

## **MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **RECORD OF RECOMMENDATION OF THE EXECUTIVE**

Recommendation Made: 8 February 2023

#### **Strategic Plan refresh 2023-28**

##### **Issue for Decision**

This recommendation reflects the refreshed areas of focus for the Council's Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2028 following consultation with the Policy Advisory Committees.

##### **Recommendation Made**

That the areas of focus for the Council's Strategic Plan for the period 2023-2028, set out in Appendix A, be approved.

##### **Reasons for Recommendation**

The Strategic Plan was adopted in December 2018, following wide spread consultation and engagement with Councillors staff and other stakeholders and covers the period until 2045. The decision was taken for it to be a 26-year plan to ensure continuity, longevity and a basis on which all other Maidstone Borough Council plans and strategies could be developed. The vision and priorities are clear and remain relevant.

The areas of focus were last refreshed in 2021 to respond to the significant impact of the pandemic and to plan the Council's approach to the recovery.

In July the Executive approved a recommendation that the Strategic Plan 2019-45 milestones be refreshed for 2023-28. The Council's Wider Leadership Team reviewed the existing areas of focus at an away day and the proposals were discussed and amended at a series of meetings by the Executive.

The refreshed areas of focus for 2023-2028 are consistent with the Council's vision and four priorities; and there have been no significant changes. They continue to reflect both the long-term ambitions of the Council whilst also responding to the current national and local environment including recovery from the pandemic, increased housing need, financial insecurity and the climate crisis.

Amendments were made to language to demonstrate emphasis, priorities and to reflect progress on objectives. There has been some broadening of actions for example in parks and public spaces, to reflect not only enforcement activities but also promotion of these spaces.

Under Safe Clean and Green an additional action has been included to reflect the work and investment being made in the service and to reflect the need to meet the requirements of all new government legislation.

Under Thriving Place changes have been made to combine actions to demonstrate focus. The previous area of focus on community resilience and to

encourage pride in our borough has been merged under homes and communities.

Under Homes and Communities two new actions have been included. The first has been added to reflect the Council's commitment to support residents and reflect the current financial crisis. The second is the commitment to deliver 1,000 affordable homes.

There has also been a change of emphasis on the milestone on temporary accommodation from reduction in use to increase in supply. Whilst the use of temporary accommodation is not desirable the change in emphasis reflects the current climate of financial insecurity which has resulted in an increased demand which the Council is required to support. The new milestone reflects that the Council will meet this demand but do so by investing in accommodation.

The changes were presented to Policy Advisory Committees in January and was considered by the Executive. The revised areas of focus following amendments proposed by Policy Advisory Committees can be seen at Appendix A.

The foreword and updates to data and images will completed prior to republication.

### **Consultation results and previous committee feedback**

Key officers and the Executive have been consulted in the development of these areas of focus at independent away days.

The revised areas for focus were presented to Policy Advisory Committees in January, Members across parties in engaged in discussion and made the following recommendations

- Make more succinct and tidy up language
- Use proactive verbs
- Add the word communities back in to 1.1
- Add the word communities back in to 2.2
- Revisit and review the use of the word 'whole', as the council aren't responsible for all areas at 2.3
- TA change to Temporary Accommodation at 4.1
- ensure that Pride in the borough is reinserted at 4.3
- include the wording 'sustainable in both financial and ecological terms' at 4.4

### **Alternatives considered and why rejected**

The Strategic Plan was adopted in December 2018 and covers the period until 2045. It was developed involving a wide cross section of Councillors, staff and other stakeholders. The vision and priorities are clear and remain relevant.

**OPTION 1 (RECOMMENDED):** Council could approve the revised areas of focus as amended following committee consultation as has been set out in Appendix A. Alternatively, they could amend the wording or add or delete areas of focus.

**OPTION 2 (NOT RECOMMENDED):** The Council could reject the revised areas of focus.

### **Appendices**

Appendix A: Strategic Plan Proposed Areas of Focus 2023-28

### **Background Papers**

Strategic Plan 2019-2045 -

[https://maidstone.gov.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0009/269721/Strategic-Plan2019.pdf](https://maidstone.gov.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0009/269721/Strategic-Plan2019.pdf)