

Item 5

REPORT TO CABINET

11 NOVEMBER 2004

JOINT REPORT OF CHIEF
EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

All Portfolios

CORPORATE STRATEGIC PLANNING **CORPORATE PLAN AND MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN**

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report sets out for Cabinet's consideration the rationale underpinning the development of the Council's first Corporate Plan (CP) and Medium-Term Financial Plan (MTFP), which the Council committed to preparing in its High Level Action Plan (HLAP) as part of the Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) process in November 2003.
- 1.2 The report recommends Cabinet's consideration of these draft documents prior to their formal consideration by Council on 26 November 2004 and their subsequent publication in December 2004.

2 RECOMMENDED

It is recommended that Cabinet considers the draft Corporate Plan (Appendix 1) and Medium-Term Financial Plan (Appendix 2) prior to their formal consideration by Council on 26 November 2004.

3 STRATEGIC PLANNING

Background

- 3.1 The Council underwent an external onsite CPA in November 2003. CPA extends the principle of Best Value and its primary emphasis on efficiency savings by focussing on corporate strategic capacity and co-ordination.
- 3.2 During and following CPA, a HLAP was prepared and then refined summarising the key issues and actions that the Council needs to address in the medium-term in order to meet the challenges set out in its own corporate CPA self assessment. Included in this was a commitment to prepare two key strategic documents (by the end of 2004), which the Council and the Audit Commission both recognised as being

critical to the future planning of the Council's work and its related financial resources – a CP and a MTFP.

Corporate Plan

- 3.3 The Corporate Plan sets out the Council's ambitions and priorities for the future. It helps to determine where and how the Council can best use its limited resources to provide quality services and value for money over a three-year period and across all areas of the Council. Importantly, it is designed in a way that will enable the Council to check the rate of progress it is making towards the achievement of its goals.
- 3.4 This document replaces the Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) and in doing so represents a significant shift from Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) compliance to customer-focused and needs-based quality service provision by establishing the way forward for service provision and investment over a three-year period and pulling together a strategic vision for the full range of Council activities

Medium-Term Financial Plan

- 3.5 The MTFP supports the CP by establishing an overarching framework for the Council's financial strategy and annual capital and revenue budgets, over the same three-year period. It sets out how available financial resources will be allocated across Cabinet Portfolios and services in accordance with corporate priorities.
- 3.6 In the future, the MTFP will be key to the preparation of annual budgets. It will allow changing resource and service levels to be planned in a structured and measured way through the effective forecasting of financial resource availability and by balancing this against improvement and investment needs and Council priorities.

Workforce Plan

- 3.7 The Council is also committed to preparing a Workforce Plan during 2005, setting out how it will manage its human resources. This plan will set out how the Council will build capacity into the workforce and develop employee skills and competencies to meet Corporate Ambitions over the medium-term.

Publication Arrangements

- 3.8 In accordance with the Council's CPA HLAP, these two strategic documents will be formally published and posted on the Council's website in December 2004 following approval by Full Council. Updated versions of both plans will then be published and posted on the Council's website in June 2005 and annually thereafter.
- 3.9 The first Workforce Plan will also be published in June 2005 and like the CP and MTFP, annually thereafter.

4 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

The publication of these plans will not result in any direct additional financial costs to the Council. Forecasts of the additional levels of financial investment required to progress identified priority service areas are set out in the MTFP.

5 CONSULTATION

- 5.1 These two strategic plans have been developed in order to help elected members, managers and employees focus on corporate ambitions whilst ensuring the delivery of continuously improving day-to-day services. Consequently, they have been prepared in full consultation with Cabinet Members (via the informal Leader's meeting) and with Directors and Heads of Service via a series of presentations, interactive workshops and information requests.
- 5.2 The plans' contents have also been informed indirectly by other external consultations with customers, partners and other stakeholders.

6 OTHER MATERIAL CONSIDERATIONS

Cabinet should note that both documents are currently being checked/refined and that minor changes to statistics and narrative may be incorporated into the versions presented to Full Council.

7 OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY IMPLICATIONS

Responsibility for these key strategic plans rests with Full Council. As such all Elected Members will be afforded the opportunity to comment and suggest amendments prior to formal approval and there are no Overview & Scrutiny implications.

8 LIST OF APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Corporate Plan
Appendix 2 – Medium-Term Financial Plan

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Ward(s)

Proposals are not ward specific

Background Papers

Comprehensive Performance Assessment – Self-Assessment

November 2003

Comprehensive Performance Assessment – Sedgfield Borough Council

Report of the Audit Commission – March 2004

Post Inspection Revised High Level Action Plan

March 2004

CPA High Level Action Plan Update

October 2004

Government Comprehensive Spending Review

HM Treasury – July 2004

Gershon Efficiency Review – Releasing Resources To The Frontline

Independent Report Commissioned by HM Treasury – July 2004

Budget Framework 2004/05

February 2004

Examination by Statutory Officers

	Yes	Not Applicable
1. The report has been examined by the Councils Head of the Paid Service or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The content has been examined by the Councils S.151 Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The content has been examined by the Council's Monitoring Officer or his representative	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The report has been approved by Management Team	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
