

Communities, Housing and Environment Policy Advisory Committee

17 January 2023

Strategic Plan Refresh 2023-28

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Economic Regeneration and Leisure PAC	10 January 2023
Planning and Infrastructure PAC	11 January 2023
Communities, Housing and Environment PAC	17 January 2023
Corporate Services PAC	18 January 2023
Executive	8 February 2023
Council	22 February 2023

Will this be a Key Decision?	Yes
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Executive
Lead Head of Service	Angela Woodhouse Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Anna Collier Insight, Communities and Governance Manager
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

This report proposes refreshed areas of focus for the Council's Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2028.

Committee are asked to consider the changes and recommend any amendments to the Executive for consideration.

Purpose of Report

Decision

This report makes the following recommendations:

1. That the Committee consider the proposed refreshed areas of focus for the Council's Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2028, set out in Appendix A, and recommend that they be approved by the Executive subject to any suggested amendments.

Strategic Plan Refresh 2023-28

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
Impact on Corporate Priorities	<p>The four Strategic Plan objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embracing Growth and enabling Infrastructure • Safe, Clean and Green • Homes and Communities • A Thriving Place <p>This report considers the proposed areas of focus for the Strategic Priorities for the next five years and identifies action for progressing the shaping of the areas of focus for 2023-2028.</p>	Insight Communities and Governance Manager
Cross Cutting Objectives	<p>The four cross-cutting objectives are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heritage is Respected • Health Inequalities are Addressed and Reduced • Deprivation and Social Mobility is Improved • Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability is respected <p>Consideration has been given to the crosscutting objectives in formulating the proposed areas of focus for the Strategic Plan</p>	Insight Communities and Governance Manager
Risk Management	The Council's corporate risk strategy includes strategic risks associated with the Strategic Plan.	Insight Communities and Governance Manager
Financial	The Strategic Plan sets the Council's Priorities and the direction for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy.	Section 151 Officer & Finance Team
Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Insight Communities and

		Governance Manager
Legal	<p>The Council has a statutory duty to make arrangements to secure continuous improvement in the way in which its functions are exercised, having regard to a combination of economy, efficiency and effectiveness. The Council's Strategic Plan demonstrates compliance with this duty. This review of the Council's priorities within the Strategic Plan will enable the Council to deliver services in an efficient and effective manner which meets the needs of the borough and aspirations of local inhabitants and stakeholders.</p> <p>In reviewing the priorities, the Council is obliged to ensure that its financial obligations are adhered to. The Council has a legal duty to set a balanced budget and continue to monitor the budget during the course of each municipal year and take remedial action if at any time.</p>	Interim Team Leader (Contentious and Corporate Governance)
Information Governance	The recommendations do not impact personal information (as defined in UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018) the Council Processes. If as a result of the update to the milestones and the emerging MTFs for 2023-2028 changes are required to services involving personal data, then Data Protection Impact Assessments will be undertaken.	Insight Communities and Governance Manager
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment. If as a result of the update to the milestones and the emerging MTFs for 2023-2028 changes are required to services involving personal data, then an Equalities Impact Assessment will be undertaken.	Insight Communities and Governance Manager
Public Health	One of the Council's cross cutting objectives is that Health Inequalities are addressed and reduced. The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an impact assessment. If as a result of the update to the milestones and the	Public Health Officer

	emerging MTFS for 2023-2028 changes are required to services involving personal data, then Data Protection Impact Assessments will be undertaken.	
Crime and Disorder	The recommendations include proposals for amendments to the areas of focus under Safe Clean and Green.	Insight Communities and Governance Manager
Procurement	No implications	Insight Communities and Governance Manager
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The recommendations includes proposals for amendments to the areas of focus under Safe Clean and Green	Biodiversity and Climate Change Manager

