**

- Appendix A: Strategic Plan 2015-20, 2018-19 Refresh
  - Appendix B: Resident Survey Summary
- 

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

# Maidstone Borough Council's Strategic Plan 2015-2020



20

# 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:

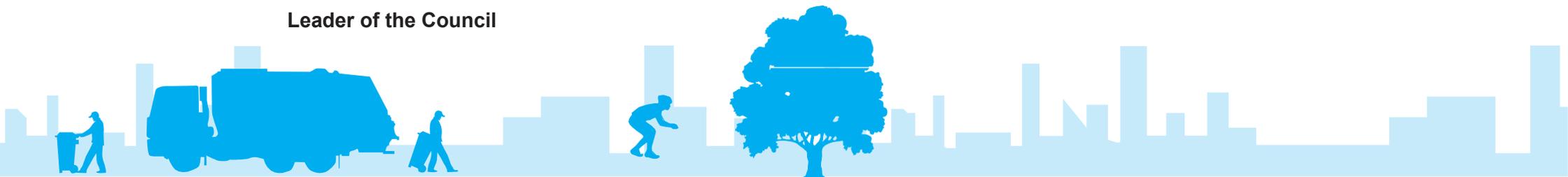
- A home for everyone
- A clean and safe environment and;
- Regenerating the town centre

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

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Fran Wilson".

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.

24

### 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

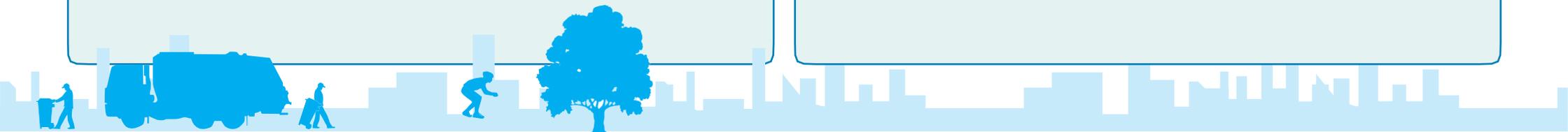
Deprivation in the borough is lower than average, however 14.8% of children (under 16 years old) in Maidstone live in poverty. There is a difference in life expectancy of men and women; women are expected to live 3 years longer than men and there is a 11 year gap between the ward with the highest life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

25

### 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

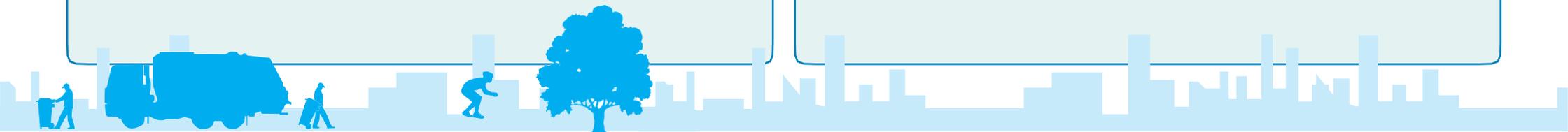
There is always something to see or do in our borough reflecting the wide variety of venues, facilities and good quality public spaces. This not only enhances quality of life for Maidstone residents but also contributes significantly to the local economy. Our population is increasing at the highest rate 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

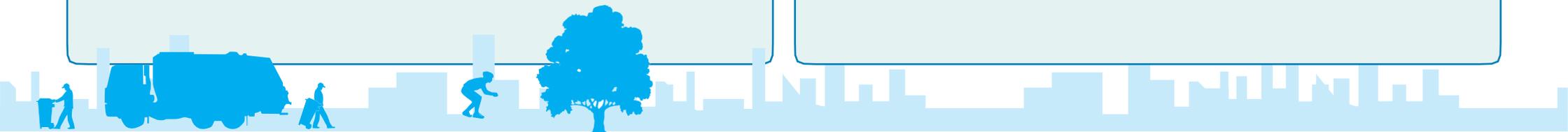
Maidstone is strategically situated between London and the channel ports and is serviced by two motorway networks, the M20 and the M2, with rail connections to central London. We do however recognise that travelling in and around the borough by car during peak periods can be difficult due to congestion. 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

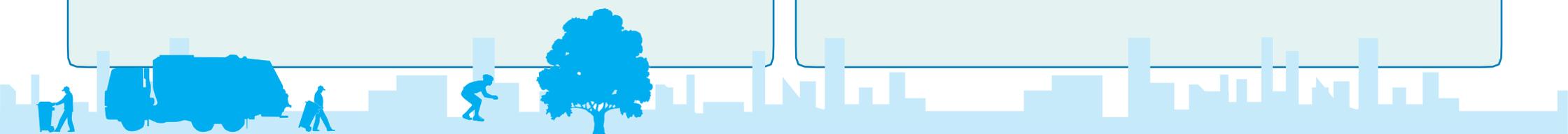
There were 77,500 people employed in the Maidstone economy in 2016/17 with a high proportion in the public sector, reflecting the town's status as Kent's County Town and administrative capital. There were 7,195 registered businesses in Maidstone in 2017.

### **We want:**

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

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

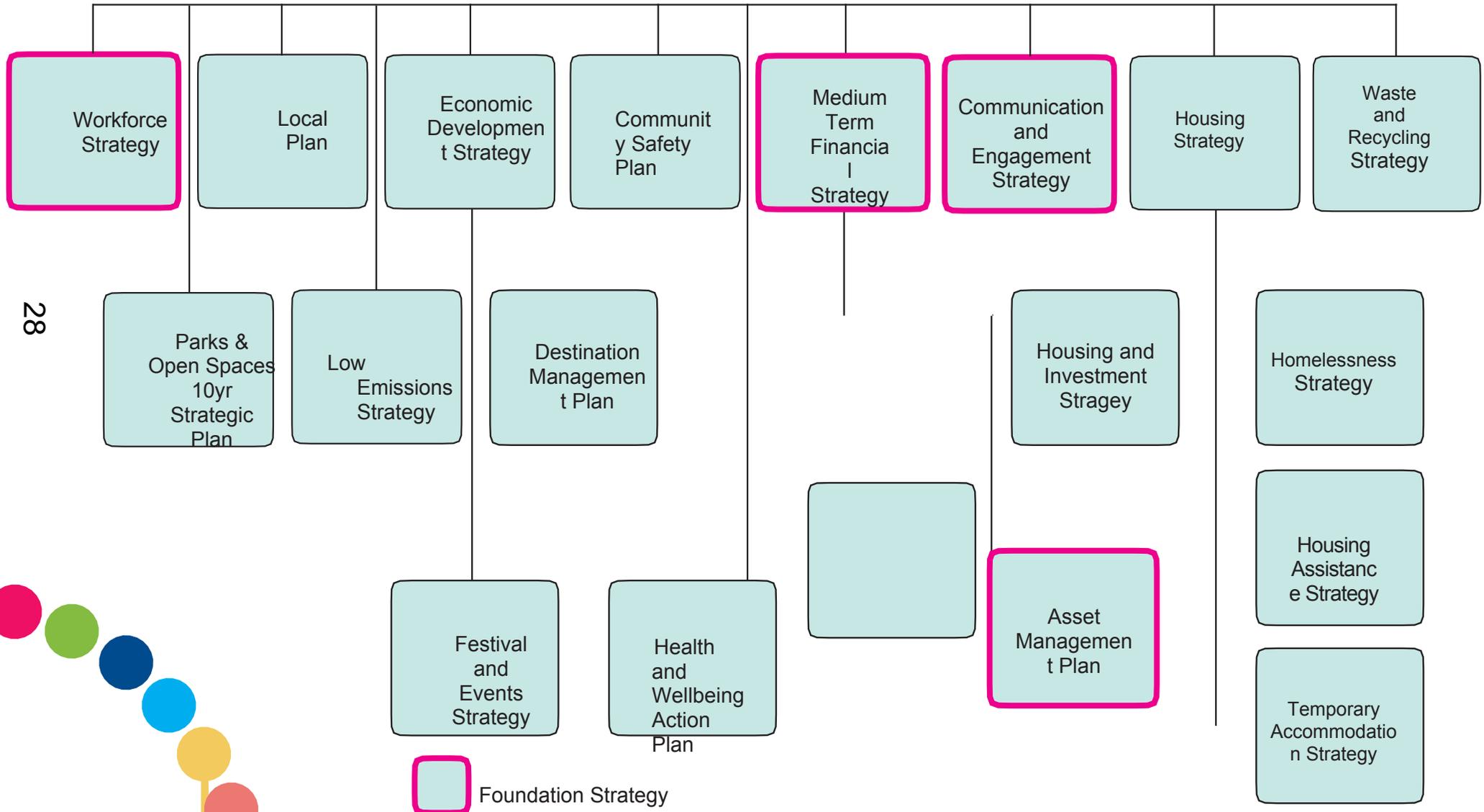
- Delivering our Economic Development Strategy
- Working with businesses to support them to grow and develop



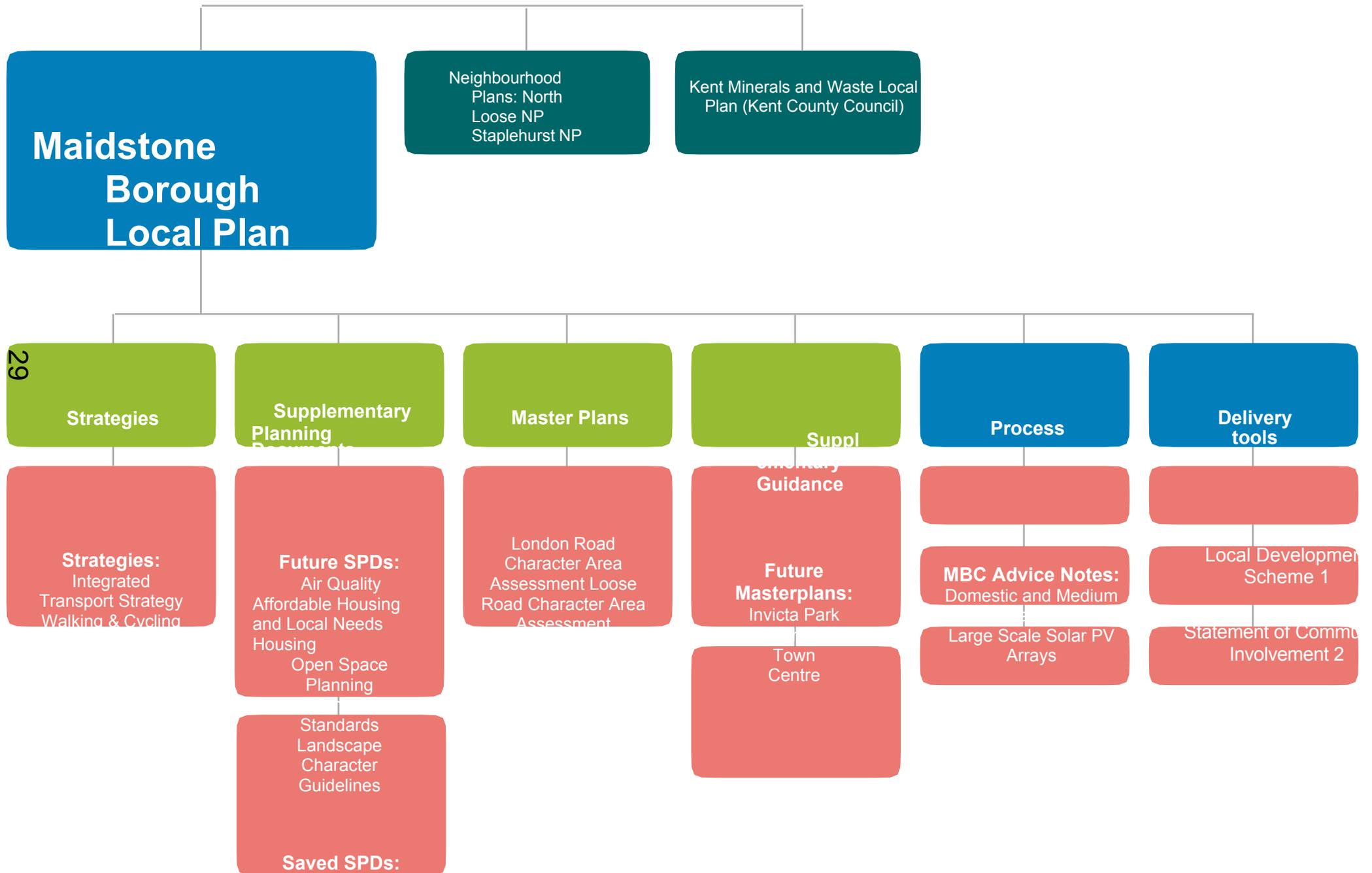
# Strategy

## Strategic Plan 2015 - 2020

Plans to be updated and artwork re-done

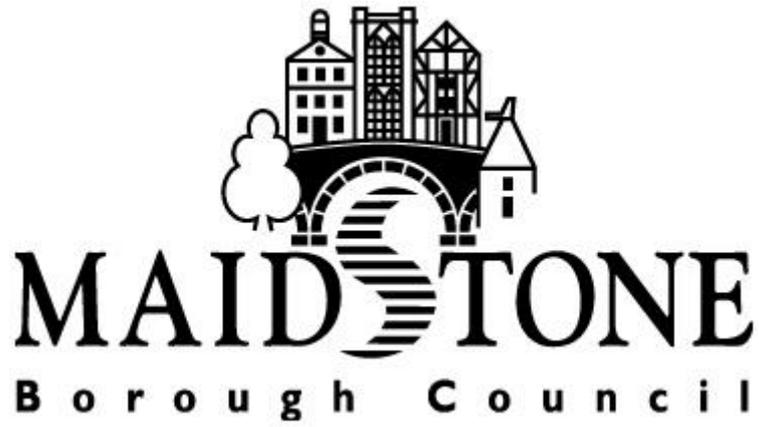


# Maidstone Local Plan Flow Chart – page to be deleted









# Resident Survey

---

2017

## Contents

<b>Methodology</b> .....	3
<b>Council Satisfaction</b> .....	4
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live? .....	4
How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Maidstone Borough Council runs things? .....	5
To what extent do you agree or disagree that Maidstone Borough Council provides good value for money.....	6
Overall, how well informed do you think Maidstone Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides? .....	7
<b>Corporate Priorities</b> .....	8
Priority Importance .....	8
Priority 1. A home for everyone .....	9
How confident are you that you know where to get information, advice and guidance about:	
Housing Advice .....	10
My neighbourhood is a place where....where homes are affordable.....	11
Priority 2. A clean and safe environment .....	12
My neighbourhood is a place that is ... clear of litter .....	13
My neighbourhood is a place that is ... clear of graffiti .....	14
My neighbourhood is a place that is ... clear of dog fouling.....	15
How safe do you feel walking in your local area during daylight .....	16
How safe do you feel walking in your local area during night-time .....	17
Priority 3. Regenerating the Town Centre.....	18
How would you rate the following in Maidstone Town Centre: Range of shops .....	19
How would you rate the following in Maidstone Town Centre: Entertainment available .....	20
How would you rate the following in Maidstone Town Centre: Range of eating and drinking establishments .....	21
Do you think any of the following issues are a problem in the Town Centre? Empty shops .....	22
<b>Demographics</b> .....	23
<b>Weighting</b> .....	24

## Methodology

Maidstone Borough Council undertook a consultation between 21 June and 20<sup>th</sup> August 2017.

The survey was carried out online and by post, with a direct email to approximately 9,000 customer who had consented to being contacted by email and was promoted on the Council's website, social media and in the local press and a mailed paper copy was sent to a random sample of 6,100 households on the Council Tax Register, this was a one off mailing with no reminders. In addition paper copies were also handed out at engagement days held at various locations around the borough. An incentive prize of £100 shopping vouchers was offered to boost returns.

The survey was open to all Maidstone Borough residents aged 18 years and over. Data has been weighted according to the known population profile to counteract non-response bias (weighting was applied to 2008 responses where both questions on gender and age were answered). The weighting profile is based on the 2016 mid-year ONS population estimates. However, the under-representation of 18 to 24 year olds means that high weights have been applied to responses in this group, therefore results for this group should be treated with caution. It should also be noted that respondents from BME backgrounds are slightly under-represented at 4.1% compared 5.9%<sup>1</sup> in the local area.

The economically active group includes respondents in employment (full, part-time or self-employed) or who are looking for work.

A total of 2350 people responded to the questionnaire, this report discusses the weighted results. Please note not every respondent answered every question therefore the total number of respondents refers to the number of respondents for the question being discussed not to the survey overall.

With a total of 2,350 responses to the survey, the overall results in this report are accurate to  $\pm 2.0\%$  at the 95% confidence level. This means that we can be 95% certain that the results are between  $\pm 2.0\%$  of the calculated response, so the 'true' response could be 2.0% above or below the figures reported (i.e. a 50% agreement rate could in reality lie within the range of 48% to 52%).

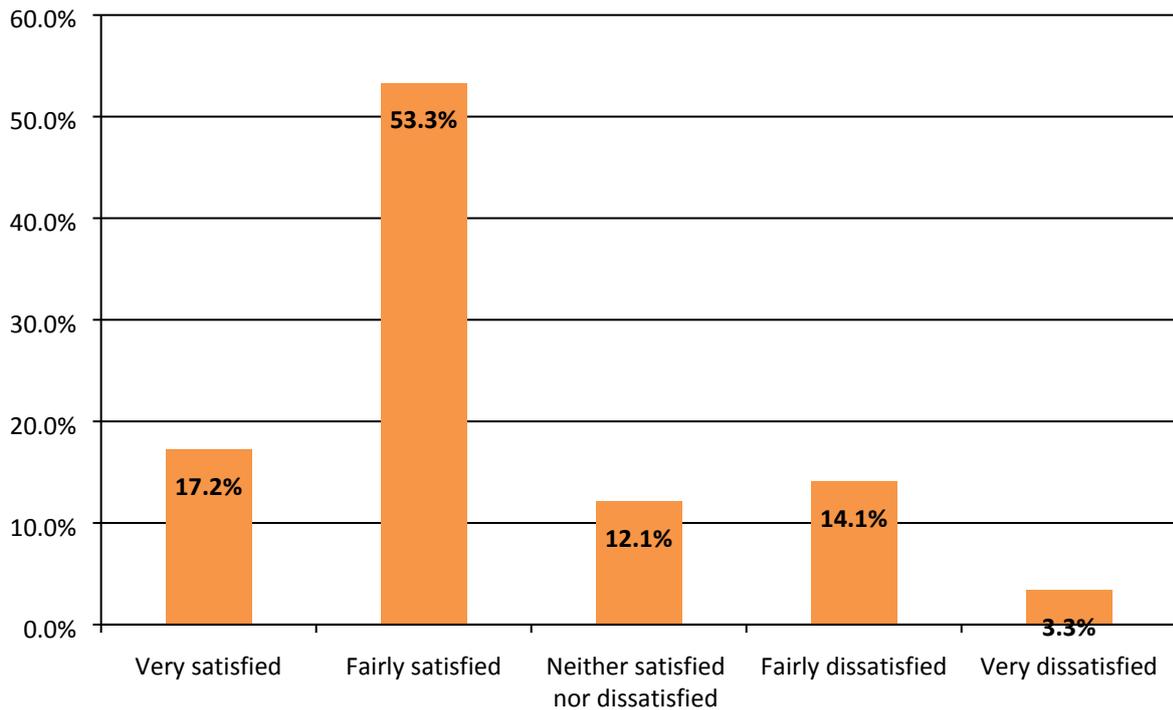
For further information about the resident survey

---

<sup>1</sup> 2011 Census

## Council Satisfaction

### How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

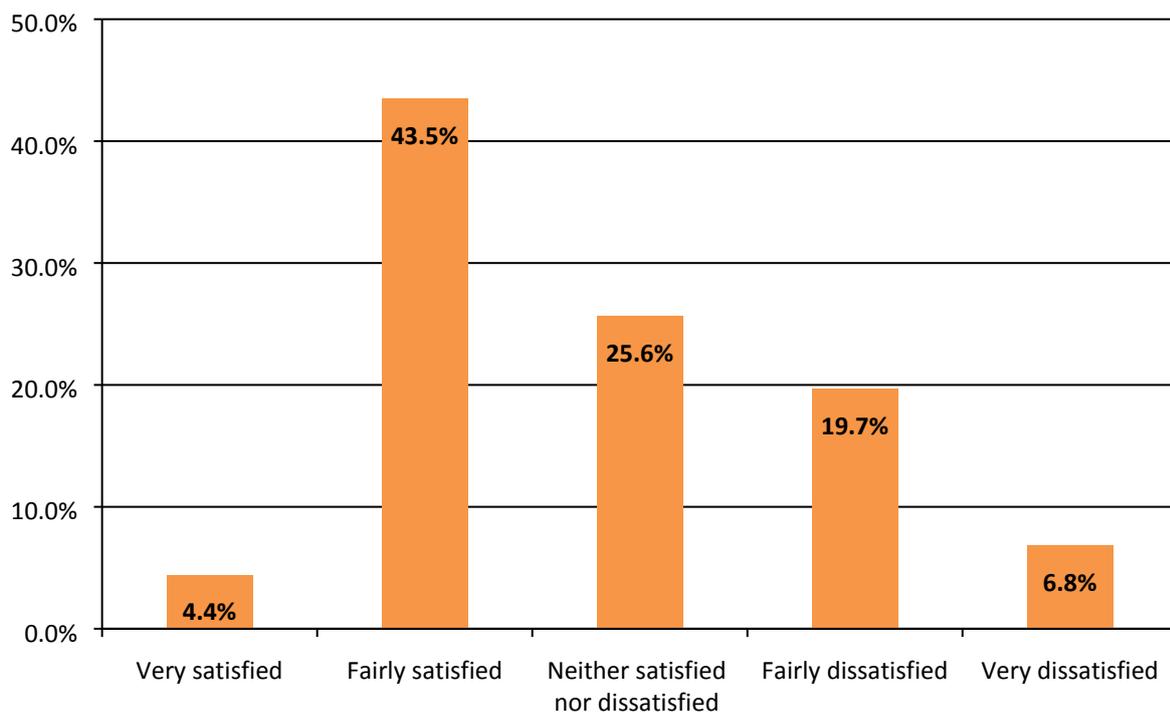


Overall, 70.5% of respondents were very or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live. The fairly satisfied was the most common response, with the majority of responses in this answer choice.

