

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21 DECEMBER 2011

REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

Report prepared by Ellie Kershaw

1. REFRESH OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN FOR 2012/13

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To agree the approach to the refresh of the Council's Strategic Plan 2011-15 and note the updated action plan.

1.2 Recommendation of the Chief Executive

- 1.2.1 It is recommended that Cabinet
- i. Approve the focus of the outcomes and list of priorities at 1.3.5
 - ii. Agree to the outcome on disadvantage being moved and that a new customer focus outcome should be added
 - iii. Agree the other areas to be refreshed
 - iv. Notes the progress on the action plan from April-November 2011

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The vision for Maidstone in the Sustainable Community Strategy is "We want Maidstone Borough to be a vibrant, prosperous 21st century urban and rural community at the heart of at the heart of Kent, where its distinctive character is enhanced to create a safe, healthy, excellent environment with high quality education and employment where all people can realise their aspirations." The essence of this message can be distilled as "Great place, great people, great opportunity" and this is what the Strategic Plan sets out to achieve.

1.3.2 Key objectives in the Strategic plan are developed alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy. The service planning process then allows these objectives to be translated into actions for each team in the Council.

1.3.3 In September 2011 Cabinet agreed that the Strategic Plan 2011-15 would be retained for 2012/13 but refreshed to reflect key changes

including work that Cabinet would undertake on the future shape of the organisation and the planning and prioritisation of actions needed to achieve the outcomes set out in the Strategic plan.

1.3.4 In the Strategic Plan for 2011-15 three priorities and six outcomes were agreed. Since that time the Council's funding has been cut meaning that some tough decisions have to be made with regards to where the Council should concentrate its budget. Cabinet agreed that the overarching aim of the Council should be to achieve economic prosperity and with this in mind, discussions have been held at Cabinet away days to define which areas of activity the Council should focus on. A list of priority areas has been drawn up and is shown at 1.3.5. It is recommended that Cabinet should formally agree this approach in order that Council Officers may prioritise their service plans accordingly.

1.3.5 Whilst the above exercise was being carried out it became apparent that the first outcome under priority 3 relating to disadvantage and deprivation, would more appropriately sit under priority 2, a decent place to live. It is further suggested that a new customer focused outcome is created under priority 3 to meet 'customer excellence' as there is currently only an outcome relating to 'corporate excellence'.

1.3.6 The refreshed plan would then contain the following information;

Priority 1 For Maidstone to have a growing economy

Outcomes

- A transport network that supports the local economy

Integrated transport strategy with KCC
– Sustainable transport approach
– Behavioural change/modal shift
– Maidstone town centre as a regional transport hub
– Integrated parking strategy

- A growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet the demands of the local economy

Creating the right planning environment
Development of key infrastructure
Business expansion
Inward investment
Development of stronger business relationships
Tackling worklessness

Priority 2 For Maidstone to be a decent place to live

Outcomes

- Decent, affordable housing in the right places across a range of tenures

Develop sustainable communities
Increase choice and improve the quality of life for vulnerable people
Improve our existing homes
Improve access to housing advice and work to prevent homelessness and rough sleeping in Maidstone

- Continues to be a clean and attractive environment for people who live in and visit the Borough

New waste management arrangements in place by 2013
Development of commercial services –including business case for commercial waste
Completion of “new” cleansing model – area working, deep cleaning, enforcement
Improve perception of cleanliness in the borough
Reduce the Council’s energy consumption
Implement Air Quality Management Area Action Plan

- Residents are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced

Early intervention preventative approach to tackle disadvantage – young children and their families
Intervention with families already with multiple needs; key criterion – intergenerational worklessness
Other intervention including health and community safety

Priority 3 Corporate and Customer Excellence

Outcomes

- The Council will continue to have value for money services that residents are satisfied with

Strategic Plan – Medium Term Financial Plan alignment
Improvement Journey
Customer centred organisation
Localism and “Bigger Society”
Future Shape of the Organisation – including structure and governance
Workforce strategy

- 1.3.7 The refresh of the Strategic Plan will take into account the Cabinet's desired approach that the Council will use its influence wherever possible to encourage partners to invest in Maidstone in both the priority and non priority areas and will seek to position itself on boards and Committees that can help this aim, such as the Ambition Boards and the Locality Board. It is not the aim of the Council to stop work in areas that have not been identified as a priority but to stop funding these from its own budget and this will be made clear in the refreshed plan.
- 1.3.8 A number of KPIs have been identified that could be used to measure success in the priority areas and these are identified at Appendix A, Keys Performance Indicators.
- 1.3.9 A resident survey was sent out to 3,000 residents in November. The Council will know the results of this survey in January and, along with information from the budget consultation which was undertaken in November, the information will be used to update the section 'What matters to Maidstone Residents'
- 1.3.10 General updates will be made to reflect changes in local and national context such as the introduction of Locality Boards.
- 1.3.11 The section on Localism will be updated to reflect the Bill having been given Royal Assent. A report on Maidstone's approach to the Bigger Society will be taken to Cabinet on 21 December. If this report is agreed this will also be included in the refresh.
- 1.3.12 Service planning will take place between December 2011 and March 2012. Each section will create objectives that relate to their delivery of the outcomes as described in the Strategic Plan. During this process actions will also be identified that will be included in the Strategic Plan Action Plan. An up to date copy of this plan is attached at Appendix B, Strategic Plan Action Plan. It should be noted that this is a living document and actions will be added and completed throughout its four year life.
- 1.3.13 Following the Cabinet meeting in December this approach will be taken to Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny in January for their comments. The plan will then be refreshed and taken to Cabinet in February for recommendation to Council in March.
- 1.3.14 The Strategic Plan action plan is attached at Appendix B. The actions currently contained in it are not yet due for completion but have been updated to show the current position.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 Cabinet could decide not to refresh the Strategic Plan. However, this would lead to out of date information being publicly available and make it difficult for officers to maintain the 'golden thread'. The Council also needs to be able to demonstrate how it is reacting to changes in the local and national context.

1.4.2 Cabinet could request the development of a new plan. However, this is not recommended as the development of a new plan would require additional resources and would risk not being produced in time for the new financial year.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Strategic Plan sets out the Council's Corporate Objectives and is the top level document from which other plans and strategies flow.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 Refining the priorities within the outcomes will allow a more robust risk management process to be undertaken.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1 The Strategic Plan has a range of implications which are discussed in the body of this report.

1. Financial	x
2. Staffing	
3. Legal	
4. Equality Impact Needs Assessment	
5. Environmental/Sustainable Development	
6. Community Safety	
7. Human Rights Act	
8. Procurement	
9. Asset Management	

1.7.2 The Medium Term Financial Strategy and Strategic Plan are developed in conjunction with each other to ensure that priorities and resources are considered together.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

Appendix A Key Performance Indicators
Appendix B Strategic Plan Action Plan

1.8.2 Background Documents

- Strategic Plan 2011-2015
- Corporate Planning Timetable Cabinet report September 2011

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

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

December 2011

This is a Key Decision because: It affects all wards

Wards/Parishes affected: all