

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

8 FEBRUARY 2012

REPORT OF THE HEAD OF BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT

Report prepared by Georgia Hawkes

1. IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2012-15

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 To consider the Council's improvement journey detailed in the Improvement Plan 2012-15 (Appendix A).

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Business Improvement

1.2.1 That Cabinet adopt the Improvement Plan 2012-15.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 The Council has set the priorities and outcomes for the borough of Maidstone in its Strategic Plan. The Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) sets out what will be spent and where savings will be made. In order to deliver the priority outcomes and the savings required, a number of key pieces of work and projects will be carried out. These are detailed in the Improvement Plan 2012-15, which ensures the improvement work is aligned with the Strategic Plan and the MTFS.

1.3.2 The Improvement Plan has three objectives:

1. A reduction in net cost, through making savings or increased income
2. Improving or maintaining quality: ensuring we deliver excellent services, which means delivering what is promised to agreed standards
3. Identifying and responding to opportunities aligned with the Strategic Plan

1.3.3 The four corporate workstreams (1-4) and enablers (5-7) of the plan are:

1. Incremental improvement
2. Asset management
3. Transformation
4. External challenge
5. Organisational culture
6. Good information and knowledge management
7. Councillor assurance

1.3.4 The priority services and projects for improvement have also been identified in the Improvement Plan, based on priorities in the Strategic Plan, our current knowledge of any external or internal opportunities and potential for improvement and/or reduction in net cost. These are as follows:

- Waste and Recycling
- Customer services delivery
- ICT
- Parking transport management
- Hazlitt Arts Centre
- Planning
- Revenues and Benefits
- Housing
- Finance
- Building Control
- Future use of Town Hall
- Community asset transfer
- Major assets review
- More proactive use of Covalent, our performance management system
- Management & Admin recharges review
- Other shared services and Mid Kent Improvement Partnership work
- Cross-organisational collaboration
- Corporate peer review

1.3.5 Compiling an Improvement Plan allows the key workstreams to be brought together and monitored. Officers responsible for each of the workstreams and enablers and the Leader will make up a monitoring group to ensure the plan progresses and benefits are delivered. It is proposed the group would include:

- Leader – provides political leadership and councillor assurance (as defined in the Improvement Plan)
- Chief Executive - ultimately owns and is accountable for delivery of Improvement Plan
- Assistant Director of Environmental & Regulatory Services – responsible for Asset management workstream

- Head of Change & Scrutiny – responsible for Incremental improvement and External challenge workstreams
- Head of Business Improvement – responsible for Transformation workstream and Good information and knowledge management enabler
- Head of HR – responsible for Organisational culture enabler
- Head of ICT – responsible for Use of technology, which is not a workstream or an enabler but a critical tool for improvement
- Head of Finance & Customer Services – essential to ensure that any improvement work is aligned with the MTFS

1.3.6 The plan will be updated annually and progress reported to Cabinet on a six-monthly basis.

1.4 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.4.1 Cabinet could decide not to adopt the Improvement Plan 2012-15. This is not recommended as the Improvement Plan is aligned with the Council's strategic objectives and MTFS and is essential for ensuring corporate oversight of a number of different pieces of work across the organisation.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Improvement Plan contains pieces of work and projects that will have a positive effect on all the priorities and outcomes for Maidstone set out in the Strategic Plan. However, the priority that it aligns with most is Corporate and Customer Excellence, outcome "the Council will continue to have value for money services that residents are satisfied with", because of the objectives in the Improvement Plan of reducing net cost whilst improving or maintaining quality.

1.6 Risk Management

1.6.1 The Improvement Plan and associated governance minimises the risk that important pieces of work/projects will not be undertaken or will not deliver and that new opportunities are missed.

1.6.2 There is still a risk that the Council does not have the resources, both in terms of staff time or money to undertake the projects envisaged in the Improvement Plan. However, the plan minimises the risk that effort will be put into pieces of work that are not considered a priority and will allow corporate resources to be more effectively directed to the priorities stated in the Improvement Plan.

1.7 Other Implications

1.7.1

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

Financial and staffing

1.7.2 An objective of the plan is to reduce net cost. This could be by reducing cost, including possibly reducing numbers of staff, or by increasing income, which would have an effect on the work that staff undertake. The cost of delivering the improvement plan will be met from within existing resources. Any additional resource requirements will be identified and addressed as part of the Medium term Financial Strategy process.

Legal

1.7.3 A number of the pieces of work/projects are likely to require legal advice and support, which will be identified and secured as part of the governance arrangements.

Procurement and asset management

1.7.4 Asset management is a workstream in the Improvement Plan and procurement is an important tool in achieving improvement.

1.8 Relevant Documents

1.8.1 Appendices

Appendix A – Improvement Plan 2012-15

1.8.2 Background Documents

None.

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

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

January 2012.....

This is a Key Decision because: it is a new plan for adoption by Cabinet.....

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Wards/Parishes affected: All.....

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