

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: Tuesday 17 April 2018
Time: 6.30 pm
Venue: Town Hall, High Street, Maidstone

Membership:

Councillors Barned (Chairman), M Burton, Field, Garten, Joy, D Mortimer
(Vice-Chairman), Mrs Ring, Mrs Robertson and Webster

The Chairman will assume that all Members will read the reports before attending the meeting. Officers are asked to assume the same when introducing reports.

AGENDA

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| 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 20 March 2018 | 1 - 6 |
| 9. Presentation of Petitions (if any) | |
| 10. Questions and answer session for members of the public (if any) | |
| 11. Reference from Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee - Affordable Gypsy and Traveller Sites | 7 - 9 |
| 12. Key Performance Indicators for Communities Housing and Environment Committee 2018-19 | 10 - 15 |
| 13. Public Realm CCTV Service Update | 16 - 20 |

Issued on Monday 9 April 2018

Continued Over/:

Alison Broom

Alison Broom, Chief Executive

PUBLIC SPEAKING AND ALTERNATIVE FORMATS

If you require this information in an alternative format please contact us, call **01622 602899** or email committee@maidstone.gov.uk.

In order to speak at this meeting, please contact Democratic Services using the contact details above, by 5 p.m. 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.

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

Should you wish to refer any decisions contained in these minutes to the **Policy and Resources Committee**, please submit a Decision Referral Form, signed by **three** Councillors, to the **Head of Policy and Communications** by: **6 April 2018**

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 20 MARCH 2018

Present: Councillors Barned, M Burton, Field, Garten, Joy,
D Mortimer, Mrs Robertson and Springett

129. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

It was noted that apologies had been received from Councillor Mrs Ring.

130. NOTIFICATION OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

It was noted that Councillor Mrs Springett was substituting for Councillor Mrs Ring.

131. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman informed the Committee that he intended to take an urgent item on Temporary Accommodation Strategy Review – Amendment due to the fact that the Council was in a position to close negotiations on the acquisition of temporary accommodation and any delay in agreeing the recommendation may result in the loss of opportunity to purchase the additional units.

RESOLVED: That the report be taken as an urgent item.

132. NOTIFICATION OF VISITING MEMBERS

There were no Visiting Members.

133. DISCLOSURES BY MEMBERS AND OFFICERS

There were no disclosures by Members and Officers.

134. DISCLOSURES OF LOBBYING

There were no disclosures of lobbying.

135. EXEMPT ITEMS

RESOLVED: That the agenda items be taken in public as proposed.

136. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 JANUARY 2018

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting held on 16 January 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed.

137. PRESENTATION OF PETITIONS

There were no petitions.

138. QUESTIONS AND ANSWER SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

There were no questions from members of the public.

139. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Committee Work Programme.

The Chairman advised that he had requested that an update on Heather House be presented to the April Committee meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Committee Work Programme be noted.

140. KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS UPDATE QUARTER 3 2017/18

The Committee considered the report of Miss Anna Collier, Information Manager which set out the progress of Key Performance Indicators related to the Committee.

Miss Collier highlighted the services where performance had increased:-

- 99.7% of land and highways had acceptable levels of litter against a target of 93.5%.
- 97.8% of land and highways had acceptable levels of detritus against a target of 84%.
- 89.3% of fly-tips had been cleared within 2 working days during the quarter.
- The allocation of the disabled facilities grant had exceeded target.
- The target of 150 for the number of applicants housed had been exceeded by 30 due to an increase in the amount of available vacant and new build properties.
- A total of 107 homeless preventions were made during quarter 3.

In response to questions from Members, the Officers advised that:-

- In terms of the three prosecutions made against fly-tips, evidence had been found in the rubbish which traced it back to the

perpetrators.

- They were unable to provide accurate information at present to Members of when roads would be swept as the new system had not been properly bedded in. It was envisaged that this would take another 8/12 months.
- The Council's costs were recovered for the clear up of fly-tips where a prosecution had been made.

The Committee asked that the Cleansing Manager be congratulated for the good work that her team had carried out in cleaning up areas on the North Downs. The team should also be congratulated on the recent work in to the town centre to clear up the snow on pathways and roads.

RESOLVED: That the summary of Performance for Quarter 3 of 2017/18 for Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) be noted.

141. THIRD QUARTER BUDGET MONITORING 2017/18

The Committee considered the report of Mr Mark Green, the Director of Finance and Business Improvement which provided an overview of the revenue budgets and outturn for the third quarter of 2017/18 and highlighted financial matters that might have a material impact on the Medium Term Financial Strategy or the Balance Sheet.

Mr Green advised that there had been a positive variance on the budget as at 31st December 2017. However, current projections indicated that it would be significantly reduced by year end.

The Committee noted that:-

- There had been good performance on Grounds Maintenance where additional work had been generated from Section 106 agreements.
- As the Council acquired more of its own properties, the expenditure for overnight accommodation from external sources would reduce.

In response to questions from Members, the Officers advised that:-

- The savings identified for CCTV in the Medium Term Financial Strategy were over a 3 year period. There had been problems with flooding at the Town Hall which may have a bearing on the budget.

However, there had been a number of cameras that had been switched off which had resulted in the lines being disconnected and therefore some savings had been made.

It was noted that a report would be coming to the April Committee meeting to update Members.