There is a gap of 13.2% between the age group with the greatest level of satisfaction (35 to 44 year olds) and that with the lowest (18 to 24 year olds). Almost one in four respondents in the 18 to 24 years group were very or fairly dissatisfied. Respondents in the group 25 to 34 years had the greatest proportion of respondent that were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied at 15.8%.

Percentage Satisfied	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	62.2
- 25 to 34 years	67.5
- 35 to 44 years	75.4
- 45 to 54 years	70.2
- 55 to 64 years	72.7
- 65 to 74 years	70.0
- 75 years and over	73.4
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	68.7
- Female	72.2
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	71.1
- BME groups	70.9
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	64.5
- No	72.0
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	72.1
- Economically inactive	66.2

## How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Maidstone Borough Council runs things?



Overall, 47.9% of respondents were very or fairly satisfied with the way the Council runs things. The most common response was fairly satisfied with 43.5% of respondents selecting this answer. However, just over one in four respondents said they were very or fairly dissatisfied with the way the Council runs things.

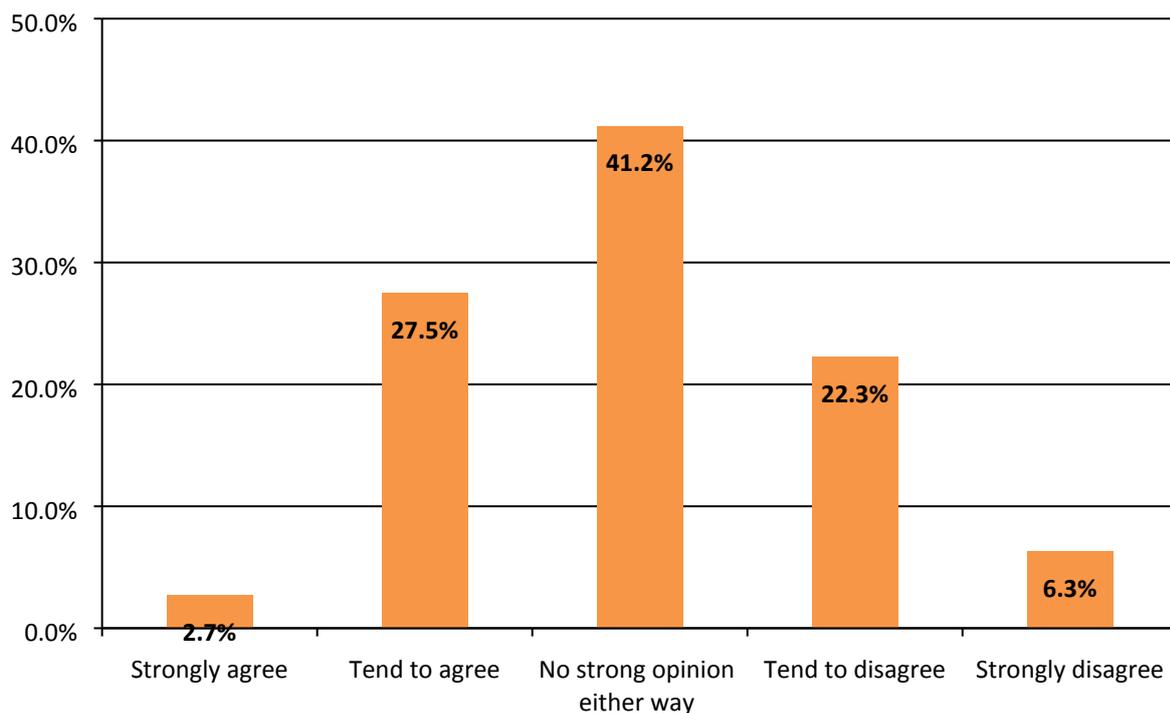
There is an 18.7% gap between the age group with the highest level of satisfaction (18 to 24 year olds) and that that with the lowest level (65 to 74 year olds).

There is an 8% difference in satisfaction between respondents that are economically active and those that are economically inactive. Inactive respondent were 5% more likely to respond that they are very or fair dissatisfied.

There is a 6.6% difference in the satisfaction levels between respondents from white groups and those from BME groups. Although both groups have a comparable proportion of people that are dissatisfied when compared to the overall result respondents from BME groups were more likely to say they have no strong opinion either way than those from white groups.

Percentage Yes	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	61.5
- 25 to 34 years	48.2
- 35 to 44 years	51.3
- 45 to 54 years	43.5
- 55 to 64 years	44.4
- 65 to 74 years	42.8
- 75 years and over	48.8
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	47.3
- Female	48.4
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	48.1
- BME groups	41.5
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	42.9
- No	49.2
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	49.7
- Economically inactive	41.7

## To what extent do you agree or disagree that Maidstone Borough Council provides good value for money



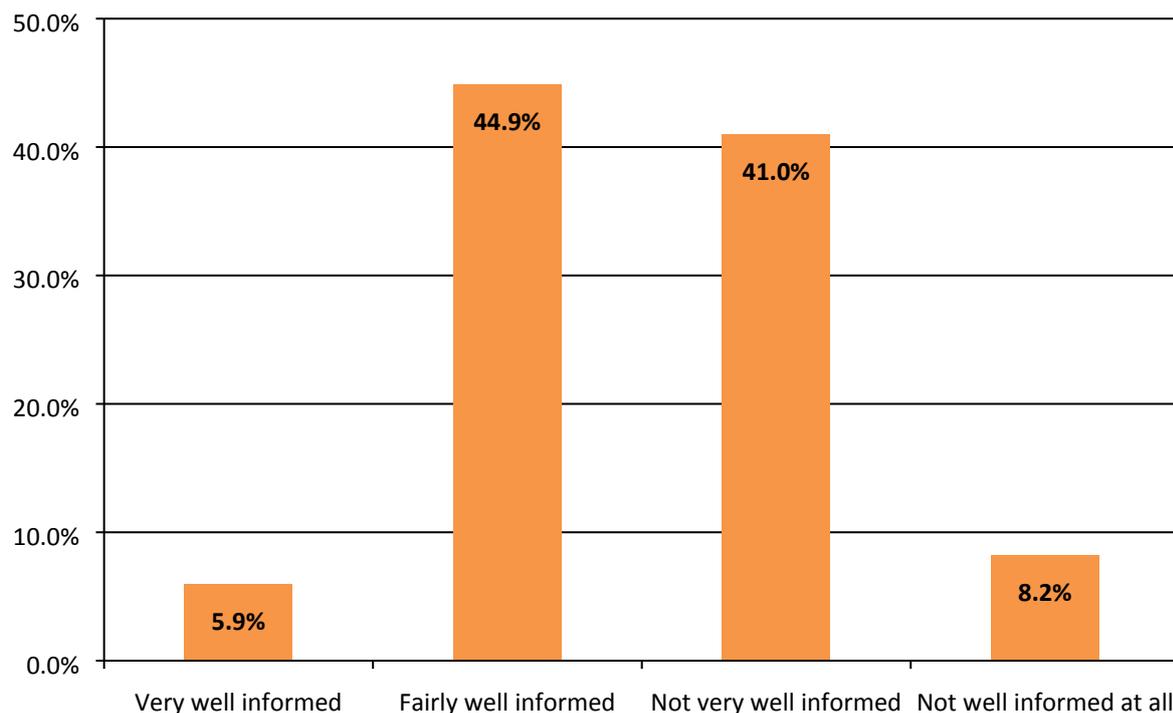
Overall, 30.2% of all respondents either strongly or tended to agree that the council provides good value for money. The most common response was no strong opinion either way with 41.2% selecting this response and more than one in four respondents said they disagreed with the statement that the Council provides good value for money.

Across the age groups, the 25 to 34 year olds have the greatest level of agreement at 35.5% and the 55 to 64 year olds have the lowest level of agreement at 25.03%. The 55 to 64 year olds have the greatest proportion of respondents that have no strong opinion either way at 47.0%, while the 18 to 24 year olds have the greatest proportion of respondents that disagree that the Council provides good value for money. Overall that is a 10.2% between the age group with the highest and that with the lowest levels of agreement.

There is a 6.2% difference in the proportion of respondents agreeing between those that are economically active and those who are not. While both have comparable proportions disagreeing at 28.4% and 28.5% respectively, there is a greater proportion of respondents in the economically inactive group that have no strong opinion either way.

Percentage Agreeing	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	31.6
- 25 to 34 years	35.5
- 35 to 44 years	30.9
- 45 to 54 years	27.6
- 55 to 64 years	25.3
- 65 to 74 years	29.8
- 75 years and over	31.7
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	30.5
- Female	29.9
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	30.3
- BME groups	31.3
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	28.4
- No	30.9
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	32.0
- Economically inactive	25.8

**Overall, how well informed do you think Maidstone Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?**



Overall, 50.8% of respondents said they thought MBC keeps its residents very or fairly well informed about the services and benefits it provides. The most common response was fairly well informed.

The 75 years and over group have the greatest proportion of respondents that think they are very well or fairly well informed at 54.6%. Respondents from BME groups have the lowest proportion saying they are informed at 40.9%.

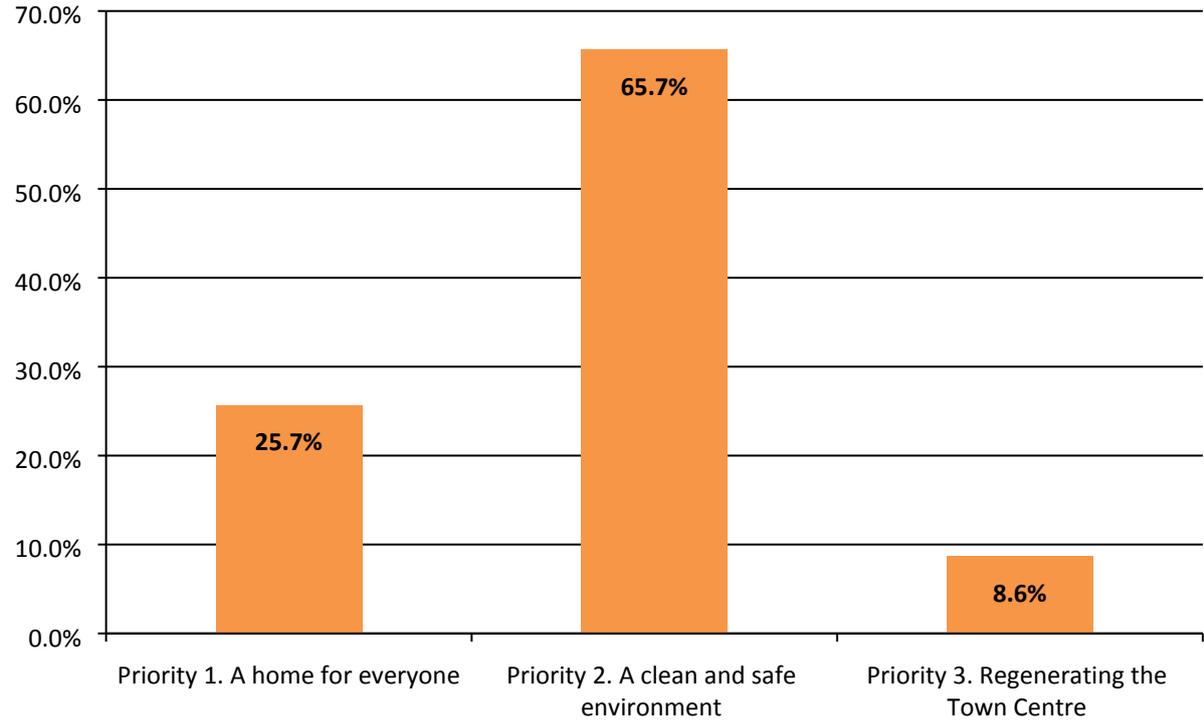
There is a 6.3% difference between the age group with the greatest level of confidence (75 years and over) and that with the lowest level (18 to 24 years). The data shows that levels of feeling informed increase with age.

The greatest variation in responses is when results from BME groups and white groups are compared. There is a 10.7% difference in the proportion that feel informed, and while there is no significant difference in the proportions responding very well informed for both groups, respondents from BME groups are more likely to not very well informed compared to white group respondents.

Percentage Very or Fairly Well Informed	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	48.3
- 25 to 34 years	49.1
- 35 to 44 years	49.6
- 45 to 54 years	51.6
- 55 to 64 years	52.2
- 65 to 74 years	50.8
- 75 years and over	54.6
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	54.1
- Female	47.7
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	51.6
- BME groups	40.9
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	48.4
- No	51.0
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	50.8
- Economically inactive	50.2

# Corporate Priorities

## Priority Importance



The majority of respondents said that priority 2. A clean and safe environment was the one most important to them. One in four respondents said that priority one was most important and less than one in ten said that regenerating the town centre was most important.

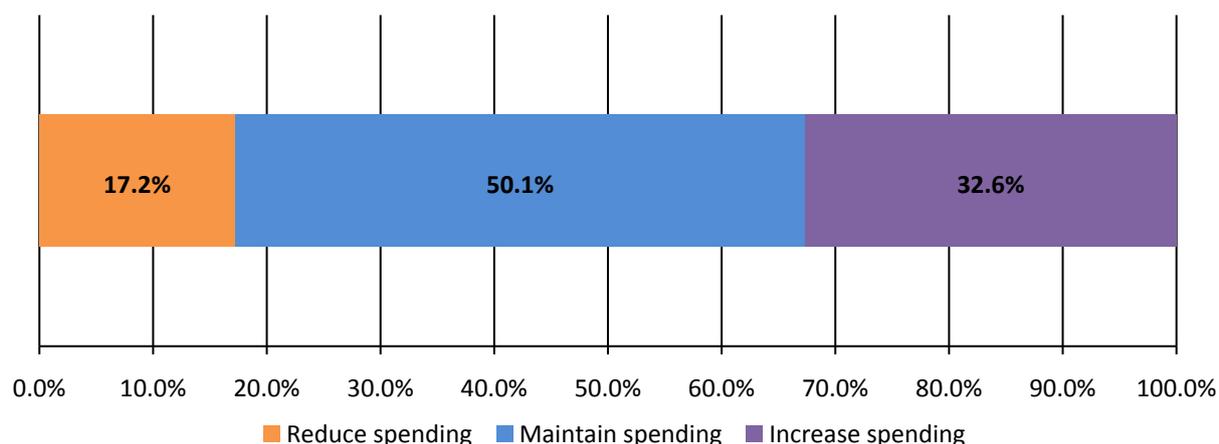
Priority two was top priority in each group; the lowest selecting this response proportion was 57.0% from the 18 to 24 years group and the highest was 72.1% from the 75 years and over group.

Priority one, A home for everyone had the second greatest proportion across all groups with proportions ranging from 41.3% (18 to 24 years) to 21.1% (35 to 44 years).

Priority three, Regenerating the Town Centre achieved the lowest proportion across all groupings, ranging from 1.7% (18 to 24 years) to 12.5% (35 to 34 years).

There are no significant differences between the responses given by those with and those without a disability, those from white groups and those from BME groups or between men and women.

## Priority 1. A home for everyone



Just over half of all respondents said that funding for the priority, a home for everyone should be maintained and almost one in three said spending should be increased.

The 18 to 24 years group had the greatest proportion saying that funding for this priority should be increased at 47.2% and the lowest proportion saying funding should be reduced. The 35 to 44 years group have the greatest proportion responding that funding should be reduced with just over one in five people in the group selecting this answer. The 75 years and over group have the greatest proportion saying that funding should be maintained at 64.5%.

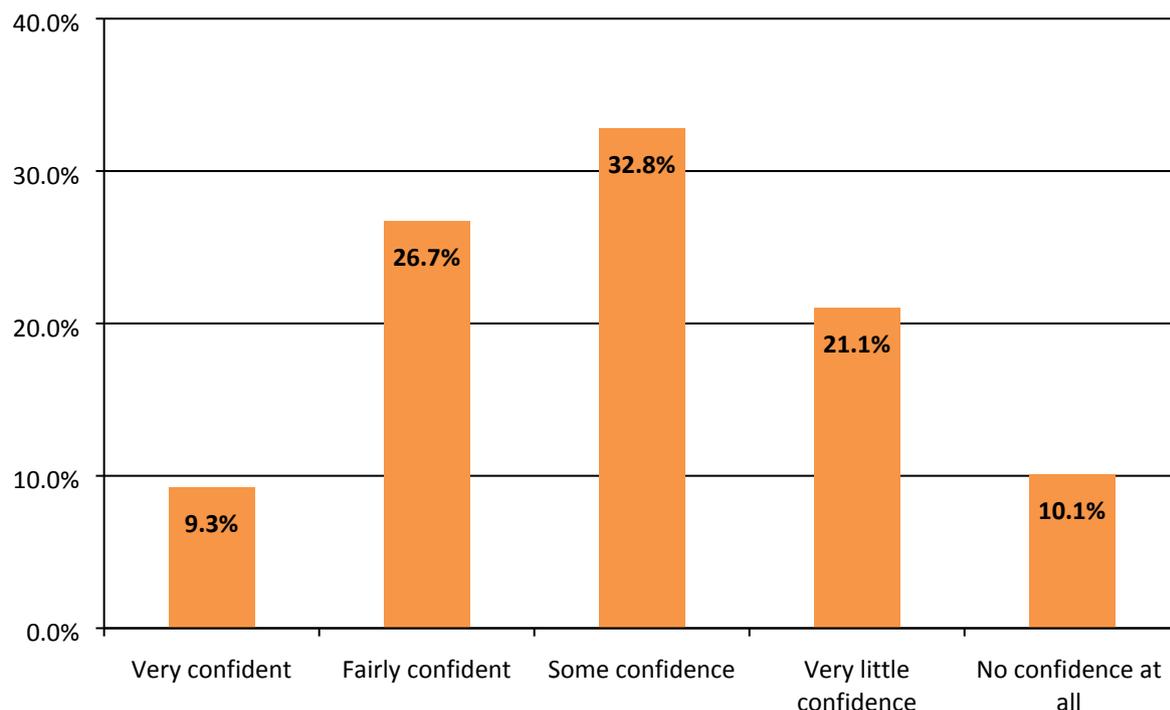
There are significant variances in responses when assessed by age with a difference of 14% between the age group with the greatest proportion saying funding should be increased and that with the lowest.

