

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL



EXECUTIVE SERVICES

Chief Executive

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NB - This agenda contains proposals, recommendations and options. These do not represent Council policy or decisions until they have received proper consideration through the full decision making process.

Contact: Committee Services
committee.services@tmbc.gov.uk

10 September 2019

To: MEMBERS OF THE FINANCE, INNOVATION AND PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

(Copies to all Members of the Council)

Dear Sir/Madam

Your attendance is requested at a meeting of the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board to be held in the Civic Suite, Gibson Building, Kings Hill, West Malling on Wednesday, 18th September, 2019 commencing at 7.30 pm

Yours faithfully

JULIE BEILBY

Chief Executive

A G E N D A

PART 1 - PUBLIC

- | | | |
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| 1. | Apologies for absence | 5 - 6 |
| 2. | Declarations of interest | 7 - 8 |

3. Minutes 9 - 14

To confirm as a correct record the Notes of the meeting of the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board held on 17 July 2019

Matters for recommendation to the Cabinet

4. Review and Replacement of Council Website 15 - 36

The report provides an update on progress in developing a website specification in liaison with the Member working group. Members are asked to consider a capital plan evaluation and recommend that the Scheme be added to the Capital Plan to enable a new CMS to be procured.

5. Purchase of Temporary Accommodation 37 - 48

The report provides an update on the purchase of premises for use as temporary accommodation together with the requirement for such accommodation.

6. Amendments to Building Control Fees 49 - 62

The report identifies errors in the calculation of the Building Control Fees for 2019/2020 and provides a correct version of the fees table.

7. Financial Planning and Control 63 - 86

The report brings together information on the Council's key budget areas of salaries, major income streams and investment income. The performance of the key budget areas, together with the approved variations to the revenue budget and areas identified through revenue budget monitoring are then summarised to provide an indicative overall budget position for the year. The report also updates Members on capital expenditure and variations agreed in relation to the capital plan.

8. Discretionary Rate Relief 87 - 92

The report gives details of an application for hardship relief.

9. Rural Rate Relief - Rural Settlement List 93 - 96

A report informing Members of the requirement to review the Council's rural settlement list and recommending that the current list should be retained, unaltered, for the financial year 2020/21.

Matters submitted for Information

10. Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2010/21 97 - 106

The report provides an update on the review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

11. Revenue and Benefits Update 107 - 112

The report details recent developments in respect of council tax, business rates, council tax reduction and housing benefits.

12. Urgent items 113 - 114

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

Matters for consideration in Private

13. Exclusion of Press and Public 115 - 116

The Chairman to move that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of any items the publication of which would disclose exempt information.

PART 2 - PRIVATE

Matters for Recommendation to the Cabinet

14. Debts for Write Off 117 - 120

LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 2 – Information likely to reveal information about an individual

Approval is sought for the writing-off of debts considered to be irrecoverable.

15. Discretionary Rate Relief - Annexes 121 - 142

LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person

Annexes relating to item 8.

Matters submitted for Information

16. Urgent items 143 - 144

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

MEMBERSHIP

Cllr M C Base (Chairman)
Cllr Miss G E Thomas (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr T Bishop
Cllr J L Botten
Cllr G C Bridge
Cllr C Brown
Cllr R I B Cannon
Cllr A E Clark
Cllr M O Davis

Cllr K King
Cllr Mrs R F Lettington
Cllr H S Rogers
Cllr K B Tanner
Cllr Mrs M Tatton
Cllr F G Tombolis
Cllr C J Williams

Apologies for absence

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Declarations of interest

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TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, INNOVATION AND PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

Wednesday, 17th July, 2019

Present: Cllr M C Base (Chairman), Cllr Miss G E Thomas (Vice-Chairman), Cllr T Bishop, Cllr G C Bridge, Cllr C Brown, Cllr R I B Cannon, Cllr A E Clark, Cllr M O Davis, Cllr K King, Cllr Mrs R F Lettington, Cllr H S Rogers, Cllr Mrs M Tatton and Cllr C J Williams

Councillors Mrs J A Anderson, R P Betts, V M C Branson, M A Coffin, M A J Hood, D Lettington, B J Luker, Mrs A S Oakley, M R Rhodes and J L Sergison were also present pursuant to Council Procedure Rule No 15.21.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J L Botten, K B Tanner and F G Tombolis

PART 1 - PUBLIC

FIP 19/20 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors T Bishop and M Davis declared Other Significant Interests in the items on Capital Programme Post Implementation Reviews and Larkfield Leisure Centre Mechanical, Electrical and Roofing Works on the grounds that they were the Council's appointees to the Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust and they withdrew from the meeting during consideration of those items.

FIP 19/21 MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the notes of the meeting of the Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board held on 5 June 2019 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

FIP 19/22 IT STRATEGY AND DIGITAL STRATEGY UPDATE

Further to Decision No D190001MEM, the Advisory Board received a presentation from the Head of IT on digital transformation together with some of the possible future aspirations to be established for the Borough. Consideration was given to a draft Digital Strategy for 2019 – 2013.

The report of the Director of Finance and Transformation gave details of the purchase of mobile working software following consultation with the Leader, Cabinet Member for Finance, Innovation and Property, Chairman of the Advisory Board and Chairman and Vice-Chairmen of

the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It was noted that the cost of £23,000 could be funded from the Invest to Save Reserve and a capital plan evaluation was set out at Annex 1 to the report.

Finally, progress was reported on the website review including the establishment of the Member Working Group and details given of plans for all Members to undertake online cyber security training.

Considerable discussion ensued and officers responded to Members' comments and questions.

RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) the draft Digital Strategy 2019 – 2023 be adopted;
- (2) the decision taken in liaison with the Members indicated in the report to proceed with the purchase of mobile working software funded from the Invest to Save Reserve be noted;
- (3) the Council be recommended to update the Capital Plan to include the mobile working software;
- (4) the progress in respect of the website review be noted; and
- (5) the need for all Members to undertake cyber security training be noted.

***Referred to Cabinet**

FIP 19/23 APPLICATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF

Decision Notice D190051MEM

The report of the Director of Finance and Transformation gave details of new and renewal applications for discretionary rate relief which were considered in accordance with the previously agreed criteria for determining such applications.

Reference was made to the agreed practice of advising organisations that there could be a reduction in the level of relief awarded in the future and to the requirement for organisations to reapply every two years with the exception of scout/guides groups which were regarded as "de minimis" in terms of the level of relief awarded.

RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) in respect of the re-application from Carers First, 146A High Street, Tonbridge – 20% discretionary rate relief be awarded for the period when the office was in use (1 April to 18 June 2019);

- (2) the new applications for discretionary rate relief be determined as follows:

Empathy Action, Unit 5a and 5b Cannon Bridge Works, Cannon Lane, Tonbridge – no discretionary rate relief be awarded; and

Hospice of Hope Romania Ltd, Unit 6 The Granary, Goblands Farm, Court Lane, Hadlow – no discretionary rate relief be awarded.

FIP 19/24 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2020-21

Decision Notice D190052MEM

Further to Decision No D190040MEM, the report of the Director of Finance and Transformation provided an update on the review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme and a broad framework for progression towards consultation and adoption of the scheme by the Council in February 2020. It was proposed to consult on moving from a means tested reduction towards an income-banded discount scheme together with a number of other options. Consideration was given to a mechanism for finalising the consultation material in the tight timescale involved.

RECOMMENDED: That authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Transformation to finalise consultation material and undertake the consultation in liaison with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Board and the Cabinet Member for Finance, Innovation and Property.

FIP 19/25 FINANCIAL PLANNING AND CONTROL

Decision Notice D190053MEM

The report of the Director of Finance and Transformation provided information on the Council's key budget areas of salaries, major income streams and investment income. It also gave details of the variations agreed in relation to the revenue budget and areas identified through budget monitoring, summarised to provide an indicative overall budget position for the year which showed a net adverse variance of £76,850.

Reference was made to the announcement that the Council had been awarded £150,000 as a result of the inclusion of Borough Green Gardens into the Government's Garden Communities Programme.

An update was given on capital expenditure and variations agreed in relation to the capital plan. The report also gave an update on the Savings and Transformation Strategy and funding gap.

RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) detailed decisions on expenditure in respect of the £150,000 funding awarded by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government for Borough Green Gardens be delegated to the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health;
- (2) it be noted that as at the end of June 2019, the projected overall outturn position is a net adverse variance of circa £77,000 when compared to the budget set in February 2019; and
- (3) the position in respect of the funding gap be noted together with the need over the coming months to identify and implement opportunities to deliver at least this year's savings and transformation contribution of £100,000.

FIP 19/26 CAPITAL PROGRAMME - POST IMPLEMENTATION REVIEWS MONITORING

Decision Notice D190054MEM

The report of the Director of Finance and Transformation identified the post implementation reviews carried out since the meeting of the Advisory Board in September 2018 together with the capital plan schemes for which reviews were due. A post implementation review in respect of the Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust IT Infrastructure Capital Grant was also brought forward for consideration.

RECOMMENDED: That the post implementation review in respect of the Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust IT Infrastructure Capital Grant, as set out at Annex 2 to the report, be approved.

MATTERS SUBMITTED FOR INFORMATION

FIP 19/27 REVENUE AND BENEFITS UPDATE

The report gave details of recent developments in respect of council tax, business rates, council tax reduction and housing benefits. Members were pleased to note that the final collection rates for council tax and business rates in 2018/19 were again the highest in Kent.

An update was given on the performance and workload of the Benefits Service including the effects of the introduction of Universal Credit. Members were advised that the shared arrangement with Gravesham Borough Council for the management of the Revenues and Benefits function would be ending on 30 September 2019. Thanks were recorded to the Revenue and Benefits Manager for his contribution.

FIP 19/28 CIPFA FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT CODE CONSULTATION

The report provided an overview of a CIPFA consultation paper on a Financial Management Code designed to support good practice in financial management and assist local authorities in demonstrating their financial sustainability. It was noted that the principles on which the draft Code was based were already embedded at Tonbridge and Malling and a copy of the response to the consultation was annexed to the report.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PRIVATE

FIP 19/29 EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

The Chairman moved, it was seconded and

RESOLVED: That as public discussion would disclose exempt information, the following matters be considered in private.

PART 2 - PRIVATE

MATTERS FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE CABINET

FIP 19/30 LARKFIELD LEISURE CENTRE - MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL AND ROOFING WORKS

(LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 3 – Financial or business affairs of any particular person)

Decision Notice D190055MEM

Further to Minute C 19/63, the report of the Management Team provided details of the risk assessed approach to the appointment of the contractor for the mechanical, electrical and roofing works at Larkfield Leisure Centre. An update was also given on a review of the loss of income claim and potential environmental improvements.

RECOMMENDED: That

- (1) based on the risk assessment outlined in the report Kier Construction Ltd be appointed as the contractor for the planned major programme of works at Larkfield Leisure Centre;
- (2) authority be granted to the Directors of Central Services and Finance and Transformation to appoint Kier Construction Ltd in accordance with the works programme, following agreement with the Cabinet Members for Finance, Innovation and Property and Community Services;
- (3) further consideration be given to the inclusion of clauses in the contract relating to the Council's 'step in' rights;

- (4) the Leisure Trust's revised estimated loss of income claim reported verbally at the meeting be noted; and
- (5) further evaluation be undertaken regarding the cost benefits of the potential installation of solar panels on to the Larkfield Leisure Centre sports hall roof.

FIP 19/31 DEBTS FOR WRITE OFF

(LGA 1972 Sch 12A Paragraph 2 – Information likely to reveal information about an individual)

Decision Notice D190056MEM

The report of the Director of Finance and Transformation sought approval of the writing-off of debts considered to be irrecoverable. Details were also given of debts under £5,000 which had been written-off in accordance with Financial Procedure Rule 18.2 together with cumulative totals of debts in the current and previous financial years and information on budgeted bad debt provision.

RECOMMENDED: That the three items shown in the schedule of amounts over £5,000, totalling £25,226.04 be written-off for the reasons stated within the schedule.

The meeting ended at 10.02 pm

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

18 September 2019

Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Council Decision

1 REVIEW AND REPLACEMENT OF COUNCIL WEBSITE

A report updating Members on the progress in developing a website specification in liaison with the Member Working group.

Members are asked to approve a capital plan evaluation and add the Scheme to the Capital Plan to enable a new CMS to be procured.

1.1 Introduction

1.1.1 Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council's current website was introduced in April 2015 and has 1,376 standard web pages maintained across the organisation by 91 people from different Service areas.

1.1.2 At the last meeting of the Advisory Board in July 2019, Members were updated on the work that has been taking place to redesign the Council's website. This is a cross-service piece of work involving all Services within the Council and is being carried out with the full support of the Management Team.

1.1.3 As advised, the website review has to be approached in two parts: firstly from the "business/service" angle, and secondly from the IT design end.

1.2 Progress of the Website Specification

1.2.1 The Head of Service for Licensing, Community Service and Customer Service has been leading a group of Service Managers in formulating the specification document for the new website.

1.2.2 The Service Managers have been meeting as two separate groups. One has been focusing on the "Transaction" based content of the website, and the other "Commercial/News/ Event" content.

1.2.3 The specification of the new website has taken place over the last few months and has focused on what the "user/customer need" is for the new website. This has been cross-referenced with the work undertaken across the different Service

areas, which has challenged the mind-set and thinking of the Service areas against the strategically important customer need.

- 1.2.4 The proposed new website will house “Commercial focus” service activities, primarily supporting legislative and statutory requirements, together with webpages that support “Commercial Events” (showing *What is on? What to do?*) and featuring relevant “News”.

Personalisation

- 1.2.5 The market for the TMBC website has different type of distinctive users, “*Resident*”, “*Business*” and “*Visitor*”. Each of these type of user has their own needs and it is inherent in the design that “*Personalisation*” features predominately when a user signs in.
- 1.2.6 Members will no doubt agree that website content needs to be personal, usable, relevant and easily accessible to the user.
- 1.2.7 As a user, when you sign on to a banking app or Utility company to view your account, you only want to see content that is relevant to you, or if services and products are being shown to you, they need to be of relevance and could be of interest to you.
- 1.2.8 For example, as a person who lives in a flat on the third story of a building with no garden, if you sign on to the new website you do not want to see the Council trying to sell you a Garden Waste bin. However, you may want to know about council tax, parking permits, nearby leisure facilities and activities taking place locally etc.
- 1.2.9 Likewise if you are a business user of the website you will want to understand business rates, networking events, funding launches, skill fairs and parking permits etc.
- 1.2.10 The key to a new website is to ensure we service the three different types of users i.e. *the Resident, Business and the Visitor* to the Borough.

Website development objectives

- 1.2.11 Our aim through channel shift, is to move interactions with TMBC from letter, email and phone calls to a seamless intuitive online interaction. This should result in reduced customer visits to council offices and allowing officer time to be focused in different ways.
- 1.2.12 In summary, we want to:
- Enable high user satisfaction with customers’ website journey in optimising the minimum number of clicks to find the required information;
 - Ensure content is accurate, appropriate, current and relevant;

- Enable the customer (whether resident or business) to sign on through “My Account” to benefit from all their financial and appropriate Service area needs immediately assessable in one place;
- Hold a “Golden Record” of a customer’s details available to all Service areas to populate records, forms and requests, without rekeying duplicate information;
- Enable web pages to be created with the ability to be “live” for a set period of time and be automatically reviewed by alerts being generated when reaching the expiry or review date;
- Enable directories for businesses (e.g. restaurants and leisure activities) to be automatically maintained, using alerts ensuring up-to-date information is shown and with alerts being generated when reaching the expiry or review date.
- Show alerts and news feeds on web, with links to social media to show any disruptions to service delivery (e.g. bin collections, inclement weather etc.); *and*
- Build a suite of analytical data visible through a dashboard to show performance of the website. This will include exception reporting where the web team and Service Managers can track the live pages.

1.2.13 Continual management of website content is a key issue and Management Team are currently considering how this can be achieved going forward within the corporate establishment.

1.2.14 As outlined in paragraph 1.1.1, currently responsibility for content management is devolved across the Council as we do not have dedicated resources allocated to this function in our staff establishment. Unfortunately however, this can often mean that time dedicated to content management is squeezed when work pressure is high and resources are stretched. If we want to deliver the objectives set out above, it will be imperative to ensure that we do provide adequate focus and resources for this important function going forward. Management Team are currently in the process of considering how this can be managed.

