1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

2. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

   To receive any declarations of interest Members may wish to make including the term(s) of the Grant of Dispensation(s) by the Standards Committee.

3. **CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 SEPTEMBER 2005**

4. **URGENT ITEMS**

   The Chairman will announce his decision as to whether there are any urgent items and their position on the agenda.

4A. **POLICE FORCE AMALGAMATIONS AND MERGERS - RESPONSE TO KENT POLICE AND KENT POLICE AUTHORITY CONSULTATION**

   **Summary:**

   To bring to Members’ attention, the Home Office review of the number of Police Forces and the potential for the Kent Police Force to merge with another Force/s. To advise Members of the views of Kent Police and Kent Police Authority and to seek endorsement to the response to their consultation, sent by the Strategic Director on behalf of the Council.

   **Recommendations:**

   1. That Members endorse the response to the Kent Police and Kent Police Authority consultation, sent by the Strategic Director on behalf of the Council.
ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION IN PUBLIC

5. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE CABINET ADVISORY PANEL HELD ON 18 OCTOBER 2005

6. Reference from Committees

6A. REFERENCE FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL: QUALITY SERVICES COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2004 - 2005

Summary:

1 To review the activities detailed in the Annual Report of the Quality Services Committee for the 2004 – 2005 municipal year (Appendix A) and in particular:

(i) To consider actions taken as a result of the recommendations made by the Tourism and Heritage Working Group, which were subsequently endorsed by Cabinet on 25 November 2004.

(ii) That the final report from Development Including Executive and Affordable Housing Working Group is still outstanding.

2 To review the frequency of Quality Services Committee meetings.

Recommendations:

1 That Members consider the Annual Report of the Quality Services Committee for the 2004-05 municipal year and propose any comments or matters to be referred to the Quality Services Committee.

2 That actions taken in fulfilment of the Cabinet resolutions on 25 November 2004, be noted and considered.

3 That the Quality Services Committee be asked to address the absence of a final report from the Development Including Executive and Affordable Housing Working Group.

4 That no change be proposed to the frequency of meetings
of the Quality Services Committee and that the Committee’s Work Programme be noted.

6B. REFERENCE FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, MEETING 14 SEPTEMBER 2005-ISSUES RELATING TO OUT OF HOURS SERVICE/NOISE NUISANCE

Summary:

To consider the request of the Scrutiny Committee regarding the reintroduction of the out of hours call out service, as soon as possible.

Recommendation:

To consider the view of the Scrutiny Committee that a call out service be reintroduced as soon as circumstances permit, in the light of resources available.

A - Strategies, Policies, Key Decisions, Consultations

7. CONSULTATION DOCUMENT : SOUTH EAST PLAN : EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN KENT

Summary:

On 5 September the County Council and Medway Council published a consultation document on the planning advice to be given to the South East England Regional Assembly. This report seeks to present a summary of the main points of the Consultation Document and suggests a response.

Recommendations:

1. That the Council thanks Kent County Council and Medway Council for the opportunity to comment on the Consultation Document.

2. That the comments set out in the emboldened text of this report be submitted as the formal response of the Council to the content of the Consultation Document.

8. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

Summary:
1. The Medium Term Financial Plan is approved by the Council at the budget meeting in February/March each year. It is updated throughout the year for known changes and reported to Members in the Autumn, to set the scheme for the following year’s budget.

2. The report will consider the national picture for local government finance, comment on the likely grant settlement for 2006/7 and make recommendations for the 2006/7 budget strategy.

Recommendation:

1. That Members note the report.

2. That Members approve the letter to the Minister for Local Government, attached as Appendix B to the report.

9. **HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE TARIFFS**

Summary:

Under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council is empowered to fix Hackney Carriage fares to operate within the Borough. A review is usually carried out annually and, historically, any changes in fares are introduced in November or December. The report offers three proposals for an increase in the Hackney Carriage Fare Tariffs for Members’ consideration.

Recommendation:

That the Hackney Carriage fare structure, detailed in Appendix E of the report, proposed by Enforcement and Regulatory Services be implemented by 30 November 2005.

10. **CONCESSIONARY FARES**

Summary:

The Government announced, as part of the 2005 budget, that from April 2006 the statutory half fare scheme will become a free scheme.
The report considers the operational and financial implications of this for the Council.

Recommendation:

That, subject to full re-imbursement of additional costs by the Government, the Council adopts a free countywide concessionary fare scheme from 1 April 2006.

B - Non-Key Decisions, Monitoring Reports

11. **DARTFORD CRICKET CLUB**

Summary:

To seek approval for a capital grant to Dartford Cricket Club which will allow the club to improve facilities and the security of its pavilion and to bring the facilities to a standard which will allow its youth development to continue.

Recommendations:

1. That Members approve a capital grant of £30,000 to assist Dartford Cricket Club in bringing its pavilion facilities to a standard that ensures the club’s continued youth development work and its efforts to raise the profile of cricket in Borough.

2. That Members authorise the Regeneration Director, in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Grants, to agree the terms for the capital grant.

3. That officers be authorised to assist Dartford Cricket Club actively in developing a bid to external funding organisations, to ensure that the club has the full range of facilities needed to continue providing youth development opportunities.

12. **PRINCES PARK STADIUM PROGRESS REPORT**

Summary:

To advise Members of the actions taken to enable a start on site to
be made in November 2005.

Recommendation:

That Members note the current position and the proposed start date for construction works.

13. **J & E HALLS BOWLS CLUB - INVESTIGATION INTO RELOCATION TO STONE LODGE**

Summary:

1. To provide an update on the present position and feasibility study into the provision of a new bowling green, pavilion and associated facilities at Stone Lodge.

2. To seek approval for action to be taken to bring forward this new project.

Recommendations:

1. That Members note the results of the feasibility study.

2. That authority be granted to the Project Director to proceed with the project at an estimated cost not exceeding that contained in the confidential appendix.

3. That in order to take the project forward authority be granted for the Council to enter into separate contracts with the existing design team and cost consultants for the Judokwai project and that these contracts be on terms to be agreed by the Project Director in consultation with the Head of Legal Services.

4. That authority be granted to the Project Director, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader of the Council, to submit a planning application once the design work has been completed.

14. **POWDER MILL LANE - RE-NAMING OF SECTIONS DUE TO STOPPING UP ORDERS**

Summary:
To update Members on the outcome of discussions with the management of Questor Industrial Estate and the Kent Fire and Rescue Service regarding the implementation of the stopping-up order and to propose a consequential re-naming of sections of Powder Mill Lane.

Recommendation:

That Members determine which of the proposals to adopt for re-naming one or other of the two sections of Powder Mill Lane shown in red and green on the map at Appendix B and that Officers be authorised to make the necessary Orders.

15. KENT AND MEDWAY STRUCTURE PLAN - CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

Summary:

To inform Members of the content of the Proposed Modifications to the Kent and Medway Structure Plan and provide a basis for deciding whether any representations should be made.

Recommendations:

1. That Cabinet note the contents of the report.

2. That Cabinet respond to KCC on the basis set out in the main body of the report.

16. PREPARATION OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR DARTFORD : SUBMISSION DRAFT STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Summary:

To inform Members of the results of the consultation on the submission Statement of Community Involvement and recommends changes to be put to the Planning Inspectorate.

Recommendations:

1. That Members agree the proposed changes set out in Appendix B to be put to the Planning Inspectorate and recommend its content to the General Assembly of the Council.
for approval.

2 That the Policy Manager/Planning Policy Manager be granted delegated approval in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Planning to respond to or clarify any matters raised by the examination inspector.

3 That respondents be thanked for commenting and be advised of the changes when approved by the General Assembly of the Council.

17. OAKFIELD LANE CHILDREN'S CENTRE DARTFORD

Summary:

To seek Members' approval for Dartford Borough Council to take a ground lease from Kent County Council on behalf of Surestart-Dartford at Oakfield Lane Infants' School, Dartford as shown by a thick black verge, for identification purposes only, on the plan attached as Appendix A to the report.

Recommendations:

1 That Members agree to the Council taking a ground lease at Oakfield Lane Infants' School Dartford on behalf of Surestart-Dartford.

2 That Members grant delegated authority to the Head of Finance and Resources in consultation with the Project Director and the Head of Legal Services to negotiate and agree lease terms.

18. THE A2/A282 DARTFORD IMPROVEMENT (M25 JUNCTION 2 IMPROVEMENTS) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER PART 2 (MP NO 41) 2005

Summary:

1 To declare the parcel of land (Plot 2/2 [0.29 hectare]), forming part of Darenth Country Park east of Green Street Green Road and on the north of the A2 Trunk Road surplus to the Council's requirements, as shown by a thick black verge, for identification purposes only, on the plan attached as Appendix A to this report.
This land is held as public open space and therefore any proposed disposal will be advertised in the local press for two weeks. Any objections received will be reported to Cabinet at a later date.

To approve the exchange of the parcel of land (Plot 2/2 [0.29 hectare]) forming part of Darenth Country Park east of Green Street Green Road and on the north of the A2 Trunk Road for the lands (Plots 4/1 [0.8 hectare] and 4/2 [0.05 hectare]) east of green Street Green Road and on the north of the A2 Trunk Road hatched black, for identification purposes only, on the plan attached as Appendix B

Recommendations:

1. That Cabinet declares the parcel of land (Plot 2/2 [0.29 hectare]), shown by black verge on the plan attached as Appendix A forming part of Darenth Country Park east of Green Street Green Road and on the north of the A2 Trunk Road, surplus to the Council’s requirements as it falls within the A2/A282 (M25 Junction 2) Improvement Compulsory Purchase Order Part 2 (MP No 41) 2005.

2. That Members note that the parcel of land (Plot 2/2 [0.29 hectare]) is held as public open space. Any representations will be reported to a future meeting.

3. That the Head of Finance and Resources be granted delegated authority to agree terms for the two parcels of land (Plot 4/1 [0.8 hectare] and 4/2 [0.05 hectare]) for the exchange of land (Plot 2/2 [0.29 hectare]) in consultation with the Project Director, the Head of Legal Services and the Regeneration Director.

19. **REMOVAL OF RESIDENTIAL PARKING SCHEMES AT HOPE COTTAGES AND GORE ROAD**

Summary:

1. To advise Members of the result of consultation undertaken with the residents of Hope Cottages and Gore Road relating to the continuation of residents parking schemes in their respective roads.

2. To seek Members’ approval for the termination of the residents’ parking schemes in Hope Cottages and Gore Road
by obtaining the appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders, in accordance with the wishes expressed by the majority of residents in the respective roads.

Recommendation:

That Members approve the termination of the residents parking schemes currently in operation at Hope Cottages, Bean and Gore Road, Darenth, by obtaining and implementing the appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders.

20. THE ORCHARD THEATRE BUDGET MONITORING

MD
(Pages 295 - 300)

Summary:

To update Members on financial performance against budget to the end of July for 2005/06 for The Orchard Theatre and provide Members with an early indication of the Theatre’s overall budgetary position at the end of the current financial year.

Recommendation:

1. That the financial performance compared to budget to date in 2005/06, for The Orchard Theatre, be noted.

2. That the early indication of the end of year budgetary position be noted.

C - Items for Information, noting, endorsing

21. ENVIRONMENTAL PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

MD
(Pages 301 - 324)

Summary:

To update Members on activities undertaken this year to promote a range of energy efficiency, environmental awareness and waste reduction schemes both internally and across the borough.

The report also recommends actions that the Council could undertake to raise environmental awareness, increase take-up of Council-funded schemes and to promote the Council as a community
leader in this area.

Recommendations:

1. That Members note the Environmental Promotion Activities undertaken to date and planned in the current financial year 2005-06

2. That Members note the proposal to introduce an Environmental Statement to show a commitment to protect and enhance the environment for Dartford Borough Council.

22. MEETING OF DARTFORD ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2005

Summary:

To present to Cabinet the notes of the meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils held on 19 September 2005.

Recommendation:

That the notes of the meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils, held on 19 September 2005, be considered and noted.

Exclusion of the Press and Public

TO RESOLVE: That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

D - Items for Consideration in Private

A. REPORT OF THE NORTH KENT INVESTMENT UPDATE REVIEW WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2005 Exempt Category SO46 (1) Annex 1, Paragraph 9

Summary:

To present the unconfirmed notes of the meeting of the North Kent Investment Update Review Working Group held on 6 October 2005, attached as Appendix A.
Recommendation:

That the unconfirmed notes of the meeting of the North Kent Investment Update Review Working Group held on 6 October 2005 be considered and noted.

B. LAND ADJACENT TO 11 DARENTH ROAD DARTFORD
Exempt Category SO46 (1) (b) Annex 1, Paragraph 9

Summary:

Dartford Borough Council owns a small area of land adjacent to No 11 Darenth Road, as shown on the plan attached as Appendix A to this report. The land was formerly used as public car parking in association with the adjacent Darenth Road car park, which is no longer in existence due to Fastrack.

Various requests to purchase or lease the land have been made to the Council for use as private car parking. Officers requested bids from all interested parties for a lease of the land. This report outlines the bids received and seeks Members’ approval to the leasing of the land.

Recommendation:

That the land as shown on the plan attached as Appendix A to the report be leased on the terms attached as Appendix B to the report or on such other terms as may be agreed by the Head of Finance and Resources in consultation with the Project Director and the Head of Legal Services.

C. EXEMPT APPENDIX - ITEM 12 - PRINCES PARK STADIUM PROGRESS REPORT
Exempt Category SO46 (1) (b) Annex 1, Paragraph 9

This appendix has been placed on the closed part of the agenda because it contains exempt information within the category contained in Standing Order 46 (1) (b) Annex 1, Paragraph 9, namely, any terms to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for the supply of goods or services.

D. EXEMPT APPENDIX - ITEM 13 - J & E HALLS BOWLS CLUB - INVESTIGATION INTO RELOCATION TO STONE LODGE
Exempt Category SO46 (1) Annex 1, Paragraph 9

This Appendix has been placed on the closed part of the agenda because it contains exempt information within Standing Order 46 (1) (b) Annex 1, paragraph 9 namely, any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a
contract for the acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.

E. EXEMPT APPENDIX - ITEM 17 - OAKFIELD LANE CHILDREN'S CENTRE DARTFORD Exempt Category SO46 (1) (b) Annex 1 Paragraph 9

This appendix has been placed on the closed part of the agenda because it contains exempt information, within the category contained in Standing Order 46 (1) (b) Annex 1 Paragraph 9, namely any terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.

F. EXEMPT APPENDIX - ITEM 20 - ORCHARD THEATRE BUDGET MONITORING Exempt Category SO46 (1) (b) Annex 1, Paragraph 7

This appendix has been placed on the closed part of the agenda because it contains exempt information within the categories contained in Standing Order 46 (1) (b) Annex 1, Paragraph 7 namely information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (other than the authority).
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DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

MINUTES of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Thursday 22 September 2005.

PRESENT: Councillor J A Kite (Vice-Chairman, in the Chair)
Councillor A D Allen
Councillor R G A Dunn
Councillor A R Martin
Councillor B E Read
Councillor Mrs P A Thurlow

99. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Councillor K F M Leadbeater.

100. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors A R Martin and B E Read declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 15 – Urban Community Chest Phase 2, as they are members of the Urban Programme Working Group.

Councillor B E Read declared a Personal Interest in Agenda Item 6 - Reference from North Kent Investment Update Review Working Group and in Agenda Item 15 - Urban Community Chest Phase 2, as he is a Town Councillor for Swanscombe and Greenhithe.

101. URGENT ITEMS

The Chairman reported that submission of the following urgent items had been authorised:

4 LEADERSHIP OF KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
4(i) KIDD LEGACY
G LOWFIELD STREET DISPOSALS: FAIRFIELD POOL (EXEMPT ITEM)

102. MR BOB PENNY

Mr Bob Penny, Regeneration Manager, was moving shortly to Colchester Borough Council.

The Cabinet expressed appreciation of Mr Penny’s dedicated and professional service to the Borough. He had been asked to deal with complex and important issues for the Council, which he had dealt with extremely well, and he had been praised highly by the staff within his team.
Members hoped that Mr Penny would stay in contact with the Council and invited him to attend the opening of the Skate Park, a project which he had been instrumental in seeing through.

Mr Penny replied that he had enjoyed his time at Dartford, expressed his appreciation for the staff and teams he had led and thanked Members for their comments.

103. CHANGE OF AGENDA ORDER

The Chairman advised Members that, due to the public interest in Agenda Item 17 – Millstone Close and the attendance of the Groundwork Kent Thames-side representative for Agenda Item 14 – Dartford Marshes, he proposed to change the agenda order.

RESOLVED:

That Agenda Item 17 – Milestone Close and Agenda Item 14 – Dartford Marshes, be taken as the first items of business.

104. FLOODING AT MILLSTONE CLOSE, SUTTON-AT-HONE

The report advised Members of the action that had been taken in relation to flood defences at Millstone Close following the report to Cabinet on 31 March 2005.

The Cabinet Advisory Panel had requested that further information be produced with regard to maintenance and servicing costs, and that the issue of poor television aerial reception at Millstone Close be investigated.

Residents were now in agreement with the Officer recommendation for a Bronze Standard of maintenance. Residents had requested that an annual meeting be held with the Council Officers, following the servicing of the pumps, to review the position.

Residents had been concerned with the quality of the environment in the area since the flooding, and felt that this had been made worse by work recently carried out by Council Contractors without consultation with local residents.

The Cabinet supported the suggestion that an annual meeting be held and undertook to investigate what environmental works had been carried out, and to inform the residents accordingly.

Members were pleased that a survey was to be carried out with regard to the poor television reception at Millstone Close, and suggested that the contractor visit the properties in the evenings and at weekends to ensure that they could gain access to all the properties affected.

RESOLVED:
(1) That the action taken in relation to the pumping station at Millstone Close, following the report on 31 March 2005, be noted.

(2) That the pumping stations at Millstone Close, Birch Place, Jagger Close/Nursery Close and Tallents Close be serviced annually to the Bronze Standard, subject to biennial review to ensure that this is cost effective.

(3) That the owners of former Council properties be asked to pay for the costs incurred in servicing the pumping stations referred to in recommendation (2) above, and associated running costs, i.e. electricity and telephone charges, for a period of five years, based on the principle that costs be shared by all who benefit from the installation.

(4) That the costs of maintenance, which are in addition to the servicing charges, not be passed on to residents for a period of five years, when this recommendation will be reviewed in the light of expenditure incurred.

(5) That the remit of the Flood Defence Action Group set up after 1 January 2003 be extended to include the recovery of the quality of the environment at Millstone Close.

(6) That a covenant to pay a Service Charge for Grounds Maintenance or any other reasonable cost be imposed on all future freehold sales of Council-owned properties.

(7) That the Council convene an annual meeting with local residents to monitor the service contract. The meeting should be held each year at the conclusion of the annual servicing of the pumps and be attended by an appropriate Council officer.

(8) That Officers investigate what environmental works were carried out at Millstone Close and that residents be informed accordingly.

105. DARTFORD MARSHES

The report informed Members of the acquisition of former NHS Estates land and the programme of works being undertaken by Groundwork Kent Thames-side to secure the site, provide public access and commence the restoration of this important grazing marsh.

The Cabinet welcomed Mr P Conrad from Groundwork Kent Thames-side, who was invited to the meeting following the concerns raised by the Cabinet Advisory Panel relating to the safety of the site.

Mr Conrad advised that Groundwork were not trying to restrict access to the Dartford Marshes. There had been a misunderstanding about the position. He explained that there were a number of issues, such as risks to persons from unauthorised motorbikes, grazing horses and hazardous fly tipping. Groundwork will support Council/Mayoral events such as a charity walk.
Mr Conrad advised that Groundwork valued its relationship with the Council and wanted to work with the Council to encourage a wide range of users of this unique bio-diverse site. It was hoped that the Council will take up Groundwork’s offer to hold a walk for members of the public, with the possibility of voluntary contributions being made to the Mayor’s Charity.

The Cabinet referred to recent reports in the local press that the Member of Parliament for Dartford supported proposals for development of stadium and hospitality facilities at Dartford Marshes, with a view to bringing the 2012 Olympic shooting competition to North Kent. Mr Conrad advised that although he had not seen details of the proposals, it was general principle that built development was not compatible with delicate wildlife and natural habitat such as that to be found at Dartford Marshes. He confirmed that Dartford Marshes was regarded as a site of national environmental importance.

Members asked officers to seek further clarification from the MP and requested a report to the Cabinet.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the acquisition of the former NHS Estates land at Dartford Marshes, secured with the assistance of English Partnerships, be noted.

(2) That the vision for Dartford Marshes be endorsed as follows:

- Restoration of historic grazing marsh habitat / landscape
- Restoration of historic features
- High quality access linking new and existing communities to the marsh and the Thames
- A secure site with an absence of anti-social behaviour (illegal motorbike riding and fly-tipping)
- A high level of stakeholder and community engagement with Dartford Marshes and the Managing the Marshes project

(3) That the works being carried out on Dartford Marshes with funding from the recent acquisition, and the future proposals being developed in conjunction with Groundwork Kent Thames-side and the Dartford Marshes Steering Group, be noted.

(4) That, following the recent report in the press relating to potential development at the Dartford Marshes aimed at bringing the 2012 Olympics to North Kent, the Member of Parliament for Dartford be asked to clarify his views and that Cabinet receive a further report.

106. LEADERSHIP OF KENT COUNTY COUNCIL

The report advised Members of the resignation of Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart as Leader of Kent County Council with effect from 12 October 2005.
The Cabinet expressed regret that Sir Sandy had resigned as Leader of Kent County Council following that Authority’s excellent achievements, but were pleased that he will continue with his position as Chairman of the Local Government Association and more particularly as Chairman of the Kent Thameside Delivery Board.

Members were advised that the new Leader of the County Council will be appointed at a special meeting of the County Council on 12 October 2005.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the resignation of Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart as Leader of Kent County Council, with effect from 12 October 2005, be noted.

(2) That the Leader be requested to write to Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart, thanking him for his positive leadership of Kent and his support for and contribution to Dartford.

(3) That the Council consider making an appropriate tribute to Sir Sandy Bruce-Lockhart for his achievements as Leader of Kent County Council, following the completion of the election of a new Leader.

107. KIDD LEGACY

The report had been accepted by the Chairman as an urgent item in view of the need to transfer parkland to the Kidd Legacy to resolve the trust issues.

The report sought to resolve the disentanglement of maintenance and income issues which had arisen following the disposal of land to St James’ Investments Ltd as part of the Lowfield Street regeneration scheme.

Members noted that the land disposed of in 2004 was neglected, dilapidated and frequently subjected to vandalism and dumping whilst the land now offered in exchange is more appropriate for recreational use and the aims of the Kidd Legacy.

RESOLVED:

(1) That, having considered the advice of the external valuer, the Council in its capacity as local authority landowner offer to the Council, acting as Charitable Trustee, 0.22 acres of land at Central Park Dartford, coloured yellow on the plan at Appendix A to the report.

(2) That the offer be conditional on the results of the public consultation on the disposal, the Charitable Trustee impressing on the land the charitable purposes of the Kidd Legacy and the Charitable Trustee assuming maintenance responsibility for the land.
(3) That, subject to the Charitable Trustee acceptance of the offer, the proposed disposal be advertised pursuant to Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972 (from the Council as local authority landowner to the Council as Charitable Trustee).

(4) That the current position regarding income and expenditure on the Kidd Legacy land be noted, and that the Council await further guidance from the Charity Commission.

(5) That the Head of Legal Services be granted delegated authority, in consultation with the Managing Director, to incur such legal and surveyors’ fees as are necessary to resolve matters associated with the Kidd Legacy and that Cabinet receive a report on the conclusion of the matter.

108. REFERENCE FROM NORTH KENT INVESTMENT UPDATE REVIEW WORKING GROUP MEETING 1 SEPTEMBER 2005

The report sought Members’ approval for the recommendations made by the North Kent Investment Update Review Working Group at their meeting held on 1 September 2005.

The Regeneration Director advised that, following the comments made by the Cabinet Advisory Panel, the minutes of the meeting held on 1 September 2005 had now been circulated.

The Regeneration Director advised that the Kent Thameside Delivery Board proposed to finalise the Project Framework Submission for the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister at its meeting on 24 January 2006, and not at its meeting on 18 October 2005 as anticipated. This will give the Council more time to review their priorities. However it is still anticipated that the Kent Thameside Delivery Board will receive a progress report on 18 October 2005, and the Council’s comments in advance of this meeting will be welcomed.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the recommendations arising from the meeting of the North Kent Investment Update Review Working Group held on 1 September 2005, be noted.

(2) That a further meeting of the North Kent Investment Update Review Working Group be held on 6 October 2005.

(3) That, following the meeting of the North Kent Investment Update Review Working Group, the Regeneration Director, in consultation with the Leader, prepare comments to be presented to the Kent Thameside Delivery Board prior to its meeting on 18 October 2005.
109. CABINET ADVISORY PANEL - 13 SEPTEMBER 2005

The Cabinet received the minutes of the Cabinet Advisory Panel held on 13 September 2005 and took note of the Panel’s views throughout the meeting.

110. CORPORATE PLAN

The report sought approval for revisions to the Dartford Borough Council Corporate Plan. The Council needed to move towards longer-term planning, improved performance management and improved risk management. Work had therefore been carried out to refine further priority corporate themes, to focus on SMART targets and to revise the Service Plan process.

This is a Key Decision, as it requires an in-year amendment to the policy framework

RESOLVED:

(1) That the proposed revisions to the Corporate Plan be agreed.

(2) That the Corporate Plan be referred to the General Assembly of the Council for adoption.

(3) That the Managing Director, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, be granted delegated authority to carry out any necessary changes to targets in the SMART Results Focused Targets, as set out in Appendix A of the report.

(4) That an additional action point be included under the Environment theme to read;

To work with partners to make Dartford a safer place to live, work and visit.

111. HOUSING STRATEGY 2004-2007 AND BUSINESS PLAN 2005-2010

RESOLVED:

That this item be withdrawn from the agenda.

112. DRAFT DEMOTED TENANCIES POLICY

The report advised Members that the draft Demoted Tenancies Policy had been formulated in line with Part 2 of the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003. This will allow the Council to apply to the Courts to reduce the security of tenure for an existing tenant, thus providing means of deterring anti-social behaviour.

This is a Key Decision, as it establishes new policy outside the agreed policy framework.
The Cabinet Advisory Panel had welcomed this change to policy, which they felt would be a powerful tool to use against tenants who engaged in anti-social behaviour.

This view was agreed by the Cabinet, who supported the recommendation that a wide public consultation be carried out on the Policy.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That, subject to wide public consultation, which should include the local community and Parish and Town Councils, the draft Demoted Tenancy Policy be agreed.


113. **DARENT VALLEY PATH**

The report advised Members of the outcome of the Feasibility Study for the Darent Valley Path and sought endorsement for the Action Plan.

Members discussed the importance of the Darent Valley Path which, in their view, was ‘the spine of the Borough’ and must be protected. They drew attention to the huge variety of urban, rural and natural landscapes to be found along the length of the Path.

The Regeneration Director advised that the Cabinet were being asked to agree the priority of projects set out in the Action Plan but that changes to the programme could be made as the project moved forward.

**RESOLVED:**

1. That the comments made by the Cabinet Advisory Panel on 13 September 2005, and by Cabinet, on the report and the Action Plan for the Darent Valley Path be taken into account before the final report is produced.

2. That the list of priorities set out within the Darent Valley Path Feasibility Study Action Plan be agreed.

3. That Officers seek external funding sources to meet the priorities set out in the Darent Valley Path Feasibility Study Action Plan.

4. That receipt by the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils of a copy of the report at their meeting held on 19 September 2005 be noted.
(5) That the Cabinet receive a further report on the Darent Valley Path Feasibility Study Action Plan, following consultation with the local community and Members.

(6) That a walk for Members be arranged on the Darent Valley Path.

114. THE BRIDGE

The report updated Members on the present position regarding The Bridge development project and the current position of work on the site which had commenced on 5 September 2005.

The Project Director advised that the schedule of programme of works, which he hoped to table at the meeting, was too cumbersome to reproduce for Members. However he had requested that the contractor produce a document setting out the key milestones for Members’ information in due course.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the now unconditional Development Agreement with Prologis Developments Limited, and the commencement on 5 September 2005 of infrastructure works, be noted.

(2) That further progress reports be brought to the Cabinet as appropriate.

115. KENT THAMESIDE DELIVERY EXECUTIVE: UPDATE ON ACTIVITIES

The report provided Members with an update on the initiatives which are currently being under taken by the Kent Thameside Delivery Executive.

The Scrutiny Committee, at their meeting on 15 September 2005, had discussed the Kent Thameside Delivery Board (KTDB). They reiterated the Cabinet Advisory Panel’s concerns, and resolved that the acting Chief Executive of the KTDB be approached to arrange seminars covering the following topics:

- Green Grid
- Ebbsfleet
- Kent Thameside Heritage
- Strategic Flood Risk to Regeneration Proposals.

The Managing Director advised that the KTDB was reviewing its functions and would be making changes, which he hoped would address the concerns raised by Members.

The Managing Director advised that, following the Panel’s enquiry about the appointment of the Kent Architecture Centre as a training supplier, he had investigated the appointment and had been advised that the appointment had been made by English Heritage.
RESOLVED:

That the initiatives which are currently being undertaken by the Kent Thameside Delivery Executive be noted

116. HOUSING SERVICE - INSPECTION BY AUDIT COMMISSION

The report advised that the Audit Commission was to carry out an inspection of the Housing Service, following the issues which were identified during the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA).

Members noted that this will be a helpful report, although the absence of Senior Officers will add immense pressure to the housing service. External resources may be required.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the Audit Commission’s proposed inspection of the Housing Service, commencing on site on 28 November 2005, be noted.

(2) That the review of Introductory Tenancies be deferred until March 2006, to allow staff to concentrate on preparation for, and completion of, the Inspection process.

(3) That, in view of the workload implications of preparing for the Inspection and the staffing demands during the anticipated seven days that the Inspectors will be in the Civic Centre, the target dates for Housing Services priorities/objectives/activities be reviewed, to establish whether any rescheduling is required.

117. URBAN COMMUNITY CHEST PHASE 2

The report provided a brief summary of the achievements of Phase 1 Community Chest and sought confirmation of Dartford Borough Council’s involvement in Phase 2 of the Community Chest Project.

The Cabinet Advisory Panel were concerned that a number of projects and groups targeted the same participants. It was felt that in some cases funding one overarching group could better serve the community, reduce duplication, cut overhead costs and improve sustainability of funded organisations.

Members discussed funding being sought for Urban Community Chest Phase 2 from the Kent Thameside Economic Board and agreed that the Community Chest was not the most appropriate funding source. The Council is already a funding partner of the Board, whose objectives are targeted at business development and economic growth, and Members felt that Community Fund resources might be better applied to local community projects.
The Cabinet supported the recommendation of the Panel.

RESOLVED:

(1) That a contribution of £14,000 to the Urban Community Chest Phase 2 be agreed, but that the Council’s funding contribution to the Community Chest be reduced by an amount matching any contribution received from the Kent Thameside Economic Board.

(2) That the Council will continue to act as Accountable Body for the second phase of the scheme.

118. KENT LOCAL AREA AGREEMENT

Members were updated on the progress with the Kent Local Area Agreement, in particular the outcomes which have been agreed, the proposed distribution of Performance Reward Grant and the next steps to be taken.

The report advised that 18 Local Area Agreement outcomes had been agreed with the Government, and four had been directly assigned to District Councils. The Council will ensure that these designated outcomes, which will be led by Kent County Council, are a priority for Dartford and reflect the Council’s own targets.

Work is on-going on the development of the draft Outcomes Delivery Plans, and on the proposed formula for distributing the Performance Reward Grant. Once this has been completed, the Council will be in a position to give a final signature to the agreement.

RESOLVED:

That the current position with regard to the Kent Local Area Agreement be noted.

119. PLANNING DELIVERY GRANT 2005-06

The report advised that the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister had announced the award of Planning Delivery Grant to local planning authorities for 2005/6. Dartford had been awarded £323,768 and the report sought approval for the use of the Planning Delivery Grant in 2005/6.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the proposals for use of the Planning Delivery Grant for 2005/06 be endorsed, including the allocation of £81k for capital purposes

(2) That delegated authority be granted to the Managing Director to agree the necessary revenue and capital virements.
120. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING - 2005/06

The report updated Members on financial performance against budget to the end of July 2005/06 for the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Identified Initiatives Reserve.

The Chairman advised that, following the extensive management action taken in response to the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, the Housing Revenue Account was projected to achieve a surplus of £1m in 2005/2006 which was available to help fund the Decent Homes Capital Programme.

RESOLVED:

(1) That financial performance compared against the budget to the end of July 2005/06, for the General Fund, the Housing Revenue Account and the Identified Initiatives Reserve, be noted.

(2) That the early indication of the end-of-year budgetary position be noted.

(3) That the virements above £10,000 approved under delegated authority, as detailed in Appendix B to the report, be noted.

(4) That the following virements for the General Fund and Revenue Account be approved:

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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Increased Expenditure £</th>
<th>Increased Income £</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CITIZENSHIP &amp; COMMUNITY</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Benefits Payments – Benefits &amp; Miscellaneous (Budget Book page 13)</td>
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<td>Land Drainage – Environment Agency Levy (Budget Book page 28)</td>
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### CABINET

**THURSDAY 22 SEPTEMBER 2005**

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<td><strong>LAND CHARGES</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>General Repairs Voids (Budget Book page 42)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Planned Repairs – Misc (Budget Book page 45)</td>
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</table>

(5) That Members seek approval from the General Assembly of the Council to increase the Housing Revenue Account expenditure budget by £1m, to fund a contribution to the capital programme.
121. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING 2005/2006


It was recommended that the budget for Stone Lodge Phase 2 be reduced in 2006/07. The Highways Agency continues to raise concern that highway capacity may be insufficient to support either the recreational proposals for Stone Lodge Phase 2 or enabling development at the former Fantaseas site. Members were frustrated to note that without Highways Agency approval the Council cannot proceed with phase 2 of this project. The Cabinet expressed hope that the Government would resolve highway capacity issues soon so that Stone Lodge Phase 2 can proceed and that capital for this and other valuable community projects will be released.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the progress of capital projects be noted.

(2) That the estimated capital resources available to fund the capital programme in 2005/6 and 2006/7, as detailed in Appendix B to the report, be noted.

(3) That the following virements to the capital budget be approved:

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<td>Swanscombe Old Library Conversion</td>
<td>(269,000)</td>
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<td>Fairfield Pool</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Orchard Theatre</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stone Lodge Phase 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stone Lodge Phase 2</td>
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<td>Recycling – Purchase of Containers</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
122. LICENSING OF HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION

The report advised of the new legislative controls with respect to a revised housing health and safety assessment regime and the licensing of Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO). The report identified the potential resource implications and sought authority for a virement to fund initial and essential work to establish the numbers of properties to be licensed and therefore the on-going operational resource implications and the fee level.

The Strategic Director advised that the post of temporary Technical Officer was at Grade F not Grade G as stated in the report.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the virement of £14,000 from the Identified Initiatives budget code A90587464 (Contaminated Land) to B70700110 (Private Sector Renewal salaries) be agreed.

(2) That the virement be used to fund a temporary Technical Officer (post STPE04) for 22 hours at Grade F and an additional 7 hours per week administrative support at Grade C (post PRIV06) until 31 March 2006, in order to identify the extent of Houses in Multiple Occupation that are likely to require mandatory or discretionary licensing under the Housing Act 2004.

(3) That budget code A90587464 (Contaminated Land) be replenished from future Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) licensing income.

123. BENEFITS UPDATE – PERFORMANCE STANDARDS REVIEW AND TAKE-UP STRATEGY

The report updated Members on the changes to the Department of Works and Pensions (DWP) “Performance Standards” from April 2005, provided the results of the recent full self-assessment against the new standards, and proposed a timetable for adherence to all standards.

The Strategic Director advised that one requirement of the new Performance Standards was that all Councils have a Take-Up Strategy for the Benefits Service. The report therefore also proposed a new Benefits Take-Up Strategy for adoption.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the significant changes to the Performance Standards be noted.

(2) That the timescales for full adherence to the new Performance Standards be agreed.

(3) That the new Benefits Take-Up Strategy be endorsed.
(4) That it be noted that the current processing targets are being met.

124. HUMAN RESOURCES UPDATE

The report updated Members on a variety of human resources issues, including establishment and turnover of staff, recruitment, the corporate training programme and Best Value Performance Indicators.

The Cabinet Advisory Panel had expressed disappointment that there had been no specific needs analysis of training for Members and were concerned that staff were being made to engage in the corporate training programme, which had created problems with service provision.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the contents of the report be noted.

(2) That Cabinet Members be provided with information on the corporate training programme for the year 2005/2006, including dates held and those participating.

125. DARTFORD JUDOKWAI PROJECT, STONE LODGE

Members were advised of the present position regarding the Judokwai Project. The report sought approval for improvement and extension of the existing car park fronting the Stone Lodge Indoor Bowls Club.

The Cabinet were advised that a foundation stone will be laid at the development on 12 October 2005.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the progress being made on the Judokwai Project be noted.

(2) That an amendment to the contract sum, to a figure not exceeding that contained in the exempt part of the report, be agreed.

(3) That works to enhance and extend the existing car park fronting the Stone Lodge Indoor Bowls Club, at a cost not to exceed the figure contained in the exempt part of the report, be approved.

126. SLURRY SEALING

The report advised of the decision taken by the Joint Transportation Board, at its meeting held on 8 September 2005, to abandon the use of slurry sealing as a low-cost protection for tarmac roads.

The Cabinet Advisory Panel had welcomed the decision taken by the Board following the disappointment which had been experienced with the service.
The Cabinet felt that the consultation undertaken with residents by Kent County Council Highways Department was unsatisfactory. Complaints had not been acknowledged and no remedial work had been undertaken.

The Cabinet resolved that the issue be referred to the Scrutiny Committee for investigation, with particular emphasis on the type of specification agreed by the County, the County’s monitoring process and the possibility of recovery by the Borough of costs from the County.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the decision made by the Joint Transportation Board, to abandon slurry sealing in favour of a higher quality solution for the protection of tarmac roads in the Borough of Dartford, be welcomed.

(2) That disappointment with the Highways Authority’s response to correspondence from residents, and its failure to remedy the problem with slurry sealing, be noted and that the Highways Authority be asked to resolve outstanding issues as a matter of urgency.

(3) That the Scrutiny Committee investigate the issue of slurry sealing, in particular to what standard the work should have been carried out, the monitoring of the quality of work, and the possibility of recovery of cost by the Council.

127. PRINCES PARK

Members were provided with an update on the present position regarding the Princes Park development.

The Project Director advised that the objections raised by the Highways Agency had now been withdrawn. Archaeology evaluation work had been carried out on the site and evidence of occupation during the Iron Age/Roman Transitional Period had been found. This will cause a delay in the project and additional consultancy costs.

Members felt that the Golf Club members should be advised that the facilities might have to be closed temporarily, if health and safety issues arise during the construction works.

The Managing Director agreed that this is necessary as the Club House will close on 30 September 2005. He advised this will be undertaken in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Portfolio Members.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the present position of the Princes Park development and the actions being taken to progress this project and to commence work on site be noted.
(2) That approval be given for a fixed price contract sum, with Jackson Construction Limited or an alternative contractor from the original short-listed tenderers, up to a figure not exceeding that contained in the exempt Appendix A to the report.

(3) That the possibility of a temporary closure of the golf facility, for an, as yet, undetermined period during the construction works be noted.

(4) That Officers write to the members of Princes Golf and Leisure Club, advising them that the Club House facilities are to close and of the possibility of a temporary closure of the golf facility during the construction work.

(5) That, pursuant to Standing Order 41(2) and for the reasons detailed in the exempt addendum to the report, Standing Order 69 be suspended.

(6) That a contract be granted to Oxford Archaeology to undertake further archaeological investigations at the site, at a figure not exceeding that contained in the exempt Addendum to the report.

128. OMBUDSMAN ANNUAL REPORT 2004/2005

The report informed Members of the Ombudsman’s Annual Letter 2004/2005 and provided statistical data of complaints determined by the Ombudsman against the Council covering a three year period.

The Head of Legal Services and the Managing Director had attended a meeting with the Local Government Ombudsman. They advised that the Ombudsman wanted to work with local authorities to investigate the volume of complaints that were being sent to the Ombudsman at a premature stage.

The Ombudsman wished to work proactively with councils to address any perceived difficulties through, for example, poorly drafted legislation. The Ombudsman will endeavour to pursue these issues with the appropriate bodies.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the favourable comments made by the Ombudsman in his Annual Letter 2004/2005 at Appendix A to the report, on the way in which the Council has dealt with complaints to date, be noted.

(2) That the statistical data (including the notes to assist interpretation) produced by the Ombudsman at Appendix B to the report, relating to the number of complaints referred to/dealt with by the Ombudsman covering a three year period from 2002 to 31 March 2005, be noted.

(3) That the increase in complaints to the Ombudsman, from 13 in 2003/2004 to 19 in 2004/2005, be noted.
129. NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF UPDATE

The report updated Members on the progress made in receiving and determining applications for Small Business Rate Relief and Discretionary Rate Relief, and advised of the responses from the Town and Parish Councils, indicating those businesses within the designated rural settlement area considered to provide critical services to residents.

RESOLVED:

That the position as at 10 August 2005, with regard to the support of potentially vulnerable businesses throughout the Borough, be endorsed and that the actions proposed to further promote take-up of Small Business Rate Relief be noted.

130. MINUTES FROM QUALITY SERVICES COMMITTEE - 27 JULY 2005

Members were presented with the Minutes (unconfirmed) of the meeting of the Quality Services Committee held on 27 July 2005.

RESOLVED:

That the Minutes (unconfirmed) of the meeting of the Quality Services Committee held on 27 July 2005 be noted.

