

BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

22 AUGUST 2019

MEDWAY COUNCIL STRATEGY

Report coordinated by: Phil Watts, Chief Finance Officer

Contributors: Children and Adults – Directorate Management Team
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Public Health
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Summary

The Council Plan 2016/21 was agreed at Full Council in February 2016 and covers the Council's strategic objectives up to 2021. It sets out the Council's three priorities and three ways of working which aim to deliver these priorities.

This report proposes the introduction of a new overarching Council Strategy; which will be a shorter, more outcomes focused document than the current Council Plan, without all of the detailed performance measures and delivery plans explaining how the strategic objectives are to be met.

Following consultation with directorates this report presents the draft Medway Council Strategy for consideration.

Members are asked to consider these proposals and forward any comments to Cabinet on 24 September 2019 prior to consideration by Full Council on 10 October 2019.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1. There is no statutory requirement for local authorities to prepare a Council Plan.
- 1.2. The Council Plan 2016/21 was agreed at Full Council in February 2016 and covers the Council's strategic objectives up to 2021. It sets out the Council's three priorities and three ways of working which aim to deliver these priorities. It includes the measures we use to track performance.
- 1.3. The Council Plan forms part of the Council's Policy Framework, and approval of the Plan is therefore a matter for Full Council following consideration by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet.

- 1.4 It is proposed that the Council Strategy should be added to the list of Policy Framework documents, alongside the Council Plan.

2. Background

- 2.1. Following a review of the corporate reporting timetable involving the Council's key strategies or plans it was concluded that a new overarching Council Strategy should be introduced. This will be a shorter, more outcomes focused document than the current Council Plan, without all of the detailed performance measures and delivery plans explaining how the strategic objectives are to be met.

- 2.2 The detailed performance measures and delivery plans will continue to be included in the Council Plan which will be considered by Cabinet and Full Council at a later stage.

- 2.3 The Council Strategy will be presented to:

Business Support O&S Committee	22 August 2019
Cabinet	24 September 2019
Full Council	10 October 2019

- 2.4 The Council Plan will be presented to:

Business Support O&S Committee	30 January 2020
Cabinet	04 February 2020
Full Council	20 February 2020

3. Draft Council Strategy

- 3.1. The Finance Strategy team have liaised with Communications, Leader of the Council, Regeneration, Culture and Environment Directorate Management Team (DMT) and Children & Adults DMT on the development of the new strategy document. A draft is provided at Appendix 1 to this report.

4. Risk management

- 4.1. As the Council's overarching strategy, risks related to the delivery of the Council Plan (including controls and mitigating actions) are developed through the Strategic Risk Register and the service planning process (in directorate business plans and service plans).

- 4.2. The local government environment is experiencing unprecedented change across multiple agendas – policy, finance, legal, and citizen and customer expectation. Continuing to communicate with key stakeholders through a clear Council Strategy and Plan with appropriate measures is a means to mitigate risks arising from a lack of strategic and corporate planning.

5. Financial and Legal implications

- 5.1. The Council Strategy and Council Plan should be developed alongside the budget setting process. This ensures the financial implications are considered during the development of the Council Plan. This is particularly important due to the current financial pressures faced by the Council due to ongoing Central

Government funding cuts. This has placed an ever-increasing pressure to focus the Council's resources on areas of greatest need and demonstrate that value for money is achieved through the allocation of scarce resources.

- 5.2. There is no statutory requirement to have a Council Strategy or Plan. Members have decided to retain the Council Plan, as a key document to guide the business of the Council and communicate its direction. The Council Plan remains a Policy Framework document within the Council's Constitution and so a decision on refreshing the Plan's indicator set must be taken by Full Council. As the Council Strategy will sit above the Council Plan then this should also be approved by Full Council and Council should be recommended to add the Strategy to the list of Policy Framework documents.

6. Recommendations

6.1 Members are recommended to:

- a) consider the draft Council Strategy and forward any comments to Cabinet, prior to approval at Full Council; and
- b) note that Cabinet will be asked to recommend to Council that the Council Strategy be added as a Policy Framework document and that paragraph 4.1 of Article 4 (The Full Council) in Chapter 2 of the Constitution be amended accordingly.

Lead officer contact

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Appendices

Appendix 1 – Draft Council Strategy

Background papers

Council Plan 2016/21

https://www.medway.gov.uk/info/200138/your_council/342/the_council_plan