

# **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **CABINET**

**22 DECEMBER 2010**

### **REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL AND THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE**

**Report prepared by Angela Woodhouse**

#### **1. Strategic Plan 2011-15**

##### 1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 The Strategic Plan and the Medium Term Financial Strategy are the key corporate planning documents for the Council. The Strategic Plan sets out the Council's priorities and outcomes for the next 4 years. The Plan also sets out how we will measure performance including draft performance indicators.

1.1.2 Cabinet are asked to agree the Draft Strategic Plan for 2011-15, and note the six monthly performance update for the strategic plan action plan for 2010-11. Consultation will be carried out on the Draft Strategic Plan for 2011-15 with residents, Councillors and staff.

##### 1.2 Recommendation of Leader of the Council and Chief Executive

1.2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:

- i) Approves the Draft Strategic Plan 2011-15 for consultation; and
- ii) Notes the update on the Strategic Plan Action Plan for 2010-11.

##### 1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The Draft Strategic Plan **attached at Appendix A** sets out the Council's vision and priorities for the next four years aligned with and in parallel to the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The priorities and outcomes in the plan have been developed over the course of the current municipal year taking into account the national, local and economic context in which the council operates.

## The Development of the Plan

- 1.3.2 In developing the priorities for the next four years Cabinet and the Corporate Management Team have been clear that the Council needed to reduce its priorities to ensure it had a focused approach to service delivery. This has followed feedback from the Improvement and Development Agency during a recent peer review that the Council needed to be clearer on what was and what was not a priority and communicate this to staff and residents. An early part of the work involved reviewing the Council's frontline services in a "pairwise" analysis as set out in the priorities section of the Plan. Following this exercise, Cabinet then reviewed national policies and local data considering residents' views from sources such as the Place Survey and statistical information regarding the current picture of Maidstone. This data is set out in the pen portrait **attached at Appendix B**
- 1.3.3 As the plan has developed, careful note has been taken of the emerging priorities of the Local Strategic Partnership and the Ambitions for Kent to ensure there is synchronicity with the Council's partners and avoid duplication. As these plans are finalised the Draft Strategic Plan will be updated.
- 1.3.4 Nationally there have been a number of actions and proposed legislative changes that have impacted on the plan and the Council's future direction. This has included substantial cuts in our budget and changes to our powers and freedoms. The Localism and Decentralisation Bill outlines 6 areas of action to create the Big Society and localism:
- 1) Lift the burden of bureaucracy
  - 2) Empower communities to do things their way
  - 3) Increase local control over public finance
  - 4) Diversify the supply of public services
  - 5) Open up government to public scrutiny
  - 6) Strengthen accountability to local people

The Draft Strategic Plan outlines the Council's role; working with others to help build on our communities and build the big society. There are a number of actions that we have taken that support the six areas identified in the Bill. We will be publishing all our financial transactions from January 2011. The public were consulted regarding the budget for discretionary services and we have listened to them when reviewing how we deliver these services and how resources are allocated. The Draft Strategic Plan outlines service design principles which aim to encourage and support the diversification of services and we will be holding our own localism events in the new year to consider what it will look like for Maidstone.

- 1.3.5 We have taken note of the government's review of national indicators, the withdrawal of the place survey and Cabinet and the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee's wish to reduce what we measure and report as a Council. We have significantly reduced our priorities, actions and performance measures. In an effort to ensure we look outwards and not upwards to measure our success, we will be consulting with the public to identify the priority services for them and measure customer satisfaction with these services.

#### Vision and Priorities

- 1.3.6 The Draft Strategic Plan 2011-15 sets out three priorities and six outcomes for Maidstone.

### **Priorities**

#### **1. For Maidstone to have a growing economy**

Maidstone will have a growing economy, with a range of employment and business opportunities. In essence, Maidstone is a good place to work and do business.

#### **Outcomes**

- a transport network that supports the local economy.
- a growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy.

#### **2. For Maidstone to be a decent place to live**

Maidstone continues to be a clean, attractive, well designed and built environment; a place where people want to live.

#### **Outcomes**

- decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures.
- continues to be a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the borough.

#### **3. Corporate and Customer Excellence**

The Council will have a productive workforce with people in the right place at the right time, delivering cost effective services. Services will be affordable, delivered on time and to agreed standards in an accessible way.