Response Levels Reduce & Increase		
Age		
	Reduce	Increase
- 18 to 24 years	7.9	47.2
- 25 to 34 years	20.8	32.3
- 35 to 44 years	21.9	29.1
- 45 to 54 years	19.6	30.0
- 55 to 64 years	15.3	36.4
- 65 to 74 years	16.5	32.0
- 75 years and over	11.4	24.0
Gender		
- Male	19.3	28.4
- Female	15.2	36.7
Ethnicity		
- White groups	17.5	32.8
- BME groups	9.4	37.4
Disability		
- Yes	17.9	34.5
- No	18.1	32.0
Economic Situation		
- Economically active	19.1	32.3
- Economically inactive	13.8	34.7

The data also shows that women are more likely than men and BME groups are more likely than white groups to say that funding for a home for everyone should be increased.

There are no significant differences in the responses from people with and without a disability.

## How confident are you that you know where to get information, advice and guidance about: Housing Advice<sup>2</sup>



Overall, 36.0% of respondents said they felt very or fairly confident about where to get information and advice on housing. The most common response was some confidence with 32.8%.

The 18 to 24 years group have the greatest proportion that said they were very or fairly confident in regards to knowing how to get housing advice. However, they also have the greatest proportion who said they have very little or no confidence in relation to housing advice (and the lowest proportion that had some confidence).

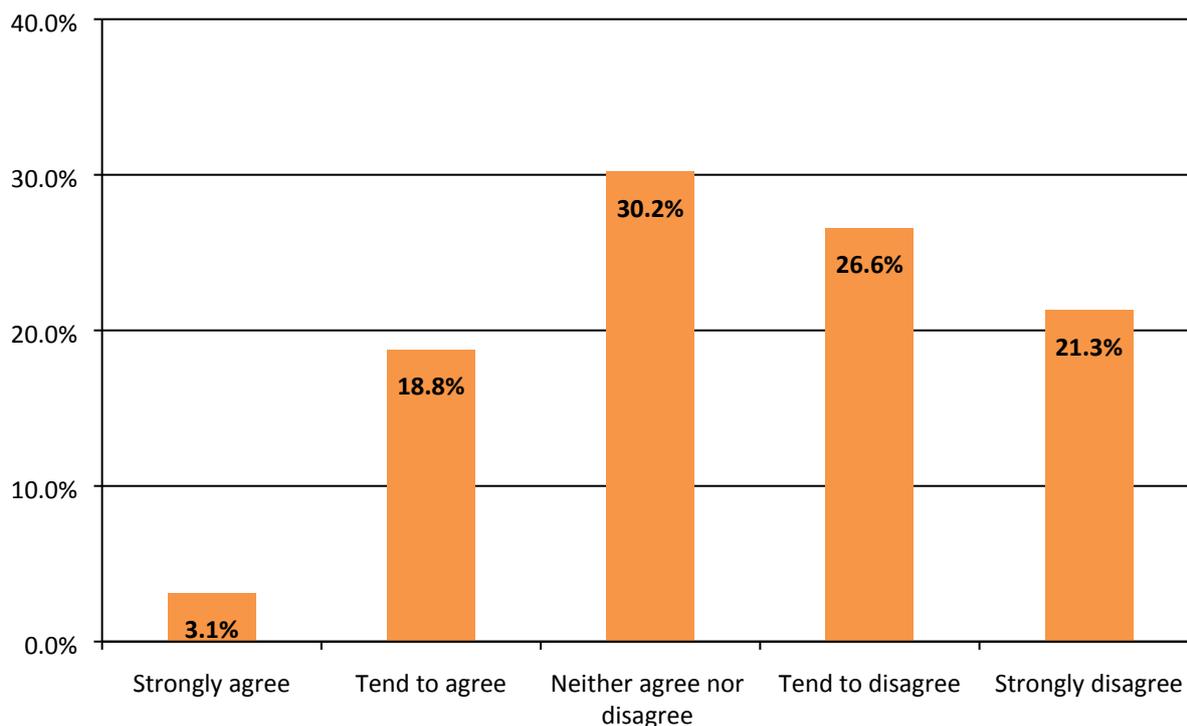
There is a gap of 12.7% between the age group with the greatest proportion saying they have confidence in this area (18 to 24 years) and that with the lowest proportion (35 to 44 years).

There are no significant variations in the responses from the economically active and the economically inactive, men and women and those with and without a disability.

Percentage Responding Very or Fairly Confident	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	44.1
- 25 to 34 years	37.4
- 35 to 44 years	31.4
- 45 to 54 years	35.4
- 55 to 64 years	39.4
- 65 to 74 years	31.9
- 75 years and over	35.0
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	36.2
- Female	35.8
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	36.0
- BME groups	41.1
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	37.3
- No	35.3
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	36.2
- Economically inactive	35.0

<sup>2</sup> For this question confidence refers to the proportion responding very or fair confident..

### My neighbourhood is a place where....where homes are affordable<sup>3</sup>



Overall, 21.9% of respondents agree that their neighbourhood is an area where homes are affordable and 47.9% disagreed. The most common response was neither agree nor disagree with 30.2%.

The 75 years and over group has the greatest proportion in agreement at 30.9% and the 18 to 24 years group have the greatest proportion disagreeing with the statement. The data suggests that disagreement with this statement declines with age. The economically inactive group have the greatest proportion that have no strong view either way at 38.8%.

The data suggests that respondents from white groups are more likely to disagree than respondents from BME groups, that the economically active are more likely to disagree than the economically inactive and that those with would a disability are more likely to disagree than those with a disability.

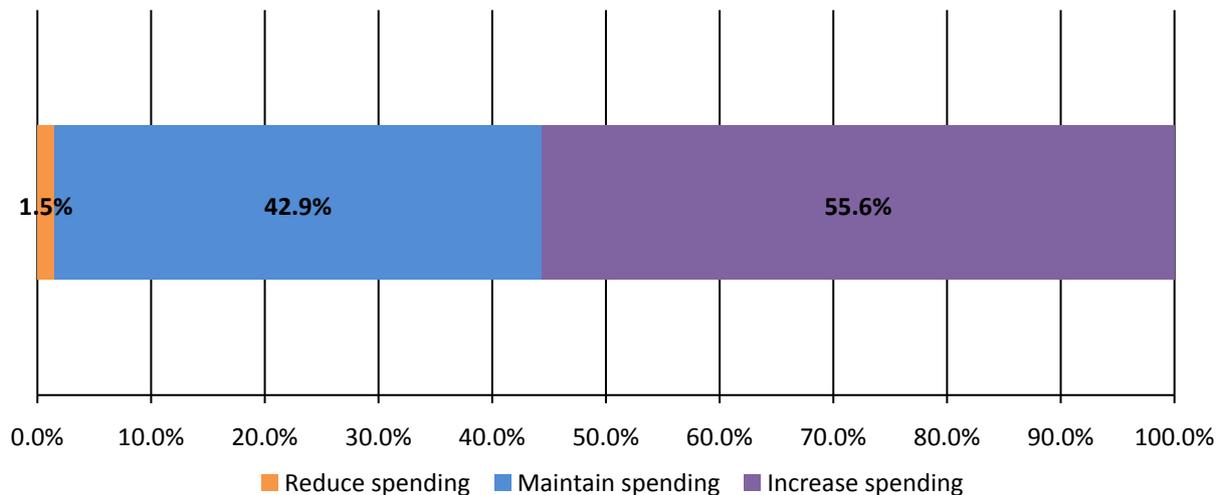
Response Levels Reduce & Increase	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	17.3
- 25 to 34 years	23.5
- 35 to 44 years	27.6
- 45 to 54 years	19.3
- 55 to 64 years	18.0
- 65 to 74 years	17.8
- 75 years and over	30.9
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	21.6
- Female	22.2
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	21.6
- BME groups	30.3
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	24.6
- No	20.9
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	22.5
- Economically inactive	20.0

The table to the left shows the percentage of respondents that said they had been affected by housing issues in the last 12 months.

Area	Percentage
Not being able to buy a new home or move	11.7%
Difficulties paying rent or mortgage	5.4%

<sup>3</sup> The use of the terms agreement level or agreeing refers to the combined proportion responding strongly agree or tend to agree, disagreement level or disagreeing refers the combined proportion responding strongly disagree or tend to disagree.

## Priority 2. A clean and safe environment



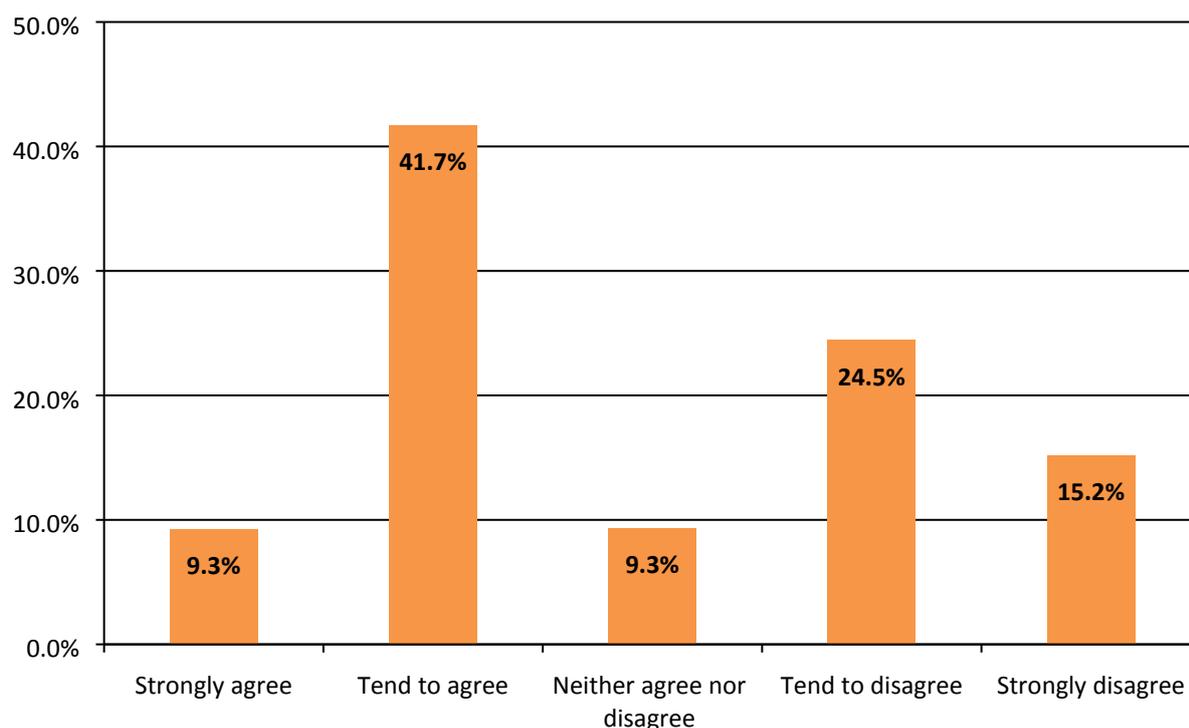
Over half of all respondents said that funding for a clean and safe environment should be increased and 1.5% said funding should be reduced.

The 35 to 44 years group have the greatest proportion of respondents that said that funding for this priority should be increased. No respondents in either the 18 to 24 years or the BME group responded that funding should be reduced. The 75 years and over group have the greatest proportion of respondents that said funding should be maintained.

While the proportion of men and women that said that funding for this priority should be reduced are in line with the overall results, the data suggests that men are slightly more in favour of increasing funding for this priority compared to women, with a 8% difference in the proportion selecting this answer. The same can be inferred for the economic activity groups with the economically active slight more in favour of increasing spending than the economically inactive.

Response Levels Reduce & Increase		
Age	Reduce	Increase
- 18 to 24 years	0.0	55.3
- 25 to 34 years	1.6	58.9
- 35 to 44 years	0.7	61.9
- 45 to 54 years	1.8	61.3
- 55 to 64 years	1.7	52.5
- 65 to 74 years	1.5	50.0
- 75 years and over	3.1	41.7
Gender		
- Male	1.5	59.7
- Female	1.5	51.7
Ethnicity		
- White groups	1.4	55.7
- BME groups	0.0	58.1
Disability		
- Yes	2.1	50.8
- No	1.4	57.2
Economic Situation		
- Economically active	1.3	58.0
- Economically inactive	1.9	50.4

## My neighbourhood is a place that is ... clear of litter <sup>4</sup>



Just over half (51%) of all respondents agree that their local area is a place that is clear of litter, 39.7% disagreed and less than one in ten had no strong opinion either way. Tend to agree was the most common response.

The greatest level of agreement was from the 18 to 24 years group at 66.5%, the 65 to 74 years group had the greatest level of disagreement at 47.0%. The 75 years and over group have the greatest proportion with no strong opinion either way at 13.6%.

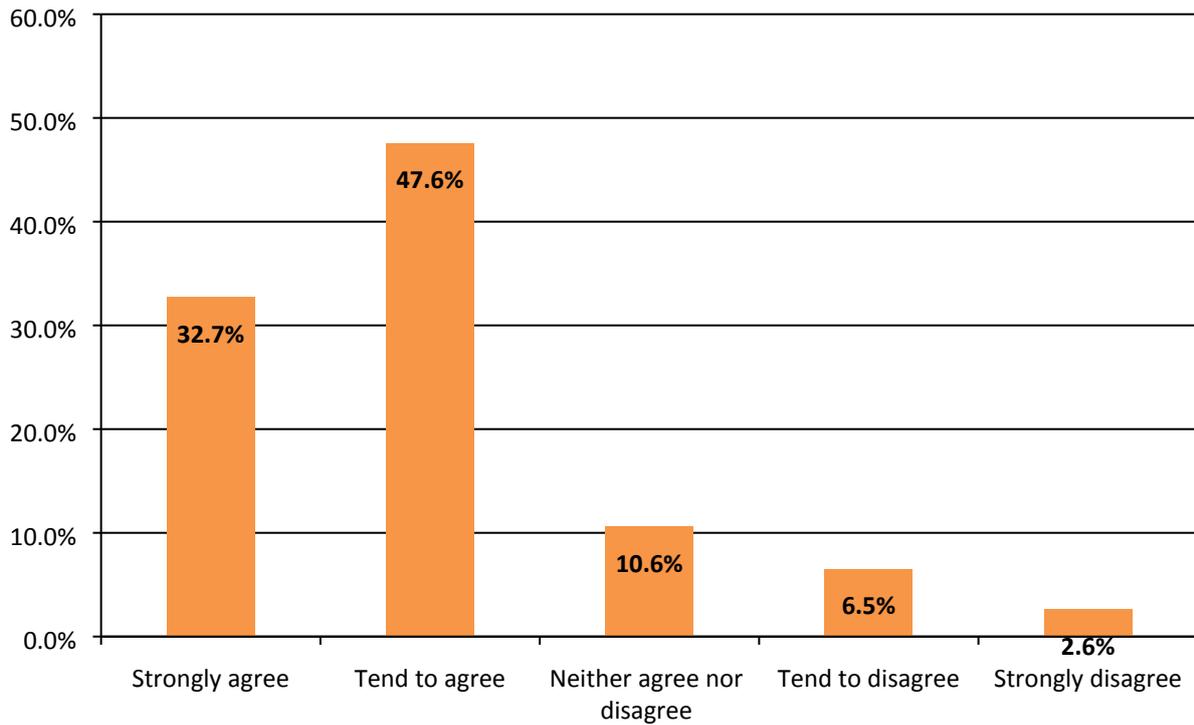
There are no significant differences between the responses of those who are economically active and those who are not, between those with and without a disability or between men and women.

Respondents from BME groups are slightly more likely to agree that their local area is free from litter compared to white groups.

Percentage agreeing	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	66.5
- 25 to 34 years	54.2
- 35 to 44 years	48.5
- 45 to 54 years	50.4
- 55 to 64 years	47.6
- 65 to 74 years	44.0
- 75 years and over	50.6
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	51.9
- Female	50.1
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	50.7
- BME groups	57.4
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	47.9
- No	51.5
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	53.1
- Economically inactive	46.9

<sup>4</sup> The use of the terms agreement level or agreeing refers to the combined proportion responding strongly agree or tend to agree, disagreement level or disagreeing refers the combined proportion responding strongly disagree or tend to disagree.

## My neighbourhood is a place that is ... clear of graffiti



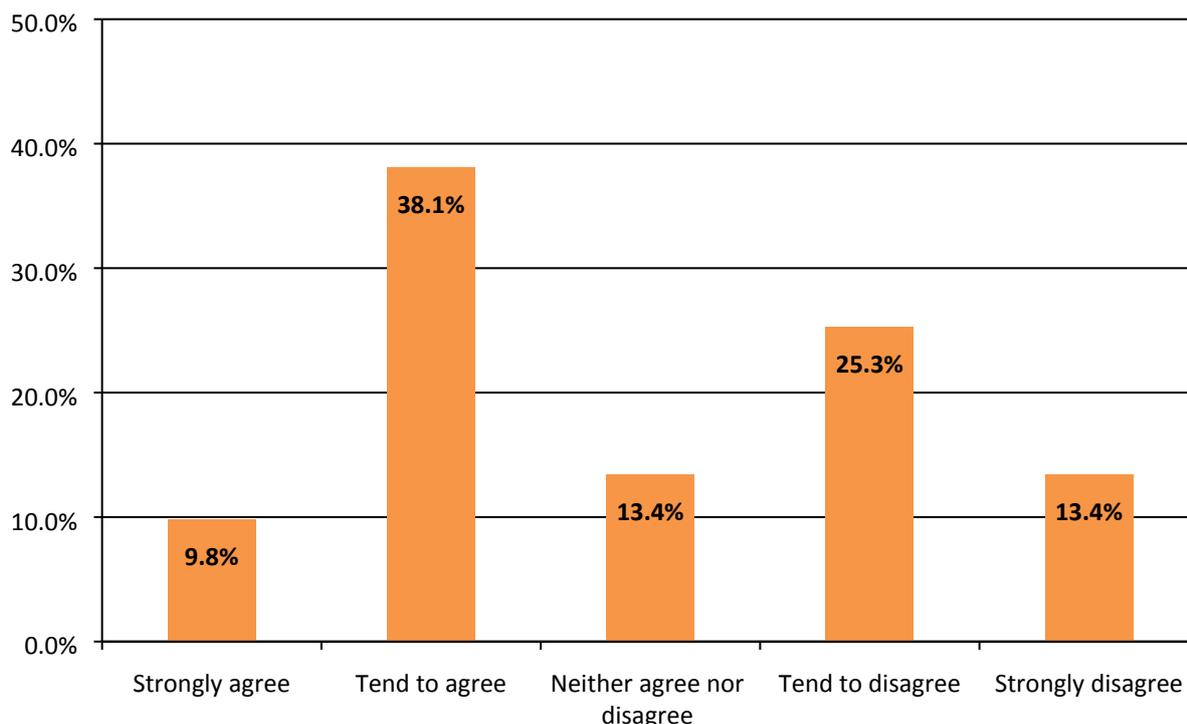
Overall, 80.3% of respondents agree that their local area is clear of graffiti and less than one in ten (9.1%) disagree. The most common response was tend to agree with 47.6%.