131. MEETING OF DARTFORD ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS HELD ON 7 JUNE 2005

Members were presented with the notes of the meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils held on 7 June 2005.

RESOLVED:

That the notes of the meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils, held on 7 June 2005, be noted.

132. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

No members of the press or public were present during the discussion of the following items of business.
133. ACACIA HALL
(EXEMPT CATEGORY SO46 (1) (B) ANNEX 1 PARAGRAPHS 7, 8, 9 AND 12)

The report provided an update on the confidential operational, contractual and financial arrangements at Acacia Hall.

Members commented on accommodation issues at Acacia Hall and the financial position.

RESOLVED:

That the current position on the operational, contractual and financial arrangements at Acacia Hall be noted.

134. POWDER MILL LANE
(EXEMPT CATEGORY SO46 (1) (B) ANNEX 1 PARAGRAPH 9)

The report set out the position on the sale of land as agreed by the Cabinet on 20 September 2001 and the Stopping Up Order at Powder Mill Lane.

The Cabinet Advisory Panel had discussed the implications of the sale of the two parcels of land, which were a pre-requisite to the Stopping Up Order. Members felt, as previously agreed by Cabinet, that the name ‘Powder Mill Lane’ should be retained, despite the Emergency Services Code of Practice stating ‘if a road is severed, then the two parts must have separate names.’

The Strategic Director advised that access was the main problem for the emergency services, and this will hopefully be clarified shortly with the land owners (Questor). Furthermore, historical research had indicated that, of the many powder mills in this area, one to the north of the River Darent North sluice gate had been known as the North Mill. The Strategic Director suggested that Members might therefore be prepared to rename that section of Powder Mill Lane as ‘North Powder Mill Lane’ and that this would meet the needs of the emergency services. The Strategic Director also explained the new route of the footpath along Powder Mill Lane.

It was agreed that, until Questor had confirmed the method of stopping-up, the extent of the required name change remained uncertain. The Strategic Director and Head of Finance and Resources will undertake public consultation, if necessary, once the situation is clear.

RESOLVED:

(1) That the sale of the two parcels of land at Powder Mill Lane be approved on the terms outlined in Appendix 4, or on such other terms as may be agreed by the Head of Finance and Resources in consultation with the Project Director and the Head of Legal Services.
(2) That the sale of land be advertised in the local press and any representations reported to a future meeting.

(3) That the provision of a temporary alternative car park be approved.

(4) That, should it be deemed advisable to rename parts of Powder Mill Lane, that public consultation be undertaken, and a further report be submitted to Cabinet detailing the response to the consultation and the renaming proposals.

135. NATIONAL NON-DOMESTIC RATE RELIEF UPDATE
EXEMPT APPENDIX B

RESOLVED:

That the appendix be noted, following discussion of the main report (minute 129).

136. REFERENCE FROM NORTH KENT INVESTMENT UPDATE REVIEW WORKING GROUP MEETING 1 SEPTEMBER 2005 APPENDICES

RESOLVED:

That the appendix be noted, following discussion of the main report (minute 6).

137. DARTFORD JUDOWAI PROJECT, STONE LODGE EXEMPT APPENDIX B

RESOLVED:

That the appendix be noted, following discussion of the main report (minute 125).

138. PRINCES PARK EXEMPT APPENDIX

RESOLVED:

That the appendix be noted, following discussion of the main report (minute 127).
139.  **LOWFIELD STREET DISPOSALS: FAIRFIELD POOL**

This report advised of the proposed disposal of part of the land at Fairfield Pool to St James’ Investments Limited as part of the Lowfield Street Development Scheme.

**RESOLVED:**

(1) That the disposal of land (shown by black verge on the plan attached as Appendix A to the report) at the Fairfield Pool Lowfield Street to St James’ Investments Limited in accordance with the terms set out in the report be agreed

(2) That the Head of Legal Services be granted delegated authority to enter into agreements to give effect to the proposed disposal.

The meeting closed at 9.50pm

Councillor J A Kite
IN THE CHAIR
CABINET
27 OCTOBER 2005

POLICE FORCE AMALGAMATIONS AND MERGERS – RESPONSE TO KENT POLICE AND KENT POLICE AUTHORITY CONSULTATION

In accordance with Standing Order 48 (4 (b)) the Chairman has decided that this report should be considered as an urgent item at the meeting, in order that Members have the opportunity to consider the matter and make any further response prior to the Home Secretary’s deadline of 31 October.

1. Summary

To bring to Members’ attention, the Home Office review of the number of Police Forces and the potential for the Kent Police Force to merge with another Force/s. To advise Members of the views of Kent Police and the Kent Police Authority and to seek endorsement to the response to their consultation, sent by the Strategic Director on behalf of the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That Members endorse the response to the Kent Police and Kent Police Authority consultation, sent by the Strategic Director on behalf of the Council.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. There has been recent coverage in the media of the concern, expressed by Her Majesty’s Inspectorate of Constabulary (HMIC), that smaller Police Forces do not have the capacity or capability to provide an effective police service in the 21st century. This has prompted a review of the number of Police Forces, nationally, and raised the potential for mergers and amalgamations of Forces in order to create a fewer number of larger Forces.

3.2. The HMIC suggests that a Force requires 4,000 officers or 6,000 total staff to have sufficient critical mass to undertake the full range of policing duties. Kent Police fall below the first threshold but exceed the second.

3.3. The Kent Police and Kent Police Authority (KPA) have produced the paper at Appendix A, which gives further background to the review and a summary of the position which they intend to take towards the review. The paper has been sent to all local authorities in Kent, seeking their views and similar papers have been circulated to Parish Councils and voluntary and community organisations.
3.4. The timescale for the review and its implementation are extremely challenging. The Kent Police and KPA requested that comments be submitted to them by 21 October 2005, in order to inform their submission to the Home Secretary, which is required by 31 October 2005.

3.5. The Home Secretary will consider final recommendations by Christmas. Decisions are likely to be taken early in 2006 with implementation completed during 2007.

3.6. This timetable unfortunately precluded the matter being brought before Cabinet in advance of comments being submitted, but the Strategic Director, in consultation with the Managing Director and the Deputy Leader, Portfolio Member for Police Liaison, agreed the response attached at Appendix B. This was sent together with a covering communication which explained the lack of consultation with Members and alerted them to the possibility of further comments this week.

3.7. Members are asked to endorse this response and to make any further comments for onward submission.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The Environment Theme of the Corporate Plan undertakes “To work with partners to make Dartford a safer place to work, live and visit.” The Council works closely with the Police in order to make progress towards this aim.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

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6. Appendices

Appendix A Kent Police and KPA consultation
Appendix B Dartford Borough Council Response
### CABINET
27 OCTOBER 2005

#### BACKGROUND PAPERS

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Appendix B

Views of the Dartford Borough Council on Potential Police Force Amalgamation & Mergers

The Dartford Borough Council strongly supports the response of Kent Police and the Kent Police Authority. Setting any size threshold is to an extent, arbitrary and it would be particularly unfortunate if the policy of Kent Police to employ civilian staff to undertake administrative and support roles, thus releasing police officers for core policing duties, has made it more vulnerable to amalgamation under this review.

The Council is also firmly of the view that there needs to remain a strong element of local policing, rooted in the community, accountable to the community and dealing with the particular crime and disorder problems of that community. Amalgamation of Forces, potential regionalization could weaken community links and give rise to ‘homogenised’ policing.

The Council had been pleased with the outcome of the Programme 2015 review in Kent and agrees that it both maintains focus on local priorities and complements the wider agenda.

On the issue of costs, there is currently little information available on which to comment. However, the Council is extremely concerned at the potential implications for Council Tax precepts, and therefore the likely impact upon Kent residents, of mergers with others Forces, whose precepts may be higher than that set by the Kent Police Authority. It would be inequitable for our residents to effectively subsidise costs associated with services provided in another geographical area through higher Council Tax. Should the Government persist with their plans for mergers, and the Police precept increase as a result, this Authority will expect the Treasury to ensure that the Police Grant allocation to the newly merged Police Authority takes into account the detrimental impact on Kent/Dartford residents in terms of the additional precept they are very likely to have to pay, so that the financial impact of the merger on them is neutral.

I hope these comments are helpful, please do not hesitate to contact me if you require anything further and please keep us informed of developments.
DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET ADVISORY PANEL A

MINUTES of the meeting of the Cabinet Advisory Panel A held on 18 October 2005.

PRESENT:  Councillor K F M Leadbeater (Chairman)
           Councillor I D Armitt
           Councillor C Broadley
           Councillor D A Hammock
           Councillor D E Hunnisett (substituting for Councillor K J Fickling)
           Councillor A R Martin
           Councillor J I Muckle
           Councillor T C H Smith

ALSO PRESENT:  Councillor A D Allen

ABSENT:  Councillor D J Baker
         Councillor L J Bobby
         Councillor A R Brooker
         Councillor S R Bull
         Councillor F G Byrne
         Councillor R G A Dunn
         Councillor K J Fickling (Councillor D E Hunnisett substituting)
         Councillor D E Lawson
         Councillor M I Peters
         Councillor B E Read
         Councillor Mrs J A Rickwood
         Councillor T A Rogers

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors L J Bobby and K J Fickling (Councillor D E Hunnisett substituting).

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors A D Allen, I D Armitt and D E Hunnisett declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 14 – Powder Mill Lane – Re-naming of sections due to stopping-up orders, as they are Parish Councillors for Wilmington.

Councillor J I Muckle declared a personal prejudicial interest in Agenda Items 12 - Princes Park Stadium Progress Report and 13 – J & E Halls Bowls Club - investigation into relocation to Stone Lodge as
he is a member of Princes Golf and Leisure Club, J & E Halls Bowls Club and Stone Lodge Bowling Club.

Councillors I D Armitt and D E Hunnisett declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 17 – Oakfield Lane Children’s Centre Dartford, as they are Governors of Oakfield Lane Junior School.

Councillor T C H Smith declared a personal interest in Agenda Item 10 – Concessionary Fares, as his wife is a bus pass holder.

3. ITEMS RESERVED FOR DEBATE

The Chairman asked Members to indicate those items from sections B, C and D of the agenda to which they wished to speak.

Members selected the following items:

12. PRINCES PARK STADIUM PROGRESS REPORT

13. J & E HALLS BOWLS CLUB – INVESTIGATION INTO RELOCATION TO STONE LODGE

14. POWDER MILL LANE – RE-NAMING OF SECTIONS DUE TO STOPPING-UP ORDERS

17. OAKFIELD LANE CHILDREN’S CENTRE DARTFORD

19. REMOVAL OF RESIDENTIAL PARKING SCHEMES AT HOPE COTTAGES AND GORE ROAD

22. MEETING OF DARTFORD ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2005

A. REPORT OF THE NORTH KENT INVESTMENT UPDATE REVIEW WORKING GROUP MEETING HELD ON 6 OCTOBER 2005

(Exempt Category SO46 (1) (b) Annex 1, Paragraph 9)

Accordingly, Members endorsed officers’ recommendations in respect of items:

11. DARTFORD CRICKET CLUB

15. KENT AND MEDWAY STRUCTURE PLAN - CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

Members expressed displeasure with the quality of the reference report submitted for this item, as it contained inadequate information for Members to make a judgement on what was required to restore the out-of-hours service.

The Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee informed the Advisory Panel that there had been an interesting debate at the Scrutiny Committee meeting, with Members from both sides wishing to see the out-of-hours service restored. However, the content of the reference report did not assist in achieving this.

The Managing Director informed the Advisory Panel that the current situation had resulted from the re-organisation needed to meet additional responsibilities within the Licensing Section. There was also a nationwide scarcity of qualified Environmental Health Officers. The Council had recently been able to make offers of employment to four Environmental Health Officers and it was hoped that this would alleviate the problem.

Members debated the salient points of operating the out-of-hours service and concurred that the main difficulties were human resources and health and safety issues.

Recommendations to Cabinet:

1. That the Cabinet Advisory Panel sympathises with the views of the Scrutiny Committee concerning the level of service being provided to the public.
2 That, to enable Cabinet to give the matter adequate consideration, a more detailed report be provided by the Environmental Health Services Manager.

3 That the Managing Director, in consultation with the Head of Legal Services, reviews how Member Services provides “reference reports” to Cabinet.

7. CONSULTATION DOCUMENT: SOUTH EAST PLAN: EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN KENT.

Members were presented with a summary of the main points of the consultation document published by Kent County Council and Medway Council on the planning advice to be given to the South East England Regional Assembly.

The Chairman thanked the report author for a very competent response to the consultation document.

The Advisory Panel particularly welcomed the housing figure of 15,500 for Dartford, contained in the single housing option for Kent Thames Gateway, and was adamant that the Council should take a clear view that this figure be used as an absolute maximum.

Members welcomed the warning note contained in paragraph 3.24, concerning the possible release of land from the Green Belt in order to facilitate the delivery of housing on the scale indicated in the housing target for the borough’s rural area, south of the A2.

The response contained in paragraph 3.37, in relation to the proposal that planning permission should only be granted once clear funding commitments have been secured for all the necessary infrastructure may be inappropriate in the case of complex and expensive sites with a lead-in time of three to five years and a project delivery period of perhaps ten years, was also warmly endorsed by the Advisory Panel, although it was agreed that the last sentence in paragraph 3.37 needed to be worded more strongly.

During the debate, Members agreed that high density developments should not result in poor design or low quality developments. The Council’s current density limit of 50 dwellings per hectare was felt to be correct. To assist with maintaining this level, it will be useful for officers to supply the Development Control Board with implied densities for each major development when plans are submitted.

Members drew particular attention to the following issues and asked that officers make references to these in the response:
• Water supply / waste water capacity. It was felt that developers should be encouraged to include new infrastructures for this in their plans. Councillor T C H Smith drew the Planning Policy Manager’s attention to a new pressure group that had been formed to campaign for improved water supplies in Kent. Officers agreed to follow this up with regard to the Local Development Framework.

• Flood plains. The response by the Environmental Agency to representations made to them was unsatisfactory.

• Whether it was appropriate to include reference to other river usage.

The Advisory Panel requested that a re-drafted letter, incorporating the above comments, be sent to Parish/Town Council Chairmen and Clerks urging them to make appropriate responses.

Recommendations to Cabinet:

1  That the last sentence of paragraph 3.37 be replaced with “The South Eastern England Regional Assembly must face up to the reality that some major developments will not take place without significant funding contributions from government for infrastructure.”

2  That the recommendations in the report, to include the above, be endorsed.

8. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The report considered the national picture of local government finance and commented on the likely grant settlement for 2006/07.

Members were informed that the continued under-funding by Government of district council services had serious implications for the Annual Budget.

The Advisory Panel were informed that the letter to the Minister for Local Government will be presented to Cabinet.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That the report be noted.

9. HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE TARIFFS
The report made proposals for an increase in the Hackney Carriage Fare Tariffs. The Licensing Assistant advised that the date contained in paragraph 3.1 of the report should read 15 February 2005 and not 2004.

The Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager informed Members that correspondence had been received from Mr Peeke and Mr Jones, with a request that this correspondence be placed before Cabinet Advisory Panel and Cabinet Members.

Members discussed the options presented in the report and concurred that:

1. The letters received from Mr Peeke and Mr Jones be circulated to Cabinet Members as supplementary information.

2. That the report be circulated to Mr Peeke, Mr Jones, Mr Lafevre and the other members of the trade who had made representations.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That the recommendation in the report be endorsed.

10. CONCESSIONARY FARES

Members welcomed the report which considered the operational, and financial implications for the Council of the Government’s announcement that, from April 2006, the statutory half-fare scheme would become a free scheme.

The Head of Finance and Resources informed Members that the third option in paragraph 3.7 (to adopt the statutory scheme but offer as an alternative the current countrywide half fare scheme), was no longer felt to be feasible. It was also confirmed that Kent County Council supported and administered the county-wide scheme.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That the recommendation in the report be endorsed.

11. DARTFORD CRICKET CLUB

Members endorsed the recommendations in the report.

12. PRINCES PARK STADIUM PROGRESS REPORT
The Chairman asked the Project Director to give an oral update to the Advisory Panel, as the report was “To Follow”.

It was explained that, following the decision of the Cabinet on 22 September 2005, regarding this matter, lengthy and detailed negotiations had taken place with Jackson Construction Limited to arrive at an agreed contract price for the project. Negotiations had been finalised at the end of the previous week.

Following a risk assessment produced by the Council's Project Managers and Cost Consultants, AYH plc., the Managing Director had agreed that a letter of intent be issued to Jackson Construction Limited enabling them to ensure the start of works on site on 14 November 2005.

It was confirmed that this action was taken to endeavour to meet the target date for the opening of the stadium in July 2006. It was pointed out, however, that, due to the archaeological investigations beginning on 10 October 2005, the artificial pitch may be delayed beyond that date.

Members welcomed and noted the progress on the scheme and the actions taken to enable a start on site on 14 November 2005.

13. J & E HALLS BOWLS CLUB – INVESTIGATION INTO RELOCATION TO STONE LODGE

The Chairman asked the Project Director to give an oral update to the Advisory Panel, as the report was “To Follow”.

The Project Director explained that the report was “To Follow” because the feasibility study authorised by Cabinet on 28 July 2005, following a report by the Regeneration Director, had not been received until 17 October 2005.

Consultation was taking place between the Project Director, the Deputy Leader of the Council, the Portfolio Member with responsibility for Asset Management and the Managing Director and a report had been produced seeking authority to proceed with the proposed project. A decision was required as a matter of urgency in view of the target of having a bowls green available as early as possible after the start of the outdoor bowling season in April 2007.

The indicative programme included in the feasibility study identified that a planning application will need to be submitted next month, if possible.

Members welcomed and noted the progress on the scheme.
14. POWDER MILL LANE – RE-NAMING OF SECTIONS DUE TO STOPPING-UP ORDERS

The report updated Members on the outcome of discussions, with the management of the Questor Industrial Estate and the Kent Fire and Rescue Service, regarding the implementation of the stopping-up order, and presented proposals for a consequential re-naming of sections of Powder Mill Lane.

Members were grateful for the historical background to option (a) in paragraph 3.8 of the report and were in agreement that retaining the name Powder Mill Lane for the residential Hawley Road end, and re-naming the Questor and Darenth Road end sections, North Powder Mill Lane, was the most appropriate proposal.

Recommendation to Cabinet:

That the option contained in paragraph 3.8 to retain the name Powder Mill Lane for the residential Hawley Road end and re-name the Questor and Darenth Road end sections, North Powder Mill Lane, be endorsed.

15. KENT AND MEDWAY STRUCTURE PLAN – CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

Members endorsed the recommendations in the report.

16. PREPARATION OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK FOR DARTFORD: UPDATE ON RESPONSES TO SUBMISSION STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Members endorsed the recommendations in the report.

17. OAKFIELD LANE CHILDREN’S CENTRE, DARTFORD

Members discussed the report, which sought approval for the Council to take a ground lease from Kent County Council on behalf of Surestart - Dartford at Oakfield Lane Infants’ School, Dartford.

Although there were some concerns about the possible implications associated with Kent County Council now being responsible for allocating budgets, Members agreed that Surestart - Dartford at Oakfield Lane Infants’ School Dartford would be a valuable asset to the Council.

Recommendation to Cabinet:
1. That the Cabinet Advisory Panel endorse the recommendations in the report.

2. That the Cabinet welcome the efforts of Councillors A D Allen and D E Hunnisett in making this project a success.

18. THE A2/A282 DARTFORD IMPROVEMENT (M25 JUNCTION 2 IMPROVEMENTS) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER PART 2 (MP NO 41) 2005

Members endorsed the recommendations in the report.

19. REMOVAL OF RESIDENTIAL PARKING SCHEMES AT HOPE COTTAGES, BEAN AND GORE ROAD, DARENTH.

The Ward Members for Bean and Darenth, Councillors I D Armitt and D A Hammock, informed the Advisory Panel of the considerable work undertaken by the Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager to bring this report to Cabinet. An extract of a letter of appreciation received from a resident, for the Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager’s personal intervention, was read out to the Advisory Panel.

Recommendations to Cabinet:

1. That the Cabinet Advisory Panel endorse the recommendation in the report.

2. That Cabinet be advised of the appreciation by residents of the personal intervention of the Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager.

3. That the Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager be thanked for his efforts in resolving this matter.

20. THE ORCHARD THEATRE BUDGET MONITORING

Members endorsed the recommendations in the report.

21. ENVIRONMENTAL PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

Members endorsed the recommendations in the report.
22. **MEETING OF THE DARTFORD ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2005**

The Chairman introduced this item which presented Members with the notes of the meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils held on 19 September 2005.

Members noted the agreed actions from the meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils held on 19 September 2005 and asked for assurances from officers that these actions were complete or being completed.

**Recommendations to Cabinet:**

1. That Cabinet request that a progress report from the Senior Engineer, Kent Highways on Highways Communication Links (Minute 16) be submitted to the next meeting of the Joint Transportation Board.

2. That copies of the full report on the Darent Valley Path (Minute 22) be sent to the Chairmen of Wilmington and Darent Parish Councils.

3. That the recommendation in the report be endorsed.

23. **EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC**

That, under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

No members of the press or public were present during discussion of the following items of business.

A. **REPORT FROM THE NORTH KENT INVESTMENT UPDATE WORKING GROUP MEETING 6 OCTOBER 2005 (EXEMPT CATEGORY SO46 (1) (B) ANNEX 1 PARAGRAPH 9)**

The Advisory Panel thanked the Lead Member, members of the Working Group and officers for the progress made to date.

**Recommendation to Cabinet:**

1. That the Lead Member, members of the Working Group and officers be thanked for the significant progress made.

2. That the recommendation of the report be endorsed.
B. LAND ADJACENT TO 11 DARENTH ROAD DARTFORD

Members endorsed the recommendation in the report.

Meeting closed at 9.25 pm

Councillor K F M Leadbeater
(Chairman)
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REFERENCE FROM THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF COUNCIL:
QUALITY SERVICES COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2004-2005

In accordance with Standing Order 48 (4 (b)) the Chairman has decided that this report should be considered as an urgent item at the meeting because of the need to resolve outstanding issues with the Quality Services Committee in a timely manner.

1. **Summary**

1.1 To review the activities detailed in the Annual Report of the Quality Services Committee for the 2004-05 municipal year (Appendix A) and in particular:

   (i) To consider actions taken as a result of the recommendations made by the Tourism and Heritage Working Group, which were subsequently endorsed by Cabinet on 25 November 2004.

   (ii) That the final report from Development Including Executive and Affordable Housing Working Group is still outstanding.

1.2 To review the frequency of Quality Services Committee meetings.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

2.1 That Members consider the Annual Report of the Quality Services Committee for the 2004-05 municipal year and propose any comments or matters to be referred to the Quality Services Committee.

2.2 That actions, taken in fulfilment of the Cabinet resolutions on 25 November 2004, be noted and considered.

2.3 That the Quality Services Committee be asked to address the absence of a final report from the Development Including Executive and Affordable Housing Working Group.

2.4 That no change be proposed to the frequency of meetings of the Quality Services Committee and that the Committee’s Work Programme be noted.

3. **Background and Discussion**

3.1 At its meeting on 24 October 2005 the General Assembly of the Council considered the Quality Services Annual Report 2004-2005 attached at Appendix A. This report had been referred from the Quality Services meeting held on 27 July 2005. A copy of the associated minute is attached at Appendix B.
3.2 Members referred to the list of recommendations made by the Tourism and Heritage Working Group, which had been endorsed by Cabinet on 25 November 2004, and asked what progress had been made.

3.3 The recommendations are listed below together with a statement as to their current status:

1. To ensure an effective distribution of promotional leaflets across the Borough.

   A new system has been set up to ensure that leaflets are distributed to, and displayed at, the following locations:

   Hall Place, Gravesend Tourism Office, Swanley Tourism Office, Canterbury Cathedral (information relating to churches only), Erith Museum, Holy Trinity Church.

   Further locations are being added as identified.

2. To have a display of visitor and heritage information in the Civic Centre reception.

   Information is currently on display but will be enhanced as part of the refurbishment process for the Customer Contact Centre. Once refurbishment is complete, the information on display will be changed regularly.

3. To make the results of the tourism and visitor survey widely available to interested local groups and organisations, and through the Council’s website.

   The tourism and visitor survey results were distributed to all Parish Councils and a copy has been made available on the Council’s website at the following address:

   http://www.dartford.gov.uk/thingstodo/Tourism/TouristIndex.htm

4. To encourage and support the participation of local places of interest in future Heritage Open Days.

   No progress to date.

5. That consideration be given to having a permanent memorial for Richard Trevithick in a prominent position within the Town Centre as part of the 2005/06 budget process.

   This matter is being considered as part of the wider regeneration of the town centre and the development of the Market Square and Central Park. Once these projects have
been taken forward, the memorial can be discussed in that context and a budget defined at that stage.

6. That the specific concerns raised by the Quality Services Committee about the Darent Valley Walk and the current state of the River Darent be noted.

A Feasibility Study and Action Plan for the Darent Valley Path was presented to Cabinet at its meeting on 22 September 2005 where it was resolved:

(1) That the comments made by the Cabinet Advisory Panel on 13 September 2005, and by Cabinet, on the report and the Action Plan for the Darent Valley Path be taken into account before the final report is produced.

(2) That the list of priorities set out within the Darent Valley Path Feasibility Study Action Plan be agreed.

(3) That Officers seek external funding sources to meet the priorities set out in the Darent Valley Path Feasibility Study Action Plan.

(4) That receipt by the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils of a copy of the report at their meeting held on 19 September 2005 be noted.

(5) That the Cabinet receive a further report on the Darent Valley Path Feasibility Study Action Plan, following consultation with the local community and Members.

(6) That a walk for Members be arranged on the Darent Valley Path.

3.4 Members also made reference to the absence of a final report from the Development Including Executive and Affordable Housing Working Group. They had felt that a lot of useful ground had been covered by the series of meetings that had been held and that it had been the Lead Member’s responsibility to produce the final report, which will advise Cabinet of the Working Group’s findings.

3.5 Members suggested that the Quality Services Committee be asked to review this issue and ensure that the final report is produced as requested and submitted to Cabinet.

3.6 During the debate it was suggested that the working of the Quality Services Committee could have been less effective, as their meetings seemed to be infrequent and had, on occasion, been cancelled. A copy of the Committee’s Work Programme, as agreed at its meeting on 27 July 2005, is attached at Appendix C. A timetable of meetings that were
scheduled since the meeting’s inception is attached at Appendix D. As members are aware the meeting that was rescheduled for 4 October 2005 was cancelled as a result of the unfortunate situation in the Housing Department, which meant research and reports could not be completed in time.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

CH5 CH/KA1 – Improving Councillor engagement and involvement

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

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6. Appendices

Appendix A – Quality Services Committee Annual Report 2004-2005

Appendix B – Extract from the minutes of the 27 July 2005 Quality Services meeting

Appendix C – Quality Services Committee Work Programme

Appendix D – Schedule of Quality Services meetings since its inception

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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INTRODUCTION

At the General Assembly of the Council meeting on 26 July 2004 it was agreed to re-allocate committee functions and associated actions. This resulted in the abolition of the Best Value Review Committee, Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Services) and Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Corporate).

Functions and responsibilities were allocated to two new committees:

1) the Quality Services Committee which inherited the overview, best value and comprehensive performance assessment functions.

2) the Scrutiny Committee which inherited the scrutiny function.

The Quality Services Committee also inherited the Working Groups which had been set up by the Overview and Scrutiny Committees. These Working Groups consider, research and investigate issues with a view to making recommendations to the parent Committee, Cabinet or the General Assembly of Council (GAC).

This report covers the activities of the Quality Services Committee from 26 July 2004 to 31 March 2005.
QUALITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Quality Services Committee has ‘overview’ responsibility in respect of the Council’s policies and strategies including corporate performance assessment, service improvements and Service (previously Best Value) Reviews. The Committee reports to the Cabinet on its findings.

In 2004-2005, the Committee inherited reviews into Tourism and Heritage and Night-time Economy as well as instigating reviews into Procurement Strategy and Contract Monitoring. It also reviewed a number of Service Improvement Plans and considered quarterly reports of the Best Value Performance Indicators, Local Performance Indicators and Key Corporate Targets.

WORK PLAN REVIEWS

REVIEW: Tourism & Heritage

Dartford Borough Council has, for many years, been a member of the South East England Tourist Board. This was the only budget allocated to tourism. Tourism promotion in the area was primarily carried out by Kent County Council, Bluewater and other businesses, such as hotels, in the Borough. This was a reflection of the greater priority given by those organisations and previously were provided by this Authority.

A Working Group was formed to review the Council’s tourism and heritage role and, if appropriate, to propose future changes.

In order to address this, the Working Group recognised that it needed to collate and consider as much information as possible on points of interest in Dartford before carrying out the review. An audit in the form of a survey was sent to local organisations to gather information.

The Working Group wished to identify aspects of Dartford’s heritage from all ages and walks of life ranging from pre-history right through to industrial and wartime heritage and the modern period. It did this by carrying out an audit, in 2003/2004, of the historic and notable buildings and sites in the Borough, identifying those that merited greater publicity as well as identifying new opportunities to promote the area. As a result of this, a number of new visitor information leaflets were developed and have been made available at key locations throughout the Borough.

The Group recommended introducing a Blue Plaque Scheme for the Borough and worked closely with Officers to improve the Council’s web site pages and the available publications. Approval for the Blue Plaque Scheme was given by Cabinet on 22 April 2004, and the first plaque, recognising Madame Bergman Osterberg (1849-1915) for her ground-breaking influence in women’s physical education, was unveiled at the former Dartford College of Physical Education on 5 February 2005.
STATUS: The final report was agreed by the Quality Services Committee on 15 November 2004 and considered by Cabinet on 25 November 2004 where it was resolved:

(1) That the content of the final report from the Tourism and Heritage Working Group, together with the associated minute from the Quality Services Committee be noted.

(2) That the Cabinet’s thanks to the Working Group and its Chairman, Councillor Broadley, be recorded.

(3) That Cabinet approve the recommendations made by the Tourism and Heritage Working Group and specifically:

   (i) The proposals in respect of ensuring an effective distribution of promotional leaflets across the Borough;
   (ii) The proposal to have a display of visitor and heritage information in the Civic Centre reception;
   (iii) The proposal to make the results of the tourism and visitor survey widely available to interested local groups and organisations, and through the Council’s website;
   (iv) The proposal to encourage and support the participation of local places of interest in future Heritage Open Days.

(4) That consideration be given to having a permanent memorial for Richard Trevithick in a prominent position within the Town Centre as part of the 2005/06 budget process.

This matter will be considered as part of the wider regeneration of the town centre and the development of the Market Square and Central Park. Once these projects have been taken forward, the memorial can be discussed in that context and a budget defined at that stage.

(5) That the specific concerns raised by the Quality Services Committee about the Darent Valley Walk and the current state of the River Darent be noted.

REVIEW: Night-Time Economy Working Group

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee (Services) decided to examine the Night-Time Economy in the Borough of Dartford, with a view to identifying the costs and benefits to residents, the Council and other service providers.

A Working Group was formed to look at the whole Borough; the Town Centre (in view of its specific issues) and the surrounding areas. The night-time economy was considered to include pubs, clubs, theatres, food outlets and supermarkets.
The Working Group planned to propose a way forward which would enable the Council’s contribution to the positive aspects of that economy to develop, and review existing approaches and investigate alternative approaches to tackle the negative aspect of the night-time economy.

It was recognised that the implications of impending licensing legislation would have a marked effect on the issues to be considered. Accordingly, the Group's work was suspended until Central Government’s final guidance on the new licensing policy had been received. Having received the information, Dartford Borough Council’s Licensing Policy has now been developed and a further meeting of the Working Group can now be arranged to enable it to complete its review and report back to the Quality Services Committee.

**STATUS:** Ongoing

**REVIEW: Procurement Strategy**

The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) published the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government 2003-06 in October 2003. The strategy set out how central and local government, working together with partners from the public, private and voluntary sectors, intends to set about improving local government procurement.

A specific objective for 2004 was that every Council should adopt a corporate procurement strategy, based on a Best Value or other review. The strategy should be owned by Members and senior managers and its implementation monitored regularly.

In order to meet this objective, a Working Group was established by the Quality Services Committee at its meeting on 13 September 2004 with the remit to consider the Council's approach to procurement and assist in the development of a Procurement Strategy.

**STATUS:** The Working Group met twice and a Draft Procurement Strategy was presented to the Quality Services Committee on the 15 November 2004. A final version of the Procurement strategy was agreed by Cabinet at its meeting on 14 December 2004 where it was resolved:

1. That the procurement strategy and action plan, attached as Appendix A to the report, be approved.

2. That Councillor A R Martin and the Cabinet Secretary, Kenneth Lawrie, be appointed as the Council’s ‘Procurement Champions’. *(The Head of Finance and Resources has since replaced the Cabinet Secretary as Procurement Champion)*

3. That a report on the implications of Sir Peter Gershon’s report ‘Releasing resources to the front line’ be received by Members, following publication of the detailed guidance, scheduled for December 2004.
Sir Peter Gershon’s report ‘Releasing resources to the front line’ was published early in 2005 and a report will be brought to the Cabinet in the near future.

(4) That it be agreed that the Contract Monitoring Working Group report directly to Cabinet, with the membership and terms of reference set out in Appendix B to the report.

Accordingly, the Working Group is no longer a Working Group of the Quality Services Committee.

**REVIEW: Development Including Executive & Affordable Housing Working Group**

At its meeting on 22 July 2003 the Overview & Scrutiny (Corporate) Committee agreed to form a working group to consider the subject of development including executive and affordable housing within the Borough.

The Working Group first met on 7 January 2004 and agreed the following Terms of Reference:

1. To consider the range of housing needs and demands likely to arise in Dartford over the next five years.

2. To explore options and models for meeting various housing needs and demands which are likely to arise.

3. To consider practical issues relating to the provision of housing to meet the range of the needs and demands likely to arise.

4. To consider whether research is required on any of the above.

The Working Group agreed to formulate a six month work programme to include the following topics:

Development policy, processes and procedures.
Exploration of development related traffic impacts in the St. Clements Way corridor.
Exploration of current housing demands and comparison with housing developments on new sites.
Identification of potential housing products and procurement options for affordable housing, including innovative options for providing housing to meet changing housing needs and demands.

The Working Group have met on 8 occasions as well as attending an awayday with a representative from Countryside Properties on 25 February 2005 which included visits to Chatham Maritime, Greenwich Millennium Village and Great Notley Garden Village in Braintree, Essex. The Working
Group agreed to conclude its formal work at the last meeting on 26 April 2005 where it was agreed that a final report be drafted by the Lead Member and Officers which the Working Group would review and finalise at an informal meeting.

**STATUS:** Awaiting final report.

**REVIEW: Contract Monitoring**

A report presenting the results of the Council’s Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) was received by Cabinet on 29 July 2004. At that meeting it was resolved that a reference be made to the Quality Services Committee, recommending that they set up a Contract Monitoring Working Group, to facilitate overview of service delivery by outside contractors.

In response, the Quality Services Committee at its meeting on 13 September 2004, established a Working Group which first met on the 1 February 2005 and agreed the following terms of reference:

- To review overall performance in relation to the contracts let by the Council for the provision of major public facing services.
- To monitor the standards of performance, planning, programming and performance to budget of individual contracts.
- To call in evidence and seek the detailed input of contractors in reviewing performance.
- To consider issues relating to the specification and performance of future contracts where tenders are to be invited in accordance with Procurement Guidelines and Standing Orders.
- To make recommendations to the Cabinet in respect of all of the above.
- To report annually to the Cabinet on the work of the Group.

A second meeting was held on 9 March 2005, where a summary of all current contracts was presented. Members asked for those contracts where Default Notices had been issued to be highlighted.

A detailed review of the Grounds Maintenance contract was carried out and Members were advised of the scope of the contract, and discussed the quality of the work being undertaken.

The Working Group agreed that they would select future contracts for detailed review at each meeting.

**STATUS:** Ongoing
PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN REVIEWS

- **Best Value Performance Indicators, Local Performance Indicators and Key Corporate Targets 2004/2005 – First Quarter Performance**

  On 13 September 2004, the Quality Services Committee considered this report which informed Members of the Council's first quarter performance for both the statutory and local 2004/2005 performance indicators, together with the Key Corporate Targets.

  As part of the Council's commitment to developing and maintaining robust corporate performance management systems, in-year monitoring (on a quarterly basis) of performance against the statutory Best Value Indicators was introduced for 2001/2002 and with some amendments has been used each year. A number of selected local performance indicators are also monitored quarterly.

  Members gave careful consideration to the report and asked for further information to be provided in relation to a number of areas.

  **RESOLVED:**

  That the Council’s first quarter performance for both the statutory and local 2004/2005 performance indicators, together with the Key Corporate Targets, be noted.

- **Planning & Land - Service Improvement Plan Monitoring**

  On 13 September 2004, the Quality Services Committee considered this report which updated Members on the contents of a report on the Service Improvement Plan for the Planning and Land review which had been presented to Cabinet on 29 July 2004.

  Members’ attention had been drawn to the proposals to delete or amend a number of targets and to the transfer of certain targets to the appropriate Directorate following the corporate restructuring. It had been proposed to drop three indicators which did not impact upon front line service delivery given the current reduced staffing levels.

  **RESOLVED:**

  That the report to Cabinet (29 July 2004) be noted.

- **General User Satisfaction Survey**

  On 15 November 2004, the Quality Services Committee considered this report which reported the findings and subsequent response by service managers to the General User Satisfaction Survey.
Members noted the overall satisfaction figure of 57% and expressed their wish to have this improved to take it further above the ‘average’ level. Members discussed adverse contributory effects of poor quality of service delivered by some of those working under contract and were advised that it is often difficult for contractors to get reliable staff, and that the policy to accept the lowest tender quotation encouraged contractors to reduce their costs, which sometimes resulted in a less than satisfactory service.

In discussion, Members also commented that some services were under the control of Kent County Council, and that their deficiencies reflected badly on the Borough, and distorted residents’ overall feelings of satisfaction.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of the report, and the details of the General User Satisfaction Survey attached at appendix A to the report, be noted.

2. That having consider the issues set out in the report in relation to customer satisfaction and performance measures, it be agreed that the needs and concerns of service users are the primary focus for the reviews conducted by this Committee and the development of appropriate performance indicators.

3. That this Committee’s concern with the ongoing problems of traffic congestion in and around Dartford Town Centre, and associated lack of action from Kent County Council, be conveyed to Cabinet with a recommendation to refer the issue to the Joint Transportation Board for discussion at its next meeting.

The concern expressed in the above resolution was presented to Cabinet on 14 December 2004, and the Joint Transportation Board on 21 December 2004 where, following detailed discussion, it was resolved:

That the County Council Officers be requested to submit a report to the next meeting of the Board on the timescale being worked to by SEEDA, in respect of the current studies by consultants in relation to traffic congestion in Dartford Town Centre, with a further detailed report to the Board being submitted to the following meeting.

The above was reported by Kent County Council to the Joint Transportation Board on 16 June 2005 where it was resolved that the report be noted.

- Street Scenes Review - Service Improvement Plan Monitoring

On 15 November 2004, the Quality Services Committee considered this report which updated Members on progress in relation to the Service Improvement Plan for the Street Scenes review.
Members discussed the problems associated with inspection scheme integration and were advised that following the recent restructure, issues associated with inspections were now all under the control of the Executive Director and that this should enable closer co-ordination of inspection visits. In addition, it was noted that issues raised were often outside the scope of the associated contract, and hence were unable to be actioned due to limited resources.

Members asked to be provided with a note outlining the names, roles and responsibilities of people who have direct contact with constituents.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of the report, and more specifically the monitoring sheets attached at Appendix A to the report, be noted.

2. That a report on the revised inspection regime be submitted to a future meeting of the Quality Services Committee. *(Detailed reports, including inspections and monitoring are now undertaken by the Contract Monitoring Working Group.)*

3. That a note, outlining the names, roles and responsibilities of people who have direct contact with constituents, be provided to Members by the Cabinet Secretary.

- **Performance Monitoring 2004/05 – Second Quarter**

On 15 November 2004, the Quality Services Committee considered this report which informed Members of the Council's second quarter performance for both the statutory and local 2004/2005 performance indicators, together with the Key Corporate Targets.

Members congratulated Officers on the timely responses to reports of graffiti in the Borough but advised that the Council’s response time might suffer because of increased demand for the service.

The lack of response from the Police in respect of various Key Corporate Indicators was noted and a letter was sent to the Police highlighting this issue. Following this, a meeting took place between the Police, the Committee Chairman and Officers to explore opportunities to address the absence of indicators.

Members also raised issues on recycling and expressed disappointment that no keyworker homes had yet been delivered in the current municipal year.

RESOLVED:
1. That the report be noted.

2. That the Chairman send a letter to the Police, on behalf of the Committee, expressing concern at the lack of information being provided to support the statistics quoted under Key Corporate Indicators. (*The Chairman wrote to Superintendent Martin Hewitt on 24 November 2004 and subsequently attended a meeting to discuss the issue, see under Performance Monitoring 2004/2005 – Third Quarter*)

- **Revenues And Benefits Review - Service Improvement Plan Monitoring**

  On 14 March 2005, the Quality Services Committee considered this report which updated Members on progress in relation to the Service Improvement Plan for the Revenues and Benefits review.

  Members were advised on progress arising from the Service Improvement Plan objectives for Revenues and Benefits and were informed that the review had now run its course and given that the targets were either completed or ongoing, there was no longer a need for future monitoring.

  Members felt that the review had been very successful with tangible outcomes and congratulated managers and staff on attaining their targets.

  RESOLVED:

  1. That the contents of the report, Revenues and Benefits Best Value Review - Service Improvement Plan Monitoring be noted.