- In regard to the staff shortages at the Depot, there had been changes to shift patterns which had meant that the team were unable to react to staff sickness as effectively as they would have wished. However, the budget had been reviewed and there was more resource available to deal with sickness positively and also the night shifts cleaning up A Roads had now stopped which had seen a reduction in the overtime budget.
- In the Housing Inclusions Section there had been a couple of vacancies, one of which had been filled and the team were in the process of recruiting to the other post.
- The additional spend on fly tipping and materials had been due to the fact that when presenting the waste to KCC it had not been put in their required bags etc. Therefore additional colour sacks had to be purchased.

In terms of the composite of the fly-tipped material, if it was asbestos, chemicals or oils, these had to be disposed of by specialist companies which would be an additional cost to the Council.

RESOLVED:

- 1) That the revenue position at the end of the third quarter and the actions being taken or proposed to improve the position where significant variances have been identified be noted.
- 2) That the position with the capital programme be noted.

142. CHARGING FOOD BUSINESSES FOR FOOD HYGIENE RATING SCHEME RESCORE INSPECTIONS

The Committee considered the report of Mrs Tracey Beattie, Mid Kent Environmental Health Manager which related to the introduction of a charge for re-inspection under the scheme for both businesses and the authority.

It was noted that the fee had been set to cover the cost of re-inspection and allowed food businesses the opportunity of reducing the current (up to) six months re-inspection period to no more than three months once the request and fee had been received.

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

- That the public can find out from the FSA website (and via a link from the Council's website what the business Food Hygiene Rating Scores are.
- Businesses do not know the date when the re-inspection would be likely to occur.

- There was a right of appeal for businesses that disagreed with the rating given at the initial inspection, this is independent of the process of a re-inspection. The appeal process would continue and involved a review by both the Team Leaders from Sittingbourne and Tunbridge Wells offices.

RESOLVED: That the introduction of a charge for re-inspections for re-scoring be introduced from 1st April 2018.

Voting: Unanimous

143. COMMUNITY TOILET SCHEME UPDATE

The Committee considered the report of Mr John Edwards, Street Scene Operational Manager, which gave an update on the Community Toilet Scheme which enabled residents and visitors to Maidstone the use of private toilet facilities which had been provided by a number of local businesses.

Mr Edwards advised that there were now a total of 9 businesses or facilities signed up to the scheme. He emphasised that there had been improved signage of the locations, especially down by the riverside. In addition, information was provided on the Council's website and public facing applications.

In response to questions from Members, the Officer advised that:-

- Should the Council provide funding to a privately owned business to accommodate a changing places area, then that establishment would be tied into a 3 to 4 year membership of the Scheme.
- The reason for the reduction in numbers of participants was that the facilities were not considered up to standard and therefore taken off the list.
- It would not make any difference to the number of participants to the scheme if more money was offered.
- If the Council were to have pods installed, following experiences of other Councils, these are open to vandalism and are a target to be robbed.
- That copies of the Monitoring Check Sheets of the current participants would be sent through to Members by email.

That CIL contributions may be able to be used for public toilet facilities. However, the Business Rates Retention Scheme only allows for investment opportunities that would generate additional income.

The following observations were made by Members:-

- That there should be public toilet facilities in the town for all to use.

- That Members had previously spoke to the landlord of the Market Buildings with a view to re-opening the toilet facilities in that location but nothing had come of it.
- That many of the towns in Kent have a changing places facility in their towns and it was embarrassing that the County Town of Kent does not and we should be working with our partners to take it forward.
- Perhaps One Maidstone could do more to encourage establishments within the town centre to take up membership of the scheme.
- That if there was a flavour for the Council to have public toilets in the town centre then this should be looked at and put into the budget for next year.

RESOLVED: That Officers come back to the Committee with a set of properly costed proposals (to include options for grant funding, public funding and/or partnership funding) for a 21st century facility in the town centre.

Voting: Unanimous

144. TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY REVIEW - AMENDMENT

The Committee considered the urgent report of the Head of Housing and Community Services which requested a change to the delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Business Improvement to enable him to determine the number, size and type of temporary accommodation to be acquired in accordance with the decision made by the Committee in December 2017.

In response to questions from Members, the Officer advised that:-

- It would over-complicate the matter to specify the size of property.
- The previously agreed budget of £4.5m would not change.
- That Officers would provide an update report in June which would list the type of properties purchased and their general location.

RESOLVED: That the Committee gives delegated authority to the Director of Finance and Business Improvement to determine the number, size and type of temporary accommodation to be acquired in accordance with the decision made by the Committee on 12 December 2017, within the previously agreed budget of £4.5m.

Voting: Unanimous

145. DURATION OF MEETING

6.45 p.m. to 8 p.m.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITIES, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

17 APRIL 2018

REFERENCE FROM STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES – NEED AND SUPPLY

The Planning Committee, at its meeting held on 11 January 2018, agreed to ask the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee to consider the issue of unmet demand for affordable Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Borough. This request arose out of consideration of an application for residential development where a financial contribution was secured towards off site affordable housing provision. The Committee was advised that it would not be possible to use this funding to address the demand for and supply of affordable Gypsy and Traveller sites, but that this should be addressed through a more rounded consideration as part of the review of the Local Plan.

The Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee considered the reference, at its meeting held on 6 February 2018, and agreed to incorporate the issues raised from the reference into the review of the Local Plan. The Committee further agreed to share the reference with the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee due to that Committee's responsibilities. It was suggested that the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee consider the operational housing aspects of the reference.

The reference from Planning Committee to the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee can be found at **Appendix 1**.

The minute of the meeting of the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee held on 6 February 2018 can be found at **Appendix 2**.

RECOMMENDED: That the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee consider the operational housing aspects of the reference.

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
STRATEGIC PLANNING, SUSTAINABILITY
AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

6 FEBRUARY 2018

REFERENCE FROM PLANNING COMMITTEE

GYPSY AND TRAVELLER SITES – NEED AND SUPPLY

The Planning Committee, at its meeting held on 11 January 2018, agreed to ask the Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee to consider the issue of unmet demand for affordable Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Borough. This request arose out of consideration of an application for residential development where a financial contribution was secured towards off site affordable housing provision. The Committee was advised that it would not be possible to use this funding to address the demand for and supply of affordable Gypsy and Traveller sites, but that this should be addressed through a more rounded consideration as part of the review of the Local Plan.

RECOMMENDED: That consideration be given to the issue of unmet demand for affordable Gypsy and Traveller sites in the Borough.

Minute from the meeting of Strategic Planning, Sustainability and Transportation Committee held on 6 February 2018

The Committee considered the reference from Planning Committee relating to Gypsy and Traveller Sites – Need and Supply. It was noted that the reference referred specifically to the need for affordable Gypsy and Traveller sites and that this was not apparent in the recommendation.

The Committee considered that the reference should be shared with the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee due to that Committee's responsibilities. It was suggested that the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee consider the operational housing aspects of the reference.

The Committee advised that the Council needed to be careful not to segregate members of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller community into isolated rural locations within the Borough.

The Committee agreed to incorporate the issues raised by the reference into the work for the review of the Local Plan.

The Chairman advised that a note of this item be included on the Planning Committee agenda.

RESOLVED:

1. That the reference from Planning Committee be shared with the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee.
2. That the issues raised by the reference be incorporated into the review of the Local Plan.

Voting: Unanimous

Agenda Item 12

Communities Housing and Environment Committee

17 April 2018

Draft Key Performance Indicators for Communities Housing and Environment Committee 2018-19

Final Decision-Maker	Communities Housing and Environment
Lead Head of Service	Angela Woodhouse Head of Policy Communications and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Anna Collier Policy and Information Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

Committees have recently reviewed a refresh of the Strategic Plan for 2018-19 which sets out the action areas that deliver the identified priorities. Each Service Committee was asked to consider and agree key performance indicators relevant to the services within its remit so as to measure achievement of our priorities for 2018-19.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. To agree the key performance indicators to be reported to this Committee in 2018-19 which cover the three action areas prioritised in the refreshed Strategic Plan.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Communities Housing and Environment Committee	17 April 2018

Draft Key Performance Indicators for Communities Housing and Environment Committee 2018-19

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 The Council has refreshed the Strategic Plan for 2018-19. Each Service Committee is asked to consider and agree key performance indicators relevant to the services within its remit so as to measure achievement of our priorities for 2018-19.
- 1.2 The Committee agreed in December 2016 to focus performance reporting on the three action areas prioritised in the refreshed Strategic Plan for 2017-18:
 - Providing a Clean and Safe Environment
 - Regenerating the Town Centre
 - A Home for Everyone
- 1.3 At the Councillor workshops and the committee meetings to consider the refresh of the Strategic Plan it was identified that where there are strategies and plans in place to deliver the action areas we will use measures set out in those documents.
- 1.4 As the Strategic Plan priorities and action areas have not changed other than the amendment to the clean and safe priority to: Providing a Safe, Clean and Green Environment it is proposed that the same approach is adopted for 2018-19.
- 1.5 Indicators have been reviewed with Heads of Service and the table at Appendix 1; shows the draft indicators by action area, their performance throughout the year, current targets for 2017-18 and proposed targets for 2018-19.
- 1.6 Where the target for 2018-19 is to be confirmed (TBC), this is either because, the indicator is annual and the final outturn is needed before the target can be assessed or performance is varied or unexpected and a full year's data is needed to ensure that the target is based on an educated assessment.

2. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 2.1 Members are asked to consider the draft set of indicators at Appendix A and could choose to increase, reduce or change any presented.
- 2.2 Members could also choose not to have any performance reported to this committee. This is not recommended as monitoring performance ensures

oversight and challenge to the delivery of the Council's priority action areas and mitigates risk of the Council not delivering its priorities.

3. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 The Committee is asked to consider which indicators will best measure and track progress against the action areas that are relevant to its terms of reference. Agreement is sought on the indicators and targets for 2018-19 and a list of recommended indicators has been given for the Committee to review.

4. RISK

4.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework. That consideration is shown in this report at paragraph 2.2. We are satisfied that the risks associated are within the Council's risk appetite and will be managed as per the Policy.

5. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

5.1 The Committee has previously considered performance measures when it reviewed the strategic plan in December 2016 and January 2017. As well as the earlier workshop with Service Committee Chairs and Vice Chairs an evening workshop was also held to which all Councillors were invited to ascertain views on indicators for each action area in March. This report reflects those meetings.

6. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

6.1 The Committee's agreed set of indicators will be reported and added to its work programme for 2018-19.

7. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Performance management is focussed on identifying whether the Council is achieving the strategic priorities and action identified in the Council's Strategic Plan.	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Risk Management	Managing performance effectively should act as both risk mitigation and	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance

	identification	
Financial	The proposals set out in the recommendation are all within already approved budgetary headings and so need no new funding for implementation.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	The indicators will be used by staff as part of performance managing our services and assessing progress against our priorities. They will not require additional staffing resource	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Legal	N/A	Legal Team
Privacy and Data Protection	N/A	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Equalities	N/A	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Crime and Disorder	N/A	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance
Procurement	N/A	Head of Policy, Communications and Governance

8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix 1: Draft Key Performance Indicators for Communities Housing and Environment Committee 2018-19

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Council's Refreshed Strategic Plan for 2018-19

Draft Key Performance Indicators Communities Housing and Environment Committee 2018-19

Providing a Clean Safe and Green Environment						
Indicator	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	2017-18 Target	2018-19 Target	Notes
The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having acceptable levels of litter	N/A	95%	99.67%	93.5%	94%	
The percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having acceptable levels of detritus	N/A	91.5%	97.84%	84%	94%	
Percentage of fly tips cleared within 2 working days	88.78%	77.55%	89.26%	88%	88%	
Percentage of fly tips with evidential value which result in enforcement action	10%	60%	56.4%	20%	50%	
Number of litter reports attended to	131	133	130	Information Only	Information Only	
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling , composting	52.67%	53.88%	51.72%	52.5%	52.5%	
A Home for Everyone						
Indicator	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	2017-18 Target	2018-19 Target	Notes
Number of affordable homes delivered	39	83	43	50 ¹ (200)	TBC	
Number of households prevented from becoming homeless through the	133	137	107	75 (300)	150	Target has been increased significantly to reflect the positive

¹ The figure in brackets represents the annual target

intervention of housing advice						performance throughout 2017-18, changes in resources and legislative requirements
Households living in temporary accommodation last night of the month (Council owned and Nightly Paid)	84	91	73	Information only	Information only	
Households living in nightly paid temporary accommodation last night of the month	New	New	New	Information only	Information only	
Encouraging Good Health and Wellbeing						
Indicator	Quarter 1	Quarter 2	Quarter 3	2017-18 Target	2018-19 Target	Notes
Percentage spend and allocation of disabled facilities grant	23.4%	48.4%	86.6%	100%	TBC	Awaiting final data to make informed decision
Number of completed housing assistances	Not measured for quarters			Information Only	TBC	Annual indicator awaiting final data
Number of completed home hazard grants	Not measured for quarters			Information Only	TBC	Annual indicator awaiting final data

Agenda Item 13

Communities, Housing & Environment

17 APRIL 2018

Public Realm CCTV Service Update

Final Decision-Maker	Communities, Housing and Environment
Lead Head of Service/Lead Director	John Littlemore – Head of Housing and Communities
Lead Officer and Report Author	Matt Roberts – Community Partnerships & Resilience Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report provides members with an update on the tendering process that was due to begin in January which has been delayed due to the impact of the flooding which occurred in the Town Hall and asks members to approve a merged desk arrangement in order to achieve part of the saving required by the medium term financial strategy.

This report makes the following recommendations to this Committee:

1. That the Committee agrees that Option 2 as outlined in paragraph 6.2 is implemented by the Head of Housing & Community Services.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Communities, Housing & Environment Committee	17 April 2018

Public Realm CCTV Service Update

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 On the 14 November 2017 the Communities, Housing and Environment Committee agreed for the Retendering for the CCTV Service for a new 5-year term be implemented by the Head of Housing and Community Services.
- 1.2 It has not been possible to implement this retendering due to the impact of flooding which occurred in the basement of the town hall.

2 TOWN HALL FLOODING

- 2.1 Late in the afternoon on Friday 15th December 2017 we received an alert from Medway Commercial Group (MCG) to say that there appeared to be a puddle of water in the control room in the basement of the Town Hall. Upon carrying out an inspection it was found that a large quantity of water had entered the basement through the floor and that the water level was rising.
- 2.2 The Property Services Team were notified and in turn Southeast Water were asked to carry out an emergency inspection to try and identify where the water was coming from, an engineer carried out a test of the water and concluded that it was not mains water due to a lack of chlorine.
- 2.3 As a result of the rising water the CCTV systems in the town hall had to be switched off to prevent the water from becoming electrified and the equipment becoming a hazard. It was not possible to locate the source of the water and moving the equipment was not an option due to it being fixed in place so things were left and monitored over the weekend.
- 2.4 The following week a temporary sump was dug and a pump installed to begin taking out the water. The water had severely damaged most of the CCTV equipment, knocking out the camera system entirely. A decision was taken to put a solution into place in order to get the system back up to provide CCTV coverage in time for the Christmas and New Year period, this was at a cost of £14,500. This is due to be recovered through an insurance claim.
- 2.5 MBC commissioned SLR Consulting Ltd to conduct a hydrology assessment, including sampling and analysis of the water egress into the basement. This has found that the water is coming from a mains source, a copy of this report has been given to Southeast Water and we are currently awaiting a response.

