

County Council

23 March 2011

Council Plan 2011 - 2014



Key Decision CORP/A/03/11/3

Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Simon Henig, Leader of the Council

Purpose of the Report

1. To seek Council approval of the Council Plan for 2011-14 (attached as Appendix 2)

Background

2. The Council Plan is the overarching high level plan for the County Council. It covers a three year timeframe and is updated annually. It links closely with our Medium-Term Financial Plan and in broad terms sets out how we will consider our corporate priorities for improvement and the key actions we will take in support of delivering the longer term goals in the Sustainable Community Strategy (2010-2030) and the Council's own improvement agenda. The Council Plan for the forthcoming period has been revised alongside the review of the Sustainable Community Strategy.
3. The Council Plan follows our vision of an **Altogether Better Council** which is shared by the Council and its partners and was agreed by Cabinet on 23rd September 2009.
4. Both the Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Plan are structured around the five priority themes for Durham being:
 - **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.

5. 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.
6. 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 and this has been reaffirmed by the County Durham Partnership at their July 2010 meeting.
7. However, 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 were presented to Cabinet on 2nd November.
8. Some further rationalisation has taken place since this time and it is suggested that the following deletions and amendments are made to the proposals presented to Cabinet on 2nd November.

| Priority Theme | Objective | Outcome | Reason for deletion |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|
| Altogether Healthier | Enable adults with social care needs to live independently | Meet the social care need for people with dementia | People with dementia are particular client group of adults with social care needs and all actions developed for people with dementia fit under existing outcomes within this objective |
| Altogether Safer | Reduce serious and violent crime | Reduce the harm caused by organised crime | This will remain an important objective for the Safe Durham Partnership but much of the actions are specific for the police and contributions from the Council are low level |
| | | Reduce violent crime | |

| Objective | Original Outcome | Revised Outcome | Reason for amendment |
|--|--|--|---|
| Affordable financial strategy which addresses reductions in Government grant | A balanced four year financial plan that reflects priorities and copes with change | A balanced four year financial plan that reflects Council priorities | The word 'Council' makes it clearer that the plan is about the whole organisation. The plan is built to cope with change. |
| | Maintain and improve income collection and debt management | Deliver continuous improvement in income collection | Improved Debt management would occur as a consequence of improving income collection. |
| Building a more streamlined corporate infrastructure | Rationalising the property portfolio | Optimising the use of the property portfolio | Rationalisation is just part of the improvement plan. Optimisation more fully reflects other planned actions to put property to more efficient use. |
| Engaging effectively with our communities and partners | A workforce development plan that reflects organisational change | An organisational development plan that reflects organisational change | An organisational development plan includes both the workforce and Members |

9. The Council Plan details the objectives and outcomes that we aspire to achieve. These priorities have been developed following an analysis of all available consultation data. Our identified priorities represent the needs and aspirations of our residents and customers. The Medium Term Financial Plan agreed by Council on 23rd February 2011 sets 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.
10. The Council Plan also details the strategic actions that we will be engaged in during the next 3 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 by Cabinet and Scrutiny through our quarterly reporting arrangements.

Further Work

11. The Government has abolished much of the elements of the performance management framework for local government including the Comprehensive Area Assessment, the National Indicator Set and Local Area Agreements. This gives the Council the freedom to develop our own locally led approach to managing our own performance. The development of a corporate basket of indicators and targets suitable to use in monitoring our success in achieving our priorities is ongoing and will be completed at the end of March.

Risk Management

12. Actions contained within the Council Plan are risk managed through the inclusion of the relevant risks within the Plan. These risks are reported on through the Council's risk management processes to the Council's Audit Committee.

13 Recommendations:

The County Council is recommended to approve the Council Plan 2011 - 2014 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.

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Background Documents

Appendix 2 - Council 2011 - 2014

Appendix 1: Implications

Finance

The Council Plan sets out the corporate priorities of the Council for the next 3 years. The Medium Term Financial Plan aligns revenue and capital investment to priorities within the Council Plan.

Staffing

The Council's developing strategies around people management will be aligned to achievement of the corporate priorities contained within the Council Plan.

Equality and diversity

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 been undertaken for the draft 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.

Sustainability

The Council Plan sets out the Council's contributions to achieving the longer term objectives contained within the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The SCS sets out the strategy for of the Council and its partners for promoting or improving the economic, social and environmental well-being of the county and contributing to the achievement of sustainable development in the UK. The Altogether Greener section of the Council Plan sets out the Council's contributions to environmental sustainability.

Human rights

None

Localities and rurality

Each of the 14 Area Action Partnerships (AAPs) in County Durham has identified their local priorities. These identify issues in each of the five priority themes contained within the Council Plan. Area Action Plans sit below the Council Plan in our planning hierarchy and will enable each of the AAPs to performance manage these issues. AAPs were also involved in the budget consultation.

Young people

The Altogether Better for Children and Young People section of the Council plan sets out the Council's contributions to delivering better outcomes for children and young people.

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.

Health

The Altogether Healthier section of the Council Plan sets out the Council's contributions towards delivering better health outcomes for the population of County Durham.