

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 5 September 2017
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Butler, Ells (Vice-Chairman), Fort, Hastie,
Mrs Hinder, Lewins, Pickett (Chairman) and Mrs Wilson

<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 4 July 2017	1 - 4
9. Presentation of Petitions (if any)	
10. Questions and answer session for members of the public	
11. Committee Work Programme	5
12. Key Performance Indicator Update Q1 17/18 HCL	6 - 14
13. First Quarter Budget Monitoring 2017/18	15 - 21
14. Disposal of Land at Hayle Place	22 - 27
15. Tourism Destination Management Plan Update	28 - 43

Issued on Friday 25 August 2017

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

PUBLIC SPEAKING

In order to book a slot to speak at this meeting please contact committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk or **01622 602272** 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 committeeservices@maidstone.gov.uk or **01622 602272**.

To find out more about the work of the Committee, please visit www.maidstone.gov.uk

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 4 JULY 2017

Present: Councillor Pickett (Chairman), and
Councillors Mrs Blackmore, Butler, Cox, Ells, Hastie,
Mrs Hinder, Lewins and Perry

Also Present: Councillors Harper, Naghi and Round

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Fort and Mrs Wilson.

23. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

The following Substitute Members were noted:-

Councillor Perry for Councillor Fort
Councillor Cox for Councillor Mrs Wilson

24. URGENT ITEMS

There were no urgent items.

25. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

The following Visiting Members were noted:-

Councillors Harper and Naghi for Agenda Item 12 – Maidstone Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan and Agenda Item 13 – Museum 20 Year Plan

Councillor Round – Observing

26. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

27. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

28. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That all items be taken in public as proposed.

29. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 6 JUNE 2017

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed, subject to recommendation 3 of the Bereavement Services – Developing Services Report being checked for accuracy.

Note: Recommendation 3 was checked with the Officer concerned and it was explained that the £220,000 was the sum set aside from the original £645,000 budget to use for the expansion of the Vinters Park Crematorium car park and improvements to disabled access.

30. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

31. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions or statements from members of the public.

32. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Committee Work Programme.

It was noted that the Report on the Plaques and People Protocol would be presented to the Committee in September.

Due to Members' concerns about the number of reports going to the September Committee meeting, the Chairman undertook to discuss this with the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development to consider whether any reports could be moved to October or November.

In response to a question from a Visiting Member, the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development advised that updates on issues discussed last year would come back to the Committee in time. Of particular note was the issue which related to the strip of land adjacent to Maidstone United Football Ground, which would have to go to Policy and Resources Committee first and then be considered by this Committee if appropriate.

In response to a question from a Member, it was noted that a framework was being developed for disposal of land and would be presented to Policy and Resources Committee for adoption.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

33. MAIDSTONE PARKS & OPEN SPACES 10 YEAR PLAN

The Head of Regeneration and Economic Development presented a report on the Maidstone Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan.

The Committee was informed that this was the final version of the 10 Year Plan which detailed how the Council would manage the parks and open spaces that were under its control. The report set out how the challenges would be met using the evidence base produced for the Local Plan and the results of the Residents' Survey.

In response to questions from Members, Officers explained that:-

- The provision of new open spaces would come forward through the planning system and would be a priority in deficit areas.
- Initiatives were being drawn up under health and wellbeing to encourage cycling in the Council's parks and open spaces.
- Some of the Council's parks and open spaces had been used as receptor sites but had not been made into Nature Reserves.
- There would be annual updates to the Committee on the progress of the 10 Year Plan.
- The Grove Green Play Area would be reviewed.
- Although the river had not been included in the Plan, Whatman Park in the town centre was included.

RESOLVED: That the Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Plan as set out in Appendix I to the report of the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development be adopted subject to the amendments identified by Members at the meeting being made.

Voting: For: Unanimous

34. MUSEUM 20 YEAR PLAN

The Museum's Director presented a report on the Maidstone Museum's 20 Year Plan.

In response to questions by Members, the Officer explained that:-

- The current stock in the Museum Shop is valued at £5,000 and the figures quoted in Appendix 1 are for running costs.
- The Museum did not have the budget to re-open the Museum on a Monday during the holiday period. However, the 20 Year Plan did work towards a 7 day a week Museum.
- The Education Officer was working with local teachers to cover areas within the curriculum.
- When the Museum is closed visitors to Maidstone wanting tourist information can go online or contact the Council by telephone.

- The staff at the Museum are multi-disciplined and to separate out the Tourist Information element and put it back in the Town Hall would not be affordable or practical.
- Parking issues at the Museum do need to be addressed and various provisions had been introduced to enable visitors with disabilities to park at the Museum (with prior notice) and informing coach operators that they can drop off groups at the Museum and then park at the Sittingbourne Road coach park.
- Unfortunately the Carriage Museum would not be able to cater for school visits as it does not have the required facilities.
- Officers would look at the STEAM agenda to see if there could be linkages with universities to help with the educational side.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the Museum's 20 Year Plan attached as Appendix I to the report of the Head of Regeneration and Economic Development be adopted.
- 2) That the Museum's Strategic Board be given approval to develop a detailed Action Plan in pursuit of fulfilling the Plan.

Voting: For: Unanimous

35. DURATION OF MEETING

6.45 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.

2017/18 WORK PROGRAMME SORTED BY COMMITTEE

Report Title	Work Stream	Committee	Month	Lead	Report Author
Museum Future Governance Options	Changes to Services & Commissioning	HCL	03/10/2017	External	Victoria Barlow
Biodiversity Action Plan	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	HCL	03/10/2017	Jennifer Shepherd	Philip Newcombe
Play Area Strategy	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	HCL	03/10/2017	Dawn Hudd	Jason Taylor
Plaques and People Protocol	New/Updates to Strategies & Policies	HCL	31/10/2017	David Pickett	Dawn Hudd
Second Quarter Budget Monitoring	Corporate Finance and Budgets	HCL	28/11/2017	Ellie Dunnet	Paul Holland
Q2 Performance Report 2017/18	Updates, Monitoring Reports and Reviews	HCL	28/11/2017	Angela Woodhouse	Anna Collier
Festival and Events Update	Updates, Monitoring Reports and Reviews	HCL	18/12/2017	Dawn Hudd	Laura Dickson
Tourism Destination Management Plan - Progress Update	Updates, Monitoring Reports and Reviews	HCL	18/12/2017	Dawn Hudd	Laura Dickson
Fees & Charges	Corporate Finance and Budgets	HCL	03/01/2018	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Medium Term Financial Strategy & Budget Proposals 2018/19	Corporate Finance and Budgets	HCL	30/01/2018	Mark Green	Ellie Dunnet
Strategic Plan Action Plan 2018/19	Corporate Planning	HCL	30/01/2018	Angela Woodhouse	Angela Woodhouse
Setting new Key Performance Indicators (please note that there will be workshops with each committee prior to the report in January/February)	Corporate Planning	HCL	06/03/2018	Angela Woodhouse	Anna Collier
Q3 Performance Report 2017/18	Updates, Monitoring Reports and Reviews	HCL	06/03/2018	Angela Woodhouse	Anna Collier

Agenda Item 12

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee

5 September 2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

No

KPI Performance Report Quarter 1 2017/18

Final Decision-Maker	Policy & Resources Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Policy, Communications & Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Anna Collier, Policy & Information Manager. Alex Munden, Performance and Business Information Officer
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the summary of performance for Quarter 1 of 2017/18 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be noted.
2. That the indicator for Festival, Events, and Parks income be removed.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

Key Performance Indicators monitor the delivery of the Council's Corporate Priorities as set out in the Strategic Plan 2015-20. The Performance Plan provides progress against the Council's key strategies which deliver the Council's corporate priorities.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Wider Leadership Team	8 August 2017
Heritage Culture & Leisure Committee	5 September 2017
Strategic Planning, Sustainability & Transport Committee	12 September 2017
Communities, Housing & Environment	19 September 2017
Policy & Resources Committee	20 September 2017

KPI Performance Report Quarter 1 2017/18

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 The Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee is asked to review the progress of performance indicators that support the delivery of the Strategic Plan 2015-2020. The team is also asked to consider the comments and actions against performance to ensure these are robust.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Having a comprehensive set of actions and performance indicators ensures that the Council delivers against the priorities and actions set out in the Strategic Plan.
 - 2.2 Following the refresh of the Strategic Plan for 2017/18 the Committees agreed 28 Key Performance Indicators in April 2017.
 - 2.3 Performance indicators are judged in two ways. Firstly on whether performance has improved, sustained or declined, compared to the same period in the previous year. This is known as direction. Where there is no previous data, no assessment of direction can be made.
 - 2.4 The second way is to look at whether an indicator has achieved the target set and is known as PI status. If an indicator has achieved or exceeded the annual target they are rated green. If the target has been missed but is within 10% of the target it will be rated amber, and if the target has been missed by more than 10% it will be rated red.
 - 2.5 Some indicators will show an asterisk (*) after the figure. These are provisional values that are awaiting confirmation. Data for some of the indicators were not available at the time of reporting. In these cases a date has been provided for when the information is expected.
 - 2.6 Contextual indicators are not targeted but are given a direction. Indicators that are not due for reporting or where there is delay in data collection are not rated against targets or given a direction.
-

3. Quarter 1 Performance Summary

- 3.1 There are 28 key performance indicators (KPIs) which were developed with Heads of Service and unit managers, and agreed by the four Service Committees for 2017/18. Five of these relate to the Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee.
- 3.2 Overall, 20% (1) of targeted KPIs reported this quarter achieved their target for quarter 1. For 20% of indicators, performance improved compared to the same quarter last year, where previous data is available for comparison.

RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	1	1	3	0	5
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Long Trend	1	0	3	1	5
Short Trend	1	0	3	1	5

Indicators suggested for removal

4. It is recommended that the indicator for Festivals, Events and Parks income is removed from the set of key performance indicators for 2017/18. Following consultation with the Leader and Chair of Heritage, Culture, and Leisure Committee, it is proposed we remove the indicator for the following reasons:
- This is a service level indicator, and the income it measures is already reported through budget monitoring.
 - The income from festivals and events is relatively small, and is separate from Parks income.
 - Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee agreed a further eight KPIs and updates, which is a relatively large number already.
 - The rationale for suggesting and including this indicator was unclear.

5. Performance by Priority

Priority 1: Keeping Maidstone an attractive place for all & Priority 2: Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough

- 5.1 The Hazlitt Theatre sold 65% of all available tickets in quarter one, against a target of 50%. We sold a total of 12,277 tickets during the period out of a possible 18,875.
- 5.2 1,662 students benefited from the Museum's educational services during quarter one, falling short of the target of 2,085. Capacity for class visits at the Museum has reduced due to building works, and the temporary loss of the smaller learning space. This has mainly affected May and June bookings. However, we have undertaken a large number of Arts Awards for children, such as Discover Arts Awards and Explore Arts Awards. In total, 119 Arts Awards sessions have taken place. To increase the benefit to

students, we are promoting outreach sessions to schools on Mondays, and introducing a range of loan boxes that schools can borrow. We placed 14 loan between September 2016 and July 2017. We currently have 9 boxes available, with promotional fliers going to schools in September.

- 5.3 Visitor footfall at the Museum was 12,138, which is 4,626 less than the same quarter in 2016/17. This continues the decline of visits seen in 2016/17, with June being a particularly quiet month. Building works for the Ancients Gallery have restricted access to parts of the museum, with some galleries being closed. The mummy previously drove footfall to the museum, but it has been off display since March. The annual Dino Day did not receive as much interest as it has previously. This could be due visitors tiring of a previous favourite as it has appeared several times during the last year, and competition from other events in the borough on the same day. We will be launching an awareness campaign, and will have a marketing push to increase footfall for the opening of the Ancients Gallery in October.
- 5.4 We received 1,221 contacts to our Visitor Information Centre at the museum during the first quarter. These consisted of 748 visits, 423 phone calls, and 50 emails. Information enquiries are most common for bus timetables, regional attractions opening times, recommendations for days out, and accommodation bookings. The Information Centre is now fully open, which will make the identification of information contacts easier.
- 5.5 There were 184,679 users at the Leisure Centre during quarter one. This is nearly 11,000 below the target of 195,581. It is also a decrease of just under 12,000 compared to the same period in 2016/17.

6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 The Strategic Plan Performance Update will be reported quarterly to the Service Committees; Communities, Housing and Environment Committee, Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transport Committee, and Heritage, Culture, and Leisure Committee. The report will then go to Policy & Resources Committee following these meetings, with any feedback from the other Committees.

7. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 The Council could choose not to monitor the Strategic Plan and/or make alternative performance management arrangements, such as the frequency of reporting. This is not recommended as it could lead to action not being taken against performance during the year, and the Council failing to deliver its priorities.
-

8. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	The key performance indicators and strategic actions are part of the Council's overarching Strategic Plan 2015-20 and play an important role in the achievement of corporate objectives. They also cover a wide range of services and priority areas, for example waste and recycling.	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy & Communications
Risk Management	The production of robust performance reports ensures that the view of the Council's approach to the management of risk and use of resources is not undermined and allows early action to be taken in order to mitigate the risk of not achieving targets and outcomes.	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy & Communications
Financial	Performance indicators and targets are closely linked to the allocation of resources and determining good value for money. The financial implications of any proposed changes are also identified and taken into account in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and associated annual budget setting process. Performance issues are highlighted as part of the budget monitoring reporting process.	Section 151 Officer
Staffing	Having a clear set of targets enables staff outcomes/objectives to be set and effective action plans to be put in place.	Angela Woodhouse, Head of Policy & Communications
Legal	None identified.	Legal Team
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	The Performance Indicators reported on in this quarterly update measure the ongoing performance of the strategies in place. If there has been a	Equalities and Corporate Policy Officer

	change to the way in which a service delivers a strategy, i.e. a policy change, an Equalities Impact Assessment is undertaken to ensure that there is no detrimental impact on individuals with a protected characteristic.	
Environmental/Sustainable Development	A number of performance indicators relate to our performance in environmental services. This has a significant effect on our ability to monitor the Environment in Maidstone. This is also important as one of our key priorities is to provide a clean and safe environment.	Policy and Information Manager
Community Safety	We have Key Performance Indicators that relate to important areas of community safety. These ensure that the work being done by the Community Safety Unit is relevant, and that key areas such as safeguarding are being developed.	Policy and Information Manager
Human Rights Act	None identified.	Policy and Information Manager
Procurement	Performance Indicators and Strategic Milestones monitor the any procurement needed to achieve the outcomes of the Strategic Plan.	Policy and Information Manager
Asset Management	Performance Indicators that measure our commercial activities monitor our use of our assets. Good performance shows good management of our assets, or can highlight where assets can be utilised more efficiently.	Policy and Information Manager

9. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix I: HCL KPI Performance Report Q1 2017/18
-

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

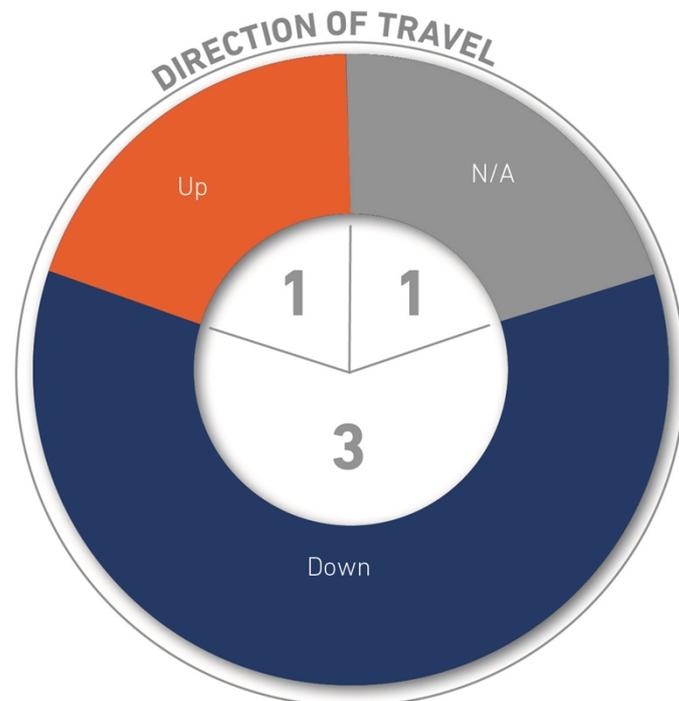
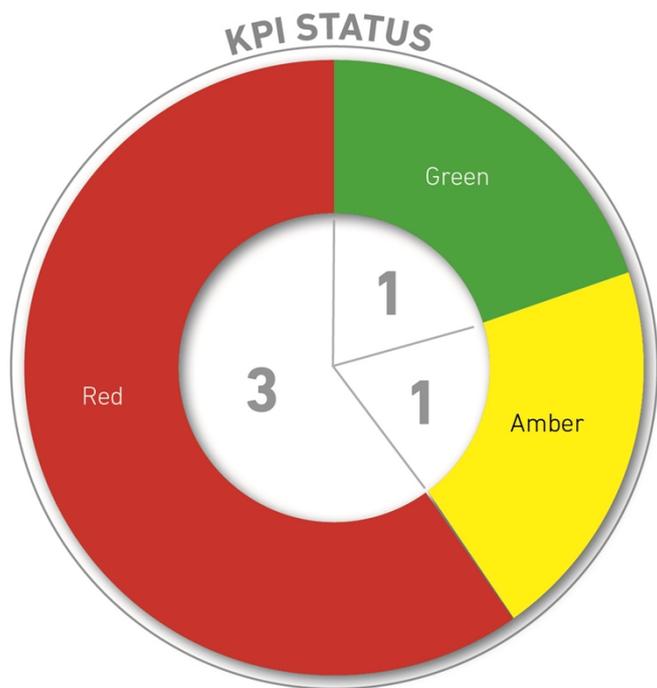
Performance Summary

This is the quarter 1 performance update on Maidstone Borough Council’s Strategic Plan 2015-20. It sets out how we are performing against Key Performance Indicators that directly contribute to the achievement of our priorities. Performance indicators are judged in two ways: firstly, whether an indicator has achieved the target set, known as PI status; secondly, we assess whether performance has improved, been sustained or declined, compared to the same period in the previous year, known as direction.

