

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL
STRATEGIC LEADERSHIP & CORPORATE SERVICES
OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 9 JUNE 2013
REPORT OF HEAD OF CHANGE AND SCRUTINY

Report prepared by Clare Wood

1. STRATEGIC PLAN ANNUAL PERFORMANCE REPORT

1.1 Issue for Decision

- 1.1.1 To consider the end of year Strategic Plan action updates, Improvement Plan update and Key Performance Indicator out-turns for 2012/13.

1.2 Recommendation of Head of Change & Scrutiny

- 1.2.1 It is recommended that Strategic Leadership & Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee:
- a) Note the Performance Out-turns and end of year Strategic Plan action updates in the Strategic Plan Annual Performance Report at Appendix A;
 - b) Note the update on the Improvement Plan work streams at Appendix B; and
 - c) Agree to an action plan being developed to tackle the decline in the overall employment rate (AMB 001) and consider if any further action needs to be taken.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

- 1.3.1 Having a comprehensive and relevant set of performance indicators and targets is vital to ensure that the Council delivers the priorities and outcomes set up until 2015. It is important to look at these measures and set targets that reflect the Council's overall aim of continuous improvement. Definitions of performance indicators are included at Appendix C for reference. To provide some contextual

information the borough profile is included for reference at Appendix D.

1.4 Performance Summary 2012/13

1.4.1 There were 58 key performance indicators (KPIs) agreed in the Strategic Plan 2011-15 for 2012/13 relating to seven strategic outcomes, overall 60.5% of KPIs achieved the annual target set and for 43% of indicators performance improved. In 2011/12 63% of the targets were met and 57% of indicators had improved.

1.4.2 There are 13 indicators that have been rated as amber (within 10% of target) of these 13 it should be noted that six¹ (46%) only marginally missed the target and achieved a minimum of 95% of target. Of the 25 indicators that show a decline in performance 11² (44%) of these have declined by 5% or less.

1.4.3 In terms of the Strategic Plan Outcomes, performance has been strong for the clean and attractive place to live and residents are not disadvantaged outcomes but weaker for the priority a growing economy with down turns in transport data. It is good to see that despite the economic situation the Council has maintained performance and continued to ensure outcomes are achieved particularly in the area of reducing disadvantage and deprivation.

1.4.4 Performance against target

Performance against target	On Target	Missed target (within 10%)	Target not achieved	N/A	Total
For Maidstone to have a growing economy	5 (55%)	4 (45%)	0	3	12
For Maidstone to be a decent place to live	14 (64%)	6 (30%)	2 (10%)	4	26
Corporate & Customer excellence	7 (58%)	3 (25%)	2 (17%)	8	20
Total	26 (60.5%)	13 (30%)	4 (9.5%)	15	58

1.4.5 Direction of performance

Direction of Performance	Improved	Sustained	Declined	N/A	Total
For Maidstone to have a growing economy	4 (36%)	1 (9%)	6 (55%)	1	12
For Maidstone to be a decent place to live	11 (46%)	0	13 (54%)	2	26
Corporate & Customer excellence	5 (42%)	1 (8%)	6 (50%)	8	20
Total	20 (43%)	2 (4%)	25 (53%)	11	58