4. CCTV CONSULTANT

- 4.1 The water is still coming up through the floor and while it is under control there is still water on the floor and should the pump fail or the water increase the equipment will be damaged and the system knocked out again. This has highlighted the need to relocate the equipment from the

basement of the Town Hall and deal with the risk to the system before a tendering process can be undertaken.

- 4.2 Relocating the equipment to the IT Server Room in Maidstone House is currently being explored and is the preferred option. This would provide the air-conditioning and Uninterruptable Power Supply (UPS) needed without additional cost to the Council in providing this equipment in an alternative location.
- 4.3 Global MSC Security have been commissioned to undertake a review of our existing CCTV equipment and provide costed options to relocate the equipment and upgrade the system to both future proof and make savings, for example a wireless telemetry system could be provided at a capital cost which in turns saves money by reducing, or removing complete, the need to use BT fibre and thus saving the year revenue cost for the fibre used currently.
- 4.4 Swale Borough Council are undertaking a similar review, as part of the shared IT services arrangement the recording equipment for both Authorities could be housed at Maidstone House and result in savings for both Authorities.
- 4.5 Once the consultant has finished the review a report will be provided to CHE Committee with costed options and ask for a decision on implementing a preferred option.

5 CCTV PARTNERSHIP

- 5.1 While the report to CHE Committee in November 2017 explained that MCG were unable to provide a solution that would achieve the savings envisaged by the Council's MTFs the situation created by the flooding means that we need to address the risk to the system before entering into a tendering exercise to reduce the hours of monitoring.
- 5.2 An alternative model was proposed by MCG that continues to provide 24 hour monitoring but through a shared desk arrangement. This would result in a reduced cost of £156,747, giving MBC annual savings of £75,688. However, to achieve this new operational model would require the Council to cover the cost of the new infrastructure, which is in the region of £25,000.

6 AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 6.1 Option 1. Do nothing, this is not recommended as the situation in the basement of the Town Hall is precarious and savings need to be achieved in order to meet the medium term financial strategy.
- 6.2 Option 2. Accept MCG's proposal for a merged desk approach as outlined in section 5.2 above and extend the CCTV Partnership Agreement for a further year. If the Committee gives its approval, then this would go forward in 2018/19.

- 6.3 While this option does not achieve the total amount of saving identified in the MTFFS it does provide a saving until the consultant has finished reviewing the options for the service and a further report can be presented to Members.

7 PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 Option 2 is the preferred option; it provides for some stability in the running of the service and provides a proportion of the savings needed.
- 7.2 Negotiations will continue with MCG to identify whether an alternative delivery model could be provided through the existing partnership on new terms that is able to deliver the remainder of the savings needed while we explore the relocation of the system in to Maidstone House.

8 NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 8.1 The previous 5 year contract expired on 31 March 2017 and a clause within the agreement to proceed with an annual rolling agreement was triggered by all of the Local Authority Partners.
- 8.2 An extension to the current rolling agreement is required for an additional period of between 6 and 12 months. This proposal will need to be communicated to our partners and MCG, together with a newly drafted agreement.

9 RISK

- 8.1 There is a risk that if the preferred recommendation in the report is not followed the saving identified in the MTFFS will not be achieved.

10 CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	Impact on Corporate objectives were reviewed in the previous report and no empirical evidence exists to demonstrate that the reduction in monitoring hours would have a detrimental impact on keeping Maidstone a clean and safe place.	Head of Housing & Community Services

Risk Management	Included within the report	Head of Housing & Community Services
Financial	£150,000 of savings are included in the Medium Term Financial Strategy for the CCTV service. The recommended option sets out a route for delivering these savings.	Section 151 Officer
Staffing		
Legal	A new agreement is required should the current agreement need to be extended	
Privacy and Data Protection		
Equalities		[Policy & Information Manager]
Crime and Disorder	Contained within the report	Head of Housing & Community Services
Procurement		

11 REPORT APPENDICES

None.

12 BACKGROUND PAPERS

Decommissioning Part of the Public Realm CCTV Service - CHE Committee 14 November 2017

Communities, Housing and Environment Committee

17th April 2018

Housing and Inclusion – Homelessness Reduction Act

Final Decision Maker	Communities, Housing and Environment Committee
Lead Head of Service	John Littlemore, Head of Housing and Community Services
Lead Officer and Report Author	Hannah Gaston, Housing and Inclusion Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report reviews the previous year’s preparation for the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) and our early adoption of new ways to work in the spirit of the Act.

This report makes the following recommendations to Committee:

1. That the Communities, Housing & Environment Committee notes the progress made towards implementing the Homelessness Reduction Act.

Timetable

Meeting	Date
Communities, Housing and Environment Committee	17 th April 2018

Housing and Inclusion – Homelessness Reduction Act

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Maidstone Borough Council for some time has been planning and preparing for the introduction of the new HRA from 3rd April 2018. We have been working to ensure we are ready both internally and with our partners across the district since April 2017, as the Homelessness Reduction Bill progressed through parliament.
- 1.2 This document aims to give a brief overview of our work since April 2017 including staffing, preventions specific work stream, protocols and challenges.