Key to performance ratings

RAG Rating	
	Target not achieved
	Target slightly missed (within 10%)
	Target met
	Data Only

Direction	
	Performance has improved
	Performance has been sustained
	Performance has declined
	No previous data to compare



RAG Rating	Green	Amber	Red	N/A	Total
KPIs	1	1	3	0	5
Direction	Up	No Change	Down	N/A	Total
Long Trend	1	0	3	1	5
Short Trend	1	0	3	1	5

**Priority 1: Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all,
& Priority 2: Securing a successful economy for Maidstone
Borough**

Ensuring there are good leisure and culture attractions

Performance Indicator	Value	Target	Status	Long Trend	Short Trend
Percentage of all available tickets sold at the Hazlitt	65%	50%			
Number of students benefiting from the Museum's Educational Service	1,662	2,085			
Footfall at the Museum and Visitor Information Centre	12,138	16,000			
Contacts to the Visitor Information Centre	1,221	1,500		N/A	N/A
Number of users at the Leisure Centre	184,679	195,581			

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

5 September 2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Yes

First Quarter Budget Monitoring 2017/18

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Director of Finance and Business Improvement
Lead Officer and Report Author	Mark Green – Director of Finance and Business Improvement (Lead Officer) Paul Holland - Senior Finance Manager Client Accountancy (Report Officer)
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

That the revenue position at the end of the first quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position where significant variances have been identified be noted.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

The budget is a statement, in financial terms, of the priorities set out in the strategic plan. It reflects the Council's decisions on the allocation of resources to all objectives of the strategic plan. The issues raised in this report identify areas where financial performance is at variance with priority outcomes.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee	5 September 2017
Policy & Resources Committee	20 September 2017

First Quarter Budget Monitoring 2017/18

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides the committee with an overview of the revenue budget and outturn for the first quarter of 2017/18, and highlights financial matters which may have a material impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy or the Balance Sheet.
 - 1.2 As at the 30 June 2017, this Committee was showing an overall positive variance of £33,401. The individual variances for each service area are detailed within **Appendix I**.
 - 1.3 The position for the Council as a whole at the end of the first quarter shows a positive variance but there are still a number of underlying pressures across all the Committees that need to be addressed to ensure that this position continues throughout the year.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Director of Finance & Business Improvement is the Responsible Financial Officer, and has overall responsibility for budgetary control and financial management. However in practice, day to day budgetary control is delegated to service managers, with assistance and advice from their director and the finance section.
- 2.2 The Medium Term Financial Strategy for 2017/18 onwards was agreed by full Council on 1 March 2017. This report advises and updates the Committee on the current position with regards to revenue expenditure against the approved budgets.
- 2.3 Attached at **Appendix I** is a table detailing the current budget and expenditure position for this Committee's services in relation to the first quarter of 2017/18, to June 2017. The appendix details the net budget per cost centre for this Committee. Actual expenditure is shown to the end of June 2017 and includes accruals for goods and services received but not yet paid for.
- 2.4 The columns of the table in the Appendix show the following detail:
 - a) The cost centre description;
 - b) The value of the total budget for the year;
 - c) The amount of the budget expected to be spent by the end of June 2017;
 - d) The actual spend to that date;
 - e) The variance between expected and actual spend;
 - f) The forecast spend to year end; and
 - g) The expected significant variances at 31 March 2018.

- 2.5 **Appendix I** shows that of a net annual expenditure budget of £4,793,510 it was expected that £1,027,379 would be spent up until the end of June. These totals include internal recharges. At this point in time the budget is reporting an under spend of £33,401, and the current forecast indicates that the outturn position for this committee will increase slightly to an under spend of £55,000.
- 2.6 Explanations for variances within individual cost centres which exceed or are expected to exceed £30,000 have been provided in accordance with the Council's constitution.

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	Positive Variance Q1 £000	Adverse Variance Q1 £000	Year End Forecast Variance £000
Bereavement Services – Income is currently ahead of budget, but there are likely to be additional repairs and maintenance costs incurred during the remainder of the year that will reduce the current variance.	46		30

3 AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.7 In considering the current position on the revenue budget at the end of June 2017 the committee can choose to note those actions or it could choose to take further action.

4 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.8 The committee is requested to note the content of the report and agree on any necessary action to be taken in relation to the budget position.

5 CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 2.9 This report is not expected to lead to any consultation.

6 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 2.10 The first quarter budget monitoring reports will be considered by the relevant Service Committees in September 2017, culminating in a full report to Policy and Resources committee on 20 September.

2.11 Details of the actions taken by service committees to manage the pressures in their budgets will be reported to Policy and Resources committee if appropriate.

7 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	This report monitors actual activity against the revenue budget and other financial matters set by Council for the financial year. The budget is set in accordance with the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy which is linked to the strategic plan and corporate priorities.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Risk Management	The Council has produced a balanced budget for both capital and revenue expenditure and income for 2017/18. This budget is set against a backdrop of limited resources and a difficult economic climate. Regular and comprehensive monitoring of the type included in this report ensures early warning of significant issues that may place the Council at financial risk. This gives this committee the best opportunity to take actions to mitigate such risks. The issues set out in this report do not exhibit the level of potential risk identified in previous years.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Financial	Financial implications are the focus of this report through high level budget monitoring. The process of budget monitoring ensures that services can react quickly to potential resource problems. The process ensures that the Council is not faced by corporate financial problems	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

	that may prejudice the delivery of strategic priorities.	
Staffing	The budget for staffing represents approximately 50% of the direct spend of the council and is carefully monitored. Any issues in relation to employee costs will be raised in this and future monitoring reports.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Legal	The Council has a statutory obligation to maintain a balanced budget this monitoring process enables the committee to remain aware of issues and the process to be taken to maintain a balanced budget for the year.	[Legal Team]
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	The budget ensures the focus of resources into areas of need as identified in the Council's strategic priorities. This monitoring report ensures that the budget is delivering services to meet those needs.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Environmental/Sustainable Development	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Community Safety	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Human Rights Act	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Procurement	No specific issues arise.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement
Asset Management	Resources available for asset management are contained within both revenue and capital budgets and do not represent a significant problem at this time.	Director of Finance & Business Improvement

8 REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix I: First Quarter 2017/18 Revenue Monitoring – Heritage, Culture & Leisure
-

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee
APPENDIX I - First Quarter Budget Monitoring - Full Summary to June 2017

Cost Centre	Budget for Year	Budget to June	Actual	Variance	Forecast	Year End Variance	Explanation
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Allotments	£13,420	£595	£5,471	-£4,876	£13,420		
Bereavement Services Section	-£12,960	-£2,490	-£5,347	£2,857	-£12,960		
Carriage Museum	£77,260	£19,208	£25,735	-£6,527	£77,260		
Cemetery	£125,970	£59,733	£42,710	£17,023	£125,970		
Cobtree Golf Course	-£40,880	-£47,043	-£52,899	£5,857	-£40,880		
Community Halls	£214,790	£22,941	£21,934	£1,007	£214,790		
Crematorium	-£432,500	£7,051	-£21,506	£28,557	-£460,500	£30,000	There are likely to be additional repairs and maintenance costs at both the Cemetery and Crematorium incurred during the remainder of the year that will reduce the current variance.
Cultural Development Arts	£47,980	£17,913	£15,632	£2,280	£47,980		
Cultural Development Sports	£3,060	£765	£765	-£0	£3,060		
Cultural Services Section	-£20,400	-£6,100	-£14,722	£8,622	-£20,400		
Festivals and Events	£76,880	£38,355	£15,606	£22,749	£76,880		
Hazlitt Arts Centre	£362,050	£81,163	£80,005	£1,157	£362,050		
Heritage Millennium Amphitheatre	£1,390	£348	£348	-£0	£1,390		
Leisure Centre	£476,540	£116,200	£126,225	-£10,025	£476,540		
Leisure Services Other Activities	£33,710	£75	-£1,260	£1,335	£33,710		
Lettable Halls	£13,940	£1,423	£1,960	-£537	£13,940		
Maidstone Culture & Leisure Section	-£56,240	-£14,060	-£11,790	-£2,270	-£56,240		
Maintenance of Closed Churchyards	£15,150	£3,788	£685	£3,102	£15,150		
Market	£23,740	£19,854	£42,520	-£22,666	£23,740		
Market Section	£0	-£100	-£995	£895	£0		
Mote Park	£263,390	£62,960	£46,746	£16,214	£263,390		
Mote Park Cafe	£60,550	-£10,062	-£10,199	£136	£60,550		
Museum	£1,616,100	£320,667	£342,267	-£21,599	£1,616,100		
Museum Cafe	-£3,500	-£1,948	£1,378	-£3,325	-£3,500		
Museum Shop	£60,750	£15,033	£18,606	-£3,574	£60,750		
Museum-Grant Funded Activities	£64,350	£14,190	£29,787	-£15,597	£39,610	£25,000	The variance at the end of the first quarter for the Museum areas has arisen due to a grant that has not yet been received. The underlying position shows that there will be a positive variance by the end of the year.
National Assistance Act	£950	£238	£1,407	-£1,170	£950		
Parks & Leisure Services Section	-£103,530	-£25,058	-£20,437	-£4,621	-£103,530		
Parks & Open Spaces	£1,076,000	£244,409	£245,773	-£1,364	£1,076,000		
Parks Pavilions	£56,890	£10,653	£9,179	£1,474	£56,890		
Playground Improvements	£470,190	£37,830	£25,777	£12,053	£470,190		
River Park	£200,150	£7,320	£7,320	£0	£200,150		
Tourism	£106,710	£31,128	£24,944	£6,184	£106,710		
Whatman's Arena	£1,610	£403	£353	£50	£1,610		
	£4,793,510	£1,027,379	£993,978	£33,401	£4,740,770	£55,000	