## **Outcomes**

- residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced.
- the Council will continue to have value for money services that residents are satisfied with.

## Service Design Principles

1.3.7 The Cabinet and Corporate Management Team have identified a set of service design principles to demonstrate how services will be designed. These will be used by managers during the service planning process and have informed the actions identified in the Strategic Plan. There are seven service design principles.

1. Residents and Businesses are the starting point for services; every service must be considered from the perspective of the citizen and delivered at the lowest possible level – a bottom-up approach.
2. We will enable service delivery and seek to commission services rather than deliver them ourselves wherever appropriate.
3. We will work with partners where there are economies of scale and to identify common solutions and shared services.
4. Services must achieve our priorities.
5. We will manage our services so no-one is disadvantaged because of where they live.
6. We will concentrate on delivering our core services, whilst recognising that there are areas we need to influence and work with others on to bring about change.
7. We will work together as one Council and with our partners to deliver change and manage expectation.

## Performance Management and Consultation

1.3.8 Strategic actions and milestones have been developed for each priority outcome. In terms of measuring success, a performance scorecard has been included for each indicator. We have significantly reduced the performance indicators with 59 draft indicators proposed, 24 of which will be reported quarterly, 14 on a

bi-annual basis and 21 annually. Staff and residents will be consulted on these strategic actions and measures to ascertain if they are right and if they will deliver the priorities and outcomes set out in the plan.

1.3.9 Consultation with residents will be undertaken through the website and face to face consultation with small focus groups. The results of the extensive budget consultation and comments received regarding savings and services have informed the development of the Strategic Plan, the prioritisation of services and spending.

1.3.10 Consultation events will be held with staff in January to inform them of the new priorities and to engage them in developing the council's "strapline" for the Strategic Plan. There will also be a photography competition for staff asking them to enter photos that present how they view the Council's proposed outcomes. These will be used in the final version of the Plan and in documents relating to the Strategic Plan and its broader dissemination.

1.3.11 The Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee will consider the budget and the Strategic Plan in January. Feedback from this meeting and the other consultations will be relayed to and considered by Cabinet in February, prior to the Plan's submission to Council in March.

Performance Update on the Strategic Plan Action Plan 2010-11

1.3.12 In order to ensure effective development of the Strategic Plan for 2011-15, it is essential to assess delivery on the current objectives and actions set out for 2009-12. The strategic level progress update is outlined in the table below.

| Key Objective   | Update  |
|---|---|
| <b>Priority: A place to achieve, prosper and thrive</b>   |   |
| <b>1.</b> Increase the prosperity of the borough by stimulating investment and working with existing businesses to create a distinctive local economy | There are seven actions relating to this key objective of which one has been completed, three are not yet due and two have missed their deadlines. The Visit Maidstone website has been redesigned and was re launched in April. The Tourism Strategy is being implemented however some actions have missed the deadline. |
| <b>2.</b> Raise skills levels and reduce worklessness, including matching the skills of the workforce to the needs of local business                  | There are four actions within this objective of which two have missed their September deadlines the other two are not due until June 2011. The Senacre Skills Studio is progressing and is expected to be opened in 2011.   |