Respondents from BME groups had the greatest level of agreement at 86.6%, the 18 to 24 years group have the greatest levels of disagreement at 12.1% and those with a disability have the greatest proportion with no strong opinion either way at 15.4%.

There are no significant variance in the responses between those who are economically active and those who are economically inactive.

Response Levels Reduce & Increase	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	79.3
- 25 to 34 years	84.1
- 35 to 44 years	81.0
- 45 to 54 years	79.9
- 55 to 64 years	77.1
- 65 to 74 years	77.3
- 75 years and over	83.1
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	79.8
- Female	80.7
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	79.9
- BME groups	86.6
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	77.5
- No	80.4
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	81.4
- Economically inactive	78.1

### My neighbourhood is a place that is ... clear of dog fouling



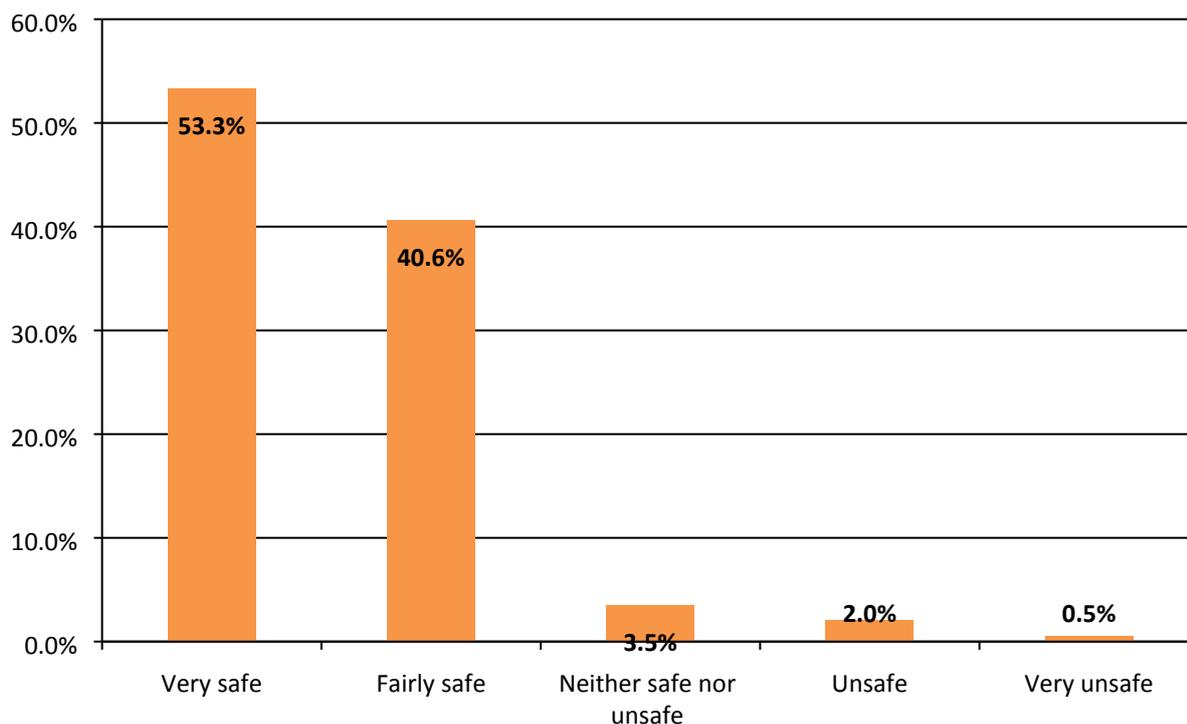
Overall, 47.9% of respondents either strongly agreed or tended to agree that their local area was clear of dog fouling and 38.7% disagreed. The most common response was tend to agree.

The 18 to 24 years had the greatest proportion that agreed at 67.4%, followed by the 75 years and over group with 58.7%. The 35 to 44 years group have the greatest proportion that disagreed at 46.2%. The 55 to 64 years groups had the greatest proportion that responded no strong opinion either way with almost one in five respondents (19.6) selecting this answer.

The data shows that men are marginally more likely to agree that their local area is clear of dog fouling when compared to women. There were no significant variations in responses between groups.

Response Levels Reduce & Increase	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	67.4
- 25 to 34 years	47.4
- 35 to 44 years	38.2
- 45 to 54 years	45.3
- 55 to 64 years	44.2
- 65 to 74 years	46.3
- 75 years and over	58.7
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	40.5
- Female	45.4
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	48.0
- BME groups	47.1
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	45.7
- No	48.2
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	48.9
- Economically inactive	46.5

## How safe do you feel walking in your local area during daylight



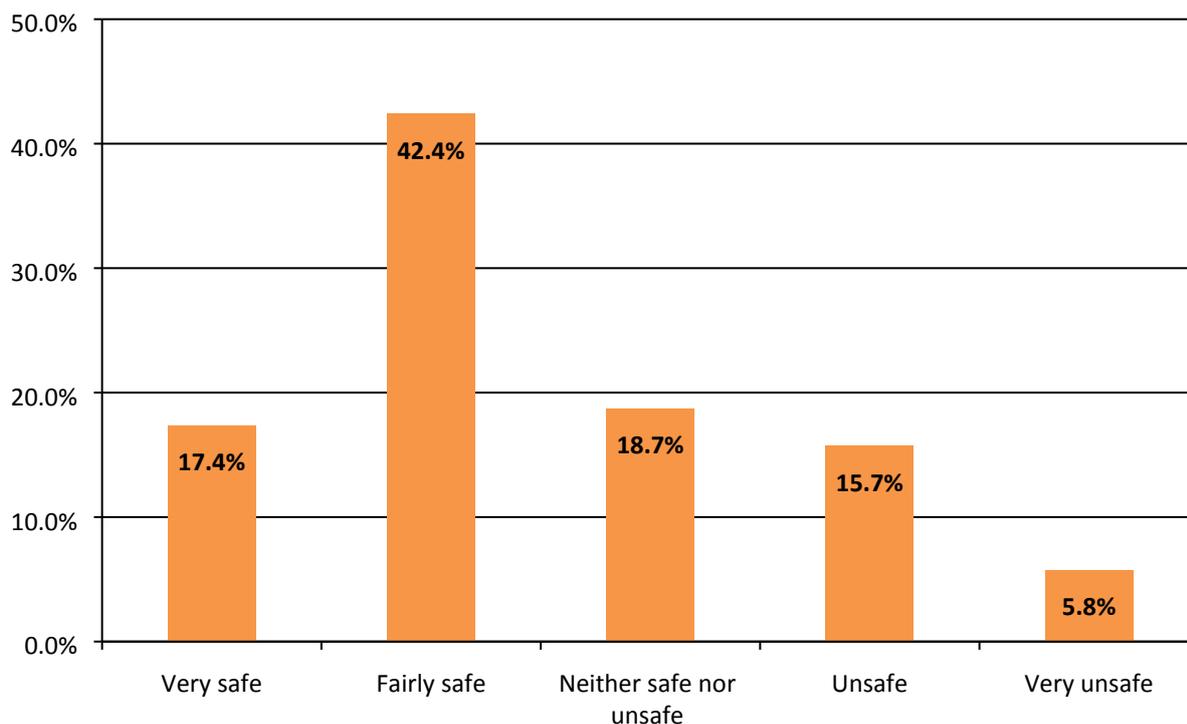
Overall, 93.9% of respondents say they feel very of fairly safe walking, in their own area during daylight and 2.5% felt unsafe or very unsafe. The most popular response was very safe with more than half (53.3%) of all respondents selecting this answer.

The 18 to 24 years group have the greatest proportion responding positively (Very safe and Safe) at 100%, the 35 to 34 years group have the greatest proportion responding negatively (Unsafe and Very unsafe) at 4.4%, interestingly this is only made up of respondents answering unsafe as there were no respondents in this group who said they were very unsafe. Respondents from BME groups have the greatest proportion with no strong feelings either way at 11.7%.

There is a 10.6% difference in the proportion of positive responses between respondents from white groups and those from BME groups. While the proportion answering negatively are not significantly different however respondents from BME groups are at least three time more likely to have no strong opinion either way.

Response Very good and Good	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	100.0
- 25 to 34 years	91.9
- 35 to 44 years	93.4
- 45 to 54 years	93.4
- 55 to 64 years	93.0
- 65 to 74 years	93.1
- 75 years and over	95.5
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	95.0
- Female	92.9
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	94.6
- BME groups	84.0
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	90.5
- No	94.7
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	94.1
- Economically inactive	93.2

## How safe do you feel walking in your local area during night-time



Overall, 59.8% of respondents said they feel very or fairly safe walking in their local area in the night – time, just over one in five (21.5%) respondents said they feel unsafe or very unsafe. The most common response was fairly satisfied with 42.4%.

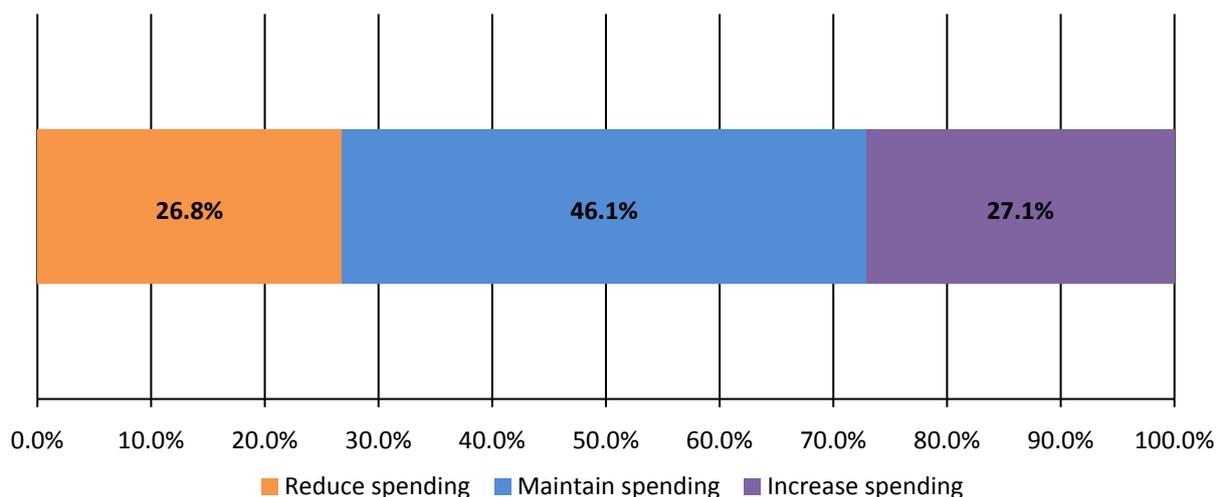
Male respondents have the greatest proportion responding that they feel very or fairly safe at 68.6%. Respondents with a disability have the greatest proportion responding unsafe and very unsafe with one in three (33.3%) in the group selecting these answers. BME respondents have the greatest proportion responding no strong feelings either way at 31.2%.

There is a 15% difference between the age group with the greatest level of respondents feeling safe (very safe and fairly safe) and that with the lowest level. For the previous two questions on feelings of safety the 18 to 24 years group had the greatest feelings of safety across all groups, it seem that these feeling of safety only apply in their own homes or during daylight hours.

There is a 17.5% difference between the feeling of safety between men and women, a 22.1% difference between respondents from BME groups when compared to respondents from white groups and a 19.1% difference between those with a disability and those without.

Response Very good and Good	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	48.4
- 25 to 34 years	62.9
- 35 to 44 years	63.4
- 45 to 54 years	63.0
- 55 to 64 years	60.3
- 65 to 74 years	56.3
- 75 years and over	56.8
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	68.6
- Female	51.1
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	61.4
- BME groups	39.4
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	44.8
- No	63.9
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	64.4
- Economically inactive	50.7

### Priority 3. Regenerating the Town Centre



Overall, 46.1% of respondents said that funding on regenerating the town centre should be maintained and 26.8% said that it should be reduced.

The 75 years and over age group have the greatest proportion who said that funding for this priority should be reduced at 35.5% and the BME group have the greatest proportion saying that funding should be increased at 45.5%. The 18 to 24 years group have the greatest proportion saying that funding should be maintained at 59.6%.

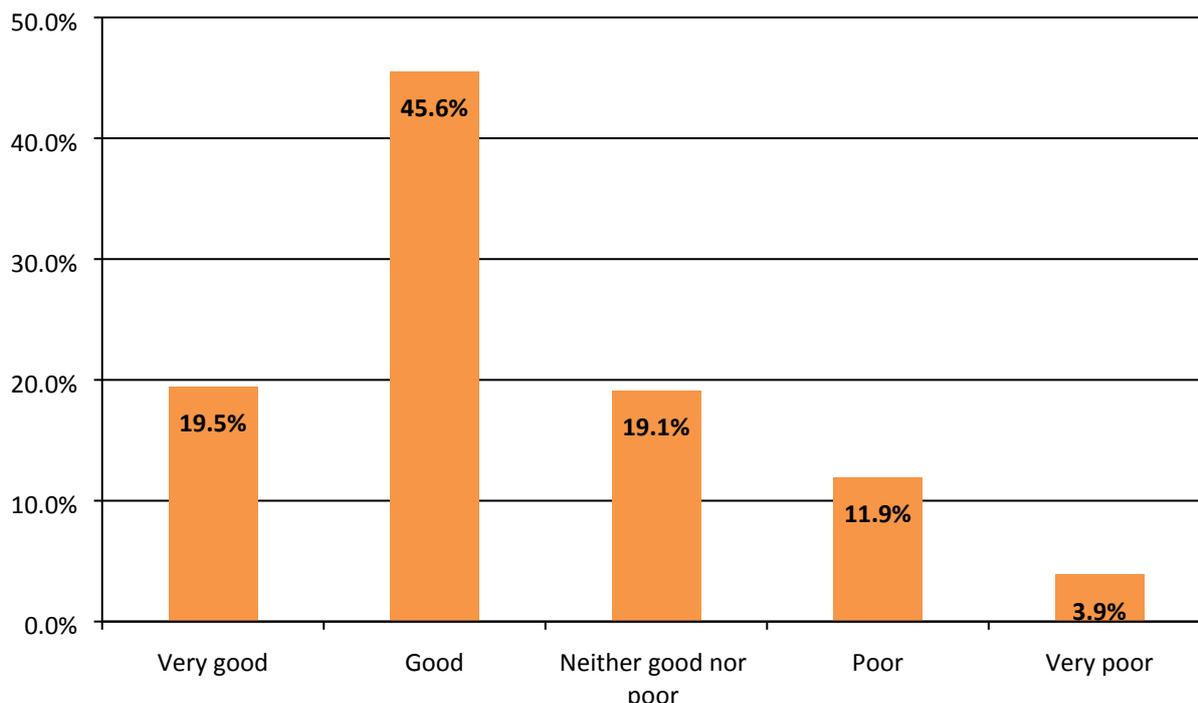
There are no significant variances in the response levels between men and women.

There are significant variances between respondents from white groups and those from BME groups, with a 19.1% difference between the proportions responding that funding should be increased.

There is a greater proportion of respondents in the disability group that said funding should be reduced for the town centre priority when compared to those without a disability, a difference of 10.9%.

Response Levels Reduce & Increase		
Age		
	Reduce	Increase
- 18 to 24 years	29.2	11.2
- 25 to 34 years	22.9	32.3
- 35 to 44 years	21.4	27.7
- 45 to 54 years	25.9	32.5
- 55 to 64 years	27.6	26.5
- 65 to 74 years	30.7	26.3
- 75 years and over	35.5	24.5
Gender		
- Male	26.2	28.9
- Female	27.4	25.3
Ethnicity		
- White groups	26.8	26.4
- BME groups	22.3	45.5
Disability		
- Yes	34.0	26.1
- No	24.9	27.2
Economic Situation		
- Economically active	24.4	28.9
- Economically inactive	31.9	23.1

## How would you rate the following in Maidstone Town Centre: Range of shops



Overall, 65.0% of respondents rated the range of shops in the town centre as very good or good and 15.8% rated them as very poor or poor. The most common response was good at 45.6%.

The 18 to 24 years group have the greatest proportion that were positive about the range of shops with four out of five respondents (81.8%) in this group answering very good or good. The 65 to 74 years group have the greatest proportion responding negatively (very poor and poor) with just over one in four (25.1%) selecting these answers. The 75 years and over group have the greatest proportion that had not strong views either way at 29.5%.

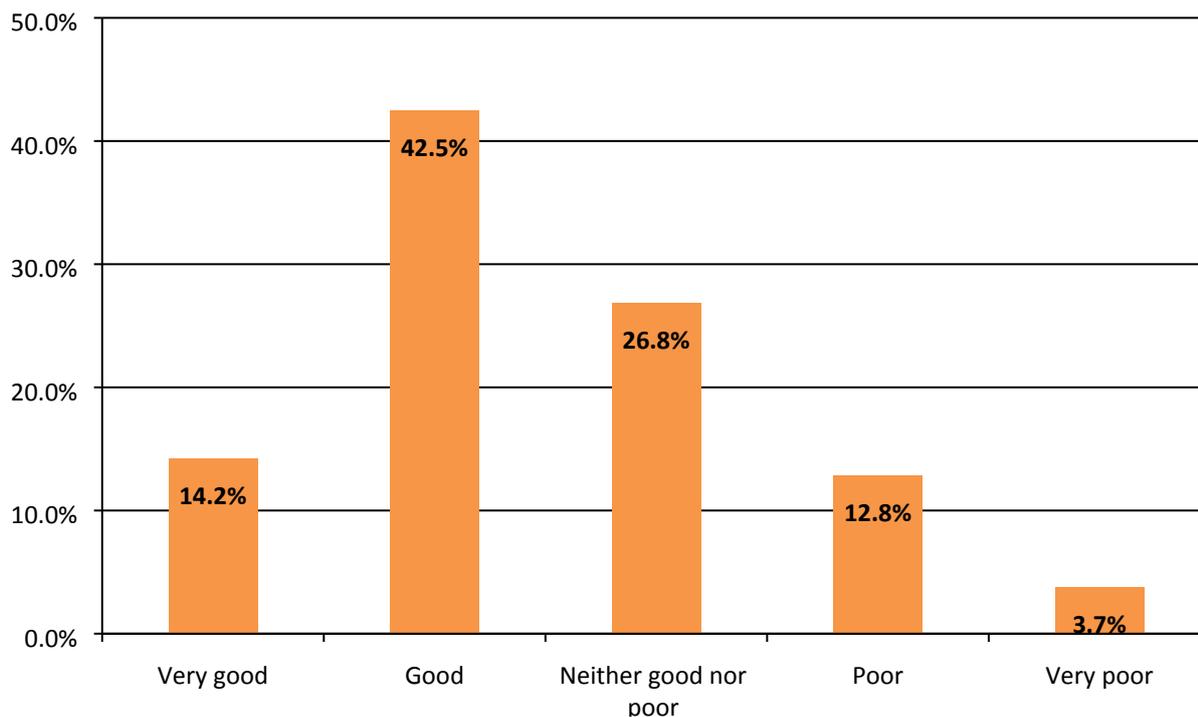
The data indicates that as people get older they are less happy with the range of shops Maidstone has to offer.

There is a 16.9% difference in the proportion of people responding positively between the economically active and the economically inactive. It should be noted that the majority of respondents aged 75 years and over said they were wholly retired from work and therefore classified as economically inactive.

NOTE: The graph and table excludes respondents who answered don't know, if these were included 1.3% of all responders selected this answer.

Response Very good & Good	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	81.8
- 25 to 34 years	79.7
- 35 to 44 years	69.2
- 45 to 54 years	66.8
- 55 to 64 years	55.5
- 65 to 74 years	48.9
- 75 years and over	49.6
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	66.3
- Female	63.8
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	65.0
- BME groups	72.2
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	57.2
- No	66.4
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	70.1
- Economically inactive	53.2

### How would you rate the following in Maidstone Town Centre: Entertainment available



Overall, 56.7% of respondents answered positively about the entertainment available in the town centre, 16.5% were negative. The most common response was good.

