

meeting	COUNTY COUNCIL		
date	25 February 2010	agenda item number	<b>8</b>

## REPORT OF THE LEADER OF THE COUNCIL

### COUNTY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN 2010-2014

#### Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is for Council to consider and approve the County Council's Strategic Plan for the next four years.

#### Background

2. All Together Better the County Council's Strategic Plan from 2006 to 2010 has provided a focus for the strategic work of the Council internally and in projecting externally, both to the public and to inspectors and assessors, the ambition and sense of purpose of the Council.
3. The plan also proved effective in focusing the work of the Council to achieve its objectives and targets. Evaluation of the impact of the plan showed that of the key performance indicators, 80% of targets were either achieved or the performance was within 10% of the target in 2008/09. It is estimated this figure will increase to 84% at the conclusion of 2009/10. Also, 80% of these measures showed the same or improved performance in 2008/09 compared to the previous year.

#### Function of the Strategic Plan

4. The function of the new Strategic Plan 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

## Factors influencing the Strategic Plan

5. In drafting the Strategic Plan account has been taken of a number of key influences on the County Council, these are:
  - The political priorities following the June 2009 elections
  - The draft Nottinghamshire Sustainable Community Strategy which is also to be considered at this Council meeting
  - Key national policy initiatives
  - The Council's current performance
6. The political priorities of the majority group have influenced the plan. These include:
  - Rebuilding the Economy – freezing Council Tax; managing public money in a business-like and professional manner.
  - Better Education – achieving excellence for all children, supporting parental choice.
  - Protecting the Environment – defending green spaces; bringing in a HGV restriction policy.
  - Public Transport for Everyone – focussing spending on bus services; introducing rural park and ride schemes.
  - Choice for Older People – supporting older people who want to retain their independence.
7. The draft Nottinghamshire Sustainable Community Strategy which was approved by the Nottinghamshire Partnership in December 2009 is based on surveys of attitudes and aspirations of the County's communities and other studies, for example the Place Survey and the Condition of Nottinghamshire. The work resulted in the identification of six priorities:
  - A greener Nottinghamshire
  - A place where children achieve their full potential
  - A safer Nottinghamshire
  - Health and well-being for all
  - A more prosperous Nottinghamshire
  - Making Nottinghamshire's communities stronger
8. Key developments nationally and in government policy have also been taken account of in the new Plan. These include:
  - The impact of the recession and the tightening of local government finances
  - The need to make increased efficiency savings
  - Independence and choice in adult services
  - Expectation of greater responsiveness and empowerment of localities
  - The introduction of the Comprehensive Area Assessment providing a performance management framework for the Council and its partners
9. Finally, the Plan reflects a clear self assessment of areas where the council needs to improve, including; community safety, safeguarding children's services and making increased savings through improved procurement processes.

## **Structure of the Strategic Plan**

10. The Strategic Plan (which is attached) is structured to provide an overview of the priorities of the Council for the next four years. It includes the following:
  - Our Vision
  - Our Promises to Lead Nottinghamshire; to Provide Good Services and Be an Efficient Council
  - Our Priorities that will support the meeting of our Promises
  - What the Council will have achieved at the end of the 4 year plan
  - How the Council will know whether it has achieved its priorities

## **Development of the Plan**

11. Cabinet Members and senior officers have been involved in the development of the Plan and its priorities. The Council's employees have been informed of the draft Plan by the Chief Executive through his Chief Executive's Bulletin. The Council's stakeholder and partner organisations were sent the draft Plan for their comments. These inputs have supported the development of final drafts of the Plan.

## **Taking the Plan forward**

12. The Strategic Plan will provide the basis for future corporate and service planning over the next four years. The plans set out under the 'To be financially robust and sustainable' priority are developed further through the Improvement Programme on which there is a separate report at this Council meeting. Its financial implications will be set out through the Medium Term Financial Strategy and service implications through the business planning process.
13. Progress on the statements made in the 'What the Council will have achieved at the end of the 4 year Plan' will be assessed through the setting of targets which will be reported to Cabinet in March. These targets will then be monitored and appropriate action taken where required.
14. The Council's performance management system will be used to measure progress and six monthly and annual reports will be submitted to Cabinet.
15. Given that the environment in which the Council works is subject to such extensive change it would be unrealistic to think that the Plan could remain unchanged for the full four years. It is therefore proposed that as part of the annual review of progress consideration is also given to whether the targets remain appropriate. Any changes proposed will be brought to Council in the Annual Performance Report.

## **Statutory and Policy Implications**

16. The Plan sets out the broad policy context for the Council over the next four years. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equal opportunities, personnel, Crime and Disorder and those using the service. Where such implications are material they have been described in the text of the report.

## **Recommendations**

17. It is recommended that:

- (a) The Council approve the County Council Strategic Plan for 2010-14
- (b) Progress with the Plan and a review of targets is reported to Council every six months.

## **Legal Services Comments (JFW 10.02.2010)**

Approval of the Council's Policy and Budget Framework is reserved for Full Council.

## **Comments of the Service Director Finance (P.B 11.02.2010)**

As indicated in the report any financial implications will be set out through the Medium Term Financial Strategy as part of the budget setting process.

## **Background Papers**

Nil

## **Electoral Divisions Affected**

All