| Key Objective   | Update  |
|---|---|
| <p><b>3.</b> Achieve regeneration focussing on enhancing the attractiveness of the Town Centre through initiatives like the High Street public realm projects</p> | <p>There are eight actions relating to this objective of which 50% are progressing well and are not yet due to be completed, the remaining 50% have missed the deadlines set. The Town Centre Management Service Level Agreement has been drafted and has been sent to the Town Centre Management Board for consideration. A Regeneration Projects Group has been established and a report is expected to management team early in 2011. The Town Centre Action has been delayed due to the LDF.</p>  |
| <p><b>4.</b> Improve outcomes for vulnerable people and minimise the negative effects of the recession</p>  | <p>There are six actions of which four have been completed and two are overdue. In relation to the Equity release pilot quarterly meeting have been set up and a pilot was successfully launched in January 2010. The Housing team have responded well to the recession and have absorbed recession impact minimisation measures into their regular processes including the Homelessness prevention fund and and the County Court Debt Service the team also have influenced the 'Supporting People Strategy' to ensure services for vulnerable people are protected and introduced additional ways for people bidding of properties through the Home choice scheme. The LSP and Domestic Violence Forum hosted a Domestic Violence awareness event in November and a new Domestic Violence handbook has been distributed to relevant agencies.</p> |
| <p><b>5.</b> Reduce traffic congestion and support economic growth through the development of a sustainable transport strategy</p>                                | <p>There are five actions for this objective, two have been completed and two are overdue. The infrastructure delivery plan and the possibility of high speed one for Maidstone are being discussed are part of the LDF which has been delayed. A decision was taken by Cabinet not to progress the All Saints Road Link proposals.</p>   |
| <p><b>Priority: A place that is clean and green</b></p>   |   |
| <p><b>6.</b> Enhance the Council's parks, green spaces and natural habitats through initiatives like the Mote Park improvement project</p>                        | <p>There are three actions within this objective, two are overdue and one has been completed. The Heritage Lottery Funding has been confirmed for the Mote park Project.</p>  |
| <p><b>7.</b> Maintain a clean and pleasant environment for people who live in and visit the borough</p>   | <p>There are six actions in this objective of which five have been completed, the remaining action is not due until March 2012. Two major campaigns have been delivered in first half of 2010 - 'Foul Play' for dog fouling and 'No Ifs No Butts' anti littering. Actions from the street cleansing review have been implemented. A number of the initiatives introduced as part of this review will be further developed but the actions from the review are now incorporated into the standard way of working.</p>  |

| Key Objective   | Update  |
|---|---|
| 8. Reduce carbon emissions across the borough and improve air quality   | There are five actions for this objective, four are not due till March 2012. The Air Quality Action Plan was overdue but has now been agreed by the Cabinet Member.   |
| 9. Reduce the Council's carbon footprint and improve the use of other natural resources, whilst ensuring the Council is planning to adapt to climate change | There are 12 actions relating to the Council's carbon footprint, four are overdue The Carbon Footprint for 2009/10 is currently being complied and a report outlining the year's performance should be with CMT by the end of November 2010 and thermo graphic surveys of Council building have been completed these results will now be used alongside those from Carbon Trust surveys to develop projects as part of the Carbon Management Programme.   |
| 10. Reduce the amount of waste produced by local people and increase the proportion of waste reused or recycled   | There are four actions for this objective two of which have been completed, one is not yet due and the other is overdue. An education and promotion plan has been created for the implementation of the new food waste collections in partnership with WRAP (Waste and Resources Action Programme). Changes to the garden waste service, bulky collection service and weekend freighter have been successfully implemented. Separate weekly food waste collections are being introduced alongside fortnightly refuse collections in January. Due to the introduction of the separate food waste collections and fortnightly refuse collections, the focus group regarding the mixed dry recycling has been delayed until the other service changes have been implemented. |
| <b>Priority: A place that has strong, healthy and safe communities</b>  |   |
| 11. Improve social, economic and environmental outcomes for communities in priority areas   | There are six actions within this objective , two are not yet due and the remaining four are overdue. The Parkwood Neighbourhood Action Plan was adopted by Cabinet at its meeting on 10th November and the initial community halls audit was completed August 2010.  |
| 12. Improve the health of people living in the borough and reduce health inequalities   | There are five actions for this objective of which two are overdue.   |
| 13. Make people feel safer where they live  | There are five actions for this objective of which two are overdue.   |
| 14. Engage communities so people have the opportunity to participate and have a real say in what happens in their local area                                | There are six actions for this objective of which two have been completed , two are overdue and two are not yet due. The Volunteer Scheme is now fully up and running and a number of different volunteers are working in the Gateway on a daily basis. The Democratic Engagement Strategy is currently behind schedule.  |