Agenda Item 14

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

5 September 2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

No

Disposal of Land at Hayle Place, South Ward

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	Jason Taylor, Leisure Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	South Ward

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the two parcels of land to the north of Hayle Country Park (as shown in Appendix 1) be declared as surplus to operational requirements.
2. That a Public Notice, pursuant to Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, be placed in a local newspaper in order to consult local residents.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all. Respecting the character and heritage of our borough.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Corporate Leadership Team	15 August 2017
Heritage Culture and Leisure Committee	5 September 2017

Disposal of Land at Hayle Place, South Ward

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides the committee with information to enable them to take a decision as to whether to declare as surplus to operational requirements two parcels of land to the north of Hayle Country Park.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Hayle Place Country Park was provided as open space as part of the Section 106 Developer contribution from the 'Land at Hayle Place' development, which was agreed in 2008.
- 2.2 A master plan for the site was produced by the developer in consultation with Valley Conservation prior to the country park being laid out.
- 2.3 The site was passed over to the Hayle Park Nature Reserve Trust in 2014. The trust was established prior to this in 2013 and is formed of three parties, these being Maidstone Borough Council (MBC), Valley Conservation and Tovil Parish Council.
- 2.4 MBC owns two parcels of land to the north of Hayle Place Country Park. These are shown edged in blue in the transfer plan shown in Appendix I
- 2.5 Parcel 1 is known as Mount Ararat Woodland and comprises of mature mixed coppice. It is approximately 8,500m² in size.
- 2.6 Parcel 2 is a triangular piece of land of approximately 4,450m² in size. It consists of park land with a number of mature trees on it. In the initial S106 document for 'the land at Hayle Place', it was agreed in the 'disposals plan' that this parcel of land would be transferred from MBC to become part of the Hayle Park Nature Reserve managed by the Hayle Park Nature Reserve Trust. A surface water storage lagoon was built in the south of Parcel 2, which it has been agreed will be retained by MBC.
- 2.7 Both of these parcels of land fall within the larger Loose Valley Conservation Area. The Hayle Park Nature Reserve Trust has agreed to take both of these parcels of land to be managed for conservation. Disposing of these parcels of land would transfer the maintenance responsibility to the Hayle Park Nature Reserve Trust.
- 2.8 It is suggested that these parcels of land could be transferred via a lease to The Hayle Park Nature Reserve Trust.
- 2.9 Currently a 'Maidstone Borough Council Policy on Disposal of Property' is in the process of being adopted. It was approved by Policy and Resources Committee on 25th July 2017 and will be submitted to full council for approval on 27th September 2017. It sets out the Council's policy to dispose of council owned land and buildings ("Property") if certain

circumstances and criteria are met.

- 2.10 The section in the policy document which relates to open space states that "On occasions, it might be beneficial to both the Council and the community, to dispose of a small or discrete area of open space. For example, this might be a strip of unused land which is currently open space, but is required to enable a development of a larger area of land; or it might be an area of open space which could benefit the community if the Council transferred it to a third party. In all such circumstances, the Council will have regard in its decision to the Council's Parks and Open Spaces 10 Year Strategic Plan 2017 – 27, which itself ties in with other policies, such as the Local Plan and The Economic Development Strategy."
- 2.11 Regarding the two parcels of land to the north of Hayle Place Country Park that this report is recommending as being declared as surplus to operational requirement, it is believed that they are " area[s] of open space which could benefit the community if the Council transferred it to a third party."
- 2.12 The method of disposal which will be recommended for these two parcels of land as detailed in the 'Maidstone Borough Council Policy on Disposal of Property' is leasehold disposal. This is described in the policy as "A leasehold disposal is the sale of an interest in the land for a number of years. The Council retains the freehold of the Property".
- 2.13 The Policy on disposal gives more detail on this saying "The Council will use leasehold disposal if a Property is suitable for disposal, but there is a benefit to the Council in retaining freehold title, for example to ensure that the Council's responsibilities in relation to the land are maintained in perpetuity. The Council will usually only dispose of Property to Parish Councils, community groups etc, by way of leasehold disposal. Any leasehold disposal, for any length of term, including short tenancies, would exclude security of tenure under the Landlord and Tenant Act 1954. This prevents the tenant from "holding over" and continuing in the tenancy at the end of the leasehold period and also enables the Council to terminate the tenancy at the end of the leasehold period."
- 2.14 The approach set out in this report in relation to the two parcels of land at Hayle Place is therefore consistent with the proposed new policy. Until the new policy is approved, Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee cannot approve the disposal of the land. However, as in this case the land is worth less than £100,000, disposal can in any case proceed under officer delegation following advertisement of the proposed disposal as recommended in this report.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 Declare both parcels of land as surplus to operational requirements.
- 3.2 Do not declare both parcels of land as surplus to operational requirements.

3.3 If the committee does decide to declare the land as surplus to operational requirements then a Public Notice pursuant of Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 would be placed

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 Officers recommend that both of these parcels of land are declared as surplus to operational requirements.
- 4.2 The reasons for this recommendation are that Hayle Park Nature Reserve Trust has the skills, experience and resources to manage these open spaces for conservation to a higher level than MBC.
- 4.3 Both parcels of land will form part of the Loose Valley Conservation Area so should be maintained to the highest levels.
-

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 5.1 A number of local ward councillors have links with the Hayle Park Nature Reserve so have been involved in discussions regarding the disposal of these two parcels of land.
- 5.2 Consultation will be through the publication of the Section 123 Notice.
-

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 6.1 Following the placing of a public notice, pursuant with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972, the final decision on disposal of the land will be taken either by Policy and Resources Committee or the Chief Finance Officer under delegated authority if appropriate.
-

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
Risk Management	Any risk associated with this land is reduced if the responsibility is passed to Hayle Park Nature Reserve Trust.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
Financial	There will be a very minimal saving in maintenance costs if this land is transferred	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team

Staffing	There will be no staffing implications.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
Environmental/Sustainable Development	Both of these parcels of land will be maintained to a higher level for conservation once transferred to Hayle Park Nature Reserve Trust	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.
Asset Management	The responsibility for managing this asset would transfer to a third party.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development.

8. REPORT APPENDICES

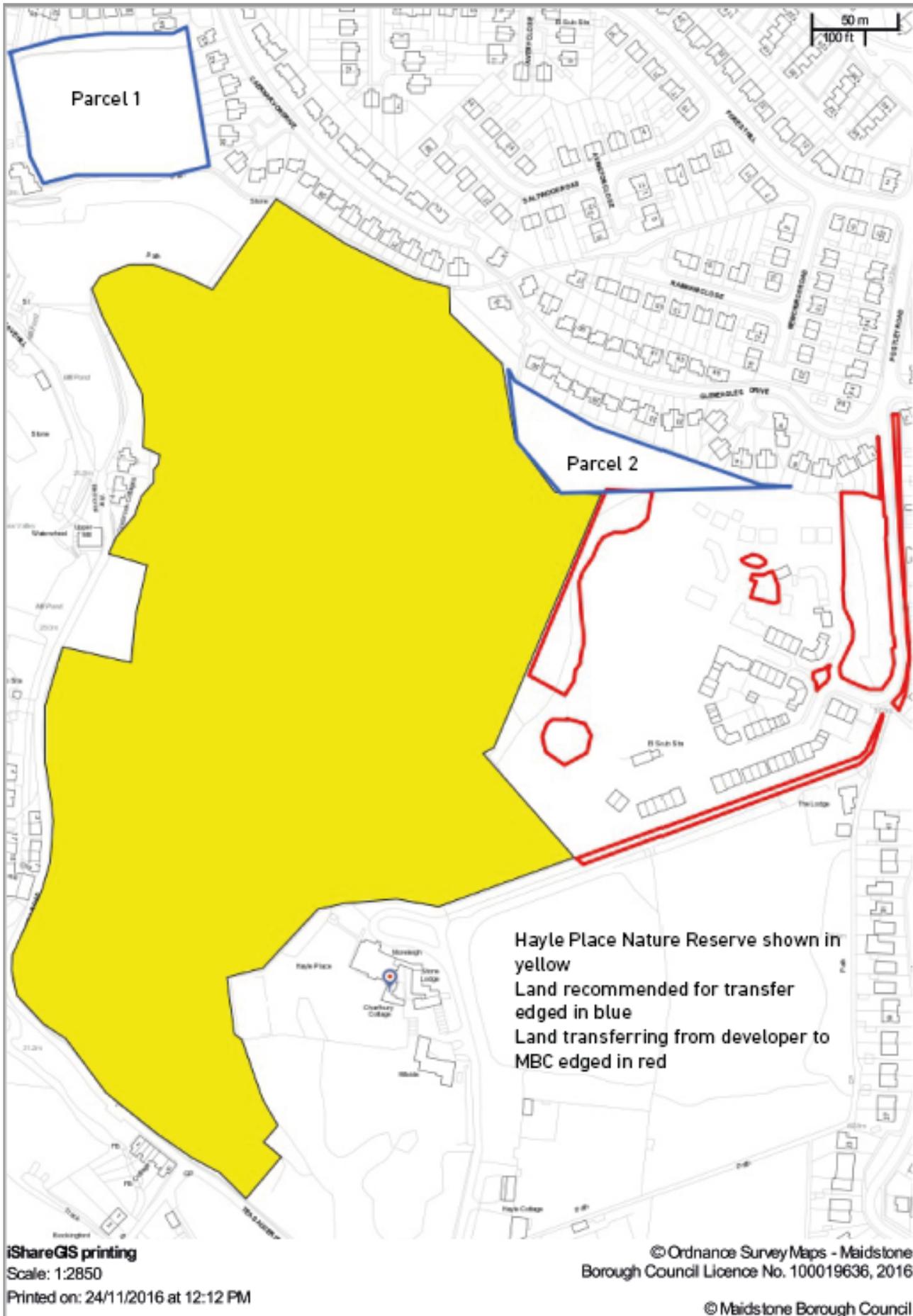
The following documents are to be published with this report and form part of the report:

- Appendix I: Hayle Place Nature Reserve Plan Transfer Plan

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

Appendix I: Hayle Place Nature Reserve Plan Transfer Plan



Agenda Item 15

HERITAGE, CULTURE AND LEISURE COMMITTEE

5 September 2017

Is the final decision on the recommendations in this report to be made at this meeting?

