

**Report to the Finance and Performance  
Management Cabinet Committee**

**Report Reference: FPM-023-2010/11**  
**Date of meeting: 17 January 2011**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

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**Portfolio: Performance Management**

**Subject: Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and Key Objectives 2011/12**

**Responsible Officer: Steve Tautz (01992 564180)**

**Democratic Services Officer: Gary Woodhall (01992 564470)**

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**Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**(1) That, subject to the views of the Finance and Performance Management Scrutiny Panel, the Cabinet Committee consider:**

**(a) the Council's draft Corporate Plan for the period from 2011/12 to 2014/15; and**

**(b) the Council's draft Key Objectives for 2011/12.**

**Executive Summary:**

The Council Plan for 2006/07 to 2009/10 was the authority's key strategic planning document, which set out service delivery priorities over the four-year period, with strategic themes matching the Community Strategy for the District. As the Council Plan has now concluded, work has taken place on the development of a new strategic plan to take the authority forward over the coming years.

The Local Government Act 1999 and the Best Value regime previously required all local authorities to publish an annual Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP), detailing priorities for the year ahead. Although the statutory requirement to publish a BVPP was removed from April 2009, this process traditionally provided an opportunity for the Council to articulate its Key Objectives and priorities for each year.

The structure of the former Council Plan was largely based around the Council's Medium-Term Priorities adopted in 2002. As part of the development of the new Corporate Plan, the Cabinet has previously identified a range of new Medium-Term Aims for 2010/11 to 2013/14. Following the alignment of the Council's business, budget, and workforce planning and development processes into a framework to enable the authority to focus on key priorities and improve performance, it is also necessary to now adopt the Council's Key Objectives for 2011/12.

**Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

The identification of the Council's service delivery priorities over the four-year period of the new Corporate Plan, and the annual adoption of Key Objectives for each year of the Plan, provides an opportunity for the Council to focus specific attention on how areas for improvement will be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people.

It is important that relevant performance management processes are in place to review and monitor performance against the Council's objectives, to ensure their continued achievability

and relevance, and to identify proposals for appropriate corrective action in areas of under performance.

### **Other Options for Action:**

No other options are appropriate in this respect. Failure to monitor and review performance against Key Objectives and outcomes, and to take corrective action where necessary, could have negative implications for the Council's reputation and for judgements made about the authority in corporate assessment processes.

### **Report:**

#### Corporate Plan 2011-2015

1. The Corporate Plan (formerly known as the Council Plan) is the Council's key strategic planning document, setting out service delivery priorities over a four-year period, with strategic themes reflecting those of the Sustainable Community Strategy for the District.

2. The Corporate Plan translates the vision for the District set out by the Community Strategy, into the Council's strategic direction, priorities and the most important outcomes that it wants to achieve, and informs all other plans and helps prioritise resources to provide quality services and value for money. The Corporate Plan does not cover everything that the authority does, focusing instead on those issues that matter most to local people, national priorities set by the Government and local challenges arising from the social, economic and environmental context of the District. As a strategic document, the Corporate Plan does not contain specific information on the wide range of services that the authority provides, or how it delivers statutory duties or enforces legislation, and details of the provision of services can be found in the individual Directorate Business Plans produced each year.

3. The Corporate Plan is an important element of the Council's Performance Management Framework and its corporate business planning processes, and informs the content of annual Business Plans to illustrate the work that directorates and services perform that directly contributes towards the achievement of the Council's corporate objectives. The Corporate Plan also provides the emerging policy foundation for the Medium-Term Financial Strategy, particularly in the current financial climate.

4. The Corporate Plan needs to evidence that the Council is aware of local issues, with a focus on vulnerable people, and that improved outcomes for local people are being, and will continue to be, delivered. The Corporate Plan should include specific actions to address corporate and local priorities that are financed, resourced and have a timescale for completion. The Corporate Plan is closely linked to the authority's Medium-Term Financial Strategy, outlining the financial resources available to fulfil specific priorities and objectives, and sets out how the Council will deliver its vision and priorities over the next four years, to ensure improved outcomes for local people.

5. The development of a new Corporate Plan has been undertaken in conjunction with the similar development of the new Community Strategy for the District by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP). The Corporate Plan should complement the Community Strategy and reflect those issues and priorities in the Strategy where the Council can have maximum impact. The Community Strategy represents the longer-term vision for the District, and the new Corporate Plan will be required to demonstrate how the Council will contribute to the delivery of this vision, concentrating on what affects the District as an area, not just on those services the Council delivers directly. The new Community Strategy was adopted by the LSP and the Council in November 2010, and the Council's Medium-Term Aims for the four-year period of the Corporate Plan were agreed by the Cabinet in February 2010.