  2. That the recommendations adopted by Cabinet (25 November 2004) be noted.

- **Waste & Recycling Best Value Review – Service Improvement Plan Monitoring**

  On 14 March 2005, the Quality Services Committee considered this report which updated Members on progress in relation to the Service Improvement Plan for the Waste and Recycling review.

  Members noted that funding had been approved for major new recycling initiatives and whilst considering the introduction of recycling boxes rather than sacks, were reassured that there was a degree of flexibility within the scheme which allowed for the continued use of sacks in certain cases (e.g. for residents living in the upper levels of housing blocks).

  Members discussed the possibility of recycling bottles on a door-to-door collection basis and were advised that this was being explored with contractors and Kent County Council as Waste Disposal Authority.
Arising from a concern that many residents were not separating out their recyclable items from their household waste, the Environmental Contracts Manager explained that part of the recycling initiatives referred to a major publicity campaign to encourage increased participation. In response to Members’ questions about inculcating good practice in children by school visits, it was confirmed that officers did attend schools when invited to do so although resources for more widespread programmes rested with Kent County Council as Waste Disposal Authority.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of the report, Waste and Recycling Best Value Review - Service Improvement Plan (SIP) Monitoring be noted.

2. That the recommendations adopted by Cabinet (27 January 2005) be noted.

- Performance Monitoring 2004/2005 – Third Quarter

On 14 March 2005, the Quality Services Committee considered this report which informed Members of the Council’s third quarter performance for both the statutory and local 2004/2005 performance indicators, together with the Key Corporate Targets.

Following the request made during the consideration of the Second Quarter’s statistics, with respect to the lack of information from the Police for various Key Corporate Indicators, the Chairman advised that a meeting with the police had failed to disaggregate the Dartford ‘burglary detected’ statistics from the North Kent Statistics. It was suggested that the police be invited to attend a future meeting of the Committee.

Members’ enquired about the cumulative total of affordable homes secured by end of the third quarter. The Performance Manager advised that there will be a launch of the Key Worker Homes in June but it was confirmed that the target will be missed for 2004/05.

Members also discussed the distortion of the ‘average relet time’ statistic which was caused by specific problems with certain properties.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.
Extract from the minutes of the Meeting of the Quality Services Committee
held on 27 July 2005

10. QUALITY SERVICES COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT 2004 - 2005

The report asked Members to consider the work carried out by the Quality Services Committee during the last municipal year.

The Chairman highlighted the volume of work undertaken and completed by the Committee.

RESOLVED:

That the annual report of the Committee be submitted to the Council.
### WORK PROGRAMME

**QUALITY SERVICES COMMITTEE**

**2005/06**

|-----------------------------------|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|

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<tr>
<td>26 April 2005 - Last formal meeting of the Working Group. A draft of the final report is being prepared and that it would, once complete, be distributed to Members of the Working Group for consideration. An informal meeting would then be held to discuss comments and agree a final version, prior to</td>
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distribution to all Members.

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<th>Landlord Service – First report</th>
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<tr>
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## Quality Services Committee meeting schedule since inception

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<tr>
<td>13 September 2004</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 November 2004</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17 January 2005</td>
<td>Cancelled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 March 2005</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>27 July 2005</td>
<td>Yes</td>
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<tr>
<td>20 September 2005</td>
<td>Moved to 4 October 2005 at the request of the Chairman, but subsequently cancelled following the death of the Housing Services Manager</td>
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<tr>
<td>22 November 2005</td>
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<tr>
<td>25 January 2006</td>
<td></td>
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<td>22 March 2006</td>
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REFERENCE FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - 14 SEPTEMBER 2005
ISSUES RELATING TO OUT OF HOURS SERVICE/NOISE NUISANCE

1. Summary
   1.1 To consider the request of the Scrutiny Committee regarding the reintroduction of the out of hours call out service, as soon as possible.

2. RECOMMENDATION
   2.1 To consider the view of the Scrutiny Committee that a call out service be reintroduced as soon as circumstances permit, in the light of resources available.

3. Background and Discussion
   3.1 Following consideration of a report on issues relating to the out of hours service/noise nuisance, the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 14 September 2005 advised the Cabinet that it would like to see the reintroduction of the out of hours call out service as soon as possible
   3.2 The report submitted to the Scrutiny Committee on 14 September 2005 and minute is attached at Appendix A.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan
   Not applicable

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Implications</th>
<th>The budget for the out of hours call out service is contained within estimate HO1030110 and is £15,790</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Implications</td>
<td>None</td>
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<tr>
<td>Staffing Implications</td>
<td>Four offers of employment have been made to applicants for Environmental Health Officer posts and volunteers to participate in the service have been sought. It is hoped that this will create sufficient numbers of trained officers to reintroduce a more defined service in</td>
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the New Year.

<table>
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<th>Administrative Implications</th>
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<td>Risk Assessment</td>
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6. **Appendices**

Appendix A - Report to the Scrutiny Committee on 14 September 2005 and minute.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents consulted</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Exempt Information Category</th>
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<td>Oct 2005</td>
<td></td>
<td>Alan Moss 01322 343276</td>
<td>Member Services. MD</td>
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ISSUES RELATING TO OUT OF HOURS/NOISE NUISANCE

1. Summary

1.1 The Chairman has drawn this item down in accordance with the Scrutiny Protocol to discuss the issues relating to out of hours/noise nuisance.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Committee considers the issues raised.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1 The Chairman has drawn this item down in accordance with the Scrutiny Protocol to discuss issues relating to out of hours/noise nuisance.

3.2 The Managing Director has been advised of the request, and will ensure that an appropriate Officer(s) to respond to the Committee’s concerns / questions is in attendance.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

Not applicable.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

<table>
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<tbody>
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<td>Risk Assessment</td>
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6. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Report by the Environmental Health Services Manager.
### Documents Consulted

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents consulted</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>File Ref</th>
<th>Report Author</th>
<th>Section and Directorate</th>
<th>Exempt Information Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>None</td>
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<td></td>
<td>A Moss (01322) 343276</td>
<td>Member Services (MD)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix 1

SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
14 SEPTEMBER 2005

Environmental Health Out of Hours Service

1. Summary

1.1 The purpose of the report is to advise Members of the reasons for the suspension of the Environmental Health out of hours service and the current restrictions preventing resumption of the service.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1. For information

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. The Environmental Health out of hours service has been provided for approximately 20 years. Many local authorities used the Dartford BC service as a template for their own. Originally the service was operated by officers on a voluntary, unpaid and informal rota basis but this changed into a formal rota system providing remuneration to the officers participating. However, it has always remained a voluntary service, with the exception of newly recruited Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) being required to participate by way of contract. Due to the historically stable EHO workforce, there is currently only one officer contracted to carry out the work.

3.2. The out of hours service was not designed for and therefore has not provided for an immediate response service for first time callers except for (i) audible alarms and (ii) disturbances that have resulted in a statutory nuisance to a large group of residents. The primary function of the service has been to respond to a register of known customers where it has been demonstrated that attempts to resolve the disturbances during office hours investigations have failed or not been the most appropriate way forward. Prior the suspension, approximately 300 calls a year were received, although not all these would have qualified for an out of hours investigation. Also, what are known as “programmed visits” are carried out. These are used when documented evidence shows that there is a strong likelihood of witnessing the noise disturbance at specific times. In these cases, officers carry out planned visits without the need for the customer to use the out of hours service. These programmed visits are relatively few and have not been suspended.

3.3. The decision to suspend the service in August 2004 was taken by the Environmental Health Services Manager following Health and Safety issues that had been brought to his attention. These issues involved the safety of staff and could not be resolved at the time. Allowing the risks to continue would have placed the Council at risk of prosecution for failing to provide a safe system of work. A detailed risk assessment confirmed the risks and since then, equipment and procedures have been identified that
are anticipated to reduce the risk to officers to an acceptable level. Some risk will always be present, given the nature of the work.

3.4. Officers have considered a number of options in order to resume the service. The equivalent services provided by others was examined and it was clear that the period of cover previously offered by the DBC service was greater than many neighbouring authorities, particularly when compared to the manpower resources available. Therefore, when the service is resumed it is likely to be limited to Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings instead of the previous cover of 7 days a week. Experience has shown that this is the period when most noisy neighbour disputes occur.

3.5. Legal Services have confirmed that statutory noise nuisances need to be determined by Environmental Health Officers. However, it is believed that the exception to this would be noise from audible intruder alarms which can be dealt with by non EHOs providing relevant training is given.

3.6. Staffing issues are currently preventing resumption of the service. Presently the Council employs 7.7 FTE EHOs. Of these, one has taken on new and additional responsibilities for non Environmental Health work that already involves out of hours working; two do not wish to participate in any resumed service; the Environmental Health Services Manager would participate only to a limited degree due to the need for him to regularly audit the service and as he has taken on additional responsibilities; one post is currently vacant and two other posts will shortly be vacant. Consequently there are too few EHO’s to resume the service as previously provided.

3.7. Consideration is now being given to the use of non EHOs. However, this would mean the only enforcement action possible would be with respect to audible intruder alarms. All other disturbances would need to be the subject of post-disturbance formal action using witness statements gathered by the staff at the time of the incidents.

3.8. Provision of an out of hours service is not a statutory obligation. The legislation has recognised that local authorities will not always be in a position to deal with statutory nuisances and allows aggrieved persons to take their own action. Officers have always, and will continue, only to suggest this course of action to customers as a last resort.

3.9. In view of the current staffing levels and work priorities, it is not anticipated that an out of hours service can be resumed before January 2006, at the earliest and will depend on recruitment of new EHO’s and provision of training. Any new service will also need to be trialled to ensure the Health and Safety implications which led to the suspension, have been reduced to acceptable levels.

3.10. Since the suspension, very few complaints as to the lack of service have been received. Notifications of evening/night-time and weekend disturbances continue to be received, and where appropriate, investigations are then carried out the next working day.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan
5. **Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Risk Assessment</td>
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6. **Appendices**

None

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<table>
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<td>Phil Kessel</td>
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<td>Environmental Health Services Strategic</td>
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18. ISSUES RELATING TO OUT OF HOURS/NOISE NUISANCE

The Chairman indicated that this matter had been drawn down because of concerns about the suspension of the Environmental Health out of hours service. He invited the Environmental Health Services Manager to outline the reasons for the suspension and the current restrictions preventing a resumption of the service.

The Environmental Health Services Manager explained that the service had been provided for approximately 20 years. Originally the service was operated by officers on a voluntary, unpaid, informal rota basis but this subsequently changed into a formal rota system providing remuneration to the officers participating. However, inclusion on the rota has always been voluntary, with the exception of newly recruited Environmental Health Officers (EHOs) being required to participate by way of contract. Currently only one officer is contracted to carry out the work.

The out of hours service was not designed for, and therefore has not provided for, an immediate response service for first time callers, except for audible alarms and disturbances that have resulted in a statutory nuisance to a large group of residents. The primary function of the service has been to respond to a register of known customers, where it has been demonstrated that attempts to resolve the disturbances during office hours investigations have failed, or not been the most appropriate way forward. Prior to the suspension, approximately 300 calls a year were received, although not all these would have qualified for an out of hours investigation. Programmed visits continue to be carried out. These are used when documented evidence shows that there is a strong likelihood of witnessing the noise disturbance at specific times. In these cases, officers carry out planned visits, without the need for the customer to use the out of hours service. These programmed visits are relatively few and have not been suspended.

The decision to suspend the service in August 2004 was taken by the Environmental Health Services Manager following Health and Safety issues that had been brought to his attention, which could have placed the Council at risk of prosecution for failing to provide a safe system of work. A detailed risk assessment confirmed the risks and, since then, equipment and procedures have been identified that are anticipated to reduce the risk to officers to an acceptable level.

Officers have considered a number of options in order to resume the service. The equivalent services provided by others was examined and it was clear that the period of cover previously offered by the Council’s service was greater than many authorities, particularly when compared to the manpower resources available. Therefore, when the service is resumed, it is likely to be limited to Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings instead of the previous cover of 7 days a week. Experience has shown that this is the period when most noise
disturbances occur. He added that, since the suspension, very few complaints as to the lack of service had been received.

Staffing issues are currently preventing resumption of the service and the Environmental Health Services Manager did not anticipate that the service could be resumed before January 2006, at the earliest.

Members expressed surprise at the current low level of complaints but commented that the new Licensing Act, with extended opening hours could give rise to an increase. The Environmental Health Services Manager explained that any out of hours work in relation to Licensing would be dealt with by programmed visits arranged with the Licensing Team. The Chairman referred to the fact that officers would still be working out of hours and asked how this differed to the call out service prior to the suspension. The Environmental Health Services Manager explained that the Licensing visits would be programmed and made with other officers, therefore there would not be the same health and safety issues that led to the suspension of the out of hours service.

Councillor Kite agreed that these extended hours could create issues for local authorities and asked if Councillor B Jones could let him know the number of complaints relating to noise nuisance being received by the MP.

Councillor Steele remarked that, because the public know that the out of hours service has been suspended, the statistics would not be representative.

Members were also concerned that they had not been informed of the suspension of the service. There had been a breakdown in communication and the Strategic Director apologised for this.

Councillor Dunn commented that the issue highlighted the gap in enforcement and monitoring and the government needed to resolve the way forward.

The Strategic Director informed Members that officers had undertaken extensive research on out of hours systems to ensure that Dartford’s will be comparable and conform to best practice. Most local authorities do not provide a 7 day service but concentrate on weekends and seasonal problems. She outlined the current difficulties in recruiting Environmental Health Officers.

Responding, Councillor Kite commented that he was not optimistic about resuming the service in January 2006. Whilst accepting there is a hidden demand, he believed that the number of complaints is relatively low. He did not want to mislead Members. The decision about the resumption of the service would be made, bearing in mind the need to maintain the health and safety of staff. If it is not possible to resume, the Council will have to review its options for the service.

RESOLVED:
1. That Councillors Kite and Dunn be thanked for attending and for their response.

2. That the difficulties relating to the out of hours service and, in particular, the implications of the Health and Safety at Work Act, be noted.

3. That the Cabinet be advised that this Committee would like to see the reintroduction of the out of hours call out service as soon as possible.
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REFERENCE FROM SCRUTINY COMMITTEE MEETING ON 14 SEPTEMBER 2005 – ISSUES RELATING TO OUT-OF-HOURS SERVICE/NOISE NUISANCE.

1. Summary

1.1. At Cabinet Advisory Panel, Members expressed their support for the Scrutiny Committee’s resolution, but were frustrated by the lack of a clear route and timetable leading to reinstatement of the Out-of-Hours Service. Members accordingly asked for more information about the action Officers were taking to enable the service to be reinstated.

1.2. This Addendum to the main report brings together that information.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS as per the main reference report

3. Supplementary Discussion

3.1 The Out-of-Hours service was suspended, initially due to concerns about the health and safety of officers delivering the service and the absence of a safe method of working.

3.2 The Environmental Health Services Manager began investigating ways of mitigating, to an acceptable level, the risks inherent in the delivery of the service. A probable solution has been identified, but has not been tested or implemented, because over the past few months the number of staff available to provide the service has declined to a point where, notwithstanding health and safety concerns, the service could not be delivered.

3.3 This situation has arisen because officers, who used to participate in the out of hours service, no longer do so, either due to change of duties and responsibilities, or because they are no longer willing to provide a service which, historically, has been non-contractual. Others have now left the Council and, due to an acknowledged national shortage of Environmental Health Officers, there has been considerable difficulty in recruiting to the vacant posts.

3.4 Since the Scrutiny Committee considered this matter, offers of employment have been made to 4 Environmental Health Officers, including two who are newly qualified and one temporary post funded by Planning Delivery Grant. These have been accepted, subject to satisfactory references, medical clearance and other necessary documentation and it is expected that the section will be fully staffed by December 2005/January 2006.
Addendum

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3.5 All of the newly appointed officers will be contracted to participate in an out of hours call out rota. Together with another experienced Environmental Health Officer, and supplemented by a further three or four non-Environmental Health Officers participating on a voluntary basis, sufficient resources will be available to reinstate the service. However, all but the experienced officer will first require specialist training on assessing and dealing with noise nuisance. This is necessary because the Environmental Health profession covers a diverse range of activities and officers, who are newly qualified or have worked in large authorities with specialist teams, may not have worked previously on noise nuisance.

3.6 Reinstatement will still be dependant upon formal resolution of the health and safety issues but, with that caveat, it is anticipated that a revised service will resume in February 2006, providing cover during Friday, Saturday and Sunday evenings between 8.00pm and 2.00am the following day. This is the period when, historically, the majority of requests for service were received, and will have minimal impact upon cover in the office the following working day.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The Quality Services theme of the Council’s Corporate Plan undertakes to provide high quality services that reflect public aspirations. The out-of-hours service is an important service, particularly for those residents suffering from inconsiderate neighbours.

5. Financial and other implications and risk assessments

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Financial Implications</th>
<th>None. The costs of three of the newly appointed officers and the cost of running the out-of-hours service are within the base budget. The fourth appointee is being funded from Planning Delivery Grant.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Implications</td>
<td>As set out in the body of the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing Implications</td>
<td>As set out in the body of the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Implications</td>
<td>As set out in the body of the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>There remains a risk that the health and safety concerns cannot be adequately mitigated and that the service is therefore not reinstated. If the service is reinstated without these issues having been addressed, the Council will be at risk of prosecution for not providing a safe system of work.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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CONSULTATION DOCUMENT SOUTH EAST PLAN:
EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE IN KENT

1. Summary

1.1 On 5 September 2005, Kent County Council and Medway Council published a consultation document on the planning advice to be given to the South East England Regional Assembly.

1.2 This report presents a summary of the main points of the Consultation Document and suggests a response.

2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

2.1. That the Council thanks Kent County Council and Medway Council for the opportunity to comment on the Consultation Document.

2.2. That the comments set out in the emboldened text of this report be submitted as the formal response of the Council to the content of the Consultation Document.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. The Draft South East Plan Part 1: Core Regional Policies was published for public consultation in January 2005 and handed in to Government on 29 July this year. The document did not include district housing figures. The draft plan was reported to Cabinet on 14 April 2005 (minute 392 refers).

3.2. The South East England Regional Assembly on 13 July agreed the total housing numbers in each sub-region. These figures have been set and the Assembly does not require consultation on them.

3.3. The South East England Regional Assembly has asked the County Council and Medway Council to provide further advice on:

- The broad locations for new employment-generating development, along with employment numbers, in Kent Thames Gateway and East Kent & Ashford sub-regions.
- District-level housing allocations within the sub-regions and across the rest of the county, based on overall quantities decided by the Regional Assembly in July 2005.
The critical infrastructure provision required for the level and pattern of growth proposed in Kent Thames Gateway and East Kent & Ashford.

3.4. The advice has to be submitted to the Regional Assembly by 9 December 2005. Kent County Council and Medway Council published a consultation document on 5 September 2005 for six weeks. The consultation process included a public meeting at Dartford Civic Centre.

3.5. The Assembly expects to finalise the Plan at its March 2006 Plenary meeting, submitting the full document to Government by 31 March 2006.

3.6. The Borough lies within two sub-regions with the A2 acting as the boundary. The area north of the A2 lies within the Kent Thames Gateway sub-region and the area south is within the Rest of Kent sub-region. The draft plan includes employment and housing proposals for both.

Locations for new employment

3.7. The consultation document proposes that sufficient business land and floorspace, and other employment, will be provided throughout Kent and Medway to sustain full employment, match new housing and reduce the need to travel long distances to work. Dartford and the Ebbsfleet hub are identified as strategic sites where priority will be given to new employment. The potential of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link to stimulate new businesses and support existing employment will be exploited in the centres that it will serve.

3.8. The Council's response on the Draft South East Plan Part 1 was that:

‘The successful regeneration of Dartford is dependent on achieving a satisfactory balance between housing and employment growth. Otherwise Dartford is in danger of becoming a dormitory suburb of London. Subsequent drafts of the South East Plan must provide sufficient emphasis on the need for economic growth, the infrastructure required to support it, and the sectors from which growth is expected to be achieved.’ The overall approach set out in the consultation document is consistent with the Council's approach and is supported.

3.9. The employment section includes Higher and Further Education and this is welcomed as education plays an important role in regeneration and the creation of vibrant communities.

3.10. The ‘Infrastructure and community services’ section of the Consultation Document at paragraph 3.44 identifies important Further and Higher education projects across the County and in Medway, and includes
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‘expanding North West Kent College on the former University of Greenwich campus at Dartford’ and ‘a potential new Higher and Further Education site in Thameside, possibly at Ebbsfleet’. The North West Kent College has a programme of further and higher education courses. It is also a partner college of the University of Greenwich. The Amended Second Deposit Draft Local Plan Review policy GB9 (Oakfield Lane Campus) is supportive of further expansion at the site subject to development satisfying certain criteria. The Council regards the site as an important Higher and Further Education facility that will play an important role in the regeneration of the area. The employment section identifies Kent Thameside as a developing new location for Higher and Further Education and this is supported. However, it omits the North West Kent College. This is inconsistent. Given the important role Higher and Further Education can play in regeneration and the creation of vibrant communities, and that regeneration in Dartford is to be employment led, the important role that the North West Kent College can play should be recognised in the employment section.

3.11. There are emerging further education opportunities in the Borough. Darent Valley Hospital, for example has aspirations to become a teaching hospital, while Ebbsfleet will provide a location of international stature and importance, with a significant business community located around the station, and first class rail connections to London and North Kent. It is ideally suited for a new Higher Education Institution serving the needs of the North Kent area, and driving the expanding economy of Kent Thameside. In the light of these and the existing presence of an expanding North West Kent College, Dartford should be identified as a critically important location for the expansion of Higher and Further Education in order to drive economic growth.

3.12. There is no reference to the role of ports. Considering the range and number of ports in North Kent, this is surprising. The important economic role of ports in North Kent should be emphasised and Dart Terminal, London (Thames Europort) should be included.

3.13. The Regional Assembly requires advice on the future change in employment in order to provide targets for monitoring. The Assembly forecast an additional 58,000 jobs in Kent Thames Gateway for the period 2006-2026 and the consultation document proposes that this figure is used as a target. It is considered essential that this target is achieved, in order to reduce Dartford’s current dependency on London for employment.

Housing numbers
The Regional Assembly in July 2005 determined the housing numbers for the sub-regions and rest of county areas for the period 2006-2026. The total housing number for Kent Thames Gateway is 48,000, and for the Rest of Kent the figure is 24,000. These figures are fixed and are not out for consultation. It is the distribution of the sub-regional housing figures amongst the districts that is now being consulted upon.

Kent Thames Gateway

The Draft South East Plan Part 1 included a single annual housing figure for Kent Thames Gateway, namely 2,900 dwellings per annum. This was higher than the Kent Thames Gateway Members Steering Group’s clearly stated preference for Option 3 (2,390 dwellings per annum).

This Council’s response to SEERA on the overall Kent Thames Gateway housing figure was:

“The Kent Thames Gateway Steering Group (KTGSG), of which Dartford was a member, felt Options 1 and 2 to be unrealistic and would change the policy of regeneration in Kent Thameside to one of major greenfield development. It therefore recommended Option 3 as the preferred scale of growth in the sub-region. The Council considers that there is insufficient capacity within the Borough to support development beyond the level envisaged in Option 3. It therefore prefers Option 3 because it is based on known site capacities and will not require development in the Green Belt. The other Options will require greenfield/Green Belt development. The Council does not support options that require development of Dartford’s Green Belt. It should be noted that, even under Option 3, it is not expected that Dartford will be able to sustain the currently high planned levels of growth throughout the plan period. However, it is anticipated that, as Dartford approaches its development capacity, other parts of Kent Thames Gateway will continue to release housing sites. Option 3 has been preferred on this basis.”

The Kent Thames Gateway figure of 48,000 is in line with the Kent Thames Gateway Option 3 figure preferred by this Council. It is lower than the identified potential land supply of 50,260. The consultation document proposes a single housing option for Kent Thames Gateway, within which the housing figure for Dartford is 15,500. This is lower than the identified potential land supply of 16,210.

This lower figure is welcomed. However, the potential land supply is based on a number of bold assumptions. These include firstly that the higher residential density which has been achieved in recent developments in Dartford can be sustained, and in some cases such as at Ebbsfleet, exceeded; secondly, that all sites will come forward when expected; and
thirdly, that the infrastructure required to serve development will be available when required to support the developments which are anticipated.

3.19. A number of recent housing developments, such as Ingress Park and Waterstone Park, have been built at overall densities around 60 dwellings per hectare. Although these developments have made good use of land, and have been designed according to principles of sustainable development, there are indications that they are not universally popular, and particularly not among families with children, those groups most likely to establish strong and lasting connections with the local community. Practical issues such as parking problems are also beginning to emerge. The Council will address these issues through the Local Development Framework process, and may conclude that the density of development recently achieved cannot be sustained over the long term.

3.20. Much of the Borough’s land supply is on large brownfield sites such as Eastern Quarry and Ebbsfleet where lead in times are extended, and where delays in bringing sites forward can have a disproportionate effect on the overall land supply. Much of Dartford’s land supply is currently affected by outstanding discussions with the Highways Agency.

3.21. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment is being undertaken as part of the Local Development Framework. The findings of the assessment might require a reassessment of housing capacities on some sites.

3.22. Should these assumptions prove over optimistic, there are no readily available sites that could be brought forward.

3.23. It should be noted that Dartford’s proposed housing allocation could only be met if relatively high density development can be sustained over the lifetime of the plan, if large brownfield sites are released when anticipated, and if infrastructure is available when needed to serve development. Recent indications suggest that this will be challenging. The proposed housing target should therefore be regarded as an absolute maximum.

Rest of Kent

3.24. The Rest of Kent sub-region includes a housing target for the Borough’s rural area south of the A2 of 230. Most of the rural area lies within the Green Belt. There are limited opportunities for residential development within the villages not subject to Green Belt restrictions. Completion rates in the rural area are averaging just over 4 dwellings per annum. If this rate continues then an additional 86 dwellings could be delivered over the period 2006 to 2026. Land at Axton Chase School is identified in the Local Plan
Review as having a site capacity of 75 units based on the provision of family housing using the existing school’s footprint. The Council is concerned that the scale of housing proposed whilst seeming to be modest over the 20 year period could nevertheless require inappropriately high density development within the villages or necessitate the release of land from the Green Belt to facilitate its delivery.

Infrastructure and community services

3.25. The Regional Assembly has requested further advice on the critical infrastructure required for the level and pattern of growth proposed. The consultation document accordingly provides a list of water supply and transport projects that are currently considered to be critical.

3.26. There is the risk that these projects will be treated as a finite list. A full assessment of the complete range of strategic infrastructure needed to deliver the scale of growth envisaged has not been presented. In addition, other projects may be identified during the period of the South East Plan as being necessary. For example, the need for a Lower Thames Crossing has yet to be assessed. It is important therefore that the advice to SEERA makes it clear that the list of critical infrastructure projects is the best assessment to date and is not necessarily the final list.

3.27. The consultation document does not include any environmental infrastructure. This is a serious omission. The green environment is crucial to the success of the regeneration of this area. It is imperative that the scale of development proposed for Kent Thames Gateway in general and Dartford in particular, is accompanied by timely, quality greenspace infrastructure.

3.28. The Consultation Document points out that with regard to water supply the South East Region has been treated in isolation, and growth in adjoining regions which might draw on the same water resources needs to be taken into account. Most of the Borough’s water is supplied by Thames Water. Investment by Thames Water in water supply and mains in the Dartford area is identified by the document as critical to maintaining water supply to existing and new dwellings. It is important that this investment takes full account of the scale of employment growth proposed for the area.

3.29. The consultation document identifies the following transport schemes as being critical transport projects:
- North Kent line, Dartford – Slade Green: improvement to four tracks
- The Fastrack network
- The Bean interchange on the A2
The Council supports these projects in principle.

3.30. The Pepper Hill interchange will need to be considered for additional, non-programmed, improvements as recognised in the Highway Agency's A2/M2 Route Management Strategy. The scheme will need to be included in the schedule of critical infrastructure.

3.31. The document lists the A226 London Road – St Clements Way junction improvement as a smaller scheme that is not individually critical but needed if planned development is to take place. The performance of the London Road corridor and St. Clements Way are critical to the regeneration of Dartford because otherwise there will be insufficient capacity to cope with further major developments and little opportunity to provide priority for Fastrack and other public transport services.

3.32. The document highlights the opportunity for improved connections to ports in Kent Thames Gateway, including Thamesport and Sheerness. It also sees potential for rail links to deep water wharves in Kent Thameside and Medway. The Council supports the principle of improved rail access to wharves, provided that this does not adversely affect the capacity for high frequency passenger services on the North Kent Line. It should be noted that studies have shown that rail to Thames Europort is not feasible.

3.33. The Crossrail Bill, currently before Parliament, provides for Crossrail only running as far as Abbey Wood. The provision of four tracks on the North Kent line between Dartford and Slade Green, whilst a potentially free-standing improvement scheme, could enable Crossrail to serve Dartford and beyond. It is important that Ebbsfleet is served by Crossrail services in the longer term and this aspiration should be included in the list submitted to the Regional Assembly.

3.34. The consultation document also proposes a full investigation for a new Lower Thames Crossing downstream of Dartford. This Council’s response to SEERA on the Lower Thames Crossing was:

“The Lower Thames Crossing has the potential to deliver major reductions in traffic on the A2 corridor east of the M25 and on the Dartford Crossing, depending on the nature of the crossing and how it is connected into the wider strategic highway network on both sides of the Thames. The A2 and M25 corridors that serve the Borough would then be much better placed to deal with the forecast growth in traffic as a result of the significant levels of development proposed for the area. At present, the Highways Agency is expressing grave concern at the ability of the strategic network to cope, even with a strong package of more sustainable alternatives in place. Provision of a Lower Thames Crossing, which includes a strategic road link, could therefore have a major local impact in providing the required capacity headroom within the strategic network. It is considered that an
assessment of the case for the Lower Thames Crossing is urgently required, and should precede any decisions about the capacity of North Kent to accept the high levels of development postulated in the draft Plan."

The Council’s position regarding the urgent need for an assessment of the case for the Lower Thames Crossing remains unchanged.

3.35. The consultation document proposes that contributions from new development should meet the costs of providing the community, transport and other infrastructure needed to serve it and that there should be a clear commitment to meeting agreed infrastructure costs before planning consent is granted. No assessment is included in the draft plan of the financial implications of providing the infrastructure required, and it is not therefore possible to say with confidence what impact such an approach will have on the supply of development. If it would render sites incapable of economic development, then the effect of such a policy would be to stifle development.

3.36. Much of the development in Dartford will be on previously developed land or on damaged or despoiled sites with abnormally high preparation costs.

3.37. The proposal that planning permission should only be granted once clear funding commitments have been secured for all the necessary infrastructure may be inappropriate in the case of complex and expensive sites with a lead-in time of three to five years and a project delivery period of perhaps ten years. An alternative mechanism is needed to underwrite the funding uncertainties which will inevitably prevail during the lifetime of the plan.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

Regeneration: Key Actions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11
Leisure Time: Key Actions 3, 4 and 7
Environment: Key Action 1 and 6
Housing: Key Action 1, 2 and 3

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

<table>
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<th>Financial Implications</th>
<th>The Council’s involvement to date has been in the form of officer and Member involvement on Working Groups. This will continue.</th>
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<tr>
<td>Legal Implications</td>
<td>The South East Plan when approved will form part of the Development Plan. The Plan will provide the spatial context with which the Local Development</td>
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<table>
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<th>Staffing Implications</th>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
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</table>

Framework will be expected to be consistent.

6. Appendices

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents consulted</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Report Author</th>
<th>Section and Directorate</th>
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<td>Sept 2005</td>
<td>Paul Buckley 01322-343202</td>
<td>Policy Regeneration</td>
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UPDATE – ITEM 7 – CONSULTATION DOCUMENT SOUTH EAST PLAN: EMPLOYMENT, HOUSING AND INFRASTRUCTURE - CABINET 27 OCTOBER 2005

1. Changes to the Report

Waste Water

Paragraph 3.28

Insert the following sentence at the end of the paragraph: **Investment in waste water infrastructure is equally important and must be planned as an integral part of new growth and development.**

Flood Risk

Add new paragraph 3.28a:

*The consultation document refers to the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment which is being undertaken for Kent Thameside (at paragraph 3.13). This is a crucial piece of work which will provide the basis for Environment Agency advice to the Council on strategic development patterns in areas of risk, and will inform the content of the Council’s emerging Local Development Framework. The Council welcomes the emphasis placed on flood risk assessment and the evidence base this will provide to guide Environment Agency inputs to the planning process.*

Critical Infrastructure

Paragraph 3.37

Delete the last sentence: **An alternative mechanism is needed to underwrite the funding uncertainties which will inevitably prevail during the lifetime of the plan.**

Replace with: **SEERA must face up to the reality that some developments will not take place without significant funding contributions from Government.**

2. Other Matters for Information

Members alerted Officers that a new pressure group has been formed to campaign for improved water supply in Kent. Officers will be following this up with regard to the Local Development Framework.

There was a query from Members regarding the draft regional policy stance on affordable housing – Policy H4 (Affordable Housing) directs Local Development Documents to “contain policies to deliver a substantial increase in the amount of affordable housing in the region” and to “set targets” “taking account of the results of housing need and market assessments and having regard to the overall regional target of 25% social rented accommodation and 10% other forms of affordable housing”.

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MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

1. Summary

1.1 The Medium Term Financial Plan is approved by the Council at the budget meeting in February/March each year. It is updated throughout the year for known changes and reported to Members in the Autumn, to set the scheme for the following year’s budget.

1.2 The report will consider the national picture for local government finance, comment on the likely grant settlement for 2006/7 and make recommendations for the 2006/7 budget strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That Members note the report.

2.2 That Members approve the letter to the Minister for Local Government attached as Appendix B.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1 When the budget is approved by Members in February/March each year, the budget report includes a Medium Term Financial Plan. The Medium Term Financial Plan considers the implications on the General Fund for the coming three years taking into account known changes and making certain assumptions about other events that are likely to impact on the Council’s budget. The Medium Term Financial Plan approved by the Council on 28 February 2005 noted that, allowing for a small increase in Government grant, if the increase in council tax was set at 3%, there was an estimated budget gap of £517,000, which would need to be found from service efficiencies or taken from balances. Further efficiencies would be required in future years.

3.2 At this time of year it is appropriate to review and update the assumptions made in February, consider any new financial pressures facing the Council and give guidance to the Managing Director for the preparation of the 2006/7 budget.
3.3 Appendix A shows the summary updated Medium Term Financial Plan. The first section shows estimated income from council tax, assuming a 3% increase each year, a 2% increase in the tax base each year and a 2.5% increase in Government grant each year. The second section shows the changes to the base budget that were assumed when the budget was approved in February, updated where relevant. The third section shows the additional cost pressures facing the Council, where an estimate can be included. It assumes that Government will fully fund new initiatives, such as concessionary fares and new food safety regulations, but this is by no means certain. Its does not take account of any potential funding difficulties following the ending of Planning Delivery Grant.

3.4 The increased pressure on the budget and the restriction on Government grant, suggests an increase in the estimated budget gap for 2006/7 to over £1m, increasing further in future years. The following paragraphs comment on some of the more significant pressure areas.

3.5 The Medium term Financial Plan assumes that Government grant will increase annually by 2.5%. There is a major doubt that the Council will receive an increase of this much. Although the Council received an increase in grant of 3% in 2005/6, part of this was a one-off cash boost and is not guaranteed in 2006/7. The Local Government Association have estimated that the average grant increase (excluding schools), implied from Government figures is an increase of only 0.8%. For Dartford 0.8% equates to £50,000. The Medium Term Financial Plan assumption of 2.5% equates to £160,000, so this loss alone will mean an increase in council tax of 2.5% before all the cost pressures are taken into account. When the cost pressures are added, an increase in council tax of £41 (or 30%) will be required.

3.6 When estimating the level of inflation, the Government use general indicators. The Adam Smith Institute has been demonstrated that since 1997, the true cost of inflation for local authorities has averaged 5% each year and reached 5.5% for the second quarter in 2005. This is significantly less than the increase in grant received.

3.7 In recent years, income from Land Charges has been consistently below budget. Despite new initiatives, income will underachieve budget by approximately £170,000 this year. There is no likelihood that will change.
in the short term and the Medium Term Financial Plan assumes that the income budget will be reduced by £150,000.

3.8 The Council purchased Acacia Hall in June 2005. When the budget was set in February, it was noted that if the purchase took place the first year’s net costs will be met from balances and the full year effect will be taken into account in the 2006/7 budget. When Glaxo operated the site, the net annual cost was approximately £250,000. The Medium Term Financial Plan assumes a net cost to the Council in 2006/7 of £200,000, reducing in future years. The Council will work actively with users to reduce this deficit, by widening of usage and hopefully further capital investment.

3.9 The tender for cleansing, recycling and waste services expires in June 2006. Experiences of other authorities in recent years, suggests an increase in tender rates of approximately 10%. The Medium Term Financial Plan assumes this increase.

3.10 Interest receivable will reduce as the Council invests in major new assets for the community. The use of any cash balances reduces the money available to invest and the interest earned. Significant new cash receipts will need to be generated in the next twelve months, and held unspent, to avoid a loss of interest. The net reduction in interest could be in the order of £200,000 in 2006/7, increasing further in 2007/8 and 2008/9.

3.11 When the budget was set in February, the estimated balance on the General Fund at 31 March 2005 was £2.5m. A balance of £1m is held for unforeseen costs and cash flow, which leaves a usable balance of £1.5m. At 31 March 2006 this balance is estimated at £1.8m.

3.12 Some items of expenditure are funded from the Identified Initiatives Reserve. The balance on the Identified Initiatives Reserve at 31 March was £2.5m, of which approximately £2.2m is committed. Apart for the local elections in 2007/8, no funding is provided beyond 2006/7. The Identified Initiatives Reserve includes some items that may require long term funding and Members will need to ensure that sufficient resources are available to meet any ongoing priorities, or take a policy decision to stop certain activities.

3.13 Government priorities for local government have been, and continue to be, education and social services, with funding for services provided by district councils far lower, particularly in the south east. The transfer of government resources from the south to the north has exacerbated this problem. The Council will need to look innovatively at all spending proposals and undoubtedly make some difficult policy choices. Any proposals for new spending should only be considered if they meet key
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corporate priorities and only then if offset by at least equivalent savings elsewhere.

3.14 This is a familiar position which is experienced each year. For the current year's budget leading Members reviewed all service plans and made recommendations to reduce the net budget by £1.3m, including the deletion of 19 posts. It is going to be far more difficult to make savings this year without changes to policy. With reduced staffing and a very ambitious corporate plan, there are signs that some areas are becoming overstretched. A comprehensive review will therefore be necessary and plans are in hand for a review of service plans by Cabinet Members.

3.15 In view of the continued under-funding by the Government of district council services, particularly in the south east, and the cost pressures facing the Council, it is recommended that a letter is sent to the Minister for Local Government and Members are asked to approve the draft attached as Appendix B (Appendix B is “To Follow”).

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The whole report deals with the Council's ability to fund the corporate plan priorities.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

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Appendices

A – Medium Term Financial Plan
B - Draft letter to the Minister for Local Government (“To Follow”)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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## MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

### 2006/07 2007/08 2008/09 2009/10

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<td>4,676</td>
<td>4,914</td>
<td>5,162</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus estimated Formula Grant</td>
<td>6,529</td>
<td>6,692</td>
<td>6,860</td>
<td>7,031</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Plus estimated Collection Fund Surplus</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total income for General Fund Budget</strong></td>
<td>11,039</td>
<td>11,429</td>
<td>11,834</td>
<td>12,254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Estimate of Expenditure on General Fund

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>2006/07</th>
<th>2007/08</th>
<th>2008/09</th>
<th>2009/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Plus estimated unavoidable increases in expenditure or unavoidable reductions in income</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pay award for staff and Members (say 3%)</td>
<td>367</td>
<td>745</td>
<td>1,134</td>
<td>1,535</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reduced benefit subsidy transitional relief</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inflation on contracts</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>220</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>440</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased employer pension costs</td>
<td>179</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>357</td>
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<tr>
<td>Reinstate Parks and Open Spaces ad hoc works budget</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grounds maintenance - new adoption Worcester Park</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Street cleansing - new roads</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refuse collection - new properties</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recycling - new properties</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of KCC Recycling Grant due to contract/disposal point change</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Loss of KCC Recycling Grant contribution to 05/06 target</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal of one-off budget for promotion of Recycling</td>
<td>-50</td>
<td>-50</td>
<td>-50</td>
<td>-50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eltham Crematorium Joint Committee reduced distribution</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bereavement fees increase from Columbaria</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>-20</td>
<td>-20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car park - Central Park closure (end June 06) - net reduced income</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Car park - Market Street closure (end June 06) - net reduced income</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Highways - Office costs contribution</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>50</td>
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<tr>
<td>Customer Contact Centre - net effect</td>
<td>-100</td>
<td>-175</td>
<td>-250</td>
<td>-250</td>
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<tr>
<td>The Orchard Theatre - Net income increase</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>-30</td>
<td>-30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Council Tax reduced resources</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>-7</td>
<td>-7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Performance Team reduced resources</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>-14</td>
<td>-14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Strategy reduced resources</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>-8</td>
<td>-8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members Services reduced resources</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>-9</td>
<td>-9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Added cost pressures facing the Council</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Charges - Reduction in income</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kent Benefits Partnership Membership</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>6</td>
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<td>Civil Contingencies Act - Service Level Agreement with KCC</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environment Agency Levy</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cesspools - cessation of service - net income lost</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drainage - Reduction in service - net income lost</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effect of Acacia Hall</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Effect of new contracts 1/7/06 - Cleansing</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
<td>81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Effect of new contracts 1/7/06 - Refuse</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>98</td>
<td>98</td>
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<tr>
<td>Estimated Effect of new contracts 1/7/06 - Recycling</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Effect of new contracts 1/7/06 - Medical Waste</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Effect of new contracts 1/7/06 - Markets</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Estimated Effect of new contracts 1/7/06 - Public Conveniences</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Police Community Support Officers - put in base</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in Interest receivable</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>400</td>
<td>500</td>
<td>500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sum required from balances to set balanced budget (or service efficiencies)</strong></td>
<td>-1,255</td>
<td>-1,821</td>
<td>-1,973</td>
<td>-2,115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total estimated expenditure</td>
<td>11,039</td>
<td>11,429</td>
<td>11,834</td>
<td>12,254</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total estimated income (see above)</td>
<td>-11,039</td>
<td>-11,429</td>
<td>-11,834</td>
<td>-12,254</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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Dear Mr Woolas,

Revenue Support Grant Settlement 2006/7

The Council submitted a detailed response to the consultation on proposals for changes to the Formula Grant Distribution System. That was essentially a technical response to the specific options put forward for consultation.