Destination Management Plan – Action Plan Progress Update

Final Decision-Maker	Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee
Lead Head of Service	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Lead Officer and Report Author	MCL Marketing & Sales Manager, Laura Dickson
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

That the report be noted.

This report relates to the following corporate priorities:

- Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all –providing a wide range of attractions, accommodation and events for visitors through tourism development
- Securing a successful economy for Maidstone Borough –The economic impact of tourism supports jobs and businesses throughout the borough

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Heritage, Culture & Leisure Committee	5 September 2017

Destination Management Plan - Action Plan Progress

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the progress made against the three year Action Plan relating to Maidstone Borough's Tourism Destination Management Plan.
-

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Tourism Destination Management Plan (DMP) was adopted by Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee in July 2015 and the accompanying three year Action Plan was endorsed by the Committee.

Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) has always been committed to delivering a tourism development service for the borough and the DMP is the tourism strategy that focusses and supports the day to day work of the Tourism section. The Tourism section delivers the marketing of the borough as a destination for visitors, supporting and advising businesses and working in partnership with county, regional and national tourism organisations to inform and encourage visitors, to improve the attractions and to develop and increase the visitor economy of the borough.

The first update report was presented to committee in February 2016 and a second in November 2016

In 2015 four groups set up initially to deliver the Action Plan.

River - River Access Improvement & River Experience
Town – Look, Feel and Do, Access and Visitor Management
Events – The Place for Big Events
Countryside – Explore Further

These groups have now been replaced by smaller working parties or external partnership groups who actively are delivering these actions.

The DMP Board is chaired by an MBC officer and Cllr David Pickett has been appointed to the DMP Board to represent Heritage, Culture and Leisure Committee. The Board consists of partners from within the tourism and visitor economy who review the progress action plan quarterly.

An update event 'Maidstone's Tourism Destination Plan – One Year On' took place on 29th November 2016. Stakeholders and partners were invited to the event which was facilitated by Visit Kent and included a presentation on the new River Cycle path. An update event for 2017 is due to take place in October or November 2017. Details have yet to be confirmed.

2.3 Key Successes to Date

A number of key activities were required in addition to the actions by the specific working groups. As detailed in previous committee reports the activities in 2016 were:

- The Shared Story toolkit created and available online.
- Creation of an Online Image Library.
- Online Event Planning Calendar created.
- New Historic Interpretation Panels in the town centre designed and installed.
- New iconic photography commissioned to support the Shared Story.
- Commissioned new promotional videos showing the attraction of visiting the borough to support the Shared Story. Themes were identified and the filming has been carried out over the summer including using drones to capture the essence of the countryside and river.
- Development of a new website, Conference Maidstone to support Business Tourism and the wedding venues. This sector was identified as a key growth market for Maidstone in the DMP.
- Development of a new Museum website. Although this was a more general action it supported the need for high quality information for visitor
- Development of accommodation, events and attractions widgets. The events group had already suggested an events widget, so it was logical to produce one for accommodation and attractions too. A widget is a piece of code that can be embedded on any website that then provides a search box. This search box draws the data from the Visit Maidstone website.

Accommodation providers can add the attractions and what's on widgets to their website. It will provide them with the latest up to date information without the need for them to add it themselves.

Event organisers can add the accommodation widget to their site.

- An application was made to the Highways Agency to change the signage on the M20 from Park and Ride at Junction 6 to tourism signage but has not yet been given permission. The sign would say Maidstone, Kent's Historic County Town. This is still ongoing but has highlighted additional costs as Highways England claim the motorway would have to be closed for the work to be carried.

In addition to the above actions, the MCL (Tourism) section also carried out:

- Destination marketing--directly promoting the Borough as an attractive destination for our visitors, for example through the website www.visitmaidstone.com, production of printed material, pr and promotional campaigns, and social media campaigns.
 - Developing the Visit Maidstone website to introduce a new polling tool to allow integration of online travel agents accommodation availability and online booking. There were over 365,000 visits to the website in 2016-17, up 11%

- Re-designed the Visit Maidstone guide and extensive distribution campaign. Supported by advertising. Printed and distributed 30,000 copies.
- Participation at trade shows to increase awareness of Maidstone as a visitor destination. Over 4000 group travel trade visitors attended Excursions.
- Partnership Marketing ensuring that Maidstone is well-represented in marketing campaigns organised by our partners, for example Tourism South East's new Meet Beyond London aimed at Business Tourism, Kent's Big Weekend.
- Events Development such as Proms in the Park and Shemonmejamo to attract visitors and to contribute to the quality of life for the local community. Broadening awareness of local history to build a sense of civic pride, for example through Heritage Open Days. Working with external event organisers such as the Big Day Out and Ramblin Man. Organisation of a number of successful events with the participation of local groups including Battle of the Somme Commemoration Event, Open Air Cinema and 'Street' Mela Consultation.
- Local events marketing—help with publicising local events and through the website and through the What's On leaflet and posters.
 - Production of 3 What's On Leaflets during year supported by increased sales through advertising. Distribution of 24,000 copies.
 - Borough wide What's On poster campaigns.
- Visitor services-providing information to our 3 million day visitors.
 - For example pockets guides, maps, historic interpretation panels, as well as personal advice
 - Commissioned and developed new Museum website
- Economic development--encouraging inward investment and supporting small business start-ups such as new accommodation businesses, and rural diversification.
- Business tourism marketing- promoting Maidstone to UK and European businesses as a destination for meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions through the Conference Maidstone website and trade shows.
- Group and Travel Trade marketing--representing Maidstone at travel trade exhibitions, organising familiarisation visits, publishing a targeted Group Visits Guide.
- Infrastructure--maintaining tourism signage and enhancing the street scene through Christmas lights.
- Development control - providing authoritative advice to support the Council in assessing planning applications and defending appeals.
- Customer care - offering advice and training to the Museum Visitor Information Service. Creating a new dedicated visitor information point in the Museum to best serve the needs of those requiring tourist information.
- Support for other Council services.
 - Providing promotional support to the Council's cultural attractions and its communications team, for example through photography, familiarisation visits, development of the Museum website, and publications such as the Carriage Museum and River Park leaflets.

2.4 The full Action Plan updates can be found in Appendix 1.

A summary of actions in 2017 so far are:

River:

- Completion of the Medway Towpath between Aylesford and Barming, which included a sustainable all-weather surface along the river bank, as well as ecological restoration.
- Maidstone River Park signage along the route of the Medway Towpath.
- Refurbishment of Fairmeadow towpath, between High Level Bridge and St Peters Bridge, which had been badly damaged by tree roots over many years. This project included new lighting, rubbish bins and seating.
- Major refurbishment of East Farleigh Lock.
- Additional parking for river in town centre at new Sandling Road pay & display.
- Restoration of Elemental lights on Maidstone Bridge and St Peters Bridge.
- Cobtree Management Estate Trust has agreed to finance a new Toucan crossing for £30,000k to enable the cycle path to be extended across Forstall Field to Cobtree Manor Estate Park
- Fairmeadow 'mushrooms' removed and 16 permanent mooring rings installed.
- Signage to and from town centre to be audited following public realm improvement scheme for Week Street and Gabriel's Hill.
- Volunteer-led committee progressing plans to set up a Community Interest Company and preparing a five to ten year action plan.
- New Barge café between Maidstone Bridge and St. Peters Bridge given planning permission. To open on a mooring at Fairmeadow for 2018 season. Owners will open and maintain Fairmeadow toilets for season.
- Opening of the Lodge Coffee kiosk at Teston Country Park.
- Open day at Maidstone Crown.
- Refurbishment of Lockmeadow Centre and opening of Gourmet Burger Kitchen.
- New River Event for August Bank holiday 2018 in development.
- Maidstone Community Mela at Whatman Park in 2017.
- Proms in Whatman Park 2017/2018.
- Teddy Bears Picnic staged at Whatman Park.
- Explore Kent has produced Cycle path map and leaflet
- *Love Where You Live* riverside clean-up with McDonald's Maidstone and MBC. Team of 24 from McDonalds spent 6 hours clearing from Lockmeadow to Maidstone Bridge
- New dedicated Visitor Information Point in Maidstone Museum.

Town:

- The Work underway to extend planning permission and obtain an annual street trading licence for MBC to facilitate new markets and street food.
- Looking to increase frequency of Farmers market.
- Christmas market in discussion to run for 12 days prior to Christmas 2017.

