

BUSINESS RATES RETENTION PILOT PROJECTS

£000

A Home for Everyone

Identifying individuals at risk of homelessness 80

We plan to build a predictive analytical model which will identify those most at risk of future homelessness, prior to them reaching the statutory trigger point of facing the threat of homelessness within 56 days. Caseworkers will work with these individuals to provide early housing support intervention and support with accessing any identified wider support services.

Rough Sleepers 80

This initiative is intended to have a positive impact on the street population and the wider community. It consists of a four point plan, comprising (i) deep dive into the reasons and experiences why people are living on the streets; (ii) development of a 'Housing First' model, which will support homeless people with high needs and complex issues to live in their own homes; (iii) creation of a Challenge Group Partnership comprising influencers and budget holders across our organisation and key stakeholders including Community Safety, Police, treatment services, Social Care and Health services; (iv) provide more effective access to primary health care.

Housing Delivery Partnership 50

There is a potential business case for a joint venture with a housing association and / or an institutional investor to acquire S106 affordable housing from developers in the borough. The project would require capital investment from MBC to be funded through the Capital Programme. To achieve the project objectives an Affordable Housing SPG or DPD will need to be commissioned and introduced, together with appropriate legal advice and procurement work.

Maidstone Housing Design Guide 50

Given the housing growth in the borough, there is a need to raise the design standard of new housing be built in the borough. This guide would become a material planning consideration or SPG, and help us succinctly set out our aspirations in terms of quality.

c/f 260

Clean and Safe

Community Environmental Engagement 90

Conserving and promoting biodiversity in the Borough is a key objective for the Council, as set out in the Local Plan and the Parks and Open Spaces 10 year Plan. In order to deliver this, it is essential to engage with residents, communities and key stakeholders and promote the environmental initiatives – both big and small – which take place across the Borough. This project centres on the creation of a website that residents, community groups, partner organisations and Maidstone Borough Council can populate with environmental based projects.

Regeneration

Town Centre Regeneration Opportunity Areas 80

This project aims to bring forward housing for development in the town centre broad locations (and other windfall sites) as set out in the Local Plan. It is intended to demonstrate vision and leadership in respect of a number of difficult sites that have proved difficult to deliver over many years.

Property Asset Review 55

The Council has not carried out a comprehensive review of its property portfolio in recent years. A Property Asset Review will ensure that the Council’s property assets can respond to the Council’s corporate priorities and more specifically will identify opportunities for the Council to optimise income or capital from Council owned property and to ensure that all Council services are provided through facilities which are fit for purpose and utilised effectively.

Maidstone Business Capital of Kent – Marketing Campaign 35

With a newly adopted Local Plan, a local economy that is continuing to grow, and many exciting projects coming to fruition, this is the right time to demonstrate that Maidstone is truly ‘open for business’. In order to promote Maidstone as the Business Capital of Kent and drive inward investment, the Council will run a positive PR campaign to raise the profile of Maidstone, and develop marketing collateral in the form of an interactive Town Centre map, a marketing toolkit and a microsite for inward investment.

	b/f	520
Staplehurst Village Centre Masterplan		15

The local community is keen to see regeneration of the land around Staplehurst railway station, to provide increased and improved car parking as well as mixed use development, to include retail, so as to create a more vibrant village centre. This would be a collaborative project intended to bring forward a development that meets the aspirations of the local community.

Maidstone Bus Centre Improvements		10
-----------------------------------	--	----

The recent Tri-study has confirmed that there is a need for a bus station in Maidstone, and the current facility is the best location for it, but it is in drastic need of refurbishment. In order to mobilise the necessary funding, it is necessary to have a worked up and costed design and supporting narrative, which this project will seek to deliver.

Keeping Maidstone Council an attractive place for all

Community Fund		60
----------------	--	----

Elected Councillors are deeply engaged with their local communities and are in an excellent position to identify local initiatives that support the Council’s overall strategic objectives. In many cases, a modest amount of funding can make the difference between whether these initiatives happen or not. It is therefore proposed to allocate £1,000 to each councillor for them to use as a ‘Community Fund’. The administration of the fund will be kept as simple as possible, consistent with the requirements of good governance, ensuring that overheads can be limited.

Data analytics for Inclusive Growth		35
-------------------------------------	--	----

The data underpinning Council policies has a critical influence on how those policies developed. Currently, much of the data we use is financial and/or biased towards what is relatively easy to measure – eg population, number of households. This means, for example, that in developing the Local Plan, there is a strong emphasis on the quantitative (number of homes) at the expense of the qualitative. This project would review the relevant information that is available. It would define a broader set of metrics, based on the available data, and would establish processes for extracting and presenting this data on a regular basis.

TOTAL		640
--------------	--	------------