

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
RECORD OF DECISION OF THE CABINET

Decision Made: 21 December 2011

IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2012-15

Issue for Decision

To consider the Council's improvement journey detailed in the draft Improvement Plan 2012-15 set out at Appendix A to the report of the Head of Business Improvement.

Decision Made

1. That the objectives of the draft Improvement Plan as set out below be agreed.
 - a. A reduction in net cost, through making savings or increased income
 - b. Improving or maintaining quality: ensuring we deliver excellent services, which means delivering what is promised to agreed standards
 - c. Identifying and responding to opportunities aligned with the Strategic Plan.
2. That the work-streams and priority services and projects for improvement as detailed below be agreed.
3. That the governance and monitoring arrangements as detailed below be agreed, including the removal of the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services from the Working Group.
4. That, subject to the following changes, the draft Improvement Plan 2012-15 be approved for consultation with Overview & Scrutiny.
 - a. That the first two sentences of the draft Improvement Plan are altered to read "The Cabinet own the Council's improvement journey and the Chief Executive is ultimately accountable for delivery of the Improvements Plan. Political leadership is provided by the Leader and the Cabinet.
 - b. That the two preferences to 'Development Management' on page 122 of the draft Improvement Plan are changed to read 'Planning' and that 'Corporate Support' is deleted from the first table on page 122 as this is included in the Customer Services delivery service area.

Reasons for Decision

The Council has set the priorities and outcomes for the borough of Maidstone in its Strategic Plan. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out what will be spent and where savings will be made. In order to deliver the priority outcomes and the savings required, a number of key pieces of work and projects will be carried out. These are detailed in the draft Improvement Plan 2012-15, which ensures the improvement work is aligned with the Strategic Plan and the MTFS.

The draft Improvement Plan has three objectives:

- d. A reduction in net cost, through making savings or increased income
- e. Improving or maintaining quality: ensuring we deliver excellent services, which means delivering what is promised to agreed standards
- f. Identifying and responding to opportunities aligned with the Strategic Plan

The four corporate work-streams (1-4) and enablers (5-7) of the draft plan are:

1. Incremental improvement
2. Asset management
3. Transformation
4. External challenge
5. Organisational culture
6. Good information and knowledge management
7. Councillor assurance

The priority services and projects for improvement have also been identified in the draft Improvement Plan, based on priorities in the Strategic Plan, our current knowledge of any external or internal opportunities and potential for improvement and/or reduction in net cost. These are as follows:

- Waste and Recycling
- Customer Services delivery
- ICT
- Parking transport management
- Hazlitt Arts Centre
- Development Management
- Revenues and Benefits
- Housing
- Finance
- Building Control

- Future use of Town Hall
- Community asset transfer
- Major assets review
- More proactive use of Covalent
- Management & Admin recharges review
- Other shared services and Mid Kent Improvement Partnership work
- Cross-organisational collaboration
- Better internal collaboration
- Corporate peer review

Compiling a draft Improvement Plan allows the key work-streams to be brought together and monitored. It is proposed that a working group made up of officers responsible for each of the work-streams and enablers and Cabinet members make up a monitoring group to ensure the plan progresses and benefits are delivered. It is proposed the group would include:

- Leader – provides political leadership and councillor assurance (as defined in the draft Improvement Plan)
- Chief Executive - ultimately owns and is accountable for delivery of Improvement Plan
- Assistant Director of Environmental & Regulatory Services – responsible for Asset management work-stream
- Head of Change & Scrutiny – responsible for Incremental improvement and External challenge work-streams
- Head of Business Improvement – responsible for Transformation work-stream and Good information and knowledge management enabler
- Head of HR – responsible for Organisational culture enabler
- Head of ICT – responsible for Use of technology, which is not a work-stream or an enabler but a critical tool for improvement

It is recommended that the Plan is updated annually and progress is reported to Cabinet on a six-monthly basis.

Alternatives considered and why rejected

It could be decided not to agree the draft Improvement Plan for consultation with Overview & Scrutiny. This is not recommended as the draft Improvement Plan is essential for allowing oversight of a number of different pieces of work across the organisation. It is aligned with the Strategic Plan and MTFS and it is recommended that it is consulted on in the same way as these documents.

Background Papers

None

Should you be concerned about this decision and wish to call it in, please submit a call in form signed by any two Non-Executive Members to the Head of Change and Scrutiny by: **05 January 2012**