

COUNCIL

20 FEBRUARY 2020

COUNCIL PLAN REFRESH 2020/21

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Report coordinated by:	Phil Watts, Chief Finance Officer
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Summary

The Council Strategy sets out the Council's key priorities, the outcomes we expect to achieve and the programmes that will deliver them. The Council Plan is the delivery plan which sets out the measures that will be used to track performance against the Council's key priorities.

Following consultation with directorates during October - December, this report presents a final summary of their proposals for the measures that will be used to track performance against the Council Plan 2020/21.

This report was initially considered by the Business Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30 January 2020 and the Cabinet on 4 February 2020, in accordance with the Policy Framework and their comments are set out in the report.

1. Budget and Policy Framework

- 1.1 On 15 May 2019, Corporate Management Team agreed to aligning corporate reporting so that all strategies are agreed at Cabinet in September with the plans to deliver them being agreed in February. The Council Strategy was agreed at Council on 10 October 2019 and the Risk Strategy was approved by the Cabinet on 19 November 2019.
- 1.2 The current Council Plan 2016/21 was agreed at Full Council in February 2016. This originally set out the Council's three priorities and three ways of working which aim to deliver these priorities. It also includes the measures we use to track performance. These measures are refreshed annually. So whilst the Council Strategy now sets the Council's key priorities, the outcomes we expect to achieve and the programmes that will deliver them, the Council Plan will continue to set out the Council Plan measures for 2020/21 as part of the annual refresh.

1.3 Both the Council Strategy and the Council Plan form part of the Council's Policy Framework, therefore, in accordance with the Policy Framework rules, the proposals were considered by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 30 January 2020 and Cabinet on 4 February 2020.

2. Background

2.1 The table below summarises the programmes which support our three priorities. It also shows the three overarching ways of working which we use to deliver all of the above.

WAYS OF WORKING		
Giving value for money		
Finding the best digital innovation and using it to meet residents' needs		
Working in partnership where this benefits our residents		
PRIORITIES		
PEOPLE Supporting Medway's people to realise their potential	PLACE Medway: A place to be proud of	GROWTH Maximising regeneration and economic growth
OUTCOME Healthy and active communities	OUTCOME A clean and green environment	OUTCOME A strong diversified economy
Improving everyone's health and reducing inequalities	Enhancing public realm, street scene and green spaces	Inward investment and business growth
OUTCOME Resilient families	Replacing Medway's street lights	OUTCOME Residents with jobs and skills
Together we can – Children's Services Improvement Plan	Climate Change	Jobs, skills and employability
The best start in life	OUTCOME Medway on the map	OUTCOME Preventing homelessness
OUTCOME Older and disabled people living independently in their homes		Preventing homelessness
Improve support for vulnerable adults by working with partners and communities		OUTCOME Delivering new homes to meet the needs of Medway's residents
OUTCOME All children achieving their potential in schools		Delivering new homes to meet the needs of Medway's residents
Raising aspiration and ambition		OUTCOME Getting around Medway
		Tackle congestion hotspots by transport and public realm improvements

2.2 As part of the Council's continued transformation, which includes the way our customers interact with us, a Customer Pledge is being developed to replace our Customer Charter. The Customer Pledge, which is currently undergoing consultation, will focus on behaviours rather than timescales, whilst directing customers to the Council's website where information is easily accessible.

3. Proposals for the Council Plan 2020/21

3.1 Following reviews by Directorate Management Teams, there are 48 Council Plan measures proposed for 2020/21. These are split across the Council Strategy priorities and ways of working as follows:

Priority and outcome	Proposed Council Plan measures 2020/21	Council Plan Measures 2019/20
PEOPLE		
Supporting Medway's people to realise their potential		
Healthy and active communities	3	4
Resilient families	11	5
The best start in life	2	2
Older and disabled people living independently in their homes	6	7
All children achieving their potential in schools	9	8
PLACE		
Medway: a place to be proud of		
A clean and green environment	3	4
Medway on the map	0	0
GROWTH		
Maximising regeneration and economic growth		
A strong diversified economy	3	3
Residents with jobs and skills	4	4
Preventing homelessness	3	3
Delivering new homes to meet the needs of Medway's residents	1	1
Getting around Medway	1	1
Ways of working		
Giving value for money	1	1
Finding the best digital innovation and using it to meet resident's needs	1	1
Working in partnership where this benefits our residents	0	0
TOTAL	48	44

3.2 The following table summarises the proposals:

	Council Plan Measures
Change – raised target	7
Change- reduced target	9
New measure	9
Remove measure	1
No change	23
Change to counting rule	0
Move from CP to directorate monitoring	3

3.3 A detailed report of the measures for 2020/21 and rationale can be found in Appendix 1: Council Plan Measures 2020/21.

3.4 For two Council Plan measures (a proposed new qualitative measure on the calibre of social work, and NI154 – net homes provided), further data is required before targets can be proposed and this is unlikely to be received until after the Council Plan Refresh 2020/21 has been discussed at Full Council. As such Full Council are asked to delegate authority to agree targets for these Council Plan measures to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources.

4. Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee – 30 January 2020

Discussion:

4.1 Members considered this report which presented a final summary of proposals for the measures that would be used to track performance against the Council Plan 2020/21.

