

SOUTH CAMBRIDGESHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Finance and Staffing Portfolio Holder

20 December 2011

AUTHOR/S: Executive Director (Corporate Services)

CORPORATE SERVICES – AGREEMENT OF SERVICE PRIORITIES FOR 2012-13

Purpose

1. This report sets out service priorities for Corporate Services for 2012-13, presented for Portfolio Holder approval as the basis for the development of the full service plan.
2. This is not a key decision as it relates to approval for a series of draft priorities which will be developed into specific actions and targets as part of the emerging full service plan.

Recommendations

3. The Portfolio Holder is recommended to agree the emerging priorities set out in the **Appendix** to this report as the basis for the development of the Corporate Services service plan for 2012-13, noting that resource requirements, have been incorporated as part of the review of the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) and development of detailed estimates.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. The recommendation is required to enable Portfolio Holder endorsement for service priorities to inform the development of 2012-13 service plans.

Background

5. The service planning timetable in previous years required full draft service overview and improvement plans to be submitted to Portfolio Holders for approval in November, with final plans following in March, following the agreement of the Council's budget and policy framework for the following year. In order to enable a clearer focus on strategic priorities and to enable effective planning, this guidance has been altered in 2011 so that service priorities are approved in advance of full and final plans being prepared for publication in March 2012.

Considerations – Policy context and service priorities

6. Corporate Services will continue to support South Cambridgeshire District Council to achieve its corporate objectives and provide services to the key internal and external customers of the Council in an accessible, effective and efficient manner, in an environment of major legislative and demographic change, and amidst ongoing pressure to reduce public sector spending.
7. The table at Appendix A to this report sets out the service's key priorities for 2012-13 and the key principal local, regional and national drivers for each. They represent a combination of new initiatives in response to our changing environment and to customer feedback, as well as objectives to take forward and build upon existing projects and achievements.

Considerations – Resources

8. The service priorities identified in the Appendix will be taken forward using existing resources. It should be recognised that unavoidable impacts such as those of new communities on revenues and benefits and ongoing internal restructuring on Human Resources, may impact adversely on operational performance if current resource levels are unable to meet future service demand. The ICT service has identified £250k savings in its capital and revenue budgets as part of the requirement for a balanced MTFs, and will have regard to these savings in its final service plan.

Options

9. The Portfolio Holder is invited to endorse the service priorities as presented; however, he may alter or amend the priorities, having regard to the policy context within which the service operates and to the needs of customers.

Implications

10. Financial	As set out in paragraph 8 above.
Legal	None specific relating to this report and recommendations
Staffing	None specific relating to this report and recommendations
Risk Management	The final service plan will include a section summarising key risks affecting the service and measures to mitigate against them.
Equality and Diversity	As stated in the appendix, the Human Resources Team's stated aims include the achievement of equality and diversity in the Council's workforce.
Equality Impact Assessment completed	No This report has not been impact-assessed; however, the final service plan will contain an equality impact assessment overview, signposting where specific services and projects will need to be subject to fuller Equality Impact Assessments.
Climate Change	None specific relating to this report and recommendations.

Consultations

11. The service objectives identified in paragraphs 6-7 above have been informed by a variety of consultation and engagement methods, including internal and external customer satisfactions surveys, and targeted work with harder-to-reach sections of the community such as revenues and benefits' work with the Gypsy and Traveller Community and with migrant workers. The Council will also be taking forward process and customer journey mapping through its customer contact centre implementation project.
12. Elements of the service priorities set out in the appendix which are part of the Policy and Performance Portfolio will be subject to separate consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Consultation with Children and Young People

13. There has been no specific consultation with Children and Young People regarding the preparation of this report; however, Legal and Democratic Services will continue to drive forward the Youth Council, which will give young people a participative voice in shaping all the Council's future priorities.

Effect on Strategic Aims

14. The service plan proposals will contribute to the delivery of all the council's strategic objectives, linking the Aims, Approaches and Actions through a Golden Thread to service-level priority action plans and individual objectives.

Background Papers: the following background papers were used in the preparation of this report: None

Contact Officer: Alex Colyer – Executive Director (Corporate Services)
Telephone: (01954) 713023
e-mail: alex.colyer@scambs.gov.uk

