



**Chester-le-Street**  
District Council

**REPORT TO:** Executive

**DATE OF MEETING:** 12<sup>th</sup> May 2008

**REPORT OF:** Director of Corporate Services

**SUBJECT:** Implementing the Transition Plan; Developing 'People and Place'

**ITEM NUMBER:** 7

---

## 1 Purpose and Summary

- 1.1 In March 2008 the council adopted its Transition Plan for 2008/2009. Since that time early progress has since been made on the implementation of plan. The purpose of this report is to update members on progress specifically on the '**People and Place**' Priority and to seek Members agreement to progress made on developing the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan
- 1.2 So far the following progress has been made. The council has:
- agreed the principles and financial allocations within the 2008/2009 Corporate budget setting process;
  - agreed the '**People and Place**' priorities and four areas of focus as part of the adopted 'Transition Plan';
  - set up the four action learning sets and appointed leads, Executive support and sponsors;
  - provided guidance and support to leads;
  - commenced the development of the delivery plan by the action learning set leads;
  - set a date for a launch event on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008
  - worked with Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to agree a workshop to take place in May to agree a single Scrutiny Panel with a task and finish approach to undertake work to support the delivery of the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan which is to take place on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2008.
  - agreed an approach to monitoring and reporting progress to the Executive on the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan.
  - agreed an approach to delivering the '**People and Place**' Personal Profile for all employees.

1.3 With specific regard to the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan progress has been made on developing the high level proposals. Work is not yet complete but progress to date on high level proposals forms Appendix 1 and Detailed plans to date form Appendix 2. Detailed current guidance, including proposed monitoring arrangements forms Appendix 3.

1.4 Members are recommended to:

- 1) Note the progress to date on implementing the Transition Plan;
- 2) Agree the high level actions for the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan identified in Appendix 1 and suggest any potential higher priority projects or other schemes where it is felt necessary;
- 3) Agree and provide comments on the 'work in progress' **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 2

## 2. Consultation

2.1 Executive Members, the Chief Executive, Directors, relevant Service Team Managers, Action Learning Set Members (including external stakeholders) have been engaged in the development of the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan

2.2 No other consultations were considered necessary at this stage including external consultations or engagement.

## 3. Transition Plan and People and Place Priority

3.1 The Transition Plan, in effect, replaces the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. The Transition Plan includes a schedule of proposals from the previous seven priorities which ought to be and can be achieved in the remaining life of the council.

3.2 The council's choice to move towards a single priority of **'People and Place'** priority was considered as part of the budget setting process and forms a firm part of the Transition Plan. This report tracks progress to date and puts forwards proposals to take forward the delivery of the **'People and Place'** priority.

3.3 The Delivery Plan content identified in the appendices in this report address all four areas of the **'People and Place'** priority focus i.e.

- Partnerships for Futures;
- Investment in the Town Centre;
- Strengthening Partnerships; and
- Neighbourhoods

## 4. Implications

### 4.1 Financial implications and value for money statement

The Transition Plan takes account of the 2008/2009 budget process. Specific resources have been made available for both the contribution to setting up the new organisation and the implementation of the '**People and Place**' priority. It is considered that the council has properly reviewed its priorities in the light of Local Government Re-organisation and its abilities to deliver services during the transitional period. The view is taken that in doing so the council will achieve value for money in a year of significant challenge. In delivering '**People and Place**' resources may need redirecting during the forthcoming year.

### 4.2 Local Government Reorganisation Implications

The Transition Plan and the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan is the council's response to the challenges it faces in the final year of its existence. It is considered that the plan commits the council to working within its capacity to provide human and financial resources to help establish the council while delivering 'Business as usual'. It is considered that the Plan meets the guidance and recommendations provided by the Audit Commission set out in their Annual Audit and Inspection Letter. The subject of this report is principally progress against this plan. It is not considered that the subject matter of the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plans at this stage requires any consultation or approval of the County Council because the proposals have been part of the budget process. Should potential resource issues change e.g. further unbudgeted resources caught within the direction occur then appropriate consultation with the County Council will take place.

### 4.3 Legal

The Transition Plan includes a factual statement of legal guidance to managers and Members. This remains under preparation and will be added to the Plan when complete. It is considered that the Transition Plan provides vehicle to enable the council to work within its legal powers during the transition period.

### 4.4 Personnel

How the council supports its employees through the transition process is a key part of the Plan. The Transition Plan revises the Organisational Development Strategy commits the council to supporting its employees through the process and help them take advantage of opportunities that will occur in the new authority. A key part of this is the development of a '**People and Place**' Personal profile for all employees. It is important to note that the Transition plan and the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan are both living and developing documents and will be reviewed as a result of consultations

undertaken and progress made. The approach to **'People and Place'** is through an 'action learning set approach' which has been a key tool used to deliver the council's improvement programme over the last three years. A key risk to delivery of business as usual next year is the capacity of the organisation to deliver. The council is faced with depleting human resources and account will be taken as to the ability of the council to deliver by regularly reviewing the strategic planning documents.

#### 4.5 Other Services

The Transition Plan and the **'People and Place'** priority have implications to all services delivered by the council.

#### 4.6 Diversity

There are no specific diversity issues in respect of the Transition Plan. The Plan does not replace the Equality Plan which will continue to be implemented through the lifetime of the council. In terms of developing In the **'People and Place'** Delivery Plan, action learning set leads are having regard to ensuring the projects are fully inclusive and projects regarding engagement with otherwise excluded groups and social cohesion are included within the delivery plan proposals.