- History trail updated and leaflet completed.
- Public Realm Phase 3 improvements to Week Street and Gabriels Hill will include a history timeline; public art; signing to key attractions and themed squares.
- One Maidstone is campaigning to reduce A Board clutter.
- Local produce and markets section on Visit Maidstone website.
- Monthly Farmers market continuing with local producers in Jubilee Square.
- New 3-day Food Festival - Shemomedjamo in Mote Park in September 2017.
- Work being undertaken on car parking, P&R and buses. All Member workshop to consider early options November (mid). SPST Committee to consider report January 2018
- Station improvement programme at Maidstone East to link to Phase 3 public realm improvements, create a sense of arrival on new concourse with signage.
- New Thameslink service to run from Maidstone East for 2018.

Events:

- Event venues information now added to new events section on ConferenceMaidstone.
- Push for organisers to populate no clash diary for 2018 and beyond as number of events is increasing. Will link with events notification in future.
- One Maidstone delivering a Harvest Festival, Live Nativity and Easter Egg Hunt.
- What's On Widget for websites to be demonstrated at 2017 investor/stakeholder event.
- Looking at branding for Maidstone Summer of Music 2018. This will highlight all the great music events in the borough from May/June until September
- Along with River Partnership early discussion on River based event taking place during August Bank Holiday weekend 2018
- New events in 2017 – Oktoberfest, Madness at the Kent Event Centre, International Arts Festival, Community Mela, Shemomedjamo

Countryside:

- Cycle routes and walking routes produced by Explore Kent And National Cycle Trail (River).
- Will be available online on VisitMaidstone and Explore Kent shortly. Leaflets in production.
- UK electric bikes have developed 4 new cycle rides around the Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn area taking in attractions and Produced in Kent sites. Will be available this autumn as downloadable pdf on Visit Maidstone.
- North Downs Trail Officer and Explore Kent are checking and developing trails from train stations onto the North Downs around the Hollingbourne area. However currently not progressing due to South Eastern contract for the service due to end soon, and they are not willing to develop this until new contract in place.
- A driving tour for the North of the Borough has been researched. And will be developed over the winter ready for 2018

- UK electric bikes have developed 4 new cycle rides around the Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn area taking in attractions and Produced in Kent sites. Will be available this Autumn as downloadable pdf on Visit Maidstone.
- North Downs Trail Officer and Explore Kent are checking and developing trails from train stations onto the North Downs around the Hollingbourne area. However currently not progressing due to South Eastern contract for the service due to end soon, and they are not willing to develop this until new contract in place.
- A driving tour for the North of the Borough has been researched. And will be developed over the winter ready for 2018.
- 15 old walking route leaflets found for Staplehurst are to be investigated and reproduced in a downloadable format

2.5 DMP Budget

There is no additional budget for the DMP 2017-18. The annual tourism service marketing budget will be used to support the DMP work. The marketing budget is £31,000 and is dependent on a £15,000 income target for advertising revenue on the website and publications.

3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

3.1 This report is an information update only.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 None

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 None

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 None

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	This work contributes to the priority 'Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all'.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Risk Management	N/A	

Financial	The action plan is delivered through a combination of existing related budgets, funding from the Kent Business Rates Pool, collaboration with the sector and bids for funding to appropriate sources.	S 151 Officer and Finance Team
Staffing	None. This project is being delivered by the MCL Marketing and Sales Team.	Head of Regeneration and Economic Development
Legal	N/A	
Equality Impact Needs Assessment	N/A	
Environmental/Sustainable Development	N/A	
Community Safety	N/A	
Human Rights Act	N/A	
Procurement	N/A	
Asset Management	N/A	

8. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix I: DMP Action Plan Progress

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Destination Management Plan

MAIDSTONE TOURISM DMP ACTION PLANS

Actions	Timescale	Status	2015	20 16	2017
Run Workshop sessions for tourism and other businesses and organisations involved in tourism, to familiarise them with the Story and to help them think creatively about how they might use it to develop and differentiate their own offer, service or business and help to deliver the Action Plans.	S	Completed	Several events ran 2015	One Year on Event – November 2016	Update event due in October 2017
Develop an Online Shared Story Toolkit for tourism stakeholders to use, comprising Story-inspired product development ideas plus downloadable marketing copy (tailored for use in different markets) and images based on the Shared Story – so that people in the place are “singing from the same song sheet”.	S	Completed	Toolkit available on line at visitmaidstone.com/dmp	Image library set up. New photography and video commissioned and delivered. W was added to image library end of 2016	More photography and images added 2017
RIVER					
<i>Major investment plans have been identified for the river in the past. Realising some of these investments is critical to unlocking the full potential of the river for the visitor economy. Some of these investments are long term and unlikely to be completed within the lifetime of this plan but actions to move them forward need to begin now. The priorities are to make the river an attraction in its own right – a “must see” for visitors to Maidstone. To achieve that requires improving access, investing in visitor hubs along the river and enabling visitors to use the riverside as a pedestrian/ cycling green corridor to explore more of Maidstone and its countryside. This needs to be supported by events on the river and by marketing activity that profiles the river more strongly to target markets. One of the biggest challenges for improving the river is the very large number of single-interest groups. It is important to bring together all the interests and broker solutions to shared issues.</i>					
Programme of enhancements and improvements to make the river more accessible and appealing to visitors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> signing and entrance points to the river from the town centre footpath investment – signing to include distances to key points, accessibility for cyclists investment in moorings parking for river visitors 	M-L	Some activities completed. Others will be ongoing	<p>£2m of Single Local Growth Funding has been allocated to create a cycle path along the river from Allington to East Farleigh. MBC £500,000 subject to final decision on funding.</p> <p>MBC Funding has been confirmed. KCC currently writing brief for detailed design. DMP group will be kept updated with opportunity for input. Tonbridge and Malling BC are not contributing to the scheme. However they <i>may</i> be some scope to extend a footpath up to Aylesford.</p> <p>Signage as part of Gyrotory is for vehicular signage only. Potential for pedestrian signage as part of cycle route project.</p>	<p>Signage and entrance points to the river being identified by group, with particular emphasis on what is stopping people accessing the river.</p> <p>The new gyratory and river cycle path will include signage, it is important that signage is combined with one brand (RIVER PARK?) and that we do not have a number of different styles of signs saying the same thing all next to one another. It is also important that these signs extend into the town centre.</p> <p>Foot path investment taking place as part of the river cycle path and new gyratory system. Group to look at any gaps in town centre and further along river path.</p> <p>Investment in moorings – group to identify issues with current moorings and additional</p>	<p>Completion of the Medway Towpath between Aylesford and Barming, which included a sustainable all-weather surface along the river bank, as well as ecological restoration.</p> <p>Maidstone River Park signage along the route of the Medway Towpath.</p> <p>Refurbishment of Fairmeadow towpath, between High Level Bridge and St Peters Bridge, which had been badly damaged by tree roots over many years. This project included new lighting, rubbish bins and seating.</p> <p>Additional parking for river in town centre at new Sandling Road pay & display.</p> <p>Major refurbishment of East Farleigh Lock</p> <p>Restoration of Elemental lights on</p>

				<p>moorings.</p> <p>Parking to be investigated.</p>	<p>Maidstone Bridge and St Peters Bridge.</p> <p>Cobtree Management Estate Trust has agreed to finance a new Toucan crossing for £30,000k to enable the cycle path to be extended across Forstall Field to Cobtree Manor Estate Park. Date for this work to be confirmed.</p> <p>Fairmeadow 'mushrooms' removed and 16 permanent mooring rings installed.</p> <p>Signage to and from town centre to be audited following public realm improvement scheme for Week Street and Gabriel's Hill.</p>
<p>Focus on strengthening visitor hubs on the river:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improve access, facilities, activities and interpretation Explore opportunities for more camping cabins/pods (luxury camping huts – alternative to camping in the open) to enable long distance walking, canoeing etc <p>Priority hubs :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Church of All Saints/amphitheatre Cobtree by Kent Life Lockmeadow 	M-L	Some activities completed. Others will be ongoing	<p>Formation of 'Friends of Maidstone River Park' Group to improve promotion of the river, current facilities and attractions. More people visiting and aware of the 'River Park' will make future events more attractive to event organisers. Opportunities for event organisers need to be better promoted. This could be done through the River Park Website (see below)</p> <p>Opportunities for camping, etc. will follow from this work.</p>	<p>It was proposed at the DMP River meeting that a friends group is established. Ian Tucker has done a considerable amount of work on this and has produced a draft website.</p> <p>The group discussed at the meeting how much of the river work DMP actions would be taken on by the Friends of the river group.</p> <p>It was agreed that work would be done to help the friends group to establish. JT agreed to pass over a model of how other friends group operate. Ian Tucker is currently working on the structure of the group.</p> <p>Maidstone River Park partnership has been created to bring together private, public and voluntary sector.</p>	<p>Volunteer-led committee progressing plans to set up a Community Interest Company and preparing a five to ten year action plan.</p> <p>New Barge café between Maidstone Bridge and St. Peters Bridge given planning permission. To open on a mooring at Fairmeadow for 2018 season. Owners will open and maintain Fairmeadow toilets for season.</p> <p>Opening of the Lodge Coffee kiosk at Teston Country Park</p> <p>Open day at Maidstone Crown</p> <p>Refurbishment of Lockmeadow Centre and opening of Gourmet Burger Kitchen</p>
<p>Create river-based events & activities that will appeal to visitors, animate the river, provide a reason to come today, contribute to extending the visitor day into the early evening. Opportunities could include – dragon boat racing, rowing events, festival of lights, regattas etc</p>	S-M	Some activities completed. Others will be ongoing	<p>River Park website is being produced by Ian Tucker. This will be a single place to identify all of the attractions and events along the river to be promoted. This will be aimed at both residents and visitors.</p> <p>Future events will then be more attractive to event organisers.</p>	<p>Draft Website and promotional information produced by IT. This could be adopted as the single place for anything to do with the river.</p> <p>River Park website to identify all of the attractions and events along the river to be promoted. This will be aimed at both residents and visitors.</p> <p>An audit of everything available to visitors</p>	<p>New River Event for August Bank holiday 2018 in development</p> <p>Maidstone Community Mela at Whatman Park in 2017</p> <p>Proms in Whatman Park 2017/2018</p> <p>Teddy Bears Picnic staged at Whatman</p>