That response included reference to the under-funding by the Government for district council services. For those districts in the South East, particularly areas of growth like Dartford, the problem is acute.

When the Dartford Cabinet considered its Medium Term Financial Plan, my Cabinet colleagues asked me to write to you personally, to seek your help in assuring a fair deal for the residents of Dartford in the forthcoming finance settlement.

The Government has made much of the increased funding to local government in recent years. Funding for local government overall, as measured solely against the retail price index, has increased, but this has been directed primarily at key Government priorities of education and social services. For district councils generally, and those in the South East in particular, the picture is completely different, with Councils having to contend with growth in economic activity and population, additional responsibilities and inflation nearer 5%.

The 2004/5 settlement was complicated by the change of funding of benefits, but the Council received additional grant of less than 3%. Our unavoidable increased costs were far greater than our increased income.

In the 2005/6 settlement, the Council received additional grant of 3% (£189,000). We generated a further £77,000 from increased tax base, giving a total additional income of £256,000, but we had additional unavoidable expenditure of £919,000.

To reduce our net expenditure and avoid a large increase in council tax in 2005/6, the Council undertook a fundamental review of all budgets. We made efficiency savings of over £800,000 and other savings, to reduce our net budget by £1.3m.

Despite this, we face similar difficulties for the 2006/7 budget with a potential budget increase of £1.2m, which implies an increase in council tax of 41%. The Council does not want to increase council tax above the level of inflation and will review budgets rigorously to identify further efficiencies, but we cannot save £1.2m without directly affecting services to the public.

The following are just some of the budget pressures which the Council has absorbed in the past couple of years and again this coming year:
AGENDA ITEM 8 – APPENDIX B

- Staff pay award
- Increased employer pension costs
- Significant additional costs or raising levels of recycling
- New licensing regime
- Local Development Framework
- Ending of targeted Government Grant e.g. Town Centre Warden, Police Community Support Officers
- Increased waste collection costs
- Reduced net income from Government changes to benefit subsidy
- Local government inflation at 5% each year
- Civil Contingencies Act
- Substantial reduction in income from land charges
- Concessionary fares
- New food safety regulations
- General growth pressures of more houses, more roads and more litter

These additional costs far exceed additional income.

In addition to this, Dartford is at the heart of the Thames Gateway. The growth pressure will undoubtedly increase and the formula grant system is very slow to react to expansion. Our response to formula grant consultation made some proposals for special assistance to growth areas and I ask that you consider them carefully. This is especially true for growth in business, where the council has been particularly successful, only to find it is penalised for its success in the Local Authority Business Growth Incentive formula. New business generates more activity and more costs, but this is not properly recognised in the present grant system.

The Council was assessed as “good” from the Comprehensive Performance Assessment, with a score which ranked it at 30 out of all district councils in the country. In our Audit Commission comparison group, we have the third lowest council tax. We are a well managed, well run council.

Government grant in recent years has been targeted at education, social services and authorities in the Midlands and the North. Most, if not all, district authorities in Kent are at the grant “floor” and receive the lowest level of grant increase each year. I am not asking for special treatment, but just for Dartford (and South East districts) to be treated fairly.

Further damage to this important tier of government by further under-funding will see targets on anti social behaviour, sport and healthy living, recycling and economic growth begin to falter. With specific government help, the area is poised for growth, but is still fragile. We can achieve, and possibly exceed expectations, but we need your help and support.

Yours sincerely,
Kenneth Leadbeater
Leader of the Council
HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE TARIFF

1. **Summary**

1.1 Under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council is empowered to fix Hackney Carriage fares to operate within the Borough. A review is usually carried out annually and, historically, any changes in fares are introduced in November or December.

1.2 Three proposals for an increase in the Hackney Carriage Fare Tariffs are offered for Members’ consideration. The first was submitted by Mr M C Peeke and Mr S W Jones, hackney carriage drivers, the second by Mr P Lafevre, also a hackney carriage driver, and the third by Enforcement and Regulatory Services.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

2.1. That the Hackney Carriage fare structure proposed by Enforcement and Regulatory Services (Appendix E) be implemented by 30 November.

3. **Background and Discussion**

3.1. The current Dartford Borough Council Fare Structure and Tariffs, shown in Appendix A, was approved by the Cabinet on 18 December 2003 (Minute No 172) and implemented on 21 January 2004. On 15 February 2004 the Cabinet accepted the outcome of a ballot of the trade that there should be no increase in the Hackney Carriage fares before November 2005.

3.2. It has been customary for the trade to request the Council to increase, or decrease, Hackney Carriage fares. Proposals for an increase were sought from the trade through a newsletter sent to all licensed hackney carriage proprietors and drivers in March 2005.

3.3. Only one written proposal was received, that from Mr Peeke and Mr Jones dated March 2005. A further updated and amended copy of their proposal was received on 15 September 2005 and it is this version that is reviewed in this report. It is presented as the opinions of “a nucleus of the Borough’s long-stranding Hackney Carriage (Taxi) Drivers, expressed independently of any trade association.” It recommends adopting and tying the Borough to the Greater London Fare Structure and tariffs, the Greater London Fare
Structure 2005/06 version of which is shown in Appendix B. A copy of this proposal together with the Enforcement and Regulatory Services' comments on it was placed in the Members Room on 10 October 2005.

3.4. Two comments considered to be of significance were made prior to the closing date for proposals stipulated in the newsletter. The first was from a past secretary of the Dartford Taxi Association (DTA), who considered that the incremental distance should be adjusted to give a rise of 20p per fare. The second comment was from an 8-seat hackney carriage driver who considered Tariff 1 should yield £2.00 per mile. These comments form the basis of a second proposal prepared by Enforcement and Regulatory Services with the addition that all waiting times are reduced by 10%.

3.5. Another proposal from a member of the trade, in the form of a table, was presented to Enforcement and Regulatory Services Section, on 19 September 2005. It follows the Enforcement and Regulatory Services proposal, but increases the initial charge, known as the “flag,” by 20p for Tariffs 1 and 3 and by 30p for Tariffs 2 and 4.

3.6. A comparison of all 3 proposals with the current Dartford tariffs is given in Appendix C. Comparisons have only been made with Dartford tariffs 1-4. This is because tariffs 5 and 6 only apply at Christmas and the New Year and are 100% of tariffs 1 and 2. For these periods the Greater London Fare Structure tariffs add a surcharge of £3 per journey.

3.7. Making an accurate assessment of the overall impact of these proposals is fraught with difficulty, as no model is held by the Council with which to make a comparative assessment and all proposals lack reliable quantitative data. Therefore only a broad indicative assessment can be provided. This is based on the average of the percentage increases for journeys up to and including 7 miles and the Transport for London details of hackney carriage running costs contained in Table 1 of the proposal submitted by Mr Peeke and Mr Jones. The 7 miles figure has been chosen, as journeys above this distance tend to have a destination outside of the Borough. When this is the case, the driver is entitled to negotiate the fare in advance of the commencement of the journey, instead of using the meter.

3.8. The proposal presented by Mr Peeke and Mr Jones argues for the Greater London Fare Structure and Tariffs. By making comparisons with a table of hackney carriage running costs produced by Transport for London it seeks to demonstrate that the running costs of a Dartford hackney carriage are higher than those for a London one. Table 1 shows the running costs for a Dartford hackney carriage based on an analysis of the Transport for London data and the information provided by Mr Peeke and Mr Jones. The London totals, that include components not applicable to Dartford, are shown in brackets.
Table 1. Estimated Running Costs for a Dartford Hackney Carriage

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component of Index</th>
<th>Cost p/mile 2003</th>
<th>Cost p/mile 2004</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vehicle Cost</td>
<td>13.35</td>
<td>13.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parts</td>
<td>14.29</td>
<td>14.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garage and Servicing</td>
<td>21.97</td>
<td>22.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fuel</td>
<td>14.98</td>
<td>15.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insurance</td>
<td>6.28</td>
<td>6.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total Operating Costs</strong></td>
<td><strong>70.87</strong></td>
<td><strong>72.68</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average National Earnings</strong></td>
<td><strong>85.60</strong></td>
<td><strong>88.68</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Grand Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>156.47</strong></td>
<td><strong>161.36</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Year on Year Increase</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Adjusted Year on Year Increase Taking Account of Dartford Extra Unpaid Mileage</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>5.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.9. From Table 1 it will be seen that the year on year increase for a Dartford hackney carriage was 3.1%. However, Mr Peeke and Mr Jones argue that a Dartford hackney carriage covers a higher proportion of unpaid mileage. If this argument is accepted and taken into account, it will result in a factor of 1.64 being applied to the 3.1% year on year increase to give an adjusted figure of 5.0%.

3.10. The above figures are based on a London type hackney carriage covering on average 22,000 miles per year. At 2004 prices the cost of such a vehicle was £29,000 and the cost of parts, garaging and servicing £8,200. Dartford does not restrict its hackney carriage fleet to such vehicles and Appendix D shows how the choice of vehicle can affect these costs. The information provided by All Night Car Hire shows the purchase and maintenance costs for a Euro 7 hackney carriage that covered 49,800 miles in a year. At £22,000 the vehicle is nearly a third cheaper to buy and at £1,900 maintenance costs are a quarter of those of the London hackney carriage. Interestingly 67% of the Dartford hackney carriage fleet are London type hackney carriages and of those 74% are over 7 years old. This would suggest that vehicle proprietors are turning away from the London style hackney carriages in favour of potentially more cost effective alternatives.
Appendix C shows a comparison of the fare tariffs for the three proposals under consideration. Table 2 is compiled from the information contained in Appendix C and shows in percentage terms how these tariffs compare with the current Dartford tariffs.

**Table 2. Comparison of the increases arising from the proposals for changes to the hackney carriage fare structures**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dartford Tariff</th>
<th>Enforcement &amp; Regulatory Services % Increase</th>
<th>Greater London Tariff % Increase</th>
<th>Trade % Increase</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.58</td>
<td>19.64</td>
<td>12.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.58</td>
<td>-20.24</td>
<td>12.63</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>41.69</td>
<td>11.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>8.79</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>11.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average % Increase</td>
<td>9.10</td>
<td>10.37</td>
<td>11.94</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As can be seen from Table 2, whilst the Greater London Tariff proposal provides an average increase of 10.37%, in the 3 tariff Greater London Fare Structure customers travelling on the equivalent of Dartford tariffs 1 and 3 will face significant increases whilst drivers of vehicles entitled to use the Dartford tariffs 2 and 4 that cover the carrying of 5-8 passengers (98.5% of the Dartford fleet can carry 5 or more passengers) could suffer a loss or severe drop in income. In contrast, the Trade proposal averages 11.94% and the Enforcement and Regulatory Services proposal 9.10%. Both of these proposals result in increases on all tariffs.

With regard to the Greater London Fare Structure proposal to change the tariff structure, whilst this should be considered, any change could only be made after wide consultation with the trade. It is therefore inappropriate to consider such a change at this stage.

When the average percentage increases given in table 2 are compared with the adjusted year on year percentage increase given in Table 1, it will be seen that both the Greater London Fare Structure and Trade proposals are more than double the year on year increase.

An idea of how Dartford’s current tariffs compare with those of adjacent boroughs can be gained from the League Table that appears in Private Hire and Taxi Monthly. Table 3 shows the positions in April 2004 and September 2005. Up to and including the September 2005 issue the 2 mile fare on Dartford Tariff 1 was quoted incorrectly. Because of this, the Dartford
position is higher than was published. Our correct position appears in the October 2005 edition.
3.16. From Table 3 it will be seen that adopting the Greater London Fare Structure will raise our position to joint second with London. It is estimated that the Trade and Enforcement and Regulatory Services proposals are likely to lift Dartford’s position to around that of Maidstone. The primary difference between these two proposals is that the Trade proposal adds an additional amount to the flag, to account for the rises in the price of fuel.

3.17. According to the Consumer Prices Index issued by National Statistics, fuel and lubricant costs increased by 9.8% over the 12 months to 12 July 2005. Whilst prices appear to have peaked, they are unlikely to fall back to their previous levels. However, there are recent indications that fuel prices will fall, in which case it would be unwise to add a fuel supplement at this stage.

3.18. Based on the adjusted Transport for London running cost data, the year on year increase in costs for a Dartford hackney carriage are between 3.1% and 5%. If the average is taken, this will give a year on year increase of 4%, which is more than covered by the increase proposed by Enforcement and Regulatory Services, if the fact that there was no increase in 2004 is taken into account.

3.19. The Enforcement and Regulatory Services proposal provides a year on year increase of 4.5% over the last 2 years. The proposed tariffs are given in full in Appendix E. Bearing in mind that the trade voted to not to increase fares before November 2005, it is obvious that there is a concern that too high an increase could result in loss of customers to the private hire sector or other means of transport. Adopting the Enforcement and Regulatory Services proposal will compensate for the fact that there was no rise in November 2004 and reduce the potential for loss of trade.

4. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

| Financial Implications | There will be a cost estimated at £300 |
### Legal Implications

The last tariff increase was introduced in January 2004, when the expectation of the trade had been that it was to be introduced in November 2003. Two drivers appealed to the Ombudsman that they had suffered loss of earnings due to the delay in introduction of the new tariffs and were each awarded £250. As a result of this, the Council advised the Ombudsman that in future increases in tariff will be introduced in November.

Subsections 65(2), (3) and (4) of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 requires that:

1. (2)(a) When a district council make or vary a table of fares they shall publish in at least one local newspaper circulating in the district a notice setting out the table of the variation thereof and specifying the period, which shall be not less than fourteen days from the date of the first publication of the notice, within which and the manner in which objections to the table of fares can be made.

2. (b) A copy of the notice referred to in paragraph (a) of this subsection shall be for the period of fourteen days from the date of the first publication thereof be deposited at the offices of the council which published the notice, and shall at all reasonable hours be open to public inspection without payment.

3. If no objection to a table of fares or variation is duly made within the period...
specified in the notice referred to in subsection (2) of this section, or if all objections so made are withdrawn, the table of fares or variation shall come into operation on the date or the expiration of the period specified in the notice of the date of withdrawal of the objection or, if more than one, of the last objection, whichever date is the later.

(4) If objection is duly made as aforesaid and is not withdrawn, the district council shall set a further date, not later than two months after the first specified date, on which the table of fares shall come into force with or without modifications as decided by them after consideration of the objections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staffing Implications</th>
<th>None.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Implications</td>
<td>Arrangements will be made for the timely publication of the new tariff in a local newspaper. Taximeter manufacturers will be advised of the new fares, so that taximeters can be reprogrammed. Hackney Carriage proprietors will be informed of when the new fare structure will be introduced. New tariff cards will be produced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>The latest date for introducing a revised fare structure is 30 November 2005. Assuming that the Cabinet approves the recommendation contained in this report and staff effort does not have to be diverted to unexpected higher priority work, this target will be achieved. The risks to missing the 30 November 2005 deadline are staff sickness and objections, neither of which is considered likely. All possible</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
preparatory action has been taken to ensure that, in the event of staff sickness, it should still be possible to meet the deadline. In the event of there being objections that cannot be disposed of before the expiry of the consultation period, a new date for the introduction of the fare structure will be set. The new date must be not later than 2 months after the first date specified. To minimise the impact of this risk, the publication of the new fare structure will be done at the earliest opportunity.

5. **Relationship to the Corporate Plan**
   Not applicable.

6. **Appendices**
   
   Appendix A: Dartford Borough Council Hackney Carriage Fare Tariff
   Appendix B: Greater London Fare Structure for 2005/2006
   Appendix C: Comparison of Current with Proposed Tariffs
   Appendix D: Purchase and Maintenance Costs for a Skoda Octavia Private Hire Vehicle and a Euro 7 Hackney Carriage
   Appendix E: Recommended Hackney Carriage Fare Tariff

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents consulted</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>File Ref</th>
<th>Report Author</th>
<th>Section and Directorate</th>
<th>Exempt Information Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Dartford Taxi Trade: Its Background, a Proposal for a Replacement Fare Structure and an Impact Study</td>
<td>10/4/05</td>
<td>HC&amp;PH/09/02</td>
<td>Tony Shilling (T). 01322 343 340</td>
<td>Licensing S/D</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr M Peeke and Mr S Jones</td>
<td>Enforcement and Regulatory Services</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPI: Detailed Figures for 12 July 2005 – 07.2.2 Fuels and Lubricants</td>
<td>HC&amp;PH/09/05</td>
<td>National Statistics</td>
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</table>
This “Table of Fares” made by the Council under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) act 1976, provides that the proprietor or driver of a Hackney Carriage shall be entitled to demand for the hire of such carriage the rate of fare prescribed by the following table. The fare payable shall be by way of a combination of time and distance automatically calculated and displayed by the Taximeter fitted thereto. The Taximeter shall be moved to the “hired” position when and only when the Hackney Carriage is hired. Commencement date 21 January 2004

### Fare Table

1. **(For Vehicles Carrying 1-4 Passengers)**
   - For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 06.00 and 22.00 for the first 694.9m (760yds) or 3 minutes 48 seconds or uncompleted part thereof £2.00
   - For each additional 182.9m (200yds) or 60 seconds or uncompleted part thereof 20p

2. **(For Vehicle Carrying 5-8 Passengers)**
   - For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 06.00 and 22.00 for the first 694.9m (760yds) or 3 minutes 48 seconds or uncompleted part thereof £3.00
   - For each additional 182.9m (200yds) or 60 seconds or uncompleted part thereof 30p

3. **(For Vehicles Carrying 1-4 Passengers)**
   - For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 22.00 and 06.00, all day Sunday and at any time on public and bank holidays including Good Friday for the first 694.9m (760yds) or 3mins 48secs or uncompleted part thereof £3.00
   - For each additional 182.9m (200yds) or 60secs or uncompleted part thereof 20p

4. **(For Vehicles Carrying 5-8 Passengers)**
   - For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 22.00 and 06.00, all day Sunday and at any time on public and bank holidays including Good Friday for the first 694.9m (760yds) or 3mins 48secs or uncompleted part thereof £4.00
   - For each additional 182.9m (200yds) or 60secs or uncompleted part thereof 30p

### CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR

5. **(For Vehicles Carrying 1-4 Passengers)**
   - For any hiring commenced between 19.00 on 24 December and 06.00 on 27 December Plus 100% of Rate 1
   - For any hiring commenced between 19.00 on 31 December and 06.00 on 2 January Plus 100% of Rate 1

6. **(For Vehicles Carrying 5-8 Passengers)**
   - For any hiring commenced between 19.00 on 24 December and 06.00 on 27 December Plus 100% of Rate 2
   - For any hiring commenced between 19.00 on 31 December and 06.00 on 2 January Plus 100% of Rate 2

### Additional Charges

- For each additional passenger over the age of 1 year in excess of 6 passengers 40p
- For Dartford Crossing Tolls As current rates for return journey
- For London Congestion Charge As current rate
- For soiling of the hackney carriage (by humans or animals) £75.00
- For booking charge for Zingo type operation or similar like company a maximum of £2.00

The driver or proprietor shall not be entitled to demand or take a fare greater than that recorded on the face of the Taximeter, with exception if payment is made by Credit Card a maximum additional 10% will be added to the fare.

**Complaints** — about a vehicle or driver (that cannot be settled by the driver or proprietor) should be reported to Enforcement and regulatory Services, Dartford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, Kent DA1 1DR – Telephone 01322 343340 and a note taken of the Licence Number of the Hackney Carriage and Driver.
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### GREATER LONDON FARE STRUCTURE AND TARIFFS

**Fares - overview**

Typical taxi fares and journey times:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tariff code on meter</th>
<th>Approx journey time</th>
<th>Monday to Friday 8pm to 10pm</th>
<th>Saturday and Sunday 6am to 10pm</th>
<th>Every night 10pm – 6am Public holidays</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Distance (miles)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Monday to Friday 6am to 8pm</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>5–12 mins</td>
<td>£4.00 - £5.60</td>
<td>£4.40 - £7.00</td>
<td>£4.80 - £6.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>8–15 mins</td>
<td>£6.20 - £8.80</td>
<td>£6.60 - £10.20</td>
<td>£7.80 - £10.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>15–30 mins</td>
<td>£10 - £14</td>
<td>£12 - £17</td>
<td>£14 - £17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>20–40 mins</td>
<td>£14 - £19</td>
<td>£17 - £20</td>
<td>£20 - £23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between Heathrow and Central London</td>
<td>30–60 mins</td>
<td>£40 - £70</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
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</table>

- There is a £2.20 minimum fare at all times
- The fare shown on the meter at the end of the journey is the maximum cash fare that may be charged. The passenger will be expected to pay the full fare displayed on the meter at the end of the journey unless the driver and passenger agree on the final fare to be charged before the start of the journey.
- The meter automatically adds a charge based on time for any part of the journey when the speed drops below 10.4 mph.
- Fares within Greater London depend on the time of day, distance travelled and taxi speed, and are displayed on the meter. The driver is not obliged to accept a hiring if the destination is outside Greater London, and the fare for such a journey may be negotiated between the driver and hirer.
- Drivers must, unless they have good cause, accept any hiring up to 12 miles (20 miles if starting at Heathrow Airport), or up to one hour duration, if the destination is in Greater London.

All fare and tariff information shown on these pages is effective from Saturday 2 April 2005.
GREATER LONDON FARE STRUCTURE AND TARIFFS

Fares - detailed

Taxi Fares and Tariffs

Drivers must, unless they have good cause, accept any hiring up to 12 miles (20 miles if starting at Heathrow Airport), or up to one hour duration, if the destination is in Greater London. The driver is not obliged to accept a hiring if the destination is outside Greater London, the fare for such a journey may be negotiated between the driver and hirer.

Taxi Tariff Details 2005/06

Below are details of the 2005/06 taxi tariff. The figures quoted include an environmental charge of 20p per trip to meet the cost of emissions reduction equipment. Other extra charges may be included in the final fare.

For any hiring during Monday to Friday other than on a public holiday between 6am and 8pm (Tariff 1):

- For the first 335.8 metres or 72.2 seconds (whichever is reached first) there is a minimum charge of £2.20;
- For each additional 167.9 metres or 36.1 seconds (whichever is reached first), or part thereof, if the fare is less than £13.40 then there is a charge of 20p;
- Once the fare is £13.40 or greater then there is a charge of 20p for each additional 117.7 metres or 25.3 seconds (whichever is reached first), or part thereof.

For any hiring either during Monday to Friday between 8pm and 10pm or during Saturday or Sunday between 6am and 10pm, other than on a public holiday, (Tariff 2):

- For the first 272.0 metres or 58.4 seconds (whichever is reached first) there is a minimum charge of £2.20;
- For each additional 136.0 metres or 29.2 seconds (whichever is reached first), or part thereof, if the fare is less than £16.20 there is a charge of 20p;
- Once the fare is £16.20 or greater then there is a charge of 20p for each additional 117.7 metres or 25.3 seconds (whichever is reached first), or part thereof.
GREATER LONDON FARE STRUCTURE AND TARIFFS

For any hiring between 10pm on any day and 6am the following day or at any time on a public holiday (Tariff 3):

- For the first 219.6 metres or 47.2 seconds (whichever is reached first) there is a minimum charge of £2.20;
- For each additional 109.8 metres or 23.6 seconds (whichever is reached first), or part thereof, if the fare is less than £19.40 there is a charge of 20p;
- Once the fare is £19.40 or greater then there is a charge of 20p for each additional 117.7 metres or 25.3 seconds (whichever is reached first).

When a different tariff becomes applicable during a hiring it shall be applied immediately, but only from the start of the new charging period.

All fare and tariff information shown on these pages is effective from Saturday 2 April 2005
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### Current Dartford Tariff 1. (For Vehicles Carrying 1-4 Passengers):

For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 06.00 and 22.00 for the first 694.9m (760yds) or 3 minutes 48 seconds or uncompleted part thereof - £2.00.

For each additional 182.9m (200yds) or 60 seconds or uncompleted part thereof - 20p

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Distance (miles)</th>
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<th>2</th>
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<th>20</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>3.00</td>
<td>4.80</td>
<td>6.60</td>
<td>8.40</td>
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<td>13.60</td>
<td>15.40</td>
<td>17.20</td>
<td>19.00</td>
<td>36.60</td>
<td>54.20</td>
<td>73.60</td>
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</table>

### Enforcement and Regulatory Services

| % Increase | 6.67% | 8.33% | 9.09% | 9.52% | 9.80% | 11.86% | 11.76% | 11.69% | 11.63% | 12.57% | 12.92% | 10.33% |

Average % increase on journeys up to 7 miles: 9.58%

### Greater London Fare Structure

| % Increase | 26.67% | 20.83% | 15.15% | 14.29% | 11.76% | 13.56% | 17.65% | 22.08% | 25.58% | 27.37% | 40.98% | 45.76% | 44.57% |

Average % increase on journeys up to 7 miles: 17.13%

### Greater London Fare Structure

| % Increase | 40.00% | 37.50% | 36.36% | 35.71% | 35.29% | 37.29% | 38.24% | 40.26% | 40.70% | 42.11% | 40.98% | 45.76% | 44.29% |

Average % increase on journeys up to 7 miles: 37.20%

### Trade

| % Increase | 13.33% | 12.50% | 12.12% | 11.90% | 11.76% | 13.56% | 12.99% | 12.99% | 12.63% | 13.11% | 13.28% | 10.60% |

Average % increase on journeys up to 7 miles: 12.63%
### Current Dartford Tariff 2 (For vehicle Carrying 5-8 Passengers):

- For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 06.00 and 22.00 for the first 694.9m (760yds) or 3 minutes 48 seconds or uncompleted part thereof - £3.00
- For each additional 182.9m (200yds) or 60 seconds or uncompleted part thereof - 30p

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<th>Distance (miles)</th>
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### Enforcement and Regulatory Services

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<th>31.80</th>
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<td>11.63%</td>
<td>11.58%</td>
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<td>12.92%</td>
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### Greater London Fare Structure

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<th>18.80</th>
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<td>-18.61%</td>
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<td>-3.62%</td>
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### Greater London Fare Structure

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### Current Dartford Tariff 3 (For Vehicles Carrying 1-4 Passengers):
For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 22.00 and 06.00, all day Sunday and at any time on public and bank holidays including Good Friday for the first 694.9m (760yds) or 3min 48secs or uncompleted part thereof - £3.00
For each additional 182.9m (200yds) or 60secs or uncompleted part thereof - 20p

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<tr>
<th>Distance (miles)</th>
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<td>Current Tariff 3 (£)</td>
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### Enforcement and Regulatory Services

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### Greater London Fare Structure

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<tr>
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<td>48.21%</td>
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### Trade

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<td>% Increase</td>
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<td>10.64%</td>
<td>10.71%</td>
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<td>12.09%</td>
<td>12.00%</td>
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**Current Dartford Tariff 4 (For Vehicles Carrying 5-8 Passengers):**
For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 22.00 and 06.00, all day Sunday and at any time on public and bank holidays including God Friday for the first 694.9m (760yds) or 3mins 48secs or uncompleted part thereof - £4.00
For each additional 182.9m (200yds) or 60secs or uncompleted part thereof - 30p

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<td>Current Tariff 4 (£)</td>
<td>5.50</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>10.90</td>
<td>13.60</td>
<td>16.30</td>
<td>18.70</td>
<td>21.40</td>
<td>24.10</td>
<td>26.80</td>
<td>29.50</td>
<td>55.90</td>
<td>82.30</td>
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**Enforcement and Regulatory Services**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Tariff 4 (£)</th>
<th>5.80</th>
<th>8.80</th>
<th>11.80</th>
<th>14.80</th>
<th>17.80</th>
<th>20.80</th>
<th>23.80</th>
<th>26.80</th>
<th>29.80</th>
<th>32.80</th>
<th>62.80</th>
<th>92.80</th>
<th>122.80</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Increase</td>
<td>5.45%</td>
<td>7.32%</td>
<td>8.26%</td>
<td>8.82%</td>
<td>9.20%</td>
<td>11.23%</td>
<td>11.21%</td>
<td>11.20%</td>
<td>11.19%</td>
<td>11.19%</td>
<td>12.34%</td>
<td>12.76%</td>
<td>10.23%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average % increase on journeys up to 7 miles</td>
<td>8.79%</td>
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**Greater London Fare Structure**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GLFS</th>
<th>4.80</th>
<th>7.80</th>
<th>10.60</th>
<th>13.60</th>
<th>16.60</th>
<th>19.40</th>
<th>22.40</th>
<th>25.20</th>
<th>27.80</th>
<th>30.60</th>
<th>55.20</th>
<th>82.60</th>
<th>110.00</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Increase</td>
<td>-12.73%</td>
<td>-4.88%</td>
<td>-2.75%</td>
<td>0.00%</td>
<td>1.84%</td>
<td>3.74%</td>
<td>4.67%</td>
<td>4.56%</td>
<td>3.73%</td>
<td>3.73%</td>
<td>-1.25%</td>
<td>0.36%</td>
<td>-1.26%</td>
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<td>Average % increase on journeys up to 7 miles. Note the 1 mile increase is not considered as its value is not representative.</td>
<td>0.38%</td>
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**Trade**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tariff 4 (£)</th>
<th>6.10</th>
<th>9.10</th>
<th>12.10</th>
<th>15.10</th>
<th>18.10</th>
<th>21.10</th>
<th>24.10</th>
<th>27.10</th>
<th>30.10</th>
<th>33.10</th>
<th>63.10</th>
<th>93.10</th>
<th>123.10</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>% Increase</td>
<td>10.91%</td>
<td>10.98%</td>
<td>11.01%</td>
<td>11.03%</td>
<td>11.04%</td>
<td>12.83%</td>
<td>12.62%</td>
<td>12.45%</td>
<td>12.31%</td>
<td>12.20%</td>
<td>12.88%</td>
<td>13.12%</td>
<td>10.50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average % increase on journeys up to 7 miles</td>
<td>11.49%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Service</td>
<td>Price</td>
<td>Details</td>
<td>Price</td>
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<tr>
<td>1st service at 12000 miles</td>
<td>£195.00 inc parts</td>
<td>Oil Air Fuel filters Pollen Filter and semi-synthetic oil.</td>
<td>£160.00 inc parts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Change of brake pads</td>
<td>£62.00 inc parts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Clutch</td>
<td>£320.00 inc parts</td>
<td></td>
<td>£350.00 inc parts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cam belt change</td>
<td>£350.00 inc parts</td>
<td></td>
<td>£385.00 inc parts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rear Shoes</td>
<td>£65.00 inc parts</td>
<td></td>
<td>£60.00 inc parts</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tyres 4</td>
<td>£170.00</td>
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<td>£190.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Skoda 4 services per year</td>
<td>£780.00</td>
<td>Euro 7 Type 2 services per year</td>
<td>£320.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>3 sets of tyres per year</td>
<td>£510.00</td>
<td>2 sets of tyres per year</td>
<td>£380.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>4 sets of brake pads per year</td>
<td>£248.00</td>
<td>3 sets of brake pads per year</td>
<td>£174.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 sets of rear brake shoes</td>
<td>£130.00</td>
<td>1 sets of rear brake shoes</td>
<td>£60.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 cam belt change per year</td>
<td>£350.00</td>
<td>1 cam belt change per year</td>
<td>£385.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 clutch every 2 years</td>
<td>£160.00</td>
<td>1 clutch every 2 years</td>
<td>£350.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>M.O.T 2 per year</td>
<td>£70.00</td>
<td>M.O.T 2 per year</td>
<td>£70.00</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Plate 1 per year</td>
<td>£143.00</td>
<td>Plate 1 per year</td>
<td>£143.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total running cost year 1</td>
<td>£2391.00</td>
<td>Total running cost year 1</td>
<td>£1882.00</td>
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</table>

Difference in cost due to difference in service intervals. The second year costs may vary due to other types of mechanical failure the above are just basic service costs. Purchase prices also need to be taken into account.
This “Table of Fares” made by the Council under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) act 1976, provides that the proprietor or driver of a Hackney Carriage shall be entitled to demand for the hire of such carriage the rate of fare prescribed by the following table. The fare payable shall be by way of a combination of time and distance automatically calculated and displayed by the Taximeter fitted thereto. The Taximeter shall be moved to the “hired” position when and only when the Hackney Carriage is hired. Commencement date ** November 2005

Fare Table

1. **(For Vehicles Carrying 1-4 Passengers)**
   For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 06.00 and 22.00 for the first 643.7m (704yds) or 3 minutes 25 seconds or uncompleted part thereof **£2.00**
   For each additional 160.9m (176yds) or 54 seconds or uncompleted part thereof **20p**

2. **(For vehicle Carrying 5-8 Passengers)**
   For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 06.00 and 22.00 for the first 643.7m (704yds) or 3 minutes 25 seconds or uncompleted part thereof **£3.00**
   For each additional 160.9m (176yds) or 54 seconds or uncompleted part thereof **30p**

3. **(For Vehicles Carrying 1-4 Passengers)**
   For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 22.00 and 06.00, all day Sunday and at any time on public and bank holidays including Good Friday for the first 643.7m (704yds) or 3mins 25 seconds or uncompleted part thereof **£3.00**
   For each additional 160.9m (176yds) or 54 seconds or uncompleted part thereof **20p**

4. **(For Vehicles Carrying 5-8 Passengers)**
   For any hiring during Monday to Saturday commenced between 22.00 and 06.00, all day Sunday and at any time on public and bank holidays including Good Friday for the first 643.7m (704yds) or 3mins 25 seconds or uncompleted part thereof **£4.00**
   For each additional 160.9m (176yds) or 54 seconds or uncompleted part thereof **30p**

**CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR**

5. **(For Vehicles Carrying 1-4 Passengers)**
   For any hiring commenced between 19.00 on 24 December and 06.00 on 27 December Plus 100% of Rate 1
   For any hiring commenced between 19.00 on 31 December and 06.00 on 2 January Plus 100% of Rate 1

6. **(For Vehicles Carrying 5-8 Passengers)**
   For any hiring commenced between 19.00 on 24 December and 06.00 on 27 December Plus 100% of Rate 2
   For any hiring commenced between 19.00 on 31 December and 06.00 on 2 January Plus 100% of Rate 2

Additional Charges

For Dartford Crossing Tolls **As current rates for return journey**
For London Congestion Charge **As current rate**
For soiling of the hackney carriage (by humans or animals) **£75.00**
For booking charge for Zingo type operation or similar like company a maximum of **£2.00**

The driver or proprietor shall not be entitled to demand or take a fare greater than that recorded on the face of the Taximeter, with exception if payment is made by Credit Card a maximum additional 10% will be added to the fare.

**Complaints** – about a vehicle or driver (that cannot be settled by the driver or proprietor) should be reported to Enforcement and regulatory Services, Dartford Borough Council, Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, Kent DA1 1DR – Telephone 01322 343340 and a note taken of the Licence Number of the Hackney Carriage and Driver.
HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE TARIFF

Supplementary Discussion

1.1. At the Cabinet Advisory Panel held on 18 October 2005 the Chairman requested that copies of the report to Cabinet be sent to those Hackney Carriage drivers who had submitted proposals for an increase in the Fare Tariff. This was done on 19 October and any comments received prior to the Cabinet will be presented at the meeting.

1.2. Correspondence has been received from Mr Jones and Mr Peeke and also from Mr E McCann, signed as D.T.A. Committee. In Mr Jones’ and Mr Peekes’ letter of 14 October the request was made that this correspondence be shown to the Cabinet Advisory Panel and the Cabinet. At the Cabinet Advisory Panel the Chairman requested that these be supplied to the Cabinet as supplementary information and are attached to this supplementary report as appendices A – F.
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APPENDIX A Letter dated 14 September 2005 from Steven Jones and Mitch Peeke
APPENDIX B Letter dated 23 September 2005 from E McCann D.T.A. Committee
APPENDIX C Letter dated 30 September 2005 from Steven Jones and Mitch Peeke
APPENDIX D Letter dated 13 October 2005 from Mike Pratt, Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager, to Steven Jones and Mitch Peeke
APPENDIX E Letter dated 13 October 2005 from Mike Pratt, Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager, to Mr E McCann
APPENDIX F Letter dated 14 October 2005 from Steven Jones and Mitch Peeke
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Mr Mike Pratt,
Enforcement and Regulatory Services,
Dartford Borough Council,
Civic Centre,
Home Gardens,
Dartford,
Kent.

14th September 2005.

Dear Mike,

We are writing to lodge a formal complaint pertaining to the alternative Hackney Carriage fare increase proposal that has suddenly been drafted, and is apparently due to be submitted within the next fortnight, by Mr AGP Shilling, your department’s Licensing Assistant, and which was given to the DTA representatives just yesterday.

That this alternative proposal should suddenly be dropped into the equation so late in the process, without any form of trade consultation, when the trade itself was restricted to a deadline of 27th May this year, (as per March Newsletter sent to every Licensed driver) is in our opinion nothing short of a case of double-dealing. That it claims to have been drafted “in the interests of balance” is a contradiction, as the very first page (para 1:2) recommends to the Council that our own proposal, the only one received, and incidentally the one backed by the trade association (DTA), be rejected before it is even considered, on the grounds that our proposed adoption of the Greater London Taxi tariff would penalise passengers on tariffs 1 and 3 and would penalise drivers on tariffs 2 and 4. This statement is absurd for the following reasons:

1. The existing Dartford tariff is too low in any case. It does not provide the driver with a wage and barely covers the cost of running a purpose-built, wheelchair-accessible vehicle.

2. Tariffs 2 and 4 are for vehicles carrying 5 to 8 passengers. As we did in fact point out in our proposal, these two tariffs are a leftover from the days when 98.5% of the fleet were only licensed to carry FOUR passengers. As the 5-seater is now the STANDARD vehicle, why should the passenger be forced to pay more for what would in fact be an easy accommodation in the vehicle? (Or perhaps the Licensing Assistant would like to explain to the travelling public why they are being charged a 50% extra fare for the carriage of one extra person over four. Whilst he is performing this feat, perhaps he could also explain to Dartford Borough Council just why Dartford needs to have an unnecessarily complex, customer-confusing and totally abuse-prone system of SIX tariffs instead of the much simpler, abuse-proof, meter-controlled, three-tariff London plan).
3. In fact, a Hackney Carriage vehicle operates under the same terms and conditions regardless of the number of passengers it is able to carry. Just like a Bus, or a Coach, or a Train. Why then, if a Taxi vehicle is filled to its licensed capacity, does the rate for the journey suddenly go up by 50%? It doesn’t in London, and furthermore, we were never permitted to charge fare and a half in the past whenever we carried four passengers in a vehicle licensed to carry that number as a maximum.

4. The amount of times ANY Dartford Taxi legally works on either tariff 2 or tariff 4 is, as a fraction of the taxi driver’s normal workload, fairly negligible.

5. Any perceived losses arising from the abolition of these two outdated tariffs would be more than made good by the gains on the remaining tariffs.

In addition to the above, the Licensing Assistant has, as he states, “taken soundings from other members of the trade” regarding his alternative proposal. It is by no means clear as to whom he is referring, but what is manifestly clear is that this was done after the 27th May deadline which he himself set. If said “other members of the trade” had anything germane to add, why did they not have to do as we did and submit a written proposal in accordance with the instructions given and by the deadline set by the licensing assistant himself. Are they exempt? Or is it one rule for us and another for “other members of the trade”, including apparently the Licensing Assistant? To incorporate the suggestions he received (as he indeed states in para 3.(5) from these “other members of the trade” and after the deadline he himself set makes a mockery of the deadline itself and therefore the dept’s own rules.

As for seeking information on running costs from the Private Hire operator “All Night Car Hire”; why? The Licensing department have so often previously told the Hackney Carriage trade that it, (the trade or its association) has absolutely nothing to do with the operations of the Private Hire trade. How come that suddenly, the Private Hire sector can exert an influence on the outcome of a fare increase proposal for the previously separate and distinct Hackney Carriage trade? If the Licensing Assistant had wanted confirmation of running costs for a Euro 7 TAXI vehicle, why did he not approach any of the Borough’s Hackney drivers who operate said vehicle?

Which brings us to the question of why the trade was not informed that the Licensing Assistant was even compiling such a proposal, apparently at the behest of the EARS dept? This in itself is unprecedented in our combined 28 years experience of working in the Taxi trade in Dartford. We would ask exactly what actual experience he has of buying, running, driving, insuring and maintaining a purpose-built, wheelchair-accessible Hackney Carriage vehicle, let alone trying to make a living with one in Dartford? The answer is of course, none. So how, may we ask, is he suddenly qualified to be the judge, jury and indeed, executioner of any trade-supported fare increase proposal? We were under the impression that it was the Councillors sitting on the Transport Panel who fulfilled that role. By loading the argument with a last-minute, covertly prepared, 21-page diatribe, which expresses the apparent support of the Licensing department as a whole, in a blatant attempt to sway the opinion of those erstwhile Councillors, is nothing short of outrageous.
There are also a number of "minor inaccuracies" in his prose too. For starters, we do not compare the Dartford trade to either Sevenoaks or Maidstone to "support our arguments", as he states in Para 3:4, because as we do indeed state in our report, the only comparison that can be drawn is with Greater London; a statement that the Licensing Assistant himself concurred with at the time he was actively helping us to compile our report. (We do have proof of this in the form of his emails, if required). Also, the current working life of a Greater London Hackney Vehicle is not the 9 years he uses for the purpose of shooting down our arguments. This point is clearly covered in our report and all that is required is to read said report. As to our apparent use of outdated figures, we had little choice at the time, as those were the current figures at the time our report, which had to be submitted by May 27th remember, was written. However, we have now in fact updated our original report with these newer figures and have made one or two other minor amendments; your dept's copy is herewith enclosed. For your information, the relevant Councillors received their copies, via us, last Thursday.

