

**Cabinet**

**19 March 2014**

**Council Plan and Service Plans  
2014 – 2017**



**Key Decision CORP/A/03/14/01**

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**Report of Corporate Management Team**

**Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive**

**Simon Henig, Leader of the Council**

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**Purpose of the Report**

- 1 To provide a draft of the Council Plan for 2014-17 attached for consideration and comment before being submitted for approval by Council on 2 April 2014.

**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 forthcoming three years.
- 3 It has been developed at a time when the council is facing unprecedented reductions in public sector finance and also an agenda of significant policy change over all areas of council services. It has been amended this year to cover a three year timeframe in line with the council's Medium- Term Financial Plan (MTFP) and sets out how we will deliver our corporate priorities and the key actions we will take to support of the longer term goals set out in the SCS. The Council Plan for the forthcoming period has been revised alongside the review of our MTFP and SCS.
- 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, plus actions required to deliver 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 and reference to relevant risk assessments.

## Council Plan 2014 – 2017

- 5 This year's council plan rolls forward the 2013-17 plan, updating it to reflect emerging priorities and the results of the latest MTFP consultation and budget plans. Whilst this has resulted in changes to some of the outcomes and action areas there are no fundamental changes at a strategic level. 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 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.
- 7 An additional theme of an **Altogether Better Council** has 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.
- 8 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 five Altogether priority themes within the Sustainable Community Strategy still articulate what the Council and partners want to achieve.
- 9 This year's plan is a rolling forward of last year's, but takes on board new policy challenges and developing priorities such as responding to the Care Bill, and ongoing development of our economic regeneration plans.
- 10 The Council Plan details the objectives and outcomes that we aspire to achieve. These priorities have been developed following an analysis of available consultation data. A report on the Medium Term Financial Plan presented to Cabinet on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2014 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.
- 11 The Council Plan also details the strategic actions that we will be engaged in delivering during the next three 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 three years. These plans have been prepared to an agreed format, and 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 A set of draft objectives and outcomes around which the Council Plan is structured was agreed at Cabinet on 20 November 2013. A small number of additional changes brought forward by services and partnerships are detailed in Appendix 2. The main changes have been made to the Altogether Safer priority theme, to align with the Safe Durham Partnership Plan. Two objectives were removed from the council plan framework but retained with the Sustainable Community Strategy framework, where it was felt they were more appropriately suited as the improvement actions sit with partners. One objective was also removed from the Altogether Greener theme, but again remains within the partnership framework. Small changes were also made to the frameworks of the Altogether Wealthier and Altogether Healthier priority themes.

### **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 monitor our success in achieving the priorities set out in the Council Plan. This work will be completed by the end of this financial year.

Please note that the service plans are now complete and copies are available on the Council's intranet (see link below under background papers). For the Cabinet meeting, service plans will be made available in the Members' Library. Following the Council Plan being approved by Council, both the Council Plan and service plans will be published on the council's website.

### **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 reported on through the Council's risk management processes to the Council's Audit Committee and to Cabinet via performance management reports.

**Recommendations and reasons:**

16 Cabinet is asked to

- Agree the content of the draft Council Plan and recommend it for approval by full Council on 2 April, subject to any final minor amendments by the Assistant Chief Executive.
- Approve the content of the draft service plans, subject to any final minor amendments by the relevant Director and Portfolio Holder.

**Background Papers**

Council Plan 2014 -17 (attached)

Service Plans (click on [here](#) to access Service Plans)

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## **Appendix 1: Implications**

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### **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 strategies are being 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 management.

### **Equality and diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty**

Individual equality impact assessments have been prepared for each savings proposal within the Medium-Term Financial Plan which also underpins the Council Plan. 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.

### **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**

The priorities and actions in the Council Plan are in line with relevant articles of the Human Rights Act, for example, many of the actions support the right to family life.

### **Consultation**

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

### **Procurement**

None.

### **Disability Issues**

See equality and diversity implications above.

### **Legal Implications**

None.

**Appendix 2 - Key**

No Change

Amended













