

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
RECORD OF DECISION OF THE CABINET

Decision Made: 14 September 2011

OPEN PUBLIC SERVICES WHITE PAPER RESPONSE

Issue for Decision

To consider the proposed response from the Council to the Open Public Services White Paper and actions to be taken.

Decision Made

1. That the response to the white paper set out at Appendix A to the report of the Head of Change and Scrutiny be agreed.
2. That the proposed actions outlined below be agreed:

Individual Services - Actions and Issues:

- Resident/Customer focused and what action we should be taking as a Council to achieve this.
- Agreements to develop a local accountability framework – and ensure residents are engaged in this process.
- The changing role of the Ward Councillor in the community and any support they require.
- Ensure the work on the future shape of the organization identifies how services will be delivered and models of service delivery.

Neighbourhood Services - Actions and Issues:

- Continuing to develop our relationship and understanding of parish councils and community groups who may want to deliver services, also the support they may require to do this.
- Reviewing the appetite for urban parishing.
- If appropriate piloting a community budget with the Government (prospectus inviting pilots out in September).

Commissioned Services -Actions and Issues:

- Identifying services we may want to deliver on behalf of others as part of the work on the future shape of the organisation.

- Ensuring we know how we would like our services delivered and by whom.
- Setting and agreeing criteria for results from commissioned services i.e. resident satisfaction.
- Having an agreed approach to publishing procurement and contract data.

Reasons for Decision

The Government has recently launched the much anticipated Open Public Services White Paper. A summary of the white paper is set out at Appendix A to the report of the Head of Change and Scrutiny.

The Government has stated that the paper will be subject to a listening period from July until September, they have set up a website about the changes which invites responses from all sectors including the public. Following the consultation there will be a programme of work undertaken from November this year.

The paper reiterates much of the information and initiatives covered by the Localism Bill rather than introducing new policies. The paper contains ambitions for public service delivery rather than concrete policy proposals and states that the Government will be consulting on these ambitions. The principles within the white paper fit with our own priorities and our service design principles as identified in the Strategic Plan 2011-15.

Alternatives considered and why rejected

Maidstone Borough Council could choose not to respond to the white paper and not to act proactively in respect of its implications. The intentions of the paper and the proposed actions however fit well with the Council's priorities and service design principles.

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: 22 September 2011
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