

Corporate Planning Timetable

Timetable	
Meeting	Date
Corporate Services PAC	12 July 2023
Cabinet	26 July 2023

Will this be a Key Decision?	No
Urgency	Not Applicable
Final Decision-Maker	Cabinet
Lead Director	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Lead Officer and Report Author	Angela Woodhouse, Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Classification	Public
Wards affected	All

Executive Summary

The Policy Advisory Committee and the Cabinet is asked to agree that as the Strategic Plan milestones were reviewed by Councillors in 2023/24 they not be reviewed this year. This report sets out the timetable and approach to setting the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2024/25- 2028/29.

Purpose of Report

Decision.

This report makes the following recommendations to the Cabinet:

1. That the Strategic Plan not be reviewed in 2023/23 and the corporate planning timetable at 3.3 of the report be approved.

Corporate Planning Timetable

1. CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES AND IMPLICATIONS

Issue	Implications	Sign-off
<p>Impact on Corporate Priorities</p>	<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>The Strategic Plan sets out the Council’s priorities. This paper sets out a timetable for setting the Medium Term Financial Strategy aligned to the recently reviewed strategic milestones.</p>	<p>Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance</p>
<p>Cross Cutting Objectives</p>	<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>The Strategic Plan sets out the Council’s priorities. This paper sets out a timetable for setting the Medium Term Financial Strategy aligned to the recently reviewed strategic milestones.</p>	<p>Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance</p>
<p>Risk Management</p>	<p>The Council’s corporate risk strategy includes strategic risks associated with the Strategic Plan.</p>	<p>Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance</p>
<p>Financial</p>	<p>The financial implications of the Strategic Plan are set out in the Council’s five-year Medium Term Financial Strategy. The timetable for approving the strategy is included in this report</p>	<p>Section 151 Officer & Finance Team</p>

Staffing	We will deliver the recommendations with our current staffing.	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Legal	The Strategic Plan aligns with the Council's general duty, as a best value authority, 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 – section 3 of the Local Government Act 1999. If adopted as recommended the corporate planning timetable enables the Council to monitor its performance against the agreed Strategic Plan outcomes.	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.	Information Governance Team – either Anna, Georgia or Lauren to review and approve.
Equalities	The recommendations do not propose a change in service therefore will not require an equalities impact assessment. Equality impact assessments will need to be carried out for any decisions made in relation to services as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.	Equalities & Communities Officer
Public Health	We recognise that the recommendations will not negatively impact on population health or that of individuals.	Public Health Officer
Crime and Disorder	The council maintains it's priorities under safe clean and green.	Director of Strategy, Insight and Governance
Procurement	Not applicable	Head of Service & Section 151 Officer
Biodiversity and Climate Change	The strategic commitment to biodiversity and climate was agreed as an area of focus for 2023-28.	Biodiversity and Climate Change Officer

2. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The Strategic Plan is a core element of our corporate planning. The priorities and outcomes in the Strategic Plan are developed alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to ensure consistency between priorities, service delivery and budgets. Service Planning allows the Council to convert high level priorities from the Strategic Plan into actions for each directorate, service or team across the Council, which then feeds into individual staff priorities.
 - 2.2 The Cabinet has been asked to consider whether to refresh the existing Strategic Plan, create a new one or leave as is. As the Strategic Plan was refreshed in 2022/23 with a full review by the Policy Advisory Committees and the Cabinet of the areas for focus for the next five years it has been determined that the plan will remain as is this year. The Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee is asked to consider whether it is in agreement with this and recommend accordingly.
 - 2.3 A timetable of activity has been planned for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Process as part of the corporate planning timetable. The proposed timetable of activities includes a period of public consultation on the 2024/5 budget as required by law, reports to Policy Advisory Committees (PACs), Overview and Scrutiny the Cabinet and Council on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget.
 - 2.4 The current Strategic Plan was adopted in December 2018 and covers the period until 2045. The plan was agreed after careful analysis and consultation. 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. Last year a review of the strategic areas of focus for the next five years was undertaken by Policy Advisory Committees, the Leadership Team and Cabinet. As a result a number of changes were made to reflect the Council's ambitions in regard to Biodiversity and Climate Change, the emerging Town Centre Strategy, community resilience and achieving 1,000 affordable homes. The foreword from the Leader was also revised.
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3. AVAILABLE OPTIONS

Retain the existing Strategic Plan

- 3.1 The current Strategic Plan was developed involving a wide cross section of Councillors, staff and other stakeholders in 2018 before being adopted in December of that year, the vision and priorities are clear and relevant. It was updated in 2020 and refreshed again last year with an update to the areas of focus for 2023-28 for each priority.
- 3.2 Outlined below is a proposed timetable for the development of budget proposals. A report on the MTFS has been included on this agenda and that has been considered in the proposed timetable below.

3.3 Corporate Planning Timetable

Date	Action
26 July 2023	Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee and Cabinet consider the corporate planning timetable
July 2023- August 2023	Budget Survey
September 2023	Draft Budget Proposals to Policy Advisory Committees, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet
December 2023	Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement published
5 February 2024	Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee consider the final proposals on the Budget for recommendation to the Cabinet
7 February 2024	Cabinet approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy to be considered at full Council on 21 February 2024

Create a new Strategic Plan

- 3.4 Creating a new Strategic Plan would have a substantially greater impact on resources. The timetable proposed would need to be revisited and this could have an impact on work elsewhere as this would take substantially more time and involvement from the Policy Advisory Committees, Cabinet and Senior Officers. It should also be noted that the Council has an all out election in 2024, that may prove to be an opportune time to review or create a new strategic plan with a four-year term of office commencing for all councillors.

Amend or create a new timetable for a new strategic plan

- 3.5 The corporate planning timetable proposed includes the development of the MTFs which is also included on a paper on this agenda.

Refresh the Strategic Plan

- 3.6 Councillors may identify that the current plan needs refreshing, a refresh of the Strategic Plan could include:
- Review and amendment of areas of focus for 2024/29
 - Refresh of any contextual information in the document such as statistics
 - New foreword.

The timetable would need to be revised to reflect the involvement of Policy Advisory Committees and the Cabinet with amendments being added to September's meetings.

4. PREFERRED OPTION AND REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 As the plan was refreshed in 2022/23 it is recommended that option 3.1 is approved.
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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 The timetable includes consultation with residents on the budget and with Councillors through Policy Advisory Committees and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 6.2 Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee reviewed the matter at its meeting on the 12 July 2023, and supported the recommendation proposed.
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7. NEXT STEPS: COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECISION

- 7.1 The timetable identifies the next steps in the process.
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8. REPORT APPENDICES

None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None