2. STAFFING

- 2.1 In order to be fully prepared for the act we have reviewed our team structure and created a number of new functions in the past 12 months; most notably the Triage and Preventions service which sits within the wider Housing Advice team. See Appendix 1 for the team structure. Posts were funded from both base budgets and the increase in grants received from government.
- 2.2 **Triage Service** offer the first contact for our customers and have been trained to provide a supportive approach to the customer's housing needs. We have created this team to ensure an effective front facing service which can be tailored to meet the needs of those approaching.
- 2.3 The staff work on a rota basis covering 9am-5pm, five days a week. Those who require assistance can approach on the day to be triaged and then assessed by a housing advisor for immediate support or booked in for a later appointment dependent on their immediate housing need.
- 2.4 **Preventions Service** was approved in April 2017 and this new service now forms part of our Housing Advice Team and complements the prevention work already carried out by the Housing Advisors.
- 2.5 Extensive work has been undertaken to widely promote the service externally, as well as applicants coming through via our triage system, we receive referrals direct from key partners and agencies including housing associations, Early Help, Community Vulnerability and Safety Group and Change, Grow, Live (CGL) Maidstone's main drug and alcohol support centre.
- 2.6 The Preventions Officers offer a wide range of holistic support outside of the core requirements of preventing homelessness, including benefit entitlement checks, maximising income through accessing reduced utility tariffs and referring on to support agencies e.g. Sanctuary Floating Support, CGL, Turn 2 Us and Step Change.

2.7 The Preventions Officers will assist clients with applying for 'stay of execution' hearings to prevent evictions for tenants and attend Court in person to support the applicant. There has been real success in this area and the service has a growing reputation including with the judiciary at our local County Court; highlighted by an email from Golding Homes received in January which states

'we have just returned from a Court hearing for this tenant and the judge has asked for us to get you involved asap'.

2.8 In essence the Judge was unwilling to grant a possession order until our Prevention Service had an opportunity to help the applicant. We cover all tenures and have had recent success in Court with stay hearings for a mortgage repossession cases also.

2.9 Each Preventions Officer and Housing Advisor has a specialist area of work, including hoarding, care leavers, domestic abuse, prison leavers, and applicants leaving hospital, mental health and family / friends evictions.

2.10 From April 2017 until February 2018 the Council prevented 544 households from homelessness this includes support from the Preventions and Housing Advice Service, discretionary housing payments and the Sanctuary Scheme.

2.11 **Staff Training** - We have implemented a wide range of training not just focussing on the HRA, but looking at enhancing other key areas including 'difficult conversations' training and comprehensive equality and diversity training specifically aimed at target groups named in the Act to ensure we are equipped to deal with all applicants sensitively and holistically.

2.12 We have ensured the Housing Advice team are fully equipped with local knowledge and regularly invite guest speakers to build relationships and expand knowledge; examples include, the Maidstone Mediation Service operating a reconnection project for people who have left prison or are street homeless, helping them to re-engage with family members and Centra, who run the domestic abuse advice and support service for Maidstone.

3. PARTNERSHIPS

3.1 The Kent Housing Group operates across the county to ensure that all districts are working to similar guidelines and protocol; more recently the Care Leavers protocol has been launched with the Offender Pathway process currently being drawn up.

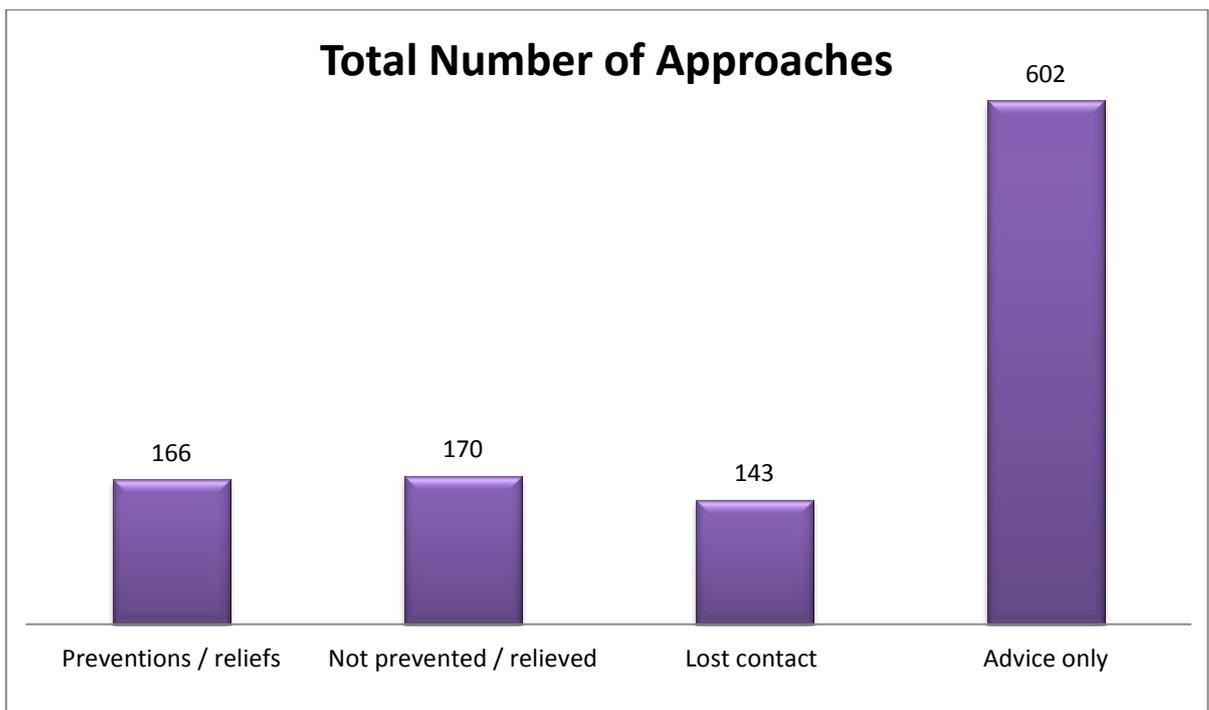
3.2 Another benefit of the system wide approach in Kent has enabled all the districts to start working together to produce advice notes and information which is consistent to all service users across the county.