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Strategic Plan was adopted in December 2018 and covers the period until 2045. The decision was taken for it to be a 26-year plan to ensure continuity, and a basis on which all other Maidstone Borough Council plans and strategies could be developed. The Strategic Plan was developed involving a wide cross section of Councillors, staff and other stakeholders before being adopted in December of that year. The vision and priorities are clear and remain relevant.
- 2.2 The areas of focus were last refreshed in 2021 to respond to the significant impact of the pandemic and to plan the Council's approach to the recovery.
- 2.3 In July the Executive approved a recommendation that the Strategic Plan 2019-45 milestones be refreshed for 2023-28. The Council's Wider Leadership Team reviewed the existing areas of focus at an away day and the proposals were discussed and amended by the Executive.
- 2.4 This report proposes refreshed areas of focus for 2023-2028 consistent with the Council's Vision and four priorities; it reflects both the long-term ambitions of the Council whilst also responding to the current national and local environment including recovery from the pandemic, increased housing need, financial insecurity and the climate crisis.
- 2.5 The revised areas of focus proposed can be seen at Appendix A. Column A shows the existing milestones and Column B shows the proposed milestones. An overview of the changes and the purpose are outlined below under each priority heading.

Embracing Growth Enabling Infrastructure.

- 2.6 Minimal changes have been made under this priority but some amendments have been made to language to show emphasis and to reflect progress on the local plan, and the importance of engagement.

Safe Clean and Green

- 2.7 There is a broadening of the action on parks and public spaces, to reflect not only enforcement activities but also promotion of these spaces.
- 2.8 Language has been changed on milestones on community safety and cleanliness to make them stronger, and on Climate Change and Biodiversity to demonstrate that Council activity goes beyond the action plan.
- 2.9 An additional action has been included to reflect the work and investment being made in the service and to reflect the need to meet the requirements of all new government legislation.

A Thriving Place

- 2.10 On initial sight it may appear there has been substantial change under this priority. However, many of the changes have been combined to demonstrate focus.
- 2.11 The area of focus on community resilience and to encourage pride in our borough has been merged under homes and communities.
- 2.12 Existing actions on Maidstone East and the opportunity sites have been merged and a new milestone created to reflect the large programme of work and significant investment being made in the town centre.

Homes and Communities

- 2.13 Two new actions have been added. The first has been added to reflect the Council's commitment to support residents and reflect the current financial crisis. The second is the commitment to deliver 1,000 affordable homes.
- 2.14 Some changes have been made to the language on the milestone for rough sleeping to reflect the proactive and innovative actions taken by the council.
- 2.15 There is a change of emphasis on the milestone on temporary accommodation from reduction in use to increase in supply. Whilst the use of temporary accommodation is not desirable the change in emphasis reflects the current climate of financial insecurity which has resulted in an increased demand which the Council is required to support. The new milestone reflects that the Council will meet this demand but do so by investing in accommodation.
- 2.16 The specific action on working with the Integrated Care Partnership has been removed as it is felt that this is covered under the action working in partnership for community resilience.
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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

- 3.1 The Strategic Plan was adopted in December 2018 and covers the period until 2045. It was developed involving a wide cross section of Councillors, staff and other stakeholders. The vision and priorities are clear and remain relevant. The proposed refresh to the areas of focus for the next 5 years has been set out in Appendix A.
 - 3.2 The Committee could recommend the amendments as set out in the final column of the table, or they could recommend amending the wording, adding or deleting areas of focus.
 - 3.3 Members could recommend retaining the current areas of focus as they were when they were last updated in 2021. However, those areas of focus reflected the current environment and immediate recovery from the pandemic.
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4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 The Committee is recommended to consider the new areas of focus as presented at Appendix A and recommend that they be approved by the Executive subject to any suggested amendments. The Council is now facing fresh challenges and opportunities and the proposed areas of focus reflect these developments
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5. RISK

- 5.1 The risks associated with this proposal, including the risks if the Council does not act as recommended, have been considered in line with the Council's Risk Management Framework.
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6. CONSULTATION RESULTS AND PREVIOUS COMMITTEE FEEDBACK

- 6.1 Key officers and the Executive have been consulted in the development of these areas of focus at independent away days.
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 The approved refreshed areas of focus will be submitted to Council for approval as the Strategic Plan is a budget and policy framework document.
 - 7.2 Once approved the new areas of focus will be shared with all Officers to ensure the delivery of the Council's priorities. The refreshed Strategic Plan will be made available on the Council's website.
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

- Appendix A: Strategic Plan Proposed Areas of Focus 2023-28
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9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Strategic Plan 2019-2045 -

https://maidstone.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/269721/Strategic-Plan2019.pdf