

3.0 **BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In recent years the Council has produced a one year Corporate Plan. This has allowed it to reflect the needs and aspirations of the Borough's communities in the setting of its priorities each year. These priorities are aligned with budgets to ensure that the Council's key priorities and projects are achievable.
- 3.2 Following the Local Government Association's Peer Challenge in late 2013, a recommendation was made that Council sets out plans on a longer term basis. A four year Corporate Plan is one element of the Council's response to this which, along with a revised medium term financial plan and strengthened transformation programme, will enable the Council to plan effectively for the financial and policy challenges it faces.
- 3.3 The plan defines the Council's key priorities and aims, based on those identified by Executive Members and officers and taking account of a wide range of evidence. The plan is aimed at providing focus, setting out priorities that will require collected corporate effort during the period. It is not an attempt to describe every service that the Council will provide; this will be covered by service plans on an annual basis.

4.0 **CORPORATE PLAN EMPHASIS, STRUCTURE AND PROCESS**

- 4.1 The plan provides continuity with the 2014-15 plan, maintaining the same vision, three overarching priorities and values. Discussions during the drafting of the plan have concluded that each of these elements are clearly stated and remain relevant for the next four years. Staff have become familiar with the vision, priorities and values through the promotion of the 2014-15 plan. There is therefore significant benefit in leaving these unchanged and continuing to use them to shape how we talk to staff and partners about the work of the Council. The values will also be used to shape the Council's Workforce Strategy and its approach to partnership working.
- 4.2 Whilst the overall framework of the plan is maintained from the previous version, the objectives set out within each overarching priority have been revised and updated. As noted above, these objectives are not intended to collectively cover all of the activity that will be delivered by the Council during this period. Rather, they provide focus and ambition that will shape how the Council uses its financial and staff resources.
- 4.3 Each of the objectives includes activities that will be delivered in the first year of the plan (2015-16) as well as aims for the whole four year period.

Wherever possible, the measures and milestones included are those over which the Council has a significant amount of control, although it is recognised that delivery will remain dependent on working closely with partners as well as the wider economic and policy context.

- 4.4 As well as setting out priorities, the plan also includes the context within which Council services will be delivered and key achievements in recent years.
- 4.5 The plan has been produced through a series of discussions and workshops with Executive Members, Scrutiny Chairs and officers from the Corporate Management Team. Draft priorities were also shared with a wider group of service managers and made available for discussions at team meetings. A draft version has been shared with representatives from the recognised Trade Unions. Although the plan has been produced within a tight timeframe, there will be further opportunities for engagement with staff and partners as more detailed planning takes place for delivery of the corporate priorities, particularly through service planning and future review of the Corporate Plan.
- 4.6 The final plan will be made available on-line through the website, although it may be necessary to produce a small number of print copies. A short summary version of the plan will be produced for dissemination among the public and partners. This will focus on a much briefer outline of the priorities together with the key achievements and values of the Council.

5.0 **MONITORING AND REVIEW ARRANGEMENTS**

- 5.1 Following approval of the Corporate Plan, service managers will produce service plans for their areas. These will provide more detail on how each service will contribute to the relevant corporate priorities, together with the other activities that form the core functions of each service area. These service plans will provide the framework for setting the objectives for individual teams and members of staff for the coming year (2015-16).
- 5.2 Following the outcome of the local and national elections in May, there will be a brief review of the Corporate Plan in order to ensure the priorities remain relevant. This will provide an opportunity to reflect on feedback from partners and staff, including that arising from the more detailed service planning process. Thereafter, the plan will be reviewed on an annual basis to take account of annual budget setting and further policy changes. The sections of the plan relating to the specific projects in the coming year will be refreshed, with the inclusion of new activities that will contribute to the objectives in the plan.

5.3 A review of corporate performance management has recently begun. This is aimed at putting in place a simple but effective process for reviewing performance against the Corporate Plan and service plans on a regular basis. It will provide support and challenge to service managers and inform decision making if action is required to keep performance on track. The revised arrangements will maintain and strengthen the 'golden thread', with all members of staff being set objectives that contribute to their service plans, which in turn drive delivery of the Corporate Plan priorities.

5.4 Arising from the revised performance management arrangements, a report will be brought to Cabinet at least every six months showing progress on the Corporate Plan.

6.0 **RISK MANAGEMENT**

Risks	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigating Action	Residual Impact	Residual Likelihood
Failure to make sufficient progress on plan delivery	H	M	Priorities, aims and projects are challenging but realistic. They provide a focus for the use of resources during the period	M	L
Failure to complete projects on time/budget/to quality standards.	H	M	Performance management approach under revision to ensure proper attention paid to progress on projects and to drive action where necessary to bring progress back on track	H	L
Core Council services unable to identify contribution to the corporate priorities	M	M	Service plans will be used to make the link between the contribution of teams and individual members of staff, and the corporate plan	L	L
Failure to properly resource priorities in the plan	M	M	Specific commitments have been accounted for in 15/16 budgets and delivery of 4 year targets will be kept under review as part of the medium term financial plan; plan will be used to focus the use of staff resources	M	L

7.0 **EQUALITIES**

7.1 Equality, diversity and social inclusion have been key considerations during the development of the plan and our values. As programmes and projects are developed to deliver our vision and priorities the appropriate level of equality analysis and community engagement will be undertaken. Overall the plan is considered to have a positive equality impact contributing to reducing health inequalities and financial exclusion which are significant areas of concern within the Borough.

8.0 **RECOMMENDATIONS**

8.1 That the Corporate Plan is approved, noting that it is:

- The Council's strategic framework for the financial years 2015-16 to 2018-19
- Subject to review following the local and national elections in May 2015 and subsequently each year to reflect shifting policy and local circumstances

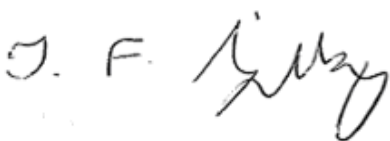
9.0 **REASON FOR RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 To provide the Council with a clear statement of its strategic priorities for 2015-2019 and a framework within which decisions can be made about the allocation of resources.

CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM

Further information on this matter can be obtained from Donna Reddish (Extension 5307).

Officer recommendation supported.



Signed

Lead Member

Date 10th February 2015

Consultee Lead Member/Support Member comments (if applicable)