Member working group

1.2.15 A Member Working group was set up to assist in the review and specification. The group consists of :

- Cllr Martin Coffin (Chair)
- Cllr Matt Boughton
- Cllr Robin Betts

- Cllr Georgina Thomas
- Cllr Mrs Anita Oakley

1.2.16 The group met on 7 August and considered, amongst other things:

- 1) What they like or dislike about the current TMBC website
- 2) Who are the “users of the website”?
- 3) Understanding the “customer need” and “personalisation”

1.2.17 Some useful insights and thoughts were forthcoming which have been built into the specification.

1.2.18 Details of the website specification drawn up by the Head of Service for Licensing, Community Service and Customer Service was shared with the Member working group on 4 September. The final specification has enabled the Head of IT to prepare the technical specification (see paragraph 1.3).

Engaging with the External Customer

1.2.19 A number of customer engagement surveys have been send out by the Head of Service for Licensing, Community Service and Customer Service to capture current thinking of the TMBC website and to capture what customers would like to see on a redesigned website. The following surveys are in the process of being completed:

- Survey completed at Customer Service at Tonbridge Castle
- Survey completed at Customer Service at Kings Hill
- Survey completed at Customer Surgeries at Larkfield
- Survey completed at Customer Surgeries at Snodland
- Survey completed by the Businesses community within the Borough
- Survey completed by Members and TMBC staff
- General Website survey (This survey for people visiting the TMBC website cannot start until the annual voter registration period ends in late September 2019).

1.2.20 The feedback has been very good in respect to people engaging honestly on their views, with over 70 members of the public and businesses agreeing for TMBC to follow up with them.

- 1.2.21 It is planned to have an “update of website development” on the staff intranet site to ensure staff can see process and actions from their input. Likewise it is proposed to have a blog where we can update members of the public and businesses.
- 1.2.22 Initial findings for each of the surveys (as at 31 August) is appended at **[Annex 1]** for Members’ information. Information continues to be gathered from customers and will be used to fine-tune the content and layout as appropriate.
- 1.2.23 The Head of Service for Licensing, Community Service and Customer Service is not able to attend the meeting of the Advisory Board on 18 September. Therefore if Members have any detailed questions they would like to raise in respect of the specification or the process that has been followed, please contact the Head of Service, Anthony Garnett, in advance of the meeting on extension 6151 or by e-mail at anthony.garnett@tmbc.gov.uk

1.3 Technical (IT) Specification

- 1.3.1 In a nutshell, the objective is to replace the Council’s current Content Management System (CMS) with the objective of improving customer experience, and allowing customers to access all Council services via a secure unified customer portal with single sign-on. Integration with core back office systems is required.
- 1.3.2 Members will note that this is not a ‘like for like’ replacement of our current website. The anticipated running costs are anticipated to be in excess of those we currently budget for, but to achieve the improvements we all seek, this is an inevitable consequence. Of course, if we can facilitate the channel shift as we hope we can, this will enable us to focus our scarce resources more efficiently.
- 1.3.3 A Capital Plan Evaluation document has been produced and attached at **[Annex 2]**.
- 1.3.4 A prudent budget for the capital cost of the replacement, including any consultancy, design and implementation is recommended as £140,000. However, we will be seeking the most cost efficient solution via a procurement process so we hope the cost will be well within this budget allocation. Ongoing annual revenue implications are anticipated to be in the order of £31,000 for the specification required. Members should note that we currently have existing running costs of £4,000 for the existing website, so these can be netted off future running costs.

1.4 Legal Implications

- 1.4.1 Once approval to proceed has been given, procurement will be done in accordance with EU procurement regulations where appropriate, and the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.5.1 The final capital costs (including design, implementation and consultancy) after the procurement exercise can be funded from the Transformation Reserve.
- 1.5.2 Revenue costs will need to be built into base budget through the preparation of Estimates.

1.6 Risk Assessment

- 1.6.1 The risk of not moving forward with a replacement for the website within the context of the digital agenda is that the Council may not be providing services in the ways that our residents wish

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users

1.8 Policy Considerations

- Customer Contact
- Communications
- Community
- Procurement

1.9 Recommendations

- 1.9.1 Members are requested to **RECOMMEND** to Cabinet (and thereafter Full Council) that:
- 1) progress with the review and replacement of the website is noted;
 - 2) the scheme be added to List A funded in full from the Transformation Reserve; and
 - 3) the net increase in revenue costs be incorporated into the forthcoming Estimates process.

Background papers:

- Internal document shared with Member working group – website specification for TMBC (work in progress)
- Technical specification for CMS prepared by Head of IT

contact: Anthony Garnett
Ganesh Thangarajah
Sharon Shelton

Sharon Shelton
Director of Finance & Transformation

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Survey completed at Customer Service at Tonbridge Castle- up to 31 August 2019

Questions	Number		Percentage	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you use the Internet?	52	8	86.67%	13.33%
Have you visited TBMC website?	37	23	61.67%	38.33%
Why did you visit TMBC today?	Text field summarised below <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking permits • Benefits • Local information • Garden bins • Council tax • Housing • Hand forms in • To pay a bill at Kiosk • Tourist information • 1 applied on online and had to wait 20 minutes • Having issues accessing online account - I do have one, tried to recover 			
Did you try and complete this on-line?	9	32	21.95%	78.05%
What changes would you like to see within a new website design?	Text field summarised below <p>Majority of people "no comment"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • None Ok • Could not get information • honestly I prefer personal attention • Full detailed list of what can and cannot be recycled for example. metal • Not very inviting - click on menu and takes you to bottom of screen - no sub • needs to be more engaging • more user friendly • Easy to navigate find the service I need and apply for parking permit online • could not get in 4 tries • 			
Number of people who gave an email address to who we can follow up with	17			

Survey completed at Customer Service at Kings Hill - up to 31 August 2019

Questions	Number		Percentage	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you use the Internet?	98	21	82.35%	17.65%
Have you visited TBMC website?	70	49	58.82%	41.18%
Why did you visit TMBC today?	Text field summarised below <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parking permits • Local information • Council tax • Housing • Hand forms in • To pay a bill at Kiosk • Parking permits • Benefits • DHP applications • Benefit claims 			
Did you try and complete this on-line?	10	109	8.40%	91.60%
What changes would you like to see within a new website design?	Text field summarised below <p style="text-align: center;">Majority of people "no comment"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nothing - I like it - very easy to use • prefer face to face contact • to include measurements • not easy to navigate • All web sites presume knowledge which not all older people have • make contact numbers easier to find and accessible • something clear and easy to read • More up to date and able to see My Account • Do not use it prefer to talk to a human • Remove redirection to Northgate NES • Too much rubbish - needs to be plain and simple - Easy to follow • just to be user friendly • website is fine thank you • update claim online instead of coming to the office all the time 			
Number of people who gave an email address to who we can follow up with	53			

Survey completed at Customer Service at Kings Hill - up to 31 August 2019

	 Male	 Female	No answer
Number	49	68	1
Percentage	41.53%	57.63%	.85%

Age	Number	Percentage
Younger than 18	1	0.86%
18 - 24	3	2.59%
25 - 34	17	14.66%
35 - 44	27	23.28%
45 - 54	20	17.24%
55 - 64	15	12.93%
65 or older	33	28.45%

TN - Tonbridge Postcode Map	Postcode	Number	Percentage
	DA13 0	1	1.18%
	ME1 3	0	0.00%
	ME15 0	0	0.00%
	ME16	0	0.00%
	ME18	4	4.71%
	ME19	38	44.71%
	ME2 1	0	0.00%
	ME20	14	16.47%
	ME5 9	0	0.00%
	ME6 5	7	8.24%
	TN10	6	7.06%
	TN11	4	4.71%
	TN12	5	5.88%
	TN14 6	0	0.00%
	TN15	5	5.88%
	TN4	0	0.00%
	TN9	1	1.18%
	Total	85	100.00%

Survey completed at Customer Surgeries at Larkfield - - up to 31 August 2019

Questions	Number		Percentage	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you use the Internet?	36	50	41.86%	58.14%
Have you visited TBMC website?	21	65	24.42%	75.58%
Why did you visit TMBC today?	Text field summarised below <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council tax • Housing • Hand forms and documents • To pay a bill at Kiosk • Parking permits • Benefits • DHP applications • Benefit claims • Help with forms • Homeless • Order brown bin 			
Could this service request be completed on-line?	13	73	15.12%	84.88%
99% of enquiries could be handled by Webchat / Web or by Scan and email				
Have you got access to transport to visit the Council offices?	36	50	41.86%	58.14%

	 Male	 Female	No answer
Number	29	69	1
Percentage	29.29%	69.70%	1.01%

Age	Number	Percentage
Younger than 18	0	0.00%
18 - 24	0	0.00%
25 - 34	6	6.00%
35 - 44	15	15.00%
45 - 54	8	8.00%
55 - 64	23	23.00%
65 or older	48	48.00%

Survey completed at Customer Surgeries at Snodland - - up to 31 August 2019

Questions	Number		Percentage	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
Do you use the Internet?	30	21	58.82%	41.18%
Have you visited TBMC website?	21	29	42.00%	58.00%
Why did you visit TMBC today?	Text field summarised below <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council tax • Housing • Hand forms and documents • To pay a bill at Kiosk • Parking permits • Benefits • DHP applications • Benefit claims • Help with forms • Homeless • Order brown bin 			
Could this service request be completed on-line?	22	37	26.00%	74.00%
99% of enquiries could be handled by Webchat / Web or by Scan and email				
Have you got access to transport to visit the Council offices?	22	29	43.14%	56.86%

	 Male	 Female	No answer
Number	31	20	0
Percentage	60.78%	39.22%	00.00%

Age	Number	Percentage
Younger than 18	0	0.00%
18 - 24	2	3.92%
25 - 34	5	9.80%
35 - 44	9	17.65%
45 - 54	12	23.53%
55 - 64	9	17.65%
65 or older	14	27.45%

Survey completed by the Businesses community within the Borough - up to 31 August 2019

It is disappointing that only 7 reply's from 640 emails sent out. However we will continue to engage with the business community through Economic Regeneration Officer, by re sending our request and speaking to businesses as we develop the website design.

Questions					
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Quarterly	Yearly
Frequency of using TMBC website	1	2	2	2	0
Percentage	14.29%	28.57%	28.57%	28.57%	00.00%
Reason to view TMBC website					
To view Committee agendas, minutes and reports					
To get information or advice					
Did you find the information you were looking for?					
	Yes	No			
Number	6	1			
Percentage	85.71%	14.29%			
How easy was it to find the information you were looking for?					
	Very Easy	Easy	Neither easy or difficult	Difficult	Very difficult
Number	1	3	1	1	1
Percentage	14.29%	42.86%	14.29%	14.29%	14.29%
How satisfied or Dissatisfied were you with the website overall?					
	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied
Number	2	2	2		1
Percentage	28.57%	28.57%	28.57%	28.57%	14.29%
Number of people who gave an email address to who we can follow up with					
	2				

Survey completed by the Businesses community within the Borough - up to 31 August 2019

TN - Tonbridge Postcode Map	Postcode	Number	Percentage
	DA13 0		
	ME1 3		
	ME15 0		
	ME16		
	ME18	1	16.67%
	ME19		
	ME2 1		
	ME20	1	16.67%
	ME5 9		
	ME6 5		
	TN10	2	33.33%
	TN11	1	16.67%
	TN12		
	TN14 6		
	TN15		
	TN4		
	TN9	1	16.67%
	Not given	0	00.00%
	Total	6	100.00%

Survey completed by Members and TMBC staff - up to 31 August 2019 - Summary of return

When talking to residents / customers, what are the most frustrating what things that they comment on about the current web site?

(Please answer as many that are appropriate)

	Number	Percentage
When trying to obtain information or advice	46	
When making a payment	8	
When applying for a service	10	
When making a booking	0	
When commenting on a consultation	9	
When applying for a Benefit	4	
When finding out about a local Councillor	4	
When viewing Committee agendas, minutes and reports	8	
When reporting a problem	9	
When make a complaint	6	
Other – please specify	14	

17 other specified.

What's good about the website?

Summary is “Webchat; Information good once found; Search speed; Uncluttered

50 detailed comments

What's not working for you?

Summary is “Design; Not intuitive; Search function; No pictures; Hard to Navigate

80 detailed comments

What information/functionality would you like to see?

Summary is “Good Design; Clear Navigation; Visual images; less jargon; Promotional opportunities;

55 detailed comments

Survey completed by Members and TMBC staff - up to 31 August 2019 - Summary of return

Thinking of your own service, or as a Councillor, how likely are you to choose the TMBC website as a source of information for yourself or your customers (i.e. to direct a customer to)?

Where 1 is not likely at all and 10 is very likely

Not Likely	Response	Percentage
1	11	18.33%
2	3	5.00%
3	7	11.67%
4	5	8.33%
5	10	16.67%
6	5	8.33%
7	3	5.00%
8	6	10.00%
9	3	5.00%
10	7	11.67%
Very Likely	60	100.00%

Thinking of your own service, or as a Councillor, how likely are your customers to telephone or email you a question that they should have been able to easily find on the TMBC website?

Where 1 is not likely at all and 10 is very likely

Not Likely	Response	Percentage
1	10	16.67%
2	2	3.33%
3	1	1.67%
4	4	6.67%
5	7	11.67%
6	4	6.67%
7	3	5.00%
8	15	25.00%
9	5	8.33%
10	9	15.00%
Very Likely	60	100.00%

Survey completed by Members and TMBC staff - up to 31 August 2019 - Summary of return

Thinking of your own service, or as a Councillor, how likely is it that contact you receive by telephone or by email could or should have been avoided by the customer using the TMBC website to answer their own query?

Where 1 is not likely at all and 10 is very likely

Not Likely	Response	Percentage
1	11	18.33%
2	2	3.33%
3	1	1.67%
4	3	5.00%
5	6	10.00%
6	7	11.67%
7	6	10.00%
8	13	21.67%
9	6	10.00%
10	5	8.33%
Very Likely	60	100.00%

Identify 3 frequently asked questions, that are asked of you or of your team, that could have been answered by the customer using the TMBC website, thus avoiding altogether the telephone or email contact.

The questions that have been submitted illustrate very clearly the vast diversity of subject matter and information that people believe a web site should hold.

The response has been very impressive and could form the backbone of a Question / Answer search function for a new website design.

145 questions submitted

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1

Corporate IT Initiatives: CMS Website Solution		
1	Specification:	
	(i) Purpose of the scheme	Replacement of the Council’s existing website Content Management System (CMS) to improve customer experience and allow customers to access all Council services via a secure unified customer portal with single sign-on,
	(ii) Relevance to National / Council’s Objectives	(a) National: Government Digital Services (GDS), The Green Agenda (b) Council: Cost reduction, Legislative compliance (GDPR,PSN)
	(iii) Targets for judging success	(a) Improved customer experiences of TMBC website (b) Increased Digital informational and transactional engagement (c) Reduced paper and face-to-face contact (d) Improved end-to-end customer service efficiencies
2	<p>Description of Project / Design Issues:</p> <p>In delivering the primary objectives of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council’s Digital Strategy (2019-23), workshops were carried out with a number of Members and residents in ascertaining their opinions, experiences and expectations of the TMBC website. Customer services has also carried out research into the ‘art of the possible’ in terms of digital services by comparing some of the websites of digitally advanced local authorities across the country. The outcome of the review has overwhelmingly highlighted the dissatisfaction amongst our residents and members with the current website, both in terms of presentation, user-friendliness and functionality.</p> <p>As a result of the review Customer services and IT have produced business and technical to underpin and deliver the Council’s Digital strategy. In order to achieve the new Business and Technical specification we need to change the existing CMS platform to provide the necessary front and back office integrations seamlessly. This will in turn help ensure that the future overheads are kept low.</p> <p>The new CMS platform should be designed to be non-technical to operate in a low-code platform, which includes features such as page templates allowing for a reusable page of questions to be reused across multiple forms. The platform should also provide a non-technical Workflow management solution for cases/subscriptions/service request management with the ability to automate elements of the service delivery process. These factors will combine to allow IT staff to build/manage forms and workflows quickly and efficiently, removing repetitive tasks through automation and reusing workflows already delivered by other Local Government Authorities. Thus, providing our customers with a single user portal to engage with the council irrespective of services they require.</p>	

Capital Plan List C – Evaluation

3	<p>Milestones / Risk: Milestones: Procurement, Implementation and Deployment. Risk: The current levels of frustration amongst Residents, Members and Businesses in using TMBC website, coupled with the increase in service demand across services will result in increased operational cost or degradation in quality of service delivered.</p>					
4	<p>Consultation: Management Team and Members are supportive of the need to replace the existing website and make it more user friendly and intuitive.</p>					
5	<p>Capital Cost: Composite outline budget of £140,000 for CMS software, design, implementation and consultancy where appropriate. We would be aiming to bring in the most economically advantageous solution well within this budget.</p>					
6	Profiling of Expenditure					
	2019/20 (£'000)	2020/21 (£'000)	2021/20 (£'000)	2022/23 (£'000)	2023/24 (£'000)	2024/25 (£'000)
	140					
7	<p>Capital Renewals Impact: Nil</p>					
8	<p>Revenue Impact: Loss of investment income of £5,600 per annum (£140,000 at 4%). Estimated Annual support and maintenance of £31,000 per annum.</p>					
9	<p>Partnership Funding: None</p>					
10	<p>Project Monitoring / Post Implementation Review: Project to be managed by IT services. Post implementation review to be conducted 12 months after completion.</p>					
11	Screening for equality impacts:					
	Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts			
	a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	N/A				
	b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	N/A				
	c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?	N/A				
12	<p>Recommendation: Scheme be added to List A, funded in full from the Transformation Reserve.</p>					

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

18 September 2019

Report of the Director of Central Services and Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Council Decision

1 PURCHASE OF TEMPORARY ACCOMODATION

Summary

This report updates Members on the purchase of premises for use as temporary accommodation and updates the requirement for temporary accommodation.

