

CANNOCK CHASE COUNCIL

30 JUNE 2010

REPORT OF CHIEF EXECUTIVE

RESPONSIBLE PORTFOLIO LEADER(S) – LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

PRIORITY DELIVERY PLANS 2010/11

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To obtain Members' approval of the revised Priority Delivery Plans for 2010/11 which detail the actions the Council will be undertaking in order to achieve improved outcomes against the priorities stated in the Corporate Plan 2009/12.

2. Recommendation(s)

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| 2.1 | That Members approve the current Priority Delivery Plans for the financial year 2010/11. |
| 2.2 | That Members note that due to the Government's intention to announce an Emergency Budget on 22 nd June (being the date of despatch for these documents); it may be necessary to review the contents of the current PDPs for 2010/11. In the event of any funding reduction within the 2010/11 financial year, the implications on 10/11 delivery would be reported to Cabinet and Scrutiny as part of the performance management framework. |
| 2.3 | That Members note that the current 2010/11 PDPs have been developed and produced based on the Local Government agenda and framework prior to 6 th May 2010. Since this time, in addition to the financial position in 2.2 above, the coalition Government have indicated their intention to radically overhaul Local Government. Whilst this overhaul is likely to include devolution and decentralisation of powers and greater financial autonomy; the impending review of local government finance will undoubtedly impact on these new freedoms. Members must therefore note that the changing context and framework within which Local Authorities will operate will require a radical rationalisation of firstly what services the Council delivers and secondly how and by whom those services are delivered. The current 2010/11 PDPs must therefore be considered in light of this context; (albeit that much of the detail is not definitive at the time of writing) and Members should note that significant changes may be required as the national agenda evolves. |

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

- 3.1 The Corporate Plan 2009/12 was approved by Council on 29th April 2009. At this time, the Council adopted the vision of the Chase Community Partnership (LSP) that *'By 2020, Cannock Chase will have a vibrant local economy, with opportunities for all, in a clean, green and safe environment'*. In order to achieve this vision, the Council agreed six corporate priorities which reflected the needs of the community:

- Children and Young People
- Healthier Communities, Housing and Older People
- Access to Education, Skills and Employment
- Safe, Strong and Cohesive Communities
- Environmental Sustainability
- Corporate Improvement

Each of these six priorities had its own Priority Delivery Plan which articulated:

- the evidence which supports the identification of each of the six priorities
- what challenges exist within each of the six priorities;
- what actions are planned to address each challenge; and
- most importantly what resources (financial, human and other physical resources) the Council has to deliver these actions

3.2 During the financial year 2009/10, the six PDPs have been subject to a robust performance management framework. Specifically, progress against the actions and performance indicators detailed within each PDP are reported on a six weekly basis to DMT and on a quarterly basis to DMT, Cabinet and Scrutiny. In addition, each Policy Committee (on behalf of the Cabinet portfolio lead) reviews the progress of their respective PDPs. Through the process of 'exception reports' performance is pro-actively managed and where an amber or red rating has been given regarding progress, the lead officer makes recommendations to Cabinet on whether additional resources are required or a target requires amendment in light of the current progress. Having considered the information provided, Cabinet are able to consult the Scrutiny Committee on any changes which may be required and the implications of any such changes. Through the consultation process, Cabinet ultimately determine whether to make the changes detailed within the exception report and in some cases, this has resulted in a target date being amended to reflect perhaps resources available, or national circumstances such as the impact of the recession.

3.3 The purpose of the Council's Performance Management Framework is to establish a robust process to ensure actions and targets set out in the Priority Delivery Plans are managed and delivered effectively. Although the process has generally been well received, through self evaluation and feedback from Cabinet, Policy and Scrutiny Committees several improvements have been identified and as a result, the lead member of DMT in consultation with the Cabinet portfolio lead has revised and refreshed their PDP. Whilst each PDP is clearly very different, the generic areas for improvement and action taken to address these issues is as follows:

- a) In recognition of the Constitutional Framework and the distinct portfolio responsibilities notified to Members at the Annual Meeting of Council in May of this year, the six PDPs in 2009/10 have been reviewed.

Action taken: Distinct PDPs for each of the seven Cabinet Portfolios have been developed for 2010/11.

- b) The current 'challenges' within the PDPs are in effect a 'statement of the issue to be addressed', for example 'Climate Change' within the Environmental Sustainability PDP. These challenges could be better articulated to describe what the outcome will be so for example 'climate change' would become 'A Cleaner and Greener Environment'.

Action taken: the current 'challenges' have been refreshed and redesignated as 'Priority Outcomes' which accurately describe what it is we want to achieve within each PDP.

- c) In some instances, it is difficult to ascertain how the action which is detailed will contribute towards the existing 'challenge' and from 10/11 onwards the 'priority outcome'. In order to establish a more obvious link, the actions should be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timed). In particular, the 'measurable' element is of utmost significance as the Council needs to be assured that the action it is taking has an impact which is measurable in terms of the outcomes for the community.

Action taken: actions have been revised in order that it can be readily ascertained how a given action contributes to the priority outcome by making it specific and measurable.

- d) As part of the SMART objective, actions need to be timed. In some cases it is not possible to identify exactly when a particular action is due to take place. This in itself renders performance management difficult as the absence of a date makes it impossible to know whether an action is indeed due at a particular moment in time. There is scope within the performance reports for lead officers to provide a commentary for example perhaps that 'this action is not due until March 2010'. In such instances, a 'no rating' status should be applied and read in conjunction with the explanatory commentary. There have however been examples where the commentary has stated that an action is not due until a future date, yet a green rating has been applied, which suggests that performance has met the target.

Action taken: actions have been profiled so that it is obvious within which quarter of 10/11 a particular action is due to take place. An action which is planned to take place in Q2 therefore will not be reported in the Q1 performance report.

