

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

17 DECEMBER 2014

REFERENCE FROM COUNCIL

1. MOTION – WATERSIDE PARK - 14/501895 (J8) DECISION

- 1.1 At the extraordinary meeting of the Council held on 10 November 2014, the following motion was moved by Councillor Harper, seconded by Councillor McKay:

The local economy has been underperforming since 2008 compared to large parts of Kent and the South East. More and more residents have to look for work outside of the Borough. Now it looks like the Borough of Maidstone is shut for business. The shocking and damaging statement sent out to the business community by Members of this Council who refused permission for the Waterside Park J8 site (planning ref: 14/501895) put forward by ADL and Scarab two major local businesses.

These firms have out grown their current sites and need to relocate, either within the Borough or to authorities only too happy to take jobs from Maidstone.

The fact is that Maidstone is in deep need of a range of sites for business and employment, including non-centre locations with good access to the rail, motorway and main road network for business zones. The entire town is ringed with green land, but it needs to go somewhere and this application was ascetically pleasing. To ensure our town and Borough have a future the Council must take responsibility for proactively identifying non-centre locations for business zones.

This Council resolves to:

1. Urgently identify alternative sites within the Borough of Maidstone.
2. Work closely with companies who wish to relocate within Maidstone or improve infrastructure to their current sites if that is an alternative.
3. Ensure that the Local Plan is pro jobs and that there are sufficient and appropriate sites identified for employment.

4. Adopt in the Local Plan policies to oppose the loss of employment land unless compensating space is locally available.
 5. Support the principle of the development of an Enterprise Hub.
 6. Report back to the next full Council meeting on all points above.
- 1.2 The motion, having been moved and seconded, was referred to the Cabinet, as the decision making body, for consideration.
- 1.3 RECOMMENDED: That the Cabinet consider and respond to the motion relating to economic development and the allocation of employment sites.**