

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

21 NOVEMBER 2012

REPORT OF HEAD OF CHANGE & SCRUTINY

Report prepared by Clare Wood

1. MID YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

1.1 Issue for Decision

1.1.1 Cabinet is asked to consider progress made in the year to date against the Strategic Plan 2011-15 actions and progress made in the second quarter of 2012/13 for the authority's key performance indicators (KPIs).

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Change & Scrutiny

1.2.1 That Corporate Leadership Team:

- a) Note the progress made against the Strategic Actions;
- b) Note the out-turns of the KPIs (Appendix A), definitions are included for reference at Appendix B;
- c) Note the areas that have been rated red for two consecutive quarters for which action plans have already been requested; and
- d) Agree any other areas where service representation or further actions are required to understand and/ or improve performance, it is recommended that the following areas are considered for action planning or further information on performance as at present it is unlikely that the annual target will be achieved:
 - HRO 001 – Working days lost due to sickness absence (rolling year); and
 - DCE 001 – Percentage of planning enforcement cases signed off within 21 days.

- e) Review and agreed the action plans that were requested for underperforming indicators at quarter 1 relating to housing and the contact centre at Appendix D.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.3.1 The Council has 26 Strategic Actions that were agreed as part of the Strategic Plan 2011-15, The Mid-year performance report has been produced to include progress updates against all Strategic Plan actions to assess if the Council is going to achieve its outcomes and priorities.
- 1.3.2 The Council has also set 60 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) in the Strategic Plan 2011-15; there are 29 indicators that can be reported at the mid-year point to check if the authority is on track to meet its targets.
- 1.3.3 The Council's quarterly performance reporting cycle is aligned with financial reporting to enable it to effectively oversee financial performance against corporate priorities and assess whether value for money is being achieved in the delivery of services. The Budget Monitoring Report shows a £331,515 underspend.

1.4 Context

- 1.4.1 The Council uses a range of information to manage performance, including actions and performance indicators.
- 1.4.2 The Council's top-level indicators are referred to as Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), are set in the Strategic Plan and linked to the Strategic Outcomes and Priorities. Both the Strategic actions and KPIs were reviewed and the number of KPIs reduced last year by Cabinet. These will continue to be reviewed annually to ensure that they are aligned with the Council's priorities.
- 1.4.3 In order to provide a 'picture' of Maidstone a borough profile (Appendix C) has been created to provide some contextual detail about the borough and help understand what is distinct about Maidstone.

1.5 Performance Summary

- 1.5.1 Appendix A shows progress against all the strategic actions and out-turn data for all indicators that can be collected quarterly and bi-annually. Some indicators are collected annually; these indicators are therefore not included in this report.
- 1.5.2 Of the 26 actions updates in this report, three have been completed. The remaining 23 actions all have the deadline of 31 March 2015 as this is when the current Strategic Plan is due to be completed.

Significant progress has been achieved and action has been taken including:

- The Core Strategy has been out to public consultation.
- The Economic Development Strategy has been reviewed.
- A revised housing Allocation Strategy is being developed.
- A new waste contract has been procured jointly for Maidstone, Ashford and Swale and integrated with waste disposal arrangements procured by Kent County Council
- A democratic Engagement action plan has been agreed and is being progressed.
- A new correspondence recording and management IT system has been purchased and the complaint handling module has been rolled out.
- The Customer Centricity project, which is reviewing how the Council interacts with our customers, has completed its first phase and potential changes are currently the subject of consultation with the public and councilors.

1.5.3 Where an indicator is new and there is no quarterly or bi-annual 2010/11 data, no direction of travel can be given. The direction of travel for pre-existing indicators compares the current out-turn for quarter 2 with the 2010/11 quarter 2 out-turn.

1.5.4 The following tables show the status of performance indicators in relation to target and direction of travel.

	Green	Amber	Red	N/A ¹	Total
KPIs	15 (55.5%)	9 (33.3%)	4 (14.8%)	2	29

	Improved	Maintained	Declined	N/A	Total
KPIs	9 (33.3%)	2 (7.4%)	16 (59.3%)	2	29

1.5.5 Overall, 55.5% of performance indicators have been rated green (currently on target) compared to 59% at the same point in 2011/12. However; using percentages to compare performance does not, in this case give a true picture of direction of travel. In fact at the mid-year point in 2011/12 only 13 indicators were rated green.

1.5.6 Of the 25 KPIs where a direction of travel can be assessed, 33.3% (9) have improved. When mid-year results for this year were compared with those for 2011/12 it showed that in 2011/12, only 29% (4) indicators reported had improved.