- e) There has been and continues to be a lack of District level data in respect of the National Indicators reported within the LAA. There are 35 indicators within the LAA for Staffordshire plus 10 statutory education and early years targets; therefore 45 in total. Of these 35 non-educational NI's, we only have District targets for Cannock Chase for 4 indicators. The Staffordshire LSP receives quarterly performance reports on 35 county wide LAA performance indicators. From this County wide information, District performance has been available at varying frequencies. There are 14 indicators which are reported either annually or bi-annually (such as those measured by the Place Survey) and of the remaining 21 for which frequent District performance should be reported, information was received for only 16 indicators for Q3. Therefore although there are only 4 indicators with official District targets for Cannock Chase, we have been provided with performance information for 16. Performance information is not meaningful when no baseline or target has been established. There is a continuous dialogue between District and County LSPs regarding the need for disaggregated data at a District level and the role of the Staffordshire observatory in the provision of such information.

Action taken: Given the lack of LAA data at a District level, LAA indicators have been removed from all PDPs. This is because the provision of County wide data is not representative of the performance of Cannock Chase as a District (the LSP) or indeed the District Council as an organisation. Where the Council is taking an action as part of a District LSP delivery plan, the action will be performance managed as part of the LSP. The role of the District Council's Scrutiny Committee is of course to scrutinise the performance of both the Council (through the PDPs) and the District LSP (through partnership performance reports). Both PDP and partnership performance have been

reported to Scrutiny on a quarterly basis throughout 09/10 and will continue to be so reported through 10/11. The LAA data will therefore form part of the partnership's performance and although the lack of District data will remain an issue, the Council's own organisational performance can remain a distinct entity and be reported independently.

- e) Financial information is aligned to each of the six PDPs and a breakdown is provided of the service costs within each priority area. For example within the Access to Education, Skills and Employment PDP, the breakdown of service finance information includes promotion of tourism, town centre management, Rugeley Market Hall etc. The financial performance against each of these 'services' is performance managed through the same 6 weekly and quarterly performance reports and lead officers are required to complete an exception report where a red financial rating has been provided. Through consideration at Committees, Members have requested that financial information be aligned to the actions which are being delivered in order to better understand the correlation between performance and cost.

Action taken: As stated above, each PDP has now identified priority outcomes which will be achieved through a variety of actions. Work has been undertaken to align financial resources to the actions stated in order to provide information on the cost of delivering these actions. In some cases, this information is readily available due to the nature and precise description of the action itself and where this exists, both cost and performance of the action will be reported on a quarterly basis. In other cases, some actions are not easily defined in financial terms and further work is being undertaken to develop this element. However, with the need to focus on priority outcomes it is prudent to understand the extent of resources required to deliver the said outcomes. For example, within the Culture and Sport PDP, the Priority outcome is 'Increased participation in sport and physical activity' and whilst there are several actions which will contribute to achieving this, having an understanding of the overall resources required will provide a comprehensive overview of the cost of delivering this outcome. Work has been undertaken to align financial information to the priority outcomes and during 2010/11 the quarterly performance/finance reports will be piloted. This pilot will improve our current financial alignment from being at a high level portfolio focus to a more detailed outcome level. Evaluation of this pilot will also provide a firm foundation upon which to build more detailed alignment to specific actions in future years.

4. Key Issues

- 4.1 The Council's current Corporate Plan was adopted in April 2009. Since this time, performance against actions and indicators within each of the six PDPs has been reported on a six weekly and quarterly basis. In addition, the Council has received the report from the March 2009 IDeA Peer Review and also undergone its first Organisational Assessment under the Comprehensive Area Assessment framework (CAA) for 2008/09. The formal results of the inspection were published in December 2009 when the Council received a score of 2 for Managing Performance and 2 for its Use of Resources. An overall score of 2 was given, meaning that the Council performs adequately.
- 4.2 As a result, of the performance management process and external reviews and inspections, several issues have been identified and improvements made to the Priority Delivery Plans as detailed within paragraph 3.3. In March 2010, the Council received the Organisational

inspection by the Audit Commission for the year 2009/10, the preliminary findings of which support this way forward. Whilst the new Government have recently announced the formal abolition of CAA with immediate effect (meaning that the results of the 2009/10 inspection will never be communicated or published), many of its principles continue to provide a robust framework on which to base the Council's improvement journey. In this sense, the PDPs are the core documents.

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Section 1

Background

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 actions the Council will be taking to deliver its priority outcomes.

Section 2

Details of Matters to be Considered

The key matter for consideration is the adoption of the new Priority Delivery Plans for the financial year 2010/11 which underpin the Corporate Plan 2009/12. The rationale and revised changes to the existing PDPs are detailed within paragraph 3.3 of this report.

Section 3

Contribution to Corporate Priorities

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 corporate priorities.

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 challenges related to the delivery of actions to address the challenges identified within each PDP – particularly in ensuring that employees have the capacity, skills and knowledge needed for effective delivery. As an "Investor In People" the Council has a well structured approach to the ongoing training and development of its people through use of personal development reviews, management competencies and workforce development initiatives.

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 would be judged by external audit and inspection and failure to produce a Corporate Plan can be detrimental.

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

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

Section 13

List of Background Papers

State of Cannock Chase Report 2008/09
Chase Community Partnership's Sustainable Community Strategy
Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2008
Audit Commission Organisational Assessment 2008/09
IDeA Peer Review Report March May 2009
Briefing Note to Scrutiny Committee – Performance Management and Refresh of PDPs 8 March 2010

Annexes

Culture and Sport PDP
Health and Wellbeing PDP
Housing PDP
Economic Development and Planning PDP
Town Centre Regeneration PDP
Environment PDP
Corporate Improvement PDP

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