

Maidstone Borough Council

Scrutiny Coordinating Committee

Thursday 28 November 2013

Scrutiny Recommendations

Report of: Christian Scade, Senior Corporate Policy Officer

1. Introduction

1.1 The issue of making, and monitoring, recommendations is an important part of the scrutiny process and the Scrutiny Coordinating Committee, in its report to Council (April, 2013) on the Cabinet and Enhanced Scrutiny Model made the following recommendations:

- Cabinet Members should attend Committee meetings to present completed Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action Plans and the action that will be taken following recommendations;
- The Scrutiny Coordinating Committee should meet quarterly and monitor Overview and Scrutiny Committee recommendations as part of its role.

1.2 This is an opportunity for the Coordinating Committee, in view of experiences this municipal year, to review the quality of recommendations that have been made and determine how it wishes to monitor Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action Plans.

2. Recommendation

2.1 That the Committee note the report and provide feedback on the quality of recommendations that have been made and determine how Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action Plans will be monitored.

3. Quality Recommendations

3.1 In general resolutions requiring further action from officers, Cabinet Members and / or other stakeholders should be as clear as possible to ensure the correct information is provided and agreed outputs met. When drafting recommendations it is important to capture the main issues arising from the debate in a concise format. Vague conclusions and unspecific recommendations are unlikely to add value.

3.2 The scrutiny team has developed the following types of quality recommendations:

- 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

3.3 By using these criteria, the quality of Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations can be recorded, by officers, as part of "Reach the Summit", the Council's monthly performance management system.

3.4 A summary for the period April 2011 – Q2 2013/14* is provided below along with further information for 2013/14.

	Target (%)	Result (%)	Status
April 2011	50	48	
May 2011	50	N/A	
June 2011	50	33	
July 2011	50	57	
August 2011	50	61	
September 2011	50	54	
October 2011	50	50	
November 2011	50	75	
December 2011	50	80	
January 2012	50	50	
February 2012	50	61	
March 2012	50	80	
Q1 2012/2013*	60	100	
Q2 2012/2013	60	41	
Q3 2012/2013	60	46	
Q3 2012/2013	60	47	
Q1 2013/2014	60	58	
Q2 2013/2014	60	51	

* From 2012/2013 data was collected quarterly instead of monthly

Quarter (2013/2014)	Total no. of recommendations	No. of recommendations that are "quality"	%
1	12	7	58
2	70	36	51

4. Next Steps and Recommendation Implementation

- 4.1 Scrutiny Committee Recommendation Action Implementation Plans (SCRAIPs), set out recommendations following scrutiny meetings and reviews, information is sought on the plan as to whether recommendations are accepted, the action that will be taken and by whom.
- 4.2 SCRAIPs will be issued as soon as possible following a scrutiny meeting (once recommendations have been approved by the Scrutiny Chairman) and recommendations should be responded to within one month of the date of issue.
- 4.3 SCRAIPs for each Overview and Scrutiny Committees are attached in appendices to this report.
- 4.4 Since the start of the 2013/14 municipal year, recommendations have been made, and information sought, across a number of areas.
- Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services OSC (Appendix A)
 - o SCRAIPs include -
 - o Commissioning and Procurement
 - o Use of 2012/13 Revenue Underspend
 - o The SCRAIP in relation to the Budget Strategy is incomplete
 - Community, Leisure Services & Environment OSC (Appendix B)
 - o SCRAIPs include -
 - o Cabinet Member for Environment – Priorities for 2013/14
 - o Approval of a New Play Area Strategic Standard
 - o Collective Switching of Energy Supplier Scheme for Householders
 - o The Warm Homes Energy Company Obligation (ECO) Pilot
 - o The SCRAIPs in relation to the Health Inequalities Action Plan for Maidstone and Accessing Mental Health Services Before The Point of Crisis are incomplete
 - Planning, Transport and Development OSC (Appendix C)
 - o SCRAIPs include -
 - o Cabinet Member for Planning, Transport and Development – Priorities for 2013/14
 - o Maidstone Borough Local Plan Public Consultation

- o The SCRAIPs in relation to Maidstone Landscape Character Assessment, Maidstone Borough Local Plan Development Management Policies and the Community Infrastructure Levy are incomplete
- o In addition, the minutes from Council (October, 2013) are attached, following scrutiny of the methodology and the judgements that need to be made in calculating the five year housing supply
- Economic and Commercial Development OSC (Appendix D)
 - o SCRAIPs include –
 - o Update on Market Review
 - o Visitor Information Centre Review
 - o Employability and Worklessness

5. Background Documents

5.1 None