

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL
29TH APRIL 2009
REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE
RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO LEADER(S) – LEADER OF THE COUNCIL
CORPORATE PLAN 2009/12

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To obtain Members' approval of the Corporate Plan 2009/12 which details the Council's vision, priorities and targeted actions for the period 1st April 2009 to 31st March 2012.

2. Recommendation(s)

- 2.1 To receive the recommendation from Cabinet in respect of the Corporate Plan 2009/12.
- 2.2 In the event that Cabinet recommend approval and adoption of the Corporate Plan 2009/12 and such recommendation is approved by Council; that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make any necessary alterations prior to final publication.

3. Conclusions and Reason(s) for the Recommendation(s)

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan 2009/12 is imperative to identify the Council's priorities for the next three years and in ensuring that resources are aligned to these priorities.
- 3.2 The proposed Improvement Planning Framework is essential in securing robust and sustained improvements and has been supported by both the Audit Commission and the Peer Review team. Through the introduction of Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) the Council is able to demonstrate:
- 3.3 why the six priorities areas have been identified as corporate priorities;
what challenges exist within each of the six areas;
what actions are planned to address each challenge; and
most importantly what resources (financial and human) the Council has to deliver these actions
- 3.4 The five CHASE PDP's and sixth Corporate Improvement PDP detail the actions the Council is taking as part of a wider partnership delivery plan and therefore as an organisation, ensure that the Council has both the resources and capacity to deliver its external partnership commitments.

4. Key Issues

- 4.1 The Council's current Corporate Plan was adopted in June 2007. Since this time, there have been many strategic developments (detailed within section 1 below) and in order to secure robust and sustained improvement planning in priority areas, the revised 2009/12 Corporate Plan is essential.

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Section 1Background

On 25th June 2007, Council approved the Corporate and Performance Plan 2007/10. The Plan detailed the Council's Corporate Vision 'that by 2015 Cannock Chase District will be recognised as a place where everyone's lives are enriched by a strong cultural identity, vibrant local economy and pride in the outstanding natural environment'. The vision was supported by five strategic objectives illustrated by the CHASE acronym and aligned to the County wide LAA thematic partnerships:

- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities, Housing and Older People
- Access to Skills, Economic Development and Enterprise
- Safe, Strong and Cohesive Communities
- Environmental Sustainability

In October 2006, the Local Government White Paper, *Strong and Prosperous Communities* detailed the Government's intention to reduce the burden on local authorities by deregulating and simplifying the traditional 'best value' requirements. The subsequent Local Government Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 incorporated many elements of the White Paper.

As a result, with effect from 1st April 2008, best value local authorities were no longer required to produce and publish an annual Corporate and Performance Plan. There were however provisions which retained a requirement for Councils to publish the outturn of performance data only for the financial year 2007/08 in order to inform the final year of CPA reports, ending on 31st March 2009. Accordingly, on 25th June 2008, Council approved the publication of BVPI outturn data for 2007/08.

Since June 2008, Staffordshire has approved its Sustainable Community Strategy and refreshed the Local Area Agreement. The LAA refresh involved Staffordshire Local Strategic Partnership negotiating with Government Office for the West Midlands and resulted in targets for 35 National Indicators (out of a potential 198) being identified as priorities for Staffordshire, in addition to the 16 mandatory educational indicators. These indicators focus on five priority areas which together aim to achieve the Staffordshire 15 year vision 'To improve the quality of life for all Staffordshire's people by increasing economic prosperity, improving local services and developing partnership working':

- A vibrant, prosperous and sustainable economy
- Strong safe and cohesive communities
- Improved health and sense of well being
- A protected, enhanced and respected environment
- Statutory education and early years' targets

Whilst these are collective priorities for Staffordshire, it is recognised that each of the 8 Districts which comprise the 'shire area' also face their own unique challenges. Each of the 8 Local Strategic Partnerships therefore had a duty to publish their own Sustainable Community Strategy by 31st June 2008. The Chase Community Partnership published its Strategy detailing a vision that 'By 2020 Cannock Chase will have a vibrant local economy, with opportunities for all, in a clean, green and safe environment' and focussed its objectives around the five LAA partnerships.

In addition to the priorities identified within its own Corporate and Performance Plan, the Council through partnership is involved in delivering many wider priorities within Cannock Chase. These

partnership priorities result from the Council's statutory roles within the Staffordshire LSP, the Chase Community Partnership (LSP) and ultimately in delivering the Local Area Agreement. As a result, there have been numerous and often competing priorities for the Council to deliver within available resources.

