

Report to Cabinet

Report reference: C-071-2014/15

Date of meeting: 9 March 2015



**Epping Forest
District Council**

Portfolio: Leader

Subject: Corporate Plan 2015 - 2020

Responsible Officer: Barbara Copson (01992 564042)

Democratic Services: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)

Recommendations/Decisions Required:

- (1) That the Council's proposed new Corporate Plan for 2015/16 to 2019/20 be agreed;**
- (2) That the proposed Key Action Plan for 2015-2016 be agreed; and**
- (3) That the Corporate Plan 2015-2020, and the Key Action Plan 2015-2016 be recommended to the Council for adoption.**

Executive Summary:

The Corporate Plan 2011 to 2015 is the authority's current key strategic planning document. The Plan is largely based around the Council's medium term priorities for that period, and includes the Council's key objectives for 2011- 2012.

As the lifetime of the current Corporate Plan comes to an end on 31 March 2015 a new Corporate plan has been developed to take the authority forward over the period from 2015/16 to 2019/20.

The Council's main areas of focus for the five year lifetime of the new Plan have been captured in a new set of corporate aims. In addition a new five year set of key objectives has been developed to support the aims. These corporate aims and key objectives replace the existing medium term aims and key objectives. A separate annual Corporate Key Action Plan for 2015-2016 has been developed to deliver the work towards the achievement of each objective during that year.

Reasons for Proposed Decision:

The identification and adoption of the Council's high level strategic aims and the key objectives to support the aims, for the five-year period of the new Corporate Plan, provide an opportunity for the Council to focus specific attention on how areas for improvement will be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people.

It is important that relevant performance management processes are in place to review and monitor performance against the Council's objectives, to ensure their continued achievability and relevance, and to identify proposals for appropriate corrective action in areas of under performance. The Corporate Key Action Plan for 2015-2016 sets out activities to deliver progress against the key objectives during the first year of the Corporate Plan.

Other Options for Action:

No other options are appropriate in this respect. The absence of a long term plan and business objectives to provide a clear focus for decision making, could result in opportunities for improvement and efficiency being lost. Failure to monitor and review performance against key objectives and to consider corrective action where necessary, could undermine the achievement of the aims and objectives and result in negative implications for the Council's reputation. The Council has previously agreed arrangements for the review of progress against the key objectives.

Report:

Corporate Plan 2015 to 2020

1. The Corporate Plan is the Council's highest level strategic document. It sets the strategic direction for the authority for the lifetime of the plan, and as such informs all other plans produced by the Council. The Corporate Plan does not cover everything that the authority does, focusing instead on a number of key areas that it needs to focus on over the lifetime of the Plan. These include issues arising from the financial context within which the Council operates, things that matter most to our residents, and local challenges arising from the social, economic and environmental background of the district. Therefore as a strategic document, the Corporate Plan does not contain specific information on the wide range of services that the authority provides, or how it delivers statutory duties or enforces legislation.

2. The Corporate Plan is an important element in the Council's performance management framework and corporate business planning processes. It provides a framework for the development of detailed annual directorate business plans and other detailed service plans which in turn provide details of service provision and how the work by directorates and services directly contributes to the achievement of the Council's aims and objectives. The Corporate Plan also provides the policy foundation for the authority's Medium-Term Financial Strategy and helps in the prioritization of resources to provide quality services and value for money.

3. As the lifetime of the current Corporate Plan comes to an end on 31 March 2015 a new Corporate Plan has been developed to take the authority forward over the period from 2015/16 to 2019/20. The draft new Corporate Plan is attached at Appendix 1 to this report.

4. The new Plan includes many of the sections found in the organisation's previous Council Plans including an overview of the district, a vision for the district, together with the corporate aims and key objectives pertinent to the life of the Plan. The most significant change to the structure of the Plan is the exclusion of the Key Cabinet Objectives Action Plan. The Action Plan, because it changes annually and will be published on the Council's website, will instead be accessible from the Corporate Plan via a hyperlink. This will enable the Action Plan to be updated more easily without affecting the structure of the Corporate Plan.

5. The corporate aims and key objectives are a central element of a Corporate Plan and as such the new Corporate Plan has been developed around them in a focused and interrelated way. The new Plan is a forward looking and organised document, shorter than the existing Corporate Plan, and whilst directed internally, it is written in plain English and is easily understandable to members of the public.