			Potential events and organisers to be identified.	has been completed and included in the draft website.	Park
Build up marketing activity over time linking to countryside theme. Develop marketing collateral – maps, trails, leaflets	S-M	Some activities completed. Others will be ongoing	Maidstone River Park website created. Leaflets of canoe trail being shared on websites, and websites now linking to each other. An audit of everything available to visitors has been completed and included in the website.	Gaps and further information and trails could be produced in the future, and/or incorporated in the cycle path/ gyatory information.	Explore Kent has produced Cycle path map and leaflet. At print.
Prioritise river management – litter, dredging, landscaping, lighting, policing, anti-social behaviour, mooring, illegal camping	S-M Ongoing	Some activities completed and others will be ongoing	Ian Tucker has been nominated to Chair a 'Friends of Maidstone River Park'. This organisation (once formalised) will undertake to identify 'grot spots' and help co-ordinate clean-ups etc. EA has offered use of boats to assist in litter and vegetation clearance.	Maidstone River Park Partnership leading to coordinate volunteering, act as a voice for the river, etc 30-40 volunteers from McDonalds took part in clearing overgrown areas.	<i>Love Where You Live</i> riverside clean-up with McDonald's Maidstone and MBC. Team of 24 from McDonalds to spend 6 hours clearing from Lockmeadow to Maidstone Bridge.

CREATING A DISTINCTIVE COUNTY TOWN

This is about animating the town and providing reasons for visitors to come, stay longer, explore further and spend more – supporting local shops, places to eat, and leisure and cultural venues. It is about using the assets and resources the town has to reposition it as the County Town for visitors. These actions require close working between town partners and local businesses.

<p>Develop local markets and fairs – food (including a farmer's market), arts & crafts etc:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review existing provision • Develop and deliver new markets in different town centre locations and develop a calendar of markets throughout the year • Use County Town Market Charter and history as part of the positioning for street markets • Introduce street food • Develop local market management plan – litter/cleaning, selection of stall traders, 	S-M Ongoing	Some activities completed. Others will be ongoing	<p>MBC progressing with fortnightly Farmers Market on Jubilee Square.</p> <p>Other locations considered for other markets are Brenchley gardens and in front of County Hall. However issues with space/access and low footfall.</p> <p>Work with PinK to investigate Street Food</p>	<p>MBC have delivered 3 successful Farmers Markets – on a monthly basis so far. May increase to 2 per month</p> <p>MBC hold a 12-day street trading consent for market – therefore unlikely to go fortnightly until Jun 17 at earliest Considering moving Sat general market to Jubilee Square</p> <p>New market manager will be considering how guest markets can fit in with MBC's own markets</p> <p>Once Farmers' market established, can build</p>	<p>Work underway to extend planning permission and obtain an annual street trading licence for MBC to facilitate new markets and street food.</p> <p>Looking to increase frequency of Farmers market.</p> <p>Food market to run for 12 days prior to Christmas 2017.</p>
--	----------------	---	--	---	--

access				up reputation for food fair.	
<p>Use themed trails and quarters to help make the town more legible for visitors and encourage exploration:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify trail themes and quarters Develop a programme of animation and interpretation including: Making use of green spaces Pavement trails/digital trails using app Distinctive lighting Mark the quarters e.g. with sculpture, distinctive street sign branding, lighting etc. 	S-M	Ongoing	<p>Town Team already looking at themed trails for schools. Need to be mindful DMP relates to <i>visitors</i> – how can the Town Team’s trail be modified for tourists?</p> <p>Town Team installed lighting on Town Hall with a view to establishing it in policy to be expanded elsewhere. Need to identify which buildings could be lit, and funding.</p>	<p>A themed trail is proposed in the HLF bid for Gabriels’ Hill – for visitors as well as residents. The bid was unsuccessful.</p> <p>FrancisKnight produced: A Public Realm Design Guide which sets out the council’s intention to create a cohesive town centre with an integrated approach to achieving high quality public realm. It complements and builds on the improvements to date, such as Jubilee Square and the High Street, as well as the forthcoming programme of improvements and redevelopments of major sites due to be delivered between now and 2031.</p> <p>A Public Art Policy for borough which will become a material consideration for planning purposes. This policy has been produced for Maidstone Borough Council officers and developers. It has a borough wide remit that looks at the commissioning of public art as part of a development or regeneration scheme.</p> <p>A Street Furniture Guidelines to ensure a consistent, coordinated and high quality approach to street furniture in Maidstone town centre.</p> <p>New Historic Interpretation panels are located throughout town.</p>	<p>History trail updated and leaflet completed.</p> <p>Public Realm Phase 3 improvements to Week Street and Gabriels Hill will include a history timeline; public art; signage to key attractions and themed squares.</p>
<p>Shopfront improvements including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shop front design and window displays (produce toolkit) Maintenance to frontages e.g. redecoration, brand signs 	S-M	Ongoing	<p>Ken Scott and volunteers have done audit of shop fronts in North end of Week Street. Need to discuss next steps, and funding.</p>	<p>Shop front improvements are incorporated in the HLF bid for <i>some</i> of the properties on Gabriels’ Hill. Bid unsuccessful.</p> <p>Unlikely to be funding available for other streets incl Week St. Public Realm is being improved so this could raise profile of area and incentivise owners to improve their buildings.</p>	<p>One Maidstone are campaigning to reduce A Board clutter.</p>
<p>Strengthen town’s association with the countryside through celebrating and promoting local food</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage local restaurants to source local 	S-M-L and Ongoing	Ongoing Ongoing	<p>What is Produce in Kent already doing re promoting local food in restaurants? How can Maidstone promote?</p>	<p>MBC could liaise with PinK and One Maidstone to promote local produce</p> <p>Could be scope to use Granada House for</p>	<p>Local produce and markets section on Visit Maidstone website.</p> <p>Business encouraged to work with</p>

<p>produce and promote it</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore potential for a new local produce centre 			Need to identify suitable location for possible local produce centre, and funding	local produce however would need to incorporate with C&R's plans.	<p>Produced in Kent.</p> <p>Monthly Farmers market with local producers in Jubilee Square.</p> <p>New 3 day food Festival - Shemomedjamo in Mote park in September 2017.</p> <p>Second food fair in Mote Park in June.</p> <p>Event organisers given list of local food traders for events.</p>
<p>ACCESS AND VISITOR MANAGEMENT</p> <p><i>There is work to do to make it easier for visitors arriving by car, coach and train to find their way into the town. This means providing information and orientation at the main arrival points and then ensuring consistent and continuous signing and information across the town. It means integrating existing signing and information with planned investment in new quarters and on the river. The new traffic-flow management planned for the bypass creates an opportunity to improve signing for visitors.</i></p>					
<p>Agree a strategy for improved access by car and coach into the town centre and support with:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clear uncluttered road signing Signing to car parks/coach park Visitor orientation in the car/coach parks Pedestrian signing from car parks to the town centre and main attractions. 	M-L	ongoing	<p>How can signage into town be improved?</p> <p>Need an audit of pedestrian signing from car parks into town – is it logical to visitors who are unfamiliar with town?</p> <p>Integrated transport strategy will address some of these issues.</p>	<p>New Visitor Information poster sites and What's On poster sites with maps installed or replaced by car parks</p>	<p>An audit of town centre signage will be undertaken after the public realm improvements are complete.</p> <p>Work being undertaken on car parking, P&R and buses. All Member workshop to consider early options November (mid). SPST Committee to consider report January 2018.</p>
<p>Review coach parking provision – volume, location and facilities – to reflect needs of international coach parties for shopping, and take account of potential growth</p>	M	Ongoing	<p>Coach park currently at Sittingbourne Road – not ideal location. Maidstone East possible alternative.</p> <p>If Maidstone has good facilities for drivers, more coaches will visit.</p>	<p>Discussion with parking now regarding Lockmeadow as Sittingbourne road getting too full with cars.</p>	<p>Developing coach driver offer with Visitor Information.</p> <p>Coach parking has not been included in the parking review.</p>
<p>Improve welcome and visitor facilities at the rail stations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Welcome sign and town map on board Clear signing to drop-off/pick-up points <p>Longer term, a need to deliver new development at Maidstone East station to improve first impressions and provide additional welcome & visitor facilities.</p>	S-M-L	Ongoing	<p>Redevelopment proposals exist for Maidstone East Station and these improvements could be incorporated. £1m of Single Local Growth Fund is available in 2016/17 for the redevelopment of the Ticket Office buildings.</p> <p>Network Rail investing in Maidstone East – Maps to go on temp hoardings) North end of Week Street due to have public realm improvements. Required good maps and information</p>	<p>SE Trains added Maidstone destination information to website and supplied poster sites in London.</p>	<p>Station improvement programme at Maidstone East to link to Phase 3 public realm improvements, create a sense of arrival on new concourse with signage.</p> <p>New Thameslink service to run from Maidstone East from 2018.</p>