6. Management Board has recently agreed arrangements for the finalisation of the new Corporate Plan, specifically in view of the fact that over two-thirds of the first year of the Plan period has already elapsed. Given the need for the Corporate Plan to translate the vision for

the District set by the Community Strategy into the Council's strategic priorities and outcomes, it is considered best for the new Corporate Plan to run from 1 April 2011, for the four-year period to 31 March 2014. This approach is supported by the need of the Council (and all local authorities) to respond rapidly over the last eight months to changes in local government initiatives introduced by the Coalition Government and, more importantly, to await the outcomes of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2010 before determining priorities and outcomes for future years. Service achievements and progress made against the Council's Key Objectives for the current year have been incorporated into a five-year (rather than four-year) 'backward look' in the new Corporate Plan.

7. The draft Corporate Plan was considered as part the joint Cabinet and Management Board meeting held on 15 December 2010, and will be adopted by the Cabinet at its joint meeting on 31 January 2011. The views of the Cabinet Committee in this respect will be reported to the Cabinet.

8. The Cabinet Committee is requested to consider the Council's draft Corporate Plan for 2011 to 2015, which is attached at Appendix 1 to this report. Appropriate resident and partner consultation in respect of the draft Corporate Plan will be undertaken during February and March 2011.

#### Key Objectives 2011/12

9. Members have previously agreed a general format and structure for the new Corporate Plan, which includes an annually updated section reflecting the Council's Key Objectives for each year of the Plan. The annual identification of Key Objectives provides an opportunity for the Council to focus specific attention on how areas for improvement will be addressed, opportunities exploited and better outcomes delivered for local people.

10. A range of specific Key Objectives for 2010/11 was adopted by the Cabinet at its meeting on 19 April 2010. The Key Objectives reflected national and local priorities and specific service improvements, and were intended to provide a clear statement of the Council's overall intentions for the year. The Key Objectives contained specific targets and outcomes, and on-going performance is reported to the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a six-monthly basis.

11. The Cabinet Committee will be aware that the Council has sought to align its business, budget, and workforce planning and development processes over recent years, and that these arrangements have provided an opportunity for the Key Objectives for each year to be incorporated within individual Directorate Business Plans, thereby further linking the various elements of the Council's performance management framework. For 2010/11, the Key Objectives were set by the Cabinet alongside the setting of the budget for the year, representing significant improvement over previous arrangements where key objectives were not determined until early in each municipal year, long after the budget for the year had been agreed.

12. In order to complete the new Corporate Plan for publication with effect from 1 April 2011, Key Objectives for 2011/12 also need to be agreed. Service Directors have therefore sought to identify appropriate draft Key Objectives with individual portfolio holders, with regard to these informing the development of Directorate Business Plans for next year. This issue was also considered as part the recent joint Cabinet and Management Board meeting, and the Council's draft Key Objectives for 2011/12 are attached at Appendix 2.

13. The Cabinet Committee is requested to consider the Council's draft Key Objectives for 2011/12, which were also considered as part the joint Cabinet and Management Board meeting on 15 December 2010, and will similarly be adopted by the Cabinet at its meeting on 31 January 2011. The views of the Cabinet Committee in this respect will also be reported to the Cabinet.

### **Resource Implications:**

The design and production costs of the new Corporate Plan can be met from within the existing budget of the Performance Improvement Unit for 2010/11 and 2011/12. Resource requirements for the achievement of specific Key Objectives for 2011/12 will be identified by the relevant Service Director and reflected in the Council's Budget process.

### **Legal and Governance Implications:**

There are no legal implications or Human Rights Act issues arising from the recommendations in this report, which ensure that the Council sets appropriate corporate priorities, and monitors progress and reports against the achievement of these priorities.

### **Safer, Cleaner and Greener Implications:**

There are no implications arising from the recommendations in this report for the Council's commitment to the Nottingham Declaration for climate change, the corporate Safer, Cleaner and Greener initiative, or any Crime and Disorder issues within the District.

### **Consultation Undertaken:**

The draft Corporate Plan 2011-2015 and Key Objectives for 2011/12 have been considered by the joint Cabinet and Management Board, and the joint Finance and Performance Management Cabinet Committee and Scrutiny Panel meetings during December 2010 and January 2011.

### **Background Papers:**

None.

### **Impact Assessments:**

#### Risk Management

The respective Service Director will have identified any risk management issues arising from proposals for the Council's Key Objectives for 2011/12, as set out in this report

#### Equality and Diversity

*Did the initial assessment of the proposals contained in this report for relevance to the Council's general equality duties reveal any potentially adverse equality implications?*

No. The content of this report has no specific equality implications. However, the respective Service Director will have identified any equality issues arising from proposals for the Council's Key Objectives for 2011/12.

*Where equality implications were identified through the initial assessment process, has a formal Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken?*

N/A.

*What equality implications were identified through the Equality Impact Assessment process?*

N/A.

*How have the equality implications identified through the Equality Impact Assessment been addressed in this report in order to avoid discrimination against any particular group?*

N/A.