

Maidstone Borough Council

Regeneration and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 28 July 2009

Draft Regeneration Statement

Report of: Overview and Scrutiny Officer

1. Introduction

- 1.1 On 27 May, the Overview and Scrutiny Team hosted a Work Programming Workshop to generate ideas for the 2009-10 overview and scrutiny work programmes. The possibility of undertaking a review of the Economic Development Strategy was considered, including the issue of economic regeneration. However, it was noted at the Committee meeting on 30 June 2009 that the Cabinet Member for Regeneration had only endorsed the Council's Economic Development Strategy in December 2008 and Members therefore felt that it would be too premature to review the strategy at this stage.
- 1.2 The Director of Prosperity and Regeneration informed the Committee that a Regeneration Statement for Maidstone was being produced and felt that it would be beneficial if the Committee considered the draft statement prior to consideration by Cabinet on 12 August 2009. The Chairman of the Regeneration and Sustainable Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that it would be useful and would serve as a suitable alternative to a review of the Economic Development Strategy.

2. Regeneration Statement

- 2.1 The Draft Regeneration Statement is attached at Appendix A. The following extract from the draft statement explains the background to its production:

"In 2001 Maidstone's regeneration approach was rated by the Audit Commission as poor, but with promising prospects for improvement. Since that time regeneration policy and activity has been developed in a range of work streams but remains somewhat fragmented. The creation of the Prosperity of Regeneration Department in February 2009 and the signal therefore that regeneration is to have a greater emphasis along with the impact of the economic downturn have prompted the drafting of a Regeneration Statement for the borough.

The purpose of this statement is to:

- Define what is meant by regeneration
- To set out the existing Strategies and Policies that promote regeneration
- To put forward a structured approach to regeneration which suggests initially for the development of public land first."

2.2 The production of a more comprehensive strategy will be considered after the adoption of the statement and Members may wish to also be involved in this.

3 Recommendation

3.1 The Economic Development Manager will be in attendance at the Committee's meeting on the 28 July 2009 to discuss the draft Regeneration Statement.

3.2 Members are recommended to consider the comments of the witness and ask questions with regard to the draft Regeneration Statement as they feel appropriate and make recommendations as they see fit.

3.3 Furthermore, Members are asked to consider and make recommendations on the following aspects of the draft Regeneration Statement:

- The definition of regeneration to be adopted for Maidstone; and
- The consequent approach and priorities to be put forward to the Cabinet for adoption by the Council.

3.4 Members are reminded that "Quality Recommendations" are those that adhere to the following categories:

- Recommendations that affect and make a difference to local people;
- Recommendations that result in a change in policy that improves services;
- Recommendations that identify savings and maintain/improve service quality; or
- Recommendations that objectively identify a solution.