<p>Create an Events Experts Group that brings together senior decision makers from the main venues & MBC to “join the dots” when it comes to planning & infrastructure, programming & marketing</p>	s	Completed	<p>First meeting took place November 215. Events Working groups comprises required decision makers and will invite others as they become apparent.</p>	<p>This group is now the Maidstone Events Group. Additional venues have been identified and will be asked to join. Group will meet 2-3 times per year. Next meeting February 2017.</p>	<p>New date for meeting to be set up</p>
<p>Carry out an Audit & Gap Analysis – looking at infrastructure & resources (physical & people), including venue capacities, transport links, traffic management, parking, signing, policing & crowd management. Must take into account potential negative impact on local communities & environment. Should include analysis of processes (licensing, highways, planning etc) too. Gap Analysis will then identify if new infrastructure/processes needed - & specific actions should then be developed.</p>	s	Completed	<p>List of questions for venue audit to be prepared by Jo and Barbara form an event organisers perspective and Natalie from a venue perspective.</p> <p>Now been circulated to group members for comment. Survey questionnaire being prepared to go out early January.</p> <p>Additional questions added and questionnaire sent to group for approval. To be sent out once countryside survey returned .</p>	<p>Survey sent and venues chased for response. Spreadsheet of the results has been compiled. Members of event group have been emailed to ask how best to show information and to ask for volunteer.</p>	<p>Group decided the best location for Event venue information would be in the Conference Maidstone website. Information now added to new events section on ConferenceMaidstone</p>
<p>Develop an Event Organisers’ Toolkit – to make it easier to hold an event in the borough. (We understand this is already under way – but it will need to be updated once the above Audit & Gap Analysis is completed)</p>	M-L	Ongoing	<p>This will be added to the website as above.</p>	<p>Once audit complete this will be done. Work is not underway as per the action comment.</p>	<p>Online events application process being developed by MBC</p>
<p>Set up a “No Clash Diary” – for venues to enter information on provisional as well as firm bookings. This is an “internal” tool for venues, organisers, accommodation providers and public agencies within the Borough (and neighbouring areas) to use – to help them avoid clashes, to spread events across the year, and also facilitate identification of potential “clusters” for joint development & marketing (see next action).</p>	S	Completed	<p>This has been set up using google calendar and is being tested by the group before making available to external organisers. It sits on DMP pages on visitmaidstone.com/dmp</p> <p>It has been tested. No needs to have more explnation added and then send to event organisers, SAG administration and our venues to ask organisers to add to. Thy must email activation request to add on events</p>	<p>It will move to the Conference Maidstone website along with the new events pages and required to fill in as part of the events notification.</p> <p>Regular reminder to event planners. SAG administration to be informed so this becomes part of the process.</p>	<p>Push for organisers to populate nio calash diary for 2018 and beyond as number of events is increasing.</p>
<p>Develop themed seasons/festivals, inspired by the Shared Story and by major events. May need a DMP Group sub-group – an “Events Development Taskforce”. Members of the Taskforce to be selected for their specific skills (marketing, events management, programming, fundraising).</p>	M-L	Ongoing	<p>TCM leading. Group looking at themes form 2016 onwards i.e. sporting, comedy and come with idea for next meeting.</p> <p>Food fair already being organised by Barbara</p>	<p>One Maidstone leading. Group looking at themes from 2017 onwards i.e. sporting, comedy and come with idea for next meeting.</p> <p>Apparent from 2016 that there is a strong music theme from Spring to Autumn. Group to develop brand for season and produce brand, leaflet, editorial pages to promote. Production to start Feb 2017. (No resources available, delayed until 2018).</p>	<p>Along with River Partnership early discussion on event taking Place in 2018</p> <p>One Maidstone delivering a Harvest Festival, Live Nativity and Easter Egg Hunt.</p> <p>Looking at branding for Maidstone Summer of Music 2018.</p> <p>New events in 2017 – Oktoberfest, Madness at the Kent Event Centre,</p>

					Community Mela, Shemomedjamo, Multicultural Food festival
Develop a consumer-facing “Events for Visitors Calendar” – comprising an online real time database of confirmed events for consumer marketing (website content, emarketing, social media & traditional media relations work), linked to the Culture Kent data pool. Evolution of current online events calendar on Visit Maidstone. Related to “No Clash Diary” – but serves different purpose. Drives events information on Visit Maidstone & Visit Kent websites, but also for tourism industry’s own marketing (could incorporate a “widget” for tourism providers to use on their own websites, providing a live feed). Will need to be promoted to visitor-facing businesses as well as consumers. Needs tight criteria & market focus so only features events with clear visitor-appeal, and presents them in a way that motivates visits (e.g. clustering them, using Shared Story themes etc).	M	Completed	Consumer events calendar available on visit Maidstone.com/whats-on. List and images can be enhanced and linked to social media. Event organiser can add their events on directly. Widget to pool information for other providers is being investigated.	Consumer events calendar available on visit Maidstone.com/whats-on. List and images can be enhanced and linked to social media. Event organiser can add their events on directly. Widget has been created and information circulated to accommodation providers, attractions and event organisers. Three widgets created what’s on, accommodation and Things to Do.	Widget for websites to be demonstrated at 2017 investor/stakeholder event.

42

Countryside					
Product audit – map & gap current provision of trails, walks and countryside & river experiences	S	Completed	As discussed in the Countryside meeting a Survey Monkey survey has been created and sent out to Parish Council’s and Visitor Attractions to collate the information across the Borough. This includes where they do their marketing and what they market and how they reach their audiences. Responses deadline is 14/2/16 and we can collate and chase missing data hopefully before next meeting on 3/3/16 2pm.	Survey has gone out to Parish Council at the beginning of January 2016 with 6 weeks to return it. Brown sign audit from Parish Councils returned a very poor result, so we completed in house. Redundant brown signs have been removed. Some parish councils have been keener than others to encourage visitors.	
Marketing audit – understand who currently markets the countryside experiences, where and how. Find best digital solution to make sure that online information for visitors from various sources is easily found. Consider how best to use/work with existing brands and sub-brands e.g. Garden of England, Heart of Kent, Our Land	S	Completed	In conjunction with above	We have had an excellent result from this and have found potential new partners to develop products with.	
Develop themed experiences and trails that use Shared Story for inspiration, include key attractions, pubs etc along trail to drive more spend	M-L	Completed	As above	Developed marketing collateral and themed experiences . Videos produced. Video will be used to promote the Borough on social media and at Bluewater.	Cycle routes and walking routes produced by Explore Kent And National Cycle Trail (River).

Develop marketing collateral – digital and offline. Rich online content.		Completed		Videos loaded on Visit Maidstone Site.	Will be available online on VisitMaidstone and Explore Kent shortly. Leaflets in production.
Audit walks and trails selected for promotion to visitors to ensure they are easy to use and attractive – safe and easy to find car parks at start points, good facilities along the way, e.g. picnic sites, interpretation, benches, viewpoints etc. Ensure the routes are consistently signed and that refreshment stops and attractions along the route provide appropriate facilities for walkers and cyclists, e.g. cycle lock ups . Develop a plan for investment to plug gaps in provision.	M	Completed		Still in assessment process and waiting returns. Some very useful information was returned to us in relation to North Downs walks and River Medway walks, with maps and info. This will prevent us doubling up on work. Meeting on 7th September to take forward ideas and areas.	UK electric bikes have developed 4 new cycle rides around the Marden, Staplehurst and Headcorn area taking in attractions and Produced in Kent sites. Will be available this Autumn as downloadable pdf on Visit Maidstone. North Downs Trail Officer and Explore Kent are checking and developing trails from train stations onto the North Downs around the Hollingbourne area. However currently not progressing due to South Eastern contract for the service due to end soon, and they are not willing to develop this until new contract in place. A driving tour for the North of the Borough has been researched. And will be developed over the winter ready for 2018.
Develop rural Visitor Information Points – “i” branded.	M	Ongoing with revised action	Work has started on Leader funding bid and potentially there will be new electronic visitor activity data as well, possibly using Scout.	Work has started on Leader funding bid and potentially there will be new electronic visitor activity data as well, possibly using Scout.	VIP points has been shelved due to match funding not being available. Visitor information website stickers to be produced and given to rural tourism related businesses
Work towards becoming Kent’s first “Walker Friendly” destination using the Cyclist Welcome and Walkers Welcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify key towns/villages and support Walkers Welcome accreditation (prioritise villages with direct train links into Maidstone) Promotional activity 	M	Revised - not possible action	Will have to be the 4 th Walker Friendly destination but it would seem that this could be a great place for walking without the car. North Downs Way and Stations are working together and have potential to join in.		See above work on walking routes and SE trains situation. 15 old walking route leaflets found for Staplehurst are to be investigated and reproduced in a downloadable format.