The 25 to 34 years group have the greatest proportion that responded positively at 72.2% and the 75 years and over group have the greatest proportion that responded negatively at 23.5%.

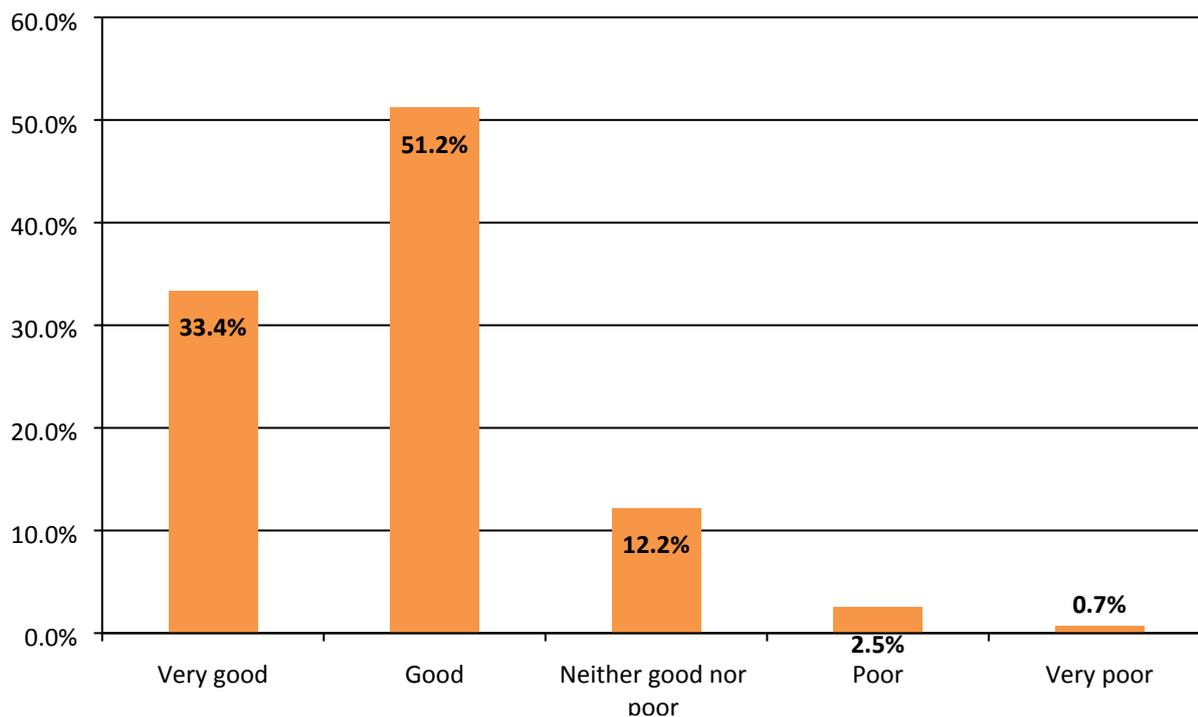
The data suggests that there may be fewer or less attractive entertainment options for this group.

There is a 15.0% difference in the proportion of people responding positively between the economically active and the economically inactive. It should be noted that the majority of respondents aged 75 years and over said they were wholly retired from work and therefore classified as economically inactive.

NOTE: The graph and table excludes respondents who answered don't know, if these were included 4.5% of all responders selected this answer.

Response Very good & Good	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	58.9
- 25 to 34 years	72.2
- 35 to 44 years	63.9
- 45 to 54 years	59.8
- 55 to 64 years	49.3
- 65 to 74 years	40.8
- 75 years and over	37.8
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	59.7
- Female	53.8
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	56.8
- BME groups	54.8
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	49.4
- No	59.1
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	61.1
- Economically inactive	46.1

## How would you rate the following in Maidstone Town Centre: Range of eating and drinking establishments



Overall, 84.6% of respondents were positive about the range of eating and drinking establishments in the town centre, and 3.2% responded negatively. The most common response was good with more than half of all respondent selecting this answer.

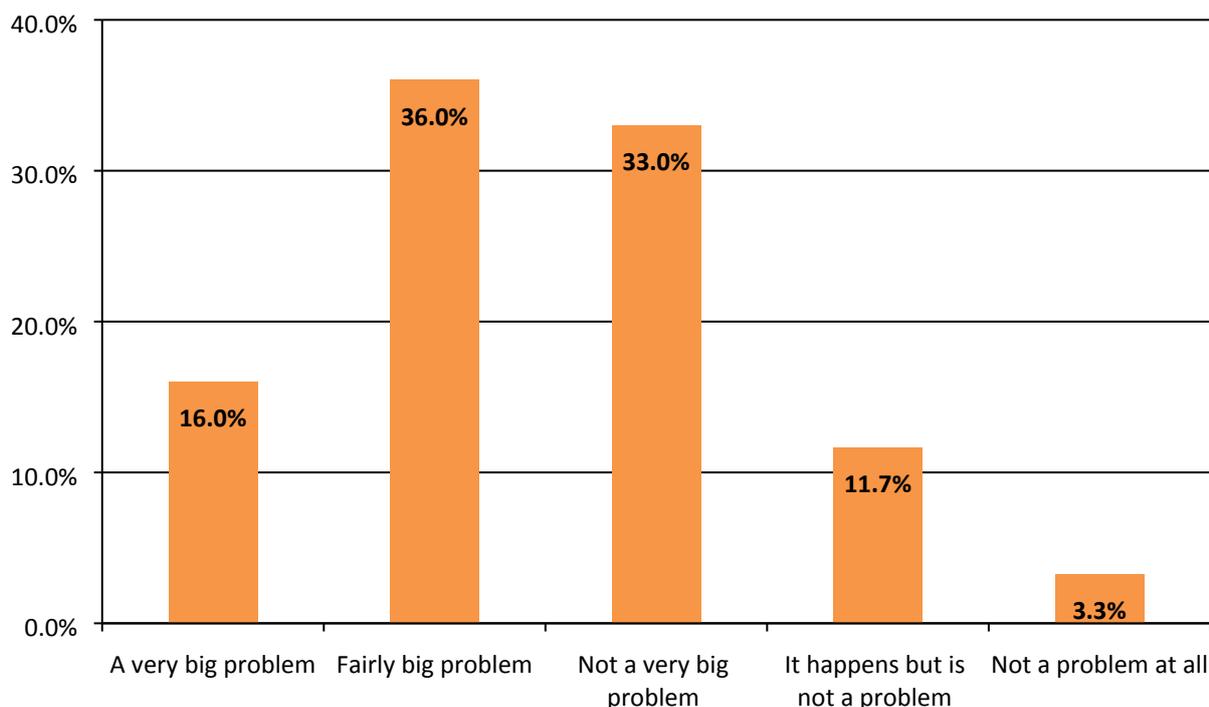
More than nine out of ten (90.5%) respondents in the 18 to 24 years group responded positively, the greatest proportion across all groups. The BME group has the greatest proportion of people who responded negatively at 10.2%, and the greatest proportion of people that have no strong opinion either way are in the 65 to 74 years group where one in five (20.5%) selected this answer.

There are no significant variances between the proportions responding positively between groupings except when it comes to age where there is a difference of 13.9% between the age group with the greatest proportion responding positively and that with the lowest proportion responding positively.

Response Very good & Good	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	90.5
- 25 to 34 years	90.2
- 35 to 44 years	86.7
- 45 to 54 years	86.0
- 55 to 64 years	78.9
- 65 to 74 years	76.6
- 75 years and over	81.8
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	84.7
- Female	84.5
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	85.2
- BME groups	78.2
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	83.2
- No	85.5
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	86.2
- Economically inactive	81.3

NOTE: The graph and table excludes respondents who answered don't know, if these were included 2.2% of all responders selected this answer.

## Do you think any of the following issues are a problem in the Town Centre? Empty shops



Overall, just over half of all respondents (52.1%) said that empty shops in the town centre are a very big or very big problem. Fairly big problem was the most common response.

Respondents with a disability had the greatest proportion responding a very big or fairly big problem at 62.2%. The 18 to 24 years group have the greatest proportion that said it happen but is not a problem or is not a problem at all at 29.3%. Respondents from BME groups have the greatest proportion saying this is not a very big problem with over half (53.6%) of this group responding this way.

There is a 12.3% difference in the proportion responding a very big and a fairly big problem between those with a disability and those without. The data shows that those with a disability are more likely to rate empty shops as a very big problem than those without and that those without a disability are more likely to rate empty shops as not a very big problem than those with a disability.

The data suggests that empty shops are grows as a concern with age and that women are more concerned than men.

NOTE: The graph and table excludes respondents who answered don't know, if these were included 2.0% of all responders selected this answer.

Response a Very big & Fairly big problem	
<b>Age</b>	
- 18 to 24 years	43.9
- 25 to 34 years	43.8
- 35 to 44 years	44.1
- 45 to 54 years	55.7
- 55 to 64 years	58.7
- 65 to 74 years	60.2
- 75 years and over	59.7
<b>Gender</b>	
- Male	46.6
- Female	57.2
<b>Ethnicity</b>	
- White groups	52.7
- BME groups	35.4
<b>Disability</b>	
- Yes	62.2
- No	49.9
<b>Economic Situation</b>	
- Economically active	50.2
- Economically inactive	56.7

## Demographics

Gender	%	Count
Male	48.8%	979
Female	51.2%	1029
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2008</b>

Religion	%	Count
Christian	56.5%	1116
Buddhist	0.3%	6
Hindu	0.5%	9
Jewish	0.2%	3
Muslim	0.5%	10
Sikh	0.2%	4
No religion	39.8%	787
Other	1.9%	38
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1975</b>
<i>No response</i>		33

Carers	%	Count
Yes, 1 to 19 hrs per week	12.1%	238
Yes, 20 to 49 hrs per week	1.7%	34
Yes, more than 50 hrs per week	2.7%	53
No	83.4%	1639
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1965</b>
<i>No response</i>		43

Living Arrangements	%	Count
Owned by you or partner (with or without a mortgage)	72.9%	1447
Rented from a housing association or trust	7.5%	149
Rented from a private landlord	12.1%	239
Shared ownership	1.8%	35
Living with friends/family (no tenancy)	4.8%	96
Other	0.9%	19
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1985</b>
<i>No response</i>		23

Disability	%	Count
Yes	15.9%	314
No	71.6%	1411
Prefer not to say	12.5%	247
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1972</b>
<i>No response</i>		36

Age	%	Count
18 to 24 years	9.5%	191
25 to 34 years	16.3%	328
35 to 44 years	16.6%	332
45 to 54 years	18.8%	378
55 to 64 years	14.7%	296
65 to 74 years	13.3%	266
75 years and over	10.8%	216
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>2008</b>

Ethnicity	%	Count
White (Northern Irish, British, Gypsy or Irish Traveller)	95.2%	1865
Mixed Multiple Ethnic Group	0.9%	17
Asian or Asian British (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Chinese)	2.3%	45
Black (African, Caribbean, Black British)	0.4%	7
Other ethnic group	1.3%	25
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1959</b>
<i>No response</i>		49

Household Income	%	Count
Under £9,999	7.4%	135
£10,000 to £19,999	16.1%	295
£20,000 to £29,999	16.5%	303
£30,000 to £39,000	14.1%	258
£40,000 to £49,000	12.7%	233
£50,000 to £59,000	12.1%	222
£60,000 to £79,000	9.3%	170
£80,000 to £99,999	5.9%	108
£100,000 or more	5.9%	108
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1832</b>
<i>No response</i>		176

Household Make up	%	Count
Couple, with no dependent child(ren)	38.7%	771
Couple with dependent child(ren)	30.2%	601
Lone parent with dependent child(ren)	5.5%	109
Single person household	17.3%	344
Multiple person household (includes house shares and homes of multiple occupation)	3.4%	68
Other	5.0%	100
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1994</b>
<i>No response</i>		14

Economic Situation	%	Count
Employed full-time (30 hrs or more a week)	48.3%	933
Employed part-time (under 30 hrs a week)	11.1%	214
Employed (no guaranteed hrs per week)	0.8%	16
Self-employed	7.4%	143
In education or training	2.1%	40
Looking for work	1.0%	19
Looking after the home	3.2%	61
Permanently sick or disabled and unable to work	2.2%	42
Volunteering	2.5%	48
Wholly retired from work	21.5%	415
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>100.0%</b>	<b>1932</b>
<i>No response</i>		76

## Weighting

Age	Population		Survey		Weight
	Males	%	Males	%	
18 to 24	6398	5.0%	12	0.6%	8.31
25 to 34	10406	8.1%	86	4.3%	1.89
35 to 44	10436	8.1%	111	5.5%	1.47
45 to 54	12132	9.4%	162	8.1%	1.17
55 to 64	9361	7.3%	206	10.3%	0.71
64 to 74	8341	6.5%	250	12.5%	0.52
75 years and over	5736	4.5%	122	6.1%	0.73
<b>Male Total</b>	<b>62810</b>		<b>949</b>		
Age	Females	%	Female	%	Weight
18 to 24 years	5864	5%	28	1.4%	3.26
25 to 34 years	10653	8%	158	7.9%	1.05
35 to 44 years	10892	8%	203	10.1%	0.84
45 to 64 years	12118	9%	208	10.4%	0.91
55 to 64 years	9617	7%	229	11.4%	0.65
65 to 74 years	8751	7%	154	7.7%	0.89
75 years and over	8118	6%	79	3.9%	1.60
<b>Female Total</b>	<b>66013</b>		<b>1059</b>		

<b>Total population (18 yrs and over)</b>	<b>128823</b>
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>2008</b>

# Agenda Item 14

## **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**13 December 2017**

### **Thames Gateway Kent Partnership**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Policy and Resources Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service/Lead Director</b>	Chief Executive
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Alison Broom
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

#### **Executive Summary**

The purpose of this report is to inform the Policy and Resources Committee that the Chairman of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership (TGKP) has formally written to Maidstone Council canvassing whether the authority wishes to join the partnership and to seek a decision as to whether or not to accept this invitation. It is recommended that Maidstone Borough Council should join the partnership.

#### **This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

1. That the Committee agrees to accept the invitation to join the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership
2. That, if recommendation (1) is agreed, then Maidstone Borough Council is represented on the Thames Gateway Partnership Board by the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee and that the Vice Chair should be the substitute

#### **Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Policy and Resources	13 December 2017

# Thames Gateway Kent Partnership

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Policy and Resources Committee that the Chairman of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership (TGKP) has formally written to Maidstone Council canvassing whether the authority wishes to join the partnership and to seek a decision as to whether or not to accept this invitation. It is recommended that Maidstone Borough Council should join the partnership.
- 1.2 The composition of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership (TGKP) is currently made up of 12 members: six local authority partners (Dartford Borough Council, Gravesham Borough Council, Swale Borough Council, Medway Council, Kent County Council and the Ebbsfleet Development Corporation) and six private sector partners (BPP Regeneration, Bluewater, Dovetail Games, Thomson Snell & Passmore, Tarmac and one board member vacancy). A number of other public sector partners also sit on TGKP as observers, including representatives from the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), higher and further education, the Environment Agency, the Homes and Communities Agency, Department for Work and Pensions and one of the local MPs.
- 1.3 TGKP is an unincorporated association and not a formal partnership in law. There are also Thames Gateway partnerships in Essex and East London. There is a strategic group that draws the three partnerships together on topics of common interest. The TGKP partnership meets four times a year, and is supported by an "officers' group" of senior managers that meets monthly. It is funded by local authority partner subscriptions, agreed every year at the TGKP annual general meeting in December. The current annual district council subscription rate is £28,000 and the board have agreed that Maidstone's subscription, if the council joins the partnership, would be calculated net of any funding currently paid by Maidstone to TGKP for work carried out on the North Kent Enterprise Zone. The Maidstone contribution for work associated with the North Kent Enterprise Zone in 2016/17 was £5,684 and for 2017/18 to date is £7,998.
- 1.4 The Partnership's vision is to make Thames Gateway Kent the place to be - to live, work, study, invest and enjoy your leisure. They identify their role as being to help create the conditions to support sustainable economic growth and prosperity. There has been a recent review of priorities and this was reported to the TGKP board in September 2017; the priorities adopted were:
1. Positioning North Kent
  2. Supporting town centre regeneration in North Kent with new technology
  3. Ensuring the cultural and creative sectors can contribute fully to North Kent's regeneration and
  4. Making the case for improved transport in North Kent.

Appendix 1 sets out a recent update of work undertaken for each area of priority.

- 1.5 The Chairman of TGKP wrote to the Leader of the Council in November 2017 formally canvassing Maidstone Borough Council's interest in joining the partnership. The key points that he made in promoting membership of the partnership were
- TGKP brings together the public and private sector to promote the interests of North Kent, working to encourage, facilitate and enable sustainable economic growth and regeneration.
  - In the period since its formation in 2001 TGKP has worked to help North Kent to articulate its collective voice, representing the local authorities of Dartford, Gravesham, Swale, Medway and Kent, together with leaders from key private sector organisations and wider public sector bodies. TGKP works closely with government to make the case for investment and additional infrastructure in the area, and to promote the unique opportunity and potential for growth in the Thames Gateway in Kent.
  - TGKP partners already have a significant number of shared and mutual interests with Maidstone. North Kent and Maidstone have a number of the same economic, transport and housing challenges, and we are already working closely together, not least on the development of the North Kent Enterprise Zone. This is also an opportune and exciting time for Maidstone to join the partnership. Amongst other things upcoming initiatives and projects are identified including
    - The Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission's report and recommendations
    - The Industrial Strategy white paper
    - Plans for the Lower Thames Crossing which are quickly taking shape
    - The ambitious proposals for the London Resort theme park on the Swanscombe Peninsula continue to be developed
    - The South East LEP is developing a new Strategic Economic Plan which is likely to have a focus on priority places. TGKP is working to ensure that these developments bring the maximum benefit to North Kent.
- 1.6 The chairman of TGKP recognises that there would be a range of practicalities, and constitutional amendments, to work through if Maidstone joins TGKP, including how the partnership's work programme could be shaped to take account of Maidstone's particular needs and requirements. Maidstone's participation is seen by the TGKP board as a means of offering membership of an organisation which has a strong, established and credible track record of helping public and private partners to drive investment, growth and regeneration in the Thames Gateway in Kent and a benefit through Maidstone's involvement for TGKP to strengthen the voice, influence and reach of North Kent.

## **2. ASSESSMENT OF MEMBERSHIP OF THE THAMES GATEWAY KENT PARTNERSHIP**

- 2.1 The Policy and Resources Committee received a report in September 2016 concerning enhanced inter –tier working and agreed amongst other things that Maidstone borough council should
- 1) continue to engage with other Kent local authorities with the objective of strengthening service delivery resilience, improving cost effectiveness and securing investment in services and community infrastructure;
  - 2) work with district councils across Kent, Medway and Kent County Council to achieve this and in particular with Dartford, Gravesham, Medway, Swale and Kent County Councils;
- 2.2 In the period since September 2016 a number of meetings of the North Kent councils’ cluster have taken place. An exploration has begun of the potential for closer working on a range of activities including communications, procurement, property, HR and debt recovery. This is being progressed in a way that does not cut across or compromise current partnership working for example Mid Kent Services.
- 2.3 Similarly Maidstone Council is collaborating through the West Kent Improvement and Local Care Delivery Boards with the West Kent Clinical Commissioning Group and the other districts which are part of the same health economy geography (Tonbridge and Malling, Tunbridge Wells and Sevenoaks), Kent County Council public health service and health providers with respect to transformational changes to the health, social care and well-being system.
- 2.4 Working with clusters of district councils is happening increasingly as this is regarded as a more practical way of seeking the contribution of district authorities in discussions eg where there are many stakeholders and it would be impracticable for 12 representatives to take part directly or where prioritisation of projects across more than one district is needed. For example the County Council has engaged with the three Kent clusters on a number of topics including the county wide Growth and Infrastructure Framework and Public Health. The NHS through the Sustainability and Transformation Partnership/Plan is seeking to do the same.