In addition, The Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2007 identified that *'the Council is trying to juggle too many things, for instance, the Corporate Plan has 50 promises and whilst the Council has good ideas, this needs to be translated into reality through a structured and resourced approach to planning'*. More recently the Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2008 confirmed *'improvement planning is not yet robust.....the Council does not have a high level improvement plan in place to tackle Corporate issues, but the Corporate Plan 2009/12 and supporting improvement planning framework are due to be adopted in April 2009.....'* In March 2009, the Council also invited an external Peer Review Team to assess the Council's positioning for the introduction of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment on 1st April 2009. Whilst the final report is not expected until mid April, informal feedback has confirmed the *'critical need to quickly reach clear agreement on a realistic number of priorities and focus given the limited capacity.....'*

The introduction of the new Comprehensive Area Assessment on 1st April 2009 places a much greater emphasis on delivering priority outcomes and it is increasingly important to ensure that decisions are evidence based and targeted to areas of greatest need. The Council has a wealth of information and evidence available to inform the decision making process. Examples include the State of Cannock Chase Report and the Citizens' Panel Surveys which take place on an annual basis. The State of Cannock Chase Report illustrates the extent and concentration of deprivation throughout the District and provides an analysis of the various domains of deprivation, such as income, health, crime etc and enables the Council and its partners to understand the community needs; whilst the Citizens' Panel Surveys provide an insight into community views and perceptions and enables the community to influence developments in service delivery. All of this information should be taken into account, alongside existing partnership commitments when determining the Council's Corporate priorities.

In February 2009 the Council set the 2009/10 to 2011/12 budget and in doing so assumed an indicative savings requirement of £870,000 per annum. The strategy in achieving such savings consisted of:

- 4% efficiency savings from corporate and support services (in addition to the £1,797,530 Gershon efficiency savings made to date, against a target of £1,214,775), thereby totalling £840,000 savings over three years
- A senior management restructure, saving £764,000 over three years
- Savings from policy options, totalling £1,233,000 over three years.

Clearly the reduction in management capacity and financial resources has a direct impact upon the scope and extent of services the Council is able to deliver. The current economic downturn also poses difficulties for the Council both in terms of the level of income it generates and the increased demand for some of its services.

It is therefore imperative and indeed timely for the Council to review its Corporate priorities to ensure that community needs are being addressed in this particularly difficult time.

Section 2

Details of Matters to be Considered

The key matter for consideration is the adoption of the new Corporate Plan 2009/12, within which the main issues are:

- Aligning the Council's Corporate vision with that of the Chase Community Partnership i.e. 'by 2020 Cannock Chase will have a vibrant local economy with opportunities for all, in a clean, green and safe environment'.
- In acknowledging the challenges the District faces, to agree the revised Council priorities and actions to be taken to address such issues.
- The adoption of a robust Improvement Planning Framework, where Priority Delivery Plans (PDPs) provide the important 'golden thread' between the Council's Corporate Plan and individual Service Delivery Plans and pro-active performance management is ensured.

Section 3

Contribution to CHASE

The Corporate Plan is the Council's key strategic planning document and is imperative in demonstrating how all Council services contribute through the business planning process to all of the Council's CHASE priorities. In addition, the Corporate Improvement Priority Delivery Plan will effectively become the sixth Council priority area which is essential in ensuring the organisation itself is well placed to deliver the five CHASE priorities for residents of the District.

Section 4

Financial Implications

There are no direct financial implications arising from this report and all relevant financial details are referred to throughout the Corporate Plan and Priority Delivery Plans.

Section 5

Human Resource Implications

There are numerous human resource implications related to the delivery of actions to address the challenges identified within each PDP

Section 6

Legal Implications

There is no legal requirement for the Council to produce and publish a Corporate Plan. However, having a Corporate Plan which identifies Council priorities and service delivery arrangements is considered good practice. It is also one of the primary plans sought and upon which a Council will be judged by external audit and inspection and failure to produce a Corporate Plan can be detrimental, particularly in relation to any future CAA assessment.

Section 7

Section 17 (Crime Prevention)

There are Section 17 implications resulting from the proposed actions within each PDP. Such implications are identified within the PDPs themselves and also within associated Service Delivery Plans.

Section 8

Human Rights Act Implications

There are no Human Rights Act Implications arising from this report.

Section 9

Data Protection Act Implications

There are no identified Data Protection Act implications.

Section 10

Risk Management Implications

Whilst there are no risk management implications associated with the main body of the Corporate Plan, each PDP contains its own risk register detailing potential risks to failing to deliver against the identified challenges.

Section 11

Equality and Diversity Implications

There are Equality and Diversity Implications resulting from the proposed actions within each PDP, for example targeting service delivery at specific vulnerable groups. Such implications are identified within the PDPs themselves and also within associated Service Delivery Plans.

Section 12

Other Options Considered

Whilst there is no statutory duty upon the Council to produce an annual Corporate Plan, there have been many significant strategic developments since the current Corporate and Performance Plan was adopted by Council in June 2007. Section 1 within this report details the reasons for adopting the new Corporate Plan and it is not considered that there are viable alternative options available.

Section 13

List of Background Papers

Corporate and Performance Plan 2007/10
State of Cannock Chase Report 2008/09
Chase Community Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy
Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2007

Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2008

Annexes