Furthermore, we don't mind publicly admitting that it was us who successfully referred the last fare increase fiasco to the Local Government Ombudsman, even if the Licensing Assistant prefers to shy from the mention of our names in this respect in para 5.2.1 of his report. We did indeed receive a payment from Dartford Borough Council relating to this sorry affair. It was NOT though, for any perceived loss of earnings, as the Licensing Assistant states in Para 5.2.1 and nor was it the £500:00 each that he also states. He ought to know, as he signed the cheques, that it was £250:00 each and that the award was for the inconvenience we were put through in having to pursue this course of action in the first place. Mind you, we are now fully acquainted with the relevant procedures, so it will not be much of an "inconvenience" to us to go through the process again if we have to; as indeed we will, if this thoroughly underhanded proposal to undermine the trade-supported proposal is submitted to the Council.

We await your early reply.

Yours sincerely,

Steven Jones and Mitch Peeke.
Licensed Hackney Carriage Drivers.
Dartford Taxi Association

90 Palmeira Road
Bexleyheath
Kent
DA7 4UX

Mr. Pratt
Taxi Licensing
Dartford Borough Council.
Civic Centre
Dartford
Kent.

23rd September 2005

Dear Sirs

We the D.T.A. are writing to complain to you about the licensing departments underhanded actions of last Monday 19th September 2005.

We are shocked and very, very, angry about the way your department has tried to purposely and calculably divide the D.T.A. by browbeating members of our Committee into accepting only your offer for a rate rise.

At yesterday's D.T.A. meeting we spoke with Mr. Doug Griffin and he tells us that you rang him last Monday and asked him to come up alone to the Civic Centre for a private meeting where your assistant Mr. Shilling intimidated Mr. Griffin by telling him and our other Committee Member Mr. Paul Lefevre who he had brought along saying that the Peeke and Jones rate would not be passed by the Council, and that the only way he would get a fare rise was to accept the licensing Assistants own rate with some small amendments.

This is Blackmail and you know it. Your department has not, and does not have the right or power to reject any fare proposal or tell anyone that you have this power. Your departments role is to present applications for any fare proposals for Councillors to discuss and reject or accept. This has always been the way applications have been done for at least the last 15-20 years. Unless you have changed it and not told ourselves or Dartford’s Councillors.
Dartford Taxi Association

We yesterday had a meeting of the D.T.A. Committee where it has been confirmed by the majority of the D.T.A. Committee that the only fare rise that we the D.T.A. want put forward is the Peeke/Jones London Proposal. This confirms what we have already told you in our last two meetings of 26th July and 13th September 2005.

Please note, any new rate proposal agreed at this meeting on Monday last with our Committee Chairman is considered by the D.T.A. as NULL AND VOID and we will have no part in it, as it had not been agreed by the full Committee and was created under duress. Because of your actions we cant trust your department any more, all future meetings between the Licensing department and the D.T.A. will consist of no less than 3 members of the D.T.A.

We would like to know why Mr shilling seems to be intent on riding roughshod over due process and your own Councils time-table for a fare rise. He knew that ALL applications for a rate rise had to be in by May 27th 2005 because he typed the news letter telling us this. But because now four months later he does not like the proposal he got, he chooses to break his own rules because it suites him. This is not a way that we would expect a local Government employee to act.

We again advise you to be fully aware that the D.T.A. will only back the Peeke/Jones London rate proposal to go forward to the Council. As this is the only legitimate rate rise received by your department.

We request that you write back to us by return confirming that you understand what we have mentioned above. Please also confirm the date the Council will meet to discuss this years rates rise.

Because of your actions be aware that we will take this to the Local Government Ombudsman or take legal action if we have too.

Yours faithfully

[Signature]
E. McCann
D.T.A. Committee
Mr Mike Pratt,
Enforcement and Regulatory Services,
Dartford Borough Council,
Civic Centre,
Home Gardens,
Dartford,
Kent.

30th September 2005.

Dear Sir

Please be advised that we still have not received an answer to our complaint of 15th October 05 (copy attached).

Can you please respond to our questions in writing no later that 14th October 2005.

Could you also advise us when DBC Councillors will meet to discuss this years fare rise.

We await your early reply.

Yours sincerely,

Steven Jones and Mitch Peeke,
Licensed Hackney Carriage Drivers.
Dear Mr Jones and Mr Peeke

HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE INCREASE

Thank you for your letter of 14 September 2005 and the subsequent follow up dated 30 September 2005 and I apologise for the delay in not replying sooner.

If I may first deal with the question raised in your second letter I can confirm that the report dealing the fare increase will be reported to the Cabinet Advisory Panel on 18 October 2005 and to Cabinet on 27 October 2005.

With reference to your first letter, I am sure you are aware that the decision about increases to the fare tariffs rests with the Council’s Cabinet. Whilst proposals from the trade will be put to the Cabinet one of the functions of the Licensing Section is to provide information and advice and to assist the Cabinet in reaching its decision. In order to allow the trade to engage in the process the Licensing Section, via the Newsletter, sought views from Hackney Carriage drivers in March 2005. Your proposals were received and were taken into account in the report that was initially drafted for the Cabinet.

I am sure you will appreciate the difficulties involved in dealing with a substantial number of individuals rather than a group that represents them and when the DTA was disbanded we were faced with this situation. Your own proposal was I believe submitted as an independent view. For this reason when the successor group to the DTA appeared to be establishing itself we took the opportunity to consult with it. As you are aware, it was at that meeting that we advised them of the draft report containing your proposal and the one prepared by the Licensing Section. This meeting led to another proposal being received which has also now been included in the report that is going to Cabinet.
I note the comments made in your letter regarding some of the contents of the draft report. Without going into each individually I would comment that there are difficulties in making an assessment of the overall impact of any proposal because of the lack of comprehensive data.

I am keen to ensure that any increases agreed by Cabinet are introduced at the earliest opportunity and in order to meet the deadlines we are working to, in terms of implementing any increase to the fare tariffs, this matter will be reported to Cabinet on 27 October. If the DTA does re-establish itself I would welcome the opportunity to work with them in examining proposals at a much earlier stage for the 2006 tariff review.

Yours sincerely

Mike Pratt
Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager
Dear Mr McCann

HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE INCREASE

I refer to your letter of 23 September 2005 and apologise for the delay in replying. This has not been deliberate on my part but was due to a number of factors including the need to get the report prepared for Cabinet and the speed of events that occurred.

I am somewhat surprised by the content of your letter as I was present at the meeting on 19 September that you referred to in your letter, and at no time were Members of your Committee browbeaten into any decisions. The reason for calling Mr Griffin was in his capacity as what we understand to be Chairman of the DTA to talk to him about the difficulties of trying to run with both the annual fare increase and an “emergency fuel increase”. In your letter you use the term “Blackmail” and refer to the department rejecting any fare proposals. As you were not present at the meeting I am not sure how you come to believe this but I refute your allegations and assure you that any proposals submitted would be included in the report to Cabinet, and have been in this instance. I can confirm it is for the Cabinet to consider and reject or accept applications for any fare increases that are received, and to set what it determines to be the appropriate tariff.

I note the document attached to your letter signed by you as DTA Committee. However, I would remind you that the Membership of the DTA is still unclear and without confirmation of the Hackney Carriage drivers you represent, it is difficult to present your views as representing the majority of drivers. With this in mind I should be grateful if you would explain why you believe it is illegal for you to confirm who the DTA actually does represent.

In closing, I would confirm the Hackney Carriage Fare Increase will be reported to the Cabinet Advisory Panel on 18 October 2005 and to Cabinet on 27 October 2005.

Yours sincerely

Mike Pratt
Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager
Mr Mike Pratt,
Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager,
Dartford Borough Council,
Civic Centre,
Home Gardens,
Dartford,
Kent.

HACKNEY CARRIAGE FARE INCREASE

Dear Mr Pratt,

We thank you for your hand delivered letter of 13th October and note your apology for taking a full calendar month to reply to our original letter of complaint. However, you still have not answered our questions, and nor have you replied to the many points we raised.

With reference to your letter, we are indeed aware that one of the Licensing department’s functions is “to provide information and advice and to assist the Cabinet in reaching its decision”, which is why we were surprised to say the least by the manner in which your department has chosen to present that information and assistance to the members of the Cabinet.

Given that, as you so rightly stated in your letter “the decision about increases to the fare tariffs rests with the Council’s Cabinet” it seems all the more surprising to us that your Licensing Assistant has compiled a counter-proposal, which in itself is totally without precedent, and that the first page of your Licensing Assistant’s draft report should recommend that our proposal be rejected in favour of his one. Hardly impartial advice intended to “assist the cabinet in reaching its decision”, is it?

The fact that you have now apparently decided NOT to recognise the DTA, (despite your holding a series of talks with them since July), surely means that, as the Local Government Ombudsman decreed, you must have an alternative arrangement for the gathering and processing of fare increase proposals in place to handle the one and only proposal that you did receive by the specified deadline of May 27th (which was received without any objections from the trade). If such is the case, where has the other, third proposal you mentioned in your letter come from? You are making a complete mockery of your own procedures, are you not, by its late inclusion?

On the point you raised about there being insufficient reliable data available with which to make a proper impact study; surely then this means that by default, the
Licensing Assistant’s own proposal is no more, or less accurate than our own and therefore cannot be said to be superior in its content. Given such, why does his proposal blatantly seek to discredit ours when we cannot have the same opportunity? Without going into detail (as space here would hardly permit it), some of the content of his, and therefore by default, your department’s proposal, merely serves to underline the point we made in our original letter that he has absolutely no experience of purchasing, running, maintaining or indeed the working of, a Hackney Carriage Vehicle. If you were to speak to the trade, you would discover exactly how outraged they are that a Licensing Officer, much less an Assistant, can possibly be in any position to dictate to the trade what they will or will not receive in the manner of a fare tariff. They are at present as outraged as we are sure you would be if your next pay increase was decided arbitrarily by a bunch of Cab Drivers. Surely both cases would be a matter for COUNCILLORS to decide, on merit?

On the subject of the timing of your department’s proposal; if you intended to compile your own proposal, surely the trade should have been given the opportunity to at least study it, compare it with the only other one received, (namely ours) and then been allowed to vote for one or the other? In which case, your own proposal ought to have been ready by, or very shortly after, the deadline of May 27th. To leave it so late that the trade has no option to consider it and then for you to add yet another, mysterious third proposal into the equation with less than one month to go before the matter goes before the Cabinet Advisory Panel, (complete with your own department’s partisan recommendation to reject all others in favour of the Licensing Assistant’s proposal), cannot be deemed by anyone to be anything less than a monumental display of unfairness, for those Councillors would be far more likely to heed the “advice” of the licensing department, would you not agree? If this last minute ‘moving of the goalposts’ constitutes the kind of “due procedure” we can expect from your department, then it would appear that we no longer have any rights and absolutely no say in the matter our own livelihoods, despite being self-employed. From where we are standing, this would appear to be an attempt to set a dangerous precedent for your department to override any future fare increase proposals that it doesn’t particularly like, even though, as you say, it is not your department’s decision, but that of the Cabinet.

It would appear to us that having invited proposals from the trade, you received only one, you didn’t like it, compiled your own covert counter-proposal and then solicited another from “other members of the trade” well after the deadline had expired (and therefore underhandedly) without ever consulting the trade, just to make sure that your Licensing Assistant’s own proposal would be accepted by virtue of carrying your department’s partisan blessing. Can you wonder that having been the only party to comply with your rules, we are aggrieved by the situation? The previous Licensing Officer, David Swift, would simply have asked the trade for its proposal and having received such, would simply have set it before the Council for them to either agree or disagree. In “assisting them to reach their decision”, he would not have told them how to vote.

Purely for future reference, can you please tell us EXACTLY how fare increase proposals will be dealt with? Are you going to continue to set conditions and deadlines only to alter and break them to suit the Licensing Assistant’s whims, or will
there actually be a proper timetable with procedures that ALL parties will adhere to? (As DBC agreed with the Ombudsman last year). We would very much like to know.

In the meantime, we would also like to know, and (because of the nearness of the dates of the panels) not later than ten days from the date of this letter, whether or not we can expect fair play over the current proposal. Will you show copies of our three letters, the DTA’s objections and your own limited response, to those Councillors of both the Advisory Panel and the Cabinet who will sit in judgement over the fare increase? If not, would you please furnish us with their details so that we can. (It may possibly help to make the Ombudsman’s task simpler later on, should we have to take that route). Having hand delivered our response, we await your speedy reply.

Yours Sincerely,

[Signature]

Steven Jones and Mitch Peeke.
Licensed Hackney Carriage Drivers.
CONCESSIONARY FARES

1. Summary

1.1 The Government announced, as part of the 2005 budget, that from April 2006 the statutory half fare scheme will become a free scheme. The report considers the operational and financial implications of this for the Council.

2. RECOMMENDATION

2.1 That, subject to full re-imbursement of additional costs by the Government, the Council adopts a free countywide concessional fare scheme from 1 April 2006.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1 The current statutory concessionary fares scheme allows eligible passengers to travel within the borough boundary (i.e. the journey must start and finish in the borough) for half fare, with no charge for the concessionary pass. The Council, with all other authorities in Kent, operates a countywide scheme that allows for journeys that either start or finish in the county. The countywide scheme provides a level of service above the statutory scheme. Countywide schemes are “promoted” by the Department for Transport.

3.2 Dartford offers “DartFare 20” as an alternative to the countywide scheme. Dartfare 20 allows eligible passengers to travel on journeys that both start and finish in the Borough for just 20 pence. The cost of the pass to customers is £5.

3.3 In the current year the Council expects to issue 2,859 countywide half fare passes and 2,114 Dartfare 20 passes. It is estimated that, when the free scheme is introduced, the number of passes will increase by up to 30% and the number of journeys made by up to 20%.

3.4 The Chancellor of the Exchequer announced, as part of the budget, that from 1 April 2006 the half fare statutory scheme will become a free scheme. In effect, the new statutory scheme is the same as DartFare 20
but all journeys will be free and DartFare 20 will no longer exist. Although the statutory free scheme only covers journeys that both start and finish in the borough, the Department for Transport continues to promote countywide schemes.

3.5 When the budget announcement was made, it included an additional £350m to cover the additional costs of moving from a half fare scheme to a free scheme. Since then, London authorities and some metropolitan authorities have been lobbying the government for a share of the funding. These authorities already provide a free scheme, but the government seems to have accepted that these authorities should receive additional funding. However, the Government has not increased the amount of additional cash available and so there is a strong possibility that the additional funding will not cover the increased costs.

3.6 The Government propose to include the additional funding in the overall Revenue Support Grant pot and allocate it in a similar way. This is unsatisfactory because it means that the amount of funding allocated will not be transparent and may be subject to manipulation by Government officials in future years. The Council has written to the Secretary of State requesting that a specific grant be established, so that both expenditure and grant are transparent.

3.7 The Council has to adopt a draft scheme by 1 December and then consult with the bus operators and have a final scheme in place by 1 March 2006. MCL consultants operate the Kent countywide scheme on behalf of all authorities and have been advising on the new scheme. There are various options for the Council to consider.

- The simplest route will be to adopt the current countywide scheme as the free scheme. This will be an enhancement on the statutory free scheme, but it is what customers are expecting.

- However, if the grant from the Government does not cover the full additional cost, the Council may wish to consider adopting the statutory scheme, i.e. that this scheme only provides free travel for journeys that both start and finish in the borough (not countywide)

- A further option could be to adopt the statutory scheme as described above, but offer as an alternative the current countywide half fare scheme
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3.8 The total current cost of the half fare scheme and DartFare 20 is approximately £260,000. The estimated cost of the new free scheme is at least £550,000.

3.9 It is recommended that the Council adopts the free countywide scheme as the draft statutory scheme, subject to the Government Grant covering all additional costs. MCL will then consult with bus operators and the Council can make a final decision as part of the budget, when final grant figures are available.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

This is a statutory service.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

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Appendices - None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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<td>Steve Brooks</td>
<td>F&amp;R MD</td>
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<td>01322 343317</td>
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Dartford Cricket Club

1. Summary

1.1 This report seeks approval for a capital grant to Dartford Cricket Club which will allow the club to improve its facilities and the security of its pavilion and to bring the facilities to a standard which will allow its youth development to continue.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That Members approve a capital grant of £30,000 to assist Dartford Cricket Club in bringing its pavilion facilities to a standard that ensures the club's continued youth development work and its efforts to raise the profile of cricket in the Borough.

2.2. That Members authorise the Regeneration Director, in consultation with the Portfolio Member for grants, to agree terms for the capital grant.

2.3. That officers be authorised to assist Dartford Cricket Club actively in developing a bid to external funding organisations, to ensure that the club has the full range of facilities needed to continue providing youth development opportunities.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1 Dartford Cricket Club has approached the Council to request funding to the value of £30,000 for improvements to its facilities, which will enable the club to continue to contribute to and/or facilitate quality cricket and youth development in the Borough.

3.2 The cost of the improvements that need to be carried out to the pavilion exceed the £30,000 capital grant requested from Council, with the remaining funds expected to be provided by Dartford Cricket Club and other external sources. The improvements to the pavilion are estimated at £77,000.

3.3 Dartford Cricket Club is seeking to secure its long term future through a range of improvements to the pavilion. There is a need to improve significantly the exterior of the building through the fitting of new windows, installation of shuttering for additional security,
extension of front of the pavilion and the interior of the building with improved showers and changing areas.

3.4 Despite continued vandalism and the pavilion being over fifty years old, the club has continued to invest considerable time, and used its limited resources, to develop the club and facilities, with over £75,000 capital investment already made. Recent improvements include cricket net facilities installed in the summer of 2005 and the cricket square renovation was completed in the autumn of 2005.

3.5 Dartford Cricket Club’s aspirations are to attract County Cricket back to Dartford within 5 years, through the improvement of the appearance and facilities for players and spectators at the pavilion. At the same time, the club wishes to develop the players of the future, as the club is a registered Focus Club, an English Cricket Board and Kent Cricket Board youth development initiative. Around 50% of the active membership of the club is under 16 years of age. Currently the club's first eleven play in the division one below the best league in Kent.

3.6 Under the Local Government Act 2000, the Council has the power to undertake anything which it considers likely to achieve any one or more of the following objectives:

i) the promotion or improvement of the economic well-being of the area,
ii) the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of the area, and
iii) the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of the area.

3.7 This power may be exercised for the whole or any part of the Council’s area and enables the Council to incur expenditure and give financial assistance.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

4.1 The project supports a number of key priorities and actions under the Council's Corporate Plan. Specifically it addresses the Council's 'Leisure Time' theme:

• "The Council will encourage and promote greater access to improved cultural and leisure opportunities, supporting healthier lifestyles and encouraging lifelong learning".
4.2 It also supports a number of the key actions under this theme, namely -

- To nurture and develop community-based arts and sports organisations, projects and initiatives, supporting a vibrant local culture;
- To create centres of excellence in sport by contributing to and supporting key projects;
- To create a quality public realm for leisure and recreational uses, including playgrounds and facilities for young people.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

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<th>Funding of a £30,000 capital grant was approved at the September Cabinet meeting as part of the Capital Programme report.</th>
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6. Appendices

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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<td>Stephen Jefferson</td>
<td>01322 343534</td>
<td>Regeneration</td>
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PRINCES PARK STADIUM PROGRESS REPORT

Ward: Brent

1. Summary

To advise Members of the actions taken to enable a start on site to be made in November 2005.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Members note the current position and the proposed start date for construction works.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. The Cabinet at its meeting on 22 September 2005 considered a report on this project and resolved:-

“(1) That the present position of the Princes Park development and the actions being taken to progress this project and to commence work on site be noted.

(2) That approval be given for a fixed price contract sum, with Jackson Construction Limited or an alternative contractor from the original short-listed tenderers, up to a figure not exceeding that contained in the exempt Appendix A to the report.

(3) That the possibility of a temporary closure of the golf facility, for an, as yet, undetermined period during the construction works be noted.

(4) That officers write to the members of Princes Golf and Leisure Club, advising them that the Club House facilities are to close and of the possibility of a temporary closure of the golf facility during the construction work.

(5) That, pursuant to Standing Order 41(2) and for the reasons detailed in the exempt addendum to the report, Standing Order 69 be suspended.

(6) That a contract be granted to Oxford Archaeology to undertake further archaeological investigations at the site, at a figure not exceeding that contained in the exempt Addendum to the report.” (Minute 127).
3.2. Since the meeting of the Cabinet, lengthy and detailed negotiations have been taking place with Jackson Construction Limited to arrive at a fixed price contract sum and these were finally resolved on 14 October 2005. Details of the fixed price sum and associated discussions are contained within the confidential appendix to this report.

3.3. In order to ensure that the earliest possible start on site can be made, a ‘Letter of Intent’ was issued to Jackson Construction Limited on 17 October 2005 authorising them to expend monies up to a limit of £250,000 exclusive of VAT prior to the completion of the contract. Entry into this Letter of Intent was necessary to ensure that Jackson Construction Limited will proceed to mobilise and authorising them to carry out, as from 17 October 2005, necessary action required to meet the commencement date on site of 14 November 2005, including but not limited to:-

- All necessary arrangements to be made with the local statutory authority to comply with Statutory Regulations;
- Commitment to all necessary management, insurance and logistical support costs for Jackson Construction Limited and their sub contractors necessary to commence works on site on 14 November 2005;
- Commitments required to be made to Statutory Services Providers regarding temporary or new incoming services, supplies or diversion of any existing services;
- Commencement and execution of any necessary design services;
- Commitment to any necessary manufacturing slots for steelwork, precast concrete and Glulam Beams.

This Letter of Intent (a pre-contractual document that creates a relationship short of a contract, but with legal effect) was sent with the expressed approval of, and on terms agreed by, the Head of Legal Services in accordance with Standing Order 83(9).

3.4. The Head of Legal Services is now working with the Council’s external consultants to finalise the contract to be entered into with Jackson Construction Limited. This could not be agreed in the necessary time scale, that is before 17 October 2005, in view of the final drafting of the employer’s requirements which are to be added into the contract. These will ensure that the Council will obtain the quality of development it requires on completion of the project.

3.5. There are a number of risks to this procedure and these are dealt with in detail in the confidential appendix to this report. This said, they have all been discussed by the Council’s Project Managers, AYH Plc, and the Project Director and agreement reached with the Managing Director that it was appropriate to proceed on the current basis to ensure that the project can be developed in what is an extremely tight programme.
3.6. All parties will be working to completion of the stadium for July 2006, but it is envisaged that, due to delays caused to the programme, by archaeological investigations and other issues previously reported to Cabinet, there may be a delay in the overall completion of the project, in that the artificial pitch may not be completed until some time after that date. One of the first actions of Jackson Construction Limited will be to provide a detailed programme for the works and this will be reported to Members as soon as possible.

3.7. Members are asked to note the actions taken by the officers to ensure that this cornerstone project is moved forward as quickly as possible.

3.8. Meanwhile, the 2nd stage of archaeological investigation commenced on site on Monday 10 October 2005, following completion of a contract with Oxford Archaeology.

3.9. The possibility of the golf club having to be closed for a temporary period during the contract will be discussed with Jackson Construction Limited and results of this will be reported to Members again, as soon as practicable.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan
The project, specifically addresses the Council’s ‘Leisure Time’ theme. Progress on this project is a key performance indicator in ensuring that a wide range of activities are either available within or near to Dartford and promote leisure activities.

Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Financial Implications</th>
<th>The gross current capital budget for all costs for this project, over 2005/6 and 2006/7, is £7,260,000.</th>
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<td>Legal Implications</td>
<td>The Letter of Intent was agreed by the Head of Legal Services and the contract will be prepared by that section.</td>
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<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>Whilst the majority of risks are dealt within the confidential appendix to this report, the following points are noted:-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The construction could be delayed due to</td>
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<td>(a) weather conditions</td>
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<td>(b) contractor or sub</td>
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contractor failure or delivery of materials.
These risks will reduce when the project is started and regular monthly project meetings will assist in overcoming any development hurdles.

5. Appendices

Confidential Appendix (Exempt Category SO 46 (1) (b) Annex 1, Paragraph 9)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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<th>Documents consulted</th>
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<td>Princes Park Stadium</td>
<td>14.10.05</td>
<td>(01322) 343074</td>
<td>David Fletcher</td>
<td>Project Director</td>
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Agenda Item 12 Page 152
J & E HALLS BOWLS CLUB – INVESTIGATION INTO RELOCATION TO STONE LODGE

Ward: STONE

1. Summary

1.1 To provide an update on the present position and feasibility study into the provision of a new bowling green, pavilion and associated facilities at Stone Lodge.
1.2 To seek approval for action to be taken to bring forward this new project.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That Members note the results of the feasibility study.
2.2. That authority be granted to the Project Director to proceed with the project at an estimated cost not exceeding that contained in the confidential appendix.
2.3. That in order to take the project forward authority be granted for the Council to enter into separate contracts with the existing design team and cost consultants for the Judokwai project and that these contracts be on terms to be agreed by the Project Director in consultation with the Head of Legal Services.
2.4. That authority be granted to the Project Director, in consultation with the Leader and Deputy Leader, to submit a planning application, once the design works have been completed.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. At the Cabinet meeting on 28 July 2005, the Regeneration Director reported on a proposal to commence a feasibility study into the provision of the replacement facilities and demonstrate the commitment to the existing membership of (J&E) Halls Bowls Club. The report sought authority for the Project Director to commission the Council’s existing external consultants, Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd, to carry out investigations into the feasibility, programme and cost of providing a natural bowling green and associated club facilities at Stone Lodge. It was resolved:-

“(1) That the Project Director commission Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd to provide a feasibility into the provision of a new bowling green, pavilion and facilities at Stone Lodge, appropriate for the relocation of (J&E) Halls Bowls Club and integrated with the Stone Lodge Indoor Bowls Club.
(2) That authority be granted to the Project Director to enter into negotiations with the Stone Lodge Indoor Bowls Club, to enable a new bowling green, pavilion and facilities to be constructed and integrated into the existing indoor bowls club facility on terms to be approved by the Project Director and the Head of Legal Services in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Property.

(3) That authority be delegated to the Managing Director, in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Portfolio Member for Property, to investigate the cost and programme for a new bowling green, pavilion and associated facilities at Stone Lodge and to report back to a subsequent Cabinet meeting, identifying the expected cost and timescale for the project.

(4) That the Managing Director be authorised to investigate and offer any appropriate reduction to (J&E) Halls Bowls Club of the annual maintenance fee payable.” (Minute 71).

3.2. On 15 August 2005, the existing contract between Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd and the design team for the Judokwai was extended to cover carrying out of the bowls club feasibility study. At the same time the contract with Cyril Sweett Ltd, the cost consultants on the Dartford Judokwai project, was also extended to cover the provision of budget costs estimates in support of the feasibility study to be prepared by Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd, which it was then estimated would take some four to five weeks to complete.

3.3. The initial work on the feasibility study was undertaken by MAKE Architects, part of the design team under the control of Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd. A meeting was held with the Managing Director and the Project Director to discuss initial thoughts in mid-September. The thought process adopted by the architect and the feasibility study was agreed to be in line with the aspirations of the Council and the team was asked to finalise the feasibility study so this could be reported to Members together with the project cost estimates. The feasibility study has now been received and is attached as Appendix A to this report. The cost estimate is attached as a confidential appendix.

3.4. Following consultation with the Managing Director and Deputy Leader, discussions are to take place both with the Stone Lodge Indoor Bowls Club and the Halls Bowls Club on 24 October 2005, to explain the proposals contained within the feasibility study and to seek their views so they can be reported to Members at this Cabinet meeting.

3.5. The feasibility study reviews the general pros and cons for the siting of the Outdoor Bowling Green. The consultants concluded that the option relating to siting on the existing car park has to be the preferred location. This review
is supported by the Managing Director and Project Director in light of the following:-

(a) Good new “front of house” for the site (a bowling green rather than a car park);
(b) Good access for coaches and the disabled;
(c) The existing Halls Bowls Club facilities can be replaced on an upgraded (in line with current regulations) “like for like” basis;
(d) A “new” elevation is provided for the Stone Lodge Indoor Bowls Club;
(e) Separate addresses can be provided for each club, though existing services installations and social facilities can be shared, subject to agreement;
(f) The existing temporary car park is augmented, buying a “breathing space” for review of the existing master plan for Phase 2;
(g) Single access to the site is maintained, which is consistent with the existing outline master plan;
(h) Abortive works are limited pending final decision on overall Phase 2 development.

3.6. A Project Programme is included within the feasibility study and this indicates key milestones to achieve a completion of the project by 29 June 2007. This is an initial target programme and it is hoped it will be improved, enabling the new facility to be open for the start of the Outdoor Bowling season in April 2007.

3.7. It is essential to obtain Members’ approval to progress this project now as the first key milestone will be the submission of a planning application next month. The main constraint to early completion of the project is the time between laying the green and it being ready for use.

3.8. Members are asked to agree recommendation 2.3 as to the consultants’ appointment, as in accordance with Standing Order 68(1)(a) the Project Director considers that the procurement of their services is urgently required (time being of the essence) and adopting other tender arrangements would impact adversely on service delivery (i.e. completion of the project to programme). The consultants have knowledge of the site and have been working effectively with Council Officers on the Dartford Judokwai project. This is a separate project and it will not be appropriate to extend further the existing contracts with the consultants, so new contracts are proposed.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan
The project specifically addresses the Council’s ‘Leisure Time’ theme. This is part of Phase 2 development at Stone Lodge and is part of a key performance indicator in ensuring that a wide range of activities are either available within or near to Dartford and promote leisure activities.
5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

### Financial Implications
The capital budget for Stone Lodge phase 2 totals £1,159,000 over 2005/6 and 2006/7 (see Cabinet report 22 September). This budget is to cover the building of the bowls club and the infrastructure works for the remainder of phase 2. The present proposals, as set out in the cost estimate within the confidential Appendix B, can be met from this budget.

### Legal Implications
The contract terms for consultants will be agreed by the Head of Legal Services.

### Staffing Implications
None.

### Administrative Implications
None.

### Risk Assessment
The programme could be delayed due to:
- Failure to achieve planning permission. Early submission to be arranged.
- Subsequent risks will arise when detailed design completed, planning approval obtaining and construction commencing

6. Appendices
Appendix A – Feasibility Study
A Confidential Appendix has been placed on the closed part of the agenda because it relates to exempt information within the category contained in S046(10)(b) Annexe 1, paragraph 9 namely, any terms to be proposed by or to the Authority in the course of a contract for the supply of goods or services.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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H:\Committee Reports\Cab 27 10 05 Open JE Halls Bowls Club.doc
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Stone Lodge Bowls Club

c/o David Fletcher
Dartford Borough Council,
Civic Centre,
Home Gardens,
Dartford,
Kent, DA1 1DR

5th October 2005

Dear David

On behalf of our client Hyder Consulting and further to your request via them for a short study examining the feasibility of including new facilities for Hall’s Bowls Club at the Stone Lodge site please find herewith a report describing that study and the team’s discussions to date. This report extends a little further than the single page plan you requested but as you are also aware it has raised important issues beyond its primary scope which should be recorded and highlighted.

Yours sincerely,

Matthew White
Contents

01 Site Analysis

02 Formulating a Brief

03 Site Options (& recommendation)

04 Future Options
01 Site analysis
Stone Lodge Indoor Bowls Club, Dartford

Overview from the North West
J & E Hall Bowls Club, Dartford

Overview of existing green
existing site layout
existing issues to consider

- existing building constraints - fire exits, ventilation, facade maintenance etc.
- existing site constraints - temporary parking areas, funding and programme issues, contractor installations
- site access and parking - relationship to existing masterplan
- security and visibility
- solar orientation, prevailing wind, views
- sustainability
- existing service routes and capacity - electricity / gas / water / drainage etc. (see also Hyder Consulting’s plan)
existing building constraints

- unknowns - we understand there to be asbestos in the parapet detail of the existing Stone Lodge Indoor Bowls building
- no windows to the bowling area - this may be a good thing
- we need to maintain fire exits and facade access
- a poor ‘shop window’ for the sport
- limited temporary parking
02 Formulating a brief
Brief Assumptions

Stone Lodge Indoor Bowls Club: Existing Areas

- bowling area - 6 rink
- auxiliary block area
- car parking - 44 as was - augmented to nearly double that with the temporary car park
- no. of club members - approx. 700

J & B Hall Lawn Bowls Club: Existing Areas

- bowling area - 6 rink outdoor
- auxiliary block area - 33x69ft (10.05x21m)
- limited car parking
- no. of club members - tbc
Brief Aspirations

**Essential**
- an outdoor Bowling Green
- a pavilion building (like for like with existing - though including stand alone WC facilities in line with current DDA / Building Regulations)
- external maintenance areas (enclosed areas for lawnmowers etc.)
- secure grounds
- full disabled access and Parking

**Nice to have**
- Renovated elevation to Stone Lodge Bowl’s Club and an appropriate ‘front of house’

**Things to consider**
- impact upon existing and/or future Detailed Masterplan
- each club’s business case, identity and feedback on these proposals (t.b.a)
- shared facilities - licensed bar etc.
- pickup/drop off - perhaps a new bus service via Stone?
03 Site Options

Please note that Options 01-04 review the general pros and cons for siting of the Outdoor Bowling Green. The current scope of works has been revised to:

- remove the 2no. ‘all-weather’ rinks (on the basis that the adjacent indoor lanes should be used during inclement weather
- remove the second road access (Option 04) by Stone Hospital (pending traffic studies which should be undertaken during the ‘breathing period’ which Option 05 allows)
option 01: south

- maintains through road
- independent address for Halls Bowls Club

- poor relationship with existing buildings
- interferes with existing temporary car park
- interferes with existing Outline Master Plan
- far removed from existing services installations
option 02: east

- maintains through road
- independent address for Halls Bowls Club
- good views to the east

- poor relationship with existing buildings
- interferes with existing Outline Master Plan
- far removed from existing services installations
- put in shadow in the evening by existing buildings
option 03: north

- independent address for Halls Bowls Club but with the potential for shared social facilities - potentially good value
- exploits existing services installations
- refurbishes North elevation of existing Bowls Club
- No change to existing car park design

- would block proposed ‘through road’
- interferes with existing Outline Master Plan
- put in shadow in the evening by the Dojo
- limits coach parking opportunities
- interferes with existing Dojo fence and consented works
option 04: west

- does not need to interfere with the existing Outline Master Plan
- provides the potential for a new ‘face’ to the Stone Lodge Bowls Club as well as facilities for Hall’s Bowls Club
- maintains through road
- close to existing services installations
- provides ‘focus’ for entrance to Stone Lodge site - rather than just a car park which would make the place look like an out-of-town retail park

- requires further traffic studies
recommendation

option 05: west

- this is an evolution of Option 04 but with a revised bowling green area which does not include ‘all-weather’ rinks
- good new ‘front of house’ for the site (a bowling green rather than a car-park)
- good access for coaches and the disabled (refer to Hyder coach movement study)
- the existing Halls facilities can be replaced on an upgraded (in line with current regulations) like-for-like basis.
- a ‘new’ elevation is provided for the Stone Lodge Club
- Separate addresses can be provided for each club though existing services installations and social facilities can be shared subject to agreement
- The existing temporary car park is augmented buying a ‘breathing period’ for re-evaluation of the existing Outline Master Plan.
- Single access to the site would be maintained for the duration of this ‘breathing period’ which would diminish the potential for the Highways Authority to object to the scheme (i.e. it would be consistent with the existing Outline Master Plan)
- The scheme limits abortive works

- further work (Scheme/Detail Design etc.) will be required promptly to resolve potential work to services (electrical / water loads and interfaces with existing drainage installations)
04 Future options
Opportunities for existing building/Stone Lodge Club

- reclad and revitalise
- produce a new focus into the central space
- improve parking
- increase bar revenue and social crossover
- create a ‘complete bowls facility’ - ‘re-affirm Dartford on the bowls map’
Option 05 proposals allow for the immediate re-siting of Hall’s Bowls Club with minimal impact upon the existing masterplan - with minimal abortive work.

- The existing Outline Masterplan should be re-considered prior to its implementation within the context of a clear business case for Stone Lodge and with a view to the creation of Public Space and a Public Identity.

- A clear business strategy should be prepared for the site with a flexible, evolvable identity.
sketch masterplan 01 - ‘branch’
sketch masterplan 02 - ‘loop’
sketch masterplan 03 - ‘spine’
what is the site identity or brand?

- **National Centre of Excellence** for alternative sports?: raise the bar for Dartford
- a shared community of bespoke facilities for individual sports
- sustainable development
- beach volleyball, archery, curling
- cycle routes, running
- proximity to the olympics - a training park?
Dartford Borough Council

Dartford Outdoor Bowls Club
Feasibility Study Options Report

14 October 2005
Report no: LN00840/A/OBC/0001

In conjunction with
Make Architects
Cyril Sweett Limited
Dartford Borough Council

Dartford Outdoor Bowls Club
Feasibility Study Options Report

Author: Hyder / Make / Cyril Sweet

Checker: Jo Kenward

Approver: Jo Kenward

Report no: LN00840/A/OBC/0001 Date: 14 October 2005

This report has been prepared for Dartford Borough Council in accordance with the terms and conditions of appointment for Feasibility Study Options Report dated 15th August 2005. Hyder Consulting (UK) Ltd (2212959) cannot accept any responsibility for any use of or reliance on the contents of this report by any third party.
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Executive Summary

• In accordance with Dartford Borough Councils brief and acceptance of Hyder Consulting Limited proposal as confirmed on 15th August 2005 this report considers the opportunity for relocating the existing Halls’ outdoor bowling green to the Stone Lodge Development Area.

• The study considers the options available to provide a 6 rink green and pavilion structure in the area adjacent to the existing indoor facility and new Judo Kwai building.

• Option 05 is considered the preferred option. This would position the new green on land between the West side of the existing indoor club and Cotton Lane (approximately over the existing car park area) and provide a pavilion screening adjacent to the existing building.

• Screening of the existing building structure and improvements by painting the cladding would greatly assist in improving the appearance of the site and existing building. A suggested arrangement is illustrated in appendix B.

• The study identified issues relating to access and existing services, which will require resolution to make the preferred site available for construction. These issues will require further investigation and to maintain the desired programme, this would have to be done in parallel with the planning process.

• For construction to allow use for the Summer 2007 season, it is essential that a planning application is prepared during October and submitted and determined before March 2006 in parallel with final design. The required programme does not facilitate development of final design only after final determination.

• The budget estimate for the preferred option is £0.83m including development costs. This would provide the new 6 rink green, new pavilion, screening and improvement of the existing building, access road to the rear of the existing indoor club and 124 car parking spaces.
1 Scope and Background

As a consequence of the development a new football and sports facility in Dartford, the existing outdoor bowls club at the Halls recreation area has to be relocated. At a meeting on 20th July 2005 Dartford Borough Council confirmed that they wished to consider the feasibility of sites in the Stone Lodge Development Area for relocation of a 6 rink outdoor bowling facility

Hyder Consulting in conjunction with Make Architects and Cyril Sweet Limited were approached for a proposal to undertake the initial feasibility study. The proposal was accepted by Dartford Borough Council’s letter of 15th August 2005.

During August and September 2005 discussions were held with the existing indoor bowling club at Stone Lodge and initial site options reviewed with Dartford Borough Council. A draft report was presented and discussed in early September from which a preferred option and strategy developed. This report has been prepared following further review and development of draft options with Dartford Borough Council in early October and concludes the feasibility study stage. The report summarises the conclusions reached by the project team and suggests a strategy for development and budgetary provisions.

2 Existing Site

The existing outdoor bowls facility is on the Halls recreation site in Dartford, which is being developed to provide a new football and sports stadium. Views of the existing site are included in Appendix A.

The proposed Stone Lodge Development Area is located immediately to the East of the Cotton Lane in Stone, near Dartford. The Stone Lodge site already has an indoor bowling club with 6 rinks. The site is currently being developed by the construction of the adjacent Dartford Judo Kwai facility. The location of these facilities are shown and discussed further in Appendix A.

3 Proposed Works

The available land areas and master plan for the Stone Lodge Development Area were reviewed. Appendix A covers the initial consideration of sites. After consideration and a first review of available site areas, constraints and benefits of the options with Dartford Borough Council it was agreed that the optimum location for the new facility was immediately adjacent to the existing indoor club on the land between the Western elevation and Cotton Lane. This is option 05 in Appendix A. Further refinement a minor reorientation was considered beneficial leading to the arrangement illustrated by the plans and architectural model shown in Appendix B.
4 Planning Considerations

The study undertook a brief review of the issues that could affect the development of this site. Enquiries were made with the Highway Authority to review existing data and information available from the outline master plan and environmental statements in respect of traffic assessments for the existing junctions. The following issues were identified and will require addressing during detailed design and/or development of the scheme for a planning application.

4.1 Highways and Access Roads

Access to the existing indoor bowls club and the new Judo Kwai building is by an at grade T junction from Cotton Lane. At present there are no provisions for right turn waiting areas.

The master plan suggests a strategy of modification of the entrances to provide better management of traffic flows will be required as the site develops. Existing traffic to the indoor bowls clubs is limited and seasonal. The proposed outdoor facility would compliment the existing arrangement without large increases in overall traffic as the indoor and outdoor bowls seasons have limited overlap.

The existing entrance and access to the bowls club and Judo Kwai facility are not to full adoptable standards and would require upgrading if this were to be required by the highway authority.