1.1 Background

1.1.1 At the Cabinet meeting of 20 March 2018, Members considered a report setting out the need for temporary accommodation and gave approval that a sum of £1.6m be added to the Capital Plan for the purchase of property for temporary accommodation funded from s106 monies (Annex 1).

1.1.2 A property in Tonbridge High Street was purchased in August 2018, and provides 5 one bedroom flats and 1 two bedroom flat. The property is working well in providing suitable temporary accommodation. A post implementation review is contained in Annex 2.

1.2 Update on need for Temporary Accommodation

1.2.1 The number of households in temporary accommodation (TA) reached a peak of 61 at the end of August 2019. Numbers vary, but the trend has been an increase over the last year from 28-49 households at the end of any calendar month in 2018/19 to 49-61 households so far in 2019/20.

1.2.2 This increase was anticipated with the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA) and there's a national trend in terms of increasing use of TA. A [survey by the Local Government Association](#) has highlighted the rise in TA use. The number of households in TA is up by more than 70% since 2010 and the burden on councils and their budgets continues to increase.

1.2.3 Sixteen households have been accommodated in the flats we own in Tonbridge High Street, with an average length of stay of 114 days/16 weeks. Six households have been accommodated in Clarion homes used as TA over the last 12 months, with an average length of stay in the Clarion homes used as TA of 149 days/21

weeks. The length of stay in nightly paid provision is much lower, as we use it in a broad range of circumstances (e.g. SWEP (Severe Weather Emergency Protocol) may result in short term placements).

- 1.2.2 The average monthly cost for TA provision during 2018/19 was £35,583 (gross spend). The total annual cost for 2018/19 was £426,019 (gross spend) with a net cost of £157,062 to the Council. The total cost for 2019/20 is anticipated to be £640,000 (gross spend), with a net cost of £250,000 to the Council. The difference between gross and net cost reflects the amount of the rent cost that can be covered by housing benefit subsidy.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.3.1 The aim of purchasing property for temporary accommodation purposes is to both manage and reduce the costs to the Council when compared to nightly paid accommodation. The purchase of the property in High Street, Tonbridge is working well both operationally and financially with a cost saving of circa £50,000 when compared to nightly paid accommodation.
- 1.3.2 There is a balance of around £500,000 of the original budget of £1.6m established for the purchase of temporary accommodation. The intention is to supplement the balance of £500,000 with a further £1.5m giving a sum of £2m to facilitate further purchases of temporary accommodation as a more cost-effective alternative to nightly paid accommodation.
- 1.3.3 The sum of £1.5m can in large part, if not in full, be funded from two sources. Monies held in the business rates retention scheme reserve (£900,000 - £1,000,000) and property fund investment reserve (500,000). The residual balance, if any, to be funded from the general revenue reserve.
- 1.3.4 Under the current operating model for the council owned TA in Tonbridge High Street, the accommodation team provide tenancy management and handle voids (arranging repair works and so on). If this approach was to continue with an increased portfolio there would be an impact on resources. We're considering if existing funds can be used to address this.

1.4 Risk Assessment

- 1.4.1 A full and detailed risk assessment on options for purchasing property will inform the final decision.

1.5 Equality Impact assessment

- 1.5.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.6 Recommendation

- 1.6.1 A sum of £1.5m be added to the Capital Plan for the purchase of property for temporary accommodation purposes funded in large part, if not in full, from the two reserves detailed at paragraph 1.3.3.
- 1.6.2 Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health and Director of Central Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Cabinet Member for Finance to progress the purchase of property for temporary accommodation purposes as outlined in this report.
- 1.6.3 Members to approve the post implementation report contained in Annex 2.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Katie Iggulden
ext. 6364

Adrian Stanfield
Director of Central Services
Eleanor Hoyle
Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

20 March 2018

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health and Director of Central Services

Part 1- Public

Recommendation to Council

1 PURCHASE OF TEMPORARY ACCOMMODATION**Summary**

This report sets out the need for access to additional temporary accommodation in order to address both housing management and cost issues and sets out a preferred way of moving forward in the short term utilising funds from planning obligations.

1.1 Background

- 1.1.1 There is a requirement for the Council's Housing Service to use Temporary Accommodation (TA) when people make a homeless application and there is reason to believe we may have a duty to assist them under homelessness legislation. Currently we have 24 households placed in TA. Numbers vary, but have tended to range between 20 and 30 households in recent years. The length of stay varies from a few nights to several months. With the introduction of the Homelessness Reduction Act (HRA), which has been previously reported to Members, we believe this demand will potentially increase by as much as 50%.
- 1.1.2 We currently rely predominantly on nightly paid provision from private providers, i.e. the Riverhill Motel in Hildenborough and out of borough provision through Paramount Independent Properties. Additionally, we have agreed the use of five homes with Clarion housing association for use as TA at Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.
- 1.1.3 The average monthly cost for TA provision during 2017/18 is £32,902 to date (gross spend). The total annual cost for 2016/17 was £461,560 (gross spend) with a net cost of £156,713 to the Council. The total cost for 2017/18 is anticipated to be £400,000 (gross spend), with a net cost of £227,798 to the Council. The difference between gross and net cost, reflects the amount of rental that can be covered by housing benefit subsidy, which is significantly lower for nightly paid accommodation.
- 1.1.4 Our ambition is to reach a position where we are able to have tighter control and accessibility to TA and provide more units within the Borough, either which we

own and have control over or by working with our partners. An objective is also to save on the current cost of TA provision by achieving access to a more reliable supply and a lesser dependency on nightly paid.

- 1.1.5 There are section 106 funds obtained in lieu of on-site provision in new development that are available to the Council for the purchase of property for TA purposes. A Capital Plan evaluation [**Annex 1**] for the purchase of property for TA purposes is attached.

1.2 Future TA Strategy

- 1.2.1 There are a range of options for providing TA, both in and out of Borough, which we are currently exploring to develop short and medium term options. They include:

- Purchasing property directly using Section 106 funds accrued for affordable housing provision. A sum of up to circa £1.6m is currently available for this purpose.
- Working in partnership with Registered Providers using existing units – including conversion or redevelopment
- Working with private providers using lease agreements to secure use of privately owned homes (landlord offer)
- making an arrangement to use a set number of units at existing sources (for example, the Riverhill Motel)

- 1.2.2 A combination of these sources of TA provision would enable us to meet two objectives. Firstly, to be more confidently placed to discharge our duties and manage homeless provision across a wider portfolio of property types. Secondly, the option of direct purchase would enable us to address the costs issue and in fact generate a modest income, albeit there would be management and maintenance cost which will need to be carefully considered and specified.

- 1.2.3 Whilst all options are subject of further investigation there is an imperative to determine how some £220,000 of Section 106 money will be spent by August this year, which is a cut-off date in the legal agreement after which time the funds would need to be repaid. Specifically we need to determine whether we spend this money in isolation on the purchase of an individual unit or pool it with the remaining funds enabling the purchase of a number of units or indeed on a rather more substantial building which could be converted into a number of units suitable for TA. The response to this will depend in large measure what the market has to offer in the very near future. Consequently we are asking Cabinet to delegate authority to enable us to respond to opportunities that fall within these parameters in our efforts to advance the appropriate supply of TA.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 The funds available for this project wholly arise from payments made by developers in accordance with legal planning obligations and consequently the monies can only be used for affordable housing, which includes TA provision. In using the section 106 money to purchase property, the Council is bound by its statutory duty to achieve value for money.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 The aim of purchasing property for TA is to manage and potentially reduce the costs to the Council of TA, in particular by reducing the amount of nightly paid accommodation we require.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 A full and detailed risk assessment on options for purchasing property will inform the final decision.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.7 Recommendations

- 1.7.1 Cabinet are asked to **recommend** to Council that:
- i) The sum of up to £1.6m be added to the Capital Plan for the purchase of property for TA purposes funded from s.106 monies.
 - ii) Delegated authority be granted to the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health and Director of Central Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Cabinet Member for Finance to progress the purchase of property for TA purposes as set out in the report.

Background papers:

Nil

contact: Jane Heeley
Steve Humphrey

Steve Humphrey
Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Adrian Stanfield
Director of Central Service

Capital Plan Post Implementation Review	
Service:	Planning, Housing and Environmental Health
Scheme Title:	Homeless Accommodation
Scheme Description:	Provision to purchase property for temporary accommodation purposes to discharge our duties and manage homeless provision and deliver a cost saving to the Council
Evaluation:	Cabinet 20 March 2018
Capital Plan Year(s)	2018/19
Approved budget	£1,600,000
National Priorities	Homelessness Reduction Act.
Local Priorities	A continuing supply of homes, including affordable housing to buy and rent, and prevention of homelessness
Targets for judging success:	(a) Reduction in use of nightly paid accommodation. (b) Reduction in costs to Council
Completion date (work completed):	September 2018 (for leasehold purchase of a property in High Street, Tonbridge)
Completion date (final payment):	August 2018 (for leasehold purchase of a property in High Street, Tonbridge)
Projected date for post implementation review:	Twelve months from date of first occupancy.
Final cost:	Purchase of the property entailed £1.088m of capital spend plus £65,000 revenue spend of the £1.6m budget provided. The balance of £447,000 is being carried forward to enable additional purchase of temporary accommodation in fulfilment of objectives.
Performance against National and Local Priorities and Targets:	The property provides 6 flats for temporary accommodation – 5 x 1 bed and 1 x 2 bed. Clients would otherwise have to be placed in nightly accommodation, and/or potentially out of borough. Location and quality of accommodation is good. Annual saving in cost compared to placement elsewhere amount to £50,000 per annum.
Budget performance / Value for money:	Overall, there are benefits from this purchase for both TMBC and clients placed. Annual saving in cost compared to placement elsewhere amount to £50,000 per annum Client caseload still continues to increase. Report to FIPAB September 2019 recommends supplementing the balance of funding (£447,000) in order to provide more accommodation to achieve national and local objectives.
Other performance / procurement issues:	None from this purchase
Ongoing / Outstanding issues:	None from this purchase.

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CAPITAL PLAN LIST C –EVALUATIONS

	Project	Planning, Housing and Environmental Health: Purchase of property for Temporary Accommodation (TA) purposes				
	1	Specification:				
		(i)	Purpose of the scheme	Purchase of property for TA purposes to be more confidently placed to discharge our duties and manage homeless provision and deliver a cost saving to the Council.		
		(ii)	Relevance to National / Council's Objectives	(a)	National:	Homelessness Reduction Act.
				(b)	Council:	A continuing supply of homes, including affordable housing to buy and rent, and prevention of homelessness.
		(iii)	Targets for judging success	(a)	Reduction in use of nightly paid accommodation.	
				(b)	Reduction in costs to Council.	
	2	Description of Project / Design Issues: Purchase of property for TA purposes. In 2018 the Council purchased the long leasehold of six flats in Tonbridge High Street to provide temporary accommodation. It is proposed that a further property / properties are purchased in order for the Council to meet the need for temporary accommodation and further reduce the current cost of paying for accommodation.				
	3	Risks Sourcing suitable property; void periods and potential damage to property.				
	4	Consultation:				
	5	Capital Cost: A sum of up to £2.0m made up from £0.5m from s.106 monies, £1.0m from business rates retention scheme reserve and £0.5m from property investment fund reserve.				
	6	Profiling of Expenditure Expenditure profile dependent on scale and timing of purchase of property.				
			2019/20 (£'000)	2020/21 (£'000)	2021/22 (£'000)	2022/23 (£'000)
			£2.0m			
	7	Capital Renewals Impact: None				
	8	Revenue Impact: There will be both a rental income and running costs associated with the property with the expectation of a net income stream.				
	9	Partnership Funding: None.				

CAPITAL PLAN LIST C –EVALUATIONS

10	Post Implementation Review: Twelve months from date of first occupancy.		
11	Screening for equality impacts:		
	Question	Answer	Explanation of impacts
	a. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper have potential to cause adverse impact or discriminate against different groups in the community?	No	[<i>Please explain your answer</i>]
	b. Does the decision being made or recommended through this paper make a positive contribution to promoting equality?	No	[<i>Please explain your answer</i>]
	c. What steps are you taking to mitigate, reduce, avoid or minimise the impacts identified above?		
12	Recommendation: Scheme recommended for inclusion in the Capital Plan List A.		

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, INNOVATION AND PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

18 September 2019

Report of the Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Key Decision

1 AMENDMENTS TO BUILDING CONTROL FEES

Summary

This report identifies errors in the calculation of the Building Control Fees for 2019/2020 and provides a correct version of the fees table.

1.1 Proposed amendments

1.1.1 A number of calculation errors have been identified with regard to the Building Control fees published on the Partnership website, in particular:

- Flats – differences in plan charge, inspection charge, building notice and regularisation charge
- Conversions – differences in building notice and regularisation charge
- Loft conversions – differences in building notice and regularisation charge
- Alterations – differences in building notice and regularisation charge

1.1.2 The Building Control charges were agreed by FIPAB on 9 January 2019, with a start date of 1 April 2019. During the summer of 2019 it became apparent that the Building Control fees agreed by FIPAB and Cabinet contained calculation errors.

1.1.3 The Building Control fees table has been updated and the errors corrected. However, in accordance with the Council's Constitution, agreement is sought for the updated and corrected Building Control Fees Table, which is attached at Annex 1.

1.1.4 In order to minimise any risk associated with the fee inaccuracies, the Building Control website has been updated to state that fee information can be provided on request. However, this is a less efficient way of managing the service and although approval of the correctly calculated fees will only be in operation for the remainder of the 2019/20 financial year, it is considered worthwhile to regularise the position both in terms of working practice and to ensure the process is based on the correct position.

1.2 Legal Implications

- 1.2.1 The Council is currently charging fees that have been calculated incorrectly; in nearly all cases the incorrect fee charged is lower than it should be. Whilst this does not adversely affect the customer financially, the fact that the fees contain errors does present a reputational, and potentially challengeable, issue for the Council.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.3.1 The incorrect fees are, in the main, lower than the correct fees. This means that there has been a small loss of income for Building Control.

1.4 Risk Assessment

The correct Building Control fees would alleviate any risk.

1.5 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.5.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.6 Recommendations

- 1.6.1 It is recommended to Cabinet to **APPROVE** the following amendments with effect from 1 November 2019:
- 1) Adopt the correct Building Control fees schedule 2019/2020 as attached at **[Annex 1]**.

Background papers:

contact: Louise Reid

Nil

Eleanor Hoyle

Director of Planning, Housing and Environmental Health

Sevenoaks District Council / Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
PO Box 561 Sevenoaks TN13 9QZ
Tel: 01732 227356

Standard Building Control Charges

Effective from 1st April 2019

Introduction

These tables and guidance notes are based on the Sevenoaks District Council's and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council's Building Control Charges scheme. The charges scheme is made under the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010. The charges have been established to cover the cost of building control fee earning work in respect of commonly occurring building projects. The full scheme of charges can be viewed at either of the Council Offices by appointment.

Charges are payable for:

Before you build, extend, convert or make alterations to a property, you may need to submit a Building Regulation application to The Building Control Partnership and this will take the form of either a Full Plans application or a Building Notice submission. If the basis on which the charge has been determined significantly changes the Building Control Partnership may either provide a refund or request a supplementary charge in writing setting out the basis and detailing the method of calculation.

