

## **Report to the Cabinet**

**Report reference: C-036-2012/13**  
**Date of meeting: 3 December 2012**



**Epping Forest  
District Council**

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**Portfolio:** Leader

**Subject:** Corporate Plan 2011-2015 - Key Objectives 2012/13

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

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

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### **Recommendations/Decisions Required:**

**(1) That the Cabinet consider progress in relation to the achievement of the Council's key objectives for 2012/13, for the first six months of the year.**

### **Executive Summary:**

The Corporate Plan is the Council's key strategic planning document, setting out service delivery priorities over the four-year period from 2011/12 to 2014/15, with strategic themes reflecting those of the Community Strategy for the district. Updates to the Corporate Plan are published annually, to reflect key objectives for each year of the Plan period and progress against the achievement of objectives for previous years.

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 over the coming year. The key objectives are intended to provide a clear statement of the Council's overall intentions for each year, containing specific actions and desired outcomes.

A range of key objectives for 2012/13 was adopted by the Cabinet at its meeting on 30 January 2012. Progress in relation to the achievement of the key objectives is reviewed by the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a six-monthly and outturn basis.

### **Reasons for Proposed Decision:**

This report presents the six-month position against the key objectives for 2012/13. It is important that appropriate performance management processes are in place to review progress against the key objectives, to ensure their continued relevance and achievability, and to identify corrective action in areas of slippage or below-target performance.

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

No other options are appropriate in this respect. Failure to review and report performance against the key objectives and to take corrective action where necessary, could have negative implications for the Council's reputation and for judgements made about the progress of the authority.

### **Report:**

1. The Corporate Plan for 2011/12 to 2014/15 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. The Corporate Plan helps to prioritise resources to provide quality services and value for money. The key objectives adopted for each year of the Corporate Plan are not intended to reflect everything that the Council does, but focus on national priorities set by the Government and local challenges arising from the social, economic and environmental context of the district. The key objectives represent the Council's high-level initiatives and over-arching goals for each year.

2. The key objectives for 2012/13 were adopted by the Cabinet at its meeting on 30 January 2012. A schedule detailing mid-year progress against individual actions designed to secure the achievement of each of the key objectives, is attached as Appendix 1 to this report. In reporting progress against the objectives, the following 'status' indicators have been applied to individual actions:

- (a) **Achieved** - specific actions have been completed or targets achieved;
- (b) **On-Track** - it is anticipated that specific actions will be completed or targets achieved within the timescale for the objective;
- (c) **Under Control** - specific actions have not been completed or achieved in accordance with quarterly or other in-year targets, although completion/achievement is likely to be secured by year-end;
- (d) **Behind Schedule** - specific actions have not been completed or achieved in accordance with quarterly or other in-year targets, and completion/achievement may not be secured by year-end;
- (e) **Pending** - the achievement of specific actions has been delayed, as a result of ongoing associated work or actions, or circumstances beyond the council's control; and
- (f) **Not Started** - specific actions have not been commenced.

3. Progress against the key objectives was an area of focus in former corporate inspection processes, in order to assess the Council's progress in improving the services that it delivered, and to identify and reflect plans to secure further improvement. Whilst such external assessment processes have generally been abolished, it remains important to ensure that appropriate performance management processes are in place to review and monitor performance against the key objectives, and to agree proposals for corrective action in areas of slippage or under performance.

4. The Cabinet is requested to consider progress in relation to the achievement of the key objectives for 2012/13, for the first six months of the year.. This report will also be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 27 November 2012, and any comments raised by the Committee will be reported to the Cabinet meeting.

#### Key Objectives 2013/14

5. The Council has aligned its business, budget, and workforce planning and development processes over recent years, and these arrangements have provided an opportunity for the key objectives for each year to be incorporated within annual Business Plans, thereby further linking the various elements of the Council's performance management framework. For 2012/13, the key objectives were agreed by the Cabinet alongside the setting of the budget for the year, representing significant improvement over previous arrangements where the objectives were not determined until early in each municipal year, after the budget for the year had been agreed.

6. In order to commence the business planning process for the next financial year, current progress against the key objectives will be used as the starting point for the identification of appropriate objectives for 2013/14. The proposed objectives will be subject of

a further report to the Cabinet, and consultation with the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in early 2013.

### **Resource Implications:**

Resource requirements arising from specific actions to achieve the key objectives for 2012/13, or from proposals for corrective action in respect of areas of slippage or below-target performance in relation to individual objectives or actions, will be identified by the responsible service director(s).

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

There are no legal implications or Human Rights Act issues arising from the recommendations of this report, which ensure that the Council reviews progress against the achievement of its key objectives. Implications arising from specific actions to achieve the key objectives for 2012/13, or from proposals for corrective action in respect of areas of slippage or below-target performance in relation to individual objectives, will be identified by the responsible service director(s).

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

There are no implications arising from the recommendations of this report in respect of the Council's commitment to the Climate Local Agreement, the corporate Safer, Cleaner, Greener initiative, or any crime and disorder issues within the district. Implications arising from specific actions to achieve the key objectives for 2012/13, or from proposals for corrective action in respect of areas of slippage or below-target performance in relation to individual objectives, will be identified by the responsible service director(s).

### **Consultation Undertaken:**

Current progress against the key objectives for 2012/13 has been submitted by the responsible service director(s). This report has been considered by Management Board and will also be presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 27 November 2012. The report was provided to the Leader of the Council in advance of the publication of this agenda.

### **Background Papers:**

None.

### **Impact Assessments:**

#### Risk Management

Failure to review performance against the key objectives and to take corrective action where necessary, could have negative implications for the Council's reputation and for judgements made about the progress of the authority.

Risk management issues arising from specific actions to achieve the key objectives for 2012/13, or from proposals for corrective action in respect of areas of slippage or below-target performance in relation to individual objectives, will be identified by the responsible service director(s).

#### Equality & Diversity

There are no equality issues arising from the recommendations of this report, which ensure that the Council reviews progress against the achievement of its key objectives. Equality issues arising from specific actions to achieve the key objectives for 2012/13, or from proposals for corrective action in respect of areas of slippage or below-target performance in relation to individual objectives, will be identified by the responsible service director(s).