To facilitate future adoption (if the master plan is developed) it is suggested that the proposed access road from the junction with Cotton Lane is built to a specification that will allow simple modification to adoptable standards in the future. This will also ensure provision is adequate for the occasional use for coaches and service vehicles that is anticipated.

Discussions were held with DBC advisors to clarify the status of acceptance of traffic modelling for the Master Planning. It was noted that the highway authority (Kent County Council) have not formally accepted the model for the existing access positions. This will need clarification with the planning application to confirm if KCC would insist on provision of a right turning lane for future development. Discussions are continuing as part of the master planning and outline planning process.

The space available between the bowls club and Judo Kwai sites would be sufficient to allow a 6m wide access road and 2m verges on both sides. This is less than the 7.3m recommended in the 2002 KCC design guide for industrial access roads, but is considered suitable for access to allow two coaches to safely pass.

It is recommended that a verge width of at least 2.5m is adopted next to the bowls club to provide room for existing drainage and land use next to the access road. KCC would not normally adopt areas with private services running beneath them.
4.2 Car Parking

In considering the effect of the new facility it was agreed that allowance was required for at least 120 spaces. This has been considered as a minimum requirement in order to obtain a check of available space. The final requirements will be the subject of detailed study and agreement in conjunction with the highway authority. Appendix B contains an outline arrangement, which would provide for up to 124 spaces based on a typical 5 x 2.5m parking bay.

4.3 Services

Whilst the service enquiries for the Judo Kwai project indicate no major services in the vicinity of the proposed road and car park, private supplies and connections to the existing outdoor bowls club must exist. In developing the site allowances for investigation and protection or diversion of these services must be considered.

The preferred location of the bowling rink is adjacent to the location of a Thames Water foul sewer. This appears to run beneath the existing bowls club. From the topographic surveys there is also evidence of manholes and drainage running parallel to Cotton Lane. The ownership and proximity of these services to the proposed bowls rink will require further investigations to ensure there is no conflict with existing easement rights, or to determine the feasibility of diversions.

All major services exist in Cotton Lane including an EDF supply and pole mounted transformer adjacent to the junction for the bowls club. This is currently being upgraded to allow a 200 MVA supply for the existing facilities.

The increase in demand arising from the proposed pavilion and lighting for car parking will require review as the spare capacity at the existing point is known to be limited. If an increase above 200 MVA is required, this would involve construction of a new sub station compound as larger supply transformers are not pole mounted.

The new access areas and car parking will require provision of a positive drainage network. Past experience of the Environment Agency suggests that even for temporary car parking areas, drainage and connections through oil water separators will be necessary. The new Judo Kwai car park has such facilities and was found to need soakaways and storage volumes to allow discharge into the chalk strata. It is anticipated that the drainage from the access road, car park and bowls rink will require similar facilities pending installation and availability of full drainage networks under the main development plan.
5 Cost Estimate

Based on the general layouts and area requirements Cyril Sweett have prepared a budget cost estimate for the preferred option. This is included in Appendix C and gives a budget estimate of £828,000. This includes allowances for capital works based on generic estimates for the different works areas anticipated and also allows for the development and anticipated data collection, consultation, design and supervisory fees.

The budget estimate assumes

1) The access road surfacing and drainage would be to adoptable construction standards,

2) The car parking would be to a lower grade temporary specification which would require modification should a more permanent layout and/or use by coaches be required

3) Lighting is only provided to principal access routes

4) The new pavilion is a single storey prefabricated structure of up to 80m$^2$ in plan area

6 Programme

In considering the programme of works, the need to provide an established outdoor bowling green for the summer season in 2007 has been taken as the objective. The programme anticipates that the development of the new bowls rink will require a 12 month period for establishment and maintenance of the new green before it can be used. A 16 week planning determination period has also been assumed. The current programme indicates that the earliest completion of the works to lay the bowls green surfacing would be in late June 2006 and hence playing would be possible only after June 2007. This would be subject to confirmation with specialist contractors who provide these sorts of playing surfaces.

Appendix D contains an outline programme of development required to achieve this target. Assuming no service diversions are required, the critical path activities will be to investigate the site, obtain planning consent and obtain tenders to allow construction of the new rink. This also raises the need to provide alternative parking for the indoor club, as the site area overlaps with the indoor bowling car park and the Como site compound. Negotiations will be required at an early stage to allow access for construction of the bowling rink during the spring. Car parking facilities and access to replace existing facilities will be required in advance of these works.
7 **Procurement Strategy**

The works involve the following principal workpackages each requiring contractors with experience in the particular fields:

1) Construction of the roads and drainage / services for the car parking and access road areas

2) Construction of the structural screen, pavilion and modifications to existing buildings, including provision of service connections

3) Construction of the bowling green

The main costs and critical programme works relate to the infrastructure (package 1) with the other two packages requiring co-ordination to avoid conflicts in programmes for construction. The construction of the green requires alternative temporary or permanent parking to be laid to free the site area proposed. The erection of the screen will require foundations, structures and craneage provisions, which fall within the experience of most highway engineering contractors, being similar in nature and size to the works required for erection of highway / motorway direction signs.

If works were required to the existing building or construction of a bespoke pavilion proposed (in lieu of the concept of using a prefabricated building with full building services fit out), input from a building works orientated contractor will be required. This could be managed as a sub contract or separately procured if necessary.

Due to the coordination issues for initial construction, need for co-ordination of works to provide parking and the likely cost distribution of the work packages, there is considerable logic in making the contractor for the infrastructure, roads and paving contractor the principal contractor under CDM for the whole site. The contractor should ideally be one experienced in highway and drainage works construction with some knowledge of building construction.

The construction of the bowling green will require a specialist contractor with experience of not only construction but also the continued maintenance through the first year to ensure the final playing surface is acceptable. Due to the difference in timescales for works and completion of maintenance, it is suggested that the works are procured as separate packages rather than the specialist contractor being subcontractor (whether nominated or otherwise) to the principal contractor.

In considering the appropriate form of Contract, the works are mainly civil and infrastructure works with an element of building. Accordingly a civil engineering form of contract would be more appropriate than the JCT building format. Suitable contracts would include the ICE 7th Edition or ECC with either Option A or C. The works and programme do not readily lend themselves to a design and build approach as the key design decisions will be made during the planning process and the design process will be relatively quick for the key elements. Accordingly a more conventional
designed and then tendering on the basis of the design is considered most likely to provide a robust and optimum tender return. Early contractor involvement could be considered to shorten timescales but this would inherently require pricing on the basis of outline arrangements and require a target cost to limit the potential for cost creep.

The measurement of works and provision of cost certainty would suggest that a target cost approach with defined parameters and lump sum activities where appropriate could be of value. The uncertainties of earthworks and construction close to or modification of, the existing building add in items of risk which would be difficult to quantify in advance unless extensive investigations are undertaken. Such investigations would extend the pre tender phase and costs. For this reason it is suggested that the building works elements are considered for remeasurement and dealt with using provisional sums.

The nature and programme of these works suggest that the design and construction should be undertaken as a separate commission to those for the existing Judo Kwai rather than considering the works as an extension of workscope or variation to the existing contract. Whilst there are some advantages of considering Como due to their knowledge and presence on the site, it should be noted that the type of works required have been subcontracted in the Judo Kwai contract with Como effectively acting as a management contractor for these elements, which are actually being undertaken by Coffey.

In the immediate future the most critical aspects are those to develop the design and undertake investigations to allow planning consent to be gained. This must be done in parallel with working up the scope of works to allow tendering of the principal elements for construction of the green and car parks by next spring. To avoid delays it is considered that the planning application should be submitted as a detailed application and kept separate from the existing outline master planning application.
8 Conclusions

The feasibility study has identified Option 05 in the site immediately adjacent to the West of the existing indoor bowls club facility as the preferred location for the outdoor facility and pavilion.

The available space could be developed to provide adequate parking for at least 120 vehicles in conjunction with facilities for coach access and turning. The limits for the temporary car park should be considered further to avoid prejudicing future development of sport facilities.

The proposed site, facilities and layout should be discussed with the existing indoor bowls club and Halls bowls club before preparing and issuing a layout for planning consent.

Planning and consents from the Highway Authority and Environment Agency will be required and fall on the critical path.

The final position of the pavilion and bowling green will be subject to detailed consideration of services and existing facilities. This will require review during detailed design once precise positions of existing services and easements have been confirmed. Existing easements should be confirmed prior to submission of planning application details.

Provisions for access and development of the highway design will be necessary in the process of obtaining planning permission.

Construction of the new rink in Spring 2006 will be necessary if it is to be ready for use for the 2007 Summer season. Discussions with specialist Contractors in this field will be required to minimise the lead in programme and optimise the timing of award for construction of the bowling green.

Procurement of the works as a separate contract to the existing Judo Kwai contract is preferable due to the different programme and maintenance commitments and for ease of identification of costs and interfaces.

A budget of £0.83m for design and construction is anticipated for the scope indicated.
9 Recommendations

It is recommended that Option 05 is developed further through outline and detailed design, subject to acceptance of the budget and programme.

To achieve programme it is recommended that the contract and procurement strategy developed on the basis that this would be a separate contract and not undertaken as an extension of the existing contract for the Judo Kwai. Consideration should be given to whether there are any benefits of allowing Como to submit a tender, given their knowledge of the site and existing site set up.

Construction and delivery of the bowling rink and playing surface is a specialist activity and falls outside of the experience of many contractors. Engagement of the advice and involvement of a specialist contractor in this field would be recommended at the earliest opportunity and considerations should be given to letting a separate contract for this part of the works in order to cover the maintenance commitment and end user requirements.

Early discussions should be held with KCC to confirm the acceptable limits of car parking and access to the site before junction improvements would be required. Any proposal for widening Cotton Lane on the Eastern side would need to be resisted as this could prejudice the siting of the new bowling rink in the proposed position.

The strategy of access to the site to allow a one-way circulation and exit only junction adjacent to the Judo Kwai should be investigated as a longer term objective to allow adoption of the access road.

It is recommended that authority to proceed with the next stage of investigatory and design development works is obtained based on a budget of £0.83m. Allowances for the risks of increased works being required by KCC and the EA should also be considered. These are not included in the above sum.

Works to confirm any legal easements that would affect the land proposed or the location of the bowls green must be undertaken and concluded to confirm any matters attaching to option 05.

To achieve the programme requires submission of a planning application during October. To achieve this objective, it is recommended that appointment of the design team is confirmed in mid October with a brief to confirm outline design based on Option 05 in sufficient detail to allow a planning application and supporting information to be submitted in November 2005.
Appendix A

Site Options Report

Make Architects
Appendix B

General arrangement & illustration

(Option 5)
Appendix D

Programme
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## Project Programme

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| Feasibility study | 5w | 15Aug05 | 05Oct05 |

| D0102 | Acceptance of recommendations | 1w | 05Oct05 | 12Oct05 |

| KD103 | DBC Agreement to proceed with scheme design | 1w | 12Oct05 | 19Oct05 |

| KD250 | DBC Agree and Submit Planning Application | 1d | 18Nov05 | 21Nov05 |

| KD299 | Receive Planning Consent | 1d | 14Mar06 | 15Mar06 |

| KD499 | Complete detailed design | 1d | 21Dec05 | 22Dec05 |

| KD500 | Issue Tender Documents | 1d | 17Jan06 | 18Jan06 |

| KD550 | Return of Tenders | 1d | 01Mar06 | 02Mar06 |

| KD599 | DBC Award Contract | 1d | 21Mar06 | 22Mar06 |

| KD600 | Start works | 1d | 25Apr06 | 26Apr06 |

| KD610 | Complete initial bowls green surface | 1d | 28Jun06 | 29Jun06 |

| KD999 | Use in 2007 season | 1d | 28Jun07 | 29Jun07 |

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| A0102 | Confirm screen appearance | 1w | 19Oct05 | 26Oct05 |

| A0103 | Confirm space allocation | 2w | 19Oct05 | 02Nov05 |

| H0100 | Service enquiries | 4w | 19Oct05 | 16Nov05 |

| H0110 | Data Collection & consultation | 3w | 19Oct05 | 09Nov05 |

| H0200 | General arrangement design | 1w | 19Oct05 | 26Oct05 |

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| P0202 | Prepare Planning consent supporting details | 2w | 02Nov05 | 16Nov05 |

| P0203 | Agree consent application | 1d | 16Nov05 | 17Nov05 |

| P0250 | Submit application | 1d | 17Nov05 | 18Nov05 |
POWDER MILL LANE - RE-NAMING OF SECTIONS DUE TO STOPPING UP ORDERS

PRINCES AND BRENT

1. Summary

To update Members on the outcome of discussions with the management of the Questor industrial estate and the Kent Fire and Rescue Service regarding the implementation of the stopping-up order and to propose a consequential re-naming of sections of Powder Mill Lane.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members determine which of the proposals to adopt for renaming one or other of the two sections of Powder Mill Lane shown in red and green on the map at Appendix B and that Officers be authorised to make the necessary Orders.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. A road may be re-named under Section 18 of the Public Health Act 1925. This requires that notices be placed at either end of and at suitable points along the road in question for a period of one month. The notice advertises the Council’s intention to make an Order and gives opportunity for objections to be considered by the Council before an Order is made. Once the Order is made, it may be challenged in the Magistrates’ Court. The Council additionally consults with local Members, the Post Office and the Emergency Services on all road naming and with Parish Councils where appropriate.

3.2. At the meeting of the Cabinet on 8 January 2004, the (then) Director of Central Services sought Members’ views on a proposal to re-name Powder Mill Lane, in the light of development at the Questor commercial estate off Powder Mill Lane and the Stopping Up of Highways Order (County of Kent) Order (No) 200 (GOSE/029/001/KENT/005) which would separate Powder Mill Lane into three sections, see Appendix A. Members were informed that the Emergency Services were strongly opposed to retaining the name Powder Mill Lane for all three sections of the road.
3.3. The Kent Fire and Rescue Service in particular has drawn Officers’ attention to the county wide Code of Practice relating to Traffic Calming and the Emergency Services that states that ‘If a road is to be severed, then the two parts must have separate names’. The basis of the Code is to ensure that the Emergency Services are able to approach a location by the most direct route and do not find themselves in a closed section of road and unable to reach an incident quickly. The concerns of the Fire and Rescue Service have recently become heightened by the expectation that the service will be regionalised and therefore the benefit of ‘local knowledge’ will be reduced.

3.4. Previous proposals have suggested re-naming the two end sections Powder Mill Lane East and Powder Mill Lane West with a separate name for the middle section contained within the Questor estate, or alternatively, to keep the predominantly residential Hawley Road end of Powder Mill Lane as Powder Mill Lane, with the other two sections being renamed. There are currently 23 residential properties, and 4 prospective properties located at the Hawley Road end (west) section of Powder Mill Lane and around 8, mainly commercial, properties at the Darenth Road (east) end.

3.5. The Powder Mill Lane area is of considerable local historical significance by virtue of its links with many of the Borough’s traditional industries, such as quarrying, paper making, gunpowder manufacture and also farming. The main gunpowder mills were situated at the eastern end of the lane, adjacent to the River Darent, and there has therefore been a disinclination to re-name.

3.6. At its last meeting, Cabinet received a report regarding the disposal of two land parcels needed by Questor to fulfil the planning conditions. During debate Members were advised that discussions with Questor management and Kent Fire and Rescue Service were on-going regarding the implementation of the stopping-up order and the access arrangements for the emergency services. It was agreed that these discussions had a bearing on the re-naming issue and that the Strategic Director would report back once the outcome was known.

3.7. It had been hoped that through access might be created for the emergency services via automated or attended barriers at both stopping up points, but that is not considered practical by Questor management. However, agreement has been reached by the two parties that the emergency services will be able to access the Questor estate from the Darenth Road end of Powder Mill Lane. As far as the emergency services are concerned, therefore, Powder Mill Lane will consist of two sections, not three, and this means that the
Darenth Road end section and the middle Questor section can have the same name. One section can therefore retain the name Powder Mill Lane.

3.8. The question remains as to which end of Powder Mill Lane to rename. The two proposals for Members’ consideration are as follows:

a) Retain the name Powder Mill Lane for the residential Hawley Road end and re-name the Questor and Darenth Road end sections either as Powder Mill Lane East or North Powder Mill Lane. The latter suggestion results from examination of the 1860 map of the area and research at Dartford Library, which places a powder mill, whose foundations remain, north of the River Darent north sluice-gate and close to the Questor/Darenth Road part of Powder Mill Lane. The Mill is referred to in a Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit publication as the ‘North Mill’.

b) Retain the name Powder Mill Lane for the Questor and Darenth Road end sections and re-name the residential Hawley Road end as Powder Mill Lane West.

3.11 Both of the above proposals are acceptable to the emergency services. Officers consider that the addition of ‘East’ or ‘West’ as a suffix or ‘North’ as a prefix to an address is unlikely to create much dissent, especially as residents and businesses will all have an interest in a prompt emergency service response to their locality. However, as explained at 3.1, a renaming Order can be challenged in the Magistrates’ Court.

3.12 Once Members have decided which proposal to adopt, Officers will write to all properties affected by the re-naming, explaining the reason for the re-naming, and the appeals process. The re-naming will not be given effect until the stopping-up order is implemented.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

Not applicable.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

| Financial Implications | None other than the minimal costs of advertising the change and these can |
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27 OCTOBER 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Legal Implications</th>
<th>As set out in the body of the report.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Staffing Implications</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Implications</td>
<td>As set out in the body of the report.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>There is a risk of challenge to any re-naming and this is set out in the body of the report. The risk can be reduced by direct communication with affected residents and businesses and effective publicity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

6. Appendices

Appendix A Power Mill Lane – 3 sections
Appendix B Powder Mill Lane – 2 sections

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents consulted</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>File Ref</th>
<th>Report Author</th>
<th>Section and Directorate</th>
<th>Exempt Information Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Dartford Gunpowder Mills by Brian Philp (published by Kent Archaeological Rescue Unit); Old area maps</td>
<td>27 Oct 2005</td>
<td>Sheri Green/Jill Dedman</td>
<td>Property Information/Strategic</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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APPENDIX B Powder Mill Lane - 2 Sections
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KENT AND MEDWAY STRUCTURE PLAN – CONSULTATION ON PROPOSED MODIFICATIONS

1. Summary

1.2 The purpose of the report is to inform Members of the content of the Proposed Modifications to the Kent and Medway Structure Plan and provide a basis for deciding whether any representations should be made.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That Cabinet note the contents of the report.
2.2. That Cabinet respond to KCC on the basis set out in the main body of this report.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. The “Kent & Medway Structure Plan Deposit Plan” was placed on deposit in September 2003. The “Proposed Pre-Examination in Public Changes” document was published for comments in June 2004. An Examination in Public (EIP), conducted by an independent Panel, was held over a four week period in September 2004 where the Plan’s key issues were debated and tested. Kent and Medway Councils also published a “Schedule of Further Amendments Proposed by Kent and Medway Councils at the EIP” at the end of September 2004. Following the EIP, the “Kent and Medway Structure Plan EIP Panel Report” was published in February 2005. This summarised the main issues debated at the EIP and set out its conclusions and recommendations.

3.2. Kent and Medway Councils have now considered the report and recommendations and have published their Proposed Modifications. These detail the changes they propose to make to policies and the key diagram in light of the Panel’s recommendations, and formalise any previously suggested changes, where these have been confirmed by the Panel’s recommendations. (The text which accompanies the policies is not part of the Statutory Plan and is therefore not the subject of any proposed modifications. This accompanying text will be revised as necessary when the Plan is finally adopted and published).

3.3. At this stage of the process, comments can only be made on the Proposed Modifications, or the fact that the Councils have not proposed a modification recommended by the Panel. Comments cannot be made on the content of the original Deposit Plan. The deadline for comments is 27 October 2005.
3.4. Once the formal consultation period has ended, the Councils will consider the comments received and decide whether further modifications are required or whether the Structure Plan should proceed to adoption. It is hoped that the Councils will be in a position to adopt the Plan by the end of 2005.

3.5. The following discussion deals first with Panel recommendations that were **not accepted** by the Councils, then those **accepted in part** by the Councils, and then those **accepted**, resulting in modifications. Cross references to the related part of the Proposed Modifications document is included.

3.6. Of the Panel’s recommendations that were **not accepted** by Kent and Medway Councils, only one relates specifically to Dartford Borough. The Panel recommended that the second paragraph of Policy SS8, which proposes the exclusion of Eastern Quarry from the Green Belt, with new boundaries to be defined in the Dartford Borough Plan, be deleted. The Councils do not agree with this proposed deletion, arguing that: “The exclusion of Eastern Quarry from the Green Belt was determined through the 1996 Structure Plan but new boundaries have yet to be determined through an adopted local plan / local development document. Pending this, retention of the reference to revision of the Green Belt in this area is appropriate.” This approach (Kent and Medway Council’s response to R9.2) merits support as it confirms the Council’s own planning policy stance. (see also related paragraph 3.9 below)

3.7. Of the Panel’s recommendations that were **accepted in part**, only one is of particular note for the Borough. This is Policy HP3 which, when first drafted, indicated a percentage target for residential development on previously developed land for each District. Dartford had a target of 95% with an asterisk which confirmed that: “Policy target includes former mineral workings and other damaged land that falls outside the definition of previously developed land within the terms of PPG3”. The Panel recommended that the target for the use of previously developed land in HP3 should be re-based to correspond with the PPG3 Annex C definition and exclude other former mineral working sites, and specify an overall county target only. The Councils have agreed to amend the policy to show only a county wide target, but plan to show District totals within the text and refer to the important role of other former mineral working sites in the strategy especially within Kent Thameside. This approach (MOD 7.3) merits support as it confirms the Council’s own planning policy stance.
3.8. Of the Panel’s recommendations that were accepted and resulted in modifications, the majority are generally helpful in clarifying the overall policy intentions of the Plan. A number of these are of particular note for Dartford. These are discussed in the order in which they appear in the Plan.

3.9. The proposed pre-EIP change to Policy SS8 (Extent of the Metropolitan Green Belt in Kent) has been confirmed by MOD 2.8. This refers to the addition of “and St Clement’s Valley” after the reference to Eastern Quarry and the reference to new boundaries being defined through the Dartford Local Development Framework. The Council supported this proposed change when commenting on the Proposed Pre-EIP Changes document (Minute 80 refers). This approach (MOD 2.8) merits support as it confirms the Council’s own planning policy stance.

3.10. Policy NK1: This policy sets out the strategic intention for urban growth in Dartford and Gravesham, and lists the main locations where growth is expected and the nature of development anticipated. Eight separate modifications are proposed. One relates specifically to Gravesham (MOD 3.8). Three of the proposed modifications (MODS 3.2, 3.4 and 3.5) clarify the policy’s application to “strategic development locations” rather than strategic developments. Two clarify the approach to development at Eastern Quarry and Swanscombe Peninsula – that it should be “integrated with a new and improved public transport network” (MODS 3.6 and 3.7). One strengthens the reference to the Green Grid being “part of a comprehensive greenspace strategy” providing “a network of open land and green spaces” (MOD 3.3). One expands the first paragraph of NK1 stating that development additionally needs to be related specifically to the phasing of the provision of “flood defences, and water resources and wastewater treatment infrastructure” (MOD 3.1). The changes to Policy NK1 (MODS 3.1 to 3.7) clarify the policy approach and merit support.

3.11. MOD 6.1 provides for the introduction of a new “Policy FP0: Land, Workforce, Education and Skills” which is designed to reflect the objective for a balance between jobs and the workforce, including a reduction over time in the volume of out commuting (particularly from North Kent), and to recognise the importance of skills and education to achieving economic objectives. This approach (MOD 6.1) merits support as it reflects the Council’s own planning policy stance that regeneration in the Borough should achieve a balance between housing and employment, and recognises the link between education and economic development.

3.12. MOD 8.4 and MOD 8.7 include amendments to the tables of transport schemes, which now include the timing and purpose of those schemes. Specific changes/additions in Table TP4 and subject of MOD 8.4 include
track widening between Slade Green and Dartford on the North Kent Line post-2016, better interchange between Ebbsfleet and Northfleet stations by 2009 and extension of Crossrail services to Ebbsfleet from 2013. MOD 8.7 includes the proposed London Road/St Clements Way junction improvement by 2009 (Table TP7). These amendments in MOD 8.4 and MOD 8.7 merit support.

3.13. MOD 8.15 which refers to Policy TP22: Kent Ports deletes the reference to “At Thames Europort redevelopment of the port for other land uses will be supported”. This has the effect of supporting employment led regeneration objectives and contributing to greater employment choice. The Local Plan Review policy approach to Thames Europort has already been raised as an issue in preparatory work for the Council’s Local Development Framework. This approach (MOD 8.15) merits support as it reflects the importance which the Council attaches to the economic potential of Thames Europort.

3.14. Proposed modification of Policy HP1 amends the housing provision figures to relate only to the period 2001 to 2016. This reflects the fact that the South East Plan will be the policy document that will contain housing provision figures for the period beyond 2016. There is no change to the figures for Dartford (12,400 for the 2001-2016 period).

3.15. In the “Managing Our National Resources: Climate Change – Energy Production – Water Resources – Flood Risk” chapter, the new policy suggested at Pre EIP stage has been confirmed. The Council’s comments at Deposit stage advocated the inclusion of a new policy addressing energy conservation. **In the interests of pursuing more sustainable development, this new policy wording (MOD 9.1) merits support.**

4. **Relationship to the Corporate Plan**

   Regeneration: Key Actions 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10 and 11  
   Leisure Time: Key Actions 3, 4 and 7  
   Environment: Key Actions 1 and 6  
   Housing: Key Actions 1, 2 and 3

5. **Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Implications</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Implications</td>
<td>The Kent and Medway Structure Plan, once adopted, will replace the Kent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CABINET
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staffing Implications</th>
<th>Structure Plan 1996 and will be a material consideration in terms of the Council’s planning functions.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Implications</td>
<td>Once adopted, references to the Kent Structure Plan 1996 in the Council’s planning considerations will be replaced by references to the Kent and Medway Structure Plan.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>No uncertainties and/or constraints</td>
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</table>

6. Appendices

None

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents consulted</th>
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<th>File Ref</th>
<th>Report Author</th>
<th>Section and Directorate</th>
<th>Exempt Information Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kent &amp; Medway Structure Plan: Proposed Modifications</td>
<td>Sept 2005</td>
<td>01322 343631 Siân Phillips</td>
<td>Planning Policy – Regeneration</td>
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<td>Kent &amp; Medway Structure Plan: Proposed Modifications</td>
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<td>Kent &amp; Medway Structure Plan: Proposed Modifications</td>
<td>Sept 2005</td>
<td>01322 343410 Tim Lynch</td>
<td>Regeneration</td>
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PREPARATION OF THE LOCAL DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK
FOR DARTFORD: UPDATE ON RESPONSES TO SUBMISSION
STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

1. Summary

1.1 The Council sent its submission Statement of Community Involvement to the Planning Inspectorate and Government Office on 30 June 2005. As required by regulations the document was subjected to public consultation over a six week period.
1.2 This report informs Members of the results of that consultation and recommends changes to be put to the Planning Inspectorate.

2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. That Members agree the proposed changes set out in Appendix B to be put to the Planning Inspectorate and recommend its content to the General Assembly of the Council for approval.

2.2. That the Policy Manager/Planning Policy Manager be granted delegated approval in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Planning to respond to or clarify any matters raised by the examination inspector.

2.3. That respondents be thanked for commenting and be advised of the changes when approved by the General Assembly of the Council.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. On 31 January 2005, the General Assembly of the Council approved a revised Local Development Scheme for submission to Government (Minute 101 refers). The Local Development Scheme is the foundation document which sets out the timetable for preparation of the Council’s new-style Local Development Framework. The Statement of Community Involvement is identified as the first document to be prepared.

3.2. On 13 June 2005, the General Assembly approved a Submission Statement of Community Involvement for submission to Government and for public consultation, in accordance with Regulation 28 (Minute 36 refers).
3.3. The Statement was published on 30 June for a six week consultation period that ended on 11 August. It was sent to the 29 organisations and private individuals who submitted comments on the draft Statement of Community Involvement. The other organisations and private individuals (over 260) who had been invited to comment on the draft Statement were informed that the Submission Statement had been submitted to Government and was out on public consultation. It was also placed on the Council’s website. Following advice from the Planning Inspectorate the consultation period was extended to 22 September to enable further consultation.

3.4. In the next stage of the process the submission Statement of Community Involvement will be assessed by an Inspector to ensure that it satisfies nine tests of soundness which are set out in Planning Policy Statement 12 “Local Development Frameworks”. The Inspector will issue a binding report which will set out any changes which the Council must include in the final document.

3.5. During the examination the inspector may correspond with participants and the Council about aspects of the Statement of Community Involvement. The inspector will set deadlines for any response which will have to be met.

3.6. Representations have been received from 21 people/organisations. Six objected to aspects of the submission SCI and in all they submitted 12 objections.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Objecting to part of the SCI/ or to the omission of a section or text</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting or not objecting to the whole of the SCI in general</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting part of the SCI</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not objecting in principle to the SCI</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not wishing to make formal comment</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gave comments on how they wished to be involved or matters that the Council should take into consideration</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>22</strong>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note * One respondent both supports and objects to parts of the SCI.

3.7. A schedule of respondents is set out at Appendix A.

3.8. Summaries of the objections to the draft Statement of Community Involvement and suggested textual changes to be put to the Planning Inspectorate are summarised in Appendix B. Most of the objections are
reasonable and can be accommodated through minor textual changes that maintain the general approach of the Statement of Community Involvement. The following convention has been followed in the ‘Council Response’ column in Appendix B: proposed new text is emboldened and text that it is proposed should be deleted is struck through.

3.9. It is proposed that objectors are informed of the Council’s response to their comments as set out in Appendix B and that the proposed changes are also forwarded to the Planning Inspectorate as commended changes for the inspector to take into consideration.

4. **Relationship to the Corporate Plan**

   Citizenship and Community – Key Actions 1 and 2.

5. **Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Implications</th>
<th>The proposals for community involvement set out in the submission SCI have financial implications, but these will be contained within the overall Planning Policy budget (Budget Book page 17) supplemented by Planning Delivery Grant.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Implications</td>
<td>The preparation of the Statement of Community Involvement follows the procedures and requirements set out in the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulation 28. As part of the independent examination of future elements of the Local Development Framework, documents will be tested to see whether they have been prepared in compliance with the Council’s Statement of Community Involvement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staffing Implications</td>
<td>These can be contained within the current staff resources. The Statement of Community Involvement examination may require a Programme Officer to be provided by the Council.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Implications</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>The main risk is that the Statement of Community Involvement is found to be unsound and the Inspector issues a...</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
binding report setting out how the statement must be changed. By observing the regulations, and consulting with GOSE and the Planning Inspectorate as necessary, these risks have been minimised as far as possible, and are considered to be low recognising that few statements of community involvement have reached this stage of the process.

6. Appendices

Appendix A: List of Respondents to Dartford’s Submission Statement of Community Involvement (June 2005)
Appendix B: Objections and suggested changes to Dartford’s submitted Statement of Community Involvement (June 2005)

BACKGROUND PAPERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents consulted</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>File Ref</th>
<th>Report Author</th>
<th>Section and Directorate</th>
<th>Exempt Information Category</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Comments received on Draft Statement of Community Involvement</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Paul Buckley 01322-343202</td>
<td>Planning Policy Regeneration</td>
<td>N/A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX A: List of Respondents to Dartford’s Submission Statement of Community Involvement (June 2005)

Respondents who have objected to part of the submission SCI document or have proposed changes to the document

- Terence O’Rourke on behalf of Bidcorp plc
- Southern Water
- Thames Water
- Barton Willmore Planning on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd
- David Lock Associates on behalf of Land Securities
- David Lock associates on behalf of Lefarge Cement Ltd

Respondents supporting or not objecting to the whole submission SCI document

- London Green Belt Council
- Kent Fire & Rescue Service
- Environment Agency
- National Playing Fields Association
- Sport England
- Kent County Council
- WM Morrisons c/o Rapley’s LLP
- English Heritage

Respondents supporting part of the submission SCI document

- Southern Water - Section: 2: Paragraphs 2.20 & 2.21
- Highways Agency - That the Agency is recognised as a Statutory Consultee

Respondents not objecting in principle to the submission SCI document

- Southfleet Parish Council

Respondents who do not wish to make formal representation on the submission SCI document

- South East England Regional Assembly
- East of England Regional Assembly
- Manor Gospel Trust

Respondents who have given comments on how they wish to be involved in the process and matters that the Council should take into consideration

- East of England Development Agency
- National Grid Transco c/o Malcolm Judd and Partners
## APPENDIX B: Objections and suggested changes to Dartford’s submission Statement of Community Involvement (June 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Suggested Change</th>
<th>Council Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Section 2: Paragraph 2.1 to 2.7</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Water (1)</td>
<td>Southern Water is a statutory sewerage undertaker in parts of Dartford, and is therefore a specific consultation body in relation to the Local Development Framework. According to regulations 17(2) (b), 26 (c), 28 (3) (c) and 32 (2) (c), the planning authority must send consultation documents to specific consultation bodies. This method is not identified in Dartford’s SCI. Appendix 2 refers to making consultation drafts available. However, making documents available is not sufficient from our point of view. Southern Water is a regional company, responding to consultations from more than 45 different planning authorities. It is therefore important that we receive consultation documents at the start of each consultation period, in accordance with regulations. As a result of the omission, we are unable to support the statement as being sound. However, minor amendments will make it sound, as proposed below: Insert new paragraph after paragraph 2.7: &quot;2.8 Draft local development documents, and alternative site addresses, will be sent to specific consultation bodies for comment at the start of each statutory consultation period.&quot;</td>
<td>Agreed. It is important that everyone has the full six week consultation period in which to consider and comment on the Local Development Documents. It is proposed that a new paragraph is inserted after paragraph 2.6 to read: &quot;2.6a We will send out consultation documents for the start of each consultation period, in either electronic or paper format as requested.&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Omission in section 2: ‘Keeping you up to date’: Paragraph 2.8-2.11**

| Barton Willmore on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (1) | We support the identification of individual letters in the Appendix 2 as a method to communicate to interested parties. | Accepted. This is a reasonable point as not everyone has access to a computer and may prefer to be consulted by letter. |
**Appendix B: Objections and suggested changes to Dartford’s submission Statement of Community Involvement (June 2005)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Suggested Change</th>
<th>Council Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>However, the main body of the SCI should expressly refer to this method of communication. It is our view that letters should be used to advise interested parties of the stage of consultation and forthcoming informal and formal consultation deadlines. For clarity, the SCI should include a commitment in this respect.</strong></td>
<td>It is proposed that the following text is inserted at the end of paragraph 2.8: “We will write to those who have asked to be kept in touch by letter.”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 2: ‘Encouraging discussion and debate’: Paragraph: 2.12-2.19**

| **Terence O’Rourke on behalf of Bidcorp plc** | **In summary, we feel that it is essential that the Council fully recognises the importance of the views of the local business community and landowners within the SCI and the forthcoming LDF process. This includes potential developers interests. The Inspector’s Report will eventually become binding and the Inspector will refer to the SCI when he/she tests the ‘soundness of the Plan’.** | **Agreed. Landowners and developers are also omitted from the list of groups not included in Annex E of PPS 12. The intention of paragraph 2.13 is to encourage involvement by local businesses, groups and private individuals not included in Annex E of PPS12. It would be helpful to include landowners and developers.** |
| | **We therefore welcome the statement in paragraph 2.13 that the Council is aware that the list of potential consultees in Annex E of PPS12 does not include businesses, and has therefore established its own list of people and groups who want to be involved in the LDF process. We welcome also the statement that this list will always be open for revision.** | **It is proposed that the second sentence in paragraph 2.13 is amended to read:** “The Council is aware that this list does not include local businesses, landowners, developers or groups or private individuals and will include them as specific groups to target.” |
| | **However, the soundness test will consider whether the Council has consulted who it specified in the SCI. As the LDF is progressed, the Council will be under no obligation to consult anyone who is not identified generally within the SCI. It is therefore paramount that business, landowner and developer interests are specifically identified and are fully represented from the formative stages of the LDF onwards.** | |
### APPENDIX B: Objections and suggested changes to Dartford’s submission Statement of Community Involvement (June 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Suggested Change</th>
<th>Council Response</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barton Willmore on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (2)</td>
<td>We support the SCI’s recognition that Annex E of Planning Policy Statement 12 Local Development Framework does not include local businesses, groups or private individuals. We note that developers and their advisors are not listed in their own right nor do they form part of an identified group. All interests must be involved and represented if the SCI is to secure the broad base of support and engagement as intended. We would suggest that the SCI identifies landowners and developers as a specific group to be targeted.</td>
<td>Agreed. Landowners and developers are also omitted from the list of groups not included in Annex E of PPS 12. The intention of paragraph 2.13 is to encourage involvement by local businesses, groups and private individuals not included in Annex E of PPS12. It would be helpful to include landowners and developers. See proposed change to paragraph 2.13 above.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section 2: ‘Formal objections and representations’: Paragraph: 2.20-2.22</td>
<td>For consultation to be of value, the Council must review the comments received with a positive and open mind. In reporting comments to Members and setting out their recommended response, Officers must summarise the representations received fairly and reasonably and provide adequate reasons for their recommendation. Failure to do so can lead to continuing uncertainty, inhibit the resolution of objections and, in respect of the local community, disenchantment. We would welcome a positive commitment in this respect.</td>
<td>Accepted. It is the Council’s practice to report representations on development plans, either in full or summary, to Cabinet and the General Assembly of the Council to help guide Member decisions. There is no intention to change this approach. It would be helpful for the SCI text to make this clear. It is proposed that the first sentence in paragraph 2.20 is amended to read:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Agenda Item 16**

Page 249
**APPENDIX B: Objections and suggested changes to Dartford’s submission Statement of Community Involvement (June 2005)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
<th>Suggested Change</th>
<th>Council Response</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Barton Willmore on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (4)</td>
<td>The SCI notes that site specific Supplementary Planning Documents may be produced and that in such instances the Council will arrange meetings with specific interest groups. All interests must be involved and represented if the SPD is to secure the broad base of support and engagement as intended. We would suggest that in addition to local interest groups, the SCI identifies the need for the early involvement of landowners and developers of the site.</td>
<td>Accepted. Paragraph 2.24 refers to ‘involving the community’ in the Supplementary Planning Document process. It is recognised that this is unclear and could be interpreted as the local resident population. This is not the intention and it would be helpful to clarify the matter. It is proposed that the phrase ‘the community’ in paragraph 2.24 is replaced by: “landowners, developers, statutory consultees and the local community”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Section 2: ‘Supplementary planning documents’: Paragraph: 2.23-2.27**

| Barton Willmore on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (4) | For consultation to be of value, the Council must review the comments received with a positive and open mind. In reporting comments to Members and setting out their recommended response, Officers must summarise the representations received fairly and reasonably and provide adequate reasons for their recommendation. Failure to do so can lead to continuing uncertainty, inhibit the resolution of objections and, in respect of the local community, disenchantment. We would welcome a | Accepted. It is the Council’s practice to report representations on development plans, either in full or summary, to Cabinet and the General Assembly of the Council to help guide Member decisions. There is no intention to change this approach. It would be helpful for the SCI text to make this clear. |

**Section 2: ‘Reporting back’: Paragraph: 2.28-2.30**

| Barton Willmore on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (5) | “After you have had the opportunity to comment on the draft Local Development Framework documents toward the end of 2005, all representations received will be presented to the Cabinet and General Assembly of the Council who will consider all the comments received, form a view, and decide what changes need to be made.” | “After you have had the opportunity to comment on the draft Local Development Framework documents toward the end of 2005, all representations received will be presented to the Cabinet and General Assembly of the Council who will consider all the comments received, form a view, and decide what changes need to be made.” |
### Section 4: ‘Planning applications’: Paragraph 4.1-4.2

**Barton Willmore on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (6)**

The SCI sets out the possible consultation methods the Council will consider for applications that are anticipated will inter alia generate significant public interest. We would suggest that the SCI identifies the need for early discussions with the applicant to enable joint working where appropriate and to ensure that the Council’s consultation reflects/responds to any pre-application consultation undertaken by the developer.

**Council Response**

Disagree. It is important that the Council is seen to be ‘independent’ when considering and determining planning applications. Joint working/consultation with the applicant would undermine this position.

### Section 4: ‘Consultation by Developers’: Paragraph 4.3-4.4

**Barton Willmore on behalf of Bellway Homes Ltd (7)**

The SCI notes that the Council may, in certain cases, encourage developers to undertake pre-application discussions.

It is our position that the SCI should provide greater guidance and certainty as to the types of proposals where the Council will encourage pre-application consultation. The SCI should be amended to state that the need to undertake pre-application consultation should be determined on a site by site basis having regard to the nature and scale of the proposals and the compliance or otherwise with the provisions of the LDF.

**Council Response**

Noted. The SCI recognises the benefits of pre-application discussions and encourages such discussion.

Paragraph 4.3 relates to developer discussions with the Council and developer consultation with members of the public. It would be helpful to separate these two different points.