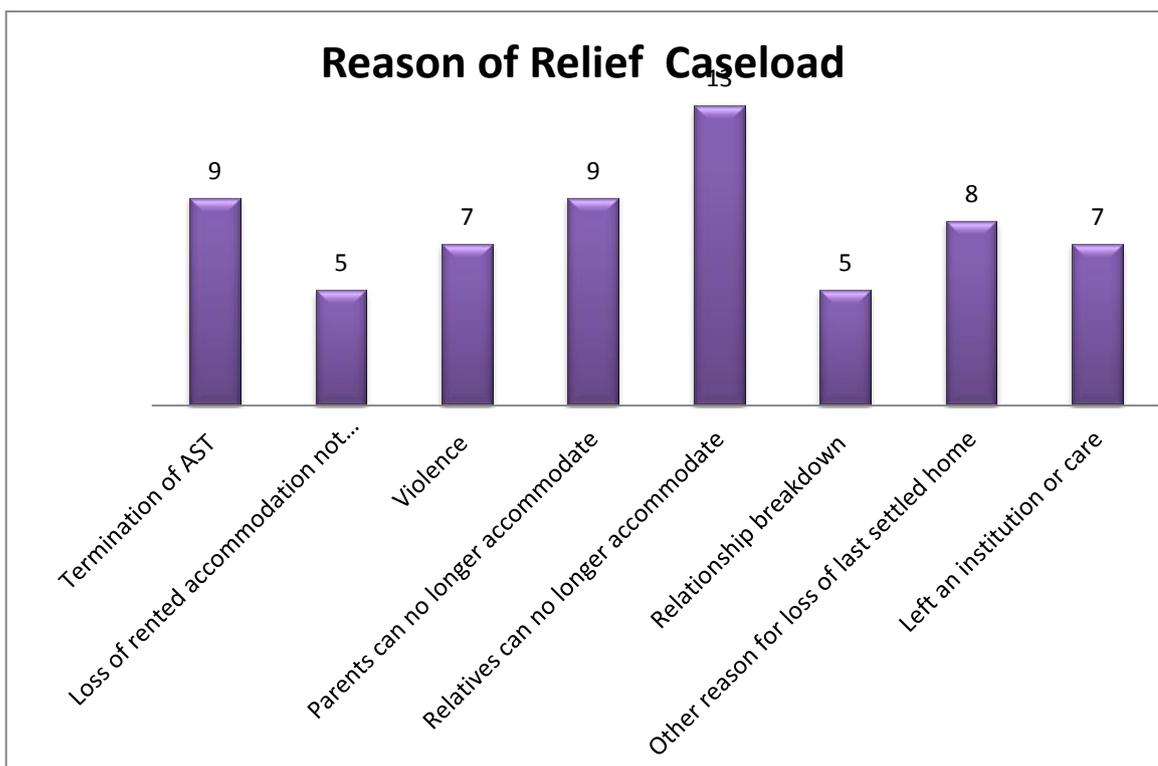
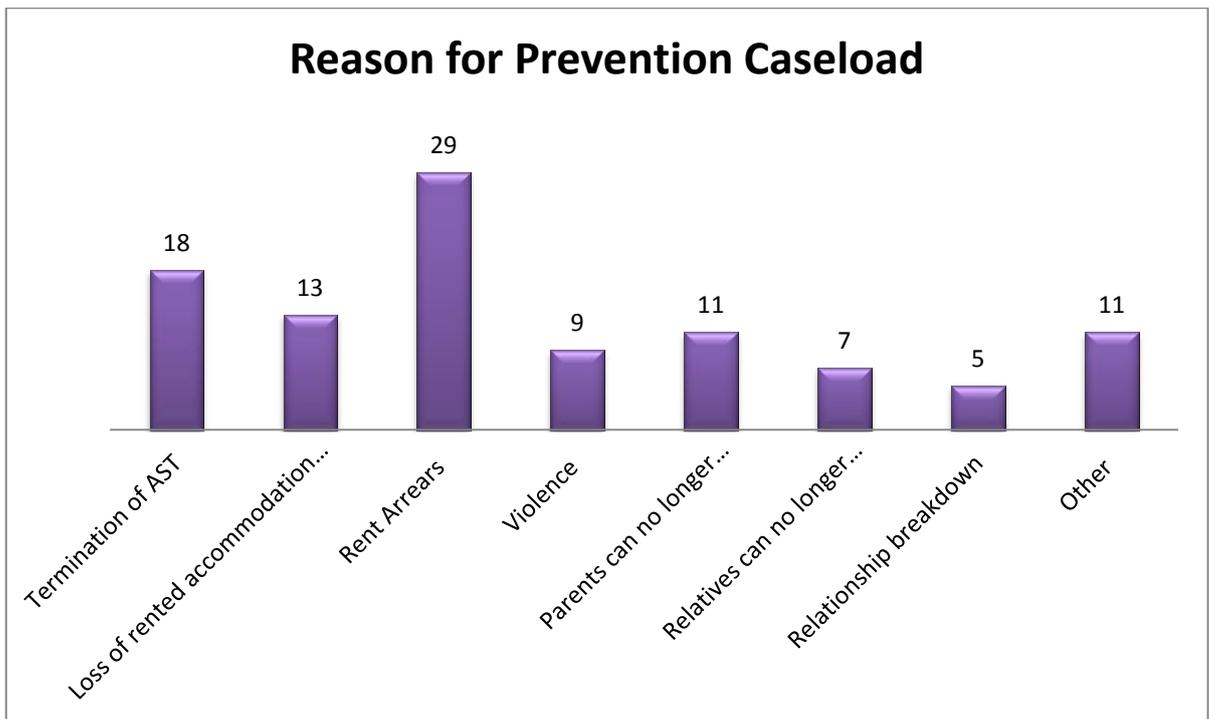
3.3 As a two tier authority some of the preparation has taken a little longer than anticipated and we are working on overcoming this with our county colleagues in social care for children and families and mental health. We are hoping to meet key people in the coming months and work towards a more cohesive approach to supporting vulnerable households at risk.

