

REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**STRATEGIC PLAN 2014 - 2018****Purpose of the Report**

1. To agree the Council's Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018, following the recent public consultation exercise.

Information and Advice

2. In September 2013 Policy Committee considered the first draft of the new Strategic Plan and agreed that the public should be consulted on it. The Strategic Plan is the key plan of the Council and its purpose is to:

Provide a clear statement of the Council's priorities, promises and values;

Enable agreed political objectives and statutory requirements to drive the Council's activities;

Enable the communication of the Council's priorities to staff, partner organisations and the community of Nottinghamshire as a whole;

Provide a broad framework of objectives and targets to allow the performance management of the Council and on which other key strategies and policies of the Council can be based including the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Asset Management Plan;

Meet the expectation of key external inspection agencies

3. The development of the Strategic Plan 2014 – 2018 has been undertaken against a difficult and prolonged financial backdrop coupled with a rising demand for our services. The Strategic Plan aims to reflect the priorities of the administration and to focus our efforts on the people who need it most. The Plan is structured around three key values and five priorities.
4. These priorities are supported by a number of outcomes that we want to achieve, how we will assess how we have done this and what the role of the County Council is in achieving outcomes. The plan has been drafted in such a way that makes it easier to performance manage with clear outcomes and measurables defined to ensure we can demonstrate progress. Further details of this will be outlined in the annual Council Delivery Plan 2014-15 which will be considered by Policy Committee in April.

Consultation Response

5. The consultation on the Strategic Plan ran from 18 September until 25 October and the public were asked three specific questions in relation to the Plan as well as broader questions in relation to the Budget Challenge;
- Having considered the **three core values** do you think there is anything else the Council needs to focus on?
 - Having considered the **five priority areas** do you think there is anything else the Council needs to focus on?
 - Are there any **further comments** that you would like the Council to consider when developing the Strategic Plan and/or budget for 2014/15?
6. Responses to the questions asked were diverse, but can be summarised into three broad groups. Firstly, local residents with a general awareness of the services provided by the County Council, who were keen to raise a specific issue concerning the challenges facing Nottinghamshire. The second group could be identified as service users as they raised specific concerns and suggestions around specific service areas with which they are clearly knowledgeable. The final group of respondents were County Council employees who raised concerns or made suggestions in relation to their own area of work.
7. The overall feedback received from all three groups was predominantly positive with over 80% of people strongly agreeing or agreeing with the core values in the Plan. Specific concerns were raised around key areas of service delivery, the majority of which were already included within the priorities of the Strategic Plan. The format and design of the draft plan were complimented as being clear, concise and straight forward. Feedback received has been used to help shape and simplify the language used within the Plan. Minor revisions have been made to the wording to ensure it is clear and concise.

Proposed Changes to the Core Values

8. The consensus of responses was overwhelmingly supportive of the three core values, with the caveat that they were general and did not include the further detail which will be part of the Council's Annual Delivery Plan. The revised version now contains a simple explanation of the purpose and timescale of the new Strategic Plan. It also makes reference to the supporting Annual Delivery Plan, where the details of what and how we plan to achieve our stated outcomes will be published.
9. The following text has been included inside the front cover to explain the purpose of the Strategic Plan and to make reference to the Delivery Plan where the detail of what is planned will be published. *"The Strategic Plan covers the period from 2014 to 2018 and provides a clear statement of the Council's priorities, promises and values. It is designed to be concise but also to encompass key areas of service delivery, agreed Council objectives and statutory requirements. Greater detail as to what and how we plan to achieve these outcomes for each financial year will be published as part of the Council's Delivery Plan".*

Proposed Changes to the priorities

10. The feedback in relation to the five priorities areas was also mainly positive. However, priority five 'helping you achieve your potential' received a lower level of support (only 57% of residents

agreed with this priority) than the other four priorities. The service areas, outcomes and aspirations that underpin priority five were also overwhelmingly supported, with a strong emphasis on the importance of prioritising support for children, families and youth services. In order to address this discrepancy between the overall priority and its constituent parts, the language of the Plan has been changed so that it accurately represents public support for this key area of service delivery.

11. The following text is proposed to replace the existing wording to priority five on page 16. Changing the priority heading from 'helping you achieve your potential' to 'Investing in our future' and including the following text *"We want Nottinghamshire to be a place where everyone is able to enjoy a good quality of life. Ensuring that children, young people and families are supported is an investment in our future, for all residents in Nottinghamshire. This investment needs to ensure that services that support attainment and achievement are primarily focussed toward those young people, families and communities in greatest need."*

Further comments from the consultation

12. The further comments question provoked the most varied response, from which it is less easy to establish a coherent picture. However, a number of responses emphasised the need for the County Council to concentrate on its 'core services' and 'to get the basics right'. It is proposed that this feedback is integrated into the new Delivery Plan (currently in development and planned to be considered by Policy Committee on 2 April 2014) which would be the appropriate place to demonstrate this focus and commitment.

Other Options Considered

13. None.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

14. The Strategic Plan has been developed in accordance with the Policy Framework to reflect the vision and priorities of the Council for the next 4 years and has been informed by public consultation.

Statutory and Policy Implications

15. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of crime and disorder, finance, human resources, human rights, the NHS Constitution (Public Health only), the public sector equality duty, safeguarding of children and vulnerable adults, service users, sustainability and the environment and ways of working and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.
16. The final Strategic Plan will direct and/or advance the Council's policy in respect of a number of these areas. The Council will also need to have regard to any statutory and policy considerations in the future development of key plans that will be required through the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDATION/S

It is recommended that

1. Council agree the Strategic Plan for 2014-18.

For any enquiries about this report please contact: Celia Morris, Group Manager Corporate Strategy x72043

Constitutional Comments (SLB 23/12/2013)

Council is the appropriate body to consider the content of this report.

Financial Comments (SEM 06/01/14)

There are no specific financial implications arising directly from this report.

Background Papers

Except for previously published documents, which will be available elsewhere, the documents listed here will be available for inspection in accordance with Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972.

Budget Challenge 2014-15 Summary of Results 1st November 2013 and Comments on Draft Strategic Plan

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All