

## County Council

1 April 2015



## Council Plan and Service Plans 2015 - 2018

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

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### Purpose of the Report

- 1 To seek approval by Council of the Council Plan 2015-18 (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 an agenda of significant policy change over all areas of council services. It covers 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 the longer term goals set out in the 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, additional resources required and reference to relevant risks

### Council Plan 2015 – 2018

- 5 This year's council plan rolls forward the 2014 -17 plan, updating it to reflect emerging priorities and the results of the latest MTFP 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 A more narrative style has been adopted for this year’s Council Plan. The document has in previous years contained action plans detailing the key things that the Council intended to implement under each of the Altogether themes over the forthcoming three years. These have been removed but are described in the text of the Plan. They are highlighted as emboldened text in the relevant Altogether sections to the document. Each of these items is linked through our performance management framework to an action or series of actions contained within our Service Plans to enable quarterly monitoring of progress.
  
- 10 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 risks. 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 11th February 2015 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.

## **Service Plans**

- 11 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 developed collectively to reduce overlap. These plans set out the priorities for each service grouping. Action plans for each service area contained within these Plans are designed to achieve service priorities which in turn, contribute to corporate priority themes of the Council.

## **Changes to the Current Council Plan**

- 12 A set of draft objectives and outcomes around which the Council Plan has been developed was agreed at Cabinet on 17 December 2014. This report proposed minor wording changes and rationalisation to some of our current outcomes to better clarify what the council is setting out to achieve and reduce duplication. Following consultation with members, an additional objective (Casualty reduction) and outcome were added to the Altogether Safer priority theme to reflect findings of a scrutiny review into road safety and a Cabinet decision to introduce 20mph speed limits around hot spot areas near schools.
- 13 The Council Plan contains a number of references to the actions contained within the County Durham Plan. At the time of writing the Council Plan we had just received the interim report from the Planning Inspectorate on the County Durham Plan. A key piece of work will be to consider the interim report and establish next stages in developing the County Durham Plan.

## **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 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 10<sup>th</sup> June.

## **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 risk references 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 The County Council is recommended to approve the Council Plan 2015-2018 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 holders(s).

**Background papers**

Council Plan 2015 -18 (attached)

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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.

**Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty** - 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 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. 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

**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 budget. Results have been taken into account in developing our resourcing decisions

**Procurement** – None

**Disability Issues** – None

**Legal Implications** – None

**Appendix 2 - Proposed Council plan objectives and outcomes**

**Key**

No Change

Amended

New













