

County Council

13 April 2016

Council Plan and Service Plans 2016-2019



Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive
Simon Henig, Leader of the Council

Purpose of the Report

- 1 To seek approval by Council of the Council Plan 2016-2019 (attached as Appendix 3).

Background

- 2 The Council Plan is the overarching high level plan for the County Council and details Durham County Council's contribution towards achieving the objectives set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) together with its own change agenda. It aims to provide a readable and accessible summary for members, partners and the public of our priorities for the county and the main things that we will do over the coming three years.
- 3 It has been developed at a time of unprecedented reductions in finance and also at a time of an agenda of significant policy change over all areas of council services. The four year Medium-Term Financial Plan, is aligned to the Council Plan which sets out the Council's strategic service priorities over the next three years 2016/17 to 2018/19 with an indicative direction of travel for 2019/20.
- 4 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 and have been prepared to a standard format, providing more detailed information on service context, key actions and performance indicators.

Council Plan 2016 - 2019

- 5 This year's Council Plan rolls forward the existing three year Council Plan, with a more fundamental review to take place next year, in line with a refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy. Whilst this has resulted in changes to some outcomes and actions areas there are no fundamental changes in strategic focus. The five key altogether better themes remain unchanged in line with the review of the Altogether Better Durham vision by the County Durham Partnership.
- 6 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;
- **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.

7 An additional theme of an **Altogether Better Council** has been developed for the Council Plan to capture the corporate initiatives that the council wants to undertake to enable achievement against the five priority themes.

8 The Council Plan details the objectives and outcomes that we aspire to achieve. These priorities have been developed following an analysis of national and local priorities, performance issues, feedback from residents and customers and risk. Our identified priorities represent the needs of our residents and customers and aspirations that we have for the county. A report on the Medium Term Financial Plan presented to Cabinet on 17 February 2016 set out how revenue and capital resources have been aligned to the priority themes within the Council Plan and how consultation data has been used to shape these priorities and resourcing decisions.

9 A small number of changes in outcomes are proposed, brought forward by services and partnerships and are summarised below. The final framework is attached as Appendix 2.

Altogether Healthier

10 It is proposed that an extra outcome be added under objective 4 'Improved mental health for the population of County Durham'. This was highlighted as a priority through the consultation process on the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy.

Altogether Safer

11 Two additional outcomes are proposed under Objective 5, 'Improved understanding of open water safety' and 'Improved Safety in the home'. There are number of actions being undertaken to increase people's understanding and confidence when around open water to support the first proposed outcome and the inclusion of the outcome around improved safety in the home was highlighted at Safer and Stronger Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a priority for the Safe Durham Partnership. The wording of objective 5 has been amended to reflect the addition of the new outcomes.

Altogether Greener

- 12 Minor wording changes to objective 1 have been proposed so it reads 'Deliver a clean, attractive and sustainable environment'. Two additional outcomes are also proposed under this objective 'Improved land and air quality' and 'well-maintained and accessible parks'. There is a significant amount of work being undertaken around pollution, contaminated land, air quality and ensuring any public space for which we have responsibility remains of a high standard.
- 13 Outcome G3 'Enhance mitigation and adaptation to climate change' was intended to capture any actions to reduce the effects of climate change. The main programmes of work in this area are around flood defence, coastal erosion and mitigation schemes. However, these feature under another existing outcome G6: 'Communities are more aware and resilient to the impact of extreme weather events'. Outcome G3 has therefore been deleted to remove duplication between existing outcomes.

Altogether Better Council

- 14 Minor rewording of outcome ABC 6 is proposed to read 'Responding to the effects of poverty and a Welfare Reform' to reflect the importance of addressing the impacts of poverty. Outcome ABC8 is to be reworded to 'Making the best use of our assets and managing information' making it more plain English.
- 15 Progress with the Council Plan will continue to be monitored through our Performance Management Framework with quarterly reports to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Format of Council Plan

- 16 A key objective of the Council's strategic planning arrangements is to make performance management more engaging for the user. Large print runs of the plan are no longer made to keep down costs. The plan is published on the council website. The plan has therefore been redesigned for this medium to make it more visual, impactful, understandable and interactive. This will be the primary document which will be viewed through the web.
- 17 There are two versions of the plan, an online interactive one which allows readers to navigate easily from one section to another and link to further information. There is also a 'print friendly' version which will allow users to print a copy of the plan for those who do not have access to the internet or find a paper version more accessible. This is the version attached as Appendix 3 to this report.

Structure of the Plan

- 18 As previously stated, the plan sets out the council's priorities, objectives and outcomes over the next three years and is structured around the Altogether Priority Themes. Each theme highlights some of our key achievements from 2015/2016 of relevance to that theme together with the key issues to address

and some key figures, facts and charts which readers may find interesting. The objectives and outcomes for each the theme are displayed alongside what we are going to be doing over the next 3 years to maintain and where possible improve our services.

Service Plans

- 19 Each service grouping has developed their own service plan to cover the forthcoming three years. These plans have been prepared to an agreed format, which have been considered collectively to reduce overlap. These plans set out the 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.

Risk Management

- 20 Any new risks associated with actions contained within service plans are identified as part of the service planning process. These risks are reported on through the Council's risk management processes to the Council's Audit Committee and to Cabinet via performance management reports.

Further Work

- 21 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 completed over the next couple of months. The final corporate indicator set and relevant targets will be considered by Cabinet on 15 June 2016.

Recommendations and reasons

- 22 The County Council is recommended to approve the Council Plan 2016_2019 as its key strategic document, which sets out our vision and priorities for improvement, subject to any final amendments by the Assistant Chief Executive in consultation with the relevant portfolio holder(s).

Background Papers

Council Plan 2016 -19 (attached)

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

The Council Plan sets out the corporate priorities of the Council for the next three years with indicative direction of travel for 2019/20. The Medium Term Financial Plan aligns revenue and capital investment to priorities within the Council Plan.

Staffing

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

Risk

Consideration of risk is undertaken in the preparation of the Council Plan and Service Plans.

Equality and diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty

A full impact assessment has previously been undertaken for the Council Plan. The actions underpinning 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 Accommodation programme is a key corporate programme 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 Sustainable Community Strategy and this has been reaffirmed by subsequent consultation on the council's budget.

Procurement

None

Disability Issues

Accessibility issues have been considered in the design of our planning document. A larger print version, easy to read version of the document will be available on request.

Legal Implications

None

Appendix 2 - Proposed Council Plan objectives and outcomes

KEY (Changes since approved in March 2015)













