

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 13 December 2012

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Title: The Draft Corporate Plan 2012-18

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Item for decision

Summary

1. The corporate plan is updated annually. The new plan melds the achievements of the last 6 years with the changing demands being placed on the Council by setting new directions and priorities. The key themes are now: Low Tax, High Quality, Responsibility and Prosperity. The Plan retains its simplicity by being presented on a single page, with the overall goal of the Council now being "The Low Tax and High Quality Council".

Recommendations

2. Cabinet approve the draft Corporate Plan for consideration by Council at its meeting of 28 February 2013.

Financial Implications

3. Any financial implications resulting from actions or projects in the corporate plan will be identified in the budget, MTFS and divisional plans.

Background Papers

4. The following papers were referred to by the author in the preparation of this report and are available for inspection from the author of the report.

None

Impact

- 5.

Communication/Consultation	The plan is derived from ongoing actions in the current corporate plan, which was itself the subject of community engagement, the budget consultation earlier this year and the Conservative Group manifesto for the 2011 local elections, which is a mandate for many of the actions.
Community Safety	Any community safety implications resulting from actions or projects in the corporate plan will be identified in the service plans

Equalities	An EQIA is commenced. Any equalities implications resulting from actions or projects in the corporate plan will be identified in the service plans. The corporate plan can be made available in Braille, larger print or translated on request
Health and Safety	Any health and safety implications resulting from actions or projects in the corporate plan will be identified in the service plans
Human Rights/Legal Implications	There are no human rights implications. Any legal implications resulting from actions or projects in the corporate plan will be identified in the service plans
Sustainability	Any sustainability implications resulting from actions or projects in the corporate plan will be identified in the service plans. Copies of the new-format corporate plan can easily be printed. The plan will be made available via the website.
Ward-specific impacts	Any ward-specific impacts resulting from actions or projects in the corporate plan will be identified in the service plans.
Workforce/Workplace	Any workforce implications resulting from actions or projects in the corporate plan will be identified in the service plans.

Situation

6. The corporate plan sets out the priorities for the council over the next 12 months and beyond. These priorities were identified through contemporaneous consultation over the budget and are among the issues that matter most to the community. The plan builds on the directions set in previous Corporate Plans but also seeks to address the priorities of central government..
7. Since the current Administration took office in 2007 the Council has focused on four priorities - finance, partnerships, people and environment. These are now subsumed within the new priorities of low taxation, high quality, responsibility and prosperity, with the overall goal being “The Low Tax High Quality Council”.
8. The Council has an enviable record. For example, over the last year, Council Tax has been frozen again, New Homes Bonus has been used for community benefit, Members have been given personal budgets, we celebrated the Olympics in style, we built council houses, we introduced Highway Rangers, we significantly improved our waste collection service and saved costs, and we have materially raised the profile of economic development in the District. The district has a strong housing market and the Council has made (and will continue to make) optimum use of the financial benefits this has brought the district – the provisional allocation of New Homes Bonus for 2013-14 is £2,042,429 which is the second highest award in Essex.

9. In a recent survey conducted by MORI for Essex CC the District performed well – for example the Uttlesford area achieved “best in Essex” for: health, overall residents satisfaction, having a sense of identity with the Council area, likelihood of volunteering, feeling safe after dark, having low levels of litter, low levels of antisocial behaviour, being well-informed, leading a healthy lifestyle and taking exercise.
10. The Government’s priority is now encouraging growth. All the localism initiatives remain but these are now to be focused on achieving growth, or at least not hindering it. The new plan reflects this change in emphasis by introducing a theme of prosperity. Major changes to the administration of welfare benefits are being introduced by government, to which the Council is adapting. Although money is tight public expectations remain high. The Plan sets the framework for addressing these issues. The reduction of the burden of Council Tax on our residents will help them manage tight budgets in these times of austerity.
11. Pathways to implementation of the Plan will be set out in service plans, which will be monitored by the Corporate Management Team, and reported as necessary to the Performance and Audit Committee in the quarterly performance reports. This is in line with current practice.
12. A Corporate Risk Register will accompany the plan when it is presented to Council.

Risk Analysis

Risk	Likelihood	Impact	Mitigating actions
The corporate plan fails to be published and the council proceeds with its work without clear direction	1	3	Performance management framework in place. Service plans produced and targets set for performance indicators. Budget and MTFs prepared in conjunction with Plan. The corporate plan ties all this information together providing coherent direction for the council in the year ahead.

- 1 = Little or no risk or impact
- 2 = Some risk or impact – action may be necessary.
- 3 = Significant risk or impact – action required
- 4 = Near certainty of risk occurring, catastrophic effect or failure of project.