| Key Objective   | Update   |
|---|--|
| <b>Priority: A place to live and enjoy</b>  |  |
| <b>15.</b> Encourage more adults and children to participate in sport   | There are five actions relating to this objective all of which are progressing well including the Maidstone's Dream Project and marketing of the leisure centre. None of the actions for this objective are due to be completed until March 2012.  |
| <b>16.</b> Improve the cultural offering of the borough through projects like the Museum East Wing Extension  | There are six actions relating to this objective as with above none of them are due at this stage however all are being progressed. The Cultural Strategy is being developed and how Maidstone is marketed is being investigated.  |
| <b>17.</b> Deliver enough of the right type of well designed new homes where they are needed, maximising the numbers of affordable homes            | There are seven actions relating to this objective, one have been completed, one is overdue and the rest are not yet due to be completed. The Housing Strategy is behind deadline but is due to Cabinet in December and the Strategic Housing Market Assessment has been completed.        |
| <b>18.</b> Improve the condition, accessibility and energy efficiency of existing housing , including reducing fuel poverty                         | There are five actions relating to this objective, none of which have reached their deadline date and all of which relate to the way in which the team runs their service on a daily basis.  |
| <b>19.</b> Better meet the accommodation needs of the Gypsy and traveller community   | There is one action relating to this objective which is not due to be completed until March 2012.  |
| <b>20.</b> Improve the quality of the built environment including protecting the borough's heritage and ensuring new developments are well designed | There are four actions relating to this objective of which one is complete and three have missed their deadline.   |
| <b>Priority: A place with efficient and effective public services</b>   |  |
| <b>21.</b> Deliver more efficient and effective Council services and increase value for money   | There are nine actions relating to this objective of which four have missed their deadlines, two are complete and three are underway. Further opportunities for shared services are continuously investigated.   |
| <b>22.</b> Ensure people can access a wider range of services in ways that suit them  | There are four actions within this objective of which one has missed its deadline and three are not yet due. The Communication Strategy is currently being reviewed but is being co-ordinated with the vision and Strategic Plan and cannot therefore be completed until these are agreed. |



| Key Objective   | Update   |
|---|--|
| <p><b>23.</b> Improve the delivery of community services to local people through an effective Local Strategic Partnership</p> | <p>There are four actions within this objective of which two have missed their deadlines, one is not due until March 2012 and one is complete. A response to the vision for Kent has been submitted in order to help decide the redirection and reallocation of resources to deliver SCS priorities and the delivery chain analysis is being raised through the LSP delivery groups.</p> |

1.3.13 The updated action plan gives an update on the 127 actions set out in last year's strategic plan action plan. The majority of actions are on target or being progressed. Key stages of the Mote Park regeneration bid have been completed, progress has been made in delivering accessible housing and changes have been implemented to the street cleansing service. A new food waste collection service will be implemented in January 2011 and a number of community projects delivered, particularly in promoting health and physical activity.

#### 1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.3.1 The Strategic Plan sets out how the Council will deliver services for the next three years. It provides the route map for the council, for managers, Councillors and the public. Without such a plan the effectiveness of the Council would be significantly compromised and reduced.

#### 1.4 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.4.1 The Strategic Plan sets out the Council's Corporate Objectives for the next four years and it represents the top level document from which all other plans and strategies of the Council will flow.

#### 1.5 Risk Management

1.5.1 The strategic risks associated with the Plan are dealt with in the Strategic Risk report attached to this agenda and have been summarised in the Strategic Plan.

#### 1.6 Other Implications

1.6.1 The Strategic Plan is the Council's key document and has a range of implications. These are contained within the body of the report.

1. Financial
2. Staffing

|   |
|---|
| x |
|   |

|    |                                       |   |
|----|---------------------------------------|---|
| 3. | Legal                                 | X |
| 4. | Equality Impact Needs Assessment      | X |
| 5. | Environmental/Sustainable Development | X |
| 6. | Community Safety                      | X |
| 7. | Human Rights Act                      | X |
| 8. | Procurement                           | X |
| 9. | Asset Management                      | X |

1.6.2 The Medium Term Financial Strategy and the Strategic Plan are developed in conjunction with each other to ensure that the Council's priorities and resources are aligned. All policies referred to within the strategic plan are equality impact assessed.

## 1.7 Relevant Documents

### 1.7.1 Appendices

Draft Strategic Plan 2011-15  
Pen Portrait of Maidstone

### 1.7.2 Background Documents

The Strategic Plan 2009-12  
The Strategic Pan 2010-11, Action Plan

**IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?**

Yes

No

If yes, when did it first appear in the Forward Plan?

.....Strategic Planning appeared in the forward Plan in October 201)

This is a Key Decision because: It affects one or more wards and is aligned to the Medium Term Financial Plan.

Wards/Parishes affected: All