4.2 The additional measures relating to children’s services were welcomed and would help O&S Members to monitor progress.

4.3 The point was made that the Audit Committee also had an important role in identifying and minimising risks, ensuring value for money was achieved and providing an early warning of problems. The Chief Finance Officer advised that the internal audit plan for next year had an increased focus on children’s services and additional funding had been agreed for the IRO service within Children’s Services. As the difficulties in children’s services had not been identified in advance, all of the tools available to Members should be deployed to identify similar issues in the future.

4.4 A discussion took place regarding the relationship between children’s services targets in the Council Plan and Directorate targets and whether O&S Members should be able to access information on the latter where this was shared with Portfolio Holders.

4.5 Reference was made to the proposal to remove the target that measured the percentage of looked after children who achieved the required standard in GCSE English and maths. The point was made that it was still important to understand how this cohort were performing and it was suggested this should be monitored by the Corporate Parenting Board.

4.6 Reference was made to the issue raised by the Commissioner for Children’s Social Care about addressing the deficit of £10.3 million on the DSG High Needs reserve and the plan to work with the Clinical Commissioning Group to ensure

NHS funding was provided in all appropriate cases. Noting that the NHS contribution to funding SEN placements in Medway had been historically quite low, the Committee asked if the Commissioner could help by raising it with the CCG, as well as the issue of high waiting lists for children's medical services. This suggestion would be raised with the Director of People – Children and Adults Services and the outcome would be reported to Members.

- 4.7 Regarding partnership targets, it was argued that the proposal to remove targets because responsibility rested with a partner was misguided as there was a democratic mandate to ensure that Medway as a place functioned effectively.

Decision:

- 4.8 The Committee agreed to:

- a) note the proposed changes to programmes and measures of success as listed in Appendix 1 to the report,
- b) recommend that, following the proposed removal from the Council Plan of Measure N101 (the percentage of looked after children who achieve the required standard in GCSE English and maths) that performance be monitored by the Corporate Parenting Board.
- c) note that those Council Plan measures still awaiting a proposed target, namely a proposed new qualitative measure on the calibre of social work and NI154 (net homes provided) will be further considered by the Corporate Management Team and that Full Council will be asked to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to agree the final measures.

5. Cabinet – 4 February 2020

Discussion:

- 5.1 The Cabinet considered this report on 4 February 2020, including the comments and recommendations from the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which had been set out as an addendum report.
- 5.2 The report included the recommendation by the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee, that following the proposed removal from the Council Plan of Measure N101 (the percentage of looked after children who achieve the required standard in GCSE English and maths) that performance be monitored by the Corporate Parenting Board.

Decision:

- 5.3 The Cabinet noted the comments of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee set out in the addendum report.
- 5.4 The Cabinet recommended to Full Council the proposed changes to programmes and measures of success summarised in paragraph 3.2 to the report and as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 5.5 The Cabinet recommended that Full Council agree to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to approve the final measures of success for the proposed new qualitative measure on the calibre of social work and NI154 (net homes provided) as set out in paragraph 3.4 to the report and as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report once

further information is received.

- 5.6 The Cabinet agreed that, following the removal of measure N101 (the percentage of looked after children who achieve the required standard in GCSE English and maths), performance relating to this measure continue to be monitored by the Corporate Parenting Board. This change is reflected on page 2 of Appendix 1 to the report.

6. Diversity Impact Assessment

- 6.1 Under the Equality Act 2010, the Council has legal duties to pay 'due regard' to the need to eliminate discrimination and promote equality. The Council has a clearly set out diversity impact assessment process which describes how changes to service delivery or new services and policies should be assessed for impact and the requirement for regular review of the equality impact of services and strategies.
- 6.2 A Diversity Impact Assessment (DIA) has been completed for the updated version of the Council Plan and can be found in Appendix 2: Diversity Impact Assessment Council Plan Refresh 2020/21.

7. Financial and Legal implications

- 7.1 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 Strategy and Council Plan. This is particularly important due to the current financial pressures faced by the Council which mean it is more necessary than ever 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.
- 7.2 There is no longer a statutory requirement to have a Council Strategy or Council Plan. Members have decided to retain the Council Strategy and Council Plan, as key documents 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.

8. Risk management

- 8.1 Risks related to the delivery of the Plan (including controls and mitigating actions) are developed through the Strategic Risk Register and the service planning process (in directorate plans and service plans).
- 8.2 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 Council Plan with appropriate measures is a means to mitigate risks arising from a lack of strategic and corporate planning.

9. Recommendations

- 9.1 Council is asked to note the comments of the Business Support Overview and Scrutiny Committee and the Cabinet as set out in sections 4 and 5 of the report.
- 9.2 Council is asked to approve the proposed changes to programmes and measures of success summarised in paragraph 3.2 of the report and as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report.
- 9.3 Council is asked to agree to delegate authority to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Resources, to approve the final measures of success for the proposed new qualitative measure on the calibre of social work and NI154 (net homes provided), as set out in paragraph 3.4 to the report and as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, once further information is received.

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Background papers

Council Strategy – Full Council, 10 October 2019 – item 341 refers:
<https://democracy.medway.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=122&MId=4448>

Appendices

Appendix 1 Council Plan Measures 2020/21
Appendix 2 Diversity Impact Assessment Council Plan Refresh 2020/21