¹ N/A figures are not included in percentage calculations

- 1.5.7 At the mid-year point in 2011/12 there were 13 indicators rated green, eight rated amber and one red. For four indicators performance had improved, ten had declined and 12 indicators could not be rated as there was no previous data or they were data only performance indicators. The lack of previous data made it difficult to make comparisons.
- 1.5.8 The four indicators that were showing as red at quarter one are still the same ones that have been rated red at the mid-year point. Cabinet have already requested action plans for these indicators and will need to consider if there are any further action plans required to address performance concerns.
- 1.5.9 It should be noted that at the end of 2011/12, 63% of all KPIs achieved their annual targets and 57% of out-turns had improved since the previous year. Each year all targets are reviewed and where possible targets are increased to ensure continuous improvement so that targets are challenging, targets are not amended during the year but where priorities have changed Service manager are asked for comment.

A growing economy

- 1.5.10 In relation to the outcome, a transport network that supports the local economy, the Integrated Transport Strategy (ITS) and Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP) have both been progressed. The Council has received 1,868 comments as a result of the public consultation. An update on the infrastructure Delivery Plan went to Cabinet in July and an updated IDP will be progressed alongside the Core Strategy.
- 1.5.11 The Local Development Framework, Core Strategy and Economic Development Strategy, which come under the outcome, a growing economy with rising employment, catering for a range of skill sets to meet have all been progressed. The Council has introduced a new role of Business Champion to build relationships with the business community and the Economic Development Strategy has been reviewed and is due to be signed off by the end of the year. The Core Strategy has been out for public consultation and the team is currently assessing the representations made.
- 1.5.12 There are two indicators that can be reported at the mid-year point that relate to the transport network. Both the Number of onboard park and ride bus transactions (PKG 007) and income from pay and display car parks per space (PKG 002) have been rated amber and for both performance has declined compared to the same period last year. It is thought that the roadworks in the town centre has impacted on the number of people visiting the town centre, though this is likely to have

a greater affect on car park income than the park and ride services. However; a number of initiatives are being explored to encourage greater use of the park and ride services including on board Wi-Fi and mobile applications. The services are also being advertised at the new Maidstone United FC Stadium.

- 1.5.13 The Percentage of people claiming Job Seekers Allowance has remained stable at 2.5% for the 2nd quarter in a row. This is positive despite the amber rating. The Council's position amongst the Kent districts for unemployment also remains unchanged with Maidstone currently 5th, Tunbridge Wells is 1st with 1.6% and Thanet is 12th with 6.1%.
- 1.5.14 The value of the pre-application advice service (DCV 002a & b) can be seen with 100% of major applications using the service in quarter 2 and 100% of applications subsequently being approved.

A decent place to live

- 1.5.15 The Housing Service continues to perform under pressure. The number of households prevented from becoming homeless through the intervention of housing (HSG 005) advice failed to achieve the quarterly target for the second quarter in a row. This is due to the large number of people presenting as homeless. By this stage the opportunity to intervene and prevent them from becoming homeless has passed. Cabinet requested an action plan to improve performance at quarter 1 this is included at Appendix D.
- 1.5.16 Despite the pressures on the Council's housing team, progress has been made in delivering new housing, with 137 out of 200 affordable homes expected to be delivered in 2012/13 already delivered (HSG 001). The Teenage Pregnancy Unit and a new Mental Health Unit have also been completed. Last year there was a Department of Communities and Local Government peer review into the housing advice services, the recommendations of which are currently being implemented including a revised Allocation Scheme that will be adopted in January 2013.
- 1.5.17 As a result of the Q1 performance report the Cabinet requested an action plan to address under performance in the number of homes occupied by vulnerable people made decent (HSG PS 002). The main cause of privately owned and privately rented homes not being decent is poor thermal comfort. The Council's ability to address this has been constrained by removal of government energy efficiency grants. An action plan is set out at Appendix D. In order to capture the work that the Council does in this area the team intends to revise the indicator methodology next year. It is expected that annual target for 2012/13 will not be achieved.

1.5.18 Although the percentage of residential planning applications processed within statutory timescales (DCV 001) marginally missed the quarter 2 target, performance is on track for the year. There was a high level of sickness within the team during quarter 2 and the team is currently advertising for a new Planning Officer. Providing this improves to a minimum of 93% for the last two quarters the annual target will be achieved.

1.5.19 As part of the outcome for Maidstone to be a clean and attractive environment the Mote Park Regeneration and Museum projects have been delivered and the data shows that there has been a 3% increase in footfall at Mote Park compared to 2011/12 and there has been an increase of 19.7% in visit and uses of the museum per 1,000 population.

1.5.20 The Environmental Enforcement team has maintained their high standard and has responded to 99.70% of all fly-tipping reports in one working day (DEP 007). It should be noted that there has been a policy change at Tovil Household Waste Recycling Centre that came into force on 1st October 2012. There is a risk that this change in policy could increase the number of fly-tips for the following quarters; this is being monitored.

