

County Council

20 February 2013

Council Plan and Service Plans 2013 - 2017



Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Simon Henig, Leader of the Council

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To seek approval Council of the Council Plan 2013-17 (attached as Appendix 2).

Background

- 2 The Council Plan is the overarching high level plan for the County Council. It covers a four year timeframe in line with the Medium Term Financial Plan and it is updated annually. It links closely with our financial planning framework and in broad terms sets out how we will consider our corporate priorities for change and the key actions we will take in support of delivering the longer term goals in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council's own change agenda. The Council Plan for the forthcoming period has been revised alongside the review of our Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 3 The Council Plan is underpinned by a series of Service Plans at a service grouping level. Service Plans provide more detailed information on the actions we are taking to deliver the Council's priorities, plus actions required for other service specific priorities. They have been prepared to a standard format and provide more detailed information on service context, details of strategic links, key actions, resources required and reference to relevant risk assessments.

Council Plan 2013 – 2017

- 4 The Council Plan follows our vision of an **Altogether Better Durham** which is shared by the Council and its partners which was agreed in 2009.
- 5 Both the Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Plan are structured around the five priority themes for Durham which are:
 - **Altogether wealthier** – focused on creating a vibrant economy and putting regeneration and economic development at the heart of what we do;
 - **Altogether better for children and young people** – enabling children and young people to develop and achieve their aspirations and to maximise their potential in line with Every Child Matters;
 - **Altogether healthier** – improving health and wellbeing;

- **Altogether greener** – ensuring an attractive and ‘liveable’ local environment and contributing to tackling global environmental challenges;
 - **Altogether safer** – creating a safer and more cohesive community.
- 6 An additional theme of an **Altogether Better Council** been developed for the Council Plan to capture corporate improvements that the Council has identified that it wants to make in order to enable achievement against the five priority themes.
 - 7 Despite the unprecedented reductions in financial support from the Government, the focus of the Council’s and partners’ ambitions remains the same. This vision and the objectives developed for each of the 5 Altogether priority themes within the Sustainable Community Strategy still articulate what the Council and partners want to achieve.
 - 8 Whilst there remains a continuity of focus on our core vision there has been a great deal of work undertaken to adapt our plans to take into account the significant level of change the council is facing. Our plans have undergone rigorous challenge involving members and officers to ensure that major issues such as welfare reform and ongoing reductions in resources are reflected in our ambitions and targets.
 - 9 Suggested amendments to some of the Council’s specific contributions beneath the 5 Altogether priority themes plus our own priority of an Altogether Better Council are contained within this report.
 - 10 The Council Plan details the objectives and outcomes that we aspire to achieve. These priorities have been developed following an analysis of national policy imperatives, local needs, current performance and all available consultation data. The priorities that we have identified represent the needs and aspirations of our residents and customers taking into account the financial constraints that we face. Reports on the Medium Term Financial Plan presented to Cabinet on 10th October, 19th December and 16 January 2013 set out how revenue and capital resources have been aligned to the priority themes within the Council Plan and how consultation data have been used to shape these priorities and resourcing decisions.
 - 11 The Council Plan details the strategic actions that we will be engaged in during the next 4 years in support of these priorities. These strategic actions are underpinned by a framework of specific actions within our Service Plans and will be monitored through our quarterly reporting arrangements.

Service Plans

- 12 Each service grouping has developed their own Service Plan to cover the forthcoming four years. These Plans have been prepared to an agreed format, which have been considered collectively to reduce overlap. These plans set out the common priorities for each service grouping. Action plans for each service area contained within the plans are designed to achieve these service priorities which in turn, contribute to corporate priority themes of the Council.

Changes to the Current Council Plan

- 13 Major changes to the Council Plan are detailed in the tables below and in Appendix 2.

Priority Theme	Objective	Changes
Altogether Wealthier	Thriving Durham City	A new outcome 'Improved housing choice to support sustainable growth' has been added under the Altogether Wealthier theme to promote improved housing choice within Durham City as set out in our aspirations in the County Durham Plan.
	A top location for business'	A new outcome 'Durham is recognised as a world class place to invest in' has been added under the Altogether Wealthier theme to capture a range of actions designed to market Durham as a place to invest in.
Altogether Better for Children and Young People	The objectives and outcomes framework for this priority theme was reviewed in 2011 to ensure that a new approach based on the emerging new Children, Young People and Families Plan was reflected in the Council and Service Plans. The new framework continues to focus our planning around those factors which cause impact on the lives of all children, young people and families in County Durham and in 2012 includes the following changes:	
	Children and young people make healthy choices and have the best start in life	New outcome 'A range of activities are available for children and young people'
	Children, young people and family's needs are met	New outcome: 'The most vulnerable families are diverted from care.'
Altogether Healthier	New Objective – Reduce health inequalities and early deaths	The objectives and outcomes framework for this priority theme have been reviewed to reflect the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy to ensure alignment to the Council Plan.