¹ PKG 002, WCN 001, WCN 005, HSG 005, R&B 009, DCV 009

² PKG 002, LVE 003, DCV 003, HSG 003, DEP 002, DEP 007, WCN 004, WCN 005, HSG 005, R&B 009, DCV 009

1.5 Good Performance

- 1.5.1 At the moment unemployment levels are relatively low as are the numbers claiming Job Seekers Allowance however there are some concerns about longer term trends including the loss of public sector jobs and start up rates for new businesses. In terms of positive results for the local economy Over 90% of all commercial applications were completed within the statutory timescales (DCV 001) and for major planning applications all of those that took pre-application advice subsequently their applications were approved (DCV 002a).
- 1.5.2 The Council has progressed the Local Development Scheme during 2013 and a Local Plan, carrying forward existing work to date on the Core Strategy, to produce a single Local Plan for Maidstone which is expected to be presented to members in September 2013. The Integrated transport Strategy will also be considered at this time.
- 1.5.3 LVE 002 - The percentage of people claiming job seekers allowance (JSA) has fluctuated throughout the year. Although the annual target was marginally missed, performance has improved from 2011/12 and at March 2013 there were 52 fewer people claiming JSA. It should be noted that there has also been a 2% increase in the working age population.
- 1.5.4 Although the percentage of vacant retail units in the town centre (LVE 003) has decreased marginally, this was expected and taken into account when the target set, the actual value of business ratable floor space (R&B 002) has increased by £1,877,924 (1.3%).
- 1.5.5 During 2012/13 the council has delivered 244 affordable homes (HSG 001), achieving the annual target. Although this is less than was delivered in 2011/12 the programme is still on track, it should be noted that Maidstone has the highest delivery of affordable housing in Kent and has done for the last three years. During 2012/13 the Housing department revised the Allocations Policy this took effect from April 2013 and a new Housing Assistance Policy has been created which links in with the Housing Strategy and the new Allocations Policy, giving the council the ability to house homeless people in private rented accommodation.
- 1.5.6 All of the finance indicators relating to the priority 'For Maidstone to be a decent place to live' have achieved their annual targets and all costs are lower than they were in 2011/12.
- 1.5.7 During 2012/13 the running of the Hazlitt Theatre went out to tender. Parkwood Leisure's bid was successful; they plan to introduce new

shows and performances as well as supporting some of the existing shows. Parkwood Leisure currently operate 84 facilities on behalf of 25 local authority clients. A new waste contract was also awarded in 2012/13 which will save the Council £1million a year. The new contract will commence in August and will allow Maidstone residents to recycle more, for example glass and small electrical items through the doorstep service.

- 1.5.8 Performance is strong for the outcome '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'. INT 001 - The percentage of the borough covered by broadband internet (2mb and faster) has increased by 10% and now more than three quarters of the borough have access to this service. The gap between median wage of employees (resident) and employees (workplace) weekly earnings (LVE 007) has reduced by £11 giving a positive direction.
- 1.5.9 The average time taken to process housing benefit/council tax new claims and change events (R&B 004) and average time taken to process and notify applicants on the housing register (HSG 004) have both reduced, the Benefits team now process these items in less than ten working days and the Housing team are now processing new applicants in less than three days.
- 1.5.10 Although the data is released a year in arrears, it appears that the number of 16-18 years olds who are not in education, employment or training (NEETS) (KCC 002) is heading in the right direction with a decrease of 0.9% between 2010/11 and 2011/12.
- 1.5.11 In relation to the priority Corporate & Customer Excellence satisfaction with complaint handling performed well throughout the year achieving the annual target for the first time since 2009/10, performance has also improved compared to last year. During 2012/13 the Council reviewed the Persistent and Vexatious Complainants Policy and the Complaints Reports have been amended to include more analysis.
- 1.5.12 Performance around revenue is strong: both percentage of non-domestic rates collected (R&B 005) and percentage of council tax collected (R&B 006) have achieved target. These are key indicators for the Council especially now that local authorities have more control over non-domestic rates (business rates). In addition the fraud partnership identified £974,000 in fraud (R&B 007).
- 1.5.13 The Council is becoming smarter in how it transacts with customers, with the percentage of financial transactions not carried out online or by direct debit/standing order (BIM 002) improving by 3.6% and achieving annual target. Avoidable contact has also reduced and the target has been met. In addition the customer focused services review

has been completed and the Council's website has been re-designed and went live in May. There are six workstreams in the Improvement Plan of which, 2 (33%) have been rated green and four (66%) have been rated amber. Within the External Challenge workstream, there is one action that has been rated red, this is in relation to the work in Building Control. A full update on the Improvement Plan workstreams is included at Appendix B.

