

Maidstone Borough Council

Strategic Leadership and Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday 4 March 2014

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1. The Council as a Business Review (Follow Up)

1.1 Issue for Consideration

1.1.1 The Committee to receive an update on the recommendations of the Council as a Business Review.

1.2 Recommendation of the Head of Policy and Communications

1.2.1 That the Committee note the current position with regard to the recommendations of the Council as a Business Review and consider whether a further update should be produced for consideration at a future meeting.

1.3 Reasons for Recommendation

1.3.1 At its meeting on 7 June 2011, the Corporate Services Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed to carry out a review that explored the financial restraints faced by the Council and how savings could be achieved in a more innovative manner.

1.3.2 The focus of the review diversified to include the evaluation of "businesslike" operations within the Council and opportunities that demonstrated a "businesslike" approach in the delivery of Council services and the use of Council assets.

1.3.3 The Committee carried out face to face questionnaires with residents at a public event and conducted formal and informal interviews with internal officers, local business people and other local authorities. A survey was designed and sent to all staff, Councillors and the public and calls for evidence were made via social media and the local press.

1.3.4 Members visited the Print Shop at Her Majesty's Prison, Maidstone to understand the working practice and ethos behind a public sector organisation competing with the private sector. The Committee also considered a wide range of desktop research and explored current thinking on public sector income generation.

1.3.5 Having considered the evidence, the Committee approved a wide range of recommendations for income generating opportunities, focusing on a business like attitude towards utilising the Council's assets.

1.3.6 The Committee's recommendations were considered by Cabinet in June 2012 while the current position is noted at **Appendix A**.

1.4 Alternative Action and Why Not Recommended

1.4.1 The Committee could decide not to consider whether any recommendations are outstanding but this would prevent the Committee from ensuring that important findings from the Review are not overlooked.

1.5 Impact on Corporate Objectives

1.5.1 The Council's Strategic Plan 2011-2015 lists "corporate and customer excellence" as key priorities. The recommendations, and action taken as a response, of the Council as a Business Review, contribute to the fulfilment of these objectives.

1.6. Background Documents

1.6.1 None