Full Plans

If you submit a Full Plans application the Plan Charge must accompany the plans to cover an assessment of the works and the passing or rejection of the plans. The Inspection Charge becomes due after the our Building Surveyors first inspection of the works on site. An invoice will be sent to the applicant for the relevant amount and this covers all necessary site inspections by Building Control Surveyors including issuing a completion certificate.

Building Notice

Where a Building Notice is submitted, the Building Notice Charge is payable at the time of submitting the Notice. The fee covers Building Control Surveyors visiting the site when notified to ensure the work conforms to Building Regulations and the issuing of a completion certificate. Supplementary information, ie floor plans, structural & thermal calculations, may be requested as necessary to confirm compliance with the Building Regulations 2010.

Regularisation

If you have carried out unauthorised building work you can apply for a Regularisation Certificate if the works were carried out on or after 11th November 1985. There is a fee to pay to cover the cost of assessing your application and all inspections, but no VAT is payable on this type of application.

Individually Determined Charges

You can request and bespoke fee quote where:

- All or part of the project falls outside of the standard Charges in Tables A, B & C
- these categories do not cover all aspects of the project
- the categories do not reflect a reasonable charge

You can obtain an Individually Determined Charge by contacting Building Control; email: building.control@sevenoaks.gov.uk or telephone: 01732 227376.

Exemption from Charges

Existing Dwelling - where the whole of the work is solely for the purpose of providing access for a disabled person to, from and within their residence, or for the purpose of providing accommodation, or facilities designed to secure the greater health, safety, welfare or convenience of the disabled person (subject to Regulation 4(2)) no charge shall be payable. Note: evidence of the person's disability or special needs may be required, ie, a letter from a medical practitioner or an occupational therapist.

Existing Building - to which members of the public are admitted (e.g. public buildings, shops, banks, etc) - where the whole of the work is solely for the purpose of providing access for disabled persons to, from and within the building, or for the provision of facilities designed to secure the greater health, safety, welfare or convenience of disabled persons no charge shall be payable.

Service level

The inspection fee will cover all site inspections carried out during the construction phase including discussions and meetings with the builder, architect &/or the owner if required. Our Surveyors provide a next day inspection service and because we are local we will do our utmost to accommodate any reasonable requests for inspections at short notice in the event of problems on site. We offer a prompt, proactive, commercially aware service and we understand the pressure involved in delivering construction projects on time including the programming issues of major builds.

The stages the Surveyor will look at include:

- Foundations
- Damp proofing
- Drainage
- Beams, floor and roof structures
- Thermal insulation

VAT

VAT is charged at 20%

Payment

Payment can be made on our website; www.sevenoaks.gov.uk. Debit / Credit card payments are accepted by telephone; 01732 227376 and cheques should be made payable to "Sevenoaks District Council" or "Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council" depending on which Council the property is located in.

Further guidance, application forms and advice can be obtained from:

Building Control Sevenoaks District Council, Council Offices, Argyle Road, Sevenoaks, TN13 1GN

E: building.control@sevenoaks.gov.uk;

T: 01732 227376

W: <http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk>;

Standard Charges

TABLE A – NEW DWELLINGS

Limited to work less than 300m² floor area

Code	Bungalows or Houses less than 3 storeys		Full Plans		Building Notice Charge *	Regularisation Charge *
			Plan Charge	Inspection Charge *		
H01	1 Plot	Net	247.50	510.00	908.33	1363.00
		VAT	49.50	102.00	181.67	-
		Total	297.00	612.00	1090.00	1363.00
H02	2 Plots	Net	309.17	824.17	1360.00	2039.00
		VAT	61.83	164.83	272.00	-
		Total	371.00	989.00	1632.00	2039.00
H03	3 Plots	Net	370.83	1081.67	1742.50	2614.00
		VAT	74.17	216.33	348.50	-
		Total	445.00	1298.00	2091.00	2614.00
H04	4 Plots	Net	432.50	1334.17	2120.00	3180.00
		VAT	86.50	266.83	424.00	-
		Total	519.00	1601.00	2544.00	3180.00
H05	5 Plots	Net	494.17	1462.50	2348.33	3523.00
		VAT	98.83	292.50	469.67	-
		Total	593.00	1755.00	2818.00	3523.00
Flats						
F01	1 Flat	Net	247.50	360.00	523.33	829.00
		VAT	49.50	72.00	104.67	-
		Total	297.00	432.00	628.00	829.00
F02	2 Flats	Net	309.17	510.00	908.33	1363.00
		VAT	61.83	102.00	181.67	-
		Total	371.00	612.00	1090.00	1363.00
F03	3 Flats	Net	370.83	630.83	1742.50	1628.00
		VAT	74.17	126.17	236.00	-
		Total	445.00	757.00	1416.00	1628.00
F04	4 Flats	Net	432.50	864.17	1505.00	2076.00
		VAT	86.50	172.83	301.00	-
		Total	519.00	1037.00	1806.00	2076.00
F05	5 Flats	Net	494.17	1596.57	1756.67	2424.00
		VAT	98.83	319.33	351.33	-
		Total	593.00	1916.00	2108.00	2424.00
Conversion to						
V01	Single Dwelling House	Net	278.33	562.50	840.83	1261.00
		VAT	55.67	112.50	168.17	-
		Total	334.00	675.00	1009.00	1261.00
V02	Single Flat	Net	133.33	360.00	523.33	829.00
		VAT	26.67	72.00	104.67	-
		Total	160.00	432.00	628.00	829.00

Standard Charges

TABLE B – EXTENSIONS TO A SINGLE DWELLING

Limited to work not more than 3 storeys above ground level

Code	Extensions & Conversions		Full Plans		Building Notice Charge *	Regularisation Charge *
			Plan Charge	Rejection Charge *		
D01	Single storey extension with a floor area less than 10m ²	Net	123.33	309.17	432.50	649.00
		VAT	24.67	61.83	86.50	-
		Total	148.00	371.00	519.00	649.00
D02	Single storey extension with a floor area between 10m ² & 40m ²	Net	185.00	432.50	618.33	927.00
		VAT	37.00	86.50	123.67	-
		Total	222.00	519.00	742.00	927.00
D03	Single storey extension floor area between 40m ² & 100m ²	Net	247.50	494.17	741.67	1080.00
		VAT	49.50	98.83	148.33	-
		Total	297.00	593.00	890.00	1080.00
D04	Multi-storey extension (ie some part 2 or 3 storeys in height) & floor area not exceeding 40m ²	Net	247.50	494.17	741.67	1112.00
		VAT	49.50	98.83	148.33	-
		Total	297.00	593.00	890.00	1112.00
D05	Multi-storey extension (ie some part 2 or 3 storeys in height) & floor area 40m ² to 100m ²	Net	247.50	555.83	803.33	1241.00
		VAT	49.50	111.17	160.67	-
		Total	297.00	667.00	964.00	1241.00
D06	Extension comprising SOLELY garage, carport or store with a floor area less than 60m ²	Net	123.33	309.17	432.50	630.00
		VAT	24.67	61.83	86.50	-
		Total	148.00	371.00	519.00	630.00
D07	Detached non-habitable domestic building with a floor area less than 60m ²	Net	123.33	309.17	432.50	649.00
		VAT	24.67	61.83	86.50	-
		Total	148.00	371.00	519.00	649.00
Conversions						
D08	Loft conversions with a floor area less than 40m ²	Net	247.50	494.17	680.00	1020.00
		VAT	49.50	98.83	136.00	-
		Total	297.00	593.00	816.00	1020.00
D09	Loft conversions with a floor area between 40m ² - 100m ²	Net	247.50	555.83	741.67	1080.00
		VAT	49.50	111.17	148.33	-
		Total	297.00	667.00	890.00	1080.00
D10	Conversion of a garage to a habitable room	Net	123.33	226.67	350.00	525.00
		VAT	24.67	45.33	70.00	-
		Total	148.00	272.00	420.00	525.00

Multiple work reductions:

- a) Where more than one extension, or an extension and a loft conversion is proposed and the works are carried out concurrently, the individual fees should be combined and reduced by 30%.
- b) Where domestic alterations up to £10,000 are to be carried out at the same time as work described in codes D01 – D09 above, the charge payable in Table C can be reduced by 30%.

Where Standard Charges are not applicable please email building.control@sevenoaks.gov.uk, or telephone 01732 2273376.

Standard Charges

TABLE C – ALTERATIONS TO A SINGLE DWELLING and ALL OTHER NON-DOMESTIC WORK

Limited to work not more than 3 storeys above ground level

Code	Alterations		Full Plans		Building Notice Charge*	Regularisation Charge*
			Plan Charge	Inspection Charge		
D11	Renovation of a thermal element ie recovering a roof or recladding walls	Net	185.00	-	154.17	278.00
		VAT	37.00	-	30.83	-
		Total	222.00	0.00	222.00	278.00
D12	Replacement of windows, roof windows, or external glazed doors	Net	185.00	-	154.17	278.00
		VAT	37.00	-	30.83	-
		Total	222.00	0.00	222.00	278.00
D13	Cost of work not exceeding £2000	Net	185.00	-	154.17	278.00
		VAT	37.00	-	30.83	-
		Total	222.00	0.00	222.00	278.00
D14	Cost of work between £2,001 & £5,000	Net	257.50	-	257.50	375.00
		VAT	51.50	-	51.50	-
		Total	309.00	0.00	309.00	375.00
D15	Cost of work between £5,001 & £15,000	Net	154.17	259.17	393.33	590.00
		VAT	30.83	51.83	78.67	-
		Total	185.00	311.00	472.00	590.00
D16	Cost of work between £15,001 & £25,000	Net	175.00	345.83	520.83	782.00
		VAT	35.00	69.17	104.17	-
		Total	210.00	415.00	625.00	782.00
D17	Cost of work between £25,001 & £50,000	Net	278.33	562.50	840.83	1261.00
		VAT	55.67	112.50	168.17	-
		Total	334.00	675.00	1009.00	1261.00
D18	Cost of work between £50,001 & £100,000	Net	345.83	680.00	1025.83	1521.00
		VAT	69.17	136.00	205.17	-
		Total	415.00	816.00	1231.00	1521.00
Competent Persons Schemes (in addition to the above, where applicable)						
D19	Where a satisfactory competent Persons certificate will not be Issued, ie Part P, GASAFE, HETAS, OFTEC	Net VAT Total	275.00 55.00 330.00	This charge relates to the first fix pre-plaster inspection and final testing on completion. For a Regularisation Certificate full testing and appraisal will be carried out.		

Estimated Cost of Works: The estimated cost of work used to determine the charge in Table C should be a reasonable estimate that would be charged by a professional builder to carry out such work (excluding the amount of any VAT).

Competent Persons Schemes: The Charges marked with an * have been reduced to reflect where controlled electrical and heating installations are to be certified by an installer registered with one of the Governments Competent Persons Schemes, the additional charge in Table C, code D19, will be required for each unit. This is to enable checks and tests on the work to be made by our nominated contractor to establish that the work meets with the requirements of the Building Regulations 2010.

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Sevenoaks District Council / Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council
PO Box 561 Sevenoaks TN13 9QZ
Tel: 01732 227376

Standard Building Control Charges Effective from 1st April 2019

These tables and guidance notes are based on the Sevenoaks District Council's and Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council's Building Control Charges scheme. The charges scheme is made under the Building (Local Authority Charges) Regulations 2010. The charges have been established to cover the cost of building control fee earning work in respect of commonly occurring building projects. The full scheme of charges can be viewed at either of the Council Offices by appointment.

Charges are payable for:

Before you build, extend, convert or make alterations to a property, you may need to submit a Building Regulation application to The Building Control Partnership and this will take the form of either a Full Plans application or a Building Notice submission. If the basis on which the charge has been determined significantly changes, the Building Control Partnership may either provide a refund or request a supplementary charge in writing setting out the basis and detailing the method of calculation.

Full Plans

If you submit a Full Plans application the Plan Charge must accompany the plans to cover an assessment of the works and the passing or rejection of the plans. The Inspection Charge becomes due after our Building Surveyors first inspection of the works on site. An invoice will be sent to the applicant for the relevant amount and this covers all necessary site inspections by Building Control Surveyors including issuing a completion certificate.

Building Notice

Where a Building Notice is submitted, the Building Notice Charge is payable at the time of submitting the Notice. The fee covers Building Control Surveyors visiting the site when notified to ensure the work conforms to Building Regulations and the issuing of a completion certificate. Supplementary information, ie floor plans, structural & thermal calculations, may be requested as necessary to confirm compliance with the Building Regulations 2010.

Fire Safety Order

A Building Notice cannot be used for a 'designated building' which is a building subject to the Regulatory Reform (Fire Safety) Order 2005, i.e. non-domestic properties, common areas of flats and homes in multiple occupation, etc.

Regularisation

If you have carried out unauthorised building work you can apply for a Regularisation Certificate if the works were carried out on or after 11th November 1985. There is a fee to pay to cover the cost of assessing your application and all inspections, but no VAT is payable on this type of application.

Individually Determined Charges

You can request a bespoke fee quote where:

- All or part of the project falls outside of the standard Charges in Tables A, B & C
- These categories do not cover all aspects of the project
- The categories do not reflect a reasonable charge

You can obtain an Individually Determined Charge by sending plans of your proposals by email: building.control@sevenoaks.gov.uk or by contacting us on telephone: 01732 227376.

Exemption from Charges

Existing Dwelling - where the whole of the work is solely for the purpose of providing access for a disabled person to, from and within their residence, or for the purpose of providing accommodation, or facilities designed to secure the greater health, safety, welfare or convenience of the disabled person (subject to Regulation 4(2)) no charge shall be payable. Note: evidence of the person's disability or special needs may be required, ie, a letter from a medical practitioner or an occupational therapist.

Existing Building - to which members of the public are admitted (e.g. public buildings, shops, banks, etc) - where the whole of the work is solely for the purpose of providing access for disabled persons to, from and within the building, or for the provision of facilities designed to secure the greater health, safety, welfare or convenience of disabled persons no charge shall be payable.

Service level

The inspection fee will cover all site inspections carried out during the construction phase including discussions and meetings with the builder, architect &/or the owner if required. Our Surveyors provide a next day inspection service and because we are local we will do our utmost to accommodate any reasonable requests for inspections at short notice in the event of problems on site. We offer a prompt, proactive, commercially aware service and we understand the pressure involved in delivering construction projects on time including the programming issues of major builds.

The stages the Surveyor will look at include:

- Foundations
- Damp proofing
- Drainage
- Beams, floor and roof structures
- Thermal insulation
- Completion

VAT

VAT is charged at 20%

Payment

Payment can be made on our website; www.sevenoaks.gov.uk.

Debit /Credit card payments are accepted by telephone; **01732 227376** and cheques should be made payable to "Sevenoaks District Council" or "Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council" depending on which Council district the property is located in.