#### 4.7 Risk

There are clear risks to the organisation in failing to continue to maintain and improve on its progress in its remaining year. The council remains committed to improving its services although it faces difficult capacity challenges through the transition period. The council will be undertaking a strategic risk assessment once the delivery plans in relation to **'People and Place'** have been developed. A key risk to delivery of business as usual next year is the capacity of the organisation to deliver. The council is faced with depleting human resources and account will be taken as to the ability of the council to deliver by regularly reviewing the strategic planning documents.

#### 4.8 Crime and Disorder

It is not felt there are any specific implications of the report on Crime and Disorder. Actions agreed through the delivery of the **'People and Place'** priority include proposals to positively address crime and disorder issues.

#### 4.9 Data Quality

Every care has been taken in the development of this report to ensure that the information and data used in its preparation and the appendices attached are accurate, valid, reliable, timely, relevant and complete. The council's Data Quality Policy has been complied with in producing this report.

#### 4.10 Other Implications

The report does not relate to a key decision. It is considered that the information will be communicated to the community and stakeholders by inclusion on the web-site. The Transition Plan has already been made available to staff and Members through the intranet and a web site is being developed. The Transition Plan has been made available to the County Council. An Intranet site for 'People and Place' has been established and work is being undertaken to update the council's own website to communicate the new priority. Should Members adopt the delivery plan progress towards achieving the '**People and Place**' priority will be significantly promoted and communicated. A '**People and Place**' brand has been developed and this will be used to co-ordinate, communicate and celebrate achievements in the coming months.

### 5. **Background, Position Statement and Options Appraisal**

5.1 As a result of Local Government Reorganisation Chester-le-Street will cease to exist as a council from April 2009. In order to set a framework as to how the council will conduct its business during this final year a 'Transition Plan' has been approved by the council in March 2008 The Transition Plan aims to:

- state the Council's aims, objectives and priorities during the transition period;
- build on the councils learning and continue its improvement programme;
- set out revised corporate activity and funding arrangements for transition period;
- clarify corporate transition programme management arrangements;
- identify how we will support and motivate and support staff through the process;
- set out the values and principles by which the Council will operate during transition; and
- establish terms of engagement with 'County Durham Council' Change Programme

5.2 In doing so the Transition Plan incorporates a review of the Corporate Plan 2007/2010. It also takes account of the 2008/2009 budget process and provides a summary of the budget agreed. It sets out the council's new single priority of '**People and Place**'. The Plan includes the council's Corporate Improvement Plan following its learning through Comprehensive Performance Assessment last year. The new priority of '**People and Place**' is being implemented through an 'Action Learning Set' approach, an approach which has brought the council significant success as part of its improvement journey to date. The Plan includes proposals to develop delivery plans to secure sustainable change to the people and places within the district and customer focused outcomes which can be used to influence the agenda of the new unitary council.

- 5.3 This Transition Plan is the overarching plan for Chester-le-Street District Council during the transition period, and as such sets out how services and projects will be facilitated, delivered and resourced. It is a rationalisation of the Council's Corporate Plan (incorporating the Best Value Performance Plan) 2007-2010, published in June 2007, and associated Medium Term Financial Plan, Organisational Development Strategy and Corporate Improvement Plan. As such, it represents the Council's contribution to the Districts Sustainable Community Strategy, the Local Area Agreement and the Strategic Vision for County Durham
- 5.4 The council has already made progress in implementing the plan which is summarised as follows. The council has:
- agreed the principles and financial allocations within the 2008/2009 Corporate budget setting process;
  - agreed the '**People and Place**' priorities and four areas of focus as part of the adopted 'Transition Plan';
  - set up the four action learning sets and appointed leads, Executive support and sponsors;
  - provided guidance and support to leads;
  - commenced the development of the delivery plan by the action learning set leads;
  - set a date for a launch event on 13<sup>th</sup> May 2008;
  - worked with Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to agree a workshop to take place in May to agree a single Scrutiny Panel with a task and finish approach to undertake work to support the delivery of the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan which is to take place on 19<sup>th</sup> May 2008;
  - agreed an approach to monitoring and reporting progress to the Executive on the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan; and
  - agreed an approach to delivering the '**People and Place**' Personal Profile for all employees and arrangements are now in hand to implement a launch..
- 5.5 In terms of the delivery of the '**People and Place**' priority the Action Learning Sets are working with Executive Members to develop the Delivery Plans. This remains work in progress and the delivery plans are continuing to be developed. Attached to this report are:
- Appendix 1 which sets out the headline Delivery Plan proposals;
  - Appendix 2 which sets out the 'work in progress' detailed delivery plans; and
  - Appendix 3 which sets out current Action Learning set guidance.
- 5.6 Should the delivery plans be further developed prior to the Executive meeting them members will be updated on content. Member's approval is sought for

the headline proposal in Appendix 1. Member's comments are sought on the 'work in progress' detail in Appendix 2. Appendix 3 is available for member's information.

6. **Recommendations**

6.1 Members are recommended to:

- 1) Note the progress to date on implementing the Transition Plan;
- 2) Agree the high level actions for the '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan identified in Appendix 1 and suggest any potential higher priority projects or other schemes where it is felt necessary;
- 3) Agree and provide comments on the 'work in progress' '**People and Place**' Delivery Plan set out in Appendix 2

7. **Background Papers/Documents referred to**

7.1 Transition Plan March 2004

7.2 Corporate Plan 2007/2010 – June 2007

7.3 Budget reports to Council dated 28<sup>th</sup> February 2008

**Ian Forster**  
**Director of Corporate Services**  
**24<sup>th</sup> May 2008**  
**Version 1.0**

**Ian Forster Tel 0191 3872130 e mail [IanForster@chester-le-street.gov.uk](mailto:IanForster@chester-le-street.gov.uk)**

This page is intentionally left blank