

Appendix B - 2015-16 Action Plan

We measure progress towards a number of communication and engagement objectives as set in appendix 2.

The actions we will take to achieve these objectives are listed below, along with actions to improve communication with councillors following the transfer to the council's new committee system in 2015-16.

Objective - Satisfaction with local area as a place to live					
What we plan to do	Anticipated Outcomes	By whom	When	Inform/ Consult/ Engage	Strategic Priority
Engage with residents to identify residents' needs and aspirations for the new homes bonus and community infrastructure levy.	A targeted approach to the distribution of these resources.	Head of Planning and Development Communications Manager	2015	Engage	Keeping Maidstone Borough an attractive place for all
Help people understand and actively engage in local issues and opportunities through community forums such as - Maidstone Older Person's Forum, Disability Focus Group and BME Forum.	People involved in local policy and decision making. Improved networking, collaboration and partnership between the voluntary and community sector and agencies building their organisational capacities. Better community cohesion and equality of opportunity for all throughout the Maidstone borough.	Head of Housing and Community Services	Annually	Engage	Putting People First
Objective – Trust the council					
What we plan to do	Anticipated Outcomes	By whom	When	Inform/ Consult/ Engage	Strategic Priority
Develop a plan to communicate funding issues and their implications to residents.	Increased awareness and understanding of new commercial activities.	Head of Policy and Communications	September 2015	Inform	Putting People First
Communicate changes to governance arrangements to ensure residents understand how they can get involved in decision-making.	Increased awareness and participation by residents in council decision making.	Head of Policy and Communications	June 2015	Engage	Putting People First

Regular feedback on the results of consultations on our website and through other channels as appropriate.	Increased trust among residents that consultation results are taken into account and do influence decision making.	Head of Policy and Communications	On-going	Inform	Putting People First
Objective - Residents can influence decisions affecting their local area					
What we plan to do	Anticipated Outcomes	By whom	When	Inform/ Consult/ Engage	Strategic Priority
Rollout an online Events Toolkit to support local community events and activities. Provide training events and workshops such as Community Participatory Appraisal and Planning for Real neighbourhood engagement.	Individuals and communities empowered and more resilient through training, information, advice and support. Increased confidence, skills, knowledge and ability to participate in community life, engage with services, local decision-making and democratic processes and take action for themselves.	Head of Housing and Community Services	Annually	Engage	Putting People First
Develop ways in which residents can have their say and influence the Council's new decision making process including the opportunity for regular dialogue and engagement.	Greater participation by residents in council decision making.	Head of Policy and Communications Head of Finance and Resources	June – July 2015	Engage	Putting People First
Participation in Democracy Week 2015	Raised awareness of the opportunities residents have to take part in council decision making.	Head of Finance and Resources	October 2015	Engage	Putting People First
Seminars and training in community engagement for staff and councillors.	More councillors and staff running community engagement events for their communities and service areas.	Head of HR Shared Services Head of Housing and Community Services Head of Finance and Resources	Annually	Engage	Putting People First

To partner with the community in decision making with neighbourhood action planning in Maidstone's areas of deprivation to involve community groups, residents and public organisations working together to tackle neighbourhood issues.	Communities have an input into addressing health, housing and wellbeing issues in their localities. Consultation and decision-making placed in the hands of the community.	Head of Housing and Community Services	Annually	Engage	Putting People First
Identify hard to reach groups and develop effective means of engaging with them, working with our partners when appropriate to ensure our communications and engagements are inclusive.	More representative samples from council consultations and greater participation in council engagement activities.	Head of Policy and Communications Head of Housing and Community Services	Review April – June annually	Inform/ Consult/ Engage	Putting People First
Objective - People from different backgrounds get on well together					
What we plan to do	Anticipated Outcomes	By whom	When	Inform/ Consult/ Engage	Strategic Priority
Develop a guide to communities across the borough containing data about communication preferences and other information available through sources such as Mosaic and Acorn to better target communications.	Improved targeting of information and engagement activities so that people receive the information most relevant to them, improving their engagement with and trust in the council.	Head of Policy and Communications	April 2015 – March 2016	Engage	Putting People First
Objective - Satisfaction with the way Maidstone Borough Council runs its services					
What we plan to do	Anticipated Outcomes	By whom	When	Inform/ Consult/ Engage	Strategic Priority
You Said... We Did quarterly campaigns/information.	Increased trust in the council. Staff and residents more informed about services and changes made as a result of customer/staff feedback.	Head of Policy and Communications	2015-2016	Inform	Putting People First
Produce Annual Report on the council's progress towards achieving its strategic plan priorities.	Increased trust in the council. Greater understanding of the council's strategic priorities	Head of Policy and Communications			

A consistent and memorable corporate identity on all front facing services.	Increased trust in the council. Greater understanding of how council tax is spent, demonstrating value for money.	Head of Policy and Communications		Inform	Putting People First
Objective – Information about the council services and benefits					
What we plan to do	Anticipated Outcomes	By whom	When	Inform/ Consult/ Engage	Strategic Priority
A review of our external communications channels including our newsletter and social networking accounts.	More effective communication and better value for money.	Head of Policy and Communications	July – September 2015	Inform	Putting People First
A new Social media Strategy, building on our policy for social networking accounts.	Clear direction for the council's use of social media to make sure that it effectively contributes to the council's priorities	Head of Policy and Communications	April – June 2015	Engage	Putting People First
'Our day' social media campaigns highlighting council services.	Increased awareness of council services, improving trust and understanding of how council tax is spent.	Head of Policy and Communications	Quarterly	Inform	Putting People First
Working for you features in our newsletter and social media.	Increased awareness of council services, improving trust and understanding of how council tax is spent.	Head of Policy and Communications	Each issue	Inform	Putting People First
Objective - Value for money					
What we plan to do	Anticipated Outcomes	By whom	When	Inform/ Consult/ Engage	Strategic Priority
Annual budget consultation for residents and staff including value for money information and report.	Increased understanding of how council tax is spent, improving trust in the council and belief that it provides value for money.	Head of Policy and Communications Head of Finance and Resources	October – January Annually	Consult/ Inform	Putting People First

Annual Council tax publicity – value of services provided.	Increased understanding of how council tax is spent, improving trust in the council and belief that it provides value for money.	Head of Policy and Communications Head of Finance and Resources	April annually	Inform	Putting People First
Objective - Employee engagement					
What we plan to do	Anticipated Outcomes	By whom	When	Inform/ Consult/ Engage	Strategic Priority
An annual One Council rhythm of the year programme of co-ordinated staff communication and engagement activities including - One Council briefings, Core Brief, team talks, Staff Forum, health and wellbeing week, and STRIVE awards etc.	Increased employee engagement leading to better understanding of the council's strategic plan and priorities.	Head of Policy and Communications Head of HR Shared Service	Annually	Engage	Putting People First
Objective – Improve communication with councillors					
What we plan to do	Anticipated Outcomes	By whom	When	Inform/ Consult/ Engage	Strategic Priority
Support councillors to raise their profiles in their local areas to lead their communities and bring forward ideas to the council.	Improved resident engagement with the council.	Councillors Head of Policy and Communications	Annually	Engage	Putting People First