

MAIDSTONE BOROUGH COUNCIL

RECORD OF DECISION OF THE CABINET

Decision Made: 26 July 2023

Corporate Planning Timetable

Issue for Decision

To seek approval that the Strategic Plan milestones not be reviewed this year, as Councillors reviewed them in 2022/23, and agree the corporate planning timetable at 3.3 of the report.

Decision Made

That the Strategic Plan not be reviewed in 23/24 and the corporate planning timetable at 3.3 of the report be approved.

Reasons for Decision

The Strategic Plan is a core element of our corporate planning. The priorities and outcomes in the Strategic Plan are developed alongside the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) to ensure consistency between priorities, service delivery and budgets. Service Planning allows the Council to convert high level priorities from the Strategic Plan into actions for each directorate, service or team across the Council, which then feeds into individual staff priorities.

The Cabinet has been asked to consider whether to refresh the existing Strategic Plan, create a new one or leave as is. As the Strategic Plan was refreshed in 2022/23 with a full review by the Policy Advisory Committees and the Cabinet of the areas for focus for the next five years it has been determined that the plan will remain as is this year.

A timetable of activity has been planned for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy Process as part of the corporate planning timetable. The proposed timetable of activities includes a period of public consultation on the 2024/5 budget as required by law, reports to Policy Advisory Committees (PACs), Overview and Scrutiny the Cabinet and Council on the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Budget.

The current Strategic Plan was adopted in December 2018 and covers the period until 2045. The plan was agreed after careful analysis and consultation. The decision was taken for it to be a 26-year plan to ensure continuity, and a basis on which all other Maidstone Borough Council plans and strategies could be developed. Last year a review of the strategic areas of focus for the next five years was undertaken by Policy Advisory Committees, the Leadership Team and Cabinet. As a result a number of changes were made to reflect the Council's ambitions in regard to Biodiversity and Climate Change, the emerging Town Centre Strategy, community resilience and achieving 1,000 affordable homes. The foreword from the Leader was also revised.

Outlined below is a proposed timetable for the development of budget proposals.

Date	Action
26 July 2023	Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee and Cabinet consider the corporate planning timetable
July 2023 – August 2023	Budget Survey
September 2023	Draft Budget Proposals to Policy Advisory Committees, Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet
December 2023	Provisional Local Government Finance Settlement published
5 February 2024	Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee consider the final proposals on the Budget for recommendation to the Cabinet
7 February 2023	Cabinet approve the Medium Term Financial Strategy to be considered at full Council on 21 February 2024

The matter was considered by the Corporate Services Policy Advisory Committee at its meeting on 12 July 2023 and the Committee supported the decision.

Alternatives considered and why rejected

Option 2: Create a new Strategic Plan. Creating a new Strategic Plan would have a substantially greater impact on resources. The timetable proposed would need to be revisited and this could have an impact on work elsewhere as this would take substantially more time and involvement from the Policy Advisory Committees, Cabinet and Senior Officers. It should also be noted that the Council has an all out election in 2024, that may prove to be an opportune time to review or create a new strategic plan with a four-year term of office commencing for all councillors.

Option 3: Refresh the Strategic Plan. Councillors may identify that the current plan needs refreshing, a refresh of the Strategic Plan could include:

- Review and amendment of areas of focus for 2024/29
- Refresh of any contextual information in the document such as statistics
- New foreword.

The timetable would need to be revised to reflect the involvement of Policy Advisory Committees and the Cabinet with amendments being added to September's meetings.

Background Papers

None

I have read and approved the above decision for the reasons
(including possible alternative options rejected) as set out above.



Signed: _____
Councillor David Burton, Leader of the Council

Full details of both the report for the decision taken above and any consideration by the relevant Policy Advisory Committee can be found at the following area of the [website](#)

Call-In: Should you be concerned about this decision and wish to call it in, please submit a call-in form signed by any three Members to the Proper Officer by: **5pm 4 August 2023**