1.6 Areas where targets were not achieved

- 1.6.1 As predicted sickness absence (HRO 001), average wait time for calls into the contact centre (CTC 001) and number of homes made decent (HSG PS 002) did not achieve target. Action plans were requested at quarter 1 for CTC 001 and HSG PS 002 and progress has been reported to Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet alongside the quarterly performance reports.
- 1.6.2 A new indicator has been devised to replace HSG PS 002 – Number of homes occupied by vulnerable people made decent. From 2012/13 the team will report on the number of private sector homes improved, this covers improvements that have a positive impact on the occupants health, safety or welfare.
- 1.6.3 There have been fluctuations in the average wait time for calls into the contact centre throughout 2012/13. Resources have impacted on this indicator during the year due to staff turnover and the time it takes to fully train new advisors.. In order to mitigate this impact Customer Service Advisors are now being cross trained. The implementation of the automated switchboard, as well as actions in the channel shift project should reduce the overall number of calls to the contact centre.
- 1.6.4 There has been a decline in the overall employment rate (AMB 001) and percentage of working people educated to NVQ level 4 or higher (KCC 003). Currently Maidstone is third out of the 12 Kent authorities in relation to overall employment rate, there has been a decrease of 6.8%, and consequently that annual target has not been achieved. Interestingly there has also been a significant drop in the percentage of people educated to NVQ level 4 or higher. There has been an actual drop of 15% (-5,200) in the number of people in this group, alongside a rise in the number of people of working age (16-64). This drop could be due to the rising cost of further education, however it should be noted that there has also been an increase in the number of working age population with no qualifications from 5,100 people in 2011/12 to 6,700 in 2012/13 this equates to 7% of the working age population.
- 1.6.5 The two transport indicators that can be rated have both marginally missed their targets. Car park income (PKG 002) is down; it is thought that this is partly due to the ongoing gas works in the town centre but

could also be down the people using private funded car parks. The Parking Services Manager has put in a claim to the gas company however even if successful this will not cover the shortfall. With regard to Park and Ride transactions the number of transactions has declined, however action has been taken to mitigate the financial pressures on the service including a renegotiation of the contract.

1.6.6 The percentage of residents participating in neighbourhood planning as a percentage of the ward population (CDP 003) has failed to achieve target. Although overall more people were engaged in the process this year, 964 compared with 600 for Park wood Neighbourhood action plan in 2011/12, due to a larger ward population the over percentage has decreased.

1.6.7 The sickness levels have increased mostly due to long term absence or re-occurring illness. The main reasons for sickness absence in 2012/13 were depression, kidney issues, chest infections and various operations. Short-term sickness currently stands at 3.24days per employee. The Council now uses a system known as Bradford scoring which identifies patterns in absences, of the 22 staff members with high Bradford scores, nine have had no further instances of absence. The Council is undertaking a health and well-being programme to improve health.

1.7 Alternative Action and why not Recommended

1.7.1 Previously the Local Authority had a duty to produce a Best Value Performance Plan setting out the annual out-turns for all performance indicators and targets for the next three years. In 2009 this duty was removed it is still considered best practice to produce an annual performance report as well as set and publish targets for the next three years.

1.8 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.8.1 Both the Strategic Plan actions and Key Performance Indicators are part of the Council's overarching Strategic Plan 2011-15 which sets out the Council's priorities and outcomes. The actions and KPIs are key to identifying how the priorities will be achieved and measuring success.

1.9 Risk Management

1.9.1 The production of a robust performance plan contributes to minimising risks, good data quality and improving use of resources.

1.10 Other Implications

1.10.1

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

Financial

- 1.10.2 The financial implications of any proposed changes are also identified and taken into account in the Council's budget setting process with issues highlighted as part of the budget monitoring reporting process.

Staffing

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

Environmental/Sustainable Development, Community Safety & Procurement

- 1.10.4 The performance indicators cover and are used to monitor a number of priority areas.

1.11 Relevant Documents

1.11.1 Appendices

Appendix A – Strategic Plan Performance Report
Appendix B – Improvement Plan Progress Update
Appendix C – KPI definitions
Appendix D – Borough Profile

1.11.2 Background Documents

[Strategic Plan 2011-15](#) (2013-14 Refresh)

IS THIS A KEY DECISION REPORT?

THIS BOX MUST BE COMPLETED

Yes

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No

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If yes, this is a Key Decision because:

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Wards/Parishes affected:

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