### **What would be the benefits of being a member of the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership?**

- 2.5 The advice from the local authorities who are currently members of the TGKP in terms of the principle of participation is that
- TGKP is a significant partnership, it is better to be involved than not, not least to shape the thinking and opportunities
  - The Chair is highly respected, knows the geography well, is very experienced and ensures good contributions from all sectors. It may be

possible for MBC to nominate a business representative to the board (if we join the partnership).

- Their voice is heard more - participation in the partnership has given them more regular access to Ministers and senior civil servants, who typically will either visit sites in North Kent more frequently, will feature at TGKP board meetings or will attend the Thames Gateway Strategic Group (TGSG) in London and there are very good communications with other partners – eg other parts of the Thames Gateway and in London regarding Crossrail extension, the London Plan, the Thames Estuary Production Corridor
- The partnership has been privy and informed earlier on relevant Government thinking, policy and key initiatives - the progress on the Thames Estuary Growth Commission being a good example
- The partnership gets an earlier insight into bidding opportunities, with possibly greater support and guidance in drafting and submitting bids improving the chances of success
- The officer team (3 staff) is recognised and highly regarded by senior officers in CLG and BEIS, as well as the HCA. The benefits of this include ministerial visits and support for cross authority projects eg the Enterprise Zone. KCC's role is important in that they fund a sizable proportion of the costs of the partnership and prioritise officer time and projects to the area.

2.6 In terms of more detailed considerations the councils who are members of the partnership advise that the collective voice of the partnership impacts on leveraging of public sector investment for north Kent eg through the LEP and other funding bodies for regeneration or transport. Experience is that having the collective voice articulated by a private sector chair adds weight and credibility from the Government perspective. It is not possible to quantify the impact precisely given that most investment has come through bidding processes. The successful Enterprise Zone bid was the result, at least in part, of the dedicated resource TGKP was able to apply. Members will also be aware that officers from MBC were also influential in the writing of the bid and development of credible proposals with respect to the Kent Medical Campus element of the Enterprise Zone. TGKP enjoys a recognised and valuable place in the hierarchy of the LEP structure. This involves reviewing and confirming priorities for North Kent, providing the background information to support bids. The partnership is quickly able to respond to short deadlines that arise from Government. Success with the LEP arises from TGKP's reputation, including some significant figures on the Board and that the added level of assurance and confidence, in that they are agile and can respond quickly to deadlines, and their view appears to count with senior Government officials.

2.7 The impact on inward investment is difficult to quantify. Local government partners are positive about the role TGKP plays in presenting a North Kent perspective to prospective investors eg via investment conferences and business breakfasts, highlighting the strengths of the area in terms of its strategic geographic position, its transport links, both road and rail, the

availability of Higher and Further Educational bodies etc. There is close working with Locate in Kent.

- 2.8 There is some impact on raising productivity, closing the skills gap and improving the connections between employers and education providers. In particular North Kent College is represented at officer and Board level and there is good liaison with Mid Kent College. This has resulted in work with individual north Kent partners to develop appropriate apprenticeship training schemes to support local business needs. TGKP periodically hosts opportunities for local businesses to discuss their skills shortages and requirements and then seeks to act upon these. This has had some success as a result of the funding model for Higher Education establishments.
- 2.9 There is a view that TGKP has more potential for the future as Government is encouraging local partnerships to grasp the growth and regeneration agenda and establish ambitious plans that could in turn lever funding. Future benefits envisaged include:
- TGKP should be capable of representing the collective view of North Kent public and private sector views eg on the London Plan and London Mayor's Housing Strategy and presenting these to the Greater London Authority. This complements and does not replace engagement by individual authorities.
  - TGKP will be the key route for participation in the Thames Estuary Production Corridor initiative which aims to create a world class location for the creative industries The UK Commission for Employment and Skills predicts 1.2 million new workers are needed in the sector over the next decade. Plans are being developed to leverage investment for production and manufacturing jobs that will be affected least by automation and therefore represent good opportunities for investors. Currently Maidstone lies outside this production corridor.
  - TGKP are expecting the 2050 Growth Commission (which was led by Lord Heseltine) to crank back into action and this was confirmed in the Chancellor's Budget Statement on 22 November. This should present an excellent opportunity to articulate the collective "ask" of government for north Kent.
  - BEIS civil servants, who also support the work of the Thames Estuary Commission, attend TGKP officer and Board meetings so there is a fast track route into the Commission.
  - There is potential for TGKP to be the body through which investment of retained business rates to enable housing and commercial growth in the north Kent cluster (should Kent and Medway become a pilot) is allocated. To date politicians have agreed that this funding will be managed on a cluster basis.
  - Work on the Lower Thames crossing and access to it; TGKP has previously responded to consultations relating to the Lower Thames Crossing. Each authority impacted may need to commission studies on particular issues in their patches.

- 2.10 In conclusion Maidstone Council, through participation in the North Kent cluster has built up a positive working relationship between members and officers. Maidstone is seen very much as a key and equal partner in North Kent – the other authorities have expressed the view that they see logic and a value to building on this through joining the TGKP.
- 2.11 From a Maidstone perspective:
- The TGKP geography reflects a natural functioning economic area which Maidstone is part of
  - The TGKP priorities with a focus on town centre regeneration, the role of the creative industries in regeneration and improved transport infrastructure align well with the Maidstone Council Strategic Plan
  - Participation in TGKP would build on the Enterprise Zone synergy and the existing North Kent cluster discussions
  - There is appetite and enthusiasm from the other members of the partnership for working with Maidstone
  - The benefits of the partnership in principle are potentially significant in terms of raising the profile of the borough with government departments and being part of a cohesive group which has weight and influence beyond that MBC can achieve on its own in key arenas including SELEP and the Kent and Medway Economic Partnership – where consideration is given to Strategic Economic Assessment, Infrastructure Investment strategy, bid prioritisation and funding allocations.
  - It is difficult to quantify the scale of any financial benefits eg leveraging capital investment in infrastructure. MBC has had some success through SELEP bids for the Local Growth Fund and working with KCC has secured funding through the National Productivity Investment Fund. There have been occasions when scoring criteria have favoured sub-county partnership bids and disadvantaged MBC because we are not a member of any such partnership. Being part of TGKP will not increase the total resources available to be bid for, will require our schemes to be part of a prioritised package for the whole of North Kent but may increase the likelihood of access to funding whereas remaining outside any partnership is more likely to increasingly diminish our position.
  - The future benefits are potentially significant especially given the timing for consultation on the London Plan, government expectations concerning the Industrial Strategy and the work of the Thames Estuary Commission and Production Corridor for creative industries.
- 2.12 Does this add up to value for money given the subscription fee of £28,000? The net payment for MBC would be £20,000 given that a contribution is made already for support on the Enterprise Zone. The subscription will be funded from Economic Development budgets and if necessary the provision for growth.

- 2.13 There is clear potential although being precise about scale and timing eg of any funding for infrastructure is not possible. Not participating potentially constrains access to new initiatives and influence. If MBC joins the partnership there is a risk that the reshaping of governance and adjustment of priorities needed from the existing partners (identified in paragraph 1.6 above) may not be forthcoming. The option of joining the partnership for a trial period has been raised with the TGKP Chief Executive who has advised that constitutionally a time-limited membership is not precluded; it would be a matter for the board to consider and given the longevity of the partnership it is likely that their preference would be for a longer-term commitment. Six months' notice of leaving is required for any member.
- 

### **3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 On balance it is considered that there would be merit in fully participating in the TGKP partnership and therefore it is recommended that Maidstone Council should advise the Chair that the Council wishes to join. If this recommendation is accepted it would be good practice to review membership; given the nature of the objectives and work undertaken it is suggested that a review should be conducted after 24 months.
- 3.2 The alternative option is not to join TGKP. The implications of this are the reverse of those for joining the partnership.
- 3.3 District councils work in clusters in West (Tunbridge Wells, Tonbridge and Malling and Sevenoaks) and East Kent (Ashford, Shepway, Canterbury, Thanet and Dover). As noted on previously when enhanced two tier working was considered by the Committee, in practice there is no likelihood of being able to join either of these two clusters and, in terms of economic geography, then the North Kent cluster has stronger synergy with Maidstone borough.
- 

### **4. RISK**

- 4.1 The Council's Corporate Risk register identifies the adverse consequences of poor partnership relationships as a key risk. Joining the TGKP partnership has the potential to enhance the council's reputation and profile provided that good relationships are developed and maintained. Experience of working informally through the North Kent cluster has been positive. The financial commitment and therefore risk of participation is small; there is potential for more effective leveraging of capital and inward investment.
- 4.2 We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

## 5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 The potential for joining the TGKP has been informally discussed with the leaders of each political group of Maidstone Borough Council.
- 

## 6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 The decision of the Policy and Resources Committee will be communicated to the Chief Executive and Chair of the TGKP. If the recommendation is agreed then work will be undertaken to revise the Constitution of TGKP.
- 6.2 It is recommended that if Maidstone Borough Council joins the TGKP then the Chair of the Policy and Resources Committee should represent the Council and that the Vice-Chair should be the substitute. This is consistent with the responsibilities of the Policy and Resources Committee and the arrangements for representation on the Mid Kent Services Board.
- 

## 7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	The recommendations will support the Council's overall achievement of its aims with respect to economic development and management of growth in the borough.	Chief Executive
<b>Risk Management</b>	Refer to paragraph 4.1-2 of the report	Chief Executive
<b>Financial</b>	Accepting the recommendations will demand new spending of £28,000 annually, £20,000 net of existing spend to support the Enterprise Zone. We plan to fund that spending as set out in section 2.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Staffing</b>	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Chief Executive
<b>Legal</b>	Acting on the recommendations is within the Council's powers as set out in The Local Government Act 1972, S111 provides that a local authority shall have power to do anything (whether or not involving the expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or the acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental to, the	Head of Mid Kent Legal Partnership

	discharge of any of their functions. The recommendations proposed are in accordance with the power.	
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	The recommendations will not impact the information the Council holds on its residents	Legal Team
<b>Equalities</b>	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment	Policy & Information Manager
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	The recommendation will not have a negative impact on Crime and Disorder.	Head of Service or Manager

## **8. REPORT APPENDICES**

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Kent Gateway Officers report
- 

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None



Thames Gateway Kent Officers' Group  
Meeting 14<sup>th</sup> November

---

## Update on the Thames Gateway Kent Partnership work programme

1. This paper summarises work underway to deliver TGKP's work programme, agreed at the board meeting in September 2017. This update is organised according to the four new priority areas and the two "business as usual" TGKP work areas. It is proposed to bring a regular update on TGKP activity to future meetings of the officers' group.

### New priority areas:

#### **Positioning North Kent**

- TGKP presentations delivered to:
  - Cultural Transformation Board;
  - Construction Skills Exhibition;
  - Kent B2B Medway.
- Attendance at Solace / Grant Thornton Industrial Strategy round table event in central London.
- Attendance at MPIM UK to promote the North Kent Enterprise Zone.

#### **Supporting town centre regeneration in North Kent with new technology**

- Work is underway with private sector board members to develop a framework to take forward engagement work on new technology. The current proposal is to undertake a series of seminars over the next 12 months with private sector and other partners to understand the impact of new technology on a small number of thematic areas on North Kent. Higher education partners are keen to be involved in this.

#### **Ensuring the cultural and creative sectors can contribute fully to North Kent's regeneration**

- TGKP have been working with the University of Kent and other Gateway partners to help develop a joint bid to the Arts and Humanities Research Council for creative R&D partnerships and wider university engagement.
- TGKP have been brokering discussions with English Heritage, Heritage Lottery Fund and other partners to develop a potential funding bid to bring heritage buildings back into sustainable use. This work is ongoing.

- TGKP have been working with KCC, the Cultural Transformation Board and SECEN on the incipient Production Corridor proposals.

### **Making the case for improved transport in North Kent**

- TGKP responded to Highways England’s M2 junction 5 consultation (October).
- TGKP participated with SELEP and KMEP in initial meetings with all three identified bidders for the South-east rail franchise.
- Crossrail: Ongoing work through both the Project Group and Chief Executive’s Group on the C2E (Crossrail to Ebbsfleet) project. The deadline for consultancy tenders for the strategic outline business case work is 10 November and an inception meeting with the appointed contractor(s) will be around 22 November. A promotional brochure was used to brief Party Conferences and copies were made available at MIPIM UK to promote the scheme. The CEX Group meets on 24 November to discuss next steps particularly on communications strategy.
- Lower Thames Crossing – TGKP is actively participating in the Stakeholder Advisory Panel and attended the last meeting on 24 October. A follow-up meeting is planned with HE representatives this month and TGKP has convened a meeting with NK partners on 14 November to discuss the range of implications for North Kent and next steps in our engagement with Highways England and Government on these issues.

### **TGKP “business as usual” work areas:**

#### **Supporting and co-ordinating the North Kent Enterprise Zone**

- TGKP continues to coordinate the NKEZ. There has been a productive discussion between EDC, HCA and GBC over the future of the portion of Northfleet Embankment East not sold to Berkeley Homes, for which a planning application for a modular homes factor is now with EDC for determination. A local delivery board for Innovation Park Medway (the new brand for Rochester Airport) has met for the first time and work is progressing on procurement of consultants to prepare the local development orders and masterplan. The main planning applications for reconfiguration of the airport site are with Medway and Tonbridge & Malling for determination.
- The NKEZ was showcased with a stand at MIPIM UK, led by Locate in Kent and with input from other partners including TGKP.

#### **Ensuring North Kent has an influential voice with government**

- Work to prepare for a new Thames Estuary 2050 Growth Commission chair, the interim (or final) report and a future meeting of the TGSG continues, with partners in Essex and London. A senior officers’ group has been meeting regularly to provide this co-ordination. A scaled-back TGSG meeting is planned for 5<sup>th</sup> December.
- DCLG Planning for the right homes in the right places consultation. TGKP submitted its response on 9 November (circulated to Board and TGKOG) following consultation with partners on a draft.

- TGKP were represented at the Thames Gateway Growth Day in Dagenham in October.
- TGKP are looking at how we can best contribute to the preparation of the South East LEP's Strategic Economic Plan. SELEP are regrouping on how to resource and progress the actual writing of the SEP following lengthy evidence-gathering over the summer and early autumn. Timing and alignment with the anticipated Industrial Strategy White Paper have not yet been finalised. The aim is to take something to the next SELEP Strategic Board, if only to confirm the direction of travel and approach.

### **Other TGKP activity**

2. Christchurch University Brexit study: TGKP has been asked by Christchurch University and KCC to chair the "Delivering a Brexit Border: Customs and Immigration, Policing Cooperation and Transport/Infrastructure" sub-group and to work with Christchurch to draft the accompanying report.
3. Following the decision at the TGKP board meeting in September, TGKP have progressed the potential membership of Maidstone on the partnership. Rob Bennett has written formally to the Leader of Maidstone and we await a formal response.
4. Re-shaping the Economic Development Officers' Group. Given the interplay between economic growth, planning, regeneration and other issues, it was agreed that the membership of the EDO group should be broadened to fit the agenda, and a clearer relationship developed between TGKOG and the retitled the "TGKP Delivery Group". It is envisaged that the group will provide both operational and policy insight to feed into TGKOG discussions as well as follow through on actions arising from TGKOG and TGKP Board decisions. We are keen to secure strong buy-in to this process.
5. The meetings of the private sector board members have continued – and there is a future programme of meetings up until spring 2018.
6. TGKP were invited by the "Peninsula Management Group" to a set of meetings at the Northfleet Industrial Estates in November to understand the potential impact of the London Resort proposals on the area.

### **Thames Gateway Kent Partnership**

**November 2017**

<b>Policy &amp; Resources Committee</b>	<b>13 December 2017</b>
---	-------------------------

## Council Tax – Tax Base & Collection Fund Adjustment 2018/19

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Policy & Resources Committee
<b>Lead Head of Service/Lead Director</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance & Business Improvement
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Ellie Dunnet, Head of Finance
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

### Executive Summary

This report advises Members of the information available on the tax base as at 13 October 2017 for Council Tax purposes. It identifies potential changes to that tax base expected in the forthcoming year and recommends the tax base for 2018/19 for the Council and parish areas.

Also detailed within Appendix 3 to the report is the anticipated balance on the Council Tax account as at 31 March 2018 which will be distributed between (or recovered from) preceptors and this Council during the next financial year, in accordance with the statutory arrangements for Council Tax.

The distribution of balances to precepting authorities is an important part of their respective budget setting processes and a decision at this time enables timely advice to those authorities. It also enables timely consideration in relation to the Council's own budget strategy for the coming financial year.

### This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. Pursuant to this report and in accordance with the Local Authority (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, that the amount calculated by this Authority as its Council Tax Base for the year 2018/19 will be 60,921.6;
2. In accordance with the Local Authority (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012, that the amount calculated by this Authority as the Council Tax Base for each parish area for the year 2018/19 will be as identified in Appendix 2 to this report;
3. That the 2017/18 Council Tax projection and proposed distribution detailed in Appendix 3 of this report is agreed.

### Timetable

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Policy & Resources Committee	13 December 2017

# Council Tax – Tax Base & Collection Fund Adjustment 2018/19

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### Tax Base

- 1.1 Setting the tax base is an integral part of the Council tax collection process which is a basic financial function of this Authority. It is essential for the efficient funding of all Local Authorities in the area. The income received from Council Tax, within the overall context of the budget process, provides resources for the achievement of all the Council's priorities.
- 1.2 Regulations prescribe that a decision on the tax base for the forthcoming financial year must be made between 1st December and 31st January.
- 1.3 The basis of the calculation of the tax base is the valuation information received from the Valuation Office on 11 September 2017 and the latest information on exemptions and discounts available as at 2 October 2017.
- 1.4 This information has been collated for the whole of the Borough area and for individual Parish areas. Information for the whole area has been supplied to the Government for their use in the monitoring of:
  - The Local Council Tax Support Scheme;
  - This Council's needs baseline for business rates; and
  - Property changes that will be used to calculate the Council's New Homes Bonus award next year.
- 1.5 The tax base figure supplied to central government is given at Appendix 1. This shows a net tax base of 60,795 as at 13 October 2017. Starting from this figure an estimate of the tax base for 2018/19 can be made by considering movements that may occur in the factors that influence the tax base over the forthcoming year.
- 1.6 It is necessary that a realistic assessment is made of the potential changes to the tax base for 2018/19 as an under or over recovery of Council Tax income will affect the Council's cash flow. If the tax base is overestimated, there will inevitably be a deficit on the collection fund which will need to be recovered through the Council Tax in the following financial year. In addition, during the course of the year, the borrowing necessary to cover the under recovery of the tax would need to be paid for by this Council. If the tax base is underestimated there will be a surplus on the Collection Fund because the Council will have asked tax payers to contribute more than necessary in this financial year. The surplus would then be used to reduce the need for resources in the following year.
- 1.7 It is also necessary at this time to provide the Parish Councils, which set a precept, with the element of the tax base of the borough that equates to

their area. Attached at Appendix 2 to this report is the detail of the calculation of the tax base for each parish.

