

# **BUSINESS SUPPORT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**2 FEBRUARY 2012**

## **COUNCIL PLAN 2012/2013**

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### **Summary**

The Council Plan is the organisation's over-arching business plan, setting out our commitments to achieving certain outcomes during the life of the plan. The plan was fundamentally reviewed last year and now requires updating to take account of developments including further funding reductions and ongoing work to improve services.

### **1. Budget and Policy Framework**

- 1.1 The Council Plan 2012/13 is a key part of the budget and policy framework which is developed alongside the 2012/13 capital and revenue budget proposals in order to align the Council's business planning and budget setting process.
- 1.2 The Council Plan will be considered at Cabinet on 14 February 2012 and Council on 23 February 2012.

### **2. Background**

- 2.1 As the council's overarching business plan, the Council Plan identifies objectives the council wishes to achieve, and as such it is important that it is considered alongside the budget setting process. The Council Plan will form an essential part of the council's performance management framework, setting out the commitments and outcomes against which progress will be measured.
- 2.2 The last plan agreed in February 2011 was substantially reworked following the formation of the coalition government nationally and the subsequent changes to local government funding and services. These changes required a comprehensive rethink of the outcomes the council was trying to achieve. As a relatively new document, the Council Plan must be updated to take account of recent developments (these will also be reflected in the budget). These include, for example, continuing financial pressures, the Munro Review of child protection, changes in the education and health systems. It continues to be a time of significant uncertainty and change, and remains a challenging context in which to produce a strategic plan.

- 2.3 Local Government is still adapting to changes in the regulatory framework including the abolition of CAA and transparency requirements. In the current environment it is important that the Council continues to be clear about overall priorities and resource allocation.
- 2.4 Monitoring of the Council Plan will continue on a quarterly basis, focusing on the Key Measures of Success. Management and reporting on operational performance will continue to be undertaken by services and directorate management teams.

### **3. Issues**

- 3.1 Significant national funding and policy changes are ongoing and these continue to be reflected in the work that is being prioritised in the Council Plan.
- 3.2 Last year's Council Plan included a small number of crosscutting key change projects to illustrate how the council was achieving its priorities. In next year's plan we propose to focus on updates on the Better for Less suite of projects.
- 3.3 As with previous years further work on the measures and their associated targets will be required in the run-up to 2011/12 year-end and will be reported at Cabinet in July 2012 and to Overview and Scrutiny Committees in that cycle of meetings.

### **4. Options**

- 4.1 It is proposed that the more strategic focus of the Council Plan will continue, and not a return to detailed action commitments to support the priority.
- 4.2 As options for meeting the 2012/13 budget gap are debated, some of the commitments included in the draft plan may need to be revisited. Changes made to the budget up to and including Full Council on 23 February may also have an impact which will need to be reflected in the final version.
- 4.3 Some national policy agendas continue to evolve along timelines that do not fit our planning and Member decision-making programme. It is important that the Council Plan is not so fluid as to be meaningless, but at the same time that it can accommodate in year changes if required. If such changes are required they will be presented to Members as part of quarterly monitoring.
- 4.4 Work on measures of success is ongoing to be completed for public reporting at the end of quarter 1, but as many as possible will be signed off by year end with only targets to be confirmed at a later date.

## **5. Consultation**

- 5.1 Consultation was undertaken during development of the council plan when last year's fundamental review was undertaken. This included a focus group to test out whether the council was on the right track in terms the measures of success. Consultation from the Residents' Opinion Poll and the Citizens' Panel also informed development. The plan has been circulated to all Overview and Scrutiny Members to enable them to feed comments into this meeting.

## **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 priorities in the Council Plan are underpinned by the core value of 'Putting the customer at the centre of everything we do', this reinforces the importance the council places on meeting the differing needs of customers and promoting 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 These processes are in place to ensure that the outcomes and initiatives set out by services, and then included in the Council Plan, meet the needs of our customers and are assessed for impact during their development. This means that officers are expected to identify and address any potential adverse impacts in line with legislation and best practice as part of implementation of the Council Plan.
- 6.3 It is clear though that in this time of limited resources it will not be possible to fund the full range of services that may be asked for and choices will have to be made. The Council continues to implement a significant programme of transformation in the way it delivers its services. The aim of this transformation is to reduce costs and maximise investment in frontline services. Over the last 18 months we have continued to consult with residents about what they think is important and this has fed into the development of this plan. However, officers will continue to assess and monitor the plan, both prior to its agreement by Council, and throughout the life of the plan, to ensure compliance with all statutory requirements. The Council's equality objectives have also been included in the Council Plan.
- 6.4 A Diversity Impact Assessment of the Council Plan setting out this process is being prepared for inclusion with the report to Cabinet, in line with the Council's established procedure for new strategic documents.

