

Committee: Cabinet

Agenda Item

Date: 16 February 2016

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Title: The Corporate Plan 2016-21

Author: Cllr Rolfe

Item for decision

Summary

1. The corporate plan is updated annually, and because it is a 5-year plan, is subject to incremental change. The key themes are: sound management of the Council's finances, high quality services, sharing the benefits of growth with our communities and maintaining thriving communities. The major change from the focus over preceding years is the enhanced emphasis on health and wellbeing. The Plan retains its simplicity by being presented on a single page, with the overall goal of the Council now being "The High Quality and Low Tax Council".

Recommendations

2. That the draft Corporate Plan for 2016-21 be approved for submission to Full Council.

Financial Implications

3. Any financial implications resulting from actions or projects in the corporate plan are 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 2015-20 corporate plan, which was itself the subject of community engagement and the budget consultation from late last year.
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

	<p>projects in the corporate plan will be identified in the service plans.</p> <p>The corporate plan can be made available in Braille, larger print or translated on request</p>
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 the previous Corporate Plan but also seeks to address the priorities of central government.
7. From 2007 to 2013 the Council focused on four priorities - finance, partnerships, people and environment. In 2013 these were subsumed within the new priorities of low taxation, high quality, responsibility and prosperity, with the overall goal being "The Low Tax High Quality Council", and this continued into 2014. These themes are now slightly changed for the 2015 Plan, with "prosperity" replaced by "Thriving communities", and the strapline reconfigured to place "high quality" ahead of "low tax". The new plan has an enhanced emphasis on health and wellbeing which it is recognised runs throughout the organisation.
8. The Council continues to have an enviable record. For example, over the last year, Council Tax was cut by 3%, and whilst an increase of 1% is proposed this year it is well below the referendum limit of 3.36% that could have been applied. Uttlesford remains among the very best places to live in national surveys and, yet again, we have one of the best financial settlements of any council in the country. Both are clear endorsements of the "High Quality, Low Tax" standards to which we aspire.

9. The Government's main priorities are economic growth and devolution. The new plan reflects the Council's response to these challenges by enhancing actions under the theme of thriving communities. Financial prudence and the delivery of high quality services remain at the heart of the plan and indeed at the heart of the culture of the whole organisation. And to this end we will continue to plan for a future in which there will be little or no government core funding. Although money is tight public expectations remain high. The Plan sets the framework for addressing these issues.
10. 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.

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.