

Maidstone Borough Council

Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 13 March 2012

Draft Community Development Strategy

Report of: Overview & Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee has 'Community Development' within its terms of reference.
- 1.2 The draft Community Development Strategy was an item on the Forward Plan of Key Decisions January 2012 to April 2012 and was included in the Committee's future work programme.
- 1.3 'The Community Development Strategy for Maidstone Borough is a key strategic planning and delivery document for the Maidstone borough as set out in the council's new Strategic Plan 2011-2015.'
- 1.4 The draft Community Development Strategy is under consultation. The period of consultation will end on 30 March 2012.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 The Committee is recommended to consider the draft Community Development Strategy and consultation document (**appendices A and B**).
- 2.2 The Committee is recommended to interview Sarah Robson, Community Partnerships Manager, and make recommendations as appropriate as part of the consultation process.

3. Community Development Strategy

- 3.1 The Community Development Strategy is a 5 year plan that provides a framework under which Community Development can take place in the borough.
- 3.2 The draft document details a number of actions that will be delivered with partners to achieve outcomes that will in five years time 'have produced measurable differences to the lives of residents of the Borough in the programme areas within its brief.'
- 3.2 *"By 2015 residents in Maidstone are not disadvantaged because of where they live or who they are, vulnerable people are assisted and the level of deprivation is reduced."* This outcome of the Strategic

Plan sets out the role of the Community Development strategy which is to:

- Reduce inequalities with communities through preventative action;
- Promote active citizenship – to facilitate and support increased involvement by local people in decision making and involvement in their neighbourhoods;
- Review the Park Wood Planning for Real activity to inform further work and activities supporting communities in identifying and meeting their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities; and
- Implement meaningful community commissioning of services for local people.

4. Impact on Corporate Objectives

4.1 The Committee will consider reports that deliver against the following Council priorities:

- 'Corporate and Customer Excellence'; and
- 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live'.

4.2 The Strategic Plan sets out the Council's key objectives for the medium term and has a range of objectives which support the delivery of the Council's priorities. The Committee's work will contribute to the delivery of these key objectives over the next year.