Priority Theme	Objective	Changes
	New Objective – Improve the quality of life, independence and care and support for people with long term conditions	
Altogether Safer	Casualty reduction	Amended outcome: 'Improved safety of roads and pavements' has been amended to now include pavements.
	Counter terrorism and prevention of violent extremism	Amended outcome S9 Implementation of CONTEST (national strategy) Amended outcome S10 Extremism and intolerance is challenged
	New objective - Embed the Think Family approach	New outcome: The most vulnerable families are diverted from offending and anti-social behaviour
Altogether Greener	Reduce waste	Amended outcome: 'Increase re-use, recycling, composting and recovery of energy from waste' has been amended to include recovery of energy from waste.
	Enhance, conserve and promote Durham's built environment	The outcome G6 'Reduce the number of vacant and derelict buildings' has been deleted. The actions to tackle empty residential properties across the County are now described under the ambitions in Altogether Wealthier theme.
Altogether Better Council	<p>The objectives and outcomes framework for the altogether better council priority theme have been reviewed as it was considered that there were too many objectives and outcomes in this priority theme which often made it unmanageable as a number overlapped with each other. In response the ABC objectives have been streamlined into 4 high level key areas as follows:</p> <p>Customers – to reflect how we can better understand our customers, effectively engage with them and improve service delivery in a fair and equitable way.</p> <p>Communities – to reflect how communities and stakeholders are engaged and communicated with and to highlight how partnership working supports coherent management of change</p>	

Priority Theme	Objective	Changes
	<p>Resources – to demonstrate how we use and manage the council resources including assets, finance and information. It is also proposed that ‘building a streamlined corporate infrastructure’ and ‘Improving efficiency’ and ‘value for money’ objectives should be included under the Resources objective.</p> <p>People – to reflect the leadership of the workforce and highlight how we manage organisational development for both staff and members throughout the authority, how we will treat the workforce fairly and equitably and how we ensure the health and wellbeing of the workforce.</p> <p>This new approach enables all service groupings to align their actions to the 4 key corporate areas. All proposed actions will then underpin and contribute to a set of People, Resources, Customer and Community action plans.</p>	

Further Work

- 14 Work is underway to review the corporate basket of indicators used to monitor council performance. New targets are also being developed for the forthcoming years which we use to measure our success in achieving the priorities set out in the Council Plan. This work will be examined at a Special Meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Management Board with an invitation to all members on 14th March. The corporate basket of performance indicators and targets will be finalised by the end of the financial year. Of particular importance this year and over the medium-term is the need for our key performance indicators to be able to measure workloads both to allow us to quantify any increase due to government reforms and also determine productivity by examining workload relative to resources.

Risk Management

- 15 Any new risks associated with actions contained within Service Plans are identified as part of the service planning process. Actions contained within the Council Plan are risk managed through the inclusion of the relevant risks within the Plan. These risks are monitored through the Council's risk management processes and are reported to the Council's Audit Committee and to Cabinet via performance management reports.

Conclusions

- 16 Whilst the council is maintaining focus on its core vision of an Altogether Better Durham, much work has been done to take account of the significant level of change we are facing. Ambitions and targets have and will continue to be adjusted to ensure that our plans remain adequately resourced within our reducing financial envelope. The Council Plan and service plans reflect our

understanding of national policy. Work is ongoing to ensure that our performance management framework can quantify workload and measure productivity improvement through being able to deliver the same or more with less resource available.

Recommendations

- 17 The County Council is recommended to approve the Council Plan 2013_17 as the key strategic document, which sets out our vision and priorities for improvement, subject to any final minor amendments by the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder (s).

Contact: Tom Gorman

Tel: 03000 268027

Background Papers

Council Plan 2013 -17 (attached)

Service Plans are available in the Members Library and via this [hyperlink](http://intranet/Pages/CouncilServicePlan.aspx)
(<http://intranet/Pages/CouncilServicePlan.aspx>)

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

The Council Plan sets out the corporate priorities of the Council for the next 4 years. The Medium Term Financial Plan aligns revenue and capital investment to priorities within the Council Plan.

Staffing

The Council's strategies are be aligned to achievement of the corporate priorities contained within the Council Plan.

Risk

Consideration of risk is a key element in the corporate and service planning framework with both the Council Plan and Service Plans containing sections on risk.

Equality and diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty

Individual equality impact assessments have been prepared for each savings proposal within the Council Plan. The cumulative impact of all savings proposals in total has also been presented to Council and will be updated as savings proposals are further developed. In addition a full impact assessment has previously been undertaken for the Council Plan. The actions in the Council Plan include specific issues relating to equality and aim to improve the equality of life for those with protected characteristics. The Plan has been influenced by consultation and monitoring to include equality issues. There is no evidence of negative impact for particular groups.

Accommodation

The Council's Corporate Asset Management Plan is aligned to the corporate priorities contained within the Council Plan.

Crime and disorder

The Altogether Safer section of the Council Plan sets out the Council's contributions to tackling crime and disorder.

Human rights

None

Consultation

Council and partnership priorities have been developed following an analysis of available consultation data including an extensive consultation programme carried out as part of the development of the interim Sustainable Community Strategy and this has been reaffirmed by subsequent consultation on the budget and through the Residents' Survey. Results have been taken into account in developing our resourcing decisions.

Procurement

None

Disability Issues

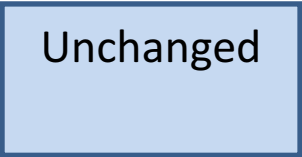
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Legal Implications

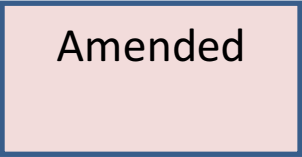
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Appendix 2

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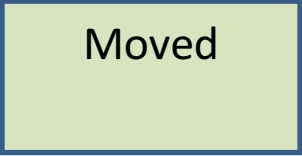
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