## **7. Financial and Legal Implications**

- 7.1 The Council Plan 2012/13 has been developed alongside the budget. This ensures the financial implications of the Council Plan are considered during its development.
- 7.2 There is no longer a statutory requirement to have a Council Plan. This means that the Council Plan is no longer listed as a plan or strategy which must be adopted by Council in the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) (England) Regulations 2000. However, the Regulations provide that where the Council determine that a decision on a non-statutory plan should be taken by them, the decision on adoption of that plan must be taken by full Council. 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 document within the Council's constitution and so a decision on it must be taken by full Council.

## **8. Recommendations**

- 8.1 Members are asked to review the Council Plan 2012/13 set out in Appendix 1 and make comments to Cabinet on 14 February 2012.

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### **Background Papers**

None.

### City of Medway – Rich heritage, great future

The Council Plan is the council's business plan. It has five priority areas and sets out what will be done to deliver these and how we will tell what difference has been made. The five priorities are:

- Safe, clean and green Medway
- Children and young people have the best start in life in Medway
- Adults maintain their independence and live healthy lives
- Everybody travelling easily around Medway
- Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration

Our two core values set out the principles of the how we work to deliver these priorities, they are:

- Putting our customers at the centre of everything we do
- Giving value for money

### What we will do

Medway Council wants to continue to ensure high quality services for all residents. We know that some people need extra support and we will continue to ensure these needs are met; and we will continue to work to safeguard children and adults. We take our roles as community leader, commissioner and provider of services very seriously. We place great emphasis on listening to customers about what services they need and how they need to receive them. By listening to customers we hope to make sure that we commission and provide services efficiently and effectively. Our aim is to commission more services rather than being the provider of services. By doing this we can focus on ensuring customers have access to a range of services that meet their different needs, rather than being limited to the range of services that can be offered by the council.

This plan is influenced by all the consultation, comments and feedback received in the last eighteen months. This plan reflects our commitment to responding to residents' priorities but there are other services we have a legal responsibility to provide.

In the past eighteen months we have also been responding to significant funding reductions. We continue to have to make savings in addition to the £29m savings in 2010/11 and 11/12, and will have to save £9.4 million during 2012/13. We are committed to minimising the impact of these changes on our front line services. We are continuing to review what we are doing and how we are doing it to become even more cost-effective.

#### Partnership

Providing services to Medway residents in partnership with other public sector bodies and the voluntary and community sector is fundamental to Medway's success. This is even more important with budget reductions affecting public services. However, we are confident that we can continue to improve the services received by customers if we work effectively with our partners.

The Council Plan 2012/13 identifies the priorities for the Council and what it intends to do to support the partnership working.

### **Why have a Council Plan?**

This Council Plan sets out the current priority areas of work that will be monitored quarterly by Councillors and senior managers. The reports look at how well we are doing and how successful we are at making a positive difference in these areas. This quarterly monitoring is also available to the public so that customers can see how we are doing. Information and summaries are and will continue to be available on the website and in Medway Matters, the council newspaper.

In order to do this each of the priorities has a limited number of commitments setting out what we want to achieve and several measures of success so we know how we are doing.

## Our commitments

### **Safe, clean and green Medway**

What we aim to do:

We want people to be safe in Medway and, equally importantly, to feel safe. We want to work with local people to make sure they feel they belong to their neighbourhood and can influence the decisions that affect it. Our commitment is to keeping the streets clean, recycling more waste, maintaining our parks and green spaces and reducing our carbon emissions.

Set out below is what we commit to and how we will know when we have made a positive difference:

#### **Commitment:**

**We will improve public confidence and feelings of safety**

#### **Measures of success**

- Residents' perceptions of litter, detritus, graffiti and flyposting
- Satisfaction with how the Council deals with graffiti
- Satisfaction with Communities Teams by users of the service
- Other measures of effectiveness of community team (tbc)

#### **Commitment:**

**We will help to prevent and reduce domestic abuse**

#### **Measures of success**

- Repeat Victims of Domestic Abuse
- MARAC cases
- Other measure to be confirmed on impact of domestic abuse on children's safety following ofsted inspection

#### **Commitment:**

**We will increase recycling and reduce waste going to landfill sites**

#### **Measures of success**

- Percentage of waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting
- kg of residual household waste per household
- Satisfaction with refuse collection
- Satisfaction with recycling facilities