The SCI as drafted could be taken to imply that public exhibitions are the only form of public...
### APPENDIX B: Objections and suggested changes to Dartford’s submission Statement of Community Involvement (June 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondent</th>
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<td>consultation that the Council considers necessary. This is not so: leaflet drops and public meetings are other options that could also be used.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It would be helpful to clarify the types of development that would require pre-application consultation.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>It is proposed that paragraph 4.3 is amended to read:</td>
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<td></td>
<td>“The best time to influence development proposals can be before a planning application has been submitted and ideas have become fixed. The Council encourages developers to discuss their proposals with the Council at an early stage. and 4.3a In certain cases, such as proposals that are large in scale, or are likely to affect a local community or perhaps do not comply with the Council’s planning policies, we will encourage developers to arrange undertake pre-application public consultation. This could take the form of leaflet drops, public meetings or public exhibition so that members of the public can discuss their proposals with them. Some developers also provide websites for their developments. In these cases, we will provide links from the Council’s own website.”</td>
</tr>
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|            |                  | And that the last sentence of paragraph 4.4 is amended to read: “Where developers propose to consult a
APPENDIX B: Objections and suggested changes to Dartford’s submission Statement of Community Involvement (June 2005)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tr>
<td>The SCI also sets out consultation measures that the Council will aim to ensure that developers follow where there is an intention to consult for example a Public Exhibition. In our view this is overly prescriptive. The SCI should be amended to state that the level of consultation to be undertaken on a given application should be determined again on a site by site basis having regard to the above provisions and should be the subject of discussion between the applicant and the Council.</td>
<td><strong>public exhibition</strong> we will aim to ensure as follows:”</td>
<td>Disagree. The SCI is a public document that explains the Council’s approach to public consultation for developers and private individuals alike. It is important that all parties clearly understand what is expected. The guidance on public exhibitions does that.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Section 4: Planning Applications and Development Proposals: Paragraph: 4.4 Bullet point 8

| David Lock Associates On behalf of Land Securities | Dartford Council will be aware that Land Securities’ practice is to be proactive in their approach to public consultation on their own major planning applications. This approach involves hosting exhibitions, newsletters and other forms of publicity and we believe represents a genuine attempt to gauge public opinion on emerging proposals. Land Securities takes this approach to ensure an early opportunity for the public to view and comment on their proposals. We do not believe that the requirement, set out in the eighth bullet of paragraph 4.4 and which would require developers to make available to the Council all comments submitted by the public, is either practical or necessary beneficial in consultation terms. In our experience, a significant proportion of useful feedback in such circumstances is achieved through non-written communication – for example through conversation at exhibitions, through comments raised at public forums, and follow-up communication such as telephone calls. It can also be the case that written responses submitted (for example at unmanned exhibitions) are accepted noted. The aim of the eighth bullet is to help the Council understand the public’s response to pre-application consultations by developers. The ability of the Council to verify any summary of consultation would be useful, particularly where an unusual or unexpected response is shown. It is not the Council’s intention to put an undue burden on developers. It would therefore be helpful to delete bullet eight and amend bullet nine as follows: |
| Accepted Noted. The aim of the eighth bullet is to help the Council understand the public’s response to pre-application consultations by developers. The ability of the Council to verify any summary of consultation would be useful, particularly where an unusual or unexpected response is shown. It is not the Council’s intention to put an undue burden on developers. It would therefore be helpful to delete bullet eight and amend bullet nine as follows: |

- The developers should make available to the Council all comments submitted by the public. |
- The developers should prepare a report summarising the process, identifying local concerns (*where appropriate the Council will seek verification of this summary*) and showing how these have influenced the resulting...
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<td>not necessarily representative of the full cross-section of public opinion and can be prone to abuse (such as by those with general concerns about the wider development process, those who wish to comment upon or criticise the activity of the local authority, or for example through random or abusive messages). To require the submission of all written comments across all methods of consultation adds a further administrative burden to what is a voluntary process, and runs the risk of not being effective in representing the full scope of public opinion. We would therefore argue that this requirement as currently set out would not be a suitable component of consultation (as required by Test 5) and would not reinforce the principle of timely and accessible consultation (as required by Test 4) since it places a further consultative burden upon the developer. We would suggest that the proposed requirement be amended to reflect the reality of public consultation. We therefore suggest that the wording of the eighth bullet be amended to read: “Where practical and appropriate, developers should make available to the Council relevant comments submitted by the public”.</td>
<td>application process. This report should be submitted to the Council at the time of application.”</td>
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</table>

David Lock Associates On behalf of Lafarge Cement UK | Dartford Council will be aware that Lafarge Cement UK, given their role in both ongoing industrial operations and in promoting the redevelopment of previously operational land, undertake regular consultation with the public on a number of issues. This involves hosting exhibitions, preparing regular newsletters and ongoing consultation in relation to IPPC licence approval. We believe that their approach represents a genuine attempt at ensuring that the public are informed about operations and proposals, and provides an important opportunity to comment on these. We do not believe that the requirement, set out in the eighth bullet of paragraph 4.4 and which would require developers to make available to the Council all comments submitted by the public, is either practical or

Accepted Noted. The aim of the eighth bullet is to help the Council understand the public’s response to pre-application consultations by developers. The ability of the Council to verify any summary of consultation would be useful, particularly where an unusual or unexpected response is shown. It is not the Council’s intention to put an undue burden on developers. It would therefore be helpful to delete bullet eight and amend bullet nine as follows: “The developers should make available to the
necessary beneficial in consultation terms. In our experience, a significant proportion of useful feedback in such circumstances is achieved through non-written communication – for example through conversation at exhibitions, through comments raised at public forums, and follow-up communication such as telephone calls. It can also be the case that written responses submitted (for example at unmanned exhibitions) are not necessarily representative of the full cross-section of public opinion and can be prone to abuse (such as by those with general concerns about the wider development process, those who wish to comment upon or criticise the activity of the local authority, or for example through random or abusive messages). To require the submission of all written comments across all methods of consultation adds a further administrative burden to what is a voluntary process, and runs the risk of not being effective in representing the full scope of public opinion. It is not clear how consultation under different regulative regimes (such as IPPC) would relate to this process. We would therefore argue that this requirement, as currently set out would not be a suitable component of consultation (as required by Test 5) and would not reinforce the principle of timely and accessible consultation (as required by Test 4) since it places a further consultative burden upon the developer.

We would suggest that the proposed requirement be amended to reflect the reality of public consultation. We therefore suggest that the wording of the eighth ballet be amended to read: “Where practical and appropriate, developers should make available to the Council relevant comments submitted by the public”.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thames Water</td>
<td>We consider that the SCI should include an Appendix which lists</td>
<td>Disagree. Annex E of Planning Policy Statement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX B: Objections and suggested changes to Dartford’s submission Statement of Community Involvement (June 2005)

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>all of the “specific Consultation bodies” such as Thames Water. We have recently commented upon numerous other authorities SCI’s and all of them have included such as Appendix.</td>
<td>12 “Local Development Frameworks” sets out a list of organisations that must be consulted in accordance with the Act and Regulations. Sewerage and water undertakers are specifically identified as organisations that must be consulted. As these organisations are listed in PPS12 there is no reason to repeat this in an appendix.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ward: Princes

1. Summary

1.1 To seek Members’ approval for Dartford Borough Council to take a ground lease from Kent County Council on behalf of Surestart-Dartford at Oakfield Lane Infants’ School Dartford as shown by a thick black verge, for identification purposes only, on the plan attached as Appendix D to the report.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That Members agree to the Council taking a ground lease at Oakfield Lane Infants’ School Dartford on behalf of Surestart-Dartford.

2.2. That Members delegate authority to the Head of Finance and Resources in consultation with the Project Director and the Head of Legal Services to negotiate and agree lease terms.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1 Surestart is an innovative cross-departmental programme that fulfils the Government’s undertaking to improve support for families and children before and from birth until their fourth birthday. Surestart-Dartford’s management board comprises parent representation, Dartford Borough Council, Kent County Council (Education and Social Services), Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Primary Care Trust, and Voluntary sector representation.

3.2 At their meeting on 6 September 2001 the Cabinet welcomed the opportunity to join a bid for funding under Surestart, agreed to sign the letter of commitment to supporting the programme and delegated authority to the Director of Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Member to agree to the wording of the application. A copy of the report to Cabinet and subsequent minute is included as Appendix A to this report.

3.3 At their meeting on 31 January 2001 the Cabinet agreed for Dartford Borough Council to be the Accountable Body for Surestart-Dartford and the partnership progress report that was submitted to the Surestart Unit was included for information. A copy of the report to Cabinet and subsequent minute is attached as Appendix B to this report.

3.4 In addition, the Cabinet agreed at their meeting on 11 April 2002 for delegated authority to be provided to the Managing Director in consultation
with the Cabinet Portfolio Member and the Director of Community Services to sign the delivery plan on behalf of Dartford Borough Council as Accountable Body and partner of Surestart-Dartford. A copy of the report to Cabinet and subsequent minute is included as Appendix C.

4. Discussion

4.1 The national aims, objectives and targets for Surestart are set out in a government Public Service Agreement for 2001-2006. Each of the four objectives has targets for the Dartford programme; some called PSA targets and some called Services Delivery Targets. These form part of the contract between the Surestart Unit and Surestart-Dartford and, in addition, local targets are also being set.

4.2 The needs identified from local consultation have assisted in developing the themes of the plan, these include:-

- Co-ordination of local services, voluntary/community organisations and home visits.
- Outreach and home visits.
- Support for families and parents.
- Support for good quality play, learning and childcare experience.
- Transition to school.
- Crèche, Day Nursery, Children’s Centre, Adults Drop-In Centre.
- Provision of education, training and childcare support.
- Primary and Community Healthcare and Social Care.
- Special needs support.
- Improvement to parents’ employability.
- Effective use of local buildings.
- Links with housing services.
- Links with environmental issues.
- Building and maintaining community involvement
- Action on teenage pregnancy.
- Action on drug and alcohol misuse.

4.3 As significant progress is being made with Surestart-Dartford and they develop into a full Children’s Centre, additional premises are required for service delivery. The Oakfield Infants’ School site has been identified by Surestart-Dartford as being a suitable site for new accommodation.

4.4 As a partner organisation, Kent County Council were approached and negotiations have taken place between Surestart-Dartford and the County Council. KCC have now obtained planning consent (Ref DA/05/00450/TEMP/0018) to erect a detached 2 storey building to provide Children’s Centre facilities at Oakfield Lane. KCC’s appointed consultant (Lea Evans Architect), who take a lead on designing and building Children’s Centres across Kent, will supervise the construction.
4.5 Terms of the ground lease which have been agreed with Kent County Council and financial implications are attached in the confidential part of the Agenda as Appendix E to this report.

4.6 As Surestart-Dartford is not a legal entity, it cannot take a lease. It is, therefore, looking to one of the partners to act as tenant. As the Council is the Surestart-Dartford Accountable Body, it has been asked to fulfil this role. This is not normal practice, as the Council has avoided taking leasehold premises for its own use and it does not take premises for other agencies or users. That said, the Council has acted in this capacity for Surestart-Dartford in the past and has recently taken a 25 year lease of accommodation at St Edmund’s Centre, Temple Hill.

4.7 Although the Council will be taking the lease in its capacity as a Surestart-Dartford partner, the Council will have ultimate responsibility for all the tenant’s covenants in the lease.

4.8 Surestart-Dartford has requested permission formally from the Surestart Unit to vire sufficient funds from elsewhere within existing budgets to meet the predetermined financial commitments.

4.9 As the landlord KCC requires the lease to be on full repairing and insuring. There could be unforeseen expenditure due to possible repairs and maintenance issues that may arise during the 25 year period of the proposed lease. Whilst this can be minimised through the negotiations of the detailed terms of the lease, it cannot be avoided entirely. Should such expenditure be necessary and in the unlikely event that Surestart-Dartford are unable to find the necessary funding, the cost will be met by the Council. Surestart-Dartford’s overall budget is significant and, whilst the precise budget for the financial year during the lease will end has not yet been set, it is not anticipated that there will be any shortfall.

4.10 Surestart-Dartford will meet both KCC’s and the Council’s legal costs.

5. Relationship to the Corporate Plan
Not applicable

6. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Implications</th>
<th>Surestart-Dartford has an identified budget to meet the annual cost of the lease. The Council holds these funds as their Accountable Body.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Implications</td>
<td>Under Section 120 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council can acquire land for the purposes of its statutory functions or for the benefit</td>
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improvement or development of its area.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staffing Implications</th>
<th>None</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Implications</td>
<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>As Accountable Body, the Council would have to meet the obligations of the lease if Surestart discontinued. However, because Surestart is backed by Government and Kent County Council this is thought to be unlikely.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

7. Details of Exempt Information Category

Appendix E has been placed on the closed part of the Agenda because it contains exempt information, within category contained Standing Order 46(1)(b) Annex 1 Paragraph 9, namely terms proposed or to be proposed by or to the authority in the course of negotiations for a contract for acquisition or disposal of property or the supply of goods or services.

8. Appendices

A: Report to Cabinet and Minutes of 6 September 2001
B: Report to Cabinet and Minutes of 31 January 2002
C: Report to Cabinet and Minutes of 11 April 2002
D: Site Plan of the proposed ground lease.
E: Confidential information: Financial implications

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Documents consulted</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>File Ref</th>
<th>Report Author</th>
<th>Section and Directorate</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oakfield Lane</td>
<td>9.9.05</td>
<td>343523</td>
<td>Antony Isanzu</td>
<td>Property Services</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Managing Director</td>
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AGENDA CLASSIFICATION
OPEN

AGENDA ITEM A9.2

REPORT TO CABINET

DATE 6 September 2001

FROM DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY SERVICES

WARD JOYCE GREEN, LITTLE BROOK, PRINCES, MISKIN, WILMINGTON EAST

SUBJECT: SURE START – APPLICATION FOR FUNDING

1. Details of Exempt Information Category
   Not applicable.

2. Purpose of the Report and Summary
   To seek approval to joining a bid for money under Sure Start.

3. Key Decisions
   This is a key decision as implementation of a scheme under Sure Start would be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area of the Borough comprising two or more wards.

4. RECOMMENDATION
   4.1 That the opportunity to join a bid for funding under Sure Start be welcomed.
   4.2 That the Managing Director be authorised to sign a letter of commitment to support the Sure Start Programme on behalf of the Council.
   4.3 That authority be delegated to the Director of Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Social Inclusion, Councillor Prout, to agree the wording of the application.
   4.4 That a sum of up to £5,000 from the Community Initiatives budget be made available to support the development of the plan for a Sure Start Programme.

5. Background
   5.1 On 11 July 2001, the Council was invited to apply for funding under the 5th wave of Sure Start. Sure Start aims to improve the health and well being of children under 4 particularly those who are disadvantaged, so that they can flourish at home and when they get to school. It is a key...
part of the Government’s drive to improve children’s health and education and prevent social exclusion later in life.

5.2 Currently there are 185 programmes up and running. A further 75 areas are developing their plans and are due to start delivering services from the early Autumn. The July announcement invited this Council and 176 others (including Gravesham) to develop programmes.

5.3 The aim of Sure Start is “to work with parents to be, parents and children to promote the physical, intellectual and social development of babies and young children – particularly those who are disadvantaged – so that they can flourish at home and when they get to school, and thereby break the cycle of disadvantage for the current generation of young children”. Attached as Appendix 1 are the aims, objectives and targets which the Government has set for achievement by the programme. From this it can be seen that the key partners must include representatives of the main statutory sector providers of services for young children and their families e.g. education, social services and health bodies. Additionally it is important that locally based voluntary organisations and community groups are involved particularly those that work with black and minority ethnic families. In addition the scheme stresses the importance of the involvement of the local community especially parents of children under 4. The guidance says that they need to feel that they own the programme and are making a significant contribution to its development. They must therefore be fully consulted about their needs and be involved in the key decisions being taken during the planning process.

5.4 There are a number of steps in developing a Sure Start Programme. Attached as Appendix 2 is an extract from the guidance setting out the seven key steps.

5.5 There are three stages in taking a programme forward. As far as the 5th Wave is concerned, and in particular this Authority, the first key date is 20 September 2001 by which time Confirmation of Interest needs to be with the Sure Start Unit. It needs to set out a statement from Senior Managers in the key statutory and voluntary agencies that confirms their commitment to Sure Start principles, their willingness to reshape existing services in response to consultation and their commitment to main streaming and identifying the resources, in cash or in kind, they will make available during the planning process. Secondly we need to show who belongs to the initial partnership and thirdly we need to provide the name of the programme, a map of the catchment area/s which the programme will serve and the number of children under 4 who live in the area. It is important to stress that this is not a bidding process. The area is assured of receiving resources provided that the application meets the Sure Start requirements. It has been emphasised that the Sure Start Unit will assist the partners in making this happen.

5.6 Acceptance of the Confirmation of Interest is due in October 2001. The partnership will then have to submit a progress report by 16 January 2002 and feedback on that will be given in late February / early March 2002. Full plans need to be submitted by 1 May 2002. These will be
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approved from June onwards and detailed capital plans are due by the end of July 2002.

5.7 There are a number of core services which it is expected that all Sure Start Programmes will include. These are:-

• Outreach and home visiting
• Support for families and parents
• Access to good quality play, learning and child care experiences for children
• Primary care and health, including advice about child health and development
• Support for children and families with special needs, including access to specialised services

In addition it is expected that there will be services around action on teenage pregnancy, crime prevention and improvements to parents employability. A key phrase which is used throughout the guidance and in the briefing session that the Director of Community Services attended was “reshaping services”. There is a clear expectation by the Unit that the programme will reshape services in the areas where it is running to provide a joined up approach for families and children under 4.

6. Discussion

6.1 Following the invitation to take part in July, a meeting was arranged at the beginning of August to discuss the development of a scheme in Dartford. As a number of the key players also cover Gravesham, we have taken a joint approach across Kent Thames-side. We had hoped that we could make a Kent Thames-side bid by combining the two programmes. Following discussions with the Sure Start Unit, we are advised that this will not be possible and that two separate bids i.e. one from Dartford and one from Gravesham need to be made. However, the Unit has indicated that if we wish to work together on the programmes then this will be acceptable to them. A joint approach is therefore proposed.

6.2 The West Kent Head of Children’s Services is currently chairing the group which includes representatives from both Borough Councils, the Primary Care Trust, the Voluntary Sector and Kent County Council Social Services & Education. The Director of Community Services represents Dartford on the group, which has taken on the task of collecting and reviewing the relevant data to define appropriate catchment areas locally. The catchment areas for Dartford have been defined following consideration of the selection criteria in the guidance booklet and following discussions with Sure Start staff. There was a possibility of a maximum of three areas containing not more than 750 children aged 0-3 in total. However, having analysed the issues in the Borough, the proposal is for two areas i.e. Temple Hill (consisting of Joyce Green and Little Brook wards) which has around 420 children aged 0-3, and the Tree Estate area (Princes ward with small parts of
6.3 Catchment areas are expected to be defined using the Index of Multiple Deprivation or similar commonly used indices. Using this and local knowledge of the various partners as to the issues within the Borough, has led us to proposing the catchment areas of Temple Hill and Tree Estate. They are both relatively cohesive communities i.e. easily defined and meet the guidance in relation to the number of children of the relevant age. Issues which have been taken into account include levels of teenage pregnancies, numbers of babies with low birth weight and Key Stage One results for children.

6.4 In addition to the above, it is already known that there is a level of need and demand amongst people living in the catchment areas for the types of services which can be provided under Sure Start. During the preparation of the Healthy Living Centre bid for Temple Hill, the lack of provision for 0-5’s was identified and recent consultation with people living in the area has confirmed that this should be a priority in any future plans. The Tree Estate currently has the Dartford Acorn Initiative based there and it is known from this that again there is a demand for provision for services for very young children and their families. In addition in both areas there are developments which could link in with Sure Start. In Temple Hill the development on the St. Edmunds site could provide a base for a Sure Start programme. In addition in October this year a Family Learning Centre will be opening on the Oakfield School site. Sure Start could be linked to this together with the availability of the Tree Estate Community Centre and the Dartford Acorn Initiative based in Larch Road. Additionally at the other side of the area is the Highfield Road site now occupied by Adult Education and into which Kent Children’s University are putting a study support centre for after hours activities for school age children.

6.5 It has been recognised that there is considerable work to do to develop a Sure Start Programme. There is therefore up to £35,000 available from the Sure Start Unit to assist with this by for example recruitment of a worker or by enabling the engagement of a locally based national organisation to work with us. Members will see from Appendix 2 the extent of the work to be carried out. It is unlikely that £35,000 will be sufficient to enable this to be done properly particularly if there is to be the correct level of consultation with local people. Accordingly it is proposed that £5,000 be allocated from the Communities Initiatives budget to support this work. Kent County Council Social Services and the Primary Care Trust have each committed the same sum in both Dartford and Gravesham to support the work.

6.6 It is anticipated that maps showing the catchment areas will be available at the meeting for Members to see. However, it is likely that the bid will still be being worked on and it is therefore recommended that authority be delegated to Director of Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Social Inclusion to agree the final wording.
6.7 The introduction of a Sure Start Programme in Dartford is an important step in breaking the cycle of deprivation. It will be linked to the Children’s Fund which supports services for 5-13 year olds and then on to Connexions which supports 13-19 year olds.

7. Financial Implications
The required contribution of £5,000 can be met from the Identified Initiatives Reserve – Community Initiatives (page 69 of the Budget book refers)

8. Legal Implications
Under Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, the Council has the power to promote or improve the social, environmental and economic well-being within its area.

9. Staffing and Other Administrative Implications
Currently the work is being undertaken by the Director of Community Services with support from Forward Planning and other colleagues to provide the relevant information. There will be an ongoing commitment throughout the planning process and the majority of the work is likely to be done within the Community Services Team.

10. Conclusion
Members are asked to endorse the recommendations at paragraph 4.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

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In July 2001, the Council was invited to apply for funding under the 5th wave of Sure Start. Sure Start aims to improve the health and well being of children under 4 particularly those who are disadvantaged, so that they can flourish at home and when they get to school. It is a key part of the Government’s drive to improve children’s health and education and prevent social exclusion later in life.

The Director of Community Services explained to Members the Government’s aims, objectives and targets for the programme and outlined the key steps involved in developing a Sure Start programme, including the work undertaken to this end in Dartford since the invitation to participate was received. She indicated that she had hoped that a Kent Thames-side bid, combining the two programmes of Dartford and Gravesham, would be possible but the Sure Start Unit had advised that two separate bids need to be made. However, the Unit had indicated that if Councils wish to work together on programmes this would be acceptable and accordingly the Director of Community Services recommended such a joint approach.

There is considerable work to do to develop a Sure Start Programme and up to £35,000 is available from the Sure Start Unit to assist with this by, for example, recruiting a worker or by enabling the engagement of a locally based national organisation to work with the Council. However it is unlikely that £35,000 will be sufficient for a programme, particularly if there is to be the correct level of consultation with local people. Accordingly the Director of Community Services proposed that £5,000 be allocated from the Communities Initiatives budget to support this work. Members noted that Kent County Council Social Services and the Primary Care Trust have each committed the same sum in both Dartford and Gravesham to support the work.

Members gave their wholehearted support to the scheme, which is one of a whole raft of developments in the borough aimed at tackling the fundamental issue of social justice and congratulated the officers for all their hard work in driving the programme forward.

RESOLVED:

1. That the opportunity to join a bid for funding under Sure Start be welcomed.

2. That the Managing Director be authorised to sign a letter of commitment to support the Sure Start Programme on behalf of the Council.

3. That authority be delegated to the Director of Community Services in consultation with the Portfolio Member for Social Inclusion, Councillor Prout, to agree the wording of the application.
1. That a sum of up to £5,000 from the Community Initiatives budget be made available to support the development of the plan for a Sure Start Programme.
SUBJECT: DARTFORD SURESTART – PROGRESS REPORT

1. Details of Exempt Information Category

Not appropriate.

2. Purpose of the Report and Summary.

To update Members on the progress of Dartford SureStart and to agree to the Council being the accountable body.

3. Key Decision

Not applicable.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 That Cabinet note the progress made on setting up Dartford SureStart.

4.2 That Dartford Borough Council be the Accountable Body.

5. Background

5.1 Members will recall that at their meeting on the 6 September 2001 they welcomed the opportunity to join a bid for funding under SureStart, agreed to sign the letter of commitment to supporting the programme and delegated authority to the Director of Community Services in consultation with the portfolio Member for Social Inclusion to agree the wording of the application. In addition a sum of up to £5,000 from the Community Initiatives Budget was made available to support the development of the plan for a SureStart programme.
5.2 Members will also recall that the two areas submitted for the SureStart programme are Temple Hill and Tree Estate.

6. Discussion

6.1 Considerable progress has been made since the submission of the initial application. The application was agreed and the sum of £35,000 has been made available to progress the development plan. A temporary Project Director has been seconded from Kent Social Services and attached as Appendix 1 is the progress report which had to be submitted to the SureStart office on 16 January 2002.

6.2 Members will be pleased to know that the recruitment process for a permanent Project Director has taken place and that an offer of appointment has been made. It is hoped that she will be in post on 4 March 2002.

6.3 Members will note from the progress report that an application is being made for further funding to support the provision of early services on both Temple Hill and Tree Estate. This would both start to address some of the issues identified and also help to engage other parents in developing the final programme.

6.4 In order to progress with the application, one of the agencies has to be appointed as Accountable Body ie to receive the funding from the SureStart office and to account to them for expenditure. Following discussion with the Managing Director, it was agreed that this Council should put itself forward as Accountable Body and Members are asked to endorse that arrangement.

7. Financial Implications

Dartford Borough Council acting as Accountable Body will receive monies from the SureStart office and will have to account to the office for such expenditure. The first amount of funding is £35,000. The final amount to be received by the project is dependent on the number of children involved and also whether bids are made for capital funding. At the moment the total amount of funding for the programme is not known. Members will note that bids for early services are being made as set out in Appendix 1.

8. Legal Implications

None specifically.

9. Staffing and Other Administrative Implications
9.1 There are clearly staffing implications for the Directorate of Central Services in taking on the role of Accountable Body. One of the Accountants has been designated as the person to be involved with the SureStart initiative and preliminary discussions have taken place between her and the lead body, Kent County Council, to set up the necessary processes and procedures to ensure a proper audit trail and accountability.

9.2 The Community Services Manager has been heavily involved on the Steering Group of SureStart and has also sat on the Consultation Group. Her role on that Group will now be taken by the Community Development Officer. In addition, the Director of Community Services has continued to oversee progress and was involved in the interviews for the Project Director. The time commitment, particularly by the Community Services Manager, has been heavy and will continue to take up much of her time. Priorities have had to be given to SureStart, completing the Community Safety Audit and Strategy (a statutory requirement) and progressing the urban programme.

10. Conclusion

Members are asked to agree the recommendations at paragraph 4.
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298. DARTFORD SURE START – PROGRESS REPORT (S)

The Director of Community Services introduced the report which aimed to update Members on the considerable progress since the submission of the initial application. She also noted that Sure Start required that one of the agencies be appointed as the Accountable Body in order to receive funding and Members were being asked to agree that the Council take on this role.

Members welcomed the news that the Project Director would be in post by 4 March 2002 and suggested that a presentation be made to Ward and Cabinet Members on this project and other funding initiatives.

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress made on setting up Dartford Sure Start be noted.

2. That Dartford Borough Council be appointed the Accountable Body.
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**AGENDA CLASSIFICATION**
OPEN

**AGENDA ITEM**
A6.2

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| FROM | DIRECTORATE: COMMUNITY SERVICES |

| WARD | JOYCE GREEN, LITTLEBROOK, PRINCES, WILIMNGTON EAST |

**SUBJECT:** DARTFORD SURE START – PROGRESS REPORT

1. **Details of Exempt Information Category**
   
   Not appropriate.

2. **Purpose of the Report and Summary.**
   
   To update Members on progress of the Dartford Sure Start and to grant delegated authority to sign the delivery plan.

3. **Key Decision**
   
   Not applicable.

4. **RECOMMENDATIONS**
   
   4.1 That Members note the progress made on setting up Dartford Sure Start.

   4.2 That Dartford Borough Council be a signatory to the Delivery Plan of Dartford Sure Start.

   4.3 That Members delegate authority to the Managing Director in consultation with the Director of Community Services and the Portfolio Member for Social Inclusion to sign the delivery plan on behalf of the Council.
5. **Background**

5.1 Sure Start is an innovative cross-departmental programme that fulfils the Government’s undertaking to improve support for families and children before and from birth until their fourth birthday. Dartford Sure Start shadow management board comprises of parent representation; Dartford Borough Council; Kent County Council (Education & Social Services); Dartford, Gravesham and Swanley Primary Care Trust; and Voluntary sector representation.

5.2 The Sure Start focus identified two geographical areas within the Borough (known technically by the Sure Start Unit as “blobs”) i.e. Temple Hill and Tree Estate.

5.3 Members will recall that at their meeting on the 6 September 2001 they welcomed the opportunity to join a bid for funding under Sure Start, agreed to sign the letter of commitment to supporting the programme and delegated authority to the Director of Community Services in consultation with the portfolio Member for Social Inclusion to agree the wording of the application. In addition a sum of up to £5,000 from the Community Initiatives Budget was made available to support the development of the plan for a Sure Start programme.

5.4 Members will also recall that at their meeting on 31 January 2002 that they agreed for Dartford Borough Council to be the Accountable Body for Dartford Sure Start and the partnership progress report that was submitted to the Sure Start Unit was included for information.

6. **Discussion**

6.1 Considerable progress has been made since the submission of the interim progress report. In addition to the sum of £35,000 being made available to progress the development plan, a Project Director has been appointed and started work on 4 March 2002.

6.2 The interim report was well received by the Sure Start Unit and with the support of a liaison officer allocated by the Unit - the delivery plan will reflect the guidance being provided.

6.3 The national aims, objectives and targets for Sure Start are set out in a government Public Service Agreement for 2001-2004. Each of the four objectives has targets for the Dartford programme; some called PSA targets and some called Services Delivery targets. These form part of the contract between the Sure Start Unit and Dartford Sure Start and in addition, local targets are also being set.

6.4 The needs identified from local consultation have assisted in developing the themes of the plan, these include:
• Co-ordination of local services, voluntary / community organisations and families
• Outreach and home visiting
• Support for families and parents
• Support for good quality play, learning and childcare experiences
• Transition to school
• Primary and Community Healthcare and social care
• Special needs support
• Improvement to parents employability
• Effective use of local buildings
• Links with housing services
• Links with environmental issues
• Building and maintaining community involvement

Others to include:
• Action on teenage pregnancy
• Action on drug and Alcohol misuse

6.5 The timetable for producing the Delivery Plan is short. A stakeholders meeting is scheduled for 16 April 2002 to discuss the draft plan and the final document is to be completed by 26 April for signature and submission to the Sure Start Unit by 1 May 2002. Because of this Authority’s sought to delegate the signing of the Delivery Plan to the Managing Director in consultation with the Director of Community Services and the Portfolio Member for Social Inclusion.

7. Financial Implications

Dartford Borough Council acting as Accountable Body will receive monies from the Sure Start office and will have to account to the office for any expenditure. Dartford Sure Start has received £35,000 from the Sure Start Unit in respect of start-up costs. In addition £15,000 has been pledged as match funding from KCC, the Primary Care Trust and from the Council’s own Community Initiatives Budget. This funding has been used to resource the Sure Start project, in terms of staffing and equipment, and also for consultation and data gathering to establish the baseline position and future requirements.

The mainstream funding is expected to be £2.26m over the next three years. Of this sum, £825,000 relates to capital funding over the life of the project.

The revenue funding for 2002/03 is expected to be £330,000.

8. Legal Implications
None specifically.

9. **Staffing and Other Administrative Implications**

9.1 There are clearly staffing implications for the Directorate of Central Services in taking on the role of Accountable Body. One of the Accountants has been designated as the person to be involved with the Sure Start initiative and regular meetings have been established between her and the lead body, Kent County Council, and the Programme Director to ensure the necessary processes and procedures provide a proper audit trail and accountability.

9.2 The Community Services Manager has been heavily involved on the wider Steering Group of Sure Start and the shadow management board. Additionally, the Community Development Officer attends the Consultation Group and the Capital Group.

10. **Conclusion**

Members are asked to agree the recommendations at paragraph 4.

**BACKGROUND PAPERS**

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368. DARTFORD SURE START (S)

Further to Minute 298, Members were advised of the considerable progress made on the Sure Start programme since the submission of the interim progress report. In particular a sum of £35,000 had been made available to progress the development plan and a Project Director had been appointed and started work on 4 March 2002.

Members noted that the timetable for producing the Delivery Plan was short. A stakeholders meeting had been scheduled for 16 April 2002 to discuss the draft plan and the final document had to be completed by 26 April for signature and submission to the Sure Start Unit by 1 May 2002. Accordingly authority was sought to delegate the signing of the Delivery Plan to the Managing Director in consultation with the Director of Community Services and the Portfolio Member for Social Inclusion. In this respect Members considered that the Ward Members for Littlebrook, Joyce Green, Princes and Wilmington East should also be involved.

RESOLVED:

1. That the progress made on setting up Dartford Sure Start be noted.

2. That Dartford Borough Council be a signatory to the Delivery Plan of Dartford Sure Start.

3. That authority be delegated to the Managing Director in consultation with the Director of Community Services and the portfolio Member for Social Inclusion and Ward Members for Littlebrook, Joyce Green, Princes and Wilmington East Wards to sign the delivery plan on behalf of the Council.
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**THE A2/A282 DARTFORD IMPROVEMENT (M25 JUNCTION 2 IMPROVEMENTS) COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER PART 2 (MP NO 41) 2005**

**Ward: Bean and Darenth**

1. **Summary**
   
   1.1 To declare the parcel of land (Plot 2/2 [0.29 hectare]), forming part of Darenth Country Park east of Green Street Green Road and on the north of the A2 Trunk Road, surplus to the Council’s requirements, as shown by a thick red verge, for identification purposes only, on the plan attached as Appendix A to this report.

   1.2 This land is held as Public Open Space and therefore any proposed disposal will be advertised in the local press for two weeks. Any objections received will be reported to Cabinet at a later date.

   1.3 To approve the exchange of the parcel of land (Plot 2/2 [0.29 hectare]), forming part of Darenth Country Park east of Green Street Green Road and on the north of the A2 Trunk Road, for the two parcels of land (Plots 4/1 [0.8 hectare] and 4/2 [0.05 hectare]) east of Green Street Green Road and on the north of the A2 Trunk Road, as shown by a thick green verge, for identification purposes only, on the plan attached as Appendix B to this report owned by the Secretary of State for Transport.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

   2.1. That Cabinet declares the parcel of land (Plot 2/2 [0.29 hectare]) as identified by a black verge on the plan attached as Appendix A to this report, forming part of Darenth Country Park east of Green Street Green Road and on the north of the A2 Trunk Road, surplus to the Council’s requirements as it falls within the A2/A282 (M25 Junction 2) Improvement Compulsory Purchase Order Part 2 (MP No 41) 2005.

   2.2. That Members note that, the land is held as a public open space. Any representations will be reported to a future Cabinet meeting.

   2.3. That the Head of Finance and Resources be granted delegated authority to agree terms for the acquisition of exchange land, two parcels of land (Plot 4/1 [0.8 hectare] and 4/2 [0.05 hectare]) as shown by a thick green verge on the plan attached as Appendix B,
3. Background and Discussion

3.1 At its meeting on 26 June 2003 considering a report entitled “A2/A282 Dartford Improvement” the Cabinet resolved:

“That no objection be made to the Compulsory Purchase Order, provided that the details are in line with the discussions held with the Highways Agency to date and are to the satisfaction of the Director of Property and Regeneration, and that the Director of Property and Regeneration be authorised to negotiate with the Highways Agency on the basis of agreement with Compulsory Purchase Powers in the background, and that the Director of Property and Regeneration be authorised to negotiate with the Highways Agency the sale of affected land and properties subject to a full report back to Cabinet in due course” (Minute 11(13)).

3.2 The A2/A282 Dartford Improvement Scheme involves widening the A2 to dual four lanes in each direction between the M25 and Bean and provision of new link roads at the A2/M25/A285 interchange (M25 Junction 2) and the improvement of the A2 Trunk Road between M25 Junction 2 and the A2/A296 junction at Bean. The scheme is to be completed by the end of 2006.

3.3 The Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) was confirmed on 27th July 2005 and an approach has now been received from the Highways Agency to acquire Plot 2/2 (0.29 hectare) of land by agreement, as shown highlighted by a black verge on the plan attached as Appendix A.

3.4 This land forms part of the Darenth Country Park and is held by the Council as Public Open Space. As this area of land was acquired with funding from the Millennium Commission, the Commission will have to approve the disposal.

3.5 As part of the CPO, it is proposed that, in exchange for the acquisition of the Council land, alternative land be offered in exchange.

3.6 The exchange lands: Plot 4/1 (0.8 hectare) is owned by the Secretary of State for Health and it is included in the CPO. Plot 4/2 (0.05 hectare) is owned by Secretary of State for Transport. Both plots of land are identified on the plan attached as Appendix B.
3.7 The Council objected to this proposal. However following negotiations between the parties, the Highways Agency agreed to carry out improvement works to the exchange land. The Council’s objection was subsequently withdrawn. This was formally documented by an undertaking from the Highways Agency.

3.8 The exchange land together with the improvement works is believed to be the best outcome that can be achieved in the circumstances. The specification for the works is still to be finalised between the parties. The Council’s Director of Regeneration will be asked to approve the specification.

3.9 Following the confirmation of the Compulsory Purchase Order for the scheme on 27 July 2005, the Council has appointed an Agent, Michael Rogers Chartered Surveyor to negotiate the Heads of Terms for the exchange of the two parcels of land with the Secretary of State for Transport.

3.10 The Agent’s fees incurred in preparing the claim and negotiating Heads of Terms for the exchange of lands, together with Solicitor’s fees for conveyancing, will be paid by the Highways Agency.

3.11 Negotiations for the exchange land are also being undertaken by agreement, in advance of Notice to Treat being served.

4. **Relationship to the Corporate Plan**

   Not applicable

5. **Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments**

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<th>The proposed swap is a barter transaction, i.e. no monetary consideration will arise. The two parcels of land that the Council will gain are deemed to be of equal value to the surrendered parcel. As there is no differential in value, no capital receipt nor VAT implications will arise.</th>
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<td>Under s.123 of the Local Government Act 1972 the Council can dispose of its land without the consent of the Secretary of State provided that the</td>
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disposal is at the best price, or the authority considers will help it to secure the promotion or improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of its area. (General Disposal Consent (England) 2003).

The land shown by a black verge on the plan attached as Appendix A is held as public open space. Therefore, under Section 123(2A) of the 1972 Act, before disposing of the land, the Council must give notice of its intention to do so by advertising for two consecutive weeks in a newspaper circulating in the area. Any representations received will be considered before any disposal can proceed.

Under the terms of the Deed of Dedication dated 14 April 1997, entered by the Council as part of the funding arrangements for the Country Park, the Council will seek the approval of the Millennium Commission and the Groundwork Foundation to the disposal of the land. Depending on the requirements of these organisations, it may be necessary to enter into a fresh Deed of Dedication in relation to the land proposed to be provided in exchange.

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6. Appendices
   Appendix A: Plan showing the parcel of land owned by the Council.
   Appendix B: Plan showing the land owned by Secretary of State for Transport.

BACKGROUND PAPERS
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Page 287 Agend Item 18
Bean and Darenth

1. **Summary**

1.1 To advise Members of the result of consultation undertaken with the residents of Hope Cottages and Gore Road relating to the continuation of residents parking schemes in their respective roads.

1.2 To seek Members’ approval for the termination of the residents parking schemes in Hope Cottages and Gore Road by obtaining the appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders, in accordance with the wishes expressed by the majority of residents in their respective roads.

2. **RECOMMENDATION**

That Members approve the termination of the residents parking schemes currently in operation at Hope Cottages, Bean and Gore Road, Darenth, by obtaining and implementing the appropriate Traffic Regulation Orders.

3. **Background and Discussion**

3.1. A residents parking scheme was introduced at Hope Cottages, Bean, at the time of the development of Bluewater. Since that time it has become clear to residents that the scheme is not necessary. In August 2005 a letter was received, signed by residents of 13 of the 16 properties, asking for the scheme to be taken out.

3.2. A similar residents parking scheme was introduced in Gore Road at the time of the development of the Darent Valley Hospital. The scheme, which was free, was introduced because of concerns that people visiting the hospital would utilise Gore Road rather than pay parking fees to use the hospital car parks.

3.3. In September 2003 the Council adopted a standard set of terms and conditions for residents parking schemes in the Borough. These terms and conditions apply to all new schemes and include an annual charge to cover costs of administration and enforcement. At the time of introduction, it was also resolved to roll out the standard terms and conditions to all existing schemes on the basis that residents should be first offered the choice of retaining a parking scheme with the new terms and conditions or having the scheme taken out.

3.4. Residents in Gore Road were consulted in January 2005 on whether they wanted the scheme retained, under the new terms and conditions, or
whether they wanted the scheme removed. Unfortunately the consultation process led to confusion on the part of a number of residents and to clarify the situation it was felt necessary to repeat the process giving residents more information.

3.5. The consultation was repeated in September and of the 65 letters delivered 60 responses were received, of which 46 supported the scheme being taken out. No responses were received supporting the scheme, the other 14 requesting a meeting prior to making their decision. In view of the overwhelming response in support of the scheme being taken out, these 14 residents were written to explaining the support was such that the matter will be reported to Cabinet with a view to the scheme being removed but offering a meeting with officers, if they still felt it was necessary.

3.6. In the case of both schemes, it is clear that residents feel they are not necessary and there is an overwhelming majority of residents that wish to have the schemes taken out.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

Not applicable.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

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<td>Administrative Implications</td>
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<td>Mike Pratt 343339</td>
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**Agenda Item 19**
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THE ORCHARD THEATRE BUDGET MONITORING – 2005/06

1. Summary

1.1 To update Members on financial performance against budget to the end of July for 2005/06 for The Orchard Theatre.

1.2 To provide Members with an early indication of the Theatre’s overall budgetary position at the end of the current financial year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 That the financial performance compared to budget to date in 2005/06, for The Orchard Theatre, be noted.

2.1 That the early indication of the end of year budgetary position be noted.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1 The Theatre’s revenue budget for 2005/06 was approved by the Council on 28 February 2005, as follows:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Overheads} & \quad \£814,130 \\
\text{Surplus from Productions} & \quad (\£394,670) \\
\text{} & \quad \£419,460
\end{align*}
\]

3.2 To meet its budgeted production surplus of £394,670 for the year, the Productions budget needs to make an average monthly surplus of £29,963, assuming £125,000 from the pantomime season. However the budget is not spread evenly over the year, as the maximum surplus that can be made in any one month is determined by the contractual terms of the actual performances held. For this reason each month’s results are compared to the expected results of the performances held as well, as to the budget for the year.

