

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Leader and Cabinet
AUTHOR/S: Leader and Chief Executive

14 June 2007

DRAFT COUNCIL CORPORATE OBJECTIVES FOR 2008/09 ONWARDS

Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to approve the Corporate Objectives and Service Priorities given in the attached **Appendix** as the basis for consultation with Members and partners.

Background

2. The Council adopted its current Corporate Objectives in 2001:
 - High Quality, Accessible, Value for money services
 - Quality Village Life
 - A sustainable future for South Cambs
 - A better future through partnership
3. These objectives were intended to give overall general direction for the Council over the long term. They were subsequently supplemented by shorter term, more specific priorities – ie to improve customer service, increase the supply of affordable housing; and successful sustainable communities at Northstowe and the other growth areas.
4. It has been intended for some time to review the Corporate Objectives and in particular to achieve improved linkages with the Community Strategy, which is also currently being reviewed (see next item on the agenda)
5. The CGI/INSPIRE Improvement Plan (Workstream B) sets out plans to:-
 - Develop political priorities and adopt new Corporate Objectives
 - Develop Council vision and values
 - Use the new objectives to influence the development of a new Community Strategy
 - Review the Council's service planning and other processes in order to deliver the new Corporate Objectives.

The Draft Objectives

6. Draft Corporate Objectives and Service Priorities are given in the Appendix. These have been developed with the Leader and the Cabinet, also with the assistance of a political mentor provided through the IDeA.
7. The draft objectives and service priorities reflect various sources of evidence:
 - The wide-ranging consultation carried out to support the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy - for example in the priority given to supporting transport schemes.
 - The results of Quality of Life and Best Value public surveys

- The results of the CGI and other inspection processes – for example the emphasis on equalities and achieving an improved audit score
- National priorities - for example recycling and low energy use
- Existing corporate objectives and priorities – for example the continuing importance of affordable housing, growth and developing the Contact Centre.
- Emerging LAA priorities – eg community cohesion

8. The **Appendix** proposes:

- three Corporate Objectives which are intended to give longer term direction to the services of the Council.
- for each objective a number of Service Priorities. These set out more specific means by which the Corporate Objectives will be achieved. These Service Priorities may change more frequently than the Corporate Objectives.

9. The draft objectives and service priorities incorporate various aspects of the Council's current objectives, priorities and policy framework - for example the focus on the growth areas; sustainability; affordable housing; recycling; and quality services. However, there are a number of newer priority areas – eg:

- ensuring the most value-for-money provision of services
- working towards level 2 of the equalities standard
- supporting schemes to improve transport and access
- working with local people to promote community cohesion and addressing the needs of the most vulnerable in the community

10. If these new areas are to be effectively pursued, it will be necessary to move resources and focus away from non-priority areas.

Using the Objectives

11. Subject to approval by the Council, the new Corporate Objectives and Service Priorities will be used to as the basis for service planning (for 2008/09 onwards) during August – October 2007. This process will enable the Council to establish performance indicators and milestones to measure progress in delivering the priorities.

12. This in turn will lead to the drawing up of a new Medium Term Financial Strategy and Workforce Plan (in November – December) to deliver the new Objectives and Priorities. The objectives and priorities will also be the basis of any other new policies or strategies required by the Council.

13. In a parallel process work is progressing in developing a vision and values for the Council. This will support the achievement of the objectives by embedding a clear vision and positive ways of working within the Council.

Links with the Sustainable Community Strategy and Local Area Agreement (LAA)

14. There are clear benefits if the Community Strategy, the LAA and the Council's Corporate Objectives are as consistent as possible, while acknowledging that the Community Strategy and the LAA are wider documents representing the views and contributions of a wide range of partners at district and county level.

15. Currently, all Cambridgeshire LSPs are preparing new community strategies with the intention that these will influence the new LAA which will come into effect in April 2008. Council representatives will be working through the LSP and LAA over the coming months to advocate policy alignment as far as possible.

Financial, Staffing, Legal and Risk Implications

16. The draft Corporate Objectives represent a shift in priorities. This will have implications for financial resources and staff which will be addressed in the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Workforce Plan. The risks inherent in delivering the new objectives will be addressed through the Council's corporate risk management process.

Consultation

17. The Corporate Objectives have been drafted with the Cabinet to reflect the policies of the controlling group put forward in the recent district council elections. They also reflect the wide-ranging consultation and research carried out for the community strategy over the last year.
18. It is intended to take the recommendations to Council on the 19 July and to use the intervening month to consult all Members on the proposals and to seek the views of partners at the meeting of the LSP Board in July.

Recommendations

19. Cabinet is recommended to:
 - a) approve the Corporate Objectives and Service Priorities given in the Appendix as the basis for consultation with Members and partners, and
 - b) review the objectives and priorities at their meeting on 9 July in the light of comments received, prior recommending them to the Council meeting on 19 July

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: the evidence base for the Sustainable Community Strategy – including consultation results; parish plans; stakeholder meeting outcomes.

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