

Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee



29 March 2016

Refresh of the Work Programme for the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to provide Members with information contained within the Council Plan 2016 – 2019, relevant to the work of the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This allows the opportunity for members to refresh the committee's work programme to reflect the five objectives and subsequent outcomes identified within the Council Plan for the Council's "Altogether Wealthier" priority theme.

Background

2. The current Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programmes focus on the priority areas identified within the context of the Council Plan, Cabinet's notice of key decisions, the Sustainable Community Strategy, Partnership plans and strategies, performance and budgetary control data and changes in government legislation.
3. In relation to the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee, members will recall that the work programme was refreshed at the committee meeting held on the 23 June 2015, ensuring that areas of focus were in line with current and forthcoming priorities within the committee's remit. Further areas of focus for the committee have been added throughout 2015 to reflect changing government policy and at the request of Members.

Council Plan 2016-2019

4. The Council Plan is the overarching high level plan for the County Council, which covers a three year period in line with the council's Medium Term Financial Plan and is updated on an annual basis. The plan sets out how the council will consider the corporate priorities for improvement and the key actions the authority will take in delivering the long term goals in the Sustainable Community Strategy and the council's own improvement agenda. Attached as Appendix 2 is the 'Altogether Wealthier' section of the Council Plan for Members consideration.
5. This year it is proposed that the existing three year Council Plan is updated and rolled forward a year, with a more fundamental review to take place next year, in line with a refresh of the Sustainable Community Strategy. This will also take into account the refreshed Regeneration Statement.

6. The 'Altogether Wealthier' theme remains the top priority of the Council with its main aim to improve the economy and job prospects across the county. The council has a vision for a higher value sustainable economy and strong ambitions for further inclusive growth. The key driver for a vibrant economy is to increase the level of productivity and higher value employment across the county; improving this will increase levels of disposable income and demand for goods and services increasing the numbers of businesses and providing the opportunities to help tackle economic deprivation.
7. To help address these issues the Council has identified 5 objectives which are set out in the Regeneration Statement together with outcomes to achieve the overarching objectives. They are set out below.
 - **Thriving Durham City**
 - Improved retail, business and tourism in Durham City and its immediate locality.
 - Increased developer interest in key sites.
 - Improved infrastructure to support economic growth.
 - **Vibrant and successful towns**
 - Improved retail, business and tourism in major town centres.
 - Increased developer interest in key housing sites.
 - Improved infrastructure to support economic growth.
 - **Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities**
 - Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.
 - Improved infrastructure to support economic growth in rural areas.
 - **Competitive and successful people**
 - Increased numbers of people in employment and training.
 - **A top location for business**
 - Increased business creation.
 - Development of existing businesses and safeguarding employment.
8. Over the next three years, the Council will strive to deliver a step change in the economy of County Durham by focusing on the actions required to achieve the above objectives.
9. The Council Plan also identifies a series of actions detailing the work which needs to be undertaken by the Authority in order to deliver the areas identified above.

Current Work Programme

10. During 2015-16 the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee has undertaken budgetary and performance monitoring, in depth Scrutiny Reviews, systematic six monthly reviews of progress against recommendations and overview presentations in relation to the following areas:

In depth Scrutiny Reviews

- Tourism marketing undertaken by Visit County Durham - **Thriving Durham City** – Improved retail, business and tourism in Durham City and its immediate locality – **Vibrant and successful towns** – Improved retail, business and tourism in major town centres.
- Skills Development supported by DCC within County Durham - **Competitive and successful people** – Increased numbers of people in employment and training.

Systematic Review

- Impact of public sector funding and policy changes on the economy of County Durham – Members' Reference Group Report (Covers all objectives and actions).

Areas of Overview Activity

- Masterplans for County Durham - **Vibrant and successful towns** – Improved retail, business and tourism in major towns.
- Poverty Action Plan - **Competitive and successful people** – Increased numbers of people in employment and training.
- Support for SME's – **Thriving Durham City** – Improved retail business and tourism in Durham City and the immediate locality. **Vibrant and successful towns** – Improved retail, business and tourism in major town centres. **Competitive and successful people** - Increased numbers of people in employment and training. **A top location for business** – Increased business creation – Development of existing businesses and safe guarding employment.
- Chapter Homes – **Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities** - Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.
- Homelessness Strategy – **Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities** - Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.
- Durham Key Options - Choice Base Lettings Policy – **Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities** – Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.