Further guidance, application forms and advice can be obtained from:

The Building Control Partnership
Sevenoaks District Council,
Council Offices,
Argyle Road, Sevenoaks,
TN13 1HG

e: building.control@sevenoaks.gov.uk

t: 01732 227376

w: <http://www.sevenoaks.gov.uk/buildingcontrol>

Standard Charges

Table A – New dwellings

Limited to work less than 300m² floor area

Code	Bungalows or Houses less than 3 storeys		Full Plans		Building Notice Charge*	Regularisation Charge*
			Plan Charge	Inspection Charge*		
H01	1 Plot	Net	247.50	510.00	908.33	1363.00
		VAT	49.50	102.00	181.67	
		Total	297.00	612.00	1090.00	1363.00
H02	2 Plots	Net	309.17	824.17	1360.00	2039.00
		VAT	61.83	164.83	272.00	
		Total	371.00	989.00	1632.00	2039.00
H03	3 Plots	Net	370.83	1081.67	1742.50	2614.00
		VAT	74.17	216.33	348.50	
		Total	445.00	1298.00	2091.00	2614.00
H04	4 Plots	Net	432.50	1334.17	2120.00	3180.00
		VAT	86.50	266.83	424.00	
		Total	519.00	1601.00	2544.00	3180.00
H05	5 Plots	Net	494.17	1462.50	2348.33	3523.00
		VAT	98.83	292.50	469.67	
		Total	593.00	1755.00	2818.00	3523.00
Flats						
F01	1 Flat	Net	133.33	360.00	493.33	875.00
		VAT	26.67	72.00	98.67	
		Total	160.00	432.00	592.00	875.00
F02	2 Flats	Net	247.50	360.00	607.50	875.00
		VAT	49.50	72.00	121.50	
		Total	297.00	432.00	729.00	875.00
F03	3 Flats	Net	309.17	510.00	819.17	1180.00
		VAT	61.83	102.00	163.83	
		Total	371.00	612.00	983.00	1180.00
F04	4 Flats	Net	370.83	630.83	1001.66	1443.00
		VAT	74.17	126.17	200.34	
		Total	445.00	757.00	1202.00	1443.00
F05	5 Flats	Net	432.50	864.17	1296.67	1867.00
		VAT	86.50	172.83	259.33	
		Total	519.00	1037.00	1556.00	1867.00
Conversion to						
V01	Single Dwelling House	Net	278.33	562.50	840.83	1261.00
		VAT	55.67	112.50	168.17	
		Total	334.00	675.00	1009.00	1261.00
V02	Single Flat	Net	133.33	360.00	523.33	829.00
		VAT	26.67	72.00	104.67	
		Total	160.00	432.00	628.00	829.00

Standard Charges

Table B – Extensions to a single dwelling

Limited to work not more than 3 storeys above ground level

Code	Extensions & Conversions		Full Plans		Building Notice Charge*	Regularisation Charge*
			Plan Charge	Inspection Charge*		
D01	Single storey extension with a floor area less than 10m ²	Net VAT Total	123.33 24.67 148.00	309.17 61.83 371.00	432.50 86.50 519.00	649.00 649.00
D02	Single storey extension with floor area between 10m ² & 40m ²	Net VAT Total	185.00 37.00 222.00	432.50 86.50 519.00	617.50 123.50 741.00	927.00 927.00
D03	Single storey extension with floor area between 40m ² & 100m ²	Net VAT Total	247.50 49.50 297.00	494.17 98.83 593.00	741.67 148.33 890.00	1112.00 1112.00
D04	Multi-storey extension (ie some part 2 or 3 storeys in height) & floor area not exceeding 40m ²	Net VAT Total	247.50 49.50 297.00	494.17 98.83 593.00	741.67 148.33 890.00	1112.00 1112.00
D05	Multi-storey extension (ie some part 2 or 3 storeys in height) & floor area 40m ² to 100m ²	Net VAT Total	247.50 49.50 297.00	555.83 111.17 667.00	803.33 160.67 964.00	1241.00 1241.00
D06	Extension comprising SOLELY a garage, carport or store with a floor area less than 60m ²	Net VAT Total	123.33 24.67 148.00	309.17 61.83 371.00	432.50 86.50 519.00	630.00 630.00
D07	Detached non-habitable domestic building with a floor area less than 60m ²	Net VAT Total	123.33 24.67 148.00	309.17 61.83 371.00	432.50 86.50 519.00	649.00 649.00
Conversions						
D08	Loft conversions with a floor area less than 40m ²	Net VAT Total	247.50 49.50 297.00	494.17 98.83 593.00	741.67 148.33 890.00	1112.00 1112.00
D09	Loft conversions with a floor area between 40m ² & 100m ²	Net VAT Total	247.50 49.50 297.00	555.83 111.17 667.00	803.33 160.67 964.00	1241.00 1241.00
D10	Conversion of a garage to a habitable room	Net VAT Total	123.33 24.67 148.00	226.67 45.33 272.00	350.00 70.00 420.00	525.00 525.00

Multiple work reductions:

- Where more than one extension, or an extension and a loft conversion is proposed and the works are carried out concurrently, the individual fees should be combined and reduced by 30%.
- Where domestic alterations up to £15,000 are to be carried out at the same time as work described in codes D01 – D09 above, the charge payable in Table C can be reduced by 30%.

Where Standard Charges are not applicable please email building.control@sevenoaks.gov.uk, or telephone 01732 227376.

Standard Charges

Table C – Alterations to a single dwelling and all other non-domestic work

Limited to work not more than 3 storeys above ground level

Code	Alterations		Full Plans		Building Notice Charge*	Regularisation Charge*
			Plan Charge	Inspection Charge*		
D11	Renovation of a thermal element ie recovering a roof or recladding walls	Net VAT Total	185.00 37.00 222.00	0.00	185.00 37.00 222.00	278.00 278.00
D12	Replacement of windows, roof windows, or external glazed doors	Net VAT Total	185.00 37.00 222.00	0.00	185.00 37.00 222.00	278.00 278.00
D13	Cost of work not exceeding £2000	Net VAT Total	185.00 37.00 222.00	0.00	185.00 37.00 222.00	278.00 278.00
D14	Cost of work between £2,001 & £5,000	Net VAT Total	257.50 51.50 309.00	0.00	257.50 51.50 309.00	375.00 375.00
D15	Cost of work between £5,001 & £15,000	Net VAT Total	154.17 30.83 185.00	259.17 51.83 311.00	413.34 82.66 496.00	590.00 590.00
D16	Cost of work between £15,001 & £25,000	Net VAT Total	175.00 35.00 210.00	345.83 69.17 415.00	520.83 104.17 625.00	782.00 782.00
D17	Cost of work between £25,001 & £50,000	Net VAT Total	278.33 55.67 334.00	562.50 112.50 675.00	840.83 168.17 1009.00	1261.00 1261.00
D18	Cost of work between £50,001 & £100,000	Net VAT Total	345.83 69.17 415.00	680.00 136.00 816.00	1025.83 205.17 1231.00	1521.00 1521.00
Competent Persons Schemes (in addition to the above, where applicable)						
D19	Where a satisfactory competent Persons certificate will not be Issued, ie Part P, GASAFE, HETAS, OFTEC	Net VAT Total	275.00 55.00 330.00	This charge relates to the first fix pre-plaster inspection and final testing on completion. For a Regularisation Certificate full testing and appraisal will be carried out.		

Estimated Cost of Works:

The estimated cost of work used to determine the charge in Table C should be a reasonable estimate that would be charged by a professional builder to carry out such work (excluding the amount of any VAT).

Competent Persons Schemes:

The Charges marked with an * have been reduced to reflect where controlled electrical and heating installations are be certified by an installer registered with one of the Governments Competent Persons Schemes. If a certified installer is not subsequently employed or Competent persons certification is not received, the charge in Table C, code D19, will be required for each unit. This is to enable checks and tests on the work to be made by our nominated contractor to establish that the work meets with the requirements of the Building Regulations 2010.

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

18 September 2019

Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 FINANCIAL PLANNING AND CONTROL

This report brings together information on the Council's key budget areas of Salaries, Major Income Streams and Investment Income. The performance of the key budget areas, together with the approved variations to the revenue budget and areas identified through revenue budget monitoring are then summarised to provide an indicative overall budget position for the year. The report also updates Members on capital expenditure and variations that have been agreed in relation to the capital plan.

1.1 Salaries Monitoring Statement

1.1.1 Appended for information at **[Annex 1]** is a budgetary control statement that compares actual expenditure on basic salaries, temporary staff, overtime, superannuation and national insurance to the end of August 2019, with the appropriate proportion of the original estimate for 2019/20.

1.1.2 Members will note that management savings to the end of August are **£17,750 more** than anticipated.

1.2 Income Monitoring Statement

1.2.1 Appended for information at **[Annex 2]** is a budgetary control statement that compares actual income from fees and charges to the end of August 2019, with the appropriate proportion of the original estimate for 2019/20.

1.2.2 Members will note that overall income to the end of August is **£208,050 more** than anticipated which can be attributed to the very positive take-up of the opt-in garden waste service.

1.3 Treasury Management

Core Funds

1.3.1 The Council achieved a return of 1.11% on its core fund investments for the period ended August 2019 (1.08% to end of May 2019), compared to the 3-month

LIBID benchmark of 0.67%. Investment income achieved for the period ended August 2019 is £121,300.

- 1.3.2 At the end of August 2019 the value of core funds stood at £26m. This was invested at an average rate of 1.13% and an average maturity of 149 days.

Cash Flow Funds

- 1.3.3 The Council achieved a return of 0.78% on its cash flow investments for the period ended August 2019 (0.76% to end of May 2019), compared to a 7-day LIBID benchmark of 0.57%. Investment income achieved for the period ended August 2019 is £42,200.

- 1.3.4 At the end of August 2019 the value of cash flow investments stood at £14.3m. This was invested at an average rate of 0.81% and an average maturity of 42 days.

Property Investment Funds

- 1.3.5 £5m in property fund investments are in place at 30 June spread across three different funds. Investment income achieved for the period ended June 2019 is £43,000 which represents a return of 3.44%.

- 1.3.6 Property Funds issue and redeem units at differing prices reflecting the costs associated with buying and selling property (legal and other expenses). The price differential is typically 8% (6% on entry to a fund, 2% on exit) and is expected to be recouped overtime through capital appreciation. The sale value of units at 30 June is £141,700 below the £5m initial investment. This compares with a sale value of £315,900 below the £5m initial investment at commencement.

All Investments

- 1.3.7 The combined return figure for core, cash flow and property investment funds is compared with the original estimate for 2019/20 later in this report.

1.4 Approved Variations to the Revenue Budget

- 1.4.1 Listed below are the variations that have been agreed to the revenue budget. It has been based upon those variations approved by Portfolio Holders, Committees, Cabinet and Council up to July 2019.

- 1.4.2 Council 9 April 2019

- Approved urgent reinstatement works to the Tonbridge Castle Motte following storm damage in March 2019. The works are estimated to cost £20,000 to be funded from the Local Authorities Parks Improvement Fund received in 2018/19.

- Approved a supplementary estimate of £20,000 to progress high priority repair works to Council owned bridges.

1.4.3 Communities and Housing Advisory Board 28 May 2019

- Recommended that a contribution of £9,750 be made by the Council in respect of the proposal brought forward by Leybourne Parish Council to protect an area of open space from Traveller incursion.

1.4.4 Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board 5 June 2019

- Recommended that the budgets in respect of the planned major programme of works at Larkfield Leisure Centre be adjusted to reflect both increased capital and revenue costs associated with the works. The latest estimated loss of income claim in respect of the proposed scheme is £1,138,000 compared to the current budget provision of £1,000,000. The increase to be funded from the Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust Reserve.
- Furthermore, it is proposed an additional contribution of £466,000 be made to the Revenue Reserve for Capital Schemes in 2019/20 by way of reimbursement following the latest cost estimate.

1.4.5 Street Scene and Environment Services Advisory Board 11 June 2019

- Recommended commencement of detailed landfill gas investigation and risk assessment work at Priory Wood Open Space and to procure an upgrade to the gas pump and service contract. The investigation and risk assessment costed at £26,650 and the service contract £1,300 per annum.

1.4.6 General Purposes Committee 19 June 2019

- Approved the regrading and reduction in hours of a Senior Planning Policy Officer post at a cost of £1,650 per annum.
- Approved the deletion / increase in hours of Park Rangers posts resulting in a saving of £250 per annum.

1.4.7 Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board 17 July 2019

- Recommended that the £150,000 capacity funding received as a result of the inclusion of Borough Green Gardens in the Government's Garden Communities Programme be used towards staffing, design and landscaping work, and master-planning.

1.4.8 Communities and Housing Advisory Board 23 July 2019

- Recommended that £183,000 of the 2019/20 Better Care Fund be allocated towards revenue initiatives.

- Noted the income from the Council's events programme has increased from £12,600 to £20,000 and cost of the Performing Rights Society licence has reduced by £1,850.

1.4.9 A summary of the approved variations to the revenue budget is given in the table below.

Description	Paragraph Reference	2019/20 £	2020/21 £
Tonbridge Castle Motte	1.4.2	-	-
Bridge Repairs	1.4.2	20,000	-
Leybourne Open Space	1.4.3	9,750	-
Larkfield Leisure Centre	1.4.4	466,000	-
Priory Wood	1.4.5	26,650	1,300 *
Senior Planning Policy Officer	1.4.6	1,250	1,650 *
Park Rangers	1.4.6	(200)	(250) *
Borough Green Gardens	1.4.7	-	-
Better Care Fund Initiatives	1.4.8	-	-
Events Programme	1.4.8	(9,250)	(9,250) *
Total		514,200	(6,550)

Those items marked with an asterisk* will need to be considered and reflected as appropriate in updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

1.5 Virements

1.5.1 There have been no virements made to the original revenue estimates for 2019/20 reported to Council on 19 February 2019.

1.6 Revenue Budget Monitoring

1.6.1 As part of our budget monitoring and control arrangements Chief Officers confirm that budgetary control has been undertaken within the Service areas under their control each month and at the same time highlight those areas, if any, which they wish to bring to the attention of the Director of Finance and Transformation. In addition, the Accountancy Section also monitors budgetary performance across the whole range of services during the year. At the time of writing this report the following areas have been brought to my attention.

1.6.2 The Council has been awarded £100,000 to fund a multi-agency approach to tackling rough sleeping.

- 1.6.3 There is a contract variation order in respect of the waste services contract in the sum of £23,500 to reflect the temporary delivery of paper and cans to a different location than that specified in the contract.
- 1.6.4 Kent County Council are to pay in the order of £156,000 in recognition of the increased council tax yield as a result of recent changes made to council tax discounts and exemptions.
- 1.6.5 Recent above inflationary uplift in energy prices resulting in increased costs of circa £25,000 over current budget provision.
- 1.6.6 Loss of income claim received from the Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust in the sum of £27,800 following closure of the Spacebowl at Larkfield Leisure Centre in February, April and May. A claim for a similar amount is expected in respect of the current closure of the Spacebowl.
- 1.6.7 Invoice raised in 2018/19 in the sum of £13,900 for works carried out at Vale Rise Depot not required. Sum due deducted from a monthly contract payment.
- 1.6.8 The Council has purchased four fire evacuation chairs at a cost of £2,200.
- 1.6.9 Two scanners have been purchased for the receptions at Kings Hill and Tonbridge Castle at a cost £2,150 (including software). This is to be funded from the Transformation Reserve.
- 1.6.10 A one-off subscription of £20,000 is to be made to Smarter Digital Services to provide 80 days of assistance with business process mapping. This is to be funded either by way of a virement(s) or from the Invest to Save Reserve.
- 1.6.11 Members will note from the Income Monitoring Statement the very positive take-up of the opt-in garden waste service exceeding both the short term target of 30% or £550,000 and medium term target of 40% or £735,000 on commencement. Assuming take-up remains at its current level and after taking into account additional annual collection costs of around £80,000 gives net additional income next year is £210,000 and circa £50,000 by the end of the medium term.
- 1.6.12 Homelessness caseload has increased significantly since the start of the year. There are currently around 60 households in temporary accommodation and at this level the associated increased cost (budget growth) is circa £100,000.
- 1.6.13 Management Team have made the following establishment changes under delegated authority:
- Posts in the Parking Enforcement Team have been regraded at a cost of £35,300 per annum.
 - The Customer Services restructure at Tonbridge Castle resulted in termination payments of £17,250 (£5,050 of which was paid in 2018/19 and the balance in 2019/20).

- Temporary staffing arrangements in the Waste and Street Scene Team have been extended to the end of January 2020. The extension will cost £48,350 to be funded from the ring-fenced sum (£32,800) and the Waste and Street Scene Initiatives Reserve (£15,550).
- Temporary Special Projects Officer post has been extended to the end of March 2020 at a cost of £29,450 to be funded from the Transformation Reserve (£12,250 reflected in Salaries Monitoring Statement above).
- Temporary Revenues and Visiting Assistant post has been extended to the end of March 2020 at a cost of £28,450 to be funded by a contribution from Kent County Council and management savings.

1.6.14 The Council has been awarded the following grants from central government which will be used to fund as yet unbudgeted expenditure or reductions in other government funding streams:

- Brexit Funding £70,000
- Individual Electoral Registration Grant £3,569 (in addition to budgeted £13,000)
- Local Authority Data Sharing Programme Grant £9,576
- Rapid Rehousing Pathway Grant £72,951
- Single Fraud Investigation Service Project Grant £902
- Universal Credit New Burdens Grant £31,950
- Verify Earnings and Pensions Alerts £26,201
- Welfare Reform Grant £28,891

1.6.15 A summary of the items identified through budgetary control is given in the table below.

Description	Paragraph Reference	2019/20 £	2020/21 £
Rough Sleeping Initiative	1.6.2	-	-
Waste Services Contract	1.6.3	23,500	-
Council Tax Discounts / Exemptions	1.6.4	(156,000)	-
Energy Prices	1.6.5	25,000	25,000 *
TMLT Loss of Income	1.6.6	55,600	-
Vale Rise Depot	1.6.7	13,900	-

Fire Evacuation Chairs	1.6.8	2,200	-
Reception Scanners	1.6.9	-	-
Business Process Mapping	1.6.10	-	-
Garden Waste Collection – Income	1.6.11	-	(290,000)
Garden Waste Collection – Cost	1.6.11	40,000	80,000
Temporary Accommodation	1.6.12	100,000	100,000 *
Parking Enforcement Team	1.6.13	20,600	35,300 *
Customer Services Team	1.6.13	12,200	-
Waste & Street Scene Team	1.6.13	-	-
Special Projects Officer	1.6.13	(12,250)	-
Revenues and Visiting Assistant	1.6.13	-	-
Central Government Grants	1.6.14	-	-
Total		124,750	(49,700)

Those items marked with an asterisk* will need to be considered and reflected as appropriate in updating the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

1.7 Revenue Budget Summary

- 1.7.1 The table below brings together information on the Council's key budget areas, the variations agreed to the revenue budget and items identified through budgetary control to provide an indicative overall budget position for the year.

