



Meeting      **COUNTY COUNCIL**

Date          **6 APRIL 2006**

agenda item number

## **Report of the Leader of the Council**

### **TITLE OF REPORT**

### **ALL TOGETHER BETTER: COUNTY COUNCIL STRATEGIC PLAN 2006 – 2010**

#### **1. Purpose of Report**

To approve the County Council's Strategic Plan for the next four years

#### **2. Background**

2.1 Building a Future, the County Council's previous Strategic Plan 2002 – 2005 was very successful both in providing 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.

2.2 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 70% of its targets were met entirely or within 10%.

#### **3. Function of the Strategic Plan**

3.1 Since the end of this plan, work has been undertaken to develop the new plan. The Plan is needed to perform the following functions:

- a) to provide a clear statement of the Council's priorities and values
- b) to enable the communication of the Council's priorities to staff, partner organisations and the community as a whole
- c) to provide a broad framework of objectives and targets to allow the performance management of the Council

- d) to provide a broad framework of objectives and targets on which other key strategies and policies of the Council can be based including the Asset Management Plan and the Medium Term Financial Strategy
- e) to meet the expectation of key external inspection agencies and the CPA Corporate Assessment .
- f) to enable agreed political objectives and statutory requirements to drive the Councils activities.

#### **4. Factors influencing the Strategic Plan**

4.1 In drafting the Strategic Plan account has been taken of a number of key influences on the County Council. These are:

- the Community Strategy
- the political priorities following the May 2005 elections
- key Government policy initiatives
- our current performance

4.2 The Community Strategy which was approved by the Nottinghamshire Partnership in September 2005 was drafted following both broad consultation on and surveys of attitudes and aspirations of the County's communities. This work resulted in the identification of five themes which also form the basis for the Strategic Plan.

- Safer and Stronger
- Healthier
- Learning and Earning
- Cleaner and Greener
- Travel and Access

4.3 The political priorities of the majority group have also influenced the plan. These include:

- Learning; Schools at the centre of our local communities
- Culture – including the renovation of 15 libraries
- Transport and the Environment – including the rebuilding or refurbishment of bus stations
- Care in the Community – including promoting choice and independence by putting in place 'mixed care' services
- Community Safety – introducing Police Community Support Officers and Neighbourhood Wardens across the county

4.4 Developments in Government policy have also been taken account of in the new Plan. Key developments include

- Integration of Children's Services
- Independence and choice in adult services
- Expectation of greater responsiveness and empowerment of local communities.
- Gershon efficiency savings
- Comprehensive Performance Assessment providing a performance management framework for the Council
- Local Area Agreements with emphasis on joining up locally and working in partnership, whilst providing community leadership

4.5 Finally the Plan reflects a clear self assessment of areas where the Council needs to improve. These include the level of achievement of school children at age 16 and levels of sickness absence among staff.

## **5. Structure of the Plan**

5.1 A copy of the plan is attached to this report. The Strategic Plan includes the following:

- A vision for the future of the County
- Five themes that reflect the priorities of the Community Strategy
- Commitments to action under each theme
- A section on improving the way we work

Targets to enable us to measure progress to achieving our commitments are also being developed and will be presented to Cabinet for approval.

## **6. Consultation on the Plan**

6.1 Broad community consultation was undertaken for the preparation of the Community Strategy and this has provided the basis for the Strategic Plan Consultation specifically on the plan has been conducted with stakeholder and partner organisations and with staff across the Council. Partner organisations were introduced to the Plan at the meeting of the Nottinghamshire Partnership in February and each partner has subsequently received a consultation draft for comment. Consultation with staff has been undertaken through the Staff Road Shows and electronically via the Council's intranet.

6.2 In the preparation of the Plan the Council has also been assisted by members of the Business Improvement Board who have advised over the most effective ways to present the Council's future intentions. A full analysis of comments and responses is attached to this report.

## **7. Taking the Plan forward**

7.1 The Strategic Plan will provide the basis for future corporate and service planning over the next four years. Its financial implications will be spelt out through the Medium Term Financial Strategy and service implications through the business planning process. The Plan's targets will enable progress on the

commitments to be monitored and appropriate action to be taken where required. The Council's performance management system PRIDE will be used to measure progress and six monthly and annual reports will be submitted to Cabinet.

- 7.2 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 proposed changes will be brought to Council along with an annual report on progress.

## **8. Statutory and Policy Implications**

- 8.1 The Plan sets the broad policy context for the Council for the next four years

## **9. Recommendations**

- 9.1 It is recommended that:

- (a) the Council approve "All together better" the County Council Strategic Plan for 2006-2010.
- (b) strategic plan targets will be presented to Cabinet for approval
- (c) progress with the Plan and a review of targets is reported to Council annually

### **Director of Resources' Financial Comments**

As indicated in the report, the financial implications in approving the County Council's Strategic Plan for 2006-2010 will be set out in the Medium Term Financial Strategy (NS 28/3/06)

### **Legal Services Comments**

The consideration and recommendation to Council of the strategic plan for the County is a matter delegated to the Leader by the Constitution (JA 28.03.06)

### **Background Papers available for inspection**

### **Electoral Divisions Affected**

All