#### **Commitment:**

**We will work with the community to keep Medway's streets clean**

#### **Measures of success**

- Satisfaction with street cleaning
- Second cleanliness measure on condition of streets / environment (tbc)

#### **Commitment:**

**We will reduce our own carbon footprint**

#### **Measures of success**

- CO2 reduction from Local Authority operation

- Measure around property rationalisation (tbc)

**Commitment:**

**We will work with local people to maintain parks and open spaces that are enjoyed by all**

**Measures of success**

- Satisfaction with parks and open spaces
- Satisfaction with play areas
- Numbers of citizen participation hours through involvement in practical volunteer tasks through membership of Friends groups
- Number of Green flags

**Commitment:**

**We will support the building of strong communities where people feel they belong**

**Measures of success**

- % of people who feel that people in Medway get on well together
- % of people who think they can influence local decision making
- Number of people involved in neighbourhood work and hours given



## **Children and young people in Medway have the best start in life**

What we aim to do:

We want all children and young people in Medway to be safe, cared for, to succeed in learning and to thrive. Set out below is what we commit to and how we will know when we have made a positive difference:

### **Commitment:**

**Working with partners to ensure the most vulnerable children and young people are safe**

### **Measures of success**

- Care Leavers in suitable accommodation
- Initial assessment for childrens social care carried out within 10 working days of referral
- Core assessments for childrens social care carried out 35 days following commencement
- Child protection plans lasting 2 years or more
- % of children becoming the subject of a Child Protection Plan for a second or subsequent time
- LAC cases reviewed within timescales
- Child protection cases reviewed within timescales
- LAC and their carers considering that their care plans are making a difference
- Children's participation in child protection reviews

*Officers are currently considering a range of performance measures that have arisen from the Munro review for inclusion in the Council Plan. The focus is to change from measuring simply the timeliness of processes to the difference made to outcomes for children and the levels of need in the community. Those currently being considered nationally include:*

- *Number of children & young people who are the subject of an application to court in past 6 months (including care and supervision orders and police protection)*
- *Rate of Initial Child Protection Conferences per 10,000 population*
- *Range of working days taken from referral to childrens care to completion of assessment.*
- *Distribution of working days from child protection strategy meeting to discuss serious concerns about a child to Initial Child Protection Conference (ICPC) where decisions are made on a child becoming subject to a child protection plan*
- *Length of time a child remains in need receiving social care services*
- *Number of children who are the subject of a Child Protection Plan (rate per 10,000 population)*
- *Percentage of referrals/assessments leading to the provision of a social care service (as defined by the child becoming an open case)*
- *Referrals to children's social care where parents/carers' mental health, substance abuse or domestic violence is a feature*

**Commitment:**

**We will champion strong leadership and high standards in schools so that all children can achieve their potential, and the gaps between the least advantaged and their peers are narrowed**

**Measures of success**

- Ofsted school judgements showing a trend of improvement
- Measures to track effectiveness of governing bodies and the support they receive to be considered
- Difference made by Local Authority support to struggling schools(to be designed)
- Pupil absence and the time taken to secure appropriate places
- Achievement at level 4 or above in English and Maths at Key Stage 2 (NI 73)
- Achievement of 5 or more A\*-C grades at GCSE or equivalent including English and Maths (NI 75)
- Narrowing the gap between lowest achieving 20% in the Early Years Foundation stage and the rest (NI 92)
- LAC achieving 5 A\*-C GCSEs at KS4 (NI 101)
- SEN/non-SEN gap – achieving 5 A\*-C GCSE including English and Maths (NI 105)
- Measures around use of and impact of local SEN provision to be developed

*Officers are currently considering a range of additional performance measures that have arisen from the Munro review for inclusion in the Council Plan as part of this measure. These include:*

- *Educational attainment of Children in Need.*
- *Attendance of Children in Need at School*
- *Rate of exclusion of Children in Need from school*

**Commitment:**

**We will promote and encourage healthy lifestyles for children and young people, reducing health inequalities and improving quality of life for people with special educational needs.**

*Note: The draft public health outcomes framework has recently been published. Officers will consider which additional measures are helpful in assisting tracking delivery of council priorities in this area.*

**Measures of success**

- Smoking quits by pregnant women
- Numbers completing the MEND programme to reduce obesity
- attendance at a local Sure Start Children's Centre by families with children aged 0-4 years
- Increase in breastfeeding rates (tbc)
- Number of c-card registrations (to increase condom usage among young people) (tbc)

### **Adults maintain their independence and live healthy lives**

What we aim to do:

We want to make it possible for people to maintain their independence and have choice over the care services they need. As part of this we want to support people in making healthy lifestyle choices that might benefit their longer-term well-being. Set out below is what we commit to and how we will know when we have made a positive difference:

#### **Commitment:**

**We will ensure older people and disabled adults are safe and well supported**

#### **Measures of success**

- Delayed discharges from hospital
- Client satisfaction with services for older and disabled people
- Number of people receiving support from adult social care
- Measure on adult safeguarding (tbc)

#### **Commitment:**

**We will support carers in the valuable work they do**

#### **Measures of success**

- Carers receiving needs assessment or review and a specific carer's service or advice and information
- Client satisfaction - Carers satisfaction with services

#### **Commitment:**

**We will work in partnership to ensure personalised services meet older and disabled adults needs**

#### **Measures of success**

- Adult Social Care clients receiving Self Directed Support (NI 130)
- Measure on impact of personalised budgets to be developed

#### **Commitment:**

**We will promote and encourage healthy lifestyles for adults**

#### **Measures of success**

- Number of adults taking part in healthy weight and exercise referral interventions
- Rate of self-reported 4 week smoking quitters aged 16 or over
- Number of households living in temporary accommodation
- Number of Medway businesses taking part in healthy workplace initiatives (tbc)
- Number of people receiving support from a Health & Lifestyle Trainer (tbc)
- Mental health measures (tbc)

### **Everybody travelling easily around Medway**

What we aim to do:

The Council recognises that the proposed physical change to Medway must be accompanied by social and economic regeneration and underpinned by the continuing development of a transport system that tackles congestion and provides good quality public transport services and encourages alternatives to the car.

**Commitment:**

**We will secure a reliable and efficient local transport network to support regeneration, economic competitiveness and growth**

**Measures of success**

- Satisfaction with road maintenance
- Satisfaction with pavement maintenance
- Satisfaction with buses
- % of people who think that Medway Council helps people travel easily around Medway – broken down by (i) car and (ii) bus.
- Measures to be developed on reducing congestion

## **Everyone benefiting from the area's regeneration**

What we aim to do:

The Council is leading on a range of work to improve the lives of residents in Medway. These range from improving housing to providing sporting, learning and cultural opportunities. We are also committed to supporting our residents and businesses through these tough economic times and helping local businesses to grow and create jobs. Despite funding reductions we remain committed to delivering our 'five towns one city vision' which will develop the area for the benefit of residents and businesses and protect heritage.

### **Commitment:**

**We will support the provision of decent new homes and improve the quality of existing housing**

### **Measures of success**

- Number of affordable homes delivered (NI 155)
- Measure on new homes bonus (tbc)
- Use of bed and breakfast for families

### **Commitment:**

**We will work to ensure that people have the skills they need to take up job opportunities created**

### **Measures of success**

- Supporting people into employment  
Number of local people supported into work
- Maintaining people in employment  
Number of intensive assists to local businesses  
Number of jobs created and safeguarded
- Care leavers in education, employment or training  
16 to 18 year olds who are not in education, employment or training  
Care leavers who are not in education, employment or training

### **Commitment:**

**We will promote Medway as a destination for culture, heritage, sport and tourism**

### **Measures of success**

- User satisfaction with museums and galleries, theatres and events
- User Satisfaction with leisure facilities
- Measure on libraries satisfaction

## **Better for Less**

During 2012/13 the scope of the Better for Less transformation programme will be widening to encompass a number of major projects. The Customer Contact and Administration project will move into its second phase with a wider range of services undergoing transformation so that initial customer contact and administration are handled by the relevant new shared teams. The council will also be reviewing the scope and functions of its customer-facing reception points to ensure that a consistently high quality face to face customer experience is provided.

The Better for Less Category Management project will deliver a new approach to how the council purchases external goods and services. This will involve taking a more joined-up approach across the council, combining contracts where appropriate to generate economies of scale. The council will also be reviewing a number of areas of external spending to reduce contract costs while protecting the quality of services provided to Medway residents. A further Better for Less project - Performance and Intelligence - will be improving how the council manages information, research and data. This will lead to benefits from better strategic planning and performance management of the council's work.

### Measures of success

- Improved customer satisfaction with council performance, providing a positive experience
- Customer satisfaction that their enquiry has been addressed at the initial point of contact
- Those customers that want to access council services via. self serve can do so