

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

**REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT AND
REGULATORY SERVICES**

Report prepared by Steve Goulette

Date Issued: 9 May 2011

**1. PARKING SERVICES – PARTNERSHIP WITH SWALE
BOROUGH COUNCIL**

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider the outcome of the recent tendering of the Council's parking enforcement contract and options to introduce a partnership arrangement for parking services with Swale Borough council.

1.2 Recommendation of the Assistant Director of Regulatory and Environmental Services.

1.2.1 That the Cabinet Member agrees the partnership arrangements for parking services with Swale Borough Council as identified in the report

1.2.2 That the partnership commence on 1st June or as soon as possible afterwards with temporary arrangements put in place.

1.2 Reasons for Recommendation

Background

1.2.2 The Council's parking services team undertakes the management of "on street" parking operations on behalf of KCC by way of an agency agreement, together with the management of the Council's "off street" car parks. The parking restrictions and orders are enforced through a contract currently undertaken by APCOA which commenced in 2004. A two year extension was granted in 2009. The service has generally operated well with few complaints.

1.2.3 The contract is due for renewal commencing on 1st June 2011 and the normal procurement arrangements have been undertaken. However discussions with Swale Borough Council suggested that it would also

be interested in outsourcing its parking enforcement service which is currently provided "in house".

- 1.2.4 These discussions led to tenders being issued with two lots, one for Maidstone alone and one for Maidstone combined with Swale. Several tenders were received and evaluated.
- 1.2.5 The results of the tendering produced very favorable results for a combined contract with annual savings for Maidstone of approximately £146000. Significant savings were also projected for Swale Through efficiency and effectiveness. The winning contractor was APCOA and the tender has been accepted.
- 1.2.6 It is proposed to retain £40000 of the savings in the parking budget for a number of reasons but primarily relating to the volatility of parking income which is affected by outside influences. Maintenance budgets have been used to offset against previous income shortfalls and repairs are becoming necessary in several car parks.
- 1.2.7 The combined enforcement contract will need careful management and having discussed with Swale the best way to do this, it is considered that a combined partnership operation for both authorities would be the best way forward. Both authorities use the same processing software. Although this is not an MKIP project the board is aware of the proposals.

Partnership proposals

- 1.2.8 The current structure for parking services is provided in Appendix A. Under the new arrangements there will be one parking service manager for both Maidstone and Swale and one back office manager for the processing of penalty charge notices, parking permits etc. The back office staff will remain the same in both authorities although this will be reviewed after 12 months. Traffic orders etc will be processed by MBC staff for Swale on a cost by cost basis. A partnership agreement is being prepared. The revised structure is provided in Appendix B.
- 1.2.9 The new partnership arrangements will generate additional savings of £36000 for Maidstone and further savings for Swale and will provide a cost effective, efficient service with improved services to the public.
- 1.2.10 It is therefore proposed, subject to the Leader of the Council's approval to undertake the necessary negotiations with staff and trade unions and introduce the partnership to coincide with the introduction of the new contract i.e. from 1st June 2011. As timescales are tight if it is not possible to have all the partnership elements in place by that

date the temporary arrangements will be put in place. This will involve the relevant staff being seconded to Swale on a part time basis.

1.3 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 The Leader of the Council could reject the partnership proposals but this would prevent savings being made and a more effective and efficient service being provided.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 Efficient and effective parking services supports the Council's three priorities as follows:-

For Maidstone to have a growing economy

Ensuring, wherever possible, the free flow of traffic on the Borough's roads and thereby a transport network that supports the local economy

For Maidstone to be a decent place to live

Ensuring vehicles are not illegally parked will help maintain parking spaces for both residents and visitors

Corporate and Customer excellence

The partnership will provide cost effective services to both Maidstone and Swale

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 There is a risk that APCOA will not meet the requirements of the contract, however based on performance in Maidstone the risk is low. There are provisions in the contract to deal with poor performance.

1.6.2 Timescales are tight and it is possible that all the changes will not be made before the new contract commences. In such circumstances temporary arrangements will be put in place as outlined above.

1.6.3 Swale could decide to not proceed with the partnership, however the risk for the future management of the contract is much higher in Swale and again is not considered high for Maidstone. The contract could operate independently if necessary.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

1.	Financial	X
2.	Staffing	X
3.	Legal	X
4.	Equality Impact Needs Assessment	X
5.	Environmental/Sustainable Development	
6.	Community Safety	
7.	Human Rights Act	
8.	Procurement	
9.	Asset Management	

1.7.1 Financial implications – these are identified in the report

1.7.2 Staffing and equality impact needs assessment – there will be staff affected and the usual arrangements will be put in place including and equality impact needs assessment on the changes

1.7.3 A partnership agreement will be required for the new arrangements.

Background Documents

None

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

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This is a Key Decision because:

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Wards/Parishes affected:

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How to Comment

Should you have any comments on the issue that is being considered please contact either the relevant Officer or the Member of the Executive who will be taking the decision.

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