1.5.21 Although the Planning Enforcement team achieved the quarter 2 target for signing off planning enforcement cases within 21 days (DCE 001), unless performance improves to a minimum of 97.5% for the next two quarters the annual target will not be achieved. This is likely as the highest performance recorded for this indicator was at quarter 2 last year with 94.44%.

Corporate & Customer Excellence

1.5.22 As part of ensuring that our services are customer focused a new correspondence system has been purchased and been rolled out to manage the complaints process, it is expected that the next stage will be to use the system for recording and monitoring freedom of information requests.

1.5.23 Unfortunately the average wait time for calls into the contact centre (CTC 001) has increased to 1 minute 48 seconds, last quarter it was 1 minute 19 seconds. The second quarter of the year is always difficult as it is the time of year where the majority of staff take some holiday. The team also lost two experienced staff members and while these posts have been filled it will take several months to fully train the new starters to handle all of the contact centre's various processes. In addition it should be noted that there has been an increase in the number of customer emails that are now being responded to by the

contact centre. At quarter 1 Cabinet requested an action plan for this indicator (Appendix D), a plan has been produced and includes actions on automating the switchboard which should have a significant impact on the number of calls received by the contact centre and channel shift which should have also reduced the overall calls to the contact centre. In order to address demands for service for the medium term considerable time and resource is being invested in improving the quality of our web offer; changes will also be recommended as a result of the review of how the council interacts with customers.

1.5.24 In the Gateway there has been a 5% increase in the number of customers seeing a Customer Services Advisor. This has led to an increase in the overall response time to visitors in the Gateway (CTC 002). As with the contact centre many staff choose to take holiday during quarter 2 and in addition the team has taken on further work for planning and housing which has increased the enquiry time. At quarter 1 Cabinet requested action plans for both the average wait time for calls into the contact centre (CTC 001) and percentage of visitors to the gateway responded to within 20 minutes (CTC 002). The Action Plan is attached at Appendix D action taken includes cross-training staff and work on implementing a new automated switchboard.

1.5.25 As part of delivering effective, cost efficient services the Council has been looking at different ways of providing services. The contract for running the Hazlitt theatre is currently out for tender and it is expected that a decision will be made by the end of the year. Reports on Environmental Health and Planning Support went to the Mid-Kent Improvement Partnership (MKIP) board in September and business cases are expected to be considered in December 2012. The Council has agreed a ICT partnership with Swale and Tunbridge Wells borough councils. Through aligning ICT systems more efficient use of the ICT resource will be enabled, the business case predicts a saving of £3.7 million over the next 10 years.

1.5.26 The Council Tax and National Non Domestic Rates collection rates have marginally missed the quarterly target. A recovery timetable is in place and will continue to be followed. A similar decline in performance for this indicator is also being experienced by other Kent authorities. This is also highlighted in the budget monitoring report which is also on this agenda.

1.5.27 Progress on the Customer Centricity project can be seen through the low out-turns for avoidable contact (CTC 004) and improvement in the percentage of financial transactions not carried out on-line or by direct debit/ standing order (BIM 002).

1.6 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.6.1 The strategic actions and KPIs reflect local priorities and measure progress towards the Council’s Strategic Outcomes. They are the Council’s top level actions and indicators and are part of the Council’s Strategic Plan.

1.6.2 Not monitoring progress against the Strategic Plan 2011-15 could mean that the Council fails to deliver its priorities and would also mean that action could not be taken effectively to address performance during the year.

1.7 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.7.1 The Strategic Actions and Key Performance Indicators are part of the Council’s overarching Strategic Plan 2011-15 and play an important role in the achievement of our corporate objectives as well as covering a wide range of service and priority areas; for example, waste and recycling.

1.8 Risk Management

1.8.1 The production of robust performance reports contributes to ensuring that the view of the authority’s approach to the management of risk and use of resources is not undermined and allows early action to be taken in order to mitigate the risk of not achieving targets and outcomes.

1.9 Other Implications

1.9.1

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

9. Asset Management



Financial

1.9.2 Performance indicators and targets are closely linked to the allocation of resources and determining good value for money.

1.9.3 The financial implications of any proposed changes are also identified and taken into account in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan and associated annual budget setting process with performance issues highlighted as part of the budget monitoring reporting process.

Staffing

1.9.4 Having a clear set of targets enables staff outcomes/objectives to be set and effective action plans to be put in place.

Environmental

1.9.5 The actions and indicators cover and are used to monitor a number of priority areas.

1.10 Relevant Documents

Strategic Plan 2011-15

1.10.1 Appendices

Appendix A – Mid-Year Strategic plan Update and KPI Performance Report - 2012/13.

Appendix B – Indicator Definitions 2012/13

Appendix C – Borough Profile

Appendix D – Action Plans

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

Yes

No

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

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This is a Key Decision because:

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Wards/Parishes affected:

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