

# **Report to Local Council's Liaison Committee**

**Date of meeting: 9 March 2011**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

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**Subject:** Corporate Plan 2011-2015

**Responsible Officer:** S. Tautz (01992 564180)

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## **Recommendations:**

**That the Committee consider the Council's new Corporate Plan for the period from 2011/12 to 2014/15.**

1. The Corporate Plan is the Council's key strategic planning document, setting out service delivery priorities over a four-year period, with strategic themes reflecting those of the Sustainable Community Strategy for the Epping Forest District. The Community Strategy represents the long-term vision for the district, and the Corporate Plan demonstrates how the Council will contribute to the delivery of this vision, concentrating on issues that affect the district as an area, not just on those services the Council delivers directly. The Corporate Plan illustrates how the authority will support the Community Strategy through its role as a leader or influencer of action, and how it will respond to the priorities of the Government and residents of the District. The previous Corporate Plan (then known as the Council Plan) expired in March 2010, and work has been taking place over the last year to develop a new Corporate Plan to take the Council forward over the next four years.
2. The Corporate Plan is intended to translate the vision for the district set out by the Community Strategy into the Council's strategic priorities and objectives, and to identify the outcomes that the authority wants to achieve. The Corporate Plan informs the Council's other strategic plans and helps prioritise resources to provide quality services and value for money. The Corporate Plan does not cover everything that the authority does, and focuses on those issues that matter most to local people, national priorities, and local challenges arising from the social, economic and environmental context of the district. As a strategic document, the Corporate Plan is not designed to contain specific information on the wide range of services that the authority provides, or how it delivers statutory duties or enforces legislation.
3. The Corporate Plan evidences that the Council is aware of local issues, and that improved outcomes for local people are being delivered. The Corporate Plan includes specific actions to address corporate and local priorities, that are financed, resourced and have a timescale for completion. The Corporate Plan is closely linked to the Council's Medium-Term Financial Strategy, outlining the financial resources available to fulfil specific priorities and objectives, and sets out how the authority will deliver its vision and priorities.
4. The Corporate Plan is an important element of the Council's Performance Management Framework and its corporate business planning processes, and informs the content of annual Business Plans to illustrate the work that directorates and services perform that contribute towards the achievement of the Council's priorities and objectives. The Corporate Plan also provides the policy foundation for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, particularly in the current financial climate.

5. The development of a new Corporate Plan has been undertaken in conjunction with the similar development of the new Community Strategy for the district by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), 'One Epping Forest'. The new Corporate Plan seeks to complement the Community Strategy and reflect those issues and priorities in the Strategy where the Council can have maximum impact. The new Community Strategy, 'Putting Epping Forest First' was adopted by the LSP in November 2010, and has previously been the subject of a presentation to the Committee.
6. Given the need for the Corporate Plan to translate the Community Strategy into the Council's strategic priorities and objectives, the Council considered that it was most appropriate for the new Corporate Plan to run from 1 April 2011, for the four-year period to 31 March 2015. This approach was supported by the need of the Council (and all local authorities) to respond rapidly during 2010 to changes in local government initiatives introduced by the Coalition Government and, more importantly, to consider the outcomes of the recent Comprehensive Spending Review before determining priorities and objectives for future years.
7. It is important that the Council's priorities and objectives reflect the issues that matter most to residents and partners. Through consultation undertaken by the authority and the LSP as part of the development of the new Community Strategy, and the analysis of a range of socio-economic and demographic data from sources such as the Office For National Statistics and the ten-yearly Census, the main concerns and issues facing the district in the forthcoming years have been identified. The new Corporate Plan seeks to ensure that these issues are addressed effectively.
8. The Corporate Plan reflects the Council's Key Objectives for 2011/12. The annual identification of Key Objectives provides 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. The Key Objectives reflect national and local priorities and specific service improvements, and are intended to provide a clear statement of the Council's overall intentions for the year. The Key Objectives contain specific targets and outcomes, and on-going performance is reported on a six-monthly basis.
9. The Corporate Plan will be updated on an annual basis to report performance against the Council's Key Objectives, and to identify objectives for future years. The review of the Corporate Plan each year will ensure that actions and resources are targeted at those areas of greatest importance.
10. The new Corporate Plan is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. The Corporate Plan was agreed by the Cabinet in January 2011, and is currently subject to resident and partner consultation in advance of its publication on 1 April 2011. The Committee is invited to comment on the content of the Corporate Plan and the Council's aims for 2011/12 to 2014/15, and its specific objectives for 2011/12. Alternatively, local councils are welcome to comment individually using either the feedback form at the end of the document, or by submitting written comments to the Performance Improvement Unit at [performance@eppingforestdc.gov.uk](mailto:performance@eppingforestdc.gov.uk) or through the website. Responses received will be used to inform the content of the final version of the Corporate Plan.