

Scrutiny Committee
Corporate Plan Delivery Plan Call-In
Tuesday 16 June 2020

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Covering Statement

In the minutes of the February 4th 2020 Scrutiny Committee meeting, in response to questioning by members “the leader said the action plan [what we know as the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan] that was being developed would address concerns about how to measure the efficiency of council services”. Those same minutes also very clearly state that “the leader said the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan would spell out the timescales that the administration hoped to achieve its goals in”.

In the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 5th November 2019, “in response to a question from Councillor Criscione, the Leader of the Council said there would be deliverables for the Corporate Plan. These would come out in the delivery plan. There would be an expansion of this document which would say what the Council wanted to achieve and how. The Chair said the Committee would welcome an early look at this document.”

To members surprise, a Delivery Plan has been published that is somewhat lacking in measurable, fully-costed and timed objectives which has subsequently led to this call-in by the Scrutiny Committee and it is now upon members to address the executive in relation to why the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan has not been able to meet those commitments and to ask very plainly why the executive feel that it is acceptable.

In comparison to other Councils, Uttlesford’s Corporate Plan Delivery Plan does not set out SMART objectives (or any other costed, measurable and timed objectives), which leads to a great deal of uncertainty for members and officers responsible for administration of the organisation. The distinct lack of direction and ambition in the Delivery Plan is somewhat underwhelming, especially when you consider that Residents For Uttlesford spoke of significant change and progress at their election and since taking office.

Residents want to know how effectively their council is being governed, they expect results and they want assurances that the organisation is in safe hands. The Corporate Plan – as members agreed *en masse* – was the supposedly ambitious and more general document to set out the R4U administration’s plans for their term in office. The Delivery Plan was then earmarked as the document where we (members of this Council and the public) would see the specifics on how R4U hopes to achieve those ambitions and by when. Frankly, the Delivery Plan does not do this, and it falls short as far as members are concerned and also from the point of view of the public who are seeing election commitments taken for granted and an organisation with no idea of what to do and when to do it.

The request for the call-in of the Delivery Plan centres around a number of questions which will be put forward by the members responsible for instigating the review. It is hoped that members from all parties will recognise the good intent behind both the executive’s published Delivery Plan and the call for review by members of the Scrutiny Committee. It is also hoped that members will engage in objective questioning of the leadership so as to make for a better Corporate Plan Delivery Plan for the benefit of the organisation and our residents.