Description	Budget to August £	Actual to August £	Variance £
Salaries Monitoring Statement	4,157,700	4,139,950	(17,750)
Income Monitoring Statement	(2,725,400)	(2,933,450)	(208,050)
Treasury Management	(168,600)	(206,500)	(37,900)
Approved Variations to the Revenue Budget			514,200
Revenue Budgetary Control			124,750
Net Adverse Variance			375,250

- 1.7.2 This would suggest if nothing else changed, the contribution to the General Revenue Reserve would be £75,350 compared to £450,600 anticipated when the budget was set in February 2019.

1.8 Savings and Transformation Strategy

1.8.1 Alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy sits a Savings and Transformation Strategy. The purpose of the Strategy is to provide structure, focus and direction in addressing the financial challenge faced by the Council. In so doing, it recognises that there is no one simple solution and as a result we will need to adopt a number of ways to deliver the required savings and transformation contributions within an agreed timescale. A number of key themes have been identified, together with outline targets and timescales.

1.8.2 When the budget was set in February 2019 the projected funding gap was £550,000 with a savings and transformation contribution of £100,000 to be achieved by 1 April 2020. Taking in isolation the position detailed in this report suggests the funding gap has increased to in excess of £675,000 highlighting why it is important to identify and implement opportunities to deliver at least this year's savings and transformation contribution of £100,000 which as things stand would give a funding gap higher than that at the start of the year. Notwithstanding the funding gap will undoubtedly change many times as we move through the year.

1.9 Capital Monitoring Statement

1.9.1 Appended for information at **[Annex 3]** is a capital monitoring statement which compares actual capital expenditure for the period 1 April 2019 to 31 August 2019 with the 2019/20 Capital Plan. The Capital Plan for 2019/20 is based on the 2019/20 budgets that were approved by Council on 19 February 2019, amended for slippage from 2018/19.

1.9.2 Prior year's expenditure is only shown for finite schemes for which there is a budget in 2019/20. Where schemes are of a rolling programme nature, prior year's expenditure has not been shown in order to avoid large, generally meaningless, totals building up.

1.9.3 Capital Plan schemes which are scheduled to start in 2020/21 and beyond have not been shown. The budget profile for these schemes can be found in the 2019/20 Revenue and Capital Budgets Book.

1.9.4 Members will note a Capital Plan spend (net) at the end of August 2019 of £282,000 against a budget of £4.8m.

1.10 Approved Variations to the Capital Plan

1.10.1 The latest estimated capital cost of the planned major programme of works at Larkfield Leisure Centre is £2,149,000 (including expenditure to date of £120,000) compared to the current budget provision of £1,650,000. The increased cost to be funded from the Tonbridge and Malling Leisure Trust Reserve and General Revenue Reserve.

- 1.10.2 As reported to Finance, Innovation and Property Advisory Board on 17 July 2019, the Council is to purchase of mobile working software at a cost of £23,000. This is to be funded from the Invest to Save Reserve.
- 1.10.3 As reported to Communities and Housing Advisory Board on 23 July 2019, the Disabled Facilities Grant budgets have been amended to reflect to 2019/20 Better Care Fund allocation.
- 1.10.4 The Council has received the second and final payment of EU Exit Funding for Local Government in the sum of £17,484 to support local authorities in their preparations for the UK leaving the EU.

1.11 Capital Plan Issues

- 1.11.1 The capital plan monitoring statement, as presented to this Board, is essentially aimed at monitoring the financial performance of the capital plan overall and on a Service and scheme basis. Notes have been provided to supply further information where this is felt to be particularly relevant. Other monitoring reports, which provide greater information about individual schemes, are presented by the Services to the relevant Advisory Board.

1.12 Legal Implications

- 1.12.1 This report fulfils the requirement of the Local Government Act 2003 which places a statutory duty on the authority to monitor income and expenditure against budget and to take action if overspends or shortfalls in income emerge. If monitoring establishes that the budget situation has deteriorated, authorities are required to take such action as they consider necessary. This might include action to reduce spending in the rest of the year, to increase income or to finance all or part of the shortfall from reserves.

1.13 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.13.1 As set out above.

1.14 Risk Assessment

- 1.14.1 Budgetary control is a prerequisite of good financial management, financial planning and control and needs to be kept under review to ensure it remains effective and relevant.

1.15 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.15.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.16 Recommendations

1.16.1 Members are asked to:

- 1) **Note** that as at the end of August 2019 the projected overall outturn position is a net adverse variance of circa £375,250, after making an additional contribution to the revenue reserve for capital schemes of £466,000, when compared to the budget set in February 2019.
- 2) **Note** the position in respect of the projected funding gap and over the coming months the need to identify and implement opportunities to deliver at least this year's savings and transformation contribution of £100,000 which as things stand would give a funding gap higher than that at the start of the year.

The Director of Finance and Transformation confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Neil Lawley

Nil

Sharon Shelton
Director of Finance and Transformation

Salaries Budgetary Control Monitoring Statement

Annex 1

Period Ended Last Day of August 2019**2019/20 Financial Year**

	Annual Budget 2019/20	Budget to end of August (a)	Actual to end of August (b)	Above (Below) Budget (b - a)
Service	£	£	£	£
Central				
Administration & Property	783,650	326,400	311,900	(14,500)
Legal	493,000	205,400	219,900	14,500
Personnel	461,650	192,400	190,600	(1,800)
Executive	517,550	210,950	216,150	5,200
Finance & Transformation				
Finance	1,812,900	754,500	739,200	(15,300)
Information Technology	876,600	368,850	359,800	(9,050)
Planning, Housing & Environmental Health				
Environmental Health & Housing	1,339,350	558,100	546,150	(11,950)
Planning	1,868,950	778,600	733,800	(44,800)
Street Scene, Leisure & Technical				
Street Scene & Leisure	1,245,600	536,650	553,600	16,950
Technical	632,300	263,450	240,350	(23,100)
Management Savings	10,031,550	4,195,300	4,111,450	(83,850)
Shared Working Arrangements	(63,600)	(25,400)	(25,350)	50
Sub-total	9,967,950	4,169,900	4,086,100	(83,800)
Non-budgeted spend on recruitment & other expenses to the end of August				6,000
Payments outstanding for the period to the end of August				47,850
Budgeted management savings to the end of August				50,000
Budgeted ring-fenced sum to the end of August				(37,800)
Net Management Savings				(17,750)

Financial Services
3 September 2019

Income Budgetary Control Monitoring Statement

Annex 2

Period Ended Last Day of August 2019

2019/20 Financial Year

Service	Annual Budget 2019/20	Budget to end of August (a)	Actual to end of August (b)	(Above) Below Budget (b - a)
	£	£	£	£
Central				
Land Charges	(271,000)	(119,350)	(98,850)	20,500 [1]
Licensing	(333,300)	(115,550)	(127,600)	(12,050)
Sub-Total	(604,300)	(234,900)	(226,450)	8,450
Planning, Housing & Environmental Health				
Planning Fees	(792,000)	(330,000)	(278,250)	51,750 [2]
Building Regulations	(388,000)	(135,000)	(140,850)	(5,850)
Sub-Total	(1,180,000)	(465,000)	(419,100)	45,900
Street Scene, Leisure & Technical				
Garden Waste Collection	(550,000)	(550,000)	(840,900)	(290,900) [3]
Recycling Performance Payment	(345,000)	0	0	0
Recycling Credits	(169,000)	(58,000)	(55,400)	2,600
Short Stay Car Parking	(1,915,000)	(789,000)	(757,100)	31,900
Long Stay Car Parking	(720,000)	(307,000)	(318,550)	(11,550)
Penalty Charge Notices	(306,000)	(127,500)	(117,850)	9,650
Car Parks Season Tickets	(250,000)	(132,000)	(137,450)	(5,450)
Residents Parking Permits	(130,000)	(62,000)	(60,650)	1,350
Sub-Total	(4,385,000)	(2,025,500)	(2,287,900)	(262,400)
Grand Total	(6,169,300)	(2,725,400)	(2,933,450)	(208,050)

[1] Reflects current market demand for property searches.

[2] Reflects transition to a new Local Plan and volatility of the development environment.

[3] Reflects the very positive take-up of the opt-in garden waste service.

Financial Services
3 September 2019

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CAPITAL PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT 2019/20 TO 31 AUGUST 2019
SUMMARY OF SERVICES

	Expenditure To 31/03/19	2019/20 Including Prior Year Slippage	2019/20 Actual to 31 August 2019
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Plan Schemes			
Planning, Housing & Environmental Health	n/a	50	11
Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services	235	2,794	89
Corporate	271	212	27
Sub-total	506	3,056	127
Capital Renewals			
Planning, Housing & Environmental Health	n/a	24	5
Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services	n/a	1,107	66
Corporate	n/a	567	84
Sub-total	n/a	1,698	155
Total	506	4,754	282

CAPITAL PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT 2019/20 TO 31 AUGUST 2019
PLANNING, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

	Expenditure To 31/03/19	2019/20 Including Prior Year Slippage	2019/20 Actual to 31 August 2019
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Plan Schemes			
Housing	n/a	30	11
Environmental Health	0	20	0
Sub-total	0	50	11
Total Planning, Housing and Environmental Health	0	50	11

CAPITAL PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT 2019/20 TO 31 AUGUST 2019
PLANNING, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

	Code	Expenditure To 31/03/19	2019/20 Including Prior Year Slippage	2019/20 Actual to 31 August 2019	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	
Housing					
(a) Disabled Facility Grants					
(i) Mandatory Grants Less repayments	P03AC	n/a	959 (13)	538 (14)	} Expenditure / grant figures comprise this years BCF allocation of } £1,026,000 plus prior year slippage of £284,000 of which £323,000 is to be } used to fund the West Kent Hospital Discharge Scheme, Handy Person } Service and secondment of Occupational Therapist to March 2021 and the } One Year Home service to March 2020, CHAB 23 July 2019.
(ii) Discretionary Grants	P03AT	n/a	41		
(iii) Government Grant		n/a	(987)	(524)	
Sub-total		n/a	0	0	
(b) Housing Assistance Less repayments	P03AD	n/a	60 (30)	33 (22)	
Sub-total		n/a	30	11	
(c) Homeless Accommodation Less Developer Contributions	P03AX	1,088 (1,088)	447 (447)		
Sub-total		0	0	0	
Total Housing to Summary		n/a	30	11	
Environmental Health					
(d) Air Quality Monitoring Station	P02EN		20		
Total Environmental Health to Summary		0	20	0	
Capital Renewals					
(e) Environmental Protection	P02EBCR01	n/a	24	5	
Total Capital Renewals to Summary		n/a	24	5	

CAPITAL PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT 2019/20 TO 31 AUGUST 2019
STREET SCENE, LEISURE & TECHNICAL SERVICES

	Expenditure To 31/03/19	2019/20 Including Prior Year Slippage	2019/20 Actual to 31 August 2019
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Plan Schemes			
Street Scene	n/a	692	21
Leisure			
Larkfield Leisure Centre	113	1,786	0
Sports Grounds	4	256	21
Open Spaces	0	0	0
Other Leisure Schemes	95	13	0
Technical Services			
Car Parking	0	43	45
Land Drainage / Flood Defence	23	4	2
Sub-total	235	2,794	89
Capital Renewals	n/a	1,107	66
Total Street Scene, Leisure & Technical Services	235	3,901	155

CAPITAL PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT 2019/20 TO 31 AUGUST 2019
STREET SCENE, LEISURE & TECHNICAL SERVICES

	Code	Expenditure To 31/03/19	2019/20 Including Prior Year Slippage	2019/20 Actual to 31 August 2019	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	
Street Scene					
(a) Green Waste Bins Growth / Replacement	P02BC	n/a	31		
(b) Refuse Bins Growth / Replacement	P02DA	n/a	61	21	
(c) Containers for new Waste / Recycling Service (i) Initial purchase	P02CN		600		
Total Street Scene to Summary		n/a	692	21	
Larkfield Leisure Centre					
(d) Ventilation, Boiler and Pool Hall Roof	P05LP	113	1,786		
Total Larkfield Leisure Centre to Summary		113	1,786	0	
Sports Grounds					
(e) Tonbridge School Athletics Track Improvements Less Developer Contribution	P05DC	140 (140)	21 (21)		
Sub-total		0	0	0	
(f) Racecourse Sportsground Riverside Rivetment Less Grants	P05DD	18 (14)	207 (14)		
Sub-total		4	193	0	
(g) Racecourse Sportsground Rugby Pitch Drainage Less Developer Contribution	P05DE		16 (8)		
Sub-total		0	8	0	
(h) Racecourse Sportsground Swimming Pool Bridge Less Developer Contribution	P05DN		120 (65)	21	
Sub-total		0	55	21	
Total Sports Grounds to Summary		4	256	21	

Budget augmented by £250,000 attributed to BREP. Total works cost £2,149,000 including £120,000 enabling works - see FIPAB 5 June 2019.

CAPITAL PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT 2019/20 TO 31 AUGUST 2019
STREET SCENE, LEISURE & TECHNICAL SERVICES

	Code	Expenditure To 31/03/19	2019/20 Including Prior Year Slippage	2019/20 Actual to 31 August 2019
		£'000	£'000	£'000
Open Spaces				
(a) Open Spaces Site Improvements - Phase 2 Less Developer Contributions	P05FV	57 (57)	12 (12)	
Sub-total		0	0	0
(b) Haysden Country Park Sewerage Treatment Less Developer Contributions	P05FC		75 (75)	4 (4)
Sub-total		0	0	0
Total Open Spaces to Summary		0	0	0
Other Leisure Schemes				
(c) Tonbridge Cemetery Memorial Safety Less Developer Contributions	P05KV	98 (3)	13	
Sub-total		95	13	0
Total Other Leisure Schemes to Summary		95	13	0
Car Parking				
(d) Existing Car Parks Improvement Rolling Programme	P01AB	n/a	43	45
Total Car Parking to Summary		0	43	45
Land Drainage / Flood Defence				
(e) Wouldham River Wall	P01HS	23	4	2
Total Land Drainage / Flood Defence to Summary		23	4	2

Budget includes £13,000 slippage from 2018/19.

CAPITAL PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT 2019/20 TO 31 AUGUST 2019
STREET SCENE, LEISURE & TECHNICAL SERVICES

	Code	Expenditure To 31/03/19	2019/20 Including Prior Year Slippage	2019/20 Actual to 31 August 2019	
		£'000	£'000	£'000	
Capital Renewals					
Sports Grounds & Open Spaces	P05KGBC05	n/a	353	5	} Provisions includes slippage from 2018/19 - to be reviewed Autumn 2019. } } } } } } } } } }
Technical Services					
(a) CCTV	P01BA	n/a	15		
(b) Car Parking	P01JF	n/a	2		
Sub-total		n/a	370	5	
Leisure Centres					
(c) Angel Centre	P05KGBC01	n/a	287	(2)	
(d) Larkfield Leisure Centre	P05KGBC02	n/a	224	12	
(e) Tonbridge Swimming Pool	P05KGBC04	n/a	179	(1)	
(f) Poulton Wood Golf Clubhouse	P05KGBC03	n/a	106		
Course	P05KGBC07	n/a	81	30	
Grounds Maintenance	P05KGBC06	n/a	82	22	
Net savings (assumes 25%)		n/a	(222)		
Sub-total		n/a	737	61	
Total Capital Renewals to Summary		n/a	1,107	66	

CAPITAL PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT 2019/20 TO 31 AUGUST 2019
CORPORATE

	Expenditure To 31/03/19	2019/20 Including Prior Year Slippage	2019/20 Actual to 31 August 2019
	£'000	£'000	£'000
Capital Plan Schemes			
Land and Property	10	60	0
Information Technology Initiatives	261	152	27
Sub-total	271	212	27
Capital Renewals	n/a	567	84
Total Corporate	271	779	111

CAPITAL PLAN MONITORING STATEMENT 2019/20 TO 31 AUGUST 2019
CORPORATE

	Code	Expenditure To 31/03/19	2019/20 Including Prior Year Slippage	2019/20 Actual to 31 August 2019	
Land and Property					
(a) Tonbridge Castle Office: Re-tile Roof	P06AA	10	60		
Total Land and Property to Summary		10	60	0	
Information Technology Initiatives					
(b) General IT Developments	P06DA	n/a	30	4	
(d) Council Chamber Conference System	P06ER	68	27		
(e) Virtual Desktop Infrastructure	P06ET	188	12		
(f) Revenues and Benefits IT Digital Solution	P06EW	5	60		
(g) Enterprise Mobile Working Solution	P06EV		23	23	New scheme approved FIPAB 17 July 2019.
Total Information Technology Initiatives to Summary		261	152	27	

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

18 September 2019

Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 APPLICATIONS FOR DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF

A report giving details of an application for hardship relief and seeking Members' recommendation in respect of any award for relief.

