

COUNCIL PLAN 2013/14 TO 2015/16

Submitted by: Head of Business Improvement and Partnerships

Portfolio: Communications, Transformation and Partnerships

Ward(s) affected: All

Purpose of the Report

To consider the draft Council Plan for the period 2013/14 to 2015/16.

Recommendations

- (a) That Members note this report and the draft copy of the Council Plan for 2013/14-2015/16 (found at Appendix A).
- (b) That Members approve the adoption of the Council Plan for 2013/14 to 2015/16.
- (c) That Members note that the monitoring section of the plan is being progressed via senior officer workshops in order to determine the relevant measures/indicators in order to monitor improvement against the priorities and outcomes being developed as part of the Council Plan.

Reasons

The Council Plan underpins the entire planning structure of the Authority and informs the organisation by acting as the major driver behind any budget proposals, longer-term strategic plans and the service planning process. By monitoring the Plan the Council is able to evidence its impact over time against its stated outcomes and identify areas of improvement.

1. Background and Issues

- 1.1 A new style Newcastle-under-Lyme Borough Council Plan for the period 2013/14 to 2015/16 is proposed which replaces the existing Corporate Plan document. The Council has taken the opportunity to develop the Plan in order to reflect changes in the political and economic environment of the Borough. The Plan also reflects the work undertaken as part of the recent Performance Management Framework Review.

The Plan itself is made up of two sections, with the first section of the draft Plan attached at Appendix A. The second section is to be produced once details of the measures and indicators – designed to monitor progress against the outcomes which underpin the Plan – are known and agreed with key stakeholders.

- 1.2 The Plan sets out the new vision for the Council, which is *to create a borough that is prosperous, clean, healthy and safe*. This vision replaces the previous vision and forms the basis for the new Council Plan.
- 1.3 The new priorities set out in the Plan are proposed as: -
- A clean, safe and sustainable borough,
 - A borough of opportunity,
 - A healthy and active community and

- Becoming a co-operative council delivering high quality, community-driven services

1.4 The draft plan attached at Appendix xx, and has been reviewed to check for Plain English.

1.5 As well as forming the basis for corporate, strategic and service planning, the proposed Council Plan is also plays a significant role in the development of the Council's budget over the period covered by the Plan, as it sets out the priority areas and the desired outcomes for the organisation against which budget decisions can be made as part of the process of putting the Medium Term Financial Strategy (MTFS) together.

2. **Development of the Council Plan**

2.1 The draft Council Plan, including its content and layout has been designed in order take into consideration the findings and information from the work undertaken earlier this year in the Performance Management Framework Review and also is a reflection of the ending of the National Performance Framework, which provides local authorities with the opportunity to set their own local outcome measures and indicators to reflect local issues.

2.2 The Plan is also a reflection of the changed political landscape of the Borough since the May 2011 local elections.

2.3 The Plan is a reflection of national issues and key pieces of legislation but is more geared towards recognising local issues and setting out how these will be tackled, via the new outcome-based performance framework.

2.4 The Plan also reflects the overall ambition of the Council over the next three years in a number of key areas of work.

2.5 The Plan is a key tool in the development of the Council's budget in the medium-term as outlined in the previous section.

2.6 In order to take into account these changes, therefore, the following was necessary in terms of reviewing the existing Corporate Plan: -

- A review of the Plan's structure.
- Involvement of key stakeholders in the review and drafting process.
- A review of the vision for the Council.
- Review of the four key priorities, in order to gauge their ongoing relevance and meaning.
- To review and challenge the developing outcomes in order to ensure they are linked to the Council's priorities and also to ensure that they reflect the issues faced by the Borough.
- To ensure that the key strategies of the council are linked to the plan and contribute to it.
- To acknowledge the key drivers for change which impact on the content and reflect the developments set out in the Plan and which are the main immediate challenges for the Council to deal with in conjunction with its communities and partners.

2.7 The Plan also renews the existing vision for the Council, with the new vision expressed as "to create a Borough that is prosperous, clean, healthy and safe".

2.8 Finally, the Plan articulates a change from the previous priority of "transforming our council to achieve excellence" by a new priority "becoming a co-operative council delivering high quality, community driven services".

3. Consultation and Other Influences

- 3.1 The vision, priorities and outcomes set out in the Plan have been considered via various forums undertaken as part of the ongoing Performance Management Framework Review process, with further work needed during September 2012 to complete the performance structure underpinning each outcome. A further report will come to the next Cabinet setting out the result of this work.
- 3.2 Ongoing consultation commissioned and analysed by the Borough Council's Communications and Business Improvement and Partnerships Departments in 2011/12 is used in the development of this Plan together with data from service-based satisfaction surveys, undertaken in-house on a regular basis to inform the management of service delivery.
- 3.3 The Plan is also a key part of the ongoing budget setting process underpinning the development of the new MTFs. The Plan sets out the key areas of focus for the Council based on the main drivers shaping the Council's future development (including the financial issues facing the organisation) and therefore provides the framework for ongoing budget decisions for the financial year 2013/14 and beyond.
- 3.4 Finally, demographic and other "profile" data contained in the Plan has been updated to reflect the emerging Census 2011 information. Further changes to the previous Plan have also been made as part of the "drivers for change" section of the Plan, including: -
- Demographic information.
 - Legislative development e.g. Welfare Reform and Localism Acts.
 - Information on the key 'local' strategies which have informed the Plan extensively.
 - Changes made due to the work done as part of the Performance Management Review.
 - Relevant aspects of the 'The Way We Work' Programme.
 - Details of initiatives around ensuring the good use of public money – especially relevant during the current challenging economic times.

4. Options, Proposal and Reasons for Preferred Solution

- 4.1 Effective strategic planning benefits from a single document outlining issues and assumptions and stating the general direction for the organisation in question – the attached draft Council Plan is designed to achieve this for the future development of Newcastle under Lyme B.C.
- 4.2 The Council Plan is therefore the document which clearly informs the council and acts as the major driver behind any budget proposals, longer-term strategic plans and also the service planning process.
- 4.3 Members are asked to consider the Plan and this covering report.
- 4.4 In considering the Plan/report, Members can: -
- Option A - accept the draft layout and its content as provided plus the addition of the monitoring section once determined (recommended, subject to further modifications and additions to be made as required by Cabinet).
 - Option B - request significant further changes to the Plan (also recommended, although Members should be aware that this will delay the process of publishing the

Plan and will also have an effect potentially on other related processes such as setting the budget for 2013/14 onwards).

5. **Outcomes Linked to Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Priorities**

5.1 This document identifies the corporate priorities of the Authority aligned to those of the Sustainable Community Strategy, linked to expected outcomes.

6. **Legal and Statutory Implications**

Officers have drafted this plan in line with current codes and legislation.

7. **Equality impact**

There are no differential impacts in this report.

8. **Financial and Resource Implications**

8.1 The plans in this report are to be considered against the overall Budget Strategy of the Council and play a key role in the development of the Council's budget from 2013/14 onwards.

9. **Major Risks**

9.1 The plans in this report are to be considered against the overall Risk Strategy of the Council. This is done as part of the Service and Financial Planning process.

10. **Key Decision information**

10.1 This report is in the Forward Plan.

11. **List of Appendices**

Appendix A - Draft Corporate Plan

12. **Background Papers**

Working papers held by officer in Corporate Plan 2012/13 files