- 3.4 We are having further meetings with Kent Savers in relation to expanding our already established loans systems for households who need some support from a credit union.
- 3.5 We have also been further developing our partnerships with Maidstone Mediation to offer more targeted mediation between families and landlords and with Involve to offer a more holistic and inclusive support service such as accessing community events, clearance of hoarding cases and handyman interventions.
- 3.6 As a non-stock holding authority our main housing association partner is Golding Homes and over the previous few years we have ensured our partnership is effective and robust and are working on specific and distinct pieces of work including:
- Direct Lets for homeless households from temporary accommodation
 - Eviction protocol – including an early notification process
 - Housing First Pilot

4. STATISTICS

4.1 Please see below for our statistical breakdown of our workloads from April 2017 to January 2018.





4.2 The prevention service have particularly excelled in the following areas:

- Negotiations with family and friends for individual or households to remain in residence until another property is found or whilst bidding is underway.
- Negotiations with landlords over rent arrears payments including processing match funding or a discretionary housing payment.

- 4.3 We have found our success lies in our ability to negotiate on behalf of the housing applicant to try and maintain accommodation for an interim period. Being able to have conversations with family, friends or landlords enables a positive dialogue to occur normally leading to a successful outcome.
- 4.4 Our major challenges come in form of the financial constraint on households these include:
- Increased issues around affordability if circumstances change for household and they can no longer afford rent.
 - Indemnity insurance of landlords – which means a benefit claimants cannot be accommodated.
 - Local Housing Allowance within the local districts are not representative of market rents.
 - Out of London placements which have the potential to force the cost of accommodation up.

5. INNOVATIONS

- 5.1 **Pelican Court** is an eleven bed former care home – which we have leased from MOAT since August 2017 and it accommodates individuals with low level support needs and complexities. We fund support to be on site for 37 hours per week to provide interventions to those living with the project. The project has been funded from government grant.
- 5.2 The project was created to stop the flow of newly homeless people onto the streets and gives individuals a respite from the threat of immediate homelessness and rough sleeping in order to try and find longer stable accommodation.
- 5.3 We are funding a **Housing Pathways Worker** in partnership with Tunbridge Wells Borough Council to commission an assertive outreach worker to provide support for those at risk of becoming homeless or those newly homeless who have substance misuse issues. Again, this project has been financed from bids to central government that we have been successful in applying for.
- 5.4 We have been awarded two tranches of funding from the **Business Rate Retention fund** firstly to create a more targeted approach to rough sleepers across Maidstone and will include:
- Deep dive into the reasons people are living on the streets in Maidstone and the barriers to people moving inside
 - Housing First Pilot within Maidstone
 - Creation of the Challenge Group – using support and enforcement to move people from the streets.
- 5.5 Secondly to create a predictive analytical model which works by taking different local and national data sets held by the Council and other organisation's and uses statistical algorithms to identify key features which are present in applicants presenting as homeless to the Council.
- 5.6 By being able to identify these key features it will enable us to target those persons who are most likely risk of facing future homelessness and to provide early intervention. The use of predictive analysts would enable

strategies, campaigns and resources to be focused on highlighting to other organisations the key features to look out for with their clients who are at greatest risk of future homelessness and enable us to work in partnership to tackle the identified key risk factors of homelessness at the earliest possible stage.

- 5.7 Our Homefinder scheme has been refreshed with more varied incentive offers for landlords including guaranteed rent for 12 months, a one off balloon payment and free inventory and support services. This is being relaunched with new literature and information worked on by our internal communications team.

6. Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government

- 6.1 During March we had a visit from Richard Williams, Government Homeless Advisor who is monitoring the implementation of the new act for the above department. He was delighted by our progress and sent the feedback below:

"I would just like to reiterate that I found this to be a particularly positive meeting. You have clearly worked hard to prepare for the new legislation. It was apparent that you, your colleagues and Elected Members are committed supporting households at risk of homelessness as well as those who are already homeless."

7. REPORT APPENDICES

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

- Appendix 1: Current team structure

Appendix 1