3.3 The Theatre has made a cumulative surplus of £69,282 in the four months to the end of July. A detailed analysis of each show held during the four month period is included as Appendix A; this is on the closed agenda due to the sensitive commercial information it contains. Summarised
results, analysed month by month, both against the expected performance for those months and the overall budget, are shown in the table below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Expected Surplus for Shows Held</th>
<th>Actual Surplus for Shows Held</th>
<th>Variance</th>
<th>Budget for month</th>
<th>Variance from actual</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>25,458</td>
<td>7,634</td>
<td>(17,824)</td>
<td>29,963</td>
<td>(22,329)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>9,270</td>
<td>9,636</td>
<td>366</td>
<td>29,963</td>
<td>(20,327)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>13,306</td>
<td>15,154</td>
<td>1,848</td>
<td>29,963</td>
<td>(14,809)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>23,653</td>
<td>36,548</td>
<td>12,895</td>
<td>29,963</td>
<td>6,585</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>71,687</td>
<td>68,972</td>
<td>(2,715)</td>
<td>119,852</td>
<td>(50,880)</td>
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</table>

3.4 Although the Theatre has only fallen £2,715 below the expected surplus for the shows held, it has fallen significantly - almost £51,000 - below its profiled budget for the year.

3.5 The effect of the under-performance to date is to increase the amount of contribution required to be made in each of the remaining months of the year. Again anticipating a surplus of £125,000 from the pantomime season, this will leave just over £40,000 to be achieved each month for the five remaining normal trading months.

3.6 August saw the staging of the innovative Ballet Moves production at The Orchard Theatre, which met with critical acclaim. This is expected to have a neutral effect on the Theatre’s budget, so has not been taken into account in the above calculation.

3.7 The target of £40,000 per month is challenging but not impossible to achieve. However, some of the autumn shows require high levels of ticket sales to break-even, and it is difficult to predict at this stage whether the required surpluses can be made. On the other hand, the pantomime is selling very well and, in conjunction with other shows scheduled for January, should exceed the £125,000 expected contribution from December and January.

3.8 There is some evidence that customers are purchasing their theatre tickets closer to the actual performances, i.e. rather than several weeks in advance. This is perhaps linked with the more general downturn in consumer activity currently being experienced in the UK economy. This
makes predicting the Theatre’s outturn more difficult, as the profitability of the shows is directly influenced by ticket sales. However, at this stage it looks as though the Theatre might under-achieve its budget by approximately £50,000.

3.9 In view of the difficult trading conditions being experienced by The Orchard Theatre, the Theatre Manager has produced the following commentary on the year to date, future shows and the marketing strategy being adopted by the Theatre:

3.9.1 Developing a new audience for a programme with diversity was going to be a challenge for The Orchard, as building a new database takes time, as does establishing a new profile, and this financial year we are seeing the results of our first season of orchestral music with a week of concerts to celebrate VE Day. Whilst the orchestral concerts received funding from Orchestras Live, unfortunately the box office did not achieve the target income. However, excellent reviews were received from patrons, and a number of congratulation letters were received by The Orchard supporting the staging of live orchestral music. Concerts to support the Council’s VE Day celebrations were well-received by the community who remembered the period in which the programme repertoire was based, but, rather disappointingly, had a limited interest to the wider public.

3.9.2 Since Easter, with the exception of our annual pantomime where ticket sales remain buoyant, the theatre has seen a decline in the number of advance tickets purchased. Like the national retail figures, the box office has experienced a downturn in sales across the board for the Theatre’s spring and summer season. However, family entertainment appears still to be holding its own, with ticket sales for “Annie” in September having maintained the same high level of box office income as that achieved when the show appeared at The Orchard in 2003.

3.9.3 During May 2005, the Theatre went through a restructuring of the Marketing department and is currently recruiting for a Sales and Promotions Manager and a Sales and Publicity Officer. Since June the marketing of the Theatre and its forthcoming shows has been under the direction of a specialist theatre marketing consultant. In August, to heighten the Theatre’s profile, a more aggressive press and marketing campaign was launched, as well as a promotions strategy to win back previous lapsed bookers. The effect of these campaigns, and our ongoing aggressive marketing strategy, is starting to see results in the box office which is very encouraging. However, ticket sales will continue to be closely monitored over the coming months.
4. **Relationship to the Corporate Plan**

Regular monitoring and reporting of the Council’s financial position is key to maintaining a sound financial strategy. This is an important element of the Corporate Health theme.

5. **Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments**

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<thead>
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<th>Details</th>
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<td>Financial Implications</td>
<td>At this stage in the financial year it is difficult to predict the outcome for the theatre, as it is so heavily driven by ticket sales. However, the Theatre has fallen behind its target sales for the first four months of the year, and it is possible that it will underachieve its budget by £50,000.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal Implications</td>
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<td>Staffing Implications</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Administrative Implications</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>There is a significant risk that the budget will not be achieved this year.</td>
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6. **Appendices**

Appendix A: Detailed Performance Summary *(EXEMPT)*
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<td>Vanessa Hart</td>
<td>Orchard Theatre</td>
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ENVIRONMENTAL PROMOTION ACTIVITIES

1. Summary

1.1 The report updates Members on activities undertaken this year to promote a range of energy efficiency, environmental awareness and waste reduction schemes both internally and across the borough.

1.2 The report also recommends actions that the Council could undertake to raise environmental awareness, increase take-up of council-funded schemes and to promote the Council as a community leader in this area.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1. That Members note the environmental promotion activities undertaken to date and planned in the current financial year 2005/06.

2.2. That Members note the proposal to introduce an Environmental Statement to show a commitment to protect and enhance the environment for Dartford Borough Council.

3. Background and Discussion

3.1. The new UK Government Sustainable Development Strategy ‘Securing the Future’ was published on 7 March 2005. This Strategy takes into account new policies since the 1999 UK Sustainable Development Strategy: ‘A Better Quality of Life’. ‘Securing the Future’ indicates a renewed International push for sustainable development resulting from the World Summit in Johannesburg in 2002. The Strategy includes more than 250 commitments to action in the four priority areas of:

- Sustainable consumption and production
- Climate change
- Protecting natural resources
- Sustainable communities

3.2. In addition Government is pushing for local authorities to give energy issues priority at a strategic level, for example through inclusion in community plans, transport and housing strategies.

3.3. The activities of the Council have an important impact on both the local and global environment. As a community leader the Council has an important
role to play in raising awareness and understanding of environmental issues within the whole community, especially as an exemplar in safeguarding the local environment and encouraging other organisations to follow the Council’s lead. The Council is also focusing on economy, efficiency and effectiveness as part of its service planning - which is very relevant to environmental issues, with the need for more efficient use of limited resources.

3.4. Environmental issues are also important to the borough’s residents. Highlighted in the latest corporate survey, the environment is one of the key priority areas on which residents would like to see action by the Council. In addition, the Corporate Plan includes several target areas that have an environmental impact, including waste reduction and management plans for local parks.

3.5. In order to play its role as a community leader, the Council must take account of its own environmental impacts, both as an employer and a provider of services. This is done by ensuring that its policies, procedures and working practices do not have an adverse effect on the environment.

3.6. The Council’s approach towards environmental issues has adjusted in recent years, with greater focus currently on the co-ordination of activities with partner agencies. Many of the activities undertaken to date form the basis of an environmental statement for the Council to progress as a public position, stating that it will use its best endeavours to:

- Minimise waste and make the best use of resources by reducing, re-using, repairing and recycling
- Prevent and reduce pollution
- Reduce energy use and encourage energy efficiency
- Reduce water consumption
- Reduce the adverse environmental impacts of transport
- Purchase environmentally friendly products and services which are effective and consistent with our demands for quality at a reasonable price
- Conserve and enhance natural habitats and open spaces
- Provide safe and healthy working and living conditions
- Raise environmental awareness and promote local community action
- Influence decision making on environmental issues

3.7. Whilst the points above highlight potential positions to take within an environmental statement, there are specific activities that the Council has undertaken during 2005 as part of its environmental promotion role. These
activities can be grouped around five distinct areas of work:

- Efficient use of energy
- Reduction of transport impacts
- Minimisation of waste
- Sustainable/green purchasing and procurement
- Reduction of water use

3.8. Following the 15 February 2005 Cabinet Report ‘Taking Environmental Promotion Forward’ several reports have been presented to Management Team, with two priority areas being identified as key areas of work; Home Energy Conservation and Promoting Waste Minimisation through re-use, recycling and composting. A brief summary of activities are shown below:

3.8.1 Home Energy Conservation. The Environmental Promotions Officer has an allocated percentage of hours per week to undertake home energy conservation activities – these are listed briefly below:

Home Energy Conservation Act 9th Progress Report (2005). The council has a duty to report to DEFRA on Home Energy Conservation activities undertaken during the year. This report outlines the wide variety of activities and shows the overall energy improvement for the Borough since 1996 – the figure this year increasing from 14.72% to 16.34%. The Progress Report was returned to meet the deadline of 30 September. A copy of the 9th HECA Annual Return is available on request.

Some of the key projects contained within the report include:

- Promotional displays throughout the year including Energy Saving Week (during October 2005)
- Schools activities linking with the Kent County Council Eco-Schools project
- Health Through Warmth Training for health and local authority staff
- Community Neighbourhood Project targeting fuel rich and fuel poor areas

During September the Annual HECA data gathering exercise took place with residents in a quarter of the borough’s wards. Information obtained from this exercise will form part of the HECA return next year and also helps to target future initiatives

A workshop was held during September for relevant officers to develop an
Action Plan to support the Sustainable Home Energy strategy. Planned consultation will take place with external agencies before the end of 2005 and the Draft Strategy will then be presented to Members for adoption.

3.8.2 Corporate Energy Usage

Dartford Borough Council itself is a significant user of both electricity and gas, which the Council purchases through an energy purchasing consortium called LASER. The Council renewed the LASER contract for the Civic Centre on 1 October 2004 and green electric is now supplied for this building.

Figures supplied by the finance department highlight that the total spend on energy, for Dartford Council sites, in 2004/05 was:

- Electricity: £112,803.16
- Gas: £146,094.25

Over the last year there has been a marked increase in the purchase of gas and electric and this will continue in the future. In addition there is an upward trend for energy costs.

The Council has arranged for The Carbon Trust to undertake a free energy survey of the Civic Centre, The Orchard Theatre and The Acacia Hall between 4 – 7 November 2005. A report, with recommendations for each site, will be issued to the Council following the survey. The Environmental Promotions Officer is co-ordinating this area of work and is being supported by the finance department, due to concerns relating to huge increases in prices over recent months.

Additional savings, both financially and in resource use, could be achieved through a reduction in the amount of printing. (For example the Council currently purchases 100,000 sheets of paper every 3 weeks for printers distributed throughout the Civic Centre and the same amount every 4 weeks for photocopiers. There are additional costs for the Print Room and The Orchard Theatre paper usage.)

Like many other organisations Dartford Borough Council provides printing facilities for individual needs, though there is little understanding of the costs across the entire organisation. Figures from the Gartner Group, an IT research company, suggest that the cost of printing is between 1% and 3% of a company’s gross revenue.

The costs of printing can be reduced significantly, often by 15 to 20% or more, through a corporate strategy of output management. Discussions are currently taking place with Lexmark to review our use of printers, with the potential for reducing the amount of paper used within the Council. However, there will always be a balance between the convenience of
desk/office based printing facilities and higher cost and resource usage, and the lower cost but impact upon staff time and efficiency of more managed facilities.

3.8.3 **Waste Minimisation – reuse, recycling and composting**

A plan of activity for the introduction of the kerbside box collection scheme, involved discussions between the Public Realm Manager and Communications Manager. Several discussions took place within the Communications Team to ensure that publicity of the scheme was in place for the launch on 3 October 2005. This included a variety of information leaflets, displays, media advertising and media relations.

A school activity pack is being made available to Schools to link with the Borough’s recycling scheme and the change in the KCC School recycling contract. Around three quarters of the schools in the Borough are being offered a paper and cardboard recycling services, which has been arranged by KCC.

At present it is envisaged that the Trial Green Waste Scheme will be piloted early in 2006 and this pilot will be supported with significant communications support.

The Council itself has reinforced its commitment to the environment by successfully promoting recycling within the council buildings. In June 2005 the existing paper recycling scheme was broadened to include the same materials collected within the household dry recycling scheme. A marked increase in the number of sacks of recycled materials per week has been noted.

3.8.4 **Staff Travel**

Since January 2004 a programme of staff travel surveys and initiatives has been implemented to identify the travel habits of staff, including a survey of where staff start their commute to the Civic Centre, who they travel with and whether they use their car for work related business. This information has proved invaluable in enabling the creation of a database of potential ‘car sharers’.

Appendix A gives a full outline of the surveys between April 2004 and April 2005. However a few key points highlight that:

- 55% of staff surveyed had travelled to work as a car driver alone, 4% by bus and 10% used the train.
- Almost 50% of staff surveyed live within Dartford Borough.
- Just 21% of staff stated that they required the car for use at work.
Dartford Borough Council is currently part of the Thames Gateway Car Share Scheme – [www.gateway2share.com](http://www.gateway2share.com) which is operated by Liftshare.com. The availability of the scheme has been promoted to staff and is included on the corporate intranet. With recent increases in the price of fuel there is potential for encouraging more staff to car share.

### 3.8.5 School Travel

Over the last two years Dartford Borough Council has been supporting KCC to encourage more schools to take part in the national ‘Eco Schools’ scheme. Several Dartford schools are now registered and are supported by a KCC Eco Schools Officer, who encourages schools to improve their environmental standards. One focus area is school travel and Dartford Borough Council has been working with local schools to monitor and improve travel to school. Activities include:

A school travel survey took place in 2005 which included gathering data for the KCC School Travel Plan Adviser. This Adviser supports schools in the development of school travel plans and walking buses. Currently four schools in the Dartford area have approved travel plans, with an additional thirteen currently working on school travel plans.

The Kent Walking Bus Scheme was launched in Dartford in March 2005. The bulk of the work around Walking Bus is undertaken by the Kent/Medway Walking Bus Group and the KCC School Travel Plan Adviser who work closely together. Dartford Borough Council has provided a small sum of funding so that the Kent/Medway Walking Bus Group can focus their activities on encouraging more schools to take part in the walking bus scheme. Gateway School currently has a Walking Bus and talks have been undertaken at Knockhall School (along with a route walk) and talks provided to Sweyne Juniors and Joydens Wood Juniors. To ensure that value for money is obtained for activities supplied by Kent/Medway Walking Bus Group, it is suggested that their work is closely monitored.

### 3.8.6 Procurement

The Council’s Procurement Strategy includes consideration of environmental and social factors, which are vital to ensure purchases are sustainable, as procurement decisions have a direct influence on environmental performance.

Efforts are being made to integrate sustainable procurement into mainstream procurement practice at an early stage of the process. A recent success includes the purchase of the new recycling boxes, which have some recycled material content, and the leaflets to accompany the “box it” scheme, which are printed on paper containing 55% and 75% recycled materials. As well as taking the lead in promoting sustainable procurement, this activity raises public awareness of the Council’s environmental
commitment and ‘closes’ the recycling loop by re-using materials which are collected as part of the recycling collection.

3.8.7 Gardening for Wildlife 2005 Awards Scheme and Go Wild in the Garden

The Kent-wide Gardening for Wildlife 2005 Award Scheme is operated by Councils throughout Kent and co-ordinated by the Kent Wildlife Trust (KWT). The award scheme is open to anyone within the Borough and operates between 20 March and the end of May. Residents registering to take part in the scheme may receive a visit by a Kent Wildlife Trust Volunteer to assess their garden during July/August, with awards being presented later in the year.

Throughout the year local residents can also request a ‘Go Wild in the Garden’ pack, which contains a wide variety of wildlife gardening information sheets. This pack has proved very popular with local residents and has generated interest in the Gardening for Wildlife Award Scheme. A register of people requesting copies of the pack is kept and these people are then sent details about the Gardening for Wildlife Award Scheme.

The Scheme will be evaluated later this year to enable a decision to be taken regarding the continuation of the schemes in the borough.

3.8.8 Environmental Small Grants Scheme

The Environmental Small Grants Scheme aims to support people with ideas for projects that improve the local environment. Community organisations, schools, groups and businesses are invited to apply for a grant of up to £250. The grant is expected to cover a maximum of 75% of the total cost of the project. Application forms and guidance have been prepared, which follow the same format as other grants offered by Dartford Borough Council.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

The Corporate Plan highlights the need to use resources efficiently and is vital to the organisation’s corporate health.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financial Implications</th>
<th>The activities referred to in this report are provided from existing budgetary provision.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Legal Implications</td>
<td>Under Section 2 of the Home Energy Conservation Act 1995, the Council has a duty to prepare a report setting out energy conservation measures that it</td>
</tr>
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CABINET
27 OCTOBER 2005

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Staffing Implications</th>
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<td>None</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Assessment</td>
<td>No uncertainties and/or constraints</td>
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The Council considers practicable, cost-effective and likely to result in significant improvement in the energy efficiency of residential accommodation in the area. This report had to be in place by 30 November 1996. The Council will then be required to prepare and publish further reports detailing the progress made in implementing the measures identified.

Under the Local Government Act 2002, the Council has the power to do anything which is considered likely to achieve any more or one of the following objectives:

a) the promotion or improvement of the economic, well-being of the area
b) the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of their area, and
c) the promotion or improvement of the environmental well-being of their area

This power may be exercised for the whole or any part of the Council’s area. It enables the Council to incur expenditure and give financial assistance.

In determining whether or how to exercise the power, the council must have regard to its Community Strategy. The Community Strategy for Kent Thameside includes the Environment and Housing and the Built Environment as key issues, with a variety of key points for action including those around Energy Conservation and Emissions.
6. **Appendices**

Appendix A Staff Travel Survey Report April 2004 – April 2005

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<td>Sandra Woodfall 01322 343056</td>
<td>Communications, Managing Director</td>
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<td>Cabinet 15</td>
<td>February 2005</td>
<td>Taking Environmental Promotion Forward</td>
<td>Sandra Woodfall 01322 343056</td>
<td>Communications, Managing Director</td>
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APPENDIX A (Item 21-Environmental Promotion Activities) – STAFF TRAVEL SURVEY

The Dartford Local Agenda 21 Strategy adopted in 2000 stated that a Council Travel Plan would be adopted as part of the action within the Improving Air Quality and Minimising Pollution section of the Strategy. This included consulting with both staff and outside bodies who have introduced similar schemes. Some progress had been made regarding researching the activities of other organisations, but little progress had been made relating to introducing and establishing travel plan activities within Dartford Borough Council until early 2004.

Dartford Borough Council has been working with local schools to monitor and improve travel to school through offering a school travel survey scheme to schools during Walk to School Week in May 2004 and promoting both the Healthy Schools and Eco Schools programmes to all schools in the Borough. Both these programmes involve developing safer travel/routes to school including walking buses and encouraging alternative travel modes to school.

All large developers are now asked for a Travel Plan as a matter of routine when submitting planning applications. Some recent examples of applications with Travel Plans include B and Q, some schools and more recent applications on Crossways including ASDA. The quality of the Travel Plan does vary.

A short report outlining a range of staff travel initiatives during the year 2004 was agreed by Management Group on 5th January 2004. The activities were drawn together following discussions between Tim Lynch (Principal Transport Planner) and Sandra Woodfall (Environmental Promotions Officer). During 2004 a programme of staff travel initiatives were proposed including:

- quarterly staff travel surveys to enable a picture to be built up regarding travel habits

- Specific activities for example providing information on season ticket loans, public transport travel information and developing a web based car share database.

The activities have been low key, but offering people information and a choice of alternative travel options. They have also been provided from within existing staffing levels and financial resources within the small Transport Promotion budget.

The proposed staff travel initiatives were discussed at Staff Consultative Group in February 2004 who supported the activities and also with Human Resources to compliment the Healthy Living Initiatives.

To date 4 staff travel surveys have taken place on Wednesday 7th April, Wednesday 14th July, Wednesday 13th October 2004 and Wednesday 12th January 2005 between 7.45 and 9.30 am. Information from these surveys are shown in Appendix 4a. The surveys provide information on which to build future activities and monitor change.
The survey questionnaire is in 2 sections:

1\textsuperscript{st} Section: includes postcode, mode of travel and parking – these questions will remain the same for all the staff travel surveys

2\textsuperscript{nd} Section: this is variable and different questions have been asked – the 1\textsuperscript{st} survey asked questions relating to awareness and use of staff travel incentives already in place. The second survey requested reasons for the mode of travel they currently use. The third survey obtained information on travel to work time and use of car whilst at work.

In addition to the surveys information on staff travel facilities i.e. season ticket loans and promotion of the car share scheme have been shown on the healthy living display board with literature available for staff to pick up. Promotional materials have been obtained at little or no cost to the Council.

Information about staff travel has been placed on the Council’s intranet site.

Discussion
The surveys have provided a wealth of information about staff travel habits including the following information:

a) showing sites that staff are parking their car and if sole car driver or car sharing

In July 55\% of those surveyed had travelled to work on the day of the survey as a car driver alone. Of these people 22\% had parked in the Civic Centre car park and 26\% in the Westgate MSCP. A small proportion of 10\% of staff had car shared or received a lift as a car passenger with 8\% of people having driven a car with a passenger

b) highlights use of public transport (bus and train)

On the survey day in July 4\% of people travelled to work by bus, with 10\% using the train. In April 2\% had used the bus and 8\% used the train. In October 6\% of people travelled to work by bus, with 9\% using the train

c) overview of the reasons stated for people bringing their car to work and use of public transport

On the survey day in July 21\% of people surveyed stated they required their car for work, with another 10\% of people stating they needed the car on the way to work to undertake a school run. 10\% of the total of people surveyed said they used public transport because they could not drive or did not own a car

d) highlights the number of people walking to work
On the survey date in April 10% of those surveyed had walked to work, whilst in July 8% had walked to work and in November 7% walked to work

e) showing levels of awareness of staff travel benefits and usage

In the April survey 52% of people were aware of the car share scheme, with 1% of people using the scheme; 67% of people were aware of the cycle parking available with 4.8% using the facility; 68% of people were aware of the interest free season ticket loan scheme with 2% using it and 42% of people being aware of the business cycle mileage with less than 1% of people using it.

f) highlights how long a journey to work takes

In the October survey 3% of people surveyed stated their journey to work took 5 minutes and under, 11% took 5 – 10 minutes, 31% taking between 10 – 20 minutes, 26% between 20 – 30 minutes, 15% taking 30 – 45 minutes with 45 minutes and over 11%

The surveys have highlighted the following:

i) an indication of the number of staff living within the DA1 and DA2 postcode areas where car sharing could be a viable option. Almost 50% of the people surveyed live within the Dartford Borough Council area

ii) the need for the free car parking arrangements for staff to be reviewed at both Westgate Multi Storey Car Park and the Civic Centre. This is seen as an issue as:
   a) there could be an over demand of people parking at the Civic Centre car park
   b) car parking within Dartford Town Centre could well become an issue in the coming months. It is thought that Dartford Borough Council staff could currently be using between 150 – 200 car parking spaces at Westgate Car Park
   c) the need to look at occupancy rates at Orchard and Priory Centre car parks

iii) there is a need to review and relaunch the season ticket loan scheme currently offered to staff to encourage more staff to use public transport. The Council Offices are well placed for use of public transport being next to the railway station and within a short distance of bus stops.

iv) The need to campaign and raise awareness through a variety of means including staff newsletters and promotional displays about non car travel at the same time offering choices:
   a. walking
   b. cycling
   c. bus
   d. train
   e. motorbike
v) Car sharing could be a viable option for some staff, however staff would not be expected to car share every day. If staff did car share 1 day or possibly 2 days per week this would make a huge difference locally. It is suggested that cluster areas where a number of staff live (as plotted by GIS) are targeted

Some of these activities will involve working alongside the Staff Consultative Group and Human Resources.
a) comparison of survey same with Dartford Borough Council totals:

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This survey also identified the number of staff working flexi time and fixed hours

b) origin (by postcode) and whether this is in Dartford Borough (Data can be mapped by Andrew in GIS)

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<tr>
<th>Postal area</th>
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<th>October 04 number</th>
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### Modes of Travel

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C) modes of Travel on survey day and normal (April, July, October 04, January and April 05)

Modes of travel today April, July, October 04, January and April 2005
Modes of travel normal April, July, October 04, January and April 05

**KEY**

A  car driver alone  
B  car driver with passenger  
C  car passenger lift  
D  car passenger car share  
E  bus  
F  bus and train  
G  bus/walk  
H  train  
I  walk  
J  bike  
K  walk/train  
L  taxi  
M  motorcycle

Modes of travel today April 04 - April 05

**KEY**

A  car driver alone  
B  car driver with passenger  
C  car passenger lift  
D  car passenger car share  
E  bus  
F  bus and train  
G  bus/walk  
H  train  
I  walk  
J  bike  
K  walk/train  
L  taxi  
M  motorcycle

**Modes of travel normal April, July, October 04, January and April 05**
Male modes of travel today April, July, October 04, January and April 05

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
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</tr>
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<td>B</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>car driver alone/walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>Car passenger/lift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>car passenger lift or car driver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>car passenger lift or bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>car passenger lift or train</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td>car passenger lift or walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>car passenger (car share)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>car passenger/car share or walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>bus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>bus/train</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>bus/walk</td>
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<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>train</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>O</td>
<td>walk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>P</td>
<td>bike</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q</td>
<td>car passenger lift/driver alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R</td>
<td>motorcycle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>car passenger lift or taxi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T</td>
<td>cycle, car driver alone/walk</td>
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<tr>
<td>U</td>
<td>car driver alone/taxi</td>
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<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>car driver alone/train/walk/cycle</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>walk/passenger lift</td>
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<td>driver alone/train</td>
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<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>walk/bus</td>
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<td>Z</td>
<td>bus/passenger lift</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AA</td>
<td>passenger lift/driver alone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>walk/train</td>
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<th>A</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>C</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>E</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>G</th>
<th>H</th>
<th>I</th>
<th>J</th>
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</table>

Key:

A    car driver alone
B    car driver with passenger
C    car passenger lift
D    car passenger car share
E    bus
F    train
G    walk
H    cycle
I    bus/walk
J    train/bus
Female modes of travel today April, July, October 04, January and April 05

Female modes of travel today April 04 - April 05

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>a</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>c</th>
<th>d</th>
<th>e</th>
<th>f</th>
<th>g</th>
<th>h</th>
<th>i</th>
<th>j</th>
<th>k</th>
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<td>3</td>
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Key:
A  car driver alone       G  walk
B  car driver with passenger       H  cycle
C  car passenger lift       I  bus/train
D  car passenger car share       J  motorcycle/moped
E  bus       K  walk/train
F  train

Where people parked
Car driver alone
Car driver with passenger

Other parking:

April 04: visitors car park
          Glaxo welcome
          Orchard
          Co-op

January 05: B and Q
            Private parking

October 04: private parking

April 05: Road

July 04: Templars Court
          Orchard
          Co-op
Awareness and use of staff travel benefits – question only asked in April 04 survey

Use of Staff Travel benefits – question only asked during April 04 survey

Reason for driving to work – question only asked during July 04 survey
Reason for use of public transport – question only asked during July 04 survey

How long journey to work takes – question only asked during October 04 survey

Use of car for work purposes – question only asked during October 04 survey
use of car for work purposes (question only asked during October 04 survey)

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<td>3+ per week</td>
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<td>1-3 per month</td>
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<td>very occasionally</td>
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<td>never</td>
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<td>uses van whilst at work</td>
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Public Transport Ticket Type (Question only asked January 05 survey)

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Note: 1 person alternates between daily and weekly tickets

Staff Registering Interest in Car Sharing (Question only asked January 05 survey)

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Details of staff registering interest in car sharing (by postcode)
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changes in travel since the survey commenced (question asked in April 05)

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- Female: 5 1 30 6 1 5 2 2 2 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 1 2 33
MEETING OF THE DARTFORD ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS HELD ON 19 SEPTEMBER 2005

1. Summary

To present to Cabinet the notes of the meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils held on 19 September 2005, attached as Appendix A.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the notes of the meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils, held on 19 September 2005, be considered and noted.

3. Background and Discussion

This report presents the cleared notes from the 19 September 2005 meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils to Cabinet for consideration and noting.

4. Relationship to the Corporate Plan

Not applicable.

5. Financial, legal, staffing and other administrative implications and risk assessments

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6. Appendices

Appendix A - Notes of the 19 September 2005 meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils.
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DARTFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL

DARTFORD ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS

NOTES of the meeting of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils held on Monday 19 September 2005.

PRESENT:

Kent County Council:

Councillor A D Allen

Borough Councillors:

Councillor P F Coleman - Chairman

Parish Councillors:

Parish Councillor T W Cook (Bean)
Parish Councillor Mrs I M Gutteridge (Darenth)
Parish Councillor J A Kite (Longfield and New Barn)
Parish Councillor Mrs M N Salway (Southfleet)
Parish Councillor Mrs N C Wightman (Stone)
Parish Councillor E J Lampkin (Wilmington) – Vice-Chairman

Parish Clerks:

Mrs J S Becket (Bean)
Mrs T Taylor (Longfield and New Barn)
Parish Councillor D M Winter (Southfleet) (Substitute for Mrs J Hardinges)
Mrs S Redden (Wilmington)

Also Present:

Mr A Burton – Senior Engineer, Kent Highways

Dartford Borough Council Officers:

Regeneration Manager: Mr R Penny
Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager: Mr M Pratt
Senior Enforcement Officer: Mr C Newmarch
Member Services Manager: Miss D Lennen-Wood
Committee Co-ordinator: Mr A Stoneham

12. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST
Councillor A D Allen declared a personal interest as she is a Parish Councillor for Wilmington, Borough Councillor for Dartford and County Councillor for Kent.

Councillor P F Coleman declared a personal interest as he is a Parish Councillor for Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley and Borough Councillor for Dartford.

Parish Councillor T W Cook declared a personal interest as he is a Parish Councillor for Bean and Darenth.

Parish Councillor Mrs I M Gutteridge declared a personal interest as she is a Parish Councillor for Darenth.

Councillor J A Kite declared a personal interest as he is a Parish Councillor for Longfield and New Barn and Borough Councillor for Dartford.

Councillor E J Lampkin declared a personal interest as he is a Parish Councillor for Wilmington and Borough Councillor for Dartford.

Parish Councillor Mrs M N Salway declared a personal interest as she is a Parish Councillor for Southfleet.

Councillor Mrs N C Wightman declared a personal interest as she is a Parish Councillor for Stone and Borough Councillor for Dartford.

Parish Councillor D M Winter declared a personal interest as he is a Parish Councillor for Southfleet.

13. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs K Gale (Clerk for Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley), Mrs J Hardinges (Clerk for Southfleet), Mr K Holmes (Clerk for Darenth), Councillor K F M Leadbeater, Mrs L Pilcher (Clerk for Stone) and Parish Councillor Mrs B Reed (Sutton-at-Hone and Hawley).

14. **NOTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

AGREED:

That the notes of the Dartford Association of Parish and Town Councils meeting held on 7 June 2005 be confirmed, subject to the addition of apologies from Parish Councillors T W Cook and Mrs M N Salway.

15. **CHANGE IN ORDER OF AGENDA**
The Chairman announced that the item on Highways Communications Links would be taken first on the agenda.

16. HIGHWAYS COMMUNICATIONS LINKS

The Chairman introduced Mr A Burton, Senior Engineer, Kent Highways, who was present to answer Members’ questions.

Mr Burton noted that there had been no immediate change in the way that parish complaints are handled by Kent Highways staff and that the same officers were in place, although he did note that structure changes were planned for the end of October.

He said that, because of problems with current email addresses, and the fact that new email addresses were to be created, Members who wished to report a problem should use the 08458 247800 number.

Members referred to a number of issues that had been raised in the past, relating to road quality and damage caused to pavements by the heavy equipment used to repair roads. Members felt that updates on issues such as these should be provided to Parish/Town Councils at regular intervals. Mr Burton replied that, without evidence, it was often difficult to prove who was responsible for incidents of damage. He also noted that procedures were being put in place to enable the status of each call to be tracked to closure.

Mr Burton said that the list which identifies those roads to be repaired was decided each year, and that those targeted for 2006/2007 had yet to be agreed. Members asked whether Parish/Town Councils could have input to the decision-making process.

Mr Burton indicated that he had made a note of all the issues that had been raised and that he would take them back to Kent Highways for further consideration.

Councillor Kite drew Members’ attention to the recent decision made by the Joint Transportation Board to abandon slurry seal as a protection for roads in the Borough of Dartford in favour of higher quality products.

Parish Councillor Mrs Gutteridge, the Parish representative on the Dartford Joint Transportation Board, noted that she had asked for future copies of the Joint Transportation Board agenda to be distributed to all Parish/Town Councils and that Parish/Town Council Members were welcome to identify issues which she would then raise at the meeting.

AGREED:
DARTFORD ASSOCIATION OF PARISH AND TOWN COUNCILS
MONDAY 19 SEPTEMBER 2005

1. That the information provided by the Senior Engineer, Kent Highways, be noted.

2. That future copies of the Joint Transportation Board agenda be distributed to all Parish/Town Councils by the Dartford Borough Council committee secretariat.

17. UPDATE ON THE USE OF CCTV IN PARISHES

Mr Newmarch, Senior Enforcement Officer, introduced this item and described the facilities that were available for Parish/Town Council use. Two covert systems were currently on trial, both of which made recordings to hard disk. Mr Newmarch said that Parish Members were welcome to come and see the systems in action and suggest potential locations for their deployment.

Mr Newmarch confirmed that Dartford Borough Council staff will assist in the setting-up and operation of the equipment.

Members asked whether there were laws associated with covert filming. Mr Pratt, Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager, replied that the Act allowed operation under authorisation, where a reason for the use of covert filming has been identified, but that this must have no impact on personal lives. The Strategic Director authorises covert filming for three months, but this authorisation may be cancelled once the required objectives have been achieved.

Mr Newmarch noted that the system was best used with mains electricity, but could be run on batteries. If batteries were used, he advised Parishes to make a note of when problems were likely to occur, to enable a timer to be used to control when the camera was active.

In discussion, Members wished to recognise the good work being carried out by the Enforcement Team throughout the Borough.

Councillor Kite noted that the Borough Council will provide the necessary legal backup to ensure that anyone identified by the equipment will be dealt with accordingly.

 AGREED:

That the information provided by the Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager, and the Senior Enforcement Officer, be noted.

18. NEW POWERS FOR PARISH CLERKS

This report provided an opportunity for Parish and Town Councils to discuss new powers for Parish Clerks.
Mr Pratt, Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager, said that the new powers for parishes formed part of a larger set of powers relating to the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act. He noted that these powers were being introduced in phases and that those relating to parishes will not be in place until April 2006. He added that he expected further detailed guidance to be issued by the Government prior to this date. He advised Members that the following areas of enforcement will be covered by these powers:

- Littering and Graffiti
- Fly-posting
- Dog control.

Members discussed whether the new powers will be available only to the Clerk or whether all Members of each Parish/Town Council will be able to issue fixed penalties. Members noted that the areas covered by the Act which related to Parish/Town Councils will also be policed by employees of the Borough Council (e.g. park keepers and Police Community Support Officers).

Members asked whether a clear guide will be produced for Parish/Town Councils, once all associated Government guidance has been issued. The Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager said that he will arrange for Parish/Town Councils to be briefed, as further information became available.

Members questioned the practicality of the scheme, given that there were no powers of detention. This meant that, unless the person caught was willing to give a genuine name and address, it will not be possible to contact them later for payment of the fixed penalty.

Whilst discussing strategies currently being employed to discourage offences in the areas covered by this Act, Members felt that by publicising the existence of fixed penalties the number of offences may be reduced.

The Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager noted that income generated from fixed penalty notices issued by Parish/Town Councils will be made available for Parish/Town Council use.

**AGREED:**

1. That the information provided by the Enforcement and Regulatory Services Manager, and the Senior Enforcement Officer, be noted.

2. That further information relating to new powers for Parish/Town Councils be distributed to all Parish/Town Councils as it becomes available.
19. ANCIENT WOODLANDS COUNTRY PARK

Mr R Penny, Regeneration Manager, introduced this item, which presented a Cabinet report on the Feasibility Study for the Ancient Woodlands Country Park. In his introduction, he noted the changes to the proposals that had been requested by Cabinet. He added that the project was at an early stage and that associated financing, including revenue implications, had yet to be identified.

In answer to the specific questions raised by Bean Parish Council, he said that responsibility for the management and security of the site was currently shared by the owners of the land (Dartford Borough Council, Kent County Council and private land owners). Future responsibility for security of the Ancient Woodlands site will depend on the management structure for the area which is yet to be determined.

With respect to the control of motorcycle riding in the park, he could only advise Members of the powers currently available, and made reference to a police motorcycle team who respond to reported instances of illegal off-road motorcycling. Unfortunately, the team consists only of two motorcycle riders and has county-wide responsibility, thus making it difficult to respond to all specific incidents. He also noted that the draft project plan includes physical obstructions in the park, but these will be carefully designed and located so as not to impede legitimate visitors with buggies or wheelchairs.

Mr Penny noted that the Beacon Wood steering committee is active and scheduled to meet twice per year. Officers from Kent County Council are prepared to discuss work programmes and local issues with Parish Councils.

Members appreciated that plans were at an early stage, but were disappointed that attempts to provide input to the Feasibility Study had been unsuccessful due to the frequency of Parish meetings. Members asked that Bean and Darenth Parish Councils be included in future consultations. The Regeneration Manager cited tight timescales as the reason for limited consultation, but said that the opportunity for Parish input had not been lost.

Members noted that, currently, the areas of land covered by this proposed Country Park were being destroyed by illegal motorcycling activities. They questioned the commencement of an improvement programme before this problem had been solved.

Members agreed that the resulting park should be seen as a facility for existing local people and recommended a phased approach to its development. It was suggested that one of the first areas of development should be the provision of public conveniences.
Members questioned the size of the proposed car park and were worried that, if the site became popular, problems might be caused by visitors parking in nearby residential areas.

AGREED:

1. That the report, and information provided by the Regeneration Manager, be noted.

2. That the Parish/Town Councils' support for this project be noted.

3. That Bean and Darenth Parish Councils be invited specifically to comment on the feasibility study and proposals to date.

4. That the Parish/Town Councils be included in any future consultation exercises carried out in relation to this project.

20. LETTERS OF RESPONSE TO ISSUES RAISED BY THIS COMMITTEE

The report asked Members to consider responses to letters sent to (1) Arriva Southern Counties Ltd, (2) Superintendent Hewitt and (3) the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister.

(1) Arriva Southern Counties Ltd.

In considering the response from Arriva Southern Counties Ltd. with respect to a request to reduce fares, Members noted the counter-argument presented. They also noted the schemes, which Arriva had already introduced, which offer fare reductions to young people.

Members felt that no further communication was necessary.

(2) Superintendent Hewitt

The response received from Inspector Dale was considered by Members, who still doubted whether every reported incident was being placed on record.

The Member Services Manager drew Members' attention to the reference in Inspector Dale’s letter to the new National Incident Reporting Standards (NIRS) and the associated National Crime Reporting Standards (NCRS). Members hoped that adherence to these new standards will result in improved logging, but suggested that the police’s response to future reported incidents be monitored.

It was suggested that future incidents be referred directly to Inspector Dale himself, in order to ensure that appropriate records are kept.
(3) The Office of the Deputy Prime Minister

Members considered the response received from the ODPM Consultation Co-ordinator on the involvement of Parish/Town Councils in the consultation process and were surprised that there was no mention of e-mail as a means of communication. They felt that the point made with respect to the production of paper copies to be irrelevant, where electronic distribution was concerned.

Members asked that a further letter be sent to the ODPM Consultation Co-ordinator suggesting that, in future, e-mail be used as a means of distributing consultation documentation. Parish/Town Councils themselves could then decide whether printed copies were required.

AGREED:

1. That the letters of response be noted.

2. That a further letter be written to the ODPM Consultation Co-ordinator, highlighting the suggestions raised during discussions.

21. WORK PLAN

This report presented the current work plan for the committee and provided an opportunity for Members to identify additional items for inclusion.

Parish Councillor Mrs M N Salway asked that an item be added on the new Licensing Policy and the associated Parish/Town Council consultation process.

AGREED:

1. That the current work plan be approved.

2. That an item on the new Licensing Policy and the associated Parish/Town Council consultation process be added for consideration at the next meeting, which is to be held on 6 December 2005.

22. DARENT VALLEY PATH

The Regeneration Manager, Mr R Penny, introduced this report which presented the outcome of the Feasibility Study for the Darent Valley Path. The report summarised information contained in a much larger final report and also presented an associated Action Plan.

He noted that the report was due to be considered by Cabinet on 22 September. A consultation exercise will then follow and Parish/Town Councils were welcome to submit their comments as part of this exercise.
He said that copies of the full report could be provided on demand and that all the information would be made available on the Dartford Borough Council website during the consultation period.

He asked that comments be fed back to the Regeneration Administration Assistant, who would be collating responses to the consultation exercise.

Members welcomed the proposed improvements and hoped that the necessary financing will be made available.

Members noted that this was Mr Penny’s last attendance at a meeting for Dartford Borough Council and took the opportunity to thank him for all the work he had carried out for the Borough and to wish him every success in his new position.

AGREED:

1. That the report, and information provided by the Regeneration Manager, be noted.

2. That the Parish/Town Councils’ support for this project be noted.

3. That Parish/Town Councils be encouraged to submit their detailed comments to the Borough Council as part of the consultation exercise.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm

Councillor P F Coleman
CHAIRMAN
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