- Business Durham – **A top location for business** - increased business creation - Development of existing businesses and safeguarding employment.
- Youth Employment Initiative – **Competitive and successful people** – Increased numbers of people in employment and training.
- Digital Durham – **A top location for business** – Increased business Creation - Development of existing businesses and safe guarding employment.
- Housing Strategy – **Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural Communities** – Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.
- Skills development and apprenticeship offer within County Durham – **Competitive and successful people** – Increased numbers of people in employment and training.
- County Durham Housing Group - **Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities** – Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham.

Budgetary and performance monitoring

- Quarterly budgetary and performance monitoring for RED Service Grouping.

11. **The Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny has also considered the following areas which cut across all objectives within the Council Plan (Altogether Wealthier):**

- County Durham Plan – (Covers all objectives and actions).
- RED Capital Programme – (Covers all objectives and actions).
- Combined Authority (Covers all objectives and actions).
- European Funding Programme 2014-2020 (Covers all objectives and actions).
- Overview of the work of the County Durham Economic Partnership – (Covers all objectives and actions).
- Regeneration Statement – (Covers all objectives and actions).

Areas for consideration in the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny work programme

12. In addition, the Altogether Wealthier section of the Council Plan for 2016 – 2019 identifies the following new high level actions which have not already been considered by committee that could be included in the 2016 – 2017 work programme:

Council Plan

Vibrant and successful towns

- **Improved retail, business and tourism in major town centres** - Support development of North East plans such as the Local Transport Plan and the Economic Plan

Sustainable neighbourhoods and rural communities

- **Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham** – develop a private landlord accreditation scheme to improve property condition in the private rented sector.
- **Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham** – Develop the existing home loans scheme to assist private landlords and home owners.
- **Improved quality and choice of housing across County Durham** – Work in partnership with social housing providers and public health to introduce a number of housing and health initiatives.

Cross Cutting Themes

13. Below are areas which have cross cutting issues from other 'Altogether' themes that link into Altogether Wealthier.

| Altogether | Objective | Outcome | Link to Altogether Wealthier |
|---------------------------|---|--|---|
| Children and Young People | Children and Young people realise and maximise their potential. | Children and young people are supported to achieve and attain during school years to prepare them for adulthood. Young people are supported to progress and achieve in education, employment and training to achieve their potential. | Increased numbers of people in employment and training. |
| Greener | Reduce carbon emissions and | The Council homes and | Improved quality and choice of |

| | | | |
|----------------|--|---|---|
| | adapt to the impact of climate change. | businesses are more energy efficient. | housing across County Durham. |
| Better Council | Working with our communities. | The effects of the Welfare Reform agenda are managed. | Increased numbers of people in employment and training. |

Next Steps

14. The Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider the appropriate section from the Council Plan, Appendix 2 (copy attached) to inform the committee's work programme for 2016 – 2017, reflecting on the current work programme detailed in paragraphs 10 and 11 and the new high level actions identified in paragraph 12 above.
15. Members will receive a further report at the next Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee confirming/agreeing the committee's work programme for 2016 – 2017 based on today's discussion.

Recommendations

16. That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee note the information contained in Appendix 2 (copy attached).
17. That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee refresh the work programme for 2016 – 2017 by discussing and considering those actions identified, under "Altogether Wealthier" priority theme of the Council Plan 2016 – 2019, Appendix 2 (copy attached) and reflected in paragraphs 10, 11 and 12 of the report.
18. That the Economy and Enterprise Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on the 28 June 2016, receives a further report detailing the committee's work programme for 2016 – 2017.

Background papers:

Council Plan 2016 -19 – Cabinet report – March 2016

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Appendix 1: Implications (The following implications are taken directly from the report to Cabinet on the 16 March 2016, re the Council Plan and Service Plans 2016-19)

Finance

The Council Plan sets out the corporate priorities of the Council for the next three 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 undertaken in the preparation of the Council Plan and Service Plans.

Equality and diversity/Public Sector Equality Duty

A full impact assessment has previously been undertaken for the Council Plan. The actions underpinning 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 Accommodation programme is a key corporate programme 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 council's budget.

Procurement

None

Disability Issues

Accessibility issues are considered in the design of our planning document.

Legal Implications

None