1.1 Application for Hardship relief

- 1.1.1 The application is from Attachments Fostering Ltd (AFL) in respect of their previous premises at The Cedars, Holborough Road, Snodland, Kent, ME6 5PW.
- 1.1.2 The Council is empowered to award hardship relief under S.49 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- 1.1.3 When considering applications for this relief, Members must be satisfied that the ratepayer would sustain hardship if relief was not awarded and it is reasonable to award relief having regard to the interests of persons subject to its council tax.
- 1.1.4 There is no statutory definition of hardship. Members should therefore bear in mind:
- Will the employment prospects in the area be worsened by the company going out of business?
 - Will the amenities of the area be reduced?
- 1.1.5 The application is shown at **[ANNEX 1]** showing AFL's version of the timeline of events that has left them facing an outstanding rates bill of £56,495.90. As the submission contains information that falls within paragraph 3 of Sch 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, Annex 1 is shown in part 2 of the agenda.
- 1.1.6 Their latest financial information is shown at **[ANNEXES 2 and 3]**. Annex 3 contains more detailed information that is not routinely published online, so again this is included in part 2 of the agenda.
- 1.1.7 An email from AFL on 19 March 2015 advised they had been located at The Cedars since 20 January 2015. At the time of the email, La Farge Cement UK Ltd

were paying the rates on the property, as they had done since 2003. The officer dealing with the correspondence decided to take no action updating the account as La Farge had not been in touch to advise they were no longer liable and direct debit payments were continuing to be made. Members are advised that there are circumstances whereby businesses can effectively 'share' premises and one business is liable with a share of rates liability being addressed within the rent.

- 1.1.8 The situation remained unchanged until February 2018, when Gerald Eve notified us that the property had been leased to AFL since 20 January 2015.
- 1.1.9 Our records were updated accordingly, and AFL were made liable to pay the business rates. This resulted in a backdated charge of £53,204.89 with a further charge of £18,120.00 becoming due on 1 April 2018.
- 1.1.10 Mr Koca (one of the directors of AFL) contacted the Revenues team on multiple occasions throughout 2018 and was advised to make an appeal to the Valuation Office Agency (VOA). The property's rateable value was subsequently reduced by the VOA; however, since the new rating list came into effect on 1 April 2017, no appeal could be made regarding the usage of the property prior to that date (AFL state they were only using part of the property) as the old rating list was closed.
- 1.1.11 This has left AFL with a debt of £56,495.90 (covering the period from 20 January 2015 to 30 December 2018) with no further option to appeal the charge.
- 1.1.12 Mr Koca did meet the Revenue and Benefits Manager and the Principal Revenue Officer on 22 February 2019 where it was explained to Mr Koca that under rating legislation, AFL were liable as they were the leaseholders for the period 20 January 2015 to 30 December 2018.
- 1.1.13 It was recognised that AFL had been put in a very difficult position due to La Farge not notifying the Council that they should not have been liable to pay, and it was suggested that Mr Koca contact them to see if they were able to assist. Mr Koca was also asked to provide a copy of the lease in order to check the terms of the lease regarding liability for business rates.
- 1.1.14 Mr Koca did not supply a copy of the lease so action was taken to recover the unpaid debt with a liability order being obtained at Sevenoaks Magistrates' Court on 24 May 2019. There is no record to say the matter would be adjourned to the July hearing, and a note on 17 June states Mr Koca rang to request a payment plan through to March 2022. Mr Koca was advised we could only extend a payment plan to March 2021 and he was invited to submit his offer of payment.
- 1.1.15 As nothing further was received, and no payments were made, the matter was passed to our enforcement agent. AFL subsequently engaged the services of Business Rate Advisors Ltd who have submitted this application on behalf of AFL. The enforcement agent is currently on hold pending a decision on this application.

- 1.1.16 AFL are currently based at Lenvale House, 2 East Street, Snodland, Kent, ME6 5BA. They are not liable to pay business rates on this property, so there is no ongoing charge to be paid.
- 1.1.17 AFL has stated: “*Our financial situation is such that we do not have large sums of money at our disposal and paying the bill of £56,315.90 would put us out of business.*”
- 1.1.18 AFL has been left in a difficult position by La Farge who failed to advise they were not liable three years earlier. Although an initial notification was received from AFL, it was not obvious they would be liable to pay the rates charge, and with payments being received by direct debit for the three year period, there was nothing to suggest the liable party was wrong.
- 1.1.19 Having notified the Council, AFL should have made contact earlier to query why they had not been sent a rates bill. Mr Koca also took responsibility to start paying the outstanding charge in June, although at the time of writing no payment has yet been received.
- 1.1.20 This has been an unfortunate case and Members might therefore consider an award of hardship relief is appropriate on this occasion, particularly with regard to the period January 2015 to March 2017 (after which the Valuation Office Agency did review the assessment). Should the applicant be considered as a ‘special case’, up to 100% relief can be awarded. Members need to consider what level of award, if any, is appropriate.

1.2 Legal Implications

- 1.2.1 As the granting of relief is a discretionary action, the only implication would be a challenge by way of judicial review if an organisation were unhappy with a decision. Such a challenge can succeed only when the Council behaves unreasonably.

1.3 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.3.1 A hardship relief award will fall to the billing authority to fund from General fund. As there is no budget provision, should Members decide to award any level of hardship relief this will need to be met from General Revenue Reserve.
- 1.3.2 In respect of all applications for rate relief, the financial considerations of granting relief are as set out in the body of the report. If relief is not granted, there is a neutral impact on the Council’s finances. This should not prevent each application being considered on its own merits however, as there must be some degree of consistency to prevent a legal challenge.

1.4 Risk Assessment

- 1.4.1 The only risk that I am aware of is a legal challenge to the Council’s decisions (see above).

1.5 Equality Impact Assessment

1.5.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.6 Recommendation

1.6.1 Members are **REQUESTED** to consider the application and make an appropriate **RECOMMENDATION** to Cabinet regarding hardship relief.

The Director of Finance & Transformation confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and policy Framework.

Background papers:

None

Sharon Shelton

Director of Finance and Transformation

contact: Glen Pritchard
01732 876146

ATTACHMENTS FOSTERING LIMITED**Registered Number 04939840****Micro-entity Balance Sheet as at 31 October 2018**

	<i>Notes</i>	<i>2018</i>	<i>2017</i>
		£	£
Fixed Assets		84,796	84,796
Current Assets		20,381	30,435
Creditors: amounts falling due within one year		(58,446)	(23,597)
Net current assets (liabilities)		<u>(38,065)</u>	<u>6,838</u>
Total assets less current liabilities		<u>46,731</u>	<u>91,634</u>
Creditors: amounts falling due after more than one year		(35,419)	(18,302)
Total net assets (liabilities)		<u>11,312</u>	<u>73,332</u>
Capital and reserves		<u>11,312</u>	<u>73,332</u>

- For the year ending 31 October 2018 the company was entitled to exemption under section 477 of the Companies Act 2006 relating to small companies.
- The members have not required the company to obtain an audit in accordance with section 476 of the Companies Act 2006.
- The directors acknowledge their responsibilities for complying with the requirements of the Companies Act 2006 with respect to accounting records and the preparation of accounts.
- The accounts have been prepared in accordance with the micro-entity provisions and delivered in accordance with the provisions applicable to companies subject to the small companies regime.

Approved by the Board on 15 June 2019

And signed on their behalf by:

Mrs D King, Director

This document was delivered using electronic communications and authenticated in accordance with the registrar's rules relating to electronic form, authentication and manner of delivery under section 1072 of the Companies Act 2006.

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

18 September 2019

Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation

Part 1- Public

Matters for Recommendation to Cabinet - Non-Key Decision (Decision may be taken by the Cabinet Member)

1 RURAL RATE RELIEF – RURAL SETTLEMENT LIST

A report informing Members of the requirement to review the Council's rural settlement list and recommending that the current list should be retained, unaltered, for the financial year 2020/21.

1.1 Members will be aware that the Council grants relief to certain types of businesses that are located in rural settlements. For the purpose of granting relief, the rural settlements within the area of Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council are shown in the Council's rural settlement list. The list is in the form of a map, which shows the location and boundaries of each rural settlement. The map is shown at **ANNEX 1.**

1.2 At this time of year, the Council has to consider whether it wishes to amend the rural settlement list for the forthcoming financial year. If it wishes to do so, then it must consult on any changes that it proposes to make.

1.3 Members should be aware that I have received no suggestions for amendment of the list. I am also unaware of any problems arising from the definitions of the rural settlements in the current list.

1.4 Legal Implications

1.4.1 None.

1.5 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

1.5.1 None.

1.6 Risk Assessment

1.6.1 No risks identified.

1.7 Equality Impact Assessment

1.7.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users.

1.8 Recommendations

1.8.1 In view of the above, Members are **REQUESTED** to **RECOMMEND** to Cabinet that the current rural settlement list should remain in force for the year 2020/21.

The Director of Finance and Transformation confirms that the proposals contained in the recommendation(s), if approved, will fall within the Council's Budget and policy Framework.

Background papers:

contact: Glen Pritchard

Nil

Tel: 01732 876146

Sharon Shelton
Director of Finance and Transformation

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

18 September 2019

Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 COUNCIL TAX REDUCTION SCHEME 2020/21

The report updates Members on the review of the Council Tax Reduction Scheme.

1.1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 Members will recall at our last Board I outlined the need for a redesign of our Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme (LCTRS) for 2020/2021. The emphasis being placed on development of a scheme that will efficiently effect the growing number of households receiving Universal Credit (UC) and claiming council tax reduction. A new scheme should also provide a stepping stone towards a simplified LCTRS for the point when full UC migration takes place, currently scheduled for some time prior to 2024.
- 1.1.2 I must reiterate, the aim of the redesign is not to reduce the level of help we provide to residents across the Borough, but to avoid further administrative costs due to the changing 'benefits' environment. With that aim, working together with some of my Kent counterparts, major preceptors and a shared specialist consultant, a number of changes are proposed to our current scheme, for implementation on 1 April 2020.
- 1.1.3 As always, the difficulty lies within creating the right balance of three fundamental building blocks for a scheme, fairness, simplicity and cost, which since the introduction of local schemes in 2013, we have achieved. I am pleased to say that since our last meeting, officers have completed comprehensive modelling and testing and developed proposals for a solution to meet those needs as well as generating incentives for those in work and safeguards for those who cannot.
- #### 1.2 Consultation
- 1.2.1 Due to the timing of our meetings and the mandatory framework for making changes to the Scheme, there is a tight schedule in which to complete the process. At our last meeting, Members agreed in order for me to make headway, I

should finalise the consultation material and undertake the consultation in liaison with the Chair, Vice Chair and Cabinet Member for our Board.

- 1.2.2 I can now report that, following agreement with the Members mentioned above, our statutory public consultation on proposed changes for the Local Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2020/21 opened on Monday, 9 September and will run for eight weeks, closing at midnight on 4 November. Members should already have received promotional cards for the consultation. The consultation survey is available online at: www.tmbc.gov.uk/cts
- 1.2.3 Promotional cards are in the process of being sent to all current working age households receiving council tax reduction and 5000 other householders in the Borough, picked at random. Cards will be available at our customer service desks, our revenues and benefits staff will promote the consultation by phone and email and there will be engagement events with other key stakeholders of the service to get a sufficient representative response that can be considered when finalising decisions.

1.3 Proposed Changes

- 1.3.1 Members will see that the consultation places some emphasis on the transition to online services, meeting growing public demand and reducing our costs. At the same time, I will ensure that measures are in place for no one to be disadvantaged through any restricted accessibility by the move towards online channels. Support will remain available to residents from our officers by telephone and face to face at our offices although the shape of these services will be managed to ensure they support and align with our Digital Strategy.
- 1.3.2 The second proposed change, to introduce a ‘minimum income floor’ for self-employed claimants would bring our Scheme into line with UC, which has a similar way of dealing with claims declaring continually low earnings.
- 1.3.3 The third proposal is actually a package of changes. Together, they represent a proposal to introduce a banded discount scheme, similar to that highlighted to the Board at our last meeting. To make this change simple but remain as fair as possible it includes some differences to the way we treat income in our current scheme. These differences include greater disregards for people in work, the amount of earnings that are not taken into account before being included in an income assessment, additional disregards where there are disability benefits in payment and disregarding Carers Allowance.

The proposed income grid and level of discount is below.

Bands	Band 1	Band 2	Band 3	Band 4	Band 5
Discount	80%	65%	50%	35%	20%
Single Person	£0 - £82.10	£82.11 - £123.15	£123.16 - £164.20	£164.21 - £205.25	£205.26 - £246.30
Couple	£0 - £122.10	£122.11 - £163.15	£163.16 - £204.20	£204.21 - £245.25	£245.26 - £286.30
Lone Parent with 1 child	£0 - £132.10	£132.11 - £173.15	£173.16 - £214.20	£214.21 - £255.25	£255.26 - £296.31
Couple with 1 child	£0 - £172.10	£172.11 - £213.15	£213.16 - £254.20	£254.21 - £295.25	£295.26 - £336.30
Lone Parent with 2+ children	£0 - £182.10	£182.11 - £223.15	£223.16 - £264.20	£264.21 - £305.25	£305.26 - £346.30
Couple with 2+ children	£0 - £222.10	£222.11 - £263.15	£263.16 - £304.20	£304.21 - £345.25	£345.26 - £386.30

- 1.3.4 A banded scheme will remove the need to constantly re-assess income, particularly for those claimants receiving UC, where automated monthly income updates are received from the Department for Work and Pensions.

1.4 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.4.1 A first stage Equality Impact Assessment is attached at **Annex 1**

- 1.4.2 Although the aim of the proposed changes is to provide a similar level of financial support to households across the Borough, the re-distribution will generate some winners and losers. The income grid has been developed to have minimal impact on the level of current awards however the initial Equality Impact Assessment gives an indication there are some households who may face changes, averaging a gain or loss of £0.56 per week. There is no indication unique impact on protected characteristic groups.

- 1.4.3 The Council's Exceptional Hardship Scheme will be retained as a key safety net for households with significant difficulties.

1.5 Legal Implications

- 1.5.1 The Council has a statutory duty to consult on a proposed scheme. Consultation will be undertaken within the principles of public consultations.
- 1.5.2 Local Council Tax Reduction Schemes must be agreed by Full Council.

1.6 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.6.1 Proposed changes to the Council's LCTRS are being made to reduce the risk of increased costs

1.7 Risk Assessment

- 1.7.1 Nil.

1.8 Equality Impact Assessment

1.8.1 A full EIA will be made following the close of the consultation.

1.9 Policy Considerations

1.9.1 None

Background papers:

contact: Andrew Rosevear
01732 876143

Sharon Shelton
Director of Finance and Transformation

Stage 1 Equality Impact Assessment

Directorate: Finance & Transformation

Service: Revs & Bens

Accountable Officer: Sharon Shelton

Telephone & e-mail: Sharon.shelton@tmbc.gov.uk

Date of assessment: 27 August 2019

Names & job titles of people carrying out the assessment:

Andrew Rosevear

Principal Benefits Officer

Name of service/function/policy etc:

Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Is this new or existing?

Replacement of existing scheme

Stage 1: Screening Stage

1. Briefly describe its aims & objectives

The Council Tax Reduction scheme provides support for certain taxpayers who have a low income.

Where entitled, the scheme provides a reduction in liability for Council Tax.