6. Like the existing Corporate Plan, and to minimise expenditure associated with the production of the new Plan, it will be primarily available via the Council's website. Should it be required in other formats assistance will be provided to facilitate access to the Plan.

Corporate Aims and Key Objectives

7. The strategic themes identified by Cabinet members and the Council's Management

Board, for the authority for the next five years, have been refined into a set of three corporate aims. Additionally a new set of more specific key objectives to support the aims has been developed with the input of the Council's Leadership Team. These corporate aims and key objectives, have been considered by Cabinet members at Joint Management Board / Cabinet Member meetings in November 2014 and January 2015. The Plan and proposed aims, together with an outline of the key objectives, have been communicated to all staff and feedback invited.

8. The proposed corporate aims and key objectives are set out within the Corporate Plan at pages 6-9, attached at Appendix 1, and also in the Key Action Plan 2015-2016 at Appendix 2 to this report.

Key Action Plan

9. Key Action Plans will continue to be set annually. Every year during the lifetime of the key objectives, the Key Action Plan will be updated and agreed between January and April, with actions to be undertaken over the following year to work towards the achievement of the key objectives. New actions will reflect the progress already achieved against the objective and emerging priorities.

10. The Action Plans will be closely monitored as at present, and performance will continue to be reported quarterly to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It should be noted that the target dates currently shown against individual actions on the attached Action Plan could be subject to change between consideration by Members and prior to publication.

11. The new Corporate Plan and the Key Action Plan for 2015-2016 were considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in February 2015, and subject to the agreement of Cabinet will be submitted to Council in April 2015 recommending adoption.

12. The Cabinet is requested to agree the draft Corporate Plan 2015 – 2020 and the Key Action Plan 2015 -2016, and recommend their adoption to Council.

Resource Implications:

The design and production costs of the new Corporate Plan have been met from within the existing budget of the Performance Improvement Unit for 2014/15. Publication of the new Corporate Plan will be primarily electronically via the Council's website. Resource requirements for actions to achieve specific key objectives will be identified by the responsible service director and reflected in the budget for the year.

Legal and Governance Implications:

There are no legal or governance implications arising from the recommendations of this report. Relevant implications arising from actions to achieve specific key objectives will be identified by the responsible service director.

Safer, Cleaner, Greener Implications:

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district. Relevant implications arising from actions to achieve specific key objectives will be identified by the responsible service director.

Consultation Undertaken:

The new Corporate Plan is a strategic planning document for the Council and which is directed internally. It is not considered that consultation with customers or external

organisations is required. The Plan has been considered by the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny committee during its development. Employees have received a presentation on the Plan, aims and objectives.

Background Papers:

None.

Risk Management:

The respective service director will have identified any risk management issues arising from proposals for the Council's Key Objectives for 2015/16-2019/20, as set out in this report.

Due Regard Record

This page shows which groups of people (if any) are affected by the subject of this report. It sets out how they are affected and how any discrimination they experience can be eliminated. It also includes information about how access to the service(s) subject of this report can be improved for the different groups of people; and how they can be assisted to understand each other better as a result of the subject of this report.

Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 requires that due regard must be paid to this information when considering the subject of this report.

Date/Officer	Summary of equality analysis
9 February 2015 B. Copson	<p>An overriding intention of the corporate aims and key objectives is to improve outcomes and circumstances for all sections of the community. The focus on the provision of resources and ensuring services are fit for purpose benefits all residents and service users, as does the delivery of a Local Plan which is based in evidence and aims to meet the needs of the district's communities.</p> <p>The delivery of key projects to provide retail opportunities and Council house building will provide economic opportunities in the district, whilst the increasing accessibility and value for money in the provision of leisure and cultural services for local residents and visitors will benefit all sectors of the community.</p> <p>Specific actions in the Key Action Plan 2015/16 address specific need for example, the provision of additional affordable rented homes, and increasing local employment opportunities for residents. Others focus on gaining understanding of the needs of an ageing population, and enhancing and improving access to services.</p> <p>There are no equality implications arising from the specific recommendations of this report. Implications arising from individual deliverables or actions to achieve the key objectives for 2015/16 will be identified and considered by the responsible service director.</p>