

MARDEN PARISH COUNCIL: Quality Gold Criteria 3

Ensures that the Council delivers value for money

Marden Parish Council is always aware of its responsibility to the community to provide value for money.

Like all Councils, we operate under a system of strict financial controls (Financial Regulations) and our accounts are subject to a two-stage audit; Internal Audit twice a year by an auditor selected by the council and then an External Audit which is undertaken at the end of the financial year by a nationally approved specialist firm of auditors (currently Mazars LLP). We also operate under statutory controls which determine procedures and approvals are required for expenditure.

In the interests of transparency, we also make available a list of expenditure over £100 which is accessible on the Parish Council website ([MPC Accounts - Marden Parish Council Marden, Tonbridge, Kent - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)) in addition to the list of invoices paid which are listed on the monthly Full Council minutes and Committee minutes. However, financial controls determine *HOW* the money is spent, not upon *WHAT* it is spent on or how this provides value for money for residents.

Marden Parish Council believes that, in order to deliver the best value, it should consider the priorities and concerns of Marden residents through our Community Engagement Policy: [Microsoft Word - Community Engagement March 2024 \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)

VALUE FOR MONEY

It is essential that as a Council we provide value for money. Our aim, therefore, is to deliver council services for the least expense without compromising quality. However, this does not mean that the Council will necessarily accept the lowest quote.

Value for Money (VFM) is the relationship between economy, efficiency and effectiveness and achieving this means having a balance between all three.

Economy: Competitive quotes for works required will be sought in line with MPC's Financial Regulations.

Efficiency: the Clerk and Council seek to obtain the most efficient services available and review the agreements with outside contractors on a regular basis.

Effectiveness: the Clerk and Council review the effectiveness of contracts when they are due to expire and to consider if any changes are required or the service could be delivered in any other way.

OBJECTIVES

Marden Parish Council's objective is to identify the principles of value for money and to ensure that these are reflected in our service planning and delivery.

RESPONSIBILITIES

- All Councillors: General duty to ensure that Marden Parish Council provides value for money to the community.
- Full Council: Overall responsibility for ensuring that the Council delivers value for money.
- Finance Committee: Makes recommendations to the Full Council and other Committees about how to achieve value for money; undertakes an annual programme of financial reviews.
- Clerk (as Responsible Financial Officer): Responsible for financial controls; ensures that Marden Parish Council's strategic direction is consistent with this statement.
- Officers: Ensure that Council services are delivered with economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

All Marden Parish Council policies relevant to Finance should reflect this statement. [Finance Policies and Procedures - Marden Parish Council - Marden Parish Council, Marden, Tonbridge \(mardenkent-pc.gov.uk\)](#)