The replacement scheme is designed to overcome the significant administrative complications with the introduction of Universal Credit within the area. The main issues are;

- The current scheme is too reactive to the constant changes in Universal Credit. With the frequent changes in liability, taxpayers receive multiple Council Tax demands which in turn has a negative effect on the taxpayer's ability to manage their finances and on collections levels;
- There is a need to make the scheme simpler and for taxpayers to be encouraged to claim a reduction; nd
- The scheme needs to be future proofed to avoid constant amendments.

2. Are there external considerations? (legislation/government directive etc.)

Yes - the legislation (Local Government Finance Act 1992 as amended) allows the Council to amend the scheme for working age applicants only.

The scheme for pension age applicants is prescribed by Central Government and cannot

be amended.

Schemes must be amended by 11th March of the financial year preceding the year of implementation.

All changes to schemes are subject to consultation with both precepting authorities and the public.

3. Who are the stakeholders and what are their interests?

The stakeholders are:

- Working age Council Taxpayers who have a low income (who may make an applicant for reduction);
- The District Council ,who is responsible for administration of the scheme, and also receives a proportion of Council Tax receipts to provide services for local residents;
- The Major Precepting Authorities (Kent CC; Police & Crime Commissioner and Fire & Rescue) who receive the majority of Council Tax receipts to provide services for local residents;

4. What outcomes do we want to achieve and for whom?

Any new scheme must:

- Minimise any potential loss to existing applicants;
- Reduce administration costs which will occur through the roll out of Universal Credit;
- Ensure that collection rates are maintained in respect of Council Tax; and
- Prevent future changes in schemes

5. Has any consultation/research been carried out or relied upon?

Yes

Consultation is to be carried out in accordance with the legislation.

Major preceptors will be consulted as well as the public and interested groups.

Consultation will be carried out over Summer / Autumn Time and the results will be analysed and taken into account when the scheme is decided by full Council.

6. Are there any concerns at this stage which indicate the possibility of inequalities/negative impacts? (Consider and identify any evidence you have - equality data relating to usage and satisfaction levels, complaints, comments, research, outcomes of review, feedback and issues raised at previous consultations, known inequalities) If so please provide details.

Major changes to the scheme as proposed may affect applicants. Modelling of scheme options have been undertaken throughout 2019 and may continue up to the adoption by

<p>the Council.</p> <p>Initial modelling indicates that the number of working age applicants will remain broadly the same</p> <p>Most applicants will experience a minimal change to their entitlement between +/- £0.56 per week.</p> <p>The Council maintains an Exceptional Hardship Payment Scheme which can be applied for by any applicant. Where any applicant experiences exceptional hardship, further support can be given.</p>

7. Could a particular protected characteristic be affected differently in either a negative or positive way? (Positive - it could benefit, Negative - it could disadvantage, Neutral - neither positive nor negative impact or Not sure?)

	Type of impact, reason & any evidence
Disability	Positive - disability benefits will be disregarded as income and a further income disregard granted where a person would have met the previous criteria for awarding disability premium, enhanced disability premium, disabled child premium or severe disability premium
Race (including Gypsy & Traveller)	Neutral
Age	Only working age applicants will be affected
Gender	Neutral - based on current modelling both male and female applicants can either receive increased or decreased support
Transgender	Neutral
Sexual Orientation	Neutral - sexual orientation has no bearing on the scheme
Religion/Belief	Neutral - religion or belief orientation has no bearing on the scheme
Pregnancy & Maternity	Neutral - although it should be noted that a third or subsequent child will not affect entitlement
Marriage/ Civil Partnership Status	Positive- couples or persons in Civil Partnerships / relationships are able to have a higher level of income than singles to receive the same level of support.

8. Could other socio-economic groups be affected e.g. carers, ex-offenders, low incomes?

Carers	Positive effect as Carers Allowance will be disregarded as an income under the scheme
Persons in receipt of	

Support Component of ESA	Positive effect as the Support Component of Employment and Support Allowance will be disregarded as an income under the scheme
Low income taxpayers - will be able to apply as in the current scheme	Neutral effect - as low income applicants can still apply for a support under the scheme
Applicants who have more than two dependants	The scheme will provide additional support to families up to and including two dependants. No additional support will be provided to a third or subsequent dependant. This is in line with Central Government benefits such as Housing Benefit, Tax Credits and Universal Credit
Applicants who have non dependants	Neutral - no change to current scheme
Disabilities	Positive effect as all applicants who receive a disability benefit such as DLA, PIP etc will have the income disregarded and a further disregard of £xx per week will be taken from their net income potentially allowing further support to be granted

9. Are there any human rights implications?

No

10. Is there an opportunity to promote equality and/or good community relations?

Yes - the new scheme will make applying for support easier and will treat all working age applicants equally.

11. If you have indicated a negative impact for any group is that impact legal? (not discriminatory under anti-discrimination legislation)

Yes

12. Is any part of this policy/service to be carried out wholly or partly by contractors?

No

Please note that normally you should proceed to a Stage 2: Full Equality Impact Assessment Report if you have identified actual, or the potential to cause, adverse impact or discrimination against different groups in the community.

13. Is a Stage 2: Full Equality Impact Assessment Report required?

Yes

14. Date by which Stage 2 is to be completed and actions

Together with compiled results following consultation

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TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

FINANCE, INNOVATION and PROPERTY ADVISORY BOARD

18 September 2019

Report of the Director of Finance and Transformation

Part 1- Public

Matters for Information

1 REVENUES AND BENEFITS UPDATE REPORT

A report detailing recent developments in respect of council tax, business rates, council tax reduction and housing benefits.

1.1 **Collection of council tax and business rates**

- 1.1.1 As at 31 August 2019, the collection rate for council tax stood at 45.95%. For the same period in the year 2018/19, the collection rate was 45.94%.
- 1.1.2 As at 31 August 2019, the collection rate for business rates stood at 48.29%. For the same period in the year 2018/19, the collection rate was 48.62%.
- 1.1.3 For the current financial year, our working age claimants have paid approximately 34.8%, compared to 37.5% for the same period in the previous financial year. We are continuing to monitor this closely as collection rates can fluctuate throughout the year.
- 1.1.4 The number of recovery notices issued this financial year is higher than last year (see ANNEX 1). These figures also fluctuate during the course of the year, so I will continue to monitor the situation and report any significant changes at the next meeting of this Board.

1.2 **Performance and Workload of the Benefits Service**

- 1.2.1 The average number of days to process new claims for housing benefit and council tax reduction for the year to 1 September was 12.4. It took on average 3.2 days to process changes to existing claims. Our performance is on a par with that of last year.
- 1.2.2 The overall number of households assisted with council tax reduction remains stable, again keeping to the trend of a slight fall in pension age households and equivalent rise in working age. 'Pensioners' now represent 40% of the total caseload.

- 1.2.3 The number of households helped by housing benefit continues to fall following the introduction of Universal Credit (UC) full service in November 2018. Whereas last September 6228 households in the Borough received housing benefit, a year later that number is 5346. Certain changes in circumstances can trigger the transition from housing benefit to UC, accounting for the much of the decrease in numbers. Over the same period the Council has witnessed a significant rise in households placed into temporary accommodation through homelessness. We are investigating whether there is any direct correlation between the two sets of figures.
- 1.2.4 At some point prior to 2024 the remaining housing benefit working age caseload will be transferred in bulk to UC. We have yet to learn when the migration will take place. In the meantime, we are remodelling our Council Tax Reduction Scheme to meet the new demands of the increased number of households receiving UC.
- 1.2.5 Our Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) fund has a balance remaining of £130,000 as at 1 September. The total fund for the year is £208,000. So far, DHP has been used for 70 households to directly prevent evictions or facilitate moves to affordable homes. A further 32 households have been assisted with top-up payments to provide short term financial help.

1.3 Legal Implications

- 1.3.1 Nil.

1.4 Financial and Value for Money Considerations

- 1.4.1 The percentage of council tax and business rates collected during the year impacts on the Council's finances and, consequently, on the level of council tax for future years.

1.5 Risk Assessment

- 1.5.1 Nil.

1.6 Equality Impact Assessment

- 1.6.1 The decisions recommended through this paper have a remote or low relevance to the substance of the Equality Act. There is no perceived impact on end users at this point.

1.7 Policy Considerations

- 1.7.1 Community
- 1.7.2 Customer Contact

Background papers:

1. In respect of the collection of council tax and business rates, data held within Financial Services.

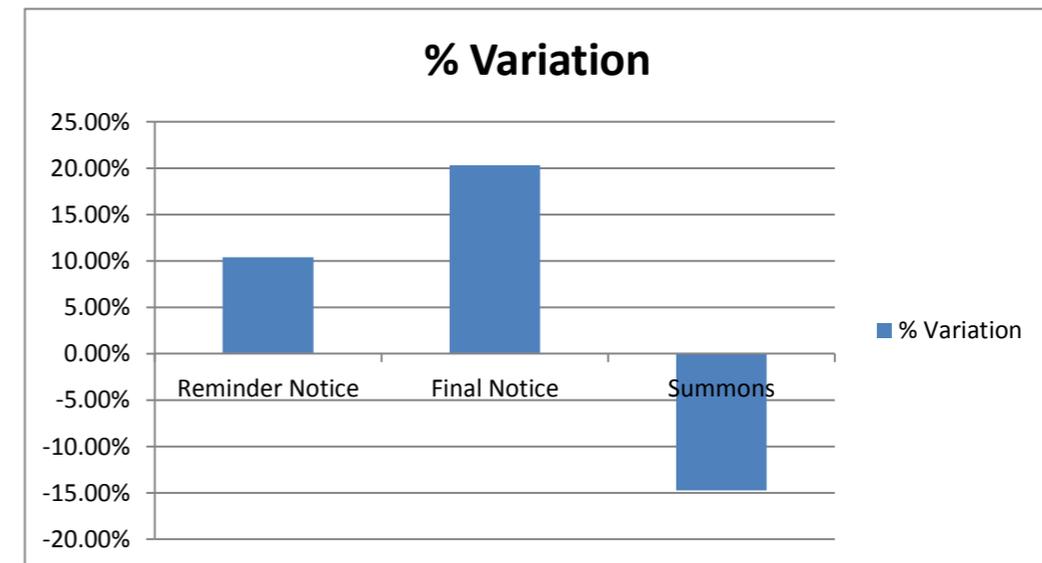
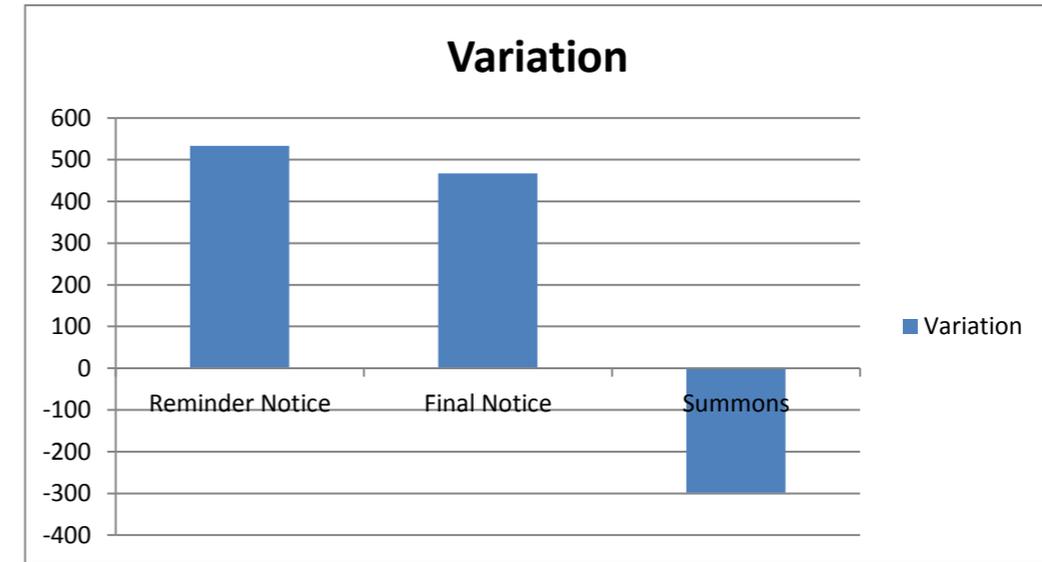
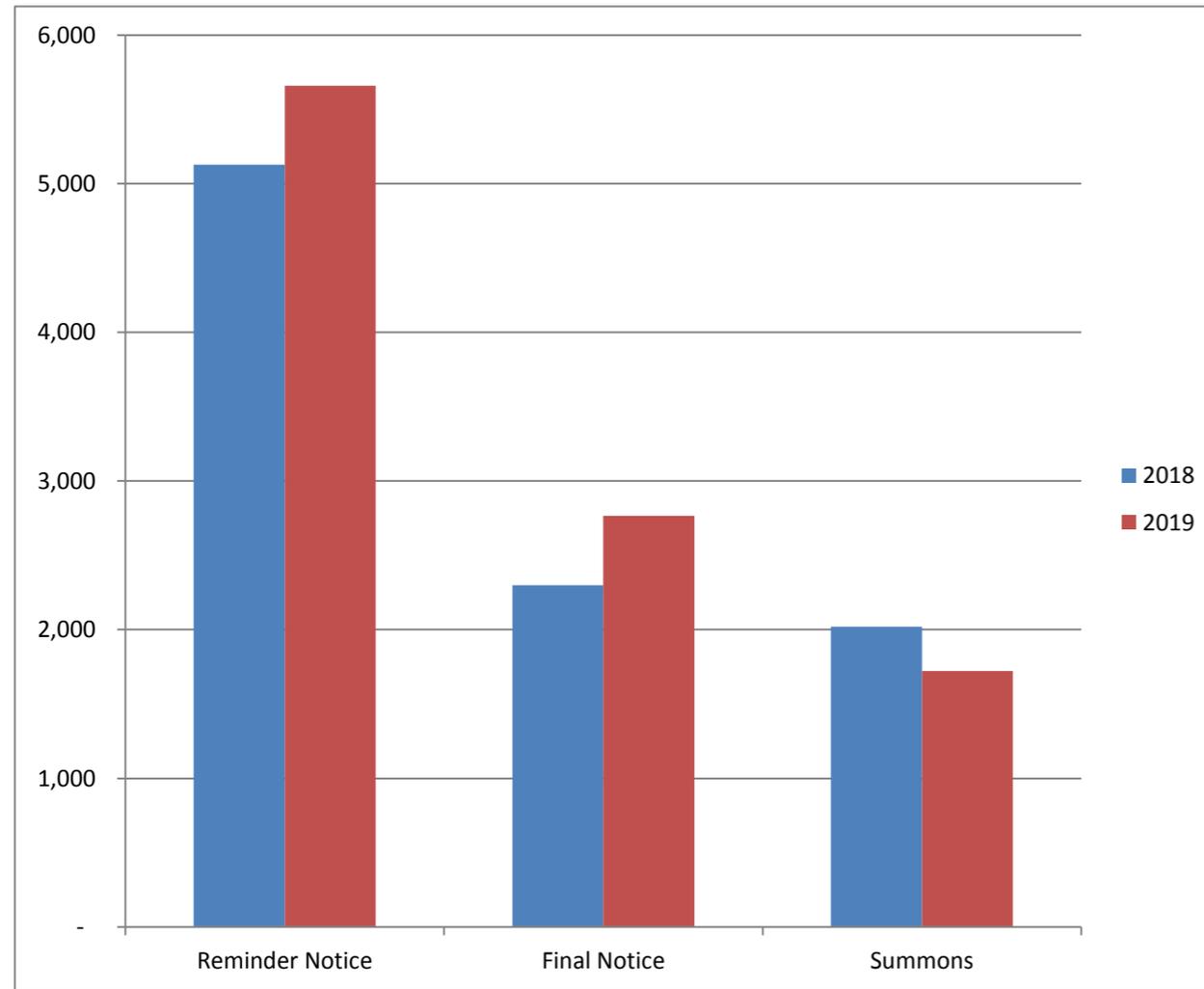
contact: Glen Pritchard
01732 876146
Andrew Rosevear
01732 876143

Sharon Shelton
Director of Finance and Transformation

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	Reminder Notice	Final Notice	Summons	Total
2018	5,127	2,299	2,021	9,447
2019	5,660	2,766	1,723	10,149
Variation	533	467	-298	702
% Variation	10.40%	20.31%	-14.75%	7.43%

ANNEX 1



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Agenda Item 12

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

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Agenda Item 13

The Chairman to move that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting during consideration of any items the publication of which would disclose exempt information.

**ANY REPORTS APPEARING AFTER THIS PAGE CONTAIN EXEMPT
INFORMATION**

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Agenda Item 16

Any other items which the Chairman decides are urgent due to special circumstances and of which notice has been given to the Chief Executive.

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