### **Collection Fund Adjustment**

- 1.8 As a billing authority, this Council has a statutory obligation to maintain a Collection Fund for transactions relating to the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates from taxpayers and distribution to preceptors.
- 1.9 For proper maintenance of the Collection Fund, it is necessary to assess, on an annual basis, the projected balance as at 31 March of each year. Any balance, either positive or negative, must be taken into account in the following financial year. Under the statutory arrangements for the Collection Fund, the balance remaining does not become a credit or charge on this Council. Instead, it is distributed proportionately across the preceptors.
- 1.10 The regulations provide that, in estimating a surplus or deficit on the Collection Fund at the end of the year, account is taken of any difference between the amount estimated for the previous year and the amount shown as the surplus/deficit for that year in the accounts. Surpluses and deficits will be calculated separately for Council Tax and Business Rates.
- 1.11 These balances (surplus or deficit) will be distributed between the billing authority, i.e. Maidstone Borough Council, and major preceptors during 2018/19. The amounts are apportioned on the basis of the billing authority's demand, and each major precepting authority's precept, based on their respective band D Council tax bases to which the estimate relates i.e. the amounts to be distributed during 2018/19 will be apportioned using the 2017/18 demand and precept amounts.
- 1.12 The Collection Fund Adjustment arising from Business Rates will be estimated at a later stage in order to align with the statutory timetable for calculating the predicted closing balance on the Business Rates element of the Collection Fund. It will be reported to the committee in February as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy proposals.

---

## **2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

### **Tax Base - Option 1**

- 2.1 An assessment of the information held by both the Revenues Service and the Planning Service suggests that between October 2017 and March 2018 a total of 1,116 properties (1.6%) will be added to the Council tax records. Distributing this sum evenly over the period and taking the average, to identify the effect on the tax base for 2018/19, the result suggests an increase of 824.4 band D equivalent properties. Adjusting this figure for the current levels of discount and other allowances suggests a net tax base increase of 742.0.
- 2.2 This figure is significantly lower than the 1,116 new properties identified because they will not all be band D properties, they will not all start to pay

Council tax at the beginning of the year and some will receive the discounts and allowances that are part of the system.

- 2.3 Finally the revised total tax base must be adjusted to allow for non-collection, for which the Council currently targets 1% of total debt.
- 2.4 The calculation is set out in the table below:

Tax Base as at Appendix I	60,795.0
New properties (Avg: by band D & time)	824.4
Adjustment for potential allowances	-82.4
Non-collection allowance (1% of above)	-615.4
<b>Proposed Tax Base</b>	<b>60,921.6</b>

*Table 1: Proposed tax base 2018/19*

- 2.5 Appendix 2 to this report provides details of the tax base for each parish based on an identical calculation.

### **Tax Base - Option 2**

- 2.6 It would be possible to vary some of the factors set out above. The exception is the figure from Appendix 1 as this is reconciled to the District Valuers' records and has been reported to central government. The other figures given above are based on current known data and they could rise or fall during the year.
- 2.7 The risks of making an inaccurate calculation are set out in paragraph 1.6 above and the data used in calculating Option 1 is accurate and evidenced. Any variation the Committee may wish to make should be similarly evidence based.

### **Tax Base - Option 3**

- 2.8 The do nothing option is not available to the Council as it has a statutory obligation to set a tax base each year.

### **Collection Fund Adjustment - Option 1**

- 2.9 A projection for 31 March 2018 based on the current position is provided at Appendix 3. This appendix details the precepts and demands on the fund totalling £100,033,288.
- 2.10 Appendix 3 also details the current position regarding Council tax bills dispatched, incorporating exemptions and discounts. Total income is now anticipated to be £100,842,167; therefore a surplus of £808,879 is anticipated for 2017/18. The forecast deficit has arisen as a consequence of an under distribution in the current year of the surplus forecast at this point last year. The decision to remove the empty property discount from 1 April 2017 has also been a significant contributing factor.
- 2.11 In line with the Local Government Finance Act 1992 it is necessary to declare the distribution of any surplus or deficit on the collection fund and for this reason it is recommended that the surplus be distributed as set out

shown in the table below. This apportions the surplus in line with the preceptors' share of the Council tax as detailed below:

<b>Preceptor</b>	<b>£</b>
Maidstone Borough Council	228,703
Kent County Council	985,276
Kent Police Authority	131,348
Kent and Medway Towns Fire Authority	61,307
<b>Total projected surplus as at 31 March 2018</b>	<b>1,406,635</b>

*Table 2: Distribution of projected Council Tax surplus as at 31 March 2018*

### **Collection Fund Adjustment - Option 2**

- 2.12 The committee could choose to vary the figures used in the estimate provided within the appendices. However, these are based on data from the revenues system, projections developed from past experience and known factors. They are considered to represent a reasonable basis for estimating the position on the collection fund at 31 March 2018.
- 2.13 Should the committee choose to vary the data and distribute a different surplus or deficit this could affect the balance on the collection fund and the Council's cash flows.

### **Collection Fund Adjustment - Option 3**

- 2.14 It is a statutory requirement that any adjustment be calculated annually and the Committee cannot choose to ignore this requirement.

## **3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Tax Base**

- 3.1 The recommended option is Option 1 (as detailed in paragraph 2.4 above) as this calculation is based on current known data and collection rates.

### **Collection Fund Adjustment**

- 3.2 It is recommended that the committee agrees the projections detailed within option 1 above and within Appendix 3, as they are based on data from the revenues system, projections developed from past experience and known factors. They are considered to represent a reasonable basis for estimating the position on the collection fund at 31 March 2018.

## **4. RISK**

- 4.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. That consideration is shown in this

report within section 2. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council’s risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

- 4.2 The main risks relate to an over optimistic estimate of the tax base and/or balance on the Council Tax account at 31 March 2018. Although any deficit arising on the Collection Fund would be recouped in subsequent years, the impact of this risk materialising could be flow problems during the year. As a direct consequence this would reduce interest income generated on the Council’s cash balances or, in extreme cases, result in a need to borrow on a temporary basis.
- 4.3 Over pessimistic estimates would lead to increased balances on the Collection Fund. When fed into the overall budget process this can produce yearly variations which need to be managed as part of the Budget Strategy and place unnecessary burdens on tax payers in advance of need.
- 4.4 Monthly monitoring of collection rates and growth seen in the tax base over recent years help the Council to mitigate this risk.

## **5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 No consultation is necessary on this specific issue but consultation has occurred with the public and with service committees on the wider issues relating to the budget and Council Tax for 2018/19.

## **6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 6.1 The tax bases approved as part of this decision will be provided, as appropriate, to relevant preceptors.
- 6.2 The Council will use this tax base in setting its 2018/19 budget on 28 February 2018.
- 6.3 The Council is required to notify preceptors of the estimated Council Tax surplus/deficit as at 31 March 2018 by 15 January 2018.

## **7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We do not expect the recommendations will by themselves materially affect achievement of corporate priorities. However, they will</li> </ul>	Head of Finance

	support the Council's overall achievement of its aims as set out in sections 2 & 3.	
<b>Risk Management</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Risk implications are set out in section 4 of the report.</li> </ul>	Head of Finance
<b>Financial</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The results of this decision affect the overall budget strategy process and therefore the pressure on the Council tax requirement in creating a balanced budget.</li> <li>• The setting of the tax base is an essential part of the budget process and is required by legislation.</li> <li>• Any increase in the tax base effectively means that the cost of services provided by this Authority and others in the area is being spread over more Council Tax payers and would effectively reduce the Council Tax burden on any individual tax payer.</li> <li>• This relationship however must be realistic in that any underachievement on the collection of Council Tax will result in cash flow problems for this Authority and a loss of investment income.</li> </ul>	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Staffing</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No impact identified.</li> </ul>	Head of Finance

<b>Legal</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accepting the recommendations regarding the tax base will fulfil the Council's duties under the Local Authority (Calculation of Council Tax Base) (England) Regulations 2012. Failure to accept the recommendations without agreeing suitable alternatives may place the Council in breach this Act.</li> <li>• Billing authorities are required by the Local Authorities (Funds) (England) Regulations 1992 to estimate any surplus/deficit on their collection fund for the year. Accepting the recommended projection in Appendix 3 will enable the Council to meet this requirement.</li> </ul>	Interim Deputy Head of Legal Partnership
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No impact identified.</li> </ul>	Interim Deputy Head of Legal Partnership
<b>Equalities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment</li> </ul>	[Policy & Information Manager]
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No impact identified.</li> </ul>	Head of Finance
<b>Procurement</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No impact identified.</li> </ul>	Head of Finance & Section 151 Officer

## 8. REPORT APPENDICES

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix 1: Calculation of Council Tax Base 2018/19 (CTB1 Return)
  - Appendix 2: Calculation of Individual Parish Tax Bases 2018/19
  - Appendix 3: Council Tax Projection to 31 March 2018
- 

## **9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

## CTB(October 2017)

## Calculation of Council Tax Base

Please e-mail to : [ctb.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ctb.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

Please enter your details after checking that you have selected the correct local authority name

Ver 1.0

Please select your local authority's name from this list

Lincoln
Liverpool
Luton
Maidstone
Reading
Malvern Hills

Check that this is your authority :

Maidstone

E-code :

E2237

Local authority contact name :

sheila Coburn

Local authority contact telephone number :

01622 602093

Local authority contact e-mail address :

sheilacoburn@maidkent.gov.uk

## CTB(October 2017) form for Maidstone

Completed forms should be received by DCLG by Friday 13 October 2017

Dwellings shown on the Valuation List  
for the authority on  
Monday 11 September 2017Band A  
entitled to  
disabled  
relief  
reduction  
COLUMN 1Band A  
COLUMN 2Band B  
COLUMN 3Band C  
COLUMN 4Band D  
COLUMN 5Band E  
COLUMN 6Band F  
COLUMN 7Band G  
COLUMN 8Band H  
COLUMN 9TOTAL  
COLUMN 10

## Part 1

	Band A entitled to disabled relief reduction COLUMN 1	Band A COLUMN 2	Band B COLUMN 3	Band C COLUMN 4	Band D COLUMN 5	Band E COLUMN 6	Band F COLUMN 7	Band G COLUMN 8	Band H COLUMN 9	TOTAL COLUMN 10
1. Total number of dwellings on the Valuation List		4,217	8,778	19,074	18,268	9,546	5,408	3,973	369	69,633.0
2. Number of dwellings on valuation list exempt on 2 October 2017 (Class B & D to W exemptions)		195	112	379	203	77	47	20	3	1,036.0
3. Number of demolished dwellings and dwellings outside area of authority on 2 October 2017 (please see notes)		1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	2.0
4. Number of chargeable dwellings on 2 October 2017 (treating demolished dwellings etc as exempt) (lines 1-2-3)		4,021	8,666	18,695	18,064	9,469	5,361	3,953	366	68,595.0
5. Number of chargeable dwellings in line 4 subject to disabled reduction on 2 October 2017		1	16	47	82	67	35	28	18	294.0
6. Number of dwellings effectively subject to council tax for this band by virtue of disabled relief (line 5 after reduction)	1	16	47	82	67	35	28	18		294.0
7. Number of chargeable dwellings adjusted in accordance with lines 5 and 6 (lines 4-5+6 or in the case of column 1, line 6)	1	4,036	8,697	18,730	18,049	9,437	5,354	3,943	348	68,595.0
8. Number of dwellings in line 7 entitled to a single adult household 25% discount on 2 October 2017	1	2,412	4,035	6,277	4,740	1,907	810	523	35	20,740.0
9. Number of dwellings in line 7 entitled to a 25% discount on 2 October 2017 due to all but one resident being disregarded for council tax purposes	0	15	53	142	146	78	37	22	1	494.0
10. Number of dwellings in line 7 entitled to a 50% discount on 2 October 2017 due to all residents being disregarded for council tax purposes	0	0	4	9	17	4	9	23	10	76.0
11. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as second homes on 2 October 2017 (b/fwd from Flex Empty tab)		24	19	29	33	19	19	23	6	172.0
12. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty and receiving a zero% discount on 2 October 2017 (b/fwd from Flex Empty tab)		68	105	159	146	59	25	20	1	583.0
13. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty and receiving a discount on 2 October 2017 and not shown in line 12 (b/fwd from Flex Empty tab)		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
14. Number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty and being charged the Empty Homes Premium on 2 October 2017 (b/fwd from Flex Empty tab)		12	28	23	21	12	8	2	1	107.0
15. Total number of dwellings in line 7 classed as empty on 2 October 2017 (lines 12, 13 & 14).		80	133	182	167	71	33	22	2	690.0
16. Number of dwellings that are classed as empty on 2 October 2017 and have been for more than 6 months. NB These properties should have already been included in line 15 above.		41	66	94	77	39	24	13	2	356.0
16a. The number of dwellings included in line 16 above which are empty on 2 October 2017 because of the flooding that occurred between 1 December 2013 and 31 March 2014 and are only empty because of the flooding.		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
16b. The number of dwellings included in line 16 above which are empty on 2 October 2017 because of the flooding that occurred between 1 December 2015 and 31 March 2016 and are only empty because of the flooding.		0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.0
17. Number of dwellings that are classed as empty on 2 October 2017 and have been for more than 6 months and fall to be treated under empty homes discount class D (formerly Class A exemptions). NB These properties should have already been included in line 15 above. Do NOT include any dwellings included in line 16a and 16b above.		3	3	3	4	1	0	0	0	14.0
18 Line 16 - line 16a - line 16b - line 17. This is the equivalent of line 18 on the CTB(October 2016) and will be used in the calculation of the New Homes Bonus.		38	63	91	73	38	24	13	2	342.0
19. Number of dwellings in line 7 where there is liability to pay 100% council tax before Family Annexe discount	0	1,596	4,577	12,278	13,124	7,435	4,490	3,373	301	47,174.0
20. Number of dwellings in line 7 that are assumed to be subject to a discount or a premium before Family Annexe discount	1	2,440	4,120	78,452	4,925	2,002	864	570	47	21,421.0

## CTB(October 2017)

**Calculation of Council Tax Base**Please e-mail to : [ctb.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ctb.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

Please enter your details after checking that you have selected the correct local authority name

Ver 1.0

21. Reduction in taxbase as a result of the Family Annexe discount (b/fwd from Family Annexe tab)	13.0	4.0	3.0	1.5	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	22.5
22. Number of dwellings equivalents after applying discounts and premiums to calculate taxbase	-12.3	3,430.8	7,684.0	17,130.3	16,828.0	8,944.3	5,141.8	3,796.3	334.5	63,277.5
23. Ratio to band D	5/9	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9	
24. Total number of band D equivalents (to 1 decimal place)(line 22 x line 23)	-6.8	2,287.2	5,976.4	15,226.9	16,828.0	10,931.9	7,427.0	6,327.1	669.0	65,666.7
25. Number of band D equivalents of contributions in lieu (in respect of Class O exempt dwellings) in 2017-18 (to 1 decimal place)										196.0
<b>26. Tax base (to 1 decimal place) (line 24 col 10 + line 25)</b>										<b>65,862.7</b>

## CTB(October 2017)

## Calculation of Council Tax Base

Please e-mail to : [ctb.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:ctb.statistics@communities.gsi.gov.uk)

Please enter your details after checking that you have selected the correct local authority name

Ver 1.0

## Part 2

27. Number of dwellings equivalents after applying discounts and premiums to calculate tax base (Line 22)	-12.25	3,430.75	7,684.00	17,130.25	16,828.00	8,944.25	5,141.75	3,796.25	334.50	63,277.5
28.Reduction in taxbase as a result of local council tax support (b/fwd from CT Support tab)	0.74	933.78	1,536.44	2,058.51	958.41	256.71	74.28	23.13	0.88	5,842.9
29. Number of dwellings equivalents after applying discounts, premiums and local tax support to calculate taxbase	-13.0	2,497.0	6,147.6	15,071.7	15,869.6	8,687.5	5,067.5	3,773.1	333.6	57,434.6
30. Ratio to band D	5/9	6/9	7/9	8/9	9/9	11/9	13/9	15/9	18/9	
31. Total number of band D equivalents after allowance for council tax support (to 1 decimal place) (line 29 x line 30)	-7.2	1,664.6	4,781.4	13,397.1	15,869.6	10,618.1	7,319.7	6,288.5	667.2	60,599.0
32. Number of band D equivalents of contributions in lieu (in respect of Class O exempt dwellings) in 2017-18 (to 1 decimal place)(line 25)										196.0
33. Tax base after allowance for council tax support (to 1 decimal place) (line 31 col 10 + line 32)										60,795.0

## Certificate of Chief Financial Officer

I certify that the information provided on this form is based on the dwellings shown in the Valuation List for my authority on 11 September 2017 and that it accurately reflects information available to me about exemptions, demolished dwellings, disabled relief, discounts and premiums applicable on 2 October 2017 and, where appropriate, has been completed in a manner consistent with the form for 2016.

Chief Financial Officer : .....

Date : .....

**Policy Resources Committee  
Tax Base Calculation for Precepting Parish Councils 2018/19**

<b>Parish</b>	<b>Tax Base</b>	<b>Adjustment net changes</b>	<b>Non Collection</b>	<b>Net Tax Base</b>
Barming	738.6	11.8	-7.5	742.9
Bearsted	3661.7	1.7	-36.6	3,626.8
Bicknor	44.5		-0.4	44.1
Boughton Malherbe	222.8	4.6	-2.3	225.2
Boughton Monchelsea	1,437.6	74.0	-15.1	1,496.5
Boxley	3898.6	2.5	-39.0	3,862.1
Bredhurst	175.8	0.0	-1.8	174.0
Broomfield & Kingswood	718.9	4.8	-7.2	716.5
Chart Sutton	418.1	2.0	-4.2	415.9
Collier Street	371.2	4.1	-3.8	371.5
Coxheath	1,570.0	22.9	-15.9	1,577.0
Detling	393.3	3.7	-4.0	393.1
Downswood	846.8	0.4	-8.5	838.7
East Sutton	144.2	0.0	-1.4	142.8
Farleigh East	677.1	1.0	-6.8	671.3
Farleigh West	229.4	3.1	-2.3	230.2
Frinted	75.1		-0.8	74.3
Harrietsham	1124.8	130.6	-12.6	1,242.8
Headcorn	1,533.1	61.2	-15.9	1,578.4
Hollingbourne	462.3	15.7	-4.8	473.3
Hucking	35.0		-0.4	34.7
Hunton	317.7	0.0	-3.2	314.5
Langley	501.2	1.2	-5.0	497.4
Leeds	337.5	3.3	-3.4	337.4
Lenham	1,425.3	20.1	-14.5	1,431.0
Linton	254.5	0.0	-2.5	252.0
Loose	1,113.6	10.9	-11.2	1,113.2
Marden	1670.4	70.2	-17.4	1,723.2
Nettlestead	309.2	0.0	-3.1	306.1
Otham	309.3	20.5	-3.3	326.5
Otterden	92.9		-0.9	92.0
Staplehurst	2394.3	34.5	-24.3	2,404.5
Stockbury	324.7	3.1	-3.3	324.5
Sutton Valence	664.4	30.6	-6.9	688.0
Teston	317.1	0.0	-3.2	313.9
Thurnham	569.1	5.4	-5.7	568.7
Tovil	1,377.6	60.4	-14.4	1,423.6
Ulcombe	389.7	1.6	-3.9	387.4
Wichling	58.5		-0.6	57.9
Wormshill	100.7		-1.0	99.7
Yalding	983.8	13.6	-10.0	987.4
	32290.4	619.6	-329.1	32,580.9

**Maidstone Borough Council**  
**Policy & Resources Committee**  
**13 December 2017**  
**Collection Fund 2017/18 - Council Tax Adjustment**

	£	%
<b><u>Demands on the fund (2017/18)</u></b>		
Maidstone Borough Council budget requirement	16,264,293	16.26%
Kent County Council (including adult social care charge)	70,068,236	70.04%
Kent Police Authority	9,340,886	9.34%
Kent and Medway Towns Fire Authority	4,359,873	4.36%
<b>Council Tax requirement</b>	<b>100,033,288</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

<b><u>Debit raised</u></b>		
Charges raised	120,824,074	
Less:		
Council Tax Support	-8,451,842	
Single Persons Discount	-8,237,297	
Disabled Relief	-103,975	
Empty Relief	-144,146	
Other exemptions and disregards	-2,175,672	
Local Discount	-12,159	
Plus:		
Second Home Premium	161,792	
	101,860,774	
Less allowance for bad and doubtful debts	-1,018,608	
<b>Projected Council Tax Income for 2017/18</b>	<b>100,842,167</b>	
<b>Projected surplus for the year</b>	<b>808,879</b>	

<b><u>Utilisation of fund balance</u></b>		<b><u>£</u></b>
Actual Surplus at 31 March 2017	1,183,886	
Less anticipated surplus (January 2017 estimate)	-586,130	
	597,756	
Projected surplus for 2017/18	808,879	
<b>Cumulative surplus as at 31 March 2018</b>	<b>1,406,635</b>	

<b><u>Distribution of surplus</u></b>		
Maidstone Borough Council	228,703	16.26%
Kent County Council	985,276	70.04%
Kent Police Authority	131,348	9.34%
Kent and Medway Towns Fire Authority	61,307	4.36%
<b>Total projected surplus as at 31 March 2018</b>	<b>1,406,635</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

**Policy and Resources  
Committee**

**13 December  
2017**

**Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Proposals**

<b>Final Decision-Maker</b>	Council
<b>Lead Head of Service/Lead Director</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Lead Officer and Report Author</b>	Mark Green, Director of Finance and Business Improvement
<b>Classification</b>	Public
<b>Wards affected</b>	All

**Executive Summary**

This report forms part of the process of agreeing a budget for 2018/19 and setting next year's Council Tax. Following agreement by Council of the Medium Term Financial Strategy at its meeting on 25 October 2017, this report updates the Strategic Revenue Projections on the basis of the latest information, and sets out detailed budget proposals which will now be subject to consideration by this Committee and the other Service Committees.

