



**Report To:** Scrutiny and Overview Committee  
**Lead Officer:** Executive Director (Corporate Services)

5 November 2015

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## Review of the Corporate Plan

### Purpose

1. To carry out pre-consultation with Scrutiny and Overview Committee to inform the development of a refreshed Corporate Plan for the Council.

### Recommendation

2. Scrutiny and Overview Committee is invited to review the current Corporate Plan 2015-2020 and make recommendations to Cabinet on:
  - (a) priority themes to inform the development of a revised plan for adoption by Council in February 2016 (Cabinet will consider any recommendations put forward at its meeting on 12 November 2015), and
  - (b) proposals for consultation, set out in paragraphs 16-17 below.

### Reason for Recommendations

3. To enable early pre-scrutiny of the Council's Corporate Plan to inform annual development, consultation and review processes.

### Background

4. The Corporate Plan is the principal strategic document setting out the Council's aims and aspirations for its business and communities. The current plan, covering the period 2015-2020, was adopted in February 2015, setting out a Vision for the Council, supported by a series of strategic aims, objectives and actions designed to achieve it. The plan is refreshed on an annual basis for a rolling five-year period.

### Considerations

5. Cabinet, at its meeting on 9 July 2015, endorsed a 'Setting the Scene' report which brought together information around the profile of the district and the national context to form the basis for the review which is now underway. Cabinet anticipated that the revised plan would retain a number of consistent themes, to reflect ongoing priorities from the current plan which will contribute to meeting the Council's Vision and provide the income and savings necessary to maintain a balanced financial strategy.
6. Continuing priorities identified were as follows:

*Engagement: Engage with residents, parishes and businesses to ensure we deliver first class services and value for money*

- Ongoing business transformation to deliver major change programmes and efficiencies, principally the Business Improvement and Efficiency Programme (BIEP), Modern Planning Office, Customer Contact Service, Commercialisation and Working Smarter programmes, ensuring planned savings and income projections are delivered

- Business support initiatives delivering outcomes: Business Register, Key Account Management, Business Hub
- Supporting communities to implement Neighbourhood Planning and 'patch-based' working and protect key local amenities.
- Ermine Street Housing: subject to outcomes of pilot review (being presented to Cabinet in November 2015);

*Partnerships: Work with partners to create opportunities for employment, enterprise, education and world-leading innovation*

- City Deal: governance (combined authority), transport infrastructure, housing and skills.
- Working with the Local Enterprise Partnership and other partners to ensure a strategic approach to economic development
- RECAP waste partnership: shared waste service with Cambridge City Council, county-wide integration and joint commissioning opportunities.
- Successfully implement and monitor existing proposals (ICT, Building Control, Legal Services), and explore new opportunities (Planning, Finance), to share services.

*Wellbeing: Ensure that South Cambridgeshire continues to offer an outstanding quality of life for our residents*

- Progress the Local Plan, providing new evidence as may be required in light of the suspension of the current process (*note – timetable for submission of additional evidence since agreed. Evidence being prepared for consultation*)
- Take forward the growth agenda, building communities not just homes at Northstowe and the other major growth sites
- Delivering positive health and well-being outcomes for children and young people and older people;
- Continue to align resources to manage the impacts of welfare reform, provide much-needed affordable housing through the Housing and New Build strategies and maximise the supply of temporary accommodation (*see paragraph 7 below*).

7. Details of the new government's policy and budget have become clearer since the identification of these priorities. The following policies are considered to have potentially significant impacts for the Council's future plans:

- Reductions to social rents arising from the welfare reform agenda have meant that the Council's aspirations with regard to its new-build programme of low-cost affordable homes will need to be reviewed,
- The Housing and Planning Bill has set out legislative details of manifesto commitments to expand affordable home ownership, improve housing management in both the social and private rented sectors and implement planning reforms.
- The austerity programme has contributed to the County Council announcing budget proposals for spending reductions which, if implemented, are likely to have significant implications for SCDC's wider financial position.

The Committee is invited to consider how the Council's Corporate Plan may best be adapted in this context.

8. The current Corporate Plan (2015-2020) is **attached** for the Committee to identify new and ongoing priorities for consultation as part of the development and review process. Modifications to the current plan should be evidence-based and have regard

to the policy and financial challenges facing the Council. The Position Report on Finance, Performance and Risk, set out elsewhere on this Agenda, sets out progress and achievements against current Corporate Plan objectives; as such, it provides further useful context to assist the Committee with its deliberations.

### **Implications**

9. In the writing of this report, taking into account financial, legal, staffing, risk management, equality and diversity, climate change, community safety and any other key issues, the following implications have been considered: -

#### ***Financial***

10. Cabinet will be asked to consider the financial context as part of its review of the MTFS, at its meeting on 12 November. The report and appendices will be made available to the Committee upon publication of the Cabinet Agenda on 4 November 2015.
11. Whilst details of the government's financial settlement for local authorities will not be made available until December 2015, it is certain that continuing contractions in central government support for the local authority will be forthcoming. In anticipation of cuts to unprotected government departments being front-loaded over the first two years of the new parliament, the MTFS has been re-modelled on the basis of a 40% funding cut over 2016-17 and 2017-18.

#### ***Staffing***

12. The Corporate Plan will be carried out within existing staffing resources wherever possible. Specific proposals for additional staffing capacity and other resources will be considered as part of the emerging MTFS and incorporated within the draft revenue and capital estimates as required.

#### ***Risk Management***

13. The Council's Strategic Risk Register forms part of the evidence base for the development of revised policy and resource priorities. It is included as part of the Quarterly Position Report elsewhere on this agenda.

#### ***Equality and Diversity***

14. Subject to Cabinet approval, draft and final plans will be screened for equality implications as part of the consultation and development process. Initial screening will provide a 'signpost' to full impact assessments of specific initiatives arising as the plan is implemented.

#### ***Climate Change***

15. The Council's Vision commits it to achieving sustainable economic growth.

#### **Consultation**

16. The priority themes agreed by Cabinet will form the basis for an open consultation to test whether customers, partners and staff consider they are focussed in the right areas and are meaningful, realistic and achievable. Communication with staff and residents will emphasise the financial as well as policy context, in order to reflect an

integrated approach; feedback will inform final service plans and the Council's budget and Corporate Plan for 2016-17 and beyond.

17. The priorities will be published on the Council's website for comment, accompanied by publicity including articles in the residents' and staff magazines, and via the Consultation Panel, Youth Council and social media. We will also hold staff briefings and will display material prominently around the Council's premises.

#### **Effect on Strategic Aims**

18. Scrutiny and Overview Committee is invited to make recommendations to Cabinet in respect of policy priorities which inform the subsequent development and agreement of a challenging but realistic Corporate Plan which sets out a consistent Vision and Aims, which can be delivered within the financial parameters set out within the developing MTFS.

#### **Background Papers:**

Corporate Plan Forward Look report to Cabinet, July 2015

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