

Report To: Leader and Cabinet
Lead Officer: Interim Chief Executive

17 November 2016

Priorities for the Corporate Plan 2017-2022

Purpose

1. To agree emerging priorities for consultation to inform the development of, a Corporate Plan for 2017-2022.
2. This is not a key decision as it involves only the identification of high-level priorities at this stage.

Recommendations

3. (a) That the priority areas set out in paragraph 8 below be retained as the basis for consultation on, and to inform the development of, a Corporate Plan for 2017-2022, and

(b) That the Interim Chief Executive be authorised to agree consultation arrangements, based on the outlines set out in paragraphs 19-20 below, in consultation with the Corporate and Customer Services Portfolio Holder.

Reasons for Recommendations

4. It is necessary to identify and agree a set of high-level priorities at this stage to form the basis for consultation and detailed development work prior to adoption of a refreshed Corporate Plan in February 2017.

Background

5. The Council's Corporate Plan is the document that sets out the Council's Vision and strategic priorities. It is agreed for a rolling five-year rolling basis, and refreshed annually to provide the flexibility to respond to emerging priorities. Council adopted a Corporate Plan for 2016-2021 in February 2016, setting out a Vision for the Council, supported by four strategic objectives and 21 actions designed to achieve it.

Considerations

6. The current Corporate Plan underwent a substantial review last year, providing a clearer statement of the Council's strategic priorities around transport, health, housing and the running of the business. Consultation responses were broadly supportive of the proposed priority themes.

7. The Council's evidence base for its current plan is made up of a number of components:
- Responding to the regional and national policy agenda;
 - Key statistics about the district, set out in **Appendices B-C attached**;
 - An analysis of performance against key objectives, strategic risks and performance indicators set out in the Corporate 2016-2021 (available elsewhere on this agenda), and in the Annual Monitoring Report for the Local Plan (to be submitted to the Planning Portfolio Holder);
 - The results of major consultation and engagement exercises, e.g. City Deal, Local Plan Issues and Options, Neighbourhood Plans, Devolution
 - Established engagement mechanisms such as the Tenant participation group, Consultation Panel, growth area fora, agents forum, parish forum and youth council, support for community groups and informal feedback from comments, complaints and compliments
 - The results of formal customer satisfaction exercises by service area e.g. housing repairs, development control, waste services, environmental quality.
8. Taking into account this evidence, and given that the majority of the objectives and actions set out in the current plan reflect ongoing long-term priorities, it is proposed that we continue to focus the following priority areas:

Living Well

We want to support our communities to make sure the district is a healthy place for everyone to live in. We know that for new and established communities to thrive they must have the facilities they need. This is why we plan to make sure the right facilities are available as we build new communities. Our partnership with the Police through the South Cambridgeshire Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership also makes sure we are dealing with local crime and anti-social behaviour issues.

Homes for our Future

We know there is a pressing demand for housing. That's why we want to keep working with developers to ensure early delivery of high quality new homes, good transport links and facilities. We are also focussing on preventing people becoming homeless through giving support early.

Connected Communities

Transport links and better digital infrastructure, such as broadband, are important to connect people and businesses. One of our focuses is the Greater Cambridge City Deal – which covers Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire. This multi-million pound programme is looking to help keep the area moving with millions of pounds of investment in transport and smarter ways to connect people. Making sure we get the right devolution deal from government that puts powers in the hands of local people rather than decisions being made in Whitehall is also a top priority.

An Innovative and Dynamic Organisation

Huge cuts to the money we receive from government to provide services has meant we are now generating our own income. Our housing company – Ermine Street Housing – is one of the ways we are already doing this with profits invested straight back into service delivery. We plan to keep doing this so we can continue to deliver the best possible services at the lowest possible cost – including sharing services with neighbouring councils where there is a sound business case.

9. Our approach to delivering our priorities will continue to provide place-shaping community leadership through:
- Direct Delivery of services, singularly and in partnership
 - Commissioning and procuring services and outcomes through external contracts;
 - Enabling and supporting local communities to develop and deliver local services; and
 - Influencing strategic partners;
 - Recruiting and retaining the staff and Members with the right skills and behaviours linked to our corporate Values of Innovation, Dynamism, Working Together and Integrity.

Options

10. The current Corporate Plan (2016-2021) is attached at **Appendix A**. Cabinet is requested to confirm the four objectives above for consultation as part of the annual 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 Cabinet with its deliberations.

Implications

11. 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

12. A draft revised Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) is set out for Cabinet consideration elsewhere on this agenda. It provides the financial context for the Corporate Plan and ensures that resources are identified to deliver it. Whilst details of the government's financial settlement for local authorities will not be made available until late-November 2017, and the new Chancellor has moved away from his predecessor's target to clear the public sector deficit by 2020, it is unlikely that continuing contractions in central government support for the local authorities will be reversed.
13. The Council has submitted an Efficiency Plan to government as part of an application for a multi-year financial settlement to 2020. The plan sets out our approach to transforming services and delivering savings, efficiencies and increased levels of income to support the delivery of services to residents, businesses and visitors.

Staffing

14. 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.

15. The emerging priorities put forward, and approaches to delivering them, are consistent with the Council's Values of Working Together, Integrity, Dynamism and Innovation. Alongside the Corporate Plan and MTFs, we have adopted an Organisational Development Strategy, which will enable us to deliver our Corporate Plan objective to 'recruit and retain staff who can exhibit the skills and behaviours required to embrace new ways of working and address the challenges ahead'.

Risk Management

16. Cabinet and EMT have considered the Council's Strategic Risk Register as part of the evidence base for the development of revised priorities.

Equality and Diversity

17. 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

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

Consultation

19. The emerging themes agreed by Cabinet will form the basis for consultation to test whether customers, partners and staff consider they still focus 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.
20. The priorities will be published on the Council's website for comment, accompanied by publicity including articles in the South Cambs and SCene 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.
21. Scrutiny and Overview Committee considered this report at its meeting on 9 November 2016. Any recommendations by the Committee will be reported at the meeting.

Effect on Strategic Aims

22. Cabinet is recommended to identify emerging priorities to form the basis for the subsequent development and agreement of an outward-facing Corporate Plan which sets out an ambitious yet attainable five-year Vision for our district.

Background Paper: [Efficiency Plan 2016-2020](#)

District Profile: An Economic, Social and Environmental Summary
Profile of South Cambridgeshire (Grant Thornton, July 2016)

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