

# REPORT TO COUNCIL

17 JUNE 2015

## REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

### REVISED CORPORATE PRIORITIES FOR PUBLIC CONSULTATION

#### 1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Council's approval of the revised corporate priorities (strategic themes) and areas of focus that have been identified for each priority for public consultation.
- 1.2 Cabinet have commissioned officers to conduct further work to develop the draft priorities. Due to tight timescales this additional information will be presented at the meeting.

#### 2. Connection to Corporate Plan / Other Corporate Priority

- 2.1 The Council's corporate priorities and areas of focus form the core elements of the Corporate Plan. They are developed to deliver the Council's vision and outcomes that matter most to local citizens.

#### 3. Background

- 3.1 In April 2013, the Council published its Corporate Plan 2013-17. The Plan set out the Council's six improvement priorities for the next four years. These priorities are:

- Working together to develop the local economy
- Working together to raise ambitions and drive up educational achievement
- Working with children and families to tackle problems early
- Working together to help vulnerable people to stay independent
- Working together to tackle health issues and encourage healthy lifestyles
- Working together to make the best use of our resources

The Plan is reviewed annually.

- 3.2 The Council also published a four-year Medium-Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) in February 2013. The strategy identified the resources to support the delivery of the improvement priorities as well as those required to support 'business as usual' activities. The strategy is reviewed annually. The current MTFS covers the period 2015-16 to 2018-19.
- 3.3 Since the publication of its Corporate Plan 2013-17, the Council entered a period of unprecedented financial challenge, and is currently facing a funding shortfall of approximately £49 million between 2016-17 and 2018-19. This means the Council needs to **change in response to increasing demand,**

**more complex needs and to an expected sustained reduction in its funding.**

- 3.4 Cabinet and the Corporate Management Board (CMB) have identified the need to revise and more tightly focus the Council's corporate priorities to design and shape a sustainable and significantly smaller authority.
- 3.5 Cabinet and CMB developed a number of principles intended to guide the selection of priorities and subsequent resourcing choices. These principles were further developed through workshops with senior managers and members from all political groups.
- 3.6 This report presents these principles and revised priorities (known as strategic themes). Additional information will be presented to Council to aid debate setting out proposed specific areas of focus to support each of these themes. The information will flow from work undertaken with senior corporate managers that is not available at the time of send out. In these circumstances it is considered appropriate to provide the additional information at Council rather than delay the consideration of the corporate priorities. Once approved, those priorities will provide a focus for the Council's change programme over the next four years.

**4. Current Situation / Proposal**

**Vision and values**

- 4.1 Cabinet and CMB have considered the current vision and core values and consider that these are still fit for purpose and should remain unaltered.
- 4.2 The Council's **vision is Working Together to Improve Lives.**

That means that the Council recognises that it is not the only body with a role in influencing the quality of people's lives. It needs to work with other agencies, businesses, communities, families and individuals in order to help people be as successful as they possibly can.

It also means that the Council as a large and complex public body is most effective when all of its component parts work together as one organisation.

- 4.3 The Council's core values are:

- **Fair** - taking into account everyone's needs and situation
- **Ambitious** - always trying to improve what we do and aiming for excellence
- **Citizen-focused** - remembering that we are here to serve our local communities
- **Efficient** - delivering services that are value for money

These values represent what the Council stands for and influence all that it does.

## **Principles developed to aid selection of revised priorities**

4.4 The principles that have been identified to guide the choice of priorities are as follows:

- Wherever possible the Council will support communities and people to create their own solutions and reduce dependency on the Council.
- The Council will focus diminishing resources on communities and individuals with the greatest need.
- The Council will use good information from service users and communities to inform its decisions.
- The Council will encourage and develop capacity amongst the third sector to identify and respond to local need.
- The Council will not let uncertainty over the future of public services prevent meaningful and pragmatic collaboration with other public sector bodies.
- The Council will work as one Council and discourage different parts of the organisation from developing multiple processes or unnecessarily different approaches.
- The Council will transform the organisation and many of its services and in so doing will deliver financial savings as well as improvements.

## **Strategic Themes – where the Council will direct its attention in the next four years**

4.5 Three strategic themes have been developed and set out below. These themes, based on comprehensive research, analysis of citizens' views (Budget Consultation 2014) and the potential future of the Council (70% of its current size), are important and will make the biggest difference to both the Council and local people. They will enable the Council to create a future in which residents have the right to a more responsive and tailored service but also take more responsibility to make that happen for themselves and their communities.

1. Supporting a successful economy – taking steps to make the county a good place to do business and ensure that our schools are focused on raising the skills, qualifications and ambitions of all young people in the county.
2. Helping people to be more self-reliant – taking early steps to reduce or prevent people from becoming vulnerable or dependent on the Council and its services.
3. Smarter use of resources – ensuring that all its resources (financial, physical, human and technological) are used as effectively and efficiently as possible; and supporting the development of resources throughout the community that can help deliver its vision.

Key changes (outcomes) that can be expected from these themes include:

- A successful, sustainable and inclusive economy that will be supported by a skilful, ambitious workforce;

- Individuals and families that will be more independent and less reliant on traditional Council services;
- A fit-for-purpose council with lean, robust processes and a skilful workforce; and
- A supported 3rd/community sector with the opportunity to take on services that meet citizens' needs.

4.6 The Council will commit to a small number of very specific actions and projects for each of the three themes and further information on these will be presented at the meeting.

## **5. Effect upon Policy Framework and Procedure Rules**

5.1 The Council's Corporate Plan forms part of the Policy Framework. It provides the general direction for service delivery. Priorities with specific policy implications will be the subject of separate reports in accordance with the requirements of the constitution and legislation.

## **6. Equality Impact Assessment**

6.1 A full equality impact assessment will be conducted on the Corporate Plan when the Plan is developed. It is expected that delivery of these strategic themes will have a positive impact on promoting equalities across the county.

## **7. Financial Implications**

7.1 The Council's priorities and corporate plan are supported by its MTFS. The 2016-2020 MTFS is in the process of development and there will be a joint public consultation on the corporate priorities and emerging MTFS proposals in the autumn.

## **8. Recommendation**

8.1 That Council approves the Council's Vision and Values remain as set out in paragraphs 4.2-4.3.

8.2 That Council approves the revised priorities and supporting actions as set out in paragraph 4.5 for staff and public consultation.

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## **Background Documents**

None