**This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:**

It is recommended that the Committee:

1. Agrees to plan on the basis of the updated Strategic Revenue Projection set out at Appendix A;
2. Agrees the budget proposals for services within the remit of this Committee as set out in Appendix C (TO FOLLOW);
3. Notes the remaining budget proposals set out in Appendix C, which will be considered by the relevant Service Committees during the course of January 2018.

**Timetable**

<b>Meeting</b>	<b>Date</b>
Policy and Resources Committee	13 December 2017
All Service Committees	January 2018
Policy and Resources Committee	14 February 2018
Council	28 February 2018

# Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget Proposals

## 1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

### Medium Term Financial Strategy

- 1.1 At its meeting on 25 October 2017, Council agreed a Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) for the next five years. The starting point for the MTFS is that budget savings for 2017/18 are on track for delivery, a modest underspend is currently projected for the year as a whole, and the level of reserves is adequate, but not excessive.
- 1.2 The MTFS provides the financial underpinning for the Council's Strategic Plan, in particular the three action areas highlighted for specific focus: a clean and safe environment; regenerating the Town Centre; and a home for everyone, ie tackling homelessness and improving housing supply.
- 1.3 There is a high degree of uncertainty about the external environment. The four year financial settlement to local authorities announced in 2016 has another two years to run. This includes £1.6 million negative Revenue Support Grant payable by the Council to central government in 2019/20, but the four year settlement at least provides a measure of certainty about the Council's funding position in the short term. However, after 2020/21 it remains unclear how any new financial settlement will affect the Council. It is also unclear how the lower level of overall economic growth now projected by the Office of Budget Responsibility will impact the Council.
- 1.4 Given uncertainty about the future, various potential scenarios were modelled in the MTFS, representing (a) favourable, (b) neutral and (c) adverse sets of circumstances. All scenarios assumed that budget savings included within the existing MTFS, set out in Appendix B, can be delivered. Projections were prepared for each of the scenarios modelled and the MTFS stated that budget proposals would be sought to address all the potential scenarios.

### Updates to Strategic Revenue Projections

#### Council Tax

- 1.5 The MTFS assumed in all scenarios that Band D Council Tax would continue to increase by £4.95 per annum, reverting to 2% in 2020/21 when this becomes a greater figure than £4.95. The government has now confirmed the referendum thresholds for 2018/19 on which these assumptions were based.
- 1.6 The other key assumption regarding Council Tax is the number of new properties. The number of new properties has been increasing in recent years, from a low of 0.38% in 2014 to 1.18% in 2016. Assumptions were as follows:

Favourable – 2%

Neutral – 1.5%  
Adverse – 1%

- 1.7 The Council Tax base for 2018/19 has now been calculated and is the subject of a separate report on your agenda. This shows an increase of 1.6% in new properties for the year to 20 September 2017. The SRP has been updated to reflect this and the related Council Tax base increase.

### **Business Rates**

- 1.8 Business rates income is highly volatile, owing to the large number of assessments that are subject to appeals. However, the underlying pattern is of continuing growth in business rates income above and beyond the baseline figure assumed in the government's funding settlement. The assumption included in the MTFs of growth of 2% has therefore been retained.
- 1.9 It is likely that as part of any new funding settlement with effect from 2020/21, business rates growth will be reset to zero. In other words, councils will lose the benefit of growth accumulated since the introduction of the present system in 2014, and their share of business rates will be recalculated based on the results of the Fair Funding Review. This review is intended to reset the starting point for local authorities' funding, based on their respective needs and resources. It will have the effect of redistributing resources away from high business rates growth areas to low growth areas in the short term.
- 1.10 Some of business rates growth is currently being used to fund the Council's economic development activity. Given the volatility of business rates, this source of income is not stable and cannot be predicted with certainty for the future. Accordingly, this feeds into the corporate risk that financial restrictions limit the Council's capacity to shape promote the borough's future economic growth.

### **Fees and Charges**

- 1.11 The MTFs assumes that fees and charges will increase in line with overall inflation assumptions. Any volume increase is offset by the drag on increases caused by the fact that not all fees and charges are within the Council's control, many being set by statute. This assumption continues to be applied in the updated SRP included at Appendix A.
- 1.12 It is assumed that the Planning Fee increases announced by the government in Spring 2017, implementation of which was then delayed by the General Election, will apply for the whole of 2018/19.

### **Inflation**

- 1.13 Inflation continues to be at a higher level than the government's 2% target. The main impact of inflation for the Council will be in its effect on payroll costs. In the Chancellor's Budget Statement on 22 November, pay increases for the public sector were left to be determined based on the recommendations of individual sector pay review bodies. Maidstone

Borough Council agrees pay for its staff independently of local government collective arrangements, so is not bound by these. The updated SRP retains the assumption of a 1% pay increase that was included within the MTFS agreed by Council in October.

### **Spending Pressures**

1.14 Allowance is made in the SRP for known spending pressures. The main additional spending pressures now included are as follows:

Temporary Accommodation £218,000 – The projected cost of providing temporary accommodation has worsened as compared with the MTFS, owing to continuing pressures in this area and the forthcoming implementation of the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Loss of interest income £120,000 – Continuing low interest receivable on cash balances means that the budget level of interest is not achievable. To date the recent increase in Bank of England base rates has not led to a corresponding increase in returns available in the market.

Planning enforcement £100,000 – There is currently a backlog of planning enforcement work, so a one-off provision has been included in the MTFS for 2018/19 to allow this to be addressed. This has been funded through a reduction of £100,000 in the provision for Planning appeal costs, which were originally estimated as £500,000 in the MTFS, based on a current assessment of the risks faced.

Market £40,000 – The market operated by Maidstone Council at Lockmeadow has consistently under-performed on its income targets. Whilst steps are being taken to develop new income sources, it is considered that a reduction of £40,000 on an ongoing basis should be incorporated into the SRP.

Heather House £25,000 – Communities, Housing & Environment Committee has recently decided to continue operating Heather House as a community hall. Income generated from the hall is currently well below budget levels and although it is hoped that income can be built up again it is appropriate to include a provision for an ongoing shortfall of £25,000.

### **Chancellor's Budget Statement**

1.15 The Chancellor's Budget Statement on 22 November 2018 reflected more pessimistic growth projections from the Office of Budget Responsibility. Whilst the main impact of the reduced growth was offset by projected increases in government borrowing, the implications for general economic growth and for public sector spending are unfavourable.

1.16 The statement included the following announcements relevant to local government:

Housing

- A range of measures were announced, with the intention of increasing the rate of new home construction to 300,000 per annum, including an additional £2.7 billion for the Housing Infrastructure Fund , £1 billion for a new Land Assembly Fund and £630 million for a Small Sites Fund.

- The Housing Revenue Account borrowing cap has been lifted for Councils in areas of 'high affordability pressure'. (This will not benefit non-housing stock owning Councils such as Maidstone).

- Councils may increase the Council Tax Empty Homes premium as an incentive to bring properties back into use.

### Business Rates

- The annual business rates increase will now be based on the Consumer Prices Index, rather than the higher Retail Prices Index. Given that CPI is running at 3%, this will still mean a significant increase for businesses.

- The frequency of business rates revaluations will be increased to once every three years, compared with once every five years now.

- Local government will be fully compensated for the loss of income as a result of these measures.

- A 100% business rates retention pilot was announced for London, but applications for pilots from outside London, including Kent's, are still under consideration by the Department for Communities and Local Government.

1.17 There were no announcements about future local government funding, so it is not proposed to make any specific updates to the SRP arising from the budget.

### Summary

1.18 The overall effect of the changes in assumptions set out above is to increase the cumulative budget gap at the end of the five year financial planning period in the neutral scenario from £3.8 million in the MTFS to £4.6 million now. Appendix A sets out the updated neutral scenario Strategic Revenue Projection.

1.19 At this stage, given that there have been no fundamental changes required to the MTFS budget assumptions, and given the certainty provided by the four year funding settlement, it is appropriate to plan for the short term on the basis of the neutral budget scenario. However, this assumption will continue to be kept under review, both when finalising the budget for 2018/19 and when updating the MTFS as part of next year's budget process.

### Budget Proposals

1.20 Budget proposals have been developed in response to the projections set out in the MTFS. Heads of Service were asked to develop proposals both in response to the neutral scenario and to the adverse scenario. 'Neutral

scenario' proposals were based on achieving further service efficiencies, increasing income, and investing to generate revenue growth. The 'neutral' budget proposals, if delivered, will ensure that the budget remit of a balanced position for 2018/19 can be secured. Details are set out in Appendix C.

- 1.21 Some changes have been made to the phasing of the existing budget proposals, set out in Appendix B. In two cases, where existing savings proposals were undeliverable, the relevant service area has substituted them with new savings proposals of the same value.
- 1.22 'Adverse scenario' proposals were developed for contingency planning purposes, based on a more radical approach, including service cuts. It is not proposed to explore these options further at this stage, given that the 'neutral' proposals and existing agreed savings proposals are sufficient to meet the budget remit. The 'adverse' budget proposals will be revisited and updated as necessary if it appears that the assumptions on which neutral scenario is based are no longer valid.

---

## **2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS**

- 2.1 Agree the updated Strategic Revenue Projection and the proposals relating to this Committee.
- 2.2 Defer a final decision on the Strategic Revenue Projection and/or the proposals relating to this Committee to the Committee's meeting on 14 February 2018.

---

## **3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 3.1 The Committee must recommend to Council at its meeting on 14 February 2018 a balanced budget and a proposed level of Council Tax for the coming year. The preferred option is that it agrees at this meeting the updated Strategic Revenue Projection and the proposals relating to the Committee. This will set a clear starting point for forthcoming consultation on the budget proposals and will allow the Committee to focus solely on the outcomes from Service Committee meetings at its meeting on 14 February. This in turn will help to ensure that the Council sets a balanced budget for the coming year at its meeting on 28 February 2018.

---

## **4. RISK**

- 4.1 The Council's MTFs is subject to a high degree of risk and certainty. In order to address this in a structured way and to ensure that appropriate mitigations are developed, the Council has developed a budget risk register. This seeks to capture all known budget risks and to present them in a readily comprehensible way. The budget risk register is updated regularly

and is reviewed by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee at each of its meetings.

---

## **5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

- 5.1 Policy and Resources Committee received an initial report on the MTFS at its meeting on 28 June 2017 and it agreed the approach set out in that report to development of an updated MTFS for 2018/19 - 2022/23 and a budget for 2018/19.
- 5.2 Policy and Resources Committee then considered a draft MTFS at its meeting on 25 July 2017, which was agreed for submission to Council. The MTFS included descriptions of the different scenarios facing the Council and described how budget proposals would be sought for all scenarios, so that the Council might be suitably prepared for the adverse scenario, as defined. Council agreed the MTFS at its meeting on 25 October 2017.
- 5.3 Consultation will now be carried out on the detailed budget proposals set out in this report. Individual Service Committees will consider the budget proposals relating to the services within their areas of responsibility. Full details of the proposals will be published and residents' and businesses' views sought.
- 

## **6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION**

- 6.1 The timetable for setting the budget for 2018/19 is set out below.

<b><i>Date</i></b>	<b><i>Meeting</i></b>	<b><i>Action</i></b>
13 December 2017	Policy and Resources Committee	Agree initial 18/19 budget proposals for consideration by Service Committees
January 2018	All Service Committees	Consider 18/19 budget proposals
14 February 2018	Policy and Resources Committee	Agree 18/19 budget proposals for recommendation to Council
28 February 2018	Council	Approve 18/19 budget

---

## **7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Implications</b>	<b>Sign-off</b>
<b>Impact on Corporate Priorities</b>	The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the budget are a re-statement in financial terms of the priorities set out in the strategic plan. They reflect the Council's decisions on the allocation of resources to all objectives of the strategic plan.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Risk Management</b>	See section 4 above.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Financial</b>	The budget strategy and the MTFS impact upon all activities of the Council. The future availability of resources to address specific issues is planned through this process. It is important that the committee gives consideration to the strategic financial consequences of the recommendations in this report.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Staffing</b>	The process of developing the budget strategy will identify the level of resources available for staffing over the medium term.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Legal</b>	The Council has a statutory obligation to set a balanced budget and development of the MTFS and the strategic revenue projection in the ways set out in this report supports achievement of a balanced budget.	Legal Team
<b>Privacy and Data Protection</b>	Adopting a budget has no incremental impact on privacy and data protection. All budgetary data is held in line with current policies and procedures.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Equalities</b>	Where appropriate, Equalities Impact Assessments are carried out for specific budget proposals.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are	Section 151 Officer &

	allocated through the development of the Medium term Financial Strategy.	Finance Team
<b>Procurement</b>	The resources to achieve the Council's objectives are allocated through the development of the Medium term Financial Strategy.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
<b>Equalities</b>	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment.	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer
<b>Crime and Disorder</b>	No implications.	William Tait, Mid-Kent Services Support Officer
<b>Procurement</b>	No implications.	William Tait, Mid-Kent Services Support Officer

---

**8. REPORT APPENDICES**

The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix A: Strategic Revenue Projection
- Appendix B: Budget Proposals in existing MTFS (updated)
- Appendix C: New Budget Proposals – Neutral Scenario – TO FOLLOW

---

**9. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

There are no background papers.

**REVENUE ESTIMATE 2018/19 TO 2022/23  
STRATEGIC REVENUE PROJECTION (Neutral)**

2017/18 £000		2018/19 £000	2019/20 £000	2020/21 £000	2021/22 £000	2022/23 £000
<b>AVAILABLE FINANCE</b>						
14,828	COUNCIL TAX	15,265	15,803	16,357	16,924	17,505
	TARIFF / TOP-UP ADJUSTMENT		-1,589	-1,589	-2,889	-2,889
3,044	RETAINED BUSINESS RATES	3,142	3,254	3,319	3,385	3,453
1,025	BUSINESS RATES GROWTH	1,035	1,046	0	500	500
<b>18,897</b>	<b>BUDGET REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>19,442</b>	<b>18,514</b>	<b>18,088</b>	<b>17,921</b>	<b>18,569</b>
19,293	OTHER INCOME	19,489	19,707	19,897	20,090	20,285
<b>38,190</b>	<b>TOTAL RESOURCES AVAILABLE</b>	<b>38,931</b>	<b>38,221</b>	<b>37,985</b>	<b>38,011</b>	<b>38,854</b>
<b>EXPECTED SERVICE SPEND</b>						
<b>36,500</b>	<b>CURRENT SPEND</b>	<b>38,190</b>	<b>38,931</b>	<b>38,221</b>	<b>37,985</b>	<b>38,011</b>
<b>INFLATION INCREASES</b>						
560	PAY, NI & INFLATION INCREASES	629	640	658	677	696
<b>NATIONAL INITIATIVES</b>						
25	LOSS OF ADMINISTRATION GRANT	100				
0	PENSION DEFICIT FUNDING	34	36	150	150	150
180	REINVEST PLANNING FEE INCREASES	70				
<b>LOCAL PRIORITIES</b>						
94	HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION	36				
	MAIDSTONE HOUSE RENT INCREASE	40	40			
235	TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION	100				
200	REPLACE CONTINGENCY					
50	MUSEUM					
200	LOCAL PLAN REVIEW					
	PLANNING APPEALS	400	-400			
	PLANNING ENFORCEMENT	100	-100			
96	MOTE PARK CAFÉ - REVIEW OF OPTIONS	-56				
	LOSS OF INTEREST INCOME	120				
	MARKET - LOSS OF INCOME	40				
	HEATHER HOUSE - LOSS OF INCOME	25				
	REVENUE COSTS OF CAPITAL PROGRAMME	261	374	547	590	433
50	GROWTH PROVISION	50	50	50	50	50
<b>38,190</b>	<b>TOTAL PREDICTED REQUIREMENT</b>	<b>40,140</b>	<b>39,571</b>	<b>39,626</b>	<b>39,452</b>	<b>39,340</b>
	<b>SAVINGS REQUIRED</b>	<b>-1,209</b>	<b>-1,349</b>	<b>-1,641</b>	<b>-1,441</b>	<b>-486</b>
	<b>SAVINGS PREVIOUSLY IDENTIFIED</b>	<b>928</b>	<b>476</b>	<b>159</b>	<b>26</b>	
	<b>ADJUST AND REPROFILE EXISTING SAVINGS</b>	<b>-325</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>0</b>	
	<b>SUB-TOTAL - BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>-606</b>	<b>-723</b>	<b>-1,417</b>	<b>-1,415</b>	<b>-486</b>
	<b>CUMULATIVE BUDGET GAP</b>	<b>-606</b>	<b>-1,330</b>	<b>-2,746</b>	<b>-4,161</b>	<b>-4,647</b>

Note: £875,000 Other Income previously netted off 'Current Spend' in 17/18 is now shown gross, ie both Other Income and Current Spend increase by £875,000.

Description	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Total
	£000	£000	£000	£000	£000
Bring large mechanical sweeper in-house	40				40
Increase Commercial Waste income generation	5				5
Reduce general publicity and focus on increased garden waste income generation		44	22		66
Increase Grounds Maintenance income generation	50				50
Alternative delivery model for fleet and relevant maintenance along with a reduction in fleet	50				50
New temporary accommodation strategy		100			100
CCTV review		75	25		100
Commissioning review of enforcement		125			125
Phased 20% reduction of voluntary sector grants	11	11	11	11	44
Remove other grants as part of grants reduction strategy	11				11
<b>CHE Total</b>	<b>167</b>	<b>355</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>591</b>
Review Museum operating and governance model		50			50
New operational model incorporated within Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan	100	50			150
Cease direct delivery of festivals and events	10	10	10		30
Withdrawal of Christmas lights provision		30			30
<b>HCL Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>260</b>
Reduction in cost of external audit contract		10			10
Additional income from new commercial acquisitions	100				100
Reduce staff costs following shift from face to face to digital contacts.	20	20			40
Retire redundant ICT systems	10				10
Review office cleaning contract	10				10
Various Council Tax collection savings	50				50
Fraud partnership saving		10			10
<b>P &amp; R Total</b>	<b>190</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>230</b>
Savings arising from Planning Review	120				120
Reduction in appeals following Local Plan adoption			40		40
5% increase in Parking income (to be agreed under fees & charges report)			100		100
Re-specify Park & Ride and deliver at reduced cost		75			75
Remove grants as part of voluntary sector grants reduction strategy	16	16	16	15	63
<b>SPST Total</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>91</b>	<b>156</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>398</b>
	<b>603</b>	<b>626</b>	<b>224</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>1,479</b>

# Agenda Item 17

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted